

# Invincible

2019  
Newsletter



## From The Helm



**W**e are now entering the second quarter of the year. Much has been accomplished and much more is anticipated. We had a successful, informative and exciting Board meeting at the Historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio. What a treat to be where Teddy Roosevelt recruited his Rough Riders and so many famous people have stayed over the 150++ years of operation. Special thanks to Adm. Dick Weitzel and the Williams Squadron for hosting and assisting in the event. A very special thanks to Adm. Barnes for his presentation of the new Texas Navy Bell.

I am excited to report that the Search For Invincible is gathering momentum and you should expect to see some fantastic results very soon. A very special thanks goes out to the "Plankowners" of Invincible for stepping up with their generous contributions that have made an expensive magnetometer survey a possibility. There are a lot of people to thank for where we are in what will be perhaps the biggest project in the history of the

Texas Navy Association. Clive Cussler from NUMA, Tom Oertling, Will Fisher, Amy Borgens, a host of Committee members over the years and most importantly the current Committee Chairman, Andy Hall, who tirelessly mans the helm and carefully plots the course of the Committee. None of this is possible without the generous donations of others. A hardy thanks to Bill Turner for telling the story so often and successfully raising tens of thousands of dollars in support of this effort.

The Texas Navy Association is an exciting place to be these days. If you are a member, thank you for your support. If you are thinking about joining, there has never been a better time. Come aboard and be a part of this wonderful organization.

Adm. Richard B. Hatch, President  
Texas Navy Association

# Quarterly Report

## Search for the Invincible Committee

April 13, 2019

In my last report, in January 2019, it was my pleasure to (1) outline the preliminary magnetometer survey conducted by BOB Hydrographics in early November 2018, (2) share the findings of that survey that identified two clusters of magnetic anomalies that the archaeologist, Bob Gearhart, recommended for further investigation; and (3) report the decision of the Search for the Invincible Committee meeting of December 28, 2018 at which the committee decided to move forward with hydraulic probing as recommended by Gearhart.

*These are the key events that have taken place since that report.*

1. Through February 2019 and into March, the Committee (and most specifically Adm. Bill Turner) began working on strategies and materials needed to raise the funds necessary to complete the hydraulic probing work proposed by BOB Hydrographics.

2. On March 16, TNA President Adm. Richard Hatch announced by e-mail a suspension or hold on planning (including fund-raising) for the proposed hydraulic probing work, to allow time for additional review and consideration of alternative technologies that might be brought to bear on the project, to provide optimal data recovery and detail, as a basis for future work. Adm. Hatch especially urged looking further into both ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and electrical resistivity tomography (ERT) as means of imaging the anomalies delineated in the magnetometer survey.

Ground penetrating radar works in a very similar manner to the types of radar that are used to track ships and aircraft. A microwave signal is projected directly down into the soil, and when it bounces back off of objects or soils of different density, that information is recorded. In this way, GPR can record vertical “slices” of the soil to a depth of several meters, depending on conditions, which is useful to show buried objects, earlier disturbances in soil, and so on. We did not previously consider GPR for the East Beach site because, based on information from multiple sources, it is ineffective in terrain where there is a high saline water table. The microwave signal does not penetrate that, but simply bounces off, so the system is effectively blind to any features below that level.



Electrical resistivity tomography is a system that uses electrical probes to map changes in electrical resistivity over an area, that can in some circumstances be used to locate archaeological features. It is commonly used

in industry for a variety of applications, including identification of saline water incursion in freshwater aquifers. It has also been used in a marine environment to locate metal-hulled submerged vessels, although in examples that have been published in the literature it was used in the water column, not with vessels that were buried under sand or soil. In the water column, with readings taken at sequential depths, ERT can be used to create horizontal “slices” across the site, that can then be used to reconstruct a rough three-dimensional depiction of the site.

