

# The Battle of Pensacola

1781

The Siege of Pensacola took place over nearly three months from March of 1781 until the British surrender on May 8th, 1781. The battle was the culmination of the Spanish campaign against the British forces all along the Gulf Coast.

The Spanish forces, under the command of General Bernardo de Galvez, had already achieved significant victories in most of what was then the Colony of West Florida including the Battles of Baton Rouge, Mobile, and Fort Charlotte. What remained was for Galvez to capture Fort George and Pensacola, the British capitol of West Florida.

On March 9th, 1781, the Spanish fleet arrived at the entrance to Pensacola Bay. The fleet was halted from entering the Bay by the British artillery fire. The Spanish Naval officers refused to enter the bay until Galvez took his flagship Galveztown and sailed it himself through the mouth of the bay on March 18th. Having seen that they could get past the British artillery, the rest of the Spanish fleet followed behind.

For the next month or so, the Spanish laid siege to Pensacola through a series of small skirmishes. Galvez's plans to take Fort George were also delayed by the arrival of a hurricane.

By May 5th, Galvez had received enough reinforcements to begin his attack on Fort George. The Spanish artillery opened fire on Fort George, and after 4 days of intense artillery fire, on May 8th a Spanish shell found a powder magazine in the Queen's Redout, destroying the fort and killing approximately 100 British Troops. British General John Campbell raised the white flag of surrender that same day, and Galvez's victory in West Florida was complete.

# History of the Pensacola Chapter

On 14 March 1896, Lt. John Henry Bull and fourteen Compatriots established the Pensacola Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). From 1896 to October 1930, the Pensacola Chapter and the Florida Society were one and the same. John Campbell Avery was Chapter President from 1896 to 1904. William Swift Keyser served from 1905 to 1907. Dr. Frank Gale Renshaw led from 1907 to 1908. John Hobart Cross was President from 1908 to 1915. Renshaw was re-elected in 1915 and also served as State President until 1932.



Minuteman bronze statue at Veteran's Memorial Park. Commissioned by the Pensacola Chapters of the Sons of the American Revolution, and Daughters of the American Revolution.



*Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution*

*Pensacola Chapter*

*"Florida's First"*

*Celebrating 125 years*

*1896 - 2021*

*Battle of Pensacola  
and Galvez Day*

*Commemoration*

*2024*

<https://www.pensacolasar.org/>  
[www.facebook.com/pensacolasar](https://www.facebook.com/pensacolasar)

# Battle of Pensacola Commemoration



The Pensacola Chapter of the Florida Society has joined with the Pensacola Heritage Foundation to commemorate the Battle of Pensacola and honor General Galvez's significant contribution to the cause of American Independence.

Each year, on the date of the British surrender, the Pensacola Heritage Foundation holds a Galvez Day ceremony and the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard opens the ceremony with a Parade of Colors that begins at Fort George, and proceeds down Palafox Street to the nearly 20 foot high monument to General Galvez that stands at the corner of Palafox and Wright Streets. The SAR is also honored to provide a musket salute to close out the ceremony.

The Battle of Pensacola Commemoration is one of three National Color Guard events that take place in the state of Florida.

# 2024 Schedule of Events

In 2024, the Battle of Pensacola Commemoration and Galvez Day Celebration will take place on Wednesday, May 8th in downtown Pensacola.

While planning has just gotten underway for next year's event, the tentative schedule of events is:

- ✧ 09:30 - Color Guard Muster at Fort George
- ✧ 10:30 - Color Guard Parade of Colors from Fort George to the Galvez Monument
- ✧ 10:30 - 11:30 - Galvez Day Ceremony
- ✧ 2:00 - SAR Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Minuteman Monument in Veteran's Memorial Park

(Note that all times are in the Central Time Zone.)



# Registration Information

The registration form for both the Color Guard and the Wreath Laying ceremony can be found on the Pensacola chapters website at [www.pensacolasar.org](http://www.pensacolasar.org).

Once on the website, select the "Events and Programs" dropdown menu, and click on "Battle of Pensacola Commemoration." The form is a .pdf form that you can fill out on your computer and then email the completed form to: [battle@pensacolasar.org](mailto:battle@pensacolasar.org).

Questions regarding registration or the event itself can also be directed to [battle@pensacolasar.org](mailto:battle@pensacolasar.org).

