

THE TEXAS STAR TRAIL

a downtown walking tour



San Antonio Conservation Society

The purpose of the San Antonio Conservation Society is to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places, and customs relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty, and all that is distinctive to our State. Such physical and cultural preservation is intended to keep the history of Texas relevant and intact to educate the public with knowledge about our inherited regional values.

10. Losoya Hotel, 1908 *Atlee B. Ayres, architect*

223 Losoya
The Vance family, who owned property all the way to Alamo Plaza from the 1860s to 1943, built this hotel. The fifth floor was added in 1919. The corbelled arches at the parapet make this a distinctive building within the block.

11. Original Mexican Restaurant, 1899-1959

231 Losoya Street
From 1899 to 1959, the Farnsworth family operated the Original Mexican Restaurant here. Prior to the opening of this restaurant, Mexican food was commercially available only in outdoor food stands.

12. Alamo Plaza South, ca. 1872-1891

242 - 252 Losoya Street
Facing both Losoya and Alamo Streets these buildings originally housed Dreiss, Thompson and Company Drug Store (1872 and 1877); Joske's Department Store (1888); and Scholz Palm Garden (1891). The Palm Garden became an important social gathering spot, while the stores represented pioneer commercial establishments on Alamo Plaza.

Much of the commercial development of Alamo Plaza began with the establishment of mule-drawn streetcars in 1878. Later, the San Antonio Street Railroad connected Alamo Plaza and San Pedro Springs, a 16-minute trip north.

13. Dullnig Building, 1883 *James Murphy, architect*

262 Losoya Street
Grocer and dry goods merchant George Dullnig constructed this “modern” red brick building at the corner of Losoya and Commerce Streets. The building featured one of the city’s first elevators and steam heating systems.

Walk west on Commerce Street »

14. Commerce Street Bridge, 1914

This is the site of an early river crossing between the Villa of San Fernando, the first civil settlement of San Antonio, and the Mission San Antonio de Valero (Alamo). A graceful iron bridge erected in 1880 preceded the present concrete structure. The iron bridge was named for famed writer Sidney Lanier who loved this spot. A 19th century trilingual sign told citizens in English, German, and Spanish to walk horses over the bridge to avoid a fine.

The Native American Indian statue, “First Inhabitant,” on the opposite side of the bridge was designed in 1914 by Waldine Tauch and cast by Hannibal Pianta, both noted San Antonio sculptors. The statue originally featured two drinking fountains, which vandals damaged shortly after installation. The Commerce Street Bridge was originally known as Jones Bridge for San Antonio mayor A.H. Jones.

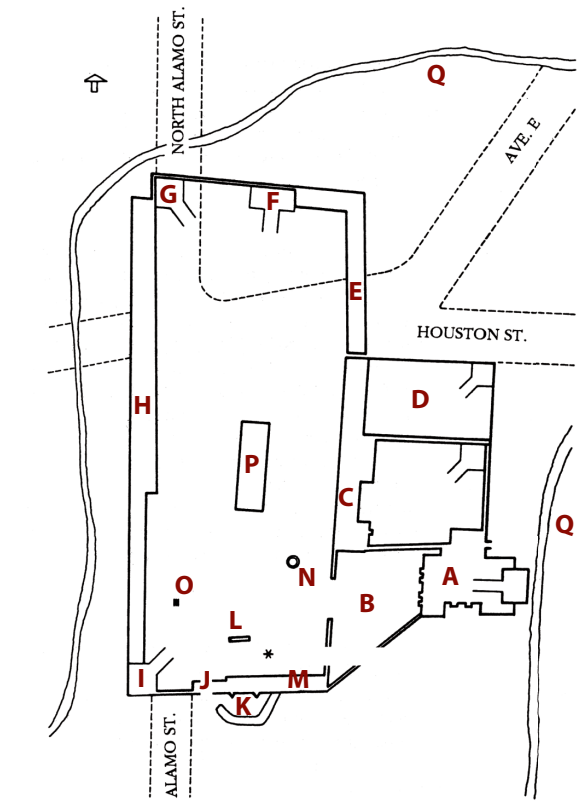
15. Paseo del Rio — River Walk

After the disastrous flood of 1921, the need for flood control threatened the natural beauty of the San Antonio River. In 1924, the founders of the fledgling San Antonio Conservation Society took city commissioners on a boat tour of the river and presented a puppet show to convince them of the need to preserve the city’s scenic attractions, such as the river and the missions. In 1929, architect Robert H.H. Hugman introduced his designs for river walkways, staircases, bridges, and landscaping. The WPA constructed these features between 1938 and 1940. In May 2009, the Museum Reach expansion of the River Walk opened, extending north along the San Antonio River to the San Antonio Museum of Art and the historic Pearl Brewery complex.

Today, the Paseo del Rio or River Walk is one of America’s most unique urban linear parks. The northern Museum Reach extension includes public art installations, lush landscaping, a scenic grotto, and a lock and dam system. The southern Mission Reach extension of the River Walk connects all of the San Antonio missions.

16. Clifford Building, 1893 *James Riely Gordon, architect*

431 E. Commerce Street
This Romanesque Revival style building with its round tower was built for prominent attorney Charles H. Clifford. The river-level once housed Robert Hugman’s architecture office and, later, an early River Walk restaurant. The replicated “R. H. H. Hugman AIA Architect” signage at the lower level was installed in the late 1970s when Hugman received official recognition for his River Walk design. The upper levels have been used as artist studios, offices, and apartments.



The locations shown on this map mark the structures, sites, and events associated with the Battle of the Alamo and the fight for Texas Independence.

