Thursday, February 16th, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.
“Chasing Beer Bottles and Privy Pits:
Urban Archeology at the Frost Town Site in Houston, Texas”
Doug Boyd, RPA, Prewitt and Associates, Inc.

Douglas K. Boyd, archeologist with Prewitt and Associates, will present a program entitled Chasing Beer Bottles and Privy Pits: Urban Archeology at the Frost Town Site in Houston, Texas at the Thursday, February 16 meeting of the Houston Archeological Society. The meeting will be held in MD Anderson Hall at the University of St. Thomas starting at 7 p.m. and is free of charge and open to the public. This program will highlight the enormous screening and data recovery project that HAS members have been working on for almost a year.

In the 1830s, German immigrants began settling in a prominent bend of Buffalo Bayou located just downstream from Allen’s landing. It evolved into a thriving neighborhood called Frost Town, and it survived as a viable community for more than 120 years. Like many urban neighborhoods across America, Frost Town underwent significant socioeconomic and ethnic changes as the surrounding area became increasingly industrialized. The community saw influxes of African American freedmen after emancipation, followed by influxes of Mexican families seeking jobs following the 1910 Mexican Revolution. By the 1930s, it had become a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood and was known as the Barrio del Alarcan. It was impacted by the construction of the MKT Railroad Terminal in the 1920s and then again by the construction of the Elysian Viaduct roadway in the 1950s. A few stragglers held on, but all of the houses of the old barrio had disappeared by 1999.

Louis Aulbach told a large part of the Frost Town story in his 2012 book called Buffalo Bayou: An Echo of Houston’s Wilderness Beginnings. But that is only a snapshot of this forgotten place, and the true complexity of its history has yet to be revealed. More evidence of the old Frost Town community is now being brought to light as historians dive deeper into the archival records and archeologists are investigating the remains of the former town site. This work is being undertaken in conjunction with a Texas Department of Transportation road improvement project that will remove and replace the aging Elysian Viaduct bridge. On behalf of the TxDOT, Prewitt and Associates, Inc. archeologists conducted the first phase of intensive data recovery investigations at the historic site in 2016, using backhoes and track hoes to strip away disturbed sediments and expose intact features. A second phase of work will follow in 2017.

This talk is a progress report on the historic archeological investigations at the Frost Town site. We will examine the pre-demolition archeological work that was done, focusing on some of the more exciting findings. Many thousands of artifacts have been recovered, and more than 830 cultural features have been mapped and investigated. The latter range from small postholes to extensive components of the community’s late nineteenth-century underground sewer system. The most
revealing features are those that can be linked with individual households from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. We will look at some of these features, including brick-lined and wooden barrel cisterns, oyster shell and brick sidewalks, brick and concrete house foundation piers, artifact concentrations under porches and in yard areas, pet burials, and ornamental alignments of upside-down buried bottles. We will also look at some of the amazing historic artifacts that have been recovered, including many that were found through the volunteer efforts of numerous Houston Archeological Society members.

Boyd received a BA degree in General Studies-Archeology from West Texas State University in 1982 and an MA degree in Anthropology from Texas A&M University in 1986. He joined Prewitt and Associates, Inc., in 1987 and is a vice president of the firm. Boyd is active in the Texas Archeological Society, and currently serves as the TAS representative on the Texas Historical Commission’s Antiquities Advisory Board and is a co-director for the Youth Group at the annual TAS field school.

In the past 35 years, he has participated in or directed many archeological projects in Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico, including investigations at a wide range of historic sites, such as cemeteries, Anglo ranching sites, Spanish Colonial sites, African-American farmsteads, Hispanic townsites, brick kilns, and antebellum plantations. Boyd has published numerous reports and articles on prehistoric and historic archeological investigations. Most recently, he was the primary contributor to an elaborate historical archeology exhibit on the Texas Beyond History web site called: “Life After Slavery: Investigations of an African American Farmstead.”

