NADB DOC # - 4,056,889

Alabama Archaeological Society

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MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

Volume 31

Number 4

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The A.A.S. Board of Directors will hold its next meeting at the Western Sizzlin' Restaurant, Oxmoor Road at I-65 in Birmingham, Wednesday, April 19, 1989, at 7 p.m. New Chapter presidents, remember that you are automatically a board member by nature of your Chapter office.

NOTE: The Society Secretary needs the list of officers for each Chapter, for listing in our publications.

RUSSELL CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT HOLDS FOURTH ANNUAL INDIAN DAY

The Fourth Annual Indian Day will be held at Russell Cave National Monument on Saturday, April 15, 1989. The theme will focus on the lifeway of the prehistoric cultures in the Tennessee River Valley and Russell Cave.

This free event will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Russell Cave, near Bridgeport, Alabama. Special programs planned include: buckskin tanning, flintknapping, blowgun making and use, Native American cooking, pottery making, Indian crafts, storytelling, and herbal use. Frank Villegas, a Native American employed at Red Clay State Park, will present a program on Red Clay, the last Cherokee Capital before removal, at 11 a.m. Carey Oakley, head of the Alabama Office of Archaeological Research, will be on hand to answer questions on archaeology and to identify artifacts. Carey will present a program on the 1988 digs at Cathedral Caverns at 1 and 3 p.m. Linda Reynolds, naturalist at Lake Guntersville State Park, will present a program on Native American plant use of this area at 2 p.m.

For more information call 205/495-2672.

Larry Beane Russell Cave

ALABAMA INDIAN REUNION IN HUNTSVILLE

The First Alabamians - Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Cherokees - will be returning to their original territorial homeland for the ultimate Alabama Reunion. The tribes will be demonstrating traditional arts, crafts,

music, dance, and other skills, as well as discussing tribal structure, religion, folklore, and existence of the tribe - past, present and future. Burritt Museum and Park will be hosting this very special Alabama Indian Reunion on Saturday, April 22, 1989, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission cost is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children.

The story?

Burritt Museum and Park's grounds will become a "common area" for these groups to display their individual skills - skills such as basket-making, beadwork, leathercraft, pottery, cooking, and woodcarving. In addition to these demonstrations continuing throughout the day, special sessions will feature such things as music, dances, hunting, and traditional games such as stickball - the predecessor of Lacrosse.

The Creek Indians will be represented by members of the Lower Creek Muscogee Tribe's North Bay Clan and Star Clan, who will be coming from Florida and South Alabama. Members of the Mississippi Band pf the Choctaw Indians will be visiting from the Choctaw reservation in Philadelphia, Mississippi to demonstrate art and craft skills. Also scheduled as feature programs are the Choctaw Tribal Dancers. Eight members of the Chickasaw Nation are travelling to Huntsville from the reservation in Oklahoma. Along with demonstrations of pottery, cloth decoration and basketweaving, the group will be performing traditional drum and flute music. The Blue Earth Singers and Dancers from Cherokee, North Carolina will represent the Cherokee Nation. Demonstrations throughout the day will include traditional Cherokee beadwork, woodcarving, and basketmaking. The Dancing Warriors, a dance group made up primarily of children, will also perform. The Dancing Warriors are a Huntsville-based group that are frequent participants at Burritt Museum and Park's special events.

Larry Beane, Park Ranger at Russell Cave, will be demonstrating the use of such prehistoric objects as nutting stones, pump drills, and the atlatl. Tamara Beane will be demonstrating the lost art of making pottery. Charles Hubbert, of the Alabama State Museum of Natural History's Division of Archaeology, will present a program on prehistoric cultures. Margaret Searcy, former Professor of Indian Studies at The University of Alabama and speaker for the Alabama Humanities Foundation, will show "Lost in Time".

The day-long festival will climax with a Pow-Wow style dance in which all of the visiting Indians will participate in one final dance. In addition to all these performers, Burritt Museum will feature some very special exhibits on Indian life. Burritt Museum Association members will be invited to a special reception on Friday evening, April 21st. Bart Henson, a member of the Alabama Archaeological Society's Huntsville Chapter and the foremost authority on Southeastern Indian Petroglyphs, will present a slide program about fascinating cave designs.

For more information about the Alabama Indian Reunion, call Burritt Museum and Park at 536-2882.

