

Alabama Archaeological Society

Stones & Bones

Volume 37, Issue 8

NADB DOC # - 4,052,778

August 1995

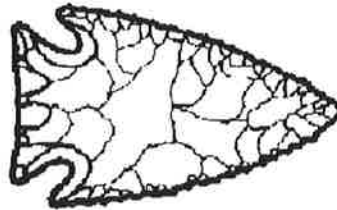
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Fingerprints

Fading fingerprints lost in time
Like swirling smoke disappearing in summer's sky
Where once Mother Nature met all their needs
Now only distant clouds float over this vanished breed
So few clues to their way of life
Searching for answers but are we always right?
Seems they knew something to content the soul
A few draws on the old clay pipe
Wind whispering in the pines
or maybe the sound of a new-born baby's cry
Like fading fingerprints lost in time
Search as they may but will never find
Too precious are these to be left on tools or bowls
For they are impressions on the soul

Submitted by Don Silvey - Cullman Chapter

Excavations at 1Ma240

In August, 1994, while surveying the location of a proposed borrow pit in southern Madison County, Alabama, I recorded Site 1Ma240. This site is a large lithic scatter located on a terrace of the Paint Rock River. Based on the results of this survey, I recommended avoidance of the site, and testing if the site was to be disturbed.

This summer, I led a four person crew in the Phase II testing of site 1Ma240. Our research design called for the excavation of six one meter test units to determine the integrity of the site. If the site was found to be confined mainly to the plow-zone, we were to mechanically strip the site and examine the subsoil for features. The research design called for the excavation of all features if only a few were found, while location of a large number of features would necessitate full mitigation.

Excavation of the test units revealed a fine sandy loam between 12 and 20 centimeters deep overlying a silty clay subsoil. The site was confined almost exclusively to the plowzone, 90% or more (by weight) of all artifacts recovered from test units were from the plowzone.

The topsoil was then stripped off the site using heavy equipment. This revealed the presence of

many features in the eastern part of the site. The western part of the site did not contain any features. Two of the most well-defined features were selected for excavation. These features were excavated in the usual manner, they were drawn in plan, half the fill removed, drawn in cross-section, and the other half of the fill removed. Soil samples were reserved for flotation. One of these features was an oval stain 82 cm east-west by 69 cm north-south. This feature proved to be basin-shaped in cross-section and extended 22 cm into the subsoil. This feature contained a Crawford Creek PP/K, an Elora PP/K, a Ledbetter PP/K, an unidentified PP/K, one modified flake and 97 flakes, as well as the usual shatter and fire-cracked rock. This feature also contained a large amount of charred hickory nut fragments, a sample of which were retained for as a C-14 date, which is still being processed at the time of this writing. Due to the presence of large amounts of hickory nut fragments, this feature is believed to represent a storage pit. Based on the projectile points, it is believed that this feature dates to the Late Archaic. The Crawford Creek PP/K dates to the early Middle Archaic period, but I feel that this is not indicative of the true date of the feature or the site as a whole, as the other three PP/K's recovered all point to a Late Archaic date. The forthcoming C-14 date will shed more light on the matter.

The other excavated feature was an oval stain 106 cm east-west by 102 cm north-south. This feature was basin-shaped in cross-section and extended 38 cm into the subsoil. This feature contained a Little Bear Creek PP/K, two drill fragments, a biface fragment, and 334 flakes, as well as shatter and fire-cracked rock. This feature contained a small amount of charred hickory nut fragments, but far less than the previous feature. The feature dates to the Late Archaic based on the projectile point found in it, but its function is uncertain.

Upon the discovery of such a large number of features, the decision was made to preserve the eastern end of the site (the feature-bearing part), and the client agreed to do this. The part of the site, which contains features, was flagged off and

covered over with the soil which had been previously removed. The parts of the site which did not contain features, (i.e. the western part) were released to the client.

