



# *Concho Valley Archeological Society Newsletter*

*December 2015*

Thursday, Dec 17th, 6 p.m. @ Ft Concho Commissary

CVAS will provide: turkey, ham, dressing, gravy, bread, tea, coffee

NEED VOLUNTEERS: Set up at 5:30 PM in the Commissary Building.

We will also be having a silent auction. Please bring any donations for the auction with you for our fund raiser.



## *New CVAS Officers Elected*

The new CVAS officers for 2016 were elected at the November monthly meeting. The election was carried by slate and it was a unanimous vote. The 2016 officers will be:

**President: Callan Clark**

**Vice President: Tom Ashmore**

**Secretary: Brownie Roberts**

**Treasurer: Steven Schooler**

**Director: Larry Riemenschneider**

## **CVAS January meeting at Davidson Center at ASU**

The January meeting (28th) will be held at the Davidson Center at ASU. CVAS membership approved this meeting place change during the November meeting. The ASU Friends of the Library and West Texas Collection will host a presentation on the Burt Smalley Petroglyphs Archeological Site at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 28, in the Houston Harte C.J. Davidson University Center.

In 1989, a field crew from the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory of the University of Texas at Austin conducted a pipeline survey through Irion County. On a limestone hill near Teepee Draw, they came across petroglyphs they thought to be pre-historic. After further investigation, it was determined that they were historic carvings, Anglo-American in origin.

## Independence Creek: mortar holes and midden found

Tom Ashmore

Lisa Wrinkle recently found a line of large mortar holes and a pristine large midden just above Dry Creek, overlooking the area we know to be a large encampment area and also the area of the bison bone discoveries. Lisa is planning to invite CVAS and IAS out in March 2016 to assist in recording the new site. This is an easy hike for just about anyone. She will also be open to anyone wanting to explore further the hillside this site was discovered on. We will keep you informed of the specific date when Lisa passes it on to us in the spring.



## Ancient Southwest Texas Project – Texas State University Summary of the 2015 ENC Season

<https://aswtproject.wordpress.com>, August 4, 2015

As we said at the beginning of the spring session, our focus was on the south wall of the Eagle Cave trench

As is often the case in archaeology, our initial goals for finishing our work on the south wall were a little too ambitious, and we had to modify our plan. While we had hoped to step and profile the entire trench face, what we did instead was focus on the upper “zone” within Eagle Cave, and intensively sample those strats (leaving the lower deposits for the 2016 season).

Rather than creating a tall, vertical profile across the entire shelter we “stepped” the profile as we excavated. This gives the profile itself a very unique shape, but follows our motto of “Low Impact, High Resolution.” The stepped profiles and excavation units are more stable, and we only excavated small areas to do as little damage to the site as possible. What was also striking was how far back the edge of the trench had eroded since the UT excavations in 1963. Where we encountered intact deposits at the top of the trench was nearly 5 meters (~16 feet) south of the original 1963 trench edge.

As we were excavating we realized we had strikingly differential preservation of materials between the dripline (front) and the rear wall of the shelter. We had expected to find more fiber and plant remains preserved towards the rear wall, but in fact we found the best preservation to be towards the dripline. In this area we had thousands of fragments of

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## Ancient Southwest Texas Project – Texas State University Summary of the 2015 ENC Season (continued)

lechuguilla, sotol, and yucca leaves along with innumerable seeds, pieces of wood and sticks, and other plant debris, whereas we encountered mainly ashy and reworked deposits toward the rear.

In the fiber zones we also found some really extraordinary artifacts that archaeologists normally do not get to find: fragments of cordage, knotted fibers, sandals, a basketry fragment, and an atlatl dart foreshaft!

As fascinating as all the perishable artifacts are, we found something even more important: coprolites! Emily wrote an excellent blog post on coprolites (see From the Bowels of the Lower Pecos) so I won't go in to much detail, but we recovered hundreds of fragments of coprolites. These artifacts will become invaluable as we begin to study how the people used Eagle Cave because they provide a direct link to what the people ate. A pilot study of Eagle Cave coprolites is being undertaken by Texas A&M Ph.D. student Chase Beck.

