

Z  
B500.3  
AN789  
1995-96

STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM  
ANNUAL REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 1995 - AUGUST 1996

Government Publications  
Texas State Documents

MAY 29 1997 *pl*

Depository  
Dallas Public Library

Administered by Blinn College, Brenham, Texas



Accredited by the American Association of Museums







**STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM  
ANNUAL REPORT  
September 1, 1995--August 31, 1996**

**PURPOSE**

*An educational institution, the Star of the Republic Museum interprets the history of the Republic of Texas and its influences. 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 Texas 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.

**ATTENDANCE**

The Museum's total attendance for the year was **56,553**. The Curator of Education and her assistant conducted 499 programs and tours for 14,470 individuals.

**EXHIBITS**

**Museum Artifacts Showcased Around State**

Two artifacts from the collections of the Star of the Republic Museum have been on tour recently as part of exhibits celebrating Texas' annexation. Created in 1936 by Pompeo Coppini to commemorate the centennial celebration of Texas Independence, the nine foot plaster statue of Sam Houston held a place of prominence as part of the "Texas 150" exhibit at the 1995 State Fair of Texas in Dallas. From its opening on September 29 through closing on October 22, the State Fair drew an estimated 3.6 million visitors.

Also celebrating statehood, the Capitol Complex Visitors' Center in Austin produced the exhibit "Celebrating 150 Years of Texas Statehood: 1845-1995," for which the Museum loaned the only known official Lone Star flag from the Republic of Texas. The exhibit opened July 3 and continued through December 31, 1995. The Visitors' Complex received over 34,000 visitors by the end of December.



## **THE MEXICAN WAR**

The Star of the Republic Museum presented a thought-provoking exhibit of the results of Texas annexation. "The Mexican War" exhibit opened on March 2, 1996, and continued through September. In a curious way, the Mexican War was a partial result of the event "Texans" commemorated in 1996, Texas' annexation to the union in 1846. A long chain of events, beginning with the settlement of Texas by the Spanish, and including the Texas Revolution, gave rise to this war with Mexico, which still claimed Texas. It ended with the U.S. (called by some "the Colossus of the North") giving Mexico \$15 million in return for the U.S. annexation of a huge chunk of land. Primarily fought in Mexico, it left behind devastation and death on both sides, and, some say, a conflict which endures to this day. Ending the war with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, the United States gained the undisputed control of Texas, much of present-day Colorado, and all of Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and California. This added a total of 1,193,061 square miles to its borders and consequently led to national conflicts over the newly acquired lands.

The exhibit displayed 34 original prints, a reverse painting under glass, maps, an original war drawing, a cast iron bas-relief of General Scott, a handwoven Mexican flag, 14 rare pieces of Texian Campaign china, broadsides, newspapers, books, a Polk-Dallas campaign ribbon, and a letter from Andrew Jackson to Sam Houston discussing possible war with Mexico. It also included General Zachary Taylor memorabilia such as a snuffbox, a quilt, a coverlet, fabric depicting Mexican War scenes, and a "Rough and Ready" bandbox. A large map from the period showed the geographical locations of the war. Aside from a diversity of unique artifacts, certain labels were keyed to the two opposing points of view by using appropriate national flags. Small replica flags decorated the entrance to the Showers-Brown Gallery.

### **Texas Historical Commission, "Outstanding Interpretive Exhibit Award"**

Kit Neumann, Coordinator of Local History Programs for the Texas Historical Commission, presented the Museum with its ninth award in ten years for "Outstanding Interpretive Exhibit." The award recognized the Museum's recent exhibition, *The Mexican War*.

Further recognition came from a Texas Senate Proclamation issued by Senator Jim Turner. The proclamation "commended the Museum for preserving, protecting, researching, and displaying historical artifacts that enhance our understanding of our relationship to Mexico throughout history."

## **EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

### ***Tours***

The number of individuals visiting the Museum in organized tours this year was 14,470 representing 328 groups. Of this total, 212 were student groups, comprised of 11,145 students, reflecting a 31% increase in the number of students toured last year.

The Museum offered the opportunity for school groups to participate in four expanded programs. These programs utilized a hands-on approach to present a unique educational experience for students. Using the inquiry teaching technique, exhibits, artifacts, films, and interpretive programs, the students received an in-depth, interdisciplinary interpretation of Republic life in Texas within the context of national history. This program led to the development of the Discovery Room, where students explored Republic life through hands-on artifacts and visual material. Topics addressed by the program include childhood, medicine, cotton, and Native Americans.





