



**Houston Archeological Society Meeting, Thursday, May 21, 2026, 6:00 p.m. ~ Virtual Only
Featuring Kelly Jenks, PhD, New Mexico State University**

Hello, HAS members - The May monthly members meeting for the Houston Archeological Society will be held virtually only via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 21, 2026. Please note that there will be no in-person gathering. The Zoom link will be emailed to members the week of the meeting. As our speaker, we welcome Kelly Jenks, PhD, Associate Professor and Museum Director in the Department of Anthropology at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Jenks will discuss a Spanish Colonial settlement in Tijeras Canyon, New Mexico.

In 1763, New Mexico's Spanish colonial governor granted land in a dangerous mountain pass to a group of families desperate for property. These families were expected to build a fortified settlement and defend it in exchange for the right to hold the acreage.

Seven years later, their homesteads were attacked, and the traumatized survivors retreated to Albuquerque, refusing to return even though that meant forfeiting the land. This talk draws on archaeological and historical evidence to tell the story of the people who settled here and what their lives were like during their short time in the landscape.



Above: Kelly Jenks, PhD, in the field.
Left: Excavation of room interior.
Right: Bowl artifact.
Photographs courtesy of Kelly Jenks, PhD.

Dr. Jenks specializes in historical archaeology and heritage management, with a particular interest in the relationships between everyday objects and cultural identity. Most of her archaeological research focuses on Spanish land grant communities in New Mexico, including San Miguel del Vado and Cañón de Carnué. She also has many years of experience working in cultural resource management and currently serves as Vice Chair of the State of New Mexico's Cultural Properties Review Committee. We hope you will all join us virtually for this fascinating presentation on Thursday, May 21. Be looking for your meeting reminder with the Zoom link. For more information about this program or about the Houston Archeological Society, please contact Bob Sewell at president@txhas.org. I look forward to seeing you virtually at the meeting or out on a site soon.

See you in the field! Frank Kozar, HAS Vice President





President's Message



In the second quarter of the year, HAS often begins to receive requests for outreach activities, and this year is no exception. So far, we have received three requests for Show and Tell activities from local libraries and parks:

- Pearlland Library on July 18, 2026 - West Pearlland Dig Day, featuring archeology and paleontology activities presented in collaboration with the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science.
- Jesse Jones Park on September 12, 2026 - Native American Heritage Day, a celebration of indigenous culture with presentations and the onsite replica Akokisa Village.
- Montgomery County Library on October 24, 2026 – Archeology Day.

HAS participated in the latter two events last year and we are delighted to be invited again. I will be reaching out to the HAS Outreach Support committee, but I welcome anyone interested in participating to contact me at president@txhas.org.

Saturday, April 18, saw an HAS team continuing work at the Walnut Tree Hill Site near Alleyton, Texas. We had a couple of folks new to the site, Ed Hertel and Pat Potter, who worked with Geoff Mills to continue to investigate the potential hearth feature we have found. The group extended the unit (N990, E985) towards the north, following the direction of the feature and providing better access. In a unit further north (N1000, E985), being worked by John Swann, Louis Hebert, and Jacob Cantu, it seems that another hearth-like feature is appearing at the 90 cm depth (see photo right). Meanwhile, Frank cleared up the group of three units to the east.



On Saturday, April 25, a group visited the Lone Oak Site near Frelsburg. Some of the units were slightly flooded, so we followed the plan to work on a couple of alternative units in the same area where several Angostura-type points had been found previously—and guess what? Another point was recovered by Jacob Cantu (see photo below). You can learn more about this interesting site in the article by Geoff Mills on page five.



Left: Jacob Cantu with an Angostura the he uncovered at the Lone Oak Site.
Right: Unit N990, E985 revealing a possible hearth feature. Photographs by Bob Sewell.

I look forward to seeing everyone out in the field and at our monthly meetings. If you have any questions about the Houston Archeological Society, please email me at president@txhas.org.

Bob Sewell, HAS President





Houston Archeological Society Monthly Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2026

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Bob Sewell - Welcome to existing and new members, and non-members. Membership - 143 members; expect more throughout the year as outreach progresses. Treasury - funds are good.

We welcome the new HAS Secretary - Dr. John Gorczyk

- Cornell University
- Professional Archeologist at Chronicle Heritage
- Adjunct Professor at U of H

Project Activities

- Walnut Tree Hill - Ongoing, next visit Saturday, April 18, 2026
- Goloby – Last workday 3/14/26
- Lone Oak - Last workday 3/21/26
- Continue lab activities (tagging/bagging) - Probably at Trini Mendenhall, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings seem the best; Saturdays are out, too busy. In preparation HAS purchased 2000 tag bags.

Outreach Activities - Several requests received for show and tell displays

- Pearland Library, Dig Day – July 18, 2026
- Jesse Jones Park, Native American Day - September 12, 2026 – Repeat invite
- Montgomery County Library System, Archeology Day – October 24, 2026 – Repeat invite

Upcoming Talks and Tours

- Lecture by Prof. Ted A. Campbell, HAS member from the DFW area - Discussing the Texas Revolution in Southeast Texas; 4:30 p.m. on April 21; Tyrrell Historical Library in Beaumont.
- Gault Site Tour – 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, April 25; www.gaultschool.org/tours.

Next month's meeting takes place May 21, 2026, at 6 p.m. This meeting will be virtual only again, featuring Dr. Kelly Jenks. Tonight's presentation features Bethany Miller speaking about Fremont Culture craft specialization.

Meeting concluded at 6:45 p.m.

HAS Secretary - Dr. John Gorczyk



~ Happy Mother's Day to all the Mothers, Grandmothers, and Incredible Women in our Community! ~



Vintage Mother's Day Cards Capture The Beauty Of Days Gone By



Reminder ~ TAS Field School Next Month June 13-20, 2026

Be sure to register right away for the Texas Archeological Society 2026 Field School In Rockdale! Each summer, the Texas Archeological Society (TAS) sponsors a week-long archeological field school. The program provides training in archeological techniques to Society members and contributes important new data to the state's archeological and historical heritage. No prior archeological experience is necessary. Participants may register for a minimum of three days or for the full week. Several Field School Scholarships are also available. Learn more at [2025 TAS Field School: https://www.tshaonline.org/san-francisco-xavier-presidio](https://www.tshaonline.org/san-francisco-xavier-presidio).



Image sources: Texas Archeological Society; Hand Free Download



May Brings the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Fundraising Gala ~ Who Wore it Better? Met Gala Celebrities (2024) or the Middle Ages?





Lone Oak Site (41CD168) 2023 Phase Report

Geoffrey F. Mills

The Houston Archeological Society has been excavating at Lone Oak since 2019 in collaboration with landowner Stan Theut, a stalwart supporter of HAS. This is a late Paleoindian to early Archaic site particularly known for Angostura lithics. For full background information, see HAS Report #36, [A 12,000 Year Occupation in Northern Colorado County, Texas](#), which summarizes the Lone Oak Site 2019 Phase, available on Amazon. The following report discusses our second phase of site work, begun in 2023.

Lone Oak has been one of our most active ongoing projects, and as such, we have always recommended it for those new to archaeology and for training purposes. We always find interesting artifacts at every visit, even if just debitage. In fact, the current excavations were plotted based on spotting debitage revealed through bioturbation from gopher mounds.