3. Subsequent to his email of March 16, Adm. Hatch also encouraged us to look into SureWave™ seismic sensor technology, and assess its appropriateness to the East Beach site. SureWave™ is a system of highly-sensitive microphones and sophisticated signal processing, that picks up minute vibrations or sounds in the soil. It is an entirely passive system, one that listens but does not itself emit a signal. SureWave™ appears to be a very useful and valuable tool for detecting underground movement (either natural or man-made), but it is not useful for detecting or imaging inanimate objects. Its primary uses, as promoted by the company, are for detecting shifts in the rock that might lead to mine collapses, locating trapped miners, or detecting tunneling activities for security reasons. It represents an innovative and useful technology, but it does not appear to have any particular value in the search for the Invincible.

4. On March 19 I contacted one of the original bidders on the project, Moore Archaeological Consulting, that had proposed last spring to do ERT survey at the site. That proposal was set aside at the time, because it was prohibitively expensive (around \$34,000 to cover the entire initial survey area), and the technology was, as near as we can tell, untried in that specific type of environment. However, the cost may be less if we restricted the ERT work to the much smaller area identified in the November 2018 magnetometer survey. They asked, and I agreed, that they should bring on a nautical archaeologist who had recently joined their company in their Baton Rouge office, who might be able better to address how they would proceed at the site. I also agreed that they should put together a proposal for any other technologies they thought would be useful, not limiting themselves strictly to ERT. (See No. 7 below for follow-up.)

5. I spoke to the current project archaeologist, Bob Gearhart, and asked him about his views on bringing in additional new technologies to the site. He was generally agreeable and seems willing to work with us on how we want to proceed, within the constraints of the profession. He did indicate that if we wanted to use a third-party to work at the site, he might be willing to

host that work under the permit he now holds, which would save time and expense for all parties. That additional work would, in principle, be done as an amendment to his existing Phase I permit, and he would be required to be present on site during the fieldwork. But that would be much more efficient than starting all over again with a new permitting process, application, etc. As always, there are multiple details in this type of arrangement that would have to be worked out before going ahead.

6. We were also contacted by Adm. Mike DeHart, who shared a conversation he had had with an acquaintance connected to the Penhall Company. They had previously discussed GPR, and the friend had judged that it would not be useful under the specific environmental conditions at the East Beach site (i.e. high saline water table). However, he shared that his company had recently obtained a more advanced GPR system that might be able to penetrate the wet sand at the site and generate useful data. I met with Mike on March 29, and obtain contact information for our representatives of the Penhall Company, and am currently in process of collecting information from them and working with them to determine whether or not this would be an appropriate site for the use of their equipment. They have tentatively agreed that they might be willing to do this work at no cost to the TNA, although there would be many details that would have to be worked out, particularly involving the security of the location data and how any subsequent public information would be shared and presented.

7. On April 9 I got a follow-up communication from Moore Archaeological Consulting (MAC), that stated that after extensive discussions within the company, MAC was unsure that their ERT or other in-house capabilities would provide very reliable or useful data in the specific geological conditions at the project site. They are still willing to do the work, and have prepared a bid to do so, but suggested that instead we discuss the project with a remote sensing specialist at Texas A&M University in College Station, who might be able to generate more useful results (for our purposes), and at lower cost through the use of students in his program. (This

person is not part of the Nautical Archaeology Program or Institute of Nautical Archaeology there.) I am currently in the process of getting in touch with him, and preliminary discussions as to his interest in working with TNA on this project.

8. It's my belief that the office of the State Marine Archaeologist would be willing to consider such an arrangement, utilizing third-party specialists under the existing permit held by Gearhart, and in doing so bringing in additional technological resources. The critical factor in securing approval for that would be to demonstrate that the resulting data is reliable and usable. New technologies come online all the time, and the Search for the Invincible Project might serve as a useful test bed for new techniques that have not been used in this region before.

### *Next Steps*

While the decision to "hit pause" on the next steps in the Phase I portion of the project was unexpected, it can provide us a useful opportunity to step back, reevaluate our options, and then proceed after deliberation. Our next steps may be determinative for the future of the Search for the Invincible Project. So it's wise to proceed with care.

Each of these options — hydraulic probing, GPR, ERT, or something else entirely — brings with it its own advantages and limitations. The Search for the Invincible Committee will be working in the coming weeks to weigh our various options, and come to decision on the optimal course of actions to follow. Keep a weather eye out for what comes next.

