Alabama Archaeological Society

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IN SEARCH OF DE SOTO'S TRAIL

The march of Hernando de Soto through the state of Alabama in 1540 is the topic of an upcoming public television program. "In Search of de Soto's Trail" will air Thursday, January 26, at 8:30 p.m. on the Alabama Public Television Network. Produced by The University of Alabama Television Services, the program recounts the experiences of de Soto's army as they passed through Alabama, and documents archaeological research concerning the expedition.

Here in Alabama there is great interest in the Spanish entrada. De Soto's name is perpetuated by a state park and is found on monuments throughout the state which mark locations of Indian villages thought to have been visited by the Spanish.

Vivid descriptions of Indian life written by survivors from de Soto's travels have stirred the curiosity of several Alabama archaeologists. Their work has uncovered dramatic evidence relating to de Soto's encounters with the Indians. Spanish artifacts have been unearthed at Indian village sites ranging from northeast Alabama to the Mobile delta.

Although the actual route of the de Soto expedition through the state is not certain, the television program follows a hypothetical route suggested by archaeologist Caleb Curren of the Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission. Curren has studied this topic for more than five years.

Appearing with Curren on the program are David DeJarnette, Professor Emeritus of The University of Alabama; Keith Little, a contract archaeologist with Jacksonville State University; Bascom M. Brooms of the Alabama Historical Commission; Noel R. Stowe of the University of South Alabama; and Dr. Vernon J. Knight of The University of Alabama. Max Shores, University Television Services, was the producer.



Archaeologist Caleb Curren talks with producer Max Shores and camerawoman Debbie Bond. Curren led the University of Alabama TV crew across the state to locations visited by de Soto.

For more information contact Max Shores, Community Relations Director; 205/348-6210.

The University of Alabama University, Alabama

CHAPTER NEWS

Birmingham Chapter

The Birmingham Chapter is well into its 1983-84 program series. So far, monthly meetings have included talks by Mr. Lawson Corley on projectile point types in Alabama (September), by Dr. Robert Brissie on Forensic Anthropology (October), and by Mr. John Bertalin on the Care and Restoration of Artifacts (November). Mr. Corley is a well-known amateur archaeologist in Birmingham; Dr. Brissie is the Chief Medical Examiner of Jefferson County; and Mr. Bertalin is a Conservator with the Birmingham Art Museum.

The December meeting featured a lecture and slide presentation by Mrs. Ruth Spence. Mrs. Spence is Curator of the Agee Map Collection at the Birmingham Public Library. Using slides, she discussed first a map of the Western Hemisphere dating to 1540. Progressively later maps narrowed in scope to North America, the Southeast and Alabama. Her talk dealt with European expansion, the gradual reduction of Indian territory, and the development of the Alabama county system (completed in 1903).

A grant of \$250 from the John Alcide and Delia Truss Robert Charitable Trust and a matching donation from an anonymous individual in Birmingham have enabled the chapter to schedule speakers from localities outside the Birmingham area.

The next chapter meeting is scheduled for January 12; Dr. Janet Rafferty, Mississippi State University, will speak on the Ingomar Mounds: Recent Discoveries. On February 9, the topic will be Developing Methods for studying Alabama Prehistory. The February speaker will be Mr. David Chase, Auburn University, Montgomery.

The Birmingham Chapter meets the second Thursday of each month at the Red Mountain Museum Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

Huntsville Chapter

The Huntsville Chapter meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Arts Council Conference Room, Von Braun Civic Center.

The December chapter meeting was a workshop session, with chapter members bringing recent "finds" to be identified. Elections were held for 1984 officers: President - Roy Blair, Jr.; First Vice President (Program Chairman) - Ken Helms; Second Vice President - Ron Jennings; Secretary/Treasurer - Nancy Rohr; and Librarian - Georgia Dunn.

Muscle Shoals Chapter

The Muscle Shoals Chapter held its December meeting on the 12th at Howard Johnson's Restaurant in Florence. After dinner Charles Moore introduced Houston Wright of Huntsville, who presented an interesting slide narration entitled "Chronology and Climatology of the Paleo Period". The January program will be given by Charles and Mary-Eliza Moore on the 9th. Their topic will be "Four Corners Revisited".

Tuscaloosa Chapter

The December chapter meeting was held at the Tuscaloosa Library. Dr. Bruce Bizzoco was the guest speaker. Dr. Bizzoco spoke and showed slides on a lost Inca city in South America.

The chapter's January meeting will be held on Sunday, January 8, 1984. We plan to hold our first group field surface-collecting meeting. Each local member will be contacted later concerning the time and location of this event.

ALABAMA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE MEETING

The 1984 Annual Meeting of the Alabama Academy of Science will be held from March 14 to 17 at the University of South Alabama, Mobile. Papers in the Anthropology section will be of interest to members of the Alabama Archaeological Society, and will include subjects in archaeology, physical anthropology, and cultural anthropology. Individuals interested in presenting a paper should contact John W. Cottier; Anthropology, Section XI, Chairperson; Department of Sociology and Anthropology; Auburn University, Alabama 36849; or Phone 205/826-5050/5049.

Membership in the Alabama Academy of Science is open to anyone. Annual dues are \$15 (\$10 for students) for membership and should be sent to Dr. Michael Lisano, Secretary; Department of Zoology; Auburn University, Alabama 36849.

