

Alabama Archaeological Society

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STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER MEETING

19-20 JULY 1986

The summer meeting of the Alabama Archaeological Society will be at the Fusihatchee site on the Tallapoosa River about 10 miles east of Montgomery. This is the site of our 1985 meeting. The East Alabama Chapter is sponsoring the meeting. Baker Dean and John Cottier are coordinating the plans and full details will be in the July Stones & Bones. Remember we had a great time last year, so make your plans now for 19-20 July.

The Editors

HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD MEETING

The Alabama Archaeological Society Board of Directors held its initial meeting of 1986 in Birmingham on Wednesday, 7 May 1986. The following actions were taken:

1. Amended the proposed budget to place \$500 in the Scholarship Fund and \$500 in the Research Fund.
2. Established the Summer Meeting date as 19 and 20 July 1986, to continue the investigations of a multicomponent site in Elmore County, site of last summer meeting.
3. Accepted an invitation from Mound State Monument to have the Winter Meeting at Moundville in late November or early December.
4. Established a committee to recommend a computer system for Society administrative, financial, and newsletter preparation use. Committee report due at next Board meeting.
5. Named the Society's Research Fund in memory of Edward C. Mahan, in recognition of his contributions to archaeological research in Alabama.
6. Fayette Chapter's request for affiliation with the A.A.S. was unanimously approved.

June 1986

7. Established a membership billing date for fall, with membership dues payable before 31 December. Publications after that date to be sent only to members in a paid-up status.

8. Received the following reports:

a. The Erskine Ramsey Research Center at Moundville has been completed and is rated as one of the largest and finest of its type in the southeast.

b. Russell Cave artifacts removed from the state during early excavations and held in various repositories may be returned to Russell Cave for display.

c. Archaeological work at the Huntsville waterworks site has been delayed due to a "bureaucratic quagmire".

d. Handbook of Alabama Archaeology, Part I, has been reprinted.

e. Report on the advantages of a Society brochure for distribution in schools, historic sites, and to satisfy the numerous inquiries received through the mail.

The Editors

BOOK REVIEW

THE SOUTHERN INDIANS AND BENJAMIN HAWKINS 1796-1816. By Florette Henri. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma. 1986. 377 pages. \$25.

If a book can be overdocumented, this one is. The references are so extensive that where 15 or more are used for one paragraph, you are unable to relate the reference to a specific subject within the paragraph. The book is mostly a rehash of previously published works on the subject - both the Indians and Benjamin Hawkins. The title is a misnomer, as the vast majority of the material deals with only the Creek Indians. The author is unduly harsh in her treatment of Andrew Jackson and other colonial frontiersmen - some of it undocumented. This author, like other Hawkins historians, gives virtually no space (one or two paragraphs) to Hawkins' common-law marriage of some 15 years and his six illegitimate children. This significant part of his life still remains a mystery, but his biographers continue to avoid this fact of his life. For those who have never read of the Creek Indians nor Benjamin Hawkins, this would be a good start.

The Editors

CHAPTER NEWS

Birmingham Chapter

The Birmingham Chapter met on May 8 in the Red Mountain Museum Auditorium. Mr. A. B. Hooper from Albertville gave an excellent presentation entitled "Pebble Tools". Mr. Hooper, who has written a number of articles on these early artifacts, presented an historical overview of the discovery and analysis of pebble tools in Alabama. To enhance his description of their possible use in Indian technology, he circulated some typical examples of these tools among the audience.

Eloise Clark

Coosa Valley Chapter

The chapter participated in the Jacksonville State University excavation at Site 1 Ca 42 in the White Plains - Choccolocco Valley during the summer of 1985. In September, the chapter heard a report-slide presentation by Keith Little of Jacksonville State University, who was field supervisor on the Site 1 Ca 42 excavations. In October, Carey Oakley, Director of the Office of Archaeological Research at Moundville, spoke on the excavations of 19th century military structures in northern Alabama. The November program on cultural anthropology of Central America was presented by Dr. James Sewastynowicz of Jacksonville State University.

