

# Louisiana Archaeological Society

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 4, No. 2



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## FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Visiting Speakers' Program: members of L.A.S. will note on the next page that the Executive Committee has voted to help the chapters in establishing a visiting speakers' program, which will have the double purpose of affording variety to the chapter programs and of enlarging acquaintance among members from various parts of the state. The idea is that each chapter will have a representative on the state-wide committee, with this local representative having the responsibility of (1) securing names of local members who are willing to visit other chapters for the purpose of giving programs, (2) securing the titles or topics about which the speakers are willing to talk, (3) reporting these to the central office, (4) offering to his chapter the names and topics of speakers from other chapters who are willing to come to a meeting of the local chapter, (5) reporting through the central office the times and places of chapter meetings, and (6) making final arrangements for the visits. It is understood that local chapters will pay travel expenses of speakers but no honorarium is expected. The central office for the rotating program exchanges is the office of the Corresponding Secretary, Brian J. Duhe, P.O. Drawer B, Reserve, LA 70084.

The meeting places, days and hours for each chapter are included in this issue of newsletter, along with each chapter report. Each chapter

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should make a note of the meeting times and places for future reference. This program can be very successful and worth while, but it takes work at each end for it to succeed. If you live in North Louisiana and wish to have a program about shell midden excavation in the coastal marshes, or about Tchefuncte and Poverty Point sites around Lake Pontchartrain, here is your chance. If you live in South Louisiana and wish to see the beauties of Caddoan pottery or Paleo-Indian points and excavations, here is your chance. If you live in Lake Charles and wish to hear about something other than cannibals, here you go. When Brian gets your responses, he will submit information to us and it will be available in the newsletter.

State Reorganization, Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission and L.A.S.: the January newsletter indicated that the future of the state commission and of the conduct and supervision of archaeological matters in Louisiana could be threatened by plans for reorganization of state agencies. I am pleased to report to you that these pressures are somewhat eased and that future plans for the protection of the state's antiquities and conduct of archaeology in the state will probably be acceptable to L.A.S. members. Recent information, including a cordial letter to Commission members from Ms. Sandra Thompson, indicate that the present office and staff will be continued and will function as in the past, until the legal status, duties and responsibilities of the office and Commission are worked out in the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, within the Office of Program Development. Future plans will be discussed at the next Commission meeting, May 12, and the L.A.S. members will be informed.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Louisiana Archaeological Society  
Natchitoches, Louisiana  
March 26, 1977

Thomas M. Ryan, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Sherwood Gagliano at 7:30 p.m. Those in attendance included: S.M. Gagliano, W.S. Baker, Dan Shipman, Jon Gibson, Clarence Webb, Tom Ryan, Les Davis, Brian Duhe, Dale Brown, Joe Frank, D. Chevalier, Lynn Sibley, Charles Collins, and Debbie Woodiel.

A motion was made to table the minutes of the New Orleans Executive Committee meeting. The minutes will appear in the next Bulletin. Motion seconded and passed. Brian Duhe presented each committee member with a packet outlining the meeting agenda. President Gagliano thanked Brian for the presentation.

The Treasurer's Report shows \$3,449 cash on hand. The Treasurer deposited \$2,000 in interest bearing accounts at First Federal Savings and Loan, Winnfield, Louisiana. Interest is 6.5 percent. Motion made by Les Davis that the Executive Committee endorse the purchase of a certificate of deposit and approve all expenditures by the Treasurer for the previous year. Motion

seconded by Charles Collins and passed. Motion made by Brian Duhe that the Treasurer establish a petty cash account of \$500 to be dispersed by the Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary. Motion seconded by Dan Shipman and duly passed.

The editor reported that he has received only three articles for the 1976 Bulletin. Discussion of bulletin length and article content followed. It was agreed that the 1976 Bulletin would not be published until the editor has received material for approximately 150 pages.

