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Between Woke and Whitewash

Issue 17



Tales of Texas Newsletter



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This issue of Tales of Texas is about The Alamo. Artwork above shows the battle in a painting at the Ralston Family Collections Center.

All illustrations taken by author. Map courtesy of the Alamo website.

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The Old Walt Disney Film Inspired a Whole Generation of Kids to Love Texas

Many people, particular the liberal left, assail the old Disney film, *Davy Crockett*, as a relic of a bygone era of oversimplified racism. These folks, apparently, aren't familiar with Disney's original philosophy of instilling a love for country and heroes into the nation's youngsters. Like me and you. Thanks to that Disney film, a lad from England, like his American cousins, became infatuated with all things Texas History.

Phil Collins became a literal rock star known throughout the world with his band, *Genesis*. As devoted to his music as he was, he never forgot his first love. History. Texas History. To become a collector of such quality requires expertise in the field and money. Lots of money. Luckily for us, Phil is a highly successful seller of records. He translated much of his money into items linked to the Alamo and Texas History. Again, lucky for us, he is unselfishly sharing his collection with the people of Texas. I'm sure Phil had his coonskin cap and toy musket as a lad, just like every kid in America at the time. Movies like that one produce kids who perform heroic actions in life.

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Tales of Texas



Living Historian



Alamo Diorama

We all know the story of the battle. Many of us know it because of the Disney movie or children's history book. Therefore, I won't retell that story.

Today, the Alamo is both a solemn memorial and vibrant museum complex. Visitors can tour the iconic stone church, whose distinct facade has become synonymous with Texas pride and resilience. The recently renovated Alamo campus includes a world-class museum located with the Ralston Family Collections Center. The Phil Collins Collection features historic weapons, uniforms, personal belongings, and rare documents directly tied to the events of 1836.

The museum's interactive exhibits and multimedia presentations help bring history to life. Visitors can explore the diverse group of defenders who gathered from across the globe and better understand the complex history of Texas and Mexico. The exhibit also highlights the contributions of Tejanos who defended the Alamo with their neighbors.

Beyond the museum walls, visitors can stroll through the beautifully landscaped Alamo Gardens and explore the full historic footprint of the site. Reenactors are now called Living Historians. Living history demonstrations, costumed interpreters, and guided tours create an engaging, hands-on environment that appeals to boys and girls, as well as parents and grandparents.

Of course, the site is in downtown San Antonio, home of the famous River Walk. Other nearby sites include the Spanish Governor's Palace and the San Fernando Cathedral. The Tejano and Spanish heritage and influence in the Texas Revolution cannot be overstated. The Texas Revolution was part of a broader Mexican Civil War, consuming five states—not just Texas.



Tales of Texas



Drawing a Line
In the Sand

To visit the Alamo church is free. I don't foresee there ever being an admission price for a walk around the grounds and sacred site.

The museum requires an admission ticket. It's well worth the price. The artwork, documents, artifacts, and the Battle of the Alamo interactive diorama are outstanding.

I toured the site with my 4th grade grandson who has a reading disability called dyslexia. He was so excited to see the hands-on models, reenactors, and the diorama. He didn't have to read anything.

Phil Collins narrates the interactive diorama of the battle so folks who are unfamiliar with it can see how it happened over the course of thirteen days.

Just a step away from the diorama are forensic portraits of Alamo defenders. These portraits were done by Houston P.D.'s record-holding forensic artist, Lois Gibson. She is in an ongoing project to give likenesses of previously unknown defenders based on current descendants' traits. It's Fantastic!

So, thank you, Walt Disney! You did a lot for my generation.

Current Map of the Alamo
And Museum Complex