In summation, site 1Ma240 appears to be a Late Archaic base camp. The presence of the hickory nut shell fragments indicated a possible occupation during the fall. The site was probably the site of tool maintenance, as indicated by the large number of flakes recovered during the excavations. While sites of this nature are common in the Tennessee Valley, sites of this period have the possibility of revealing information about the subsistence strategies and settlement patterns of the Late Archaic people.

written by J. Eric Gilliland

O.A.S.

U. of A. Moundville, AL.

Membership Challenge

Public education is the key to the Alabama Archaeological Society's future as well as the future of Alabama Archaeology. If we want to continue to grow as a society and if we want to preserve and protect Alabama's rich archaeological heritage, we must educate the citizenry of Alabama, particularly our youth.

In order to make progress in meeting this challenge, the Troy State Chapter, led by member Lee Harris, has taken on the task of contacting every public library in the state requesting that they join the Alabama Archaeological Society. The majority had no idea that the Society even existed or that the Journal of Alabama Archaeology was available. Ninety-nine percent expressed a sincere interest in joining (one librarian must have been having a bad day). We will soon begin to mail membership forms to all public libraries in Alabama. The editors encourage every member of the Society to do your part in this challenge to educate our youth. Contact every school in your county by telephone. Explain to them what the Alabama Archaeological Society is all about and tell them about the Journal of Alabama Archaeology as well as our other publications. Follow up

by mailing them a membership form (make copies from the back page of your newsletter). Please do it soon, however, since most schools make their expenditure commitments in August and early September. Write the *Stones & Bones* about your success. Let's get every member on the band wagon!!

In The Alabama Archaeological Society's Past

Twenty-eight years ago in August 1967 Sam A. Mosely spoke to the Morgan-Limestone Chapter on the "Nebo Hill Site," giving an interesting glimpse of a small, secluded Paleo site.

The Montgomery Chapter heard a discussion by Dave Chase on "Cultural Associations with Alabama Pottery Types," the third in a series of pottery classification discussions.

Chapter News

Troy State University...

will be taking a trip to the southwestern United States from August 14th - August 25th. The group plans to visit archaeological sites in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah.

Calendar

An Imperial Chinese Exhibit will be on display until September 18th at the Convention Center in Memphis, while associated exhibits will be on display in the Dixon Museum. The exhibit will display some of the famous terra-cotta figures from the tomb of the First Emperor.

Southeastern Archaeological Conference will hold its annual meeting at the Hilton Hotel,

Knoxville, TN on November 8-11, 1995. Local arrangements co-ordinator is Dr. Jefferson Chapman. Program Chair is Dr. Gerald Schroedl. For more information contact: SEAC Conference, Department of Anthropology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-0720; (615) 974-4408; fax (615) 974-2686.

The winter meeting of the **Alabama Archaeological Society** will be held on December 9th, in Selma, Alabama.

New Members

Our membership has grown to 470 members. We would like to welcome the following new members to the Society:

Tommy Kellum
993 Cherokee Trail
Ohatchee, Al 36271

Joseph T. Betterton III
14388 White Oak Drive
Tuscaloosa, Al 35405

Hunter B. Johnson
5306 Virginia Drive
Tuscaloosa, Al 35404

Clete Rooney
1410 19th Avenue East
Tuscaloosa, Al 35404

Donald E. Chavis
5523 Tamarack St
Pensacola, Fl 32503

Elisabeth A. Evans
4541 Sequoia Drive
Apt 261
Harrisburg, Pa 17109

David W. Morgan
Department of Anthropology
1021 Audobon Street
New Orleans, La 70118

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of *Journal of Alabama Archaeology*

- Vol. 20-31, each issue (*two issues per volume*).....\$3.50pp
Vol. 32 & up, each issue (*two issues per volume*).....\$6.00pp
Stanfield- Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archaeology)
Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint.....\$7.50pp
Special Publication 2 - *The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County Alabama*.....\$6.00pp
Special Publication 3 - *Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend ..* \$8.00pp
Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part I, Point Types.....\$15.00pp
Lively, Long, Josselyn - Pebble Tool Paper..... \$3.00pp
Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile).....\$9.00pp

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.

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- ☐ NEW MEMBERSHIP ☐ PAYMENT OF ANNUAL DUES
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