

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial

2. Location

Street & number: 1008 S. Alamo St.
City or town: Refugio State: Texas County: Refugio
Not for publication: [ ] Vicinity: [ ]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[ ] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[ ] national [ ] statewide [ ] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [ ] A [ ] B [ ] C [ ] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 6/14/18
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument

**Current Functions:** RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** Other: Monument

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Stone/granite; Metal/bronze

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6)

Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** F (Commemorative Properties); B (Moved Properties)

**Areas of Significance:** Social History, Art

**Period of Significance:** 1937

**Significant Dates:** 1937

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Josset, Raoul (sculptor), Page & Southerland (architects)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-7 through 8-12)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 9-13)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** less than 1 acre

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 28.294108° N      Longitude: -97.277600° W

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The monument is located on the south side of Blk 11 on the grounds of the Our Lady of Refuge Church. The nomination encompasses only the monument and the ground upon which it stands, an area of approximately 4.5 square feet.

**Boundary Justification:** The nomination boundary is drawn to include only the monument itself. No other structures on the property have been evaluated for eligibility due to the specific focus of this theme (*Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*).

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Bonnie Tipton Wilson, THC National Register Historian  
Organization: Texas Historical Commission  
Street & number: P.O. Box 12276  
City or Town: Austin      State: TX      Zip Code: 78711-2276  
Email: bonnie.wilson@thc.texas.gov  
Telephone: 512-463-6046  
Date: March 1, 2018

## Additional Documentation

- Maps**      (see continuation sheets MAP-14)
- Additional items**      (see continuation sheets FIGURE-15 through FIGURE-16)
- Photographs**      (see continuation sheets PHOTO-17 through PHOTO-20)

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**Photograph Log**

Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument  
Refugio, Refugio County, Texas  
Photographer: Gregory Smith  
Date: February 15, 2018

Photo 1: Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument—camera facing north

Photo 2: Monument oblique—camera facing northeast

Photo 3: Detail view of bas-relief bronze plaque—camera facing north

Photo 4: Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument at the Our Lady of Refuge Church—camera facing north

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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### Narrative Description

The Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument in Refugio, Texas is a 6-foot-tall pink granite slab commemorative monument with a bronze plaque that was designed by architects Page & Southerland and sculptor Raoul Josset for the 1936 Texas Centennial. It is a Centennial commemorative property identified in *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial* MPS as sub-type “Monument Slabs,” and represents “Type X” of that category.<sup>1</sup> Nine Type X monuments were erected at historical sites across Texas for the centenary. The granite base is 2’3” wide, tapers by 1.5” to a slightly rounded top, and has chamfered edges. Josset designed the 3-foot-tall bronze-cast panel with a bas-relief live oak and olive leaf wreath encircling a star. Mirrored on each side of the wreath are cactus plants, cow skull, and scrolled belt with a buckle.

Erected in 1937 at the Our Lady of Refuge Church, it originally stood at the front of the building, facing S. Alamo St./U.S. Hwy 77. After 1994, the Catholic Diocese moved the monument to its current location on the south side of the church that faces W. Roca St. Its integrity of location was adversely affected when the monument was relocated. However, the move did not adversely affect its eligibility for listing under the Registration Requirements outlined in *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial* MPS. It retains sufficient physical integrity and was installed in an outdoor setting that is similar in character and function to the original location on the church grounds.<sup>2</sup>

The monument is inscribed as followed:

SITE OF  
MISSION NUESTRA  
SEÑORA DEL REFUGIO  
ORIGINALLY FOUNDED ON JANUARY  
31, 1793, BY FATHERS JOSE  
FRANCISCO GARZA AND MARIANO  
VELASCO, FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES,  
AT THE JUNCTURE OF THE  
GUADALUPE AND SAN ANTONIO  
RIVERS FOR THE CONVERSION  
OF THE KARANKAWA INDIANS.  
REMOVED TO THE PRESENT  
LOCATION, JANUARY 10, 1795.