Dale Brown reported on public relations and the need for wider public exposure to Louisiana archaeology. Discussion of a LAS sponsored archaeological guidebook directed toward the general public followed. Motion made by Charles Collins that the President appoint a committee to explore the feasibility of a LAS sponsored archaeological guidebook. Motion seconded by Dan Shipman and passed. President Gagliano appointed Debbie Woodiel, Smokey Joe Frank and Dale Brown to the committee.

Brian Duhe reported on the overall decrease in 1977 membership. Discussion followed. It was agreed that the Corresponding Secretary will send a reminder notice to all old members who have not renewed their 1977 membership.

Debbie Woodiel, Jon Gibson, and Tom Ryan reported on plans for the 1977 Summer Field Workshop. The workshop is scheduled for 22, 23, and 24 July and will be held in central Louisiana, possibly in the Jonesville area. A specific site location will be published in the next Newsletter.

Assistant editor Clarence Webb requested chapter reports and articles by April 1. Webb also requested dates of each chapter meeting for publication in the Newsletter.

Discussion of the speaker program followed. President Gagliano requested that each chapter establish a speaker representative to be made available to other chapters on an exchange basis. Programs details will be made available in the Newsletter.

Brian Duhe presented samples of belt buckles and bumper stickers for consideration by the Society. It was agreed that the belt buckles were too expensive (\$10) and would not be appropriate. Brisk discussion of the bumper stickers ensued. It was agreed that Debbie Woodiel would sponsor competition for the best LAS bumper sticker slogan. The prize, to be judged by the Executive Committee, will be a free year's membership in the Society.

The Society's role in cultural resource management was discussed at some length. A brisk discussion followed and several opinions were expressed.

The agenda for the next meeting will include student memberships, registration fee for the annual meeting, and the large number of papers given at the annual meeting. Meeting adjourned at 11 p.m.

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## 1977 LAS FIELD WORKSHOP

The 1977 Summer Field Workshop will be held on July 22, 23, and 24. A specific site has not been selected at this time but we hope to hold the workshop in central Louisiana, possibly in the Jonesville area. A variety of activities are planned with each participant having an opportunity to try their hand at map reading, map making, recording site stratigraphy, artifact analysis, and preparing a site grid. Both slide seminars and actual field exercises are planned. We are anticipating an active workshop which will include a picnic dinner in the field on Saturday night, July 23. Registration for the entire workshop, including the picnic dinner, is only \$5. This will be an opportunity for all to share knowledge, experience, and generally pass a good time. Watch the Newsletter for specific site details and local accommodations. Mark July 22 - 24 on your calendar and make plans to attend our first LAS workshop.

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### LAS PERSONALITIES

Jon Lee Gibson

by Clarence H. Webb,  
Assistant Editor, L.A.S.

Jon Lee Gibson is the immediate Past-President of the Louisiana Archaeological Society--not the retiring president, because Jon and I decided long ago that a man need not be retiring and full of false modesty. He should have self-esteem and be proud of what he accomplishes. Then he should accomplish something to be proud of. Women, too, you male chauvinists. Insofar as LAS is concerned, Jon has every reason to be proud, because he has been a wheel-horse in the young organization: a founder, member of the Executive Committee, first President-elect, second President and, simultaneously, its only Editor. He has produced four top-notch newsletters every year; the two volumes of LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY have attained an enviable quality in a very short time; and all publications have achieved a good balance between the interests of the professional and the avocational archaeologist. Just last week a professional in another state wrote to tell me that he wishes to submit an article to LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGY because "the LAS Bulletin might easily become the leading source of information on Poverty Point culture in the country".