The Alamo in 1836

- A.** Ruins of the Mission church. Three cannons were mounted on a platform at the rear.
- B.** Low double stockade patched with dirt, enclosing old mission graveyard. Davy Crockett defended this area.
- C.** Old mission convent, downstairs barracks and armory, upstairs hospital. Courtyard in back formerly had two-story arched corridors.
- D.** Corral enclosed with picket fence.
- E.** Adobe houses.
- F.** Battery of cannons, called *Teran* by the Mexicans. On the ramp of this position Col. Travis was killed.
- G.** Battery of cannons called *Forten de Condelle* by the Mexicans.
- H.** West wall of the plaza. Formerly Mission Indian houses, some with arched corridors.
- I.** Location of 18 lb. cannon, largest in the fort.
- J.** Jail.
- K.** Main gates with tower, defended by two cannons in an extended earthwork. A Texas Historical Marker commemorates the site.
- L.** Interior barricades defending main gate.
- M.** Low barracks.
- N.** Well.
- O.** Unmounted cannons.
- P.** Cenotaph Monument. A Texas Historical Marker for Adina de Zavala is located near the Cenotaph.
- Q.** Acequia (irrigation ditch)

17. Schilo's Delicatessen, ca. 1880-1890

424 E. Commerce Street
Built for the Mayo Exchange Co., the building has housed Schilo's since 1942. The delicatessen is best known for its split-pea soup and home-style root beer.

18. Schultze Hardware, ca. 1875

421 E. Commerce Street
Schultze Stove and Hardware Company, founded in 1864, operated here until the early 1950s. The river level now accommodates a restaurant. The unusually ornate roof cornice is worth noting. The roofline parapet still bears the name “H. Schultze.”

19. Rilling Building, ca. 1877

417 (421) E. Commerce Street
H. Rilling, Leather Goods and Findings, established in San Antonio in 1868, occupied this limestone building for almost 100 years.

20. Harnisch and Baer Building, ca. 1875

415 E. Commerce Street
Harnisch and Baer Confectioners called this building home for many years. It served as a confectioners shop, ice cream parlor, and, reportedly, as one of the city’s earliest soda fountains. Later it housed Hammond Jewelry Co.

21. Dietrich Heye and Co. Building

409 E. Commerce Street
One of the city’s finest saddlery shops originally occupied this building. Together with L. Frank Saddlery, Dietrich Heye outfitted Teddy Roosevelt’s Rough Riders for their charge up San Juan Hill. As part of the former Stockman Restaurant, the building became a centerpiece of the economic renaissance of the Paseo del Rio (River Walk) following HemisFair 1968. The elaborate roofline parapet still bears the name “D. Heye.”

22. Old Alamo National Bank Building/Commerce Building, 1902

316 E. Commerce Street *Atlee B. Ayres and James Wahrenberger, architects*
Alamo National Bank, chartered in 1891, built this elaborate Renaissance Revival style building on the south side of Commerce Street. In an impressive engineering feat, construction workers raised the building onto rollers and moved it south twenty feet when Commerce Street was widened in 1913-1915. Banking operations never ceased throughout the process. The upper three stories were added in 1916 after the move.

23. Stevens Building, 1893 *James Riely Gordon, architect*

315 E. Commerce Street
Built by Bettie Thornton and John J. Stevens, the Stevens Building housed the University Club. A civic leader and rancher, Stevens was said to have brought the first Herefords to Texas. The Romanesque Revival style building is one of the most elaborate on Commerce Street.

24. Staacke Building, 1894 *James Riely Gordon, architect*

309 (315) E. Commerce Street
August Staacke built this structure on the site of the original ca. 1845 First Presbyterian Church to house his carriage business. Notice the engraved names of the architect and builder near the building’s front steps. A Texas Historical Marker to the west of the building commemorates the site of the former Presbyterian Church.

25. Pancoast Building, 1880 *Alfred Giles, architect*

308 E. Commerce Street
Designed for A. Pancoast and Sons Clothing, Merchants and Tailors, this building, along with others on the south side of Commerce Street, lost fifteen feet of its facade when the street was widened. The present facade was reconstructed, reusing the iron columns, and a plain third floor replaced the ornate cornice. North on Navarro Street is the **Nix Professional Building**, an Art Deco skyscraper designed by Henry T. Phelps in 1929 as a hospital, medical offices, and parking garage. The building remains an operational medical facility today.

Welcome to the Texas Star Trail. You may begin at any point along its 2.6 mile length. The route can also be abbreviated or walked in sections.

The numbered locations shown on the map are identified with a **Texas Star Medallion** in the sidewalk in front of each structure.

The Alamo, 1744

In 1793 Mission San Antonio de Valero was secularized and lay abandoned for seven years. In 1803, a company of Spanish soldiers from San José y Santiago del Alamo Parras in northern Mexico established their quarters at the old mission. From this troop came the name “The Alamo.” The famed battle of the Alamo during the Texas Revolution of 1836 took its toll on the structure. In 1850 the U. S. Army leased the crumbling structure from the Catholic Church. Architect John Fries and David Russi, a stonemason, renovated the buildings and created the distinctive parapet that so many identify with the Alamo and San Antonio. The State of Texas purchased the chapel in 1885 and acquired more of the property in the early 20th century. The State gave the Daughters of the Republic of Texas custody of the entire site in 1905.

Today, the chapel serves as a shrine to the heroes of the battle. Museum exhibits interpret the story of the Alamo and the famous battle. The Alamo is a designated National Historic Landmark, the highest national historic honor and one of only seven in San Antonio.

1. Alamo Plaza

This site has served as a focal point for the city of San Antonio from its earliest days as a mission outpost of New Spain to its present importance in the heart of downtown. The Mission San Antonio de Valero, originally established in 1718, moved here in 1724, after having been unsuccessfully located at two other sites. Missionaries began construction of a stone church in 1744, but its walls later collapsed, prompting reconstruction that remained half-completed by 1777. Through the years, various epidemics depopulated the mission, and by 1778, there were not enough Indians to work the mission fields.

In addition to being a mission and fortress, the plaza provided space for a city market for many years. The famous “chili queens” first set up their stands in this location. In 1888, Alderman Anton Wulff called for the building of four paved streets around the plaza with a landscaped garden in the center. He installed iron benches in the garden at his own expense. The **Cenotaph** (empty tomb), commissioned by the U.S. State of Texas Centennial in 1936, was dedicated in 1940. Local architects Adams and Adams provided the structural design for the monument, which was executed by sculptor Pompeo Coppini.

