

HILL COUNTRY ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Preserving the Past

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GENERAL MEETING

Saturday

March 21, 2015

12:30 PM at

Riverside Nature Center



The Saner archeological book and publications collection will be available to purchase at the upcoming meeting on Saturday, March 21st. Prices will be 10 cents to 30 cents. Bryant Saner has donated the proceeds of the purchases to the HCAA . If one wishes to take part in the sale, arrive a little prior to the meeting to look them over.

Mummified Man, Bundled Baby

Change View of Ancient Burials in Texas

More than 10 elaborately prepared bodies recovered from caves in West Texas could rewrite the history of how people processed, buried, and even thought about the dead in the ancient Southwest, according to a new study.

Some of the remains, dating back as much as 4,000 years, were naturally mummified by the arid climate, leaving traces of skin, hair and internal tissues intact. Others were ritually "bundled," a practice that involved flexing the deceased into a fetal position, wrapping it in a series of woven mats, and sometimes binding it with ropes made from human hair.

One set of remains, unearthed from a cave known as Mummy Shelter, was of an exceptionally well mummified adult male, and is at least 800 years older than was previously thought, dating back some 1,900 years.

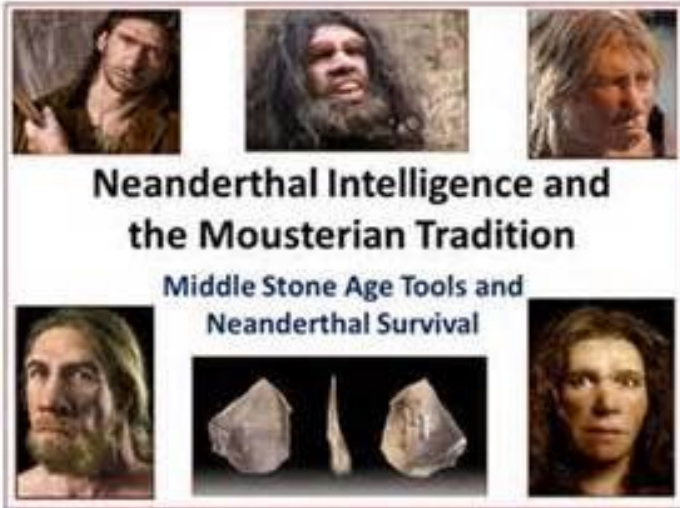
Another set, of a one-year-old child, is the most ornate infant burial found in the region and has been dated at 3,800 years old — the oldest example of bundling ever studied, according to the research, published in the journal [Plains Anthropologist](#).

The baby was interred in a rockshelter with a host of elaborate grave goods, including four ornaments carved out of mussel shells, pipes made from hollow reeds, and finely woven baskets that contained two tiny skull caps, braided out of natural fiber and affectionately painted in red diamond and zigzag patterns.

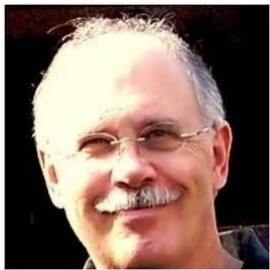
Other bodies, removed from caves near where the Pecos River meets the Texas-Mexico border, have been found with baskets full of spare clothing and even food, suggesting that the dead were being outfitted for the after-life.

Though not widely known today, except to archaeologists and relic hunters, these practices appear to have been common for a millennium or more among a nexus of cultures known simply as the Lower Pecos.

But [Dr. Solveig Turpin](#), an anthropologist at the University of Texas at Austin who conducted the research, says her study — particularly of the festooned infant — pushes back the use of these customs by at least a thousand years.



Our speaker for March meeting will be
Craig Mayer, PhD.



Dr. Craig currently works in building the Texas wine industry, but started his career teaching anthropology/archaeology at SMU and Diploma in Archaeology (MA equivalent) from Durham University in England.

Dr. Craig's talk will be: "Neanderthal Intelligence and the Mousterian Tradition: Middle Stone Age Tools and Neanderthal Survival". This presentation will focus on Neanderthal tool development and the keen intelligence needed to create such sophisticated tools, with particular emphasis on the Mousterian Tradition and Levallois technique. He will also touch on the highly influential French archaeologist, Francois Bordes, and his Paleolithic tool typology.