My first field trip with Jon was a dozen or more years ago, when Pete Gregory and I were scrounging around the wilds of Catahoula Lake, and Jon, then a student of Pete's at Northwestern, met us at the Cad Mound site. After the usual amenities and gestures, like shaking hands, kicking dust, scanning the woods, inquiring about families, taking a drink of water, looking at the weather (hot, dry), walking around the site, and an unmentionable or two, we decided to profile the edge of a road ditch. I mention these



JON GIBSON IN THE FIELD AT COULEE CROW, VERMILION RIVER, ST. MARTIN PARISH.  
PHOTO BY MIKE MAYER, USL OFFICE OF PUBLICATIONS.

details because that's the way field testing was done in LaSalle Parish then, before the days of contract archaeology and hourly wages; leisurely, that is, unless something "hot" turned up, then it was "kin to kaint" (start as soon as you "kin" see and quit when you "kaint"). Anyway, we straightened the face, found a good, loose Coles Creek-Plaquemine midden on top, then hit the Archaic level in famous buckshot yellow clay, the kind that laughs at a trowel, makes a shovel bounce right back, and only yields to a pick or a sharp grubbing hoe. About this time Jon went for a drink of water and disappeared, leaving me and Pete to whack away at the buckshot. Hours later we finished with blistered hands, sore backs and a few flakes, while Jon turned up with a pocket full of beads and bead blanks. A few years later he published a beautiful article about bead manufacture at Cad: brain over brawn.

I tried to get even with Jon in 1970, when he and I, with the help of Carl Alexander and, occasionally, Pete, spent some weeks cataloguing and studying Carl's second collection from Poverty Point. It was decided by someone that Carl and I would deal with the more mundane objects like baked clay balls, projectile points and plummets, while Jon and Pete (when available) would deal with the more esoteric beads, bangles and baubles, plus the microflint blade and flake tools--the latter because of Jon and Pete's studies with Sollberger and Shiner at S.M.U., including Wendorf's Paleolithic tools from Africa. The hitch was that Carl and I could take our boxes and bushel baskets out to a big table in the shade and catch the breezes, while Jon and Pete had to study the ornaments one-by-one in the display cases and the microflint "dornicks" by side lighting inside--no air conditioning in July and August, and the side lighting by hanging electric light bulbs. They made it through 5000 Jaketown perforators but only at the cost to Jon of 10 pounds of sweat.

More recently Jon is getting one-up on me again. For several years we have been exploring, off and on, the mysteries of Delta Plantation's 75,000 acres of new soybean land in the Catahoula-Larto Basin, with Bill Baker. We go traipsing and barging around, Jon using his football muscle, Bill as spry as a wire-haired terrier, and I bringing up the rear with my mid-seventy paunch and loss of balance, falling over vines three times every hour on Wild Hog Mound, and sliding down Baker's stupendous ditches that are really relict Arkansas River meanders. Who says archaeology is all fun?

Enough of light chatter and let's stay away from ribald reminiscences. I'm no Stu Neitzel and this is supposed to biographize Jon Gibson.

The budding anthropologist was born in Urania, resided in Tullos and went to school at Olla, all in LaSalle Parish within a couple of rifle shots of Catahoula Lake. I don't know why it took three towns to start him off, unless Jon was just born rambunctious. He didn't tell me, either, that his mother flavored his formula with pine tar and that chufa was his first cereal, but I wouldn't be surprised. He did tell me that, by the time he moved to Haynesville at the age of 16, he had muscles enough to play football, basketball and track (however one plays that), worked on the side, was sharp as a tack (enough to win honors in high school, get scholarships at Northwestern, an assistantship at L.S.U., and a National Science Foundation Traineeship at Southern Methodist University, which is plenty sharp), was artistic enough to win state Industrial Arts competitions and receive

recommendations of merit in International competition, plus being sufficiently handsome or eloquent to be chosen class president, class favorite, most intelligent, student council member and member of the national honor society. Some of these are undoubtedly because he got 100% of the girls' votes and everyone knows that girls are more numerous and smarter than boys in high school.