Leaving the Alamo, turn right on Alamo Plaza »

2. Medical Arts Building, 1926 *Ralph Cameron, architect*

705 E. Houston Street
Originally, the Medical Arts Building housed doctors’ offices and a hospital. Renovated for hotel use in 1985, it was renamed the Emily Morgan for the legendary “Yellow Rose of Texas.” The building stands as a focal point at the east end of Houston Street and is noted for its Gothic Revival terracotta details, including gargoyles.

North of the hotel, two exceptional buildings are visible: the 1929 **San Antonio Express-News Building** (on the left) with its sculptured entrance by Pompeo Coppini; and the 1922-24 **Scottish Rite Cathedral** (on the right), designed by Ralph Cameron, with bronze doors by Coppini.

3. Post Office & Federal Courts Building, 1937

615 E. Houston *Ralph Cameron & Paul Philippe Cret, architects*
This imposing Renaissance Revival style building became the third post office located on Alamo Plaza, replacing an 1886 facility at this location and an earlier building located nearby. Renowned local architect Ralph Cameron designed the building. Through a program administered by the Treasury Department’s Section of Fine Arts, artist Howard Cook painted fresco murals in the lobby that depict “San Antonio’s Importance in Texas History.” The building now serves as the Hipolito F. Garcia Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse under the U.S. General Services Administration.

Cross Alamo Street to the west side of the plaza »

26. Old First National Bank Building, 1885 *Cyrus Eidlitz, architect*

239 E. Commerce Street

27. San Antonio Loan and Trust, 1901 *G. Voorbees, architect*

235 E. Commerce Street
Both the elaborate Moorish-inspired bank and the Loan and Trust Company building were constructed for noted philanthropist and businessman George W. Brackenridge. Brackenridge made the top three floors of the Loan and Trust building his residence, and legend has it that he kept a cow in the roof garden of the bank to assure himself fresh milk. The bank, originally established by Brackenridge ca. 1866 as the San Antonio National Bank, later became First National Bank of San Antonio. Brackenridge is best known for his role in developing the San Antonio Waterworks and in deeding Brackenridge Park to the city. A Texas Historical Marker commemorates the buildings.

28. L. Frank Saddlery Co., ca. 1880

231 E. Commerce Street
The L. Frank Co. wholesale and retail saddle and harness business, established in 1880, moved to this building from Main Plaza in 1901. The company did much international business in Mexico and Cuba. It also supplied harnesses and saddles to the Allied Armies during the Crimean War and WWI. The building later housed Karotkin’s Furniture Company for many decades. In December 2002, the Commerce Street façade collapsed during the gutted building’s renovation for hotel use. Replication of the original façade and the addition of three floors were completed in 2004.

29. Aztec Theatre and Building, 1926 *Kelwood Company, architects*

104 N. St. Mary’s Street
At the corner of Commerce and N. St. Mary’s Street, a six-story office building surrounds one of San Antonio’s grand “exotic theme” movie palaces. The theater entrance is around the corner on St. Mary’s Street. Belying its name, the Aztec Theatre features elaborate Mayan and Mesoamerican influenced motifs, colorful mosaics, and lavish details in the lobby and auditorium. Little has changed except for the removal of an Aztec stone calendar replica that once graced the lobby and the addition of a river entrance at the rear of the building along the River Walk.

30. Alamo National Bank Building, 1929-30 *Grabam, Anderson, Proust and White, architects*

154 E. Commerce Street/105 N. St. Mary’s Street
This 24-story building on the south side of the street became the second home of Alamo National Bank. The distinctive Alamo stained glass (added in 1964), interior ceiling moldings, and elaborate bronze and marble finishes are worth a detour into the lobby of this Art Deco skyscraper. Oil paintings depicting “Trust” and “Thrift” are a recent addition made during the 1993 filming of the movie *Blank Check*. The building now serves as a hotel.

31. Witte Building, 1893 *Murphy and Hayden, architects*

135 - 37 E. Commerce Street
Philanthropist George Witte, whose son Alfred was the benefactor of San Antonio’s Witte Museum, built this commercial building on land that was once part of the Spanish grant to his ancestor, Canary Islander Juan Curbelo. The San Antonio Foundry Company manufactured the cast iron storefront. Much of the original decorative façade on the upper floors has been removed.

Cross to south side of Commerce Street at Soledad to enter Main Plaza »

32. Plaza de las Islas/Main Plaza, 1731

When the Canary Islanders, the first civilian settlers of San Fernando de Béxar, joined the military and mission populations, they made their homes on this plaza. Then, as now, the parish church was here, as well as many governmental and business buildings. This plaza still serves as the traditional center of business and government. Beginning in 2007, the City renovated Main Plaza with the permanent closure of N. Main Street and E. Main Plaza (once through-streets at the east and west sides of Main Plaza). Improvements, including extensive landscaping, stonework, fountains, and other amenities, have transformed Main Plaza into a central city gathering place for locals and visitors.

33. San Fernando Cathedral *115 Main Plaza*

John Odin, 1840; F. Giraud, 1868-77; Leo M.J. Dielmann 1922; Ford Powell & Carson 1977
The Spanish crown established this site in 1731 for the Canary Islanders, who began construction of the parish church in 1737.

The present Gothic Revival style addition on the façade enlarged the original Spanish Colonial Church in the mid 19th century. Architects exposed and restored the oldest portion of the church,

Smaller medallion markers in the sidewalks connect the sites. Street names are also listed on the map for those who wish to drive.

For an abbreviated tour, stars in the text denote the “must see” buildings.

4. Gibbs Building, 1912 *Sanguinet & Staats, architects*

521 E. Houston Street
The corner of Houston and Alamo Streets marked the northwest wall of the old Alamo compound. Samuel Maverick, signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, built a two-story house on this site in 1850. During excavation of the Gibbs Building basement, cannons were unearthed and are now on display at the Alamo and at the western entrance of La Villita. Notice the “G” for Gibbs on the cartouches below the roofline.

