



# Daughters of the Republic of Texas

**Barbara Stevens, President General**

Wednesday, June 14, 2017

Dear Fellow Members

As my term starts as your newest President General, I want to introduce myself and to communicate my goals for my administration. I have been a member of DRT for twenty-eight years. I have served three terms as chapter president and seven terms as chapter registrar. I have written the chapter newsletter for over ten years. At the national level, I have served as Registrar General for two terms, and one term as CRT Registrar General and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President General/President General Elect. Those who know me know that I have a passion for Texas history and genealogy.

I make a solemn promise to you that my primary goal is to put the interests of DRT first and foremost in my decisions. I wish to involve the membership and communicate often. I also want to learn what you are doing at the chapter and district level.

I am very excited about the composition of the Board of Management, you have elected a very committed and able group of officers. Together with membership, we will do great things for DRT. The new officers installed at our Convention, and your new leadership:

- **President General**, Barbara Stevens, District VI, Seth Hurin Bates Chapter
- **President General-Elect**, Carolyn Raney, District III, James Butler Bonham Chapter
- **Chaplain General**, Claire Haynes, District IX, Cradle of Texas Chapter
- **Recording Secretary General**, Anita Cooper, District VI, San Jacinto Chapter
- **Treasurer General**, Ellen McCaffrey, District VI, Miss Ima Hogg Chapter
- **Registrar General**, Glenda Wise, District III, George Washington Stell Chapter
- **Custodian General**, John Ellen Becker, District VIII, William Barrett Travis Chapter
- **Executive Secretary General**, Melissa Goodrich, District VIII, William Barrett Travis Chapter
- **Historian General**, Liz Hedges, District IV, John Tilley Edwards Chapter

- **District IV Representative**, Johnnie McWilliams, Charles G. Davenport
- **District IX Representative**, Tiffany Miller, James W. Brown Chapter



Front Row: Liz Hedges, John Ellen Becker, Ellen McCaffrey, Claire Haynes, Barbara Stevens, Carolyn Raney, Anita Cooper, Glenda Wise, Melissa Goodrich

Back Row: Rhonda Helton, Tiffany Williams, Mariann Laughlin, Mary Wieser, Coyla Holmes, Sue Cobb, Johnnie McWilliams, Denise Cervantes, Carol Steakley. Present but not pictured Judith D'Amico

### **News from Convention**

If you missed this convention, you missed a great time. District III did an awesome job of providing a great mix of activities. The six workshops were excellent. A Daughter could learn to prepare and application for an ancestor and in the next session learn to make that ancestor's tombstone look new. She could learn the mysteries of using divining rods to search for that lost ancestor grave or maybe attend the session untangling the mystery wound in your DNA that connects you to that ancestor. Chapter presidents and other officers could learn how to conduct an efficient meeting in accordance with Robert's Rules. A Daughter could learn the inner workings of that computer. Thursday was an enjoyable day to learn, shop and connect with each other. Plan to arrive early next year for learning opportunities!

## **President General's Project**

I have chosen **Improvements to the IT infrastructure**, with an emphasis on improving the overall database structure to optimize the design and functionality. IT is critical to maintaining our business and membership records. Part of the goal is to define, with the Lineage Research Committee assistance, a better method to store and search ancestor data and improve access to the wealth of data in our application files. I would also like to improve the process of citing previous data. As a former Registrar General, my interest in establishing gateway ancestors and improvements in the application process are very important to me. Increase in membership is an important part of strengthening our organization. I will be working with the Registrar General and Chapter Registrars to develop these initiatives.

## **Historic Education**

It was decided that we needed a fresh approach to Historic Education. Many chapters have become frustrated with the inability to successfully implement the existing contests in their local schools. The Essay's and Teachers contests were discussed in a motion at convention and the Daughters voted that the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contests and Teacher contests will continue for the next two years while alternative programs are being developed. The topics for this year's essays will be as follows:

- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade - Austin's Old 300: Who, What and Why
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - Stephen F. Austin: His life and contribution to the Republic of Texas

## **Republic of Texas History Center**

The RTHC committee brought the vision of our new home to life with a wonderful video walk through the new building. Such a wonderful space is planned for us! As we entered the building we could see the pink granite Republic of Texas map on the floor of the formal entrance hall and the beautiful staircase with our portrait of Sam Houston and the beautiful chandelier in the landing. On the first-floor across from the museum entrance was our lineage research room, light and airy with its work areas and computer bank. On the second floor, we saw the meeting rooms and the efficiently designed staff offices and work areas which will improve staff productivity. Up to our archives and storage on the third floor with its vault and workspace, there we saw the beautiful windows with the DRT Seals. Back, via our elevator, to the first floor and our museum, The Gallery of Heroes, highlighting our Republic of Texas Museum collection. The Committee brought multiple design boards so we could see the beautiful finishes for the rooms. This same presentation will be at every District Workshop. Don't miss it! It is breathtaking!

The Vision is becoming clearer, with enthusiasm to get this done. We look to our members to help us build this dream. Three donors in the new fundraising for the RTHC

have already given \$50,000 in the new 50/50 Campaign. We will let membership know very soon of other ways to donate. *So many members have said they want to say, "I helped build that!" We will help that become reality.*

### **French Legation Museum**

PG Edwards has been keeping you apprised of the status of the House and Senate Bills changing jurisdiction of the French Legation Museum. This change in jurisdiction removes the FLM from the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) list of properties and adds it to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) list of properties. The legislation also removes the custodianship from DRT and gives it to the THC. The House Bill (HB 3810) as amended in the Senate states that the THC **may** enter into an agreement with DRT for management, operation, and parking. This bill is currently with the Governor for signature. This Convention passed a resolution indicating the Daughters were not interested in a Management Agreement with THC to operate the FLM. A more complete report on the bill will be given after the final actions by the state.

### **Media and Communication**

Communication is a key in any organization. We have made great strides with our two Facebook pages in reaching both members and the public. Daughters on FB should check these pages out. *The Daughters of the Republic of Texas Announcements* page is a closed page with information on chapter and national activities for members. The other page, *The Daughters of the Republic of Texas*, is a public page with ROT history and activities. We may want to establish other Facebook pages for up to the minute communication; One idea is establishing pages for chapter registrars and lineage research to foster communication or assistance for chapter registrars and research volunteers. Further, it is my goal the DRT Newsletter becomes a more comprehensive publication with information from your General Officers, Districts, and Chapters. ***I am still looking for members who would like to serve on our Media and Communications Committee to help develop these communication opportunities.***

## **Committees**

There are so many great opportunities for member involvement and friendship in committees. The listing on the website gives a listing of committees prior to this term. <http://www.drinfo.org/members/committees-2/committees> The 2016 Bylaws changed the name and function of some committees. While the webpage must be updated with new chairs and committee change this page gives a Daughter the sense of the areas of service. If you find a committee in your area of interest, please contact me by email at once. DRT needs your talent and passion, enlist now and be instrumental in making DRT stronger.

I am honored to be your President General. I look forward to serving you and promoting the goals of our Organization. I look forward to renewing old friendships and meeting and making new friends as I travel around the state in these next two years.

With my kindest wishes for our continued health and growth, I remain, Sincerely yours,  
in DRT friendship,

Barbara