

Alabama Archaeological Society

Stones & Bones

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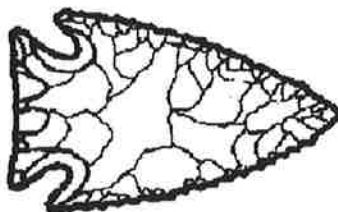
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What's Happening Around the State

The University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Services conducted two large-scale Phase I surveys in the Autauga and Elmore county areas during 1998. A summary of these projects and the results of the investigations follow:

Proposed Golf Course

The proposed golf course will encompass approximately 700 acres in the southwest portion of Elmore County, Alabama. Varied topographic features within the study area consisted of broad and nearly level terraces and stream bottoms of the Alabama River. Field investigations for the project were supervised by Jeffery M. Meyer; Carey B. Oakley, Director of O.A. S., served as Principal Investigator.

Surface investigations employed during the survey were significantly improved by using a firebreak cutter, which expanded horizontal surface exposure. Numerous firebreak transects, measuring one meter wide, were cut in areas bordering active agricultural fields. Fallow fields and unimproved secondary growth areas were

strategically dissected to expose areas considered to be high probability for cultural resource occurrence. The firebreaks did not cut below the existing plow zone, which averaged 12 cm deep, and did not extend into any undisturbed soil matrix.

As a result of the Phase I cultural resources survey, 25 archaeological sites were discovered (Sites 1Ee461 through 485). All of the sites consist of open-air aboriginal artifact scatters. Twenty-four of the sites are shallow and have been disturbed by cultivation practices. Four historic standing structures were encountered within the boundaries of the proposed golf course. The four structures constitute mid-twentieth century tenant dwellings.

Site 1Ee461 consists of a dense Late Archaic/Woodland base camp adjacent to Still Creek/Swamp. Artifacts recovered include: Ledbetter and Little Bear Creek projectile points, bi-face and uniface fragments, ground stone implements, a steatite fragment and substantial debitage. Shovel testing revealed a soil depth of at least 90 cm with at least 60 cm of soil appearing undisturbed. The potential for intact subsurface features is considered to be high.

Wildlife Mitigation Area

A proposed wildlife mitigation area is located southwest of Prattville in Autauga County,

Alabama. The project area encompasses 323.1 acres of land. The study area lies on the east side of the Autauga Creek and Alabama confluence. The field survey was conducted in February, 1998 under the direction of Jeffery M. Meyer; Carey B. Oakley, Director of O. A. S., served as Principal Investigator.

A firebreak cutter was used in a majority of the project area. Wetlands, sloped terrain, and old hardwood forest areas were excluded from firebreak cutter operations. Areas of planted pines and fallow field areas were strategically dissected to expose areas considered to be high probability for cultural resource occurrence. During the course of the survey, fourteen previously recorded archaeological sites were revisited and evaluated while five new archaeological sites were discovered. All of the sites consist of open-air aboriginal artifact scatters. Eight of the site areas are considered significant while the remaining eleven sites are contained within disturbed contexts lessening the potential for intact cultural deposits.

Submitted by Marla Spry.

Mark Your Calendar!!

The Moundville Native American Festival will open Tuesday, September 22, and run through Indian Market Day, Saturday, September 26, 1998. The festival is held each year at the beautiful 320-acre archaeological site at Moundville Archaeological Park in honor of Alabama's first inhabitants. Southeastern Indian tribes, including Choctaw, Creek, Cherokee, and Seminole, come from all around the region to demonstrate basketweaving, feather work, beadworking, flint knapping and other Native American crafts. Also for sale will be pottery, silver jewelry, musical instruments, wooden implements and tools. The park will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Special rates for groups of 10 or more are available. Admission charged. For information, call (205) 371-2234.

