

Alabama Archaeological Society

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STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

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Huntsville, Alabama 35803

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A.A.S. WINTER MEETING

Don't forget our winter meeting at Moundville on December 6. The meeting will be at the OAR Center, Moundville State Monument. A good program and barbecue is all lined up. Come on and enjoy the program and eats!

The Editors

PALEOPATHOLOGY IN ALASKAN MUMMIES

In the frigid regions of Alaska, naturally frozen bodies are occasionally found. The oldest preserved bodies from Alaska are mammals of the late Pleistocene (15,000-25,000 years before the present) from the area of modern Fairbanks, recovered during gold mining.

Much more recent are the artificially prepared mummies of the Aleutian Islands, dating to the 18th century A.D. The Aleuts of that time were anatomically sophisticated, performing autopsies on humans and comparative studies on sea otters. They mummified their dead by drying the cadaver in the air or over a fire, wiping it frequently. The mummy was then dressed, wrapped in sea lion skins, and placed in a burial cave.

A number of mummies were removed from the caves in the 19th and early 20th centuries, most being donated to the Smithsonian Institution. Two have been subjected to analysis, one a middle-aged male and the other a middle-aged female. Interestingly, both showed evidence of pneumonia, a fatal infection in the case of the male. Other findings in common were atherosclerosis and anthracosis, black pigmentation in the lungs; such observations indicate the antiquity of these disorders. The woman also suffered from a chronic ear infection and from head lice, which are almost perfectly preserved. As with the Egyptian mummies, no malignancies were found.

Naturally frozen bodies of ancient humans have also been found in Alaska. The oldest one, dating to about A.D. 400, is that of a middle-aged Eskimo woman found on St. Lawrence Island, apparently having been exposed by erosion of an overhanging cliff face. Gross pathologic changes included adhesion of the lungs to the chest wall (evidence of a previous bout of pneumonia), atherosclerosis, and fractures of the skull and face. A striking finding was the packing of the air passages in the lungs by moss, forming casts of the bronchi.

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What can be stated with some degree of certainty is that, although the freezer-like conditions of the Arctic would seem to provide for excellent preservation of soft tissues, bodies are in fact preserved only under extraordinary circumstances. The frozen ground makes winter burials impossible, and the permafrost layer is only a few centimeters below the surface, discouraging deep burials even in summer. Cycles of freezing and thawing tend to bring summer burials to the surface, exposing any bodies to the ravages of animals and weather. Rare finds, such as those described above, give a glimpse into prehistoric Alaska, showing health hazards shared by past and present inhabitants of a once remote area.

These studies of mummies from Alaska, as well as those from ancient Egypt, point out the major focus of paleopathology, the reconstruction of ancient patterns, which is of interest both in historical terms and as an aid to the understanding of the evolution of modern-day diseases. Whereas the natural history of many disorders found, such as pneumonia, anthracosis, histoplasmosis, and trichinosis, is well known, the causes remain unknown for others, such as atherosclerosis and osteoporosis; and the lack of evidence for certain diseases such as cancer is interesting in itself. It is hoped that the historical perspective of paleopathology will add to the delineation of the factors involved in these diseases.

(From an article by Michael R. Zimmerman in "American Scientist", Volume 73)

The Editors

SLATE OF NOMINEES - 1987 A.A.S. OFFICERS

The following is the slate of nominees for A.A.S. officers for 1987, as presented by the nominating committee.

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ESAF Alternate Rep.	Mr. Robert Gay	Standing Rock
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Director at Large	Mr. Charles E. Moore	Florence
Director at Large	Mr. Larry Oaks	Montgomery
Director at Large	Dr. Craig Sheldon	Montgomery
Director at Large	Dr. Harry Holstein	Jacksonville

Nominating Committee

PUBLICATIONS

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI VALLEY, by Dan F. Morse and Phyllis A. Morse. x, 345 pages; Academic Press, Inc., New York, 1983, \$39.50.

This book is the seventh in the series "New World Archaeological Record", published by Academic Press under the editorship of James B. Griffin. The series is designed to provide professional and lay readers with up-to-date and authoritative overviews of the archaeology of selected regions of North America.

