

Bullock Museum's new Collectors' Gallery opens with spotlight on J. P. Bryan Collection

DECEMBER 20, 2016 (AUSTIN, TX) — Unique artifacts from some of the most prolific collectors in the state will now be on view at the Bullock Texas State History Museum with the opening of a new Collectors' Gallery at the downtown Austin museum. While private collectors are rarely in the spotlight, their collections often highlight the most prominent Texans and are integral to the preservation of Texas's history. The new gallery allows the museum to display exceptional artifacts and share with the public some of the finest treasures in the state.

"This is our opportunity to show the critical role private collectors play in preserving Texas history and to share these significant artifacts with the public," Bullock Museum Director Victoria Ramirez said. "We want to acknowledge that collectors have gone to surprising lengths to preserve Texas history."

The museum wanted a remarkable collection to feature for the gallery launch and chose to highlight the collection of J. P. Bryan, founder and chairman of Torch Energy Advisors and avid collector of significant Texas artifacts.

The Bryan Collection is one of the world's largest collections of historical artifacts, documents, and artwork relating to Texas and the American West. It spans more than 12,000 years, from ancient Native American cultural artifacts to pieces from the 21st century. With approximately 70,000 items in total, the collection includes 20,000 rare books, more than 30,000 documents in Spanish, German, French and English, three dozen saddles, more than 250 antique firearms, several hundred spurs, exceedingly rare maps, the works of Texas craftsmen, and a large collection of artworks.

"The artifacts on display were chosen to represent the scope of Mr. Bryan's collection," Ramirez said. "They offer a glimpse into his collecting interests and his deliberate effort to document the history of Texas and the American



The Bullock Museum in Austin has opened a new Collectors' Gallery that will feature rotating special exhibitions highlighting private history collections in Texas. The collection of J. P. Bryan, founder and chairman of Torch Energy Advisors and avid collector of significant Texas artifacts, is the first to be featured in the new gallery space.

West to its fullest extent.”

At the Bullock Museum, visitors can see selections from the Bryan Collection, including a rare 18th-century Spanish Colonial painted trunk, a Bowie knife (made popular by Alamo defender James Bowie), a Republic of Texas dragoon sword and shako helmet, and an American Indian beaded vest and leggings. A selection from an extensive collection of spurs dating from the 1600s forward is on display and shows styles from different centuries, various countries, and from a variety of spur makers. Remarkable artwork by Thomas Allen, Joseph Henry Sharp, Frank Reaugh and other artists round out the gallery.

J. P. Bryan himself has a strong connection to Texas history —Stephen F. Austin’s sister, Emily Austin Perry, is his fifth-great aunt. But his lifelong dedication to historical preservation sets him apart. He has served on the advisory board for the Brazoria County Historical Museum; as chairman of the board for the Institute of Texan Cultures; as president of both the Texas Historical Foundation and the Texas State Historical Association; and was appointed as a commissioner for the Texas Historical Commission.

Bryan spent two decades restoring the Gage Hotel in Marathon, Texas, and recently completed restoration of that town’s oldest building. In 2013, he purchased the Galveston Orphans Home in Galveston, which has been restored and now houses The Bryan Museum. Earlier this year, the museum received the Texas Historical Commission’s John L. Nau, III Award of Excellence in Museums in September of 2016.

The new Collectors’ Gallery at the Bullock Museum will feature the Bryan Collection through June 25, 2017, and will feature a rotation of artifacts from exceptional collections in Texas. Details at TheStoryofTexas.com.

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MEDIA Images and Assets: <http://bit.ly/CollectorsGallery>

Support for the Bullock Museum's exhibitions and education programs provided by the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum includes three floors of exhibitions, IMAX® and 4D special-effects theaters, a café and museum store. The Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives and individuals to display original historical artifacts and host exhibitions that illuminate and celebrate Texas history and culture. For more, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or call (512) 936-8746.