

Alabama Archaeological Society

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STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

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1980 SUMMER MEETING

There was something for everyone at the 1980 Summer Meeting at Fort Tombekbe; Epes, Alabama; July 19 and 20. Participants in the meeting - society members and others interested in archaeology - dug, screened for artifacts, and bagged "finds" by square number for later study and cataloguing. Many members took advantage of the opportunity to photograph a dig in progress.

Archaeologists Jim Parker (project supervisor) and Roy Blair supervised the two-day "dig", giving instruction to those interested in working on the site and information to the merely curious. Thanks to extensive publicity on the meeting, "sidewalk superintendents" and workers arrived from as far as 150 miles away to inspect an on-going archaeological excavation.

A team of students from Livingston University, led by archaeologists Parker and Blair, had been working at the site, an 18th century European fort, for just over a month by the time of the A.A.S. meeting. Much of what they uncovered was visible: a Spanish stone oven, part of the Spanish earthworks. Items found during the Society's two-day part of the dig included earthenware (European) sherds, gun flints, minie balls and trade beads.

A barbeque at the Epes Community Center concluded Saturday's activities. Speaker at the barbeque was Dr. Chris Peebles, who holds a dual appointment to the University of Alabama and the University of Michigan and is Curator of the Museum for Great Lakes Archaeology at the University of Michigan. Dr. Peebles spoke of the archaeology and history of the Tombigbee and surrounding area. An interesting point made by Dr. Peebles was that in the 18th century Indians were considered poor slaves; they tended to escape. Many Indians were shipped to the West Indies, where they were traded three to two for Black slaves. According to Dr. Peebles, documents supporting this theory have been generally available, but their importance has not been recognized.

Several hardy souls, anxious to get in as much experience in the field as possible despite the 100° weather, returned to the site on Sunday for another day's work.

The A.A.S. is most grateful to Livingston University for their support of our meeting, and to the people of Epes and Livingston for their interest and hospitality.

The Editors

August 1980

ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S SUMMER MEETING FORT TOMBEKBE



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Photographs 1-4: Typical views of water screening operations. Photos 5 & 6: Recovered artifacts. In Photo 5 are shown metal fragments, a nail, bone, and teeth. Photo 6 shows a glass bead, and superimposed, a gun flint and lead rifle ball.

FORT TOMBEKBE

Jay Higginbotham of Mobile wrote to us pointing out that Fort Tombekbe was planned as early as 1702 and these plans were actually placed into execution but were thwarted by the party being murdered. Mr. Higginbotham is author of the outstanding work published under the title of "Old Mobile Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711", which is available from Rockwell Publications; P. O. Box 66607; Mobile, Alabama 36606 for \$25.00. This 585-page work is the most outstanding and thorough research done to date on this period of old Mobile. We highly recommend it.

The Editors

CHAPTER NEWS

Birmingham Chapter: The Birmingham Chapter meets the second Thursday of each month at the Red Mountain Museum. Call Tom Hutto for further information at 956-1895.

Cullman Chapter: For those of you who missed our June meeting, we had quite a time. We had 16 members to visit the Florence museum, the LeGrange Bluff Shelter, and the Dewitt Coleman Home. Here we would like to extend a special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Dewitt Coleman for their hospitality and for the good food. Thank you both! Our meeting for July was a film on New Mexico's Chaco Legacy.

Huntsville Chapter: Mr. Houston Wright presented a slide-illustrated talk on Celtic Migration.

The Celts were a war-like people originating in Germany about 1500 B.C.-500 B.C. These people conquered and occupied Italy, the Iberian peninsula and the British islands. Their language was at one time written in a primitive script called Ogam. Mr. Wright noted that there was increasing evidence of pre-Columbian contact with the Americas by an Ogam-writing people, and that he has seen monuments or altars in the southeastern U. S. which may possibly have a link to these Celtic people. Approximately 25 members and guests attended the meeting.

Muscle Shoals Chapter: The July meeting was held at the Indian Mound Museum in Florence. Al Beinlich led the study and discussion on stone knives of various kinds. The chapter examined numerous examples that Al and other members had brought. Charles Moore presented the program, which was a color slide narration entitled "Some Indian Sites in Southern Ohio". Paul Kittle also contributed to the presentation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE A.A.S. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Society President, Dorothy Luke, convened the Directors' meeting at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, July 19, 1980 in the Presidential Suite of Livingston University.

In addition to the routine business matters and reports treated by the Board, certain agenda items were covered which may be of particular interest to the members.

Dave DeJarnette, A.A.S. representative to the Alabama Historical Commission, presented a comprehensive report on the AHC's funding of archaeological research in Alabama. Projects and funding amounts included:

Historic Blakely Foundation	Survey and Development of Plan	\$ 38,000
Jefferson Davis Junior College	Site Survey, Test Excavations and Artifact Analysis, Tensas Country Frontier Military Complex	\$ 35,000
Livingston University	Testing and Evaluation of Fort Tombekbe	\$ 20,000
University of Alabama - Alabama Museum of Natural History	Protohistoric Research along the Warrior and Tombigbee Rivers	\$ 12,219
University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research	Renewal, Storage and Analysis of Artifacts at Moundville	\$ 35,000
Briarfield Furnace Area	Field Reconnaissance and Archaeological Research	\$ 2,000
TOTAL		\$142,219

Mr. Charles Moore, on behalf of the Florence Chapter, extended an invitation to the Society to hold the 1980 Winter Meeting in Florence. The Board accepted the Florence Chapter's invitation and established a tentative date of Saturday, November 22, 1980.

The Board authorized the Publications Committee to begin development of 35 mm slide programs on topics in Alabama archaeology. The slide programs will be designed for 30-45 minute duration and consist of a written narrative and a cassette tape. The initial programs will deal with an important archaeological site in north-west Alabama, the Stanfield Worley Bluff Shelter; Society Summer Digs; and Projectile Point Typology. The programs should be suitable for use by Society chapters, local schools, libraries, and historical and preservation societies. It is anticipated that the Society will make the programs generally available by loan, donation, or by purchase at production cost.

The Editors

NOTICE

The Publications Committee has begun the development of a number of slide programs and needs from the membership high-quality 35 mm slides for use in these programs. Slides from the Stanfield Worley Bluff Shelter and all Society summer digs are needed immediately. People with slides in these subject areas who can loan them for reproduction may send them to the Publications Committee Chairman. All slides will be returned to the owner unless specifically donated to the Society. All material sent should include the owner's name and address, plus

information identifying the slide's subject matter: date (especially the year), site location, principal subject of the slide and, if possible, the names of any individuals appearing in the slides, and other pertinent information.

The Publications Committee will immediately acknowledge, by mail, receipt of all slides and will return all slides within 90 days, a period necessary for editing, duplicating, etc. Slides donated to the Society will be acknowledged as a gift to the Society and placed in the Society archives.

Publications Committee Chairman is Mr. B. Bart Henson
7608 Teal Drive, S. W.
Huntsville, Alabama 35802

The Editors

NEW MEMBERS

Amenda, Ms. Mary B.	Individual	203 Fairwood Circle Ozark, Alabama 36360
Goodson, Ms. Ellis	Individual	2208 Briarcliff Drive, S. E. Huntsville, Alabama 35801
Harvell, Mr. Lewis D.	Individual	Route One, Box 30 Camden, Alabama 36726
Jackson, Ms. Dee Dee	Individual	1250 Belle Chene Drive Mobile, Alabama 36609
Jackson, Mr. Charles E., Jr.	Individual	1250 Belle Chene Drive Mobile, Alabama 36609
Riggins, Mr. Thomas E.	Individual	738 Wingard Street Prattville, Alabama 36067
Scarry, Mr. and Mrs. John	Family	3846 Bell Drive Tallahassee, Florida 32303
O'Shields, Mrs. Ramona J.	Individual	Route Two Section, Alabama 35771
Seckinger, Mr. Ernest, Jr.	Individual	Route Two, Box 440-G Daphne, Alabama 36526
Welch, Mr. Paul D.	Individual	University of Michigan, Museum of Anthropology Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

ANCIENT JAWS

Ancient animal jaw bones recovered from a burial pit on Redstone Arsenal in March have been identified as being from a bear and a deer. In tentative identification at the time the pit was excavated, archaeologists correctly identified the bear jaw but believed the other to be from an elk.

But a spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers' Mobile District said that closer examination has shown the jaw bone to have belonged to a large deer rather than an elk.

The bear and deer bones were found along with ornamental neck pendants, arrowheads and other artifacts in a spot where they had been buried by Indians hundreds of years ago, apparently in some sort of ceremony.

The ancient burial was found by archaeologists working for the Corps of Engineers to determine if there are important archaeological sites that might be damaged if Huntsville Spring Branch has to be rerouted because of DDT pollution in the streambed.

