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STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM
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ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 1991 - AUGUST 1992

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**STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM
ANNUAL REPORT
September 1, 1991--August 31, 1992**

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 insure 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 museum in the state devoted exclusively to collecting and interpreting pre 1850 Texas history and material culture.

HIGHLIGHTS

The major highlight of the year was the completion of the Museum's new Collection Storage and Research Annex. Completed in early June, the 4,700 square foot facility provides over 2,000 square feet of climate and humidity controlled storage space for the Museum's collection of artifacts and documents. The storage area is furnished with eleven custom-made Delta cabinets, which meet the highest standards for museum collections. A portion of the funds used to purchase these cabinets came from a grant from the Institute of Museum services. The remaining space in the new annex houses a conservation laboratory, darkroom, paint room, woodworking shop, and two curatorial offices.

The Star of the Republic Museum received a Mitchell A. Wilder Silver Certificate Award from the Texas Association of Museums. The award recognizes excellence in design, and was given for the Museum's book, *Notes on the Republic*.

ATTENDANCE

The Museum experienced a decrease in overall attendance last year. The total attendance for the year was 68,204, compared to the previous year's total of 74,382. This decrease was probably due to severe flooding in December, which decreased the amount of spring wildflowers, which attract many visitors to the Park and Museum. However, the Museum did show an increase in the number of participants in guided tours, from 12,602 the previous year to 15,733 last year. There were 149 participants in our Pioneer Camp this year compared with 157 last year.

EXHIBITS

2.

On Saturday, February 29, 1992, the Star of the Republic Museum opened a new temporary exhibition, *"Sorrow Whispers in the Winds": Native Americans and the Republic*. This exhibition examined the interaction of Indians and Anglo settlers during the 1830's and 1840's, not only a period of assimilation and accommodation, but also one of bitterness and bloodshed. Using eyewitness accounts and authentic Native American artifacts, this exhibit told the story of Indian refugees from the United States, such as the Cherokees, who immigrated to Texas only to be expelled in a ruthless land grab; the skirmishes among the various Texas tribes, such as the intense animosity between the Lipan Apaches and the Comanches; the confrontations with settlers and misconduct by both Anglos and Indians; and finally, the ever changing policies of the Republic government, from peaceful coexistence to removal and extermination.

"Sorrow Whispers in the Winds" featured a fascinating collection of Native American artifacts, including: a beaded Comanche cradle board or baby carrier, a beaded Delaware pouch from the Republic period, an Apache dress with metal, bell-like ornaments on the skirt, and numerous trade items, such as a bridle with Indian and Mexican made silver work, and an iron pipe-tomahawk. In addition, the exhibit contained a unique assortment of nineteenth century Native American baskets, clothing, examples of bead work, and buffalo paraphernalia. *"Sorrow Whispers in the Winds"* briefly examined the present day Indian scene, including a small mixed media art exhibition by contemporary Texas Native Americans. The exhibit was on display through October of 1992.

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The number of individuals visiting the Museum in organized tours this year was 15,733, representing 386 groups, which is 700 more participants and 80 more groups than the previous year. Included in this total were 215 student groups, comprised of 11,884 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, Navasota. Strongly supported by the principals and staff at both schools, a total of 297 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, February 29 through May 31, 1992. The judges for the contest were Ms. Jane Cavanaugh, Ms. Nita Ross, and Ms. Thelma Zwiener.

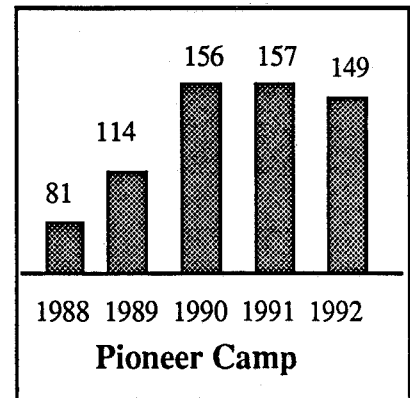
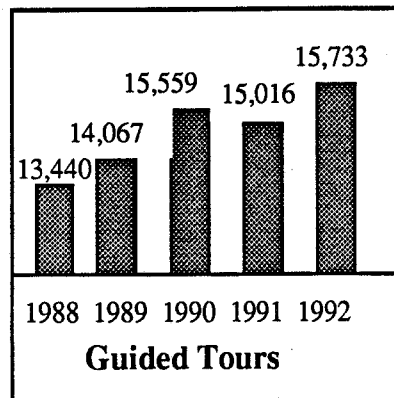
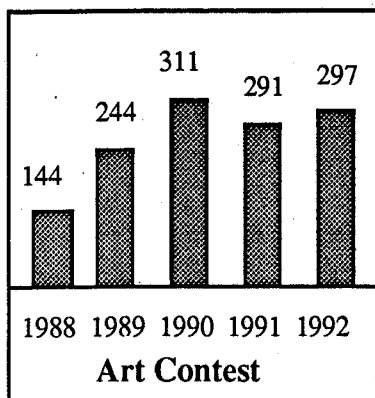
The Star of the Republic Museum's "April Folk Weekends," provided demonstrations of traditional folk art and crafts. Every Saturday and Sunday in April, from 1:00-5:00 p.m., the Museum will offer visitors a chance to observe and participate in folk demonstrations representing various aspects of everyday life in the Texas Republic.

