

TIME CAPSULE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FORT BEND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

An affiliate of the Fort Bend History Association
500 Houston Street / Richmond, TX 77469
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March 2019



General Meeting: March 19, 2019. 7PM

Meetings will now be held on the 2nd Floor
of the Gus George Building! See note below.

Speakers: Dirk Van Tuerenhout

Topic: How I spent my summers – Fieldwork in Belize and Guatemala

Many know Dirk Van Tuerenhout from his current job as curator of anthropology for the Houston Museum of Natural Science, but during the 1980s and 1990s, Dirk participated in excavations in Nohmul and Cuello, Belize and worked on surveys and excavations in the Petexbatun area, Guatemala. The chronological range of the sites extended from Preclassic to Terminal Classic Maya periods. Dirk will share his field experiences which included capturing important data on these sites, finding cool artifacts, discovering Maya fortifications, encountering British soldiers, and hearing the Guatemalan air force bomb just a few miles away from camp. All in a day's work for an archeologist.



Pictured is fieldwork at Cuello, Belize which was featured in National Geographic Magazine at the time.

Dirk Van Tuerenhout, Ph.D. has been interested in archeology since elementary school in Belgium. His interest in the Maya brought him to Tulane for graduate school. He is currently the Curator of Anthropology at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. The incredible exhibits that he has brought to Houston are too numerous to name, and he is an extremely entertaining and dynamic speaker. Dr. Van Tuerenhout has taken part in excavations of Late Roman ruins in his native Belgium, and of course, Maya ruins in Belize and Guatemala.

Location: **Gus George Law Enforcement Academy** - 1521 Eugene Heimann Circle, Richmond, Texas.
Everyone is welcome - the program is free and open to the public.

2020 TAS Annual Meeting Sponsors

One of the awesome things about our region is the collaborations between the regional archeological societies. This will be especially on display at the 2020 TAS Annual Meeting. Ft. Bend has been invited to co-sponsor the annual meeting (along with Houston Archeological Society and Brazoria Archeological Society). Too early to share substantive details, but be on the look out for more and more information. We are grateful to be included and look forward to this regional collaboration to be the best annual meeting ever.

Professional Archeologist's Corner: Archeologist's Code of Ethics

By Dr. Sarah Chesney, PhD.

Article reprinted with permission from The Houston Archeological Society newsletter, The Profile

So You Want to Dig in Texas: A Primer

Like many of you, my favorite part of archeology is the fieldwork, and I love that being a member of HAS means that we have many opportunities to go out into the field on a wide variety of projects. But do you know how these opportunities come about? If you do, great – this is a refresher that you can skim and impress your non-archeological friends with your esoteric knowledge! But if you don't know how and why we dig where we do, then this column is for you!

Believe it or not, there are actually state and federal laws that govern when and how we can do archeology in Texas. For the most part, these laws apply to public land; i.e. land owned or controlled by the state, county, city, or federal government. (Archeological work on private land is considerably less restricted; this is a topic for another time). I'm sure many of you can think of obvious examples of public land: state and national parks, state historic sites, public nature reserves, and so on. But there are other, less obvious elements that fall under this category: for instance, did you know that the Army Corps of Engineers controls/is responsible for areas in and around any navigable bodies of water in the United States? So most rivers have some areas considered "public" land. Public roads also have right-of-way corridors that are managed by TxDOT or the federal government.

While we don't have as much federally-controlled land in Texas as other states, certain types of construction projects also fall under this category because of their nature or funding. For instance, if a shopping center is going to be constructed with a bank, the area of the bank building falls under federal archeological/historic preservation law because all banks are federally insured. Oil and gas pipeline projects also fall under this law because they are interstate projects, and therefore under federal (rather than state) jurisdiction.

Okay, so you get it; "public land" is a more complicated definition than it seems at first. But what, exactly, ARE the laws that restrict archeology in these areas? I'm so glad you asked, because I'm about to tell you! There are several state and federal laws that govern archeological work in Texas, but the two most important (for our purposes) are the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Antiquities Code of Texas (1969). The NHPA sets the conditions for all federally-controlled, owned, or funded projects in the United States (i.e., the banks and pipelines mentioned above, as well as interstate highways, and so on). That "condition" is that 1% of the budget for any of these projects MUST be used for cultural resource assessment; i.e. money must be put aside to investigate the project area and determine if the project will impact any cultural resources (for instance, will this roadway cut through or impact a historic town site, or a Caddo village).

