

# Alabama Archaeological Society

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA P.O. BOX 6135, UNIVERSITY, ALA. 35486

ENGLAND ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
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## STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

NADB DOC # - 4,056,668

MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

### 1970 WINTER ANNUAL STATE SOCIETY MEETING

This event will take place Saturday, December 5th, at Dothan, Ala., with the Choctaw-hatchee Chapter as hosts. The meeting will be held in the Dothan Community (Recreation) Center, on the corner of South Alice and Garland Streets. Tentatively, times are 9:00 AM for registration and setting up artifact displays; business meeting at 11:00 AM; and planned program at 1:00 PM.

A fine program has been arranged, with these principal speakers:

Bettye J. Broyles, Head, Section of Archaeology, Geological and Economic Survey, University of West Virginia, who will speak on "The St. Alban's Site" (See page 4, August 1970 issue of STONES & BONES), and will display samples of projectile points from the site as well as show color slides of the dig.

Dr. C. Earle Smith Jr., Professor of Anthropology and Biology, University of Alabama Tuscaloosa, who will speak on "The Value to Archaeology of Interdisciplinary Research" and will concern identification and interpretation of plant remains from the Tehuacan and Oaxaca Valleys, Mexico, illustrated with slides.

Downtown motels are Heart of Dothan, 314 N. Forrester, Phone 792-1123; Town Terrace Motel, 204 N. Oates, Phone 792-1135; Motels on Ross Clark Circle, which goes around the city: Carousel Motel, Phone 792-9181; Holiday Inn, Phone 794-6601; Ramada Inn, Phone 792-0031; and Leon Motel. All except Town Terrace Motel and Leon Motel have restaurants in connection.

The Choctawhatchee Chapter is planning a get-together of some attractive kind on Friday night, December 4th, for those arriving there that evening, - so you can make your plans accordingly. Further details, including the complete program and a map of the city, will come along with the December Newsletter. This will be an occasion YOU will not want to miss, and WE most certainly don't want to miss YOU! COME!

### NEW DEVELOPMENT

From the September 1970 FIELD NOTES (No. 69), the monthly newsletter of the Archaeological Society of Arkansas, comes an interesting observation on ecology of the past:

"Ecology is a popular word these days, and archaeologists are getting into the act in this field just like everyone else, and it is amazing the kinds of information which archaeologists can use. One of the things, of course, which has only recently been tackled, is trying to find out exactly what the environment was like at the time a particular site was occupied. We know that as the glaciers retreated

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in the north, the weather patterns in Arkansas changed, and that this in turn changed the kinds of plants and animals which lived in a particular area. Obviously being able to tell something about what plants and animals were in the area, whether the site was only occupied in the summer or winter, or both is going to give us a much better idea of the way of life of any particular group of Indians.

Animal bones, of course, can give some clues to diet, and possibly butchering techniques, and sometimes to seasonal hunting practices. Pollen grains preserved in the soil is now another major source for reconstructing past environments. If you found seeds in the refuse pit, you might consider that these would have formed part of the group's diet. But what about grass and weed seeds? To give you some idea of how everything can be used for interpretation, let me quote from a summary of research by 'environmental archaeologists' from the University of Wisconsin:

'It was evident in processing the soil samples from refuse pits...that we were also recovering fairly large quantities of grass and weed seeds. These seeds probably have little to do with the aboriginal diet...but may have simply been a part of the natural seed rain occurring when the refuse pits were filled. Actually, this is what suggests they are important. Since particular seeds are produced at different times during the spring, summer and fall, those seeds present in a pit might give an indication as to when the pit was filled and hence when the site was occupied by man...and perhaps give a clue to the cycle of economic activity at the site. Here we can see quite clearly how seed identification and the very presence of seeds which may have no relation to man's cultural activities' actually can provide essential information for interpreting the past."

We add our own observations from the Alabama armchair: such a study could also be made of soil samples from burial pits, to determine the frequency of death by seasons of the year, by age groups; and with respect to reburials - bundle burials - make determination as to the season of the year the reburial ceremonies took place.

