

LEOH Trip

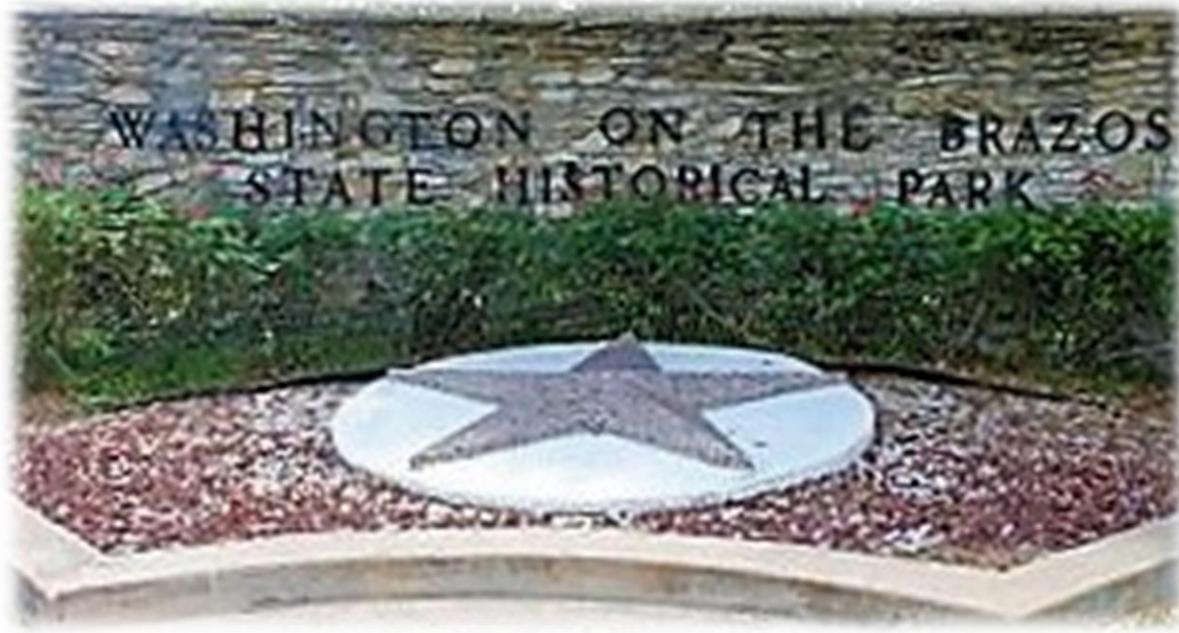
February 20, 2020

Washington-on-the-Brazos

“Where Texas Became Texas”



Our first stop was for lunch at **Mariachi's Mexican Restaurant** in Brenham.
Our bus driver enjoyed lunch, as well
(upper left photo with Debbie and Gary).



Once we arrived, our tour guide gave us a brief overview of the park, before leading us to a replicate of Independence Hall, "Where Texas Became Texas".

