



Concho Valley Archeological Society Newsletter

April 2011

SWFAS symposium great success!

Thanks again to all our CVAS volunteers for a job well done. Our symposium was a big success with 80-100 attendees and numerous positive comments. We always seemed to have most all the chairs full for each of our speakers. We had attendees from as far away as Amarillo, Austin, Texas A&M, and Fort Worth. Tom Ashmore and Ray Theiss were the first two speakers and were met with numerous questions about their presentation subjects. Later in the day Larry Riemenschneider held the attendees attention with his presentation on early day horse racing in San Angelo. Tom, Ray, and Larry serving as presenters should be applauded for a great job and congratulated for representing CVAS so effectively.



Silent auction table with some beautiful donations. Thanks all



A good, solid audience all day long

Once more, we could not have pulled this symposium off without the volunteers from CVAS. Thanks to our volunteers all went smoothly. I can't name them all in this short letter because space will not allow. We should all be very proud of the efforts by CVAS members who so selflessly gave their time and energy. As the CVAS 2011 president I would like to say thank you to all who helped make the SWFAS Symposium a great success.

*C. A. Maedgen
2011 CVAS Pres.*

Is this the first ever portrait of Jesus?

By Nick Pryer, www.dailymail.co.uk, 4 April 2011

The image is eerily familiar: a bearded young man with flowing curly hair. After lying for nearly 2,000 years hidden in a cave in the Holy Land, the fine detail is difficult to determine. But in a certain light it is not difficult to interpret the marks around the figure's brow as a crown of thorns.

The extraordinary picture of one of the recently discovered hoard of up to 70 lead codices – booklets – found in a cave in the hills overlooking the Sea of Galilee is one reason Bible historians are clamouring to get their hands on the ancient artefacts.

If genuine, this could be the first-ever portrait of Jesus Christ, possibly even created in the lifetime of those who knew him.

The tiny booklet, a little smaller than a modern credit card, is sealed on all sides and has a three-dimensional representation of a human head on both the front and the back. One appears to have a beard and the other is without. Even the maker's fingerprint can be seen in the lead impression. Beneath both figures is a line of as-yet undeciphered text in an ancient Hebrew script.

Astonishingly, one of the booklets appears to bear the words 'Saviour of Israel' – one of the few phrases so far translated.

The owner of the cache is Bedouin trucker Hassan Saida who lives in the Arab village of Umm al-Ghanim, Shibli. He has refused to sell the booklets but two samples were sent to England and Switzerland for testing.

A Mail on Sunday investigation has revealed that the artefacts were originally found in a cave in the village of Saham in Jordan, close to where Israel, Jordan and Syria's Golan Heights converge – and within three miles of the Israeli spa and hot springs of Hamat Gader, a religious site for thousands of years.

According to sources in Saham, they were discovered five years ago after a flash flood scoured away the dusty mountain soil to reveal what looked like a large capstone. When this was levered aside, a cave was discovered with a large number of small niches set into the walls. Each of these niches contained a booklet. There were also other objects, including some metal plates and rolled lead scrolls.

The codices range in size from smaller than 3in x 2in to around 10in x 8in. They each contain an average of eight or nine pages and appear to be cast, rather than inscribed, with images on both sides and bound with lead-ring bindings. Many of them were severely corroded when they were first discovered, although it has been possible to open them with care.

The codex showing what may be the face of Christ is not thought to have been opened yet. Some codices show signs of having been buried – although this could simply be the detritus resulting from lying in a cave for hundreds of years.

Unlike the Dead Sea Scrolls, the lead codices appear to consist of stylised pictures, rather than text, with a relatively small amount of script that appears to be in a Phoenician language, although the exact dialect is yet to be identified. At the time these codices were created, the Holy Land was populated by different sects, including Essenes, Samaritans, Pharisees, Sadducees, Dositheans and Nazoreans.



There was no common script and considerable intermingling of language and writing systems between groups. Which means it could take years of detailed scholarship to accurately interpret the codices.

Many of the books are sealed on all sides with metal rings, suggesting they were not intended to be opened. This could be because they contained holy words which should never be read. For example, the early Jews fiercely protected the sacred name of God, which was only ever uttered by The High Priest in the Temple in Jerusalem at Yom Kippur.

One plate has been interpreted as a schematic map of Christian Jerusalem showing the Roman crosses outside the city walls. At the top can be seen a ladder-type shape. This is thought to be a balustrade mentioned in a biblical description of the Temple in Jerusalem. Below that are three groups of brickwork, to represent the walls of the city.



Scientists: The first Americans may have been Texans

By ERIC BERGER HOUSTON CHRONICLE, March 24, 2011

Texas scientists have found the oldest confirmed site of human habitation in the Americas just north of Austin, where the Edwards Plateau meets the coastal plains.

The unprecedented haul of artifacts from as far back as 15,500 years ago brings archaeologists much closer to answering the mysteries of who the first Americans were, where they came from and how they got here.

