

Stones & Bones

May and June 2013

Volume 55, Issue 3

The Newsletter of the Alabama Archaeological Society

2013 Summer Meeting

The 2013 Summer Meeting of the Alabama Archaeological Society will be held June 29th at Oakville Indian Mounds Park and Museum, located at 1219 County Road 187, Danville, AL 35619. The park is located about a half mile off Alabama Highway 157 in Lawrence County, about 8 miles east of Moulton and 35 miles west of Cullman and I-65. Lodging is available in either city.

Meeting registration is \$4 for Society members and \$5 for non-members, with no charge for children under 12. The program will include a few speakers or presentations about the history and archaeology of the park and the local area in the morning, with a walking tour of the park and other sites after lunch. In the event of extreme weather it will be a driving tour. If you have artifacts you would like to learn more about, the various members in attendance could likely shed some light on them for you. Park information can be found at <http://www.oakvilleindianmounds.com/>.

Lunch will be a typical southern picnic (burgers, dogs, chips, soft drinks) with a charge of \$5 to offset cost, or you may bring your own lunch or drive to a nearby town on your own. If you would like to have lunch with us please let Teresa Paglione know either via email at tlpaglione@gmail.com or via phone at (334) 887-4561. Some veggie burgers will also be available - just let her know your preference.

There is an optional pre-meeting tour late Friday afternoon or early that evening on nearby private land containing rockshelters and possible Civil War features (rifle pits) associated with a skirmish between Streight and Nathan Bedford Forrest at Crooked Creek. The owner has a nice collection of period artifacts mostly acquired through trade but with a few found on the property by his grandchildren. A charge of \$5 per person for that tour will go to the owner as a thank you for accommodating meeting attendees. Contact Teresa Paglione at 334-887-4561 or via email at tlpaglione@gmail.com if you plan to attend the Friday walking tour.

The newly built Jesse Owens Memorial

Museum and Park is also just up the road from Oakville Mounds Park. Jesse Owens was one of the great track stars of his day, winning Gold Medals and setting world records at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. There is no admission charged to visit the Jesse Owens Museum (www.jesseowensmuseum.org). Also nearby is the Clarkson Covered Bridge (aka Legg Covered Bridge) over Crooked Creek, about 1 mile north of U.S. Highway 278 and 4 miles south of Alabama Highway 157 in Cullman County. The site of LaGrange College, the first chartered institution of higher learning in Alabama and forerunner of the University of North Alabama, is about 15 miles west on Alabama Highway 157 in Colbert County. Various period buildings from off-site have been donated to the park. There is no admission to walk on the park grounds, and the view from the mountain overlooking the Tennessee Valley is impressive. The Welcome Center is open 1-4 on Sundays, or by appointment. Information on LaGrange park can be found at http://www.recall-lagrange.00me.com/index_1.html. The Sipsey Wilderness Area in Bankhead National Forest is just a short drive to the south of Danville.

News items, the meeting agenda and updates, and links to our Facebook and Twitter feeds can be found on the AAS website, www.alabamaarchaeology.org.



History of LaGrange College and Military Academy 1830-1862

The establishment of LaGrange College by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1830 represents the birth of higher education in Alabama. On January 11, 1830, LaGrange College opened atop a mountain in Colbert County under the direction of Rev. Robert Paine, with two faculty members and 70 students. It received its official charter on January 19th

of that year, the first chartered college in Alabama.

Archaeological evidence on the mountain indicates that Native Americans occupied the area for at least 12,000 years before European contact. In the early 1820s wealthy landowners in the area established a village on the 400-ft high mountain, then known as Lawrence's Hill, to escape the mosquitoes and summer heat. About 400 residents occupied the community, called LaGrange after the estate of General Marquis de LaFayette, near Paris.

In the late 1820s the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church solicited proposals and funding for a college in the Southeast. On December 4, 1828 at its conference in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, a subscription of \$13,000 by local citizens and pastors to bring the college to LaGrange was unanimously accepted. On December 28th of that year, the Mississippi Conference accepted an invitation to participate. Representatives met at LaGrange on January 10, 1829 to select the site of the college, form a constitution, raise funds, and plan construction.

