



**de Stolfe Journal**  
**13.6 : FALL-WINTER 2024**



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## 13.6 : FALL-WINTER 2024

*Covers activities in October 2024 to January 2025.*

*(Page numbers correspond to the PDF page numbers.)*

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## ON THE COVER



*All across the South, Spanish Moss drapes in the trees like a heavy dew. Savannah, Georgia is no exception. Mom and I went to Savannah for the weekend in the early 1990s. We took Amtrak from Jacksonville to Savannah, about a two hour ride as I recall. Read more about our visit in this issue of the journal.*



*In September, I went back to Texas Steak Express to work as a delivery driver for the third time. The first time was 2007-2009, second 2011-2012, and third 2024-2025.*



We live in the 2020s, not the 1920s! Wherever there is a web link like below, click it to go to the webpage it references! (Click it now!)

[www.destolfe.com](http://www.destolfe.com)



# COMMENTS BY RG

## Summing Up 2024 Into 2025

Well, I am stupidly late in finishing out the reporting of 2024 and into 2025. But in all fairness, there have been some major changes with me! Now, you will have to wait until the next regular issue to get caught up with the new things. But for now, I want to get you caught up with the last six months or so before I can tell you about what has happened in recent months.

This issue includes another trip from the early 1990s I took with Mom to Savannah, Georgia. It was a weekend trip where we took a short Amtrak route from Jacksonville and relaxed in the low country.

In early August, my job ended working for a company called Jagen Events for reasons that I will explain in the next regular issue of the journal. Needless to say, I needed to find other work and in early September went back to work for Steak Express as a delivery drive for the third time.

In mid November, I took a few hours in the afternoon before I had to go to work to visit two familiar museums that I had not visited in a long time. There were some new things that each museum had and finally went to go see them.

The end of October was one year after Dad's death. There has been some things that went on with that, and I am uncertain as to what, how much, and in what ways I want to tell about those things. More about that in the next issue as well.

My personal situations and arrangements made me decide best to stay home for the various end of the year holidays. For Thanksgiving, I simply made a nice dinner and froze the leftovers to have for Christmas as I intentionally made plenty to have for Christmas, which was nearly a repeat of the Thanksgiving dinner. However, I did have a completely different Christmas Eve dinner, but one consistent with past Eve dinners I've had.

I celebrated the New Year quite uneventfully at home watching the Central Time Zone New Year fireworks from Dallas on the YouTube live feed.

In this issue, I finally sum up my garden for 2024, which was a rather light gardening year.



January proved to be quite the radical transitional month. However, this leads into what the next issue will cover to get y'all caught up with what is going on with me. But also needless to say, January and early February were quite the roller coaster of emotions and of physical activity. I do not intend to have as much gap between this issue and next issue as I had with the last regular issue until now!

So until the next issue, enjoy and happy spring!

*RG*

# WORD FOR LIFE

## Revelation Topics - "The End Times" - Part 4

The book of Revelation has a total of 22 chapters. In the last segment of this unexpectedly long series, I finished describing chapter 13. Let's just pick right up with chapter 14 and continue on.

Up to this point, the actions that have happened have been like "light affliction" as compared to what is about to happen. What we must remember is that those who are in Christ Jesus have long since been raptured to Jesus by this point and those left behind—the worldly, the unbelievers—are those facing the things happening as described in Revelation.

Chapter 14 starts with "The Lamb and the 144,000", where verse 4 says, "These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins". The rest of verse 4 and verse 5 shows, "These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God." Back in chapter 7, 144,000 Jews were sealed, 12,000 from each tribe. I am thinking that these are the same 144,000.

The next section tells about the proclamations of three angels. In short, the first angel said in part "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come..." the second angel proclaimed in part "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city..." and the third angel said in part "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into

the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." The first angel was proclaiming a call to repentance, to fear God, and to give the glory to God as the bowl judgements are about to happen. The second angel proclaimed the strong city of Babylon has fallen and more is described about that in chapter 18. The third angel gave a stern warning not to fall prey to the Beast by taking his mark on the right hand or on the forehead (Revelation 13:16) as those who do will most certainly be judged and cast in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, eternal torment! Verse 12 and 13 provide that the Spirit said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

The rest of chapter 14 covers the reaping of the Earth's Harvest and the reaping of the Grapes of Wrath. Both of these reapings are stating that angels are telling someone to thrust a sickle into the earth to reap a ripe harvest. These do not refer to actual harvests of produce, but rather refer to two kinds of harvests of mankind. The earth's harvest shows that Jesus has one sickle, as the pronouns are capitalized for holy names. It is possible that this could refer to a rapture of the righteous, perhaps a different rapture or redemption to the big rapture of the righteous at the start of the tribulation. The grapes of wrath definitely refers to the unrighteous and the great slaughter, causing blood to shed and build "up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs" (Revelation 14:20). A furlong is 220 yards,

and 1600 furlongs is just over 357,000 yards, or 200 miles. This is the Valley of Armageddon, which some Biblical scholars state is not a specific geological place, but rather the type of place where the great battle will be. Others state that it is a specific location. In any case, these two sections of reaping are each an individual study that are far more extensive than I intend to describe in this short writing!

Chapter 15 is a prelude to the seven bowl judgements. The first verse that John states basically describes it: "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete." The wrath of God refers to God's hot judgement against the people who rejected Him and His Salvation, meaning Jesus. But one important thing to note is in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, "God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ", meaning that the saved are not prearranged to experience God's hot wrath! In preparation to pour out the bowl judgements, the Bible says, "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever" (Revelation 15:5-7)

Chapter 16 tells about each of the seven bowls that a loud voice said to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of

the wrath of God on the earth". Here is a short summary of the seven bowls:  
Bowl 1 - Loathsome Sores, "...foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast..." (16:2)  
Bowl 2 - The Sea Turns to Blood, "...every living creature in the sea died." (16:3)  
Bowl 3 - The Waters Turn to Blood, "...[the judged] have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. for it is their just due." (16:6)  
Bowl 4 - Men Are Scorched, "...the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire." and they did not repent. (16:8-9)  
Bowl 5 - Darkness and Pain, "the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain."  
Bowl 6 - Euphrates Dried Up, "the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up" (16:12)  
Bowl 7 - The Earth Utterly Shaken, "the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air... there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake"

As part of the last bowl, the Word also says, "And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great." (16:21) The weight of a talent was not consistent among the ancient cultures, but varied anywhere from 60 pounds to 130 pounds, with the 130 often cited as the weight of a talent in the New

# WORD FOR LIFE

Testament times when John wrote the book of Revelation. If you have seen what pea to golf ball sized hail does, image what damage, destruction, and death that even the lightest talent of hail would cause!

I have not even stated all of the details written for each bowl judgement! Each of these bowl judgements deserves at least a paragraph to more thoroughly explain! However, I am continually learning just as with the rest of you, just as I said at

the beginning of this series. I have no desire to misinterpret the meanings of these judgements. However, understand that these are God's fiercest wrath against the people who have rejected Him!

With six more chapters left of Revelation, I think there will be at least two more sections to this series. The best parts of Revelation are in Chapters 21 and 22! So until then, walk in love and peace towards your brethren.

