

# Alabama Archaeological Society

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## STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

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MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

### PALEO INDIAN AND THE PLEISTOCENE OF ALABAMA

As most of you are aware from previous reports in the newsletter, a survey of Paleo Indian deposits, extinct animal remains and Pleistocene environments has been under way in Alabama for the past ten months. This work has focused on the lower half of the state with sojourns into the northern half. In a nutshell, we have recently learned where to look for the remains of the animals, humans and plants and are putting the knowledge to good use. The results are that we now know more about the late Pleistocene - early Holocene in Alabama than ever before. Now the next problem is how to disseminate the rather abundant information. To solve this problem we are preparing a manuscript for publication and making plans for a film and museum display. Certainly there is no way to transcribe all the information in this brief article. The most recent developments can, however, be mentioned.

A symposium on early man in the Southeastern United States was recently held in Tuscaloosa. Researchers from throughout the eastern United States met to attempt to unify early man studies. Interest in the Alabama project was intense.

Several C-14 dates have been received. Among them are the first dates on extinct bison (*Bison antiquus*) and extinct sloth (*Paramylodon*). Both animal bones and dates were obtained during the project. The date on the sloth was 40,000 B.P.; the date on the bison, 9,700 B.P. Both animal skeletons were found in "Blue-Grey" deposits recently discovered. The dates mean that at least three terraces are present and that now extinct animals roamed Alabama at the same time early man did.

Pollen scientists spent several days with me in the field collecting samples from the bone-bearing terrace deposits. They were thoroughly pleased and surprised by the exposures they visited. Results should do much to reveal late Pleistocene conditions in the state.

The human skull fragment discovered in late Pleistocene-early Holocene deposits during the project is now under Fluorine analysis for a relative age determination.

April 1977

As an offshoot of the project, the ill-defined Middle Archaic in the coastal plain is becoming more clearly understood. It appears that a rather extensive transport of Tallahatta Quartzite existed.

Newspaper and radio coverage of the project have resulted in intensified public and professional interest in the work. Much time has been spent just answering letters and phone calls inquiring about the project.

Sojourns into the northern half of the state have resulted in an update of extinct animal discoveries there along with establishment of new late Pleistocene deposit stations.

These are but a few of the subjects being dealt with during this latest effort at learning more of early man in Alabama. The manuscript is now being prepared for publication and field work is continuing. We hope this is just the beginning and envision a continuing interest and continuing commitment to early man research in the state.

*Sonny Curren*

#### 19TH ANNUAL DIC FUND REPORT

We are regretfully unable to list more than one donor since the last report, but most happily, he is a person who brings much joy to our heart - a new donor - and we are proud to list him along with a Dan Josselyn Memorial Fund addition.

He is Michael S. Delaney of Ozark and our first new donor for 1977.

Lively-Long-Josselyn Pebble Tool Papers, their second of the year.

Very soon now we will let you know about the Research Association project for 1977, but don't wait - send in your donations today.

*Milt Harris*

#### SOUTHEASTERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE 1976

Stars certainly fell on Alabama at the 1976 Southeastern Archaeological Conference held in Tuscaloosa, November 4-6, 1976.

I am reporting a few of the highlights of the Conference. The Program Chairman was John A. Walthall, and Carey B. Oakley was in charge of local arrangements. This conference was held under the auspices of the Division of Anthropology and Psychology, Committee on State Archaeological Surveys, National Research Council. Of the 40-plus members and guests present, almost all names familiar in the archaeological field today, eight were listed from Alabama.

