YEAR OF THE MAMMOTH!

Our love affair with the Huntington Mammoth has been long-standing, nearly twenty years. The romanticism and speculation surrounding the find lives on as much today as when it was found on 08-08-88. Why was it found at such a high altitude, what prompted its demise? Natural causes? Paleoindians? It was even speculated in the Salt Lake Tribune’s Monday November 21, 1988 edition that a “Bad Old Bear May Have Finished Off Mammoth in Bog.” One thing is for sure: the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum still plays host to one of the most pristine examples of a Columbian Mammoth, *Mammuthus columbi*, ever to be found!

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We had so many talented and delightful selections that it wasn’t an easy judging. Participation was great on all levels with a variety or processes utilized. There were three People’s Choice winners, one from each of the three categories.

Kicking off the year of the mammoth was an amateur art competition involving all of the would-be-famous artists that cared to create submissions! Employees from the State of Utah visited the museum and found the elementary level entries to be so captivating, that the asked us to obtain permission to send them to the State Capital where they remained on display for the entire prehistory week!

Maranda Tucker from the Junior High and High School Division,

Otto DeGroff from the Pre-school and Grade School Division,

and Lyle Bauer from the College and the General Public Division. These People’s Choice winners received plaques in honor of their work.
Additionally, there were three Judges’ Choice winners, who won the opportunity to have their masterpieces on merchandise now for sale in the CEU Prehistoric Museum Gift Shop. The winner from the Preschool and Elementary group was Hunter Stevenson, who had his drawing placed on T-shirts:

Maranda Tucker, who received her pencil sketch placed on canvas bags:

And Lindsay Reid, who received her digital design placed on TWO sizes of ceramic mugs:

The outcome was so much more than we could have hoped for! This is just another showing of the creative minds and brilliant artists we have here in our areas. Congratulations to everyone who won and who participated. We, as well as all of those who visited the museum during this display were pleased to see your creations! We love to give amateur artists a venue where they can show their talents!
New to the museum, and the first of its kind, is an exhibit containing living creatures and fossils. It gives a glimpse of the wonder that the proposed Mesozoic Gardens could hold.

A Miniature Mesozoic Gardens
Today Southeast Utah is a desert, a boon to paleontologists since finding dinosaur fossils is much easier without all of the surface greenery, but it wasn’t always this way. In the Cretaceous Period, thick vegetation was especially lush along the coasts of a warm inland sea. This provided the material that would eventually form the coal-beds of present day Carbon and Emery Counties. In Utah nearly all of these plants died out along with the dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous 66 million years ago. Some descendant plants, which survive today in the Southern Hemisphere, have been collected here to reconstruct, on a small scale, the ecology thriving in this area during the Cretaceous.

The Mesozoic Gardens display is a taste of our plan to develop the half-acre Mesozoic Garden, with hundreds of species of these living fossils. Strange plants, large trees of the ancient forests, and a diversity of animals will provide a living reconstruction where visitors can walk among the ecology of the age of dinosaurs.

Living Fossils
Direct descendants of species found in the fossil record that show little or no change from their ancestors, called ‘living fossils,’ represent remarkable designs able to make a living through many changes on Earth. Each of the animals and plants in the exhibit are evolutionary success stories, persisting through incredibly long timespans and many ecological overhauls to survive today.

Alligator
Alligator mississippiensis
The species of alligator in the exhibit is the only alligator species living today in the United States. However, several species in the family Alligatoridae were common all over North America in the Cretaceous, including the modestly sized 18 - 20 foot long Leidyosuchus and the monstrous 35 - 50 foot long Deinosuchus.

After dinosaurs died out, alligators and other kinds of crocodile were top predators in the fossil world.

Soft-shelled Turtle
Trionyx and Apalone
Although seldom star attractions in dinosaur exhibits, soft-shelled turtles are actually very abundant in aquatic deposits of Cretaceous age, indicating their great success in the dinosaur ecology.

The living North American examples seen in this exhibit include the spiny soft-shell Apalone spinifera and the larger Florida soft-shell Apalone ferox, whose species name translates to ‘ferocious’.

Words cannot express how thrilled we are to have Renee here at the museum. Her knowledge and enthusiasm are refreshing and what she brings to the museum is beyond compare. Not only did we get a top-notch archaeologist, we got a dear friend and the museum got one heck of an asset! Welcome aboard Renee, we hope we weren’t too much culture shock for you!
**ANOTHER NEW LIVING ADDITION**

New to the Hall of Dinosaurs are two Monkey Puzzle Trees  
*Araucaria araucana*

The family Araucariaceae is an exotic group of ‘living fossil’ trees with a long history. Araucarians are actually conifer trees, related to modern pines, originating after a major extinction event over 200 million years ago in the Triassic Period - long before the flowering trees in forests today. The ancient supercontinent Pangaea allowed these conifers to spread around the world by the Jurassic Period.

Araucarian trees were less abundant on northern continents by the time of the Morrison Formation, when Cleveland-Lloyd dinosaurs flourished, and they became extinct in North America at the end of the Cretaceous.

