



On The Vine

GRAPEVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

V28 #8 • DEDICATED TO PRESERVING GRAPEVINE AND TEXAS HISTORY • AUGUST 2025

GETTING RIGHT TO THE POINT...

Grapevine's Collections of Arrow Points

Before 1843, the Grape Vine Prairie had an abundance of wildlife and was the site of a great deal of American Indian hunting activity. William E. (Bill) Moore, archaeologist and author of the book *The Texas Calaboose and other Forgotten Jails* (which features Grapevine), states in the Introduction of his new book *Arrow Points of Texas and Its Borderlands*, “the excitement one gets from finding his or her first ‘arrowhead’ is an experience that can only be understood by those who have held a stone object that was made and used by people hundreds, if not thousands, of years ago.”

When thinking and reading* about the age of arrow points, there are abbreviations which we are familiar with, and some new ones to know. These include BC or B.C. (years before Christ); AD or A.D., (years after the death of Christ); BP or B.P. (Before Present - 1950); BCE or B.C.E. (Before Current Era – Year 1); and CE or C.E. (Current Era – Year 1). Arrow points found in this area could be 1,225 years old.

Is it an arrowhead? An “arrow point” is more descriptive. When non-archaeologists talk about “arrowheads” they most likely are referring to any variety of chipped stone objects that were associated with the weapon system of the Late-Prehistoric-era people in Texas – the bow and arrow. In fact, the found “arrowhead” could be a “dart point” that was attached to a spear and hurled with an atlatl, or it could be a tool that was used for cutting or scraping. A trained professional through microscopic analysis can tell the difference. The arrow point could be for personal use, trade or for ceremonial purposes.

And there is no such thing as a “bird point,” although non-professionals like to call small arrow points by that name. The size of an effective arrow point is commensurate with the size and pull of the bow. The bigger the bow and the stronger the pull, the bigger the point can be. And another

A few Grapevine Historical Society members have experienced the thrill of finding an arrow point, including Mayor Tate and past members Larry Banks and Hugh Lee Higgins.



Local Native American arrow points and other artifacts displayed in the Wallis Hotel Building

Their collections are on display in the Grapevine Historical Museum, the Settlement to City Museum, and in the second floor lobby of the Wallis Hotel building (Messina Hof Winery).

MUSINGS FROM THE MAYOR

The Pigeon and the Apple

When colonists reached the American shores and started settlements, they found the winters harsh and food scarce. Rifles were not very accurate. Shooting large game took the best of marksmen. More often their diet consisted of small game like squirrels and rabbits that could be snared, and codfish and oysters that could be collected along the coastline. They also feasted on the passenger pigeon, which at that time were the most prevalent birds on earth. Their numbers were estimated to be 60 billion before they became extinct in the early twentieth century.

Our Sister City of West Lothian, Scotland, home of Linlithgow Palace, where Mary Queen of Scots was born and spent her early years, is home to an ancient pigeon house across the street from the Palace where pigeons were raised in the 15th and 16th Centuries so that the monarchs would always have fresh meat. Passenger pigeons helped the colonists survive the first few years of settlement. Today the pigeon has lost its prestige as a table staple, and has become more of a nuisance on city streets around the world.

Early colonists brought with them twigs of apple trees to be grafted onto native trees, including the American Crabapple whose fruit was small and bitter. Thanks to the grafting process apples were produced in a very short time. The colonists

--Continued on next page

-- Continued on next page

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Making a few points about “arrowheads”

myth-buster explained in William Moore’s book: no Indian, as erroneously shown in movies, wanted to shoot arrows at great distances while hunting or in warfare. Closeness to the target was always the objective; the ideal range was 30 to 80 feet.

Arrow points can be recycled! They can be re-sharpened and broken points can be used for other tasks. But what if you didn’t have any stone suitable for an arrow point? The Apache of New Mexico and the Yuma of Arizona sharpened and fire-hardened the tips of their arrow shafts into points. However, these arrows would not travel as far and with the same speed as those bearing properly weighted points. If you wanted to stun a bird or small animal rather than pierce it, an arrow with a blunt tip would do the job. The Karankawa Indians of Texas even fished with their bows and arrows.

The demise of the bow and arrow was largely due to the development and availability of modern firearms, and American Indians were always open to new technology. In Grapevine, when you look at the Peace Circle, you will see the beautiful bois d’arc bow in the hand of Towaash, Chief of the Ioni tribe; but a rifle in the hand of Kateahtick, Chief of the Keechi tribe. Change was here regarding rifles – which Sam Houston addressed in Article XXIII in the Treaty of Bird’s Fort – allowing the tribes to have arms for the purpose of hunting.

