

Stones & Bones

July and August 2014

Volume 56, Issue 4

The Newsletter of the Alabama Archaeological Society

Meet a Member!

Editor's note: Welcome to our new regular interview feature! In each issue, an AAS member will be highlighted giving us all an opportunity to get to know fellow members or learn something new and entertaining about a colleague. If you would like to be interviewed, please email Kim Pyszka (kpyszka@aum.edu).

To kick-off this new feature, the current AAS President, Eric Sipes, provided his answers to our interview questions.



Who influenced your decision to become an archaeologist? Actually, a number of people led to my decision to become a professional archaeologist. My grandfather was an artifact collector, and walking fields with him as a child first fueled my interest in Native American culture. Later, when I was a young college student, I took my small "arrowhead" collection to Indiana University where I met Dr. Christopher Peebles. He spent a lot of time helping me record my finds on state site forms and encouraged me to sign up for the archaeological field school later that summer. Finally, my parents for supporting my decision to change schools and switch my major from Engineering to Anthropology – I left one of the best private engineering schools in the country to become an archaeologist. I know that they thought I was crazy, but once they saw that I was serious about it, they supported me fully despite whatever reservations they might have had.

What is the first site you worked on? What is the last one (or current one)? The first

site I worked on was during field school. We excavated a Late Woodland Period (ca. AD 500-1000), Native American site located on a low rise within the floodplain of the White River in Lawrence County, Indiana. This former stockaded village site was located in a cornfield in the full sun – it was hot, humid, and buggy – and I had the one of the best times of my life. After field school, I was certain I had made the right choice of career! The last site I worked on was a partially-excavated, mid-to-late nineteenth century railroad tunnel in the mountains in Rabun County, Georgia (northeast corner of the state). This now-flooded tunnel was associated with the never completed Blue Ridge Railroad, which was abandoned at the start of the Civil War. Local legend says that 41 Irish immigrant miners were trapped halfway under the mountain when the tunnel collapsed.

Fieldwork or lab work? Fieldwork – I love being outside. However, for every day I spend in the field, I spend at least 20 days in the lab. It is important to remember that without lab work (research, analysis, writing), fieldwork loses meaning. Archaeology is about discovering information about the past – not just collecting artifacts.

What would be your dream site to work at? I have always wanted to work in Greece and Italy. For a time, I thought I wanted to be an Old World archaeologist, and I did a lot of classwork in Greek and Roman archaeology. In fact, I had signed up for a field school in Greece as an undergraduate – if it had not been cancelled for reasons unknown to me, I might have ended up working there instead...

If you could have lunch with any archaeologist (past or present) who would it be? Wow, that's a tough question. It might be nice to have met Heinrich Schliemann or Howard Carter, but I would also like to have a long chat with C.B. Moore.

Why are you a member of AAS? I initially joined AAS as a way to meet people that

share my love of archaeology. Not long after that, I was invited to serve on the Board of Directors and have more recently held several offices, including my current role as President. The sense of camaraderie in this society is wonderful, and I consider my many friends in AAS as an extended family.



AAS Fall Picnic at Moundville

An AAS Fall Picnic is in the works for Saturday, September 20th at the Moundville State Archaeological Park. Plans are underway to schedule nationally recognized Moundville experts Drs. Kent Reilly (Texas State University, San Marcos) and Vincas Steponaitis (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) to be guest speakers to kick off a larger symposium celebrating the 75th anniversary of the opening of the Jones Archaeological Museum.

The event will be held at the Park's riverside conference center. The planning process is still underway, but the first speaker is tentatively scheduled for 11:00 am followed by the picnic at noon and a second speaker at 1:00 pm.



AAS Summer Meeting at Fort Toulouse/Jackson

The Alabama Archaeological Society summer meeting was held on June 21 at Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson. We met to listen to four distinguished speakers who have spent time digging at the forts – sometimes with shovels and trowels and sometimes with picks and jackhammers! It was a typical warm summer morning but it really was comfortable sitting under the shade of the pavilion with a few fans to stir the air around.