### *Sponsorship*

None of the work described in this report, either completed or proposed, would have been possible without the generous support of individuals who are willing to make a commitment to this project, even though the hoped-for outcome (i.e. confirmation of this site as the wreck of Invincible) remains very uncertain. The

Tom Toby Squadron, under the guidance of Adm. Jeff Corbin, organized a raffle for rides on a restored World War II SNJ aircraft, that raised a significant amount of money for the project. In particular, I would like to express this committee's great appreciation for the work done by Adm. Bill Turner, who has taken the lead in raising funds committed to this project.

### *Committee*

At the April 13, 2019 Board of Directors meeting in San Antonio, the following members for the Search for the Invincible Committee were confirmed by Board vote:

Adm. Chester Barnes  
Adm. Jeff Corbin  
Adm. Dave Haglund  
Adm. Andy Hall  
Adm. Paula Morris  
Adm. Tom Oertling  
Adm. Peter Rindlisbacher  
Adm. Butch Spafford  
Adm. Bill Turner

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew W. Hall  
Chairman

*Image: Still from the TNA-sponsored film, How the Texas Navy Saved the Revolution. The stand-in for Invincible is the replica War of 1812 privateer schooner Lynx.*



## CAMP MABRY MUSEUM RECEIVES TEXIAN NAVY SCRIP



Michael Marotta

The Brigadier General John C. L. Scribner Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry now holds two of the April 23, 1841, pay warrants that were issued to sailors and marines of the Texian Navy.

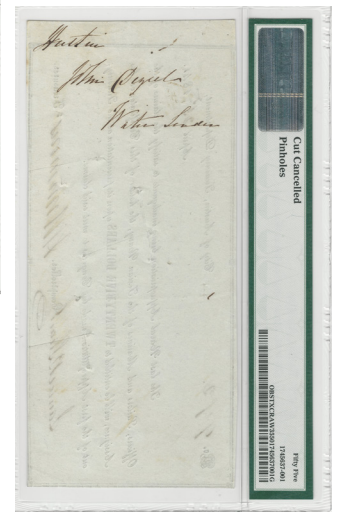
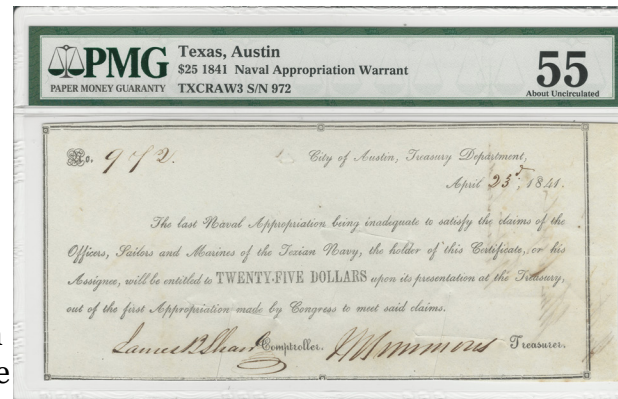
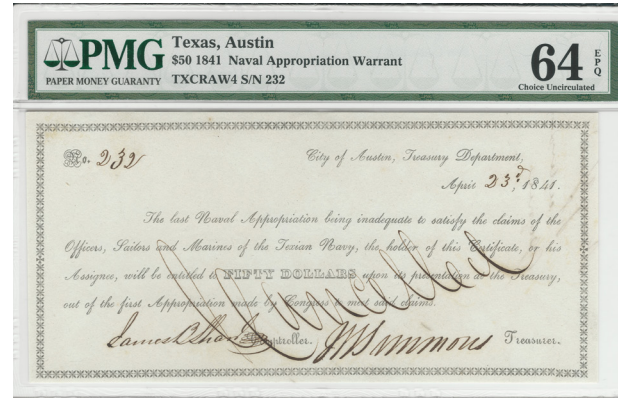
The pay warrants were donated by Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael E. Marotta of the Texas State Guard Maritime Regiment.

