

# PASTIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PANHANDLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER

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Happy Birthday!

Celebrating 50 years as  
Texas' Only National Monument

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## From the Editor's Desk

Saturday August 29, we celebrated Alibates' 50 years as the only National Monument in Texas. As of July 15, it has been joined by Waco Mammoth Site. So now there are two. I don't plan to attend Waco's 50th anniversary, so I had to have a super good time at Alibates!

I don't know how many attended by the end of the day, but 35 hiked to the ruins. It's quite a stroll, and that evening I had charley horses in both legs at once. But if there hadn't been any material remains there at all, the view of the Canadian Breaks made it all worthwhile.



We've had a lot of rain (for us) this year, so as you can see from the photos, everything was unusually green and beautiful.

The remains of foundations are visible to the discerning eye; early visitors to the ruins thought the stones were old grave markers. Builders used the core-and-veneer method of construction. That is, they set two limestone blocks a foot or two apart and filled the space between with rubble.

Now if only we could find out what the rest of the walls and roofs looked like! It was once believed that they were built pueblo-style, and that's what the model in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum looks like. That, combined with the presence of pot sherds, turquoise, obsidian and some shell ornaments led some of the authors of the first published reports to conclude that the people here were from the Southwest.

"This mistaken notion accounts for Studer's paradoxical position of using Southwestern architectural and cultural terminology, yet insisting on a Plains or Eastern origin for the Panhandle culture." (Lintz 1986).

So the questions remain: who were these people, where did they come from, and where did they go?

Perhaps the next 50 years will tell us.



## Minutes of the last meeting — May 20, 2015

The meeting was called to order by President Donna Otto shortly after 7:00 p.m. at the Downtown Amarillo Library second floor Board Room.

There were 16 members in attendance.

The following upcoming meetings and events were announced •

- TAS Field School, June 13-20 Colorado County, TX

PROGRAM: Henry Crawford, curator of History at the Museum of Texas Tech University and living history reenactor, presented a program on the Buffalo Soldiers during the Indian Wars era following the Civil war. After a brief introduction of the beginnings of the Buffalo Soldiers, Crawford, dressed in the uniform of the period, showed and discussed various pieces of equipment - saddles and their accouterments, uniforms, weapons, etc.

MINUTES: Minutes from the previous meeting were published in the PAS Newsletter. Minutes were approved as printed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Pam Allison reported a balance of \$4,055. The report was approved. (However, before the meeting was over, she wrote checks for several expenses.)

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT: Rolla Shaller reported a balance of \$1,435.77 in the money market account and \$5,043.31 in the CD.. The report was approved. Rolla reported that of the 100 copies of the SWFAS, only 30 remained. Rolla also reported that the new Canyonlands Society will host next year's SWFAS meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: The Lamar Elementary science Day was successful.

The TAS Academy, which was discussed last month, will be on Lithics in May of 2016. It will be a 2 day affair with the first day at P-PHM and the second day probably at Alibates. TAS members will pay \$100.

NEW BUSINESS: A Smithsonian traveling exhibit of interest to PAS members, "George Catlin's *American Buffalo*" will open May 30th at P-PHM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: There being no further business or announcements, the meeting was adjourned by Donna Otto at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ruthe Carter, Secretary

## NEXT MEETING —SEPTEMBER 16

Amarillo Public Library Downtown—7:00 p.m.

We invite you to join us at Napopli's Italian Restaurant 700 South Taylor for dinner at 5:30.

### **The 1969 TAS Field School at Blue Creek: An Investigation of Antelope Creek Phase Sites in Moore County, Texas**

Arlene Wimer



#### **1969 TAS Excavations at 41MO36**

In 1969 the TAS held their annual field school at four adjacent Antelope Creek phase sites overlooking Blue Creek, a south flowing tributary of the Canadian River in Moore County, Texas. This was the 8<sup>th</sup> TAS field school ever held and it was well attended with over 200 participants. These investigations, under the direction of Dr. Jack T. Hughes, examined a prehistoric cemetery and three residential sites (41MO35, 41MO36, 41MO37). The cemetery contained the remains of four individuals and two additional burials that had been disturbed by pothunters. The three residential sites contained a variety of Antelope Creek residential house forms including free-standing large, square to rectangular houses and small circular to oval pithouses and long, linear, multi-roomed structures. This presentation consists of a recently digitized 16 mm film shot by Martha Hughes during the 1969 TAS field school.