We had an all-star lineup of speakers:

Ned Jenkins, Craig Sheldon, Jim Parker, and Greg Waselkov. Ned Jenkins spoke first on "Contemporaneous Societies of the Central Alabama Region from 300 to 1700" - basically describing the native populations and cultures that lived along the Alabama River at the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. Next was Jim Parker - former Site Director (retired) who has worked at the park since the bicentennial celebration. In his presentation - "There's Another Fort in There: Recognition of the American Components of the Fort Toulouse Site" - Jim described how at first the (non-local) archaeologist in charge failed to correctly understand the multiple features (trenches, hearths, footings, etc) of the three Fort Toulouses and the one Fort Jackson. In fact, originally all four forts were interpreted as one very puzzling fort! It took a little mental gymnastics and a lot of excavations to recognize which features belonged to what fort - and some luck when a contemporaneous sketch map of a fort was found!

Next up was Craig Sheldon talking about "French and Indians at Fort Toulouse." After this presentation, he led a walk and talk tour of the recreated French Fort Toulouse which was 'garrisoned' by French re-enactors. After the walking tour we had grilled burgers and hotdogs, chips, drinks, and watermelon - a popular menu for our summer meetings!

Our last speaker, Greg Waselkov, discussed "Fort Toulouse After 300 Years: New Questions for Old Excavations." Greg summarized all of the work and artifacts recovered from Fort Toulouse and presented questions that still remain - some of which can now be addressed with new technology. For instance, elemental analysis of deer bones could indicate where the deer lived and when they were hunted and thus how far the hunters had to travel to hunt. Such an analysis could reveal whether that distance or pattern changed over the decades as deer became scarcer due to the deerskin trade.

After the last presentation, there was an informally led walk along the Coosa to the Mississippian Indian mound and the Alabamians' village and finally down to the point where the two rivers join to become the Alabama.

Our meeting was a great success. Our thanks go to the Fort Toulouse- Fort Jackson staff and the weekend's French 'Living History' garrison. Special thanks also to donations in support of our meeting: Robert Perry and Associates (Pell City), MRS Consultants (Tuscaloosa), and



AAS members enjoy an informative talk at the Summer Meeting at the Fort Toulouse/Jackson State Historic Site

Tennessee River Valley Archaeological Research (Huntsville).

Also, during the meeting, all of the presentations were recorded on video courtesy of Jason Mann and Troy University. We hope to soon post them to our website so those of you who missed the meeting can still listen to our featured speakers!



The Southeastern Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology in September at Stone Mountain, GA

The third annual SECHSA Conference is scheduled for September 19-20, 2014 in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

As a local community on the edge of a modern metropolis, Stone Mountain inspires this year's theme of "Looking In, Looking Out." Archaeology in SECHSA's region of interest explores places, happenings, and developments at the local level that had regional significance or that reflect the influences of wide-ranging processes or events on local places. For instance, rock quarried from the Stone Mountain vicinity was put to use locally but was also shipped throughout the country. At the same time, changes in

engineering, construction, and other industries influenced local quarrying technology and practices. In keeping with this year's theme, we encourage submissions that have studied the widespread forces that impacted localities as well as the small-scale developments that reverberated throughout the southeast. Because SECHSA is primarily an opportunity to share research and exchange ideas, however, papers touching on all aspects of southeastern historical archaeology are invited.

The 2014 conference is hosted and arranged by New South Associates, based in the historic Stone Mountain Village, and the Stone Mountain Memorial Association. The conference venue will be at the Education Annex of Stone Mountain Park, located just outside the parks' west entrance. Lodging options (including camping) are available inside the park as well as nearby. The conference venue is easily accessible by car, and several local restaurants are located nearby in the Stone

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The Unique and the Unknown: Artifacts from the Little Canoe Creek Site, 1Sc336

By Brandon Thompson

In the summer and fall of 2010, the University of Alabama Office of Archaeological Research conducted data recovery excavations of the Little Canoe Creek site, 1Sc336, near Odenville in St. Clair County, Alabama. Radiocarbon samples produced an average calibrated date of A.D. 1147, and the recovered cultural materials, in conjunction with this temporal data, place the site in the Terminal Woodland Ellis phase. Sixty-six features were recorded including roasting pits, earth ovens, and a large square structure, 6 m on a side. A wide assortment of artifacts were recovered, including projectile points spanning from the Archaic to the Mississippian stage, grog-tempered and shell-tempered ceramics, stone discoidals, and bone tools. Apart from the general time/phase data that the overall artifact assemblage provides, there were a number of truly remarkable artifacts. Two of these are further discussed here.

