

TIME CAPSULE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FORT BEND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

An affiliate of the Fort Bend History Association

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May/June 2020



FBAS YouTube Channel is Operational

Hopefully by now everyone has heard of the Fort Bend Archeological Society YouTube channel. If not, please go to this link and subscribe so you don't miss out on any content.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFSV34RILn8svWMIDiPzVjQ>

I think most people would agree that these YouTube lectures are no substitute for getting together in person. We are actively seeking a solution to that issue. Obviously, for us to meet, we must be able to ensure the safety of our members and speakers. In order to do this, we will follow the guidance of our county officials. We have reached out to determine if we can have a meeting in July, and if so, to confirm our safeguards (such as social distancing). So far we have not received the "all clear". What does this mean? Look for our newsletter at the beginning of July.

VERY IMPORTANT: if we do have a meeting in July, it will not be widely publicized so that we can keep occupancy at roughly 25% of room occupancy. If you know friends who love archeology, please make sure they are on the newsletter email list so they get the announcements.

Treasurer's Report

May 1, 2020

Balance as of March 6, 2020 **\$3,761.96**

1956	4/29/2020	FBHA	postage - March and April	10.00
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Balance as of May 1, 2020 **\$3,751.96**

Submitted by
Claire Rogers
Treasurer

Upcoming Meetings:

July 21: TBD

YouTube Content for May/June

Speaker: Dr. Liz Horton

Topic: Toltec Mounds and the Plum Bayou Culture of Arkansas
https://youtu.be/lwxc_Fx5yvI



Coming Soon (in May/June)



Speaker: Dr. Sergio Ayala

Topic: The oldest tools in Texas:
Experimentally Supported Analysis of the Bifaces used at the Gault site over
16,000 Years Ago

Speaker: Dr. Lance Harris

Topic: The mounds of Grand Village of the Natchez Indians



Speaker: Dr. Robert Lassen

Topic: From a teen member of the Fort Bend Archeological Society to highly accomplished archeologist. This presentation will be specifically geared towards those interested in a potential career in archeology.

Dr. Robert Lassen

Speaker: Dr. Scott W. Hammerstedt

Topic: Spiro Mounds in Oklahoma



Notes from Poverty Point Lecture

(From the FBAS YouTube Channel) <https://youtu.be/TT4gQ590USA>

This article is a compilation of notes taken from a talk given by Dr Valerie Feathers of Louisiana.

The Poverty Point World Heritage Site is in Northeast Louisiana, just east of Monroe. The occupational timeframe of the site is 1700BC – 1100BC. At the time, this was the largest earthworks in North America. The people who occupied the site, did so over 600 years, but there is no evidence of domesticated agriculture. People built the monumental site most likely as a ceremonial center.



One of the many reasons that Poverty Point is such an incredible site is because of how much of the material culture found was imported in from other sites. In fact, over 78 tons of stone artifacts were recovered from the site, but practically none of it is local. The most common stone artifacts are tied to hunting technology. The Poverty Point site was utilized prior to the bow and arrow, so points and weights were found using a large variety of stone types. Many groundstone plummets were found, and it is believed that they were used on fishing lines and nets, but more investigation is needed before archeologists reach a conclusion.

One of the most impressive artifacts are the nearly 30 small red jasper owls which were found at sites that span from eastern Florida and as far west as Poverty Point, all of which date back to the same period as Poverty Point. The tallest of these owls is just over an inch tall. Many of these intricate pieces are much smaller and it is just incredible to imagine they were carved using stoned tools. Another fascinating carved artifact which leads to more questions than answers are these stone figures, usually of the female body, and normally with their heads missing. The few heads that are intact show people speaking or smiling. We don't know if the heads were removed intentionally. It is possible they were used for ceremonial purposes.

Red jasper owl pendants



The only material that is local to the area is the clay. The most common artifacts found in excavations are cooking stones that are referred to as "Poverty Point Objects."

These were used to create an earthen oven so that the cooking could be temperature-regulated in a way that cooking directly over fire does not easily allow. There are many different shapes and sizes, but so far nobody knows why. However, experimental archeology is still done at the site demonstrating how these objects were used. On that subject, many stone bowls were found during excavations, but very few pottery bowls. They had pottery, but there appears to be a preference for the stone bowls. The stone from the bowls came from Alabama.

And here is my personal opinion:

If you are looking for an interesting road trip, I highly recommend visiting this site. There is just no way to express how impressive the mounds are, unless you visit them yourself. There is a Poverty Point State Park about 15 minutes away from the site where you can find a great cabin right on a large reservoir.



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