Not only were sessions of SEAC being held, but the Conference on Historic Site Archaeology had a full program on Thursday, November 4. A very brief outline of the program follows in chronological order. On Thursday morning, the two concurrent SEAC sessions were: SYMPOSIUM: "The Late Pleistocene in the Southeastern United States" and VOLUNTEER PAPERS: "Intra-Site Analysis and Interpretation". Thursday afternoon, three sessions: the morning's Symposium continued and followed by a session VOLUNTEER PAPERS: "Environmental and Subsistence Reconstruction", being held in one room while the SYMPOSIUM "Quarry Site Research" was the afternoon session in the other room. Three sessions on Friday morning were a SYMPOSIUM: "New Developments in the Lower Mississippi Valley Ceramic Chronology" followed by the SYMPOSIUM: "Recent Approaches to Piedmont Archaeology in South Carolina and Georgia", while in the other room VOLUNTEER PAPERS: "Strategies for Survey and Data Recovery" was held. Friday afternoon offered two symposiums: "The Research Potential of Shell Middens: Methodological and Analytical Considerations" and "Approaches to Anthropological Archaeology Under Contract". Friday evening, a special opportunity was offered to the SFAC to attend an evening showing of the "Art of the Alabama Indians" at Garland Hall on the University of Alabama campus. The ceramics and other material were on loan from Mound State Monument, Peabody Museum, Howard College, State of Alabama Department of Archives and History and the Birmingham Museum of Art.

At 8:00 a.m. on Saturday the SYMPOSIUM: "Studies in Alabama Archaeology in Honor of David L. DeJarnette" was chaired by James B. Griffin. The following are the participants and their papers. C. B. Curren: "The Zooarchaeology of Alabama"; D. W. Chase: "A Taxonomic Appraisal of Central Alabama Prehistory"; N. J. Jenkins: "The West Jefferson Phase and Alabama Archaeology"; C. S. Peebles: "Mississippian Polity: Politics and Ritual in the Southeast"; J. A. Walthall: "Some Comments on Black Warrior Valley Prehistory"; C. T. Sheldon: "Late Aboriginal Cultural Development in South Central Alabama"; J. W. Cottier: "A State Regional Scheme for Cultural Resource Management"; H. B. Ensor: "Archaeology at 1 Je 34-A Late West Jefferson Phase Site"; R. S. Dickens and J. H. Chapman (Dickens giving the paper): "Ceramic Patterning and Social Structure at Two Late Historic Upper Creek Sites in Alabama" and Elizabeth Sheldon: "Childersburg: Evidence of European Influences Demonstrated by Archaeological Plant Remains".

Following this view of present-day work was a session in a slightly lighter note with a flavor of the past. "David DeJarnette and Southeastern Archaeology: A Tribute" was chaired by Chris Peebles. The participants told many stories of the years of early archaeological work in Alabama. It was very easy to realize the important place of Mr. DeJarnette as we saw how his work and influence was intricately woven into this detailed "history". James B. Griffin gave a background of Mr. DeJarnette's whole life, emphasizing their associations. Steve Wimberly exposed some little-known facts about his own ventures into archaeology with Mr. DeJarnette. Charles Fairbanks could well remember their early work together and contacts continuing through the years. Bill Hagg had many "tall tales" of exploits, archaeological

and non-archaeological. Stu Neitzel, making use of some of the New Archaeological terms, described "trade secrets" and "techniques" and reminisced about his early contacts with Mr. DeJarnette. Benny Keel, now in charge of the National Park Service S. F. Area in Atlanta, told how Mr. DeJarnette had given him his first real, paying job in archaeology - he was not sure whether he should thank him or not! Chris Peebles concluded with a description of the life of a researcher living at Moundville in a trailer by the lab. I believe Mr. DeJarnette thoroughly enjoyed these sessions, though more than once he cried out, "Oh, NO!", and during several of the film presentations they "held" him in his seat. Mr. DeJarnette extended an invitation for all to come and visit him and Mrs. DeJarnette in their new home. He urged that everyone go to Moundville and enjoy the barbeque which is just exactly what most everyone hastened to do as it was now well after noon. I am sorry for those who missed SEAC in 1976 as it was an experience that can never again be enjoyed.

*Marjorie Gay*

#### BOOK REVIEWS

THE SEARCH FOR PEKING MAN, by Christopher G. Janus with William Brashler. Macmillan Pub., New York, c. 1975 - \$8.95.

