



# OKLAHOMA ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

## NEWSLETTER

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## DISTINGUISHED WYOMING ARCHEOLOGIST VISITS THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

During the week of March 17<sup>th</sup>, Dr. George Frison (Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, University of Wyoming, and Smithsonian Institute Research Associate) visited the University of Oklahoma. During his visit, Dr. Frison toured the Oklahoma Archeological Survey facilities, visited two Oklahoma Paleoindian bison kills, and met with Survey staff and students from the Department of Anthropology.

Dr. Frison is well known for his long-term research on numerous Paleoindian sites of the Northwest Plains. Work by Dr. Frison and his students has established much of what is currently known of the cultural chronology for this part of the Plains. He has published several books including: *The Casper Site: A Hell Gap Bison Kill on the High Plains*, *Prehistoric Hunters of the High Plains*, *Folsom Tools and Technology at the Hanson Site*, *Wyoming* (with Bruce A. Bradley), *The Agate Basin Site: A Record of the Paleoindian*

*Occupation of the Northwestern High Plains* (with Dennis Stanford), *The Colby Mammoth Site 48WA322* (with Lawrence C. Todd), *The Horner Site: The Type Site of the Cody Cultural Complex* (with L.C. Todd), and *The Mill Iron Site*.

Dr. Frison was invited to Oklahoma to give a lecture as part of the Anthropology Graduate Student Association (AGSA) spring colloquium series. The lecture, cosponsored by AGSA, the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, and the University of Oklahoma Speakers' Bureau, was held on the University of Oklahoma campus and was attended by Survey staff, Department of Anthropology faculty, students, and Oklahoma Anthropological Society members. The talk, titled "Paleoindian Utilization of the High Altitudes in the Central and Southern Rocky Mountains", presented evidence for year round occupation of Alpine environments by prehistoric bison hunting groups. Topics addressed included hunter-gatherer mobility, technology, and hunting and

butchering strategies.

While in Oklahoma, Dr. Frison, accompanied by his wife June, visited the Cooper and Waugh Folsom age bison kill sites in the northwestern part of the state. Dr. Frison, familiar with both of these sites from publications and conference presentations, was very interested in visiting these sites in order to gain a feeling for their setting and the 10,500 ± year old deposits preserved here. Needless to say, Dr. Frison was very impressed with both of these sites and found them to be analogous to several bison kill sites excavated on the Northern Plains. The tour of these sites was led by Lee Bement, joined by Kent Buehler, and graduate students Jesse Ballenger and Scott Brosowske. Dr. Frison had also expressed an interest to visit the Certain bison kill site in Roger Mills County. Unfortunately, this leg of the tour had to be canceled due to muddy roads.

The rest of Dr. Frison's visit was spent touring the Survey and visiting with staff and students. We were very honored to be given the opportunity to showcase the state's abundant cultural resources for such a prominent archeologist. Overall, he was very impressed with the Survey facilities and the quality of research being undertaken in the state.

*Scott D. Brosowske*

### **Archeologists Attend 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Flint Hills Archaeological Conference**

The Flint Hills is a geographic area rich with deposits of Florence chert that extends from north central Oklahoma through central Kansas. In the mid-1970s, several archeological projects were underway that produced new information about the prehistoric occupation in this region. Susan Vehik and Kent Buehler, therefore, organized the first Flint Hills Archaeological Conference in 1979 to bring together these archaeologists to exchange research information. It was so successful that it has continued each spring for the past 20 years with the meetings generally hosted by different universities in Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Missouri.

This year, for the first time, the Flint Hills Conference was hosted by the Wichita Tribe and held at their Tribal Complex and Cultural Center in Anadarko, Oklahoma. In this setting, tribal members from numerous

Oklahoma tribes met with archaeologists working in Oklahoma and Kansas. Marjy Duncan, Lois Albert, and Kent Buehler, staff archeologists with the Survey, and Charles Wallis (Oklahoma Conservation Commission archeologist), as well as students and faculty from the OU Department of Anthropology, attended the March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> meetings. Marjy presented a paper, "Calf Creek Occupation at the Kubik site, North-Central Oklahoma". *Marjy Duncan*

