



Concho Valley Archeological Society Newsletter

January 2012

New CVAS Officers

At the December Christmas dinner we voted on a slate of new CVAS officers. The positions for the new year are as follows: Vice President: Callan Clark, Treasurer: Peter Norris, Secretary: Sue Meachem. We also had some volunteers step forward. For next year's archeology fair we will have a team effort by Ray Theiss and Callan Clark.

President position remains open

As of January 1st no one has volunteered for the office of president. Our by-laws state that the president cannot hold office for more than two consecutive terms. CA Maedgen has completed his second term as president. I have visited with CA and he has agreed to serve another year as president. In order for him to serve one more year the Society has to suspend the rules to elect him for the upcoming year (2012). In order to suspend the rules all members must be contacted prior to the meeting that the suspension will take place. Let it be known that in our January meeting Thursday 26th 2012, we will vote on the suspension of the rules so that CA Maedgen can be re-elected president for one more year. This suspension of the rules will only be for this particular election.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Larry Riemenschneider
CVAS Director

January 26th Meeting Presentation

This month's speaker is noted author Russell Smith. Russell Smith is a former Tom Green County sheriff and San Angelo Chief of Police. He has authored several books on local and area murder events. His upcoming book, *Women, Whiskey and Sin*, will be a series of light-hearted books involving West Texas saloons and the ladies who worked there, revolving around the time when Texas passed laws against gambling and prostitution in the late 1800's.

We meet in the Living History Stables classroom (236 Henry O. Flipper St.) in historic Ft. Concho at 7 PM. You can take the road the drives down the north side of the fort to the a parking lot on the right. The stables are across the street from the parking lot.

THC site atlas makes history handy

AUSTIN - The Texas Historical Commission's (THC) improved atlas now features nearly 300,000 site records, including data on Official Texas Historical Markers, National Register of Historic Places, historic courthouses and museums in the state.

You may search by historic designation, keyword, county, address or site name to get instant access to details textual descriptions, historic photographs and interactive maps to help you discover what makes areas of interest unique.

The THC has recently changed the software used to display map data. As a result, the maps look better, are easier to use and display more useful data. Access the atlas by visiting atlas.thc.state.tx.us.

Fort McKavett

Tom Ashmore

I know most folks in CVAS have visited Fort McKavett. However, have you ever visited when it was almost completely deserted of visitors? It's a different place if you are interested in archeology and have the ability to quietly walk in and among the ruins. Don't pick anything up, but it is wonderful to find bits and pieces of history laying around. In and among the foundations that have not been restored you can see bits of pottery and chinaware that make your imagination slip back to those days even more than the restored displays. Here are a few pictures of a time I was there with practically nobody around.



Big Bend outing set for Feb 24th—26th

This year's Big Bend outing will feature trips to view dinosaur bones and fossils and a visit to a tinaja at the north end of the park. This will be a guided trip. Camping will be at Chisos Basin. Some sites are already reserved. Contact Jack Woodrow for more information. We will also have a more in-depth article in next month's newsletter.

Jack Woodrow: 325-942-9153

Hayrick outing

I still haven't been able to reach the landowner and ask if a big group of people could come on his property. If you would like to participate in the project at Hayrick, the County Seat of Coke County, please come to the January Meeting and talk to me, Callan Clark. I have the dates for each outing and sign up sheets.

Callan Clark

Artifact Quiz: This object is 3-1/4" long Answer: page 5.

