

The PROFILE

August 2004

Texas Archeological Society-www.txarch.org

AUGUST MEETING:

Friday, August 13, 2004, 7:30 p.m. Robert d'Aigle, RPA, Principal Investigator, CRC, International Archaeology & Ecology, LLC: "BZT-1 (PaleoAmerican Woman.)" Anyone wishing to present should contact Muriel Walker at 281-392-7504.

LABORATORY SCHEDULE:

Mondays, August 15 & 29, 7:00 p.m., Rice University Archeology Lab, Sewall Hall, Room 103.

HAS LIBRARY: - Library hours are 6:00 p.m. to 7:20 p.m. on Friday, July 13. For more information, contact David Pettus at txgeol@earthlink.net.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN:

Congratulations to Dick Gregg and Sheldon Kindall, two founding members of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network, a program of the Texas Historical Commission. Dick and Sheldon were honored at a recent workshop in Austin where they received Awards of Merit "for 20 years of exceptional service as a member(s) of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network." Another HAS member, Bob Crosser, was admitted as a new steward for our region.

A half-price sale on selected reports will take place at the August and September meetings. Quantities are limited. This sale will reduce the inventory of some reports and generate income for the society.

Library Book Sale in September! Donations and duplicates of books and reports will be available for purchase at the September meeting; this provides a great opportunity to add to your personal library.

Labwork will focus on washing and cataloguing of artifacts from our two 2004 visits to the Elizabeth Powell site and the Kulcak site excavations in 2000. Members are working on reports for these two sites, both to which are located in Ft. Bend County and have yielded Mexican Army artifacts.

Hot off the press: The Prehistory of Texas, edited by T. K. Pertulla and published by Texas A & M University Press, Hardcover, 480 pages, \$100. Available online from Texas A&M University Press or check your local bookstore. Two excellent resources for Southeast Texas archeology, written by Leland Paterson: HAS Report No. 12 and the Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society, Vol. 66, 1995.

Both publications are available for checkout from the HAS library located in the McAgy Archaeology Library, 3907 Yoakum, adjacent to the Little Archaeology Gallery. The HAS report can also be purchased at the meeting.

Election of new officers scheduled for the annual meeting on September 10.

Condolences to newsletter editor Mary Barbara Gold whose mother, Agnes D. Brooks, passed away in July.

Beth Aucoin, President

Ekpi.aucoin@prodigy.net or 281-480-6151

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

- Brazosport Archeological Society Meeting, Tuesday, August 10, 2004, 7:00 p.m., Brazosport Museum of Natural Science, 400 College Dr. Clute, TX.
- Ft. Bend Archeological Society Meeting, Wednesday, August 11, 2004, 7:00 p.m., George Memorial Library, 1001 Golfview (at FM 762), Richmond, TX.
- 5th Annual Piney Woods Archeology Fair, Saturday, October 9, 2004, Jasper TX.
- TAS Annual Meeting October 29-30, 2004, Hilton Hotel, College Station, TX.

Background on the August Lecture:

In 1999, during the mechanical excavations for a levee on federal land at the San Bernard River National Wildlife Refuge, located in Brazoria County, human bones were unearthed. In a story appearing in a local newspaper, the bones were identified as "a skull, two vertebrae and part of a jaw with some teeth." While "radiocarbon testing (on the bones) was inconclusive, other signs, such as the soil in which the bones were found, point to the remains being at least 11,000 years old." (Houston Chronicle, August 9, 2002, 31-32 A.) Additional information is available at www.houstonarcheology.org.

HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING MINUTES, July 9, 2004

Beth Aucoin, HAS President called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m., welcomed the guests and new members, then detailed the meeting's agenda.

Announcements:

- No fieldwork until further notice.
- Nominating committee has begun their work.
- 2003 financial audit is complete.
- The Board of Directors approved sending a letter of recommendation and a one year society membership to Joanna Mundy for her work on the McClure collection. The board also approved donating the old slide projector to Marianne Marek.
- The August meeting will have a half-off sale of overstocked reports.
- Book sale at the September meeting.
- Diane Baird agreed to provide refreshments at the August meeting.
- The Journal is ready for printing.
- Lab work focuses on the Powell site paperwork.
- Volunteers are needed for newsletter folding.
- Beth is trying to get some information on the Texas City skeleton.

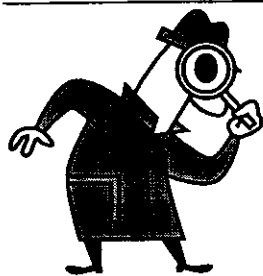
Muriel Walker introduced the night's speakers: Don Keyes, Lisa Weatherford, and Beth Aucoin discussed TAS Field School, and Michael Bailey gave a slide presentation of archeological activities in the area.

The business meeting began after the break for refreshments.

- The minutes of the May meeting were approved.
- The HAS website is maintaining five to six hits per day.
- The Treasurer's report has a June ending balance for all accounts of \$14,892.49
- There were some publications sales.
- The librarian will suggest a purchase for the \$25 donation received in Don McReynold's name.

