

HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

VOLUME 8: NUMBER 9.....OCTOBER, 2013

Remember the Alamo?

“Don’t believe anything you hear and only half of what you read.” I always thought that little dicho originated with Will Rogers, but Wiki Answers says Ben Franklin. Based upon the saying itself, and after reading *Sleuthing the Alamo*, I don’t believe either. Author and native Texan James E. Crisp, Associate Professor of History at North Carolina State University, provides a personal account of a complicated study that has led him through the archives of several Texas universities to Yale and into private collections as far south as Mexico City.

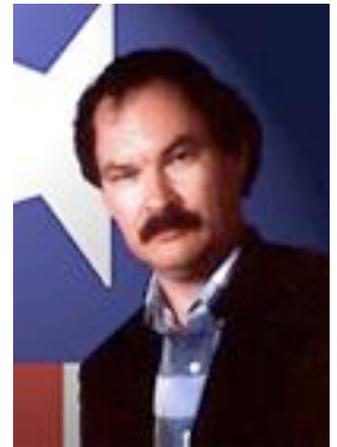
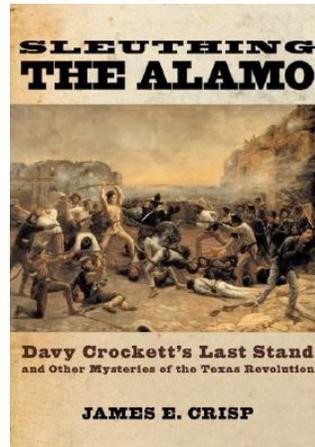
Featured this Month

Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett’s last stand and other mysteries of the Texas Revolution by James E. Crisp

The book focuses upon a long-hidden diary and memoir of Jose Enrique de la Pena who was a soldier with Santa Anna, when his troops over-ran the Americans at the Alamo. A few short passages in de la Pena’s writings describe the execution of Crockett and a small group who, by his account, surrendered to the Mexicans during the final moments of battle and who were quickly and summarily executed on the orders of Santa Anna. According to de la Pena, Davy faced his death bravely, but he didn’t go down swinging his rifle and killing Mexicans as portrayed by John Wayne and Fess Parker in the movies or in early American art-work on the subject.

Such a recasting of an American icon led Crisp into years of research through claims of forgery for de la Pena’s writings to hate mail and threats of bodily harm for Crisp and his fellow scholars. Americans, especially Texans, don’t like to have their long-held visions of the past challenged, even by newly-uncovered facts and increased scrutiny of old ones.

Sleuthing... reads more like a modern mystery than a dull analysis of history. Yet, as noted on the cover by south-westerner David Weber, the chapters “remind us that even the most intensely studied historical topic can still yield new secrets if the historian is willing to dig deep enough.” And Crisp



did dig. His work demonstrates that history is often distorted as much by facts ignored or eliminated as by facts chosen. And he once again confirms that histories of conflicts are “written by the winners.” In the case of subjects as sensitive, even racially sensitive, as the Alamo, history too often continues to be written and controlled by the rich and powerful.

In his efforts to get to the truth, Crisp takes us through his own epic of discovery regarding “controlled” history fed to him in school, through small but exciting epiphanies that leap out of a written page into the ever-widening world of discovery fostered by a tenacious and creative mind. What happened in the last few minutes at the Alamo provides the book’s mystery, but Crisp’s meandering research also introduces a spunky German teenager who barely escaped execution and a sexy ex-slave who may have contributed as much as Sam Houston to Santa Anna’s defeat.

Read this book and, whether or not you agree with Crisp’s conclusions about Davy’s demise, you’ll never view history as a dull subject again; and the phrase, “Remember the Alamo” will take on a whole new meaning. In his last chapter, Crisp uses an incident from his own past to demonstrate “... the unrealized losses we can suffer from a silenced past, from voices now lost. Even when it is ‘the other’ who is silenced, we lose a part of our history-- a part of ourselves--and a part of our family.”

Introduction and review by Harley Shaw

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New at the Library

Nonfiction

The Real Wyatt Earp by Steve Gatto
Shaolin Qi Gong by Shi Xinggui
It's Only Raven Laughing by Bonnie Maldonado
Too Personal for Words- *the invisible path of aging*
by Bonnie Maldonado
The Colonel by Mahmoud Dowlatabadi

Fiction

Jewelweed by David Rhodes

Mystery

Eyeshot by Lynn S. Hightower
When Secrets Die by Lynn S. Hightower
Fortunes of the Dead by Lynn Hightower
Satan's Lambs by Lynn Hightower
Down in the Flood by Kenneth Abel
Ice Run by Steve Hamilton
Stolen Season by Steve Hamilton
North of Nowhere by Steve Hamilton
The Long Goodbye by Raymond Chandler

Films on DVD

The Amityville Horror
Hart's War
Saw II
Saw V
Cabeza De Vaca (*in Spanish*)

Library Hours:

Sunday & Monday: closed
Tues. 3:30 - 5:30pm Wed. 1:00 - 4:00pm
Thurs: 3:30 - 5:30pm Fri: 10:00am - 1:00pm
Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm

Notes from the Library Board

We hope that all of our members have received the information we sent last month on renewing your yearly membership.

All of the services that the Library affords to our community:

- over 7000 books and other items for check-out
- free internet access
- free long distance telephoning and fax
- nominally priced copying and printing
- website catalog look-up
- the monthly Newsletter

are made possible by your membership contributions and by our other fund-raising activities. Your support is crucial.

If you haven't yet returned your membership update please do it today. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website at

<http://www.hillsborocommunitylibrary.com/join.html>

For a complete listing of Library materials, visit
<http://www.hillsborocommunitylibrary.com>

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, October 16

Hillsboro: 1:00 - 2:00 pm Kingston: 2:30-3:30 pm

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