

museum musings

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Isn't the logo for our new exhibit beautiful? Created by Presley Design Studio, we love it! Fabricators are hard at work putting the finishing touches on this project, which has been rescheduled to open on Saturday, June 6, 2009, from 2-4 p.m. Dr. Michael Collins, archaeologist at the Gault Site, will speak at 2:30 p.m. Flintknapping and atlatl demonstrations will be held, and the museum's archaeology pits will be open for youngsters to conduct mock excavations. The museum will even serve "Clovis" cookies!

The Gault site has been home to human beings for over 13,000 years. Strategically located streamside in the Balcones Ecotone (the boundary zone of the Edwards Plateau and the Black Prairie and Coastal Plain Ecozone), the Gault Site provided abundant food resources for early peoples. This rich ecotone enabled early peoples to forage the uplands for the plants and animals found there as well as the stream valley where different kinds of plants and animals were found.

Just as important as the wealth of food sources, however, is the seemingly endless supply of chert at the site, which was readily crafted into tools and weapons. To date, the Gault Site excavations have uncovered almost 2 million artifacts; 600,000 to 700,000 of these are from the Clovis period (13,300 to 12,900 years ago). The analysis of this material provides archaeologists with a unique look into the lifestyles of the earliest people in Texas and, by extension, the earliest people in the Americas.

The new exhibit will feature large murals, discovery drawers, microscopes, and the new film, "The Gault Project: An Adventure in Time," funded by the Texas Historical Foundation. Also included in the exhibit is a plaster bust reconstruction of an adult male skull found at the Horn Rock Shelter in Bosque County. The remains of the male and that of a young girl were found near the bottom of a limestone rock overhang and were dated by Carbon-14 at almost 10,000 years old, making them one of the few occurrences of "in situ" Paleoindians in the Americas.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Henry Kiper "Ki" Allen, Jr. has donated a 1916 map with notations by Dr. Alex Dienst to the museum. Dr. Dienst (1870-1938) was a dentist in Temple by vocation and a prolific writer, historian and collector of historical artifacts by avocation. He served for three years as president of the Texas State Historical Association, and also as the president of the Bell County Historical Society. In the *Story of Bell County, Texas*, Marie Surghnor Malsbary wrote, "Dr. Dienst created one of the most remarkable libraries anywhere in the country. His Texas valuables took him more than 40 years to collect and contained more than 50,000 documents worth more than \$200,000 from originals of the earliest records of the Spanish and Mexican dealings with Texas, to the governorship of Dan Moody." The map was purchased in the late 1950s from another prominent historian, Dayton Kelley. We appreciate this gift by Ki and the rest of the Allen family.

THE INSPIRED LINE:

SELECTED PRINTS OF ALBRECHT DURER AND REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

from the Thrivent Financial Collection of Religious Art

The Bell County Museum is pleased to announce that it will be hosting an exhibition of prints by the extraordinary artists Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt van Rijn. *The Inspired Line: Selected Prints of Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt van Rijn* will be on view June 20 through August 8, 2009. The exhibition is made possible by the Friends of the Museum organization, the Bell County Museum Association, Inc., The Texas Commission on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. It is organized by ExhibitsUSA, a national division of the Mid-America Arts Alliance.

The exhibition illustrates how two different masters, one 16th-century German and Roman Catholic, the other 17th-century Dutch and Protestant, created the same biblical themes but with unique differences.

Although Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471-1528) and Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (Dutch, 1601-1669) created their artwork a century apart, connections between their prints are significant, intriguing, and often remarkable. *The Inspired Line* consists of 40 prints and provides an opportunity to view the religious works of these great masters side by side and consider the historical contexts, religious backgrounds, and aesthetic approaches of each.

At a young age, Dürer was trained as a metalworker by his father in Nuremberg, Germany. Later, Dürer applied the same exacting methods to his woodcuts and engravings. His strong admiration for Leonardo da Vinci and the Italian Renaissance led him to become known as the father of the Northern European Renaissance. Though Dürer was Catholic, he was encouraged by an enthusiastic patron to befriend chief figures of the Protestant Reformation, an act that involved him in religious controversy until his death.

Rembrandt, who began his career as a scholar, imbued his portraits with psychological depth and masterly light and shadow. At the height of his career, he was the most successful artist of the Baroque Era in Holland, a time of great prosperity. A lifelong member of the Dutch Reformed Church in a predominately Protestant country, Rembrandt received no church commissions; rather, his patronage came from the thriving middle class. He was a highly accomplished etcher who created unique, profound interpretations of biblical stories.

Both artists rendered multiple scenes of Jesus' life and other New Testament stories, and prints of these biblical themes are especially strong in this collection. Viewed together, the works illustrate the differences in aesthetic movements and religious influences of their times, yet by sharing a subject matter, they are ideal counterpoint images.

EXTRA.....EXTRA.....EXTRA..... SOMMER CAMP!!!

Scholarships are available through an anonymous contribution for four campers to attend the camp. Children should show proof of need. Contact Kristen Reichert at 254.933.5741 for more information.

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.

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Garage Sale and Perennial Plant Sale

We are thrilled to announce that our annual Big Bell County Garage Sale landed \$11,307.00 for museum programs! We are thankful for these proceeds, and for all of those who gave of their time to help us.

We are also pleased to announce that, due to our prolific perennials, we will be selling their offspring every Saturday in May. Stop by and purchase, for a suggested donation, Mexican feather grass, kalanchoes, sage, and more! Thank you, Dave Spriggs, our gardener.