## Bible References Used

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

Revelation 14:4-5

4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Revelation 14:6-11

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Revelation 13:16

He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

# RANDOM THINGS



*This is called Texas Sage. Sometimes, it can be in full bloom, dense with flowers. 7.21.24*



*This is called Bird of Paradise, no relation to the orange/purple variety of the same name. 7.4.24*



*Why it is called "penny tile". (In a Chick-fil-A)*



*These are the denominations available as of 2025. (This is rare that I might have all of these denominations at the same time!)*

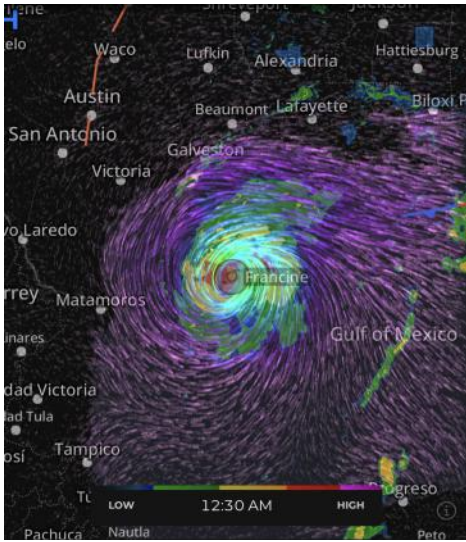


*The Canada Geese were making their rounds. 1.13.25*

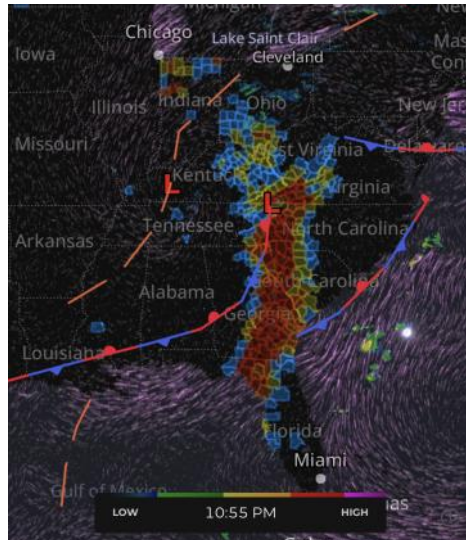
*Finally got to October in the 2024 Gebo's calendar to get to my photo!*



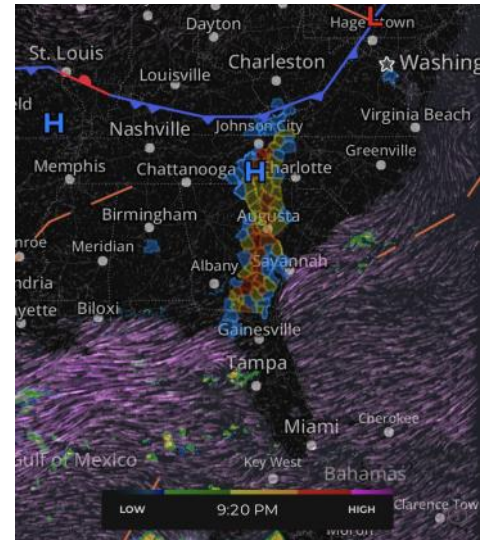
# RANDOM THINGS



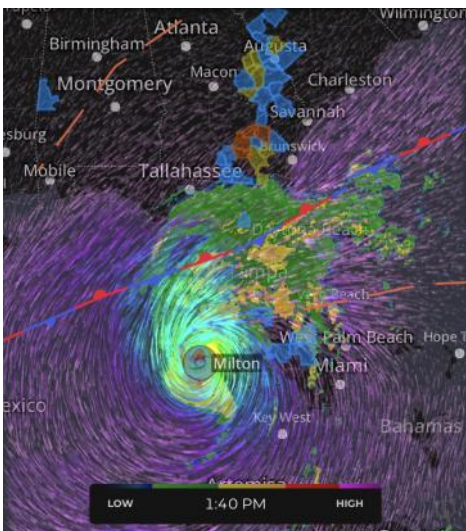
*Hurricane Francine in the Gulf on September 11, 2024.*



*Counties without power on September 29, 2024 after Hurricane Helene.*

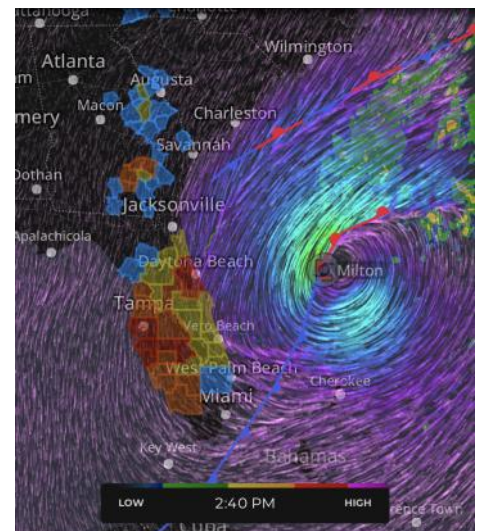


*Counties still without power on October 5, 2024 after Hurricane Helene.*



*Hurricane Milton about to cross Florida, as of October 10, 2024.*

*Hurricane Milton as of October 11 and showing the counties without power in Florida and counties still without power in Georgia and South Carolina after Helene.*



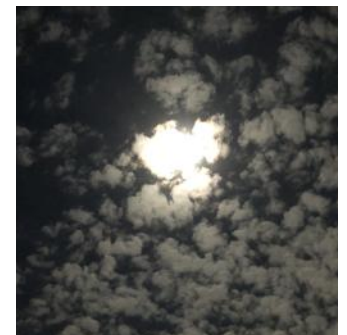
*October 17, 2024*



*November 14, 2024*



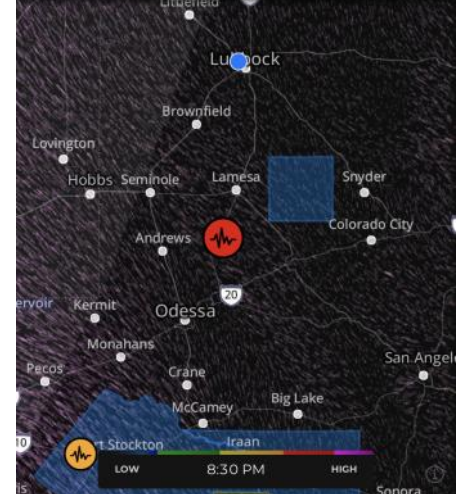
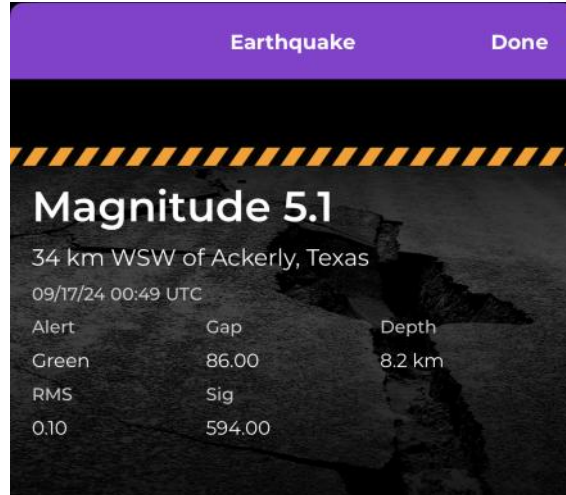
*December 19, 2024*



*January 13, 2025*

# RANDOM THINGS

*A town about 1.5 hours south of Lubbock called Ackerly had a 5.1 magnitude earthquake on September 17, 2024. This area and further south and southwest has heavy oil production. It is very likely that the earthquake was caused by the oil production.*



*Had very light snow on January 9, 2025*



*Known as a haboob, sand storm on January 17, 2025*



*Very cold on January 18, 2025!*



*Even more frigid the morning of January 21, 2025!*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

## Weekend Trip to Savanna, Georgia

Mom and I went on a weekend trip to Savanna, Georgia in the very early 1990s. I don't remember exactly when this was, but it was within the first few years after moving to Jacksonville in 1989. I also remember that it was during the time of year when it was cooler, so probably in the early part of the year. Also, we went on the trip while I was in high school in Jacksonville, from February 1989 through May 1991.