(Steve B. Wimberly, Birmingham Chapter)

#### 1970 - LIST OF DIG DONORS - 1970

Here they are! In addition to those already listed month by month, during October we received CHARTER DONOR Alvin V. Walls' ELEVENTH consecutive donation, the EIGHTH donation from George E. Russell, and Dr. John E. Wood's FIFTH (the Walls and Russell checks are specified for the Dan Josselyn Memorial Fund). These bring to a total of 68 the number of contributions reaching us since the listing was published last year. Your State Society expresses its most grateful appreciation to each of the persons listed, members and non-members, for making possible our ELEVENTH annual dig and our ELEVENTH successful drive for funds to finance the dig. This is an accomplishment not duplicated by any other State Archaeological Society, and to say we are proud of each of our donors expresses our feelings mildly. The names, home towns and number of years making dig donations are:

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ANONYMOUS BUSINESS DONOR, Birmingham, Ala.	7
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The grand total of donations this year is \$2,087.65 to the dig fund, and \$1,312.50 to the Dan Josselyn Memorial Fund! Isn't it wonderful to be a member of an organization that has now responded ELEVEN times to an annual fund raising drive, on a purely voluntary and personally motivated basis? We surely think so, and thank each of you.

### U.S. AND WORLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES

THE INTERAMERICAN, Newsletter of the Instituto Interamericano, Dr. Carl B. Compton, Director, is the source of these items from the July-October 1970 issue:

**"MYSTERY COGS:** People who lived in Orange County, California, some 8,000 years ago left one of archaeology's most intriguing mysteries. They made cogged stones from c. 2 to over 6 inches in diameter. They are generally round. Some are made with machinelike precision. The number of cogs varies, 22 being the greatest number. After much study and soul-searching Hal Eberhart has come up with the startling theory that these were likely ceremonial objects. This totally disregards our own theory that these early Southern Californians were trying to invent a cog-wheel railroad.

**I IK O POP:** A correspondent has come up with a very interesting question. He wants to know when the next 260 day Mayan "sacred year" will start. We suggested that he (or we) find someone who still practices the ancient Mayan religion and ask them, which we are trying to do at the moment. As is well known, the Maya had two "year" systems - the 20 months of 13 days "year" and the 18 month of 20 days plus 5 days "year". To establish the answer to our correspondent's question we must first correlate a given Mayan "regular" year with a Christian year, day for day. This we think we have BUT we then must have a correlation, of any day, between the "sacred" Maya year and our established day for day Maya-Christian year. There are systems, the easiest consisting of cogged wheels, for correlating the two Maya years (cf. The Ancient Maya, Morley-Brainerd, Stanford Univ. P. 234). Thus, if one can get ANY day correlation between all three calendars, we have the man's question answered. Suggestions considered but not necessarily acted upon.

**MAYA CODEX DISCOVERED:** In a place called El Mirador in the municipio of Jiquipila, Chiapas, Mexico, Pierre Agrimier has found a Maya codex. Agrimier is working for the New World Foundation. The codex has been dated at 450 A.D. by C-14. It is in a compacted mass but will be restored by modern methods page by page. Already, however, some of the hieroglyphic writing can be studied. It is quite probable that this will add greatly to knowledge of Maya writing and certainly, if it is what experts think it may be it will constitute a 4th extant Maya codex.

**CHERT AND FLINT**, by John Emery Adams, Newsletter, Midland Archaeological Society, 3612 Shell, Midland, Texas. Vol. 4:2, August 1970. This is a comprehensive discussion of the subject. We learned several things we didn't know before. They may have some over-run copies. It's worth a request."

THE TENNESSEE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY met at Russellville, Ky. on Oct. 2 & 3, with members in attendance from Alabama (6), North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Among the highlights, Dr. Alfred Guthe, Curator of McClung Museum, reported on the University of Tennessee salvage work being done at Tellico Reservoir, which he said is the last site in Tennessee and perhaps in the southeast, where the Cherokee of the 18th century can be studied. Dr. Lathel Duffield of the University of Kentucky Department of Anthropology presented examples of what some call "New Archaeology" or "Ecological Archaeology". After hearing about these new techniques, there could be little doubt in anyone's mind that a site has much more to offer than a few artifacts. Col. Howard McCord, who is an archaeologist with the Virginia State Library, was banquet speaker, and outlined some of the work being done in Virginia. Many similarities in the cultures, problems and solutions for the area were apparent. The really big news of the meeting was the announcement that Tennessee Governor Ellington has allotted \$20,700 to replace the funds which were omitted from the Tennessee Archaeological Bill when it was passed by the Legislature, bringing the Archaeological Program in Tennessee a step closer.

