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We arrived at our final air b n b on the outskirts of San Antonio just after 6pm.

We had a quick shower and requested an Uber- we were keen to get into the centre of town and have an evening out with no rain!

Our Uber dropped us outside the Alamo. It was all lit up and was amazing to be finally here.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



We wandered down onto the famous San Antonio Riverwalk which is lined with restaurants and bars. The Riverwalk is just beautiful- similar to Venice with a fairly narrow river with picturesque bridges crossing every 100metres or so.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



We opted for a steak dinner which was delicious, washed down with some Californian red wine. After dinner we set out on our mission of finding somewhere to try some Texan wine. We didn't need to venture too far: we found some just down the walk in a German bar weirdly enough!

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



I tried the Becker Merlot, which actually came from the vineyard at Stonewall, which we drove past today. It was really smooth and tasty – it felt good to try some local wine!

It had been a long day so we didn't stay out too late. We'd had a cracking day though-

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

perhaps our favourite out here yet!

Friday

A slight lay in (8am rather than 6am!) this morning and a very excited Keith and I head into town to visit the Alamo. Entry is free but you can pay for an audio guide. We know quite a bit about the history so decided not to do this.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

It was amazing to be inside the former mission. No photos were allowed inside but outside we could take all the pictures we wanted.



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



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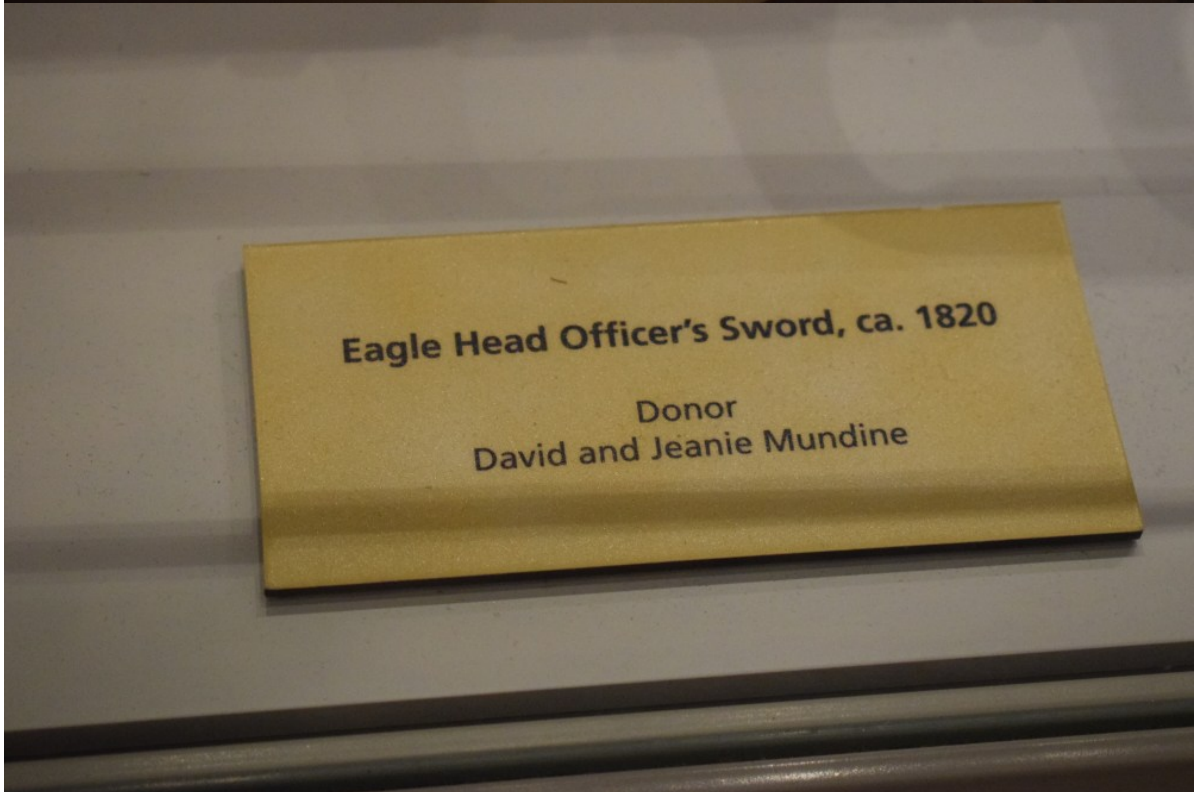
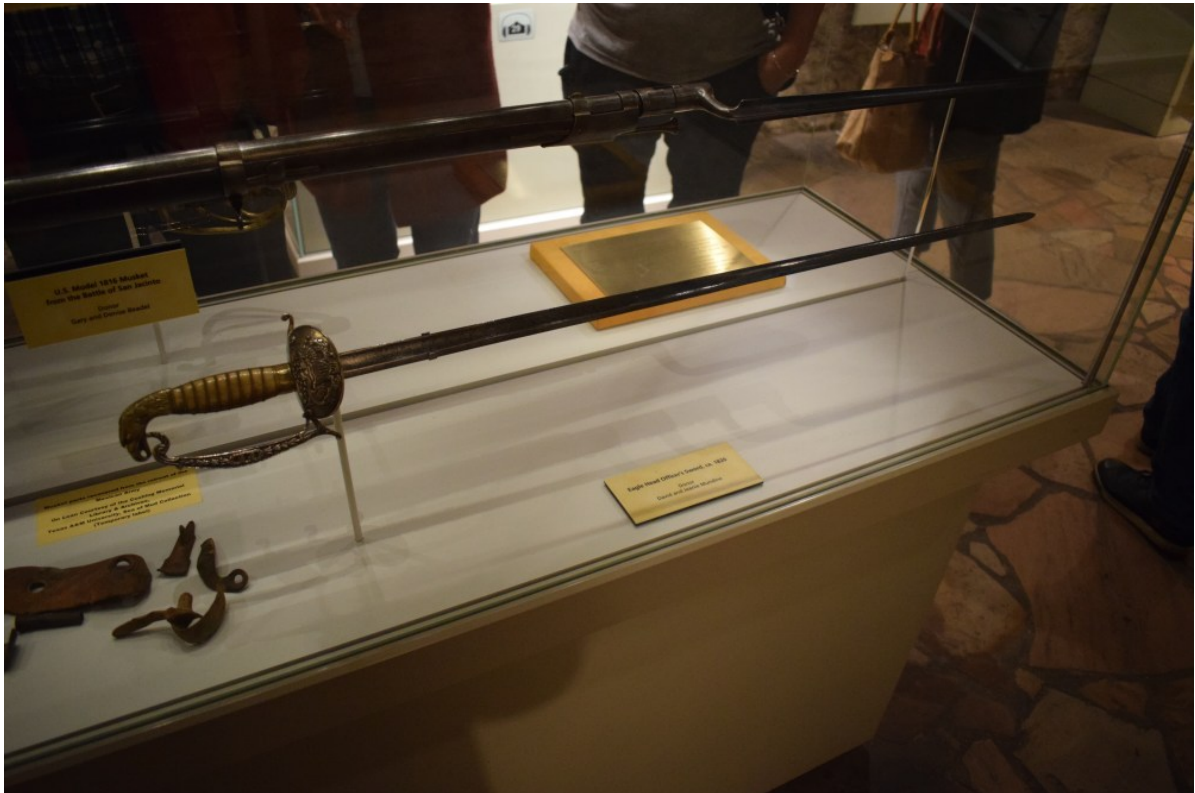


Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

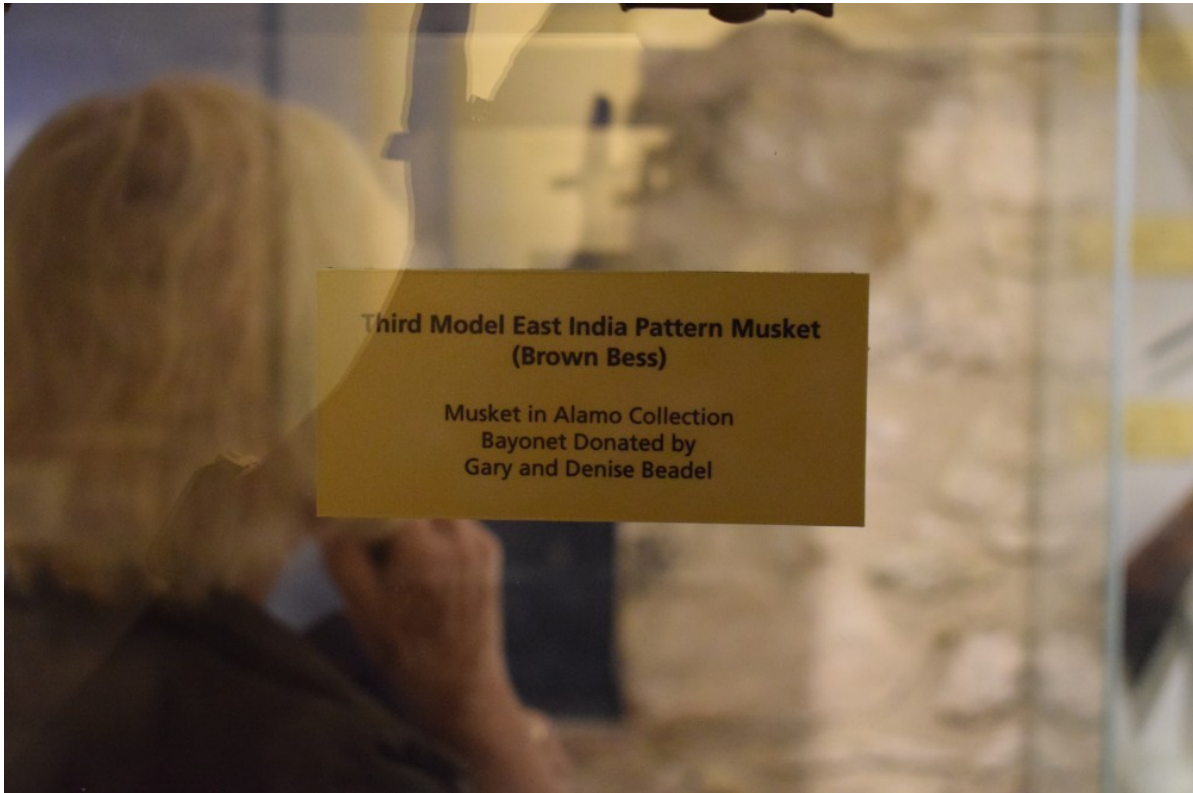


It was really moving in there and told the story well. There was a small museum which also housed Davy Crockett's rifle and knife.

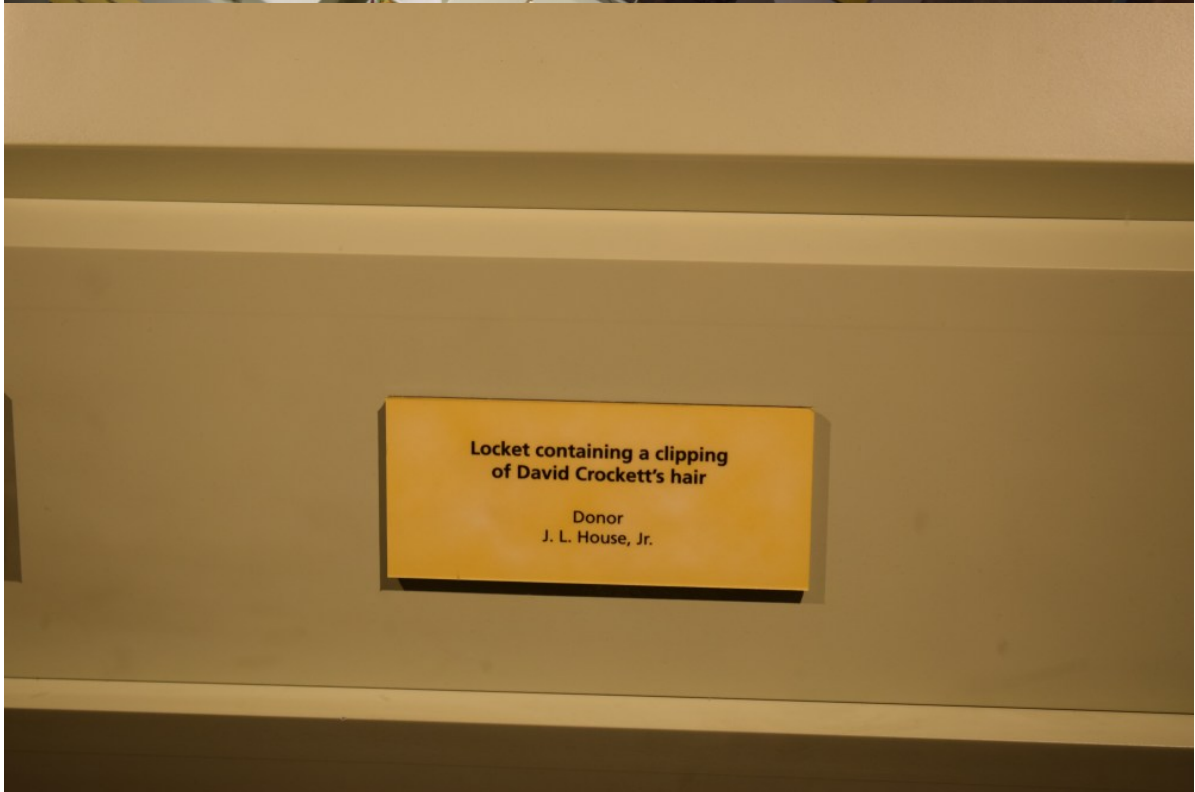
Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