Pipe fragments are occasionally found during prehistoric site excavations. They can be stone or ceramic, undecorated or highly stylized. One such unusual pipe bowl (see picture) was found at the Little Canoe Creek site. Tempered with fine sand and mica, it is pale yellow in color but has remnants of red ochre pigment. The most striking characteristics, however, are ribbed circles encompassing the entire bowl. It appears to be a Middle Coosa manifestation of the central Alabama Hope Hull continuum (Ned Jenkins, personal communication, 2010). The Hope Hull continuum is represented in the Middle Coosa River drainage by the Lightwood site, 1Ta241, (Knight 1985, 1986) and the Cane Creek phase (Little et al. 1997). Cane Creek and Late Hope Hull date to approximately A.D. 1000-1100.

Sometimes artifacts defy simple explanation. Their form can be described but their function can be ineffable. A single, 40 g, drilled and incised rectangular siltstone pebble (lower picture) was recovered during the excavation of the Little Canoe Creek site. Several surfaces exhibited evidence of abrading, small incised grooves were present, as were twelve drilled holes. At least four of the holes had secondary drilled rings around

the primary hole locations. Perhaps these secondary rings were made by river cane that could have been harvested near the creek from which the site gets its name. Determining the use of this artifact is difficult due to its uniqueness, and its ultimate function is unknown.

The Little Canoe Creek site is a remarkable example of the Terminal Woodland Ellis phase in the Coosa River drainage. It produced more than a dozen radiocarbon samples, and the recovered artifacts provided invaluable information into the prehistory of the area. Information regarding lifeways, subsistence strategies, and architectural methods was gained, and the artifacts presented here reflect the extraordinary contributions this site has made.

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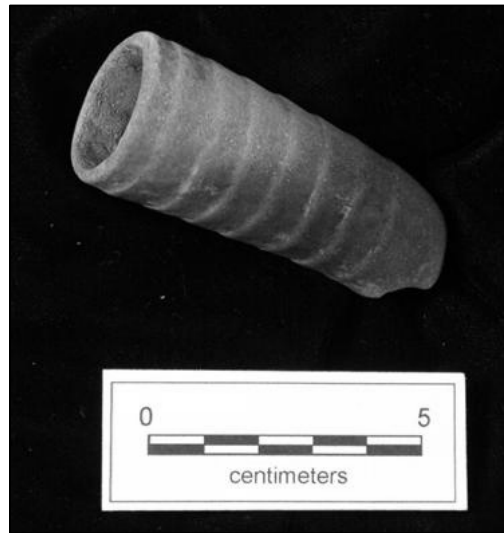
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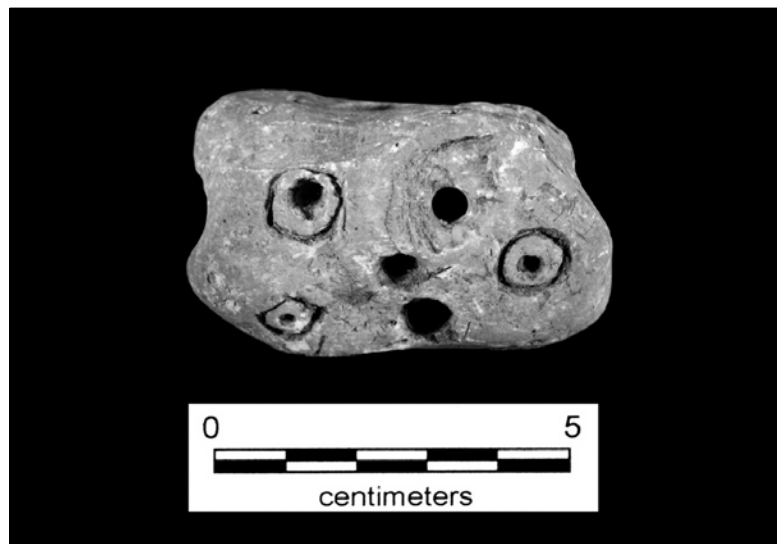
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Fine sand and mica tempered pipe bowl



Drilled and incised pebble

Troy University Summer Field School Excavations at the Thrash Site

By Jason Mann

During the Summer Term, the Troy University Archaeological Research Center (TUARC) began research excavations at a previously undocumented site along the Pea River in Pike County. The Thrash Site, 1Pk71, located on a very low sandy terrace in the Pea River swamp was only known about by the property owner who introduced me to the site. Upon introduction to the site, I was reluctant to believe it was actually a site, at least not a very good site. Regardless, there were flakes on the surface of the plowed wildlife plot, and some of the artifacts the landowner showed me were nice, so I figured some shovel testing would not hurt.

