

STONES & BONES

The Alabama Archaeological Society

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AAS Winter Meeting 2006

Ashley Dumas



photo by Howard King

On Saturday, December 2 members of the AAS convened in Montgomery for the annual Winter Meeting. Attendees were entertained and enlightened by a program of seven presentations on archaeology from Pre-Clovis to historic cemeteries. At the annual Business Meeting, the 2007 slate of officers were elected, and their names can be found elsewhere in this issue of Stones and Bones. A very surprised Linda Derry was presented with the Milt and Bea Harris Award for her many years of dedicated service to the AAS. Linda served as President in 1996, and as Secretary she has rarely missed a board meeting and has kept meticulous records for the society. We look forward to her work as a new board member at-large. President Howard King presented a certificate of appreciation to McDonald Brooms for serving as editor of the Stones and Bones, the AAS newsletter, for the past 15 years. The Silent Book Auction saw the most volumes ever donated and brought in \$942. At the Board of Directors meeting, the board was able to vote on finally clearing our debt to the heirs of Jack Cambron and David Hulse. Two Public Education grants were awarded. Funding was awarded to Ben Hoksbergen of Redstone Arsenal to support an outreach program to Hunstville-area fourth graders. Public Education funds also were earmarked to support a radio program about Alabama archaeology that will be broadcast out of the Montgomery area.

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A Message from our President

Howard King

I would like to thank our 1st Vice President, Ashley Dumas, for the great winter meeting held on the campus of Auburn University at Montgomery. Also, thanks to Dr. Craig Shelton for hosting the Society in the University's beautiful facilities. We had a separate room where we held a very successful silent book auction. All the books were donated by our members and the proceeds were applied to the Cambron and Hulse fund. We had many fine programs ranging from trying to discover the site of Mabila to searching for evidence of Pre-Clovis. It was a great pleasure and honor for me as AAS president to present both families the remainder of their share from the sale of the Alabama Point Type book on December 21, 2006. AAS Finance



photo by Van King

Shown above is McDonald Brooms (right) receiving from AAS President Howard King a certificate of appreciation for his fifteen years as AAS newsletter editor. This presentation was held at the AAS annual meeting.

Committee chairperson, Robbie Camp, Board of Director members, Eugene Stewart and Charles Hubbert joined me



photo by Van King

Shown above is Linda Derry receiving the AAS member of the year award from McDonald Brooms at the AAS annual meeting.

on that day to deliver the final checks. So now that we have met our obligation to the Cambron and Hulse families, we are in great need for donations to continue our goals of financing archaeological research and publishing the latest archaeological explorations from throughout our state. Remember that your donations are tax deductible. Also, if you know of someone who may be interested in archaeology, then give them a membership application. You may even want to pay for the membership of someone; that would be a nice gift. There are many projects with which you may want to help in which our society is involved: recording and protecting sites;

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**For additional pictures
from the AAS Winter Meeting
turn to page 6.**



Cottonfield Meditations 16

Charles Hubbert

I wonder who it was that made the decisions about where PaleoIndian bands would camp? Somebody must have decided when the time came to move from one location to another one. What were the factors that were considered in determining when the time was right for a move to another location? Who were the people who considered those factors, and made the decision for the group? Who were these people who would decide where the group would go next? They did not move aimlessly away from their old camp. When they left they knew where they were going.

I can think of a number of circumstances that might encourage a move away from an old camp location. A dwindling supply of firewood in the neighborhood might be one factor. Fires were important to PaleoIndian people not only for warmth and for cooking. It was also important to them for security. They shared their world with some very impressive carnivores! Another factor that might have been considered would have been an oppressive accumulation of bathroom debris. That kind of thing would not be pleasant for any of us, and I feel certain it would not have been to them. Both those things would exert a "push" away from an old location. And there is this to consider, as food resources matured and became available in other areas, or as need arose for some other resources, such as tool quality stone, they would exert a "pull" on the encampment of the PaleoIndian band.