### **Museum of the Red River Expanding**

There are some big changes going on at the Museum of the Red River in Idabel. The Museum closed its doors on January 1, 1998 to get ready for a major expansion of its facilities. The revamped museum's permanent display area will be increased to about four times its previous size. A separate room for traveling collections of art, ethnographic and archeological displays and another for meetings will be included in the new design. The new building will include a visible storage area, and drawer based type collections of projectile points, stone and bone tool types, and ceramic decoration styles for people wishing to identify archeological items they might have found. All the collections will be housed in climate controlled conditions to enhance preservation of archeological and ethnographic items. Construction is slated to begin with the demolition of much of the present structure in April 1998, and completion of the new structure is scheduled for April or May 1999. The new exhibits should be in place for a grand re-opening in June 1999. In the interim, a newsletter entitled *Sherds* will keep patrons apprised of the reconstruction progress, and will also highlight aspects of the Museum's collections. Director Henry Moy reported that a permanent curator and an education director will be hired early in 1999 after a national search. Archeological Survey Staff Archeologist Larry Neal is Vice President of the Idabel Museum Society's Board. *Larry Neal*

### **Oklahoma Academy of Science Test Excavations**

As part of the spring field meeting for the Oklahoma Academy of Science, several staff members from the Survey directed test excavations at a small prehistoric camp (34MR106) along the Washita River in the Arbuckle Mountains. The site is on a low terrace near the river and a small creek. It was discovered during surveys south of Davis in 1997. We didn't know the age of the

site in 1997, but surface finds indicated the use of Frisco and Oil Creek cherts from 30-40 km east of the area. This suggested a possible base camp or village location. The Academy excavations were designed to provide participants with excavation experience and a look at an archeological site in this region. The tests were also intended to delimit the nature and extent of the site's cultural deposits and, possibly, provide information on when the site was occupied. Richard Drass, Lois Albert, Valli Powell, and Dave Morgan from the Survey directed the excavations with assistance from Frank Winchell of the Corps of Engineers.

Four 1x1 meter squares were set out and partially excavated with the help of nine volunteers from the Oklahoma Academy of Science. The four units were spaced across the western and northern ends of the terrace where surface evidence indicated the most likely location for cultural deposits; the survey work had discovered flakes along the terrace slopes in this area. The soil was sandy and after removal of grass roots, it was easy to dig and screen. None of the excavations revealed a high concentration of material, and it appears that this was a temporary camp location. Most squares were dug to only 30 or 40 cm. However, half of Test Square #1 was excavated to 60 cm and yielded the only tool from the testing, a small arrow tip fragment. Moreover, limestone and sandstone in Test Squares #4 and 6 may indicate the remains of hearths or other features. Although only limited materials were recovered during this testing, it did provide additional information on one pre-historic camp in the Arbuckle Mountains area. The arrow point may indicate a Late Prehistoric camp, possibly a hunting camp used by groups occupying more permanent base camps and villages. The work also provided an introduction to Oklahoma archeology for several Oklahoma Academy of Science members.

#### **40<sup>th</sup> Caddo Conference Held in Arkadelphia**

During March 12-14, Robert Brooks (State Archeologist and Survey Director), Larry Neal, and Lois Albert (Staff Archeologists) attended the annual Caddo Conference held in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. A number of professional and avocational archeologists, students, and Caddos also attended. A welcoming reception was held on Thursday evening, March 12, and a barbecue dinner on Friday evening. The formal sessions of the conference were conducted on Friday and Saturday. Bob presented a paper,

coauthored by graduate student Bob Stokes, titled "Data Recovery Excavations at Graystone Estates #1 (34TU129), Tulsa County, Oklahoma". Lois talked about "The Oklahoma Anthropological Society's Certification Program", and Larry gave a paper "Middle Holocene Archeology in Northeastern Oklahoma", coauthored by Richard Drass. Jesse Ballenger also presented a paper titled "Isolates, Individuals, and Innovation: A Cody Example", and K.C. Kraft gave one about "A Hempstead Engraved Bottle from the Confluence of the Cimarron and Arkansas Rivers, Pawnee County, Oklahoma". They are graduate students of Don Wyckoff (Department of Anthropology and Oklahoma Museum of Natural History). Three members of the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma (David Scholes, Stacey Halfmoon, and Phil Cross) also presented talks. Next year's conference will be in northeastern Texas.

