

Stones & Bones

Sept. and Oct. 2015

Volume 57, Issue 5

The Newsletter of the Alabama Archaeological Society

Meet a Member!

Hamilton Bryant III is a second-year graduate student at the University of Mississippi, after receiving his undergraduate degree at Auburn University. His thesis research centers on the production of chunky stones at the Carter Robinson site, a 14th century Mississippian frontier mound site in southwest Virginia.

What's the most interesting artifact you've ever found?

This is always a tough question, but I suppose I'll go with a small, seemingly unfinished spatulate celt, made of mica schist, from the remains of a burned house at the Ebert Canebrake site (1Mc25), which is a small mid-late Mississippian site. The celt was rough and small, almost like a child made it, but it was perforated suggesting that it was to be worn. Perhaps it was an unfinished prestige item that was meant for exchange to garner support. Regardless of what it was meant for, I think it's really interesting to consider how it entered the archaeological record before it was finished. This is even more interesting when you consider that Ebert Canebrake is, we believe, culturally connected to Moundville (based on ceramics) and yet it is found about 25 miles into the Lamar cultural region. Does this site represent a short-lived chiefdom that budded off of groups located along the upper Alabama River? Or was it essentially an outpost meant to obtain resources? Perhaps it was a successful chiefdom that simply rose and fell like we have seen throughout the Southeast (to paraphrase Anderson and Sassaman (2012, *Southeastern Archaeology: Mississippian Complexity: Contact Coalescence*) "like so many twinkling Christmas lights") (at least I believe that's a paraphrase...it may be a direct quote).

Who influenced your decision to become an archaeologist?

My interest in archaeology goes way back. I don't know where it really began, but I would have to give a good deal of credit to my parents. They are curious scientists and they encouraged me to question and explore the world and to

pursue whatever career path interested me. Ultimately, this led me to enroll at Auburn University as a freshman anthropology major. As many of you probably know, as soon as I started college Dr. John Cottier became my mentor and eventually a close friend. He encouraged me to be an archaeologist, but his personality and achievements inspired me to be the best. In addition, many people in archaeology that I have met over the years, but who I will not name here, have had a great impact on my career. The rest, as they say, is history.



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

So the first site where I participated in extensive excavations was the Ebert Canebrake site (1Mc25), a small, fortified mid-late Mississippian village on the Lower Tallapoosa River. Now that I'm working on my Master's degree at the University of Mississippi, I have had the fortune to work at two different sites: Carter Robinson (44Le10) and Carson (22Co505). This summer, the University of Mississippi field school was held at the Carter Robinson site, under the guidance of Dr. Maureen Meyers. More recently, Stephanie Orsini and I helped Todd McLeod conduct a geophysical survey of a portion of the Carson site in the Mississippi Delta. This is a very large, multi-mound Mississippian site located not far from the active channel of the Mississippi River. A good report on the last seven years of work at this site will be coming out in the near future in the journal *Mississippi Archaeology*.

Fieldwork or labwork?

I can honestly say that enjoy both.

Maybe I lean towards fieldwork more, but going "into the field" is a rite of passage in anthropology - it's in our blood. Labwork, however, is really just a continuation of fieldwork. In the lab you build upon a foundation laid in the field. So I kind of look at this a dichotomy as more of a continuum. Afterall, you can do some lab work in the field, right?

What are you currently reading?

I'm reading a number of things right now. I'm working on my literature review for my thesis, so I've been reading up on political economy and frontier studies. What's more interesting is that I'm reading *Conversations with the High Priest of Coosa* by Charles Hudson. It's what he calls a "fictionalized ethnography" that is presented as a series of conversations between a Spanish priest who traveled to the Chiefdom of Coosa around 1559 and a fictional tribal elder/shaman. It's a great and easy read that really helps us approach the world-view and cosmology of a Mississippian people.

Why are you a member of AAS?