While LaGrange College was operated by the Methodist Church, it was not a theological institution, but rather literary and scientific. Enrollment ranged from 70 at its inception to a peak of 139 in 1845, averaging just over 100 students per year. About 150 students are believed to have received A.B. degrees over its 25-year history. By 1854 the college was in financial trouble, and in January 1855 accepted an offer by the citizens of Florence to move the college there. It reopened under the name Wesleyan University on April 14, 1856 and has undergone several name changes since. On August 14, 1974 it took its current name, The University of North Alabama.

After the original LaGrange College moved to Florence and changed its name, a group of interested citizens organized another college in the vacated facilities using the original name. A new faculty was assembled under the direction of Rev. Felix Johnson, and classes resumed. However, that institution saw an enrollment of only about 16 students, and it struggled financially, remaining solvent due only to the generosity of the trustees.

The college was temporarily suspended in the fall of 1857 to erect a third building to accommodate a newly-added military component. It reopened in February 1858 under the name LaGrange College and Military Academy, with Major J. W. Robertson Superintendent and Capt. Wm. H. Hunt Commandant of Cadets. While the changes did improve the school, it continued to struggle financially until the state contributed military equipment and funds for scholarships.

The school was patterned after the U.S. Military Academy, and under Major Robertson's able guidance was once known as "The West Point of the South", with students from throughout the South attending. In 1860, the name was shortened to LaGrange Military Academy, and by 1861 enrollment had reached nearly 200 students. However, only two students ever graduated.

With the arrival of the Civil War in April 1861, membership began to wane, and nearly one third of the students had joined the Confederate Army by July of that year. On March 1, 1862, the Academy was suspended due to the war, and Major Robinson was given permission to raise a regiment from the membership, which became the 35th Alabama Regiment, C.S.A., and he was promoted to Colonel. On March 12th the 35th mustered into the Confederate Army for three years.

On April 28, 1863, the 7th Cavalry Regiment, U.S.A., under Colonel Florence N. Cornyn raided the community, burning the Academy, many local businesses, and over one hundred homes. Many citizens of LaGrange eventually left for better opportunities elsewhere, and what remained of the community became a ghost town.



Fort Tombecbe Community Day

The second annual Community Day was held at Fort Tombecbe on Saturday, May 18. Fort Tombecbe is an eighteenth-century fort built by the French in 1736 and subsequently occupied by the British, followed by the Spanish until 1797. Saturday's activities included weapons demonstrations, including a Coehorn mortar and a flintlock musket. A living history camp by Rosa Hall and Monica Moore depicted typical eighteenth-century crafts of Choctaw women. The first com-

mandant of the fort, Swiss Captain Joseph de Lusser, was represented by Brian Mast. Brian is the Public Historian for the Black Belt Museum and was recently awarded a grant from the Daniel Foundation of Alabama to support the Museum's living history programs.

Many families from the west Alabama area brought their children to see and participate in an archaeological dig, assisted by Steven Meredith and Ashley Dumas. Current archaeological projects at the fort include mapping out the palisade wall of Fort Tombecbe, whose location was confirmed through excavations in 2010 and 2012 by University of West Alabama field schools. Cedar posts will be installed at approximate 5 meter intervals

near the outline of the original palisade so that visitors will understand its shape and size. The corners of the large French Marine barracks also will be marked. The holes for the posts will be excavated carefully and will help to guide the placement of any future large-scale excavations. This work and other improvements to the site are made possible by an Operations Grant administered by the Alabama Historical Commission.

Black Belt Museum staff still need a lot of help to complete the necessary excavations, so please contact Ashley Dumas (adumas@uwa.edu) if you'd like to be on the volunteer list. For more photos of Community Day, visit the Black Belt Museum Facebook page.