The question I have, however, is "Who was it that considered all those factors and then decided that the group would move camp tomorrow? And decided where they would move to?" If PaleoIndian people were like other band-level societies they had no Chief-man. They did not elect, or appoint a man to be the "boss" of the group, or even an official leader. Anthropologist think of band-level societies as "egalitarian" societies. . .with all members of the group having an equal authority. But we all know that people are not really all equal.

From time-to-time in PaleoIndian societies, as in our own, a man would come along who had knowledge and skill in a range of activities. Success in hunting was an achievement that earned respect. It benefitted the entire band. Men who were good fighters, warriors, were respected. That is a macho kind of thing that can be observed wherever groups of men get together. Kindness, generosity, and freedom from a bad temper were characteristics that were highly valued. It seems to me that when dealing with our friends and loved ones, as well as the general public, they are admirable traits. When a man came along that combined all those characteristics he was highly regarded. People sought him out for his advice and willingly followed it. He seemed like the leader of the band. But his position was not official.

People of his kind accomplished plentiful supplies of berries and nuts. They brought in an ample supply of dried meat,

and chose places where there were as many fish as a person would want for a year. They were

"Kindness, generosity, and freedom from a bad temper were characteristics that were highly valued."

men who cared about their family. They would make decisions in the best interest of the group. . .the band. . .us. . .! They would act in the best interest of us all. Wouldn't it be nice if we had leadership like that today. . .???

In my mind, a man of that sort decided where camps would be made. Perhaps at the evening fire he said, "I think we should get up tomorrow and make our things ready for travel. The next day we can go to that Spring That Comes Out of the Big Hole. We can spend the night there. . .then we can go on to the Pond Where the Many Turtles Were the next day." That is the way it would be.

I think it was a man like that who made the decisions about these sites that we see scattered about the landscape.

What do you think? Tell me.

Charles McConnell Hubbert

Board of Directors

2007

Ashley Dumas, Van King,
Charles Moore, and Gary Mullen

2008

Phil Carr, Charles Hubbert,
and Hoyt Price

2009

McDonald Brooms, Linda Derry,
Carey Geiger, Bart Henson,
and Margaret Russell

A Message from our President

(continued from page 1)

recording paleo points; watching out for the destruction of sites; researching the history of the area in which you live; creating and/or supporting a local museum; creating an archaeological reference center at the local library; volunteering to help a local archaeologist; offering your services on an archaeological excavation. These are just a few of the many wonderful and exciting things that you can do in archaeology. As we enter a new year, I hope that it will be the best and most successful year for the Alabama Archaeological Society. I hope to see you at one of the many monthly chapter meetings and/or at one of our two AAS meetings.

AAS Winter Meeting 2006

(continued from page 1)

Many thanks to Gary and Jackie Mullen and the East Alabama Chapter for supplying and setting up the breakfast treats, coffee, and water; Craig Sheldon for arranging for the use of the Nursing Auditorium at AUM; Eugene Futato for his able management of the book auction; Teresa Paglione for helping with registration and setting up the tour of a local plantation; and Steven Meredith for assisting in all aspects of planning and publicizing the meeting. Also, the invited speakers deserve a big thanks for putting together some excellent presentations on Alabama archaeology. This meeting was a success because of their willingness to share their scholarship with us.

A black, legal-size binder was left in the auditorium at the Winter Meeting. If this is yours, please send an email to ashleydumas@usa.net.

DEADLINE

for the March/April 2007 issue of *Stones & Bones* is
February 15, 2007. Please e-mail your information to
Hoyt Price at hbprice@bellsouth.net

A Special Moment

Robbie Camp

As I get older, I have begun to realize that time passes very quickly and when a special moment comes along we should recognize it, inhale it and share it with others. I was fortunate enough to experience such a moment on December 21, 2006 while assisting AAS president Howard King, Eugene Stewart and Charles Hubbert with a presentation to settle the Cambron/ Hulse debt.

The morning began with a drive to Decatur to the home of Bette Hulse Steele where Howard, Eugene Stewart and I had the pleasure of meeting with Bette and her sister Susan Hulse Chapman. They were very pleased to see this matter finally resolved and expressed sincere gratitude for all who were involved in making this happen. Now if these two ladies weren't impressive enough, I was about to meet a lady who made an everlasting impression on me regarding the importance of savoring every moment of life.