My family has lived in Alabama for at least six generations, so I feel connected to both the land and past peoples of the state. I became a member of AAS in order to get to know the archaeology and archaeologists of Alabama, but meeting other students and getting to know interested people has been equally rewarding.

How many years have you been a member (approximately)?

I believe I first joined the AAS 2009, but I participated in my first volunteer dig with the AAS in 2007 at Fort Mims. Dr. Greg Waselkov and Bonnie Gums of the University of South Alabama were conducting the excavations.



Oakville Mounds

By Anna Mullican and Travis Rael

Editor's note: This is the fifth installment

of a feature profiling an archaeological site in Alabama that exemplifies sites of a given time period or culture, starting with the Paleoindian and moving forward through time. If you know of a site that has contributed in a major way to our understanding of a particular time period or culture or is typical in some way of such sites in Alabama, send me a manuscript!

This edition focuses on the Middle Woodland Period, a dynamic time in eastern North America when cultivation of native plants began to be widely practiced, exotic goods became incorporated into elaborate mortuary ceremonialism, and a wide array of earthworks were constructed by diverse cultures throughout the region.

The Oakville Mound Site (1La1*) in Lawrence County is one of three sites in the Middle Tennessee Valley that features a Middle Woodland platform mound. Based on excavations at another of these sites (the Walling Mound in Madison County) these early platform mound sites were probably venues for aggregation of groups that would come together for special events to hold ceremonies, exchange exotic goods, and renew social ties. The Oakville mound group originally consisted of at least three mounds and maybe more, but only two are still standing – the platform mound and a large conical mound. This mound group stands roughly at the center of a concentration of Copena mortuary mound sites distributed along Flint Creek and its tributaries.

When most visitors come to the Oakville Indian Mounds in North Alabama, they don't necessarily think of the terms, "archaeology, Alabama history, and Woodland Indians." They think "Cross Country".

The Oakville Indian Mounds Education Center is home to the Southeast's largest high school cross country competition, the Jesse Owens Classic. This race brought over 5,000 runners and 8,000 spectators to the park on October 3, 2015. The park is also the home of the State AHSAA XC competition in November and will be home of the 2015 National XC competition in December. The park is owned and operated by the Lawrence County School System and is home to the Indian Education Program that provides math and reading tutoring through a Native American heritage paradigm to over 1,550 students in Lawrence County.

Of the 43,000 plus visitors last year, over 30,000 visited for cross-country racing events. The 5K trail wraps around both Woodland era Indian mounds and

winds around the large Oakville lake before finishing next to the large Cherokee council house replica museum. Cross country competitions help keep the park and museum sustained and that is a great accomplishment for any nonprofit history museum. Engaging sporting event driven visitors to care about the prehistory and cultural significance of the site can be quite challenging. New archaeological investigations, free public programs and events, and updated school field trips are trying to bring a new focus to this Middle Woodland mound site in North Alabama.

In July and August 2014, archaeological testing at Oakville Indian Mounds was conducted on the large platform mound in coordination with renovations of a staircase. One 1-x-2 m excavation unit was placed on the mound summit, near the southern edge, and another was placed at the base of the mound. A flank trench was excavated between the two units in order to further reveal construction stages of the mound. An auger test was also placed at the bottom of each excavation unit to further examine

construction sequences. Sponsored by Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research, and conducted in partnership with the University of Alabama in Huntsville and Oakville Indian Mound Education Center staff members, this research focused on identifying the culture or cultures responsible for its construction.

Excavation at the platform mound revealed at least nine possible construction episodes, including two clay caps. Although artifact density was minimal, only Mulberry Creek Plain and Longbranch Fabric Marked sherds diagnostic of the Middle Woodland period were recovered. Additionally, carbonized wood recovered from between the two clay caps yielded a 2-sigma radiocarbon date of cal AD 90 to 100 and cal AD 125 to 250. In light of these findings, the large platform mound was constructed primarily during the Middle Woodland period.

For more information on the museum and park, visit OakvilleIndianMounds.com. Too stay up to date with our events please visit [Facebook.com/OakvilleIndianMounds](https://www.facebook.com/OakvilleIndianMounds).