The Maverick family developed much of Alamo Plaza and Houston Street in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Looking west on Houston Street you will see the ornate restored facade of the **Albert Maverick Building**, ca. 1882, the oldest building on Houston Street.

5. Crockett Block, 1882 *Alfred Giles, architect*

317 - 323 Alamo Plaza
Samuel Maverick’s sons, William H. and Albert Maverick, built this block of Italianate-style commercial buildings along what was the western wall of the Alamo compound. The architect, Alfred Giles, designed many homes and commercial buildings in Texas and northern Mexico in the late 19th century.

6. Paseo del Alamo, 1881 *Ford, Powell, & Carson, architects*

Low, street-level walls within the plaza represent the location of the Alamo compound’s west wall. Archaeological remains of the original walls are visible through the glass-top enclosure. The water feature incorporates representative elements of the original Spanish acequia irrigation system which carried water from the San Antonio River to outlying fields for irrigation. The mosaic mural downstairs below Losoya Street depicts many San Antonio landmarks as envisioned by artist Tom Stell. A statue of Hispanic Texan Toribio Losoya, “An Unsung Hero of the Alamo,” stands at the top of the stairs. Losoya Street is named for him.

Cross Crockett Street »

7. Reuter Building, 1891 *James Wahrenberger, architect*

217 - 219 Alamo Plaza
Constructed as “Billy Reuter’s Barroom,” this ornate red brick building has been a gathering place for generations. William Reuter paid for a bandstand in Alamo Plaza in 1890, a replica of which stands there today. On special occasions, a cornetist would play from a balcony on the building for those gathered below.

Continue west on Crockett Street to Losoya Street »

8. Old Chamber of Commerce Building, 1920

124 E. Crockett Street
The Chamber of Commerce, the largest in the state in the 1920s, erected the two-story red brick building on the left. The world-famous Lucchese Boot Company also occupied it for many years. Original art-deco details are visible on the second floor above the altered ground floor façade.

Cross Losoya Street »

9. Chandler Building, 1908 *C.A. Coughlin, architect*

110 E. Crockett
The ornate initials adorning this building stand for E.B. Chandler, an early financier of Texas farm and ranch land development. It served as the first meeting place of the San Antonio Businessmen’s Club which evolved into the Chamber of Commerce. Notice the patterned brickwork above the arched windows.

Walk south on Losoya Street »

the apse and sanctuary, in 1977. A full exterior and interior renovation was completed in 2003. The statue of San Antonio de Padua, for whom the city was named, was relocated near the Cathedral in 2009.

34. Old Frost Bank /Municipal Plaza Building, 1922 *Sanguinet and Staats, architects*

114 W. Commerce Street
The headquarters of Frost National Bank (established in 1868) occupied this building until a new headquarters was constructed one block north in the early 1970s. The building now houses municipal offices and the City Council Chamber. Texas Historical Markers on the building’s façade commemorate General David E. Twiggs, the Woll Invasion, and T.C. Frost of Frost Bank. Notice the coin medallions between the arched windows.

35. Wolfson Building, 1880 *Alfred Giles, architect*

100 N. Main
On the north side of Commerce Street, Wolfson’s Dry Goods and Clothing Store formed a cornerstone of Main Plaza when the plaza served as a booming retail center in the late 19th century.

Continue west on Commerce Street, cross S. Flores »

36. Plaza de Armas/Military Plaza

The Presidio (military garrison) of San Antonio moved to this permanent site in 1722 from its original 1718 location farther north on San Pedro Creek. Military troops of Spain once drilled in this plaza and “chili queens” reigned here in the 19th century. Military Plaza evolved from an early community gathering and market place into the site of City Hall.

A number of historic markers and statues are located throughout the plaza: a statue of Moses Austin, father of Stephen F. Austin of the Austin colony; the Zero Milestone Marker of the Old Spanish Trail auto highway, connecting cities of Spanish Colonial missions from St. Augustine, Florida to California; a bust of Franklin D. Roosevelt; a Texas Historical Marker commemorating the development of barbed wire, instrumental in Texas ranching; a Plaza de Armas memorial; and a Cinco de Mayo memorial honoring Hispanics in Texas.

37. City Hall, 1889-1892 *Otto Kramer, architect*

100 Plaza de Armas
Successor to the legendary “Bat Cave,” the former city hall and jail structure that once occupied this site, the present building has served as City Hall since its dedication in 1892. The Renaissance Revival style building, altered in 1927, lost its ornate corner towers and central dome with the addition of a fourth story.

38. Spanish Governor’s Palace, 1749

105 Plaza de Armas
The Spanish Governor’s Palace served as the residence and headquarters of the captain of the Presidio de Béxar, who represented the King of Spain in the governor’s absence. The Hapsburg coat-of-arms over the door is dated 1749, suggesting the building’s completion date. The combined efforts of San Antonian Adina de Zavala’s Texas Historical and Landmarks Association and the San Antonio Conservation Society saved the building in the early 20th century.

Designed around a central landscaped courtyard, the building’s appearance today primarily reflects reconstruction efforts by San Antonio architect Harvey P. Smith in 1929-1930. The City of San Antonio owns the Spanish Governor’s Palace and maintains it as a museum with period furnishings. The Spanish Governor’s Palace is also a designated National Historic Landmark, one of only seven in San Antonio. The sculpture of the conquistador in front of the building was a gift from Spain in 1977.

39. Vogel Bell Complex, 1880

111 - 121 Plaza de Armas
This building block on the west side of Plaza de Armas, now leased as city offices, is an excellent example of late Victorian commercial development. The buildings once housed a variety of enterprises including The Fashion Theater, the wool and cotton business of Louis Bergstrom, and the Heusinger Hardware Company.

North on Camaron Street, the ca. 1910 **Artes Gráficas Building** on the left formerly housed the Palace Livy Stable. Original signage has been retained on the façade. Across Camaron Street on the right, is the old **Bexar County Jail Building**, constructed in 1878 and remodeled and enlarged to five stories in the 1920s. Although it now functions as a hotel, the original metal bars at the front and rear windows remain in place.

