

December: Goodies and the West African Iron Age

Dr. Susan McIntosh, Director of Scientia, an Institute for the History of Science and Culture, and Professor, Department of Anthropology, Rice University, will bring us a change of pace on Thursday, December 17, with a talk on “West African Iron Age Archeology.”



In 1977, Dr. McIntosh co-discovered an archeological site in what is today Mali, called [Jenne-jeno](#), which turned out to be the earliest example of urbanism in sub-Saharan Africa, predating the more familiar complex societies that developed along the eastern coast of Africa.

With colleague Jeffrey Fleisher, McIntosh continues her work in the region with annual visits to the Rice Archeological Field School in Gorée Island, Senegal. One problem for archaeologists and the reconstruction of the African past is the ongoing destruction of archaeological heritage due to development projects, such as dams, and the looting of sites for art objects. In Mali, where terracotta statuettes were fashioned in antiquity, this is a particular problem. One of the keys to ensuring more effective management of cultural resources is to educate future African leaders in the field.

"We reinstated our graduate program to train Africans," McIntosh explained. The students can take undergraduate as well as graduate courses at Rice and then engage in archeological research in their home countries. An earlier Rice alumnus rose to become Mali's director of national heritage. McIntosh and Fleisher are also active in developing relationships and nurturing connections with the local African-American community.

Susan McIntosh holds advanced degrees from Cambridge University (M.A.) and the University of

California at Santa Barbara (Ph.D.). She has taught at Rice University since 1980. She is the co-author or editor of three major monographs on field research in Mali and Senegal at the sites of Jenné-jeno and Sincu Bara. A fourth book, on the use of African data for understanding the emergence and development of complex societies, was published in 1999 by Cambridge University Press. In 2000, Columbia University Press published *The way the Wind Blows*, the proceedings of a conference on climate change and human response in history, which she organized and edited with J. Tainter and R. McIntosh.

In addition, she has authored or co-authored over 60 articles on West African fieldwork or issues relating to complex societies in Africa. She has also authored a series of overviews of West African archaeology and is currently writing a book for Cambridge University Press on the Holocene archaeology of West Africa. Her main fieldwork has concentrated on the development of iron-using societies in the two great floodplains of the Middle Niger and the Middle Senegal Valleys. She has co-directed field research in Mali and Senegal for ten seasons since 1980.

Goodies: It has become a tradition at the HAS December meeting for everyone to bring their favorite holiday goodies to share and enjoy. Don't worry if for some reason you can't come bearing food; come anyway, because large numbers of folks will be laying out a smorgasbord of good eats that can't be resisted!



Location: Our December 17 meeting will be at 7:00 pm in the Carriage House at the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, 5300 Caroline, Houston, TX 77004.

Lab: One night only this month, on Monday, Dec. 14th, 7:00 p.m., Sewall Hall, Rice University. For a map, visit www.houstonarcheology.org.



President's Message

There have been some changes to HAS the past several months or so. The two major changes that have taken place concern our new meeting place and the changes regarding the HAS library. It is this last change I am making the subject of my message this month. Along with the moving of our meeting place at the University of St. Thomas, it was also necessary to move our archeology library from the campus as well since the university needed the space for their purposes. There was no totally happy solution to the library move. The ill timing required us to move the library to a storage facility in the interim. Not only was the rented storage facility costing us money each month, but our library resources were not accessible to the membership. Our library contained many books of archeological subjects as well as many archeological reports and publications that were not meant for "check out" by the general public. Based on the alternatives presented to the library search committee, the best solution voted on by the Board of Directors was to split the library between two repositories. Our archeological reports and publications were given to Rice University's Fondren Library as a special collection being available for reference only. Some of our reports and publications were shelved and used as references in our archeology lab at Rice anyway, so this move seemed to be a logical and compatible arrangement. The reason for the "split" was Rice would not take the books which were duplicates of their own holdings. As a result, the books were given to the Adriance Library and Research Center at the Brazoria County Historical Museum in Angleton, Texas. The Brazoria County Historical Museum would only take the archeological reports and publications if they could be made available to the general public, which HAS found unacceptable. The curator of the museum is our own HAS Vice President, Michael Bailey, so it is almost like family in care, custody, and control of our former library books. Although HAS is technically no longer the owner of the books and publications, we still have access to (our) library at the aforementioned repositories subject to their hours of operation and library rules. It is felt that our library is in the best hands possible under the circumstances. Access to the Rice University Fondren Library information can be found at their website www.library.rice.edu. The website for the Brazoria County Historical Museum is www.bchm.org. As a reminder to HAS members, information as to the library use will be published in the HAS Profile from time to time and will be referenced on our website www.houstonarcheology.org. **** Season's Greetings to all **** -- Charlie Gordy, President

Minutes of HAS Meeting November 19, 2009

The November 19 HAS meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Charlie Gordy, who welcomed members and guests. Michael Bailey introduced the program for the evening, an update on the Bernardo Plantation presented by Charlie Gordy, coordinator of information and volunteer work for the plantation project. President Gordy acknowledged the cooperation of Greg Brown, the land owner of the plantation, and members of Texas Historical Commission, represented this evening by Carol McDavid.