New staircase up the platform mound at Oakville Site

Redstone Arsenal Update

By Ben Hoksbergen

The last fiscal year was a busy one at Redstone Arsenal with field work completed on one data recovery, 13 Phase II excavations, and two emergency salvage digs!

The data recovery excavation was on the Williams Spring Site (1Ma1167), a large multicomponent site on a broad terrace along Indian Creek about eight miles upstream from its confluence with the Tennessee River. The site is named for Williams Spring, a beautiful freshwater spring that flows from a limestone outcrop north of the site. This spring was probably the main draw for both prehistoric and historic occupants of the site.

The data recovery was conducted to clear the site prior to construction to widen Martin Road and demolition and clean-up of a World War II-era wastewater treatment plant. Alexander Archaeological Consultants (AAC) conducted the field work intermittently from February of 2010 to December of 2014.

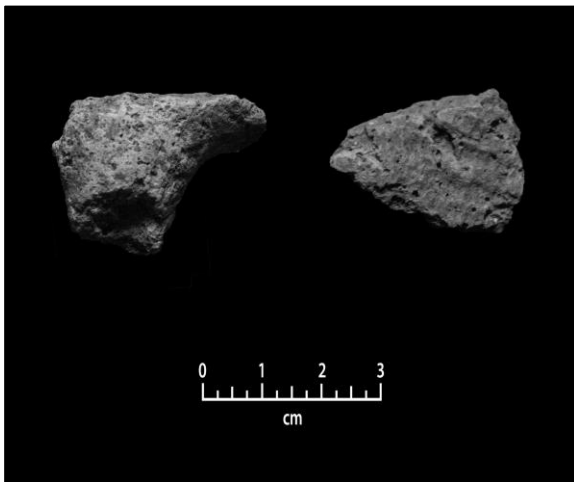
The earliest archaeological component on site is Early Archaic, represented by a light scatter of Big Sandy, Plevna, Decatur, Kirk Corner Notched, and LeCroy points, mostly found intermixed in the midden and feature fill from later cultures.

The Middle Archaic component was more substantial with at least two large pit features associated with it. Both features were large amorphous pits with an abundance of lithic debitage and projectile points (White Springs and Morrow Mountain types) in the fill. One of the pits had a badly degraded bone deposit at its base which may have been what was left of a human burial. This pit yielded a radiocarbon date of 7280 ± 30 BP.

The Late Archaic component was most strongly focused on a lower terrace just above the active Indian Creek floodplain. Here, archaeologists from AAC excavated at least six pit features with Late Archaic dates including two that were filled with lumps of fired clay, similar to but less formal than the Poverty Point objects of the lower Mississippi Valley. The fired clay pits yielded dates of 3900 ± 30 BP and 2090 ± 30 BP. Various Late Archaic points including Elora, Pickwick/Ledbetter, McIntire, Little Bear Creek, and Motley types were found throughout the site. A number of Gulf Formational pottery sherds were also recovered including Wheeler Plain, Wheeler Dentate Stamped, and



Stratigraphic profile on summit of Oakville platform mound



Woodland ceramics from platform mound excavation



Conical mound at Oakville with historic cemetery on top

Alexander Incised.

The most substantial component at the Williams Spring Site belonged to the late Middle Woodland Bell Hill phase. Over 300 features associated with this component were excavated in a broad band along the crest of the terrace. These included storage pits, trash pits, burials, and post holes – all originating in a thick midden that reached up to 80cm in thickness in some locations. Unfortunately most of the upper part of the midden had been disturbed historically, so only segments of post hole patterns could be discerned.

AAC processed at least half of all feature fill through flotation, recovering a massive faunal and botanical assemblage which is still being analyzed. Preliminary counts, however, include at least 63 species of vertebrates, and seeds representing all the Eastern Complex cultigens.

Nine radiocarbon dates have been run so far on the Middle Woodland component, and all the calibrated dates cluster tightly between AD 600 and 775.

