

October, 2008

September Meeting Washed Out, Frank Griffin to Speak in October

In September, for the first time anyone around here can remember, a monthly meeting of the Houston Archeological Society was cancelled on account of a hurricane. We hope all our readers and their families came through the storm safely and with a minimum of property damage.

As a result of the cancellation, our programs for September and October have been rescheduled for October and November respectively. Frank E. Griffin, originally scheduled to speak to us in September, will join us at the October 10th meeting instead.

In his latest communication, Griffin says, “as mentioned earlier, my presentation will be 95+% new materials with lots of artifacts and illustration on a PowerPoint presentation. The title is **‘Edge Modification: With a Case Study in Edge Wear**

Analysis.’ It will include show and tell on beveling, grinding, and edge wear analysis with an experiment on cutting edge wear. As in the first presentation, it will be oriented toward avocational archeology; however, it will have reference to archeological inference. If members have a 10X loupe, it would be of use but not necessary.”

He also sent us some great photos of edge wear, which are presented here, along with a bit of explanation from Griffin: “alternate beveling is a special thinning technique where one edge is



Edge wear analysis: Alternate beveling

flaked then turned over and the opposing edge is flaked. Alternately beveled stems are diagnostic for Nolan points. There will be a Nolan point in the show and tell portion of the presentation.”

For biographical and background information on Frank Griffin, see the September, 2008, *Profile*.

Our October 10th meeting will be in Anderson Hall on the Academic Mall of the University of St. Thomas, at 7:30 p.m. Parking: Use the Moran Center Parking Garage at the corner of W. Alabama and Graustark, or park in Faculty Lot S at Montrose and Branard after 7:00 pm. For a detailed map, visit our website at www.houstonarcheology.org, or e-mail HASEvents@aol.com.



Primary Flake with purposeful retouch to make a scraper

November meeting: Next meeting is Friday, November 14th. We will feature an interesting program on “The Little-Known Mounds of Southeast Texas and Southern Louisiana,” so make your plans now to be there!

The Prez Sez

I hope that this column finds you electrified, de-limbed and at least, getting back to normal. I was very fortunate and enjoyed a visit from friends from Friendswood. My school was lucky also. We started back (in Dickinson) one week after the storm.

Things are changing in my life. I will no longer be at my current residence. My cell number will not change (281-797-4233), but my email address will be diba1952@yahoo.com.

We have been told to get our stuff out of the kitchen area at the old archeology library. We'll have to move it to the storage place where our books are. I have not been able to get with Clayton Library yet about meeting there. My only priorities are my job and getting out of the townhouse.

Beth Aucoin is still taking nominations for awards. Please contact her with your ideas as soon as possible.

Board, we will have a meeting next Friday before the meeting. We'll meet in Anderson Hall. If I can't be there, I'll contact Mike to conduct the meeting. The next day is moving day and I'm not sure I can do both. I'll let you know the time.

I know that eventually things at the Society will get back to normal. But WHEN?????????

Please be at the meeting!!

--Diane Baird, *HAS President*

Nominees Named for 2008-09

The Nominating Committee has finalized its slate of candidates for the 2008-2009 year, basically recommending that all the incumbents return for another year. The positions open for election this year, and the nominees, are as follows: President—Diane Baird; Vice President—Michael Bailey; Secretary—Kathleen Barry; Treasurer—Ed Masten; Director-at-Large—Lucia Bonno. Two other Directors' terms have not yet expired, so incumbents Phyllis Bradley and Muriel Walker will also remain on the Board. Additional nominations can be made from the floor at the October meeting.

Archeology News Roundup

- Archeologists doing CRM in advance of construction of a new theater in Shoreditch, England, say they've found an old theater, the one where Shakespeare and the Lord Chamberlain's men performed before their move to the Globe.
- A dig in a cave in Paisley, Oregon, has yielded human coprolites that have been (preliminarily) carbon-dated to 14,300 years ago, about 1,000 years before the advent of the Clovis culture. DNA analysis of the coprolites indicates that these early Americans, like modern Native Americans, had ethnic roots in Asia. Since there was no ice-free way to enter North America 14,300 years ago, the findings raise questions as to how these people came here.
- Brian Fagan, in *Current World Archaeology*, reports that cacao residue has been found in pots excavated in Puerto Escondido, Honduras. Dated to 1100 BC, this discovery pushes back the documented use of chocolate by the Maya by 500 years.
- Scientists involved in the March, 2008, excavation at Stonehenge have put forth the theory that, prior to erection of the stones (from 8000

BC to 2300 BC), the area was a burial ground for cremated remains of the dead, but with the installation of the stones—particularly the bluestones from Wales—it became a place of healing. According to the theory, bluestones were long revered in Wales as having magical healing properties, and taking a number of them to England enabled the locals to avail themselves of their healing capabilities as well. For more information, see the October issue of *Smithsonian* magazine.