From here we proceeded to the residence of Doris Cambron where we were shortly joined by Charles Hubbert. After the initial introductions, check presentation and completion of paperwork, we were afforded the opportunity to sit and chat with the widow of Jack Cambron, who along with David Hulse co-authored the Alabama Point Type



Shown above is Mrs. Doris Cambron receiving her final inheritance check from the AAS on the royalties from the sale of the Alabama Point Type Book. Left to right: AAS Finance Committee Chairman, Robbie Camp; Mrs. Doris Cambron; and AAS President Howard King.

handbook among many other archaeological reports and contributions to the investigations of the early history of Alabama.

Now 85, Mrs. Cambron was thrilled to share stories and experiences of the many excursions she shared with Jack. She was quick to tell us that the other residents in her assisted living complex loved to gather downstairs and talk about ailments and medications but she wanted no part of it, although she has a knee and hip replacement to go along with two broken shoulders from recent falls. She would rather talk about her

favorite hobby which is archaeology. You should have seen the sparkle in her eyes as she told of the many nights spent at the kitchen table helping Jack meticulously measure and record points. It was her responsibility to record and keep up with the files. When asked of her involvement with the point type book, she beamed with pride and told us of her contributions, including the typing of all the text. Just the tone of her voice, facial expressions and comments left no doubt that Jack Cambron was her idol and hero and she cherished every moment of artifact collecting with him. She told us her favorite artifact was a Cumberland she found one day that Jack had overlooked. When asked if he ever heard the end of that, she just smiled.

Then the story takes a sad turn as she painfully told us of Jack's diagnosis of Alzheimer's at the age of 50, lengthy sickness and subsequent death at 62. What a tragic loss. She gave away many of his books and records to some of those who worked closely with him.

When asked, she does seem to be eager to meet and share many other stories that we unfortunately did not have time for today. As we left, I felt that old lump come up in my throat that a good cry would probably have cured but I made a decision right then and there to appreciate the simple things in life, the importance of friendship and dedication to a cause, but most importantly, to savor every moment.



Shown above are the daughters of David Hulse receiving their final inheritance check from the AAS on the royalties from the sale of the Alabama Point Type Book. Left to right: AAS Finance Committee Chairman, Robbie Camp; Mrs. Susan Chapman; Mrs. Bette Steele, holding her son, Conner; and AAS President Howard King.

Take time to visit our website: <http://www.southalabama.edu/aas/>

Missing slab could unlock mysteries of past

Ancient artifact from east Nashville has unique etchings

RALPH LOOS, Staff Writer
Tennessean.Com
Sunday, 12/24/06

Missing: one incised slab.
Collector value: thousands of dollars.
Historical value: priceless.

For the past few years, archaeologist Tracy Brown has combed flea markets and collector shows across Tennessee and the Southeast, hoping to stumble upon the owner of a small stone slab first discovered in east Nashville 40 years ago. On the rock, a 14-by-13-inch slab that dates from the Mississippian Period (1000-1450 A.D.), is an artistic image that the ancient inhabitants of a mound site etched into its surface with primitive stone tools. But the artifact is coveted more for what is not etched onto its face than what is.

"It's unique because it is the only slab of six found that does not have clear Southeastern Ceremonial Complex symbols on it," Brown said. He has quizzed collector groups, questioned fellow archaeologists and talked to "just about anyone who might come into contact with this kind of item."

"It's like fishing the ocean," Brown said. So far he's had nary a nibble. "There's an excellent chance this piece of history is sitting in somebody's rock garden or on some kid's dresser as a trinket," said Brown, who is based in Oak Ridge.

Brown said the slab isn't stolen property, and he is not interested in purchasing it. Professional archaeologists do not collect, buy, sell or appraise prehistoric artifacts, he said. He simply wants to examine it, make some notes, measure it, photograph it and give it right back to the person who owns it.

"What many people don't know about archaeology is that the item itself isn't as important as how the item fits into the 'big picture' with other items found at a site," he said. "It's like a giant puzzle where you know you're never going to find all the pieces. So you try to find as many as you can."