The HAS July meeting was adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Richard Carter, Secretary, richardandwanda@sbcglobalnet.com



Archeologists Assist Law Enforcement: Join members of the Texas Archeological Society for their Annual Meeting, on October 29-30, 2004, to hear how Dr. Vaughn Bryant, archeologist at Texas A&M University, uses his skills to assist police investigations. The event will be held at the Hilton Hotel, College Station, on Friday, October 29, at 7 PM. This forum is free and open to the public. Dr. Bryant's talk titled, "From Archaeology to CSI: Catching Crooks through Pollen Analysis," will relate how his pollen studies carry over into law enforcement. Bryant first analyzed pollen samples from a famous bison kill site along the Pecos River known as Bonfire Shelter.

Artifact identification and discussion by Texas' archeologists Harry Shafer, Elton Prewitt, Alan Skinner, Tom Hester, and Dan Potter will follow the main talk. The public is invited to bring objects to be identified.

Events on Saturday include talks and poster presentations beginning at 8 AM and concluding with a banquet and speaker, Kevin Crisman, who will speak about a shipwreck found on the Red River. His work on this 1838 wreck has involved students from Oklahoma and Texas.

Contact Pam Wheat at 361-727-1766 or 800-377-7240, for more information.

Get Well Soon:

- ❖ HAS Librarian David Pettus is in the hospital; please keep him in your thoughts.
- ❖ Mary Lou Patterson is recovering from a hip operation. We wish her a quick recovery!

❖ Powell Site Ammunition:

In the mid 1990s HAS conducted excavations at the supposed 1830s home site of Austin colonist, Elizabeth Powell (41FB269) near Kendelton, Texas. Although the site yielded period artifacts, the exact location of her house was never satisfactorily confirmed.

Twice in the spring of 2004, HAS members revisited the site to (1) correct errors on the site map generated in the '90s; (2) acclimate people to the site who had never been there but are working on the site report; (3) further excavate in an area that was thought to be a trash pit; and (4) conduct metal detecting surveys to define the limits of the site.

Although the success of the above endeavor is unknown as of yet, numerous artifacts were found including a horse bit, one small gun flint, lead bullets, cast iron stove parts, and numerous ceramic shards.

One artifact in particular that caught my attention and post dates the Powell occupation is an unfired .44 caliber lead conical bullet. Conical bullets were a type of ammunition used in cap and ball revolvers. The term "cap and ball" refers to the fact that percussion caps were the ignition source for this type of revolver, while lead balls were the first type of ammunition used. Later conical shaped bullets were adapted for use in the cap and ball revolver due to their superior ballistics.

The cap and ball revolver was invented by the American Samuel Colt, while at sea in route to England in 1835. It was patented in England on December 13, 1835, and in the United States on February 25, 1836. Most cap and ball revolvers had a six shot cylinder. Some brands had more or less. The .36 and .44 were the most common caliber with others being .25, .27, .31, .33, .41, and .42.

To load a cap and ball revolver, a measured amount of black powder was poured into the front of each of the cylinder chambers of the revolver. An integral under-barrel loading lever was used to force the bullet into each chamber. The bullet was oversized so that when forced into the front of the chamber, a circumferential ring of lead was sheared off, insuring that the bullet remained in the chamber and upon firing, engaged the barrels rifling. A percussion cap was inserted on a nipple at the back of each chamber and the gun was ready to fire.

Millions of cap and ball revolvers were produced by U.S. and foreign companies before becoming obsolete in the mid-1870s. They were replaced by metallic cartridge firing revolvers.

Approximately 500 cap and ball revolvers in both .36 and .44 caliber were manufactured by the J. H. Dance & Brothers of Columbia, Brazoria County, Texas in 1862/63, for the Confederacy. A Dance Brothers' revolver in good condition is currently valued at \$50,000.

Two of history's better know cap and ball revolvers are the Colt .36 caliber Navy and .44 caliber Army. The names "Army" and "Navy" had no military meaning; they were designated by a Colt Firearms Co. salesman as a sales gimmick.

One revolver made famous by the American Civil War was the two barrel LeMat. It was invented by Dr. Jean Alexander François LeMat of New Orleans. Two thousand nine hundred were manufactured in Belgium, France, and England and purchased by the Confederacy. The revolver had a .42 caliber, seven-shot cylinder that rotated around a barrel of .62 caliber for firing buckshot.

Since the 1960s, millions of shoot able reproduction cap and ball revolvers have been produced in America and Europe for gun enthusiasts and American Civil War battle re-enactors. A reproduction Dance Brothers' revolver costs \$300.

References:

Flaydermann, N.M., Flayderman's Guide to Antique American and Their Values. 1993, Krause Publications.

James & Serven, Colt Firearms from 1836. 1979, Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Kirkland, T. K., Dixie Gun Works Inc., 2000 Catalogue #149.

Russell, C. P., Guns on the Early Frontiers. 1957, University of Nebraska Press.

Tom Nuckols, tholnuc@evl.net.

To submit articles to The Profile, contact Mary Barbara Gold, 3303 Big Spruce, Kingwood, TX 77339, 281-360-5226, or mary.gold@humble.k12.tx.us.

Submit articles no later than August 30, 2004, for the September edition.

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