Arlene Wimer is the Chief of Resource Management at the Lake Meredith National Recreational Area. She has worked for 15 years with the NPS and 5 years as an independent biological monitor in the oil and gas industry. She received a BS in biology and a MS in environmental science from Texas A&M at Corpus Christi. She supervises all natural and cultural resource management activities at LAMR and ALFL and serves as the park's environmental compliance officer. She works closely with Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, the repository for the parks collections, coordinates with researchers interested in or who are working within the parks, and is active in developing new activities that renew an interest in visiting the outdoors.

## PAS Calendar 2015



Sept. 12	Exhibit Opening @ PPHM – <i>Hunting the Panhandle-Plains</i>
Sept. 16	PAS meeting @ 7:00 pm @ Amarillo downtown library, second floor.
Sept. 23-25	2015 Fur Trade Symposium, Bent's Fort, Colorado. <a href="http://www.2015fts.org/">http://www.2015fts.org/</a>
<b>October is Texas Archeology Awareness Month</b>	
Oct. 3 and 4	FlintFest @ Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument Visitors Center
Oct. 9 and 10	19th Biennial Jornada Mogollon Conference @ El Paso Museum of Archaeology
Oct. 13-17	The 73rd Annual Plains Anthropological Society Conference, 2015, Iowa City, Iowa. <a href="http://www.plainsanthroconf.com/">http://www.plainsanthroconf.com/</a>
Oct. 21	PAS meeting @7:00 pm @ Amarillo downtown library
Oct. 23-25	TAS Annual Meeting - Houston, Texas
Nov. 18	PAS meeting @7:00 pm @ Amarillo downtown library
Dec. 12	Studer Banquet and Lecture @ Youngblood's Café [620 SW 16th Ave., Amarillo].

### PAS Publications

The Publications Committee will have on hand at the September meeting copies of the 50th Transactions of the Southwestern Federation of Archeological Societies. A limited number of this publication is available. The price of the publication is \$15.00 for PAS members and \$18.00 for non-members. \$4.00 additional cost for shipping. See Rolla Shaller at the meeting.

### Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum Canyon, Texas

#### Hunting the Panhandle-Plains

Using artifacts, specimens, fossils, and works of art, this exhibition will present how animal life on the Panhandle-Plains has evolved and how this affected hunting, settlement, and migration patterns both in prehistoric and historic times.

A new staff member has been added to the Archeological Department at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum. Katie Moorehead has filled the position Curatorial Assistant previously held by Lisa Jackson. Katie comes to the PPHM from Buffalo Gap Historical Village, Buffalo Gap, Texas where she served as Assistant Site Manager and Programs Coordinator. We welcome Katie to the Texas Panhandle.

### Recent Publications

Chris Lintz, Rolla Shaller and Paul Katz recently published in the Bulletin of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society 62:51-65. The Craig Cache Toolkit (41PT505): An Alibates Scraper Cache from Potter County.



This Alibates scraper cache was discovered by Jack T. Hughes, Bill Harrison, and Candace Collier in 1984 on private property in western Potter County while on a pedestrian survey for a sewer interceptor line for the City of Amarillo. Unreported in the original survey report as the site was outside the survey area, the collection remained in limbo at the P-PHM until Shaller ran across a reference to it in the collection files. With field records and field notes, the authors were able to relocate the site, locate the current property owner, visit and record the site with a state trinomial, and write and publish a report on the artifacts collected from this unusual isolated discovery. Alibates scraper caches are rare among the reported cache discoveries on the Southern Plains.

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The following comes to us from one of our sister research societies in this area:

Dear Friends and Members of the [West Texas Historical] Association:

Tis late summer and fixin' to be early fall and the schedule is full of great events, exhibits and conferences. The listings include-- a Texas Tech Press book award that honors one of much beloved members, Lou Rodenberger, an upcoming trails meeting in New Mexico, a historic home tour in Mason, a full slate of exhibits at the Scurry County Museum, an update from our friend Frederica Wyatt of the Edwards Plateau Historical Association, a presentation in Albany by our friend Ty Cashion, two new books by Norm Brown and Shelly Armitage, information on Texas New Deal history, and Debbie Liles presentation at the July conference at the Dulaney Western Heritage Symposium in Fort Worth.

One of our members seeks information regarding the "cowhead" trail that ostensibly was a tendril of the larger Chisholm Trail system. If you have any information please forward it and we will pass it along.

