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STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM
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ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 1992 - AUGUST 1993

Administered by Blinn College, Brenham, Texas

**STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM
ANNUAL REPORT
September 1, 1992--August 31, 1993**

PURPOSE

An educational institution, the Star of the Republic Museum interprets the history of the Republic of Texas with emphasis on the Brazos Valley. Interpretation is conducted through exhibits, school and group programs, media programs, and community programs. The Museum collects and preserves artifacts to implement the programs and extensively researches to ensure authenticity of the collections and presentation.

Adopted by the Blinn College Board of Trustees, 1979

AUTHORITY

The Star of the Republic Museum, located in the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park, was created by the State of Texas in 1970. House Bill No. 634, of the Sixty-first Legislature, in regular session, transferred the control and custody of the Museum to Blinn College, Brenham, in Washington County, Texas, from the State Parks and Wildlife Commission. The Museum was created to interpret the ten year history of the Republic of Texas from 1836 to 1846, and to commemorate the site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the last capital of the Texas Republic. The Star of the Republic Museum is the only AAM Accredited museum in the state devoted exclusively to collecting and interpreting pre-1850 Texas history and material culture.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Museum received an "Outstanding Interpretive Exhibit Award" from the Texas Historical Commission for the exhibit, "*Sorrow Whispers in the Winds*": *Native Americans and the Republic*. This exhibition examined the interaction of Indians and Anglo settlers during the 1830s and 1840s. The Museum also received a congratulatory resolution from the Texas Senate for winning the award. The Senate Resolution was sponsored by Senator Jim Turner.

ATTENDANCE

The Museum's total attendance for the year was 62,410, compared to the previous year's total of 68,204. This decrease was probably due to a shortage of spring wildflowers, which usually attract many visitors to the Park and Museum. The total number of participants in guided tours totalled 14,215, of which 10,295 were students. This year our Summer Pioneer Day Camp drew 104 participants.

EXHIBITS

The Texas of Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston. This exhibit opened on February 27, 1993 and celebrated the 200th birthdays of two of Texas' most important heroes. It illustrated their remarkable lives by utilizing the Museum's extensive map collection, and relevant artifacts. The exhibit covered the period from 1793, the year they were born, until 1863, the year Houston died. A time line reflecting the important events in the lives of these two men corresponded with the applicable maps of the period. Our visitors were given the opportunity to see significant maps from the history of cartography and were exposed to various map making concepts such as the Mercator Projection.

The exhibit opened on February 27-28, 1993, to coincide with the Texas Independence Day celebration at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park, and will remain on display through the summer of 1994. Serving as a consultant for this project was Mr. J. C. Martin, Director of the San Jacinto Museum of History, and co-author of the books, *Maps of Texas and the Southwest, 1513-1900* and *Contours of Discovery*.

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The number of individuals visiting the Museum in organized tours this year was 14,215, representing 304 groups. Included in this total were 176 student groups, comprised of 10,295 students.

In an attempt to make the history of the Texas Republic more meaningful to area school children, once again the Museum sponsored the Republic of Texas Art Contest for the fourth grade students of Brenham Intermediate School and John C. Webb Middle School in Navasota. Strongly supported by the principals and staff at both schools, a total of 263 students participated. An awards ceremony was held in the Museum theater during the Texas Independence Day Celebration, and the winning entries were exhibited in the Museum from February 29 through May 31, 1993. The judges for the contest were Ms. Juanita Jackson and Ms. Joy Blake from Brenham and Ms. Irene Murphy from Navasota.

The Star of the Republic Museum's "April Folk Weekends" provided demonstrations of traditional folk art and crafts. Every Saturday and Sunday in April, from 1:00-5:00 p.m., the Museum offered visitors a chance to observe and participate in folk demonstrations representing various aspects of everyday life in the Texas Republic. Once again, Mr. Gaylon Powell and friends led a Sacred Harp Singing performance. "Sacred Harp" is an "a cappella" singing tradition that dates back to the 18th century and is characterized by the use of the minor key and unusual four part harmony. Continuing the musical theme, the North Harris County Dulcimer Society played traditional dulcimer and auto harp music. Other activities included "marbleizing" on paper, demonstrated by Carrie Marsh, and "corn husk dollsmaking" taught by Mrs. Eleanor Nance. The total attendance for these four weekends was 5,019.

This was the seventh summer that the Museum has held its "Pioneer Day Camp." Area children had the opportunity to participate in activities which included pioneer food preparation (grinding corn and making butter), carding and spinning cotton, early crafts, traditional games. In addition, Reba Corley, a Park employee, demonstrated pioneer cooking in the Anson Jones kitchen. Camps were held on four Saturdays in June and July, with separate sessions for the younger and the older children. A total of 104 children participated. The participants, ranging in age from six to twelve, came from Brenham, Navasota, Bryan/College Station, Houston, and other surrounding communities.