(Marjorie Gay, East Alabama Chapter)

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN, by James Adair, London 1775. A facsimile reprint of this outstanding work is available from Johnson Reprint Corp., New York, for \$20.00. Historians consider this work as the finest reference available on southeastern Indians for the period from 1735 to about 1768. They feel Adair was relatively objective in his writing and his description of the times is invaluable. Not only are the contents fascinating, but the brief glimpses of the author hold an aura of mystery. Virtually nothing is known of John Adair outside of what is revealed in his book. He is "believed" to have immigrated from Ireland and went almost immediately to the Indian country. Obviously, from his writing, he was a well educated man and this was a unique quality among traders. He traded among the Cherokee and Catawba initially and moved to northern Mississippi among the Chickasaw in 1744. Here he moved among both the Chickasaw and Choctaw participating in their wars and influencing them against the French. Later he returned to the Cherokee in South Carolina and lived with them until about 1761 when he returned to live with the Chickasaw until about 1768-9. Advertisements for subscriptions to his book appeared as early as 1769 in New York, Charlestown and Savannah newspapers, but it was not published until 1775 in London. It is almost ironic that here is a man, like most of the anonymous English traders of the southeast, except for 2 things - he could write, and he wrote of his experiences as a trader. Otherwise, history would have passed by John Adair. I feel sure he had no realization of how scholars and historians 200 years later would pore over his writings in order to grasp every detail, regardless of how slight, of the great southeastern tribes he so vividly describes. (Amos J. Wright Jr., Huntsville Chapter)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SHANNON SITE, by Joseph L. Benthall, should be of special interest to Joe's many friends in Alabama while he was a student at the University. This Virginia State Library Publication No. 32, 1969 is obtainable from the Virginia State Library, 11th & Capitol Sts., Richmond, Va. 23219, at \$4.00.

The site is a palisaded Late Prehistoric Indian Village, occupied perhaps for only a single generation, or about 25 years, with signs of earlier Archaic cultures. An aerial photograph shows the site as a dark doughnut shape with a lighter center, so the presence of a palisaded village with a center plaza was suspected from the beginning. The site was to be destroyed by the construction of a golf course. Since funds were not available, all labor was volunteer, excepting the Project Director.

A total of 167 pits were excavated; 100 of these being burials, 50 of which contained offerings. There are 32 photographs of burials. Eleven structures and a palisade showed the community layout. The palisade enclosed an elliptical area of 322 feet north to south and 210 feet east to west. Artifacts were manufactured of material such as bone, antler, shell, stone, copper and ceramics. Pottery sherds numbered 11,932 and samples are photographed and drawings show vessel shapes and rim profiles. Three series are represented: Radford, Clarksville and New River. The report is paperback, 150 pages and 105 illustrations & charts. (Marjorie Gay, E. Alabama Chapter)

OLDEST SOUTH CAROLINA RELICS FOUND? From our friends, the E. L. Griggs Jr. in Tennessee, we received a clipping from the Columbia, S.C. Newspaper, THE STATE, from which the following interesting information is quoted:

"What are believed to be the oldest relics of prehistoric man ever found in S.C. have been discovered in an abandoned cornfield in Cayce. Excavations at the site by members of the Archaeological Society of S.C. have unearthed ancient spearheads dating back 11,500 years. The actual digging began last January after 8 years of repeated "arrowhead" finds in the area attracted archaeologists to the site. The work is headed and sponsored by Columbian James Michie, president of the archaeological society. Michie says that the spearheads, called Clovis points, predate all others found in the state...Michie and fellow archaeology buff Bill Fisher investigated reports of such findings in the Cayce area. Using surveyor's transits, marking sticks, string and shovels, they dug an unimpressive-looking, shallow clay pit, 10 feet square and 2 feet deep. Michie now feels that this excavation is the most rewarding and significant archaeological dig in South Carolina's history to date. 'We began by looking

for evidence of early man which came not from plow-level soil, but from the undisturbed context below', Michie said. 'The layers of soil which we are excavating lie only a few feet below the surface but have not been touched by human hands since the early hunters deserted their fires.' According to Michie, several types of spearheads or points, have been found at the Cayce site. These points are classified by a system called analogy which fixes the date of their origin in one of the 3 major cultural periods of Indians native to North America...In all, the archaeologists have found 5 of the Clovis type points which predate all other spearheads, but these have only been found in topsoil."

ARMCHAIR ARCHAEOLOGY: Any right-thinking archaeologist of 50 years ago would have told you that Man had arrived in the New World about 3,000-4,000 years ago. There were a few "voices from the rear of the room", who insisted that Man had inhabited America for a much longer period, but these voices were largely ignored. Archaeologists and other scientists have a way of demanding proof and there was no proof.

Then one day in 1926, a cowboy riding the range looking for stray cattle noticed some strange-looking, large, white bones protruding from a bank near the bottom of a 20 foot deep gully. The cowboy dismounted to take a closer look. With his penknife he pried loose a piece of flint which he noticed lodged among the bones - and there in his hand lay a beautiful fluted point.