(From The Redstone Rocket [Huntsville, Alabama], May 28, 1980)

The Editors

THE GRAVE ROBBERS

An article in Newsweek June 23 and a review on NBC Evening News July 2 covered the wanton and widespread looting and virtual destruction of archaeological sites in the southwest U. S. The primary reason for this looting is the high price some artifacts are bringing on the market - pots going for as high as \$25,000 - one collection selling for \$750,000. It is sad and tragic that some people would destroy such valuable history and evidence of the past for the greed of money. Three Utah men were recently prosecuted under the new Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 for looting a site on the Tonto National Forest near Phoenix, Arizona, and were given prison sentences; but the problem here is the lack of personnel to patrol and protect these vast areas of the west - so prosecutions seem few and far between compared to the destruction taking place. Also another main problem is that much of the destruction is taking place on private land, where a site is leased from the landowner and then looted for its artifacts - which seems to be legal. It is even more alarming from the fact that the destruction has greatly accelerated in the past few years. We read accounts of just senseless defacing and destruction of petroglyphs; the destruction and mutilation of medicine rings and other ground features by droves of dune buggies and RVs in the far west; and other accounts that are almost unbelievable. This problem is not new or unique to the U. S. Tomb robbers go back to the Pharaohs of Egypt, where one has rarely been found that has not been plundered. The outlawed natives in South America loot and dig for a few artifacts to sell on the illegal market. It is very disillusioning to see and hear of all this destruction, and we are told that a great deal of pot hunting goes on right here in Alabama. We just hope that people engaged in such vandalism will pause and analyze what they are doing - they are depriving themselves and their children's children of invaluable information that can never be recovered or reconstructed.

The Editors

FIRST NAHAUTL-TO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

Nahautl is the language of the ancient Aztec empire. It has already been translated into German, French and Spanish, but has never been translated into English.

This lack of an English-Nahautl dictionary forces scholars to translate through another language to arrive at the English meaning of a Nahautl word, according to Franke Neumann, associate professor of religion at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Neumann decided to do something about it seven years ago and began assembling an English-Nahautl dictionary with his own funds.

Because of the immensity of the task, the professor considered using a computer for text editing. However, a lack of funds forced him to use an IBM 3032 only to format words and their meanings in batch mode into a dictionary-ready form.

If more money becomes available, Neumann plans to acquire a terminal and use it on-line with the school's other systems - a pair of IBM 370/158s. The system's text editing features would greatly speed entering words and making the necessary corrections, he said.

In spite of all the work he has put into the project to date, the professor finds that scholars in the field tend to turn up their noses when they hear about his endeavor. "There is this mystique about Nahautl, that nobody has any business fooling around with Nahautl in English, that it should be translated into other perfectly acceptable languages", he observed.

So far Neumann is still on the As, which makes him think the dictionary will become a lifetime project. When completed it will contain from 500 to 1,000 pages.

(From COMPUTERWORLD, May 19, 1980)

The Editors

WHAT'S SIGNIFICANT

A special bill was introduced in the House of Representatives last March to raise the allowable percentage from one percent to four percent for archaeological work for two projects in southwest Colorado. The justification is that "archaeologists have found uniquely significant resources with an unusually high density". The amount would be increased from \$2.5 million to \$10 million, but the "kicker" is that no additional funding is authorized. The Secretary of Interior is to use what he is already funded, which means that \$7.5 million would be taken away from other projects - some may be here in the southeast, and we are confident that many sites here are "uniquely significant".

The Editors

PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

Treasures from Jamestown, by J. Paul Hudson - Special Publication #7 of The Archaeological Society of Virginia. Order from the Treasurer, H. A. MacCord, Sr., at 562 Rossmore Road; Richmond, Virginia 23225. \$3.

The Editors

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of <i>Journal of Alabama Archaeology</i> Vol. 13-18	\$1.00 pp
Vol. 20-24 (\$2.50 to Members)	\$4.00 pp
<i>Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations</i> (Journal of Alabama Archaeology)	
Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint)	\$5.00 pp
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<i>Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part I, Point Types</i>	\$7.35 pp
<i>Lively, Long, Josselyn - Pebbles Too! Paper</i>	\$3.00 pp
<i>Investigations in Russell Cave</i> , published by the National Parks Service	\$5.00 pp

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MAIL CHECKS TO: **MR. EUGENE FUTATO, Office of Archaeological Research**
1 Mound State Monument, Moundville, Alabama 35474

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