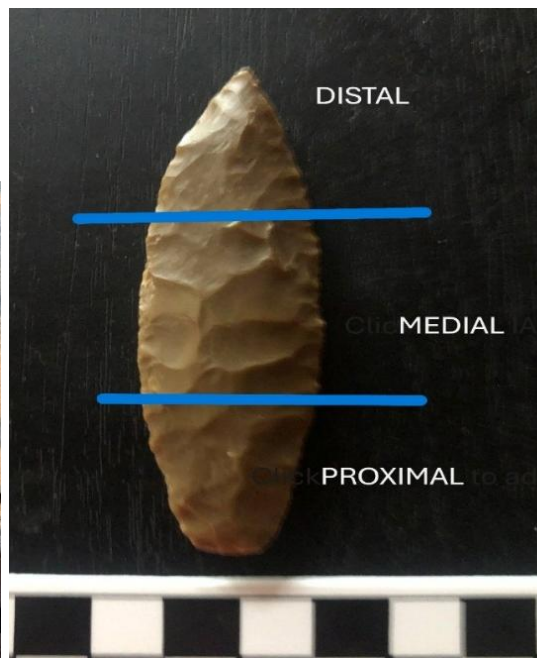
The most significant artifacts have been Angostura typology projectile points. After further research I have determined that the type of Angostura we are finding is known as Zella Angostura. Zella Angostura distribution primarily falls in east and south-central Texas and into the Coastal Plains region, dating to the Transitional Paleo period of approximately 8,800 - 8,100 BP. For a good reference on lithics in Texas, see Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians by Thomas Hester, et al.

Top right: New member Natalie Mayronne finds her first artifact. Center left and center: Angostura projectile points. Center right: Potentially reworked Angostura point. Photographs by Frank Kozar. Below left: Preform lithic; photograph by Geoff Mills.



Our hard-working HAS team has uncovered lithics in all stages of production. The artifact to the left is a good example of a preform, an unfinished, intentionally shaped piece of lithic material in a manufacturing stage prior to eventual completion as a projectile point, often prepared for travel or trade.

Left, top to bottom: Overshot flake, photograph by Geoff Mills; Angostura in situ, photograph by Frank Kozar; Examples of fire cracked rock (FCR), photograph by Geoff Mills. Right, top to bottom: Debitage from one 10 cm level; Lithics terminology; Hammer stone. Photographs by Geoff Mills. All photographs from Lone Oak Site.



An overshot flake is a lithic piece of debitage occurring during bifacial reduction, usually associated with rapid thinning during the knapping process.

Debitage encompasses all the residual artifacts found associated with tool making, including flakes, production debris, and rejected material. Through debitage analysis of lithic waste assemblage, specialists glean information as to the expedient tools used, productivity of a site, and skill of the manufacturers.



Site participants often uncover fragments of lithic points, learning to identify the distal (tip), medial (mid-section), and proximal (hafted end) characteristics (Lithic Terminology).

A hammer stone is a rounded cobble of hard rock used for percussion flaking of stone tools, identified by a battered end.

Fire cracked rocks (FCR) are stones that have been affected by deliberate heating, often indicating a hearth or a location used for cooking or water boiling techniques. Additionally, chert or other raw lithic materials were often heat treated for knapping. Thermal alteration resulted in a more brittle stone, improving flaking properties. This common practice sometimes shattered the chert, leaving debitage.

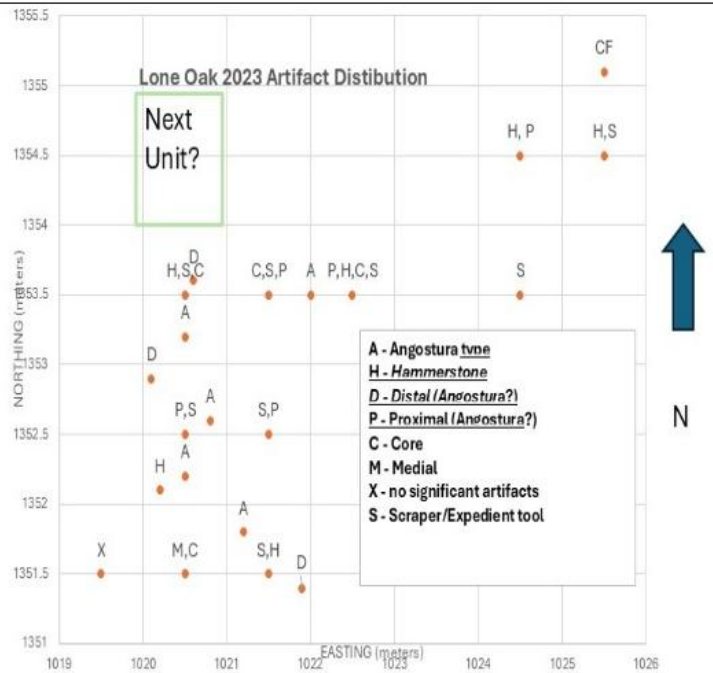
Lone Oak 2023 – Future Direction

The scatter plot to the right indicates the distribution of most of the significant artifacts recovered during our current excavations of the Lone Oak 2023 project. The average depth of all the artifacts has been 66 cm from local unit datum, 46 cm from surface. The proposed location for the next unit is based on graph analysis.

We hope that all HAS members will consider joining us as we excavate and record this remarkable site.



Right: Graph of Lone Oak site.
Left: Jay Durel holds a sizable Angostura point. Photograph by Frank Kozar.



Sources: [Angostura Lanceolate](#); [\(PDF\) Clovis intentional bifacial overshot flaking: Two replica examples](#); [\(A Comparative Study of Overshot Flaking Between Clovis and Other Components From the Gault Site, Texas on JSTOR\)](#); [A 12,000 Year Occupation in Northern Colorado County, Texas](#); [Stone artifacts of Texas Indians](#); [Lithic Terminology UFL.edu](#); [Heat Treatment of Novaculite](#); <https://www.projectilepoints.net/Points/zella.html>.



HAS Reference Desk



What research on archeology, anthropology, paleontology, or history have you been reading lately? The HAS Reference desk seeks your suggestions about interesting archeology and history links.

Texas Historical Commission podcasts - [Re-Collections of the Revolution Podcast](#); [The Spirit of '76](#) and [THC Blog](#); <https://lib.uh.edu/TheTangent>; [Pompeii's Wildest Party Archaeology Magazine](#); [Tour Queen Elizabeth II's Private Rooms in This Scottish Palace](#); [Roman cemetery found on Co-op development in Caistor](#); [Caistor Roman Project, Norfolk](#); [Bruce Ismay, Historic UK](#); [Archaeologists Uncover](#)

[Hundreds of Massive Structures at the 'Gates of Hell'/Their Purpose Remains Unknown](#); [Mystery of 2,000-year-old coin used to pay bus fare may finally be solved](#); [One of 1,500 Cold War bunkers found in UK castle](#); [First Roman marching camps discovered in Saxony-Anhalt prove Roman advances in the 3rd century AD](#); [Articles & Videos: CoBalt Archeology](#); [Byzantine plate and Frankish mines: provenance of silver in north-west European coinage during the Long Eighth Century \(c. 660–820\) Cambridge](#); [Mass grave of young children and infants from the Persian period in Tel Azekah and importance for understanding burial practices](#); [English Family Finds More Than a Thousand 17th-Century Coins During Home Renovation](#); [Over 800-year-old human skeletons discovered under busy Brussels street](#); [Fossil site in China reveals bevy of complex creatures lived prior to the Cambrian explosion, including a 'Dune'-like sandworm | Live Science](#); [Explore Vindolanda's Free Excavation Reports](#); [Roman soldiers at Vindolanda suffered persistent parasite infections](#); [Mysterious Voynich Manuscript may be a medieval cipher](#); [3D analysis reveals Shroud of Turin image likely from a sculpture, not Jesus' body | Archaeology News](#); [Shakespeare didn't abandon his wife in Stratford, letter suggests](#); [Shakespeare owned house in London – location research](#); [Titanic Expeditions | RMS Titanic Inc.'s Exploration of the Wreck Site](#).