Jeff Hughes Burritt Museum

CONTRIBUTION

The Society wishes to express its appreciation to Mary Mahan of Guntersville, Alabama for her generous contribution to the Ed Mahan Research Fund. This fund is used in support of the Society's various research projects, both in the field and in the lab.

SUMMER FIELD SCHOOL

After some years, U.A.B. is going to have a 1989 Summer Field School in archaeology, during which we will excavate a site on the Mulberry Fork in southern Cullman County. We will be testing the site this spring.

We are looking for full-time crew members, and Society members are welcome. We will not have a field camp, and will be leaving each morning (6:30 a.m.) from the U.A.B. campus in a 15-passenger van. Because of a grant from the U.A.B. Special Studies program, student expenses will be minimal - 6 hours of tuition, or about \$325 for Alabama residents.

For those of you who cannot participate for the entire project, we would be pleased to have your volunteer help, if you can work at least one full week (five days) at a time. Unfortunately, because of potential problems stemming from the current land use, we cannot have casual visitors to the site. Serious volunteers are welcome; as a matter of fact, to some extent this is an emergency project, since the site is slowly washing into the river.

The Field School will run from June 5 to July 28 - for eight weeks, Monday through Friday. Participants should be in good health and at least 18 years of age. Those interested should contact me at the Department of Anthropology, U.A.B. Station, Birmingham, Alabama 35294; 934-3508 or 934-4690; evenings - 879-0619. I hope to see some of you on the dig!

Dr. Roger Nance Birmingham

CHAPTER NEWS

CULLMAN COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Our March program was presented by Mr. Richard Cobb of Florence concerning The University of Alabama's dig at Smith Bottom Cave located near the Tennessee River. There is much hope surrounding this dig, and this summer they will be digging again. Here's a great chance to work on a professional dig!

Howard King

HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER

The Huntsville Chapter meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Public Library on St. Clair Avenue. The public is welcome.

Houston Wright was the speaker at the March Chapter meeting; he presented an interesting slide program on "Geology and Flint from Dover, Tennessee and Wells Creek Crater".

The speaker for the March 28 meeting is scheduled to be Van King. Van's topic is "Steatite Pots".

Dorothy Luke

An exhibit of artifacts of the American Indians was on display at the museum area of the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library during the month of February, and by special request it was held over during March. The collection and display were coordinated by a local member, John Williams.

The exhibit emphasized stone-age artifacts, the flaking of projectile points, axes and tomahawks, polished ceremonial objects, and maps of Indian occupation. One of the major features of the diplay was artfully crafted reproductions of weapons and tools, with such things as carved tomahawks, leather and feather craft. It included an excellent collection of ancient pot sherds, with samples of major decorative symbols and art.

The collection succeeded in giving the viewer an excellent look at a major handicraft of the Indian and an insight into their way of life. It conveyed beautifully the skill of native workmanship and a sensitivity to the plight of the Indian. The exhibit was outstanding and a major attraction in the library museum area.

Houston Wright

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POSTERS

These informative posters are ideal for point identification, educational purposes, and decorative use. Prepared by archaeologist Dr. Don W. Dragoo, each poster is printed on fine 17×22 -inch card stock and is accompanied by a brochure-key and bibliography.

Currently available: 1) Prehistoric Projectile Points - Appalachian Mts. - Atlantic Coast; 2) Paleo-Indian Projectile Points and Tools - Eastern North America; and 3) Classic Projectile Points - Eastern North America.

Order from: Mrs. Christine W. Dragoo; P. O. Box 648; Glouster, Virginia 23061.

FRIENDS OF THE ALABAMA ARCHIVES MEETING

Dr. Charles Hudson - Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Georgia - delivered the Milo B. Howard, Jr. keynote lecture for the 1989 Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Alabama Archives on Saturday, February 25, 1989. "DeSoto in Alabama" was the topic of the lecture, which was held in the Howard Auditorium. The Friends of the Alabama Archives is a non-profit support organization for the Archives.

NEW LOOK AT THE INDIANS

The Alabama Department of Archives and History building in Montgomery, which closed for repairs more than a year ago, recently reopened with an updated approach to the Peter Brannon Indian Gallery.

