

Alabama Archaeological Society

Stones & Bones

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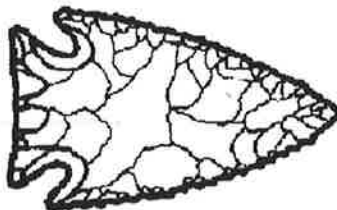
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AAS Summer Meeting

The Alabama Archaeological Society Summer Meeting will be held at Dust Cave on Saturday, July 26th. Shuttles will depart from the Seven Mile Island Wildlife Refuge entrance at the Florence sewer plant at 8am, 10am, 12pm, and 2pm in order to take people to and from the cave. The refuge is located just off of Hwy. 20W about one and a half miles from downtown Florence. Everyone should bring their own lunch and drinks. A business meeting will be conducted during lunch.



Boy Scouts Announce the Archaeology Merit Badge

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has just announced the new Archaeology merit badge. Although Indian Lore has been a merit badge for many years, the Boy Scouts have realized the widespread interest in archaeology and have

chosen to recognize the importance of the conservation and preservation of these resources.

A variety of topics are included in the merit badge pamphlet and the overall focus is upon historic preservation. The requirements involve a full range of archaeological activities from research planning to fieldwork and analysis to creation of records and artifacts.

This will not be an easy badge to earn. Counselors who administer the badge will include vocational and avocational archaeologists. To serve as a counselor, you will need to register with your State Archaeologist's office to get on the list. You will also need to register as an adult leader with the local Scout council office. The merit badge pamphlet (item # 35,000) can be purchased from your local Scout shop for \$2.00 or can be ordered from the Boy Scouts of America Distribution Center by calling 800-323-0732.

For additional information about the merit badge contact your local council office and ask to speak to the Advancement Chairman. The Special Interests Subcommittee of the Public Education Committee of the Society for American Archaeology is compiling information about merit badge activities. Information should be sent to S. Alan Skinner at PO Box 820727, Dallas, TX 75380, or E-mail at arcdigs@aol.com.

University of Alabama Summer Field School

The University of Alabama will provide financial support for the 1997 summer field school at Dust Cave through a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant of \$51,980. The NSF award is based on scientific technical merit for undergraduate research programs. The grant provides \$2,500 cash stipend, tuition, fees, lodging, food and reimbursement of some or all travel expenses for each student. The University of Alabama Summer Field School has conducted excavations at Dust Cave since 1989. Dust Cave, located in the Tennessee River Valley near Florence, Alabama, was occupied by prehistoric inhabitants around 10,000 years ago until a little over 5,000 years ago. Since then, sand and debris deposits filled the cave and preserved archaeological features. Dr. Boyce N. Driskell, Senior Archaeologist, University of Alabama Museums, Office of Archaeological Services serves as director of the Dust Cave field school. A relationship between the Dust Cave project and Dr. Rod Riley of the IBM Corporation allows students to create web pages in the field. IBM Corporation will provide computer support and 15 laptops for student instruction. Thus, the project directs undergraduates in publishing their individual research papers. Last year's student projects can be found on the Internet:

<http://attila.atg.ua.edu/atg/dustcave/97/mainmenu.htm>.

Ten students were chosen from fifty-five applicants to participate in the 1997 summer field school from June 9 through August 1. Places for several adult volunteers are available on a weekly basis. This intensive field course includes six or seven hours a day of excavations with morning and evening lectures and seminars. The course of study requires students to participate in both the long term research program and to develop their own research projects during the field season. The student projects will be shared with field school members in evening presentations and with the

public on the Dust Cave Student Project WEBPAGE. Experts from across the United States will also direct lectures and workshops each week. The mentors scheduled this year include: Dr. Paul Parmalee, zooarchaeologist, the University of Tennessee; Dr. Paul Goldberg, geologist/micromorphologist, Boston University; Dr. Kristen Gremillion, archaeobotanist, Ohio State University; Dr. David Dye, southeastern archaeologist, the University of Memphis; Dr. Homes Hogue, physical anthropologist, Mississippi State University; Dr. Jay Johnson, lithic technologist, the University of Mississippi; and Dr. Patty Jo Watson, who specializes in cave and shell midden archaeology.

