**AUSTRALOPITHECUS GARHI**

by Ms. C-R



I am Australopithecus Garhi. I may not be that well-known, but there are some things that are pretty interesting about me. It is believed that I roamed the Eastern part of Africa in what is now called Ethiopia about 2 and a half million years ago. There isn't much fossil evidence from then so when scientists found a partial cranium, some small skull fragments and an incomplete skeleton of one of my friends back in 1990, it was pretty exciting. At first, the fossils looked like just another example of an Australopithecus species already identified. But then, a closer study showed that the leg bone was longer suggesting that we were further along at walking upright. In addition, we were a curious mixture of Homo-like cranial features, an Australopithecus-like brain size, and large Paranthropus-sized teeth. It wasn't until 1997 that the researchers confirmed that what they found indicated a new species on the evolutionary chart. I was named Garhi because it means "surprise" in the language of Ethiopia and this finding was, indeed, a very big surprise! So were the stone tools and cut open animals bones that were found nearby. Could it be that we were among the first to make stone tools and to eat meat and bone marrow from large animals? In keeping with my name, I'm going to have to keep the truth about our survival habits a surprise!

*photo source: http://kozmopolitaydinlar.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/garhi\_cap.jpg*