Continue west on Commerce Street »

40. San Pedro Creek

Native Americans, followed by the Spanish, established settlements along this creek, whose headwaters emerge from San Pedro Springs Park further north. The natural waterway was channelized in the early 20th century but still flows to join the San Antonio River near Mission Concepcion about two miles south of this crossing.

41. La Clede Hotel/Continental Hotel, 1898

322 - 344 W. Commerce Street

Reputedly another Alfred Giles designed building, this brick and limestone structure was constructed as the La Clede Hotel on the west bank of San Pedro Creek. Legend maintains that many involved with the Mexican Revolution of 1910 stayed here. It now serves as the main offices for San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

Just one block west is **El Mercado/Market Square**. The market square area has historically served as a public market space since the late 1880s. The collection of 19th and 20th century structures combine to create a market place for curios, clothing, restaurants, and frequent colorful weekend festivals. The **Museo Alameda**, a museum of Latino arts and culture and the first affiliate museum of the Smithsonian Institute outside of Washington D.C, opened in 2007.

Turn left on Laredo Street, walk south »

42. De La Garza Homestead

118 S. Laredo Street

This small "salt box" style house and the Governor's Palace are the oldest residential structures remaining downtown. The Texians reputedly used it as their headquarters during the Battle of Bexar in December 1835.

43. O. Henry House, ca. 1855

124 S. Laredo Street

German immigrant John Kush built this typical two-room caliche block dwelling ca. 1855 at 904 S. Presa Street. In 1895-96, short story writer O. Henry (*nom de plume* of William Sidney Porter) lived in the home. The house was moved to the Lone Star Brewery in 1960 and was reconstructed at its present site in 1999. A Texas Historical Marker commemorates the site.

Cross Dolorosa Street, continue south »

44. Casa Navarro State Historic Site, ca. 1855

228 - 232 S. Laredo Street

José Antonio Navarro, Texas patriot and signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence in 1836, built his home and office here. In 1960 the San Antonio Conservation Society purchased these buildings which are among the few remaining adobe and limestone structures downtown.

Deeded by the Conservation Society to the State in 1976, the buildings house exhibits and furnishings appropriate to the site's history. The Texas Historical Commission now operates the historic site, its smallest property in the state.

Return to Dolorosa Street, walk east »

45. Arana Building, 1926

Leo M.J. Dielmann, architect

607 - 633 Dolorosa Street

Craftsmen who fled Mexico during the Revolution reportedly built this Mission Revival style building. The south side of Plaza de Armas/Military Plaza represents one of the most important groups of 19th and 20th century buildings in the city. The Francisco Ruiz House, home of another signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and father-in-law of Texas' spy, Erastus "Deaf" Smith, stood here until it was relocated to the grounds of the Witte Museum. A Texas Historical Marker commemorates Jose Francisco Ruiz.

46. Fawcett Furniture Company, 1890/1920

414 - 418 Dolorosa Street

Originally established on Commerce Street, Fawcett Furniture was one of the oldest family-owned retail businesses in downtown, having served San Antonio since 1921. This was the company's third location. "Fawcett Furniture" is still visible on the building's west side wall.



67. Staffel House, ca. late 1800s

422 S. Presa Street

The Staffel House, the furthest south on Presa Street, was constructed for a prominent German family. Along with two other historic houses, it has now been sensitively incorporated into the adjoining hotel complex as meeting and function facilities.

Double back briefly on S. Presa to Arciniega Street and turn right »

68. Diaz House, ca. 1840

206 Arciniega

The house at the corner of Arciniega and S. Presa is named for Juana Diaz, the first owner of the land. Behind the Diaz House stands another historic home, the ca. 1850 Elmendorf-Taylor House, built by Heino Staffel. Miss Stella Elmendorf-Taylor, a descendent of the Staffels, owned the house for many years. San Antonio architects Ford, Powell, and Carson incorporated the two properties, along with the Staffel House on S. Presa Street, into the grounds of the adjoining hotel complex in 1979.

Continue east on Arciniega to S. Alamo Street »

69. O.K. Grocery and Market, ca. 1890s

504 S. Alamo Street, HemisFair Park

Looking south across S. Alamo Street, the small commercial structure, originally at the corner of Matagorda and Wyoming Streets, became one of a number of historic structures relocated to HemisFair Park. The 1919 city directory listed it as the O.K. Grocery, 302 Matagorda Street and O.K. Bar, 204 Wyoming Street.

70. Pereida House, ca. 1883

502 S. Alamo Street, HemisFair Plaza

The Pereida family traced their roots to the Canary Islanders who had come to San Antonio in 1731. R.M. Pereida built this home, believed to be the first cement house in San Antonio. He purchased the property from Sarah and Robert Eagar (see 71.) who had received the land as a wedding present from Sarah's father. Three generations of the Pereida family lived here until the house was acquired for HemisFair.

Turn left on S. Alamo Street, continue north »

71. Eagar House, ca. 1866

John H. Kampmann, builder

400 S. Alamo Street, HemisFair Plaza

This limestone masonry house, across S. Alamo Street, typifies the early vernacular homes that once occupied much of this area. Sarah Riddle Eagar, who lived here until her death at the age of 105 in 1947, was reputedly one of the first Anglo children born in San Antonio before Texas joined the Union.

72. Beethoven Hall, 1914

Leo M.J. Dielmann, architect

420 S. Alamo Street, HemisFair Plaza

The Beethoven Mannerchor, one of the earliest German singing societies in Texas, used the original concert hall on this site as its home until it burned in 1913. Rebuilt in 1914, the building was sold shortly thereafter and was used as a meeting hall for many different groups. The City removed a portion of the 1914 building when S. Alamo Street was widened.