Begun in the Spring of 1995, the Museum offered a new option for adult visitors: expanded adult tours. Planned for adult groups of twenty or more, participants could explore the history of the Republic in greater detail. The "*Behind the Scenes*" tour allowed the visitor to take a peek at the Museum most people never see; to examine the process of artifact research and exhibit development, and how to see the Museum preserves and manages artifacts. "*Fightin' the Devil*" examined the efforts of organized religion and inspired individuals, to establish a foothold in a land where the citizens were often indifferent to religion. In "*The Texas Mystique*," visitors explored the allure of Texas, born in the fight for freedom, steeped in myth, and shaped by individuals who created an identity for the state that has been able to survive into the 20th century. In its first full year of operation, 269 adults participated in the expanded adult tours, an increase of 169 individuals over last year.

### ***Art Contest***

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 these schools, a total of 230 students participated. An award ceremony was held in the Museum theater during the Texas Independence Day Celebration, and the winning entries were exhibited in the Museum from March 2, through May 16, 1996. The judges for the contest were Mr. Ralph Speich of Navasota, representing the Historical Commission of Grimes County; Mr. Kenneth McCullough, from the History Department at Blinn College in Brenham; and Ms. Jane Viertel of Brenham, representing the Fine Arts League of Brenham. The Grand Prize and First Prize winners of the Art Contest were awarded scholarships to attend the 1996 Pioneer Day Camp; this generous gift was provided by William E. Swisher II, descendant of Declaration signer, James G. Swisher.

### ***April Folk Weekends***

The Star of the Republic Museum's "April Folk Weekends" provided demonstrations of traditional folk art and crafts. Following Easter weekend, every Saturday and Sunday in April, throughout the day, the Museum offered visitors a chance to observe and participate in folk demonstrations representing various aspects of everyday life in the Texas Republic.

On Saturday, April 13, visitors were treated to an "a cappella" singing tradition that dates back to the 18th century and includes an unusual four part harmony. The "Texas Sacred Harp Singers" performed the singing that was very much a part of the rural traditions in early 19th century Texas and is seldom heard today outside of certain Baptist denominations. Another musical treat was offered on Sunday, April 14, when the North Harris County Dulcimer Society performed traditional dulcimer and autoharp music.

During the remainder of April, folk demonstrations included: the art and skill of Bill Phillips demonstrating woodcarving; the meticulous and creative work of Bertie Edwards demonstrating spinning and weaving; and the intricate and labor-intensive craft of chair caning demonstrated by Don Henthorne and Lou Rose. April Folk Weekends concluded on April 28 with participation by Don Hann who educated and entertained visitors with his craft of producing handmade musical instruments from native Texas woods.





## *Pioneer Day Camp*

The Star of the Republic Museum invited children between the ages of six and eleven to take a journey back in time and discover the way people lived before electricity, cars, and television, by participating in the tenth annual Pioneer Day Camp. The camp was held on Saturday, July 27.

Participants had the opportunity to explore many aspects of pioneer lifestyles and cultures of Texas through making pottery, quilting, leather lacing, grinding corn, and making butter. Campers also examined Native American life by producing crafts and playing traditional Native American games. Native American Ray Olachia discussed and demonstrated the use of many Native American items, including various arrowheads/projectile points, stone tools, the atlatl, arrows, and shields. A total of 24 children, representing 10 communities in Texas and one in Ireland, participated in the camp.

## *Outreach*

Schools and other organizations utilized the Museum's "outreach programs," which included a 16 mm film and video on the Texas Republic; a video of the Sesquicentennial film, "Independence," highlighting the actual signing of the Declaration; a video on nineteenth-century medicine; and an activity suitcase which examines entertainment in the Texas Republic through multicultural folk toys, games, folk tales, and recorded music. All of these programs were available through the mail, free of charge, except for return postage and insurance. Outreach programs were utilized by 420 individuals last year.

The Museum's Education Department implemented an "in-school" program for pre-kindergarten through first grade in Navasota and Brenham. The program was about Native Americans, their lives, and culture during the Texas Republic, and reached 261 students in 15 classes.

In conjunction with the Republic of Texas Art Contest, a half-hour "in-school" program on the Republic period was developed which implemented props and hands-on items. In the local communities, 600 students received the program.

The Museum has begun offering the opportunity for Cub Scouts to receive their Texas Badge. Badge requirements address the subjects of Texas history and the different ethnic groups of Texas. The program included an examination of Texas symbols, discussion of the Republic period, with particular attention focused on prominent Texas individuals, and participation in the hands-on program about Texas Native Americans. This year the Museum assisted 93 scouts in completing the requirements to earn their Texas Badges.