One of the most interesting things about the Bell Hill component is the number of indicators of violence noted in the skeletal assemblage. Remains of at least ten individuals were recovered, and of these, at least one had a healed compression fracture on the cranium, and as many as five were represented by isolated skull elements including one frontal bone with scalp marks. An additional individual was represented by an isolated femur. The isolated elements could represent war trophies. Warfare could explain why so many of the Bell Hill phase settlements in the area are situated far up tributaries instead of on the Tennessee River where earlier settlements were concentrated.

A site with similar components was the subject of one of the Phase II excavations. This site was 1Ma22, and like Williams Spring, it had components ranging from Early Archaic through early 20th century historic including a late Middle Woodland Bell Hill phase midden. Also like Williams Spring, 1Ma22 is located adjacent to a freshwater spring over nine miles up tributaries away from the Tennessee River. Around 50 features were excavated during the Phase II, most associated with the late Middle Woodland component.

The remaining Phase II investigations included four small lithic scatters (1Ma115, 1Ma191, 1Ma196, and 1Ma1526), a large late 19th to early 20th century farm (1Ma491), and seven sites with both pre-historic and historic components (1Ma162, 1Ma279, 1Ma359, 1Ma447, 1Ma597,



Archaeologists with AAC excavate the last section of the Williams Spring Site



A Cumberland point found during the Phase II of Site 1Ma279



CCI Archaeologist Mitch Sohn flags a feature during the salvage dig at 1Ma403

1Ma1549, and 1Ma1736).

Of the latter, one (1Ma447) included the remains of a mid-19th century blacksmith shop complete with tools, a midden, and possible foundation remnants.

Two of the sites yielded multiple features. Site 1Ma279 included at least three Middle Woodland pits, several post holes, and a substantial early 19th century feature complex including a stone-lined cellar and a stone chimney foundation. Site 1Ma597 included a large Late Archaic pit and a complex of small historic pits and post holes associated with an early 20th century tenant farm.

The salvage excavations included site 1Ma403 which had was originally considered ineligible for listing on the National Register and therefore not worthy of preservation. Realignment of the interchange between Rideout and Goss Roads on the Arsenal put a two-lane road right across the site. During routine monitoring during initial grading of the road, Redstone Arsenal archaeologists noticed a remarkable number of stone grinding implements being uncovered. As the last of the plowzone began to be removed, they also noticed a number of fire-cracked rock (fcr) concentrations beginning to be uncovered. Construction was halted, and archaeologists spent two days quickly excavating the features. In the end, six prehistoric features were excavated along with a large 1920's trash pit, and five features that were probably related to early Army activity. Around 40 groundstone tools were also recovered and piece plotted. Diagnostic artifacts indicated components ranging from the terminal Paleoindian (Beaver Lake/Dalton) through the Late Archaic. Three of the grinding implements have been submitted for microbotanical analysis, and a sample of the fcr is currently undergoing thermoluminescence dating.

The second salvage excavation was on an early 20th century farm site (1Ma1526) which was previously thought to be mostly destroyed. During grading for a new gate along Rideout Road, however, construction uncovered a large trash pit dating to the demolition of the farm upon Army acquisition of the land in 1941. Redstone Arsenal archaeologists spent a day bisecting and sampling the pit to salvage some data before the rest of the site was destroyed.

The next fiscal year will see another round of salvage excavations of eroding features on the Tennessee River bank, three more Phase II excavations, and an archaeological field school with UAH. Stay tuned!

Recent Alabama National Guard Training

By Heather Puckett

The Alabama Army National Guard (AL ARNG) recently hosted a training course offered by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) on the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) at the Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Center in Calhoun County, Alabama. The training course includes 37 hours of hands-on learning, field practical, and mock court room testimony, with an emphasis on criminal ARPA violations. The course included representatives of the archaeological community and law enforcement officers. The law enforcement officers received basic archaeological identification skills, while the

archaeologists learned "CSI" skills. Among the instructors was Erin Pritchard from the Tennessee Valley Authority (Thanks, Erin!!!).