The Dust Cave research project and field school are jointly supported by the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), IBM Corporation, and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Proposal Approved

The following proposal was approved at the April Board of Directors meeting.

The Alabama Archaeological Society shall award public education grants each year in the amount of \$500.00. Single grant awards shall not exceed \$500.00. Proposals for the grants must be submitted to the Education Committee Chairman by January 31st. The Education Committee shall review the proposals and make recommendations to the Board of Directors at the Spring B.O.D. meeting. The Board of Directors shall vote on the proposals at the Spring meeting and an announcement of the grant recipient(s) shall be made by March 31 st.

Funding for the grant shall come from contributions made to the Public Education Special Projects Fund. All donors to the Fund will be listed in the Stones & Bones unless a contributor wishes to remain anonymous. The amount received in the fund to date will be published in the Stones & Bones each month as well as the amount needed to fulfill the \$500.00 goal. The Finance

Committee in cooperation with The Education committee shall initiate fund drives as needed. In the event that the full \$500.00 goal is not reached, the amount donated from April 1st of the last year until March 31st of that year will be the amount awarded. In the event that the goal of \$500.00 is exceeded, the amount over \$500.00 will be applied towards the following year's grant fund unless the Board of Directors votes to exceed the amount of \$500.00 for that year's grant(s).

Minimum criteria for the grant shall be:

1) The proposed public education project "shall clearly promote the conservation of archaeological sites" and shall not be in conflict with any of the other objectives of the Alabama Archaeological Society as stated in the Society's constitution.

2) The project director / grant administrator must be a member of the Alabama Archaeological Society.

3) The public education project must benefit the residents and resources of the State of Alabama.

4) The project director or his / her representative will be required to give a presentation of the project at the Winter meeting in the year that the grant is awarded.

5) To ensure that materials produced are relevant, all proposals to generate materials for classroom use must show a familiarity with state and local curriculum requirements. To insure that classroom materials are useable, this type of proposal should also show an awareness of relevant suggested standards in this field (such as the Society for American Archaeology's "Guidelines for the Evaluation of Archaeological Education Materials").

Exhibition at the Birmingham Museum of Art

Crosscurrents of Culture: Arts of Africa and the Americas in Alabama Collections to open May 18, 1997 at The Birmingham Museum of Art.

The first comprehensive survey of the Arts of Africa and the Americas currently in private and institutional collections in Alabama opens May 18, 1997, at the Birmingham Museum of Art. The exhibition will remain on view through August 31, 1997.

Crosscurrents of Culture: Arts of Africa and the Americas in Alabama Collections will feature over 100 African, Precolumbian and Native American art objects dating from 1200 B.C. to 1950. These include sculpture, woodwork, textiles, metalwork, ceramics and basketry.

The objects come from more than twenty private collections and five institutional collections in the state of Alabama. The majority of these works, selected for their quality and cultural significance, have never been exhibited publicly before.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 120-page catalog fully illustrated with images of the objects in the exhibition. Information related to the meaning and use of these pieces in their original cultural contexts will be featured.

Crosscurrents of Culture celebrates the spirit and vision of private collectors and institutions in gathering outstanding and significant works of art. The objects on display are representative of some of the most prominent art-producing cultures of Africa and the Americas.

African, Precolumbian, and Native American cultures use a variety of art forms to illustrate principles of cosmology, politics, and religion. This exhibition provides the Museum visitor with an opportunity to compare how diverse artistic traditions approach ideas related to human conditions such as birth, growth, regeneration, social or political order, education, history, and religion.

Crosscurrents of Culture will be on view in the three Jemison Galleries on the Third Floor; each gallery will be devoted to one of the three main areas represented.

African Art

Over 45 African art objects, dating from the late 19th to the early 20th century, are featured in the exhibition. These include ceremonial and ancestral masks, textiles (wrappers and other garments), power figures, diviner figures and containers, ceremonial and linguist staffs, secret society emblems, images representing nature and ancestral spirits, divination and healing bowls and figures, beadwork, dolls, and headdresses.