Speaking of what people ate, we also found a variety of well-preserved faunal (animal) remains. Although most of the bones were from small animals (like rabbits, mice, squirrels, and fish), we did find evidence of larger game like deer, bison, and antelope.

The January-May 2015 field season was very successful, and we will be learning more about Eagle Cave as we begin analyses. We will be returning to Eagle Cave next winter to finish the south wall.



(clockwise from top right): sandal fragment, foreshaft, cordage, and matting fragment.

# CVAS Facebook Page

We are getting many “likes” from our new Facebook page. For those not familiar, a “like” is when someone indicates they want to be notified when an addition to the change is made so they can view it. I’m also able to share posts from other Facebook pages that I think are of interest to our members. In the example below I shared an update on the Fort Concho bandstand being built. Some of the pages I follow are Fort Concho, Fort Chadbourne, Fort Lancaster, Center for Big Bend Studies, Ancient Southwest Texas Project – Texas State University. I’m looking to find more that are dedicated to archeology and Texas history.

Concho Valley Archeological Society

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0 Website Clicks

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ABOUT

CVAS is a non-profit organization of professional and avocational archeologists and persons interested in history and archeology, based in San Angelo, TX

http://cvas.sanangelo.org/ Boost Ability

PHOTOS

Write something...

Concho Valley Archeological Society shared Fort Concho National Historic Landmark's photo.

8 likes · 0 comments

Bandstand under construction at Fort Concho National Historic Landmark.

## Tom Ashmore contributes to Southern Trails Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association Desert Tracks Journal

I've been informed by Jon and Debbie Lawrence, editors of the Desert Tracks journal, that my article sent to them will be published in their winter publication. Desert Tracks is the quarterly publication of the Southern Trails Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

You might remember from our last newsletter that I took the two of them out on Arden road to see the crossing points of the Butterfield Trail. It was during our conversations that they asked if I might be interested in writing a short article for their winter issue and a longer article for their spring issue.

The article I wrote for them is entitled 'Confusion about Texas Sections of Butterfield Trail,' and details the three sections of the trail between Fort Chadbourne and the Pecos River where shortcuts were constructed—one during the Butterfield period and two after the Butterfield Trail was abandoned. Two of these shortcuts have often been confused as the Butterfield Trail when they weren't. Those two are Grierson's Shortcut, which ran from Fort Concho, along what is now Arden Road, veered in to the original Johnson's Station and then paralleled the river again for another five miles until it merged back into the original Butterfield Trail. The other shortcut was built by the Ben Ficklin Mail Company and diverged from the Butterfield Trail at Centralia Draw. It went south and then west, while the Butterfield Trail continued due west from Centralia Draw. They both merged again before heading into Castle Gap. The third section I discussed was actually two trails coming out of Fort Chadbourne, both used by the Butterfield Overland Mail Company, but at different periods of time and that later one used extensively after the Butterfield Company disbanded. The later shortcut crossed the creek due south of the fort and headed almost straight down close to what is now Bronte before crossing the Colorado River and merging into the older trail. The older trail was the one notated by the crossing point on the highway between Bronte and Robert Lee. That trail was originally the old military trail used to cross over the hills and down to the original Camp Johnston. That trail was used by the Butterfield company early on because it was the only road at all when they first started out. The stagecoach trail diverged from the military trail after crossing the Colorado River. The military trail headed west to cross the hills while the Butterfield road headed south to their Grape Creek Station.

My next article for their publication will focus on my work detailing the crossing points at Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River. I covered this in the November 2010 issue of our CVAS newsletter.

Their website can be found at <http://southern-trails.org> and their publications are in .pdf for download.

Tom Ashmore  
Vice President & newsletter editor, CVAS

### Fort Lancaster visitor's center update

From the Ft. Lancaster Facebook Page: Latest construction update from Fort Lancaster! All the walls are up and now begins the painting and priming. The floor is nearing completion with the new tile which looks great. Soon the new exhibit will be installed! We are excited about the progress that is being made!



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.

## 2015 Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Family members \_\_\_\_\_

132 Kilt Road San Angelo, TX 76901

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 \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$15</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Family</b>	<b>\$20</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Student or military N/C</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>

(active military only)

Mail to: CVAS, 132 Kilt Road, San Angelo, TX 76901