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Alabama Archaeological Society

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MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

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MORE OBSERVATIONS ON THE HIGHTOWER SITE

(NOTE: The following is from long-time member Helen Mabry, where she describes her enthusiastic participation in the Hightower Site.)

Participants in the field school of the Alabama State Museum of Natural History at the Hightower Village site met some very interesting people. One particular favorite with the campers was A. J. Powers, described by his friends as a "walking encyclopedia" of the nearby area. Powers, interested in local history all his life, has made surface collections in the region for many years. He is a former member of the Birmingham Anthropological Association and remembers E. S. Ginnane, Dan Josselyn, Bill Steele and other old timers. Powers and a group of ladies from Sylacauga - Susan Green, Bettye Lessley, Eva Motes and Janie Rawlinson - have been digging on this site for several years. They helped the professionals oversee the students' work at the site during June and July and worked as hard as or harder than anyone there. The newcomers were impressed with their knowledge and skill as well as by their energy. How did this expertise come about?

The story began with Jean Pinkerton, who taught history in Sylacauga before becoming director of the Sylacauga Museum and Art Center. She learned about the prehistoric occupation nearby when artifacts showed up at school for science fairs. While directing the Sylacauga Museum, she organized already enthusiastic amateurs in 1983 to prepare for an archaeological survey by the Office of Archaeological Research, hereinafter called OAR. The Sylacauga amateurs met with the professionals and gave them locations of sites and described artifacts already discovered. OAR computerized the information and assigned official site numbers. The group met for an eight-week night course under Carey Oakley's direction. He and either Jim Knight, Richard Krause, Carlos Solis, Rick Walling or Lawrence Alexander travelled weekly between the University and/or Moundville to Sylacauga to teach the class how to use the Universal Transverse Mercator system, to make maps, to keep records and to fill out site forms. At the end of eight weeks, 26 persons received certificates of proficiency in field archaeology!

From August to October of 1984, the OAR survey of parts of Calhoun, Clay, Coosa, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega and Tallapoosa counties located 31 new sites not in the OAR files. One of the known sites revealed a 16th century Spanish ax. Support came from the Sylacauga Museum, Alabama Historical Commission, some corporate foundations as well as OAR. Paul Jordan, Jim Knight, Carlos Solis and Rick Valling led the survey.

Meanwhile, their students from Sylacauga - A. J. Susan, Bettye, Eva and Janie - dug at the Hightower Village under the direction of Bob Wilson, then of University of Florida; now with National Park Service; Rick Walling and anthropology graduate student Kermit Baumgartner, both of University of Alabama. Their work confirmed the presence of a late Mississippian Indian village and their discovery of 16th century iron horseshoes, a sickle blade and three "chisel-like" tools confirmed contact with the Spanish.

Work continued at Hightower in 1985 under Rick Walling's direction, with Kermit Baumgartner as assistant. Over 300 visitors came to the site open house, and the artifacts went on display at the museum, now renamed Isabel Comer Museum and Arts Center.

The August STONES & BONES carried photographs of some of the finds of 1987, and a more complete report will follow. The local enthusiasm, the leadership of Jean Pinkerton and Carey Oakley, plus the several years of field experience have produced a nucleus of certified amateurs: A. J., Bettye, Eva, Janie and Susan. Will their example set a course for many others in Alabama? Hope so!

Many thanks to Bettye Lessley, historian, for her minutes and her scrap-book.

Helen Mabry Birmingham Archaeological Society

NEW MEMBERS

NAME	Түре	Address	ZIP
Curren, Mr. Caleb	I	Director of Archeology, Alabama-Tombigbee Reg. Com P. O. Box 269, Camden, AL	36726
Dabbs, Ms. Patricia P.	I	200 Afton Brae, Anniston, AL	36201
Dean, Mr. Lewis S.	I	P. O. Box 1428, Tuscaloosa, AL	35401
Gerrell, Mr. Philip R.	I	2102 Monticello Drive, Tallahassee, FL	32303
Graves, Dr. Guy E.	I	829 Eldorado Drive SE, Huntsville, AL	35802
Jones, Ms. Kathleen	I	P. O. Box 269, Weaver, AL 36277	36277
Lyons, Mrs. Julie R.	I	Route One, Box 536, Highway 41 South, Selma, AL	36701
Myhand, M/Ms Hiram A.Jr.	F	310 Milesford Court, Alpharetta, GA 30201	30201
Perroni, Ms. Jody C.	I	608 Four Mile Post Road SE, Huntsville, AL	35802
Pugh, Mr. Donald Ralph	I	102 Fairview Circle, Brewton, AL	36426
Smith, Dr. Marvin T.	I	4000 Dekalb Technology Parkway, Suite # 375 Atlanta, GA	30340