I don't recall taking any notes, and I vaguely remember what we did. Even the photos barely recall my memory. But in looking back at the photos, we saw some history, and the town is likely not quite the same today, especially after 30 years of hurricanes, as it was then!

We travelled to Savannah by train on Amtrak, about a 2½ hour trip one way on the Palmetto rail line. The part of the route we took went from Jacksonville to Jesup to Savannah. I do clearly remember the conductor going through the train cars telling people that they are about to arrive in "JessssssUP" in a partial southern accent, even though the line went all the way to New York! (But of course there would be different staff members along the different parts of the route.)

With where the Amtrak station is today and probably was then, we likely took a taxi to the motel. While in Savannah, we did not rent a car, and so what we did was within acceptable walking

distance from the motel. I am uncertain as to what motel we stayed at as I have no photos of the outside of it that I have found. I do recall that I think we had lunch at a restaurant called Huey's that had New Orleans style cuisine.

The photos included on these pages were unintentionally double exposed with two other activities I did with my high school French Club. I guess I did not remember that the roll of film was already exposed! I did blacken out some of the parts of the double exposures that were confusing from the parts of the Savanna trip where possible to make it easier to focus on the

images of the Savanna sites. I scanned the negatives and did some minor correction leaving most of the image the same.

Like I do with many of my recalled trips from years or decades ago, I look on Google Maps to try to match up the photos to approximately where each photo was taken. Of course, after 30 years, much could have changed to make it difficult to identify what is in each photo. It did turn out, however, that I was able to located where most of these photos were taken using Google Street View.



*This detail of the Amtrak route map shows the Palmetto Route from Jacksonville to Jesup to Savannah.*

*This is the old Amtrak logo used until 2000.*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

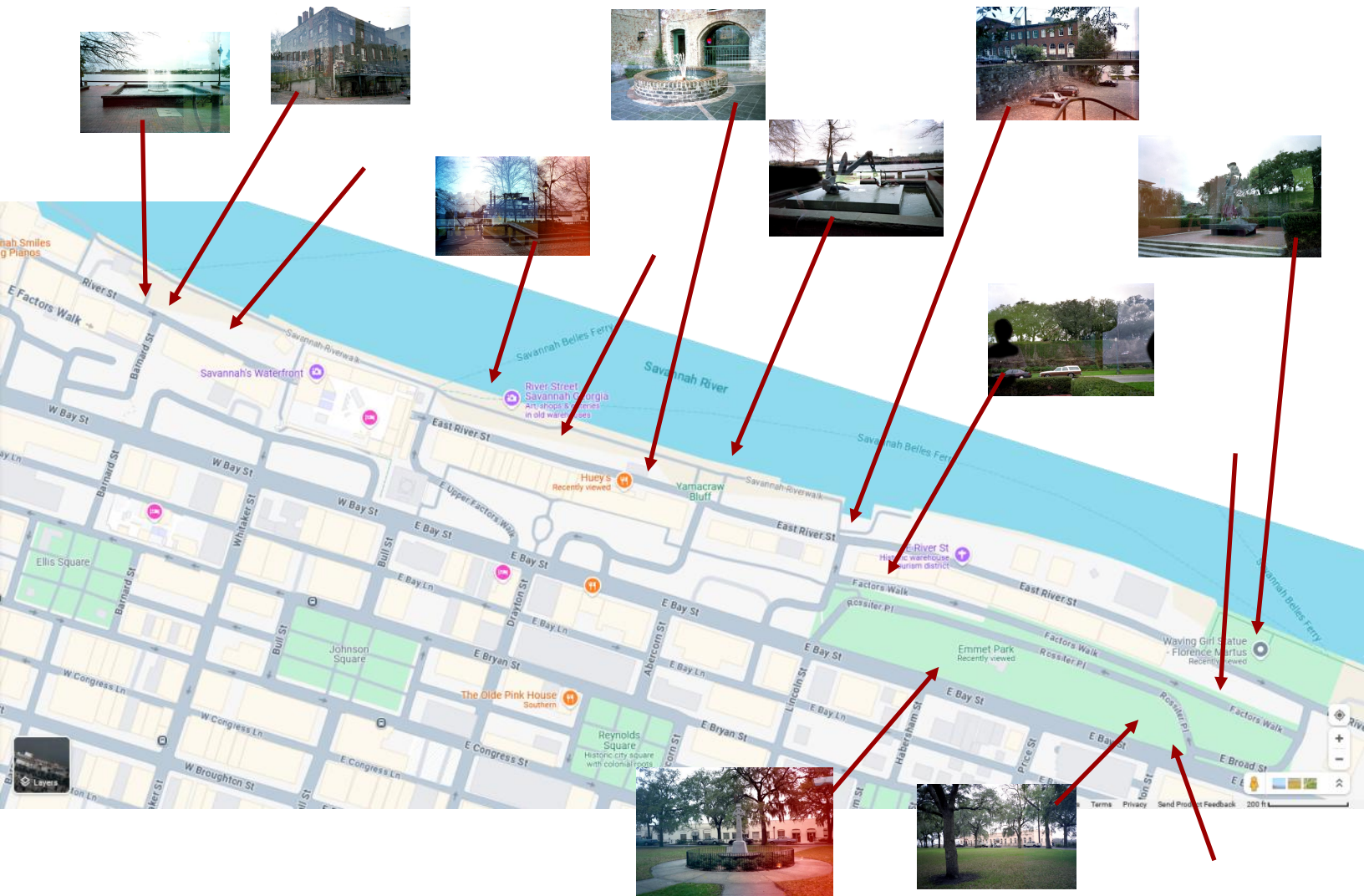


*This was our motel room, circa early 1990s!*



*Motels have much improved over the decades!*

These arrows show where some of the photos were taken along River Street.



# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Fountain at the end of Barnard Street by the Savanna River.  
Today, a small sculpture called "Ship Fountain" is in the middle of the fountain. (Google Street View)*



*This is the Chart House restaurant in Savannah. It still exists here. The road is paved with bricks.*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Paddleboat ferries regularly will take you across the Savanna River to hotels and the convention center.*



*Shops along River Street.  
The streetcar rails were no longer in use.*



*A paddleboat today. (Google Street View)*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Cool little fountain by the entrance to a restaurant.*



*Lincoln Street Ramp.*

*The drop from street level to River Street looks to be about 20 to 30 feet. The ramps are paved with cobblestones and are quite difficult to walk on! Also, the brick building serves partially as a modern speakeasy.*



*There is this ship anchor fountain as a little plaza between River Street and the river edge. From what I could find out, it is a memorial to merchant seamen who have died at sea.*



*Further down on the Lincoln Street Ramp.*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Near the Lincoln Street Ramp.*



*Near the Lincoln Street Ramp is a walkway with a series of benches. Surprisingly, they are still there!*



*Here is Mom and myself on the bench. I am guessing a nearby person took the photo for us.*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Across Emmett Park on Bay Street are these two buildings. Today, the building on the left is the Spanish Moss Inn, and the building on the right is the old Magholm Hall, not to be confused with a different building called Magnolia Hall.*



*Celtic Cross in Emmett Park at 408 E Bay St across from Habersham Street.*



*This sculpture in Morrell Park is called "Waving Girl" by Florence Martus (1868-1943). This memorial sculpture shows a girl waving with her greeting ships as they came in.*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*Rossiter Place and Bay Street in Emmett Park. The base of the Old Harbor Light is visible in the middle of the photo.*



*Looking from Emmett Park towards the Olde Harbor Inn by the Savannah River.*



*Trees along Emmett Park. All over the South, especially along the coasts, Spanish moss is a standard feature!*

# SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



*This photo is so jumbled up that it looks like a digital art piece!  
This looks like a triple or even quad exposed image.  
I must have really messed up my film to have gotten this!*



*A view further down from the Chart House.*



*Another view of the Lincoln Street Ramp*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

On Thursday, November 14, I had a few hours before I needed to go to work.

