



# *Concho Valley Archeological Society Newsletter*

*December 2011*

## **Christmas party/dinner set for December 15th**

The CVAS Christmas party and dinner is set to take place in the Fort Concho Commissary on December 15th. As was done last year, Karla Clark will cook the turkey, ham, dressing and gravy. At the November meeting, people committed to bringing mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green beans, bread, cranberry sauce, and fruit salad.

Needs are: someone to bring ice, everyone else to bring a side dish or dessert. We need four volunteers to come two hours early to set up, and someone to carve the turkey. Please contact Arnetta Cooper if you are willing to help out.

The Ice House Brass Band are to play from 6:00-8:00.

New officers will be voted on at this dinner. Nominations were taken during the November meeting, but we are taking nominations right up to the voting business. Email Tom Ashmore, Arnetta Cooper, or Jack Woodrow for nominations or you can nominate at the event.

## **Texas Historical Commission looks into dried lakes**

<http://www.oaoa.com>, November 13, 2011, by Nathaniel Miller

Dried-up bodies of water are producing some hidden historical treasures, according to the Texas Historical Commission, but so far, no such finds have been reported in West Texas.

Director of the Archeology Division for the THC Pat Mercado-Allinger said since the recent drought has taken its toll on the lakes and reservoirs in the state, items such as tools, cemeteries and even skulls are being found. While calls have come in from around West Texas about potential finds, the THC has yet to make its way to the area.

"There have been instances reported of (items) exposed," Mercado said. "We don't have the man power to check all of them."

John Grant, Director of the Colorado River Municipal Water District, said about six months ago, a motor boat was discovered at the bottom of Lake Spence, but nothing else has been discovered. Citing the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which helps retain diverse elements of past cultures, Grant said multiple studies were done to make sure there was nothing to be disturbed before construction began on Ivie or Spence.

Ivie, before being constructed in the 1980s, was delayed several times to relocate several local family cemeteries. Spence was constructed in 1969, though there were no reported delays in its creation.

"We spent about \$10 million ... to make sure there were no archeological sites," Grant said.

Fort Stockton mayor Bill Lannom said there were findings at the bottom of the Imperial Reservoir, but they were items he had expected.

"Just a motor boat and some beer bottles," Lannom said.

**(Continued on page 2)**

## Texas Historical Commission looks into dried lakes

(Continued from page 1)

Since taking effect in 1966, the Preservation Act states the United States government would “use measures, including financial and technical assistance, to foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations.”

Mercado said though the laws have helped preserve several historical sites, there are still several that were overlooked.

“Many of the protections (of the law) now in place just weren’t laws back (before 1966),” she said.

Though there have been no significant finds in the Permian Basin, Mercado said individuals are not encouraged to go out to dried bodies of water in search of hidden artifacts. Saying there could be possible legal action for individuals who venture into an area controlled by a water municipality, Mercado said those who are concerned about possible historical findings should contact the appropriate authorities to work with the THC.

“It’s when people start picking things up and destroy them when it becomes an issue,” Mercado said.

## Historic coins with drill holes

Tom Ashmore

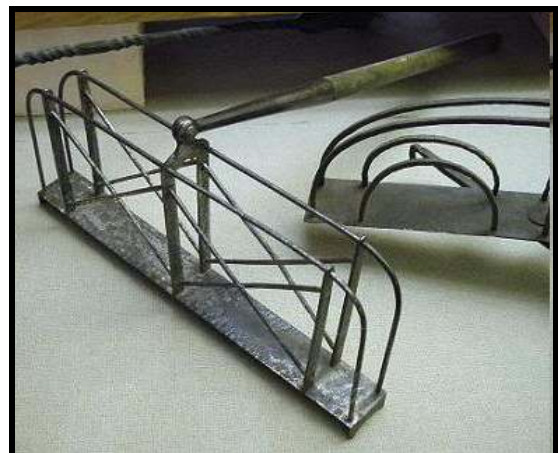
If you were with us during the excavation of the Butterfield stage station at Fort Chadbourne you probably remember us finding a dime with a hole drilled in it. Recently, a friend of my wife gave us a small bag of old coins her deceased husband collected over the years and in it were a bunch of Indian head pennies. One of those coins, dated 1897, had a hole drilled in it and it reminded me of the coin we found at Fort Chadbourne.