The January meeting was a discussion by Dr. Harry O. Holstein of Jacksonville State University on Coosa Valley archaeology and the plans for a stone mound excavation at Morgan Mountain in the Choccolocco Valley during the spring and summer of 1986. Dr. Phillip E. Koerper, a Jacksonville State University History Professor, presented a lecture-slide program on Mesa Verde culture at the February meeting. At the March meeting, David Muncher of the Florida Research and Conservation Laboratory presented a slide-exhibit-lecture on the underwater archaeology of 16th and 17th century Spanish galleons. Twenty-five members of the Coosa Valley - JSU Club visited the Russell Cave Indian Culture Day on April 19. Patsy Hanvey, a chapter member, provided an exhibit on authentic Indian pottery making. Members of the chapter did a field survey in the Paint Rock Creek area on the way home from Russell Cave.

Chapter officers are: Dr. Phillip E. Koerper, President; Dr. Leon Willman, Vice President; Mary Johnson, Secretary; and Jane Cato, Treasurer. The chapter normally meets on the last Thursday night of each month (September to April) at Brewer Hall on Jacksonville State University campus.

Phillip E. Koerper

Cullman Chapter

The chapter program for April was a discussion-type workshop on map reading. Van King had topo maps and led the discussion on how to map sites. At the March meeting, Howard King spoke on the importance of labeling artifacts according to the sites where they were found.

The May 19 program featured Mr. Charles Moore, who presented "The Distribution and Use of Early Indian Artifacts". Charles had several examples of early man's tools and projectiles for members to examine.

Howard King

Huntsville Chapter

The Huntsville Chapter meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the United Way office on Traylor Island. For information on programs and other chapter activities, call Program Chairman Houston Wright at 881-2485.

The speaker for the May 20 meeting is scheduled to be Mr. Gordon Bell of the Red Mountain Museum in Birmingham. Mr. Bell will make a slide-illustrated presentation on ice age (Pleistocene) fossil findings, such as the recent Cave Sink discovery of extinct ground sloth remains.

Houston Wright

Muscle Shoals Chapter

The Muscle Shoals Chapter held its March meeting on the 10th at the Indian Mound Museum in Florence. Twenty-two members and guests attended the meeting.

Bart Henson of Huntsville gave an interesting slide narration on Indian Rock Art. This program was an update on some of his more recent investigations and built upon some of his southeastern rock art papers. He showed a wide variety of Indian rock art from several parts of the country and contrasted that with some rock art that was somewhat speculative as to its origin.

The April meeting took place on the 14th, and Dr. Bill Strong, the Geology Department head at the University of North Alabama, showed slides on pre-Columbian Indian sites in Peru. Many of these sites were Inca village sites that had pretty well remained undisturbed until recently because they were located in high, isolated mountainous areas that had been reachable only by using the Indian bridges and difficult trails. Nineteen members and guests attended.

Charles Moore

Tuscaloosa Chapter

The April meeting of the Tuscaloosa Chapter was held on Monday, April 7 at the Tuscaloosa Public Library. The guest speaker was Carolyn Thomas, who talked about "Cliff Dwellings and Range Dwellings in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona".

The following officers were elected: President, Rick Messer; 1st Vice President, Jack Wilson; 2nd Vice President, Ed Brown; and Secretary-Treasurer, Joan King.

Joan M. King

A NEW WORLD POMPEII

Now the New World has its own Pompeii. For centuries the remains of a lost civilization lay in the shadow of the Arenal volcano in Costa Rica. About 10 years ago local inhabitants began finding artifacts - a pot shard here, a tool fragment there - as roads were cut through the ash-enriched terrain. Preliminary archaeological excavation followed, but not until the pick and shovel gave way to airborne remote sensing did researchers grasp the scope of their find: a hitherto undocumented people, unrelated to the great Maya and Aztec civilizations of Central America, all traces of whom vanished around the time of the Spanish conquest.