Schools and other organizations utilized the Museum's "outreach programs," which include a 16 mm film on the Texas Republic; a video of the Sesquicentennial film, "Independence," highlighting the actual signing of the Declaration; and an activity suitcase which examines children's entertainment in the Texas Republic through multi cultural folk toys, games, folk tales, and a music tape. All of these programs are available through the mail, free of charge, except for return postage and insurance. Outreach programs were utilized by over 889 individuals last year.

PUBLICITY

The Museum received excellent publicity this year through articles about exhibits, programs, or excerpts from the *Notes*, appearing in the following publications: Texas Highways, Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Houston Chronicle, and the Austin American Statesman, as well as several stories each in the Bryan Eagle, Navasota Examiner, and Brenham Banner Press.

PUBLICATIONS

The quarterly newsletter, *Notes*, was distributed to over 2,700 individuals last year. One of the topics covered represented excerpts from a catalog written to accompany the Museum exhibit on Native Americans, and was titled "*An Interloper in His Native Home*": *Native Americans and the Republic*. The other two issues were about our 1993 exhibit and were titled *Sam Houston and Washington*, and "*Magnificent Schemes for Texas*": *Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston*.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

In 1992-93 the Museum received six grants totalling \$77,105, including three federal grants, one State agency grant, and two grants from private foundations. One of the federal grants, totalling \$16,000, and was from the Institute of Museum Services/Conservation Support Program. It paid for the hiring of an engineer and architect to prepare schematic designs for replacing the Museum's environmental control systems.

A \$17,105 from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a Humanities Self-Study Grant allowed the Museum to engage a number of consultants to evaluate the Museum's humanities programming, including exhibits, educational programs, and publications. Local scholars such as Dr. Robert Calvert and Dr. Sylvia Grider from Texas A&M participated, as well as members of the Texas museum community, including Mr. Calvin Smith, Director of the Strecker Museum at Baylor University; Mr. Mark Lane, Director of the Witte Museum in San Antonio; and out-of-state consultants such as Mr. Jim Sims from the Smithsonian Institution and Ms. Barbara Franco from the Minnesota Historical Society. A three day workshop was held at the Museum for the staff and consultants. Joining this group for one of the days were additional consultants: Dr. Ron Tyler, Director of the Texas Historical Foundation; Mr. Robert O'Connor, Director of the Texas Committee for the Humanities; Mr. Barry Hutchinson, Interpretive Planner for Texas Parks and Wildlife; and Dr. Deanna Alfred, Curriculum Coordinator for Brenham Independent School District. In addition, the grant paid for the professional staff of the Museum to travel to the Boston, Massachusetts area and to the Bay area around San Francisco to visit museums and consult with their professional staffs about interpretive programs and exhibits.

The Museum received a \$34,000 General Operating Support Grant from the Institute of Museum Services to support a variety of operating costs. Less than 30% of the applicants nationwide received a GOS Grant.

The Texas Committee for the Humanities awarded the Museum a \$5,500 grant to support the Native American Symposium, held in conjunction with the previous years' exhibit. Over two hundred people attended the all-day symposium, which featured seven scholars who presented papers addressing various aspects of Native American life in early Texas.

The Museum received a \$3,500 grant from the Summerlee Foundation in Dallas to pay for the conservation of twelve of the Museum's maps that were used in the new exhibit.

The George and Anne Butler Foundation awarded the Museum \$1,000 to sponsor the reception for the exhibit opening on Saturday, February 27, 1993.

Additions to the Museum's collection included fifteen purchases and twelve gifts. Nineteen books were added to the research library.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Texas Independence Day Celebration held on Saturday and Sunday, February 27 and 28, 1993, was the major event of the year. The estimated attendance was between ten and twelve thousand people during the weekend of activities and events. Approximately 200 persons attended the Museum's exhibit opening on Saturday evening, February 27.

Sponsored by the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park Association, the two-day celebration was highlighted by Governor Ann Richards, who was the keynote speaker. At 2:00 p.m., Texas Highways' "Toast To Texas," was led by the Governor.

VOLUNTEERS

Last year the Museum continued its effort to recruit, train, and utilize volunteers in several areas of museum operation. The result was a total of 33 volunteers contributing over 827 hours for 1992-93. Volunteers assisted with Pioneer Day Camp and in the Museum Gift Shop, and served as tour docents, exhibit helpers, and receptionists. In addition to these regularly scheduled volunteers, the Museum had one student intern last year, Kella Kunz, from Texas A&M University, who worked in the library and with exhibits during the spring. She contributed 74.5 hours. James Slowey, a history major and recent graduate from Texas A&M, helped with the school tours during the spring, assisted with the Pioneer Camp during the summer, and helped the Curator of Exhibits enter collections data into the computer, contributing over 155 hours. Beverly Stone, a local artist from Navasota, contributed over 152 hours restoring most of the frames used in the map exhibit.

