

# Alabama Archaeological Society

**Associate Editors**

Bart Henson  
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**STONES & BONES  
NEWSLETTER**

**Editor**

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2602 Green Mountain Rd.  
Huntsville, Alabama 35803

Volume 29

MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

Number 4

SOCIETY MEMBER HONORED

A.A.S. First Vice President Mr. Baker Dean of Opelika was recently recognized by the Opelika City Council for his many years of service to the community. Baker has been a member of the Planning Commission since 1946 and has been chairman since 1962. The council also passed a resolution recommending that the awards committee of the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association select Dean to receive the distinguished leadership award for 1987.

The Editors

HELP! HELP!

We are still looking for copies of "Arrow Points" in order to give us a complete set for the Society archives. Following is a list of those we need:

<u>Volume</u>	<u>Number</u>
1	1, 3-6
2	All
3	1-4
4	1
5	2-3
6	5
18	All
19	All
20	All
21	All
22	3-6

Amos J. Wright  
Chairman  
Archives Committee

April 1987

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Cullman County

The monthly meeting was held on Monday night, March 16, at 7:30 p.m. in the courthouse. We had a very good meeting in February, with a good video tape on "Searching for the Early Americans".

Howard King

### Fayette Chapter

President Joe P. Sanford called the February meeting to order. The speaker was Bruce Bizzoco from Shelton State College. He spoke about "Paleo Points".

Joe P. Sanford

### Huntsville Chapter



Eugene Futato of the Office of Archaeological Research at Moundville was the speaker at the March chapter meeting. Eugene spoke on the continuing archaeological investigations at Tell Halif in Israel, in which he and his wife, Polly, participated last summer. Eugene used slides to illustrate his most interesting talk; he also brought lithic artifacts from the dig to display to the chapter. Photo above shows chapter members O. D. Hartley and Nancy Rohr.

The Huntsville Chapter meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the conference room of the United Way office on Traylor Island. For more information on programs and other chapter activities, call Program Chairman Bart Henson at 881-9389.

Dorothy Luke

#### Muscle Shoals Chapter

The Muscle Shoals Chapter held its February meeting on February 10 at the Indian Mound Museum in Florence. Twenty-five members and guests attended. The State Society President, Carey Oakley, spoke to the chapter, and told us about the recent activities of the Office of Archaeological Research and about the University of Alabama's site survey of Pickwick Lake.

The March meeting was held March 17. Charles Moore presented a slide program on Cahokia. Eighteen members and guests were present. The next meeting will be on April 14 at 7:15 p.m. at the Museum in Florence.

Charles Moore

#### Tuscaloosa Chapter

The Tuscaloosa Chapter meeting was held at the town library on the first Monday of March. The meeting consisted of chapter elections and a membership artifact show. The elections went as follows: Tony Farrell, President; Bill Adkison, First Vice President; Robby Hall, Second Vice President; Joyce Farrell, Secretary/Treasurer.

The Tuscaloosa Chapter meets on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

John Wm. (Bill) Adkison

#### LIFE MEMBER DIES

Society Life Member Dr. Walter Alves of Guntersville died February 6, 1987, four days after his 78th birthday. Dr. Alves' 40-year practice included delivering 4,397 babies, the last one delivered on his 75th birthday.

He was a life-long member of the Episcopal Church and was working on a history of the Episcopal Church in Guntersville. Dr. Alves was also a member of numerous historical, civic, and professional societies. A.A.S. members in Guntersville knew Dr. Alves both professionally and socially - as a caring, concerned friend who is greatly missed.

Mary Mahan  
Guntersville

LETTER FROM ROGER NANCE

February 11, 1987

Members of the Alabama Archaeological Society:

This year (1986-1987) I skipped town and the whole state and headed for Guatemala. I am teaching archaeology courses at the Universidad del Valle in Guatemala City as a Fulbright Teaching Fellow. This has been quite enjoyable, although the struggle with Spanish is continuous. There are very good archaeology students in Guatemala, both at del Valle and at the large public Universidad de San Carlos. I've taught courses in method and theory and on the use of microcomputers in archaeology. Micros are very popular here.

For archaeology, we've been involved in two projects. One has been rabagging artifacts which literally have been stored in a chicken coop since 1972. Needless to say, Guatemala has been hard pressed to find adequate storage for tons of excavated artifacts. The collection consists of about 300,000 potsherds in plastic bags that have all but disintegrated. We are changing bags and looking for labels, but many of the latter have disappeared - eaten by rats. We are working on this project on weekends with volunteers. It reminds me of some times with Society members.