Lacking funds for the Navy, on his own authority, President Mirabeau Lamar issued the notes at the Galveston Navy Yard and aboard his flagship, the Austin. All dated April 23, 1841, the notes were of \$25 and \$50 denomination. They read: "The last Naval Appropriation being inadequate to satisfy the claims of the Officers, Sailors and Marines of the Texian Navy, the holder of this Certificate or his Assignee, will be entitled to "FIFTY DOLLARS" or "TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS" upon its presentation at the Treasury out of the first Appropriation made by Congress to meet said claims." The notes were printed three to a sheet, one fifty and two twenty-fives and were signed by the Comptroller, James R. Shaw, and the Treasurer, James W. Simmons.

Like other Texas Republic paper money, the promissory notes quickly lost value and few were ever redeemed. The pay warrants now owned by the TMF Museum were actually cashed in and cancelled. They are endorsed on the back by the men to whom they were given. The \$25 promise carries the endorsement of John Deziel. The signature on the \$50 note is difficult to read, though the word "Assignor" is plain. The first s in that word is elongate in the old-fashioned typography that rendered the word "Congress" to look like "Congrefs."

The warrants are well-known to historians of the Texian Navy, but

two fires that destroyed Republic archives leave many unanswered questions.



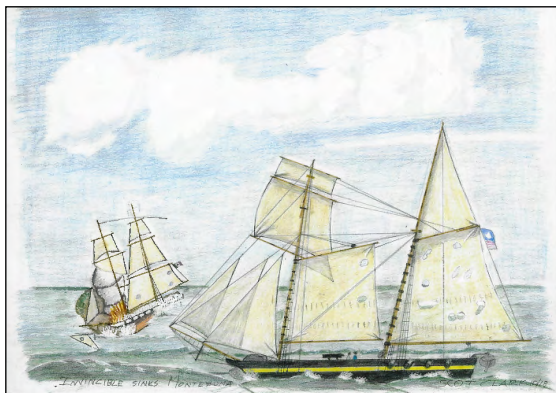


At the TNA Board Meeting on January 12, 2019, Admiral Turner - Past President of the TNA, read off the names of Plankowners. He presented to those present a beautifully framed print of the Peter Rindlisbacher painting 'Parting Shot' portraying the final battle on Invincible with the two Mexican brigs. Plankowners donated \$1,000 to the Search for the Invincible.

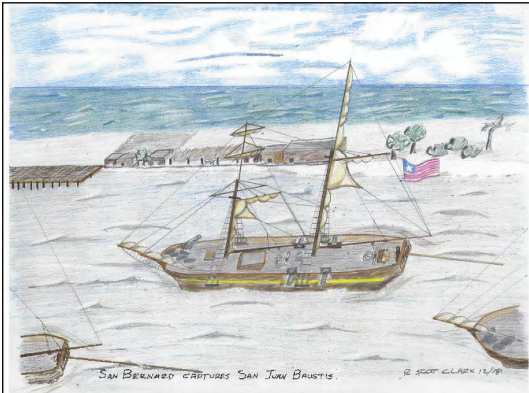
#### PLANKOWNERS ARE:

*Adm. Jeremy and Shana Jones, Houston*  
*Adm. Bob Wright, Shoreacres*  
*Adm. Brantly Minor, Houston*  
*Adm. Ed and Marsh Bluestein, Houston*  
*David and Gloria Walker, Bolivar*  
*Adm. By Baldrige, Seabrook*  
*Adm. Dave and Mary Haglund, Houston*  
*Anonymous, Gonzales*  
*Adm Rick M. Dempsey, Dallas*  
*Adm. Herb Hammond, Dallas*  
*Adm. Glenn Seureau, Houston*  
*Adm. Tom and Suzanne Hauser, San Marcos*  
*Adm. Butch Spafford and Candice Zummo, Groves*  
*Adm. Richard and Carol Ann Weitzel, San Antonio*  
*Adm. Chester Barnes, III, Lake Jackson*  
*Adm. Jim and Jo Tyson, Katy*  
*Skip Harrison, Kemah*

