

SAN JACINTO DAY AT VARNER HOGG OFFERS HISTORY LESSON

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The Brazoria Historical Militia fires a cannon in a Texas Revolution re-enactment Saturday for the San Jacinto Day festival at the Varner-Hogg Plantation in West Columbia.

Katie Frezza/The Facts



Tour coordinator Sissy Peveto, left, talks to Alan and Monica McClelland about the original flooring in the plantation's mansion Saturday at the Varner-Hogg Plantation in West Columbia. Katie Frezza/The Facts



Varner-Hogg volunteer Michael Bailey, left, talks to Harley Nixon and Jennifer Miller about the Burnet Flag on Saturday at the San Jacinto Day festival at the Varner-Hogg Plantation Site in West Columbia. KATIE FREZZA/The Facts

WEST COLUMBIA — Visitors to the Varner-Hogg Plantation this weekend saw historically dressed docents walking around the vast grounds and were deafened by the firing of cannons, all part of a celebration of San Jacinto Day.

The Texas holiday marks the anniversary of the historic Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, when Texas won its independence from Mexico during the final battle of the Texas Revolution.

The Varner-Hogg San Jacinto Day Celebration on Saturday had re-enactors walk the grounds, giving residents who came out an interactive history lesson about the historic battle.

Events like this are a great opportunity to display early Texas history in a hands-on, interactive way, plantation educator Ben Pfeiffer said.

Pfeiffer said he hopes residents are able to gain a richer understanding and appreciation of Texas history from the celebration.

Outside at the plantation's vast grounds, re-enactor and Brazoria County Historical Museum Curator Michael Bailey and other re-enactors were dressed in period clothing, firing cannons and muskets, all in an effort to educate visitors about the battle.

Amid all the theatrics, the true focus of the day's festivities is on educating the public on Texas history, Bailey said.

For example, Mexican Gen. Santa Anna was held prisoner on the plantation for a while after the Battle of San Jacinto, just one of the plantation's interesting tidbits, Bailey said.

It's always a pleasure to talk about history with the public, especially at a site like the Varner-Hogg Plantation, re-enactor and Stephen F. Austin-Munson Historical County site manager James Glover said.

"We will show the military aspect of what the soldiers carried and make some noise similar to what they made on that fateful day so many years ago," he said. "Talk to the people, share a little history."

Tour coordinator Sissy Peveto provided guided house tours at the plantation's mansion and discussed the mansion's various decorations and significance, she said.

"Each room in the house is decorated differently," she said.

The plantation has seen rich history throughout the years and she feels it's important for her to make all parts of the community more aware of just how special the Varner-Hogg Plantation is, Peveto said.

"They don't realize the history that's here," she said. "Our focus is to get the children educated on the history of Texas."

The main purpose of events like San Jacinto Day is to instill some more knowledge into attendees, Peveto said.

"There's a lot of historical things that's happened in this area that people don't even know," she said.