

The Substance of Life: Texas Through the Eyes of Theodore Gentilz

Louis Theodore Jean Gentilz (1819 –1906), a Frenchman, immigrated to Texas in 1844 with French colonizer, Henri Castro. He served as Castro’s chief engineer and surveyor, laying out the town of Castroville and helping establish other towns within the colony. Severe drought in 1848 forced him to leave Castroville for San Antonio, where he became immersed in the Mexican culture. The scenes that he saw each day soon turned into drawings and paintings. Theodore Gentilz is most remembered for the pictorial record he created of the life and customs of Mexican Texans in the last half of the 19th century.

“The Substance of Life: Texas Through the Eyes of Theodore Gentilz,” an exhibit opening at the Star of the Republic Museum on March 2, features 16 paintings which provide a valuable record of the period’s events, characters, architecture and landscapes with scenes from everyday life. Included in the exhibit are *Lavandera* (“Laundress”), *Barrilleros en San Felipe* (“Plantation Workers at San Felipe”), and *Tlachiqueros* (“Men Gathering Juice from the Maguey”), which illustrated common methods of making a living in old San Antonio. During this period, San Antonio was a town of lime-washed adobe houses and *jacales* with traditional street vendors hawking their wares or supplies such as wood, water, or colorful birds. Characteristic to Gentilz’s work, the paintings reflect vibrant colors, as well as an attention to detail.

In addition to painting street scenes, Gentilz researched significant historical events in Texas to preserve these scenes with his paintbrush. He depicted the already decaying Spanish missions in the San Antonio area, and after interviewing many local inhabitants who were eyewitnesses to the battle at the Alamo, he memorialized that fateful scene. He also produced a highly detailed map of northern Mexico in 1882, which recorded capitals, boundaries, highways, rivers, haciendas, mines, horse paths, and watering places. His keen power of observation and devotion to realism helped preserve the history of a culture that was too often inadequately recorded or totally neglected.

Gentilz sold very few of his paintings, meeting his economic demands through surveying, and later, teaching at St. Mary’s College in San Antonio. Upon his death in 1906, his wife inherited over one hundred pieces of artwork.

“The Substance of Life: Texas Through the Eyes of Theodore Gentilz” will be open through May 31, 2013. The Museum is grateful to the anonymous lender who made this exhibit possible.





***In the Shadow of Giants* to be Performed During Annual Celebration**

In his piece ***In The Shadow Of Giants***, native Texan troubadour Craig Toungate portrays his great grandfather, Texas pioneer settler and member of Sam Houston's army, Meredith Toungate. The show tells the story of the Texas Revolution from the fall of the Alamo to the Battle of San Jacinto using original songs and narration based on eyewitness accounts and primary documents. This riveting show is full of drama and unexpected humor told with memorable music and narration from a true Texas character. The performance will mark the 177th anniversary of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Performances will be on Saturday, March 2 at 1:00 pm in the Amphitheater and on Sunday, March 3 at 1:00 pm in the Museum Theater. Saturday's show will last an hour and a half, with a 15-minute intermission, and Sunday's show will be an abbreviated version lasting 45 minutes. Don't miss this unique and entertaining story about our Texas heritage!

"Texas Pioneers" Girl Scout Day

Four area Girl Scout troops attended "Texas Pioneers" an interactive learning and discovery workshop on Saturday, January 19. The scouts took home with them an experience of pioneer life in Texas....and hand-made brooms, butter, cornhusk and rag dolls, and molasses taffy! They also earned a "Texas Pioneer" patch! The next opportunity to earn this patch will be on April 27. Contact Elaine Platt at 936-878-2461, ext. 236 for details. Reservations required.

FIRST NOTICE

As a state-funded institution, we are periodically required to ask our readers if they wish to continue to receive our free quarterly publication, *Notes*. **If you would like to remain on our mailing list, please let us know by one of the following methods:**

Mail: P. O. Box 317, Washington, TX 77880
Phone: (936) 878-2461, ext. 234
Fax: (936) 878-2462
E-mail: star@blinn.edu

The newsletter is also available to download from our website at www.starmuseum.org. Thank you for your cooperation.