John Cottier Auburn

GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGY AWARENESS WEEK

Governor George C. Wallace proclaimed the week of December 11-17 "Alabama Archaeology Awareness Week" in recognition of the state's rich prehistoric and historic heritage.

The story of Alabama's prehistoric Indians was presented in the one-hour documentary LOST IN TIME: EARLY ALABAMA INDIANS, broadcast December 14 on the Alabama Public Television Network. Produced by Auburn Television in cooperation with professional archaeologists throughout the state, the program traces the story of Alabama's prehistoric inhabitants from the crossing of the Bering Straits land bridge to the arrival of Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto in 1540.

There are 16 museums in Alabama which have collections of prehistoric artifacts, some books have been published on the state's prehistory, and several universities offer both credit and non-credit courses in archaeology and field excavation. Contact the Alabama Historical Commission in Montgomery for more information.



With the governor are McDonald Brooms, President, Alabama Archaeological Society; Bruce G. Kuerten, Producer, Auburn Television; Carey Oakley, Chairman of the Council on Alabama Archaeology; Maryanne G. Culpepper, Producer, Auburn Television; and F. Lawrence Oaks, Executive Director, Alabama Historical Commission.

McDonald Brooms Montgomery

PRESERVATION REPORT

The bi-monthly newsletter of the Alabama Historical Commission, Preservation Report, is available free of charge. If you are not already receiving the newsletter but would like to, please send your name and address with a note indicating that you would like to be on the AHC mailing list to Shirley Kaylor; Alabama Historical Commission; 725 Monroe Street; Montgomery, Alabama 36130.

McDonald Brooms Montgomery

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM IN THE COOSA AND TALLAPOOSA RIVER VALLEYS, EAST ALABAMA

The University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research, with the cooperation and assistance of the regional Sylacauga Museum, proposes to conduct an archaeological reconnaissance of the Coosa and Tallapoosa River watersheds in the lower Alabama Piedmont physiographic region. The counties of primary interest include Chilton, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Shelby, Talladega, Clay and St. Clair. This is to be organized as a multifaceted project, incorporating scientific goals, cultural resource management goals and public education goals within this region. The chief scientific focus will be upon the location and documentation of important protohistoric and historic aboriginal town sites relevant to the Muskogee Indians and to the development of the Creek Confederacy in this area.

The Coosa and Tallapoosa River watersheds of Alabama were the historic seat of the majority of the Muskogee Indians, once the most populous and powerful of the aboriginal ethnic groups of the southeast. More specifically, this was the home of the Upper Creeks, who eventually came to incorporate by confederation or annexation numerous remnant tribal groups including Natchez, Shawnee, Chickasaw, Koasati, and Alibamo. Importantly, the Muskogees of this region also represent the culmination of a sequence of some 10,000 years of local indigenous Indian cultures. In direct contrast to nearly all other regions of the State of Alabama, the Coosa-Tallapoosa region remained a relatively stable center of aboriginal population through the centuries of wholesale disruption and displacement elsewhere between the Late Mississippian period (c. 1400-1540) and the Removal in the early years of the 19th century. The scientific and historical importance of this region, then, can be hardly overemphasized, especially given that many of the direct descendents of these peoples remain in Oklahoma, Alabama, and elsewhere as viable ethnic subcultures vitally interested in their own heritage.

Finally, copies of the completed report of investigations will be submitted to the Creek Tribal Council in Oklahoma and to the Creek Nation East of the Mississippi, Inc., in addition to the Alabama Historical Commission. The Sylacauga Museum will also receive a copy of the final survey report in addition to a selection of the recovered artifacts for public display. The latter will be on a custodial basis - while ownership will reside with the State of Alabama.

This grant is funded from FY 83 Survey and Planning funds for the continuation of AHC's archaeological inventory program. The Sylacauga Museum, for their part, have expressed much interest in the project and have offered their assistance in several capacities. They have offered financial support, and agreed to provide volunteer labor and the facilities of their institution toward the successful completion of the investigation. Current plans are for the Sylacauga Museum to serve as a regional center for communications.

The field investigators, in cooperation with the staff of the Sylacauga Museum, will then begin systematic field investigations of sites reported by local informants, by members of local historical societies and archaeological societies, and of the areas specified during the initial historical research. All sites, when located, will be surface collected or auger tested to determine estimates of site size, depth, and integrity, sufficient to provide a preliminary judgment in each case as to National Register eligibility.

The grant requirements of A.H.C. specify that the survey report, maps and site forms must be submitted on or before September 30, 1984.

Carey Oakley Tuscaloosa

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI VALLEY - a volume in the NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD series. By Dan F. Morse and Phyllis A. Morse. \$39.50; 363 printed pages. Available from Academic Press, Inc.; 111 Fifth Avenue; New York, New York 10003.

1984 DUES

Your A.A.S. dues for 1984 are now due. See membership categories on the back page of this issue.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE	
Available issues of <i>Journal of Alabama Archaeology</i> Vol. 13-18, each i Vol. 20-24 (\$2.50 to Members)	issue
Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archae	peology) Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint \$5.00 pp
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell	\$2.00 pp
Special Publication 2 — The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County, Alabama	
Special Publication 3 — Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend	
Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types	
Lively, Long, Josselyn - Pebble Tool Paper	\$3.00 pp
Investigations in Russell Cave, published by the National Park Service	\$7.50 pp
Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile)	\$7.00 pp
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Alabama Archaeological Society

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