



Louisiana Archaeological Society

NEWSLETTER

CHARLES E. PEARSON, Newsletter Editor

COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS, INC.,

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70802

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A Message From The President

You have won an important round in the fight to preserve the Tchefuncte site and other sites on Cane Bayou in St. Tammany Parish. Your letters and calls to legislators and other key persons in the state did it. We were joined, as most of you know, by the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and other groups who had equal though different interests in preventing the destruction of Cane Bayou, a Scenic Waterway, with its natural and cultural resources, recreational usages and esthetic beauty. The total Louisiana membership of all organizations involved in the fight is somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 persons. We will continue to monitor the Cane Bayou situation. We have also developed a program which will involve the news media to generate public awareness and support, which we will use if we need to. Presenting a united front, as we have done, and also uniting with other organizations and concerned citizens gets results.

The LAS is stronger and more united than ever before, but many members are also more frustrated than ever before. That frustration has increased through the years with the increasing realization that we, "the Stewards of the Past", have not been able to halt the senseless destruction of our cultural resources, nor has anyone else or any state agency. Possibly, worst of all, the private landowner, who could be fined and imprisoned for killing a game animal (a renewable resource) out of season on his property can obliterate archaeological sites on that same property. None of this is new to us. Every president of the LAS has presented the same message- "something must be done".

Earlier this year, I received a mandate from the LAS members, through the Executive Committee,

to deliver a message. That message reflects the feelings of the majority of our members, and that is that "too little is being done to save important sites from needless destruction". The message has been communicated to a number of people in the state. It was not intended as a personal attack on anyone. The system is not working as it should and the system needs to be improved.

I have received several replies to that message. From those replies one can see that there are several areas creating problems, including: a lack of communication, a need for more laws, and a need for greater funding. As we look at the problems, we should remember that the departments that have been criticized recently are manned by our friends. They need our help if they are ever to be able to respond as we would have them to do. As we begin to look at the solutions to various problems it also becomes apparent that if there is any blame to place for the problems, some of it must be placed squarely on our shoulders. Improving the quality of the management of our cultural resources is not a spectator sport. Each of us must do our part to effectively communicate with the State Archaeologist, state parks, legislators, the governor and local politicians. They all need to know what is on our minds when it first starts to trouble us. They, in turn, need to respond promptly, take whatever action they can, and let us know what action has been taken. Simply improving communications at all levels will eliminate many misconceptions and prevent some events from becoming problems.

The Office of the State Archaeologist has to operate within the laws governing it. That is spelled out in a couple of letters I received. What we need to do, then, is to put more laws on the books to give that department more muscle and

teeth. We want them to have the power to act to preserve our cultural heritage. I have heard from several of you that a few states have found better ways to do the job through better laws. The LAS will work to have the proper legislation passed, but I believe the task of finding out just what those laws are belongs to the department being affected. That department could find out just how other states have done it and then let us know. I hope that by our October meeting we will have copies from them of legislation from other states which can serve as models for our state. If they will do that, then we can work toward getting the proper legislation introduced and passed.

Everyone needs more funding. We are particularly interested in our Universities, The Division of Archaeology and the Division of State Parks. We all need to let our legislators know just how important these are to us. Please ask your legislator to give them one hundred percent of the budget they need. Let your legislators know that you will give them your support but you expect them to help us in the proper management of our cultural and natural resources.

By now many of you have received LAS Raffle Tickets. The money from the sale of these is needed by our organization. If you did not receive tickets and would like to help the LAS by selling some, please call me at (504) 892-9435 or write to 112 North Drive, Covington, LA 70433. First prize will be \$200 cash and second prize \$100 cash. Any individual who sells 300 tickets will receive a life membership or past bulletins, shirts etc. of equal value. If we sell all 5000 tickets we could, if the Executive Committee approves it, give a \$500 anthropology/archaeology scholarship to one of the state's universities. The school would be selected by a person drawn from the raffle tickets. The scholarship would carry the name of the LAS and the name of the person picked in the drawing. In order to do this, we need everyone's participation.

Joe Manuel

LAS FIELD SCHOOL

A reminder to all members that the Louisiana Archaeological Society Field School will be held October 23rd - 26th at Fountainebleau State Park in Mandeville, Louisiana. Dr. Dave Davis of Tulane University, is Field School Chairman. Everyone should have received a flier which provides information on the field school, costs, facilities, etc. The field school should be of real

interest to the membership and everyone is urged to attend. Sites to be examined include the original Tchefuncte site and the 19th century plantation home and sugar mill of Bernard de Marigny. If you wish to attend, send your registration form in immediately. Cabins are available at the park to house 65 people or you may bring campers or tents. This is going to be one of the best field schools the LAS has ever had so try to make it. If you need additional information contact: Jack Moore, 6 Oaklawn Drive, Covington, LA 70433.