So after lunch, I trekked over to go through two museums. You know these museums; one I

graduated from and the other I had previously worked for. They are the Museum of Texas Tech

University and the National Ranching Heritage Center.

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## Museum of Texas Tech University

I first went to the museum. I had not been there in a good year or two. As with most museums, they had rotating exhibitions, and there was one I had heard about I thought I would go see. In addition, the museum had recently completed an addition that included a new gallery space. I started out front walking through a relandscaped entrance completed in early 2019

called an arroyo. To understand why this was created, you need to understand the design of the museum building built between 1968 and 1970.

According to a history of the Museum magazine article written in M, Spring-Summer 2019 issue, “The architects, Howard Schmidt and Bob Messersmith, and the museum consultant,

Lotar Witteborg of New York, worked with [the ideas of Land, Sun, Man] as they designed the new building.” Also, “Witteborg conceived of a building with the clean, sweeping lines of the earliest structures of the Euphrates Valley, where agriculture originated. The planetarium structure represents the forms of the mesas of the Southwest, the Maya and Incan temples, and

the early Spanish missions. In the final design, the parking lot was lower than the building itself, evoking a view as you emerge from your car as if you are approaching the Caprock [from the southeast] of Lubbock near Post. As visitors walk up a series of levels, eventually seeing the reflecting pool, they are reminded of aridity and the importance of water in the region.”



*Museum of Texas Tech University. Photo from the Museum of Texas Tech University*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

With this previous intent for the building, the new arroyo entrance was to be an extension of the building design, but in landscape form. According to another Museum article in the same issue, “The new landscape feature

leading from the parking lot to the Museum’s main entrance is... a West Texas Eco-Garden. An arroyo is a dry creek, streambed, or gulch that temporarily or seasonally fills with water and flows after

sufficient rain. Flash floods are common in arroyos following thunderstorms. Arroyos are most common in the semi-arid environments of the southwestern U.S.” The Museum adds, “The arroyo-like feature is an outdoor

gallery of the Museum, with native plants, recycled materials, and signs describing the design intent, recycled materials, and native plants.” I took photos of the signage through the pathway.



*This photo by the Museum shows the arroyo after completion in 2019.*



*These are my photos of the arroyo, about five years later. Definitely has gotten a little wild!*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

## THE ARROYO

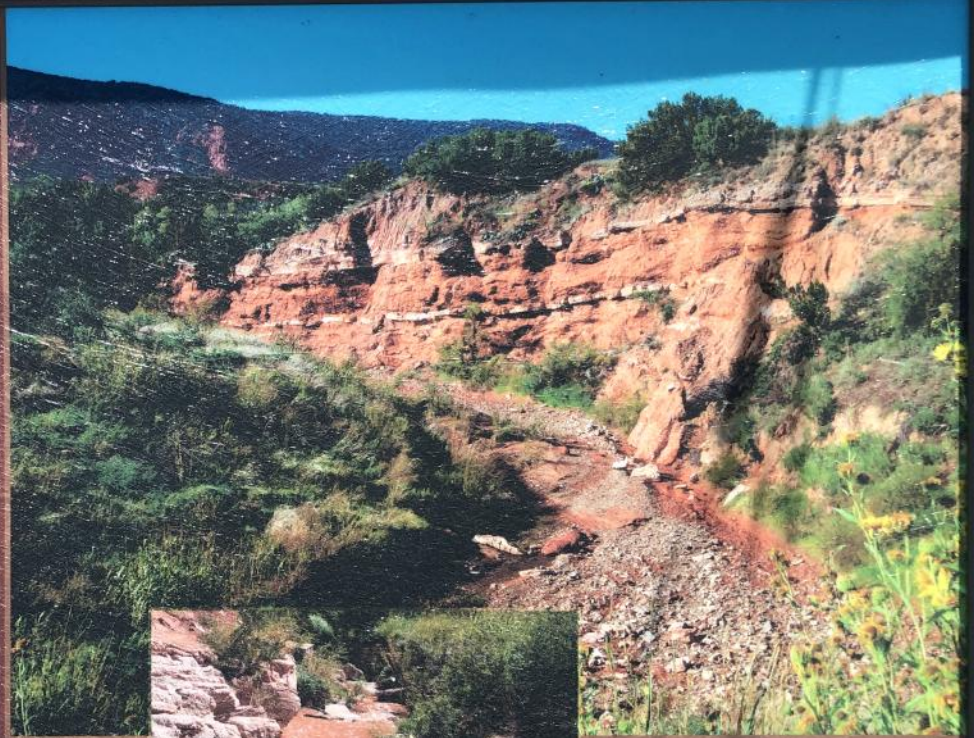
In the Greater American Southwest arroyos (uh-ROY-yos) are steep-walled channels with a flat bed of sand, dirt, and rocks, and are formed by water runoff from sudden storms.

Arroyos can fill very quickly when it rains. Large volumes of water swiftly carry sediment and further erode the channel. Because of this they are dangerous to be in during and after rainfall, even several miles downstream.

Arroyos are important habitats for animals and plants. We introduce some of the plants and animals in this recreated arroyo.

This is not intended to be a replica of an arroyo, but it has been created with the idea of how arroyos look and function.

THIS ARROYO APPROACH TO THE MUSEUM OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY IS THE FIRST OF SEVERAL STAGES IN CREATING A WEST TEXAS ECO-GARDEN AND HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE CH FOUNDATION AND TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



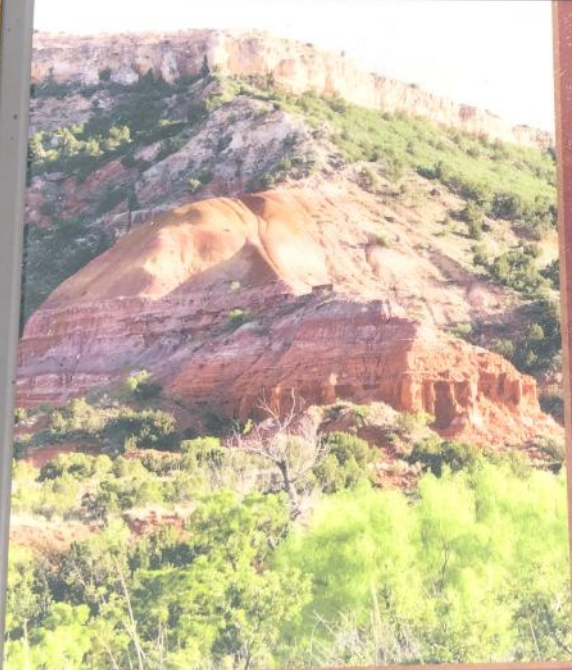
IN TIME THE ENTIRE NORTHERN APPROACH TO THE MUSEUM WILL BE LANDSCAPED TO GIVE AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DIVERSE NATURAL HABITATS OF WEST TEXAS.

## SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

We used recycled materials wherever possible in constructing this arroyo. This demonstrates an important principle of sustainability, where using local and recycled materials reduces the energy footprint that would go into making new materials and shipping them over long distances.

Old red paving bricks from the original flat plaza in front of the Museum building were crushed and reused to represent the red soils of West Texas. Concrete rubble from the site has been used as foundations for the arroyo bottom. The rocks along the arroyo walls came from a quarry southeast of Lubbock. Most of the plants have been transplanted from a number of sites in the Lubbock area. The goal is to create a landscape that will be sustained by local rainfall.

*Several plaques along the arroyo approach highlight several details that include about The Arroyo, Sustainable Landscaping, Plants, Mesquite, Animals, and Playas.*



# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

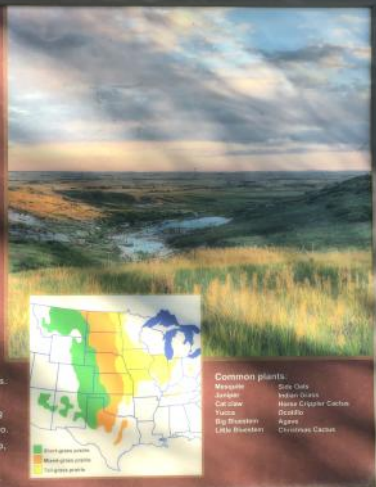
## PLANTS

The plants you see in the arroyo are short-grass prairie plants typical of the Southern Plains and a few plants selected to represent the shrub, yucca, and cacti community of the Chihuahuan Desert and canyonlands bordering the Llano Estacado to the east and southwest.

Short-grass prairie is the dominant habitat type of the Llano Estacado. One of the major types of grassland in North America, short-grass prairie consists of a mix of grasses and other annual and perennial flowering plants. Plants of the short-grass prairie need less rainfall than those in tall-grass prairie. In areas of Texas where rainfall is even less than here, the short-grass prairie is progressively replaced by desert plants.

As dry as it is here in West Texas, trends in global climate change suggest that it will become drier as a result of altered rainfall patterns. As a result, the short-grass prairie may come under increasing water stress.

We have transplanted plants from local areas and are using local seed stock to create the plant community of the arroyo. It will take several years for the plant community to develop, just like it does in nature. The arroyo will be constantly changing – between the seasons and over the years ahead.



**Common plants:**

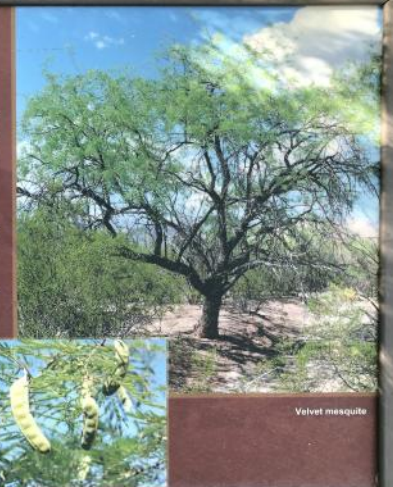
Bluestem	Sage	Yucca	Cholla
Boutelou	Shrub	Yucca	Cholla
Carolina	Yucca	Yucca	Cholla
Big bluestem	Yucca	Yucca	Cholla
Little bluestem	Yucca	Yucca	Cholla
	Yucca	Yucca	Cholla

## MESQUITE

Mesquites (mes-KEET) are small hardy trees or bushes of the genus *Prosopis* that are native to the Greater American Southwest (southwest United States and northern Mexico). They are legumes (members of the bean family) whose roots can extract nitrogen from the air between the grains of soil in which they live. This is called nitrogen fixation, which means mesquites can survive in low nutrient soils. They can also survive with very little water. Many varieties have thorns which help protect them from being eaten by herbivorous animals.

Mesquite flowers form in spring and summer followed by a flat pod of beans 2-6 inches long. The whole dry pod is edible and can be ground into flour and was made into bread by indigenous peoples in West Texas.

Because they are so tolerant of harsh soil and climate conditions, mesquites can be invasive, taking over large swaths of land particularly during periods of drought.



Velvet mesquite

## ANIMALS

The Llano Estacado has a diverse community of mammals, birds, and reptiles. Animals depend on plants to survive. Herbivores eat the plants, and carnivores eat the herbivores.

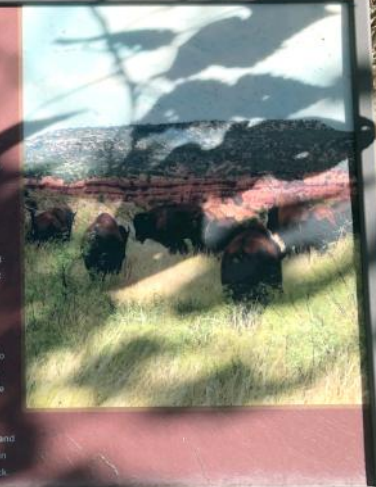
### MAMMALS

Common herbivorous mammals of the Llano Estacado include the prairie dog, mule and white-tailed deer, black-tailed jackrabbit and cottontail rabbit, four species of gophers, and ground squirrels (like the thirteen-lined ground squirrel common in Lubbock).

The pig-like javelina (PRAV-a-lieens), also known as the collared peccary, was once common in parts of the Llano Estacado but is now much reduced in range. Also less common is the pronghorn, often incorrectly called an antelope but in fact a mammal unique to North America.

Bison were once very abundant, but they were nearly hunted to extinction in the late 19th century during the Indian Wars. The Texas State Bison Herd, is protected in Caprock Canyons State Park, 95 miles northeast of Lubbock.

The common carnivorous mammals are swift and gray foxes, and the coyote. There were once black bears, wolves, and mountain lions here, but they have been exterminated to protect livestock.



## ANIMALS

The Llano Estacado has a diverse community of mammals, birds, and reptiles. Animals depend on plants to survive. Herbivores eat the plants, and carnivores eat the herbivores.

### BIRDS

The bird populations change markedly through the year, with many birds (especially water birds) using the Llano Estacado as a migration route north in summer and south in winter.

Prairie chickens and burrowing owls live largely on the ground. Prairie chickens are now very rare. The owls typically are seen in prairie dog towns where they use the burrows for their shelters.

There are several species of sparrows found both in towns and in the countryside. The great-tailed grackle, pigeon, and Eurasian dove are recent arrivals and now very common in urban settings.

Roadrunners are common along the canyons surrounding the Llano Estacado, where they hunt for insects and lizards.