The Alamo *A Story Bigger Than Texas*



*T*his is the Long Barrack, the oldest building in San Antonio. It was built in 1724 as a *convento* or residence for priests and was originally part of the Mission San Antonio de Valero, now known as the Alamo. Since then it has been used as a Spanish army barrack and hospital, a fortress, a United States Army quartermaster depot, a general store, and, since 1905, a shrine and museum maintained by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The Long Barrack and the church next door are the only remaining buildings of the Alamo.

Even though the Alamo has a special place in Texas history, these two buildings embody a story whose roots reach into Spain, France, and Mexico and out across the American Southwest, and whose consequences have helped to shape today's world. *It is a story that is much bigger than Texas.*

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

After our visit we headed on a walk up through downtown and up towards the the Mexican Market place. We grabbed a wonderful taco breakfast from a street trader in the market. The whole place was bright and colourful- not that we've ever been, but it's exactly how I imagine Mexico to be! It was a cool place to buy some souvenirs too.



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



We visited the San Fernando cathedral, which is a big catholic cathedral and also has the remains of Crocket, Travis and Bowie in a casket at the front.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



By now, all the Mexican smells were tantalising our tastebuds, so we decided it was time for more food – and today would be a Mexican feast. We picked a Mexican along the Riverwalk and washed down by a couple of margaritas, we sat in the sun people watching for an hour or so. The lunch was gor-

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

geous. Seriously every meal was becoming
harder to beat!

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



We carried on our walk along the river to the historical La Villita Arts district. They were setting up for Dia de Los Muertos (day of the dead) celebrations which were happening from tomorrow- we were sad that we were to miss it, but pleased we could see how it was shaping up to look. Dia de Los Muertos is a festival that celebrates the dead. Families

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

set up huge colourful shrines with photos of their deceased loved ones, and then throw massive parties and picnics at the shrines. Think the film Coco.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas
Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

During our walk today we'd been informed that tonight there was a special Halloween event happening along the river walk. We decided to head back to the apartment and freshen up, and come back in for the evening festivities around 6pm.

There was a mass trick or treat event from 6, with all the restaurants and bars giving out candy to the hoards of families trick or treating. We chose the Coyote bar which had a raised terrace so we could observe. We got more than we bargained for, innocent lil me didn't realise there would be a (near) topless woman parading around ON the bar! It felt very American!

After this we walked down the river towards

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

the historical arts district, and arrived at the river theatre just in time for the adults Halloween costume competition to be judged. Well, the costumes were just phenomenal. Honestly, it was like we were on a film set. The atmosphere was electric and we just **ADORED** it.



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



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Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

After the costume competition, in which these were the three winners,



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



there was a Halloween river parade. Absolutely sensational- it's given us the taste of an American Parade, and we are itching to go and experience the Macy's Thanksgiving pa-

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

rade now!



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Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



After the parade, there was this incredible moment when everyone just started playing with some beach balls. It was so funny and surreal and in excellent nature. Everyone was howling with laughter- I just can't ever imagine something like this happening in UK.

We decided that we were loving the evening

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

so much we didn't want to come home! No not really, we just didn't want to leave for dinner so we grabbed some Mexican street food which was available and just hung out, there was a live band on and games. We also took the opportunity to grab some people for some pics.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas
Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

The whole night was just so entertaining, I really really loved it. You can see our YouTube video [here](#)

Before we headed back, we nipped to the German bar for another Texas wine each. Keith had the Shiraz and I had the merlot again.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Saturday- our last day ☐

Today was our last day! I woke up sad, Texas has captured my heart in a way I wasn't ex-

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

pecting! Before our night flight home, we had to drive from San Antonio to Houston, so we made a day of it by going via San Marco for the retail outlet village where we bagged some cheap Levi's and then onto nearby Gruene (pronounced Green). Gruene has the oldest Dance Hall in Texas.