-- Sallie Andrews

**Some information in this article is excerpted from Arrow Points of Texas and Its Borderlands by William E. Moore. This book, published by Texas A&M University Press, is available from Amazon and other retailers.*



**THE VINE ARTS CENTER
225 W. WORTH ST.
6:30 PM REFRESHMENTS
FREE • OPEN TO ALL**



July 28 Historical Society Meeting:

Tales From The Grapevine Opry w. Rocky Gribble

After 35 years showing movies on Main Street, the Palace Theatre got a total makeover in 1975...transformed into the Grapevine Opry. For the next quarter-century and beyond, it was home to musical talent from local hopefuls to rising stars and country legends. The characters in front of the stage and behind the scenes are as rich and entertaining as any country song.

For the Grapevine Opry’s 50th anniversary, Rocky Gribble joins the Historical Society to share some of those stories. The Opry’s bandleader since 1986, and later producer of its weekly shows, Rocky Gribble continues to produce and host Opry tribute concerts. Expect lively stories & fascinating history!

Continued from Page One

used the apple as fresh in-season, and dried them for the rest of the year. They were used in now-famous American apple pie. The juice made cider that the entire family could drink, important since water often had bacteria that could cause sickness and even death.



The pigeon and the apple played vital roles in the establishment of the American nation.

John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, was a pioneer American nurseryman who introduced trees

grown from apple seed as opposed to by grafting. He became a legend during his lifetime because of his kind, generous ways, his inventive role as a conservationist, and the important contributions he made with apples. In 1806 he began a journey down the Ohio, Muskingum, and Walhonding Rivers using two canoes tied together to transport him and his seeds. He gathered pomace seed from the Potomac River cider mills and used them to plant seed everywhere he went. He planted nurseries instead of orchards, fenced them, and left them to neighbors who sold the trees on shares.

Johnny was a successful businessman, buying most of the land on which the nurseries were located and accumulating some 1,200 acres during his life. He wore pauper’s clothing by choice, not because he could not afford better. He was a vegetarian who never married, but believed he would find his soulmate in Heaven if she did not appear to him on earth. John Chapman knew apples would be important to the settlers as the nation grew westward into Ohio and the Midwest. Remember him the next time you are at Central Market, trying to pick out the perfect fruit.

Mayor William D. Tate

FORTY YEARS AGO, THE AREA'S MOST HORRIFIC PLANE CRASH

August 2, 1985: The Tragedy of Delta Flight 191

On an early August evening exactly forty years ago, the weather around Grapevine was a summertime mix of sun and storms. The temperature had topped 100 degrees a few hours earlier, but by 6 PM on this August 2nd, scattered pop-up thunderstorms were threatening to mess with the end of the Friday rush hour. Some folks noticed the mix of sunshine and rain and even a rainbow that seemed to reach the open fields just north of the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

Just east of town, Delta Airlines Flight 191, carrying 152 passengers and a crew of 11, was southbound on its final descent to the airport, the halfway stop on a journey from Fort Lauderdale to Los Angeles. The scattered storms were evident to the crew and the approach controllers. A private Learjet had landed minutes ahead to the Delta plane and reported heavy rain and some turbulence, but nothing alarming.

But by the time the Lockheed L1011 descended under the same storm cloud, things were different. The plane was suddenly hit by a fierce, undetected microburst of wind - a powerful downdraft blast of air later estimated at 80 MPH. It shoved the plane towards the ground at high speed. More than a mile short of the runway, the airliner clipped the ground just north of Highway 114. It bounced up then skidded across the highway where one of its engines smashed into a Toyota Celica, instantly killing the driver. Flight 191 plowed through the field northeast of the runways, shed-

ding pieces and only coming to a stop when it struck two water tanks at the airport's edge. The tail section broke free of the main fuselage and just escaped the worst of the resulting fireball.

Emergency units were alerted within moments. First responders began arriving at the crash within five minutes, braving rain and wind. Despite their efforts 137 people perished. Just 28 survived, most of them seated in sheared-off the tail section.



In this Dallas Morning News photo, officials inspect the wreckage of Delta Flight 191 in the days after the crash

Grapevine's Fire Chief Bill Powers rushed 23 men to the crash site, while the Grapevine Police sent 33 officers towards the airport. All were pressed into service on various aspects of the crash, from assisting with the dead and injured to directing commuter and emergency traffic. "It was total disaster," Powers told *The Grapevine Sun* a few days later. "Until I actually got to down to the crash site did I realize how devastating it was." Curiously, Grapevine Medical

Center did not receive any crash victims - Grapevine's three ambulances rushed survivors to Parkland Hospital and Harris Hospital HEB. The fact that Highway 114 was shut down from being involved in the crash was one factor in that decision. No Grapevine residents were on the plane, although the driver struck on Highway 114 had been planning to move to the area.

Delta Flight 191 remains the worst disaster both Delta and DFW International Airport have ever experienced. The crash was directly responsible for re-writing the science and safety rules around wind shear. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) blamed it on the flight crew's decision to fly through the thunderstorm, a lack of training on microbursts, and the limited knowledge of the hazards of wind shear. Because of this tragedy, airports now have the Low Level Wind Shear Alert System (LLWAS) in place, and pilots receive much better training. The events of August 2, 1985 are seared into the memory of many Grapevine residents, and a memorial can be found at the Founders' Plaza on the airport's north edge.

