

# Alabama Archaeological Society

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## STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

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### ⌘ A.A.S. Summer Meeting ⌘

The Alabama Archaeological Society's summer meeting will be held Saturday, July 9, 1994, at Dust Cave near Florence, Alabama. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the University of Alabama/A.A.S. fieldschool. This is the third year in a row the meeting will be held at Dust Cave.

There is no admission charge to attend the summer meeting. The site of the meeting is not accessible by private car, as it is located inside a locked gate and 1.5 miles off the paved road. If you would like to attend, meet at the south side of the Indian Mound in Florence before 8 a.m. on the day of the meeting. A van will ferry people to and from the site. A second run to the site will be made at 10 a.m. Return trips to the Indian Mound will be at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., or necessary.

### Board of Directors Meeting

The summer Board of Director's meeting will be held at noon on July 9th coinciding with the summer meeting at Dust Cave. Board members who cannot attend the entire day's events will be picked up at the Florence Mound Museum at 10 a.m. and returned at 2 p.m.

### In The Alabama Archaeological Society's Past

During the past 10 years we have seen an increased use of heavy mechanical equipment by archaeologists in the field. This equipment is used to cut away the plow zone; open up large areas for locating features such as storage pits, post holes and fire hearths; dig test pits; and whenever it is desired to move large quantities of dirt quickly.

As we recall, the early use of heavy equipment was justified for salvage archaeology where sites were imminently threatened by construction and/ or inundation by reservoir backwater. Time was of essence and as much information as possible had to be salvaged in a short time on the basis that the site would in any event be destroyed or seriously damaged - the implication being that the end justified the means. No doubt this enabled archaeologists to salvage a great deal of data that otherwise would be lost. However, at the same time this technique destroyed data that might have been salvaged. So, one wonders whether more data was saved than was lost, but we will really never know since we have no way to measure that which was lost.

In any case, the archaeologist is determining what data is of value and what is not. This has to occur within a limited perspective - that is, within the limitations of knowledge and experience of each individual archaeologist, which may have considerable variation. For example, an archaeologist determines (regardless of the reasons) that the plow zone of a given site has little or no value; therefore, a grader is used to remove the plow zone over several acres. This determination is based and justified on the limited perspective of a given archaeologist at a given time. Is this being short-sighted? How can we make an absolute determination of values today that will apply to the future? We cannot know what the value of a plow zone and the information contained therein may be to the archaeologist of tomorrow. What may be of little value today may be of great value tomorrow, and we all know the old cliché - "once it's dug, a page of history is torn out".

This leads us to the question - and the thrust of this article - have archaeologists eased into a frame of mind that heavy equipment is justified for field archaeology without the "imminent threat" being a factor? We don't know positively if this is the case, but we raise the possibility that it is occurring without conscious effort. We offer this hypothesis, and a little amateur psychology, as to how this could happen - we all become conditioned and consequently comfortable with the tools / techniques we use in our given occupation over a period of time and may lose sight of the premise that some tools are intended for only limited use. Whatever "works" best for us we tend to continue to use. However, maybe on the other hand some archaeologists are consciously using heavy equipment purely as a "time saver", which may result in a lower successful bid. This could be more important to the many private "consultant" archaeological businesses that have mushroomed in recent times.

If it is purely a "time saver", is this a form of destruction cloaked in the wraps of legitimate archaeology? If it is the "creeping frame of mind" condition, should archaeologists back off and take an objective look at themselves and this technique?

Honestly, we don't know! But we do think the profession needs to open up this question, discuss within the professional societies the pros and cons, decide the merits and establish guidelines on the use of heavy equipment before it becomes an accepted practice for "all" field archaeology. Our "gut" feel is that all artifacts and all data from a site are important and should be treated accordingly. (Taken from June 1980 *Stones and Bones*)

*\*Editors Note- It has been 14 years since this article was written. Stones & Bones is interested in your views on the use of heavy equipment on archaeological sites today. Whether you are a professional archaeologist or amateur, let us hear from you.*

### **New Publications**

***Women in Archaeology***, edited by Cheryl Classen; 272pp, 34 illustrations, Paper, ISBN 0-8122-1509-5, \$ 16.95; also available in cloth, ISBN 0-8122-3277-1, \$ 36.95.