Best wishes,

West Texas Historical Association  
P.O. 41041  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas 79409  
806-742-9076

Two Reviews of:

*Lives in Ruins: Archaeologists and the Seductive Lure of Human Rubble*

by Marilyn Johnson

The first is from the New York Times, January 9, 2015

SUNDAY BOOK REVIEW

'Lives in Ruins,' by Marilyn Johnson

By JOHN GLASSIEJAN. 9, 2015

PhotoThe Atapuerca site near the city of Burgos. CreditCesar Manso/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The past has a way of suddenly speaking to us. When images appear, for example, of human hands that archaeologists say were stenciled 40,000 years ago, a haunted feeling of connection and perspective quickly emerges. But many archaeologists



themselves seem to experience this sense of connection more or less continuously. As Marilyn Johnson suggests in "Lives in Ruins," her lively survey of archaeology and the people who practice it, it fuels their dedication to the job, which they desperately need because the actual work and the challenges involved are pretty continuous as well.

Johnson has written two previous books about practitioners of un-sung trades: "This Book Is Overdue!" about librarians, and "The Dead Beat," about obituary writers. Her new subject occupies a similar niche, one that is only ostensibly narrow. Human history is a broad topic, after all, and there are archaeologists all around the world studying the remnants of virtually every era. But she chases down a colorful sampling and produces a series of enlightening glimpses into the profession.

The author doesn't just observe academics at conferences giving lectures on ancient recipes for alcoholic beverages, although she does do that, and it's very interesting. (Scrapings from the bottoms of pots in Midas's tomb at Gordian in Turkey suggest you mix grape wine, barley beer and honey.) She follows archaeologists to Deadwood, S.D., and Machu Picchu. She takes a college course called the Archaeology of Human Origins and then attends a department goat roast, where she learns how to make a blade from a hunk of obsidian and how to butcher a lamb (a goat couldn't be procured). She also spends weeks in the field — at digs on the island of St. Eustatius in the Caribbean, looking for vestiges of a colonial-era sugar mill, then on the island Yeronisos off the coast of Cyprus, looking for signs

that Cleopatra had directed its development.

In the 21st century, as you might guess, archaeology is no longer all pith helmets and plumb bobs. Fortunately, it's no longer all men either. Johnson describes the schedule of Joan Connelly, the New York University professor who has run the Yeronisos field school digs for 23 years: "During a week in which she and her crew excavated on six of the seven days, she also delivered four separate lectures to outside groups; . . . threw her annual party to thank a hundred or so locals; and hosted numerous guests, including Richard Wiese and his camera crew from 'Born to Explore,' four visiting high school students, including her nephew, and me."

That's on the upscale end. According to Johnson, Kathy Abbass, who founded and single-handedly runs the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project, lives on less than a \$1,000 a month, an income that includes her Social Security check. Preservation often requires one underpaid person to obsess for years about some broken piece of history that in many cases — because the licensing process, ecological studies and other pre-dig preparations can take so long to complete, or in Abbass's case, because her Revolution-era ships are underwater — she can't even see.



Johnson writes entertainingly, employing many quirky tidbits gleaned from the likably eccentric intellectuals she meets. Start up a conversation with an archaeologist, she says, and “soon you are talking about bone grease . . . or pointy-headed babies . . . or pig dragons.” Occasionally her efforts seem intended not just to entertain but to sell us on her subject. She can come off as a champion rather than mere chronicler of the archaeologist’s cause. And yet, with respect both to the author’s enthusiasm and the archaeologists’ aims, it’s hard not to feel sympathetic.

“You may think there’s nothing there,” Connelly says at one point about what may lie in the ground, “but there’s never nothing there.” “Lives in Ruins” leaves you with a tantalizing notion: The past is everywhere around us, and the forgotten is always underfoot.

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The second is from Washington Post, by Wendy Smith, December 12, 2014.

When Marilyn Johnson reports on a profession, she does it with proselytizing enthusiasm. “This Book Is Overdue!” proclaims that librarians stand at the vanguard of 21st-century literacy; “The Dead Beat” hails a golden age of obituary writing. She’s just as gung-ho in her new book, declaring on Page 1, “There is no better time than now to follow archaeologists.” Johnson is not a thoughtless cheerleader. “Lives in Ruins” soberingly depicts historic sites destroyed, valuable artifacts looted, and archaeologists perennially underpaid and frequently unemployed. Yet it also lovingly conveys archaeology’s romance.

