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**For Immediate Release:**

**Star of the Republic Museum’s New Exhibit:**

**“So Others Could Follow: Four Centuries of Maps that Define Texas”**

The [Star of the Republic Museum](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/about/the-star-of-the-republic-museum/)’s new exhibit “So Others Could Follow: Four Centuries of Maps that Define Texas” will open on Saturday, March 3, 2018, with 20 maps spanning three centuries from the most famous cartographers in the world. The museum is located at [Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](http://www.wheretexasbecametexas.org) at 23400 Park Rd 12, Washington, TX 77880.

Maps in this exhibit will focus on the ever-changing shape of Texas in the years from the early 1500s through the late1800s, encompassing the years before it was the Republic of Texas up to the days after it won statehood in the United States and through the Civil War. Within that time, Texas claimed more than half of New Mexico, the Oklahoma panhandle, the lower left-hand corner of Kansas, large sections of Colorado and even a small part of Wyoming. It is only five years after Texas joined the US that it accepted the boundaries it has today as part of the Compromise of 1850.

“The distinctive shape of Texas is a well-known symbol to millions of people around the world—a shape that was fabricated over hundreds of years by explorers and cartographers,” says Houston McGaugh, Director, Star of the Republic Museum. “With each passing year, another river was mapped or another road begun. Fortunately, the Star of the Republic Museum's collection reflects those changes in its four centuries of maps assembled for this exhibit.” McGaugh has served as the museum’s director for 30 years.

Exhibit highlights include maps that first mention Tejas (1721); are executed in decorative German style with a cartouche of warships, and gold being unloaded as American Indians look on (1750); Daniel Lizars’ map of Mexico and Central America, prior to Mexico's push for independence (1833); identify where the empresario grants were located (1835); the *Republic of Texas* from 1836-1845 when the first Congress of Texas defined this nation’s boundaries and 23 counties; *Central America including Texas, California and the northern states of Mexico* that depicts towns, villages, forts, roads, trails, swamps, lakes, Indian tribe locations and interesting notes such as "Supposed Petrified Forest" and "Supposed residence of the Aztecs in the 12th century" (1842); and *A New Map of Texas, Oregon and California with the Regions Adjoining* by Samuel Augustus Mitchell—described as "one of the most influential maps in Western American History,"—showing Texas when admitted to the Union, at the beginning of the U.S.-Mexican war (1846).

The map exhibit—that’s opening coincides with Washington on the Brazos’ two-day “[Texas Independence Day Celebration](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/events/texas-independence-day-celebration-3/)” March 3 and 4, 2018—will continue until February 15, 2019. Museum hours are 10 a.m. –

5 p.m. daily.

Tickets for the museum (and all its exhibits including the new map exhibit) are $5 for adults: $3 for children 7 or older; $15 for families of 2 adults and up to 5 children. Children age 6 and under are admitted free. The museum also offers a**dult group rates available Monday-Friday for groups of 20 or more adults; call the museum to arrange in advance. For more information, contact museum staff at** (936) 878-2461 or star@blinn.edu.

**Star of the Republic Museum:** Thisis the only museum in the state created by the Texas Legislature for the exclusive purpose of interpreting the republic period of Texas history and its cultural materials. Along with 10,000 square feet of exhibit space, the museum features a children’s Pioneer Playground, which simulates an early Texas frontier homestead to allow participants to immerse themselves in the role of pioneers through role-playing, interactive experiences and a variety of learning styles.

The museum opened in 1970 and has held the highest honor a museum can receive: accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM)—one of the first museums in the state and nation to be so designated. The museum was created by the Texas Legislature and is administered by Blinn College as a cultural and educational institution to collect and preserve the material culture of the Texas Republic (1836-1846) and early Texas.

**Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site**: The expansive park grounds of this state park along the Brazos River also provide a beautiful setting for picnicking, sightseeing and bird watching, as well as four geocaching sites—two each from TPWD and the Brenham/Washington County Chamber and CVB. It also features a Conference and Education Center, which is available for rent for meetings, weddings and reunions. An outdoor amphitheater and two pavilions are also available to rent. Attractions are accessible for the mobility impaired.

Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site is located on the Brazos River at the original townsite of Washington, Texas, a major political and commercial center in early Texas. It is located at 23400 Park Road 12, Washington, TX, 77880—approximately halfway between Brenham and Navasota, off of State Hwy. 105. From Hwy. 105, follow either FM 912 or FM 1155 to Park Road 12. For additional information, call (936) 878-2214 or visit the site’s website at [www.wheretexasbecametexas.org](http://www.wheretexasbecametexas.org) or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Washington-on-the-Brazos-State-Historic-Site-1562674683997696/>.