Jon had developed an interest in collecting artifacts in early childhood, rapidly filling a snap-top Prince Albert tobacco can and graduating to a Prince Edward cigar box. Between eight and twelve years of age he had found dozens of sites along Castor Creek; during high school his interests had expanded to the Catahoula Lake area. He was fortunate to have a teacher who recognized and encouraged his bent and taught him to keep records, to the extent that Jon presented a paper on Tchefuncte at Russell Landing at the Louisiana Junior Academy of Sciences in 1960. Entering Northwestern State University in 1961, he majored in geography but worked with Pete Gregory in anthropology, becoming Gregory's assistant at Williamson Museum. During three summer vacations Jon worked for Cities Service Oil Company as a pipeliner in Kansas and Illinois--field work with a vengeance. At the end of each summer he engaged in an organized survey of Little River and Catahoula Lake, with a group of 4 - 6 undergraduates called the Catahoula Basin Survey.

After graduation from Northwestern in 1965 (B.A. with honors), Jon made three profound steps of maturity: (1) he married Mary Beth Sellers, his greatest evidence of good judgment; (2) he became a graduate assistant under Bill Haag at L.S.U.--more good judgment but who can compare Bill Haag with Mary Beth?; (3) he attended his first archaeological meeting, the Caddo Conference at Natchitoches. There he listened with awe (who didn't, except Jimmy Griffin?) to Jim Ford as Ford linked Valdivia with Jomon, he saw the first beautiful whole Tchefuncte pot from East Texas, he met me (I remember Jon well, eager-eyed and bushy-tailed), and he saw in the flesh the ideal field archaeologist, the bearded Burney McClurkan, fresh from Coral Snake excavations. A decade later, Jon has finally now achieved a beard as beautiful as Burney's.

Gibson's first publications followed soon--his survey of LaSalle Parish occupations, in LOUISIANA STUDIES, and a note on burins in AMERICAN ANTIQUITY. That did it; the pen was mightier than the spade and Jon knew that he had a way with words. He received the M.A. in Anthropology at L.S.U. in 1968 and at S.M.U. in 1970, with his thesis concerning his old love, Tchefuncte occupation at Russell Landing. During these years, on Bill Haag's recommendation, he worked for Ed Jelks' river basin salvage program in Texas, made surveys on the Lower Ouachita River and on Caddo Lake, and assisted Woody Gagliano at Avery Island.

Jon Gibson returned to Louisiana in 1969, as assistant professor at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, where he has remained until now. In 1969 and 1970 Jon and I worked at Poverty Point, chiefly with Carl Alexander's provenience-related collection, which we attempted to relate to social and cultural factors at the site. This work afforded the basis for Jon's Ph.D. dissertation; he received this degree from S.M.U. in 1972 and was subsequently advanced to associate professorship and head of the Department of Social Studies at Southwestern.

Jon and I are agreed that our collaboration in Poverty Point studies, in Central Louisiana, and on the Editorial Board of L.A.S. is an example of how the "old" and the "new" archaeology can be mutually challenging and supporting, without being hostile or antagonistic. In his words, "I emerged (from S.M.U.), perhaps, hypercritical and quite dissatisfied with the traditional concept of archaeology .... I was bent on setting Southeastern archaeology on the proper straight and narrow path from which it had strayed. It was Clarence Webb who managed to bring my outlook back into a metastable balance. Our year and a half of collaborative intermittent work at Poverty Point was a great lesson in reality; Webb coming from right field and I from the far left produced new realizations and modified perspectives but, delightfully, few sparks." Right on, Jon! What he really means, readers, is that we had some hellacious arguments, but came out of it fast friends with a common meeting ground of reciprocal benefit and mutual respect.

I will not detail all that Jon has done since his return to Louisiana. Most of the readers have some knowledge of his activities, versatile and amazing as they are. He has been a good teacher, named Southwestern's Distinguished Professor for 1975; he has been a good citizen, serving on local, regional and state boards and as consultant for many enterprises. He is a member of the Louisiana Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission. He continues to do field work and surveys--and publishes his findings. In recognition of his research, he was recently selected as the Sigma Xi researcher of the year at USL. He has established the Lafayette Phase of Tchefuncte culture and the Beau Rivage Phase of Poverty Point culture in his area. His work and the studies of Bill Baker, Donald Hunter, Pete Gregory and the writer have opened new perspectives of prehistoric cultures in the Catahoula Basin. His article in ARCHAEOLOGY, which labeled Poverty Point the first North American chiefdom, was not only so cogently presented that no one has challenged his claim, but also was the most beautifully illustrated that I have seen (maybe bias speaks, since Carl Alexander and I took some of the Kodachromes).