University of Pennsylvania Press. This work documents and discusses attempts at the exclusion of women from archaeology and the resulting androcentrism of archaeological knowledge. The first part examines the lives and work of 41 women who have made important contributions to archaeology during the twentieth century. The second part analyzes the current status of female archaeologists in the academy, in the contract businesses, and in museums and other nonprofit organizations. Whatever the reason for

the exclusion of women in archaeology, the result has created a bias in archaeological knowledge.

## **Chapter News**

### ***Dothan Chapter....***

The Dothan Chapter will hold its Second Annual Artifact Identification Day on Sunday June 5, 1994, at Landmark Park. For more information contact Greg Creel at 205-677-1228. The next meeting will be held May 29, 1994 at the Landmark Park picnic area. The public is invited to attend.

*Greg Creel*

### ***Muscle Shoals Chapter....***

The Muscle Shoals Chapter held its March meeting on March 14, 1994, at the Indian Mound Museum in Florence. Bart Henson of Huntsville brought the chapter an interesting update on Rock Art in Alabama. After having given us a similar program two years ago, Bart showed us slides of petroglyph and pictograph sites that he had recently visited. Thirty-two members and guests attended.

On April 11, 1994 Charles Moore presented a program on projectile point identification. He showed slides on about 55 different point types, most of which are in the Alabama Point Type book (Cambron and Hulse). Thirty members and guests were in attendance.

Dr. Joe Copeland of Florence provided our May program on the ninth of the month. His program was entitled "Mounds of the upper Mississippi Valley". He showed slides of Mississippian and Woodland mounds that are located as far north as Wisconsin. He also showed slides of the Catlinite pipestone quarry in Minnesota. Twenty-eight members and guests attended.

The June meeting will be a picnic at the Indian Mound Museum on June 13, 1994. Members are asked to bring covered dishes, deserts, etc., and the chapter will furnish hamburgers. We hope to have the crew from the nearby Dust Cave excavations as guests of the chapter. Dust Cave excavations will be discussed, and plans will be made for the summer meeting, which will also be held at Dust Cave.

*Charles Moore*

### ***Huntsville Chapter....***

The Huntsville Chapter held its last meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 1994. Melissa Lehman, First Vice President of the Huntsville Chapter was the speaker. The topic of her presentation was "Tribal Traditions In Determining the Origin and Separation of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians of the Southeast." This presentation reviews tribal origin myths and oral traditions to determine if these can be used to support archaeological and historical data concerning tribal origins.

Melissa holds an undergraduate degree in anthropology and a master's degree in public archaeology, both from Memphis State. She served as Curator of Education at Chucalissa, near Memphis, before moving to Alabama.

*D.P. Luke*

### ***East Alabama Chapter...***

Our program on May 10, 1994 was the first of a two-part series on flintknapping techniques. Following a brief introduction by Gary Mullen, President of our local chapter, a portion of the two-hour videotape entitled "The Art of Flintknapping" was shown featuring D.C. Waldorf. Filmed by his wife Valerie, this videotape will be shown at our next meeting on June 14.

Eighteen members and guests of our chapter attended the "Southeastern Mound Builders Day" at Florence Marina State Park, Stewart County, Georgia, on April 23. Slide talks were presented on four Indian mound sites in Georgia and West Florida by the following individuals: John Bundy (Ocmulgee Mounds), Sandy Madson (Lake Jackson Mounds), Billy Adams (Kolomoki Mounds) and Frank Schnell (Singer-Moye Mounds). A number of archaeological exhibits and artifacts relating to the Florence area were on display for visitors where the talks were given. Following the presentation, Frank Schnell of the Columbus Museum led a group of approximately forty people on a walking tour of the nearby Rood Creek Indian Mounds. Having participated in the excavations at this site, Mr. Schnell provided a very interesting and informative account of what has been learned about this important Mississippian site and the efforts which have been made to preserve it.

On May 14th, eleven members of our chapter travelled to Dallas County to the site of Alabama's first state capital to attend the 15th annual "Old Cahawba Festival." Plans for this trip were made back in January after Linda Derry, Project Manager and Archaeologist for Old Cahawba, presented an excellent program on this site at our meeting that month.

While members of our chapter were at Old Cahawba, other members of our chapter were participating that same day in a tour of several archaeological sites of interest in Stewart County, Georgia, and Russell County, Alabama. As part of the Spring meeting of the Society's for Georgia Archaeology, the tour was scheduled to coincide with the celebration of "Georgia Archaeology Awareness Week." The itinerary included visits to the Rood Creek Indian Mounds, the old town of Florence, GA (c. 1837), the site of the historic Creek village known as Yuchi Town, and Fort Mitchell (c. 1814).

