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September 2014

For Immediate Release:

Washington on the Brazos: Where Texas Became Texas

2014 Calendar of Events for State Historic Site

Park and site's four attractions open year-round with special activities

Located midway between Houston and Austin on 293 acres of lush park land, the picturesque [Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](#) gives visitors unique insights into the lives and times of the 59 delegates who met on that very spot to make a formal declaration of independence from Mexico in 1836. From 1836 to 1846, the Republic of Texas proudly but precariously existed as a separate and unique nation.

Washington on the Brazos is, indeed, “Where Texas Became Texas.”

This state park offers many amenities and special events so visitors can step back in time and experience life in early 19th century at its four main attractions: Independence Hall, Barrington Living History Farm and Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site (all administered—along with the parklands—by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the Star of the Republic Museum (administered by Blinn College). There is more information on each attraction at end of release.

The picturesque Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site (WOB) is located on the Brazos River. The expansive park grounds provide a beautiful setting for picnicking, sightseeing and bird watching, as well as four geocaching sites. There are many [group facilities](#) that can be rented for gatherings (of any kind); most facilities and attractions are accessible for the mobility impaired. There is no charge to enter the park grounds, open

daily from 8 a.m. until sundown; parking is free. Admission and program fees do apply at the venues, unless otherwise stated. The site's Visitor Center features interactive exhibits which present a timeline of the Texas Revolution and highlight the historic attractions located within the park. The center also houses the spacious Washington Emporium Gift Shop, which offers snacks and a wide range of Texas-themed items and keepsakes.

The [Texas Independence website](#) highlights the convention held at Washington on the Brazos in 1836 when 59 elected delegates met to sign the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico and create a new nation, the Republic of Texas. While the town of Washington no longer exists as it did in 1836, an app for smart phones and iPads not only recreates the town, but allows visitors to interact with some of its citizens. Produced by Star of the Republic Museum, Blinn College, Washington on the Brazos State Park Association and TPWD, the app can be downloaded at www.tx1836.net.

More information on the park complex is available at the website for the Washington on the Brazos State Park Association—which supports the state historic site and preserves Texas history through programs, education and celebrations—at www.wheretexasbecametexas.org, the TPWD website for the park at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/washington-on-the-brazos and the museum website at www.starmuseum.org.

The public can also call (936) 878-2214 for more information. For lodging information, please contact the Brenham Visitor Center at www.visitbrenhamtexas.com/ or 1-888-BRENNHAM, or the City of Navasota at 936-825-7055 or the Visitors page at www.navasotatx.gov.

Since most events occur at least partially outside, guests should dress appropriately for the weather. All programs and events are open to all ages; children must be accompanied by an adult.

SEPTEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER 2014 EVENTS

Present to February 15, 2015 - *Weather Wisdom: Forecasting in the Texas Republic*, (Star of the Republic Museum): The 19th century is seen as a transitional period in forecasting, from the use of weather lore (e.g. “when a whirlwind spins to the right, it means dry weather”) to the systematic collection of weather data. Included in this exhibit are assorted 19th century scientific instruments used to measure wind velocity, atmospheric pressure and temperature. For more information, contact Elaine Platt, Visitor Services Coordinator, at elaine.platt@blinn.edu or call (936) 878-2461, ext. 236.

Weekends, September 2014 - *Cotton Pickin' Weekends*, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Barrington Farm):

Visitors can join the farm hands harvesting the Barrington Farm cotton crop. The cotton has been planted, watered and weeded, and now visitors can help pick, hand gin, card, and weave the beautiful, “Lone Star” antique variety of cotton. Standard activity fees apply. Activities may vary depending on weather conditions and

resource availability. For more information, contact Jessica Guidry at (936) 878-2214 ext. 246 or jessica.guidry@tpwd.texas.gov.