Jon Gibson has been active in professional organizations, a member of all major national and many regional or state archaeological organizations; he has appeared on the programs of many of these. The astounding quantity, variety and excellence of Jon's publications are reflected in the attached bibliography; few can rival this list in less than a dozen years. He has given a freshness of approach to the archaeology of our state and an example of hard work and energy that all of us can admire but few can emulate. Keep your eye on that 6 foot, 4 inch stature of Jim Ford, Jon, because you are building toward it. One of our members has said, recently, that the publications of LAS represent milestones in the progress of Louisiana archaeology.

As they say in the theatre, sotto voce to the members--somehow, I like the guy. Out loud, to Jon Gibson--Jon, we cherish you.

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- 1968b (review) Three prehistoric sites near Cedar Bayou, Galveston Bay area, by J.R. Ambler. Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society 39:167-172.
- 1968c James Alfred Ford, 1911-1968. The Record, Bulletin of the Dallas Archeological Society 25:2-12.
- 1968d Evaluation of the geographical potential of the lower Ouachita River Valley with regard to the DeSoto-Moscoso expedition. Louisiana Studies 7:203-212.
- 1969a Sites and environment: a study of the archaeology of a portion of the Denton Creek watershed. Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society 40:199-209.
- 1969b Archeological survey of Caddo Lake: Louisiana and Texas. Southern Methodist University Contributions in Anthropology 5.
- 1969c The nature of southern Hopewell. Bulletin of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference 11:58-66.
- 1970a The Hopewellian phenomenon in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Louisiana Studies 9:176-192.
- 1970b The Paleo-Indian era in Louisiana. Louisiana Heritage 2:18-19, 38.
- 1970c Intrasite variability at Poverty Point: some preliminary considerations on lapidary. In The Poverty Point Culture, edited by Bettye J. Broyles and C.H. Webb. Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Bulletin 12:13-20.
- 1970d Archaeological checklist of edible flora in the Lower Mississippi Valley. In The Poverty Point Culture, edited by B.J. Broyles and C.H. Webb. Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Bulletin 12:90-98.
- 1971 (review) A comparison of Formative cultures in the Americas, by James A. Ford. Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society 42:377-381.
- 1973a (review) Sacred Chitimacha Indian beliefs, by Faye Stouff, Louisiana History (winter):410.

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- 1974b Poverty Point, the first North American chiefdom. Archaeology 27: 96-105.
- 1974c The Tchefuncte culture in the Bayou Vermilion basin, south central Louisiana. Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society 45:67-95.
- 1974d Prehistoric diffusion in southeast Mississippi, a critical review. Mississippi Archaeology 9:1-8.
- 1974e (with J.R. Shenkel) Big Oak Island: an historical perspective of changing site function. Louisiana Studies 13:173-186.
- 1974f State of the society message. Newsletter of the Louisiana Archeological Society 2:1-2.
- 1974g The rise and decline of Poverty Point. Louisiana Archaeology 1:8-36.
- 1974h The inaugural issue of Louisiana Archaeology. Louisiana Archaeology 1: ii-iii.
- 1975a A red slate claw from Magenta East, St. Martin Parish, Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society 2:7-8.
- 1975b The current status of Louisiana Archaeology. Field Notes, Newsletter of the Arkansas Archeological Society 124:1-2.
- 1975c Clarence H. Webb, president of the Louisiana Archaeological Society. Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society 2:4-7.
- 1975d The year in retrospect. Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society 2:1-2.
- 1975e Editors' preface. In The Culture of Acadiana: Tradition and Change in South Louisiana, edited by S.L. Del Sesto and Jon L. Gibson, pp. iv-vi. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette.
- 1975f The prehistory of Acadiana. In The Culture of Acadiana: Tradition and Change in South Louisiana, edited by S.L. Del Sesto and Jon L. Gibson, pp. 16-40. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette.
- 1975g (with Steven L. Del Sesto) The Culture of Acadiana: an anthropological perspective. In The Culture of Acadiana: Tradition and Change in South Louisiana, edited by S.L. Del Sesto and Jon L. Gibson, pp. 1-14. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette.