Calendar

Annual Meeting of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission

Highland Country Club, LaGrange, Georgia
September 17, 1998

Information: (334) 687-9755

Cherokees of Northeast Alabama

Sequoyah Caverns Fall Indian Festival

September 18-20, 1998

Ider, Alabama

Information: (205) 681-0800

Moundville Archaeological Park

Moundville Native American Festival

September, 22-26, 1998

Moundville, Alabama

Information: (205) 371-2572

Burrit Museum and Park

Indian Heritage Festival

October 15-17, 1998

Huntsville, Alabama

Information: (205) 536-2882

MaChis Lower Creek Indian Tribe

Children's Day and Pow Wow

October 16-17, 1998

New Brocton, Alabama

Information: (334) 894-6578

Scottsboro-Jackson Heritage Center

Southeastern Native American Festival

October 24-25, 1998

Scottsboro, Alabama

Information: (334) 242-2831

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Stephen B. Wimberly Fund - \$547.50

Donations can be made to the grant programs any time during the year. Donations to the Stephen B. Wimberly Scholarship Fund provides the financial support necessary for the Student Scholarship Program while donations to the Edward C. Mahan Fund are used to fund research grants. Funds for the Public Education grants are provided by the Public Education Special Projects Fund.

****Please send your donations to:****

AAS
13075 Moundville Archaeological Park
Moundville, AL 35474

Book Review: *Treasures of the Longleaf Pine; Naval Stores*

Treasures of the Longleaf Pine sets the scene as the natural resource for this saga. The use of integrated text, 111 photographs, and 138 illustrations takes the reader through the history of the remarkable industry and its people. Numerous footnotes reflect inputs from interviews with families directly involved in the industry. Their inputs represented all tiers of the industry from the factor, who provided the capital for turpentine operations, turpentine operator, woods rider, stiller, cooper, and the operators woodsmen.

Topics range from how tar and pitch were produced over a period of 2,500 years to how gum was extracted and collected from the longleaf

piners. One follows the collected gum through the distillation process and the packaging of the distilled products into wood barrels prepared by the cooper. Then, the reader tracks the challenges in transporting very heavy barrels from remote woodland locations to a shipping point like a river landing or railroad. Finally, the products arrive at the market where the factor sells the products to the dealer with the highest bid.

This book fills a long neglected gap in our knowledge of the first colonial industry. This industry was instrumental in the growth of the South. This industry reached its zenith during the first 15 years of the twentieth century. Pine forests in the coastal plains were teeming with turpentiners extracting and collecting gum from pines. The gum was processed in hundreds of stilleries near the timber being worked. Some counties had as many as 30 to 40 stills operating during these peak production years. Butler captures your imagination and transports you back in time scenes of this vibrant industry as it once was.

Many white and black pioneer families lining today within the southern coastal plain moved from the Carolinas between 1850 and the early 1900s. Usually these were the most experienced turpentine operators and woodsmen who realized the supply of longleaf timber in the Carolinas was not endless. Timber conservation was not considered, and the practiced of cutting a cavity in the base of the tree to collect the gum decimated the Carolina timber. By early 1900s, more conservative woodworking practices developed by the US Forest Service and Dr. Charles Herty prevented a similar fate in the massive Georgia, Florida, and Alabama forests. Longleaf and slash pine flourished in the coastal plain region, which extended from the Carolinas to eastern Texas within about 150 miles of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

The reader follows the turpentine from the woods rider's wakeup call ensuring that the woodsmen are working by daylight to the turpentiner's end of the day. The oxen or mules were fed and hooked up to wagons and the woodsmen were transported to their assigned drifts of timber to be worked.

This once vibrant gum naval stores industry is now in a survival mode with a small number of gum producers and one processing plant remaining in South Georgia. This labor-intensive industry has been exported to countries with much lower labor cost. In addition, gum naval stores must compete with the fully mechanized wood naval stores industry. The latter industry produces crude sulfate turpentine and tall oil rosin as by-products of the Kraft pulping process. Current research is addressing problems of the gum naval stores industry with the focus on a bore hole gum extraction and collection system for splash pine.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carroll B. Butler was born in 1929. In the 1940's, South Georgia was the setting for the writer's woodworking experience on his father's farm. He received B.S. and M.S. engineering degrees from the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Notre Dame. A retired Aerospace Engineer, he has long been interested in the history of the naval stores industry. He is currently at work on a pictorial history and description.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Once an Air Force Officer and a member of the faculty of Charleston Southern University, John Christian is now a free-lance commercial artist specializing in architectural art and calligraphy. He received his B.S. in Commercial Art from Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana and his M.S. in Education from Troy State University, Troy, Alabama. He and his wife live in Niceville, Florida.

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Alabama State Artifact
"The Rattlesnake Disk"



Moundville, Alabama

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