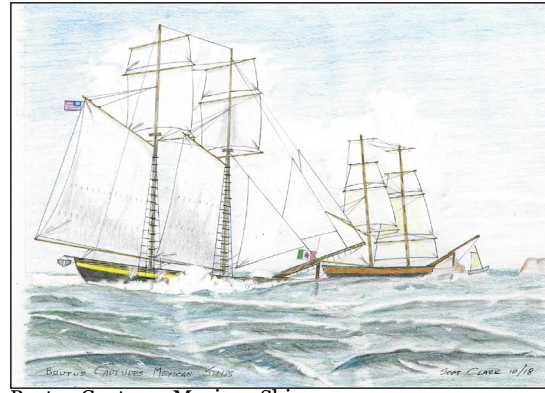




Invincible sinks Montezuma



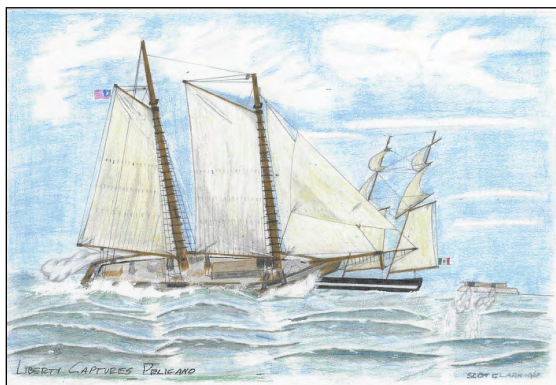
San Bernard Captures San Juan Baustis



Brutus Captures Mexican Ships



San Antonio, San Jacinto Captures Prize Ship

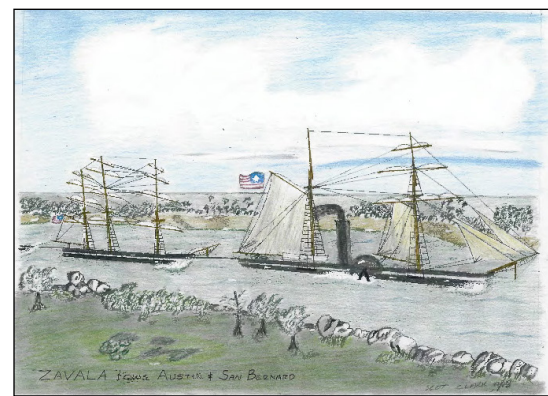


Liberty Captures Pelicano

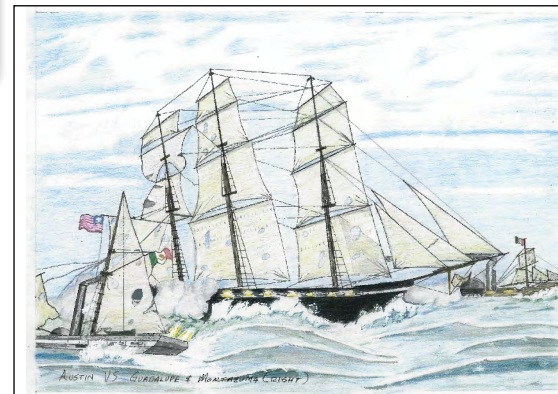


(L) Admiral Scot Clark and Admiral Will Fisher, former TNA Board member, presents Admiral Clark with his Admiral in the Texas Navy certificate awarded by Governor Abbott.

Admiral Clark has taken a real interest in the Texas Navy ships. He not long ago took a drawing class and decided to draw the ships of the Texas Navy. Well done! Congratulations and welcome aboard!



Zavala Tows Austin & San Bernard



Austin vs Guadalupe & Montezuma (right)



## Hawkins Squadron Adopts New Home

**O**n March 13, the Charles E. Hawkins Squadron in Galveston inaugurated the newly-christened Texas Navy Room at Waterman's Restaurant in Galveston. The venue was a big success, thanks in large part to the efforts of Admirals Chester Barnes and Paula Morris in making the arrangements. Great venue, great food, and great times. Special thanks to Waterman's owner, Adm. Todd Edwards, for making it possible.

Photos from Admiral Bill Turner's post on our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/texasnavyassociation/>





## Ship's Bell Presented to the Texas Navy

Submitted by: Admiral Andy Hall

At the April 13 Texas Navy Association Board of Directors meeting in San Antonio, Adm. Chester Barnes (below, center) of the Hawkins Squadron in Galveston presented the TNA with a newly-cast ship's bell, for use in TNA events and ceremonies. The bell is presented by Adm. Barnes and Adm. Paula Morris of the Hawkins Squadron in Galveston. Sadly, we were only able to ring it four times before the Menger Hotel staff rushed in, anxious to know what the alarm was.

