



# ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS

## **Sri Battle over Kennewick Man appears over**

The battle over Kennewick Man, one of the most complete skeletons ever found in North America, appears to be over. Four Northwest tribes seeking to bury the 9,300-year-old bones have announced they will not take their fight to the U.S. Supreme Court after losing in lower federal courts to scientists who want to study the remains. The U.S. Justice Department, which earlier had sided with the tribes, declined to say whether it would file its own appeal to the nation's highest court. Seattle attorney Rob Roy Smith, who represents the Colville Tribes, said he assumes the federal agency will not continue with the case. The Nez Perce, Umatilla, Yakama and Colville tribes filed a claim to the skeleton shortly after it was found July 31, 1996, in Kennewick, Washington.

*Source: Seattle Post-Intelligencer, July 17, 2004*

## **Qualicum First Nation to rebury 64 ancestors**

Ancestors of the Qualicum First Nation, long separated from their traditional land, are coming home this week in a traditional reburial ceremony. The remains of 52 individuals are being returned to the Band after decades in storage at the Royal British Columbia Museum. They will join the remains of 12 others uncovered during the excavation of a burial site at the Deep Bay harbour in 2003. Kim Recalma-Clutesi, chief elected councillor of the Qualicum First Nation, said Band members will hold a special ceremony Friday. It will incorporate modern and more traditional rituals befitting the Northern Coast Salish Pentlatch people - from whom their ancestors descended, said Recalma-Clutesi. "Those 52 ancestors were turned in to the museum

by individuals, pre-Heritage Conservation Act," said Recalma-Clutesi. "All of them came from the Deep Bay area." Those remains, she said, have been in storage for more than two decades and the museum has been in the process of preparing them for repatriation for just such an occasion.

*Source: Parksville Qualicum News, July 27, 2004*

## **Lanka's History: In Danger of Disappearing**

Environmentalists warn that unchecked vandalism and neglect are destroying thousands of ancient rock caves in Sri Lanka dating back to 30,500 BC, with scores of Buddha statues rendered headless, and paintings defaced. In the absence of a detailed survey, it is believed there are between 3000-4000 caves of historic importance in the country, bearing testimony to its ancient history and religion. At a special meeting of the cultural ministry of the central Sabaragamuwa province last week, former Director General of Archaeology, Dr Shiran Deraniyagala, declared that unless the authorities take immediate action to save the caves, important historical evidence will soon be gone. He alleged there was an orchestrated move to destroy archaeological sites to remove precious artifacts. One of relics is a female body, which remains in Bulathsinhala, in Kalutara district in the Western province, which testifies to the consumption of rice, maize and salt.

*Source: One World South Asia, June 22, 2004*

## **Burial Site Uncovered in Lafayette California**

Archaeologists are sifting through 80 sets of centuries-old human remains and artifacts discovered in a Lafayette construction site that could provide new

insight into the lives of those who inhabited the region long before the Spanish arrived. With at least as many Native American remains and artifacts — including projectile points, stone mortars and beads — still hidden beneath what soon will be two dozen upscale homes, experts say they may have discovered one of the region's last large, and largely intact, Indian burial sites. The discovery brought work on a portion of the Hidden Oaks housing development to a halt late last week so the city's Planning Commission can review the project and bring in another archaeologist to study the significance of the findings.

*Source: San Francisco Chronicle, June 22, 2004*

## **Archaeologists Seeking Pots Find World War II Munition**

American archaeologists diving for Roman artifacts off a packed swimmers' beach in Cyprus found live munition dating from the Second World War instead, authorities said on Tuesday. British bomb disposal experts were called in to destroy the device found a few yards away from the shore of a beach neighboring a British military base on the southern coast of the island. "The archaeologists were diving for bits of pottery and they saw a metal fin sticking up off the sea bed," British bases spokesman Dennis Barnes told Reuters. "It could well have been a danger to the public," he said.

*Source: Reuters, June 30, 2004*

## **Battlements Found at Egypt's Ancient East Gateway**

An Egyptian archaeological team has uncovered battlements from Pharaonic times at the ancient eastern gateway to Egypt in the north of the Sinai Peninsula, the Culture Ministry said Wednesday. The find includes three fortifications built in

the area of Tharu, an ancient city which stood on a branch of the Nile that has long since dried up, a ministry statement said. The battlements stand on the ancient Horus Road, a vital commercial and military artery from ancient Egypt to Asia. The discoveries, about 20 miles east of the Suez Canal, form part of the defenses that stretched along the route. Zahi Hawass, head of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, said in the statement that the Horus Road was fortified through the ages starting from Egypt's Middle Kingdom beginning around 2000 BC until the Roman and Greek eras that start around 323 BC.