CALL FOR PAPERS LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY 1987 ANNUAL MEETING

The 1987 Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society will be held in New Orleans, January 24th and 25th, 1987. The theme of the meeting will be "Preserving our Louisiana Heritage". If you wish to present a paper, send the title and an abstract of not more than 150 words to: Dan Shipman, 2100 Kentucky Avenue, Kenner, Louisiana 70062. Paper titles must be received by October 15, 1986.

The meetings will be held in the renovated U. S. Mint building on Esplanade Avenue. Arrangements are being made with the Richelieu Hotel for reduced room rates for meeting attendees. A mailing providing complete information on the meeting will be sent soon.

PETRIFIED WOOD by Paul V. Heinrich

A lithic material frequently used by prehistoric populations for the manufacture of artifacts is petrified wood. Within the upper Gulf Coast area of eastern Texas and western Louisiana petrified wood was commonly used, and often formed a significant portion of the lithic artifact assemblage. This paper examines the use of petrified wood in this region and provides information on the origin, distribution and types of petrified wood found.

At sites near Lake Fort within Wood County in East Texas, Pertulla (1984) found a consistent use of petrified wood throughout time to produce certain artifacts. Typically, cores and large bifacial tools, e.g. axes, utilized bifaces, and large projectile points, were made from petrified wood, sedimentary quartzite, or coarse-grained chert. These locally procured materials were used for tools designed to have a durable edge

suitable for multiple uses. Tools that needed to possess a sharp cutting edge, e.g. small projectile points, perforators, and scrapers, were made from fine-grained, generally imported, chert. However a few of the smaller projectile points were made from petrified wood and other local materials (Perttula 1984:142-143).

Other sites within East Texas and western Louisiana exhibit a variable usage of petrified wood for the manufacture of artifacts. For example, within Caddo Parish, Louisiana, at the John Pearce site (16 CD 56), only about 16 to 20% of the debris and debitage, 7% of the nonprojectile point tools and 2.5% of the projectile points were made from petrified wood. The majority of the lithic artifacts were made from local gravel chert (Webb et al. 1971). At the Wolfshead site (41 SA 117) in San Augustine County, Texas, over 65% of projectile points, including San Patrice and lanceolate forms, and other tools consisted of petrified wood (Duffield 1963). There appeared to be a lack of any consistent association of material and artifact type at either site.

Near Eagle Hill within the Peason Ridge Military Reservation in Sabine Parish, Louisiana, many sites contain an exceptional abundance of artifacts made on petrified wood. About 94 to 98% of the artifacts found at the Eagle Hill II site (16 SA 50) consisted of a massive petrified wood called "Eagle Hill Chert" (Heinrich 1986). A trace, to just over 1% of the artifacts are of regular petrified wood, including some palm wood. The remaining artifacts consisted of gravel chert and sedimentary quartzite. At the Eagle Hill I site (16 SA 8), 98% of a 1,100 artifact sample drawn from over 9,000 artifacts collected by Servello and Bianchi (1983:392-403) are of Eagle Hill Chert. Their collection of over 9,000 artifacts contained numerous large secondary flakes that ranged in size from 2 to 7 cm, cores, core trimming elements, primary flakes, and Paleo-Indian tools that included projectile points. The heavy and similar patination of these artifacts suggests that the Eagle Hill I site was a major locus for the manufacture and fabrication of tools by Paleo-Indian populations using Eagle Hill Chert, a local, massive petrified wood. Frank Servello (Personal communication 1985) noted that some of these artifacts apparently have been reused and reworked by later populations.

The areal and temporal variations for the use of petrified wood for Texas and western Louisiana is currently unknown. It seems to have been a material that was used when other more suitable materials were lacking.

Origin

A wide variety of minerals, including silica, silicates, carbonates, sulfates, sulfides, oxides, and phosphates can permineralize wood to form petrified wood (Adam 1920). However, petrified wood most commonly consists of silica (SiO_2) in the form of either opal or chert (Stein 1982). Most, if not all, artifacts made from petrified wood consist of this type of petrified wood, silicified wood.

