



ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS

Construction of Park to Commemorate History Stumbles on the Past

Washington State Transportation Department has had to delay some road work on Highway 101 near the Columbia River delta. Plans to straighten out a corner, and move the road for a new park, have been put on hold following a pre-construction archaeological survey. The park that is to be constructed will commemorate the westernmost camp of Lewis & Clark, where the expedition finally reached the Pacific Ocean. The artifacts found in the survey could be left over from first contact between the Indians that lived there and fur traders. Doug Wilson, Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve archaeologist told the *Seattle Times*; "It's a wonderful window into the meeting of two cultures." The Chinook Indian Nation, whose ancestors had seasonal villages in the area, has been called in to consult and assist with the excavation. The discovery includes planks and posts, stone tools, arrowheads, glass beads, and other trade items such as Chinese coins, English ceramics, gun flints and musket balls.

Things to Do in the Yard

There are a wide variety of things that people do in their yards. There are effortless things like relaxing in the sun, and the lazy Sunday afternoon barbeque. Some more strenuous activities can include things like building the sundeck to relax on, or getting rid of that pesky blackberry bush. But how many people can say they spend their time in the yard making significant archaeological discoveries?

In Salt Lake City, Utah, three teenage boys were digging while building a backyard fort. When they found a bone, they quickly dismissed it as an old animal bone and tossed it aside. As the fort

construction continued, they found more bones, first part of a rib cage then a skull: a human skull. Finally the interruptions were enough to distract them from the fort project, and the police were called. When the remains were examined, it was discovered that they were of a prehistoric American Indian.

A gardener in Cringleford, England made a discovery during a landscaping project. He stumbled across what looked to be a stash of bronze tools. Archaeologists excavated the site and came up with 145 pieces in all. There was an assortment of Bronze Age axe and spearheads, sword parts, tools and ingots for trading. The items have been dated to approximately 800 BC and are considered to be the largest and most noteworthy finds in the area.

A few projects I have done in my own backyard were building a workshop and a couple of gravel pathways. All I found while digging were rusty old house nails, and a few bottle caps. Later this summer I plan to construct a new cobblestone patio. Maybe I will be fortunate enough to make a discovery of my own.

History Found in Planning of the Future

An aboriginal archaeological site has been discovered in Seattle on the banks of the Duwamish River. Sound Transit is planning to build a new elevated light rail transit line and has hired archaeologists to survey planned construction sites for archaeological impact. Near the rivers edge, where a support column is planned, they have found a site that yielded artifacts in every test excavation. These items range from tools, stone flakes and fire-altered rock to pieces of animal bone and shell fragments. Unlike other sites found along the same river, this one is remarkably well preserved and is plenti-

ful in artifacts. Within the the first few initial digs, the archaeologists uncovered over 900 artifacts. Although no human remains have been found, or are expected to be found, scientists speculate that they could uncover upwards of 11,000 artifacts. An excavation of a 39 square yard area is currently underway.

Study will Build Global Human Family Tree

A multi-international team of scientists, in cooperation with The National Geographic Society and IBM, is going to map out the genetic links among the global human population. The scientists will collect and study cheek swabs from hundreds of thousands of indigenous people around the world. The data obtained by studying the DNA samples will be combined with data already known from fossils, and will chart out the differences and similarities among the species. The study named The Genographic Project is expected to take five years, and will build a database that plots out the migration and movement of humans, as we evolved and spread out across the world.

The Hobbit was Human

The three-foot tall hominid skeleton, nicknamed "the Hobbit," has proved it is deserving of its entrance into the *Homo* lineage. Found on the tiny island of Flores, and given the name *Homo floresiensis*, the scientists who made the discovery believed they had found a new species of human. Using imprints on the inside of the skull and three-dimensional computer modeling, researchers have built a latex model of the Hobbit's brain. Study of the models show that *H. floresiensis* was not only capable of intelligent thought but

also had the brain functions for memory, emotions, and speech sounds. These characteristics are common in larger brains, but have not previously been discovered in such a small brain. The Hobbit's brain was approximately one-third the size of the average human adult.

Oldest Skull May be Earliest Human

A fossil skull found in the Sahara desert in 2001, is the oldest known hominid with an estimated age of 7 million years. Named Toumai, the skull has been a subject of controversy. Some scientists believe it is an ancient ancestor of modern humans, while others believe it is a female ape. Scientists have recently uncovered remains of tooth and jaw fragments. Armed with a little more than just a skull, they are now able to use computer models and reconstruct what Toumai might have looked like. Their findings have put forth new evidence that Toumai is indeed a human and not an ape. Marcia Ponce de Leon, a researcher at the University of Zurich-Irchel, told Reuters news that "The computer reconstruction shows the original anatomy of this specimen. In the anatomy you can read that this creature was a hominid but it was probably also bipedal."

Sandy Grant

Wayne Prescott Suttles

Wayne Suttles died May 9, 2005, at age 87.

Dr. Suttles was born April 24, 1918, in Seattle and earned his doctoral degree in Anthropology from the University of Washington in 1951. He first taught anthropology at the University of British Columbia in 1952 and was active there for more than a decade. He also taught at the University of Nevada and Portland State University, where he became professor emeritus.

His research interests included the cultures and languages of the Coast Salish area. All who have worked in the region are indebted to his work.

Some major works:

- 2004 *Musqueam Reference Grammar*. UBC Press.
- 1990 Volume Editor. *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 7, Northwest Coast*, Smithsonian Institution.
- 1987 *Coast Salish Essays*. Talonbooks, Vancouver and the University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- 1951 *The Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Straits*. American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. Coast Salish and western Washington Indians, 1. New York : Garland Pub. Inc. (1974).

Sacred Bowl Sold

This seated human figure bowl from Saltspring Island, was auctioned by Theodore Pappas of West Coast Estates who hoped it would sell for at least \$18,750. Despite misgivings among First Nations, the public, the press, archaeologists, the Archaeology Branch, and various legal advisors, the sale took place in Vancouver on April 30, 2005. The Semiahmoo First Nation, representing the Sencot'en Alliance, secured the sacred bowl for \$10,000.

A future issue of *The Midden* will describe the efforts made to prevent the sale and how a First Nation was the successful bidder.

The screenshot shows an eBay Live Auctions listing for a Native Artifact Human Stone Effigy Bowl. The page includes the eBay logo, navigation links (HOME, BROWSE, SEARCH, REGISTRATION, SERVICES, HELP), and a breadcrumb trail: Antiques, Art and Antifacts > eBay Live Auctions: Native & Ethnographic > Live Auction Seller > Antiques > Ethnographic > Other. The item title is "0870: Native Artifact Human Stone Effigy Bowl" with item number 6527523630. A "Sign Up" button is visible. The starting price is C \$3,750.00 (approximately US \$3,011.20). The estimate is C \$16,875.00 - C \$20,625.00. The auction date is Apr-30-05 12:00:00 PDT. The seller information shows a feedback score of 637 and a positive feedback of 99.7%. A "Larger Picture" link is also present.