



September Talk: New Horizons on the Ancient Maya of Northwestern Belize

Our September meeting will feature Dr. Thomas H. Guderjan of the University of Texas at Tyler and director of the Blue Creek Project in Belize, who will give a presentation entitled *New Horizons on the Ancient Maya of Northwestern Belize*. The meeting will be Thursday, September 20th 2012, at 7:00 pm in Room 103, Anderson Hall, Building 20, The University of St. Thomas,

3800 Montrose Houston, Texas 77006. The program is free of charge and open to the public.

The Blue Creek Archaeological Project is an interdisciplinary and international effort aimed at understanding the ancient Maya. After more than two decades of field research, efforts

are focused on a series of research domains. These currently include ancient landscapes and resources, settlement and power; ancient agricultural systems, the events and processes leading to abandonment and efforts to preserve the Maya centers of the area. "In this program the ancient Maya will be introduced. I will also discuss how the Blue Creek project addresses these research domains and offer a first look at the first results of the 2012 field work at Blue Creek," said Dr. Guderjan.

Dr. Thomas Guderjan (see photo above) has conducted archaeological fieldwork in the southern US, Belize, Mexico and Peru and holds a Ph.D. from

Southern Methodist University. He is the author of numerous publications about the Maya and Texas archaeology including "The Nature of a Maya City" (2007, University of Alabama Press). Dr. Guderjan is also the organizer for the 2012 Texas Archeological Society Annual Meeting which will be held at the University of Texas-Tyler on October 26 – 28.

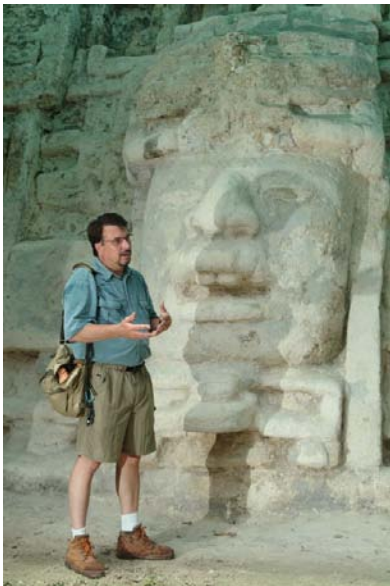
For a campus map, go to www.stthom.edu and look for the Interactive Map, Building 20, Anderson Hall. Street parking is available as well as paid parking (\$2) in Moran Center Garage at the corner of West Alabama and Graustark.

Annual Business Meeting is Sept. 20

The HAS Annual Business Meeting, including election of new officers and board members, will be held on September 20 after the program. Be there or be square!

Lab Schedule for September-December

Lab will be held on the following dates: Sept. 10th and 17th; Oct. 15th and 29th; Nov. 12th only; and Dec. 10th only. We'll meet as usual on Monday evenings, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., Room 103, Sewall Hall, Rice University. We'll continue processing artifacts from two collections from a prehistoric shell midden site. Closest parking to Sewall Hall is in the Founders Court/Visitors Lot across from Sewall Hall. A credit or debit card is required to access the parking lot. For a map of the campus and parking, visit www.rice.edu/maps.





President's Message

Meeting Reminder

Place: University of St. Thomas (UST)

Where: Anderson Hall; Room 103

When: September 20, 2012

Time: 7:00-9:30 P.M.

Greetings to all!

Please don't forget, we will be voting for the 2012-2013 Board Members during this month's meeting. The nominating committee did a wonderful job in recruiting volunteers for the upcoming term and I hope everyone will come and participate in the voting process.

I want to sincerely thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as President of HAS this past term. The experience was as challenging as it was rewarding, one in which I have grown both personally and professionally. I would ask that everyone give our new Board a very warm welcome!

Hope to see you Thursday evening!

-- Karen Belvin

Minutes of HAS Meeting, Thursday, August 16, 2012

The meeting began at 7:00 pm. There were 28 present, including 2 visitors. The program "Research into Abandoned Villages Along the Rio Grande River in the Big Bend Area of Texas" was presented by Louis F. Aulbach and Linda Gorski. The presentation included artifacts that they located from preserved sites. They took pictures and categorized the findings. Everything was left as they found them.

A presentation was made by Bryant Autley, from the THC, who is assigned to the San Felipe site. We were told that the land acquisition issue is ongoing. There will be a festival commemorating Stephen F. Austin's birthday that will take place at San Felipe on Saturday, November 3, 2012. HAS has been invited to participate in the festival in some manner.

The HAS Business Meeting was called to order by Karen Belvin at 8:20 p.m. There were 17 members present.

