Thursday, November 18th, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.
“The Late Archaic Lower Brazos Culture and the Nature of Long Distance Exchange Networks” - Dr. Dan Worrall

The November monthly meeting of the Houston Archeological Society will be held on Thursday, November 18th. This meeting will feature a program by historian and author, Dr. Dan Worrall, who will give a presentation entitled The Late Archaic Lower Brazos Culture and the Nature of Long Distance Exchange Networks. We will hold this meeting in person at the Trini Mendenhall Community Center at 1414 Wirt Street in Houston starting at 6:30 p.m. for socializing and 7:00 p.m. for the business meeting and program. The meeting will also be offered virtually via Zoom and YouTube Livestream. The YouTube Livestream link is here https://youtu.be/xfCvhInhBp4. Members will receive the Zoom link before the meeting.

According to Dr. Worrall, people of the Late Archaic Lower Brazos Culture (LBC) lived along the lower parts of the Brazos and Colorado Rivers extending to the coast; their territory was approximately equivalent to that of the Coco/Karankawa of the early Historic Period. They are principally known from a series of cemetery sites found along the rims of those two river valleys, which were studied by several archeological groups in the 1960s-1990s, including the Houston Archeological Society. A late period at these burial sites (2600 to 1650 BP, or 650 BC to AD 400) witnessed extensive use of exotic long distance exchange goods and marine shell ornaments. Recent research by ethnohistorians using oral history accounts as well as earlier historic era written descriptions of Native Americans of the eastern woodlands region suggest that such long distance exchange was less commercially driven than it was spiritual and cultural.

Dan Worrall is among a fifth generation of his family to live in the Houston area. He received a BA from Rice University in 1972 and a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in 1978, both in geology. Following a career in exploration geology research and basin studies at Shell Oil Company, he has been a member of the Harris County Historical Commission since 2014, and a member of the HAS since 2017. In 2016, he published a book on the history of the west Houston area entitled *Pleasant Bend: Upper Buffalo Bayou and the San Felipe Trail in the Nineteenth Century*. Early this year, he followed that with *A Prehistory of Houston and Southeast Texas: Landscape and Culture*, which describes the development of our area’s natural landscape as well as the Native American people who have lived here for thirteen or more millennia. It is a map-based work that prominently uses 60 years of HAS archeological research among its many sources.

If you have any questions about this meeting, please contact HAS President Linda Gorski at president@txhas.org.
President’s Message – Linda Gorski

HAS Members –
In a really perfect post-Covid world, October will be the last month we will meet virtually only via Zoom and YouTube Livestream. We plan to go back to holding our meetings in person at the Trini Mendenhall Center at 1414 Wirt Road in Houston on November 18th. However, we will continue to offer our programs virtually so that our out-of-town members and those who live locally but prefer not to drive at night can continue to join us. We are so indebted to our wonderful tech guru, Dr. Elizabeth Coon-Nguyen for making this happen!

In other good post-Covid news, we are back to holding live and in person outreach programs!!!! Since our last newsletter we’ve held two really successful programs. One was at Salem Lutheran School in Spring where we presented our program, activities and hands on displays for the three seventh grade Texas history classes. Then, on Saturday, October 16, the Outreach team was invited to participate in the first annual Archeology Event at the at Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site, in Washington, Texas, the site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. Dubbed “The Ruins of Washington Archeology Day”, HAS members including Sharon Menegaz, Bob Sewell, Louis Aulbach, Jennifer Fuentes, Linda Gorski, Sandy Rogers, David Englebretnson and Don Keyes were joined by Texas Historical Commission archeologists Jeff Durst and Jenny McWilliams to make the day a huge success for visitors.

Our next big Outreach Program will be at Kleb Woods Nature Center in Tomball on Saturday, November 6th. Watch for announcements from Bob Sewell asking YOU to volunteer!
WELCOME to our HAS Monthly Meeting!  Meeting called to order at 7pm.  Due to an upsurge in the pandemic, we are once again holding our meeting via Zoom!  We are so glad everyone can join us tonight (Linda Gorski).

Treasurer’s Report (Bob Sewell):  Bob reported amounts in the HAS checking and savings accounts. If any member is interested in more information about HAS finances, please see Bob.

Membership (Bob Sewell):  Our membership currently stands at 243!  In 2019, membership rose to 250; in 2020, it dropped to 195, so we are doing very well with our total number for this year!