Highlights include a highly elaborate wooden divination bowl (*opon igede ifa*) created by a Nigerian artist named Master Areogun (1880-1956). Master Areogun is known for a refined carving style that incorporates complex scenes alluding to human conflicts that may be resolved through divination. Of the only four or five bowls attributed to this master Yoruba carver, the one in this exhibition (collection of Mary E. Cumming) is probably the finest.

From the same collection, a superb figurative couple represents *asie osu* (nature spirits) that are responsible for the well being of Baule people in Ivory Coast. A finely carved mask, with black and white broad stripes and dramatic over-proportioned and expressionistic features (anonymous collection), is also on view. Based on supernatural powers manipulated by members of the *kifwebe* society, this mask once implemented principles of social justice for the Songye people in Zaire.

From the same private collection, a Songye ancestral power figure - with attached materials including animal parts, vegetal fibers, and carved wooden figurines - attests to the ancestor's supernatural abilities in protecting and healing members of a Songye community.

Precolumbian Art

The earliest object in the exhibition is among the 30 Precolumbian art objects on display. An

Olmec green stone figurine (anonymous collection), dating from approximately 1200 B.C., is a fine representative example of the earliest known art producing culture in Precolumbian Mexico. The objects range from this period to the mid-16th century.

The Precolumbian works of art include ritual / ceremonial decorative vessels with figurative and abstract designs; stone and ceramic images of deities; figures representing companions or guides to the after-life; ceramic representations of wild and domesticated animals; and ceramic and wooden vessels from the colonial period.

The figure of a man seated on a stool, a shaman, and a ceramic mask (private collection) are outstanding examples of art forms created in ancient West Mexico by the Colima culture. The figures were meant to protect and accompany the deceased on their journey into the afterlife. The Colima ceramic mask is among the finest known examples of the type from that area of Precolumbian Mexico.

A portrait of a Mayan lord and warrior (anonymous collection), from the Jaina cultural complex in the Yucatan peninsula, exemplifies the degree of naturalism achieved in Precolumbian ceramic sculpture. An outstanding collection of Maya painted ceramic bowls, from the collection of Randolph O. George, illustrates scenes related to royal ceremonial practices and images of creatures associated with the Maya underworld. A rare Maya vessel in the form of a dog is part of the same private collection.

Vessels with painted images of warriors, animals, and other creatures, from the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Charles W. Ochs, represent the Moche and other cultures of Precolumbian Peru.

Native American Art

Alabama's rich history of Native American culture is evidenced in the outstanding examples of Native American art on view in the exhibition. Forty-five objects are represented, dating from 800 to 1400, with many generously loaned by the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) in Montgomery; the Alabama State Museum of Natural History in Moundville; the

University of Alabama Museums, Tuscaloosa; and the Anniston Museum of Natural History. Most of the objects from these institutions have never before been on public display. Many of the objects on display also came from private collectors.

The Native American works of art are grouped according to regions: Southeast, Southwest, the Plains, Northwest Coast, and the Northeast. The objects include utilitarian and ritual ceramics, shell ornaments (beads, earspools and pendants), elaborate beadwork and quillwork (vests, leggings, bags, moccasins, leather garments, head-dresses, and accessories), and textiles (beaded saddle blanket, Chilkat blanket).

Two outstanding examples of historical significance are a man's European-style coat and a man's shirt with quilled and painted decorations from the Western Plains (ADAH). The coat and shirt were collected by amateur botanist Edward Harris who traveled with John James Audubon to Ford Union in the Yellowstone region in 1843. The leather coat and shirt are in a pristine state of conservation.

Excellent examples of Mississippian pottery (including two figurative vessels), from the ADAH and the Moundville collection, represent the rich artistic traditions of cultures native to Alabama and Arkansas. An outstanding Zuni decorated bowl, from the Dick Jemison collection, is one of the various pieces of pottery created by the Pueblo cultures of the southwest.

A highlight of the exhibition is a rare and very fine shell mask with engraved details from the Noden culture of Arkansas (Moundville collection).

Crosscurrents of Culture: Arts of Africa and the Americas in Alabama Collections is the result of collaborative efforts between the Birmingham Museum of Art, private collectors, the general public, and other museums and institutions in the state of Alabama. Workshops and public discussions, created in conjunction with the exhibition, seek to establish a dialogue between institutions, collectors, scholars, art dealers, and the public, about how best to secure objects of artistic and cultural significance for the enjoyment of future generations in Alabama.