For a campus map of St. Thomas University, go to www.stthom.edu and look for the Interactive Map, Building 20, Anderson Hall. Street parking is available as well as paid parking in Moran Center Garage at the corner of West Alabama and Graustark. For more information about this program or about the HAS, please contact Linda Gorski, at lindagorski@cs.com.

DON’T FORGET MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IS DUE

It’s that time of the year again!! If you have not done so already, it is time to renew your HAS Membership for 2017. For just $25 for an Individual, $15 for a Student, or $30 for a Family you can continue to be part of the most active Archeological Society in Texas. You can find a membership form on our website at http://www.txhas.org/PDF/HAS%20Membership%20Form.pdf
President’s Message

One of the most important missions of the Houston Archeological Society is Public Outreach – promoting a wider understanding and appreciation of archeology and related fields of science to the public. To attain this goal, HAS members give frequent presentations to students in local schools, conduct public archeology days at various sites including the annual International Archeology Day at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, give presentations to many adult groups in the Houston Area, publish an excellent newsletter and maintain a fantastic website. I think I speak for all HAS members who participate in these public outreach efforts when I say that it is truly gratifying when we get positive feedback on these projects.

For instance, HAS Vice President Louis Aulbach, Treasurer Bob Sewell and I recently presented a program to the second grade classes at The Awtv International School. We started off with a 30 minute presentation and then had a 30 minute hands on show and tell for the kids using real artifacts from both prehistoric and historic sites. These students had just finished studying a unit on archeology and the teachers obviously did an amazing job getting their students excited about archeology! The kids had some brilliant questions during our presentation and were impressively knowledgeable about the hands on artifacts we brought for show and tell. Right after the program I got an email from the mother of one of the students who said her daughter was ready to join the HAS and become an archeologist and to PLEASE tell her when they could join us digging up Texas history! We also just received in the mail 60 thank you letters from students who took part in our program. They are priceless!!! We’ll be scanning them and posting them on our website for all to enjoy but here’s a sample!

Thanks, Awtv second graders! You made our day!

If you have questions about any Houston Archeological Society’s activities, especially about our opportunities in public outreach and how you can share your special knowledge and talents, email me back at lindagorski@cs.com

- Linda Gorski, President Houston Archeological Society
Minutes
Houston Archeological Society Monthly Meeting
January 19th, 2017

Happy New Year and Welcome New Members and Guests – Linda Gorski, President

Treasurer’s Report: Bob Sewell reported amounts currently in the HAS checking and savings accounts. For more information on this, please contact Bob.

- Bob also discussed the proposed budget for 2017. Some items on the budget specifically mentioned were the new storage facility cost, the amount of General Liability Insurance HAS must maintain, the increase in publishing costs (which will be paid in part by the remainder of Dub Crook’s generous 2016 donation). Increases in both publishing and postage are due to an increase in membership! There will be a slight deficit in the 2017 budget which will be covered from the HAS savings account. The motion to approve the 2017 budget was proposed by Louis Aulbach and seconded by Julia Speed. Membership then unanimously approved the 2017 budget.

Membership: Bob Sewell reports 229 members at the end of 2016 and 103 members so far in 2017, a few joining tonight. Membership drive for 2017 has begun. All new and renewing members get a bumper sticker and a copy of the newest HAS Report and Journal.

New Business

- Audit Committee – John Lumb, Louis Frey and Charlie Aulbach will meet on February 22 to conduct the audit. Thanks to this great team. They did a great job last year!
- Lab report – We plan to return to the popular workshop format for labs. HAS members and local archeologists will share their expertise on particular subjects. Dr. Gus has announced that labs will be held on the 4th Monday of the month, except this January, when it will meet next Monday, the 23rd. Attendees on the 23rd will conduct inventory and analysis of the Barnhill site, which eventually will become a special report. Future lab dates are 2/27, 3/27, 4/24, and 5/29.
- Journals – Dub Crook says membership can expect a special report this spring on the Kellum-Noble House, and 2 journal issues, one on multiple topics and one on Etruscan/Roman archeology to be out near the end of 2017. We need authors. Dub will help anyone interested in writing articles!
- The Battle of San Jacinto Symposium: Barbara Eaves reports this event will be held April 8 at the battleground. Speakers are real scholars who don’t just read papers! The day begins at the Monument Inn at the Lynchburg Ferry, and optional tours will take place after lunch. Speakers include J. P. Bryan, Gregg J. Dimmick, Stephen L. Hardin, and Laura McLemore. Jeff Dunn and Gregg Dimmick will conduct tours.