The AL ARNG hopes to use this training to further develop its ARPA Program. Goals include addressing both criminal and civil violations, establishing baseline data for each of our known archaeological sites, and routine monitoring of our cultural resources, as well as posting signage, further developing outreach opportunities, and coordinating efforts with local law enforcement.

We highly recommend this training to the archaeological and law enforcement communities. Together we can preserve our heritage resources in Alabama. If you are interested in attending this course, contact Mr. Charles Louke at FLETC, or visit <https://www.fletc.gov/training-program/archeological-resources-protection-training-program-xp>.



Robert Still, National Park Service, and Major Thomas Livoti, Institute for Military Support to Governance, demonstrate how to create castings of tool impressions on the ground

International Archaeology Day Festival in Huntsville October 17

The fourth annual International Archaeology Day fair will be held in Huntsville on Saturday, October 17 from 1-4pm at Lowe Mill. Several archaeology organizations will be represented. The AAS will be there doing artifact identifications, the AIA will have a table of information about their annual lecture series, TVA will have information about their cultural resources program along with kids activities, Larry Beane with Little River Canyon National Park will be doing demonstrations of Native American life-

ways, Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research will be giving tours of their labs, and Huntsville City Schools Earthscope will be doing demonstrations of Native American games.

Redstone Arsenal will be accepting artifact donations for teaching collections as well as providing one-day amnesty for the return of artifacts collected on public lands.

Brandon Thompson with OAR will be giving the keynote talk about OAR's ongoing reanalysis and inventory of skeletal remains and funerary items from the old TVA reservoir surveys. His talk will be at 7pm at the Wilson Hall Theater on the UAH campus.

This event is free and open to the public.

NOTICE: Please check your mailing label. The year listed is the last year for which you paid your dues. Please make sure your dues are current!

Member News

New Members

Russell S. Abrams, Huntsville, AL
Bradley Jones, Trussville, AL
Nagea and Brannon Littleton, Pike Road, AL
Neal Scott, Huntsville, AL

Renewals

Don Hudgins, Gadsden, AL
Jeff and Cathy Meyer and Family
Tuscaloosa, AL
M/M Cecil W. Stedham, Jr., Weaver, AL
William B. Stepp, Huntsville, AL

Chapter News

News from the Huntsville Chapter, by Ben Hoksbergen: The Huntsville Chapter kicked off the fall season with a great talk by Eugene Futato who spoke about efforts underway by the UA Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) to update the curation of archaeological collections from the 1930s-1940s TVA reservoir surveys including the re-inventory of diagnostic artifacts in the collections. Eugene showed how over 75 years of archaeological research since the artifacts were collected is helping OAR to extract important new information from these extraordinary old collections. We're looking forward to a talk next month by Anna Mullican of Oakville Indian Mounds Museum who will be discussing recent excavations on the platform mound.

News from the Southwest Chapter, by Bonnie Gums: The Southwest Chapter will begin holding regular monthly meetings again, after a several-year lull, on first Mondays (October-December, February-April) at 6:30pm at the University of South Alabama's Archaeology Museum, 6052 USA Drive South, in Mobile. All past members are welcomed back, and everyone interested in archaeology is invited to attend this reorganizational meeting. On October 5, Greg Waselkov's talk – "Towasas, Townhouses, and Crayfish" -- will highlight some recent developments. In particular, volunteer excavations in Orange Beach by the Southwest Chapter over the last two years uncovered a site occupied around AD 1700 apparently by the elusive Towasa Indians. Waselkov will also describe his search for a 1797 painting of the Cherokee town of Toqua, which turned up in the National Library of Australia. And, finally, he will discuss an amazing stone pipe, a crawfish effigy, found on Dauphin Island in 1922; a museum-quality replica is on display at the Archaeology Museum, loaned by Theodore Vaughan, Jr., son of the pipe's discoverer. Come see what's new in Southwest Alabama archaeology!