Update from CoBALT Archeology, Victoria

The Coastal Bend Archeological Logistics Team (CoBALT) is a 501 (c)(3), non-profit archeology team in Victoria, Texas, dedicated to discovering and cataloging historic artifacts for public display. CoBALT collaborates with its partners, the Museum of the Coastal Bend, Victoria College, landowners, and stakeholders. While the archaeology lab is being relocated to another building on the Victoria College campus, CoBALT has stayed busy working on a variety of archaeology projects and assisting the museum.



"Lou," Tamra, Don and Charlie do XRF trace metal testing of Spanish artifacts in the museum



Measuring Spanish lead ball prior to XRF testing



Trace Element Analysis of Spanish Artifact



Weighing Spanish plate fragment prior to XRF testing

Recently, Dr. Tamra Walters and her husband Don, along with metallurgist Charlie Haecker and his wife Lou, visited the museum to conduct trace metal testing on Spanish artifacts from the mission and presidio collections. Their research will compare these results with artifacts recently discovered at the rediscovered Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo, found in December by Dr. Walters and her team.



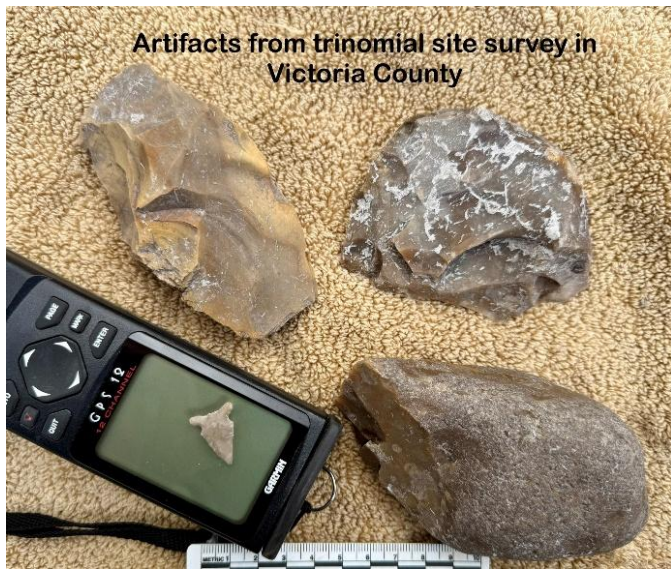
Dr Pam Stranahan presentation for the Texas Master Naturalist Class

O.C. Garza joined Dr. Pam Stranahan to present to a Master Naturalist class in Victoria. Pam focused on Archaic and historic excavations in the Coastal Bend and led an innovative hands-on activity, while OC highlighted recently discovered Paleoindian artifacts from site 41VT141.



Mike, Cameron & Rickey accessioning bows & arrows

In addition, the CoBALT team assisted the museum with accessioning bows and arrows from the Bill Birmingham Collection and conducted several archaeological site surveys in both Goliad and Victoria counties. CoBALT also accessioned artifacts into the museum's collections and assisted with preparing a new "History of Ranching" exhibit at the Museum of the Coastal Bend.



Artifacts from trinomial site survey in Victoria County



Bill and Glenn inspecting brands and other ranching tools for a new exhibit at the Museum



Louis & John at axial skeleton lab exercise, TAS ZOA

Frank K.

John

Louis



John & Louis, mammal limb station, TAS ZOA

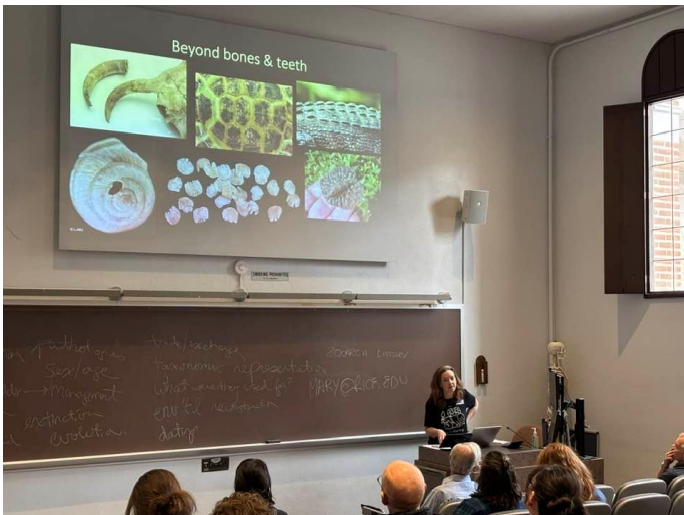
Louis

John

Frank Condron and O.C. Garza attended the recent TAS Zooarchaeology and Osteology Academy at Rice University. It's easy to see why this academy fills up so quickly. Using an incredible and diverse collection of complete skeletal remains, each lab station offered hands-on learning experiences—from assembling complete skeletons to comparing pelvic bones across many different species. We had high expectations going into the academy, and it far exceeded them. We were teamed up with HAS members Louis Hebert and John Swann, and Hill Country Archeology Association member Kelly Skovbjerg. This was a great learning experience.

~ O. C. Garza, CoBALT Archaeology

More About the TAS Zoology and Osteology Academy, Rice University



Dr. Mary Prendergast and her team of assistants led the TAS Zooarchaeology and Osteology Academy at Rice University. Guest speakers included Dr. Manuel Dominguez-Rodrigo (Rice University, on taphonomy) and Dr. Kristine Korzow (TAMU, on Ancient DNA and biomolecular zooarcheology). Subjects included bone structure, tooth structure, anatomical terminology, horns and antlers, and analysis of dentition and mammalian crania.

~ Frank Kozar



Left: Dr. Mary Prendergast lecturing during the session. Right: O.C. Garza, Louis Hebert, and John Swann participating in the academy. Photographs by Frank Kozar.



Trip to the Caucasus Reveals Outstanding Archaeological Sites

Louis Hebert

A recent trip to the Caucasus region in the fall of 2025 proved to be rewarding and memorable. I recommend visiting the area if you enjoy world-class archaeological sites, superb wines, and welcoming people. Tucked in between Russia, Iran, Turkey, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus region and its countries of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia are often overlooked by American travelers. But I can assure you, it is an area definitely worth visiting. Even though our organized trip was not specifically dedicated to archaeology, there were many outstanding archaeological sites to experience, and I wished for more time to explore it all. Our tour group of fifteen first traveled to Azerbaijan, followed by Georgia, and finally to Armenia.