Projects:

- Katy ISD Archeological Project – Linda Kubena - this project is taking place February 9 – 14. The GT Program students are studying archeology for a couple of months as an enrichment activity at their Outdoor Learning Center. Students and parents will have dig activities and learn about pre-historic Native Americans. They need volunteers for 1 to 2 hours on Saturday. See Linda if you are interested.
- Frost Town – Work at the site this Friday and Saturday has been cancelled due to rain. We are screening Piles C, D, E, and F. Porta-potty and fencing will be removed by January 31. The Elysian Viaduct comes down on February 11, so we hope to complete screening on piles C, D, and some of E and F by the end of January. Dr. Jason will give a report on the exciting future of the project once the Elysian Viaduct is demolished and Phase II of the project begins, and says the trench on the other side of the road from where we’re working is going to be re-dug and screened to see what’s there
- Kleb Woods Public Archeology project – Ashley Jones will be our PI. She is currently getting permits for the project, which will probably start with GPR/magnetometer surveys of the site in late January/early February, 2017.

Program for February – Doug Boyd, with Prewitt and Associates in Austin will give a program/update on the spectacular Frost Town project we’ve been working on since July, 2016. He will review the history of the project area and artifacts that have been recovered.

Program for January – Wilson W. “Dub” Crook presented tonight on the Difficulties in Sourcing Turquoise Using X-ray Fluorescence. Recently, three artifacts of turquoise, including two beads and a small pendant, have been recovered from the Branch site (41COL9) in Collin County. In an effort to source the turquoise, Dub Crook has used a more complex multi-element analysis in an attempt to develop a non-destructive trace sourcing methodology. In his talk, Dub discussed the difficulties in sourcing a complex mineral such as turquoise using XRF, and its potential for sourcing similar artifacts found in Caddo sites across East Texas. A question and answer session followed the talk.

-Beth Kennedy, Secretary, Houston Archeological Society
Whatzit?: Fruit, Flowers and Vegetables - By Louis Aulbach

Last week, HAS Board Member Larry Golden acquired an item from an auction. As one who is an expert on bottles, ceramics, stoneware and fine glassware, Larry nevertheless asked: What is it?

Clearly, as one can see, it is a finely made, small glass tumbler, a flat-bottomed beverage container, that is etched on the front and back with some identifying marks. On the front, the wording reads: Texas Fruit, Flower & Vegetable Festival. Houston, Tex. On the back: Dienstag’s China Palace Houston, Tex.

Let's begin to unravel the story of this glass by noting that the inscription on the back is the name of the company that had made the glass for distribution as a promotional item. Dienstag’s China Palace was a retail store in Houston, Texas in the late nineteenth century that sold a variety of fine ceramic and glass housewares.

Max Dienstag immigrated to the United States from Prussia in 1871, and by 1877, Dienstag was in Houston where he went to work for his father in law Zachariah Emmich. Emmich had a store on Main Street (at Preston) that sold china, glass and "queensware." Max Dienstag advanced to become the manager of Emmich's store about 1886, and he continued in that position until 1890 when he opened his own store at 67 Main Street. Shortly thereafter, Dienstag moved his store to 407 Main Street where it was the place in Houston to buy china, glassware, crockery, lamps and other similar items. Advertisements in 1896 from Dienstag's China Palace promoted the quantity and quality of his stock of dinner sets, chamber sets and silver plated butter dishes, cream pitchers and tea sets.