73. German English School, 1859-1869

421 - 423 S. Alamo *G. Friesleben/John H. Kampmann, architect/builder*
Founded in 1859 to educate children of local German intellectuals, the school assured fluency in English and German to its students. It operated until the 1890s, and the buildings later served a variety of educational purposes. The complex now functions as a conference and meeting facility. A marker on the north building commemorates the site's history.

74. Fairmount Hotel, 1906

Leo M.J. Dielmann, architect

401 S. Alamo

Originally built five blocks away at E. Commerce and Bowie Streets as a traveler's hotel, the red brick and limestone building established a world record as the heaviest building ever moved on wheels when it was relocated in April 1985.

47. Heusinger Hardware Building, 1896

408 Dolorosa Street

Built on the site of a one-story building that housed Heusinger Hardware in the 1880s, this Victorian Italianate structure has been rented to many companies selling such varied wares as overalls, paper and paint, and clothing. The iron columns on the storefront feature decorative foliage motifs.

48. Kotula Building, ca. 1873

406 Dolorosa Street

Excepting the Spanish Governor's Palace, this is the oldest building remaining on Military Plaza. Martin Muench built the two-story limestone structure. He sold it a few years later to Ed Kotula, a native of Poland, who operated a successful mercantile business here.

49. Kallison Block, ca. 1920

101 - 125 S. Flores Street

The two-story commercial block reflects the Spanish mission influence with decorative elements at the second floor and above the corner entrance. Kallison's, the famous ranch and western store in business since the 19th century, maintained a store at the southern end of this block.

Cross S. Flores Street, continue east on Dolorosa Street »

In front of the **Bexar County Justice Center** is a recreated portion of the original San Pedro acequia. Native Indians constructed acequias, or irrigation ditches, for the Spanish missions beginning in 1718. These acequias eventually encompassed over 15 miles of channels from the San Antonio River and San Pedro Springs. The San Antonio acequias were designated a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1968.

50. Bexar County Courthouse, 1891-1894

James Riely Gordon, architect

Main Plaza

Architect of some dozen courthouses in Texas, Gordon claimed to have designed over 60 throughout the nation. He first practiced architecture here before moving to New York where he achieved national prominence. The Romanesque Revival style building is constructed of Texas granite and red sandstone. Though altered by numerous additions by prominent San Antonio architects, the courthouse retains the original main facade.

The 1896 Lady Liberty Fountain was located in the east courtyard of the Courthouse until 1927, when an addition enclosed the courtyard. After years in storage and an extensive restoration, the Lady Liberty Fountain returned to grace the front of the Courthouse in 2008. A number of historical markers and interpretive pavers are located throughout the Courthouse plaza.

51. Old Police and Health Department Building, 1927/1943

200 Main Plaza *Leo M.J. Dielmann, architect*
The red brick building, identified by signage as the Legal Professional Building, served as the city's police building and health department until 1962. A Texas Historical Marker on the corner of the building commemorates the San Antonio Mutual Aid Association.

Between the Old Police and Health Department Building and the neighboring Prudential Building is a Texas Historical Marker designating the Vicinity of the Storming of Bexar, the 1835 battle during the War for Texas Independence.

52. Prudential Building, 1902

Atlee B. Ayres, architect

128 Main Plaza

The building has served many functions including insurance offices, the Prudential Hotel, the Washer Furniture Company, and today, apartments.

If interested, cross Market Street to Main Plaza. Stop at the second building from the corner on the right.

53. Ramsey and Ford Building ca. 1875

114 E. Main Plaza

Though altered, this two-story building is one of the oldest remaining commercial buildings from the early days of Main Plaza. The decorative lintels over the upper floor windows and the roofline cornice reflect its historic appearance. It was built on the site of an 18th century Spanish government house known as the *Casas Reales*. A Texas Historical Marker, on the south side of the adjoining building facing Market Street, commemorates the site.

Cross back to south side of Market Street, continue east on Market Street.

As you cross the bridge you will be traveling over the river bypass flood channel built in 1926 following a devastating 1921 flood. A floodgate cutting off the river bend at the northern part of the loop and an in-channel dam in its southern end protect the bend from inundation. The Olmos Dam, completed in 1927 above the headwaters of the San Antonio River, prevents additional floodwaters from reaching the river.

54. San Antonio Drug Company, 1919

Atlee B. Ayres, architect

432 - 38 W. Market Street

At the southeast corner of St. Mary's Street, the San Antonio Drug Company, for whom this building was erected, became the successor of two earlier drug companies: Dreiss, Thompson & Co. and Kalteyer & Schmidt, both established in the 1870s. A late 1990s renovation converted the building into a hotel.

Turn right on St. Mary's Street, walk south to Villita Street »

Spanning the San Antonio River is the **St. Mary's Street Bridge**, constructed in 1915. Architectural features include decorative swags and obelisk light posts.

55. Smith-Young Tower/Tower Life Building, 1929

310 S. Saint Mary's Street

Atlee B. and Robert Ayres, architects

Prolific San Antonio architects Atlee B. and Robert Ayres designed the neo-gothic skyscraper on the left, originally known as the **Smith-Young Tower**. Step inside to view the spectacular Gothic Revival style lobby and ornate bronze elevator doors. This building and its neighbors occupy what was once known as **Bowen's Island**, formed by a loop in the river and the *Pajalache Acequia* (irrigation ditch), also known as the *Concepcion Acequia*.

The land comprised the homestead of John and Mary Bowen, who built their house here in 1866. John Bowen served as the first U.S. Postmaster of San Antonio. The island later featured a public beer garden called Central Garden. The San Antonio Turn-Verein (German gymnastics club) held its meetings and exhibitions there. In 1923, J.H. and F.A. Smith, successful contractors, purchased the "island" and began its development when the loop in the river was straightened and the old channel and irrigation ditch filled.

Atlee B. and Robert Ayres designed all of the major structures on the island including the Smith-Young Tower (now the Tower Life Building) and the **Plaza Hotel** on the opposite side of St. Mary's Street, then the tallest hotel in the city. It is now apartments. Notice the elaborate detail of the arched front entrance.