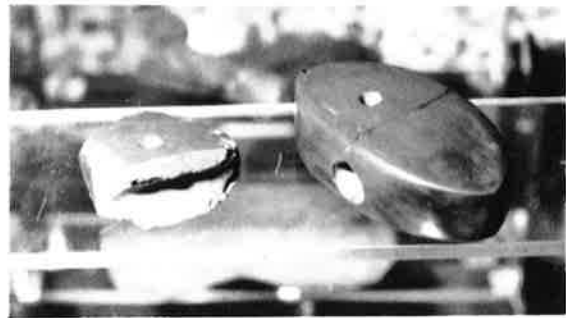
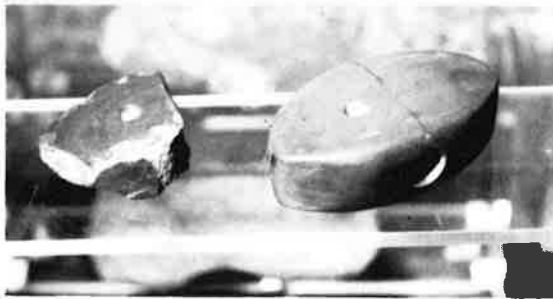
The other project has been on the South Coast of Guatemala near the border with Mexico (near the town of Tilapa). The whole area was intensively occupied during the Preclassic, and we spent three weeks excavating two 2 x 2 m test pits in a small mound. The mound, about 2.5 m high, had been about 70% destroyed by a modern salt factory, and the Late Preclassic people (300 B.C.) who built and used the structure may have been involved in salt production as well. The mound and many others nearby are in the middle of a large salt flat. The dig produced some interesting stratigraphy and also an unbelievable amount of pottery. We borrowed a five-ton truck to haul the stuff back to Guatemala City. The project generated some new information, establishing good cultural context for a coarse, utility ware which is abundant at many of the mounds in the salt flats. (The fresh pineapple in this part of Guatemala is delicious.) I was assisted by two del Valle students and Dr. Marion Hatch, an archaeologist on the faculty there.

The above, plus two M.A. thesis projects in lithic archaeology (analysis of obsidian blades from Middle and Late Preclassic contexts at the site of Kaminaljuyu in Guatemala City) are keeping me occupied. My daughter, Lisa, and wife, Vally, have lots to do in Guatemala as well, although my son, Charles, opted to return to Birmingham to graduate with his friends at Homewood High School.

I hope this letter finds you enjoying archaeology in Alabama. It is good to receive Society news via "Stones and Bones".

Sincerely,  
Roger Nance  
(Dept. of Anthropology,  
U.A.B.)  
U. S. Embassy, USIS  
A.P.O., Miami, FL 34024

### AN UNUSUAL BANNERSTONE FEATURE



The pictured bannerstone on the left was found only a few miles from Moundville, Alabama, but is related to a much earlier Archaic culture than the Mississippian people of Moundville. The location, known as temporary site number T-25, is recorded on a state site form filed with the Office of Archaeological Research at Moundville and has been surface collected by myself and other Tuscaloosa Chapter members for about four years; and this is the only bannerstone that has been found on this site.

Most bannerstones are curious artifacts and "bannerstones" are a loose category of Archaic artifacts. In outline, bannerstones or banners are symmetrical, usually winged artifacts possessing a drilled center hole or notches. Large numbers of blending forms in a great variety of stones lead to difficulties in classifications.\*

The partial bannerstone shown is made of a dark red hematite material is peculiar due to the two holes that were drilled into it. The first: the center hole, was approximately one-half-inch in diameter and is where it would have been mounted on the atlatl throwing stick. The second hole, a much smaller one, is slightly tapered and is one-quarter-inch in diameter on one side and tapers to a smaller three-sixteenths-inch diameter opening on the other. It was also drilled at a 90 degree angle in relation to the center hole.

The purpose of the second hold is unknown and is the unusual feature of this bannerstone.

A reproduction, pictured on the right, shows these features and is slightly thicker than the original, but is probably close to what the original looked like as a whole. It is made from material that came from southeast Oklahoma known as "Mud Stone" or "Clay Stone", although also found in Alabama, but is not as hard a material as bannerstones require. The reproduction was made only to show the approximate size and features of the original more clearly, and it was then broken and repaired to avoid being

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\*NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ARTIFACTS by Lar Hothem, 1984. Books Americana, Inc., P. O. Box 2326, Florence, Alabama 35630

mistaken as an Archaic artifact and also to show this area where the original was weak and broken. On close investigation, the reproduction shows this area clearly near its center.