The talk will compare Mousterian flake tools with Aurignacian blade tools (a tradition used by fully modern forms of people, i.e., Homo Sapiens) and will review the climatic conditions in which Neanderthals lived and their adaptations to varying climatic conditions and environments over several hundred thousand years.

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Texas Archeological Society Events and Trainings

The first Archeology Academy will be "Archeology 101", and will be held in Columbus on March 27-29, with the deadline on March 19th.

The second Archeology Academy will be "Historical Archeology", and will be in Nacogdoches on May 2-3, with the deadline of April 14th.

TAS Field School will again be in Columbus and will be held June 13-20. (Deadline for registration not available as yet).

TAS Annual Meeting is 23-25 of October.

Resource for free books to download in the public domain

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/>

Examples :

The Extermination of the American Bison by William T. Hornaday

History of Ancient Pottery Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 by H. B. Waters

Parsons on the Rose by Samuel Browne Parsons

History of Embalming by J.-N. Gannal

Multiple formats for download are offered: Kindle, epub, etc., and also for reading on line.

Neanderthals wore eagle talons as jewelry 130,000 years ago



The eight eagle talons from Krapina arranged with an eagle phalanx that was also found at the site. (Luka Mjeda, Zagreb)

Long before they shared the landscape with modern humans, Neanderthals in Europe developed a sharp sense of style, wearing eagle claws as jewelry, new evidence suggests.

Researchers identified eight talons from white-tailed eagles — including four that had distinct notches and cut marks — from a 130,000-year-old Neanderthal cave in Croatia. They suspect the claws were once strung together as part of a necklace or bracelet.

"It really is absolutely stunning," study author David Frayer, an anthropology professor at the University of Kansas, told Live Science. "It fits in with this general picture that's emerging that Neanderthals were much more modern in their behavior."

The talons were first excavated more than 100 years ago at a famous sandstone rock-shelter site called Krapina in Croatia. There, archaeologists found more than 900 Neanderthal bones dating back to a relatively warm, interglacial period about 120,000 to 130,000 years ago. They also found Mousterian stone tools (a telltale sign of Neanderthal occupation), a hearth and the bones of rhinos and cave bears, but no signs of modern human occupation. *Homo sapiens* didn't spread into Europe until about 40,000 years ago.

The eagle talons were all found in the same archaeological layer, Frayer said, and they had been studied a few times before. But no one noticed the cut marks until last year, when Davorka Radovčić, curator of the Croatian Natural History Museum, was reassessing some of the Krapina objects in the collection.

The researchers don't know exactly how the talons would have been assembled into jewelry. But Frayer said some facets on the claws look quite polished — perhaps made smooth from being wrapped in some kind of fiber, or from rubbing against the surface of the other talons. There were also nicks in three of the talons that wouldn't have been created during an eagle's life, Frayer said.

Now extinct, Neanderthals were the closest known relatives of modern humans. They lived in Eurasia from about 200,000 to 30,000 years ago. Recent research has uncovered evidence that Neanderthals may have engaged in some familiar behaviors, such as burying their dead, adorning themselves with feathers and even making art.

But scientists debate the extent to which Neanderthals were capable of abstract thinking. Deliberately making or wearing jewelry would suggest some degree of symbolic thought, as well as planning, Frayer explained. And the age of the talons suggests that if the Neanderthals were indeed wearing jewelry, they didn't pick up on the trend from modern humans.

"Eagle talons are not easy to find," Frayer said. "My guess is that they were catching the birds live — which also isn't easy."

The findings were published March 11 in the journal PLOS ONE.

Famous Archaeological Sites in Texas

The state of Texas maintains a database of 65,000 archeological sites found in the state. Many of the famous archaeological sites give visitors insight into the history of Texas from prehistoric cultures right through the historic shipwrecks of the Civil War. Most of the sites, which are open to the public, are managed by the Texas Historical Commission (thc.state.tx.us).