The new work, published Thursday in the journal *Science*, may definitively prove humans lived in the Americas prior to the "Clovis" people, who spread widely across the western hemisphere beginning about 13,000 years ago. These people, identifiable by their characteristic fluted spear points, were long thought to be the first Americans.

The discovery of such an old settlement also suggests the first Americans must have come from Asia, not through an ice-free corridor over land, but along the Alaskan and Canadian coasts in boats as long as 16,000 years ago.

"I think we're getting closer and closer to understanding how and when the first people came into the Americas," said Michael Waters, a Texas A&M University archaeologist who led the study.

Waters and his colleagues found the trove of some 15,000 stone artifacts about 50 miles north-northwest of Austin at the Debra L. Friedkin site along Buttermilk Creek.

Fed by permanent springs, this area between the Edwards Plateau and lower coastal plains would have offered ample game from both ecosystems, and its limestone held an abundant supply of flint-like rock, or chert, ideal for making Stone Age tools.

Since the 1930s, archaeologists have believed the ancestors of the Clovis people — so named for a small number of stone "points" found near Clovis, N.M. - walked into North America from Asia across the Bering Sea landmass as the last Ice Age waned about 13,500 years ago.

Long-held theory

They feasted on large game unaccustomed to human predators and possibly contributed to the extinction of animals such as the mammoth. They followed this game and quickly spread throughout the continent. Eventually the Clovis technology gave way to varied, ancient Indian peoples. This is the story long told in textbooks and museums.

In recent years, however, this "Clovis first" theory has come under mounting attack by some archaeologists, linguists and geneticists who suggest people may have been in this hemisphere for far longer, predating the Clovis by thousands of years.

Some sites in Virginia and Pennsylvania have produced artifacts that archaeologists claim show evidence of habitation 15,000 to 17,000 years ago. But this evidence, generally measured in dozens of artifacts rather than thousands, hasn't convinced some Clovis-first archaeologists.

The new evidence, however, is difficult to dismiss. Waters' team found the thousands of older artifacts in sediments beneath a layer of Clovis artifacts.

The design of the older points is more crude than Clovis technology, but there are enough similarities to suggest that Clovis points were derived from the older points.

"Some people will say this is the final nail in the coffin for the Clovis-first theory," said Gary Haynes, a professor of anthropology at the University of Nevada, Reno, who has long been skeptical of pre-Clovis peoples in the Americas. "I don't think this is the last nail, but I do think they've done some pretty good work here."

Questions about dating

Haynes said he still has questions about the accuracy of the dating of sediments - without carbon-based material it's difficult to get precise estimates of dates - and he has concerns that artifacts from later eras could have slipped down into older sediments.

But Lee Nordt, a co-author of the *Science* paper and a geologist at Baylor University, dismissed that concern. He said there's no evidence of such post-burial redistribution in the sediments.

"They demonstrated to us unequivocally that the peopling of the Americas occurred prior to Clovis times and more than 13,000 years ago," Nordt said.

If Waters' conclusions are correct, the first Americans were evidently handy with boats. Prior to about 13,500 years ago, sheets of ice two miles thick covered nearly all of Canada, making a land route impassable. The most plausible solution is that the first Americans traveled a coastal route, using boats to come down the Alaskan and Canadian coasts, parts of which probably would have been free of ice.

There is little archaeological evidence of this trek, however, as such sites would now be underwater as seas have been rising for thousands of years. Nevertheless this theory is supported by modern genetics, which suggest several handfuls of brave adventurers ventured from northeast Asia around 16,000 years ago. Their genes can be found in many of today's Native Americans.

Civil War 150th Commemoration Discussion Series
September 2011 — April 2012
CJ Davidson Center (UC) & Fort Concho Commissary

Dr. Kenneth J. Heineman, Professor and Chair, ASU History Department, is planning a monthly panel/lecture/discussion series on seven topics related to the U.S. Civil War, hosted by, among others, the ASU History Department, the ASU Center for Security Studies, the West Texas Collection, the Multicultural Center, Air Force ROTC, Fort Concho, and the Tom Green Civil War Roundtable.

According to Dr. Heineman, the goal is to engage as many ASU and San Angelo community people as possible, providing engaging, informative sessions throughout the year. Sessions with three panelists would limit speakers to no more than 15 minutes each in order to provide moderated discussion with the audience. Sessions will be free to the public and will be held at either the Fort Concho Commissary or the University Center on the ASU campus.

An example of some of the planned topics are The Civil War comes to Texas, Civil War Commanders: Ulysses S. Grant vs. Robert E. Lee, Guerilla Warfare, Counter-Insurgency, and the Lessons of the Civil War. We will keep members informed of the specifics as the time nears.