Only the pictured half of the original bannerstone was found, but perhaps the remaining lost half also contained a second small drilled hole, possibly for attachment purposes.

Another partial bannerstone similar to the one pictured was found in Fayette County by Joe P. Sanford of the Fayette Chapter, but it is also only one-half of a bannerstone showing only one small drilled hole.

I have not seen any others like this but would be interested in hearing from anyone who has found a complete bannerstone of this type or from anyone with a theory for the purpose of the smaller drilled hole. Much time and effort were undoubtedly spent in drilling it.

Jack C. Wilson  
Tuscaloosa

#### BURIED ALIVE IN MAYA RUIN

"Acting on a tip off, police last Thursday, February 12, recovered the bodies of two 20-year-old Guatemalans in San Felipe, Orange Walk District.

"The men, identified as Julio Adolfo Cucul and Margarito Vargas, were reportedly digging a Maya ruin in the Gongora area of San Felipe in search of Mayan artifacts which illegal sales have been fetching lucrative profits.

"It is believed both men met their death when parts of the ruin collapsed, burying them alive.

"Orange Walk Hospital post mortems revealed that Cucul and Vargas died from fractured skulls.

"As far as we understand, the Maya ruin in question has not yet been officially excavated".

(The above article, from The Belize Times (Sunday, February 22, 1987), was submitted by A.A.S. member George Thurlow, then visiting Belize.)

George Thurlow  
Huntsville

#### ARCHAEOLOGY & ETHNOLOGY OF THE MAYA

For the sixth time, a trip to the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico to study the past and present culture of the Maya will be offered during the Summer Session at Western Carolina University by two anthropologists. Students

will receive six hours of academic credit, either undergraduate or graduate, for participation in these courses.

Students will fly from Atlanta to Merida, which will serve as headquarters for the course. Among the activities planned are field trips to more than 20 archaeological sites, colonial towns, Mayan villages, and the Gulf and Caribbean coasts of Mexico.

Cost per student, which includes air fare from Atlanta to Merida and return, hotel accommodations, ground transportation for course-related activities, admissions to museums and archaeological sites, health insurance and Mexican airport tax, is \$950 plus tuition.

Enrollment is open to anyone interested in the culture and archaeology of this area of Mexico. Courses will be taught by Dr. Patrick Morris, an ethnologist, and Dr. Anne Rogers, an archaeologist. As space is limited, prospective participants must contact either Morris or Rogers before February 16 at the Department of Earth Sciences and Anthropology, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C. 28723; 704/227-7268.

The Editors

#### DECALS AND VINYL STICKERS

Decals and vinyl stickers are now available to chapters and chapter members, showing the Alabama Archaeological Society in black lettering around the Rattlesnake Disc symbol, in red, for \$1 each for chapter orders or \$1.25 each for individual member orders. The decals (for inside of window glass) and vinyl stickers (for field notebooks, clipboards, bumpers, outside glass, etc.), are 4 x 4 inches with white backgrounds. State quantity of decals or vinyl stickers and please include \$.25 postage per order. Any amount of both are available by writing to:

Mr. Jack C. Wilson  
P. O. Box 482  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35402



## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of <i>Journal of Alabama Archaeology</i> Vol. 20-29 each issue .....	(\$2.50 to Members) \$5.00 pp
<i>Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations</i> (Journal of Alabama Archaeology) Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint, each issue .....	\$5.00 pp
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell .....	\$2.00 pp
Special Publication 2 — <i>The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County Alabama</i> .....	\$4.50 pp
Special Publication 3 — <i>Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend</i> .....	\$6.50 pp
<i>Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types</i> .....	\$10.00 pp
Lively, Long, Josselyn - <i>Pebble Tool Paper</i> .....	\$3.00 pp
<i>Investigations in Russell Cave</i> , published by the National Park Service .....	\$7.50 pp
<i>Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology</i> (Juvenile) .....	\$7.00 pp

CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO: **ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

SEND CHECKS TO: **MR. EUGENE FUTATO, Office of Archaeological Research**  
1 Mound State Monument, Moundville, Alabama 35474

## MEMBERSHIP

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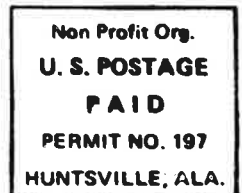
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\* Contributions are Tax Deductible

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