Azerbaijan

Located near the Caspian Sea, the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, was preparing to host its annual Formula 1 Grand Prix when we arrived. Despite all of the race preparations, we managed to visit some great sights: Baku's Old City is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the gracefully modern Heydar Aliyev Center displays the cultural and historical heritage of Azerbaijan. The excellent archaeological section of the museum presents significant archaeological artifacts such as Islamic calligraphy and manuscripts, traditional clothing, swords, and musical instruments.



Above left: Old Town Baku with modern towers in background. Right: Modern skyline of Baku. Below left: Ringing the Gavel Dash musical limestone at Gobustan, Azerbaijan. Photographs courtesy of Louis Hebert.



Another UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Gobustan Rock Art and Cultural Landscape, includes prehistoric carvings, ancient human bones, and lithic tools. Petroglyphs portray images of prehistoric life in the Caucasus. Along with Rock Art, the surroundings include the Gobustan rock drum or Gavel Dash. The hollow limestone rock produces melodious tambourine sounds when struck, leaving quite a memorable impression; listen at [this link \(Gaval Dash\)](#). Also worth visiting in the Shaki area are the evocative Albanian Church of Kish and Khan Palace. The Church of Kish houses glass-covered Bronze Age excavation sites revealing skeletons and artifacts dating to 3,000-4,000 BC. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Khan Palace features lavishly colored glass mosaics, floral panels, and elaborate frescoes.



Bibi-Heybat oil and gas-condensate field, 1846. Photograph courtesy of Louis Hebert.

If you have worked in the oil industry, a must-see is the 1846 Bibi-Heybat drill site, ten kilometers west of Baku. The first mechanically cable-tool drilled oil well, by modern standards this was a shallow oil-producing well, drilled to only 21 meters. Interestingly, tree bark was used to pipe in the oil. It predates by more than ten years the first oil well drilled by Edwin Drake in Titusville, Pennsylvania.

Georgia

Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, offers much to visitors. First and foremost, in the Georgian National Museum, you can get a glimpse of life in Georgia during the Soviet occupation. The ancient district of Tbilisi's historic dome-roofed brick bathhouses built over the sulfur hot springs gave Tbilisi its name, "warm place."

In Gori, the State Stalin Museum uncovers the complex history of Russia-Georgia relations and recounts Stalin's life, from his early years in Gori to his death mask, including a collection of pipes and his personal railway car used for his travel throughout the Soviet Union.

The Cave City of Vardzia, an 800-year-old monastery complex, first existed as a hidden fortification to protect against invading Mongols. Upon transformation into a monastery, 2,000 monks lived in rock-hewn dwellings.

The remote fourteenth-century Gergeti Trinity Church perches on a hill framed by Mount Kazbek, in a setting considered one of Georgia's iconic landmarks.

Below: Gergeti Trinity Church at night. Above right: Caves of Vardzia. Photographs courtesy of Louis Hebert. Below right: The church with Mount Kazbek in the background. Source: [Gergeti Trinity Church | Georgia Travel](#).



Although Mount Ararat stands in easternmost Turkey, the dormant volcano's snow-capped peak looms over Armenia as an omnipresence. The best site to experience its splendor is at Khor Virap, positioned on a hill at the base of the mountain. The monastery's name translates as Deep Dungeon in Armenian, based on the fourth century legend as the site where Saint Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned in a pit for thirteen years, with the sacred spot becoming the first Christian church in Armenia in 642 AD. Nearby lies another archaeological complex, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Zvartnots, containing remains of early Christian buildings associated with Echmiadzin Mother Cathedral (303 AD), one of the oldest Christian cathedrals in the world. Although our group did not visit the Treasury Museum of Etchmiadzin, the faithful believe the collection safeguards relics of the holy lance and Noah's Ark.



Above: Khor Virap, photograph courtesy of Louis Hebert.
Below: Zvartnots Cathedral - Travel to Armenia.

The country's wealth of remarkable sites continues with the Monastery of Geghard and the Upper Azat Valley - UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Temple of Garni. The hermitage originated as a small cave chapel in the fourth century named for the lance used to wound Jesus at the crucifixion. It grew into an elaborate monastery complex partially carved into the cliffs of the Azat River Gorge. During our visit, we were fortunate to hear an Armenian choir singing amazing polyphonic chants.

Nearby, the Temple of Garni, also constructed on a cliff overlooking the Azat, is a colonnaded Greco-Roman temple thought to have been built around the first century AD before the arrival of Christianity in Armenia.

No visit to Armenia should be complete without a visit to the National Gallery Museum in Yerevan’s beautiful Republic Square, an essential resource for archaeologists and historians alike. Please plan for at least a two-hour visit there to view cuneiform inscriptions on clay tablets, amphoras, and details about the Kingdom of Van, or Urartu (13th Century BC to 7th Century BC).



Above: Artifacts in the National Gallery Museum in Yerevan. Below left: Armenian brandy, made with white grapes and spring water. Photographs courtesy of Louis Hebert.

Finally, before you leave Armenia, do yourself a favor and taste one of Winston Churchill’s favorite libations: Armenian brandy. After Soviet leader Joseph Stalin introduced Winston Churchill to Armenian brandy and Cuban cigars during WWII summits, the luxuries became daily staples for the British prime minister.



**American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) Annual Conference
Great Falls, Montana ~ June 25-29**

The American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) will be hosting its annual conference in Great Falls, Montana, on June 25-29, 2026. Events include field trips, presentations, the annual business meeting, an auction, vendors, awards, and a banquet.

Click [here](https://www.araraprogram@rockart.us) for more information or see araraprogram@rockart.us.





Alamo Archaeology Church Preservation Updates The Alamo's Archaeology Team Discovers Battle-Era Cannonball



The Alamo's archaeology team has unearthed a fully-intact, solid cannonball that can be traced to the Battle of the Alamo era. The discovery was made on March 5, 2026 - the day before the 190th anniversary of the Battle of the Alamo, which took place on March 6, 1836. The Alamo broke the news on the latest episode of the award-winning [Stories Bigger Than Texas: The Alamo Podcast](#).

"I have chills now, just thinking about it," the Alamo's Director of Archaeology Dr. Tiffany Lindley shared during the podcast. "March 5th is when we pulled it out of the ground. I don't think words can express the feelings that we all felt." Dr. Lindley said the four-pound, solid bronze cannonball was found

approximately three feet below ground in an excavation unit outside the Alamo Church. She described the unit as a clean deposit, meaning the layers of soil over time are clearly visible. "It gives us an, almost with certainty, exact time period - and that's the Battle," Dr. Lindley explained.

The Alamo's archaeology team collaborated with other Alamo experts to determine the cannonball was likely used by the Mexican Army during the thirteen-day Siege and Battle of The Alamo. "We can't say with 100% certainty that it came from the Mexican Army, but I would say 99% because largely the Mexican Army is using bronze cannonballs and largely the Texans are using iron cannonballs," the Alamo's Senior Researcher and Historian Kolby Lanham clarified. "Doesn't mean they didn't capture each other's stuff and use it, but I would say with a fair amount of certainty that this is a Mexican Army cannonball, and it was likely fired at the Battle of the Alamo - or it could have been during the twelve-day siege."