Young visitors help excavate holes for the placement of interpretive posts at the fort



Brian Mast, the Black Belt Museum's Public Historian, portrays Swiss Captain Joseph de Lusser, first commandant at Fort Tombecbe

Benton Blade from Limestone County

By Stuart McGregor

J.D. Cornelius of the Lester community in Limestone County found this artifact in Sugar Creek about 10 years ago. He and his wife had taken their young son to the creek for the day, and he saw the point lying on the streambed while walking back to his car. While not an avid artifact collector, J.D. does have an appreciation for such things, and while I was working near his home recently he mentioned the point and let me take some quick photos with my cell phone camera. I saw Ben Hoksbergen the next day and he tentatively identified the artifact as a Middle Archaic Benton preform or cache blade.



Benton cache blade from Limestone County, front and back view

A Note on the Resurgence of the Oxford Mound Controversy

Lately, for some unknown reason, there has been a lot of buzz on the internet and media about the Oxford Stone Mound – which was destroyed in 2010. There has also been a lot of criticism about the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) and the State Archaeologist not doing their job to protect the Oxford Stone Mound. Truth be told, the AHC and State Archeologist advised the City of Oxford to avoid affecting the stone mound; however, the AHC and the State Archeologist could not legally require protection or even require that an archaeological survey be conducted prior to its destruction. They had *no* power or legal standing to delay or stop the development or the destruction of the site since it was on *private* land and was being developed without federal funds or a federal permit. Short of disturbing human remains, the AHC was not legally allowed to intervene. The planned development was not reviewable and did not require the concurrence of the AHC. (There is a state law directing that a permit from the AHC is required if human remains are disturbed.)

There *is* a state law to protect sites on state lands (parks and forests, mostly) and in state/public waters (the rivers and larger tributaries - not those creeks or waterways that are privately owned). In addition,

there *is* a federal law – the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) - to consider protecting important archaeological sites. This federal law, however, is only triggered when a federal agency is involved. *If* federal funds are used (bridges and highways), or a federal permit is required (404 permit or cell towers, gas pipelines, powerlines) or federal lands are involved (National Forest, military installations), an archaeological survey is usually required. The federal law does not automatically protect sites; it only requires that archaeological sites are considered in the planning process. If sites cannot be protected, mitigation measures are usually required; these mitigation measures normally are mutually agreed upon by the applicant and/or federal agency, the AHC, and the consulting federally recognized Tribe(s).

Which brings me to yet another action by the City of Oxford that will result in the destruction of an archaeological site - *HOWEVER*, this newest development of a Sportsplex *did* require a permit from the Corps of Engineers – which required the NHPA Section 106 process to begin. An archaeological survey was conducted, and sites were found. Not all of the sites could be avoided if the City were to construct their Sportsplex in a reasonable amount of time for a reasonable amount of money in a reasonably close location. Remember – Section 106 does *not* require the protection of sites – it only requires consideration - and the communication with affected parties: the AHC, the applicant or federal agency, and the affected federally

recognized Tribe(s). In the case of the Sportsplex, since sites would be destroyed, mitigation measures were developed and agreed to by all consulting parties. One mitigation measure was to archaeologically excavate portions of the site(s); another mitigation measure involves the reconstruction of the stone mound at the Sportsplex and the preservation of nearby Choccolocco Town, which features an earthen mound.

These are two very different outcomes to two very different archaeological sites in Oxford. The only difference was that the federal law afforded the sites at the Sportsplex some consideration in the planning process for the Sportsplex – whether it was on-site or off-site protection or archaeological excavations or the reconstruction of an important stone feature. There was –and still is - *no* state law that protects or considers the protection of the Oxford Stone Mound. Unfortunately, the destruction of the Oxford Stone Mound occurred despite the protests of Alabama citizens, archaeologists, the Alabama Historical Commission, and the Native American community.

