

Alabama Archaeological Society

Stones & Bones

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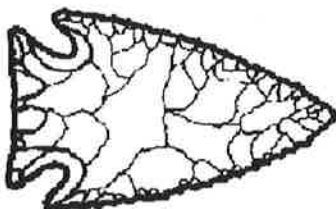
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1997 AAS Scholarship Recipients

The AAS would like to congratulate Ms. Judith L. Gillies and Ms. Garnet M. Garvin as recipients of the first Alabama Archaeological Society Scholarships. Both students will present a report on their research at the 1997 AAS Winter Meeting.

Ms. Gillies is a first year graduate student at the University of Alabama and will be conducting the first serious stylistic study of Moundville engraved art on pottery. Moundville is an archaeological site that displays several apparently different art styles, seen in various genres, such as carved stone, embossed copper, engraved shell gorgets and shell cups, modeled, painted, incised and engraved ceramics. The objective of this study is to define the art style exhibited by one of these genres, that of Moundville representational engraved ceramics. Pottery is the most common archaeological material upon which iconographic art is exhibited at that site (McKenzie 1964).

Ms. Garvin is a post-baccalaureate student at Troy State University who plans to continue her education as a graduate student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1998. She will

conduct an analysis of the artifact assemblage collected from 1Cv32, a Weeden Island / Mississippian mound site, in Covington County, Alabama during the 1950's by William H. Sears. During 1995 and 1996 Troy State University conducted Phase I and II testing of the site. Sears described 1Cv32 as "a major Weeden Island ceremonial center, the only Weeden Island site, of any brand, with a temple mound excepting Kolomoki" (Sears 1959).

Ms. Garvin's plans to catalog and analyze the Sears assemblage and compare it to the more recently collected Troy State assemblage. This work will provide a greater understanding of the temporal development of Weeden Island, emergent Mississippian, and terminal Mississippian society in the Alabama Coastal Plain.

Participate in an Archaeological Expedition

The Alabama Museum of Natural History invites you to join them on an archaeological adventure exploring Mississippi's past through their Summer Expedition Program. This year Expedition 19 will be in Natchez, Mississippi at the

Anna Site. This Mississippian Indian site contains a wealth of information and prehistoric artifacts which promise to be exciting and educational for those who attend.

The Anna Site is located in Adams County, Mississippi, north of the city of Natchez. At the time the site was occupied, between A.D. 1200 and 1500, it was one of the premier ceremonial sites in the Lower Mississippi Valley. The Plaquemine people, a group in the southeastern Mississippian culture, built the six flat-topped pyramidal mounds along the edge of a large level bluff, the largest mound towering about 50 feet above the valley. Situated on the edge of the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River floodplain, the site rises high above the surrounding terrain. When it was occupied, the inhabitants must have had a clear view of travelers ascending and descending the river.

Despite the importance of this site, our knowledge of its cultural development is meager; the only professional excavations ever undertaken at Anna were almost fifty years ago. In June of 1997, the Alabama Museum of Natural History's Expedition 19 team will collaborate with the Museum's Gulf Coast Survey in excavating the Anna Site for its 19th annual summer field camp. The research leaders will be Ian W. Brown, Director of the Alabama Museum of Natural History, and Richard S. Fuller, Archaeological Research Assistant at the museum. Brown Hawkins will be Expedition Leader and Rosa Newman will be Camp Director. The research will focus on reconstructing prehistoric settlement patterns. In order to understand the types of buildings the Indians constructed, researchers will open up two large blocks, one on top of the major mound and one in the flats below. The Expedition team will also excavate trash pits to determine what kinds of food these people ate and what sort of artifacts they left behind.

The Anna Site has been the scene of archaeological investigation over the years, but most of the work has consisted of short-term testing operations. Montroville Dickeson visited the site in 1843 and excavated several graves. Calvin Brown produced the first map of the site in 1917. Other

archaeologists worked there in 1924, in 1931, and in 1940. But it was not until 1948, with the work of John Cotter, now with the National Parks Service, that significant excavations were conducted at Anna. The Anna Site was again surveyed by Jeffrey P. Brain of the Peabody Museum in 1971, and has been visited many times in the years since.

The Expedition will begin on Sunday, June 15 and extend through Saturday, July 12. The program is broken into four one-week sessions, beginning on Sunday and ending the following Saturday. During this time campers will be full members of our research team. Participants receive instruction from professional archaeologists in excavation techniques, lab procedures, and artifact identification.

This program provides an excellent opportunity for high school students to develop projects for both science fairs and other science projects. With advance arrangements, students may also receive elective high school credit. Enrolling in the Expedition is an excellent way for teachers to earn University of Alabama Continuing Education Units for Professional Development hours, as well.