If the volcano buried the Arenal society, it protected the remains. In late 1984 and early 1985 Thomas Sever of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) flew over the area in a NASA aircraft and photographed it with infrared film, radar and lidar (light detection and ranging) gear. The resulting images of roadways radiating from a central graveyard were all that researchers, led by Payson Sheets of the University of Colorado, needed to plan their dig. After two seasons Sheets has excavated 62 sites, from houses to tombs to storage buildings, and concludes that a wandering people lived around Arenal as early as 10,000 B.C., finally settling permanently on the nearby lake shore around 2,000 B.C.

Unlike better known Amerindian civilizations, the people of Arenal apparently did not engage in trade, exploiting only local resources. They also kept their population small and their economy simple: they raised corn and beans. Arenal has erupted 10 times in the last 4,000 years, devastating the surrounding jungle but simultaneously fertilizing the area with ash. After an eruption the people would move 15 or so miles away, then return once crops began to grow again. This resiliency was probably a direct result of Arenal's simplicity: a small society in balance with the tropical ecology could bounce back more easily than could a civilization as complex as the Maya. In the end it was likely an epidemic, not an eruption, that doomed the people of Arenal at about the time of the conquistadors.

(From an article by Sharon Begley with Susan Katz in Newsweek - January 6, 1986)

The Editors

POSSIBLE ANCIENT CIVILIZATION UNCOVERED BY NASA TECHNOLOGY

Using remote sensing technology, NASA's National Space Technology Laboratories (NSTL) and the University of Colorado at Boulder, 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 five-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 Whitacker, 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 underway 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 civilization". 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".

(From an article in "NASA Activities", January 1986)

The Editors

ANOTHER SOCIETY MEMBER RECEIVES HONOR

Cobb Institute of Archaeology of Mississippi State University has notified Linda D. Marshall that she is one of two students selected to receive an Undergraduate Research Assistantship for the academic year 1986-1987. The award is renewable for up to four years by maintenance of a B average and satisfactory work performance. Her duties will include work with the faculty on research and museum projects. Linda is a senior at Butler High School, where she is a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Math Honorary, French Club, and Latin Club. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George L.

Marshall, Jr., of Huntsville. She plans to major in Anthropology/Archaeology with emphasis on Near Eastern Archaeology.

The Editors

HERITAGE HIDDEN

Are the bullets, buttons, and other artifacts which souvenir hunters pick up on America's historic battlefields "archaeological antiquities"? According to a recently passed law, they are, and their collection is illegal on federal land. The law defines "antiquities" clearly and makes enforcing their protection easier.

The National Park Service, an agency of the United States Department of the Interior, recently secured one-year jail terms for two alleged "antiquity thieves", prosecuted under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. They had used modern metal detectors to pinpoint metal souvenirs on the grounds of the Battle of Richmond National Battlefield Park. Raiders digging at the Custer Battlefield National Monument are also targets, which forced the Park Service to limit access of even qualified archaeologists.

Many believe that, as American citizens, they have a right to anything abandoned, including even bones, which they find that is of interest or value to them. Selling uniform buttons, buckles, harness hardware and similar items to collectors can be lucrative.

However, Park Service spokesman Duncan Morrow, reflecting not only his agency's but that of the academic community's view, said: "We're trying to protect the common heritage of all Americans, something that should not be ripped off for private profit".

Is leaving these artifacts beneath the soil where no one can enjoy or learn from them preserving a common heritage or just saving research opportunities for graduate students? If the Park Service should hire or give permits to archaeologists and historians to survey, uncover, exhibit and describe the evidence of this heritage in places and ways easily accessible to the general public, this justification would be more acceptable.

(Article in "Huntsville News", July 8, 1985)

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
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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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