**CVAS volunteer list for Fort Chadbourne Living History Days,
May 6th & 7th**

The Living History Days at Fort Chadbourne will be held May 6th and 7th. The CVAS is not actively involved in an archeological project at the Fort at this time; therefore, the CVAS will only have an exhibit during the event. We will only need a limited number of volunteers to man the exhibit. During the last two meetings, a sign sheet for volunteers was available. At this time we have enough volunteers needed for both days. Following is a list of volunteers and the times they will be working.

Friday May 6th **8:00-11:30**

Brownie Roberts
Bill Haley
Loy Haley
Larry Riemenschneider

11:30-3:00

Fred Braziel
C.A. Maedgen
Tee Maedgen
Larry Riemenschneider

Saturday May 7th **8:30-12:30**

Bill Haley
Loy Haley
Fred Braziel
Eilene Braziel
Tom Ashmore

12:30-5:00

Janice Weiss
Bill Haley
Loy Haley
C.A. Maedgen
Tee Maedgen

If you unable to work, please contact me before the upcoming meeting so that we can find a replacement.

Larry Riemenschneider
325-653-8216

CVAS Members,

Thank you so much for the book, Fort Chadbourne, that you presented to me during the last meeting in recognition of seven years of chairmanship of the archeology fair. What a nice surprise. Your kindness in words and thoughts mean a lot to me. You could not have picked a better gift because, as most of you know, Fort Chadbourne and our work there over the past several years is near and dear to my heart.

*Thanks again,
Larry Riemenschneider*

CVAS April 28th Meeting Presentation

Vickii Scism

DECEIT, SUSPICION, AND SOME VERY OLD GRAVES

Oh my, what one can learn from old survey field notes!

Railroad survey field notes and plat maps provide invaluable source information to this researcher who, along with her crew is physically tracing across West Texas, the historic freight route, The Chihuahua Road. During the mid 1800's freight companies transported trade goods through gulf ports, Indianola and Port Lavaca, Texas, followed the Immigrant Route or the Military Road to El Paso or via an alternate route crossing at Presidio del Norte to reach the destination, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico. The United States and the world needed silver; therefore, silver bullion became the impetus for the exchange. Historic documents are essential toward tracing the route; however, the early surveyors often made notation of the old road's location while occasionally adding details that are important guidelines for the trail sleuth and cherished by the landowner.

Survey field notes sometimes provide a glimpse of everyday lifestyles of early pioneers. Included within the historic documents may be found a discussion of daily chores, certificates of water rights and land grants, or the surprising details of unbecoming behavior. Noted details that seem humorous to today's reader played a serious role in the personal affairs and livelihood of individuals at the time they were written. Drawn from survey field notes, the paper will focus on incidents surrounding three families who lived along the old freight route during the time period, 1862 – 1910. Subtitles are: **"John Burgess said, Well here, you can put up your house"**; **The Lands of Landrum, Where Was He Buried?**; and **He Never Slept at Her House!**. These accounts are a representation of many worthwhile notations made by those tough, hard-working land surveyors.

The following is my transcription of hand-written notes of George B. McClellan, who was part of General C. F. Smith's party during his exploration and inspection tour when he visited Camp Johnston in 1852, just before they moved the unit to Oak Creek and built Fort Chadbourne. The notes were found by CVAS member Darrell Fischer and provided to me during one of our meetings. They are copied directly out of a small personal notebook. I thought you would find the notes interesting. The month is October. This party came from inspecting Oak Creek, then down and across the Colorado River and over to Camp Johnston. When they left they continued on to Camp McKavett. [Tom Ashmore]

Monday, 25th

In camp at Camp Johnston

This camp is on the W. bank of the N. fork of the Concho. The stream is bordered by large pecans – certainly affording, together with the stone in the vicinity, the necessary materials for building. The country around is bare of timber & covered by prairie dog towns & rattlesnakes. To west and S.W. scant mesquite growth. To the N.W., W., N, & N.E. ridges of hills. This post is remarkably healthy, & as this river is much frequented by Indians, I rather doubt the xxxxxx of moving it to Oak Creek.

The command (5 Cos.) are in tents – nothing whatever in the way of building having been attempted. Of the discipline of the men I cannot form an opinion - it is probably pretty good – the officers are not generally possessed of the proper spirit – too much disposition to can't thwart & complain – not the real military spirit of obeying orders promptly & making the best. Of circumstances as they are – I doubt whether xxx Oak Creek will content them.

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
CVASSANANGELO.ORG

Meeting Location

Please remember that our meetings are now in the classroom at the Fort Concho Living History Stables, **236 Henry O. Flipper St.** We enter through the side door.

2011 Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Cell _____

Family members _____

Email _____

I pledge I will not intentionally violate the terms or conditions of any current or future state or local statute concerning cultural resources or engage in the practice of buying or selling artifacts for commercial purposes, or engage in the willful destruction of archeological data, or disregard proper archeological field techniques

Signature _____ Date _____

Mail to: CVAS, 4801 Royal Oak Dr., San Angelo, TX 76904

Individual \$15

Family \$20

Student or military N/C

(active military only)