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Investigation of a Rockshelter in Calhoun County

By Teresa Paglione

Last July a private landowner in Calhoun County approached Robert Perry (Robert E. Perry and Associates, Pell City) about recording and testing a small bluff shelter on his property. He was excited about the story his site might have in telling a small part of the history of Alabama. Robert and Van King visited the site and determined that the shelter was an archaeological site – but it appeared to be heavily disturbed. An inspection of the surface area indicated that a good bit of the soil under and adjacent to the shelter had already been displaced by collectors digging for artifacts. The owner volunteered that he had been letting friends and neighbors dig the site. That explained the holes and backfill piles, but what Robert, Van and the owner didn't know was whether there were any cultural strata or features that might be intact that could provide more information about the site itself.

Unfortunately, rock-shelters and bluff-shelters are favorite targets of artifact collectors and looters. Rock- or bluff-shelters are just recessed areas - usually situated on steep bluffs or slopes with a stone face or "wall" that provides shelter from wind and rain. Because their floors are protected from rain and erosion, they sometimes contain vast amounts of archeological information about the past, including fragile ecofacts (remains of seeds, pollen grains, tiny bones, etc.) that do not survive in open air sites (See Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter or Dust Cave issues of the Journal of Alabama Archaeology for some famous examples).

Bluff- and rock-shelters played an important role in Alabama's past as both long-term and temporary camps. The kinds of artifacts and ecofacts, along with the types of stone tools and debitage, can indicate whether or not a site was occupied intermittently or long-term, whether it was a hunting camp or was used to process game or nuts or if it was occupied year-round. The artifacts and features can also divulge the date of the occupations – Paleoindian, Archaic, Woodland, Mississippian, or historic. An investigation of a fairly intact or undisturbed site might have been able to reveal how Alabama's prehistoric populations and cultures in the Coosa

River area were adapting to environmental change.

In October, I was invited by the Alabama Treasure Forest Association to present the results of the testing of a few sites on a Treasure Forest member's property in Cleburne County conducted last summer (previously reported with NRCS Earth team volunteers from Troy and Auburn University students in a "Stones and Bones" article). The owner of the shelter Robert and Van investigated tell was in attendance and approached me to tell me that archaeologists had visited the site but he would like to have it tested, so I contacted Robert, and we set a date in mid-March when his crew and I could meet at the site with the owner. If the site had intact strata or features, we might have had an opportunity to call on AAS volunteers to test the site further.

When I arrived at the property, Robert and his crew (including Van) had already started excavating a couple of units under the shelter and on the talus slope. A few hours later, having recovered only a handful of small chert flakes, we

determined that unfortunately the entire shelter had been disturbed. We failed to recover any diagnostic artifacts within the shelter – no projectile points, no pottery, and no intact soils or features were identified anywhere in or outside the shelter. Only a single White Springs hafted biface was recovered from a test unit excavated within a looter's spoil pile outside the shelter.

Sadly, the shelter we investigated had little or no archaeological information worth pursuing; there was no reason for AAS to call for volunteers to help investigate the past. We will never have the opportunity to discover what might have been the importance of that particular site in telling the history of the Coosa River area, much less Alabama. Once a site has been disturbed and soils and artifacts displaced – we can never put it back together again. Without context, all we know is that at some time in the Middle Archaic, an unknown Native American Indian sat under this shelter and may have knocked a flake or two off a blade or projectile point. We have a place – but no history.



Calhoun County
rockshelter seen from a
distance



Close-up view of
rockshelter

1TU495, The Bank of the State Site, Tuscaloosa, AL: An Interim Report

By Brandon Thompson

In the spring of 2013, The University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) conducted Phase III excavations at The Bank of the State Site (1TU495) on the 500 block of University Boulevard in Tuscaloosa. The investigations were undertaken in anticipation of a planned hotel/conference center. Presently, the material recovered is at OAR's DeJarnette Archaeological Laboratory at Moundville Archaeological Park undergoing processing, washing, and analysis. However, a brief overview of the glass bottles recovered from the site is possible at present.

Urban sites are often conglomerations of time periods and activities, with deposits that may intrude upon each other in complex ways. Land modifications, construction, razing, rebuilding, utility installation, and a multitude of processes contribute to this complexity, and 1TU495 is in many ways a typical urban site. Yet, despite all the impacts the site has experienced, there is a remarkable amount of preservation. This is well reflected in the bottle assemblage recovered. Approximately 100 whole glass and ceramic bottles, representative of the broad history of the property and the diversity of its occupation, were found (Figure 1: Image of bottle type collection).