Website /Newsletter/Hats (Bob Sewell):  Nothing is wrong with the web site but when the web site is located using a google search, viewers are not taken to site page. Bob is working with Google to correct. The newsletter is enjoyable. Another article from Tom Nuckols on munitions to come out and maybe a journal should be done with all the details.  Please submit any information on an interesting archeological topic or historical Texas topic so an article can be written for the next newsletter.

Hat production and orders are delayed due to the supplier not being able to get product from China.  Maybe in November things will be back on track.

NEW BUSINESS
Vacancy on Board – A vacancy opened on the board. Mike Woods has agreed to fill this position and has been appointed for the remainder of the term.

Projects:  In May, HAS submitted a proposal for a Summerlee Grant. HAS has been awarded a Grant for $15,000 to do Geophys for the project at San Felipe De Austin Garden Lot 26. The property is owned by Kathleen Kelly and is about 1½ miles from the historical San Felipe site.  Dr. Chet Walker will do the Geophys in November. Kathleen has written an interesting book about the location, and this would be valuable to read if planning to work out at the site. After the Geophys is complete this project will be opened up to the members of the HAS for working on site.

Dedication:  Rice University Archeology Lab was dedicated to HAS member Bill McClure. Rice recently hired a PhD zooarcheologist from Harvard as a new professor who stated that she would not have taken the position if it wasn’t for the McClure collection. Rice is looking to re-establishing relationships with Houston Archeological Society and the lab. Article in the newsletter about the lab and the project at GL26 Summerlee Grant.

Lone Oak: (Bob Sewell) - 41CD168 site has begun Phase 4 and is open to all members. 17 members went out recently to survey, clear the over burden in and around the units and perform some shovel tests north of site. Next visit is planned for October 30 with the site located in Columbus, about 1 hour and 45 minutes from Houston. Members should receive an email from fielddirector@txhas.org.

Publications (Louis Aulbach):  Some publications are available and when we get back together in person those will be available to distribute. The publication on Lone Oak is in short supply with most already handed out.

TAS Annual Meeting: (Liz and Sarah): October 22 and 23, 2021 will be totally virtual. Go to www.txarch.org to register. Interesting talks about Frost Town by Doug Boyd on Friday and Carolyn Boyd will talk on the Rock Art at Lower Pecos on Saturday night. Get the first look at the Gault Film. Presentations will be recorded for future viewing by registered participants.

Tonight’s Program:  HAS Meeting Author and Historian Jim Woodrick spoke on “The Cannons of San Jacinto”. The video presentation explained the role the three cannons played at the Battle of San Jacinto and the possible status of the cannons years after the battle. The cannons were the Twin Sisters used by the Sam Houston’s Texian army and the Golden Standard used by Santa Anna’s troops.

Future Meetings:  The contract with Trini Mendenhall Community Center was renewed for 2022. Hopefully we can get back to meeting in person soon.

Next Month’s Program:  On November 18, Dr. Dan Worrall will speak on the Lower Brazos Culture and Late Archaic Long Distance Trading Networks.

Meeting adjourned at 8pm

Diana Cooper, Secretary
Houston Archeological Society Wins Summerlee Grant for Upcoming Project at San Felipe de Austin Garden Lot 26
by Linda Gorski

It gives me a huge amount of pleasure to announce to our membership that the Houston Archeological Society has won a substantial grant from the Summerlee Foundation to conduct geophysical surveys at our newest historic archeological site, Garden Lot 26 at San Felipe de Austin. We submitted the grant proposal in May and received the great news that we’d been awarded the grant in late September. Depending on weather and schedules, the geophysical surveys will take place in November 2021, and depending on the results we hope to be actively working at the site early in 2022.

Garden Lot 26 (GL 26) is located on private property approximately a mile and a half from the San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site. It was the home of Samuel May Williams, Secretary and Land Agent to Stephen F. Austin during the period when Austin was establishing the first colony in Mexican Texas, the Old Three Hundred Colony. The current landowner of GL 26, Kathleen Kelly, who has done extensive archival research on the property, sought help from HAS in late 2020 to integrate her documentary work with archeological excavations in order to accomplish three goals: first, to locate the original foundations of the Williams House and the adjacent buildings which served as the land office for the Austin Colony, second, to identify the gravesites of the two young daughters of the Williams Family who had lived on the property and, third, to confirm the encampment of the Texian Army under the command of General Sam Houston on the property in March 1836 as it prepared to advance to the impending battle of San Jacinto.