Unusual symbols on slab

Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (SCC) symbols are found on Mississippian Period artifacts from sites throughout the Southeast and as far west as eastern

Oklahoma. At one time, the somewhat bizarre symbols were interpreted as important elements of a pan-Southeastern American Indian religion with a strong emphasis on sun veneration and human death.

The slab in question does feature a snake, which is common as symbols go. "But taken as a whole, the individual symbols and the picture on this stone do not have an SCC flavor about them," Brown said. "This is important and at least suggests that the iconography on the stone may be more personal in nature and important to the life of one or more individuals in an ancient society."

Although the ancient tales told by the missing slab take place more than a thousand years ago, the story about the slab begins in the mid-1990s, which is when it went missing. The widow of a collector apparently gave it away.

"All together, she probably gave away \$100,000 in artifacts for nothing," Brown said. "The person who got them for free ended up selling them to collectors. Some of the items were bigger-ticket items, but the slab I'm looking for was probably among a large group of items that might have gone for 10, 15 or 20 bucks at a flea market."

Six slabs found in area

The missing slab — one of six that have been discovered in Middle Tennessee — was found at a large Mississippian site in east Nashville in the autumn of 1968. A now-deceased local artifact collector, Malcolm Parker, former director of The Parthenon, found the incised slab in a stone box at an original burial site.

The first of the six slabs was discovered on Rocky Creek in Trousdale County in 1874 and was named after Gates P. Thruston, a Nashville-area antiquarian

who authored *Antiquities of Tennessee* in 1890. The slab, now known as the Thruston Tablet, was interpreted by Thruston as a commemoration of an important political or social event in the life of a local Mississippian Period community, Brown said.

The second stone was found at the Castalian Springs mound site, now owned by the state, in Sumner County in 1892. Etchings on that stone show the upper body of a human figure ceremonially dressed as a raptorial bird. "This representation and the sun symbol on his chest are typical of the SCC, and the stone no doubt dates to the same time as the mounds," Brown said. He added that Kevin Smith in the Department of Anthropology at Middle Tennessee State University has conducted field school excavations at the Castalian Springs site the past two summers.

A slab found at the Arnold site in Brentwood in the early-middle 1960s was the third such stone found and the last before the subject of Brown's search. Two more were found later along the Cumberland River in east Nashville in 1975.

To archaeologists and historians, the stones are valuable for "what they can tell us about the technology, social organization and belief systems of the original Middle Tennesseans who lived here before we Euro-Americans and Afro-Americans arrived," Brown said.

**"All together,
she probably
gave away
\$100,000 in
artifacts for
nothing,"
Brown said.**

2007 AAS Officers

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Mark Cole and Ron Morrow
Photographer: Barry Watters
AHC Representative: Craig Sheldon

Chapter News



Birmingham

Shown above exhibiting some of his restored artifacts is Robbie Camp. Robbie demonstrated to the Birmingham chapter the methods he uses to restore slightly damaged artifacts at the chapter's October meeting. The Birmingham Chapter meets at 7:00 pm on the second Thursday of each month at the Emmet O'Neal Library, 50 Oak Street, in Crestline. Please contact Steven Meredith 205/566-5376 or e-mail: mered003@bama.ua.edu, for further information. *Submitted by: Howard King.*



Huntsville

Pictured above is Mr. Scott Shaw who gave the November program to the Huntsville Chapter on cave exploring. The Huntsville Chapter meets on the 4th Tuesday night at the Huntsville Library. For further information, contact chapter president Richard Kilborn. *Submitted by Howard King.*

Muscle Shoals

Pictured to the right is Charles Hubbert talking to the Muscle Shoals Chapter regarding settlement patterns of paleo man in the Tennessee Valley. Charles, whose lifelong task of studying and searching for evidence of early man, provoked a lot of discussion on Early Man the chapter's October meeting. The Muscle Shoals Chapter meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:15 p.m. in Florence's Mound Museum. For further information on the Muscle Shoals Chapter contact chapter president Gerald Hester. *Submitted by Howard King.*