The earliest bottles date to well before the Civil War, and are mouth-blown, handmade specimens. The olive glass "wine bottle" shown here is characteristic of the methods of manufacture. There is a high "kick-up", where the pontil rod held the bottle during shaping. The base is uneven, and has some indications of sag from when the glass was still quite hot. The mouth, or finish, is uneven and obviously applied by hand. Interestingly, there is still some of the foil seal adhering to the bottle's neck (Figure 2: olive wine bottle).

Post-Civil War, the technology of bottle manufacture received numerous boosts, and these innovations were rapidly adapted. Molds become widely used, and by the end of the 19th century, automation was becoming common. There are two important archaeological consequences of this fluorescence of innovation worth mentioning here: 1) Bottles became cheaper to make, and therefore, more common. This meant that bottles are more likely to enter the archaeological record relatively soon after their manufacture, instead of being heirloomed for other uses. 2) It became practical for local businesses to have bottles made with their own names/markings. This allows archaeologists to investigate distribution and consumption at a very local scale; something that is more challenging with earlier unmarked bottles which were often reused. Examples of a so-called Patent-Medicine bottle and a bottle from the Tuscaloosa Dispensary are found in Figures 3 and 4.

Our latest bottles come from the early-mid 20th century, and represent fully machine-made technology. A typical soda water bottle is found in Figure 5, and has many of the characteristics common to machine-made bottles. The shape of the bottle is fairly complex, which would have been unusual for an earlier soda water bottle due to high cost, and the finish would have had a crown-closure or bottle-cap that was ubiquitous until a few decades ago.

Of course, we are not only interested in complete bottles. We are analyzing each shard of glass and attempting to categorize every one. Having complete specimens is an advantage, because it provides us with a type collection to which we can compare the fragments. Glass bottles are only one artifact type recovered from the Bank of the State Site, and data from this assemblage will complement what we discover from other artifacts.

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

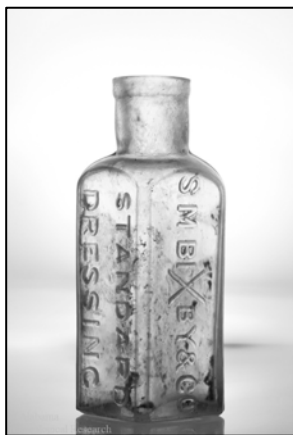


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

Chapter News

News from the Cullman Chapter by Robbie Camp: The Cullman Chapter met Thursday night May 16th for the last time before a three month summer break. Ellis Whitt of Huntsville presented the program. Ellis shared a detailed report on many sites in North Alabama that he has collected for several years. We particularly enjoyed his slide presentation revealing many great finds in situ, detailed breakdowns of the many point types found at each site, and the stories that go along with memorable finds. The chapter voted to go to the Florence Indian Mound Museum to see the stone wall that Tom Hendrix built on Saturday, June 8th for a summer field trip. The next scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, September 19th at 7:00 pm.

News from the Southwest Chapter by Bonnie Gums:

The AAS Southwest Chapter co-sponsored two talks with The Archaeology Museum at the University of South Alabama (USA). On April 25, over 90 people attended a talk by Art History Professor Dr. Kara Burns titled "A Reflection of Mystery in Late Roman Britain." Dr. Burns discussed Orpheus, the legendary singer and founder of the Mystery cult of the Greco-Roman god Bacchus. Eight Roman mosaics found in reception rooms of affluent Roman villas in southwest Britain depict images of Orpheus reflecting the religious beliefs of this once great religion. Dr. Burns examined art and literature of ancient Greece and Rome to seek an explanation as to why Orpheus became a popular interior mosaic design for wealthy Roman homeowners.