The Alamo

The large city of San Antonio surrounds one of Texas' best-known archaeological sites, the Alamo. Most people know the Alamo (thealamo.org) as the historic building used by Texans in 1836 to hold out against the Mexican army. The area also offers a glimpse into the rest of the buildings that were part of the three-acre fort, including a church built in 1744 that now lies in ruins. Look for the stone walls and adobe huts that were used to create the fort's barracks. A walk through the Shrine and the Long Barrack buildings gives you views of a diorama that shows the way the fort looked in the 1800s.

Ancient Cultures

The area around Caprock Canyons State Park & Trailway (tpwd.state.tx.us), located southeast of Amarillo, originally played home to the Folsom culture more than 10,000 years ago. Artifacts found in the area from the Archaic period that existed up to 2,000 years ago includes pebbles boiled to heat food and stones for grinding seeds. Dart points and oval knives also were found at the site, along with Neo-Indian arrow points and pottery. To get a feel for the 15,313-acre park, hike, bike or horseback ride part of the 64.25-mile Rail-to-Trail, or take the free audio tour guide to learn more about the region.

Shipwrecks

The ocean and rivers of Texas harbor more than 600 shipwrecks, including the USS Hatteras, a side-wheel gunboat used during the Civil War. The boat was used in the Gulf of Mexico against blockade runners before it sank in 1863 in a battle against the Confederate boat the CSS Alabama. It's now a Texas State Archeological Landmark and on the National Register of Historic Places, and underwater divers can explore the historical landmark that lies 20 miles from Galveston about 60 feet underwater.

Mound Builders

The Caddo Mounds State Historic Site (visitcaddomounds.com), located along the Neches River near Nacogdoches, consists of three earthen mounds built more than 1,200 years ago by the Caddo Indians. Known as the Hasinai tribe, the ancient civilization also built a village and a ceremonial center in the area. The site was abandoned in the 13th century. Visitors to the 397-acre site will see two temple mounds, a burial mound and part of the village area via a walking trail. You'll also find a visitor center offers exhibits and displays about the area.

Social Hour Goodies

Members are encouraged to bring cookies, snacks, cake, (even healthy food if you must) to share with the other members and guests at the beginning of each meeting. We need volunteers to take home ice chest and supplies after each meeting as we can not leave them at RNC. The volunteer will then bring the ice chest and supply boxes, long with ice and new assortment of canned drinks and bottled water to the next meeting. Looking to see you there!

Renewal Time for HCAA Membership dues for 2015

Membership In HCAA brings opportunities to hear great speakers and training opportunities

The Hill Country Archeological Association is classified as a Section 501 (c) (3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code and all donations, including membership dues, are tax deductible.

Dues Schedule

- Student (full time only) \$10
- Individual, Institutions and Societies \$25
- Family \$30
- Contributing \$50
- Supporting \$100
- Life \$250
- Patron \$500

Business Class Membership:

- Business \$250
- Corporate \$500

Make Checks payable to Hill Country Archeological Association and mail to:

HCAA, P.O. Box 290393
Kerrville, TX 78029-0393

ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT HCAA
WEBSITE

www.hcarcheology.org

If you are renewing please make note of any changes to your phone, address or email.

Due by March 31 to avoid loss of membership.

Keep up to date with HCAA activities

Check our website regularly

hcarcheology.org

***Remember you can order anything from Amazon.com
through the HCAA website and our club will benefit.***

HILL COUNTRY ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

**HCAA BOARD
WILL MEET SATURDAY
MORNING
MARCH 21, 2015
AT 10:00 AM
RIVERSIDE NATURE
CENTER.
MEMBERS ARE
WELCOME TO
ATTEND**

A REMINDER

The HCAA is thankful to the many land owners who graciously allow us to survey their property for archeological sites. We should constantly remind ourselves that:

All artifacts found on their property belong to them. HCAA members keep no artifacts.

If an archeological site is identified on their property, the location of the ranch should remain confidential.

We visit a property only with owner's permission.

We do not hold a land-owner liable for injuries which occur while on their property.

We encourage, and enjoy, the participation of the landowner in our activities.

The HCAA offers its archeological activities as a community service.

HCAA members will not intentionally violate the terms and conditions of any Federal or Texas Antiquities Statutes, as same now exist, or shall hereafter be amended or enacted, or engage in the practice of buying or selling of artifacts for commercial purposes or engage in the willful destruction or distortion of archeological data or disregard proper archeological field techniques.

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