



OKLAHOMA ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

NEWSLETTER

Volume 23, Number 3, January 2002

50th ANNIVERSARY TO BE CELEBRATED BY OKLAHOMA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

For 50 years, the Oklahoma Anthropological Society (OAS) has served as a bridge between avocational and professional archeologists in the state. This significant anniversary will be marked by a celebration, the **2002 OAS Spring Meeting**, at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History (SNOMNH) in Norman. The Society was formed in 1952 by Drs. Robert Bell, William Bittle, and Karl Schmitt from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Oklahoma, faculty members from other departments and universities, anthropology students, and nonprofessionals from around Oklahoma as well as other states. Their objective was to bring together professionals and amateurs interested in the study of Native Americans in Oklahoma and the surrounding area. The founding members' established goals were to study, publish, and help preserve the archeological and ethnographic evidence of human cultures in the Oklahoma area. The first Annual Bulletin was published in March, 1953, and contained a series of articles about research in archeology and ethnology. Volume 50 of this bulletin is nearing completion, and will be ready soon for distribution to members.

Since 1952, the Society has expanded from one chapter consisting of a small group of interested individuals (20 initially, but reaching 120 by 1953) to four active chapters and around 500 members in 2002. In the intervening years, a number of additional chapters were formed in towns throughout the state by active individuals; these chapters became inactive or were disbanded as these individuals died or moved away. Although many of the founding members have passed

away, a few (including Dr. Bell) remain.



*Dr. Robert E. Bell at the El Inga site, Ecuador, in 1961.
Photo courtesy of the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum
of Natural History.*

Throughout its existence, many of the Society's activities have centered on archeological research, although some ethnographic work was also continued. The OAS has been very active over the past 50 years helping to discover, document, excavate, and preserve many archeological sites that would otherwise be lost through modern construction, farming activities, natural

erosion, or vandalism. The annual Spring Digs and the Certification Program (established in 1983) have provided a training ground for a cadre of responsible avocational archeologists who are recognized for their abilities throughout the nation by groups such as the National Park Service. These people have aided in the interpretation of Oklahoma's past by providing a trained workforce for archeologists, including those from the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, in the excavation and salvage of numerous prehistoric and early historic sites. To recognize outstanding service of avocational members to the Society, the Golden Trowel Award was established in 1965. The Robert E. Bell Distinguished Service Award, begun in 1994, acknowledges contributions by professional members.



OAS members working at the Converse site (34JN28), Johnston County, during the 1978 Spring Dig



OAS members organizing excavated materials at the 1992 OAS Spring Dig at the Traders Creek site (34WD5), Woods County. Photo by William Menzie.

The Spring and Fall Meetings are another continuing feature of the OAS; members congregate in different towns across the state each year to hear papers on the latest research and to renew their acquaintances with other members. This year's Spring Meeting in Norman celebrates the OAS's 50th anniversary through an emphasis on past activities and a reunion of long-time

society members. A Reunion Committee has been contacting individuals about coming to the reunion and reminiscing about their past OAS activities. We hope that some of the remaining founding members of the Society will attend. The schedule includes an evening reception (7:00 p.m.) on Friday, April 5th, at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Don Wyckoff (SNOMNH and Department of Anthropology, The University of Oklahoma) and his bluegrass band, the Crosstimbers Ramblers, will provide music and members can take a free tour of the museum. The meeting on Saturday, April 6th, is designed to bring together members, former members, and other interested people to hear about the Society's past and future activities. During the morning, Don Wyckoff will present a historical review of the Society and its digs, illustrated by slides. The Committee also hopes to have histories and photographs from various local OAS chapters. In the afternoon, two papers on current archeological research at the University of Oklahoma are scheduled. These talks range from the upcoming 2002 OAS Spring Dig at the Paleoindian period Jake Bluff site by Lee Bement (Oklahoma Archeological Survey) to the much later Mississippian mound centers presented by John Blitz (Department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma).



OAS members excavating at the Tucker's Knob site (34LT35), Latimer County, 1973 Spring Dig.

Please plan to come to Norman on April 5th and 6th for this special celebration of the Society's contributions to Oklahoma archeology and anthropology at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Festivities kick off Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. and

Saturday at 10:00 a.m. Everyone interested in Oklahoma archeology and anthropology is encouraged to attend. Anyone with suggestions or information on Oklahoma Anthropological Society members, previous or current, who should be contacted about the reunion should send the contact information to:



Dr. Robert E. Bell, the first recipient of the Robert E. Bell Distinguished Service Award, presented at Lawton, Oklahoma at the 1994 OAS Spring Meeting. Photo by Charlette Gifford.

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SURVEY ARCHEOLOGISTS TO HEAD 2002 OAS SPRING DIG AND OU FIELD SCHOOL

Lee Bement and Kent Buehler from the Oklahoma Archeological Survey will be the principal investigators of the excavation of the Paleoindian period Jake Bluff bison kill site (34HP60) during the 2002 OAS Spring Dig. The site is in northwestern Oklahoma, near Woodward. The dates for this dig are Saturday, May 25, through Sunday, June 2. OAS Certification Program seminars will be offered on May 25 (8:30 a.m., General Excavation Techniques; 7:00 p.m., Archeological Research Design) and May 26 (8:30 a.m., Specialized Techniques: Soils). Although you must be a member of the OAS in order to participate in the OAS dig or seminars, you can join the Society at the dig or at any time before the dig. If you would like more information on membership, contact the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, Rt. 1, Box 62B, Cheyenne OK 73628, or the Oklahoma Archeological Survey (405) 325-7211. Web site: www.ou.edu/cas/archsur/jakebluff.htm



Brian Carter, soil scientist from OSU, and Natalie Neustaedter, graduate student from OU, work on bison bone during preliminary investigations at the Jake Bluff site (34HP60), Harper County.

After the OAS dig, a field school sponsored by the Department of Anthropology, The University of Oklahoma, will be held at the Jake Bluff site and the Late Archaic period Certain site (34BK46). It will start June 3 and run until July 26. The Certain site, another bison kill, is near Elk City in Beckham County. Participation in this excavation is limited to students enrolled in the field school.



*Topographical setting of the Certain bison kill site
(34BK46), Beckham County, Oklahoma.*

The Oklahoma Archeological Survey Newsletter is issued quarterly by the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, University of Oklahoma, 111 E. Chesapeake, Norman OK 73019-0575, telephone (405)325-7211. Two thousand copies of the Newsletter were printed by the Oklahoma Geological Survey, Norman, OK at a cost of \$192 to the taxpayers of Oklahoma. COPIES HAVE BEEN DEPOSITED WITH THE PUBLICATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE OF THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES.

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