Texas Independence Day Celebration

Washington-on-the-Brazos

March 2 – 3, 2013

Schedule of Events

Ongoing activities, throughout the weekend, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm:

- Craft vendors, demonstrators, and musicians located along trail between Visitors Center and Museum, the Star of the Republic Museum and Barrington Farm
- *The Social Republic: The Frontier Tavern as a Networking Hub* at Washington Inn
- Descendants of Declaration Signers sign-in at Visitors Center
- New Museum exhibit “The Substance of Life: Texas Through the Eyes of Theodore Gentilz”
- Book signing by Texas authors at Visitors Center

Saturday, March 2

TIME*	EVENT	LOCATION
10:00 am & 4:00 pm.....	Texas Independence Day Commemorative Program.....	Independence Hall
10:45 am & 3:00 pm.....	<i>William Carroll Crawford: Last Surviving Signer</i>	Independence Hall
11:00 am & 3:00 pm.....	Geocaching 101: Introduction to Geocaching.....	Education Center
11:00 am & 1:00 pm & 3:00 pm.....	Texas1836: Virtual Townsite Tour.....	Starts at Visitor Center
11:00 am & 1:00 pm & 3:00 pm.....	Recollections of The Runaway Scrape by Mary Jones.....	Barrington Farm
11:00 am.....	Texas Heroes Living History: <i>General Sam Houston</i>	Museum Theater
11:00 am.....	No Foolin’ String Band.....	Amphitheater
12:00 pm & 2:00 pm.....	Firing demonstrations, small arms and artillery.....	Washington Inn
12:00 pm & 3:00 pm.....	Dave Parsons, Texas State 2011 Poet Laureate.....	Amphitheater
12:00 pm & 1:00 pm & 2:00 pm.....	Independence Hall Tours.....	Independence Hall
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm.....	Craig Tougate presents <i>In the Shadow of Giants</i>	Amphitheater
1:30 pm.....	Texas Heroes Living History: <i>Col. James Bowie</i>	Museum Theater
3:30 pm.....	Texas Heroes Living History: <i>General Sam Houston</i>	Museum Theater

Sunday, March 3

TIME*	EVENT	LOCATION
11:00 am.....	Texas Heroes Living History: <i>Col. James Bowie</i>	Museum Theater
11:00 am.....	<i>The Convention through a Lady’s Eyes</i>	Independence Hall
11:00 am & 1:00 pm & 3:00 pm.....	Texas1836: Virtual Townsite Tour.....	Starts at Visitor Center
11:00 am & 1:00 pm & 3:00 pm.....	Recollections of The Runaway Scrape by Mary Jones.....	Barrington Farm
12:00 pm.....	No Foolin’ String Band.....	Amphitheater
12:00 pm & 2:00 pm.....	Firing demonstrations, small arms and artillery.....	Washington Inn
12:00 pm & 1:00 pm & 2:00 pm.....	Independence Hall Tours.....	Independence Hall
1:00 pm.....	Cutting of the Texas Birthday Cake.....	On lawn in front of Conference Center
1:00 pm.....	Craig Tougate presents <i>In the Shadow of Giants</i>	Museum Theater
1:00 pm.....	Geocaching 101: Introduction to Geocaching.....	Education Center
2:00 pm.....	<i>The War for Texas Independence</i> by Naomi Carrier.....	Amphitheater
3:00 pm.....	<i>William Carroll Crawford: Last Surviving Signer</i>	Independence Hall
3:30 pm.....	Texas Heroes Living History: <i>General Sam Houston</i>	Museum Theater
4:00 pm.....	Texas Independence Day Commemorative Program.....	Independence Hall

* Each activity lasts approximately 30-45 minutes, unless otherwise specified.

P. O. Box 317 Washington, Texas 77880

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Brazos Valley Regional History Fair

The eighth Brazos Valley Regional History Fair was held on February 8 at Washington on the Brazos. The Museum gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors:

FOUNDERS \$400+

- Washington on the Brazos State Park Association
- Brazos County Historical Commission
- Blinn College
- Star of the Republic Museum
- Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site

DELEGATES \$250+

- Brazos Heritage Society
- Washington County Genealogical Society
- Independence Historical Society
- Monograms & More

TEXIANS up to \$249

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- La Villita Chapter, NSDAR
- William Mayfield Chapter #34, SRT
- Washington County Historical Commission
- Minnie B. Williams Chapter #531, UDC
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STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM

Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site

Open Daily
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

936-878-2461 (fax) 936-878-2462

www.starmuseum.org
www.txindependence.org
www.facebook.com/staroftherepublic

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