In addition to the cannonball, four exploding shot fragments have been discovered outside the Alamo Church over the past year. Three are made from bronze, and one is made from iron. They are all Howitzer-round fragments, meaning the original weapon was hollow inside and had been filled with gunpowder to explode like a modern-day grenade. Alamo researchers will soon measure the pieces to learn more about the size of the weapons and their trajectories.

The Alamo is an active archaeological site with excavations supporting constant preservation of the Alamo Church and Long Barrack as well as construction associated with the ongoing \$550 million Alamo Plan. For the past few years, visitors have had daily opportunities to watch the team work, and they often witness artifact discoveries. "There was a visitor who once said, 'I've been to Pompeii, but this is cooler!' And I almost had a heart attack," Dr. Lindley told the podcast. "As an archaeologist, Pompeii is the epitome of cool. So, I was so excited to hear that visitors are really connecting to what we're doing and they're enjoying seeing us." Courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.



Above: The intact cannonball uncovered in a unit outside the Alamo Church. Below: Exploded shot fragments. [The Alamo's Archaeology Team Discovers Battle-Era Cannonball](#), courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.

March 16, 2026 - Archaeologists continued investigations in units 68, 70, and 111, and completed excavations in EUs 77, 84, 116, and 126. These units were excavated and completed between Monday March 2, 2026, through Friday March 13, 2026. EU-68 was located along the northeast corner of the Church. Archaeologists encountered several disturbances in this unit such as a PVC pipe, metal pipe, and a ceramic pipe. EU-68 had a dense concentration of artifacts, including nails, colorless glass, and construction material. EU-70 was located northeast of EU-68. The upper soil deposits were composed of a modern topsoil mixed with construction sand. Disturbances within the unit included a PVC pipe along the southern boundary and a utility on the northeast corner. Artifacts consisted of construction materials, metal, and glass. A porcelain doll leg was recovered at 90 cm below surface. Excavation in EU-77 was completed at an approximate depth of 150 cm below surface. Artifacts consisted of large amounts of container glass, metal, and European Earthenware ceramic. A portion of a container for a perfumed hair pomade product was recovered at 100 cm below surface.



Above left: Porcelain doll leg recovered from EU-70. Right: Ox Marrow pomade container fragments from EU-77. Center left: EU-84 at 100 cm below surface, facing south. Center right: Clay pipe stem and pipe bowl fragments from EU-84. Below left: Complete glass bottle from EU-102. [Alamo Archaeology Church Preservation - March 16](#) and [March 23](#) | [The Alamo](#), courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.



Archaeologists terminated excavations within EU-84 at an approximate depth of 100 cm below surface, exposing a limestone concentration at the bottom of the unit. The limestone concentration was disarticulated and not aligned, suggesting this could be a construction fill or wall fall episode. Artifacts from this unit mostly consisted of container glass, metal, construction materials, and European earthenware ceramic. EU-111 is located on the southeast corner of the church. Archaeologists are still within the upper levels of this unit, approximately 30 cm below surface. Soil deposits consist of modern topsoil in the eastern quadrant, and the back fill from the 2019 archaeological excavations on the western quadrant. Archaeologists completed excavations in EUs 116 and 126, both located on the south side of the church, last week. Both units reached a maximum depth of 100 cm below surface and encountered the archaeologically sterile R horizon. Final unit documentation included photographs, maps, and digital scans.

March 23, 2026 - Archaeologists continued investigations at the Alamo Church. Units 69, 76, 102, and 111 were active last week. EU-102 is located at the southeast corner of the Alamo Church. The upper soil deposits consisted of a modern topsoil mix, but the soil transitioned to a darker sandy clay as they excavated deeper. Archaeologists excavated to an approximate depth of 80 cm below surface. Artifacts from this unit include a complete glass bottle and fragments of a stoneware vessel. The bottle is embossed with “Cold Cross Beverages and Bottling Company Rodriguez Root Beer.” Rodriguez Root Beer was created by San Antonians Guadalupe Rodriguez, Jr. and his father in 1918 on Santa Rosa Street.

Archaeologists completed excavations in EU-111 at approximately 100 cm below surface when they reached the natural caliche hardpan. Excavations revealed a cut into the hardpan, but the reason for this is still undetermined. The Monel plate, installed within the Church wall in 1995, is visible in this unit. Artifacts from this unit included glass, metal fragments, and ceramics.

March 30, 2026 - Archaeologists continued investigations at the Alamo Church. Excavation units 69, 102, 105, and 112 were active last week. Archaeologists reached the terminal depth, approximately 100 cm below surface, in EU 69. The deeper soil levels consisted of sandy clay and mixed deposits from previous utility excavations. While no features were encountered, archaeologists did recover several artifacts including Chinese porcelain and decorative hardware.



Above: Stoneware vessel sherds from EU-102. March 23 | The Alamo. Left: Porcelain rim sherd from EU-69. Center: Decorative hardware from EU-69. Alamo Archaeology Church Preservation - March 30 | The Alamo. Below: Above: Button recovered from EU-112. Alamo Archaeology Church Preservation - March 30 | The Alamo. All images courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.

Excavations were completed in EU-102 at an approximate depth of 110 cm below surface. The natural caliche hardpan covered the base of the unit, causing a termination of excavation. This unit had fewer artifacts than previous units and no features. Assessment of the walls indicated the foundation was built into the hardpan, a trait seen in almost all excavation units against the Church walls. A new unit, EU-105, was opened last week on the south side of the Church. This unit was adjacent to the wall of the South Transept and was south of EU-102. Archaeologists reached an approximate depth of 40 cm below surface by the end of the week. The portion of the unit immediately against the Church was previously excavated by archaeologists in the 1990s. This previously excavated area is identifiable by a synthetic membrane that was installed at the base of the excavations. Even though part of this area was excavated in the past, archaeologists today still screen the soils to ensure consistency with archaeological methodologies. Artifacts recovered include nails and glass fragments. Archaeologists completed excavations in EU-112 at approximately 100 cm below surface when they reached the natural caliche hardpan. Due to multiple utilities within this unit, soil deposits were mixed. Artifact counts decreased as the archaeologists reached the lower levels. However, archaeologists did recover a button from one of the final levels.



April 6, 2026 - Archaeologists continued investigations at the Alamo Church. Work was ongoing in excavation units 63, 67, 103, and 105 last week. The first few levels of EU-63 consisted of a thick sand deposit, indicating a recent construction episode. As archaeologists excavated deeper they encountered two stacked limestone blocks in the north profile. It appears that any associated stones were previously impacted, making the function of this feature undetermined at this point. Archaeologists will leave these stones in situ. A second feature was located on the southern side of the unit and extends into the adjacent unit. This feature is likely a prepared surface, but more information will be gathered once the adjacent unit is excavated. The feature will remain in situ. Archaeologists continued excavations in EU-103 and reached an approximate depth of 110 cm below surface. A broken clay pipe running east-west was encountered in the unit at approximately 55 cm

below surface. Soil deposits were mixed as a result of previous impacts. Artifact counts were fairly low and consisted of mostly construction related materials. Excavations were completed in EU-105 at an approximate depth of 100 cm below surface. The natural caliche hardpan covered the base of the unit, causing a termination of excavation. Assessment of the walls indicated the foundation was built into the hardpan, a trait seen in almost all excavation units against the Church walls. Prior to the cessation of excavation, archaeologists recovered several artifacts, including a partial Guerrero point, European earthenware, a partial gunflint, and a cuprous Howitzer-style shell fragment. No features were encountered in this unit. At the completion of excavation, the unit was fully documented. Documentation of all Church walls also includes an assessment by the Alamo Trust, Inc. (ATI) Conservation Department. Courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.