Silicified wood is usually found within one of two types of strata. First, it occurs within accumulations of volcanic ash, tuff, and breccia, e.g. the petrified forests of Yellowstone National Park. Second, silicified wood also occurs within sands, silts, and muds deposited by rivers and streams that have hardened to sandstones, siltstones, or shale. Typically, the sandstones, siltstones and shales that contain silicified wood also contain redeposited tuffaceous materials or volcanic ash. The silicified wood found in Petrified National Forest in Arizona and the Miocene strata of Texas occur within such strata (Knauth 1972:44).

Silicified wood forms in these deposits because of the presence of dissolved silica within the groundwater. The silica is derived from the dissolution of the volcanic material by the groundwater within the volcanics or sediments. This dissolved silica, in the form of monomeric silicic acid, attaches itself to the lignin and cellulose of the wood. With time, a layer of the acid forms on the exposed woody tissues. The acid dehydrates into silica gel, and additional layers of the acid attach to this silica gel eventually filling and encasing the wood with silica gel. A rapid loss of water converts the silica gel into amorphous silica (opal) (Leo and Barghoorn 1976, Scurfield and Segnit 1984).

Within 10 to 40 million years, the opal of the silicified wood further dehydrates and crystallizes into microcrystalline quartz (chert). Factors such as temperature and pressure may speed or slow the process, but eventually the opal of the silicified wood becomes chert (Stein 1982). During the change from opal to chert in silicified wood, the relict woody texture may either be retained or lost.

During the silicification process, various materials and minerals may be incorporated into the silica gel. For example, manganese dioxides, iron oxides, organic matter and authigenic clay can alone, or in combination, color the opal or chert that forms silicified wood. Because each piece of wood becomes silicified in its own local geochemical environment, the trace and major

materials and elements that it contains will vary greatly from piece to piece even within the same stratum (Knauth 1972:45, 1981). Therefore, trace element analysis is generally useless in tracing the source of any silicified wood.

Types

Within the Tertiary strata that outcrop in southeast to southwest Texas and into Louisiana, three types of silicified wood can be recognized. They are: 1. rather nondescript silicified wood, 2. palm wood and 3. a massive silicified wood.

The nondescript silicified wood consists of silicified wood that possesses a recognizable woody structure. The relict woody structure is fine and nondescript, and is not identifiable without oriented thin sections, specialized references, and comparative material (Blackwell et al. 1983:2). Therefore, this type is best described simply as "silicified wood".

The second type of silicified wood is commonly called "palm wood" by geologist and rock collectors. Palm wood is a group of fossil woods that contain prominent rod-like structures within the regular grain of the silicified wood. Depending upon the angle at which they are cut by fracture, these rod-like structures show up as spots, tapering rods or continuous lines. The rod-like structures are sclerenchyma bundles that comprise part of the wood tissues that gave vertical strength to the Oligocene and Miocene tree genera, Palmoxylon (Blackwell et al. 1983:4-5).

The third type of silicified wood is massive silicified wood. The silicification of the wood or subsequent transformation of silica gel to opal or chert has obliterated any trace of the grain of the former wood. The destruction of the structure of the silicified wood has resulted in a massive opal or chert that lacks any visible indication of its origin. Because of its variable, massive nature and heterogeneous trace element composition, many investigators (e.g. Jolly 1982 and Jolly and Kerr 1984) have failed to recognize the nature of this material. The Eagle Hill Chert found within west-central Louisiana is a local, massive silicified wood (Heinrich 1986). A similar massive silicified wood called "golden palm" occurs in equivalent strata within east-central Texas (Leland Patterson, personal communication 1985).

Occurrence

Within Texas, silicified wood is most abundant in an arcuate belt stretching from Goliad to Livingston (Leland Patterson, personal communication 1985). The belt also extends into

western Louisiana within northern Vernon and southern Sabine Parishes (Heinrich 1986). The silicified wood found in this belt occurs within tuffaceous sedimentary rocks of the Fleming and Catahoula Groups (Plummer 1932).

Outcrops of older Tertiary strata within East Texas and in bands parallel to the Gulf Coastal Plain, also contain scattered silicified wood (Plummer 1932:592,674). The gravels of the overlying Willis and Goliad Formations and the modern river and stream gravels contain usable silicified wood eroded from these rocks. Similarly, in East Texas, the Uvalde Gravel and the lag deposits derived from it contains cobbles and pebbles of silicified wood (Byrd 1971, Perttula 1984).

Petrified wood has also been reported from other strata in Louisiana, but its composition is currently undetermined. Outcrops of the Sandel, Cockfield, and Summit Hall Formations in Sabine Parish contain petrified wood. The Logansport Formation in De Soto Parish and the Wilcox Group in Webster Parish also contain petrified wood. Finally, reworked cobbles and pebbles of silicified wood occur within Pleistocene gravels and sands (Heinrich 1986).

