

Alabama Archaeological Society

Associate Editors

Bart Henson
Dorothy Luke

STONES & BONES NEWSLETTER

Editor

Amos J. Wright
2602 Green Mountain Rd.
Huntsville, Alabama 35803

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MEMBER OF THE EASTERN STATES ARCHEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

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A. A. S. ANNUAL MEETING

The Alabama Archaeological Society annual meeting will be held on Saturday, December 8 in Montgomery. Ours will be the first group to use the new Milo B. Howard Auditorium in the Archives and History Building in the capital complex.

The featured speaker at the meeting will be Dr. Patricia Galloway, Research Associate with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in Jackson. Dr. Galloway is also Editor of the Mississippi Archaeologist. She specializes in study of the Choctaw Indians.

Other speakers will include Dr. Harry Holstein, Dr. Richard Krause, Dr. John Cottier, Dr. Jim Knight, Mr. Greg Waselkov, Mr. Reed Stowe and Ms. Jean Allan. One hour has been reserved for Society members to present site reviews or other reports. These reports will be limited to 10 minutes each; those members who would like to present a brief paper are requested to submit an abstract to Jim Parker, A. A. S. Program Chairman, by November 5. Send this synopsis to: Jim Parker; 1333 South Perry Street; Montgomery, Alabama 36104; or call Jim at 205-263-7412.

The Program Committee is working to make this weekend a memorable occasion for all who attend. There will be a reception in Montgomery on Friday evening, and several field trips are planned for Sunday morning. There will be no registration fee for the annual meeting. Watch for more information in the November and December STONES & BONES.

The Editors

STONES AND MOUNDS

Throughout the Piedmont and Appalachian areas of Georgia, and even into the coastal plain, there are numerous examples of large, unmodified stones used by people in the past. Many, if not most of these have been called stone mounds. However, it is becoming more and more clear that such a "monolithic" classification does not do justice to the complexity of the situation.

October 1984

Even in the 19th century it was recognized that there were at least two kinds of earthen mounds - "mortuary" and "domiciliary". We have since learned that earthen mounds can be divided into a number of significant categories.

It is time that a concerted effort was made to catalogue, classify and analyze the phenomenon of "monumental" usage of stones. As I see it, there are at least six major categories of stone usage for such purposes.

1. Stone usage in or on mounds made largely of other materials. Possible subcategories include use as fill, "environmentally protective" use, "culturally protective" use, and symbolic use.
2. Stone "Cairns". Potential purposes include monuments over burials, "memorials", astronomical or geographic markers, social or political boundary markers, symbolic arrangements, etc.
3. Stone Mounds. These are usually distinguished from cairns by their size. Some are known to have been used for burial purposes, but others have yielded no evidence of burials, and other explanations may be found.
4. Stone "Walls". Possibilities include political, social, religious, military and agricultural usage.
5. Stone Enclosures. These are frequently referred to as stone "forts" by nonprofessionals and "ceremonial enclosures" by professionals. Other potential purposes should be explored.
6. Stone Effigies. The two best known are those near Eatonton, Georgia. There may well be others which have not been recognized. The effigy at Rock Eagle 4H Camp apparently was used, at least in part, for burial interment. There is obviously a symbolic meaning to these mounds which may also be found.

There are probably other major categories which have not been listed above.

The next question is who made these stone features? Some of them are obviously of Indian construction, some of them are of apparent Indian construction, and some are apparently of Euro- and Afro-American construction. The vast majority of them cannot be easily classified as to origin.

It is easy to conclude that many are the project of "some farmer clearing his field", but it is too important a question to take such a nonchalant approach. Evidence is beginning to mount that the vast majority of them are of prehistoric Indian construction. If we ignore them, we are probably ignoring a very significant part of Georgia's archaeological and cultural heritage.

