



The PROFILE

April 2007

Joan Few Presents “Sugar, Planters, Slaves, and Convicts”

Joan Few, Adjunct Professor of Archaeology at the University of Houston Clear Lake, will speak about her book, “Sugar, Planters, Slaves, and Convicts,” at the April 13 meeting. Joan is a fifth generation Texan who has always had a passion for history. Mixing history and archaeology became the perfect research discipline. She received her Bachelors in history from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, and her Masters in archaeology from the University of Houston. She has been a professor of archaeology since 1990, and is a past President of the Texas Archeological Society, past President of the Council of Texas Archeologists and past President of the Houston Archeological Society. Her book, “Sugar, Planters, Slaves, and Convicts,” is the culmination of ten years of historical and archaeological research on the first industry of Texas, sugar, and early Texas plantations. This book is about the first industry in Texas, sugar; the remarkable Jackson family who built one of the largest sugar empires in Texas; the slaves, whose labor and knowledge produced the sugar; and the convicts that replaced them after the Civil War. Ten years of historic research, archaeological excavations, and many years of analysis and interpretation of over 70,000 artifacts are included in this research; made possible by a massive output of local and community support, and over 800 volunteers and students who participated in the archaeological excavations.



The April 13th meeting will be held at our usual location in Anderson Hall on the quadrangle of the University of St. Thomas, at 7:30 p.m. For a detailed map, visit the HAS web site at www.houstonarcheology.org. Parking for M.D. Anderson Hall: use the Moran Center Parking Garage at the corner of West Alabama and Graustark (\$2 fee), or park in Faculty Parking Lot S at Montrose and Branard after 7:00 PM (no charge).

May 2007 Program: Frank Griffin will discuss Lithic Technology. Anyone wishing to deliver a future presentation should contact Michael Bailey at m Bailey@beamans.com

Friends to Sponsor Annual Shiffick Distinguished Lecture in Archeology

The St. Thomas Friends of Archaeology group will present **Four Decades under the Aegean: Archeology along Turkey’s Turquoise Coast**, by Dr. George F. Bass of Texas A&M University and the Institute of Nautical Archeology, Sunday, April 22, 2007, at 7:00 p.m., the University of St. Thomas, Jones Auditorium on the Academic Mall, located at 3900 Yoakum Blvd, one

block south of West Alabama, one block west of Montrose. A reception for the speaker will follow the lecture. That evening there will be a presentation of the **2007 Hugh Goodrich Golden Trowel Award** to Dr. Bass. Family and friends are welcome to attend this extraordinary event. *—Fr. Edward Bader*

HB 1016 Would Legalize Metal Detecting on Texas Public Land

Back in January I received a letter from a person who said he was the president of the Texas Artifact Collectors Association (TACA), as well as a member of HAS, TAS, and the Houston Gem and Mineral Society. He said his organization consists of artifact collectors who want to “protect and promote the preservation and collecting of Native American Artifacts.” This group wants to amend the Texas Antiquities Code “to allow responsible artifact collectors to surface hunt Texas lakes, creeks and other public access lands for artifacts...” He said he had his organization of 300 people sending letters to every Texas legislator to get the law changed. All he needed was a “sympathetic” archaeologist to write a letter “basically stating that these artifacts on public access land...are of little archaeological value and the responsible surface hunting of these already destroyed sites will do no damage to their archaeological value, whatever may be left of it.” He wanted to know if I could recommend such an archaeologist.

This idea seemed to be a crackpot notion to me (there's no such thing as a “responsible artifact collector”), and I didn't think it even deserved a reply, although I did alert TAS about the letter. Now, however, I see that HB 1016 was introduced in February in the Texas House of Representatives. It is styled “An Act relating to allowing recreational metal detecting in designated areas of state parks.” This bill may have no connection with the aforementioned TACA, but it would certainly help to advance their goals. Similar bills to allow metal detecting on state lands were introduced in 1998 and 2004, so evidently there are state representatives who don't see this as a crackpot notion at all.

HB 1016 would prohibit the removal of objects, implements and artifacts whose removal is already prohibited under the Natural Resources Code. However, with a state parks system that is under-funded and under-staffed, it's impossible for our park rangers to stop the looting and destruction of archaeological sites as it is. Why would anyone want to legalize the looters' tool of choice for finding these sites? If the bill passes (with no mention of additional funding, I might add) who is going to supervise all the metal detector users to be sure they don't carry off anything that would be considered a natural resource? Enforcing such a law would entail doubling or tripling the ranger staff at most parks, and we know that's not going to happen, so the looting will escalate and more site destruction will take place.

HB 1016 has been read into the record and assigned to the Culture, Recreation and Tourism Committee. If your representative serves on this committee, I suggest sending a letter to him/her expressing your opposition to this bill. Let us hope it languishes from lack of support and dies a quiet death in committee, never again to see the light of day.

-- Linda Swift

Elementary Students “Dig” Archeology!

Over a two week period in February, Pat and Beth Aucoin, Bill Csanyi and I gave a series of demonstrations and lectures about archaeology to elementary school children enrolled in the Challenger Program at Katy ISD.

As part of my talk, I displayed the gun parts from the Powell Site, 41FB269, and showed them HAS Site Report #16, *Tracking the Mexican Army through the Mar de Lodo (Sea of Mud)*, 41WH92, 93, 94 & 95.

For my efforts, I received a package of thank-you letters in the mail from some of the students. This one was my favorite:

Dear Mr. Nuckols

Thank you so much for telling me all about archaeology. I especially enjoyed learning about the steps for an archaeological site. The most interesting thing I learned is that digging is not the most important thing. The M sign that came off the Mexican uniform was very interesting, also the gun parts were amazing. I don't know why some people think that people in earlier times were stupid. I just don't get some modern people because without the people back then we wouldn't have what we have now.

