Hello Everyone, a lot has happened in the Anthropology Department since we sent out our first newsletter last spring.

One of the most important developments in the department is that we are searching to fill two new faculty positions, one in forensic anthropology and the second in medical anthropology. The opportunity to build the department’s expertise in applied areas of anthropology such as forensic anthropology, cultural resource management, and medical anthropology is an especially exciting new direction for our program.

Last Fall we passed our five year external review and one of the surprising pieces of information to come out of that process was that we are now one of the largest undergraduate programs in the country with over 300 Anthropology majors! The faculty in the department have been very active this year. You might have seen Dr. Conlee’s work in the Nasca area of Peru featured in a recent National Geographic television program, heard about Dr. Spradley’s presentation at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. or heard about Dr. Reilly’s work in the renovations and redesign of the museum at the Moundville Archaeological Park.

On a personal note, I have started working with Dr. Joel Palka of the University of Chicago-Illinois on a preliminary research project in the Lacandon Maya community of Mensabak. Dr. Palka is starting to map the many archaeological sites around the modern community and I am investigating the contemporary Lacandon use of these sites and Maya folklore concerning them.

Finally, we would love to hear from you. If you would like to tell us where you are and what you are doing, and share that information with your former classmates, please email Mary Gibson at m.gibson@txstate.edu. Take care and stay in touch.

Jon McGee

The Gault Project comes to Texas State University

Drs. Michael Collins and Clark Wernecke, director and executive director of the Gault School of Archaeological Research, will be setting up new offices for the project at Texas State under the auspices of the Department of Anthropology. The Gault Project will be housed in Lower Pecos Building adjacent to the Center for Archaeological Studies. Also, Collins has been appointed as a research professor in the Department of Anthropology.

The Gault site, 40 miles north of Austin, has been nearly continuously occupied for over 14,000 years. The project has recovered more than 2 million artifacts from the site including more than 600,000 from the Clovis period (13,500 years ago) making the largest Clovis period excavation. Other surprises have included a Clovis age stone floor, the oldest known architecture in North America, and engraved stones representative of the first art in the Americas. Current excavations are examining artifacts found consistently below the Clovis strata at Gault for which the project has received a $214,000 National Science Foundation grant.

Collins and Wernecke are interested in researching the earliest peoples in the Americas and their antecedents. In addition to the work at the Gault site they have participated in excavations of a Pleistocene bone bed in Guatemala and a long term project with NOAA examining the continental shelf off of Western Florida.
FACULTY RESEARCH

Dr. Britt Bousman and graduate students Senna Barnett and Marisol Espino excavated at the Middle Stone Age (MSA) and Later Stone Age (LSA) site of Erfkroon in South Africa during September and October of 2009. This project is funded by the National Science Foundation and is in collaboration with Dr. James Brink of the Florisbad Quaternary Research Department at the National Museum in Bloemfontein. We are investigating the evolution of modern human behavior in Africa in the Middle and Late Pleistocene eras. We recovered multiple MSA occupations dating between 70,000 and 35,000 years ago and an Early LSA occupation dating to approximately 30,000 years ago. We also have found one of the densest concentrations of Early LSA sites in the continent. Bousman plans to return to Africa in the summer of 2010.

Dr. Christina Conlee excavated at the site of La Tiza in Nasca, Peru during the summer of 2009. Her research was focused on recovering information on ancient burial practices. The project was funded by the National Geographic Society and was aimed at discovering more about the practice of human sacrifice and trophy head taking in the region, as well as the impact that looting has had on ancient Nasca cemeteries. She found that human sacrifice occurred among the Nasca people and was related to rituals conducted to bring rain and crop fertility. She also concluded that despite the amount of destruction done by looters, there is still valuable information that can be obtained from disturbed graves. The research was featured in the National Geographic Channel television program “Nasca Lines: The Buried Secrets,” that premiered in February 2010 and in the National Geographic magazine article “Spirits in the Sand” in the March 2010 issue.

Dr. Garber started an archaeology project on the small island of St. George’s Caye, Belize last summer. The island was initially the base for pirates and buccaneers and was later the home for English merchants and traders. It also served as their first capital. During the Battle of St. George’s Caye, from September 3-10, 1798 the Belizeans fought off a substantial Spanish flotilla which was Spain’s last attempt to take Belize by force.