(Article by Frank Schnell in "Profile", newsletter of The Society for Georgia Archaeology; No. 43, March 1984)

Pebble Tools from NE Alabama

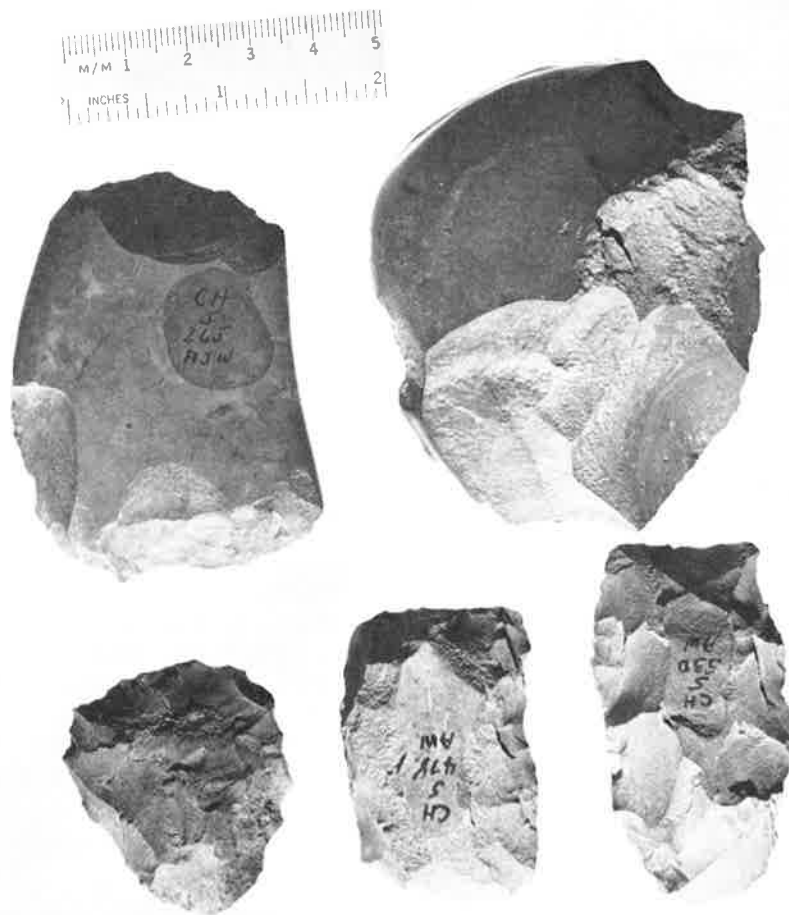
In 1965 a paper entitled "Preliminary Report on a Pebble Tool Complex in Alabama" by Matthew Lively and Daniel Josselyn described through text, drawings and photographs pebble tools from NW Alabama. As their study revealed, these lithic artifacts, previously little noted, were, in fact, abundant throughout North Alabama.

Alerted to the significance of these artifacts, people began to recognize and collect them. The size, weight, general characteristics and probable uses of these artifacts are apparently universal in lithic technology and spans a time period of more than a million years.

The photograph below shows pebble tools collected several years ago by Amos J. Wright from a site near the Coosa River in Cherokee County, Alabama. Photographs are by Dr. A. G. Long.

NOTE: The Pebble Tool Papers by Lively, Long, and Josselyn are available—see back page of this newsletter.

Editors



PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Prehistoric Architecture in the Eastern United States by William N. Morgan, MIT Press, 1980, hardbound, over 200 pages, \$27.50.

This publication, through textual descriptions and architectural style drawings—often supplemented by photographs, illustrates approximately 100 U. S. prehistoric monumental archaeological sites. Each site is treated individually in one to eight pages, where pertinent data are presented. The 34 page introduction discusses time periods, conceptual drawings, prominent symbolic motifs and provides a table of significant characteristics. Moundville, Alabama, for example, has the third largest volume of earthen mounds in the United States and is second in size. The material reproduced below is a portion of that presented on Moundville and is representative of the book's coverage of other sites.