On Thursday May 16, Tara Potts from the Center for Archaeological Studies presented a talk on "Holy Ground: A Historic Creek Village and Battlefield." Following the Battle of Burnt Corn and the Redstick Creek attacks on Fort Mims and Fort Sinquefield, American forces, militia, and Choctaw warriors marched toward a new Redstick war settlement known as Holy Ground. In December 1813, the Battle of Holy Ground resulted in the destruction of the settlement and the deaths of 30 Redstick warriors and one American soldier. In 2009 staff and students from the USA's Center for Archaeological Studies located Holy Ground and initiated research at this important site, which was funded by grants from the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service and the Alabama Historical Commission. The site has since been purchased by The Archaeological Conservancy. Ms. Potts' talk focused on the history of the battle and archaeological discoveries at Holy Ground.

On May 14, 2013, SWC member Bonnie Gums from the Center for Archaeological Studies at the University of South Alabama gave a talk on historic potteries on the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay at The Fairhope Museum of History. This talk highlighted the new museum exhibit of pottery ranging from prehistoric times to the present, including Mississippian pottery effigies, many jugs, jars, and churns from nineteenth and twentieth century pottery kilns, two pots stamped "Alabama City," a large piece of the LaCoste-McAdam kiln, Fairhope's 1904 brick machine, Edith Harwell's Pinewood Pottery throw wheel and pottery tools, and lots of kiln furniture (pieces used to stack pots in the kiln). The exhibit includes the history of pottery making and photographs.

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DUES

Type	U.S.	Foreign
Annual Associate (under 18 years of age)	\$15.00	\$20.00
Annual Individual	\$25.00	\$30.00
Annual Family	\$30.00	\$35.00
Annual Institutional	\$50.00	\$55.00
Annual Sustaining Individual	\$35.00	\$40.00
Annual Sustaining Joint	\$40.00	\$45.00
Life Individual	\$500.00	\$600.00
Life Joint	\$600.00	\$700.00

AAS Research Grant

The AAS will grant an award of \$500 this year to a deserving archaeological research project. Grant proposals must be submitted to the Archaeological Resources Chairman by October 1st. The Board of Directors will vote on the proposals and announce the winner at the Winter Meeting. Minimum criteria for the grant are: 1) the project director/grant administrator must be a member of the AAS; 2) the project must be located in Alabama; 3) the project director or his or her representative will be required to present a paper on the archaeological project at the Winter Meeting; 4) the project director or other personnel working on the project must submit a written report for publication in the Journal of Alabama Archaeology within twelve months of receiving the grant.

Public Education Grant

The AAS will award public education grants this year in the amount of \$500. Single grant awards shall not exceed \$500. Proposals for grants must be submitted to the Chair of the Public Education Committee (see below) by October 1st. The Board will announce the grant recipient(s) at the Winter Meeting. Minimum criteria for the grants are: 1) the project director/grant administrator must be a member of the AAS; 2) the public education project must be located in the state of Alabama.

AAS Scholarships

The AAS will award up to two scholarships this year in the amount of \$250 each to undergraduate and/or graduate students attending an Alabama college or university. Scholarship nominations are to be submitted to the Archaeological Resources Committee Chair (see below) by October 1st. Each eligible student nominee must have an academic sponsor who must submit the nomination on the student's behalf. The nomination must take the form of a letter addressed to the Chair of the Archaeological Resources Committee. The letter must clearly identify both the nominee and the academic sponsor and must include pertinent contact information for both. The nomination letter must indicate the academic degree being sought and progress made to date toward that degree. The letter should include and discuss all the information necessary for the committee to evaluate the nominee. The sponsor should summarize the academic credentials and achievements of the nominee in the body of the nomination letter. The student must also be a member of the AAS.

Submit applications and questions to Erin Phillips, phill018@crimson.ua.edu, or Erin Phillips, Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama, P.O. Box 870210, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Additional details are available on the AAS website at:

www.alabamaarchaeology.org/aasgrants

Stones & Bones

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Stones & Bones is published bi-monthly at the beginning of January, March, May, July, September, and November. The deadline for submitting articles is the end of the month prior to publication. Articles, questions, and comments can be sent via email to:

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