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Alabama Archaeological Society

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Volume 31



Editor
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MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

Number 7

A.A.S. SUMMER MEETING

The Alabama Archaeological Society held its summer meeting at Smith Bottom Cave on Saturday, June 17. Dr. Boyce Driskell of the Department of Archaeology (formerly Office of Archaeological Research), Moundville, his students and crew made this a memorable day for our Society.

Some of the attendees participated in the actual exacavation, water screening, sorting, etc. Others toured the excavation area and were briefed on archaeological techniques and theories on this particular site. There was something for everyone.

Participants took a break from the activities to eat a picnic lunch; work resumed in early afternoon. The Board of Directors met, and routine Society business was conducted.

The Muscle Shoals Chapter hosted a fish fry Saturday evening: fish steaks accompanied by hush puppies, Mexican cornbread, potato salad, slaw, and wonderful homemade desserts. At dusk, Dr. Driskell presented a slide-illustrated talk on the excavation, comparing this year's activities with those of earlier seasons.

On Sunday morning Charles Moore of Florence opened the Indian Mound Museum for a tour. Charles explained the layout of the exhibits and pointed out several pieces of particular interest. Those who climbed the Indian Mound were impressed by its size and the view it commands.

The weather was beautiful, the company was excellent and the food delicious. Our thanks to Dr. Driskell and the Muscle Shoals Chapter for an outstanding meeting.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RELEASED STUDY OF DE SOTO'S 16TH CENTURY EXPEDITION

A draft feasibility study of the approximate route traveled by Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto and his expedition in 1539-40 through what is now the sountern United States has been released for public

review and comment by the National Park Service. Copies of the study may be obtained from the National Park Service, Planning and Federal Programs Division; 75 Spring Street, S.W.; Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

(From a press release by the National Park Service, Atlanta)

BOOK REVIEW

KEY MARCO'S BURIED TREASURE, by Marion S. Gilliland. University of Florida Press; 15 Northwest 15th Street; Gainesville, Florida 32603. 138 pages, oversize. 21 plates. \$25.00.

Gilliland published in 1975 THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF KEY MARCO, FLORIDA, which was the first account of Frank Cushing's expedition and excavations on Key Marco in 1895 and 1896. Cushing uncovered remarkable artifacts in shell mounds that were in near perfect condition — painted wooden masks, carved figurines, fishing nets, hafted tools, and many other artifacts fashioned from perishable materials. No comparable find has ever been made before or since.

Cushing became a controversial figure in the archaeological community, being accused of fraud and fakery. Gilliland has gone back to the "drawing board" and unearthed much material from family records, diaries, letters, and papers never before published to find the true story behind the Cushing expedition. Gilliland follows Cushing from the beginning of the expedition to the end, creating an interesting narrative. This book is a good sequel to her earlier book on Marco. A good buy at a modest price.

CHAPTER NEWS

Cullman Archaeological Society

We're suspending our meetings this summer during July and August. Our last meeting in June was a picnic held at Sparkman Park in Hartselle, next to the Civic Center.

Howard King

Huntsville Chapter

The Huntsville Chapter meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium of the public library on St. Clair Avenue. The public is welcome.

Lori Fanning of the Madison County Tourism Board was the speaker at the May chapter meeting. Ms. Fanning presented a slide show on old buildings of Huntsville. Dr. Boyce Driskell is scheduled to be the speaker at the June 27 meeting.

Dorothy Luke

ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT OSTEO-ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is one of our most common disabling diseases today. Whether or not RA also existed in ancient times has been questioned and debated in recent years. Supporters of the view of recent onset claim that evidence of the existence of RA in antiquity can be found neither in old literature nor in paintings — and most important — convincing paleopathological finds are lacking. The following presentation reviews the results of an examination of skeletons found during an excavation of a neolithic burial place in the island of Gotland, Sweden. In two skeletons there were marked peripheral changes in both large and small joints. These changes are compatible with in vivo presence of a chronic aseptic polyarthritis. Different diagnostic possibilities for such polyarticular joint disease are discussed. It is suggested that RA might be the most probable alternative although other possibilities cannot be excluded.

(From an article by I. Leden et al in Scand J Rheumatology; Vol. 17, 1988)

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

The Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV) is pleased to announce its latest publication - A GUIDE TO THE IDENTIFICATION OF VIRGINIA PROJECTILE POINTS, by Wm. Jack Hranicky and Floyd Painter.

The Guide may be ordered from: ASV Treasurer; P. O. Box 41; Courtland, Virginia 23837. The cost is \$11.00 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. 100 pages; photos, maps, drawings, references, and index.

SINGLE-OWNER RULE STALLS PRESERVATION EFFORTS

A federal rule prohibiting the Army Corps of Engineers from undertaking projects that benefit a single property owner has stalled efforts to halt river erosion that is threatening to undermine two national historic sites in Alabama.

Corps spokesman Ed Green confirmed last week that the single ownership rule is the major reason the Corps has not sought funding to correct the erosion problems at Mound State Monument in Moundville and at Fort Toulouse-Jackson National Historic Landmark in Wetumpka.

Mr. Green said the rule, put in force by the President's Office of Management and Budget, is being followed by the Corps in both cases, even though the single owner of each historic site is the State of Alabama.

(From an AP article in The Alabama Journal; Mon., April 10, 1989)

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