The Department of Transportation, which has asked us to participate in their Grand Parkway project, has had two issues come up. We will be doing dry screening, not wet screening, and Jim Abbott is looking for a secure place in which to do the screening. We will be screening about two dump trucks of excavated dirt. If anyone has a place to do this, please contact Karen. The membership will be e-mailed with dates and the number of people needed.

The Treasurer reported that there is \$4,143.82 in checking and \$9,454.74 in savings. The July minutes were approved, after motion by Linda Swift and second by Beth Aucoin.

Linda Swift reported the work of the Nominating Committee for next year's board:

President - Linda Gorski

Vice-President - Louis Aulbach

Secretary - Lenore Psincek

Treasurer - Juan Reyes

Director at Large (3 years) - Don Keyes

Director at Large (1 year) - Diane Baird

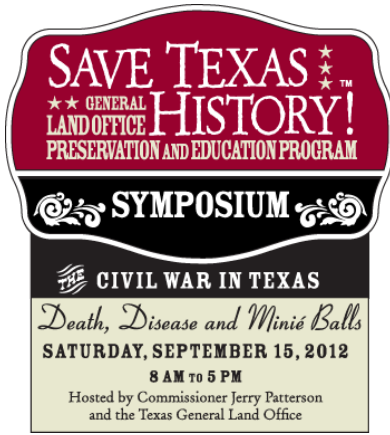
Ad hoc immediate past President - Karen Belvin

(Carol Roberts remaining for two more years as Director)

Linda Gorski reported that we need new members. Also, some college archeology and anthropology teachers are giving extra points for coming to HAS meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

--Submitted by Diane Baird, Secretary



Sept. 15 Symposium: *The Civil War in Texas: Death, Disease and Minié Balls*

The Texas General Land Office Proudly Presents: The 3rd Annual Save Texas History Symposium, *The Civil War in Texas: Death, Disease and Minié Balls* September 15, 2012, at the Thompson Conference Center (TCC) 2405 East Campus Drive, Austin, TX 78712 Phone: (512) 471-3121 <http://www.glo.texas.gov/save-texas-history/symposium.html>

Texas Navy Day Celebration is Sept. 15

In observance of Texas Navy Day, the Brazoria Historical Militia will host a Celebration & Cannon School on Saturday, September 15, at Surfside Jetty Park. Attendees will be able to meet and visit infantry and cannon crews of the Texas Revolution, observe a 19th century artillery school, and participate in Navy Day ceremonies. Festivities start with a flag raising at 8:00 am, infantry drill at 9:00 am, cannon school 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, and ceremony at 4:00 pm. This event is organized and conducted by the Brazoria Historical Militia with support from the Village of Surfside, the Brazoria County Parks Department, and the Brazoria County Historical Texas Navy Day. For information, call 979-864-1541 or e-mail co3militia@yahoo.com.



Construction Crew Unearths Prehistoric Bones in West Harris County

Work crews clearing the land for the Grand Parkway expansion have made a surprising discovery – a handful of human remains that are being tentatively dated to 3,000 to 5,000 years old, from the late Archaic Period. To protect it, the site is not being identified but is said to be along Cypress Creek between I-10 and US Highway 290. The four pieces of bone, consisting of three leg bones and a jaw with teeth, were located about two feet below the surface in sediment near a small lake. The bones apparently were bundled for burial in an area that archaeologists believe was a seasonal campsite for small groups. Earlier archaeological surveys uncovered bison teeth, ceramic fragments, and stone tools. Removal of the bones is on hold until a Harris County judge grants TxDOT's request to remove the bones and any others that may be found nearby.

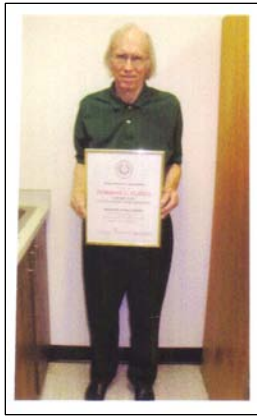
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Rock Art Foundation Sponsoring Lower Pecos DNA Project

The Rock Art Foundation is supporting and providing funding for a pilot study of population dynamics in the Lower Pecos Region during the Archaic Period through the analysis of DNA from well-preserved human skeletal material. DNA analysis has the potential to define population movements, relationships between culture areas, stability within a given area and even mate selection.

Dr. Deborah Bolnick of the University of Texas at Austin is an expert in ancient DNA and will lead this project. She has developed and tested a technique for the non-destructive extraction of DNA. Preliminary discussions within the RAF Board of Directors ascertained that the most practical approach to a pilot study would be to analyze 12 samples to determine the degree of DNA preservation and, if sufficient, to initiate the first level of analyses.