--Larry Groebe

A Footnote: As it happens, just a few weeks ago — precisely forty years and two days after the tragedy — DFW International Airport was hit by an even stronger wind microburst - 89 MPH - the highest wind speed ever recorded in this area. Fortunately, it happened on a Monday morning at 2 AM, with generations of improved technology and training now in place. This one merely rated some comments by the local TV weathermen.

CONTINUING THE STORY OF THE NEWEST DISCOVERIES OF THE AREA'S OLDEST INHABITANTS

Prehistoric Turtles, Birds, and a Dinosaur named "Grapevine"

Last month we described some early local paleontological discoveries- the plesiosaur uncovered during construction of the airport, and the hadrosaur tracks exposed on the Grapevine Lake spillway in 1981. But there has proved to be much more to dig up...

In 1994, Hadrosaur bones were discovered along the north side of the lake by amateur paleontologist Gary Byrd. Dating back 96 million years, experts concluded that these were the oldest hadrosaur fossils in Texas, possibly even in North America. Then in 2006 a shoreline visitor discovered parts of the tusks and jaw of a Columbian mammoth. Finally, the drought in 2006 and floods in 2015 churned up more Lake shoreline, uncovering new tracks. These were more Hadrosaur prints, along with another set made by a meat-eating Theropod dinosaur — a

30-foot animal that walked on two legs and had sharp claws on the tips of its toes. Since the two types were found in the same layer, it has been speculated that the meat-eater was stalking the plant-eater. Thieves cut away two of the footprints and made off with them (presumably to sell), despite the Army Corps of Engineers' attempts to keep the exact location secret. The Corps filled in the remaining tracks to hide them from further poachers.

In 2009 the trained eye of an amateur paleontologist spotted some tiny bones along the spillway - bones that turned out to have a story that belied their small size. What Kris Howe had found were 96-million-year-old bones from a previously undiscovered species of flightless, carnivorous bird that probably

resembled a modern roadrunner. The largest of the bones was only about 2.5 inches, and together are "reminiscent of what you might find in the bottom of a KFC bucket," quipped scientist Tony Fiorillo, curator of earth sciences for the Dallas Museum of Nature and Science at a March 2010 news conference. Howe's animal bones, which was named "*Flexomornis howei*" in his honor, are considered the oldest bird fossils found in North America.



Two-foot turtle shell uncovered in 2019

In 2019, near Oak Grove Park on the southwestern shoreline of Grapevine Lake, nine-year-old Ty Leslie Goble spotted something unusual in the rocks. It turned out to be the shell of a prehistoric tortoise, which, when pieced together by volunteers from the Heard Natural Science Museum under the direction of Patrick and Margie Kline, proved remarkably complete. This 95-million-year old ancestor of today's mud turtles can be seen in McKinney at the Heard Museum.

Grapevine Lake has proven a rewarding source for dedicated local paleontologists, and the most recent discovery is one of the most interesting of all. Murray Cohen, volunteer at the Perot Museum of Nature, was the fellow who found it. He was fossil hunting along a promising part of the lake in 2020, when he spotted a 2-inch-long part of a fossilized jawbone. It was first thought to be part of an ancient crocodile, but upon detailed examination it turned out to be a dinosaur jawbone - and from a wholly new and unknown species at that.

With a discovery comes with the right to name the new species, and last fall the Perot Museum



"Cohen's Grapevine Jaw" was discovered in 2020

introduced "*Ampelognathus Cheni*" to the world. Ron Tykoski, vice president of science at the Perot, explained to the Texas Standard "it comes down from ancient Greek: `ampelos` for `grapes` or `grapevine` and `gnáthos`, meaning `jaw`, and `coheni` after the gentleman who actually found the fossil."

Much remains to be unearthed, both literally and figuratively, about this particular ancient reptile, but Perot Museum paleontologists have estimated that this creature might have been around the size of a border collie and weighed between 20 and 60 pounds. The same part of the lake also reveal fossilized plant impressions, and these (some of which appear to be new to scientists) probably represented the lizard's diet.

And so what was old is new again. Various fossils discovered in the immediate area are now spread across North Texas - at the Heard Museum, the Perot Museum, SMU, and in town. It seems Grapevine itself can boast a history... of pre-historic discoveries.

--Larry Groebe



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER 3
TICKETS FOR OUR AUTUMN BANQUET ARE ON SALE NOW ON OUR WEBSITE

The Grapevine Historical Society • P. O. Box 995 / Grapevine, Texas 76099-0995 • grapevinehistory.org

Duff O'Dell, President • Larry Groebe, Communications Chair • updates@grapevinehistory.org

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported by tax-deductible memberships and contributions. Become a member!

Join The GHS' Facebook Group - search for "Grapevine Historical Society" and read all about it!