Turn left on Villita Street, continue east to Navarro Street »

Architects Atlee B. and Robert Ayres also designed the two structures at Villita and Navarro Streets: the imposing 1928 Classical Revival style **Federal Reserve Bank** at 127 Navarro Street, which now serves as the Mexican Consulate; and the **A.B. Frank Building** at 145 Navarro Street, built for A.B. Frank's grocery and dry goods business and now the headquarters of City Public Service. Although a 1980s renovation greatly altered the façade of the Frank Building, the original roofline cornice is still visible.

North of Villita Street is the **Navarro Street Bridge**, constructed in 1922 and originally known as the Mill Bridge. The obelisk light posts match those on the St. Mary's Street Bridge.

Cross Navarro Street and continue through the breezeway to S. Presa Street »

56. Presa Street Bridge, 1890

Manufactured by Berlin Iron Bridge Company, East Berlin, Connecticut, this bridge spans the San Antonio River at the original crossing between the plaza area to the north and La Villita to the south.

57. Public Library/Hertzberg Circus Collection/Briscoe Western Art Museum, 1930

210 W. Market Street

Herbert S. Green, architect

The former San Antonio Public Library occupies the corner of S. Presa and W. Market Streets beyond the Presa Street Bridge. Serving as the public library until 1968, this Art-Deco style building features statues of Cervantes and Shakespeare flanking the arched doorway. The library later housed a collection of over 20,000 circus exhibits bequeathed to the library system by Harry Hertzberg. The building has been renovated into the Briscoe Western Art Museum, and the Hertzberg Circus Collection was moved to the Witte Museum.

Cross S. Presa Street, continue south »

58. La Villita

S. Presa Street/Villita Street

The Spanish first established a small village here in the late 18th century near the Presidio de Bejar, Villa de San Fernando, and Mission San Antonio de Valero (Alamo). In the early 19th century, Spanish soldiers stationed at the Alamo lived here with their families. More prominent citizens moved here from the plaza area after a flood in 1819 destroyed their homes.

The earliest remaining structure is the **Cos House**, ca. 1800. Most buildings date to the 1850-1880 period when European immigrants, many of them German, built modest residential and commercial structures in the area. First restored by the National Youth Administration in 1939, the buildings owned by the City now house artists, craftsmen, and various small shops, and are open throughout the week. The cannons flanking the entrance were unearthed from the Maverick Homestead site at Alamo Plaza and Houston Street.

Homes such as the Gresser House on the west side of S. Presa Street backed up to the *Pajalache (Concepcion) Acequia*, the oldest Spanish irrigation ditch in San Antonio.

59. Gresser House, ca. 1806-1870

222 S. Presa Street

Louis Gresser bought this property, originally part of a Spanish land grant to Jose Ignacio Casas, in 1861. He added two rooms to an earlier structure. The San Antonio Conservation Society owns the building, which serves as the headquarters for NIOSA (Night in Old San Antonio), a major annual Fiesta event.

60. St. John's Lutheran Church, 1932

502 E. Nueva Street

German immigrant Lutherans founded this church in December 1857. The first church building, constructed in 1860, became known as the "Rooster Church" for the shape of its weathervane. The present church, the third on the site, was completed for the congregation's 75th anniversary. A Texas Historical Marker commemorates the church.

61. Frey Houses, 1903, 1904

335-339 S. Presa Street

Swiss immigrant Carl Frey, a skilled cabinetmaker who married the widow of an early pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, built this complex of four frame houses (two are located behind the houses fronting S. Presa Street). The houses now serve as an inn.

62. Tynan House, 1853

Walter C. Tynan, builder

401 S. Presa Street

Mr. Tynan built this house for his wife, Johanna Hassett Tynan, and their family. A stonemason by trade, Tynan worked on the 1870s addition to San Fernando Cathedral.

63. Tynan House, 1910

405 S. Presa Street

A fire in 1951 damaged this imposing home built for Elizabeth Tynan. The second floor was later reconstructed.

64. Dietrich House, ca. 1879

Theobold Dietrich, builder

409 S. Presa Street

Theobold Dietrich built this house of caliche block, a soft native stone.

65. Ernst House, ca. 1890

411 S. Presa Street

This house was built for William Ernst, onetime chef for Emperor Maximillian of Mexico. He operated a famous steakhouse and restaurant in the city market for many years. A Texas Historical Marker on the façade commemorates the house.

66. Richter House, ca. 1869

419 S. Presa Street

William Richter, a barber-surgeon, reputedly built his home on the old *Pajalache Acequia* (irrigation ditch) to ensure an abundance of leeches for bleeding patients. A Texas Historical Marker on the façade commemorates the house.

75. HemisFair Park, 1968

The 92.5-acre site became the location of HemisFair in 1968. Themed the "Confluence of Civilizations in the Americas," HemisFair attracted over six million visitors and participation from more than 30 nations. The grounds of HemisFair once served as farmlands for the Alamo mission, but by the late 19th century the area had become a thriving community with multiple streets and building blocks. The City retained twenty four (24) historic structures within the HemisFair plan. The 622-foot Tower of the Americas includes a restaurant and observation deck. Today the Institute of Texan Cultures, the Mexican Cultural Institute, and the Convention Center Complex are among the facilities maintained here.

76. Schultze Store, 1891

The two-story limestone building with decorative iron balconies served as the warehouse and tin shop of Herman Schultze, whose hardware store was on Commerce Street. It housed a tourist information center during HemisFair.