All 12 samples are in the UT lab and undergoing preliminary processing by Dr. Bolnick and her assistants to determine if all still carry identifiable DNA. The current selection spans almost 8,000 years of prehistory and includes men, women, and children.



Local THC Volunteer Stewards Recognized

At their annual meeting and luncheon held in Austin on August 18th, the following members of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN) were recognized for their dedication to Texas archeology. Four Houston Archeological Society members received the *Jim Word Award* for their 10 years of service: Marilyn Horton, Walter Horton, Don Keyes and Sandra Rogers.

Another HAS member, Dick Gregg (left), was one of only four recipients of the *Norman Flagg Certificate for Outstanding Performance* for Region 3/ South and Coastal Texas. Dick traveled over 3700 miles during his 400 hours of service; service that included documenting a looted site in Harris County. --Beth Aucoin

Save the Dates: Friends of Archaeology Tour-- Travel to Prehistoric Texas including the Gault Site

The Friends of Archaeology group at the University of St. Thomas will be touring the Gault site and other locations of prehistoric interest on **Wednesday, October 17 and Thursday, October 18, 2012**. The plan is to leave UST Wednesday morning and drive to two prehistoric sites, spend the night in Salado, visit the Gault site on Thursday, and return Thursday night to Houston. Tour Cost will depend on the number of people attending (best guess around \$200 double occupancy) and will include bus transportation and overnight accommodations. Flyers with details will be available at the HAS meeting.

Friends' Lecture Sept. 23: Ancient Water Systems of Southern Turkey

The Friends of Archaeology at the University of St. Thomas will sponsor a lecture entitled *Ancient Water Systems of Southern Turkey* on Sunday, September 23, beginning at 5:00 pm in Anderson Hall at the University of St. Thomas. Speaker will be Dennis Murphy.

Archeologists, in their haste to uncover the past, often miss or even destroy infrastructures such as ancient water systems. Preserving water systems at these sites provides an opportunity to learn how they were constructed and utilized. This presentation will consider various types of water systems and examine construction techniques of building aqueduct bridges, water channels, pipelines, inverted siphons and water off-take devices in this rugged and picturesque area.

Dennis Murphy, is a long time member of the 'Friends' and AIA. His focus is the study of ancient water systems, primarily in Southern Turkey, and he has presented the results of his work at AIA Annual Meetings and international conferences.

Take a Tour of Brazoria County History!

On Friday, September 28, take a bus tour to some of the earliest Brazoria County cemeteries and see where notable individuals of early Texas are buried. Hosted by the Brazoria County Historical Museum, the tour will be led by Museum Curator Michael Bailey and Museum Volunteer Neal McLain.

The bus will leave the Brazoria County Historical Museum promptly at 9:00 a.m. and return to Angleton by 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$35.00 per person. Registration fee includes lunch as well as entries to museums and other venues. Due to the cost associated with the tour no refunds are available for cancelations after September 21.

Reservations are required by September 19, 2012. Seating is limited. Call 979-864-1208 to reserve your seat.

Oct. 20 Conference to Feature the Texas Rangers

The Lavaca County Historical Commission announces its Alton C. Allen Historical Conference, *The Texas Rangers Bringing "First Order and then Law" to Texas: The Frontier Battalion, 1874-1901*, to be held October 20 at the American Legion Hall in Hallettsville. Pre-registration cost is 15.00 per Person, \$20.00 per Couple, \$5.00 /Student/Teacher/Senior Citizen. This conference is jointly sponsored by the Dickson-Allen Foundation. For a registration form and more information, go to http://www.lavacacountyhistory.org/historical_commission.htm.

Another Cofferdam Project Going Forward in Maryland

Taking their cue from Texas' *La Belle* project, the Navy's Department of Naval History is planning a dry-land excavation of a sunken ship in the Patuxent River in Maryland that is believed to be the USS *Scorpion*, a War of 1812 naval ship. This is only the second time in US history that a cofferdam has been constructed to do underwater archaeology, the *La Belle* excavation in Texas being the first.

On August 22, 1814, several Navy vessels, including the flagship *Scorpion*, were taken upriver and scuttled in order to avoid having them fall into the hands of invading British. The exact location of the sunken ships was lost to human memory until 1979, when underwater archaeology surveys revealed a War of 1812 wreck in these waters.



