



The PROFILE

September, 2008

Frank Griffin Comes to Houston with a “Three-Fer” in September

Frank E. Griffin, well-known avocational archeologist from San Antonio, will join us again at the September 12th meeting for a three-part presentation on “Looking At Sites”, “Reading the Literature” and “Avocational Archeology.” Each part will be followed by a 5-10 minute discussion/hands-on session. Since Mr. Griffin is a lithics analyst, you may want to bring a 10X loupe to the meeting to better see some of his examples.

“I am a teacher that loves to share my passion for avocational archeology from 35 years behind a trowel. Yes, it was 1973 that I returned from an Anasazi dig in Nevada to work at the Kerrville TAS field school. From sand that fell through the screen to a burnt rock midden--what a contrast,” he said recently. “My emphasis is always oriented towards a ‘way of thinking’ about archaeology, especially field work organized around show and tell.”

A member of the Texas Archeological Society (TAS) and the South Texas Archeological Association (STAA), Mr. Griffin holds a bachelor’s degree in Social Studies and an M.A. in United States His-

tory, as well as graduate hours in Archeology from the UNLV Field School and University of Texas-San Antonio. As an avocational archeologist, Mr. Griffin has been the Field Director STAA surveying and recording sites at the Bear Creek Boy Scout Camp in Kerrville. A Crew Chief at TAS field schools including Galveston Island, he has also recorded and filed sites in Runnels and Bexar County.

Last time he spoke to us, Mr. Griffin was working and recording multiple sites on 90 acres along Medio Creek of the Medina River in SW Bexar County, Come to the September meeting and find out what this enthusiastic avocational is up to now!

Our September 12th 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.

An Invitation to the 2008 TAS Annual Meeting

The Texas Archeological Society’s 79th Annual Meeting will be held in Lubbock, Texas, October 24–26, 2008. All TAS members are invited to attend the meetings, and, for the second year, non-TAS members can attend the sessions and/or the banquet at a slightly higher fee than members.

The theme of “pioneers of Texas archeology and Panhandle archeology” will be carried into the public forum, banquet, session, and excursions. The conference hotel is the Holiday Inn Park Plaza.

Two private tours of the Lubbock Lake Landmark for TAS members are being offered on Friday afternoon, followed by a private reception for TAS members of “Medieval Southwest: Manifestations of the Old World in the New,” at the Southwest Collec-

tion on the campus of Texas Tech University. Artifacts from the TAS Field Schools at Presidio San Sabá will be on display as part of the exhibit.

This year’s Public Forum speaker will be Brett Cruse, of the Texas Historical Commission, who will talk about his research on the Red River Wars.

On Saturday, in addition to general sessions featuring recent research by both professional and avocational archeologists, there will be several organized symposia, including papers by the THC’s Stewards, and a session dedicated to the Pioneers of Texas Archeology.

The Saturday evening Social and Banquet speaker is Dr. Jane Holden Kelley, Professor Emerita of Archaeology at the University of Calgary.

The Prez Sez

I am sitting at home trying (as is everyone else) to figure out what Gustav is going to do. I'm supposed to be in Galveston right now having a wonderful time with friends in their RV. Thanks for nothing, Mother Nature. I don't even know at this point if we'll have school on Tuesday. Teaching in Dickinson puts a whole new curve on watching for a hurricane!

I'm glad our meeting is the second Friday instead of the first. At least there should be some degree of normalcy by then - if we are mostly missed by the storm. Being a native Houstonian doesn't mean that I've been through so many storms that I'm not very cautious.

This has been a bad month for some of our HAS family. Karen Acker's mother has died, as has Linda Swift's father. I will have sympathy cards for everyone to sign. Give them a hug when you see them.

A change for you to be aware of: with moving out of my townhouse and starting school, the book sale will have to wait. Beth and I are now pushing for January. Sorry for the delay. I'm spread as thin as a piece of deli meat with tears around the edges!

There is still no big progress on where to meet and/or store books. Hopefully, in the next week or two, people will be back from vacations/business trips and we can get rolling.

The awards committee is still looking for nominations. Please think hard and contact the Aucoins or Carters. They await your call!

I hope to see a larger crowd for our meeting. It's time to get back into the groove. See you there.

--Diane Baird, *HAS President*

Minutes of the August 8, 2008, HAS Meeting

Diane Baird, HAS President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Announcements:

- Beth Aucoin – Lab held on Monday will be sorting artifacts from the Barnhill site.
- Beth Aucoin- The Awards committee is looking for nominations for both the SE Research Award and the Merit Award.
- Diane announced the slate of officers would remain the same except for the position of secretary. The position is open.
- Refreshments were brought by Muriel Walker and Phyllis Bradley.
- Correction to July minutes-Lucia Bonno not Lucia Barton.

Program:

Michael Bailey, HAS V-P, introduced the speaker – Victoria Scism, who spoke on the “Texas Chihuahua Trail.” In addition to our speaker, HAS member Jack Farrell gave a presentation on “Old Penjikent, Tajikistan, on the Old Silk Road.”

--Submitted by Muriel Walker

October meeting: Next meeting is Friday, October 12th.

HAS Awards: Last Call for Nominations Deadline is September 10 for nominations for the Merit Award and the Southeast Texas Research Award. Contact Beth Aucoin, ekpj.aucoin@prodigy.net, 281-480-6151, or Richard and Wanda Carter, richardandwanda@sbcglobal.net or 713-477-2145.