Back in town, the cowboy talked about his discovery - huge bones 15 feet below the surface of the earth - the strange "arrowhead", like no other he had ever seen. The story reached the ears of Dr. J. D. Figgins of Colorado and he spread the word.

Soon, scientists from all over descended on the small town of Folsom, N.M. The bones were excavated and proved to be those of a "Taylor's" bison, extinct for 10,000 years. As the skeletons were carefully uncovered, the flint points which came to light were left in place - drawings - photographs - records were made. Proof!!

Headlines proclaimed: "Evidence of Ancient Hunter Discovered 10,000 Years Old!"

The Folsom point had been discovered. This find was to change the whole concept of New World Archaeology.

Moral: A projectile point in a bison bone is worth any number in a shoe box.

(Kathleen Kiker Jones, Choccolocco Chapter)

#### CHAPTER NEWS

The Pastfinders, Birmingham Chapter Ladies' Auxiliary, meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in members' homes. Mrs. Bestor Brown delighted everyone at the October meeting in Mrs. Robert Reid's home with an informative talk on Moundville Indians. The group enthusiastically passed a resolution indorsing the Alabama Conservancy's fight for a Wilderness Area in the Bankhead Forest. Speaker at the November meeting will be Dr. Douglas Jones, on "The Civil War" with special emphasis on the guns used.

Cullman County Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 3rd Monday of each month at Cullman City Hall. The October program was given by Sister Maurus Allen, teacher of Biblical Archaeology at Cullman College, who covered her recent trip to the Holy Land and the Biblical Archaeological work being done there, also showing slides made during her year of study in the Holy Land.

East Alabama Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 2nd Thursday of each month in Comer Hall, Auburn University. At the November meeting, Chapter Officers for 1971 will be elected and there will be a program for those in attendance.

Huntsville Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in the Madison County Courthouse. At the October meeting, Horace Holland, Muscle Shoals Chapter, spoke on "Trip to South America this Summer", showing slides and artifacts of the Inca period. Dr. Bert Hayes, Dean of Student Personnel at Athens College, will show slides and speak on "Historical Geography of the Middle East" at the November meeting.

Montgomery Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 1st Tuesday of each month in the Museum of Fine Arts. A questionnaire was forwarded to all present and former members of the Chapter regarding programs and attendance, and will be the subject of discussion at the meeting in October.

Morgan-Limestone Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 1st Tuesday of each month in Decatur City Court Room. Chapter Vice President David P. Floyd III discussed "Artifact Identification" at the October meeting, and Chapter members and guests took a slide quiz on identifying various artifacts which was an extremely good test for both "experts" and beginners. Chapter member Dr. Brian Pilling will speak on "British Archaeology" at the November meeting, showing slides and several artifacts from Britain.

Muscle Shoals Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 4th Monday of each month in Room 100, Science Building, Florence State University. At the September meeting, Col. William L. Koob Jr., spoke on "Restoration of Fragmentary Projectile Points", discussing techniques he has worked out to restore broken projectile points to their original appearance, including flaking pattern and color match, using an epoxy resin to rebuild missing sections.

Noccalula Chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the 1st Thursday of each month at Etowah County Court House, Gadsden. The film "So This Is London" was shown at the October meeting. At the November meeting, Bill Ashley, Chapter President, who likes to read books on Tennessee, will discuss "Indian Life in Tennessee".

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS - STATE NEWS

NEW MEMBERS DURING OCTOBER: (Nice to have you with us for 1971!)

O. H. Dyer, C-14 Holiday Park, Bessemer, Ala. 35020  
Lee M. Feder, 6214 - 8th Ave. S., Gulfport, Fla. 33707  
Kenneth L. Roman, Route 1 Box 181, Beaumont, Miss. 39423  
Larry Tolman, 1967 Goldsmith Lane, Apt. E-5, Louisville, Ky. 40218  
S. Arthur Wade, 408 W. Hickory, Sylacauga, Ala. 35150

BAD ADDRESS: Nancy Antoine - formerly Neill House, Auburn, Ala. (Can anyone help?)

BUCKS (EMPTY) POCKET: In last month's Newsletter, we reported that archaeological investigations would be made at a bluff shelter at Bucks Pocket. Roger Nance and his University of Alabama Birmingham archaeological student group excavated there during the weekend of October 17-18. Unfortunately the site had previously been so "potted" by "pothunters" that there was no intact midden remaining for study. So, Roger's time and the time of his students went for naught - a lost weekend, as it were. Another example of "pages of history" being ripped from our archaeological record, never to be replaced. From the few artifacts found at the site, it appears that the shelter was used during Archaic times and perhaps during the following Early Woodland times.