Dr. Garber is planning a ten-year project, which will include archival research and archaeological excavations. These excavations will focus on house structures, the country’s oldest Anglo cemetery, and 3 shipwrecks that were preliminarily investigated in the summer of 2009.
Huffman Lecture

On April 6, 2010 Dr. Tom Huffman, professor emeritus at The University of the Witwatersrand, will give a lecture entitled *Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe: pathways to social complexity in Southern Africa*. Dr. Huffman has conducted field work in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and South Africa for over 40 years where he excavated at Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe and many other sites. He served at the Head of Archaeology and later the Chair of Archaeology at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for over 30 years and he is a world renowned scholar on the spread and development of Bantu societies in Southern Africa. He recently published *Handbook to the Iron Age, the archaeology of pre-colonial farming societies in Southern Africa* (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press).

FACTS Workshop

The Forensic Anthropology Center at Texas State University is offering a workshop to law enforcement officials from May 31 - June 4th that focuses on the outdoor recovery of human remains. The goal of this workshop is to educate law enforcement on the proper methodology in identifying, locating, and recovering buried or surface scattered human remains. Law enforcement officers from across the state of Texas are attending the workshop and receiving continuing education credits for their time.

Recent Events

**Dr. Richard Townsend** ~ Curator of African and Amer-Indian Art at The Art Institute of Chicago presented "Life and Art in the Aztec World" and "The Land and its Symbols in Aztec Art and Religious Performance" on March 29, 2010. Both lectures were colorfully presented with images of major sculptures, illuminated manuscripts and a variety of works of art, as well as views of archaeological ruins with plans, maps, and landscapes.

On February 11, 2010, **Dr. Terry Prewitt**, Professor at University of West Florida, presented his research topic "Semiotics and the Evolution of the Semiotic Animal".

The History Department’s Public History Program and the Anthropology Department co-sponsored the presentation of *The Search for Amelia Earhart*, an illustrated lecture by **Thomas F. King**, PhD, author of *Thirteen Bones* and Amelia Earhart’s *Shoes* on November 14, 2009. King’s talk reviewed the fascinating history of the concerted effort to find out what happened to Earhart. He highlighted the latest findings since the updated 2004 edition of *Amelia Earhart’s Shoes*, a book he co-authored on the search. He discussed his treatment of the evidence in his new novel, *Thirteen Bones*, and TIGHAR’s plans for another expedition in 2010 to — perhaps — finally solve the mystery.

The Department of Anthropology sponsored the **Ancient Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop** on October 10-11, 2009, at Texas State University. A free public screening of the award-winning documentary *Breaking the Maya Code* (Nightfire Films, 2008 – 120 min.) on the decipherment of the ancient script was held in connection with the workshop.
Becca Shattuck and Laura Ayers won third place and honorable mention, respectively, for their papers. Altogether, nine Anthropology students gave papers at the meeting. In addition to Ayers, Davis, and Shattuck, those giving papers were including Barry Kidder, Ken Lawrence, Whitney Lylte, Michael Saunders, Meredith Tise, and Robert Wishoff. “Texas State was well-represented and all of the students did an excellent job,” said Dr. Britt Bousman, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Texas State, who also presented a paper at the meeting. Bousman was vice chair of the meeting’s Anthropology section. Dr. Kate Spradley, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, also presented a paper.

Congratulations to the following students who have been accepted into Ph.D. programs:

- Rosie Bongiovanni - accepted to University of Montana
- Meredith Tise - accepted to University of South Florida
- Amber Wheat - accepted to University of Tennessee
- Dara Adams – accepted to PhD programs in Anthropology at University of Southern Illinois, The Ohio State University, UTSA
- Ashley Hurst – accepted to Conservation Biology at Antioch College as well as PhD program in Anthropology at UTSA
- Becca Shattuck - accepted to University of Missouri Columbia
- Mike Saunders - accepted to Tulane University

Three Anthropology students at Texas State University-San Marcos won awards for papers presented recently at the Texas Academy of Science meeting, held at Tarleton State University at Stephenville.

Undergraduate Anthropology major Chris Davis won Best Abstract Award in Anthropology, and graduate students