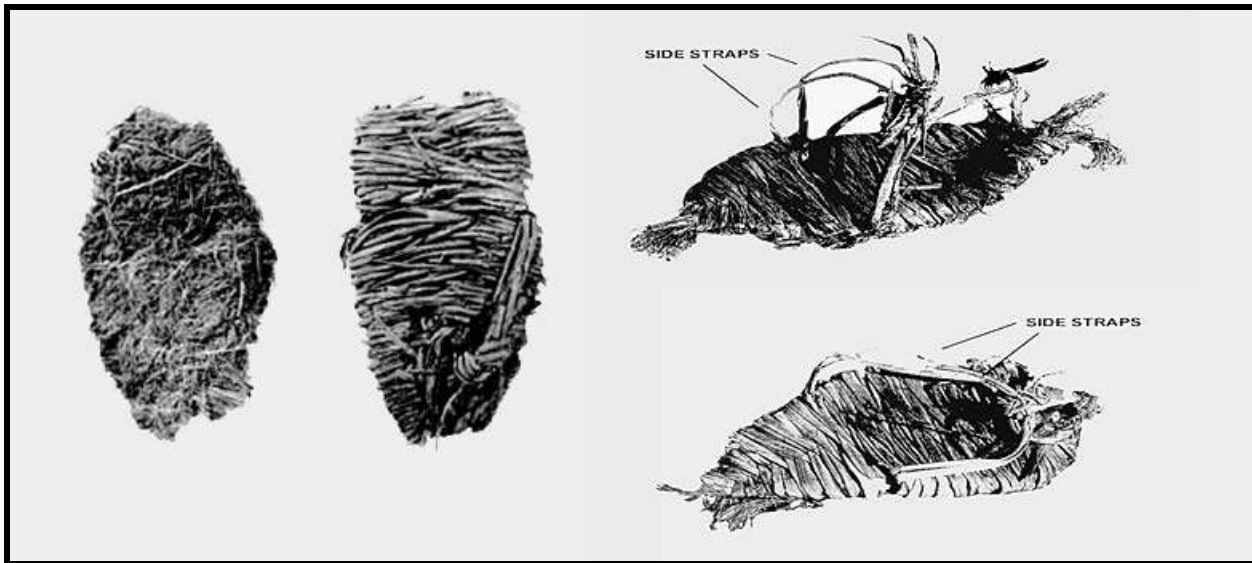


New Member

**welcome
Elizabeth Boyd**

Reconstructing Fishtail Sandals

The following article is from a larger article on the West Texas Granado Cave excavation reported in Texas Beyond History. You can find the full article at: <http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/granado>



Eight fishtail sandals were recovered from Granado Cave. All of the sandals are constructed entirely of narrow-leaf yucca leaves. They are all of the same type, known by archeologists as "fishtail sandals," the only type of sandals found in the Rustler Hills. Similar specimens have been found in the two Caldwell shelters, the McAlpin Caves, and at Brooks Cave.

The widths of the sandals from Granado Cave range from 1.5 to 3.5 inches (4.2 to 9.1 cm). Interestingly, most of the sandals were made for small feet, probably for children or even infants. No sandals were found that would appear large enough to fit an adult foot, even considering that these people may have had small feet, which is not supported by skeletal studies. Sandals appear to have been made primarily for children, whose feet had not yet toughened and become insensitive to the hot desert land. Historic accounts support this argument, as they indicate that people went barefoot. However, adults may have also sometimes worn sandals.

The sandals vary in shape from the characteristic fishtail form to sandals that have a wider, square-toe shape. All were constructed in the same manner.

The Reconstruction

In order to demonstrate the motor skills involved and the versatility of *Yucca elata* as a raw material, archeologist Donny Hamilton replicated the construction of the sandals.



1: The warps are formed into two bundles of six yucca leaves each.

2: The bundled warps are crossed to form the characteristic "fishtail" that will become the heel of the sandal.



3: Estimating the required length of the sandal.

Continued on next page

Reconstructing Fishtail Sandals

(continued from page 3)

From a single crown of yucca leaves, one pair of adult-sized sandals and one pair of child-sized sandals could be constructed.

An adult sandal required 58 yucca leaves. The two warp bundles consisted of six leaves each (12 leaves) with an additional two leaves placed on each of the warps to form the side straps (4 leaves). The weft consisted of 14 bundles of 3 leaves (42 leaves), for a total of 116 for the pair.

The warp bundle of the child's sandal consisted of five leaves each (10 leaves). Two leaves were required to make the side straps (4 leaves) and eight weft bundles of 2 leaves each (16 leaves) were used. A total of 32 leaves were required for one child's sandal, or 64 for a pair.

The toe loop was secured over the second toe, and there is not a "left" or "right" side. The toes project slightly over the ends of the sandal, but this was not found to be bothersome to the wearer.

