

Thursday, April 13, 1989

INDEPENDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH:

Sam Houston and his family were members of the church. Houston was baptized in nearby Little Rocky Creek.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY:

The city had to provide a site and maintenance funds for the library to supplement Andrew Carnegie's grant of \$10,000. The library was established in 1903.

TEXAS A&M:

The State Legislature authorized the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas on April 17, 1871 under terms of the federal Morrill Act.

"Committed to 'teach...branches of learning...related to agriculture and mechanic arts...to promote liberal and practical education.'" Texas A&M opened Oct. 4, 1876 as the first state institution of higher learning operating in Texas.

WILLIAM JOEL BRYAN — BRAZOS COUNTY COURTHOUSE:

Bryan was a Missouri native who came to Texas in 1831 and was a nephew of Stephen F. Austin and grandson of Moses Austin. He fought in the Texas revolution and farmed land near Peach Point for 71 years.

BOONVILLE:

"Established in 1841 as the seat of Navasota County by John Millican, John N. Jones, J. Ferguson, E. Seale and Mordecai Boon, whose name it bears. The name of the county was changed to Brazos in 1842. Boonville flourished until 1866 when Bryan was established on the railroad." (from historical marker)

BAYLOR PARK:

The park includes the remains of four buildings that were for women students at Baylor. The men's building was on a hill to the south across the "River Jordan."

WASHINGTON ON THE BRAZOS:

Noah T. Byars' house: Delegates used it for Texas' Independence Hall.



A journey through Texas history is only a short drive away

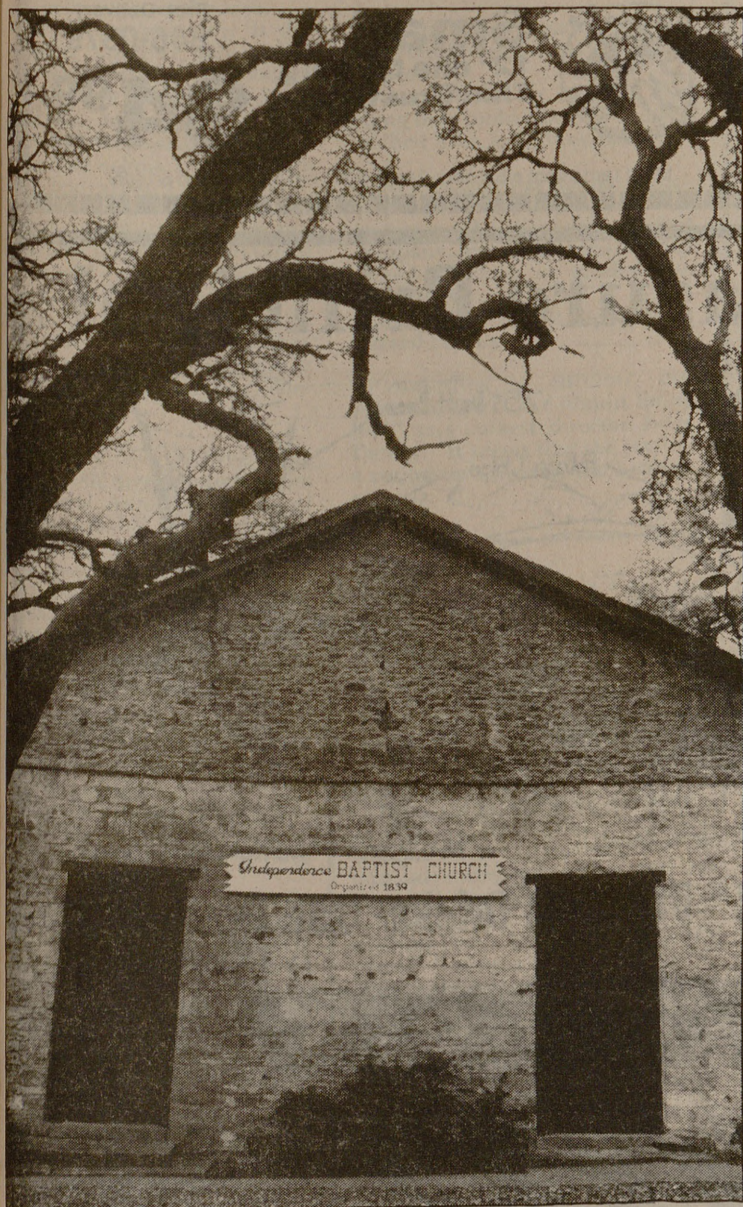


Photo by Jay Janner

By Chuck Lovejoy

ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

Texas history is told not only in textbooks but on the road — by the Texas Historical Commission's historical markers, those black and silver plaques so often passed by on the highway.

From the Bryan-College Station area, many historic sites are no more than a half-hour's drive away. One of the first places to visit is Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park, on FM 1155 just south of Hwy. 105.

Washington-on-the-Brazos was the site of the convention at which 59 delegates from across the Mexican state of Texas met beginning on March 1, 1836 (while the famous conflict at the Alamo was underway) to decide if the state should be independent from Mexico.

The park has a replica of Texas' Independence Hall, an unfinished building without windows in which the representatives met during near-freezing temperatures and declared Texas an independent nation.

Other structures in the park include the home of Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas. Tours of the home, during which the tour guide assumes the role of Jones, begin at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. on weekends.

Another interesting area surrounds the Independence Baptist Church, a historic building at the intersection of FM 50 and 390.

A historical marker standing outside the front of the church tells that the church's members included Sam Houston, who was baptized by the church's minister in nearby Little Rocky Creek. Adjacent to the church, which was one of the first to be established in Texas, is the Texas Baptist Historical Center Museum.

A quarter-mile down the road from Independence Church is the

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