Hence, the creation of what we call Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firms, which are companies hired by these large projects to perform these assessments. The CRM firms perform the assessment and then file a report with the project leaders AND with the designated state/federal liaison whose job it is to review this assessment. This liaison is the State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO, and in Texas, that is the Texas Historical Commission. Reviews are undertaken by the Archeological Division of the THC, under the direction of the State Archeologist. The section of the NHPA in which this requirement is discussed is Section 106, which is why you sometimes hear professional archeologists using the term "Section 106" review as shorthand to refer to this assessment and reporting process.

In addition to setting the conditions for federally-funded projects, the NHPA ALSO sets the standards for who can conduct cultural resource assessments. Since a "cultural resource" can be just about anything, the law sets the professional standards for a wide variety of disciplines including historians, architectural

historians, and archeologists. In order to perform an archeological assessment (i.e. run the project as the Principle Investigator, or PI), you MUST meet the following standards as set by the US Secretary of the Interior:

“The minimum professional qualifications in archeology are a graduate degree in archeology, anthropology, or a closely-related field PLUS

- 1. At least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in archeological research, administration, or management;*
- 2. At least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in general North American archeology, and*
- 3. Demonstrated ability to carry research to completion.*

In addition to these MINIMUM qualifications, a professional in prehistoric archeology shall have at least one year of full-time professional experience at a supervisory level in the study of archeological resources of the prehistoric period. A professional in historic archeology shall have at least one year of full-time professional experience at a supervisory level in the study of archeological resources of the historic period.”¹

As you can see, the National Historic Preservation Act does two really important things: it tells you WHAT must be done for federally-controlled or funded projects, and WHO is qualified to do it. But, the NHPA only applies to FEDERAL land or projects. So what about all our state and local land? This is where the Texas Antiquities Code comes in.

Three years after the NHPA was passed, Texas passed its own version of antiquities law to cover all the state, county, and local lands in the state, the Antiquities Code of Texas. As with the federal law, the Texas Code sets the standards and conditions for all archeological work on public lands in the state, including the qualifications for the archeologist in charge (the Principal Investigator). In Texas, the Principal Investigator must meet the federally-mandated professional standards outlined in the NHPA Section 106 (see above quote) AND he or she must apply for an Antiquities Permit from the Texas Historical Commission. What this means: you CANNOT legally dig on public land in Texas WITHOUT a valid Antiquities Permit, and in order to obtain one, you MUST prove that you meet the federal standards for professional archeologists.

This does not mean that everyone on an excavation must have a permit – only the PI needs a permit; he or she can then bring in whatever team they need to get the job done. BUT, an Antiquities Permit is legally binding; holding a permit means that an archeologist is legally responsible for the work done under that permit – it is his or her responsibility to see the project to completion (fieldwork, analysis, report), and to ensure that the project meets ethical and legal standards. This means that sometimes PIs will use smaller crews if they are under a time-crunch with the permit, or if the scope of the permit is too narrow to allow for a larger dig with a large crew. At the end of the day, it is up to the PI as the permit holder to determine how large a crew he or she will bring into a project, and that decision is based on the scope of the permit and needs of the project.

Whew! That’s a lot! And frankly, this is only the tip of the legal iceberg of state and federal archeological laws. We will likely discuss other laws in future columns (NAGPRA especially), but that’s all for today.

If you are interested in reading more on these laws – or reading the laws themselves, both the Texas Historical Commission (www.nps.gov/history) and the National Park Service (www.thc.texas.gov/project-review) are good resources.

¹ Source: Professional Qualifications Standards, Archeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines [As Amended and Annotated]. National Park Service, www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm. Accessed 28 January 2019.

New Meeting Room (Please spread the word to friends)

The times they **aren't** a'changin... **but** the room is... moving forward, we will meet on the 2nd floor at the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy in ROOM 3 (also numbered ROOM 249). Here is what's important to know:

- We **will** have an audio system so that speakers will have a microphone to project their voices.
- There is an elevator to the 2nd floor in case the stairs are inconvenient for you.
- The room is really nice and professional with all of the presentation amenities we've come to expect. It's smaller than the downstairs room, but more than sufficient for the number of people we typically attract to our programs.
- The night of our meeting, more often than not, you'll see a meeting on the first floor where we used to meet (and unless you're interested in the Sheriff's meeting), please note that it won't be us in there any longer. Go upstairs (or up the elevator).
- I know change can be intimidating, but I think after a meeting or two, everyone will agree this is not much of a change at all. Please tell friends, family, neighbors, and anyone else that we now meet on the 2nd floor.