The East Alabama Chapter meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Alabama Power Company auditorium 230 North Gay Street, Auburn. Visitors are always welcome.

*Gary R. Mullen*

### ***Troy State Chapter...***

The Troy State University Chapter held its last meeting of the 1993-94 school year on May 19th. New officers were elected in preparation for the oncoming year. They are

as follows: President- Natalie Maddox, Vice-President - Sharon Baggett, Secretary - Gregg Dickey, and Treasurer - Tina McCall.

The Chapter T-shirts were also discussed. They are navy in color with illustrations of regional projectile points on the back and a mammoth on the front pocket. They will be on sale in the archaeology lab for \$13.00. We encourage all members to purchase a t-shirt.

To conclude the meeting's business everyone enjoyed pizza and refreshments. The newly elected officers were congratulated on their good fortune and the rest of the meeting was carried out in a relaxed social atmosphere.

We would like to thank this years officers for the job that they have done and wish the new officers a very eventful and educational, new year. In the meantime we hope everyone enjoys the summer break.

*Clay Helms*

### ***Birmingham Chapter...***

The Birmingham Chapter held its last meeting on May 12th when new officers were elected. The new officers are as follows: President - Steven Meredith, Vice-President - Mike Anders, Secretary - Helen Mabry. The Birmingham chapter meets the second Thursday of every month at 7 P.M. at Alabama Outdoors on Highway 31. For more information call Steven Meredith at 205-664-2739.

*Steven Meredith*

## **The Calendar**

**Alabama Museum of Natural History - Museum Expedition #16.** This year the Alabama Museum of Natural History will be collecting Dinosaur Age fossils in Greene County, Alabama, near Eutaw, camping near the fossil sites in our "tent city".

The Museum's Expedition will begin on Sunday, June 19, and extend through Saturday, July 16. The camp is broken into four one-week sessions, beginning on the Sunday of each week and ending on the following Saturday. During this time you will be full participating members of our research team.

This program provides an excellent opportunity for high school students to develop projects for both science fairs and science paper reading contests.

Individual contributions to the program are \$175 per week for members of the Alabama Natural History Society, \$200 for nonmembers. Food, tents and scientific equipment are provided. All you need to bring are a bedroll and personal items.

For further information about Summer Expedition #16 please write or call:

Alabama Museum of Natural History  
The University of Alabama  
Box 870340  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0340  
(205)348-9473

**Nov. 9 - 12 Southeastern Archaeological Conference / Midwest Archaeological Conference, Annual Meeting.** This year the Southeastern Archaeological Conference and the Midwest Archaeological Conference will hold a joint meeting, November 9-12, 1994, at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Lexington, KY. A keynote address will be given by Dr. Alison Wylie. This joint meeting is an exciting opportunity for archaeologists working in the Southeast and Midwest to exchange information and ideas. The local arrangements chair is Mary Lucas Powell. The program co-chairs for SEAC are John Scarry and Margaret Scarry. The program chair for MAC is Richard Jeffries. Contact SEAC/MAC Committee, 101 American Bldg, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0100. Phone: 606/257-1944. FAX: 606/323-1968.

**Nov.9-12 Southeastern Archaeological Conference/Midwest Archaeological Conference, Annual Meeting, Lexington, KY.** Deadline for abstracts: August 1, 1994. Contact SEAC/MAC Committee (Richard Jeffries, John Scarry, Margaret Scarry), 101 American BLDG, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0100. Phone: 606/257-1944. FAX: 606/323-1968.

## Publications Available

Available issues of *Journal of Alabama Archaeology* .....\$3.50pp  
 Vol. 20-31, each issue.....\$6.00pp  
 Vol. 32& up, each issue.....\$7.50pp  
*Standfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archaeology)*  
 Vol.VIII Nos. 1&2- Reprint.....\$6.00pp  
 Special Publication 2- *The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas*  
 County Alabama.....\$8.00pp  
 Special Publication 3- *Achaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend*.....\$15.00pp  
*Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types*.....\$3.00pp  
 Lively, Long, Josselyn- *Pebble Tool Paper*.....\$10.00pp  
*Investigations in Russell Cave, published by the National Park Service*.....\$9.00pp  
*Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile)*.....\$9.00pp

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