



THE SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

It has been said that "He who knows the history of San Antonio, knows the history of Texas." With this in mind, the San Antonio Conservation Society was founded on July 8, 1925. "The purpose for which it was formed is to preserve and encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, and places relating to the history of Texas and its natural beauty and all that is admirably distinctive of our State and by such physical preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, and especially the youth of today and tomorrow, for knowledge of our inherited regional values."

During its years as a corporate body, the Society has accomplished the preservation of the San Antonio River from its intended fate as a concrete covered ditch; the restoration and preservation of the old Granary at the San Jose Mission, now designated a National Historic Site; the protection of the Espada Spanish Mission aqueduct; and the yearly presentation of the Colonial Spanish Christmas play "Los Pastores."

One of the guiding ideas behind the Society has been the intention to preserve examples of the architecture of all the peoples who made up the population of San Antonio. Therefore, the Span-



Piñatas are an important part of Fiesta celebration for children. The brightly colored paper replicas are filled with goodies and broken open with a broom stick. The goodies scatter and the children scramble.

Center: Some 90,000 people are attracted to the annual four-night event where varieties of food, drink, and entertainment are presented by The San Antonio Conservation Society.

Left: Hand made tortillas are a delicacy to some and a staple to others. The art of patting the tortilla into its pancake-like shape is a skill which has been transmitted from generation to generation.

Right: Tortillas and beans are combined to make a bean taco. A popular item of "A Night In Old San Antonio."



ish period is represented by the Governor's Palace, the Mexican influence by the Market place, the republican period by the Alamo and the French era by the remains of the Guilbeau house. The Society's most recent project is the nineteenth century Ursuline Convent with its unique gothic chapel. The Society bought part of the chapel for \$250,000 and they are now selling it at \$1.00 per inch to interested citizens. The motto of the Conservation ladies has become, "Shall I say 'Yes, I remember it,' or 'Here it is, I helped to save it.'"

Fiesta Week is the celebra-

tion to commemorate the Battle of San Jacinto in the Texas-Mexican War. In 1895 the women of San Antonio decided to make an annual event of the day and call it the Battle of the Flowers. They brought flowers on that day to the Alamo to commemorate the heroes of the battle. Their ceremony has mushroomed into a week-long celebration which includes "A Night in Old San Antonio" sponsored by the San Antonio Conservation Society in La Villita, incorporates the help of 2,000 local volunteers, and earns enough over the four day festival to continue its restoration work

during the remainder of the year. Over 90,000 people visit the celebration and enjoy a unique opportunity to sample the food, music and craftsmanship of the ethnic groups of San Antonio.

Pinātas and cascarones share the spotlight with german beer and czech pastries. Can-can girls and New Orleans jazz give way to Mariachi bands and Chili Queens. Sailing up the beautiful, landscaped San Antonio River, saved from anonymity under a concrete cover by the Ladies of the Conservation Society, one is grateful for their determination to preserve the past for the future.