Ms. Kelly has consolidated her extensive research of original documents and early maps into a published book entitled Indelible Footprints in San Felipe de Austin: Trailhead to Texas Independence. The book presents solid evidence that GL 26 existed and was occupied until the US Civil War, rendering the Williams home and the Austin cabin as the only two homes in San Felipe de Austin not destroyed in advance of Santa Anna’s troops en route to San Jacinto. Since the GL 26 property has remained in private hands and generally unexplored from the occupation of Samuel May Williams and Stephen F. Austin until now, it presents enticing, untouched research potential of significant historical and archeological value.

Our immediate geophysical and archeological project focuses on the period circa 1825 when Williams and Austin moved their homes and land offices from the town center of San Felipe de Austin to the Garden Lots, and specifically to Garden Lot 26. The scope of the project is to survey Garden Lot 26 in an effort to learn what happened there during the period 1824 – 1836. So far, a small group of Texas Historical Commission Archeological Stewards and a few volunteers from HAS, including hand-selected specialists in areas such as munitions, metal conservation, and ceramics identification, have done preliminary work at the site to follow up on Ms. Kelly’s extensive research. This preliminary work has corroborated her research and validated the enormous historic importance of this site. The GL 26 team has already made some impressive discoveries, including artifacts that suggest the Texian Army camped on the tract in March, 1836. Moreover, there is evidence not only of Texian occupation, but of Mexican occupation as well.

Thanks to our landowner, Kathleen Kelly, the Houston Archeological Society may soon be Digging up Texas history – one trowel full at a time – at one of the most important historic sites in Texas! Stand by for more information!
Old bones get new life in renovated Rice laboratory

Collection of Texas animal bones donated by Houston Archeological Society

The skeletons of more than 800 Southeast Texas animals are getting a second life in a renovated archaeology lab space at Rice University.

![Image of Mary Prendergast standing near the William L. McClure faunal collection in the Department of Anthropology's archaeology lab. Photo by Jeff Fitlow.](image)

The bones make up the William L. McClure faunal collection, donated to Rice’s Department of Anthropology by the [Houston Archeological Society](https://www.houstonarch.org) in 2020.

The department has a long-standing relationship with the society and has had access to the McClure collection since 1981. At that time, the society arranged for researchers and students to study the collection in exchange for use of Rice’s laboratory space. In 2020, as plans came together for the archaeology lab renovation and new faculty were hired to teach and research in the space, [Jeffrey Fleisher](https://www.rice.edu/anthropology/people/faculty/jeffrey-fleisher), the department chair, asked if Rice could have the collection outright, and the society’s board enthusiastically agreed.

“We couldn’t think of a better place for it,” said Linda Gorski, president of the Houston Archeological Society.
“So often people who are teaching this kind of class wind up collaborating with a local museum or rely on images,” said Mary Prendergast, an associate professor of anthropology at Rice who specializes in zooarchaeology and oversees the new lab. “Having a collection like this is not particularly common in universities. So we’re incredibly grateful to have it, and it is just amazing to teach with and to research with.”

McClure, who died in 2002, was president of the Houston Archeological Society from 1971-72, a director on its board in 1983 and recipient of the society’s first Southeast Texas Research Award in 1989. During his career as a civil engineer with the Texas Department of Transportation, he amassed the bone collection in the 1970s and 1980s by finding deceased animals from the area during his lunch hour. He processed the skeletons himself and made detailed notes on each set of remains.

The renovated laboratory, located in 103 Sewall Hall, houses the McClure collection as well as other artifacts for research and education. It includes enhanced lighting for artifact analysis, expanded seating, improved workspace for classes and more.

“We’re thankful for the donation of McClure collection to the Anthropology Department at Rice,” Fleisher said. “It provides an important foundation for the zooarchaeology collection that we will continue to build, and offers an amazing resource for our faculty and students to use for research and learning. As one of the most extensive collections of its kind on the Gulf Coast, we also hope other scholars and students will come to Rice to work with the collection.”

ABOUT AMY MCCAIQ

Amy is a senior media relations specialist in Rice University’s Office of Public Affairs.
Texas Archeological Society 92nd Annual Meeting, October 22 - 23 is a Wrap!

They say a picture is worth a thousand words so here’s a report on the 92nd TAS Annual Meeting in photos! As most of you know, this meeting was held virtually for the first time ever and it turned out to be a huge success! Thanks to everyone who participated including all our Virtual Volunteers who made the presentations happen seamlessly including HAS members Dr. Liz Coon-Nguyen, Dr. Sarah Chesney, Louis Aulbach, Betsy Wittenmyer, Diana Cooper and Frank Kozar. Thanks also to the Houston Museum of Natural Science for co-hosting our Friday and Saturday night programs.

The Texas Archeological Society 92nd Annual Meeting!