Continue North on S. Alamo Street »

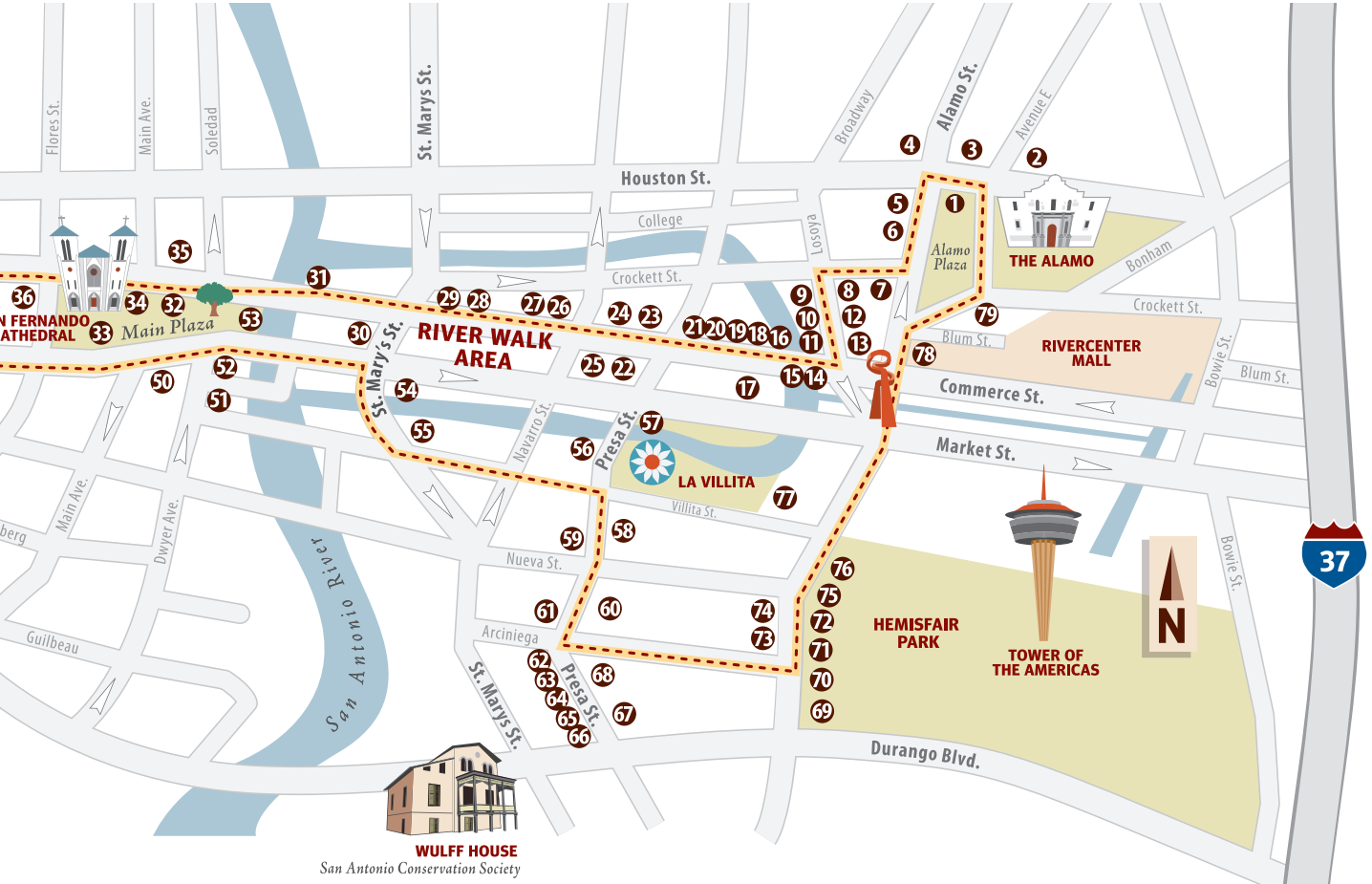
77. La Villita, eastern boundary

This section of S. Alamo Street was commonly called the "Little Rhine" for the many German bars and restaurants located here. To the left, many of the historic structures within La Villita are visible. The San Antonio Conservation Society owns the ca. 1855 **Bombach House** on the northeast corner of the La Villita Historic District and leases it to the Little Rhein Steakhouse. To the north, stands the **Hilton Palacio del Rio Hotel**, built in 1967-68 for HemisFair. A giant crane lifted into place the prefabricated rooms, which were manufactured and almost completely furnished off-site. Construction took less than seven months to complete.

Looking northeast from the S. Alamo and Market Street intersection, note **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**, constructed in 1868-1871. Built for the city's German-Catholic population, the church is fondly known as St. Joske's, for the former department store that surrounds it.

Cross S. Alamo Street at Market Street. »

Cross Market Street, continue north to Commerce Street. »



A Texas Historical Marker on the right before the Commerce Street intersection commemorates the founding of San Antonio.

78. Joske's of Texas, 1889/1910/1939/1967

101-103 Alamo Plaza

Alfred Giles and Guindon/ J.C. Dielmann, architects

Joske Brothers Clothing and Dry Goods Merchants was established in 1873 and moved to Alamo Plaza in 1888, where it became known as the "Biggest Store in the Biggest State" until Alaska was admitted to the Union. Then it became "The Greatest Store in the Greatest State." The small display windows replicate the famous "Rose Window" at Mission San José. Later the building housed Dillard's Department Store. Today, it remains part of Rivercenter Mall.

Continue north on Alamo Plaza »

79. Menger Hotel, 1859-1966

204 Alamo Plaza

Alfred Giles, Atlee B. and Robert Ayres, architects

William A. Menger, who emigrated from Germany and settled on Alamo Plaza barely 20 years after the Alamo battle, established a brewery and boarding house as the forerunner to this hotel. The hotel has operated continuously since its opening, serving the likes of Presidents Taft and McKinley, generals Grant and Lee, actress Sarah Bernhardt, and Teddy Roosevelt, who rallied the Rough Riders in the Menger Bar. Texas Historical Markers commemorate the Menger Hotel, barbed wire demonstration, and the San Antonio Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, originally established at the Menger Hotel.

Cross E. Crockett Street and return to Alamo Plaza »

Looking east on Crockett Street you will see the **Crockett Hotel** on Bonham Street. The International Order of Odd Fellows owned and operated it for many years. The hotel underwent renovation in the early 1980s.



For San Antonio Conservation Society brochures,

call 210.224.6163, email conserve@saconservation.org

or visit www.saconservation.org