Some of the artifacts were on hand when the nation's first state—supported archives department opened in 1901 in the Alabama Capitol Building. Large numbers of items, mainly relating to the Creek tribes of Central Alabama, came from the state anthropological society when the museum moved to its present headquarters on Washington Street in 1941. Still more has been added since.

"Now we have cataloged the entire collection - piece by piece, bead by bead", says curator Bob Cason. "We've displayed the best of the 326,000 items in chronological order, taking the Indians from 8,000 to 6,000 B.C., when we know they were first here, through Alabama statehood and Indian Removal." Outstanding items range from a Washington Peace Medal awarded to the Creek chiefs in 1790 to burial urns unique to Central Alabama, and beads - 270,000 in all.

The museum is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

(From Southern Living, February 1989.)

AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE DISPUTE

"Greenberg's LANGUAGE IN THE AMERICAS has a detrimental impact on the field; its classification should not be accepted; the record should be set straight". With this bold assertion Lyle Campbell began a recent review of Joseph Greenberg's new book on American language classification.

The thesis of Greenberg's book is that "all the indigenous languages of the Americas fall into three genetic groups", he explained recently. "By far the largest is... Amerind and comprehends all of the languages except Na-Dene and Eskimo-Aleut". It is the identification of the Amerind group, or language family, that causes most anguish among American Indianists, because it encompasses all languages of South America and most of North America.

Greenberg believes that his identification of three major language groups is consistent with recent genetic and dental evidence, which can also be interpreted as indicating three genetic groups resulting from three separate migrations.

Greenberg approaches classification with a broad brush, encompassing in his studies all languages for which there are recorded data, and sorting them into major groups. It is essentially a top down approach. By contrast, Campbell, Goddard, and others study in detail just a handful of languages at a time, carefully building up historical relationships among them, from which the big picture may eventually emerge. It is a bottom up approach.

By declaring now that the great majority of languages belong to one family, and therefore have a common origin some 12,000 or so years ago, Greenberg has essentially scooped the bottom uppers.

Many linguists choose to look, not for similarities among languages, but for what are called sound correspondences. Sound correspondences are when, say, a "p" in one language is always represented by a "d" in another, the result of a specific "mutation".

It is the use of sound correspondences, among other things, that gives Campbell, Goddard and their allies the security that they are identifying historical traces in the languages they study. Greenberg, by contrast, works with similarities among languages, and is therefore often labeled "unscientific". His technique is known as mass comparison, a "common sense approach", he calls it. Using a limited list of words for parts of the body, pronouns, and so on - words that change slowly and are borrowed rarely - Greenberg compares hundreds of languages at a time, believing that he can identify patterns of relationship among the languages.

Negative reception of his ideas is not novel to Greenberg, although the degree of vituperation is. Before he embarked on the study of American Indian languages Greenberg had applied his technique to African languages, producing a classification that, unpopular to begin with, eventually became largely accepted. According to his opponents, Greenberg should have stayed on his own side of the street. "Greenberg is an Africanist, not an Americanist", challenges Goddard.

Greenberg responds to this, saying that the American Indian work must, of course, stand on its own and not adduce the African success in its support.

(From an article by Roger Lewin in "Research News", December 23, 1988.)

COOSA VALLEY CHAPTER NEWS

The Coosa Valley Archaeology Club held its February meeting on the 23rd. A short business meeting was held, at which time it was announced that from now on our meetings will be at 7:00 p.m., not at 7:30, which

previously had been the case. Also the members were informed that Dr. Harry Holstein has received a grant in the amount of \$10,000 for a survey of this area; in addition, he received a faculty research grant in the amount of \$1,500.

Dr. Phillip Koerper and Dr. Harry Holstein will be giving their presentations on the Battle of Tallasseehatchee at the 175th anniversary of Horseshoe Bend on March 25, 1989.

Our guest speaker for February was Deb Slaney from the Anniston Museum of Natural History. Deb gave a very interesting presentation on Southwestern Pottery.

The Coosa Valley Chapter meets on the last Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Brewer Hall, Jacksonville State University.

Brigitte Cole

PUBLICATIONS	AVAILABLE
Available issues of Journal of Alabama Archaeology Vol. 20-29 each	issue
Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archa	
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell	\$2.00 pp
Special Publication 2 — The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Ben	
Special Publication 3 — Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe I	
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	e
Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile)	\$7.00 pp
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