Above left: Partial Guerrero Point from EU-105. Center: European earthenware from EU-105. Right: Gunflint recovered from EU-105. Below left: Cuprous shot fragment from EU-105. [Alamo Archaeology Church Preservation - April 6 | The Alamo](#); courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.



[Alamo Artifacts](#) - The Alamo Collection contains manuscripts, objects, and artwork spanning over 300 years of Alamo history. Explore the artifact portal and come back often to see what is new: [Alamo Artifact Collection](#). Courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.

The Alamo Podcast

[Episode 123](#): The Harrowing Stakes of Formally Declaring Independence. Explore the convention at Washington on the Brazos, where Texas Revolutionaries felt the drumbeat of the clock to write a Declaration of Independence and create a framework for the Republic of Texas government. In March 1836, with the Alamo under siege and eventually fallen, a group of delegates met along the Brazos River to turn the Texas

Revolution into a true independence movement. Listeners will learn about this critical moment from experts at the Washington on the Brazos historic site, which has recently undergone millions of dollars in improvements to preserve the beacon of independence.

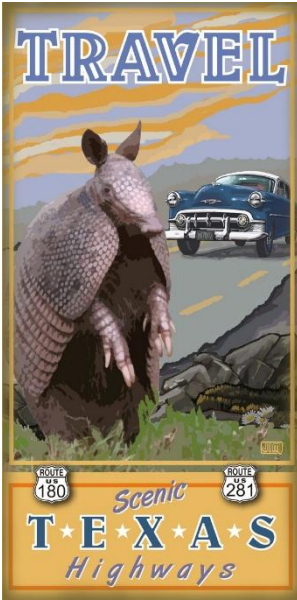
[Episode 124](#): Learn more about new of the Alamo's archaeology team discovery of a [fully-intact solid shot cannonball](#) that can be traced to the Battle of the Alamo era. The discovery was made on March 5, the eve of the 190th anniversary of the world-famous battle. The Alamo's Director of Archaeology Dr. Tiffany Lindley describes the incredible discovery of the cannonball outside the Alamo Church as well as recent discoveries of [four exploding shot fragments](#). She also answers listener questions about her team's work and the archaeology field.

Other recent topics include [Wise About Texas](#), [The Brew King Of San Antonio](#); [The Power Of The Printing Press](#); [The Texas General Land Office](#); and [Ask The Alamo's Archaeologist](#). Stream this and other episodes at the Alamo's podcast [at the website](#), [on YouTube](#), or on your preferred podcasting app. Courtesy of the Alamo Trust, Inc.





Texas Travel ~ San Antonio Sojourn

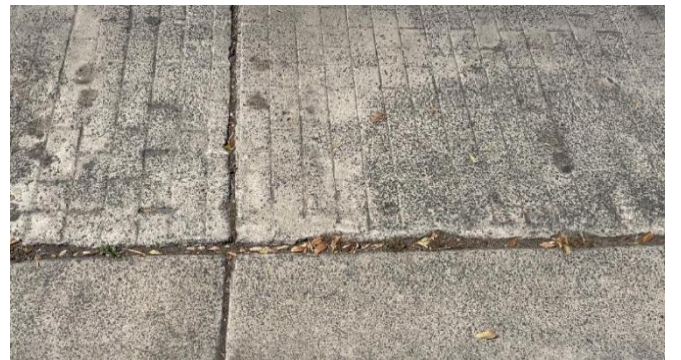


Above: Texas Poster - Etsy.

Right above: The Blue Hole, the Source of the San Antonio River.

Right center and below: The oldest concrete in Texas; Belknap Place historical marker. Photographs by Betsy Wittenmyer.

It's rewarding to venture away from the main sights, such as north to the San Antonio River's traditional source, the Blue Hole on the campus of Incarnate Word. Two miles west, history devotees will find handsome mansions in the Monte Vista Historic District and the oldest concrete in Texas (1914), on Belknap Place between Woodlawn and Huisache, textured to provide traction for turn-of-the-century horse-drawn carriages.



Beyond the Riverwalk and missions, San Antonio's endless wealth of significant historic sites warrants multiple visits. The Conservation Society preserves three important house museums adjacent to the walkable King William District, a pleasant, shaded retreat. Original adobe structures nestle between art deco buildings in the heart of the city, including the Melchor De La Garza (c. 1790-1800), O'Henry (c. 1855), and Jose Navarro (1856) houses. This epicenter of early Spanish settlement includes the old-world governor's outpost (1749) and San Fernando Cathedral (1738-1755), founded by the sixteen Canary Island families who immigrated upon the invitation of King Phillip V of Spain. Remains of some of the Alamo defenders are believed to be entombed there. Evening brings an illuminated projection, The Saga, designed by Xavier de Richemont. If you've not yet been, this sound and light show is as magnificent as any you've seen at European monuments and cathedrals, many of those designed by this same internationally known artist. The massive Romanesque Revival Bexar County Courthouse, still in use today, faces the Plaza de Las Islas Canarias. In a nearby working-class neighborhood, a young Carol Burnett lived at 2006 West Commerce, a small Victorian house now serving as a community center. If the doors are open, slip inside and look for marks on the wooden floors from the days when Burnett roller skated indoors with her grandmother's permission.



Left and center: The Saga illuminates the façade of San Fernando Cathedral. Photographs by Betsy Wittenmyer. Right: Four-gallon Jar by Wilson Potteries, 1880. [The Witte Museum Collection](#). Below: The festive décor at Mi Tierra Café and Bakery. Photograph by Betsy Wittenmyer.

The [Witte Museum](#) curates artifacts from many disciplines of Texas history—archeology, geology, anthropology, art—with a nice collection of [Texas pottery](#). Their education department leads regular guided Rock Art trips to shelters in the lower Pecos. In nearby Mahanke Park, the museum maintains the [Ruiz House](#) (1745) and an 85-million-year-old [petrified tree trunk](#). The San Antonio Museum of Art holds remarkable [Art of the Americas Pre-1500](#) and [Ancient Mediterranean World](#) collections. Situated in a hilltop Spanish Colonial Revival villa (1927), the McNay Art Museum offers a collection of not only [modern](#) art but [medieval](#) sculpture, paintings, and stained glass. And stop by the vivid red Central Library to explore the [Texana Resource Center](#) and marvel at the [Chihuly Fiesta Tower](#) sculpture.

