

# Alabama Archaeological Society

Associate Editor  
H. Blaine Ensor



NADB DOC # - 4,858,510

Editor  
Dorothy Prince Luke  
P.O. Box 4802  
Huntsville, AL 35815-4802  
(205) 880-2825

Volume 34

Number 3

## A.A.S. COMMENTARY

Editor's Note: The following letter is the first in our new column "A.A.S. Commentary", which was announced in the February 1992 STONES & BONES. This column is intended to be a forum for our members: a place to express a viewpoint or opinion concerning archaeology and historic preservation in Alabama.

In common with other entries to the STONES & BONES, deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month, for publication in the following month's issue; and the Newsletter staff reserve the right to edit or abstract submissions in order to save space.

---

### Modern Manufacture of Stone Artifacts: A Source of Knowledge and Concern for Avocational and Professional Archaeologists

Back in the good old days only a handful of professional and avocational archaeologists alike concerned themselves with understanding how Indian projectile points and other tools were made and used by trying to replicate various stone artifacts. In fact, avocationalists such as Don Crabtree and Dan Josselyn pioneered such studies at a time when most professionals understood very little about such matters. These early experimenters concentrated on understanding the aboriginal technology they were trying to reproduce so they could better understand the archaeological record.

Since then, North America has seen a virtual explosion, both in number and kind, of people who practice stone artifact manufacture. The interest spurred by the beginners in stone working technology in the 1960's caught fire and had created by the 1980's a wide variety of practitioners of chipped and ground stone technology. Nowadays many professional archaeologists conduct rigorously controlled stone artifact replications and experiments designed to allow better understanding of specific aboriginal technological practices. Many avocationalists also conduct such experiments and have made valuable contributions to archaeology in doing so.

March 1992

Unfortunately, I perceive another, somewhat dimmer, side of this matter, as I have witnessed the seemingly innocent manufacture of projectile points and other artifacts by the lay person grow exponentially to the point that it has become a source of concern for archaeology. A wide range of people make points these days - from those concerned with monetary profit to those who just knap for personal satisfaction. My primary concern is for the buying, selling and trading of unmarked modern artifacts which could be mistaken for the real thing as well as for people trying to pass them off as fakes or authentic. Of course, the issue of buying, selling, and trading authentic artifacts has long contributed to the mixing of local collections, but that is another topic in itself.

In my view, this has created a dangerous situation which potentially may cause irreversible erosion of the archaeological data base; i.e., private surface collections. Gone are the days when a professional or avocational could pretty much assume that a private collection was authentic and representative of a particular region or area within a state. While there has always been a need for caution when using surface collections as a data base, I feel that if the present situation continues, only museum collections and those of which one has personal knowledge will qualify as potential research collections.

The situation is serious and demands, in my view, immediate attention by avocationalists, professionals, and all knappers alike. While by no means suggesting that flintknapping should stop, I do feel that its potential effects on the archaeological data base should receive careful evaluation, discussion and commentary to identify possible solutions. One obvious way of assuring that modern artifacts are not mistaken for aboriginal would be to indelibly mark each such that to remove the mark would mean damaging the artifact: rendering it useless for sale, barter, or "aging" to make it "look old."

One need only briefly examine the literature concerned with lithic technology to appreciate the important role of dedicated avocationalists and professionals to the scientific study of aboriginal technology. My hope is that the valuable contributions to science represented in their work is continued by the current generation of knappers. At the same time, aboriginal artifacts are of extreme interest and reverence to many people, including native American survivors, not only for their scientific value, but for their beauty, aesthetic appeal, religious and other qualities. To enjoy flint knapping and to produce works of art and interest so that others may appreciate the skills of native Americans is commendable. My concern is for the integrity of the archaeological data base.

I am interested in hearing views on this topic from the membership, not only regarding modern stone artifact manufacture but on others which are of modern manufacture.

H. Blaine Ensor  
Huntsville

#### MID-SOUTH ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

The 13th Mid-South Archaeological Conference will be held Saturday, May 23 and possibly continue on Sunday, March 24. It will be sponsored by the Archaeology Division of The University of Alabama, Museum of Natural History, and will be held at Moundville Archaeological Park (formerly Mound State Monument).

This year's topic is Historic Native Americans in the Mid-South: Archaeology of the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks and Cherokees. We want to focus on the 17th and 18th centuries. The proceedings will be published.

If you are interested in presenting a paper, or wish further information on the Conference, contact Eugene M. Futato; Division of Archaeology; 1 Moundville Archaeological Park; Moundville, AL 35474.

Eugene M. Futato  
Moundville

#### RUSSELL CAVE - INDIAN DAY

The seventh annual Indian Day will be held at Russell Cave National Monument near Bridgeport, Alabama on Saturday, April 18, 1992, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The theme will focus on the lifeway of the prehistoric cultures and periods in the Tennessee River Valley and Russell Cave. We are expecting a great event, so plan to bring all your friends and relatives. There is no admission charge.

We are looking for volunteers for the event to assist the staff, park cars, and help the exhibitors. We will also consider programs and exhibitors appropriate for inclusion in the event. Please let us know your interest and sign up as soon as possible.

Experts on prehistoric activities are invited to share their skills. These include: buckskin tanning, flintknapping, blowgun making and use, pottery making, carving of wooden pottery stamping tools, basketmaking and atlatl use. Archaeological programs are to be scheduled. Other activities planned include weaving, Indian Education programs, storytelling, herbal use and native plants.

