

From: Kristi Nichols

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020 5:53 PM

To: Holly, Bryant Celestne; Brown, Lauren; Rick West; Tamara Francis, Ted Isham

Cc: Gloria Mejia; Douglass W. McDonald; Steve Tomka; Emily Dylla; Rhea Roberts (CMO); Jillian Bliss; Karina Erickson

Subject: Alamo Archaeology Notice of Find

Good evening all,

Archaeologists were able to return to excavations in EU-02 on January 22, 2020 after air quality scrubbing to reduce the high levels of mold observed during early excavations was completed. EU-02 is located in the south transept of the Church. Later in the afternoon of January 22, 2020, a concentration of human bones was encountered during exploratory excavations for EU-02. The concentration was discovered in the south-central area of the unit at approximately 57 cm below datum, just north of a kickout adjacent to the southern South Transept wall. A single subadult individual is represented by the following skeletal elements: Cranium (fragmentary); Right tibia (intact); Right fibula (intact); Right foot including Metatarsals (digits 1-5; intact), 4 proximal phalanges (intact), 1 intermediate phalanx (intact), and 1 distal phalanx (intact).

The cranial fragments were discovered first and are oriented in a manner consistent with an intact cranium. At the time the cranium was uncovered, no other associated remains were observed. Additional exploration of the area around the cranium resulted in encountering a concentration of foot bones; discovered roughly 40 cm south of the cranium. The right lower leg bones (tibia and fibula) were subsequently discovered just to the south of the foot bones, articulated and in anatomical position. A majority of the foot and lower leg bones are intact; however, the overall condition of the skeletal material is extremely poor. The orientation of all skeletal elements indicates that the burial faces north, with the head to the south and feet to the north, towards the shrine. The position and orientation of the bone indicates that the concentration likely represents an intentional burial, therefore the find has been assigned the designation as Burial #4. No personal items have been recovered in association with the human bone and bone fragments, nor has any evidence of a container associated with the burial been identified. Biological sex and ancestry cannot be evaluated at this time due to the young age of the individual and the limited skeletal exposure.

The soil matrix above the burial consisted of the same disturbed, mixed silty clay observed throughout Church unit excavations; however, at approximately 54 cm below datum, evidence of a compacted caliche floor was encountered. The floor manifested throughout most of the unit but is not present within the center and western-central areas of the unit. The burial is located within the portion of the unit where the caliche floor is not present, but it is not presently clear if the floor was impacted for the purposes of the interment.

Kristi Nichols, the Alamo Archaeologist, and Steve Tomka, the Principal Investigator, were immediately notified of the discovery, and a call/voicemail message to Emily Dylla of the THC

was made at approximately 1:23pm. Kristi Nichols informed Alamo Trust, Inc. and the GLO of the find. The Tribal Monitor was present throughout the excavation and discovery of the burial. Excavations for the rest of the Level 4 (50-60 cm below datum) were completed to determine if any other identifiable skeletal elements were present. However, once level excavations were completed, all work within EU-02 ceased. The bone and bone fragments were left in place and covered with a layer of sterile soil matrix to prevent drying out, and then covered with a layer of muslin and more sterile soil for added protection.

The protocol set forth in the Human Remains Treatment Plan will inform the next steps in the process as designations are completed and plans are developed. As such, all work in EU-02 has halted.

Best,

Kristi Miller Nichols

Alamo Archaeologist & Collections Manager
Alamo Trust, Inc.