September 13, 2014 - Stagecoach Days and The Fanthorp Guest Register (dual program), 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn): On the second Saturday from February through October, Fanthorp Inn will host Stagecoach Days allowing visitors to experience what it was like to travel cross country via stagecoach and learn about the Inn's history and connection with early stage lines. There is no admission fee to visit the inn, with a suggested donation of \$10 for adults and \$5 for children for stagecoach rides. Rides last approximately 15 minutes and Inn tours for 30-45 minutes. Additional activities on these days may include music from the **Star of Texas Dulcimers** and poems by a Cowboy Poet. This event is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

- **September 13, 2014 - The Fanthorp Guest Register, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.** (Fanthorp Inn): This presentation will highlight the 1800s public conveyances like the stagecoach that brought common travelers and famous Texans alike to the shelter of stagecoach inns. The guestbook at Fanthorp Inn is an important reflection of the pages of history-honored Texans. Visitors will hear the stories of the famous travelers who spent time at the Fanthorp--one of the most important and best preserved stagecoach inns in Texas. Anson Jones, Sam Houston and Robert E. Lee are reported to have stayed at the inn. During his march to Mexico in 1846, Zachary Taylor camped at the inn; his officers were treated to an elegant formal dinner at while his troops were fed under a tree outside. Presentations will be ongoing throughout the day and will last approximately 35-40 minutes. This program is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

September 13, 2014 - Texas Pioneers - Girl Scout Day, (Star of the Republic Museum):

On the second Saturday of each month during the school year, the Star of the Republic Museum hosts a three-hour interactive event for Girl Scouts ages 7-13 to earn a "Texas Pioneer" patch. The goal is to promote an awareness of how living has changed from pioneering days to modern times. Activities such as making butter, constructing a broom, and cooperatively doing daily chores will be included. The event takes place from 1 - 4 p.m. and costs \$8 per scout. Interested troop leaders should contact Elaine Platt, Visitor Services Coordinator, at elaine.platt@blinn.edu or call (936) 878-2461, ext. 236 to register.

September 20, 2014 - Living History Saturday at Independence Hall and the Old Washington Townsite, 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (Washington on the Brazos site):

Free to park visitors. Travel back in time to where a nation was born in 1836. On the third Saturday of each month staff and volunteers dressed in period clothing bring to life the people and events of Old Washington

providing a unique opportunity to discover various aspects of life surrounding the birth of the Republic of Texas. The program features activities suited for the entire family. Try your hand at writing with a quill pen and sign a copy of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Visit with militia soldiers travelling through town or try your hand at some early Texas games. Step back in time and discover the spot where Texas became Texas! (Activities will vary and some are weather dependent). Traditional guided tours of Independence Hall will not be offered these days. For more information, contact Jon Failor at [\(936\) 878-2214](tel:9368782214) ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

September 27, 2014 - *Music Makes a Celebration*, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn):

Discover the music that inspired celebration and recreation in 19th century Texas with the program “Music Makes a Celebration,” presented by **Homestead Strings** at Fanthorp Inn. As one of early Texas’ most occupied stagecoach inns, Fanthorp often found itself as the focal point for parties, celebrations and great balls which brought delight to significant holidays such as New Years, Christmas and Texas Independence Day. Relive the joy that weary travelers and local citizens experienced as the Inn provided the largest accommodations in the area to host celebrations, parties and the occasional escape from the rugged Texas frontier. Presentations will be ongoing throughout the day and will last approximately 35-40 minutes. This program is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at [\(936\) 878-2214](tel:9368782214) ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

Thursdays, October, 2014 - *Home School Days*, (Barrington Farm and Star of the Republic Museum):

Every Thursday in October, the staff at the Star of the Republic Museum and Barrington Farm will present *Childhood in Early Texas*, an interactive, hands-on program for the entire family, targeting students ages 5-12. At the Museum, visitors will learn about childhood chores, clothes and schools, and then make some old-fashioned toys to take home. At Barrington Farm, they can experience life on an 1850s era farm to learn more about the crops, livestock, and daily life of early Texans. No minimum group size required. Hours: 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Cost: \$8/child, \$6/adult for both attractions. Reservations and payment in advance required by calling Elaine Platt, Visitor Services Coordinator, at (936) 878-2461 ext. 236 or elaine.platt@blinn.edu to register.