For further information about Indian Day activities, please call 205/495-2672, or write to Russell Cave National Monument; Route 1, Box 175; Bridgeport, AL 35740.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Regina Horne - Anniston, Alabama

Mr. & Mrs. William H. Washington, Jr. - Decatur, Alabama

#### PREHISTORIC LIFEWAYS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

The University of Alabama in Huntsville, Division of Continuing Education, will again offer a course on the prehistory of the Tennessee Valley in north Alabama during the spring quarter. The format of the course has been changed somewhat to allow hands-on experience with artifact types produced by the prehistoric inhabitants of the valley.

The course begins on Thursday evening, April 9 and runs through May 28. Class will meet at 6 p.m. in Spragins Hall on the UAH campus. For further information consult the university at 205/895-6010, or come by the business office, located in the Science Building, Room 124 on campus. Those persons living outside the Huntsville area may register by calling 1-800/448-4031 between 8:30-noon, and 1-5 p.m. weekdays.

H. Blaine Ensor  
Huntsville

#### CHAPTER NEWS

##### Huntsville Chapter

The chapter met on February 25 to hear Mr. Evan Peacock of Pan American Consultants of Tuscaloosa speak on recent field work he directed at an aboriginal Mississippian-period site on the Cumberland River in Nashville.

Dr. Jim Knight, anthropology professor at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, will speak to the Huntsville Chapter on March 24. Dr. Knight will bring the chapter up to date on recent field research at Moundville, where 14 structures have been unearthed as well as numerous artifacts and other features.

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.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Two important works in the Columbus Quincentenary Series have been released recently by the University Press of Florida.

MISSIONS TO THE CALUSA, ed. and translated by John H. Hann, with an introduction by William H. Marquardt.

This work provides missing information on the ethnography of the Calusa, a society that inhabited the area of Florida now known as Charlotte, Lee, and Collier Counties. The compilation of historical documents that make up this book includes many reports never before translated into English, including letters from Pedro Menendez, reports from governors, bishops, soldiers and King Charles III, and eyewitness testimony from priests and laypersons about mission efforts from the 16th through the 18th centuries. Hann traces Spanish contact with the Calusa from the early 17th century, focusing particularly on the ill-fated Franciscan attempt in 1697 to convert the Calusa to Christianity.

Five hundred sixty pages, 6x9. Notes, bibliography, index, map. ISBN 0-8130-1075 Cloth, \$49.95.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE FRANCISCAN FRONTIER: ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE FIG SPRINGS MISSION, by Brent Richard Weisman.

While many mission sites have been excavated in the colonial capital of St. Augustine and in the populous Apalachee Province near present-day Tallahassee, few detailed excavations have been carried out in the Indian province of Tumucua, an early setting for the Franciscan effort to bring Christianity to Florida's native peoples. Still fewer excavations have concentrated on the village areas of the mission community.

The dig at Fig Springs has revealed remarkably intact remains of several mission buildings as well as thousands of artifacts in and around the buildings found as they were left when the mission was abandoned in the mid 17th century. Most important, Weisman shows, the artifacts, architecture and community plan from this site demonstrate how mission culture evolved well beyond the religious dimension and combined traits of both European and aboriginal cultures.

Two hundred seventy-two pages, 6x9. Black-and-white photographs, figures, tables, references, index, appendices. ISBN 0-8130-1119-1 Cloth, \$29.95.

The above books are available from University Press of Florida; 15 NW 15th Street; Gainesville, FL 32611. Add \$3 for first book and \$.50 for each additional book for shipping and handling.

## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of *Journal of Alabama Archaeology*

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

CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO: **ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

SEND CHECKS TO: Journal Editor, A.A.S.  
Division of Archaeology  
1 Mound State Monument; Moundville, AL 35474

## MEMBERSHIP

The coupon below may be used EITHER to APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP in the Society, or for the PAYMENT OF ANNUAL DUES. Please be sure that your name and address are CLEARLY entered, and that appropriate boxes are checked.

TO: **THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**, for

☐ NEW MEMBERSHIP   ☐ PAYMENT OF ANNUAL DUES   ☐ REPORTING OF NEW ADDRESS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:  
TREASURER, A.A.S.  
DIVISION OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
1 MOUND STATE MONUMENT  
MOUNDVILLE, AL 35474

(Residents of Foreign Countries, including Canada & Mexico \$2.00 additional for Regular, Associate or Institutional Membership, \$20.00 additional for Individual Life and \$25.00 additional for Joint Life Membership)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life (Individual) .....\$180.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Joint Life (husband & wife) .....\$250.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Annual (Individual) .....\$9.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Annual, Family (husband, wife<br>and children under age 18) .....\$12.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Associate (Students under age 18) .....\$7.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (Individual) .....\$15.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (husband & wife) .....\$20.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Annual (Institutional) .....\$13.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> *Steven B. Wimberley Scholarship Fund .....\$ _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> *Edward C. Mahan Research Fund .....\$ _____<br>*Contributions are Tax Deductible |
|---|--|

## Alabama Archaeological Society

Dorothy Prince Luke  
P.O. Box 4802  
Huntsville, AL 35815-4802



Non Profit Org.  
**U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 197  
HUNTSVILLE, ALA.

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**