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



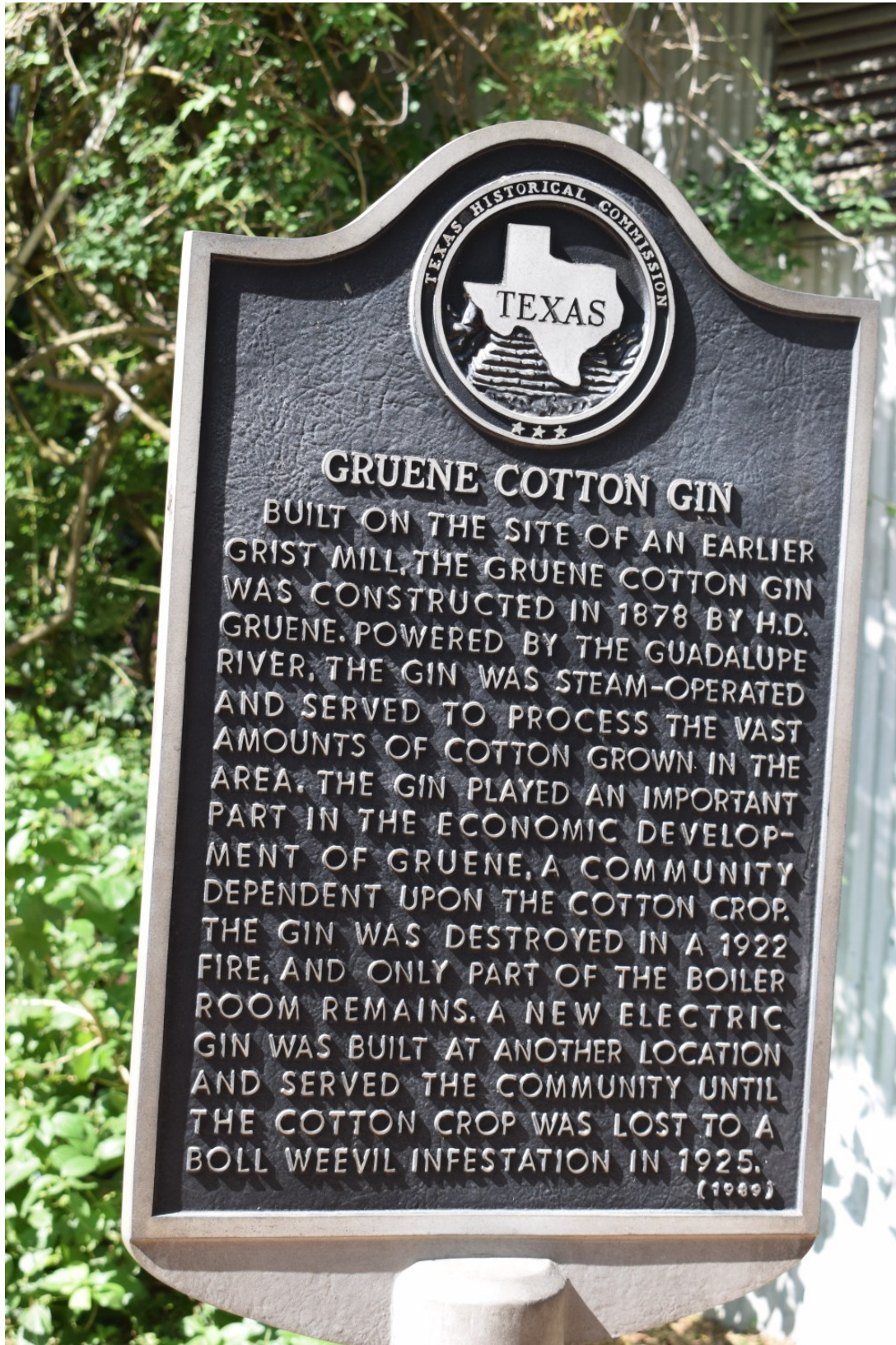
Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



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Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



The

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

place was heaving, but we soon realised why- there was a free music afternoon on. We had a wander round the general store, got some last minute souvenirs and had a spot of lunch. Then went into the dance hall for a beer and a last enjoy of some live music. It was a larger band this time, with a violin, steel stringed guitar, acoustic guitar, double bass and two vocalists. It was packed, there were locals and tourists, and even a group celebration for a lady's 80th.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



