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Leading Academic Museums and Galleries in the 21st Century

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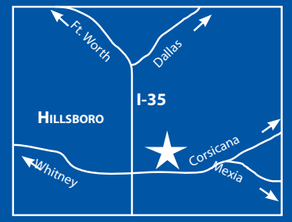

Summer Hours

Gallery & Collections
Mon. - Thurs., 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Historical Research Center
Mon. - Thurs., 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Annual Membership Form

Please use a ballpoint pen.

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Medal of Honor Memorial Brick Campaign

If you sign up for a membership with the Texas Heritage Museum today, you may also sponsor a brick at a special low price of $75. Using the space below, tell us what you want your brick to say. Please limit to 15 characters per line and three lines per brick. If you decide to purchase more than one brick, please attach additional information to this form. Those wishing to purchase a brick without a membership may do so at the regular price of $100.

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Texas Heritage Museum
Home of the Official State Medal of Honor Memorial to Native-Born Texans

Lasting Legacies
Newsletter

Vol. 8 No. 1 Summer 2016

Congratulations are in Order

Officials at the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries have appointed Texas Heritage Museum at Hill College Dean John Versluis as the new Mountain-Plains representative according to an official press release on April 28.

Versluis' regional territory spans over 10 states – from Texas to North Dakota – which has approximately 200 academically-based museums. "I am honored and humbled to accept this appointment to represent the AAMG Mountain Plains Region," Versluis said. "I am also excited to be part of the AAMG leadership to embark on an exciting new chapter to help guide College and University museums that congregate our communities around heritage and culture, while embracing the best museum practices and standards. A very special thanks to the AAMG nominating committee and Jill Hartz, President of AAMG, for selecting me."

The Mountain-Plains Region consists of Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

Versluis has been with the Texas Heritage Museum since 2005 and oversees three divisions: Galleries and Collections, Historical Research Center and the Hill College Press. He has also served as Past Director of the North Platte Valley Museum in Gering, Neb., and as Past Director of the Greater Southwest Historical Museum in Ardmore, Okla.

He was also the recipient of the Doña Ana Historical Society Pasajero Del Camino Real Award for co-authoring, Historic Architectural Styles in Las Cruses, N.M.: Celebrating 150 Years.

"I am very proud of John for being appointed as an AAMG Regional Representative," Hill College President Dr. Pam Boehm said. "He will further carry the Hill College name into the national spotlight."

Versluis has made new scholarly discoveries providing further insights into the U.S. intervention into Russia 1918-1920 and has presented his research at national history conferences. He is also a member of the Apollo 11 Preservation Task Force officially designating the artifacts left behind at Tranquility Base on the moon as Cultural Properties.

He also serves as an Association of Academic Museums peer reviewer for the Museum Assessment Program.

The Association of Academic Museums and Galleries has over 1,100 total members, including 450 institutional members, throughout the United States. It was founded in 1980 to promote and support academic museums and to help its constituent members achieve their educational missions.

Today AAMG serves as an advocate for all types of academic museums.

Meet and Greet

The Texas Heritage Museum would like to introduce you to the Spring/Summer 2016 Graduate Intern, Theresa Arias.

Theresa will receive a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Washington Information School in June 2016. She feels that working as an intern at the museum has helped prepare her for her future endeavors through the hands-on experience.

She believes the best advice for future interns at the museum is, "attention to detail" and to "listen to current workers," because they know the tricks if you come to a dead end.

Theresa Arias

THE TEXAS HERITAGE MUSEUM'S MISSION IS TO EXPLORE TEXAS AND TEXANS DURING WARTIME AND HOW THOSE EXPERIENCES AFFECT US TODAY.

Civil War Relics from 1862

Laguna Park resident Mike Stell has graciously donated several Civil War relics from the Battle of Valverde (New Mexico, 1862) to the Texas Heritage Museum at Hill College in Hillsboro.

Some of the relics that are now on display at the museum include belt buckles, uniform buttons, assortments of horse saddles and tack, nails, bullets, bullet casings, some glassware – and a Confederate cannon ball found on the black mesa.

"Mr. Stell's donated items are part of an educational piece that will help illustrate to visitors that there actually were Civil War battlefields and skirmishes that took place in the western portion of the United States," said John Versluis, Dean of the Texas Heritage Museum. "In fact, the Battle of Valverde was the largest and westernmost battle of the Civil War campaign in New Mexico territory."