Doug Boyd gave the Houston Archeological Society many kudos during his talk for the Society’s participation in the Frost Town project with special thanks to Louis Aulbach for all his historical research!

Doug Boyd’s Friday night talk on the Frost Town project

Texas Archeological Stewards Network meeting

Houston Archeological Society

Approx. # of Volunteer Hours: 2016 thru 2018

2,542

A Collaborative Project:

BRICKS, BOTTLES, AND BONES AT FROST TOWN:

Historic Archeology of a 140-year-old Working-Class Houston Neighborhood

Douglas K. Boyd
TAS Annual Meeting
Public Forum, Oct. 22, 2021
Notes on Munitions
The Loading Block
Part 2 of 2
By Tom Nuckols

Introduction

To understand how a loading block makes the process of loading a muzzle-loading rifle faster and easier, I need to explain how a muzzle-loading rifle is loaded in the conventional manner without using a block. This will be an enhanced version of an article that I wrote for the July, 2020 Houston Archaeological Society’s newsletter, The Profile, at: https://www.txhas.org/PDF/newsletters/2020/2020%20July%20Profile.pdf, Notes on Munitions (What Came Before) the Minié Ball (Part 3). The article also contains a glossary of some of the terms used below.

Loading a Muzzle-loading Rifle

Step 1. Place the rifle’s butt on top of the shoe of my left foot and rest the muzzle in the crook of my right arm. (I am left-handed). Placing the butt on my shoe instead of the ground, avoids scratching the rifle’s brass butt plate.

Step 2. Pour black gun powder (powder) from the powder horn or powder flask into a measure (Figure 1. Illustration 1).

Step 3. From the measure, pour the powder down the barrels bore (Figure 1. Illustration 2).

Step 4. Remove a patch from the patchbox that has been pre-lubricated, and center it over the muzzle.

Step 5. Remove a mold cast bullet from the shot pouch that is slightly smaller in diameter than the barrel bore by a few thousands of an inch and place it on the patch with its sprue nib pointing upward (Figure 1. Illustration 3).
Step 6. Push the tight-fitting patched bullet as far down the muzzle as far as possible with my thumb.

Step 7. With the bullet starter, push the patched bullet deeper into the bore by tapping the bullet starter with the palm of my hand (Figure 1. Illustration 4).

Step 8. Remove the ramrod from its holding position under the barrel and use it to push the bullet all the way down until it rests against the powder that is now sitting at the bottom of the bore (Figure 1. Illustration 5, 6, & 7).

Step 9. Return the ramrod to its holding position.

Step 10. Pick up the rifle and hold it horizontally.

Step 11. If shooting a flintlock rifle, clear the vent hole with a pick and fill the pan with black priming powder from a priming flask and close the frizzen (Figure 1. Illustration 8, & 9).

Step 12. If shooting a caplock rifle, place a percussion cap on the nipple of the percussion lock (Figure 1. Illustration 10).

Step 13. To shoot the rifle, place the hammer at full cock, and pull the trigger.

How the Block Works

By using a block, Steps 4, 5, and 6 of the loading processes as mentioned above, are eliminated. Loading a bullet is accomplished by placing the loading block over the rifles barrel and simply pushing the bullet down through the block and into the bore with the bullet starter (Figures 2 & 3).
Figure 3. After a loading block encased bullet is centered over the barrel of a muzzle-loading rifle, it is pushed down the bore with the bullet starter. Next, the loading block is removed and the ramrod is used to push the bullet all the way down the barrel until it comes to rest on the gun powder charge sitting at the bottom or breech of the barrel. Illustration by author.

Is the Block an Historic Accouterment?

The first block that I ever saw was in Peterson and Elman’s book *THE GREAT GUNS*. Page 95 of the book contains a picture of a circa 1750, flintlock rifle leaning against a stone wall. Hanging from the rifle’s muzzle are three accouterments, a powder horn, shot pouch, and a block. I suspect the accouterments are props and are not period to the rifle. The block is circular in shape with ten holes. However, the holes are devoid of patched bullets. I often looked at that picture over the ensuing years, trying to figure out what that weird, hole pierced, circular shaped piece of wood was.

In the mid-1970’s, when I began to collect and shoot muzzle-loading rifles, I still did not know what a block was. And, blocks were not an accouterment sold by gun shops that catered to the muzzle-loading fraternity that I frequented. I cannot tell you when it was that I finally became aware of the purpose of a block. Now, knowing what they are, I have observed a lot of riflemen reenactors with a block dangling from their neck.

In doing research for this article, I was unable to determine if blocks existed as an accoutrement to the rifle in historic times. Are blocks an invention of the recent past?