One of the first ideas of the hole drilled in coins was that it might be made into a necklace, but this does not make much sense because the drill holes are usually very crude and displaying money in the 1800s was probably not a good idea. One story I read was that in the late 1800’s through the early 1900’s men’s watch fobs were often made using silver coins. One person spoke of his grandfather’s watch fob made from many barber coins with holes drilled in them, then hooked together with what looked like copper wire. I think there must have been two holes in each coin for that. Another person states he came across an 1836 document showing the different ways people tagged their livestock and many of them used pennies with a hole in them and strung it through the cow/ox ears. OK, but knowing how easy it is for an animal to get that pulled off in the brush makes me think you might just be throwing money away—not something most people would be willing to risk.

Which brings me to what I believe is the most likely reason. These coins were probably to ensure yourself of an emergency stash of money in case of robbery or otherwise being caught without funds. If they were on a necklace it would probably be hidden under the clothing. Most were likely sewn into the lining of clothes. This would be for both men and women. If you were robbed you would always have a small amount of money to get you through.



**Artifact Quiz:** This object is 15” long and about 3.5” high. The handle on top is also about 15” long. The object to the right is a portion of another version of the same thing. Answer: page 3.



# Metal Arrowheads

Tom Ashmore

While researching Tower Hill, Ray Theiss and I had the privilege of visiting the late Jim Davis' artifact collection. While there I found one of the largest collections of Indian metal arrowheads I have ever seen. You would think metal arrowheads would be abundant, but I have seen very few. In addition there was a complete arrow. Given the fact I found no other replicas in his entire collection, I believe it is real. The construction of it appears completely authentic.



Artifact Quiz from page 2: This is a bread toaster, used over a fireplace.

# Castles of 'Lost Cities' Revealed in Libyan Desert

<http://www.ouramazingplanet.com>, November 08, 2011

New evidence of a lost civilization in an area of the Sahara in Libya has emerged from images taken by satellites.

Using satellites and air photographs to identify the remains in one of the most inhospitable parts of the desert, a team from the University of Leicester in England has discovered more than 100 fortified farms and villages with castle-like structures and several towns, most dating between AD 1 to 500.

"It is like someone coming to England and suddenly discovering all the medieval castles. These settlements had been unremarked and unrecorded under the Gadhafi regime," said project leader David Mattingly, professor of Roman archaeology at the university. The fall of the regime has opened up Libya to more exploration by archaeologists of its pre-Islamic heritage.

These "lost cities" were built by a little-known ancient civilization called the Garamantes, whose lifestyle and culture was far more advanced and historically significant than ancient sources had suggested.

The team from the University of Leicester has identified the mud brick remains of the castle-like complexes, with walls still standing up to 13 feet (4 meters) high, along with traces of dwellings, cairn cemeteries, associated field systems, wells and sophisticated irrigation systems.