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- 1975i A reply to Greenwell's reply to Gibson's critique of Greenwell's article. Mississippi Archaeology 10(4):13.
- 1975j Attending the archaeology game. Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society 2(4):1-2.
- 1975k Fire pits at Mount Bayou (16CT35), Catahoula Parish, Louisiana. Louisiana Archaeology 2:201-218.
- 1976a (Smokye) Joseph Vincent Frank, LAS Corresponding Secretary. Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society 3(1):3-5.
- 1976b Archaeological survey of the Mermentau River and bayous Nezpique and Des Cannes. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Center for Archaeological Studies, Report 1.
- 1976c Archaeological survey of Bayou Teche, Vermilion River, and Freshwater Bayou. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Center for Archaeological Studies, Report 2.
- 1976d Toward an attitude of archaeology for all. Louisiana Archaeological Society, Newsletter 3(2):1-2.
- 1976e The future of society and the society. Conservation archaeology. Louisiana Archaeological Society, Newsletter 3(4):1-4.
- 1977a The good, the bad, and the ugly, reflections from a past president. Louisiana Archaeological Society, Newsletter 4(1):1-2.
- 1977b A crisis indeed. Louisiana Archaeological Society, Newsletter 4(1):5-6.

(in press):

Patterns at Poverty Point: empirical and social structures. South-eastern Archaeological Conference, Bulletin 15.

(review) The Chitimacha People, by Herbert T. Hoover. Ethnohistory.

Settlement patterns on the Mermentau River. In "Contributions to Southeast Texas Prehistory", edited by Brent W. Smith. Houston Archeological Society, Special Publication.

(unpublished reports):

- n.d.a. (cultural resources) Environmental impact assessment on eastern Rapides and south central Avoyelles parishes, Louisiana Phase I GDM. Unpublished M.S., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District.

- n.d.b. (cultural resources) Draft composite environmental impact statement for operation and maintenance of three projects in the Teche-Vermilion Basin, Bayou Teche, Bayou Teche-Vermilion River and Freshwater Bayou, Louisiana. Unpublished M.S., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District.
- n.d.c. (cultural resources) Environmental impact statement on Cooper Lake Reservoir, Texas. Unpublished M.S., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District.
- n.d.d. Archaeological survey of portions of Little River, Boeuf River, and Big Creek, East central and northeastern Louisiana. Unpublished M.S., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District.
- n.d.e. Preliminary plans for Indian village, Atchafalaya Basin Interpretative Center. Unpublished M.S., submitted to Perry Segura and Associates, New Iberia, November 1974.
- n.d.f. Preliminary plans for Indian exhibition area, Ecology Building, Atchafalaya Basin Interpretive Center. Unpublished M.S., submitted to Perry Segura and Associates, New Iberia, February 1975.
- n.d.g. Archaeological survey of the Lafayette municipal airport, Lafayette, Louisiana. Unpublished M.S., submitted to Domingue, Szabo, and Associates, Lafayette, January 1976.
- n.d.h. (cultural resources survey of water system expansion, village of Parks and vicinity, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to J. Briant Fournet and Associates, Lafayette, May 1976.
- n.d.i. Archaeological survey of Colonial pipeline, Bayou Nezpique to West Atchafalaya guide levee, south Louisiana. Unpublished M.S., submitted to Ford, Bacon, and Davis Construction Company, May 1976.
- n.d.j. (cultural resources survey of Leesville industrial park). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Albert Switzer and Associates, Inc., May 1976.
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- n.d.m. (cultural resources survey of recreational park, Grand Coteau, St. Landry Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to town of Grand Coteau, September 1976.
- n.d.n. (cultural resources survey of proposed sewerage system, town of Cecilia, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to J. Briant Fournet and Associates, Lafayette, September 1976.