This is a fascinating book, and the author has done a fine job of relating his search for Peking Man.

Peking Man was discovered in China in 1926 but disappeared in 1941 when the Japanese overran a U. S. Marine base in China. All the material had been sent to this base for safety and further removal to the U. S.

One hundred and fifty thousand dollars has been offered as a reward for Peking Man by Janus. He had received all kinds of tips, with secret meetings, etc. Many theories have been expressed by experts about the possible whereabouts of Peking Man, but so far none proved.

THOUSANDS OF YEARS: An Archaeological Search for Ancient Egypt, by John A. Wilson, New York, c. 1972 - \$8.95.

This book, classified as archaeology, is really an autobiography of Dr. John A. Wilson, famed Egyptologist.

He gives a personal account of his family background and his work. In later chapters he shows the changing emphasis being put on archaeological research on pottery, stone, implements and architecture in Egypt.

Dr. Wilson was a long-time director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

*Margaret Perryman Smith*

## CHAPTER NEWS

- TUSCALOOSA - New officers for 1977 are: President, Eugene Futato, Moundville; Vice President, Janice Gilliland, Coker; and Secretary/Treasurer, Betsy Stewart, Northport.
- BIRMINGHAM - The March meeting was held at Red Mountain Museum, where Jim Little gave an interesting program on point identification by time periods. The April meeting will be on April 6 at the museum with a "Show and Tell" program. Members are asked to bring artifacts and tell their history, etc. The public is invited. 1977 Chapter officers are: President, Paul McLaughlin; First Vice President, Tom Hutto; Second Vice President, Joseph Watkins, Jr.; Secretary, Ken De Ramus; and Treasurer, Margaret M. Thompson.
- CULLMAN - The March meeting was held at the Colonel Cullman Home, where James Fox gave a program showing many slides he has taken over the past years on archaeology. The chapter is planning a "spring" field trip in the near future.
- HUNTSVILLE - Huntsville Chapter meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Senior Center on Big Spring. At the March meeting, chapter president Dottie Luke gave a slide-illustrated talk on stone circles of Great Britain, with emphasis on Stonehenge. The April program will feature Deloris and Pat Roys, who will talk about their participation in a three-week "dig" near Iztapa, Guatemala, in January of this year.
- MORGAN-LIMESTONE - 1977 officers are: President, Eugene Stewart; Vice President, Jack Cambron; and Secretary/Treasurer, Rodger Schaefer.
- MUSCLE SHOALS - The Muscle Shoals Chapter held its monthly meeting on March 14. The guest speaker was Charles Hubbert (UNA - Dept. of Archaeology). Mr. Hubbert lectured about Anthropology in the 20th Century - man and his environment. The chapter meets the second Monday of each month at the Indian Mound Museum. The next meeting will be April 11 at 7 p.m. All visitors are invited to attend.

## WANTED - BULLETIN #1 OF SEAC

Mack Brooms (716 Pinkston Street; Montgomery, Alabama 36109) would like to obtain a copy of Bulletin #1 of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference. Anyone having a copy to sell, trade or lend Mack for copying, please contact him at 272-6805.

## THE IMPACT STATEMENT BOONDOGGLE

The demand for "impact statements" evaluating the environmental consequences of human activities in natural ecosystems seemed a natural outgrowth of the rise in ecological awareness of the 1960's. This idea, designed to protect our natural resources, has to some extent pacified the demands of ecologically concerned citizens. These citizens should have another look. Having seen the results of many of these impact studies, and evaluated proposals for second-generation studies, I believe that the idea has backfired.