Editors

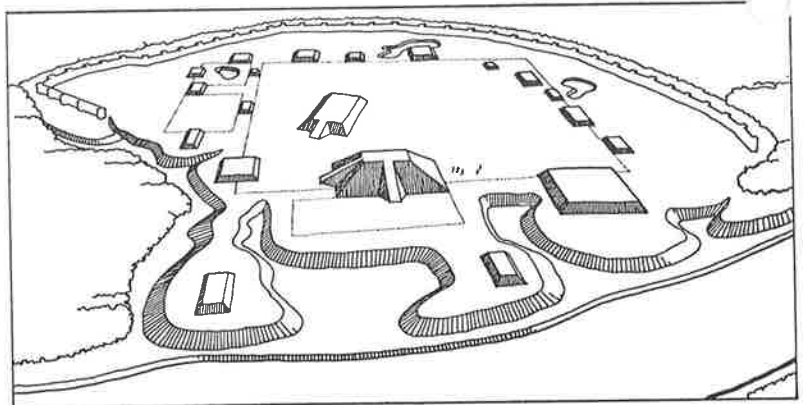
Moundville

Moundville, Alabama

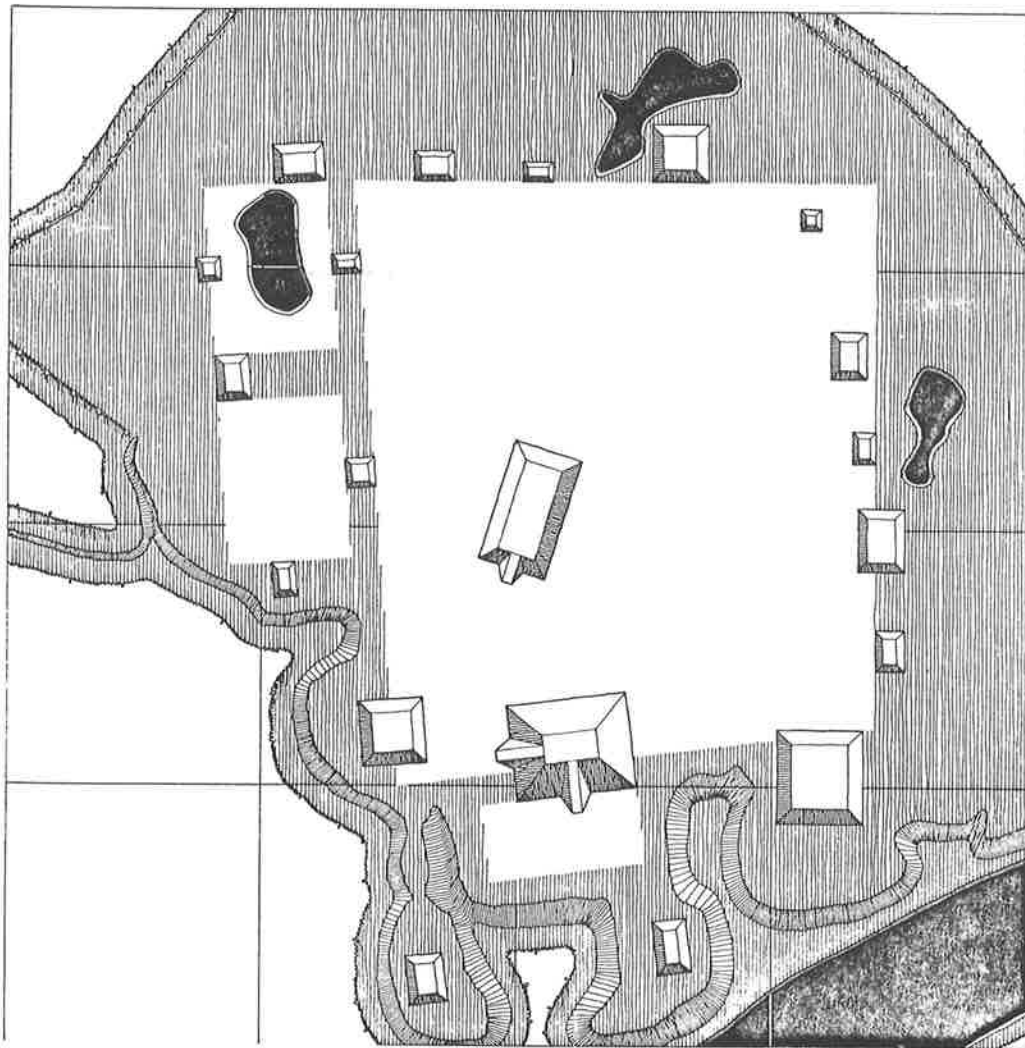
Moundville was a period 3 ceremonial center and habitation area second only to Cahokia in size. Located 27 kilometers south of Tuscaloosa on the southeast bank of the Big Warrior River, the 120-hectare site contains twenty truncated platform mounds with related features. A thick palisade with outwardly projecting bastions originally surrounded Moundville and formed an arc around the southern portion of the site, as shown in the reconstruction.