The story of the other side of the glass begins in 1897. The popularity of fruit and flower festivals in the Midwest and Colorado during 1896 caught the attention of members of the Houston Business League who felt that Houston could hold a similar event to highlight the productive winter fruit and vegetable farmers along the Texas coast. The Texas Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Association was organized in early 1897, and on October 6, 1897, a meeting was held at the Hutchins House to organize a week long Texas Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Festival for December of that year.

The first F, F and V Festival, as it was known for short, was held in downtown Houston from December 6 to 11, 1897. The festivities include parades in downtown, exhibits at the Houston Auditorium (a meeting facility located at Main Street and McGowan Street), and a ball at the Market House on Market Square. The kick off parade of the event, called the "March of Plenty," was held on opening day. It included wagons and floats that showcased plants, flowers, vegetables and
fruits produced in and around the Houston area. Wagons full of turnips, beets, corn, potatoes, eggplant and more were the highlight of the day.

In all, the Texas Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Festival was a huge success in its initial year. The festival returned again in 1898 with similar results. In the third annual F, F and V Festival of December, 1899, an industrial theme was added to the events to show the strength of Houston as a manufacturing and mercantile center, and a parade organized by the "princes of No-Tsu-Oh" proved to be a favorite of the festival.

By the time that planning began for the fourth annual F, F and V Festival in August, 1900, the promoters of the No-Tsu-Oh events overwhelmed the original scope of the festival. The No-Tsu-Oh parade and the No-Tsu-Oh ball emerged in splendor and pageantry as the new focus of the fall festival. In 1901, the No-Tsu-Oh Carnival replaced the Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Festival as Houston's premier fall extravaganza.

The No-Tsu-Oh festival, that continued with its extravagant parades and balls until its final year in 1915, is well remembered in Houston's histories. Although the Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Festival initiated this annual celebration of the productivity and vibrancy of the Houston economy, it was quickly surpassed by the attraction of the No-Tsu-Oh celebrations, and it was soon forgotten.

The small tumbler highlighted in this article was a promotional item for the Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Festival. We do not know in which year it was produced and sold. It could have been sold to advertise the festival in any year from 1897 to 1901. Not many of these inexpensive juice glasses exist, and this one is a rare one in mint condition.

*** IMPORTANT NOTICE ***

The University of St. Thomas will be closed 16 – 17 March, 2017. Therefore the March HAS Membership Meeting has been rescheduled to

7:00pm on Thursday 9th March, 2017.

The topic of the meeting is “Reminiscences of Moses Austin Bryan” and will be presented by Beth Aucoin.
Notes on Munitions: The Percussion Revolver  
By Tom Nuckols

The percussion revolver, often called the cap and ball revolver, was a gun invented by Samuel Colt (1814-1862) of Hartford Connecticut in the early 1830s. He patented his invention in England in 1835 and in the United States in 1836.

The percussion revolver used black gun powder as propellant and percussion caps as an ignition source. The revolver fired either round lead balls or conical lead bullets and had an integral loading lever and rammer to seat bullets in each of its cylinder chambers (usually six).

When Colt’s patent expired in 1857, arms manufacturers in the United States and Europe began manufacturing percussion revolvers in numerous styles and calibers, with .36 and .44 being the most predominate.

Shortly after the American Civil War, percussion revolvers became obsolete.

For a description on how percussion revolvers worked, see Nuckols (2014: 68-70).

Peter Tumlinson Bell (1869-1956) was born in Atascosa, Texas. His family moved to Carrizo Springs, Dimmit County, Texas in 1871. Bell tells this story concerning a percussion revolver (Bell 1980: 95):

“I remember an old cap and ball pistol that father had one time that was also brass mounted but held only six shots. The old gun finally got plum wore out from so much use. The gun got to where after you fired three or four chambers the other two or three would go off by themselves and father got scared that he would kill himself accidently with it so he practically gave the old gun away. The bullet molds also went with the deal as the gun wasn’t any good if you couldn’t mold any bullets for it”.