In association with the Museum's newest exhibition, *"Sorrow Whispers in the Winds": Native Americans and the Republic*, there was an emphasis on Native American folkways last spring. Mr. Tomas Ramirez from the San Antonio Council of Native Americans demonstrated traditional Indian bead work; Mr. Dan Rowe showed how to make bows; and Mr. Neal Stilley interpreted Native American material culture by examining the ways Indians exploited their environment in making their tools, as well as feeding and clothing themselves. Finally, Mr. O.T. Baker, founder of the Texas Folk Life Festival at the Institute of Texan Cultures San Antonio, presented a program in Native American herbal medicines.

Music was also an important aspect to last year's programs, with Mr. J.C. High Eagle, a nationally known flute player, demonstrating Native American musical traditions. Once again, Mr. Gaylon Powell and friends led a Sacred Harp Singing performance. "Sacred Harp" is an "a cappella" singing tradition that goes 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. There was also "traditional blacksmithing" with Mr. Randy Hall.

This was the sixth 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, a live snake demonstration, a nature hike, firearm programs, and a live "Buckskinner" show. A program about the Native Americans who lived in Texas was presented by Mr. Ray Olachia, himself a Mescalero Apache. The camp was held on four Saturdays in June and July, with separate sessions for the younger and the older children. A total of 149 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 ethnic activity suitcase which examines children's entertainment in the Texas Republic through folk toys, games, folk tales, and a music tape. The Museum's newest outreach program is geared to junior high and high school students. A slide show, "The World of the Texas Republic," examines the political, economic, and cultural events transpiring in the rest of the world during the 1830's and 1840's. *The Republic of Texas* videotape seen in the Museum theater, and the videotape, *Prometheus Proud's Miracle Medicine Show* are also part of the lending program. All of these programs are available through the mail and are free of charge except for return postage and insurance. Outreach programs were seen by over 3,785 individuals last year. In addition, approximately 700 people, in various groups and organizations, heard programs presented by the Museum staff, primarily Ellen Murry, Curator of Education.



PUBLICITY

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

PUBLICATIONS

4.

The quarterly newsletter, Notes, was distributed to over 2,700 individuals last year. The topics covered represented excerpts from a catalog written to accompany the Museum exhibit on Native Americans, "*Sorrow Whispers in the Winds*." The four part series included: "Native Americans and the Republic," "Expel, Defeat, or Exterminate," and "An Interloper in His Native Home."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum produced a thirty-two page booklet which describes the Native American experience during the Texas Republic period. While the booklet was written to accompany the exhibit, the publication examined the topic in much greater detail and was designed to effectively address the subject once the exhibit was dismantled.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

In 1991-92 the Museum received five grants totalling \$71,277; several of these grants supported the Native American exhibition, symposium, and booklet. The Texas Committee for the Humanities awarded the Museum \$6,500; the National Endowment for the Humanities granted \$1,000 in matching funds through the TCH; the George and Anne Butler Foundation provided \$2,000 to match the NEH grant; and The Summerlee Foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Museum.

The Museum received a \$31,827 General Operating Support Grant from the Institute of Museum Services to support a variety of operating costs. A portion of these funds were used to hire two summer employees to assist in moving the Museum's collection into the new storage facility. Ms. Josephine Arevalo, a recent Texas A&M graduate, and Celeste Sauls, a recent graduate of Baylor University were hired in these positions. The Museum also received \$24,950 from the Institute of Museum Services for a Conservation Implementation Grant to hire an Environmental Conservation consultant to assess the environment of the Museum with regard to climate and humidity control. The grant also paid for a portion of the new collection storage cabinets and conservation supplies.

The Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park Association donated \$100 to help cover expenses for the exhibit opening on February 28, 1992. 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 29 and March 1, 1992, 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 29.

Sponsored by the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park Association, the two-day celebration was highlighted by Ron Stone, who was the keynote speaker. At 2:00 p.m., Texas Highways "Toast To Texas," was led by Mr. Sam Houston, IV.

In July, the Museum hosted a Central Texas Museum Association workshop entitled "Lighting My Exhibits", which discussed how to have attractive and affordable lighting for exhibits, and observe recommended conservation requirements. There were approximately 30 participants from surrounding museums in attendance.