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<sup>1</sup> National Register of Historic Places. *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial* MPS, Texas. National Register #100002344, 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

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### Statement of Significance

The Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument, at the Our Lady of Refuge Church in Refugio, Texas, is a granite and bronze historical marker that the State of Texas commissioned for the 1936 Centennial. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance under the multiple property submission *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*. It is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Social History as the product of a concerted statewide effort whereby state and local governments, a variety of private organizations, and individuals worked to commemorate historic persons, places and events important to Texas history. The monument is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Art as a work by master sculptor, Raoul Josset. It meets Criteria Consideration F (Commemorative Properties) as a work of art that reflects early 20th century interest in recognizing historic subjects throughout Texas, which culminated in the publicly-funded statewide Texas Centennial. The monument also meets Criteria Consideration B (Moved Properties) as a resource that was moved from its location on its original site to another location on the same property. Its setting, orientation, and environment on the south side of the church are compatible to its original location at the front of the church. The period of significance for the Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument is 1937, the year it was erected.

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### A Brief History of Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio and Refugio, Texas<sup>3</sup>

Between 1519 and 1821, Spain established *presidios* and *missions* in Texas as part of its political, economic, and religious expansion from present-day Mexico into its North American territory. Franciscan missionaries, sponsored by the government, established missions across Texas to convert Native Americans to Catholicism and teach them aspects of Spanish culture. The goal was to gradually transition each mission to an indigenous colonial community loyal to the King.

In 1793, Fray Manuel Julio de Silva and Fray Jose Mariano de Garza established the last mission in Texas on Matagorda Bay and named it Nuestra Señora del Refugio Mission (hereafter Mission Refugio). It was active for 37 years. They chose the site at the request of a group of Karankawa, who called the area *El Paraje del Refugio* ("Place of Refuge") because they often sought protection there from other groups of indigenous people. However, the locale was not optimal for farming nor did it provide a natural fortification for defense. After a Karankawa group led by Fresada Pinto attacked the mission, Fray Silva and Fray Garza moved Mission Refugio to Mosquitos Creek in June 1794. When Pinto attacked the second site, the Franciscan missionaries looked for a new place inland to re-establish Mission Refugio.

The mission moved to its final location at present-day Refugio in January 1795. It was in a region better-suited for farming and it offered better potential to yield new indigenous recruits to the mission system. Within a year, Mission Refugio had 175 Native Americans in the community, and at its height in 1804 there were 224 people enumerated. In 1799, construction was completed on a stone church, blacksmith shop, living quarters, granary, and workshops at the compound. Internal conflicts among missionized indigenous groups, external attacks by Comanches and non-mission Native Americans, and periodic shortages in food led to the gradual abandonment of Mission Refugio.

During the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a village (also called Refugio) and *rancho* community grew around Mission Refugio under the rule of Mexico. It is possible that civilians pressured the government to secularize the mission so the land could be released for purchase. In 1830, Mexican authorities closed the mission and it was abandoned. James Power and James Hewetson received *empresario* contracts to settle Irish immigrants and Mexican

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<sup>3</sup> This section derived from *Handbook of Texas Online*, June Melby Benowitz, "Nuestra Senora Del Refugio Mission," accessed March 15, 2018, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/uqn18> and *Handbook of Texas Online*, John Leffler, "Refugio, TX," accessed February 19, 2018, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hgr03>.

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colonists in territory that included the mission site between 1828 and 1832. During the 1836 Texas Revolution, most settlers fled from Refugio to escape the Mexican Army. Texan and Mexican forces clashed at the Battle of Refugio, a series of fights that occurred March 12-15, 1836, at and near the ruins of the mission compound. The Texan auxiliary force under the command of Amon B. King were executed as a result of the battle.

After independence, the Republic of Texas organized Refugio County as one of the thirteen original counties and designated Refugio as the government seat. However, the settlement was slow to repopulate. Refugio experienced several economic booms during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that aided growth. In 1867, the Catholic community constructed “the old stone church” from stone of the original mission and built the new chapel on its foundation. They called it Our Lady of Refuge Church, the translated name of the mission.

