

# *Santiago Residents Pay Tribute to Father of Cuban Homeland*

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Santiago de Cuba, June 16 (RHC) — Residents of the eastern Cuban province of Santiago de Cuba, on behalf of the entire Cuban people, paid tribute to Carlos Manuel de Céspedes — the Father of the Cuban Homeland -- at the monument where his mortal remains are kept at the Santa Ifigenia cemetery. Sunday's solemn ceremony was on occasion of Fathers' Day.

Floral wreaths were placed at the monument and a military ceremony was also held to honor the memory of the man who started Cuba's independence war against Spanish colonial rule in 1868.

On October 10, 1868, Céspedes, a landowner, freed all his slaves and invited them to join in a war against the Spanish colonial government of the island. He made what is known as the Grito de Yara (Cry of Yara), declaring Cuban independence and beginning the Ten Years' War.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes is best remembered for his firm response to Spanish colonialists, when they proposed trading Céspedes' surrender for his imprisoned son's life. Céspedes refused categorically, and responded: "Oscar is not my only son; I'm the father of all those Cubans who are fighting and dying for our nation's freedom."

The independence hero -- known as The Father of the Homeland -- was killed by Spanish troops 140 years ago.

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