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TUSCALOOSA CHAPTER DIGS EARLY BANK SITE

The Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society, the Heritage Commission of Tuscaloosa County, Shelton State Community College, University of Alabama State Museum of Natural History, University of Alabama Art Department and the City of Tuscaloosa have been assisted by many of the Tuscaloosa Chapter members of the Alabama Archaeological Society as volunteers in their coordinating an "urban" archaeological dig in the downtown Tuscaloosa area, to locate and investigate the foundation of Alabama's first chartered state bank.

Future development of the recently cleared site of later 20th century structures was started in early June of this year, which made possible the opportunity for archaeologists, historians, and interested volunteers to examine and study the early history of Tuscaloosa during the "Capital Era", 1826-1847.

The Bank of the State of Alabama was erected in Tuscaloosa in 1828 and was constructed of locally quarried stone and brick, which provided banking rooms on the ground floor, with living quarters for the cashier and his family located upstairs. A separate building just east of the bank was also constructed to house the vault, due to the fear of fire. Both buildings appear on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of that period and their exact locations, along with a well which was located directly behind the bank, could be determined from these maps with extreme accuracy.

Both structures were leveled in 1919 to make way for the buildings which were recently removed.

The bank, vault and well were chosen from a portion of the historic city owned cleared block for the archaeological investigation, to promote an awareness of the historical significance of Tuscaloosa in its early years and an opportunity to see and study historic foundations and articles unseen in over a century.

Other cities, including Boston and Houston, have also had similar projects of this nature under way, and archaeological excavation of the foundation of the original Rotunda, which was burned by invading Union troops in 1865 at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, was completed in very recent years.

Archaeologist Dr. Bruce Bizzoco, an administrator with Shelton State Community College, is supervising the current project, and working closely with him are Dr. Robert Mellown, an architectural historian on The University of Alabama art faculty, and Heritage Commission Executive Director Betsy Hayslip.

Along with assisting in the excavation of the site, several Tuscaloosa Chapter members have provided valuable research material available from their personal collections on many of the found metal clothing buttons, bottles, ceramics, and other historic artifacts of that era, and they have also aided with photography and in the cleaning and necessary reassembly of many of the fragmented artifacts that have been found.

Active members involved in the project include: Bruce Bizzoco, Jack Adkison, Kenneth Yeager, John Wathen, David Yeager, Tonny Ferrell, and Joe P. Sanford of Fayette.

The summer-long excavation activity has attracted many volunteers and visitors, and is expected to be completed in September.

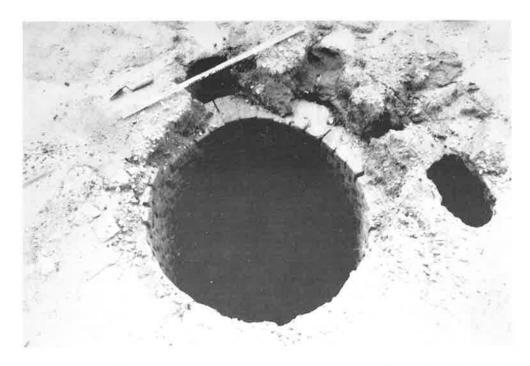
Jack Wilson Tuscaloosa



Society members and other volunteers clearing foundation area of bank's west wall (looking north).



Left to Right: Tuscaloosa Chapter members Dr. Bruce Bizzoco (in background, conducting a tour of visitors), Bill Adkison, Kenneth Yeager, Trice Keene and Jack Wilson.



Picture of well located directly behind the bank, taken prior to any excavation. Approx. 36 inches across (in center) and 18 ft. deep to dirt layer. Notice wedged shaped bricks.



Picture taken of front of bank foundations, looking east. Shows south wall foundations with 2 entrance foundations at bottom right and top right with trowel shown in between them.