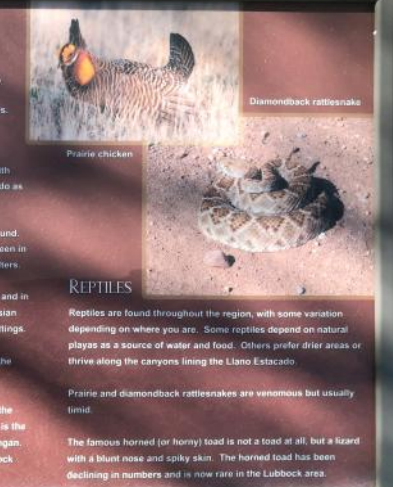
High above, raptors (eagles and hawks) search for prey on the ground. One of those common raptors, the red-tailed hawk, is the subject of the nearby artwork, "Red Tail" by artist Peter Mangin. Another is the Mississippi kite, a common resident of Lubbock during the summer months.

### REPTILES

Reptiles are found throughout the region, with some variation depending on where you are. Some reptiles depend on natural playas as a source of water and food. Others prefer drier areas or thrive along the canyons lining the Llano Estacado.

Prairie and diamondback rattlesnakes are venomous but usually timid.

The famous horned (or horny) toad is not a toad at all, but a lizard with a blunt nose and spiky skin. The horned toad has been declining in numbers and is now rare in the Lubbock area.



Diamondback rattlesnake

Prairie chicken

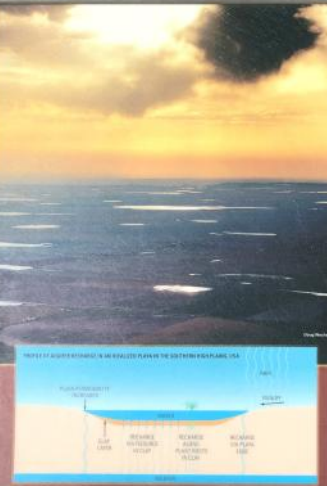
## PLAYAS

As you stand here, you can glimpse a body of water on the northern side of 4th Street. It is an urban-modified playa (ply-a) or playa lake.

Playas are a major feature of the Llano Estacado. Natural playas are temporary lakes that fill up after rains and dry out during dry periods. There are 20,000 playas on the Llano Estacado. They are vital water sources to wildlife and agriculture, and water percolates through them into the underlying Ogallala Aquifer. Playas are essential habitat for migrating water birds moving north for summer and south for winter.

Within Lubbock, many playas have been modified to be part of urban parks and the local drainage system, often taking on more water than they naturally would have. This is true for the playa you can see, which now holds water throughout the year. The low-lying area of land on the south side of 4th Street collects large volumes of water after heavy rains but is not part of the playa.

YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT PLAYAS IN THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE LLANO ESTACADO EXHIBIT IN THE MUSEUM OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY.



*This panel about Playas points in the direction of an actual playa across the street from the museum. All over West Texas, and in Lubbock alone, are playas of various sizes and shapes, and many were cut in half or cut into quadrants as roads were built right through the middle of them. Other roads circumvented or circumscribed the playas instead. A "playa" is a natural wind and water formed usually shallow depression in the land that often holds water or seasonally holds water. In modern times, they have been heavily modified.*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

## Microsculpture

THE INSECT PORTRAITS OF LEVON BISS

From the collections of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Microsculpture presents insects like never before. Created through a collaboration between the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and British portrait photographer Levon Biss, this series of beautifully-lit, high magnification portraits captures the microscopic form and evolutionary adaptations of insects in striking large-format, high-resolution detail.

[www.microsculpture.net](http://www.microsculpture.net)

<https://levonbissstudio.com>



[www.microsculpture.net](http://www.microsculpture.net) | [levonbissstudio.com](https://levonbissstudio.com)

Once inside the museum, my intent was to see the specific exhibition I had heard about and to casually walk around to the many other areas of the museum, many of which have rotating exhibitions, along with the permanent exhibitions. My first stop was to see the recommended exhibition called Microsculpture: The Insect Portraits of Levon Biss, which was created from the collections of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

This exhibition featured large format giclée prints of insects chosen by Dr. James Hogan of the Oxford Museum and

select insects in display cases, assumably from the Museum of Texas Tech University's etymology collection. The prints featured a "series of beautifully-lit, high magnification portraits" capturing "the microscopic form and evolutionary adaptations of insects in striking

large-format, high resolution detail." For each insect, Biss created an average of 8000 individual photos with precise strobe lighting from various angles using a 36 megapixel camera with a 10x microscope attachment and a 200 mm lens. Each composite took

about three weeks for each insect from photographing, processing, and retouching. I have never seen such a variety of bugs and had no clue what most of them were. But they were quite striking in shapes and colors.



# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



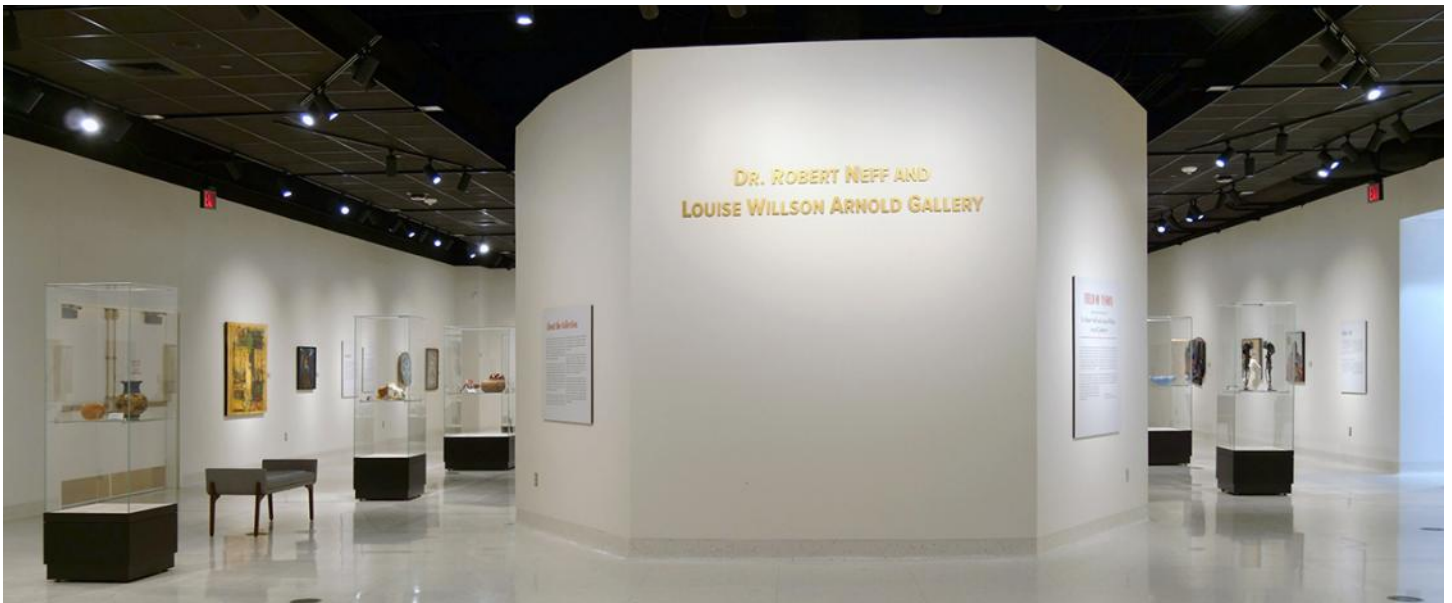
# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

From there, I walked around through the many other galleries, including the new Dr. Robert Neff and Louise Willson Arnold Gallery that opened in mid 2023 and featured the inaugural exhibition, Field of Vision Selections from the Dr.