After doing some systematic interval shovel testing it was clear that the site was good. Numerous artifacts were found to a depth of 120cm, and it also appeared that the bulk of the site was intact well below the plowzone. Following shovel testing, a decision was made to place square holes in the areas that yielded the highest artifact densities.

The first 1x2 meter unit yielded a nearly complete cord-wrapped dowel impressed pot with podal supports. That same unit produced artifacts all the way to the water table at 115cm. Thus, a decision was made to continue excavations. By the end of the Summer Term, the Troy students had excavated 38 square meters to an average depth of 60 cm.

The early and very preliminary results of the excavations indicate that the Thrash Site had occupation events that ended around AD 400 and began during the Middle to Early Archaic period. The largest occupation event was during the Early Woodland/Gulf Formational Period as indicated by cord-wrapped dowel impressed pottery, simple stamped pottery, fiber tempered pottery, Alexander Pinched and Punctated pottery, and some odd sherds that appear to be very Marksville like. Numerous features were discovered which contained very few artifacts. The projectile points are primarily of the style used toward the end of the Archaic, and no true arrowheads were discovered. Charred hickory nut, charred wood, and other botanicals were all recovered which will aid in the dating and understanding of the prehistoric food ways of the occupation.

Of particular interest is the geomorphology of the site. Early analysis suggests that during the site's occupation, 1Pk71 was a primary terrace of the Pea River. Yet, sometime around 1600 years ago, the nature of the Pea River flood plain pattern changed, and the site became uninhabitable due to being too low and wet. The sandy nature of the site, though easy to dig, does make the site delicate to excavate carefully. We had to stop excavating deeper than 80cm because the water table could rise or fall unexpectedly which caused the profiles to sink in, much like a child discovers when digging a hole near the surf on the beach as the tide changes. This change, which is easily dateable at the Thrash Site, may be an

indicator of an important climatic shift in the overall Southeastern climate pattern.

The Thrash Site is also important because of the Early Woodland component being intact. Very few intact Gulf Formational/Early Woodland sites from this far south are found as a largely undisturbed primary component. TUARC plans to analyze the artifacts and other data recovered this Fall semester and will return to the Thrash Site to continue excavations in the year(s) to come. Thanks must be given here to Steve Thrash, the property owner who allowed TUARC to excavate on his property and also for using his tractor to fill in our holes. We have good strong students, but 3000 tons of dirt would have killed them in the heat.



Troy students (left to right) James Edmonds, Cameron Petterson, and Richard Bozeman mapping features at 1Pk71



Richard Bozeman holds up a point found during excavations at 1Pk71

Wright Family Donates Amos Wright Collection to DeJarnette Research Center

By Carey Oakley

Saturday, March 15, 2014 was a good day. Actually it was a wonderful day for me as I got to visit with the Amos Wright family which now consists of Carolyn, Jay, and Richard.

I am sure a number of you will have fond memories of Amos (AJ) Wright who passed away several years ago. AJ was a devoted family man and a staunch member of the Huntsville Chapter of the Alabama Archaeological Society. For several years, the Wright Family walked the fields of the Tennessee Valley and along the Coosa River picking up, according to Richard, "anything that was made by the hand of man".

The purpose of my visit was to meet with Eugene Futato and Brandon Thompson of the University of Alabama Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) and the Wright family at the family residence and complete the donation of some two thousand pounds of archaeological specimens to the curation facilities at David L. DeJarnette Research Center at Moundville Archaeological Park. Eugene Futato stated that what makes this collection significant is that not only have these artifacts received meticulous care from the time they were collected in the field but also strict records, including maps and other documents, were maintained. This level of care and detailed record keeping makes this an outstanding research collection that will be made available to researchers for generations to come.

Sadly enough, most collections are usually sold or the supporting documentation is lost making the specimens almost worthless from a research point of view. Not so with this collection. As time and resources allow, each of the estimated ten thousand specimens will be examined and catalogued. While some specimens may be selected for display from time to time, the majority of the Amos Wright Family Collection will be made available for research. I am deeply grateful to the Wright Family for their contribution to our cultural heritage which will also serve our professional discipline as it is studied in the future.



Eugene Futato (left) of OAR looks at a specimen from the Amos Wright Collection with Richard (center) and Jay Wright (right).