This should serve us well. Thanks, Admirals Barnes and Morris!



(L) Front Row: Admiral Bill Turner, Admiral Mike DeHart, Admiral Chester Barnes, Admiral Dick Hatch, Admiral Jerry Patterson, and Admiral Jim Tyson

(L) Back Row: Admiral Dick Weitzel, Admiral Rick Dempsey, Admiral Andy Hall, and Admiral Dave Wetzel

## Hawkins Squadron Deputy Commander Appointment

Admiral Jeff Kilgore received his appointment as Deputy Commander of the Charles E. Hawkins Squadron in Galveston at the bimonthly Squadron meeting at Waterman's Restaurant on March 13. Adm. Kilgore has been active in the Texas Navy Association, the Laffite Society in Galveston, and other community organizations. Congratulations, Admiral!



## A Gift from Admiral Nimitz

Submitted by: Admiral Thomas A. Cellucci, PhD, MBA



Thought our group might be interested in this photo I recently found. I went to Fordham University many years ago for my B.S:

Caption for Photo: On this day in 1946, U.S. President Harry S. Truman received an honorary degree from Fordham and became the first person to officially ring the Victory Bell—launching a tradition that marks the start of the University's Commencement ceremony each year.

The bell is a gift from Admiral Chester Nimitz as a memorial to Fordham alumni who died during World War II.

See more of Fordham's 175 years of history [atbit.ly/Fordham175](http://atbit.ly/Fordham175)



## Affiliated Squadrons

### **Charles E. Hawkins Squadron**

If you live in the Galveston or south Houston area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Chester Barnes at [chester@barnes.com](mailto:chester@barnes.com)

### **Chester W. Nimitz Squadron**

If you live in the Dallas area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Tim Weiland [e7aviation@att.net](mailto:e7aviation@att.net)

### **Commodore Edwin Ward Moore Squadron**

If you live in the Austin area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Steve Von Roeder [svroeder@sbcglobal.net](mailto:svroeder@sbcglobal.net)

### **Sam Houston Squadron**

If you are a Texas Navy Admiral and a member of Lakewood Yacht Club or a reciprocal club to Lakewood Yacht Club and are interested in joining the Sam Houston Squadron, please contact the Sam Houston Squadron Commander, Admiral John Ebeling [mrebeling@hotmail.com](mailto:mrebeling@hotmail.com)

### **Samuel May Williams Squadron**

If you live in the San Antonio area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Richard Weitzel [richard.weitzel@gmail.com](mailto:richard.weitzel@gmail.com)

### **The Mirabeau B. Lamar Squadron**

If you are a Texas Navy Admiral and a member of the Houston Yacht Club and are interested in joining the Mirabeau B. Lamar Squadron, please contact Squadron Commander Admiral Robert Williams [apachenite@aol.com](mailto:apachenite@aol.com)

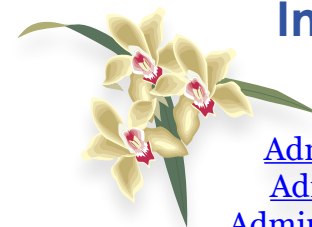
### **Tom Toby Squadron**

If you live in the Houston area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Jeff Corbin [corbinj43@yahoo.com](mailto:corbinj43@yahoo.com)

### **New Squadrons Forming**

A new Squadron is in the beginning stages of forming. If you live in Corpus Christi and have an interest in joining please contact Admiral Peter Davidson at [peterd@cctexas.com](mailto:peterd@cctexas.com)

If you would like a Squadron to form near you please let us know. Contact Admiral Dick Hatch [rhatch@texasnavy.com](mailto:rhatch@texasnavy.com)



## In Memory Of

[Admiral Houston Daniel](#)  
[Admiral Jean Epperson](#)  
[Admiral John Fisher Schwarz](#)

*Fair Winds and Following Seas*



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