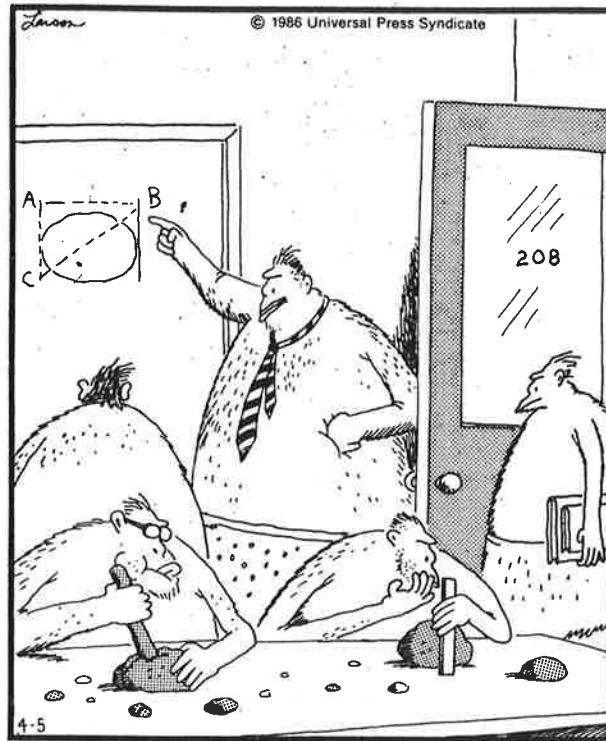
Following a description of the environment of the Central Mississippi Valley and a history of prior archaeological work, the Morses present a thorough period-by-period cultural history of the area from Paleoindian through historic times. Although their format is regional, they do a good job of working into their discussions issues that are important to all New World archaeologists.

GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH DESIGN PAPERS: A new publication series, the Georgia Archaeological Research Design Papers, is dedicated to the publication of Operating Plans within Georgia's Comprehensive Plan for the preservation and protection of its archaeological resources. Each Paper may be ordered for \$5 (postage paid) from the Publications Secretary; Department of Anthropology, Baldwin Hall; University of Georgia; Athens, Georgia 30602.

- GARD Paper No. 1 - Mississippi Period Archaeology of the Georgia Coastal Zone
Morgan R. Crook, Jr. (1986)
- GARD Paper No. 2 - Mississippi Period Archaeology of the Georgia Piedmont
David J. Hally and James L. Rudolph (1986)

The Editors

THE FAR SIDE by Gary Larson



Rock Shop 101

Frank and Ernest



CHAPTER NEWS

Birmingham Chapter

The Birmingham Archaeological Society met on Thursday, October 9, at the Red Mountain Museum. Mr. Houston Wright from Huntsville presented a most informative slide/presentation entitled "Paleo Man of Alabama".

Eloise Clark

PUBLICATIONS

THE TOMBIGBEE WATERSHED IN SOUTHEASTERN PREHISTORY, by Ned J. Jenkins and Richard A. Krause.

THE TOMBIGBEE WATERSHED IN SOUTHEASTERN PREHISTORY offers new theoretical and interpretive contributions to the study of human activity in the Tombigbee River Valley from approximately 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1450. The authors have devised a new taxonomic scheme that they apply to their study and interpretation of artifacts from the Tombigbee River Valley. This new scheme abandons, in part, the traditional "static phase" approach in favor of one that can be used to sketch "continuity in time and space". The authors portray cultures as they gathered momentum and peaked in their potential as social, economic, and political structures. This book represents the synthesis of approximately ten years of archaeological field research along the central Tombigbee River. The data acquired for this study are from the massive cultural resource management program that accompanied construction of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.

Available from The University of Alabama Press; Box 2877; Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-2877. Cloth, \$18.95.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT CERROS, BELIZE, CENTRAL AMERICA - Volume I. Available from Southern Methodist University Press, Dallas, Texas 75275. 174 pages, illustrations, tables, maps, appendix, glossary. \$19.95 paper.

This series will report the results of seven years of excavation at the small lowland Maya center of Cerros, on the southern shore of Corozal Bay, which was occupied primarily during the Late Preclassic Period (300 B.C. - A.D. 1).

An introduction by series editor David A. Freidel describes such details as environment, history of research, and field logistics. The ten papers that follow introduce various methods and data, discussing the topics of the monumental architecture, the dispersed settlement, excavations in the Late Preclassic nucleated village, a preliminary reconstruction based on chipped stone use, the drainage canal and raised field excavations, the

ceramics, the artifacts, the preliminary results of an analysis of fauna, and the Late Preclassic Maya agriculture, wild plant utilization, and land-use practices.

