

IF YOU
CLEAN
IT... THEY WILL
COME

Submitted by
Cindie and Bob
Gruetzmacher

Photos courtesy of Cindie Gruetzmacher

“Wow! I never knew this was here!” You could hear the

comments from visitors drawn to the almost-glowing façade of the stone panels in the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) Plaza at the Texan Army Camp site of the San Jacinto Battleground in La Porte, TX. Honoring the nine men who died in the battle, which secured Texas’ independence from Mexico 175 years ago, a once dingy, barely legible slab of stone was now a bright, proud monument again, thanks to the volunteer efforts of Hydro Tek.US and three of its local distributors.

Get Permission

Bob Gruetzmacher, Hydro Tek.US’s Southern regional development manager, began discussions about cleaning the monuments five months before the work finally took place. On-site meetings with San Jacinto Chapter



DRT and Texas Parks and Wildlife’s San Jacinto Battleground Complex superintendent and historic architect

provided guidance through the proper channels in order to obtain permission to clean the designated

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areas. Great care would be needed in the cleaning job due to the age of the stones and their inscriptions. Chemicals could not be used and no surface material removed.

Get It Clean

Most of the surfaces had never been cleaned since they were constructed in 1912 and the 1930s, and there was also a great amount of carved graffiti. Hydro Tek.US equipment used included SC30008DAF, SCU51006VAF, SS35006VG, AZV88 Recycle Systems, ANT28 and ANT3C Surface Cleaners, and ANTV3 Vacuum Surface Cleaner. Hot water and turbo nozzles at 10 in.-12 in. from the panels' surface removed tree pitch, dirt, and killed the black mold, all of which had been building for many years. Because so much of the ground surface of the Great Stone Circle was uneven, the dirty water was vacuumed as it settled in low areas. The hot water also killed the weeds growing between the pavers.

"It was an honor and a pleasure," Gruetzmacher says of the job. "With deep southern roots, mostly my wife's, we felt it important to support the heritage that gave us the freedoms we enjoy today. Many thanks to John Koen, president of Hydro Tek.US, and to Evans Equipment and Action Cleaning, both of Houston, TX, and Alklean Industries of Pasadena, TX. Without their help and hard work, it would have been very difficult for the San Jacinto Chapter DRT and Hydro Tek.US to complete this job in time for the San Jacinto Battleground's 175th Anniversary reenactment and celebration."


Cindie Gruetzmacher, member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, supports ancestral research and historical preservation, as knowledge and pursuit of these endeavors strengthen a culture. Cindie is a past Cleaner Times contributor of computer and Internet related articles.

Bob Gruetzmacher, Southern regional development manager, has been with Hydro Tek.US for ten years, and the cleaning industry since 1982, including 15 years with another major manufacturer of janitorial and pressure washer equipment and four years with a Houston distributor. CT

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