EDWARD C. MAHAN RESEARCH FUND DONATIONS

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Guntersville, AL

Mrs. Mary Mahan

Guntersville, AL

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Guntersville, AL

Thank you for these generous gifts to the research fund in memory of Edward C. Mahan.

Bettye T. Henson Huntsville

CHAPTER NEWS

Huntsville Chapter

Mrs. Ruth Spence of Birmingham was the speaker at the July 21 meeting. Mrs. Spence's topic was old maps; she was curator of the Agee Collection at the Birmingham Public Library. Her slides of very early maps and copies of old atlases made for a very interesting presentation.

At the August 25 meeting, Melinda Herzog, Director of Huntsville's Burritt Museum, spoke on "Archaeological Exhibits and Collections at the Burritt Museum". Ms. Herzog showed a newly compiled slide presentation on the history of the Burritt family, the construction of the Burritt mansion (which became - in the 1950's - a regional museum), and the outbuildings and grounds which make up the Museum complex. The Museum occupies over 150 acres on Roundtop; it is an educational resource used by several other states besides Alabama. Apart from the natural history displays, which form a large part of the Museum and its programs, the archaeological exhibits are the most popular. Ms. Herzog spoke of future plans to expand the archaeological collection and the construction of a new building, which will house the expanded collection.

The Huntsville Chapter has finally found a permanent home, after several years of moving from one meeting place to another. We have been using the United Way office on Traylor Island for some time, thanks to the generosity of that organization. However, their building is in the path of the new interstate construction and will be torn down before long. The new Huntsville Public Library came to our rescue with an offer of a permanent meeting room - their Auditorium, located just off the lobby. In order to take advantage of this offer, we were obliged to change our meeting time to the fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m.

For more information on Huntsville Chapter programs and other activities, call Program Chairman Bart Henson at 881-9389.

Dorothy Luke

Tuscaloosa Chapter

The Tuscaloosa Chapter held its August meeting on the 3rd. Dr. Robert Mellown of The University of Alabama was guest speaker. Dr. Mellown spoke and showed slides on pre-Civil War architecture of Tuscaloosa.

Bill Adkison

VINLAND MAP

The Vinland map, which came to light in the early 1960's, and was believed for some years to be the earliest cartographic evidence of the existence of North America, was pronounced a forgery in 1974, when analysis of microparticles removed from its surface led McCrone Associates of Chicago to conclude that the ink used was based on titanium oxide, and hence of 20th century origin. But now work by a team at the Crocker Nuclear Laboratory of the University of California has called into question the McCrone results, and once more opens up the question of the map's authenticity.

(From an Article in Nature, Vol. 328, July 16, 1987.)

The Editors

PUBLICATIONS

The Historic Chattahoochee Commission has recently printed 15,000 copies of its new publications booklet. This 41-page promotional catalog lists 56 books which were published or reprinted between 1963 and 1987. Subjects covered include city and county histories, roadside markers, cemetery records, covered bridges, music, art, architecture, genealogy, travel, religion, humor and baseball. All relate in some way to the history of the Chattahoochee Valley of Alabama and Georgia.

Free copies of the publication catalog are available on request by writing or calling the HCC; P. O. Box 33; Eufaula, Alabama 36027; Tel. 205/687-9755.

The Editors

HARNEY FLATS: A FLORIDA PALEO-INDIAN SITE - by I. Randolph Daniel, Jr., and Michael Wisenbaker. Baywood Publishing Company, Inc., Amityville, New York.

With the publication of this book, great strides have been made in the study of Paleo-Indian in the Southeast. After decades of tantalizing hints at a significant presence of Early Man in Florida, provided primarily by finds of Suwanee points and Pleistocene fossils in the rivers of that state, we have in this book a full-blown study of a major site and its assemblages. Comparatively speaking, the data themselves are rather spectacular.

Pre-publication price: \$24.95 (postage included). Offer expires November 1, 1987.

The Editors

PUBLICATIONS		
Available issues of Journal of Alabama Archaeology Vol. 20-29 each	issue	\$2.50 to Members) \$5.00 pp
Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Arch		
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell		
Special Publication 2 — The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Ber		
Special Publication 3 — Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe		
Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types	so and the factor of the value of the	\$10.00 pp
Lively, Long, Josselyn - Pebble Tool Paper		\$3.00 pp
Investigations in Russell Cave, published by the National Park Service	е	\$7.50 pp
Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile)		
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Alabama Archaeological Society

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