REFERENCES

Bell, Peter Tumlinson  
1980 © Memories of Peter Tumlinson Bell. S.J.T. Printing Co., Saint Jo, TX

Nuckols, Thomas L., Elizabeth K. Aucoin, Richard L. Gregg and Robert T. Shelby  
Teaching Texas History: One Historical Marker at a Time
By Sharon Menegaz

For those of you who have not suffered through my bio, I am a science teacher, to be specific; I have taught upper division high school biology classes such as Biology Honors, Anatomy and Dual Credit Biology for more than 20 years. But, since I teach at a private school, I’m lucky enough to also teach Texas History, or as my boss put it 10 years ago, “You have to either leave the history teachers alone, or teach Texas History yourself” (at the time, our history teachers were from Rhode Island and Oklahoma - get a rope!). So, armed with a passion for Texas History, a typical Texas History Textbook, my own bookshelves full of Texas History books, and my membership in TAS….I began.

I found the textbook...not much fun, and simply not very conducive to making Texas History become personal for my students. How could you limit the story of La Salle to one column of one page, when people I knew had spent the last 20 years looking at artifacts from his expedition? How could you just look at a photo of the Alamo and see in your mind the layout of the mission in 1836? Could you imagine coming into Texas in the 1800’s if you hadn’t seen the Camino Real, or stood at the site of Indianola?

As a result, even though I could (and do) take my students on Texas History field trips, we began the “Picture yourself in Texas History” project. While my school families travel through Texas, or even as they go about our own little corners of Harris, Montgomery and Waller counties, my students and their parents find 10-15 historical markers, take a photo with the marker, then, in their own words describe the historical significance of the site or event. While it’s great to see a photo of my students in front of the Seawall in Galveston, describing the Great Storm, or in front of Presidio La Bahia, reliving the Massacre at Goliad, they are often more excited when they find the marker 5 miles from the school showing one of Sam Houston’s campsites on the way to San Jacinto, or a nearby cemetery with names of the German colonists who came to Tomball in the 1850’s. They really love finding a marker that “Mrs. Menegaz has never seen”, and with over 16,000 state historical markers in Texas, I have teaching material for years to come. Of course, with the motto, “Do as I do” my long-suffering husband has to drive me around and find equal numbers of new markers every year.

That principal, who encouraged me 10 years ago? He was the first to send me a photo of himself in front of the marker for Mission Santa Cruz at Camp Wood, where the TAS field school will be this summer. And parents of students I had years ago send me photos of new markers they and their teenage children just had to stop and look at. Just maybe, some of these students will become HAS members, or at least, learn to love Texas History as much as we do.
HAS Laboratory

As most HAS members know, when we dig at historic archeological sites we recover bottles. Lots of bottles. Lots of pieces of bottles. The big question is: “How can we date those bottles and put them in context with other recovered artifacts?”.

About two years ago, HAS member Larry Golden presented an informative workshop at the HAS lab at Rice University entitled Determining the Age of Bottles. Due to popular demand especially from new members, we’ve asked Larry to repeat this workshop on Monday, February 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rice Lab. Using a large number of bottles from his own collection, Larry will discuss how molds and mold lines, pontil marks, whittle marks, lips and tops can help date a bottle. He will also discuss colors of bottle glass and why bottles turn purple in the sunlight (answer: the addition of manganese from 1880 – 1920s to the glass) as well as the various types of mineral and soda bottles. Larry will also provide each attendee a 43-page workbook which includes most of the information he will discuss in his presentation.

For a report on his previous bottle workshop, see the HAS website at http://txhas.org/PDF/lab%20activities/golden%20bottles/golden%20bottles.pdf

The Rice lab is located in Room 103 (lower level) Sewall Hall, Rice University. The nearest parking lot is the Founders Court/Visitor Parking directly across from Sewall Hall. This lot requires a credit or debit card for access and the cost is $3.50 per hour. There are other parking lots on the Rice University campus including one near the stadium that is less costly and offers a shuttle bus service to Sewall Hall. See www.rice.edu/maps for a map of campus parking areas. If you plan to attend this lab or would like to put your name on the notification list for future labs, please contact HAS Lab Director, Dr. Gus Costa at augustcosta@rice.edu.

