



Bexar County Commissioners Court

San Antonio, Texas 78205-3036

210.335.2555

210.335.2926/fax

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Contact: Laura Jesse

210.335.0073/o

210.787.9038/m

Nuestra Historia – Our History: Spain in Bexar County **Archival documents from Spain tell story of beginning of Bexar**

Bexar County and its co-sponsor, the UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures, will open a public exhibit of Spanish Colonial archival documents for viewing at the Bexar County Courthouse. The preliminary exhibit, which helps tell the story of the founding of Bexar County and San Antonio, precedes a larger exhibition that will open in spring 2016.

“As we celebrate the World Heritage designation of our San Antonio Missions and begin the preparations to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of Bexar County and San Antonio, this exhibit comes at a perfect time,” County Judge Nelson Wolff said. “We are grateful to the General Archive of the Indies for sharing this part of our history with this community.”

The temporary exhibit includes digital copies of:

- 20 maps, plans and paintings from the General Archive of the Indies (Archivo General de las Indias) in Sevilla, Spain.
- The 1717 Rebolledo letter describing the need for a settlement on the San Antonio River from the Bexar Archives at the University of Texas at Austin.
- Five documents from the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library
- Multiple documents from the archival records at the Center for Mexican American Studies and Research at Our Lady of the Lake University.

The exhibit is free and open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, with the exception of County holidays, from Oct. 20 through the end of February 2016. The exhibit is in the 1897 Double-Height Courtroom on the second floor of the Courthouse at 100 Dolorosa Street.

In the spring, the original documents from Archivo General de las Indias will arrive and a larger exhibition will open to the public at 126 E. Nueva Street, just south of the Courthouse. For this larger exhibition, Spanish Colonial period objects will join the display of original documents. Some of the objects have not been seen by the public since the Missions were secularized in the 1800s.

“The Institute of Texan Cultures is thrilled to be part of this exhibit bringing together documents from Spain with locally held documents and artifacts that tell the story of our World Heritage,” said Dr. Sarah Zenaida Gould, lead curatorial researcher at the Institute of Texan Cultures and curator of the exhibit.

Objects on loan from the Marianist Archives, Archdiocese of San Antonio, National Park Service, San Antonio Museum of Art, and the UTSA Center for Archaeological Research include:

- Projectile points
- A hand carved and painted palm wood Monstrance
- A hand embroidered chasuble
- Crucifix
- Chalice, cruets, and ciborium
- Ecclesiastical wafer iron
- A De La Garza coin
- A short sword
- Native American stone gaming discs
- Locally made and imported pottery
- Archaeological food remnants
- Cannon and musket balls

The larger exhibition also will be free and open to the public, and will be open on weekends.

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