

FP-051

STATUE OF LIBERTY REPLICA

Given their proximity to one another, it would be easy to think that the artist Jose Martin crafted the replica of the Statue of Liberty you see in front of you. And that the statue's name was the Allegorical Figure of the State Fair of Texas. After all, that's what that plaque embedded in the ground at the foot of the Statue of Liberty says, right?

In fact, the plaque and the Statue of Liberty replica have nothing to do with one another, and their location next to one another is a mistake we unearthed during the course of our creating this cell phone tour.

Let's begin with the plaque. Jose Martin is the artist responsible for a statue called The Allegorical Figure of the State Fair of Texas. But you'll find that statue just inside the Parry Avenue Entrance Gates. It is the statue bearing the likeness of a heroic female figure at the top.

So, what is the plaque doing here? Well no one seems to know for sure, but we think the history of the Statue of Liberty replica provides a clue.

Back in the 1950s, the Boy Scouts of America helped fund the creation of several Statue of Liberty replicas that it distributed across the United States in honor of scouting's 40th anniversary. This is one of those replicas, created by the Friedley Voshardt Foundry in Chicago. It stands eight feet, four inches high, and is made of stamped sheet copper. Apparently, the statue was relocated to this site near the Hall of State in 1978, as an inscription on its base attests. Although no one can be certain, we think this Statue of Liberty may have originally been located somewhere near the Allegorical Figure of the State Fair of Texas. And, that park workers mistakenly moved the plaque for that statue, along with the Statue of Liberty, to this new location, believing they belonged to one another.

As another inscription on the statue's base attests, this Statue of Liberty replica was restored in 1991. Engineering that restoration was local civic leader and philanthropist, Peter Chantilis, whose parents had immigrated to the United States from Greece at the turn of the 20th century.

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