Many politicians have been quick to grasp that the quickest way to silence critical "ecofreaks" is to allocate a small proportion of funds for any engineering project for ecological studies. Someone is inevitably available to receive these funds, conduct the studies regardless of how quickly results are demanded, write large, diffuse reports containing reams of uninterpreted and incomplete descriptive data, and in some cases, construct "predictive" models, irrespective of the quality of the data base. These reports have formed a "gray literature" so diffuse, so voluminous, and so limited in distribution that its conclusions and recommendations are never scrutinized by the scientific community at large. Often the author's only scientific credentials are an impressive title in a government agency, university, or consulting firm. This title, the mass of the report, the author's salary, and his dress and bearing often carry more weight with the commission or study board to whom the statement is presented than either his scientific competence or the validity of his scientific investigation. Indeed, many agencies have found it in their best interests to employ a "traveling circus" of "scientists" with credentials matching these requirements. As a result, impact statements seldom receive the hard scrutiny that follows the publication of scientific findings in a reputable scientific journal.

From "Science", May 7, 1976

#### EFFORTS TO FIND NESSIE SPAWN SENSATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL, GEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Last July's U. S. expedition to Northern Scotland's Loch Ness wasn't successful in spotting Nessie, the legendary monster. But the sophisticated seismic, side scan sonar and photographic equipment used by the explorers revealed archaeological and geological information that promises to tease and intrigue the scientific community into further studies. One discovery is a submerged rival to the famed Stonehenge boulder circle on the Salisbury Plain of southern England that possibly dates back to the ancient Druids. There is a solid circle stone formation 100 feet in diameter. Nearby is another circle of what may be large boulders or mounds. A straight line of boulders or rounds goes through this second circle of boulders. Since no research has gone into this find as yet no astronomical relationship has been determined, as there has been with Stonehenge. Another find is the possible outline of a grouping of structures on the bottom. Subbottom profiles reveal a possible ancient river bed. Some of the findings are below current sea level. Loch Ness lies in a deep earth rift, with the current lake level well above sea level. Martin Klein, president of Klein Associates, Salem, N. H., furnished key equipment and participated in the project. Another participant was Dr. Harold Edgerton, MIT professor and marine scientist.

From "Sea Technology", October 1976

Articles which go into considerable detail about equipment, technique and archaeological findings in the Loch Ness surveys appear in the November 5, 1976 issue of "Electronic Design News" and in the January 1977 issue of "Sea Technology".

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH BASED ON HUMAN HAIR

Hair plucked from the head of a student with high academic grades has been found to contain substantially more zinc and copper than the hair of a student with low grades. But Adon A. Gordus, professor of chemistry at the University of Michigan, has not limited his sources of hair to students in his study on the human intake of environmental contaminants. By comparing historical hair samples with modern hair samples, Professor Gordus hopes to establish the extent of intake of potentially harmful elements as industrialization has advanced. This requires pre-industrialization samples and Dr. Gordus has obtained over 800 well-documented historical hair samples from museums and private owners.

A popular hobby in the 1800's, the practice of weaving human hair into wreaths and other decorative items such as lockets provides an important source of historical specimens.

Neutron activation, the method of analysis employed in the study, simultaneously detects up to 38 different chemical elements in the hair. Neutron activation requires that the hair samples first be made radioactive by neutron irradiation in the reactor at the U-M's Phoenix Memorial Laboratory. Then, the irradiated samples are examined on a multi-channel gamma ray analyzer. Each element in the hair emits gammas of different energies.

Handling the vast amount of information - generated from not only the interactions of the metals themselves, but also from the relationships involving sex, age, academic ability and other factors - is a job for the computer.

By these means, Professor Gordus is able to routinely work with samples and accumulate the spectral data.

Initially funded by the U-M Institute for Environmental Quality but now backed by a grant from the National Science Foundation's Research Applied to National Needs (RANN) program, Gordus's interdisciplinary study also involves faculty and students from U-M's chemistry department and School of Public Health. Other studies of the same nature are now being performed on other materials.

From Vol. 1, No. 4 of "The Tennecomp News", published by Tennecomp Systems, Inc., Oak Ridge, Tenn.

## EARLY MAN STUDY

The Alabama Historical Commission has approved a \$13,235 grant for the study of early man in Central Alabama.