Field work will be conducted the weekend of December 11, Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

After a short break to enjoy refreshments provided by Lucia Bonno, Diane Baird, Charlie Gordy and Linda Swift, the business meeting was called to order by Charlie Gordy. There were no changes made to the minutes of last month's meeting.

Diane Baird reported on the TAS annual meeting. Diane presented awards to TAS members William Haskell, 25 years, Linda Swift, 20 years, Robert Sheldon, 20 years, and Suzanne Patrick, 30 years.

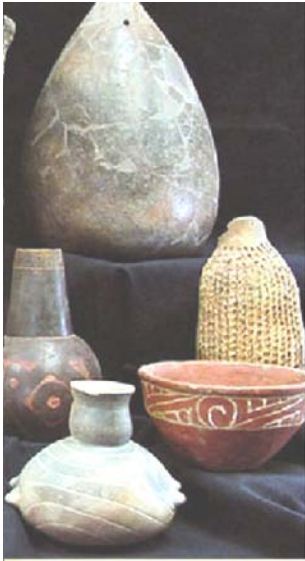
Beth Aucoin reported on the search for the Champs d'Asile site on the Trinity River in Liberty. This site was settled by French loyalists for the purpose of bringing Napoleon Bonaparte to the area and then to be made emperor of Mexico. After six months the Spanish removed the French and the site was abandoned.

The HAS meeting December 17 will be a short meeting and all are encouraged to bring a refreshment for a Christmas social to be held immediately after the meeting.

There being no unfinished business to be discussed the meeting was adjourned, motion made by Linda Swift, seconded by Fred Kelly. -- Phyllis Bradley, Secretary

East Texas Archeological Conference and Caddo Conference To Hold Joint Meeting in March

The 17th annual East Texas Archeological Conference and the 52nd annual Caddo Conference will be held together March 18-20, 2010, at the University of Texas at Tyler in Tyler, Texas.



Courtesy of Texas Beyond History

The first Caddo Conference was held in 1946 on the campus of the University of Oklahoma. Now more than 60 years later, the Caddo Conference is still going strong, and the 2010 Caddo Conference will be the 52nd meeting. The Caddo Conference is an informal organization of archaeologists (both professional and avocational), Caddo

Indian peoples, historians, ethnohistorians, and others, that come together once a year (and rotating

the meeting year to year between Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas) to learn more about current research on the native history and culture of the Caddo.

From its modest beginnings in 1993, the East Texas Archeological Conference (ETAC) has become an important, successful, and well-attended regional archaeological conference. At each conference, the current results of archaeological, ethnohistorical, and historical research projects conducted by professional and avocational archaeologists in the general East Texas region are presented to an interested public. The 2010 ETAC is the 17th that has been held over the years. The 1999 ETAC was also held in conjunction with the Caddo Conference.

The *Caddo Journal* and the *Journal of Northeast Texas Archaeology* regularly publish articles based on presentations at past Caddo Conferences and ETAC meetings.

For more information, visit the conference web site at www.52ndcaddo-17thetac.com.

HAS Journal Ready for Distribution

HAS Journal #132, for the years 2008 and 2009, is now ready to be distributed to the membership and other organizations. In order to save postage expense, our plan is to have members pick up their copies at the December and January meetings, so please be sure to come by and get yours and save us the \$2.00 postage.

This issue has some interesting articles you don't want to miss, including three by our own Leland Patterson on freshwater shellfish processing and shellfish middens in our local area. Two articles by member Wilson W. "Dub" Crook are featured, one concerning a Late Paleoindian/Archaic occupation at Salado Cave in Bell County, and one about a late prehistoric projectile point concentration from the Upper Farmersville Site in Collin County. Last but not least is an article by archeologist Tim Perttula entitled "Aboriginal Ceramics from the Boriack Bog Locality, Lee County, Texas."



Merry Christmas and Best
Wishes for a Happy and
Prosperous 2010!

Archeology Books for Kids

If you have any youngsters on your Christmas list who have even a spark of interest in archeology, here are some good ideas from two Texas archeologists. Margaret Howard recommends a book “that is intended for primary-age children, and does a reasonably good job of explaining what archeologists do and why.” It is *Archaeologists Dig for Clues* by Kate Duke (1997), part of the Let's Read and Find Out Science series published by Harper Collins.

TAS Executive Director Pam Wheat endorses that selection and adds a few more:

- *The Magic School Bus: A Book about Archaeology*
- *Discovering Archaeology* by Gigi Starnes published Eakin Press
- for older youth, *Discovery at Flint Springs* by John Erickson

All of these can probably be found on Amazon.com if not in local bookstores.

Please submit articles for publication to *Profile* Editor Linda Swift, swiftlinda@sbcglobal.net. Submit articles no later than January 5 for the January 2010 issue.

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