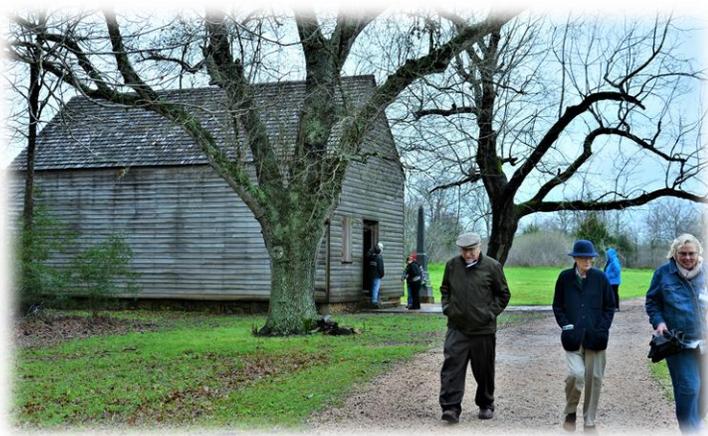




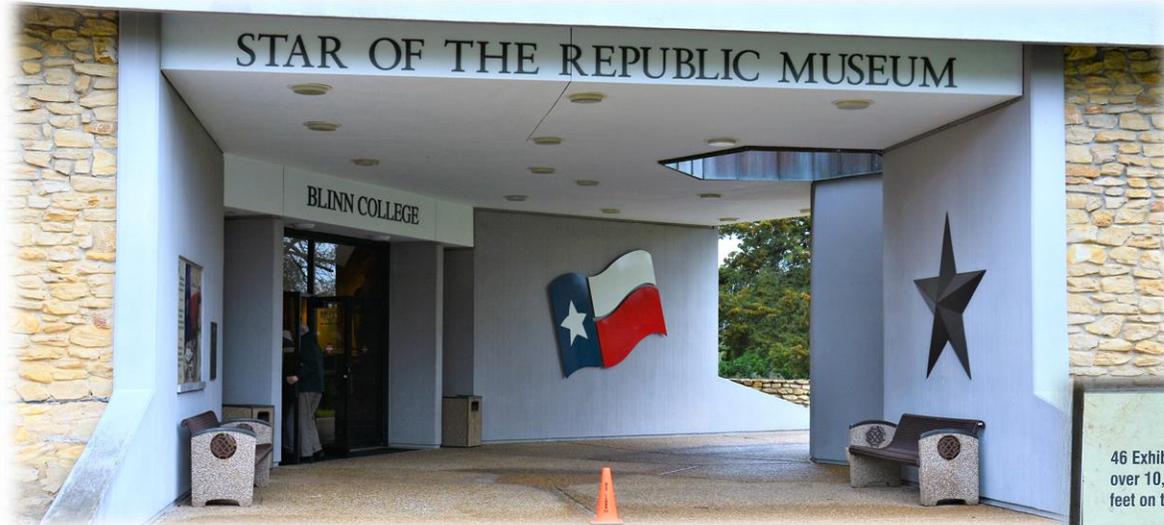
In the town that began as a Brazos river ferry crossing, enterprising townspeople determined that they wanted Texas delegates to convene there to officially declare Texas independence from Mexico, and to declare Washington-on-the-Brazos as the first capital of the new Republic of Texas. Fifty-nine delegates arrived, finding themselves meeting in an unfinished building with a dirt floor, owned by a local gunsmith.

As they convened to meet on March 1, they were aware that the Alamo was under siege, and considered disbanding the convention to assist defense of the Alamo. Lt. Col. William B. Travis at the Alamo sent word to the convention that Texas independence was too important, and that the delegates must complete their task. On March 2, 1836, they completed and signed the Texas Declaration of Independence. The Alamo fell on March 6th. Over 200 men died there, including Lt. Col. Travis, who was 26 years old. The delegates completed their work, organized an interim government, and signed the Constitution on March 16th. The “runaway scrape” followed shortly thereafter, as the townspeople fled from advancing Mexican troops. Many returned after the battle was won at San Jacinto on April 21st.





As we left the Independence Hall replica (that had a wood floor), we had a better sense of the delegates' perseverance, including their physical working conditions. It was reported that temperatures during the convention were in the 30's. On the day of our visit, the temperature was in the 40's , and it was damp and drizzly!



After enjoying time in the main visitor building, which included a nice gift shop, we toured the Star of the Republic Museum. The two-story museum has many exhibits and historical artifacts specific to the period of 1836-1846.





- To the left – we enjoyed viewing a large mural as we walked upstairs
- To the right – a printing press representative of that time
- Below – a mock-up of a log cabin, with information on the many uses of a hog (nothing went to waste).
- Below – a display of “Texian Campaigne China”, made in Staffordshire, England, supposedly depicting some of the battles; but likely just a marketing tool to target Americans.





Within the museum are larger-than-life statues of Sam Houston (left) and Stephen F. Austin. There are also several statues throughout the park of other important figures from the era.

Sam Houston defeated Santa Anna on April 21, 1836. He then served as the first President of the Republic of Texas. (Anson Jones served as the fourth and last President.)

Stephen F. Austin, called “The Father of Texas”, helped colonize Texas by bringing 300 families to the region in 1825.