By 1890, the town had a wooden courthouse, several churches, a convent, two public schools, a hotel, and had grown to a population of 1,100. Local anticipation for the construction of the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway through Refugio in 1905 also attracted more merchant businesses and increased growth. General prosperity encouraged Our Lady of Refuge parishioners to construct a new church building. In March 1900, the old stone church was demolished and townspeople carted away the stone to use in the construction of walks, fences, and other buildings. The new Our Lady of Refuge church was completed on top of the original mission site in 1901.

Rapid development occurred in Refugio after 1928 with the discovery of oil in Refugio County. Within a five-year period, Refugio’s population jumped from 933 (1925) to 2,019 (1930), and doubled to 4,077 in 1941. Paved streets, modern public buildings, water and sewage systems, and residential subdivisions were evidence of its prosperity and development. Since 1960, however, Refugio’s population has declined to 2,900 (2000), but it remains an important local center for petroleum and petrochemical industries.

#### **Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument<sup>4</sup>**

The Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument at the Our Lady of Refuge Church in Refugio is an example of the smallest monument sub-type erected for the 1936 Texas Centennial. It is a historical marker to the Spanish-era mission that once stood at the site. On May 9, 1934, workers accidentally uncovered the shared grave of King’s Men at Mt. Cavalry Cemetery in Refugio, and they reported the discovery to Father William Oberste, the parish priest of Our Lady of Refuge Church. With funding from a Civil Works Administration grant, Oberste oversaw the excavation of the burial of sixteen remains that was conducted by J. Frank Low, an avocational archaeologist. Other skeletal remains turned up in June when the Texas Highway Department began its construction of State Highway 128 (now U.S. Hwy. 77) in front of the church.<sup>5</sup> Both discoveries motivated Oberste to study the history of Mission Refugio and locate funding to conduct more archaeological investigations at the historic mission site. He believed the Centennial was that opportunity.

The Refugio County Centennial Advisory Board and its Citizens’ Centennial Committee jointly drafted an ambitious petition to the Advisory Board of Historians which they presented at the July 18, 1935 hearing at the Capitol in Austin. The appeal outlined Refugio County’s historical significance “as a major county in the annals of Texas history” that participated in events that led to Texas independence, cleared the area of Native Americans, and as the home/birthplace of many prominent Texans. The crux of their \$54,000 proposition was a \$35,000 project to restore

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<sup>4</sup> Refer to the National Register nomination for the Amon B. King monument that chronicles, in greater detail, the planning and construction for the town’s Centennial commemorative properties, including the Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument.

<sup>5</sup> Huson, 398-399; “Long Lost Grave of Texas Heroes is Uncovered by Chance Near Refugio,” *McAllen Daily Press*, June 15, 1934.



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(or replicate) Nuestra Señora del Refugio Mission and conduct archaeological excavations at the site.<sup>6</sup> Funds for continued digging at the mission would, Oberste argued, build on the research they discovered in 1934 about the original compound and “bring to light...many unexpected and unthought relics and facts.”<sup>7</sup> He suggested \$5,000 be allocated for the important project.

When the Commission of Control announced statewide Centennial funding the following October, Refugio’s total apportionment was considerably less than what the local Centennial board requested. Furthermore, the \$8,500 total award was primarily earmarked for commemorating Amon B. King. At the recommendation of the Advisory Board of Historians, a \$500 monument, “of select Texas granite bearing a bronze plaque,” was approved for marking the site of the old mission. It is not clear why Oberste’s project did not receive more support from the Advisory Board of Historians. One of its members, Father Paul Foik, was a scholar in Catholic history with interest in researching the Spanish mission system in Texas.<sup>8</sup> In fact, Foik’s primary contribution to the statewide Centennial program involved confirming dozens of mission sites and assisting with inscription-writing for historical markers each location.