4: The bundles are tied together to form the heel of the sandal; the bases of the leaves are alternated from side to side.



5: The wefts are criss-crossed over the warps in a figure-8 pattern.



6: Pushing the wefts down to compact the base.



7: Midway down the sandal two extra leaves are inserted on each side; they



8: Checking the size of the sandal base.



9: The toe ring is formed by knotting together two wefts.



10: The side straps are tied together across the top of the foot and then joined to the toe ring.



11: The toe ring is placed over the second toe, not the big toe as in modern sandals.

Trail of 'stone breadcrumbs' reveals the identity of one of the first human groups to leave Africa

<http://www.eurekalert.org>, 30-Nov-2011, by Yael Franco

A series of new archaeological discoveries in the Sultanate of Oman, nestled in the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, reveals the timing and identity of one of the first modern human groups to migrate out of Africa, according to a research article published in the open-access journal PLoS ONE.

An international team of archaeologists and geologists working in the Dhofar Mountains of southern Oman, led by Dr. Jeffrey Rose of the University of Birmingham, report finding over 100 new sites classified as "Nubian Middle Stone Age (MSA)." Distinctive Nubian MSA stone tools are well known throughout the Nile Valley; however, this is the first time such sites have ever been found outside of Africa.

According to the authors, the evidence from Oman provides a "trail of stone breadcrumbs" left by early humans migrating across the Red Sea on their journey out of Africa. "After a decade of searching in southern Arabia for some clue that might help us understand early human expansion, at long last we've found the smoking gun of their exit from Africa," says Rose. "What makes this so exciting," he adds, "is that the answer is a scenario almost never considered."

These new findings challenge long-held assumptions about the timing and route of early human expansion out of Africa. Using a technique called Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) to date one of the sites in Oman, researchers have determined that Nubian MSA toolmakers had entered Arabia by 106,000 years ago, if not earlier. This date is considerably older than geneticists have put forth for the modern human exodus from Africa, who estimate the dispersal of our species occurred between 70,000 and 40,000 years ago.

Even more surprising, all of the Nubian MSA sites were found far inland, contrary to the currently accepted theory that envisions early human groups moving along the coast of southern Arabia. "Here we have an example of the disconnect between theoretical models versus real evidence on the ground," says co-author Professor Emeritus Anthony Marks of Southern Methodist University. "The coastal expansion hypothesis looks reasonable on paper, but there is simply no archaeological evidence to back it up. Genetics predict an expansion out of Africa after 70,000 thousand years ago, yet we've seen three separate discoveries published this year with evidence for humans in Arabia thousands, if not tens of thousands of years prior to this date."

The presence of Nubian MSA sites in Oman corresponds to a wet period in Arabia's climatic history, when copious rains fell across the peninsula and transformed its barren deserts to sprawling grasslands. "For a while," remarks Rose, "South Arabia became a verdant paradise rich in resources – large game, plentiful freshwater, and high-quality flint with which to make stone tools." Far from innovative fishermen, it seems that early humans spreading from Africa into Arabia were opportunistic hunters traveling along river networks like highways. Whether or not these pioneers were able to survive in Arabia during the hyperarid conditions of the Last Ice Age is another matter – a mystery that will require archaeologists to continue combing the deserts of southern Arabia, hot on the trail of stone breadcrumbs.

The Dhofar Archaeological Project is conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture in Oman. The team is comprised of an interdisciplinary group of researchers from the University of Birmingham and Oxford Brookes University, UK; Arizona State University and Southern Methodist University, USA; Institute of Archaeology, National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine; Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Science, Czech Republic; University of Tübingen, Germany, and the University of Wollongong, Australia. The project is funded by research grants from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Australian Research Council.

Please don't forget that annual dues are due this month. The new application form with the new mailing address is on the back of this newsletter or you can pay at the meeting to our new treasurer, Peter Norris.

Artifact Quiz from page 2: This is a Sword holder or sword frog from the Civil War era, worn on the belt with the sword resting in the hook.

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.

2012 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, 4063 Green Meadow Dr., San Angelo, TX 76904

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

(active military only)