Summary

Petrified wood was a material commonly used prehistoric peoples in Louisiana and Texas to manufacture artifacts. It typically consists of wood permineralized by silica to form silicified wood. The silicified wood consists of either opal or chert. In the field, three general types of silicified wood can be recognized on the basis of visual characteristics. They are palm wood, nondescript silicified wood, and massive silicified wood. The massive silicified wood, in cases, may not even be recognized as silicified wood.

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MEETINGS

Southeastern Archaeological Conference

November 5-8, 1986
Radisson Plaza Hotel
Nashville, Tennessee

For information contact:

Carl Kuttruff
Tennessee Division of Archaeology
5103 Edmondson Pike
Nashville, TN 37211
(615) 741-1588

International Conference on Wet Site Archaeology

December 12-14, 1986
J. Wayne Reitz Union
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

For information contact:

Barbara A. Purdy
Department of Anthropology
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

CHAPTER NEWS

Delta Chapter Reported by Marjorie Friedman

The Delta Chapter is sponsoring the 1987 LAS Annual Meetings and the theme is "Preserving Our Louisiana Heritage". It is of great significance that we, as archaeologists, make this our prime concern as we are often in conflict with the pressure of economic growth and must reach equitable solutions. Dr. Ivor Noel Hume, Director of the archaeology program at Historic Williamsburg, will be the guest speaker at the meetings. Dr. Noel Hume is an internationally recognized historical archaeologist and we are honored to have him attend and speak to our membership. Bettie Pendley is convention chairman and Dan Shipman is program chairman for the 1987 meetings. Remember, the Delta Chapter wants to see you in January 1987.

We will all miss Roger Baudier and his sweet, shy smile. He made a real contribution to our chapter and to the LAS. The St. Bernard project, a tribute to his leadership, provides much new material about prehistoric settlement in that area.

Northeast Chapter Reported by Maxine Spence

Officers for 1986 are:

President: Bernard McKenzie
Vice President: Dave Kleppinger
Secretary: Maxine Spence
Treasurer: Charles McKenzie, Jr.

The chapter has had excellent speakers this year. In February, Dr. Wade Meade of Louisiana Tech University presented a talk on the excavation of a site in Bienville Parish. The site, 16 BI 91, yielded over 200 projectile points and a large quantity of ceramics. Projectile points recovered include the early types Meserve and San Patrice, as well as later forms. Occupation at the site spanned the period from ca. 10,000 BP through historic times.

In March, Mary Rose Bassett and Kindra Craft presented a program on the Cosper Cemetery entitled "History in my Backyard". The cemetery is located in Swartz, Louisiana, and the earliest interment is dated 1850. In April, Jamie Whelan, a graduate student in geography at LSU, gave a talk on excavations and historical research undertaken at the Goodland Cypress Sawmill in Terrebone Parish. The excavations, funded by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and

Development, examined the residential area of black employees of the sawmill which was occupied between 1903 and 1916.

In May, George Castille, an archaeologist with Coastal Environments, Inc. in Baton Rouge, spoke on excavations conducted in New Orleans relative to the construction of the New Mississippi River Bridge.

The Northeast Chapter meets in Room 101 of the New Chemistry Building at NLU the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Northwest Chapter Reported by David Jeane

In April, Claude McCrocklin presented a talk updating the chapter's work on site survey along the Red River. In May, Dr. Pete Gregory of Northwestern Louisiana State University, presented a talk on the Spanish colonial period Los Adaes site near Natchitoches.

Imperial Calcasieu Chapter Reported by Joe Frank

Dr. Birdwell of Lamar University in Beaumont was the guest speaker at the April meeting. She presented a talk on modern-day Maya in Central America.

Mr. Philip Rivet, of the Louisiana Division of Archaeology, was the guest speaker at the May meeting. He spoke on dugout canoes in Louisiana. Some members of the chapter are now trying to relocate canoes previously reported in the Calcasieu River.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING Natchez, Mississippi May 31, 1986

Reported by Linda Church

The spring meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society was in Natchez, Mississippi at the Ramada Inn, with Joe Manuel, President, presiding. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Mid-South Archaeological Conference.

Linda Church, Recording Secretary, read the minutes from the last Executive Meeting and they

were approved as read. The Treasurer, Brian Duhe, gave the Treasurer's Report. The balance in the checking account is \$2471.48 and the total funds amount to \$9677.85. Brian also gave the membership report. There were 401 members at the close of 1985 but only 181 persons have renewed their membership to date. Brian stated that it is typical to have a decline in membership at this time of the year and hoped that the membership would pick up. He also announced evidence of a big turn-around in membership which he reported as being consistent with the LAS roster for the past 10 years. Joe Manuel suggested hustling local chapter members to join LAS. Brian offered to send each chapter representative a list of those members who need to renew their membership just as a reminder.