October 11, 2014 - *Stagecoach Days and Texian Days (dual program)*, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn):

On the second Saturday from February through October, Fanthorp Inn will host Stagecoach Days allowing visitors to experience what it was like to travel cross country via stagecoach and learn about the Inn’s history and connection with early stage lines. There is no admission fee to visit the inn, with a suggested donation of \$10 for adults and \$5 for children for stagecoach rides. Rides last approximately 15 minutes and Inn tours for 30-45 minutes. Additional activities on these days may include music from the Star of Texas Dulcimers and

poems by a Cowboy Poet. This event is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

- **October 11, 2014 – *Texian Days***, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn): Visit Fanthorp Inn on this special Saturday in October and experience the origins of our Texas mystique. What is the history and lore that gives Texans that special swagger and confidence? How does being Texan somehow make us special and perhaps a bit more proud than most? The Brazos valley is rich in Texas history and there is no better place than Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site to discover the shared history that molded the Texians. This program is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

October 11, 2014 - *Texas Pioneers - Girl Scout Day*, (Star of the Republic Museum):

On the second Saturday of each month during the school year, the Star of the Republic Museum hosts a three-hour interactive event for Girl Scouts ages 7-13 to earn a "Texas Pioneer" patch. The goal is to promote an awareness of how living has changed from pioneering days to modern times. Activities such as making butter, constructing a broom, and cooperatively doing daily chores will be included. The event takes place from 1 - 4 p.m. and costs \$8 per scout. Interested troop leaders should contact Elaine Platt, Visitor Services Coordinator, at elaine.platt@blinn.edu or call (936) 878-2461, ext. 236 to register.

October 18, 2014 - *Living History Saturday at Independence Hall and the Old Washington Townsite*, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (Washington on the Brazos): Free to park visitors. Travel back in time to where a nation was born in 1836. On the third Saturday of each month staff and volunteers dressed in period clothing bring to life the people and events of Old Washington providing a unique opportunity to discover various aspects of life surrounding the birth of the Republic of Texas. The program features activities suited for the entire family. Try your hand at writing with a quill pen and sign a copy of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Visit with militia soldiers travelling through town or try your hand at some early Texas games. Step back in time and discover the spot where Texas became Texas! (Activities will vary and some are weather dependent) Traditional guided tours of Independence Hall will not be offered these days. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

October 25 and 26, 2014 - *Labor of Thine Hands: Trades in Early Texas*, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Barrington Farm): Ponder for a moment all of the skills and trades practiced by those that people rely upon daily: auto mechanics, carpenters, electricians and plumbers to name a few. Just as people need skilled laborers to live, so too did the farmers of early Texas. Barrington Farm presents this expanded program where demonstrators will exhibit some of the many skills needed by our ancestors from blacksmiths to tailor and potters. Activities and discussions will be on going from until Standard activity fees apply. For more information, contact Jessica Guidry at (936) 878-2214 ext. 246 or jessica.guidry@tpwd.texas.gov.

October 25, 2014 - *Music Makes a Celebration*, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn):

Discover the music that inspired celebration and recreation in 19th century Texas with the program “Music Makes a Celebration,” presented by **Homestead Strings** at Fanthorp Inn. As one of early Texas’ most occupied stagecoach inns, Fanthorp often found itself as the focal point for parties, celebrations and great balls which brought delight to significant holidays such as New Years, Christmas and Texas Independence Day. Relive the joy that weary travelers and local citizens experienced as the Inn provided the largest accommodations in the area to host celebrations, parties and the occasional escape from the rugged Texas frontier. Presentations will be ongoing throughout the day and will last approximately 35-40 minutes. This program is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

November 1, 2014 – *Night at the Star of the Republic Museum* (Star of the Republic Museum):

The Star of the Republic Museum will present *Night at the Star of the Republic Museum* on Saturday, November 1 between 7 – 9 p.m., when the lights will go down and the museum’s exhibits will come to life. Explore the museum by flashlight—but BEWARE of what’s around the corner! This is a fun way to learn about Texas history from real live costumed characters who step out of the exhibits to tell their story. The admission fee is \$5/adults, \$3/students and free to anyone with a current Blinn College ID. Visitors are encouraged to bring a flashlight.

November 8, 2014 - *Texas Pioneers - Girl Scout Day*, (Star of the Republic Museum):

On the second Saturday of each month during the school year, the Star of the Republic Museum hosts a three-hour interactive event for Girl Scouts ages 7-13 to earn a "Texas Pioneer" patch. The goal is to promote an awareness of how living has changed from pioneering days to modern times. Activities such as making butter, constructing a broom, and cooperatively doing daily chores will be included. The event takes place from 1 - 4 p.m. and costs \$8 per scout. Interested troop leaders should contact Elaine Platt, Visitor Services Coordinator, at elaine.platt@blinn.edu or call (936) 878-2461, ext. 236 to register.