Preliminary dives on the wreck have recovered artifacts, including two pairs of surgeon's scissors (left) and an apothecary bottle, which suggest the fleet surgeon may have been aboard. Having the fleet surgeon aboard would indicate this may be the flagship *Scorpion*. The wreck site is 75 ft. in length by 20 ft. in width, which will require a sizeable cofferdam to be constructed.

The ship's crew was not allowed to take their personal belongings off the ship at the time of scuttling, so both naval and cultural materials from 200 years ago are expected to be discovered. Processing and curation will take place at the US Navy's Underwater Archaeology & Conservation Lab in Washington, DC.

Construction of the cofferdam and excavation of the shipwreck will start before the end of this year. Funding and in-kind support are provided by the Maryland State Highway Administration, the US Navy, and Maryland Historical Trust.

-- Linda Swift

New on Texas Beyond History:

Stone Cairns of West-Central Texas

Hundreds, if not thousands, of rock cairns, some marking the graves of Late Prehistoric people, lie atop mesas and stream terraces near Abilene in west-central Texas. These mysterious circular features relate to a time of interaction and conflict on the Plains, as different groups vied for resources and territory. In a few burials there is clear evidence of violence—arrow points still embedded in bone. Some skeletons lack mandibles, skulls and other elements, suggestive of a pattern of trophy taking seen throughout the greater Plains region during the Late Archaic and early Late Prehistoric times.

This new 5-section thematic exhibit draws together much of what is known about cairns and cemeteries of the region and highlights the decades-long efforts of investigators to understand these phenomena. Although most cairns have been destroyed by collectors or damaged through ranching activities, a handful of excavated sites allow us to trace patterns and speculate as to the authors of this expression. TBH viewers can explore these sites via an interactive map and access images of artifacts, photos, and graphics, many from TARL's Sayles Collection. Check it out at <http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/cairn/index.html>

"Sicily" Lecture Series in Houston Oct. 8-29

Dr. William J. Neidinger will present a 4-lecture adult education series on Ancient and Medieval Sicily in Houston on four Monday evenings October 8-29. Sessions will be from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm each night. Location of all session will be St. Agnes Academy, 9000 Bellaire Blvd, Houston TX 77036. For a complete course description and registration information, visit <http://www.tfahr.org/Sicily12.html>.

End of World Coming Soon

On September 24, the Houston chapter of Archaeological Institute of America will kick off its 2012-13 lecture season with *The End of Time? Maya Inscriptions and 2012*, at 6:30 pm at the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS), presented by Dr. David Stuart.

This lecture will cover the truth about Maya prophecies and the end of the world. For the Maya, time was not just a means of measuring the course of history; it was a shaping force in their daily and religious lives. The decoding of ancient glyphs provides insights into classic Maya views of time and leads to a greater understanding of their complex world.

Dr. Stuart is professor of Mesoamerican Art and Writing, University of Texas Linda and David Schele Chair in the Art and Writing of Mesoamerica. The event is co-sponsored by HMNS and the Consul General of Mexico. General admission is \$18.00, and \$12.00 for members of AIA and HMNS.

This lecture is the first in a series entitled "It's About Time," which will feature presentations on the Greek Antikythera mechanism, Aboriginal Dreamtime, and Otzi the Iceman, among others. For more information, visit www.aia-houston.com or call 713-364-6344.

**Please submit articles for publication to *Profile* Editor Linda Swift at swiftlinda@sbcglobal.net.
Submit articles no later than October 4 for the October 2012 issue.**

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

HAS BOARD MEMBERS

Karen Belvin , President, iv_art@ymail.com	Lucia Bonno , Director-at-Large, 713-961-0455
Elizabeth Aucoin , Vice President, ekpj.aucoin@prodigy.net	Linda Gorski , Director-at-Large, LindaGorski@cs.com
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AREA TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION ARCHEOLOGY STEWARDS

Elizabeth & Pat Aucoin , ekpj.aucoin@prodigy.net	Sheldon Kindall , kindall1@peoplepc.com
Bob Crosser , 281-341-5251	Bev Mendenhall , bmend2@yahoo.com
Richard L. Gregg , rlgregg7@att.net	Tom Nuckols , tnuckols58@att.net
Marilyn & Walter Horton , mh3839@hotmail.com	Sandra & Johnny Pollan , pollanone@sbcglobal.net
Joe D. Hudgins , manso@jdhudgins.com	Sandra E. Rogers (Sandy) , sojourne@att.net
Brenda Jackson , brendajacks1@yahoo.com	Gary Ryman , gkryman@gmail.com
Don Keves keves_don@hotmail.com	

The Profile
Houston Archeological Society
PO Box 130631
Houston, TX 77219-0631

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