In general, Refugians were dissatisfied by the Commission of Control’s disregard for local opinion on Centennial projects. By 1937, their displeasure escalated to indignation upon the completion of the Amon B. King’s Men monument in King’s Park.<sup>9</sup> Local participation in work related to state-sponsored projects subsequently diminished. By July 1936, there was only one person serving the local Centennial board. However, this did not signal disinterest in attracting tourism to Refugio for the centenary. Oberste found local support for continued excavation work at Mission Refugio in 1936, and he planned to construct a shrine around the ruins for the visiting public.<sup>10</sup> The city of Refugio also staged a lavish Centennial celebration with a “March of History” parade so fantastic that it drew “the continuous applause of the thousands of spectators” assembled during the centenary year.<sup>11</sup>

Planning and construction of the Nuestra Señora del Refugio Mission monument followed the same process established by the State Board of Control for all statewide Centennial projects.<sup>12</sup> The State Board of Control hired Austin architecture firm Page & Southerland, sculptor Raoul Josset, and J.W. Cearley & Sons Memorials of Yoakum, DeWitt County to design and build monuments classified as “Type X.”<sup>13</sup> The Nuestra Señora del Refugio is an example of that design scheme.”<sup>14</sup> With template-based bronze bas-relief plaques, these monuments functioned more

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<sup>6</sup> Father Oberste is credited with preparing the proposal and presenting it to the Advisory Board of Historians. “Refugio Granted Sum of \$8,500 for Centennial Use,” *Victoria Daily Advocate*, October 28, 1935.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Foik was instrumental to the completion of historian Carlos E. Castaneda’s seven-volume *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*. Credited as editor of the book, Foik collected many of the primary source documents Castaneda used from Mexican archives and the microfilmed records were donated to the Catholica Archives of Texas. *Our Catholic Heritage* was the definitive history of Spanish-era Texas for many years after its publication.

<sup>9</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Amon B. King’s Men Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas.

<sup>10</sup> *Refugio Timely Remarks: City Hall and Improvement Edition*, April 17, 1936, 39.

<sup>11</sup> “Refugio Puts on its Most Lavish Event,” *Victoria Advocate*, October 22, 1936.

<sup>12</sup> *Monuments and Buildings of the Centennial*, 10-27.

<sup>13</sup> Drafts of Centennial monuments show Page & Southerland and Josset began working with the Centennial Division in February 1936, but their contracts were not signed until June and August 1936. Minutes, Texas State Board of Control, Centennial Division, June 2 and August 28, 1936, Centennial Division, Texas State Board of Control. Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

<sup>14</sup> The Advisory Board recommended the Commission of Control erect nine, \$500 monuments to recognize a variety of historical subjects: burial grounds, mission sites, townsites, and church sites. Harold Schoen, eds., *Monuments Erected by the State of Texas to Commemorate the Centenary of Texas Independence; the Report of the Commission of Control for Texas Centennial Celebrations*, (Austin: Commission of Control for Texas Centennial Celebrations, 1938), 121-122.

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like historical markers when compared to Josset's individually-designed plaques for the Type Y monuments. Cearley & Sons Memorials constructed each monument based Page & Southerland's blueprint out of pink Texas granite.<sup>15</sup>

The Advisory Board of Historians produced the marker text for the Mission Refugio monument, and the 48-word-long inscription shows several errors. First, there was no known person named Mariano Velasco associated with mission's founding. The two Franciscan missionaries were named Fray Manuel Julio de Silva and Fray Jose Mariano de Garza. The inscription suggests Mission Refugio existed at two locations, but the mission was moved three times; the final site being at present-day Refugio. Finally, it described the previous mission site to be "at the juncture of the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers." There were documents available at the time, but perhaps not accessible, that described the site being south of that confluence.<sup>16</sup>

The errors illustrate several issues—limited time, manpower, and access to primary source material—that adversely impacted the inscription-writing program.<sup>17</sup> Although contemporary interest in Spanish mission history resulted in the publication of several book-length studies after the Centennial, it is likely that accurate information about Mission Refugio was lacking at the time the inscription was drafted.<sup>18</sup> Dr. Lota M. Spell reported in July 1936 that "the one member of county board" and her supervisor Lou Kemp each approved the Mission Refugio marker text, and it was submitted to the Board of Control with errors.<sup>19</sup>

Refugians did not dedicate the Amon B. King monument, and it is not known if they recognized the construction of the Mission Refugio monument either. Local newspapers from 1937, when most Type X monuments were completed, fail to mention any Centennial dedications in Refugio.<sup>20</sup> Cearly & Sons Memorials erected the monument to left side of the church entrance on S. Alamo St./U.S. Hwy 77 (then a state highway) (Figure 2). Sometime after 1939, likely when the Highway Department widened the road, the monument was relocated to the right side of the church entrance where it remained until the late 1990s (Figure 3). Again, the church relocated the Mission Refugio monument to the south side of the church where it stands today.