November 8, 2014 – *Getting Ready For Winter*, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Barrington Farm):

At Barrington Farm we use methods of farming from Thomas Affleck’s “Southern Rural Almanac” and Anson Jones’ journals. Written in the mid-19th century and way ahead of his time, Affleck suggested rotating crops, using cover crops and companion planting. Come to Barrington Farm and see our heirloom vegetable garden and learn how families prepared for the winter. Standard activity fees apply. For more information, contact Kellie McKenney at (936) 878-2214 ext.246 or kellie.mckenney@tpwd.texas.gov.

November 15, 2014 - Living History Saturday at Independence Hall and the Old Washington Townsite:

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Washington on the Brazos): Free to park visitors. Travel back in time to where a nation was born in 1836. On the third Saturday of each month staff and volunteers dressed in period clothing bring to life the people and events of Old Washington providing a unique opportunity to discover various aspects of life surrounding the birth of the Republic of Texas. The program features activities suited for the entire family. Try your hand at writing with a quill pen and sign a copy of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Visit with militia soldiers travelling through town or try your hand at some early Texas games. Step back in time and discover the spot where Texas became Texas! (Activities will vary and some are weather dependent) Traditional guided tours of Independence Hall will not be offered these days. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

November 22, 2014 - *Hearth Cooking School*, (Barrington Farm):

How was cooking done for thousands of years before modern conveniences were invented? How were meals prepared before the late 20th century? At this interactive cooking class, visitors will learn old-fashioned skills that great-great-grandparents would have known. Reservations are required. For more information, contact Barb King (936) 878-2214 ext. 246 or barb.king@tpwd.texas.gov.

November 29, 2014 - *Twilight Firelight – A Period Gathering at Fanthorp Inn*, 4:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. (Fanthorp Inn): Inns like Henry Fanthorp's were places where news from far away was spread, ideas were exchanged and communities developed. Visitors can tour this historic inn restored to its 1850s appearance, ride a replica stagecoach, enjoy period music and interpreters in period clothing and learn about this exciting site, rich with history and culture. Twilight Firelight includes stagecoach and wagon rides from the courthouse square in Anderson to the inn and back at the conclusion of your tour. Parking for this event is in downtown Anderson. A donation of \$10 for adults and \$5 for children is suggested for stagecoach ride. This program is open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

December 13, 2014 – *Christmas on the Brazos featuring Barrington Candlelight Christmas*, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. (last tickets sold at 8 p.m.) (Washington on the Brazos site, Star of the Republic Museum, Independence Hall, Visitor Center and Barrington Farm):

Start the holiday season by spending the day at **Washington on the Brazos** with holiday activities for all ages include period music, craft making, readings, food samplings and sale of artisan gifts. This event features modern and historic activities that will be staggered throughout the park. Daytime activities will be concentrated throughout the site; standard admission fees will apply to the daytime activities. At 5 p.m., activities will shift to Barrington Farm for Candlelight Christmas, the evening event. This special program features timed vignettes, offering glimpses into 1850s festivities through a candlelit tour of Barrington Farm. The event will include live

19th century music and dancing, bonfires and Christmas readings, 1850s Santa Claus, musket firing, cookies and hot cider. Please allow at least one hour to complete the full experience. Groups will enter the site at timed intervals and reservations are highly recommended and will be accepted starting October 1. For more information or to make reservations, contact Jessica Guidry at (936) 878-2214 ext. 246 or barrington.farm@tpwd.texas.gov.

December 20, 2014 - Living History Saturday at Independence Hall and the Old Washington Townsite, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (WOB): Free to park visitors. Travel back in time to where a nation was born in 1836. On the third Saturday of each month staff and volunteers dressed in period clothing bring to life the people and events of Old Washington providing a unique opportunity to discover various aspects of life surrounding the birth of the Republic of Texas. The program features activities suited for the entire family. Try your hand at writing with a quill pen and sign a copy of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Visit with militia soldiers travelling through town or try your hand at some early Texas games. Step back in time and discover the spot where Texas became Texas! (Activities will vary and some are weather dependent) Traditional guided tours of Independence Hall will not be offered these days. For more information, contact Jon Failor at (936) 878-2214 ext. 224 or jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

ATTRACTIONS OVERVIEW

The picturesque Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site is located on the Brazos River. The expansive park grounds along the Brazos River 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. There are many [group facilities](#) that can be rented for gatherings of any kind; all facilities and attractions in the park are accessible to the physically challenged.