The archaeological project should locate and record the presence of Stone Age man in Central Alabama and especially his artifacts in association with extinct animals from the late Pleistocene Age, some 10,000 years ago.

It is being conducted by the University of Alabama with aid from the Archaeological Research Association of Alabama, Inc., to match the 50 per cent grant from the U. S. Department of the Interior through the AHC.

"This is the largest federal grant ever awarded by the Alabama Historical Commission for archaeological research relating to either an era or a theme", said W. Warner Floyd, AHC executive director.

These early people, called Paleo-Indians, were apparently nomadic or semi-nomadic and hunted now extinct animals, such as the mammoth, mastodon and giant sloth.

At this time there is no well documented case of an association between Paleo-Indian artifacts and remains of these animals from Alabama or the eastern United States. We know very little about these first inhabitants of the state, but there are tantalizing indications of their presence.

The year-long study began this past summer and so far more than 10 sites have been located for further study, most of them in the Black Belt area.

Chairman of the project is Dr. Richard A. Krause, chairman of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alabama, and project director is Cailup B. Curren Jr., University staff archaeologist.

From PRESERVATION REPORT, Alabama Historic Commission, November 1976

#### LITHIC SYMPOSIUM

Where: Catawba College, Salisbury, North Carolina  
What: 2-day lithic symposium of the Uwharrie Mountains, also known as "Carolina Slate Belt"  
When: April 22, 23, 1977  
Purpose: A meeting of persons interested in the "Slate Belt or Higgins' Atlantic Seaboard Volcanic Province". The problems discussed will closely parallel the problems of our own Fort Payne chert belt.  
More Information: Peter P. Cooper  
Catawba College  
Salisbury  
North Carolina 28144

*Marjorie Gay*



## THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Following are the objectives stated in our Constitution, slightly modified for emphasis: To promote informed interest in the study of Archaeology in Alabama and neighboring States; to encourage careful scientific archaeological research in such ways as surface scouting, mapping, marking, studying and especially reporting; to promote and support professionally directed excavations and discourage unsupervised "digging"; to promote the conservation of archaeological sites and to favor the passage of laws prescribing such; to oppose the sale of antiquities, and the manufacture and sale of fraudulent artifacts; to encourage and develop a better understanding of archaeology through providing Newsletters, Journals, Chapter and State meetings, helpful associates and good fellowship; to serve as a bond between individual archaeologists in the State, both non-professional and professional; and perhaps most importantly, to give everyone the opportunity to "do something about archaeology" through the accomplishment and enjoyment of these high aims.

The Society needs and welcomes as members, all persons whose ideals are in accord with the objectives set forth above. Active members receive the JOURNAL OF ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGY, devoted to articles on the archaeology of Alabama and nearby States, and also receive the STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER, published monthly, containing news of members and their activities, also State, national and worldwide events of archaeological importance.

The Society is a non-profit corporation and all contributions are deductible when making your income tax return.

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### THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA, INC.

This Association, an affiliate of our State Society, is a non-profit corporation, whose aim and purpose is to finance archaeological advancement in Alabama, the FIRST State to provide such financial support through popular subscription. All contributions to this association are deductible in making your income tax return (if, of course, you itemize your deductions). Your check should be made payable to the association as shown above.

#### MAIL TO:

Mr. Wm. M. Spencer, Suite 1510, First National - Southern Natural Bldg., 1900 - 5th Ave., No., Birmingham, AL. 35203

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### Journals and Special Publications

Available back issues of the Society's Journal *THE JOURNAL OF ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGY*, and all Special Publications are available from the Journal Editor. Please see back of this page for listing.

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### Stones and Bones Newsletter

Comments, news items, reviews and other material for inclusion in the Newsletter should be addressed to:

**Stones and Bones Editor / Amos J. Wright**  
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*Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part II, Uniface Blade and Flake Tools* ..... 2.25 pp  
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