Joe Manuel asked Linda Church to read a letter of resignation from the Newsletter Editor, Charlie Pearson. Brian was asked to write a letter Charlie accepting his resignation. Several names were discussed for replacement but no decision was made. Rich Weinstein said that it would be helpful to have a revised membership list sent to the Editor 1 or 2 weeks before the mailing of the Newsletter.

There was no Bulletin report.

Joe Manuel gave the Field School report. He said that Dave Davis gave a revised version of the report to the state and the Department of Parks approved it. Kass Byrd will send a contract soon for signatures. Areas in the Fontainebleau State Park considered for excavation are: 1. the original Tchefuncet site and 2. the structural remains of the Marigny Plantation.

Cabins are available at the park which can sleep 65. The date of the field school is the weekend of October 23rd through 25th, 1986. An alternate date has been set for two weeks later if the weather is inclement. The cost for the field school is \$15 per person and \$20 per family. Hours toward certification will be decided by Richard Beavers. The report on the Certification Committee stated that Kass Byrd sent reading lists to candidates some 2 years ago and there has been little response.

Old Business:

Copies of the Northlake Chapter Convention (1986 LAS Annual Meeting) financial report were distributed by Joe Manuel. Recca Jones was asked to send in a financial report for the Monroe meetings (1985 LAS Annual Meeting) which is still outstanding.

New Business:

Those attending were urged to be thinking of nominees for vice-president/president elect and recording secretary. Also for nominees for the Governor's Award contact Kass Byrd and for the James A. Ford Award contact Joe Manuel.

Joe Manuel suggested a raffle as a fund raiser. This would go toward bulletin publication and support of the field school. It was suggested that the tickets be \$1 each. The motion to hold the raffle was passed 11 to 1.

It was announced that Linda Church has re-issued a request for a monetary grant from Amoco Oil Company.

Skip Newfield invited everyone present to the 1987 Annual Meeting to be hosted by the Delta Chapter and held in New Orleans the weekend of January 24-25, 1987. Accommodations will be available at the Richelieu Hotel for \$50 per room. The hotel is located one half block from the renovated U.S. Mint where the meetings will be held. It is hoped that a display of a portion of the Tunica Treasure will set up for the meetings. There will be a reception at the Presbytere on Friday night. Dr. Ivor Noel Hume has promised to speak at the meeting.

There was a discussion about the loss of Dr. Mary Sandford from her position at USL. She had been a professor of anthropology and a frequent speaker at the Lafayette Chapter meetings. Brian was asked to write a letter in her behalf.

Rich Weinstein noted that the Division of Archaeology is offering matching grants in the state to conduct surveys or excavations. He said that individuals often contact Coastal Environments, Inc. indicating their willingness to put up matching monies but who want the money

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to go to a non-profit organization. Since Coastal Environments is not a non-profit organization, it cannot accept these funds. Rich wonders if the LAS, a non-profit organization, could accept private funding, receive matching funds from the state, and then employ private firms such as CEI to do the archaeological work. The contract would be written by the LAS, and the final report would be printed in the Bulletin. We agreed the LAS would have to be very careful in pursuing this and it would be wise to consult with an attorney, and form a steering committee. The committee would consist of: Brian Duhe, Rich Weinstein, Dan Shipman, Farrell Latour, and Mark Dupuy. It was also brought out that the LAS itself could possibly apply for grants for its own research.

Steve Sieracki suggested that the LAS make a concerted effort to raise the profile of the LAS. He suggested displays be set up at the airport and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries on Williams Boulevard. Steve will look into this.

Joe Manuel expressed concern over the lack of aggression exhibited by the Division of Archaeology. He cited the example of a privately owned railroad at Fontainebleau State Park being traded for a north-east sector of the park whose cultural resources are unknown. In essence, this is allowing state properties to change to private ownership without implementation of a state ordinance calling for an archaeological survey. It was also brought out that recently a private collection, which includes pot-hunted material, was donated to the State Archives, presumably for a tax deduction. Brian Duhe suggested that a letter be written to Kass Byrd protesting the donation and requesting greater aggression by the Division of Archaeology on future, similar issues. Brian agreed to write the letter.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DUES RENEWAL 1986

Regular Membership	()	Annually \$15.00
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