PERSONNEL

Museum Staff

Houston McGaugh has been the Director since July of 1987. He received his M.A. in Museum Science from Texas Tech University, and has fifteen years of museum education and administrative experience. He is the past President of the Central Texas Museum Association, served on committees and panels for the Texas Association of Museums, was elected to the AAM Standing Professional Committee on Education for the Mountain/Plains Museums Region, and Washington County Historical Commission. He was also appointed by Governor Ann Richards to serve on the Sam Houston Bicentennial Commission and the Stephen F. Austin Bicentennial Commission. The Director assumes overall responsibility for the long-term and daily operations of the Museum, oversees the curators and staff in their duties, and reports to the governing authorities.

Sherry Humphreys has served as the Curator of Exhibits/Collections at the Museum for nineteen years. She received her B.A. from North Texas State University, and her M.A. in Anthropology from Southern Methodist University. She was a participant in the Winedale Museum Seminar, the A.A.S.L.H. Exhibit Seminar, and has won seven awards for interpretive exhibits from the Texas Historical Commission. She has served on the Publications Committee and other committees, such as Disaster Recovery and Prevention, for the Texas Association of Museums, conducted workshops on exhibit design, served on the Board of the Central Texas Museum Association, acted as a consultant for other museums, and works with local history groups. The Curator of Exhibits/Collections is responsible for accessioning, cataloging, conservation and storage of the artifact collections, and directs the exhibit program.

Ellen Murry served as the Curator of Education, with responsibility for publications. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from Louisiana State University, and her M.A. in History from Texas A&M University. She has been at the Museum for seven years. She has attended an A.A.S.L.H. Seminar on Museum Management, Winedale Seminar on Interpretation for History Museums, Smithsonian Workshop on Museum Management, and chaired sessions at the annual A.A.S.L.H. meetings in Seattle and Detroit, where she served on both of the program committees. She is an active member of the Texas Association of Museums, where she has served on the annual Program Committee, Nominating Committee, and chaired sessions on Museum Education. She is active with the Central Texas Museum Association, and speaks regularly to genealogical, historical, and civic groups. The Curator of Education has responsibility for all educational and interpretive programs, and for all publications. Ms. Murry submitted her resignation effective July 31, 1993.

Gayle Piper is the Administrative Assistant. She attended Blinn College and Texas A&M University. She is responsible for managing the Museum's Gift Shop, including part-time clerks, and coordinating all Museum orders and purchases. Ms. Piper also maintains the library, the computer network, and all Museum files.

Additional Staff:

Cordelia Lauter, general assistant
Edith Dickschat, curatorial assistant
Carolyn Skopik, part-time gift shop
Carolyn Barlow, part-time gift shop

Karen Gaskamp, part-time gift shop
Bobbi Lee, Gift Shop attendant/clerical
Ladonna Vest, part-time tour guide
James Slowey, part-time gift shop

Blinn College Administration

Walter C. Schwartz, President

John D. Barkman, Vice President Administration and Planning and has administrative responsibilities for the Star of the Republic Museum

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Donald Stafford, Vice President Student Services

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1992/93 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	Actual	Budgeted
State Appropriations	\$187,393.00	\$187,393.00
*Transfer from Reserve	12,486.00	1,268.00
Museum Shop Revenue	59,000.00	80,000.00
Interest Income	8,532.61	7,500.00
Programs & Services Income	3,624.50	2,500.00
Donations & Miscellaneous	8,110.55	4,000.00
IMS Grants	50,000.00	50,000.00
NEH Grant	17,105.00	17,105.00
Other Grants	17,215.00	14,500.00
Education Program Revenue	2,557.50	5,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	368,424.16	369,266.00
Salaries, Wages, & Benefits	191,395.01	176,310.00
Collections	1,726.35	3,000.00
Equipment	3,599.19	5,500.00
Supplies	16,312.88	16,500.00
Supplies, Custodial	766.59	2,500.00
Travel	6,479.55	7,566.00
Utilities	43,611.96	46,500.00
*Repair & Maintenance	22,298.39	10,250.00
Library	2,055.19	3,600.00
Publications	2,312.18	8,000.00
Insurance	2,601.00	4,000.00
Education Services/Freight/Other	3,844.04	6,100.00
Education Program Expense	2,847.05	3,500.00
Administrative	18,000.00	18,000.00
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	317,849.44	\$311,326.00
Museum Store Expenses	50,574.72	57,900.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$368,424.16	\$369,226.00
Difference	\$0.00	0.00

* Unscheduled building maintenance