

museum musings

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Hooray! It's Summertime!

Please join us for....

Walking tours for adults – Thursdays, June 12th and July 10th, at 7:00 p.m. Participants will meet on the north side of the Courthouse square for a leisurely walk through Belton's rich past. This activity is always well-received; if you've lived in Belton for forever, or are a newcomer, this event will make you laugh, cry or reminisce about the way things used to be. A fee of \$3 includes the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce walking tour guide. No preregistration is required.

Kids ages 5-8 – Saturday, June 7th is Archeology Day, from 10 - noon. Saturday, June 14th is Native American Day, from 10 – noon. These fun activities will be geared toward our younger audiences. A fee of \$5 per day covers all expenses, and includes a snack! Preregistration is required.

Kids ages 8-12 – Summer Camp! Tuesday through Friday, July 22-25, from 9 a.m. until noon. A \$30 fee includes snacks and all supplies. Preregistration is required.

Opening August 16th – *Edward S. Curtis: The North American Indian*. This exhibition is co-sponsored by the Friends of the Museum, the Bell County Museum Association, Inc., and the Four Winds Intertribal Society. It is a must-see for everyone!

Up the Chisholm Trail

Our wonderful bronze sculpture, *Up the Chisholm Trail*, was unveiled April 5th. Special thanks go to the Leon Heights Elementary School Honor Choir, the Rev. Roscoe Harrison, Jr., Gene Doss, John Dungan, the Bell County Commissioners Court, Dr. Doug Harman, the City of Belton, the Aldrich family, and all of those who made contributions to the monument fund.

Sculptor Troy Kelley and Dorothy Ann Aldrich unveiling *Up the Chisholm Trail*



Up the Chisholm Trail



Who was Ella K. Mewhinney?

A new exhibit on the work of Bell County artist Ella K. Mewhinney will open November 1, 2008. The prolific and talented local artist Ella Koepke Mewhinney was born in 1891 in Nelsonville, Texas, and was reared in Bartlett. She married Logan Mewhinney in 1913 and the couple settled in Holland to raise a family. Although most well-known as a landscape and still-life artist, Mrs. Mewhinney also had training in china painting and drawing, and worked in watercolor and pastels. Known as a painter in the American Impressionist style, her work exudes a brilliant use of line and color. During her lifetime, she was considered unusual in that she managed a family and home in rural Central Texas and also managed a successful career as a talented artist. A 1929 article in *Holland's* magazine featuring Mrs. Mewhinney was titled "Can Marriage and a Career Be Combined? Ella K. Mewhinney Proves It Possible."

We are searching for more information on the life and work of Mrs. Mewhinney. If you have information you'd like to share about her, please contact Amanda Dyer at the museum at 254-933-5244 or by e-mail at amanda.dyer@co.bell.tx.us.

Drawing Battle Lines – The Map Testimony of Custer's Last Fight

Local art professor, artist and historian Michael Donahue will present a program and book signing on his new and seminal work on Gen. George Armstrong Custer and the Battle of the Little Bighorn on Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. at the museum. Everyone is invited to attend this free and fascinating event.



Professor Michael Donahue at the Little Bighorn Battlefield, Montana

Drawing Battle Lines: The Map Testimony of Custer's Last Fight, is based upon Mr. Donahue's 35 years of research and over seven years of writing and collecting information about the important and tragic battle that took place on June 25, 1876. On that day, over 2,000 Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho warriors killed Custer and over 260 soldiers, making the battle one of the worst disasters of the Indian Wars era. Huge mysteries have remained regarding conflicting testimonies from oral histories of those present at the battle. Mr. Donahue's research, premise and publication led prominent historian and author Robert Utley to state that the book is a "milestone in the historiography of the Little Bighorn."

In discussing the book, Mr. Donahue stated, "The total picture of what truly occurred that day began to appear from the sometimes conflicting puzzle pieces I gathered by comparing and analyzing all of the map drawings that I could find. It became clear that Custer attempted to capture a handful of noncombatants—women, children and elderly—to offset and possibly control the huge number of warriors in the village. It was a tactic he had used in previous altercations and promised to use at Little Bighorn as well."

One of the remarkable aspects of this new publication is that it contains every known map drawn by battle participants of both sides—soldier and Indian.

The May 8th event will begin with a 50-minute docudrama created by the BBC and Discovery Channel, based upon Mr. Donahue's research. Mr. Donahue was the consultant, narrator, and impetus for the new program released in Europe last year and on satellite in the United States. Titled "The Wild West—Custer's Last Stand," the program provides an alternative premise to the historic and tragic battle. "Instead of Custer the idiot riding pell-mell into 2,000 angry warriors with 200 men, Custer was smart like a fox and realized from experience the best way to win a victory with minimal casualties—but his plan backfired. Custer came within minutes of winning a major victory against overwhelming odds," Mr. Donahue stated.

After the docudrama, Mr. Donahue will speak briefly about his work and will sign copies of his 400-page book which sells for \$55.00.

Michael Donahue chairs the art department at Temple College and is also an award-winning artist and teacher. He has spent 18 summers in Montana, serving as a Park Ranger and Historical Interpreter at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

For more information about this event, please call the museum at 933.5243.

Please join us! Take part in preserving the rich history of the Bell County region by joining the Friends of the Museum Association. Your membership allows us to continue award-winning programming through exhibits and educational activities that enhance our county-wide community. Benefits of membership include discounts in the museum bookstore, invitations to special events, and the satisfaction of knowing that YOU are an important part of the preservation of Bell County and Central Texas history. Together, we make our community great!

- Yes! I want to support the Bell County Museum by becoming a member of the Friends of the Museum Association.
- \$10 Student
- \$25 Friend
- \$50 Family
- \$75 Advocate
- \$100 Patron
- \$250 Partner
- \$500 Associate
- \$1000+ Benefactor

THANK YOU
to our
New & Renewing
Friends

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Hon. & Mrs. J.F. Clawson
Jesse & Gerry Edwards
Jesse & Mary Jo Harris
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John Odom
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Bill & Claudia Clark
Martha James
Wes & Aida Riddle
Carwyn Smith, Subway

Partner:
Don & Camilla Gidden

Benefactor:
Ed & Mary Jo Franklin
Killeen Evening Lions Club

Archeology exhibit update

Planning continues for the development of our newest permanent exhibit on the peopling of the Americas. Focusing on findings from the Gault Site in Bell County, we hope to have the exhibit finished by the end of this year. The exhibit is made possible through a generous grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. Please stay tuned for more details.

MEMORIA

In memory of:

Nina Fuller
by
LaRue Diddle

Ginny Keith
by the
Woman's Wednesday Club

Beverly Wright Hallquist
by
Richard & Peggy Dillard

Clark Potter
by
Madiene & Jerry Gibson
The Hon. Clifton Peters

Alfred Lochlear
by
Ken Peel & Leo Lara

Where Do All Those Kids Come From?

We have seen a surge in school groups this year! Students from all over Bell County are regulars at the museum, and they often return with their families. Our kids are from the following:

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| Southwest Elementary | Tyler Elementary |
| Central Texas Christian School | Duncan Elementary |
| Belton Christian Youth Center | Salado Elementary |
| Miller Heights Elementary | Clark Elementary |
| Leon Heights Elementary | Eastern Hills Middle School |
| Sparta Elementary | Western Hills Elementary |
| Cater Elementary | Girl Scouts |
| Nolanville Elementary | Liberty Hills Middle School |
| Rogers Elementary | Boy Scouts |

Call Kristen Williams to find out how to schedule a tour for your group!