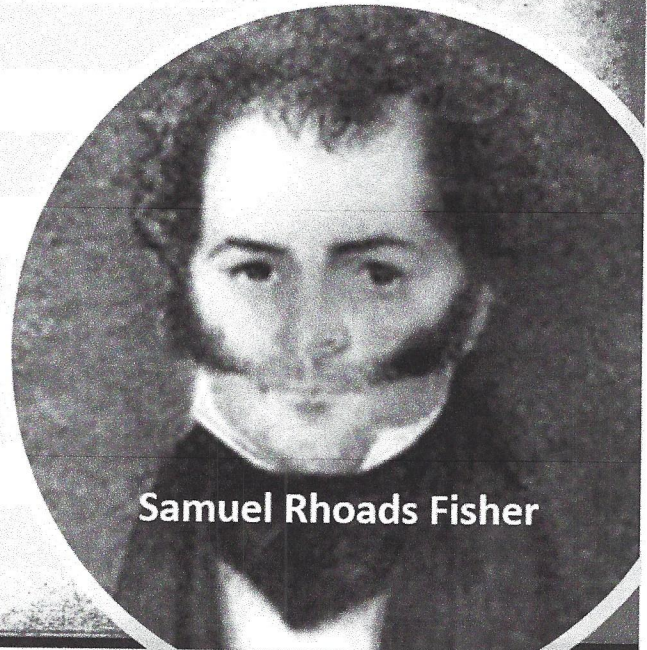


God Prosper Texas!
Samuel Rhoads Fisher –
First Secretary of the Navy
for the Republic of Texas

The Sons of the Republic of Texas
Sydney Sherman Chapter
May 17, 2022

Acknowledgements:

Beth Fisher, Richard Hunn, Ann and Van Hunn, Diana Compton, Lynne Echegaray, Betsy Vaughan, Peter Rindlisbacher



Presentation by Adm. Dallam Masterson entitled ***“God Prosper Texas! Samuel Rhoads Fisher - First Secretary of the Navy for the Republic of Texas.”*** Samuel Rhoads Fisher met Moses and Stephen F. Austin in Missouri in 1819 and decided to move his shipping business from Philadelphia to Austin’s colony at the newly founded town of Matagorda in 1830. The house that ships’ carpenters built for Fisher’s family in 1832 has survived several major hurricanes and is one of the oldest homes in Texas. Fisher was instrumental in creating the first Texas Navy, beginning with the acquisition of the schooner William Robbins (renamed Liberty) that captured supplies intended for Santa Anna and diverted them to the Texas army to ensure their victory at San Jacinto in April 1836. Fisher signed the Texas Declaration of Independence and was appointed the first Secretary of the Navy for the Republic of Texas by President Sam Houston. When Mexico threatened the survival of the young Republic with a naval blockade of the Texas coast in 1837, Secretary Fisher ordered the Texas Navy on a diversionary cruise to Yucatan that broke the blockade when the Mexican fleet retreated to defend their coast. President Houston was not pleased that Fisher had volunteered for the Yucatan cruise while on furlough and fired him when he returned to a hero’s welcome in Texas. Fisher was cleared of all Houston’s charges by the Texas Senate, and in his farewell letter Fisher closed with “God prosper Texas! and to you my friends and fellow citizens, happiness and thanks.”

Speaker: Wilmer Dallam Masterson IV is a consulting petroleum geologist in Houston with 40 years’ experience exploring for oil and gas on the Alaskan North Slope and for unconventional shale plays in the Lower 48 states. He is a fourth great grandson of Samuel Rhoads Fisher, the first Secretary of the Texas Navy for the Republic of Texas. Secretary Fisher’s daughter Ann Pleasants Fisher married James Wilmer Dallam, a lawyer and author who published “Dallam’s Digest” that documented the first rulings of the Supreme Court in the Republic of Texas. Their daughter Annie Wilmer Dallam Masterson perished near her home on 39th Street and Avenue R

during the 1900 Galveston Storm; fortunately for the speaker, her 16-year-old son Wilmer Dallam Masterson survived the storm.

Fisher's descendants have played significant roles in Galveston's history. Judge Lewis Fisher oversaw the construction of the seawall, William C. Fisher, MD was one of the founders of the first medical school in Texas (now UTMB) – his home at 18th & I has THC marker, William C. Fisher, Jr. MD was one of the first graduating residents from St. Mary's Hospital, Dr. Fred Fisher (his home at 35th & P has THC marker) was Galveston's Quarantine officer during the 1917 Pandemic and the John Harris Family has been generous benefactor to the Rosenberg library and donated beautiful stained glass window at Grace Church in memory the 13 Fisher family members lost in the 1900 Storm.

Fisher's Historic Home is operated as a B & B in Matagorda

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The Stanley-Fisher House is one of the first houses ever built in Texas, is listed as a Texas Historic Landmark. In 1832, **Samuel Rhoads Fisher**, of Philadelphia, built the house for his family. Fisher, one of 300 colonists recruited by Stephen F. Austin, was **First Secretary of the Republic of Texas Navy** and a **signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence**. It is very likely that Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston were guests in the house from time to time.

The house has withstood the tests of time and the elements, and has been restored to its original splendor with modern amenities for your comfort. We welcome you to relax in our home, in your private bedroom, or on our screened-in porch. Enjoy a home-cooked breakfast served in the dining room by your hosts, or choose to receive a breakfast basket delivered to your room.