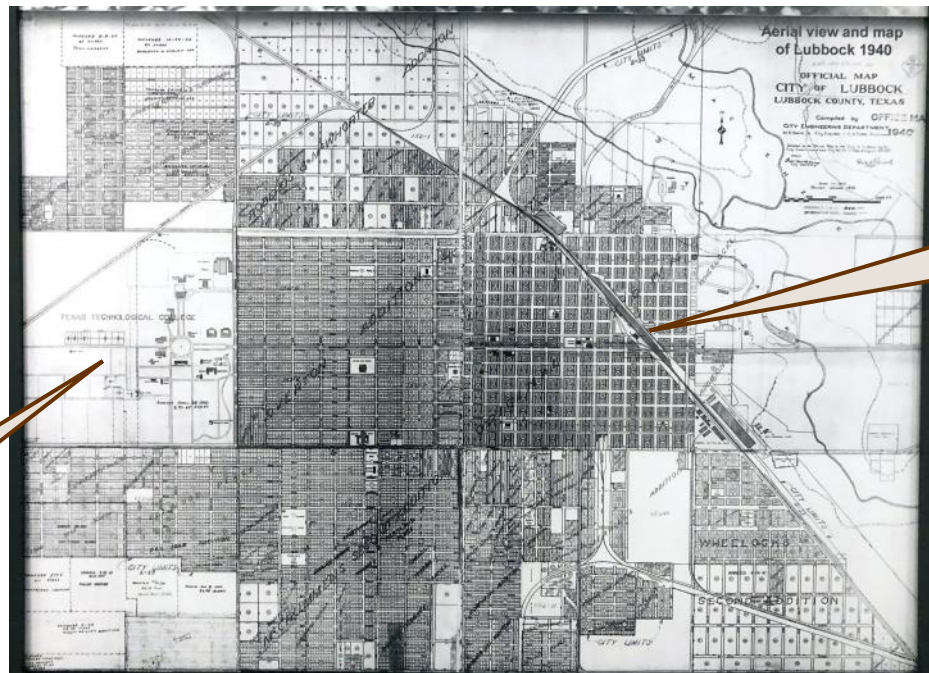
Robert Neff and Louise Willson Arnold Collection. While walking to the museum next door, I came across my own bug to photograph. I have no clue what it was, but I don't think I had ever seen one like it before.



*I have no clue what type of bug this was, but it stood out being red. It is shown much larger here than it actually was at less than half an inch.*



*In the Lubbock Gallery of the museum, many photos of the early days of Lubbock fill this basically wide curvy hallway. One image shows this map of Lubbock in 1940. Lubbock was much smaller, but was quickly expanding!*



Old Lubbock  
Santa Fe  
Depot

Texas Technological College  
(Texas Tech University)  
Founded in 1923

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

## National Ranching Heritage Center

By the time I got over to the NRHC, I only had about an hour before I would need to leave. With that in mind, I only planned to visit the main building and the new addition. Once in the main building, I went to the right into the retrooled gallery where a temporary exhibit was of transportation vehicles, called From Cow Trails To Highways, that showed five wheeled vehicles, including a restored Wells Fargo stagecoach.

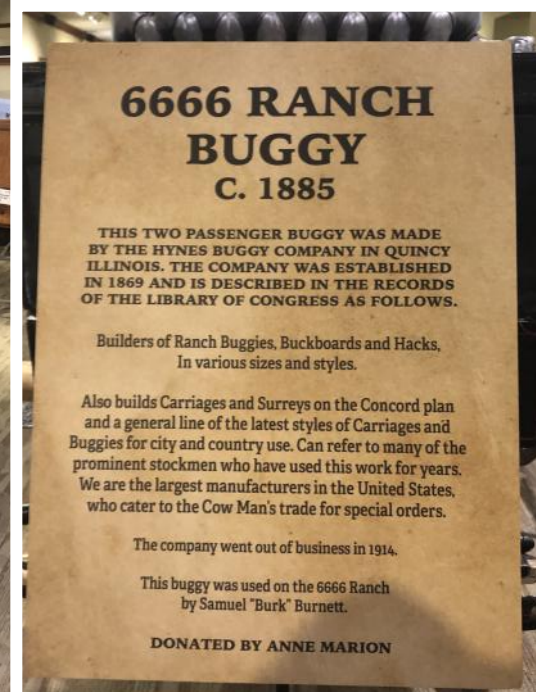


*1923 Model T Touring Car*



*1890s Freight Wagon*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



The NRHC added a significant front entrance to the museum that was sponsored by Anne Marion, the owner of the 6666 Ranch. She died in February of 2020 and had ordered in her will for the sizable 6666 Ranch holdings to be sold.

That is the former story. Today, the ranch has become even more famous because of the buyer. But make no mistake, the historic 6666 Ranch is exactly the same as it was previously. I visited it in July 2024. (Refer to my Summer 2024 issue)



*Featured here is a full portrait bronze sculpture of Anne Marion with two bas relief cattle drive sculptures by the front entrance to the museum.*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



*1923 Model TT One Ton Truck (Yes, ONE TON!)*

From there, I wanted to see the new addition that opened a year earlier in October 2023. While the previous doors that went out onto the patio and the outdoor part of the museum were still pretty much the same, people are directed to enter the outdoor park through the gift shop and into the Cash Family Ranch Life Learning Center Featuring Hank the Cowdog. The theme throughout the indoor and outdoor addition was to learn about the basics of ranching, its purpose, and the various aspects important to the industry.



*Google Earth*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



Several small gallery spaces featured a variety of topics.



*This exhibit, called The Cowboy's Equipment, shows a survey of clothing, chaps, boots, hats, and saddles worn and used by modern cowboys.*

*This exhibit, called A Day In The Life Of A Cowboy, features a rotunda of video of a cattle drive.*

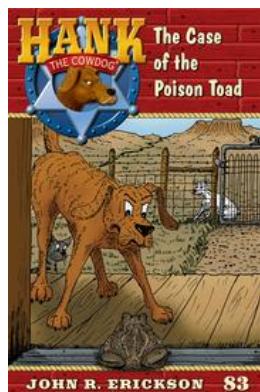
# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



The outside part of the new feature was the most exciting to see. What I saw there was something I think those working at the museum 30 years ago could have only hoped that the museum could be! Frankly, the outside part was simply fantastic!

The outside featured and was established as the Hank The Cowdog M Cross Ranch, which is the fictional ranch in its books. Hank the Cowdog is a series of reading books for children written by John R. Erickson about the official head of ranch security, Hank. He, another dog (Drover), and a cat (Pete the Barn Cat), among a host of

other regular characters, find themselves in various situations and predicaments. The books started in the early 1980s and new ones are still published, an amazing 83 of them! This outdoor park featured fully interactive, experiential sections. Look at the photos and the map, and you'll see what I mean.



#83 *The Case of The Poison Toad*, Spring 2025



*Hank*



*Pete The Barn Cat*



*Drover*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



*This is the layout of the outdoor pavilion showing the various vignettes related to ranching.*



*This shows the water resources (15) and Wolf Creek (16).*



*This shows the other side of Wolf Creek (16).*

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



Windmill pavilion (17).



Amphitheatre (10)



The Horse Pasture (9) contained various grasses highlighted individually on a long plaque. The grasses include: fourwing saltbush, sideoats, little bluestem, buffalo grass, blue grama, American basketflower, gayfeather, and Mexican hat.



Little Alfred's Front Yard (2). This is likely the most popular with kids visiting as they can play with the various ranching toys of trucks, trailers, corrals, and livestock.

# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS



From there, I went to a couple of other galleries. The Macy Gallery featured an exhibit of “Oil Ranching” and had an oil pump jack, gasoline pump, and other artifacts.



*After I left the NRHC, I walked by a large rock located between the museums with a bronze plaque dedicated to William Curry Holden. The original location of the museum was in Holden Hall located in the middle of the campus of Texas Tech University.*



# VISITED TWO MUSEUMS

The Stevens Gallery featured the removed 6666 Bedroom. The bedroom was a permanent gallery at the other end of the building that had to move to make room for the new addition, which did take up part of the existing building where the library was. I do not know if the bedroom is in a permanent location, or if it is in a long term temporary location.



The Stevens Gallery is located next to a wide hallway, and on the other wall featured two mounted Texas longhorn steers, King and Freckles, owned by Paul and Mari-Katheryn Braswell of the Cactus Ridge Ranch. Not long after, I left to get ready for work.



# HOLIDAYS: THANKSGIVING

Unlike with other Thanksgivings, I did not want to go anywhere, and I even just made a nice dinner at home. Because of some things that were going on at the time, this was the best thing for me to do. However, I did not skimp on the overall dinner! I bought some turkey from Rudy's BBQ and the rest I made at home. This included stuffing,

loaded mashed potatoes, green beans with bacon, cranberry sauce, iced tea, and rolls with butter. I bought the frozen thaw and bake rolls, Rhodes Texas rolls. I've been buying them for years. They are double the size of the regular Rhodes rolls. The dinner was yummy. And of course, I had pumpkin pie with whipped cream and hot cocoa for dessert!



## The White House Turkey Pardon

**Peach and Blossom**

### Peach

**HATCH DATE:** July 18, 2024

**WEIGHT:** 41 lbs.

**FAVORITE SNACK:** Hotdish (especially tater tot-topped)

**FAVORITE SPORT:** Cross-country skiing

**DREAM JOB:** Becoming the next Prince of pop culture

**TRAVEL GOAL:** See the Northern Lights in the Boundary Waters

**FAVORITE SONG:** "Defying Gravity"

**MOTTO:** "Keep calm and gobble on"

### Blossom

**HATCH DATE:** July 18, 2024

**WEIGHT:** 40 lbs.

**FAVORITE SNACK:** Cheese curds

**FAVORITE SPORT:** Featherweight Boxing

**DREAM JOB:** Manager of the Mall of America

**TRAVEL GOAL:** Road trip to every Minnesota lake (yes, all 10,000 of them!)

**FAVORITE MOVIE:** Frozen

**MOTTO:** "No 'fowl' play, just Minnesota nice!"

# HOLIDAYS: CHRISTMAS

I spent my Christmas almost the same as I did for Thanksgiving and just stayed home. I did have a good meal of tamales, potatoes, chips, guac, sour cream, and tea for Christmas eve and had an almost identical dinner for Christmas as I had for

Thanksgiving. And it was identical in that it was actually the same leftovers that I froze and reheated! I did buy another batch of turkey from Rudy's BBQ and made a fresh batch of the rolls along with making sure to have extra gravy!



*This was apparently the "in" thing this year. I saw cars and trucks covered in LED lights.*



*My Christmas lights this year on the house and table.*



*Christmas Eve dinner*



*Christmas Day dinner*



*United sold the smallest poinsettia I've ever seen! It's only a 2" pot!*



*United also sold amaryllis bulbs in little turtleneck sweaters!*

# HOLIDAYS: NEW YEAR 2025

Like last year, I also spent New Years Eve at home. I counted down and watched the live fireworks display on YouTube in Dallas, also like last year. The camera was pointed at Reunion Tower in downtown Dallas.



LIVE: Dallas New Year's Eve Fireworks show | FOX 4



FOX 4 Dallas-Fort Worth  
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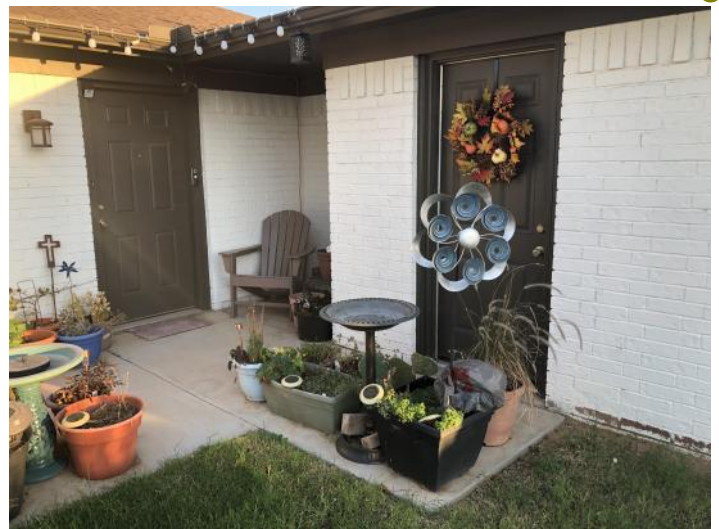
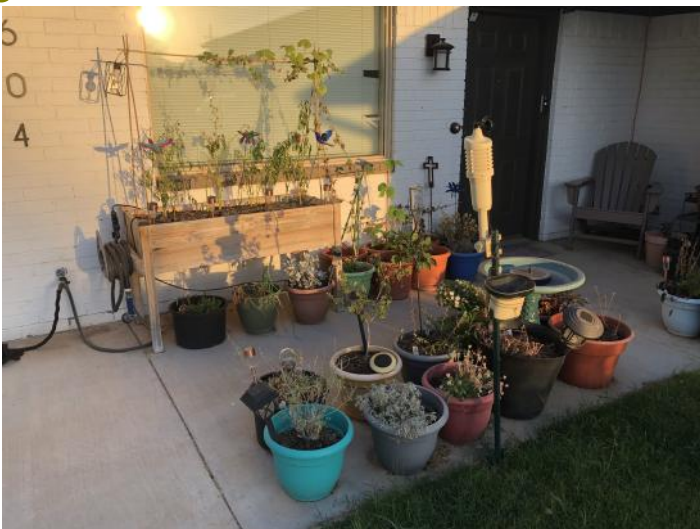
Save



# GARDENING



*Wednesday, August 14, 2024*



*Wednesday, October 9, 2024*



*Thursday, January 9, 2025 — Had some very light snow.*

# GARDENING



*I filled the vegetable trough with 7 varieties of peppers.*



*Here's the harvest of very ripe sweet peppers*



*Vine turned out to be a birdhouse gourd*



*Had a good rain!*



*Sweet potato vine flowers*



*My fall wreath*



*10.9.24*



*10.11.24*



*11.12.24*



*11.12.24*

# FINAL THOUGHT

## A Note About Time

There are some who will say that time goes by slowly or that it is too slow, while others will say that time disappears way too fast. The fact is that time goes on at exactly the same rate it always has. We are either too focused on it, making it seem as if time goes tick, tick, tick... or that we pay little attention to it and only notice time randomly making it seem as if it is sprinting! Either way, we must understand that we each only have a finite period of time we live on earth, and we cannot afford to waste any of it on living wrongly.



*Handcrafted cuckoo clock made in Germany that Dad had in his house. The pinecones must be pulled up every few days to keep the clock running. It did not keep time very well! I need to adjust the pendulum.*



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### **Publisher/Owner/Editor**

Robert-George de Stolfe

### **Graphics/Layout\***

Robert-George de Stolfe

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