San Antonio's culinary traditions offer abundant options. Classic choices include [Schilo's German Restaurant](#) (1917; Reuben, pretzel, homemade root beer), [Casa Rio](#) (1946; first riverside dining, popular margarita flights), [Mi Tierra Café](#) at the market (1941; enchiladas, mariachis, Mexican bakery, pralines), and [The Original Donut Shop](#) (1954; known for breakfast tacos wrapped in freshly made tortillas). The [family-owned La Panadería](#) bakes from fifty-year-old recipes blending Mexican and French pastry traditions. Elegant new restaurants and a farmer's market populate the renovated [Historic Pearl Brewery](#). You won't find a lovelier spot for a cocktail than the rooftop [Moon's Daughters](#), or follow in Teddy Roosevelt's steps and enjoy a drink at the [Menger Bar](#) (1887), complete with [bullet holes](#) in the dark cherry wood paneling. Enjoy a [bento box with jasmine tea](#) while overlooking the century-old [Japanese Garden](#) (1917). After all the feasting, hike one of the many surrounding [trails](#), trek through the [Government Canyon](#) wilderness to discover [dinosaur footprints](#), climb to [Comanche Lookout](#), visit [Bracken Cave Bat Preserve](#), or see the [Land Heritage Institute living land museum](#), which manages an [historic farm](#) and herd of longhorns, and safeguards the prehistoric [Richard Beene](#) site (41BX831) on the Medina River.



Aquifers and bubbling springs permeate the [Edwards Limestone](#), such as at [Hot Wells Park](#) set among the ruins of an 1892 resort, reopened as a Bexar County park in 2019. Right next door, a private endeavor has developed [Camp Hot Wells](#), where you can immerse your feet in the sulfuric waters while drinking a locally brewed ale, or rent a private cedar tub for soaking. And just as indigenous Payaya peoples gathered around [San Pedro Springs](#), swimmers congregate there today around a stone-lined pool, gazebo, and cypress trees—one of the oldest public parks in the country. Sixty miles east at [Ottine Mineral Springs](#), facilities built for [polio patients](#) (1937) are undergoing upscale renovations and are now offering spa treatments and bathing in the warm artesian waters—an intriguing stop between Houston and San Antonio near Palmetto State Park.

As much as we love Houston, there's something special about the magical milieu and palpable heritage of San Antonio, where quintessential Tejas cultures have mixed and thrived for centuries, and the [Tex meets the Mex](#) (from *Bernie*, 2011). Where do you spend time in San Antonio—at the many noteworthy tourist sites, studying a particular museum artifact, or relaxing on a saltillo tile patio in a quaint neighborhood? Send us your suggestions for San Antonio, plus here are more from [Texas Time Travel](#). And where else do you like to go for a Texas summer road trip? Perhaps you can recommend some must-see or lesser-known destinations. Our great state boasts a proud legacy, so we invite you to share some of your favorite cultural journeys and historic landmarks with us at newsletter@txhas.org.





Cinco de Mayo ~ May 5, 1862



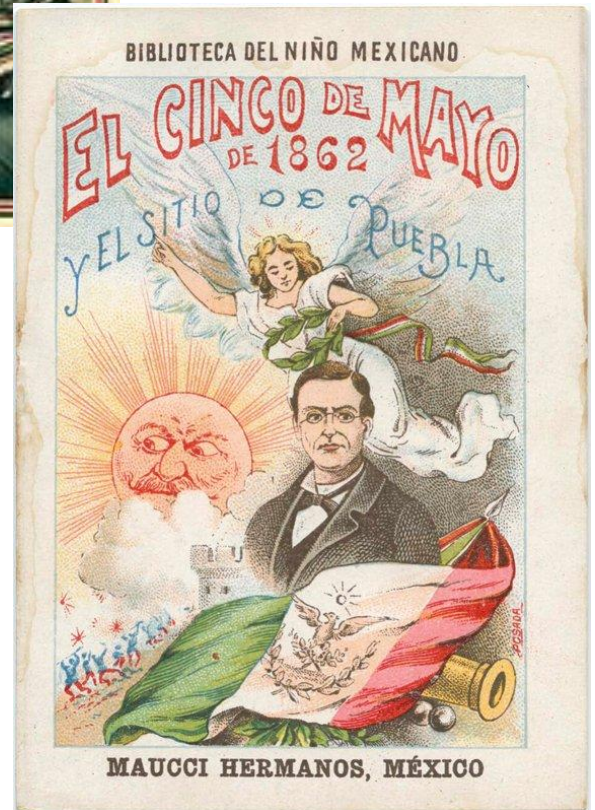
Cinco de Mayo, the Fifth of May, commemorates the Mexican Army's unexpected victory at the Battle of Puebla against the invading Second Empire French army lead by Napoleon III. Mexico's fiscal stability suffered from the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and the Reform Wars (1858-1861), resulting

in near bankruptcy. President Benito Juárez suspended payments to foreign creditors. Napoleon III capitalized on this weakness, as well as the United States' preoccupation with its Civil War, invading with imperialistic designs to challenge U. S. hegemony in the Americas.

On May 5, 1862, in the town of Puebla, General Ignacio Zaragoza led 2,000 Mexican troops against a well-trained French force of 6,000. The Mexicans' familiarity with the terrain, use of hilltop forts, and determined patriotism resulted in a remarkable victory, despite being outnumbered and less experienced.

Although this battle did not halt an eventual brief French sovereignty (1864–1867), the Cinco de Mayo holiday celebrates the valiant resilience, proud heritage, and vibrant culture of Mexico.

Sources: How were the French defeated at the Battle of Puebla; Cinco de Mayo: History and Major Facts; Why Did the French Invade Mexico in 1861 | History Hit. Images: Fondo de celebración de cinco de mayo, Freepics; Cinco de Mayo: History and Major Facts - World History Edu.



Borderlandia Magazine Spring Issue ~ Engage with the Rich Border Culture



Joan Coronado at his family's bacanora distillery.

Learn about the distilling of Sonora agave and production of bacanora, a local specialty spirit fermented from roasted agave hearts. Read about the port cities of Puerto Peñasco, San Carlos, and Kino Bay; trace Linda Ronstadt's family roots in the area; consider traveling to join the guided hikes and culinary tours. Based in Tumacacori, Arizona, Borderlandia is a binational organization committed to building public understanding of the borderlands. In addition to publishing the digital Borderlandia Magazine, they offer small-group heritage tours, public history interpretation, and educational media focused on the Sonoran Desert and borderlands, thoughtfully discussing and celebrating the area's unique and ancient cultures.





More on Jean Lafitte and the Maison Rouge Site



Last month we pulled from the archives an article in the August 1984 *HAS Journal No 79.pdf* about the property in Galveston associated with pirate Jean Lafitte. The team reported that they did not find Lafitte's residence, Maison Rouge. However, they did find charcoal in a level correlating to the historically recorded burning of the Lafitte settlement, and they recovered cultural material dating to the 1818 period within an architectural horizon that included a hard packed surface overlaid by shell. Therefore, the team concluded that in situ artifacts did conclusively suggest that a Lafitte era occupation occurred on or near the property. In 1996,

Dale Olson reviewed this 1984 work in his *Archaeological Investigation of the Maison Rouge Site*, discussing a tantalizing postscript and some important artifacts. The following is extracted from the final pages of Olson's report. (Also, HAS members likely know that in January and May of this year, 2026, Annaliese Dempsey served as PI on a collaboration between Texas A&M and LX Heritage to perform this latest onsite work. Follow and subscribe to project news and updates at La Maison Rouge — LX Heritage!)



