



The Texas Navy Association



Honorary Commander in Chief
Honorable Rick Perry,
Governor of Texas.

The Texas Navy Association, Inc

PO Box 8203 Galveston, Texas 77553-8203

Presenting the Complete Story of the Flags of the Texas Navy

With the outbreak of hostilities that led to the Texas Revolution in October 1835, the provisional government of Texas sanctioned the creation of a navy for Texas. In a bill passed on November 25, 1835 the Council authorized the purchase of four schooners and the formal organization of maritime defense.

These first four ships of the Texas Navy were purchased in January 1836 and, in March, placed under the command of Commodore Charles E. Hawkins. The navy distinguished itself throughout the revolution and played a deciding role in securing Texas' independence. Following the Battle of San Jacinto, the Texas Navy was constituted as a permanent, albeit controversial wing of the Republic of Texas War Department.

As the newly minted government of Texas got down to the business of forging a country, it soon became clear that nations require symbols to distinguish themselves and to solidify their collective identity. These include a great seal of state, a national flag, and, quite often, a maritime flag. The flag of the Texas Navy is one of the key features of Republic-era iconography.

The first flag of the Texas Navy was adopted via executive order issued by President David G. Burnet on April

9, 1836, while his government was headquartered at Harrisburg. Burnet's order called for a flag that is: "union blue, star central, thirteen stripes prolonged, alternate red and white." This flag, however, was not a new design. Examples of it are seen on letterhead for the firm McKinney, Williams and Company dating to as early as 1834. It appears that the flag adopted for use by the Texas Navy was the standard flown on McKinney and William's ships, several of which, including the famous steamer *Yellowstone*, were utilized during the Texas Revolution.

The initial design for the Texas Navy flag was indeed very clever and would have no doubt served the twin interests of both McKinney, Williams and Company and Texan naval commanders. Upon the high seas, peering through a handheld telescope, the first flag of the Texas Navy is virtually indistinguishable from that of the United States national standard, flown on all U.S. Navy ships. As such, potential enemies would be discouraged from attacking a vessel backed by the full force of the American military, rather than that of the rising Lone Star Republic.

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Texian Navy Day!!

Attention All Admirals!

Please join with us to celebrate
TEXIAN NAVY DAY 2008
Sponsored by:
The Sons of the Republic of Texas

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2008

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

"RAIN OR SHINE"

10:00 AM – ceremony
Keynote address by:

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett
Founders Memorial Cemetery
1101 W. Dallas St. at Valentine St.
Houston, Texas

11:00 AM – reception
(hors d'oeuvres & refreshments)

Sponsored by:
Texas Navy Association
Heritage Society Tea Room
1100 Bagby St.
Houston, TX 77002

On Saturday, September 20, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., The Sons of the Republic of Texas (SRT) will honor the second commander of the Texas Navy, Commodore Henry Livingston Thompson, at the historic Founders Memorial Cemetery, in Houston, as part of the SRT's official observance of Texian Navy Day. The Texas Navy Association will also participate by laying a wreath to honor Thompson and the entire Republic of Texas Navy.

The keynote speaker will be Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. Commodore Thompson launched an audacious plan to raid Mexican ports to force the Mexican Navy to defend Mexico rather than attack Texan ports during the Texas Revolution. At the time, this plan was highly controversial, but now historians agree this put the world on notice that the Texas Navy was a small, but potent force.

On January 25, 1839 the Congress of the Republic of Texas revisited the question of national symbolism. They abolished the use of the previous national and maritime standards and adopted a new national flag for Texas. Today, we know this flag as the "Lone Star" flag that still flies over our state.

Following the adoption of the "Lone Star" flag as the national flag of the Republic of Texas, the ordinance calling for a maritime flag was repealed. The national standard then became the official flag of the Texas Navy. It served this duty until the Republic of Texas joined the United States and the Texas Navy was formally abolished.

However, the story of the Texas Navy flag does not end there! In 1958, Texas Governor Price Daniel re-activated the Texas Navy. Further, in 1973, the Texas Legislature authorized the charter of the Texas Navy Association, Inc., as the official body to oversee the operation of the Texas Navy. In order to preserve Texas' maritime history, the TNA has adopted the first flag of the Texas Navy as its symbol, appearing on association letterhead, Web site, and in other formats.

Unfortunately, the use of this flag in a symbolic manner poses a problem. The first flag of the Texas Navy is very close in appearance to the modern flag of the nation of Liberia. As such United States military personnel are forbidden from saluting the flag of another nation. Therefore, the TNA Board of Directors has adopted a modified version of the Texas Navy flag for use as a ceremonial tool. Through this flag, the symbolic heritage of the Republic of Texas Navy lives on.



The First Flag of the Texas Navy

**Yet, Freedom! Yet the banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunderstorm against the
wind!**

George Gordon, Lord Byron

The Texas Navy Needs YOU!!



The Texas Navy Association is only as strong as its members! This is your opportunity to get involved and help us build a strong organization. We are engaged in a lot of exciting projects and we are calling on you for assistance. The TNA needs your help!

NEWSLETTER

We need your story ideas, photos, and event information for our quarterly newsletter. Let's use it as a tool to keep in touch!

SILENT AUCTION

At this year's Christmas Party the TNA will be hosting a fundraising silent auction. Please dig deep and donate an interesting book, artifact, antique, or collectible to the auction. All proceeds go to help out your Texas Navy Association.

To suggest a newsletter story or donate an item to the silent auction contact Admiral Jerry Drake at:

texas.admiral@gmail.com

Texas Navy Annual Meeting & Christmas Party 2008

Friday Evening, December 12, 2008

Galveston Artillery Club

3102 Avenue O, Galveston, Texas

Cocktails at 6:30 - Seated Dinner at 7:30

Black tie preferred

\$70.00 per person