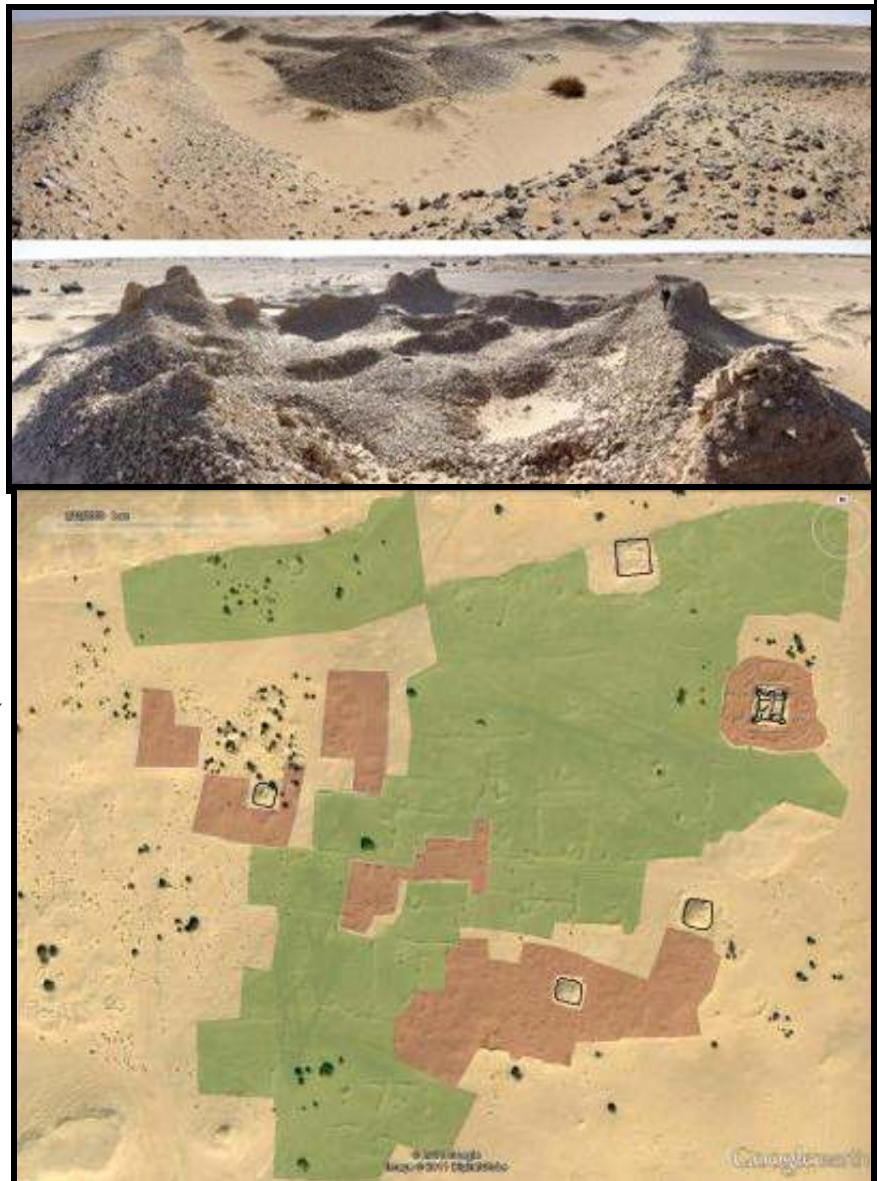
Follow-up ground surveys earlier this year confirmed the pre-Islamic date and remarkable preservation of the sites.

"Satellite imagery has given us the ability to cover a large region. The evidence suggests that the climate has not changed over the years and we can see that this inhospitable landscape with zero rainfall was once very densely built up and cultivated. These are quite exceptional ancient landscapes, both in terms of the range of features and the quality of preservation," said Martin Sterry, who has been responsible for much of the image analysis and site interpretation.

The findings challenge a view dating back to Roman accounts that the Garamantes consisted of barbaric nomads and troublemakers on the edge of the Roman Empire.

"In fact, they were highly civilized, living in large-scale fortified settlements, predominantly as oasis farmers. It was an organized state with towns and villages, a written language and state of the art technologies. The Garamantes were pioneers in establishing oases and opening up trans-Saharan trade," Mattingly said.

The professor and his team were forced to evacuate Libya in February when the anti-Gadhafi revolt started, but hope to be able to return to the field as soon as security is fully restored. The Libyan antiquities department, badly neglected under Gadhafi, is closely involved in the project.



A satellite image of area of desert with archaeological interpretation of features: fortifications are outlined in black, areas of dwellings are in red and oasis gardens are in green. Google, image copyright 2011 DigitalGlobe.

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)