Cullman

Shown above is Dr. Hoyt Price sharing some arrowhead hunting stories with John and Barbara Gustafson (seated). John presented the program for the Cullman Chapter's October meeting on the changes he has seen on the Quad site during the past 40 years. He stated that the Quad site was probably the world's largest and most important paleo site. Yet due to archaeologist's lack of interest and inaction along with TVA's disregard, the site has completely washed away. Only the artifacts collected by a few individuals during the 60's and 70's remain to tell the story of what could have been much valuable data if only the site had been professionally investigated, documented and researched. The Cullman Chapter meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Cullman County Health Department's Conference room at 7:00 p.m. For further information, contact chapter president Robbie Camp. *Submitted by Howard King.*



Huntsville

Pictured above are members at the Huntsville Chapter's October meeting discussing some artifacts brought in by one of the members. The Huntsville Chapter meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month in the Huntsville Public Library at 7:00 p.m. For further information, contact chapter president Richard Kilborn. *Submitted by Howard King.*

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AAS Winter Meeting Speakers



Shown left to right are some of the speakers at the AAS winter meeting. **Dr. Jim Knight** spoke regarding Mississippian Cosmography, **Ian Brown** spoke on Modern Alabama Cemeteries from an Archaeological Perspective: An Examination of Ideology. **Amanda Regnier** discussed A Century of Searching for Mabila. **Carey Geiger** told those in attendance his experiences at the Topper Site and his belief in the Pre-Clovis Evidence. **Dr. Phil Carr** of University of South Alabama discussed the The Clovis Theory and **Steven Meredith** talked about Early Paleoindian Settlement in the Gulf Coastal Plain of Alabama. *Submitted by Howard King*

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Public Forum on Current Research in Alabama Archaeology

Alabama State Capitol Building Auditorium • February 10, 2007 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Come and learn what Alabama professional archaeologists are researching in Alabama.

Sponsored by the Alabama Historical Commission and the Council on Alabama Archaeology.

Alabama Paleo Point Survey Points



This Clovis is made of Fort Payne chert and was found in Lauderdale County. It has an old break on the distal end and is fluted on both faces approximately one-fourth length of estimated length. The point measures 2 1/8" long, 1 3/16" wide and 1/4" thick. APPS Artifact #508.



Found in Lauderdale County, the above Clovis Point is made of Fort Payne chert. It has an old break on the distal end and is fluted approximately one-fourth length on both faces. The point measures 3 15/16" long, 1 1/8" wide and 5/16" thick. APPS Artifact #502.

Recent Find



Steven Meredith recently found this gorget in Baldwin County at site 1Ba414. It is made of a ferruginous siltstone that is very similar to rocks that can be found in some of the bluffs on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. As can be seen from the photo, there is a single hole drilled near the center of the artifact. The drilling was done from each face. On both faces there is a shallow groove cut or worn into the surface. The faces of the gorget are not completely ground smooth. Assuming this is a finished artifact, the important elements of the object did not include the smoothness or evenness of the surfaces. Rather, the roughly bilaterally symmetrical silhouette, the central hole, and the faint groove across each face were what made it complete.

Available Publications

Available Issues of Journal of Alabama Archaeology

Vol. 21-31, each issue (2 issues per volume)\$3.50 pp
 Vol. 32 & up, each issue (2 issue per volume)\$6.00 pp
 Vol. 40 (Dust Cave), special issue.....\$18.00 pp
 Vol. 44 (Alabama Ceramics), special issue\$18.00 pp

Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations

(Journal of Alabama Archaeology)

Vol. VIII Numbers 1 & 2 (reprint)\$7.50 pp

The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas Co, Alabama

Special Publication 2\$6.00 pp

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DEADLINE

to submit information for
 March/April 2007 issue of
 Stones and Bones is February 15, 2007

Membership

The form below may be used for any or all of the following: applying for membership, payment of annual membership dues, change of address, or donations. Please be sure to PRINT your name and address clearly, and check the appropriate boxes. All checks should be made payable to: Alabama Archaeological Society. Send the membership form and payment to: Alabama Archaeological Society • Archaeological Services • 13075 Moundville Archaeological Park • Moundville, AL 35474.

Alabama Archaeological Society Membership Form

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**STONES & BONES
NEWSLETTER**

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