Stell looks at display inside the THM with Charles and Velda Record.

Stell said he was 8 years old when he and his father first visited the battle site looking for anything they could find that would date back to the Battle of Valverde.

"My grandmother would give us a coffee can, and we would go out – sometimes twice a day after it rained – and looked for items," Stell said. "We didn't have a metal detector back then, but I wish we would have had one."

The Battle of Valverde was actually a two-day battle from Feb. 20-21, 1862. The majority of the fighting between the Union and Confederates took place at a ford of Valverde Creek in New Mexico territory.

The Confederates totaled 2,510 soldiers – consisting primarily of Texans – and were led by Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley. The Union soldiers were led by Colonel Edward Canby and included 3,800 men. However, around 2,000 of these men consisted of New Mexican volunteers, 500 were members of the militia, and 100 were Colorado volunteers.

Although outnumbered from the beginning, Sibley's men had won a tactile victory by pushing the Union soldiers back to Fort Craig, but that win put his men in a precarious position.

Most of the Sibley's supplies of food, water and other items were attacked and burned by members of the Union militia, and many of the Rebels' mules and horses had been run off.

Sibley thought if he could take Fort Craig, that would take care of his supply problems, but he soon retreated his men because he had received word that additional Union forces were called in to help defend Fort Craig.

Within the next four months – and even after occupying Santa Fe, N.M. – the Confederates would have to retreat back to Texas.

Total casualties from the Battle of Valverde included 202 for the Union and 187 for the Confederates.

'The Daytripper' Season Seven Finale Episode on Hillsboro

On Feb. 18, "The Daytripper" came to Hillsboro to film and the Texas Heritage Museum at Hill College was one of the locations picked by the producers to showcase. They were truly amazed and repeatedly said that "we were at the top of one of the best museums that they have ever filmed in the seven years they have been producing the show."

They had a great time as they filmed touring the museum. All exhibits were filmed and the highlights will include an introduction in the lobby, the Texas Revolution, the Civil War Milton Holland exhibit (first Texan to receive the Medal of Honor who was African-American), the Audie Murphy exhibit in WWII and the Vietnam tunnel exhibit.

Richie Lozan, one of the producers and editor of "The Daytripper," directed the filming at the museum and told me his uncle received the Medal of Honor. Well, his uncle was Mike C. Pena, a native-born Texan, who received the Medal of Honor from the Korean War, which was awarded posthumously in 2014, by President Obama. We added his name with four others last year for the unveiling of the new addition to The Medal of Honor Memorial to Native-Born Texans during the 50th anniversary celebration. Richie was amazed that we already had his uncle's name placed on the memorial, and he was truly grateful and taken aback.

Dean John Versluis and Chet Garner.

Hot Off the Hill College Press

Currently circulating by Hill College Press are *More Texas Burial Sites of Civil War and Reconstruction Era Notables*, by James Mundie, Dean Letzring, and John Luckey (2014) and *Frontier Horsemen of the Confederacy: Major's Texas Cavalry Brigade*, by James Matthews (2015). The first is a two-volume follow up of a single volume on the subject in 2002. Based on extensive research and "labor" throughout Texas, the latest work contains more than 1,000 biographical sketches and photos of burial sites of veterans of both Confederate and Union armies and a few non-military prominent individuals buried in 462 cemeteries in 150 counties. Attractively presented in format and with dust jackets, the work is an important reference for researchers studying the activities of the persons, their parts in the war and aftermath; it will be a springboard for many to enhanced learning about conditions in the personal lives of those listed and the turmoil of the society in which many lived in Texas and elsewhere for years afterward.

Matthews's book is about a unit of Texans and men from other states who, in terms of length and breadth of service during the Civil War, extended from the Confederate invasions of New Mexico and Arizona early in the war to the Red River campaign of the Union forces in Louisiana in 1864. Never serving east of the Mississippi River, the brigade was also known as the Second Cavalry Brigade and was commanded by Col. James Major in 1863-1865. After suffering many casualties, the brigade disbanded in east Texas when the war ended.

Currently being prepared for publication in a few months is a descriptive work of institutional information and history with tentative title of *The Texas Heritage Museum: Memories of the Past and Visions of the Future, 1964-2016.*

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