- Cuds of masticated seaweed, dating from 14,220 and 13,980 years ago, have been found in hearths at the Monte Verde settlement in southern Chile. Some of the seaweed had been cooked, and some had been mixed with other plants and chewed raw, perhaps for medicinal purposes. This site is about 36 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. Its 20-30 inhabitants foraged for food and tool materials over a range of 150 miles. Their diet consisted of seaweed, shellfish, water plants, seeds, nuts, berries, and two extinct animals: an elephant-like gomphothere and a species of llama. (Documented in *Current World Archaeology*.)

Excavation Reveals New Orleans' History **Archaeologists find evidence of oldest French Colonial structure**

Archaeologists have found what they believe to be the earliest structure from French colonial New Orleans. The discovery was made during excavations in St. Anthony's Garden, located behind St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, the nation's oldest active cathedral.

"We uncovered a small hut made of post and planks sunk directly into the ground that lays askew the current street alignment," said Shannon Lee Dawdy, a University of Chicago archaeologist who directed the excavation. The hut dates to New Orleans' frontier phase, sometime between 1717 and 1722. Native American pottery sherds and French ceramics, as well as the bottom of a wine bottle from the early 1700s, have been recovered adjacent to the hut. Many sherds resemble Creek and Choctaw pottery and suggest a significant Native American contribution to the building of the city that has gone unrecognized in the historical record.

The researchers have found thousands of artifacts representing nearly 300 years of history at (the) site. "One of the most remarkable artifacts recovered is the small silver crucifix with a Christ figure attached which we found in the area of Pere Antoine's hut and yard," said Dawdy. Pere Antoine was a Capuchin priest who wielded great influence over the French colony from the 1770s till the early American period in the 1820s. A fire destroyed most of the city in

1788, and the beloved priest allowed residents who had lost their homes to build temporary structures in the garden next to his small hut.

The existing cathedral is the third church built in this location. The first church was completed in 1717, and the second church, built after the 1788 fire, was dedicated on Christmas Eve, 1794. The present church was built by the French-born architect Jacques N. B. de Pouilly in the mid-19th century, incorporating parts of the earlier structure.

The researchers have uncovered evidence that the site served as a kitchen garden maintained by the Capuchin fathers in the French Colonial era, and later hosted an ice cream stand and flower market during the antebellum period. By analyzing phytolith samples, which are mineralized remains of plant cells, the researchers hope to identify which species were being cultivated. This marks the first time this technology has been used to analyze samples from a North American garden site.

The investigation is part of the planning phase of a major restoration of the garden that was prompted by Hurricane Katrina's toppling numerous trees. – *Tamara Stewart*. (Reprinted from *American Archaeology*, Fall 2008, pg 9.)

HAS Awards Postponed to November

The annual **HAS Awards Presentation** is being postponed until the November meeting. Normally awards are given out at the October meeting, but due to extenuating circumstances, namely Ike and its damage to the trophy store, we'll bestow the awards honors on Nov. 12th.
– *Beth Aucoin*

October Lab Schedule

Labs will be held Monday, October 13th and 27th, 7-9 p.m., Room 103, Sewall Hall, Rice University. We will continue cataloging artifacts from the Menard-Morris House in Seabrook, while the Powell Site authors continue refining their articles. Visit our web site, www.houstonarcheology.org, for a map.

Last Call for TAS Annual Meeting

Time is running out to register in advance for the Texas Archeological Society's 79th Annual Meeting in Lubbock, October 24–26, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Park Plaza. Online registration is available until October 18th on the TAS web site at www.txarch.org. Discounts for early registration are offered only until October 3rd. In addition to the registration form, the web site has a link to the hotel web site. After October 18th, you can still register in person at the annual meeting. To view a schedule of the presenters' papers, go to:
<http://txarch.org/pdf/annualmeeting/2008/PrelimSchedule2008v4cs.pdf>. See you in Lubbock!

Archeology. . . Life in the Past Lane

The Friends of Archaeology will present Parts 3 and 4 of the video, “Roman Emperors,” on Sunday, **October 12th at 4:00 pm** at the University of St. Thomas, Robertson Hall, Room 116. The Friends’ October lecture presentation will be “**Mystery of the Miami Circle,**” by Randolph J. Widmer, PhD, of the University of Houston Department of Anthropology, at **5:00 pm on Sunday, October 19th**, University of St. Thomas, Jones Hall auditorium. The Friends are also planning what looks to be a fascinating Nile excursion in Egypt in January. For more information on this trip, call Nancy Jircik at 713-524-3719.

The **Archaeological Institute of America-Houston Society** will emphasize American archeology for its 2008-2009 lecture series. First presentation will be on **Wednesday, October 29, 2008, 7:00 p.m.** on the topic, “**When Does the Story Begin – Who Were the Earliest ‘Americans’?**” featuring Dr. Michael Collins, Director of the Gault Site; Dr. Dennis Stanford, Director of Archaeology, The Smithsonian Institution; and moderator Sam Malone, DJ AT 96.5 FM. Location will be the Morris Cultural Arts Center, Houston Baptist University. Cosponsored by the Department of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences, University of Houston. General Admission – \$15.00; AIA Members – \$10.00 with reserved seating; Students – \$10.00.

Please submit articles for publication to Linda Swift, swiftlinda@sbcglobal.net
Submit articles no later than November 2nd for the November issue.

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

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The Profile

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