NEWS ITEMS: Recently, the BIRMINGHAM NEWS contained a nice article announcing the election of Ye Editor of this Newsletter, Brittain Thompson, as President of the Birmingham Zoological Society, so Britt will apparently be learning to "talk with the Animals" as well as he has learned to "talk with Stones & Bones" over the years.

Another BIRMINGHAM NEWS article had a lot of nice things to say about Birmingham Chapter member Arthur B. Dunning's granddaughter and her excellent rock collection.

ANNUAL MEETING: Of course, this is the biggest item of "State News", and with the unusually fine speakers scheduled, we are hopeful an even larger number than usual of our membership will please our hosts by making the trip south to Dothan!



## EDUCATIONAL PAGE

### SOME RANDOM COMMENTS

The beliefs and the religious actions of the Indians were as widely varied as there were tribes. Many persons think that there was only a form of monotheism, only one Great Spirit, and this is partially true among some tribes. There were also many beliefs and practices of a mystical nature that were a large part of the daily living and the very existence of the Indian groups.

A very interesting comparison of the Navajo and the Indian of India can be made. The Navajo thought of the world as being supported by gods who stood under the sky to hold it up, and the India Indian has the supporters being turtles who have the same function. The Greeks believed that Apollo hitched his fiery steeds to the chariot and leaped into the sky of a morning and pulled them all day into the west. The Navajos, recognizing the sky as a dome, held that the sun came through an eastern door and left through a door in the west.

One of the Navajo beliefs hits very closely to the beliefs of the early Christian and Judaic thought, namely that the earth is land floating on an ocean like an island, with the sky a domelike lid that touches the far horizons. Of course, the dome of the sky is well festooned with all the heavenly bodies. An ocean was believed to be above the heavenly dome, and when it rained, it was merely the angels opening the windows of heaven for a little while.

The flood story is one that is perhaps best known of all in the past of man. There is alleged to be over 50 civilizations that have this story in their past. Here in the new world, the most well known versions are those of the Mayan, the Algonquin and the Navajo. Though there is considerable difference in detail, there is no doubt that there were devastating floods that became a part of the beliefs of all mankind.

Another of the beliefs modern man seems to share with the Indian of yesterday is certain knowledge of good and bad spirits, the way they help or hinder a man in the course of his living. Of course, we now group the spirits and speak of their actions as good or bad luck. We might also mention that the sacrifice or deference of today is only practiced by a few who make wishes, rap on wood or throw salt over a shoulder.

Everyone who is fortunate enough to have a knowledge of another language will understand how difficult it is to tell in both a true and beautiful way the thoughts of one civilization to those of another. One must almost live with each to have an understanding, yet an Indian Song from the Talking God, imperfect as the translation may be, cannot help but touch any thinking, feeling person. It follows:

Now I walk with Talking God.  
It is with his feet I go;  
It is with his legs I go;  
It is with his body I go;  
It is with his mind I go;  
It is with his voice I go;  
I go with twelve feathers of the white eagle.  
With goodness and beauty before me I go;  
With goodness and beauty behind me I go;  
With goodness and beauty above me I go;  
With goodness and beauty below me I go;  
With goodness and beauty in all things around me I go;  
With goodness and beauty I follow immortality.  
Thus being I, I go.

Brittain Thompson, Birmingham Chapter



## THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Following are the objectives stated in our Constitution, slightly modified for emphasis: To promote informed interest in the study of Archaeology in Alabama and neighboring States; to encourage careful scientific archaeological research in such ways as surface scouting, mapping, marking, studying and especially reporting; to promote and support professionally directed excavations and discourage unsupervised "digging"; to promote the conservation of archaeological sites and to favor the passage of laws prescribing such; to oppose the sale of antiquities, and the manufacture and sale of fraudulent artifacts; to encourage and develop a better understanding of archaeology through providing Newsletters, Journals, Chapter and State meetings, helpful associates and good fellowship; to serve as a bond between individual archaeologists in the State, both non-professional and professional; and perhaps most importantly, to give everyone the opportunity to "do something about archaeology" through the accomplishment and enjoyment of these high aims.

The Society needs and welcomes as members, all persons whose ideals are in accord with the objectives set forth above. Active members receive the JOURNAL OF ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGY, devoted to articles on the archaeology of Alabama and nearby States, and also receive the STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER, published monthly, containing news of members and their activities, also State, national and worldwide events of archaeological importance.



The coupon below may be used EITHER to APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP in the Society, or for the PAYMENT OF ANNUAL DUES. Please be sure that your name and address are CLEARLY entered, and that checkmarks appear in applicable blanks!

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To THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, for

\_\_\_\_\_ New Membership  
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Decatur, Ala. 35601

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