Do you have an opinion of the subject? If so, contact me via email at tnluckols58@att.net. Any pertinent response will be published in one of my future *Notes on Munitions* article.

Reference

Peterson, Harold L and Robert Elman
Houston’s Concrete House, a Structure with a Prehistoric Past

by Louis F. Aulbach and Linda C. Gorski

In the summer of 2007, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership announced their intention to renovate the historic International Coffee Company building located near the site of the former City Wharves. The old structure had been vacant for decades, but it was one of the few remaining buildings belonging to the late 19th and early 20th century enterprise known as W. D. Cleveland and Company. The business was established after the Civil War by William Davis Cleveland, and by the 1890’s, it was one of the most prosperous wholesale grocers and cotton merchants in Houston.¹

The International Coffee Company of Galveston was acquired by W. D. Cleveland in 1907, and by 1910, a new building for the coffee company was erected adjacent to the main offices of Cleveland’s grocery operations. The two buildings occupied a prominent location the tract of land north of Commerce Avenue, between Main Street and Fannin Street (see Figure 1).

The W. D. Cleveland and Company building was constructed in 1894 after a fire had completely destroyed the company’s previous business in 1893. In the hope of preventing a similar catastrophe, Cleveland decided to build his new building completely in concrete to make it as fireproof as possible. This new building, which was dubbed the Concrete House, consisted of a basement and three stories. Although the W. D. Cleveland and Company operations ceased in the early 1930’s, the Concrete House survived until the late 20th century. At some point between 1995 and 2002, the old concrete structure was demolished. Yet, a segment of the western wall of the building has been retained, and it can be seen today near the southwest corner of the restored International Coffee Company building, now known as the Sunset Coffee Building (see Figure 2).

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¹ For more information on W. D. Cleveland and Company, see William Davis Cleveland and Company: A Business History of Houston, by Linda C. Gorski (1996).
The construction techniques used to build the massive concrete structure can be seen in the surviving wall elements. The walls of the building were made of poured concrete about two feet in thickness. The close up of the north end of the wall exposes the solid concrete core of the wall that was sealed with a plaster layer of about 3/4-inch thickness (see Figure 3).

The wall segment also reveals the method of concrete construction in the era prior to the use of steel reinforcing bar (“rebar”) to strengthen the concrete under tension. An aggregate of shell was used in the construction of the Concrete House to provide the strength. Although some reports refer to the shells used in the Concrete House as oyster shell, the aggregate can be identified as *Rangia* clam shells that were excavated from middens located along Galveston Bay (see Figure 4).
For over eight thousand years, the hunter and gatherer tribes of the Gulf Coast camped at the midden sites to eat the *Rangia* mollusks, one of their staple foods. Fed by the empty shells and other materials left near the camps around Galveston Bay, the middens accumulated, occasionally to a height of thirty feet. The Native American artifacts and burial practices found in the middens have been of great importance to archeological investigations of the native peoples of the Texas coast.\(^2\)

Unfortunately, many of the midden deposits along the western shore of Galveston Bay have been lost to archeological analysis due the intensive mining of the shell deposits during the 19\(^{th}\) and 20\(^{th}\) centuries. The communities around Galveston Bay, including the city of Houston, used the shell from the middens as a substitute for gravel in the construction of streets. With the coming of the railroads, the midden shell became a major resource for the base material used in the laying of tracks. The use of *Rangia* shell in the construction of a building such as the Concrete House is fairly rare. Yet, one wonders what artifacts might still be embedded in the wall of that structure.\(^3\)

Footnotes


3. “Shell Mounds and Shellfish: Staff of Prehistoric Life?”

Gallaway, p. 2, 15-16.
We need YOU to help at this event!!! Watch for announcements from Sharon Menegaz about volunteering on November 6th at Kleb Woods Nature Center. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sharon at smenegaz@rcseaglesonline.org

Or publicoutreach@txhas.org

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Houston Archeological Society

Monthly Meeting Programs for 2021/22
6:30pm Third Thursday of every month
(Until further notice meetings are virtual for members only)

December 16, 2021 – Linda Gorski - Wrap Up of 2021 Activities

January 20, 2022 – Louis Aulbach - Buffalo Bayou, A Treasure Chest of Archeological Remnants of Houston’s Past

All Houston Archeological Society meetings are normally free and open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 situation they are currently being conducted virtually for members only. For more information about HAS then visit 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/

Please submit articles for publication to The Profile Editor Bob Sewell at newsletter@txhas.org. Please submit articles for the December issue no later than 25th November, 2021.

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

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