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<sup>15</sup> King, 82.

<sup>16</sup> In 1821, Stephen F. Austin toured the Matagorda Bay region and created a map that indicated the second site of Mission Refugio. The map belonged to a collection at the University of Texas, Austin where Dr. Spell conducted much of her marker inscription research.

<sup>17</sup> *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*, 18-19.

<sup>18</sup> The Centennial influenced the publication of two important scholarly works: Carlos E. Castaneda's seven-volume *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936* (1938) and Father William Oberste's *History of Refugio Mission* (1942). Although each author may have provided information to the Advisory Board of Historians for the Mission Refugio monument inscription, research for both books were incomplete at the time. Historian David R. McDonald noted in a 2002 history of the mission that though Oberste's book was well-researched, other integral documents (located in Mexican archives) were unavailable at the time of his work. Texas Department of Transportation Environmental Affairs Division, *Nuestra Senora del Refugio*, Archaeological Survey Report No. 315, 2002: 7.

<sup>19</sup> Spell to Singleton, July 22, 1936. Lota May Harrigan Spell Papers, Correspondence, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.

<sup>20</sup> Research conducted for the nomination included a review of every issue of the *Refugio Timely Remarks* from 1937, available issues published in 1936, and issues of nearby metropolitan newspapers such as *Victoria Advocate* and the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*.

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**Raoul Jean Josset (1899-1957)<sup>21</sup>**

“Frenchman by birth, American by law, and Texan by preference,” Raoul Josset, the most prolific sculptor of Texas Centennial monuments, was born in Fours, Nièvre, France on December 9, 1899.<sup>22</sup> Educated at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and winner of the prestigious Prix de Rome, Josset also apprenticed under French sculptor Émile-Antoine Bourdelle (1861-1929). He immigrated to Chicago in 1927 and remained in the United States for the rest of his life. Josset’s career gained momentum in the early 1930s, and his aesthetic, influenced by French Art Deco and classical sculpture, was popular to American architects. His early commissions in Chicago included architectural decorations on the Palmolive building (1929), the Carbon & Carbide building (1929), and at the Century of Progress International Exposition (1933).

During this period, he was introduced to architect Donald Nelson and the two collaborated on projects for Chicago’s Century of Progress fair. On Nelson’s recommendation, architect George Dahl invited Josset to Texas in 1935 to create commemorative statues for the Central Centennial Exposition at Fair Park in Dallas. The Texas Centennial was the most intensely-creative period of Josset’s career. Upon completion of his commissions at Fair Park in 1936, the State Board of Control hired Josset to design monuments and statues for the statewide Centennial. In three years, he completed 35 monuments and 5 statues, all commemorating subjects in Texas history.

Josset’s commissions slowed after the Centennial, and he briefly pursued work outside of Texas. He returned to Dallas permanently in 1948 to share a studio with a friend, Jose Martin. There he created his final works that included: a 75-foot-long stone bas-relief for the Nelson-designed Grand Lodge Masonic Temple in Waco (1949), statue of *St. Francis of Assisi* in Lubbock (1953), and a statue of *Sam Houston* for the Masonic Temple in Waco (1957). Just as he was enjoying renewed professional success, Josset died suddenly in 1957. He told friends that he felt Texans appreciated his talents, saying “Texans seek [art] with meaning and...they choose with an eye of permanence, thinking in terms of years, generations, maybe forever.”<sup>23</sup>

**Page & Southerland<sup>24</sup>**

Louis C. Page, Jr. (1909-1981) and Louis F. Southerland (1906-1994) met at the University of Texas School of Architecture in 1930 and were roommates at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1933, Page & Southerland established their firm in Tyler, Texas with hopes that the nationwide depression would not affect the prosperous oil town. Unfortunately, as Southerland recalled, “the money was there but they weren’t spending it on buildings.”<sup>25</sup> The partners closed the business and, temporarily, went their separate ways.