To further expand its boundaries and address a need among educators, the Museum has implemented an in-school outreach program. Based on the expanded programs offered at the Museum, this pilot program was designed to reach an underserved audience. The first of these programs was presented in August of 1996 to 101 fourth graders. These students participated in the hands-on activities utilizing reproduction artifacts, and produced a take-home activity. After the formal program, students were encouraged to come to the Museum with their families to explore Republic history in greater depth.

The article "Friendship in Adversity' Freemasonry and the Texas Republic" which appeared in the Spring 1995 issue of *Notes* was reprinted in two publications this year. The first was in the Fulton Mansion Docent Organization newsletter, *Messenger*. It also appeared in *The Occasional Bulletin of the Texas Lodge of Research*, a masonic publication with a readership of 1500.



In addition, the Museum staff presented a variety of programs to various civic and cultural organizations. In April, the Curator of Education spoke with the nearly 50 educators in attendance at the "Growing the Seeds of Environmental Education" conference sponsored by the Texas Association for Environmental Education and Houston Independent School District's Outdoor Education Center. The Museum also hosted various meetings and conferences, including the Texas Municipal League meeting in February, the annual meeting of the East Texas Historical Association in February, and the FAM Tour for San Antonio tour operators in May.

The Curator of Exhibits/Collections spoke to several civic groups and in May hosted a group attending the ALFAM Regional Meeting in College Station. Several members of this national association of living history farms, including five costume historians, spent the day at the Museum examining and photographing items of early nineteenth century clothing. Both Curators continue to answer telephone and mail requests for information and photographs for reproduction in textbooks and other publications.

## PUBLICATIONS

The quarterly newsletter, *Notes*, was distributed to over 1,500 individuals last year. Topics presented in the *Notes* included: "**The Republic of Texas is no more**" which gave readers the opportunity to learn about the national and international ramifications of the struggle for Texas statehood. "**An 'Unholy War'**" focused on the Museum exhibition on the Mexican War, which was a direct result of the annexation of Texas by the United States. "**So Accurately and So Universally Known**" addressed the development of lithography in conjunction with the Mexican War, which made the Mexican War the first war to be illustrated and have the pictures duplicated for mass distribution. The summer issue "**'Portrait' of a Founder: Dr. Asa Hoxey**" examined the life and likeness of one of Washington's founding fathers, who became one of the most prominent figures during the revolution and during the development of the Republic.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### *Texas Independence Day*

Sponsored by the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park Association, and coordinated by the Museum staff, the Texas Independence Day Celebration held on Saturday and Sunday, March 2 and 3, 1996, was the major event of the year. Serving as keynote speaker for the celebration was United States Senator, Kay Bailey Hutchison. Estimated attendance was between eight and ten thousand people during the weekend of activities and events. Approximately 150 persons attended the Museum's exhibit opening on Saturday evening, March 2. Additionally, the Museum hosted a number of demonstrators presenting traditional nineteenth-century crafts and skills throughout the Museum.

## VOLUNTEERS

Last year the Museum continued its effort to recruit, train, and utilize volunteers in several areas of museum operation, providing invaluable assistance in the Museum Gift Shop, and serving as tour docents, exhibit helpers, and receptionists. This core group of fifteen volunteers assisted the Museum throughout the year. Volunteers also assisted with special events, including: the Christmas Program, Texas Independence Day, April Folk Weekends, and Pioneer Day Camp. A total of 51 volunteers contributed 379.5 hours for 1995-96.





On February 15, the Star of the Republic Museum held a recognition and appreciation luncheon for the many hours of service provided by the Museum *Star* volunteers. Volunteers were treated to a sampling of the new adult tour programs offered by the Museum, followed by a discussion of volunteer opportunities. Nearly 20 volunteers attended. The Museum could not provide the quality nor quantity of programs and services without the help of the *Stars*. The Museum staff offers their sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the volunteers.

#### DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTION

Wesley and Sallie Anderson, Calvert, Texas: Glassmaker's handtools, hand-powered cotton gin from early 1800, wooden shaving horse for shingle making, and a spike-toothed harrow.

Margaret B. and Elliott Goodwin, Navasota, Texas: Documents and photographs about the Park history and Texas history, including the Somervell Expedition.

Jim Lather and John Shaw, Chappell Hill, Texas: Historical postcard of Independence Hall, early reconstruction.

Charles W. Rivers, Charlottesville, Virginia: Oil portrait of Asa Hoxey, done in the 1830's. Dr. Hoxey was a resident of Washington County.