The Editors

CONFERENCE ON UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

The 1987 Conference of the Society for Historical Archaeology and the Conference on Underwater Archaeology will be held in Savannah, Georgia, on January 7-11, 1987. For more information call 912/927-5380.

The Editors

EARTHWATCH

A copy of the Quarterly EARTHWATCH Report - "Expedition News" - may be obtained by writing

EARTHWATCH
680 Mount Auburn Street
P.O. Box 403
Watertown, MA 02272

The current issue identifies several interesting "participation" programs in the U.S., France, and Easter Island. Informative reports from past expeditions are included in each issue.

The Editors

BIBLIOGRAPHY AVAILABLE

Now available: Bibliography of Maryland Archeology: 1981-1984 Supplement, \$2.50 each; Bibliography of Maryland Archeology (through 1980), \$3.50 each.

Make checks payable to MARYLAND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY. Mail to Maryland Geological Survey; 2300 St. Paul Street; Baltimore, Maryland 21218.

The Editors

NASA AIDS IN UNCOVERING ANCIENT CIVILIZATION IN PERU

Using remote sensing technology, NASA's National Space Technology Laboratories (NSTL), and the University of Colorado at Boulder have uncovered information that suggests a civilization existed in the subtropical Peruvian jungles prior to the Incas.

Tom Sever, NASA's principal investigator, and Tom Lennon, archaeologist and co-director of the University's Rio Abiseo National Park Project, jointly completed a 5-day expedition into the jungles of Peru's Rio Abiseo National Park after remote sensing, by satellite and aircraft, permitted the explorers to map and prioritize the field investigation sites. Prior to the field exploration, Cerro Central, the largest site including more than 250 buildings, was discovered by the remote sensing operation. The ancient site of Gran Pajaten, which included only 30 buildings, previously had been the major point of interest. Sever said "We know now that Pajaten is probably the smallest and least important of the sites. We are fairly confident that we have approached the very edges of a new civilization and we believe that the farther in we go, the higher and more complicated the elevation of architecture and civilization will be".

Sever said some plant and animal species, thought to be extinct, were discovered. "That is the reason the expertise of more than 30 support people and interdisciplinary scientists was required on the expedition. Lou Whitaker, who climbed Mt. Everest in 1981, was brought in with his team to scale cliffs from which we could see the buildings, but we had no way to reach them". A materials dating process is currently under way to determine when the civilization existed. Sever continued "Our guess right now is that the civilization was pre-Inca because the architecture is circular and statuary have very delicate motifs, in comparison with the Inca ruins which are long, narrow structures with corner bases. This civilization built a totally different and perhaps more advanced architectural style than has been seen in the Inca civilizations". He concluded "The Inca expanded dramatically in a short time. Apparently, the newly discovered ruins are from a much more complicated civilization, but they had no desire to expand. Perhaps their empire extended into the Amazon Valley. We are not sure".

NSTL was asked to collaborate in the investigation with the University's Anthropology Department because of the installation's expertise in satellite remote sensing and image analysis. According to Sever, NSTL remote sensing specialist and archaeologist, the investigation represents the best example of remote sensing application and perhaps the only known means by which the objectives of this project could be obtained. "The job certainly could not be accomplished on foot or by ground survey. We are dependent upon remote sensing because the junglecloud-forest environment is treacherous and extensive. Thus, we needed to prioritize where to send the field investigators".

There are more than 1,000 square miles of park to be explored, not only for uncovering valuable archaeological sites, but also to investigate plant and animal life inhabiting the delicate pristine environment.

(From the MARSHALL STAR, February 5, 1986).

The Editors

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of <i>Journal of Alabama Archaeology</i> Vol. 20-29 each issue	(\$2.50 to Members) \$5.00 pp
<i>Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations</i> (Journal of Alabama Archaeology) Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint, each issue . . .	\$5.00 pp
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell	\$2.00 pp
Special Publication 2 — <i>The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County Alabama</i>	\$4.50 pp
Special Publication 3 — <i>Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend</i>	\$6.50 pp
<i>Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types</i>	\$10.00 pp
Lively, Long, Josselyn - <i>Pebble Tool Paper</i>	\$3.00 pp
<i>Investigations in Russell Cave</i> , published by the National Park Service	\$7.50 pp
<i>Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology</i> (Juvenile)	\$7.00 pp

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 SEND CHECKS TO: **MR. EUGENE FUTATO, Office of Archaeological Research**
 1 Mound State Monument, Moundville, Alabama 35474

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