



Old Stone Fort Archaeological Society

May 2010

The Old Stone Fort Archaeological Society will meet **Thursday, May 13th at 6:00 PM** at the Old Stone Fort Museum in Manchester, Tennessee. The purpose of this Society is to learn more about prehistoric Native American cultures and the early historic period of Tennessee. We meet on the second Thursday of each month and our meetings are **Free** and open to the public. Our program this month:

Dr. Kevin Smith

who will present

Tennessee Ancient Race of Pygmies: Wonder of the Western Country

In 1820, the discovery of large cemeteries filled with small stone lined graves near Sparta in White County, Tennessee drew national and eventually international attention as evidence of an ancient race of pygmies. Scholars of national prominence visited this then-wilderness-area to examine the remains of these pygmies. Over the centuries to follow, the story grew in the telling -- with similar pygmy graveyards reported along the eastern Highland Rim and Cumberland Plateau stretching from White County to Coffee County. These stories of Tennessee pygmies resurfaced in national and international newspapers in the 1860s and 1880s -- and were featured as the center theme of the novel *In the Stranger People's Country* by one of Tennessee's early women writer's (Mary Noailles Murfree writing as Egbert Craddock).

Dr. Smith will examine the origins of these pygmy stories stretching from ancient Greece to Cherokee folklore -- and more modern archaeological interpretations of what these cemeteries of small square stone lined graves represent.

Invite your friends and family; see you at the meeting,

Mark

Information: Mark Norton – 615-741-1588, ext.113 mark.norton@tn.gov

Old Stone Fort State Park -931-723-5073 <http://state.tn.us/environment/parks/OldStoneFort/>

Tennessee Archaeology Network

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~kesmith/TNARCH/>

Tennessee Archaeology E – Journal

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~kesmith/TNARCH/tennesseearchaeology.html>

Mid-South Archaeological Conference – June 18-19, 2010

<http://msac.weaverassociatesllc.com/>

The 2010 Allendale Paleoamerican Expedition

<http://www.allendale-expedition.net/>

Gray Fossil Site and Museum

<http://www.grayfossilmuseum.com/?CONTEXT=art&art=5>

Tennessee State Museum

<http://www.tnmuseum.org/>

Pink Palace Museum

<http://www.memphismuseums.org/>

National Park Service – Archaeology Program

<http://www.nps.gov/archeology/public/news.htm>