September Lab: September 15 & 29, 7-9 p.m., Rm. 103, Sewall Hall, Rice University. Visit www.houstonarcheology.org for a map. We will continue cataloging artifacts from the Menard-Morris House in Seabrook.

Humans and Neanderthals Not Related

A newly retrieved Neanderthal mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) sequence indicates that humans and Neanderthals are different species, and in fact evolved separately sometime between 550,000 and 820,000 years ago.

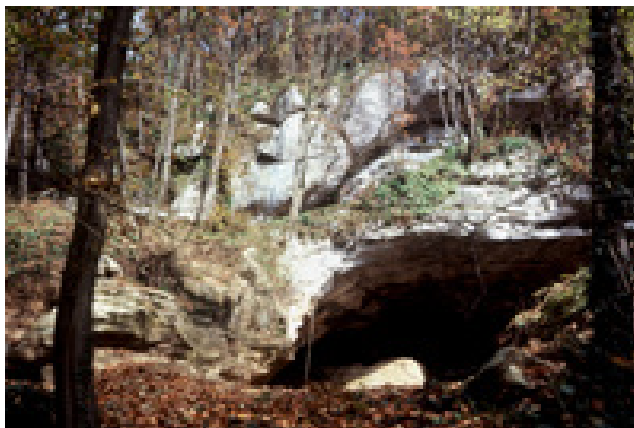
In the August, 2008, journal *Cell*, a team led by Svante Paabo reported that a complete Neanderthal mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) sequence has been recovered from a bone excavated at the Vindija Cave site in Croatia.

The bone, referred to as bone 33.16 in the latest article, is called Vi-80 in the older literature. Vi-80 is a fragment of a bone from a male Neanderthal. The bone was excavated from the G3 level of Vindija cave in 1980; it has been radiocarbon dated to 38,310 +/- 2130 radiocarbon years before the present (RCYBP). G3 is one of four and maybe five fairly intact levels at Vindija that hold human remains: Vindija cave's archaeological levels hold remains of both humans and Neanderthals in its deposits. Level G3 is strictly a Neanderthal level, with Mousterian-type artifacts alongside.

It is great good luck that a bone excavated nearly 30 years ago has not been contaminated by modern DNA from people handling the bone. Researchers looking at Vi-80 (among other samples) discovered DNA fragments there that were predominantly Neanderthal ~99% of the 63 base-pair mtDNA segments and ~94% of the 119-base pair segments were of Neanderthal origin. It so far is the most DNA re-

covered from a Neanderthal individual. That level of integrity allowed Green and colleagues to recreate the entire mtDNA sequence.

Interestingly, Lalueza-Fox and colleagues discovered similar DNA sequences--fragments of sequences, that is--in Neanderthals from Feldhofer Cave (Ger-



Vindija Cave, Croatia.

Photo by Fred Smith, Northern Illinois University

many) and El Sidron (northern Spain), leading them to suggest that a common demographic history existed among Neanderthal groups in eastern Europe and the Iberian peninsula. The implications of that, with respect to movement of Neanderthal populations and interactions with human populations living in the same vicinity, have yet to be discussed. – Reprinted from <http://archaeology.about.com>.

Stone Age Milk Use Began 2,000 Years Earlier

By James Owen for National Geographic News

August 6, 2008 - Prehistoric humans consumed milk at least 8,500 years ago—up to 2,000 years earlier than previously thought—new discoveries of the earliest known milk containers suggest.

The find shows that the culinary breakthrough of using animal milk was first developed by cow herders in northwest Turkey. The first milk users, though, are not thought to have been milk drinkers—but butter, yogurt, or cheese eaters.

"It's the earliest direct evidence for milk use anywhere," said lead study author Richard Evershed, professor of biogeochemistry at the University of Bristol, United Kingdom. Evershed and his team analyzed more than 2,200 ceramic vessels from late Stone Age sites across Turkey, southeastern Europe, and the Middle East.

Evidence for milk fats—as opposed to meat fats—showed up clearly on unglazed pots dating back to 6500 B.C. from the Sea of Marmara region. Ancient animal bones at the site also revealed the dairy livestock used there were cattle, rather than goats or sheep.

Previously, experts argued that sheep and goats kick-started dairy production, Evershed said. "This [study] shows that if you get into serious milk consumption, where you're using pottery and preparing your milk, it's really related to cattle suddenly coming on-stream," he said.

The new findings were reported in the journal *Nature*. For more information, go to <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/08/080806-prehistoric-dairy.html>.

Arenosa Rock Shelter Now on *Texas Beyond History*

New on *Texas Beyond History*, the award-winning virtual museum of Texas' cultural heritage created by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in partnership with 16 other organizations: **Arenosa Shelter**.

This 7-section exhibit tells the story of an extraordinary rock shelter and terrace site near the mouth of the Pecos River in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands that hunting and gathering peoples revisited for at least 10,000 years. Alternating layers of flood deposits and cultural debris at Arenosa Shelter were more than 42 feet thick, creating a

textbook example of archeological and geological stratification.

Arenosa Shelter was excavated in the mid-1960s by the University of Texas under the direction of Dave Dibble as part of the Amistad Reservoir Salvage Program. Sadly, it has never been fully reported, although three outstanding dissertations have been written that have focused on Arenosa data.

The new exhibit helps show the continued research potential of this amazing site. Check it out at www.texasbeyondhistory.net/arenosa/.

Please submit articles for publication to Linda Swift, swiftlinda@sbcglobal.net
Submit articles no later than September 29th for the October issue.

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

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The Profile

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