Mr. and Mrs. N.L. Winfield, Jr., Chappell Hill, Texas: Documents from the early 19th century Washington County and Washington, Texas.

Elizabeth Rice Winston, Washington, Texas: Extensive collection of historical papers from Washington County from the 1800's.

#### Converted from Loans to Gifts:

Ms. Joyce Matthews McCorkle, Ocean Park, Washington: Portrait in charcoal of William Wescott Browning, Chappell Hill, Texas, settler.

Jean Alexander-Williams, Lakeland, Florida: Land grant signed by Anson Jones and drafting set from the early 19th century.



## 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 twenty years of museum education and administrative experience. He is the past President of the Central Texas Museum Association, has served on committees and panels for the Texas Association of Museums, served on the AAM Standing Professional Committee on Education for the Mountain/Plains Museums Region and is currently a member of the 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. In 1995 he was elected to serve on the Texas Association of Museums' administrative council. 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 twenty-one 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.

Lisa Kalmus joined the Museum in December of 1993 as Curator of Education. She received her B.A. degree in History from Trinity University in San Antonio, and her M.A. degree in History from Texas A&M University. While attending Texas A&M University, she served as president of the Sigma Rho Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta from 1991-1992 and chaired the Spring 1992 Regional Meeting. She participated in the Winedale Museum Seminar on Administration and Interpretation held in November of 1994. In 1995 she was appointed State Membership Representative for the American Association for State and Local History. Ms. Kalmus is responsible for all areas of education at the Museum, including direction of all educational and interpretive programs, preparation and production of educational materials, recruitment and training of volunteers, coordinating special events production and programming, and is also responsible for Museum publicity and publications.

Diana Evans assumed the position of Administrative Assistant on March 1, 1995. She is responsible for managing the Museum's Gift Shop, including part-time clerks, and coordinating all Museum orders and purchases. Ms. Evans maintains the computer network and all Museum files.

Effie Wellman, Museum Secretary, is responsible for giftshop inventory, reception, and serves as assistant to the Administrative Assistant.

Shari Irwin is the part-time education assistant and works with the Curator of Education in presenting tours and programs, and education development.

### Additional Staff:

Cordelia Lauter, General Assistant  
Edith Dickschat, Curatorial Assistant  
Christie Roese, part-time Gift Shop  
Linda Warzon, part-time Gift Shop

Virgie Griffith, part-time Gift Shop  
Misti Hartstack, part-time Gift Shop  
Michelle Wendt, part-time Gift Shop  
Carol Kidder, part-time Gift Shop





## Blinn College Administration

Donald E. Voelter, President  
John D. Barkman, Executive Vice President  
{administrative responsibilities for the Star of the Republic Museum}  
John Robertson, Vice President Business Services  
Ronald L. Johnston, Vice President Academic Affairs  
John D. Harris, Vice President Student Services  
Barbara Pearson, Vice President, Brazos County Campuses

## Blinn College Board of Trustees for Academic Year 1995-1996

Henry J. Boehm, Jr., M.D., President  
Atwood C. Kenjura, Vice President  
Sudie Schaer Stark, Secretary  
Norwood Lange  
Leon B. Toubin  
L. J. Lacina, Jr.  
Steve M. Westbrook

## 1995/96 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

<u>Income</u>	Actual	Budgeted
State Appropriations	\$345,049.00	\$349,487.00
Transfer from Reserve	18,154.00	29,952.00
Museum Shop Revenue	82,456.00	80,000.00
IMS Grants	0.00	28,817.00
Education Program Revenue	1,741.00	13,500.00
Other Income	44,565.00	31,683.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>491,965.00</b>	<b>533,439.00</b>
<u>Expenses</u>		
Salaries, Wages, & Benefits	174,796.91	202,441.00
Collections	3,456.90	5,000.00
Equipment	4,813.13	4,850.00
Supplies	8,670.91	13,500.00
Travel	3,173.68	3,400.00
Utilities	36,071.71	43,000.00
Repair & Maintenance	7,752.50	9,500.00
Library	1,848.04	2,600.00
Publications	2,321.19	2,000.00
Insurance	5,365.00	3,000.00
Education Services/Freight/Other	3,477.65	6,250.00
Administrative	18,000.00	18,000.00
Construction	156,805.00	156,805.00
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$426,552.62</b>	<b>\$470,346.00</b>
Museum Store Expenses	60,197.30	56,300.00
Education Program Expense	4,385.55	6,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$491,135.47</b>	<b>\$532,646.00</b>