All of Moundville's structures were platform mounds rather than burial mounds. The 16.8-meter-high main temple mound measured 52 by 116 meters at its base and contained more than 112,000 cubic meters of earth. The 6.4-meter-high platform in the center of the plaza measured 82 by 107 meters maximum at its base. Moundville's remaining structures were mostly 4 to 5 meters high.

Three ponds were located near the central open space. Archaeologists have found numerous fish hooks on the bottom of the ponds, suggesting they were used to store fish.



Moundville appears to have been organized as a ranked society. The site contained elite residences in its northeast zone and public buildings at the northeast and northwest corners of the plaza. Charnel houses and a "sweat house" were constructed on the plaza's perimeter. Residential areas were located east, south, and west of the plaza.



Moundville's population, who subsisted on agriculture, may have been about 3,000 persons at one time. Occupied and constructed between A.D. 1200 and 1500, as the population increased, villages developed within 20 kilometers of Moundville. These villages were grouped in a hierarchical arrangement of secondary centers with platform mounds and tertiary settlements without platform mounds. All of the settlements were elevated well above the river to avoid flooding. Like the comparable ceremonial centers of Etowah and Spiro, Moundville flourished after A.D. 1300, about the time that Cahokia was beginning its decline. Extensive excavations at Moundville have yielded more than 3,000 burials, seventy-five structures, and more than a million artifacts.

Because Moundville is located on the northernmost edge of the gulf coastal plain, immediately south of the Cumberland plateau fall line, Moundville's inhabitants had access to widely varied ecological zones that assured their subsistence and presented opportunities for extensive trade.

This reconstruction is based primarily on the 1905 and 1907 accounts of Clarence B. Moore and on an excellent 1969 map and additional information provided by Christopher S. Peebles in 1979.

Reference: Peebles and Kus, 1977.

CHAPTER NEWS

Cullman Chapter

Much talk in the past few weeks has been concerned with the announcement of the Wheeler Wildlife Manager of the possible "arresting and conviction" of artifact collectors "surface finding" or "digging" on wildlife property (and all federal lands). DeWitt Coleman will have copies of the law in question available for everyone; he has invited the "head man" of the Wildlife Refuge to our meeting to answer questions; he has invited local lawmakers also.

Howard King

Huntsville Chapter

The speaker at the Huntsville Chapter September meeting was Tim Mistovich of Moundville. Tim gave a most interesting presentation on underwater archaeology, with photographs showing some of the equipment used on modern expeditions. He discussed some of the problems faced by archaeologists working in this sometimes inhospitable environment, and stressed the safety precautions required by this specialized occupation.