Individual contributions to the program are \$250 for non-members and \$225 for members of the Alabama Natural History Society. Food, tents, and scientific equipment are provided. You only need to bring a bedroll and personal items.

For further information about summer Expedition 19, please call (205) 348-0534 or write the address below. Hope to see you this summer!

W. Brown Hawkins, Jr.
Expedition #19 Leader
University of Alabama Museums
Box 870340
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0340

The Green Ax Exhibited at Moundville

Moundville Archaeological Park has on display one of the best-preserved archaeological finds ever to come out of the Black Warrior River.

"The Green Ax", from the Mississippian Indian stage 500 to 1,000 years ago, is a pristine example of a stone ax with a wooden handle. Subject to decay, few examples of wooden tools are found intact, but because of time spent in the river, the handle on this specimen was preserved in an undisturbed state. "The Green Ax" is currently on display at the Jones Archaeological Museum.

Moundville Archaeological Park, an internationally known National Historic Landmark on the banks of the Black Warrior River 15 miles south of Tuscaloosa, is a 320-acre park containing more than 20 prehistoric Indian mounds. Visitors can watch videos on Native American lifeways in the Jones Archaeological Museum theater, see displays of pottery and tools, take a stroll along a boardwalk nature trail, lunch in the picnic grounds or spend the night in a wooded campground. For more information call (205) 371-2234. (*Alabama Alumni Magazine, February/March 1997*).

What's Happening Around the State

Troy State University...

For the past eleven months the Troy State University Archaeological Research Center has conducted a search for water powered mills in south Alabama. The search has been concentrated in Pike, Covington, and Coffee counties. To date, 137 sites have been located. Several have been selected for special consideration. At least three sites have enormous potential for further

investigation, and are considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. (*Lee Harris, Research Historian*)

Call for Papers

The Sixteenth Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference will be held at the Hampton Inn at Pensacola, Florida October 9-11, 1997. Proposals for papers, panels, and roundtables should be submitted by May 20, 1997. Dr. Jerald T. Milanich of the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida will be the Keynote Speaker. Dr. Gregory A. Waselkov of the University of South Alabama will serve as Guest Editor of Conference Proceedings for *The Gulf Coast Historical Review*.

For more information, contact Daniel E. Miller at:
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Excavate in Alaska

The Afognak Native Corporation in Kodiak, Alaska invites you to participate in an Alaskan archaeological expedition during the 1997 field season. "Light the Past, Spark the Future, Dig Afognak" is a program begun by their corporation in 1993, seeking to regain, restore and renew interest in the Alutiiq culture by combining traditional knowledge with scientific research.

The Dig Afognak camp is located at the old Alaskan village of Katenai, near Litnik Bay, Afognak Island, 20 miles north of the city of Kodiak. The village of Katenai was inhabited as recently as the 1920's and has been the site of human occupation, including both Alutiiq and Russian, for at least the past 7,000 years. The camp

site is breathtaking in its beauty with both beaches and spruce forests.

There will be seven one week sessions from June 1 through August 23. Each session will focus on a particular area of research according to the expertise of the anthropologists present. For instance, Sessions 1 and 2 will feature Dr. Jeff Leer, Assistant Professor with the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. He holds both an MA and PhD in Linguistics and will be joining the Dig Afognak program in order to continue work on the Alutiiq place name project for Afognak Island. This represents a very rare opportunity for participants to share with local elders and to help accomplish this important oral history project. Other anthropologists will follow, focusing on specific areas of research such as archaeology, archaeobotany, tree ring dating, climate, and Native Peoples of Alaska and their relationship to other Native Americans.

For more information on participating in this program call toll free at 1-800-770-6041 or (907)486-6014. Fax: (907) 486-2514. E-mail: dig@afognak.com

William Hulse Sears

William H. Sears, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Florida Atlantic University, died December 20, 1996, at his home in Vero Beach, FL. Dr. Sears was 76.

Born on Long Island in 1920, Sears entered the University of Chicago in 1939 to study anthropology and archaeology. His tenure at Chicago was interrupted by service in the US Marine Corps in (1942-45). After the war, he returned to Chicago (MA 1947) and then moved his studies to the University of Michigan (PhD 1951). The summer of 1948 he and his wife Elsie went to Georgia to work on the Kolomoki site and began a 45-year commitment to the archaeology of the Southeast.

Sears was a lecturer at Hofstra College (1954-55) and joined the staff of the Florida State Museum (now Florida Museum of Natural

History) in 1955. In 1964 he was appointed chair of the Department of Anthropology at the newly formed Florida Atlantic University, where he stayed until his retirement.

Sears' work in Georgia and Florida was fundamental to the development of ceramic chronologies still used today. He was a strong believer in a practical scientific approach to archaeology and was an unapologetic cultural evolutionist and materialist. He began writing about political and religious systems in the 1950's and published "The Study of Social and Religious Systems in North American Archaeology" (*Current Anthropology*, 1961). His theoretical ideas were always influenced by economic factors, for he felt that a strong and calorically productive economic base was needed for the development of complex societies.