NRCS Remote Sensing Project

By Teresa Paglione

Early last month USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil scientist Wes Tuttle (NRCS - North Carolina) visited Alabama to conduct remote sensing training for local NRCS soil scientists. Teresa Paglione, NRCS Cultural Resources Specialist, arranged for the location of the training at several archaeological sites. The first training location was at Old Cahawba for a much anticipated search of several prehistoric and historic features chosen by Linda Derry, the park's site director. We were in search of the large moat that surrounded

the old Indian village at Old Cahawba. Using Linda's historic maps of the first State Capitol's streets, we chose several places to try to intersect the now-filled in and largely unseen moat. With three remote sensing machines in tow, Wes used the ground-penetrating radar (GPR) to try to locate the feature - and we did! Or at least we are fairly sure we did since large disturbed areas were intersected in several places that resembled a deep ditch.

Next we attempted to locate the original State House. Linda knew which block it was in; however, there are no maps or sketches of the original structure - just general statements of its dimensions. To complicate matters, this area may have been graded, and so possibly any features associated with the structure may have already been destroyed. For this survey Wes chose to use the ground penetrating radar and an electromagnetic induction or EMI machine. We laid out a checkerboard grid in the block so that if the machines revealed any ground disturbances, Linda would know where - exactly where - the disturbances were that needed further investigation (ground-truthing with excavations). Although Wes noticed a few disturbed areas during the survey, results from the search for the State House are still being analyzed and interpreted.

We also headed over to the Forever Wild land adjacent to the park to try to locate a small family cemetery. Unfortunately the results from the ground penetrating radar were negative.

Finally, we headed south to Orange Beach to a site that volunteers from the University of South Alabama (Southwest Chapter) and Wiregrass Archaeological Consulting have been testing. Wes used the EMI and the GPR on a portion of this prehistoric site with sandy soils. Results are still being analyzed.



Pulling the ground-penetrating radar unit at Old Cahaba

Member News

New Members

Rick Bowman, Deatsville, AL
James Causey, Cragford, AL
Lauren E. Downs, Northport, AL
Jeff and Sue Hand, Auburn, AL
Wesley Reynolds, Letohatchee, AL
Victoria Springer, Millbrook, AL

Renewals

Lionel R. Barrett, Jr., Nashville, TN
Beth Davis, Wetumpka, AL
Lurin O. Dixon, Daphne, AL
Glenn Drummond, Notasulga, AL
Mark and Teri Gisi, Montgomery, AL
Paul W. Gray, Jr., Huntsville, AL
Steve Harris, Dothan, AL
Stacy Hathorn and Family, Tallassee, AL
T. R. Henderson and Family, Headland, AL
Ned J. Jenkins, Wetumpka, AL
Ann B. Kirkland, Ramer, AL
Steve Lamb, Geneva, AL
Robert D. Marley, Geneva, AL
Jane and Bill Mason, Birmingham, AL
Garry Mitchell, Mobile, AL
Carey B. Oakley, Cordova, AL
James W. Parker, Wetumpka, AL
M/M Cecil Stedham, Weaver, AL
A. Lee and Mary I. Swetman, Daphne, AL
William Wolfe, Auburn, AL

Donations and Gifts

Cultural resource management firms working in Alabama continue to support AAS programs through contributions to underwrite the costs of our summer and annual meetings. These donations permit us to reduce registration fees and provide snacks, drinks, and reduced price lunches at the meetings. We received major support for our recent Summer Meeting at Fort Toulouse from: Robert E. Perry and Associates, Southern Research Historic Preservation associates, and Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research. Teresa Paglione and Jason Mann made individual contributions to the meeting.

A. Lee and Mary I Swetman are among the most reliable supporters of the AAS grant programs. Along with their dues, they included a donation to each of the three funds. This makes six of the last seven years they have helped support our grant program. According to the AAS bylaws, the grants are restricted to donations. No dues or other regular AAS funds may be used for this purpose.

Joe Basenburg has made an unrestricted contribution to the Society, which can be applied wherever it is needed the most.

We appreciate all of you and thank you for your support of AAS and its programs.

Thank you!

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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 Hunter Johnson, Hunter@TVAREsearch.com, or Hunter Johnson, Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research, 2211 Seminole Drive, Suite 302, Huntsville, AL 35805

Additional details are available on the AAS website at:

www.alabamaarchaeology.org/aasgrants

Stones & Bones

Editor: Ben Hoksbergen; Assistant Editors: Teresa Paglione and Jason Mann

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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