Johnson, a veteran magazine writer and editor, has a knack for enlivening a potentially dry subject with vivid sketches, punchy quotes and lively scene-setting. “Her students call her the god,” she writes of charismatic archaeologist Corinne Hofman. “One told me, ‘Picture her with everyone gathered around, awaiting her instructions. The question is, who gets to wave the fan?’ ”

Fieldwork is not for weaklings, we see, as the author joins a dig on a Greek island accessed via a dinghy ride over turbulent waters and a sweaty climb up cliffs nearly 70 feet high. Despite her dutiful caveat that swashbuckling movie archaeologist Indiana Jones is a fantasy figure, Johnson acknowledges his mythic allure in an occupation still dominated by men: “The guys all own fedoras and whips,” a female grad student confides.

This is good fun, but it would be ephemeral fun if Johnson didn’t also possess the journalist’s ability to pinpoint essential information for general readers. We learn alongside her as she enrolls in field school to acquire basic archaeological skills such as digging test pits, identifying pottery shards — and flipping a tarantula off her instructor’s shirt. This particular field school was on a tropical island, and the tarantula didn’t worry Richard Gilmore nearly as much as the relentless pace of development that is a particular threat to sites in the tourist-centric Caribbean. A specialist in historical archaeology (the study of the past few centuries), Gilmore saw a slave burial ground backhoed into oblivion by an owner who didn’t want the archaeological recovery process to slow construction of his vacation home.

Most nations have laws (enforced with variable diligence) to protect historically significant material, which leads Johnson to another specialty. Contract archaeologists are hired by owners and developers to survey sites before construction begins, and their employers are rarely happy to be told about the existence of artifacts that will delay or halt building. In Fishkill, N.Y., contract archaeologist Bill Sandy discovered “the largest cemetery of Revolutionary War soldiers in the country,” which seven years later still sits unexcavated, because the owners want \$6 million for the land and there are no federal funds for purchasing it. Sandy gives tours and talks about the site, while a private organization tries to raise money to buy it.

Publicizing historic finds is crucial in modern archaeology, especially in the United States, where government funding for cultural preservation has been declining for decades. Archaeologists have had to become entrepreneurs; consider Kathy Abbas, who cleaned houses to support herself while creating the independent Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project. This “scholar with a marketing plan” has tried to drum up public interest in 13 ships sunk by the British in Newport harbor in 1788 by spotlighting the sexiest one: the vessel that carried Capt. James Cook around the world before he was killed and eaten in Hawaii.

The fear that publicizing important sites in war zones would lead to looting stymied cooperation between archaeologists and the military for years. The 2003 plundering of the National Museum of Iraq was a wake-up call, Johnson writes: “With the blessing of high command, archaeologists [began] to arm U.S. soldiers with enough cultural information to conduct missions, and engage in combat without destroying the world’s archaeological treasures.” The no-strike list compiled during the Libyan conflict of 2011 was a paradigm-setting success; all 242 sites survived seven months of bombing. Today, Johnson notes, the Defense Department “spends more on cultural heritage protection than almost any other entity in the United States.”



The achievements and ambiguities of cultural heritage protection suffuse the closing chapter, as Johnson pays a visit to Machu Picchu, the ancient Inca city carved into a Peruvian mountaintop. The beautifully maintained site and its spectacular views are thrilling; its swarms of tourists, less so. “The millions of boots that trample through Machu Picchu,” she reflects, “support archaeology and help make the case for investing in preservation.” All preservationists are grateful for that support, knowing that it comes at a cost.

Heading home from Peru, Johnson thinks about the fierce dedication of the archaeologists she has met. One in particular comes to mind, a Vietnam veteran who became an archaeologist because “it was the opposite of killing.” The prehistoric Native American village in South Dakota where Adrien Hannus prospects for evidence of the residents’ diet will never have the visibility — or the crowds — of UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Machu Picchu. But in such places of “invisible archaeology,” the magic connection to the past that inspires Hannus and his peers is all the more evident: “It was about kneeling down in the elements, paying very close attention, and trying to locate a spark of the human life that had once touched that spot there.” Johnson has a good time portraying archaeologists as the rugged sons and daughters of Indiana Jones, but “Lives in Ruins” is most compelling when she captures them in quiet moments like this.