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 57 volunteers contributing over 1,606 hours for 1991-92. For Pioneer Day Camp last summer, 54 volunteers contributed over 586 hours. Other areas of volunteer efforts were in the Museum Gift Shop, Tour docents, Exhibit helpers, and receptionist. In addition to our more regular volunteers, the Museum had three student interns last year. Christina Weisler worked in the library and with exhibits during the month of January, and contributed 128 hours. Josephine Arevalo, a senior history major from Texas A&M, helped with the school tours during the spring and helped with the Pioneer Camp during the summer, contributing over 418 hours. Jennifer Ellis, another Texas A&M history major, worked during the summer to assist moving the collection into the new facility. Ms. Ellis contributed 474 hours.

The Museum hosted a volunteer appreciation dinner at the Museum to express its thanks, share its successes, and stress the continuing need for volunteer support and assistance. Volunteer recruitment and utilization at the Museum continues to be a priority for the coming year. Volunteers not only assist with the day to day operational needs of the Museum, but serve as a positive outreach from the Museum to the local communities.

FUTURE EXHIBIT PLANS

Major temporary exhibits in the Showers-Brown room will open every spring in association with the Texas Independence Day celebration. Renovation of the more permanent exhibits, travelling exhibits, and other programming will be developed as needed or as available.

FEBRUARY 27, 1993

The Texas of Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston. This exhibit will celebrate the 200th birthdays of two of Texas' most important heroes, and will illustrate their remarkable lives by utilizing the Museum's extensive map collection, and related artifacts. The exhibit will cover 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 will correspond with the proper maps of the period. Our visitors will also be given the opportunity to see significant maps from the history of cartography and will be exposed to various map making concepts such as the Mercator projection.

The exhibit is scheduled to premiere on Saturday and Sunday, February 27-28, 1993, to celebrate Texas Independence Day at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park, and will remain on display until the end of November. Serving as a consultant for this project is 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*. We also plan to borrow several maps and other artifacts from institutions around the state.

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 is a member of the Cotton Heritage Association Board (a new program of the National Trust), Washington County Historical Commission, and Washington County Arts Council. He was also appointed to serve on the Sam Houston Bicentennial Commission, by Governor Ann Richards. 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 eighteen 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 six awards for interpretive exhibits from the Texas Historical Commission. She has served on the Publications 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 is 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.

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, keeping track of all Museum orders and purchases. Ms. Piper also maintains the library, the computer network, and all Museum files.

Cordelia Lauter, general assistant
Edith Dickschat, curatorial assistant
Carolyn Skopik, part-time gift shop
Celeste Sauls, summer assistant

Stephanie Stolze, part-time gift shop
Bobbi Lee, Gift Shop attendant
Ladonna Vest, part-time tour guide
Josephine Arevalo, summer assistant

Blinn College Administration

7.

Walter C. Schwartz, President

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

Donald E. Voelter, Executive Vice President Fiscal Affairs

Charles L. Cottingham, Vice President Academic Affairs

Donald Stafford, Vice President Student Services

Blinn College Board of Trustees

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Norwood Lange

Gladys S. Hogan

Leon B. Toubin

1990/91 FINANCIAL INFORMATION (not audited)

| | Actual | Budgeted |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| State Appropriations | \$187,393.00 | \$187,393.00 |
| State Benefits | 10,950.00 | 10,950.00 |
| Transfer from Reserve | 25,772.00 | 37,703.87 |
| Museum Shop Revenue* | 80,000.00 | 67,868.52 |
| Interest Income | 20,000.00 | 19,066.87 |
| Programs & Services Income | 1,500.00 | 0.00 |
| Donations & Miscellaneous | 5,500.00 | 361.00 |
| IMS Grants | 56,777.00 | 56,777.00 |
| Other Grants | 6,500.00 | 10,000.00 |
| Education Program Revenue | 6,500.00 | 3,425.70 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$409,392.00 | \$393,545.96 |
| Salaries, Wages, & Benefits | \$201,117.00 | 200,332.70 |
| Collections | 3,000.00 | 1,212.75 |
| Equipment | 20,500.00 | 4,978.04 |
| Supplies, Office & Postage | 9,000.00 | 7,288.19 |
| Supplies, Exhibits | 9,000.00 | 6,479.82 |
| Supplies, Conservation | 1,500.00 | 3,015.15 |
| Supplies, Custodial | 2,000.00 | 1,530.41 |
| Travel | 3,400.00 | 1,862.25 |
| Utilities | 40,100.00 | 33,766.76 |
| Repair & Maintenance | 10,250.00 | 39,820.04 |
| Library | 3,500.00 | 2,041.19 |
| Publications | 16,500.00 | 9,633.02 |
| Insurance | 4,000.00 | 3,271.00 |
| Education Services | 5,500.00 | 1,835.65 |
| Freight & Other | 2,000.00 | 5,238.35 |
| Education Program Expense | 3,500.00 | 1,682.80 |
| Administrative | 18,000.00 | 18,090.80 |
| TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES | \$352,867.00 | \$342,078.42 |
| Museum Store Expenses | 56,525.00 | 50,568.42 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$409,392.00 | \$392,646.65 |
| Difference | \$0.00 | \$899.31 |