A new publication on the Caddos was available at the conference. Its title is "The Native History of the Caddo: Their Place in Southeastern Archeology and Ethnohistory", edited by Timothy K. Perttula and James E. Bruseth, and published by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, University of Texas at Austin, Pickle Research Center, 10100 Burnet Road, Austin TX 78758.

#### **Cameron University Class Works at Hester-Adams Site, 34ML83.**

An *Introduction to Archeology* class from Cameron University spent the weekend of April 25-26, 1998, learning about excavation techniques at the Hester-Adams site in McClain County. Dr. Sharon Methvin brought 24 students to the site to dig under the direction of Survey Staff Archeologist Larry Neal. Though the weekend weather was less than ideal, we opened eleven squares, several of which were incomplete from last year. Saturday was warm and very windy, and the students learned the joys of sand in the eyes, ears, hair, etc. On Sunday the rain that came as we tried to backfill washed away the sand experience, I'm sure. This is the second year that Cameron students have participated in this class exercise. The Hester-Adams site is located on a ridge above a spring, and is between 60 cm and one meter in depth. The primary component relates to the Calf Creek culture that seems to be associated with the long hot and dry climatic event called the Altithermal about 5,000-6,000 years ago. Stems of the large, basal notched Calf Creek points, scrapers, drills, and flake tools have been recovered on this and previous class exercises involving

students from OU, University of Central Oklahoma, and Cameron. We extend our continuing gratitude to landowner/OU alum Angie Hester, and to the lessee Mr. Jim Strong for their cooperation in allowing us to introduce the rudiments of archeological excavation to these students.

Larry Neal

### Upcoming Events

*May 18 - June 26 Summer Field Session of the University of Oklahoma's Late Mississippian Archaeological Project in Alabama.* This is a field school for the University of Oklahoma, to be held in the Black Warrior Valley in western Alabama near the well known Mississippian period site of Moundville. Field Director Mark Rees could use a few more volunteers during his time in the field. If you are interested, contact Mark at the Department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma 455 W Lindsey, Room 521, Norman OK 73019-0535; email marees@ou.edu; telephone (405) 325-6824 (lab) or 447-1796 (home).

*May 23 - 31 Oklahoma Anthropological Society Spring Dig* This year's OAS Spring Dig will be held at the Kubik site, a Calf Creek site in Kay County, near Kaw Lake in north-central Oklahoma. Camping will be at the Osage Cove Group Camp (Meadowlark Loop) on Kaw Lake. The charge is \$7/night for RVs and trailers, and \$3/night for tents. Registration is \$5/person for four days or less, and \$10/person for over four days. In addition to the excavation, a laboratory tent will be in operation, and several seminars will be given. The seminars are "General Excavation Techniques" (5/23, 9 a.m.), "Public Education" (5/23, 7 p.m.), "Specialized Techniques: Flintknapping" (5/24, 2 p.m.), and "General Laboratory Techniques" (5/25, 9 a.m.). The fee for the seminars is \$2/person/seminar. You must be an OAS member to participate, but you may join at the dig. The cost is \$20/year for a basic membership, with additional family members \$3 each. If you are interested in obtaining more information about this activity, contact Lois Albert or Dave Morgan at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, 111 E. Chesapeake, Norman OK 73019-5111; telephone (405) 325-7211; email: lealbert@ou.edu.

*June 1 - July 10 University of Oklahoma Archeological Field School at the Certain Bison Kill Site* in Beckham County, Oklahoma. This is a 2000 year old bison kill with at least seven kill episodes, and is probably the largest bison

kill site on the Southern Plains. Because of the limited space in the excavation areas, no volunteers can be accommodated. However, visitors are welcome **BY ADVANCE ARRANGEMENT ONLY**. For more information, contact Lee Bement (lbement@ou.edu) or Kent Buehler (kbuehler@ou.edu) at the Survey (address above). After the field school begins, contact Lisa (lwhitman@ou.edu) at the address above.

*June 1 - July 31 University of Oklahoma Archeological Field School at the Jere Shine Site* near Montgomery, Alabama. The site is a multimound Mississippian period town in central Alabama. For more information, contact Dr. Cameron Wesson at the Department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma; telephone (405) 325-4458; email: c-wesson@ou.edu

*October 1 Public Lecture by Richard Leakey.* This will be held at 5:30 p.m. on the OU campus. More information about the title and location of the talk will be in the next issue of this newsletter.

Newsletter editors: Lois Albert and Marjy Duncan