George Gele, an architect and commercial contractor, displays an artifact he recovered from the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico near the northern Chandeleur Islands earlier this year. Gele discovered thousands of pieces of rock and stone in a formation the size of the base of the Superdome at the site, and has been trying to determine what the formation is and how it got there. The artifact is a man-made piece of a building constructed sometime between the 1800s and the turn of the century, Gele said.

Man on 3-decade quest for answers about site

BY STEVEN WARD
 Advocate staff writer

George Gelé has spent the past 35 years or so trying to solve a mystery.
There's something at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico near the northern Chandeleur Islands off the coast of Louisiana, and Gele wants to know what it is and how it got there.

Gelé, a 64-year-old Prairievile architect and commercial contractor, calls himself an "amateur archeologist."

His quest for the truth has consumed his time with hard work over the past three decades, Gelé said, and led to the spending of hundreds of thousands of his own dollars.

"What's important is to figure out what's there because whatever it is, it belongs to the people of Louisiana," Gelé said.

Gelé has state officials rooting for him and supporting his search, including Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and State Archeologist Chip McGimsey.

So far, this is what Gelé knows:

He found a large continuous mass of thousands and thousands of broken and square stones last year.

Even though granite is not natural to Louisiana or Mississippi, most of the rock in the mass is granite, which means someone had to bring it to the location, Gelé said.

Source: University of New Orleans, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources