

State historic sites offer free admission on May 5

In celebration of National Preservation Month and Texas Travel and Tourism Week, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) is offering free admission to 18 state historic sites Sunday, May 5. Epic military forts, a world-class museum devoted exclusively to World War II in the Pacific Theater, and beautiful historic homes are among the destination options on the THC's Historic Sites Free Day.

Several of the THC's sites have recently been renovated or restored. For a complete listing please visit texashistoricsites.com and make your plans now to visit one of the sites near you.

Visitors to San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site in San Felipe can explore a new state-of-the-art 10,000 square-foot museum telling the dramatic story of the first Anglo Colony in Mexican Texas—a community founded in 1823, but burned by its own residents during the Texas Revolution's Runaway Scrape. A special exhibition, El Mar De Lodo or "The Sea of Mud," is currently on display and featuring more than 50 artifacts related to the Mexican army's retreat after the Battle of San Jacinto. For more information, go to visitsanfelipedeAustin.com or call 979-885-2181.

Casa Navarro State Historic Site, a National Historic Landmark in San Antonio, explores the life and home of a true Texas patriot, José Antonio Navarro. Stroll around the historic compound—one of the oldest adobe structures remaining in San Antonio—and learn about the statesman's career as an advocate for Texas independence and Tejano rights in the mid-1800s. For more information, see visitcasanavarro.com or call 325-396-2358.

Fort McKavett State Historic Site in Fort McKavett is a 150-year-old West Texas fort that stands atop a remote hill in Menard Country. It is one of the best-preserved examples of a Texas Indian Wars (1850-75) military post. Overlooking the headwaters of the San Saba River, Fort McKavett, consists of 19 restored buildings located on 80 acres. Several of the buildings have been refurbished with period furniture. Restored structures include the officers' quarters, barracks, hospital, schoolhouse, dead house, sink and post headquarters. In addition, there are ruins of several buildings, most notably the commanding officer's quarters, which burned in 1941, and the barracks along the north side of the parade ground, which once was the longest building west of the Mississippi River. For more information please see visitfortmckavett.com or call 325-396-2358.

a great spot for families to spend the day together and learn about "the Greatest Generation." The museum honors the millions of Americans who met and defeated the greatest threat to freedom and democracy of the 20th Century. It is the most comprehensive and engaging museum dedicated to the Pacific

War ever created. Spread across more than six acres, the complex has more than 50,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space including modern, interactive exhibits, state of the art media, and an extraordinary array of unique artifacts in addition to the outdoor exhibits that also line the campus. One of the

most popular venues is the Pacific Combat Zone which has guided tours of macro-artifacts and regularly scheduled combat re-enactments. For more information, see pacificwarmuseum.org. The THC's state historic sites host events year-round for visitors of all ages and interests,

such as stargazing parties, cooking classes, living history programs, and archeology workshops. Several of the THC's sites are currently undergoing renovations or restorations. Please visit thc.texas.gov/freeday to check individual site hours and to make plans to visit.

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