

DRT Celebrates Gonzales Day

October 2 is Gonzales Day, which marks the Battle of Gonzales and the beginning of the Texas Revolution. It is one of twelve Texas Honor Days designated by The Daughters of the Republic of Texas to commemorate important events and people in Texas history. Significant are the pioneers who fought in the Battle of Gonzales, which took place on October 2, 1835.

The events surrounding the battle centered on a small cannon provided to the citizens of Gonzales in 1831 for defense against hostile Indians. When Santa Anna issued a disarmament decree in 1835, a request was made for the return of the cannon. Soldiers were sent to collect the cannon, but Gonzales citizens refused. Additional Mexican troops were sent to carry out the order and the citizens of Gonzales called for Texian help. Tensions escalated, and on the morning of October 2, 1835, the Texians attacked the Mexican detachment. During the skirmish, the leaders of the Mexican and Texian forces met and the request for the cannon was made again. In response, the Texians pointed to the cannon, which they had positioned at the rear of the Mexican troops, and said, "There it is--come and take it." The little cannon was fired, and after a few rifle volleys, the short fight ended and the Mexican troops withdrew. Known as the "Come and Take It" cannon, this little cannon fired the first shot for Texas independence.

Though the Battle of Gonzales lasted only a few minutes, and the shot of the cannon was harmless, it provided the catalyst for Texans to realize that there was no turning back. The Texas Revolution had begun!

Each year in Gonzales, a cannon firing ceremony is held on October 2 to mark the date of the battle. A "Come and Take It Festival" is held in Gonzales on the first full

weekend in October and the battle is re-enacted on Saturday at the Gonzales Pioneer Village and Living History Center. This year's dates are October 5, 6, and 7. For more information, call 888-672-1095.

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas is dedicated to the preservation and education of Texas history. For more information on Texas Honor Days and the work of the DRT, please visit the website at www.drinfo.org.