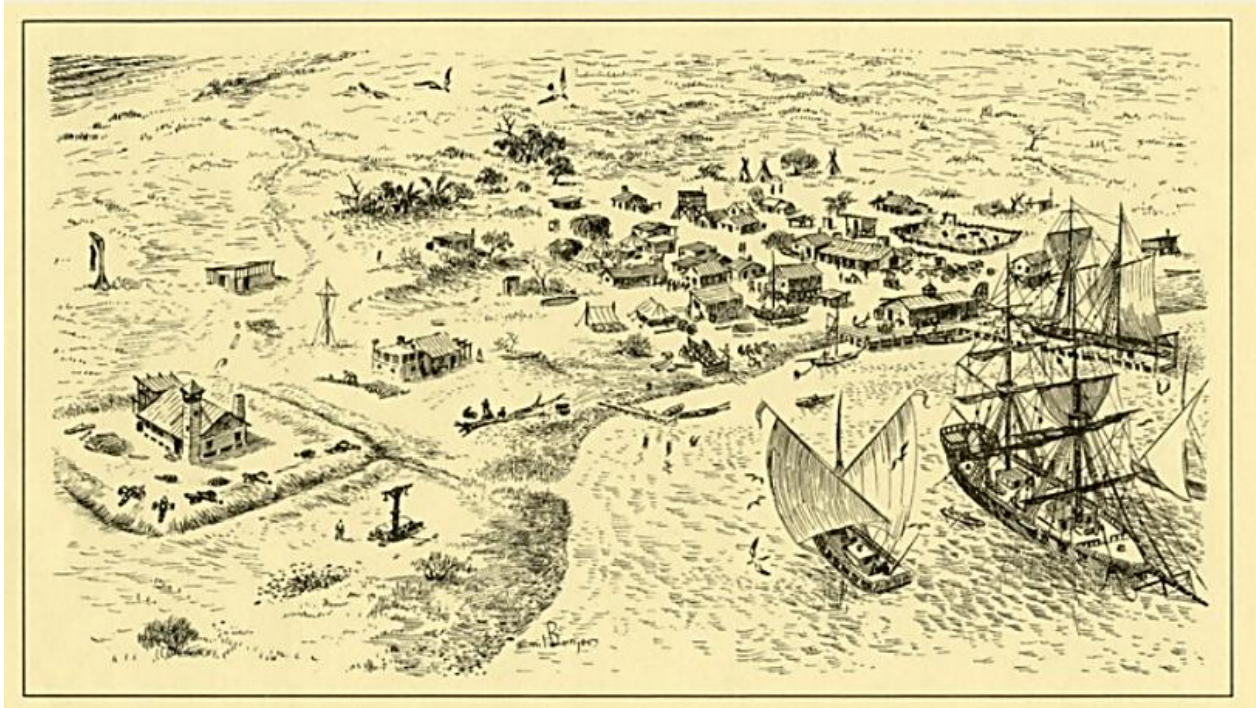
Left: Engraving of Jean Lafitte, c. 1873. The Laffite Society of Galveston. Right: Lafitte Historical Marker | Visit Galveston.

A final note was appended to the preliminary report. The note was handwritten by Sheldon Kindall, whose credentials include the positions of Regional Director of the Texas Archaeological Society and Field Director of the Houston Archaeological Society. The note states, "A lot more was learned about this site after this report went to press. We did find a structure which was of the right time period to be Maison Rouge. SMK."

In 1991 the artifacts excavated at Maison Rouge were housed at the University of Houston in the Archaeology department. Fragments of Spanish ceramics and part of a Spanish plate have been the prime evidence dating the site to the era of Jean Laffite. As if Jean personally dictated precisely which items would be excavated by the archaeologists, a fragment of wood, part of a larger piece preserved by the ever-present ground moisture, was taken from its resting place four feet below the surface. This was of the correct location and depth to have once been a part of Maison Rouge. A stone ax, possibly European in origin, was also found. Mr. Kindall was originally skeptical about the authenticity of the site as being that of the original Maison Rouge. Following the excavation, however, his opinion changed. He currently harbors "little doubt" that the site is that of Maison Rouge (Kindall, 1991). One hundred seventy years after Laffite sailed from Galveston, fragments of his existence rested in an academic office

at the University of Houston, some fifty miles from the site of Maison Rouge. In 1995, these artifacts were finally returned to Galveston Island ([Maison Rouge Site Artifacts Return to Galveston Island](#)). According to Sheldon Kindall, these items ". . . are not very interesting to a layman, but definitely so to an archaeologist. Several nails, pieces of metal, etc., could probably make a profound statement about the location and Laffite's occupancy if someone would only undertake the project" (Kindall, 1991). As of 1992, another student working under Dr. Randolph Widmer, University of Houston, had undertaken analysis of the 1984 artifacts.

Adapted from [Archaeological Investigation of the Maison Rouge](#) (1996).



Bunjes, Emil. *Lafitte's Fleet & Fort, Galveston Island 1818, Galveston, Texas*, [G_2274_1_FF001_002], c. 1935. A respected local artist's interpretation of Lafitte's early outpost on Galveston, at that time called Campeche. Rosenberg Library, <https://gthcdigital.rosenberg-library.org/nodes/view/5674>.

Sources and more information at [HAS Journal No 79.pdf](#); [Jean Laffite diary | Rosenberg Library](#) (authenticity disputed); <https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu>; [Maison Rouge Site Rosenberg Library](#); [Maison Rouge/Hendrick's Castle Ruins](#); [Fort Maison Rouge - FortWiki Historic U.S. and Canadian Forts](#); [Historical Marker: Near Campsites of Louis-Michel Aury and Francisco Xavier Mina](#); [Texas Forts](#); [The Galveston Legend of the Infamous Pirate Jean Lafitte](#).



Houston Archeological Society - Monthly Meeting Program Schedule

Please note that meetings will vary between in-person, hybrid, or virtual (via Zoom). The meeting format may change; prior to each meeting, be sure to doublecheck your emails and the HAS website for updates.

May 21- 6 p.m. Monthly meeting featuring Dr. Kelly Jenks, Professor at New Mexico State University, via Zoom only.

June – No meeting, no newsletter. See you at TAS Field School.

July 16 – 6 p.m. Monthly meeting with a TAS Field School recap. [Trini Mendenhall Community Center](#), 1414 Wirt Road, with a Zoom link available to members.

August 20 – 6 p.m. Monthly meeting featuring Dr. Heather Para, via Zoom only.

September 17 - 6 p.m. Monthly meeting featuring Dr. Gus Costa. [Trini Mendenhall Community Center](#), 1414 Wirt Road, with a Zoom link available to members.

Houston Archeological Society monthly meetings are ordinarily free and open to the public. Many previous HAS presentations are archived on our [YouTube Site](#), where they are available for public viewing. For more information about HAS, visit www.txhas.org, email us at president@txhas.org, or join our [Facebook Page](#).





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MORE Who Wore it Better ~ Met Gala Celebrities (2025) or the Middle Ages?



Courtesy of Matthew Ponesse, PhD, Professor of History at Ohio Dominican University; [Instagram: Medievalistmatt](https://www.instagram.com/medievalistmatt).