The ‘Monkey Puzzle’ is one of 19 living species surviving in the Southern Hemisphere countries of Brazil, Argentina, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and New Caledonia. Their common name comes from the prickly branches that would make it hard for a monkey to climb.

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**MAMMOTH MARATHON**

Another exciting event to take place in commemorating the 20th anniversary of The Year of the Mammoth is the Mammoth Marathon.

**Date:**  
Saturday, September 13, 2008

**Event Details:** This is the only Marathon and Half Marathon where you get to run through the Little Grand Canyon in Eastern Utah and see some of the most pristine scenery in the world. This area is also known as the San Rafael Swell or Buckhorn Wash. These towering red rocks are not only majestic but they reveal the geological timetable as you run through the Jurassic, Triassic and Cretaceous Eras. There are actual dinosaur footprints on the side of the road and you run in front of one of the largest Native American pictograph panels in the state (The Buckhorn Panel).

With this exclusive location and the multiple paleontological and archeological vistas, this is the only run of its kind. This is a limited run and is not for runners that enjoy running in large crowds and in great cities, this is for the scenic-runner that enjoys the tranquility and beauty of running in nature.

**Marathon Course:** The course begins at 5,650 ft. and only has about 235 ft. of climb in the first four miles. The remaining course is fairly flat with a slight decline until you hit the mouth of Buckhorn Wash (about 16 miles from the start). The remaining course descends about 547 ft. over the next 10 miles. This is a great decline because it doesn’t put unnecessary pain on your joints by being too steep.

**Half Marathon Course:** This is primarily a flat / downhill half-marathon with only gently rolling hills. The beginning of the run starts at an elevation of 5656 ft. and descends to an elevation of 5100 ft. so it will not put unnecessary strain on joints. There is only one access road through the canyon, but it is fairly compacted.

Runners will get a free shirt and Authentic Finishing Medal after the race.

**Registration:** Each race is limited to the first 400 entrants. Race information and registration is available online at http://www.mammothmarathons.org/lgc/lgc.html.

The Little Grand Canyon is considered to be one of the hidden treasures of the world so don’t miss out!
Find your way and save the mammoth!
The discovery of the Huntington Mammoth brought national attention to the area and the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum. There was quite a discussion as to who would have possession of the original mammoth bones. The bones were to be repossed in the CEU Museum, but the University of Utah and other institutions expressed interest in curating the bones. Upon becoming an accredited museum, CEU was allowed to house the original bones. The museum began constructing casts, which are now sold throughout the world. The mammoth find was a rare one since mammoths were not known to live in high elevations: the previous record for mammoths at high altitudes was in New Mexico at 7,200 feet while this animal died at over 9,000 feet, a higher elevation than they were thought to inhabit. Since the discovery of this particular mammoth, remains were found in Colorado at an elevation of approximately 10,000 feet. It is speculated that he was one of the last mammoths to roam this continent, residing in a refrigerated state in lake sediments for approximately 10,000 years at the base of the Huntington Reservoir dam. Some 16 years after the discovery, the significance of what a great find this was was the inspiration for the Byways Board to undertake the project of creating a kiosk. It was felt this project could be an opportunity to educate visitors to the area about the mammoth and invite them to stop, stretch their legs, enjoy the beautiful scenery and educate themselves about how awesome of a find this really was. In 2004 Joan Taylor and Kathy Smith wrote a grant to get this project up and running. By 2005 the money and Jana Abrams arrived, and the project began the tedious process of going from paper to the dimensional form you now see today.

The project brings together photos and text of the actual discovery and excavation of the mammoth, a history of the mammoth, a map showing the local museums that have replicas of the mammoth on display and, also includes the Joe Venus mural. This project is located at the top of Huntington/Eccles Canyons National Scenic Byway located in Huntington Canyon.

Last year a kiosk was created and dedicated on June 29th to honor the Huntington Mammoth find and to commemorate not only the mammoth itself, but also the place where it was found. Joe Venus painted the famous mural that resides in the Hall of Man at the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum. A portion of that mural overlooks the valley where the mammoth was found. Jana Abrams saw the mural and decided to incorporate that portion of the mural in the kiosk project. Joe Venus was very gracious when asked if she could use part of his mural that was on display at the CEU Museum as part of the project. He quickly got her the digital image she needed for the designer and printer, and was very pleased with the completed project. Today, that same panel of the mural stands overlooking the very valley that en tombed the mammoth for thousands of years.

When you stand at the kiosk and look at the Joe’s image then look out over the lay of the land where the mammoth once resided, it is as though you are tiptoeing through two time spans. It’s a delightful addition rounding out the informational and artistic content displayed in the kiosk.
You can view the kiosk by traveling up Huntington Canyon approximately 30 miles near mile marker 18.

Once you are in the parking lot, you will find a lovely informational teaser.

Then when you travel down the beautiful footpath to a covered area complete with seating, you will find the entire kiosk where you can re-discover the magic of the mammoth discovery.
DRAW YOUR OWN MAMMOTH HERE!

CEU Prehistoric Museum
451 East 400 North
Price, Utah 84501
Located at 155 East Main Street
Visit us on the web at
http://museum.ceu.edu

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