Independence Hall: Revered as the place “where Texas became Texas,” Independence Hall was the site, in 1836, where representatives of the Texas settlements met to make a formal declaration of independence from Mexico. A replica of Independence Hall marks the place where the Texas Declaration of Independence was signed and the government of the Republic of Texas was created. Tours of Independence Hall are offered daily and provide a great opportunity to discover the unique history of Texas. Special living history programs are offered on the third Saturdays of each month from 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. These programs are open to all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. Accessible for the mobility impaired. Information: 936-878-2214 or Jon.Failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

Star of the Republic Museum: The Star of the Republic 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 to interpret the history, cultures, diversity, and values of early Texans. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, the Museum strives to inspire interest, understanding and appreciation of Texas heritage for students, teachers, scholars, and the general public through exhibits, tours, programs, web activities, and outreach. Since 1972, the Museum 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. Information: (936) 878-2461, www.starmuseum.org and star@blinn.edu.

Barrington Living History Farm: Barrington Farm is a representation of the farm founded by Dr. Anson Jones, the last President of the Republic of Texas. With Jones' daybook and accounts as their guide, the interpreters at Barrington Living History Farm conduct themselves much as did the earliest residents of the original farmstead, raising cotton, corn, cattle and hogs. Visitors take a step into the lives of Barrington's earliest residents and participate in daily activities to better understand what life was like over 150 years ago. The Anson Jones Home is the original structure built in 1844, near Washington. It was moved to Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site as part of the Texas Centennial Celebration in 1936. Barrington Farm is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Special programming is offered on select weekends throughout the year. Please dress appropriately for the season and be prepared for the weather as events take place in an 1850s period setting with some portions outdoors. Leashed pets allowed in park, but NOT ALLOWED onto farm site. Activities are dependent on weather conditions. Information: 936-878-2214 or Jessica.Guidry@tpwd.texas.gov.

Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site: Nestled amid the rolling hills of Grimes County near Navasota, Texas, about 20 miles northeast of Washington on the Brazos, Fanthorp Inn stands as a wonderfully preserved example of a 19th century stagecoach inn. The 18-room inn had humble beginnings in 1834 as the simple dogtrot home of English immigrant, Henry Fanthorp and his bride, Rachel Kennard. By 1835 Fanthorp had become postmaster for the area and over time, the Fanthorp home evolved into a well-known country inn. Once again, the Inn is a bastion of hospitality for guided tours, school programs, adult group tours and special events. Information: 936-878-2214 or Jon.Failor@tpwd.texas.gov.

Washington on the Brazos State Park Association was created in the 1950s as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to preserve the heroic actions taken by Texas' forefathers with the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836 in Washington, TX. The Park Association facilitates preservation projects, celebrations, and educational programming at this TPWD state park/historic site and its four attractions. Besides playing an integral part in the efforts to secure the creation of The Star of the Republic Museum, it also has supplied funding for personnel to assist the park and museum; an educational website; rebranding and marketing; playground equipment; animals for the farm; bluebonnet and other wildflower seeds; and an important collection of historical papers and documents for the museum. Membership levels are available for individuals, families and businesses and include free admission to the Site's attractions for a year, including—for some levels—private parties during the park's special celebrations. For more information on the park association, contact office@wheretexasbecametexas.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site is located at 23400 Park Road 12 in Washington, Texas, off State Hwy. 105 on FM 1155 (about halfway between Brenham and Navasota, and approximately one hour northwest of Houston). More detailed information on all Washington on the Brazos events is continually updated at www.wheretexasbecametexas.org; call (936) 878-2214 for more information. For lodging information, please

contact the Brenham Visitor Center at www.visitbrenhamtexas.com or 1-888-BRENNHAM, or the City of Navasota at 936-825-7055 or www.navasotatx.gov.