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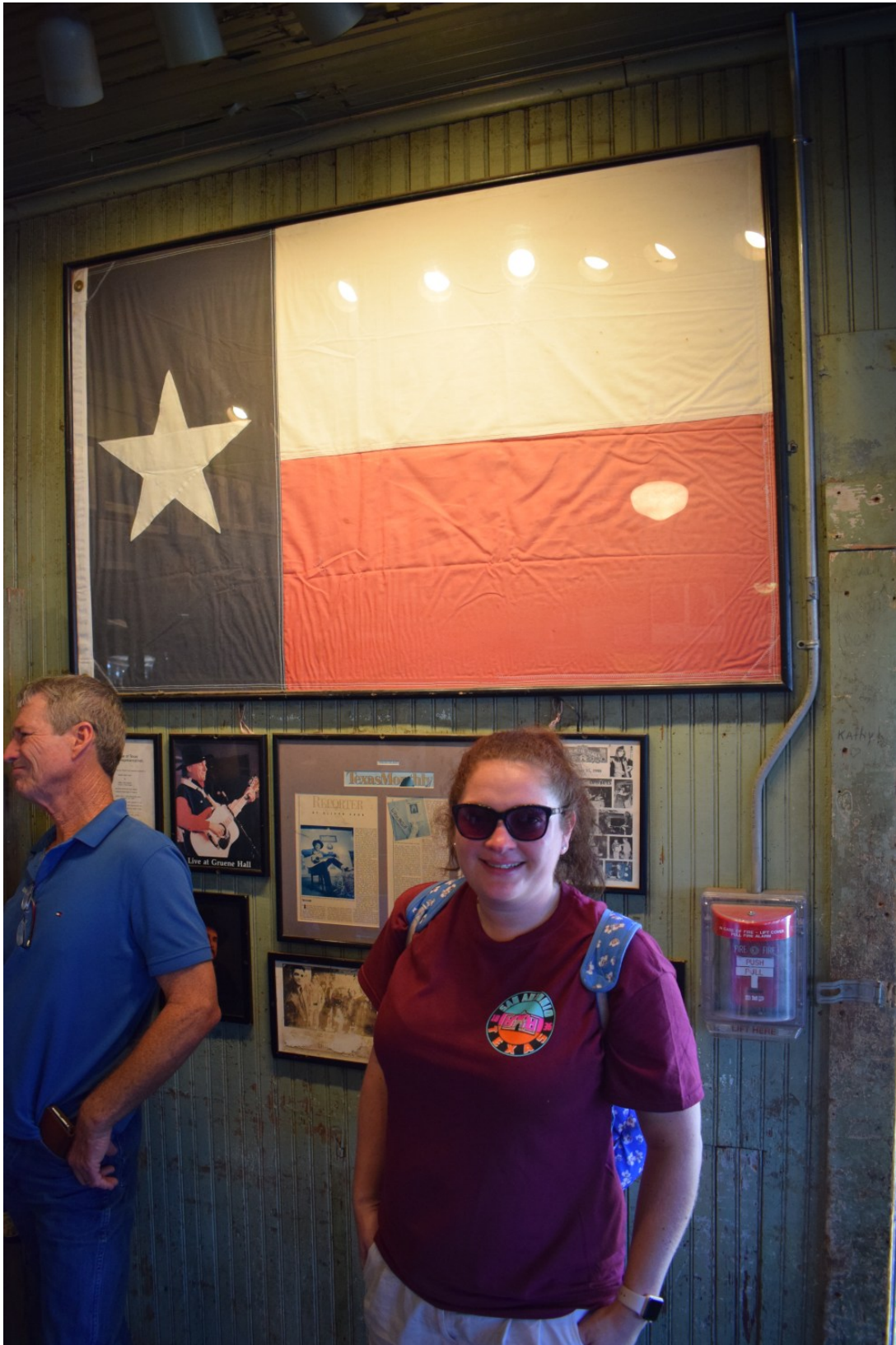


Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

Everyone was dancing and enjoying themselves, the band were fab, Keith and I even had a slow waltz. See video [here](#). We had an hour there before the 3 hour journey to Houston, and I was feeling exceptionally emotional. I put my sunglasses on so no one would notice the tears streaming down my face. I'm not sure I got away with it!



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio



That's not our car btw (sadly)

All too soon it was time to move on, and by 6pm we were dropping off the car at Houston Avis and checking in. The tears wouldn't stop – I blubbed all the way through security, and then sulked all the way onto the plane.

Adventures Stateside; A Texas Roadtrip. San Antonio

Texas. You've entirely stolen our British hearts. We'll be back! For anyone who loves food and music – Texas is your state! Please visit. I get the impression not many people do other than for work.

Until next time

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