Crosscurrents of Culture presents African, Precolumbian, and Native American art as a part of the world's cultural heritage which Alabama preserves in the spirit of cultural diversity.

After viewing the exhibition, visitors are encouraged to visit the Museum's own growing collections of African, Precolumbian and Native American art, also on the Third Floor.

For more information, please contact Manuel Jordan, Curator of Arts of Africa and the Americas at the BMA at (205)254-2983. The Birmingham Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Friday from 10am-5pm and Sundays 12-5pm. Closed Mondays. Free admission.

Crosscurrents of Culture: Arts of Africa and the Americas in Alabama Collections has been organized by the Birmingham Museum of Art. It is sponsored by The Birmingham News / Birmingham Post-Herald. World Wide Web Address: <http://www.hansonlib.org>

Oldest Musical Instrument

The oldest known musical instrument in the world is a flute, a fragment (from a Slovenian Neanderthal camp site), of a cave-bear cub's femur, with 4 holes in it (43,000 to 82,000 years old). It's also the first musical instrument ever associated with Neanderthals.

This flute has now been analyzed by Canadian musicologist Bob Fink as playing 4 notes of the Do, Re, Mi scale (known as the diatonic scale), making it the first evidence of the diatonic scale in prehistoric periods.

Fink's interdisciplinary analysis was checked and accepted by earth-scientists involved in work of the site where the bone flute was found, and by musicologists who heard about the findings. The odds the 4 holes could be spaced as they are by chance are very slim.

This is the most significant evidence to date showing there is a natural foundation to the major and minor scale. It is in line with University of California's (Berkeley) Prof. Anne D. Kilmer's deciphering of the world's oldest known song from

clay tablets, 4,000 years old, indicating the use then of both harmony and of the diatonic scale. It is also confirming of recent psychological studies by Trehub (U. of Toronto), Schellenberg (U. of Windsor), and Kagan (Harvard) of infants.

These studies (Vol. 7 #5 Sept '96 of "Psychological Science") showed musically untutored infants preferred natural (acoustic) intervals over dissonant intervals.

While Fink believes strongly in cultural and scientific relativity, he says "not everything is relative. We have in the acoustic nature of the scale something that forces this scale into near-universal existence over time, no matter whose culture you are in, or where you are, or when you were."

The conclusions may bear upon certain views in old-school thinking in musicology and psychology. Many musicologists have operated on an opposite view -- namely, that the scale is an arbitrary set of notes we like because we got used to them. The view is that we could like any other arrangement of tones just as well, and build whole new worlds of music based on other scales. According to this view, scales, harmony or discord -- all are relative and not a matter of anything "natural."

Built upon this view is the so-called "avant-gard" school of music, with its "atonal, 12-tone scale". Atonal means music without a sense of "key." Often melodies are avoided altogether, or broken up to avoid a sense of being whole or connected, to break old public habits.

Composers of avant-gard music include Schoenberg, Charles Ives, Alban Berg, Virgil Thompson, Boulez, and others before them, like Stravinski, all of whose music gave us an era of dissonance and unmelodic keylessness, called "modern" music (also often called "contemporary" or "serious" music).

Author and International Herald-Tribune music critic Henry Pleasants wrote many years ago: "Modern music is neither modern nor music." Many others have condemned it since it began, while more have felt it was understandable only by a tiny elite, if at all.

The atonalist view of music, with more and more cracks showing in it, persists. Atonal music is still almost obligatory in every concert, despite

generations of its failure to "take" among the general public as predicted long ago by Schoenberg and Berg. It remains an acquired taste of the very few. Its adherents in music departments and symphony orchestras have worked for this music to persist despite collapsing attendance at concerts, & despite increasing evidence from other disciplines against its underlying theory.

This bone flute find could be a possible "coup de grace" to this view. The oldest has come back to haunt the newest. It's "carved in bone..." says Fink. Fink's essay is available in full on-line at the Greenwich website:

<http://www.webster.sk.ca/greenwich/fl-compl.htm>
. An article has also been published on-line in April's on-line *Bel Canto* magazine.