Archaeology is a really helpful subject because it tells us about people from the earlier centuries. I might consider being an archaeologist when I am old enough.

*Sincerely,
[Student]*

--Tom Nuckols

Houston Archeological Society Meeting Minutes, March 9, 2007

Linda Swift, HAS President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Thirty-three people were in attendance.

Announcements:

- HAS lab is March 12 and 26.
- The Texas Archeological Academy 2007 class, "Rock Art," will be held in Del Rio, March 30 – April 4.
- 23 HAS memberships have not been received for 2007. Renewals not received will be removed from the roster.
- Diane Baird and Muriel Walker were thanked for providing refreshments.
- The search for Champ d'Asile will continue Saturday, March 17th at Moss Bluff.
- Beth Aucoin discussed the "Calendar of Events" for March and April.
- Diane Baird stated that the HAS library has a new report (2 copies) available for checkout: *Archaeological Investigations at San Felipe de Austin (41AU2), The Colonial Capital of Texas, 2004-2006 Season*.

After the program there was a refreshment break followed by the business meeting with 14 people in attendance.

- The January meeting minutes (no business meeting in February) were approved.
 - Treasurer Karen Acker will send out HAS membership renewal notices.
 - Editor Dick Gregg said that the next edition of the Journal is ready to print.
 - Beth gave a progress update on the Powell Site Report.
 - The HAS audit committee consisting of Muriel Walker, Beth and Pat Aucoin will meet in April.
 - Linda gave an update on the upcoming HAS and AIA archaeology project for 3rd grade HISD students and called for volunteers.
 - Beth Aucoin announced her resignation as HAS Outreach Chairperson. Her duties will continue until May 31.
- The Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Submitted by Tom Nuckols, Secretary

Upcoming Events

Drawn from Experience: Landmark Maps of Texas at the San Jacinto Museum of History opened March 31, 2007. Open 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tickets: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 11 and younger, \$4.50 for senior citizens 65 and older, \$2 for school groups. Combo tickets for admission to the exhibit, the theater, and elevator ride to the top of the monument: \$12 for adults, \$8 for children, \$10.50 for seniors, and \$4 for school groups. For more information, call the museum at 281-489-2421 or visit www.sanjacinto-museum.org.



HAS 2007 Awards: Nominations can now be made for 2007 HAS awards, the Merit Award and the Southeast Texas Archeological Research Award. Nominations can be given to Sheldon Kindall, Joe Hudgins, or Lee Patterson, 418 Wycliffe, Houston, Texas 77079. (713-468-4464). Awards are given at the October HAS meeting each year.

"Unearthing the Mycenaeans" (AIA Joukowsky Lecture) by Dr. Cynthia W. Shelmerdine of the University of Texas. Dinner Lecture and Awards Presentation, Thursday, April 17, 2007, 7:00 p.m. at Bistro Vino Restaurant. For more information visit www.aia-houston.com.

Laboratory Schedule: April Labs: Monday, April 16 and April 30, 7-9pm., Sewall Hall, Room 103, Rice University.

HAS Library: Open April 13th from 6:30pm-7:20pm., 3907 Yoakum Blvd. The library has 2 copies of *Archaeological Investigations at San Felipe de Austin (41au2), The Colonial Capital of Texas, 2004-2006 Season* available for checkout.

ArchaeoSeek, a social network for archaeologists (sort of like MySpace, but more manageable) has been launched. It is free to join and the membership is open to all professional archaeologists, students, avocationalists, museum folks, and those interested in the field. All aspects of archaeology will be covered, from underwater to terrestrial. <http://archaeoseek.ning.com>. -Anita Cohen-Williams, List owner of HISTARCH, SUB-ARCH, SPANBORD

San Jacinto Festival & Battle Reenactment on the grounds of the San Jacinto Museum in Houston/LaPorte. Saturday, April 21st, 10 am - 6 pm. Volunteers needed, 9 a.m.– 5 p.m. Sign up at the meeting or contact Beth Aucoin, (281) 479-2421, or ekpj.aucoin@prodigy.net.

Battle of San Jacinto Symposium, April 14th, 9 am-5 pm at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center, University of Houston. Flyers and registration forms available at the April HAS meeting.

TAS 2007 [Field School](#) will be held June 9-16 at Presidio San Saba, Menard, Texas. Information and online registration are now available - www.txarch.org.

Dung Mites Track Inca Fall

Scientists believe they may have a new way to track the rise and fall of ancient civilizations with animal-based economies, reports Christine McGourty, BBC News science correspondent.



Inca healer sculpture, at www.neru.incasculture.org

A team of scientists studying the soil near Cuzco, Peru, found that the quantities of fossilized dung mites, tiny animals that live in grasslands and pastures and breakdown animal matter, corresponded with the

expansion and decline of the Inca Empire. McGourty writes, "They found a huge increase in the number of fossil mites as the empire expanded from the Cuzco area in the early 1400s. A sudden drop in numbers corresponded with the collapse of the native population after the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors." The abundance or lack of dung mites seems to reflect the past livestock populations.

The scientists speculate that fossil evidence of the mites may provide a new tool for studying native populations, as well as the study of economic and social changes in other cultures. (BBC News, Science/Nature)

Please submit articles for publication to Sara Guillote, sguillote@hotmail.com
Submit articles no later than May 1st for the May issue.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ARCHEOLOGY IN THIS AREA, CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:

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The Profile

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