Tim also spoke about the recent find in Jackson County of a Late Woodland burial pit. He was one of five people to go into the cave and study the remains. This discovery was mentioned in many Alabama newspapers, including the Huntsville News, which ran an article on the find on Tuesday, September 11.

The next meeting of the Huntsville Chapter will be on Tuesday, October 16, and will be a workshop session. We urge our members to bring in any artifacts they may have which they have been unable to classify; experts will be on hand to help you identify your "find". The chapter has a number of new members; we extend a special invitation to them to attend this session.

Dorothy Luke

NOTE TO COLLECTORS

On Page 7 of the September 1984 STONES & BONES, there was an article entitled "Wheeler Refuge Officials Will Crack Down on Relic Seekers". Due to the considerable response concerning this newspaper article, the Society has obtained the names and addresses of two individuals to whom you may write for clarification of TVA's intentions, the legal aspects of this action, or to express your concern over this crackdown. (See Cullman Chapter notes, above).

William T. Martin, Jr.
Office of the General Counsel
Tennessee Valley Authority
400 Commerce Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

Charles H. Dean, Jr.
Chairman, Board of Directors
Tennessee Valley Authority
400 Commerce Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

The Editors

NEW MEMBERS

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Type</u> | <u>Address</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------|---|
| Albright, Mrs. Carolyn E. | I | 139 Elsmore Blvd. Gadsden, Alabama 35901 |
| Eckstam, Ms. Kathryn Ann | I | Apt. 81-B, 2861 Thornhill Road Birmingham, Alabama 35213 |
| Howard, Mr. Randall L. | I | 105 Old Highway 31 South Decatur, Alabama 35603 |

SOCIETY FOR APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

The Society for Applied Anthropology has recently created a liaison role to organizations concerned with the survival of indigenous peoples. The purposes of the liaison role are to formally declare SfAA's concerns with the problems of indigenes, to offer help to indigenes by linking SfAA members to those organizations, thereby providing channels through which voluntary, technical assistance, and other activities may be provided upon request, and to facilitate communication with the SfAA membership.

As a first stop, it is requested that names and addresses of relevant organizations and periodicals be sent to Gilbert Kushner, SfAA Liaison, Department of Anthropology; University of South Florida; Tampa, Florida 33620.

The Editors

RESTORE AND RECONSTRUCT HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS

Archaeological specimens can be restored and missing pieces reconstructed using a new product from The Friendly Plastic Company, Ltd., of Boulder, Colorado.

Friendly Plastic® compound comes in rice-sized pellets which soften to a clay-like consistency in just 12 seconds when sprinkled into boiling water. The preferred working temperature of 135°F is gentle enough to be modeled with your bare hands.

For more details contact: The Friendly Plastic Company, Ltd.; 2888 Bluff Street, No. 233; Boulder, Colorado 80301; 303-530-5115.

The Editors

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Available issues of *Journal of Alabama Archaeology* Vol. 20-29 each issue (\$2.50 to Members) \$5.00 pp
Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archaeology) Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint, each issue \$5.00 pp
 Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell \$2.00 pp
 Special Publication 2 — *The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County, Alabama* \$4.50 pp
 Special Publication 3 — *Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend* \$6.50 pp
Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types \$10.00 pp
 Lively, Long, Josselyn - *Pebble Tool Paper* \$3.00 pp
Investigations in Russell Cave, published by the National Park Service \$7.50 pp
Exploring Prehistoric Alabama through Archaeology (Juvenile) \$7.00 pp

CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO: **ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**
 SEND CHECKS TO: **MR. EUGENE FUTATO, Office of Archaeological Research**
 1 Mound State Monument, Moundville, Alabama 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

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MAIL TO:
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SECRETARY AND TREASURER
 7608 Teal Drive, S.W.
 Huntsville, Alabama 35802

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (Students under age 18) \$7.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> *Contribution \$ _____ |

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Alabama Archaeological Society

Mr. Amos J. Wright
 2602 Green Mountain Road SE
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