--Candace Norton

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New Publications

Prehistory of the Central Mississippi Valley *Edited by Charles H. McNutt*

Contributions from experts throughout the Central Mississippi Valley-the region along the Mississippi River from where the Ohio River joins in the north to its confluence with the Arkansas River in the south-present current, if sometimes conflicting, views of the regional cultural sequences supported by data concerning recent surveys and excavations, as well as radiocarbon and chronometric determinations. This volume provides a comprehensive overview of the valley and defines future research goals. Charles H. McNutt is Professor of Anthropology at The University of Memphis. To order your copy contact The University of Alabama Press at 1-800-825-9980 or write to:

The University of Alabama
The University of Alabama Press
Box 870380
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0380

Chapter News

Muscle Shoals Chapter

The May meeting was held on the 12th at the Indian Mound Museum in Florence. Van King presented a program on the chronology of pottery types with associated point types for the Tennessee River Valley.

In order to help in the identification of pottery types, Mr. King circulated sherds representing the various types. Seventeen chapter members were in attendance. The annual chapter picnic will be held on June 9 when Sarah Sherwood of the University of Tennessee will present a program on a glyph cave in Tennessee. *Joe Copeland*

Tuscaloosa Chapter

For our May meeting we were fortunate to have J.B. "Butch" Fuller speak and give demonstrations of traditional Creek Indian lifestyles. He had a bow, baskets, trade beads, clothing etc. that were used everyday by the Creek Indians in the 1800's. He also told how to make cordage, tan buckskin, and other skills used by the Creeks'.

Robby Hall, Secretary

East Alabama Chapter

A small group from our chapter braved the inclement weather on Sunday, April 27, to visit Bean's Mill on Halawaka Creek just off Highway 29 about 8 miles north of Opelika, AL. Making the trip were Jackie and Gary Mullen, Renee and Scott Anderson and their son Michael, and Dick O'Connor, a long-time friend of the Andersons who was visiting from North Dakota. John Ross provided us with an interesting tour of the 122-year-old grist mill that he is in the process of reconstructing. Although there is a lot of work remaining to be done, the upper wooded structure is now largely enclosed, providing a good idea of what the original mill once looked like.

For their May 13th meeting the East Alabama Chapter presented a behind the scenes story of the filming of *First Frontier* by John DiJulio and Bruce Kuerten of Auburn University Telecommunications & Educational Television.

As the directors and producers of the documentary film *First Frontier*, John DiJulio and Bruce Kuerten provided intriguing glimpses of the efforts to which they went in making this film to portray as authentically as possible the culture and events that shaped Alabama's early history. The film chronicles the period from the arrival of

Hernando DeSoto in 1540 to the defeat of the Creek Indians by Andrew Jackson's forces at Horseshoe Bend in 1814.

Donations !!!

We would like to thank Ian W. Brown for contributing to the Wimberly and Mahan funds, Elizabeth C. DeGrummond for contributing to the Education fund, Lawrence and Viola Evans for contributing to the Wimberly and Mahan funds, Julie R. Lyons for contributing to the Education fund, and Scott Meeks for contributing to the Mahan fund. Thanks so much for the contributions!! You make research possible!!

Currently our balances are:

Mahan fund - \$408.50

Wimberly fund - \$283.50

Education fund - \$317.00

Keep the donations coming so that we can meet and surpass our goals!!!

New Members

Glenn V. McDaniel
Chatom, AL

George M. Hamby Jr.
Sheffield, AL

Catherine Crowell
Troy, AL

Amanda Bowling
Troy, AL

John Noel
Troy, AL

Terry Nunnelley
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Available issues of *Journal of Alabama Archaeology*

- Vol. 20-31, each issue (*two issues per volume*).....\$3.50pp
- Vol. 32 & up, each issue (*two issues per volume*).....\$6.00pp
- Stanfield- Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations* (*Journal of Alabama Archaeology*)
- Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint.....\$7.50pp
- Special Publication 2 - *The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County Alabama*.....\$6.00pp
- Special Publication 3 - *Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend* ..\$8.00pp
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