This semester, HAS Lab at Rice will be on the last Monday of each month. That’s Feb27, March27, April 24, and May 29 (7-9 PM).

Public Outreach for Katy ISD

HAS members have an opportunity to participate in a large public outreach program this month in Katy. HAS member Linda Kubena is organizing a Katy Archeology Project for students in Katy ISD. This program is held once every five years and runs from Thursday February 9 – Tuesday, February 14. Linda is looking for folks to speak on subjects related to archeology, geology, paleontology, anthropology, ecology, and other related topics. These are short talks of 30 minutes each to small groups of students on Thursday, Monday and Tuesday. She is also organizing a “festival format” on Friday and Saturday when students will be taking part in digging and screening, painting pebbles, identifying artifacts, assembling broken pottery, learning about plants used by Native Americans, and other activities.

If you can help Linda in any way please email her at linda.kubena@att.net. Several HAS members will be out at the festival on Saturday supervising digging and screening activities and some of the hands on displays. We’d love to have you join us! Email Linda for more information.
TAS 2017 ARCHEOLOGY ACADEMIES 2017 TAS

Homepage: http://txarch.org/Activities/academy/aa2017/index.php
Registration fee $100 plus TAS membership required
Scholarships are available, please apply! http://www.txarch.org/scholarships/index.php

Ceramics Academy – Feb. 25-26, 2017 - At Ft. Richardson State Park
Registration deadline Feb. 10

An exciting academy to be held at Fort Richardson State Park near Jacksboro. This academy will introduce the importance of archeological ceramics in terms of technology, chronology, dating, trade, subsistence, and cultural identity. Definitions and origins of ceramics, decoration and how pottery was embellished, sherd analysis and how pottery is classified and typed, and interpretations including what we can learn from pottery analysis. For the first time in five years, the Ceramics Academy will provide numerous hands-on exercises such as making pottery and identifying vessel types, age, and firing. Instructors: Marybeth Tomka and Dr. Chris Lintz.

This is an excellent opportunity for participants to enjoy the parks many amenities including hiking, biking, equestrian trails, camping, and fishing. And take advantage of the historic Fort Richardson site tours! http://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/fort-richardson Lodging options are available throughout Fort Richardson State Park including cabins, RV hookups, and camping. Jacksboro has motel options, with more in nearby Graham and Mineral Wells.

Technology in Archeology - April 29-30, 2017 - in Fredericksburg
Registration deadline is April 14

Another new TAS Academy for 2017, we are very excited to offer for the first time Technology in Archeology in Fredericksburg! Participants will be introduced to exciting methods such as Structure from Motion (SfM) photogrammetry, geophysical survey methods, aerial drone recordation, and 3D scanning are also planned topics. This course will introduce these technologies in an archeological application within a state of the art classroom setting at the Hill Country University Center. Outdoor activities will include SfM, geophysical survey, and drone recordation at the nearby Fort Martin Scott. Instructors: Charles Koenig, Tiffany Osburn, Dr. Zac Selden, and Arlo McKee.

Fredericksburg offers incredible outdoor opportunities such as the nearby Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, shopping, historic sites, wineries, and much more. Lodging opportunities range from nice hotels, an incredible variety of bed and breakfasts, camping, RV parks, and more.

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Scholarships are available, please apply! http://www.txarch.org/scholarships/index.php
Houston Archeological Society
Monthly Meeting Programs for 2017
7:00pm Third Thursday of every month (except June)
M. D. Anderson Hall, St. Thomas University

Programs for 2017

March 9, 2017 - Beth Aucoin, “Reminiscences of Moses Austin Bryan”.


May 18, 2017 – Kimberly L. Faulk, MA, “Underwater Archeology on the Gulf Coast”.

June – No meeting due to TAS Field School

All Houston Archeological Society meetings are free of charge and open to the public. For more information about HAS then visited our website at www.txhas.org or email lindagorski@cs.com. You can also join our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/123659814324626/

Note: Please submit articles for publication to The Profile Editor Bob Sewell at newsletter@txhas.org. Submit articles no later than February 24th for the March 2017 issue.

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

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