FIELD NOTES

Lamar Homesite

This is an **exciting time** to be interested in archeology. Not only does Fort Bend have an incredibly interesting project, but the entire region is popping with work. Local firms are sapping up all of the professional talent (come talk to us if you're an archeologist looking for work) and there has never been a better time for avocational archeologists to improve their skills under the watchful eyes of those with years and years of experience. The amount of work often outweighs the number of volunteers... if you are interested in "getting your hands dirty", PLEASE come to a meeting and speak to Bob Crosser. There has never been a time like the present.



2019 TAS Field School

The only thing that can be more magical than Palo Duro Canyon State Park would be field school in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. Interested? Here is the link: <https://www.txarch.org/tas-field-school> AND our May meeting will be dedicated to the topic.



Minutes from February 19, 2019 Meeting

The Fort Bend Archeological Society met at the Gus George Academy in Richmond, TX. In attendance were 10 members and 7 guests. The meeting was called to order by President Jay Roussel at 7:05pm.

Minutes:

Minutes from the January 15, 2019 were circulated in the monthly newsletter sent by email and mail to all members. A motion by Bob Crosser to approve minutes as corrected (location of meeting was mistakenly listed as Tyree House), Paul Spana seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Balance as of February 19, 2019: \$4241.12. The treasurer's report was circulated in the newsletter. There were no additions or corrections; motion by Bob Crosser to accept the treasurer's report, David Rose seconded the motion. Treasurer's report accepted.

New Business:

- Committee Report: Bob Crosser reported on the Lamar Homestead site. Last Saturday, February 16, a large concrete footing possibly from the 1940s was excavated. Principal Investigator wants to open new pit to find rest of metal feature. Next Saturday, February 23 will be going to level 3 (4 inches) or if it rains, will wash artifacts that have been collected from the site.
- Jay Roussel gave presentations at the Louisiana Archeological Society Annual Meeting and to the Rotary Club of Rosenberg.
- Jay Roussel introduced new member, Kaitlyn Shedd.
- Jay Roussel asked members; if there were objections or questions of Co-Sponsoring the 2020 TAS Annual Meeting, October 20-25, 2020. Will discuss at later time.
- Discussed how to earn a FBAS shirt or ball cap by attending meetings, volunteering to earn hours.

Old Business:

- No Old Business

David Rose introduced our guest speaker, David Furlow who spoke on the topic: Did Women's work (Dairying) save Plymouth Colony? The Archaeology of the Allerton/Cushman Farm, 1627-1697.

Next Meeting scheduled for March 19, 2019, 7pm at the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy classroom #3.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30pm

Minutes submitted by: Dottie Allen, Secretary

Financial Report

March 1, 2019

Balance as of February 19, 2019				\$4,241.12
1929	2/25/2019	Brody Gussert	carved trowel for speaker	40.00
1930	2/26/2019	FBHA	postage for March	5.00
1931	2/26/2019	Jay Roussel	reimbursement for PA system	325.97
Balance as of March 1, 2019				\$3,870.15

Submitted by: Claire Rogers, Treasurer

Events

FBAS & HAS Meetings:

March 19 FBAS General Meeting: Dirk Van Tuerenhout - Mayan discoveries in Belize and Guatemala

March 21 HAS General Meeting: Elton Prewitt, Painted Pebbles of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands.

***NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:** Elton is an awesome speaker, and it's hard to attend two meetings in a single week, but this will be worth the push on your schedule.*

April 16 FBAS General Meeting: Dr. Gregg Dimmick - Matching the Archeology and History of the Almonte Surrender Site

April 18 HAS General Meeting: Jeffrey Girard, Discovery and Recovery of a 14th Century Dugout Canoe on Red River

May 16 HAS General Meeting Dr. Jason Barrett, Trade Trails and Meeting Locations in SE Texas Prehistory

May 21 FBAS General Meeting: Ron Ralph – Are you ready for the 2019 Field School in Palo Duro Canyon State Park??

JUNE – No meetings... See you at Field School!!!

HAS meets at the Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Road, Houston

FBAS meets at the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy.

The FBAS meetings will be in Class Room 3 (SECOND FLOOR) of the Gus George Academy, 1521 Eugene Heimann Circle, Richmond, Texas

Fort Bend Archeological Society
c/o Fort Bend Museum
500 Houston Street
Richmond, TX 77469