In 1935, they reopened in Austin and began looking for commissions. Page & Southerland responded to the Board of Control’s 1936 bid to design schemes for Centennial markers and monuments. Although it was not a prestigious account for the young firm, the contract for 622 historical markers and 26 monuments paid well. Between February and November 1936, the young firm produced schemes for historical markers, grave markers, and monuments that the State Board of Control used to construct these Centennial property types. The two scheme sub-types for slab monuments—Type X and Y—are differentiated by size (8’-feet-tall versus 6’-feet-tall) and the style of bronze plaque. Type Y monuments, sometimes called “county monuments” for the subject of most of the markers, were adorned with individually-designed bronze bas-relief plaques. Josset designed a template for all plaques attached to Type X

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<sup>21</sup> Section adapted from *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*, 24-25.

<sup>22</sup> “Raoul Josset Completes His 8-Foot Childress Memorial,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 3, 1938.

<sup>23</sup> “Texas Mourns Tragic Loss of Raoul Josset, Sculptor,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, July 21, 1957.

<sup>24</sup> Section adapted from *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*, 23.

<sup>25</sup> “Louis Southerland Still Holding Fast to Drawing Pen That Paints Success,” *The Austin Statesman*, December 29, 1947.

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monuments. Plaques on both monument sub-types had individualized marker text. Page & Southerland's Centennial commission, a job outside their typical area of expertise, imparted a lasting contribution to the Texas cultural landscape.

There are few documents that record Page & Southerland's Centennial work, but other records show that 1936 marked the beginning of their productive careers.<sup>26</sup> In addition to many residential projects, they received two big commissions before 1940: the City of Austin Municipal Building (1937) and the Public Works Administration-funded Rosewood Courts public housing project (1938) in East Austin. Louis Page's brother George joined the firm in 1939 and, after WWII, Page Southerland Page moved to large commercial, medical, and public building projects as they continued their practice designing residential buildings. Their success in the 1950's and 1960's allowed Page Southerland Page to open additional offices in Houston (1973) and Dallas (1975). Today, the firm operates as Page and designs projects worldwide.

### Conclusion

The Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument in Refugio is a granite and bronze historical marker commissioned for the 1936 Centennial. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance under the multiple property submission *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*. The monument is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Social History as the product of a concerted statewide effort whereby state and local governments, a variety of private organizations, and individuals worked to commemorate historic persons, places and events important to Texas history. The monument is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Art as a work by master sculptor, Raoul Josset. It meets Criteria Consideration F (Commemorative Properties) as a work of art that reflects early 20th century interest in recognizing historic subjects throughout Texas, which culminated in the publicly-funded statewide Texas Centennial. The monument also meets Criteria Consideration B (Moved Properties) as a resource that was moved from its location on its original site to another location on the same property. It retains its ability to convey historical information because the current orientation, setting, and environment are highly compatible to its original location on the Our Lady of Refuge church grounds. The period of significance for the Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument is 1937, the year it was erected.

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<sup>26</sup> The Texas State Library & Archives has drafts of Centennial monuments and marker schemes drawn by Page & Southerland dated February – June 1936. The only business records pertaining to their Centennial work is in the Texas State Board of Control, Centennial Division minutes and Tom C. King's audit report for the Centennial (see bibliography).

Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

**Maps**

Map 1: Refugio County, Texas



Map 2: Google Earth, accessed March 1, 2018

Latitude: 28.294108° N Longitude: -97.277600°W



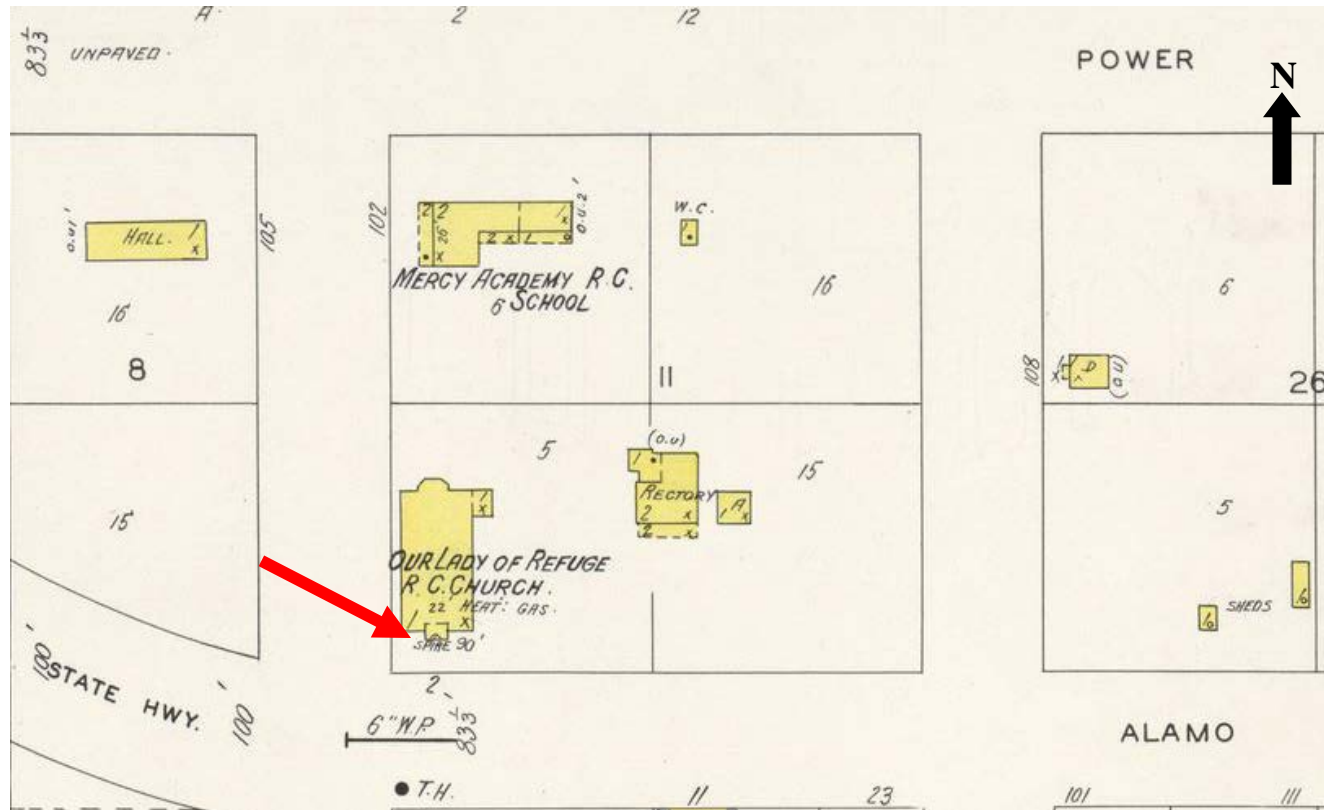


Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

**Figures**

Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1935. The red arrow indicates the original location of the monument on the Our Lady of Refuge church grounds.

Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/txu-sanborn-bay\\_city-1942-02.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/txu-sanborn-bay_city-1942-02.jpg)



Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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Figure 2: Original location of the Centennial monument, 1939.

Source: Coastal Bend Collection



Figure 3: Second location of the mission monument, 1979.

Source: Texas Historical Commission





Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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**Photographs**

Photo 1: Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument—camera facing north, February 15, 2018.





Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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Photo 2: Monument oblique—camera facing northeast, February 15, 2018.





Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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Photo 3: Detail view of bas-relief bronze plaque—camera facing north, February 15, 2018.





Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio Monument, Refugio, Refugio County, Texas

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Photo 4: Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio monument at the Our Lady of Refuge Church—camera facing north, February 15, 2018.



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