



HISTORY OF THE SAM HOUSTON RIFLES

Within every member of the Sam Houston Rifles, also known as "Jodies", is a profound loyalty and respect for his unit. This example of esprit de corps is not an accident, but rather an indication of a trust, which is maintained by every member of the unit. An understanding of what this trust means is not easily conveyed by words, but must be felt by association with fellow Jodies. The story of this trust may, in part, be told by a review of the past achievements of the Sam Houston Rifles.

The "Crack Platoon" was formed in the fall of 1924 out of the Cadet Corps of North Texas Agricultural College. The team was later to provide competition for John Tarleton State College at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Exposition. It was during this competition, in 1933, that the team took its first trophy. In 1935, following their third straight defeat, Tarleton withdrew from competition. The Crack Platoon now had to settle for exhibition drills, which were not infrequent as the teams fame spread. In March of 1937, the name Sam Houston Rifles was adopted, and their typical drill schedule included parades and honor guards throughout northern Texas and exhibition drills at the State Fair of Texas and the Fort Worth Stock Show.

The members of this team became more than just cadets - they became living examples of the guiding principles of the ROTC program. The name Sam Houston Rifles exemplified the principles of patriotism, citizenship, and military bearing. In 1942, when the United States was plunged into World War II, the Sam Houston Rifles Drill Team was disbanded by unanimous vote of the members, to take up arms to preserve the very thing that its name represented. It was a long war and many died to maintain what they believed.

In 1947 the war was over and those who returned re-established the old Sam Houston Rifles. More than ever it was up to them to fulfill and pass on to their successors the same spirit shared by many of their members who now slept under the rows of white crosses. The Sam Houston Rifles have carried on this spirit throughout the years.

In 1950, remembering the sacrifices and ideals of their forerunners, the Sam Houston Rifles Constitution was drafted by the team. Also that year, the Houston family shield with crossed rifles was adopted as the official crest, and the nickname "Jodies" was attached to the popular unit. The team performed in Fort Worth, Dallas, and other cities in northern Texas.

Since then the Jodies have performed at the Presidential Inaugural of 1957, the Junior Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, the Mardi Gras in New Orleans, the Cotton Bowl Parade in Dallas, the Cherry

Blossom Festival in Washington D.C. and such Texas cities as Laredo, Galveston, San Antonio, Tyler, Corpus Christi, and Lubbock.

Throughout this time the Sam Houston Rifles have maintained a winning average of over 91%. Nevertheless, the Sam Houston Rifles are more than just a drill team. They are an exclusive fraternity made possible by their forerunners sacrifices. Their fellow Jodies, past, present, and future, continue to maintain the spirit, drive, and ideals that characterize the trust assumed by every man when he becomes a member of the Sam Houston Rifles.

For decades it has been a normal sight to find the leadership in the corps of cadets proudly wearing the black and gold cord of the SHR. Today is no exception. There is a long and distinguished line of those who have earned membership in the leadership laboratory that is the "Jodies". It was through building high performing organizations like the SHR, the Rifle and Pistol Teams, the Insurgent Team, and others that cadets learned about leadership, character, and how to build high performing organizations. These "teams" provided a lasting foundation of leadership skills that endured in an ever-changing environment. For those of us who selected the military as a career, we found organizational change and evolving doctrine and tactics the norm. The constant in all of this was leadership and the requirement to build a winning team of teams. This same skill set proved invaluable to those both in and out of uniform.