Sears' strong belief that corn was an essential base for the development of complex social systems in eastern North America led to his final major excavation project at the Ft. Center site in Florida, where it was shown that corn was an element in the diet of the population as early as 300 BC.

Perhaps the most interesting part of Sears' personality in the field and class is that he was always singing. Many of these songs were spontaneous in nature, grew in complexity through time but were never finished or written down. Obscure melodies from the Bahamas or the Pogo Christmas Carol were part of his repertoire, as were Protestant hymns.

Sears served as First Vice President of the Society for American Archaeology (1960-61), and was on the Executive Committee of the Florida Anthropological Society. He was awarded the Rice University Semcentennial Medallion for valuable contributions to the Symposium on Early Man in North America (1962), a special award for achievement from the Society for American Archaeology on its 50th anniversary and the Presidential Award from the Southeastern Archaeological Conference (1966). He conducted two NSF sponsored projects: A study of the social, political human adaptation in the Okeechobee basin.

After retirement Sears pursued his passion for fishing and was able to devote time to making fine furniture.

William Sears is survived by wife Elsie, daughters Nancy and Amy, sons Stephen and Michael and 5 grandchildren. (*Karl T. Steinen, Anthropology Newsletter/April 1997*)

Chapter News

Tuscaloosa Chapter...

Met Thursday March 27th at 7:00 pm in the conference room of the public library. The subject for this meeting was Indian artifacts from the Florida area. Cris Lewis was the speaker and had his display of artifacts from the Florida area.

Joby Stanford, past President of the Fayette Chapter, was the guest speaker for us on Thursday, April 24th. His presentation was on Indian artifacts found by himself and others from the Fayette area. Bill Adkinson also reported on the State Board of Directors meeting held in Birmingham. The next meeting is planned for Thursday, May 22, at 7:00pm in the conference room of the Tuscaloosa Public Library. (*Robby Hall, Chapter Secretary*)

Coosa Valley Chapter...

The Coosa Valley Chapter held it's monthly meeting on April 15, 1997, in Martin Hall (Room 233) on the Jacksonville State University campus at 7:30 pm. After several announcements by chapter president, Dr. Phil Koerper, the chapter agreed to hold club day meetings at the JSU field school excavation sites in May and June.

Dr. Harry O. Holstein presented a slide-lecture on Woodland Indian sites that have been identified and/or excavated by the JSU Archaeological Laboratory. These include the recreation fields in northern Anniston at the Blue Hole Site, now officially known as "Woodland Park." (*Ms. Brigitte Cole, Chapter Secretary*)

Donations !!

The AAS would like to extend our thanks to Mr. Ben Carpenter Jr. of Sheffield, AL who made donations to the Wimberly, Mahan, and Education funds and Mr. Lawrence D. Maples of Huntsville, AL who made donations to the Wimberly and Mahan funds. Thanks very much!! Your donations are greatly appreciated!!

New Members

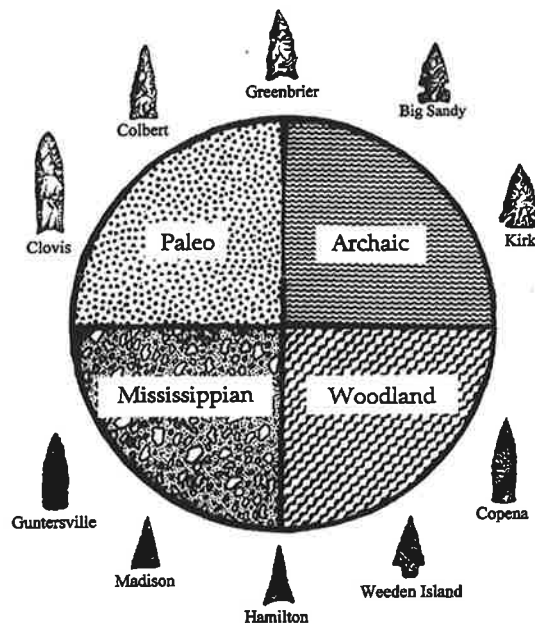
Ashley Dumas
Mobile, AL

Bill Fowler
Birmingham, AL

Alabama Archaeological Society T-Shirts!!

The AAS now has T-shirts in your choice of navy blue or hunter green with beige lettering. Each shirt is \$15.00 which includes shipping and handling. It has the design featured below on the back with "Alabama Archaeological Society" on the front pocket. If you are interested in purchasing a shirt please return this order form along with your check or money order to:

**Troy State University
Archaeological Research Center
40 Eldridge Hall
Troy, AL 36082**



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