Fund Balances

Education Fund: -\$294.13
Mahan Fund: \$402.35
Wimberly Fund: \$283.12

AAS Chapters

2015 Chapter Presidents

Troy: Jason Mann

jmann@troy.edu

Cullman: Robbie Camp

robbie@alabamaprinting.com

East Alabama: Teresa Paglione

tlpaglione@gmail.com

Muscle Shoals: Gerald Hester

GeraldRH@aol.com

Huntsville: Ben Hoksbergen

benhoksbergen@gmail.com

Southwest Chapter: Bonnie Gums

bgums@southalabama.edu

Coosa Valley: Phillip Koerper

pkoerper@jsu.edu

Join or Renew Today!

You can pay AAS membership dues or make donations to AAS online at www.alabamaarchaeology.org

Or, send a check made out to "Alabama Archaeological Society"

to

Alabama Archaeological Society
13075 Moundville Archaeological Park
Moundville, AL 35474

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

NOTICE: AAS will be accepting applications for grants and scholarships up to Oct. 30th this year. Specific details can be viewed on the website at www.alabamaarchaeology.org/grants.

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:

benhoksbergen@gmail.com

or via U.S. mail to:

Ben Hoksbergen
3699 US Hwy. 72
Paint Rock, AL 35764

Alabama Archaeological Society

President: Erin Phillips, erinalaarch@gmail.com

1st Vice President: Hunter Johnson, hunter@tvaresearch.com

2nd Vice President: Van King, melvanmd@hopper.net

Secretary: Heather Puckett, heather.r.puckett@gmail.com

Treasurer: Eugene Futato, efutato@bama.ua.edu

Assistant Treasurer: Brandon Thompson, branthompson@hotmail.com

Journal of Alabama Archaeology Editor: Keith Little, keith@tvaresearch.com

Journal Editorial Assistants: Ashley Dumas, adumas@uwa.edu; Matt Gage, mdgage@alan.ua.edu; Scott Meeks, scott@tvaresearch.com

Stones & Bones Editor: Ben Hoksbergen, benhoksbergen@gmail.com

Stones & Bones Assistant Editors: Teresa Paglione, tpaglione@gmail.com; Jason Mann, jmann@troy.edu

Web Editor and Photo Archivist: Duke Beasley, vrbeasle@ua.edu

AHC Representative: Craig Sheldon, csheldon@aum.edu

Board of Directors:

Terms expire 2016:

Matt Gage, mdgage@alan.ua.edu

Margaret Russell, srussell@eufaula.rr.com

John Van Valkenberg, joycevan@knology.net

Terms expire 2017:

Van King, melvanmd@hopper.net

Kimberly Pyszka, kpyszka@aum.edu

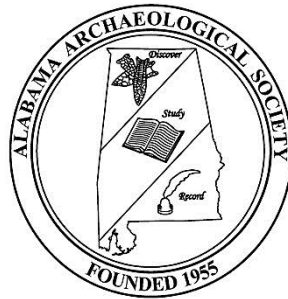
Steven Meredith, mered003@bama.ua.edu

Terms expire 2018:

David Johnson, johnsdatt@gmail.com

John Hall, jhall@uwa.edu

Cathy Meyer, cathy.mrsconsultants@yahoo.com



In this Issue of Stones and Bones...

Meet a Member!	1
Oakville Mounds by Anna Mullican and Travis Rael	1
Redstone Arsenal Update by Ben Hoksbergen	3
Recent Alabama National Guard Training by Heather Puckett	5
International Archaeology Day Festival in Huntsville October 17	5
Member News	6
Chapter News	6
Fund Balances	6
AAS Chapters & Presidents.....	6
Dues Information	6
Grant & Scholarship Information	7
Stones & Bones Contact Information.....	7
AAS Officer & Board Contact Information.....	7

Alabama Archaeological Society
3699 US Highway 72
Palm Rock, Alabama 35764