*Source: MSNBC.com, June 30, 2004*

### **Utah Canyon Yields Rare Indian ruins**

High in eastern Utah's rocky cliffs, the ruins of an ancient Indian settlement stand in pristine condition, a glorious piece of early America frozen in time centuries ago and virtually untouched by humans since. Though residents have known about the tract for decades, it was not until Wednesday that state officials unveiled what they're calling a national treasure for its unspoiled condition and historic significance. Skeletal remains, rock burial mounds, arrowheads, beads made of Pacific seashells, pottery fragments, cliffside granaries, collapsed sandstone dwellings, panels of rock paintings and carvings—the remnants of an ancient native people called the Fremont are scattered throughout a 12-mile canyon teeming with wildlife and sustained by Range Creek and wetlands.

*Source: Chicago Tribune, July 8, 2004*

### **Tiny Prehistoric Skull Found in Kenya**

A prehistoric human skull discovered at an archaeological site in Kenya has bridged a 400,000-year gap in the East African region's human fossil record. The tiny incomplete skull found at the Olorgesailie site is between 900,000 and 970,000 years old. It is the first find in the region that falls within the 600,000 and one million years range, said Washington-based Richard Potts of the Smithsonian Institution. "It's small and at this stage I would speculate that it is a

female," Potts told a news conference at the National Museums of Kenya where the fossil will be kept. He added however that it was not possible to determine the gender conclusively based on the brow ridge, left ear region and fragments of the brain case found at the site, which is about 55 miles southwest of Nairobi.

*Source: Reuters, July 5, 2004*

### **"Sistine Chapel of the Ice Age"**

An English cave has been described as the "Sistine Chapel of the Ice Age" after the discovery of 80 engraved figures in its limestone ceiling. The discovery at Creswell Crags was announced on Tuesday. It comes a year after the initial discovery of 12 engraved figures, which were trumpeted as the earliest examples of prehistoric cave art in Britain. The new discoveries were made possible by the good natural light in April and June, rock art experts said. Creswell Crags lies on the border of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. It comprises a gorge and many caves. The latest artwork, dated to be about 13,000 years old, was found in an opening in the rock known as Church Hole, in Nottinghamshire.

*Source: BBC, July 13, 2004*

### **Fifty Minoan Tombs Uncovered in Crete**

Archeologists have discovered 50 tombs dating back to the late Minoan period, around 1,400 BC, and containing a number of artifacts on the Greek island of Crete. The tombs were part of the once powerful ancient city of Kydonia, which was destroyed at the time but later rebuilt. The oldest among them contained bronze weapons, jewelry and vases and are similar to the tombs of fallen soldiers of the Mycenaean type from mainland Greece, said the head of the excavations, Maria Vlaziaki. The more recent family tombs are of a more traditional Kydonia type. Earlier excavations in the area in northwest Crete near the town of Chania had already yielded some 100 burial sites.

*Source: Agence France-Press, July 18, 2004*

### **Islamic Necropolis Discovered in Portugal**

Portuguese archeologists said they have discovered the largest Islamic necropolis

in the country, and possibly in the Iberian peninsula. Around 35 skeletons have so far been found at the cemetery, at Santarem, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Lisbon and which was the capital of an independent kingdom in the 8th century when Muslims from North Africa occupied the Iberian peninsula. The site covers 3,400 square meters (36,000 square feet), making it the largest of its kind in Portugal, said Antonio Matias, the archaeologist in charge of the site, quoted by the Lusa news agency.

*Source: Agence France-Press, August 24, 2004*

### **Scientists Find Ancient Brewery in Peru**

Here's an archaeological discovery that the average guy at the end of the bar can appreciate: An ancient brewery. A team of scientists from Chicago's Field Museum in July uncovered a brewery in the mountains of southern Peru where members of the Wari Empire made an alcoholic beer-like drink called chicha more than 1,000 years ago. It wasn't just a mom-and-pop operation, but something that could deliver the goods when dozens, if not hundreds, of Wari decided it was chicha time. The brewery may be the oldest large-scale facility of its kind ever found in the Andes and predates the Inca Empire by at least four centuries.

*Source: AP, August 1, 2004*

### **Chinese Scientists Rush to Reinforce Peking Man's Cave**

China has started work to reinforce the caves where the 500,000-year-old Peking Man was found, following reports that parts of the site was in danger of collapsing, state media said. Thirty scientists and engineers have been assigned to the three-month project at the Zhoukoudian area, a World Heritage site 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Beijing, the China Daily reported. Action has been taken after worrying signs that the site — a series of caves located in rolling hill country — had begun to disintegrate, with stones falling from the ceiling at several spots. Scientists are also worried that the site could fall victim to one of the area's frequent landslides or even to earthquakes.

*Source: Agence France-Press, July 23, 2004*