- n.d.o. (cultural resources survey of underground cable right-of-way, Cass and Bowie counties, Texas). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, September 1976.
- n.d.p. (cultural resources survey of proposed borrow area, S36, T11S, R8E, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Bernard McNemany Construction Co., November 1976.
- n.d.q. (cultural resources of the Jonesboro airport, north central Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Town of Jonesboro, Louisiana, November 1976.
- n.d.r. (cultural resources survey of the municipal sewerage system, town of Washington, St. Landry Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Alex Theriot, Jr., Inc., Denham Springs, December 1976.
- n.d.s. (cultural resources survey of the municipal sewerage system, village of Sicily Island, Catahoula Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to Alex Theriot, Jr., Inc., Denham Springs, January 1977.
- n.d.t. (cultural resources investigation of Hudson realignment area along the Red River, Rapides Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, February 1977.
- n.d.u. (cultural resources survey of the Wiggins revetment, Red River waterway, Rapides Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, April 1977.
- n.d.v. (cultural resources survey of the Cognac revetment, Red River waterway, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana). Unpublished M.S., submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, April 1977.
- n.d.w. (cultural resources survey of the Cedar Creek revetment, Red River waterway, Miller County, Arkansas). Unpublished M.S., submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, April 1977.

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## THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF POVERTY POINT

### Bird Symbolism in Poverty Point Culture

Clarence H. Webb

We have noted in a previous article of this series that owl pendants of red jasper and bird effigy pendants of other polished stones are found at the Poverty Point site and, occasionally, at other sites of the cultural complex. In describing solid clay figurines, in another article of the series, we noted that several figurines had human bodies and bird-like faces--the "bird-women" of Poverty Point.

But there are other evidences of interest in birds at Poverty Point, enough to suggest that birds were important in the peoples' mythology and, possibly, in their religious concepts. I have therefore brought together, in Fig. 1, several of the media through which bird concepts were expressed at the cultural and ceremonial center.

James A. Ford, in a note to American Antiquity in 1954, first demonstrated, by aerial photography, the immense geometric figure of village ridge construction. In the same article his perception and imagination led him to suggest that Mound A and the Motley Mound were gigantic bird effigies. I am told by Dr. William Haag that the recent clearing of underbrush and thinning of trees on Mound A and its platform enable one to see more clearly the tail shape of the latter, which connects the mound with the outer perimeter of the village. Hence, my first evidence of bird symbolism in Fig. 1a is Mound A as it may have appeared in Poverty Point times, as a seated bird (as though guarding its immense nest, out of which it had just stepped) with wings spread north and south, its rounded breast projecting westward, and a stairway from the head-crest to the tail-platform eastward. This ties bird symbolism with the massive sun-oriented construction.

In beads and pendants, Fig. 1b-d,f show bird heads and a whole bird, evidently of various species, carved from black and brown stones. These are from the Edward Neild collection, secured at Poverty Point during the 1920's and 1930's and now housed in the Louisiana State Exhibit Museum in Shreveport. Fig. 1e is a polished stone bird pendant from Claiborne, the Poverty Point colony-site on the Gulf Coast. Fig. 1g is an example of the more than 20 red jasper owl pendant figures that are distinctive Poverty Point traits, found in various stages of manufacture at the site and as trade items from the Aaron site, near Poverty Point, to Hebe site in the Yazoo Basin, and as far east as the Withlacoochie River in Florida. Fig. 1h illustrates a tubular jasper bead with engraved bird figure.

In another medium, Fig. 1i is the relief carving of a spread eagle on 4 steatite sherds which were included in the cache of 2724 steatite fragments excavated by Dodd and myself in 1935. They had been buried outside the village, in a pit about 400 meters southwest of Mound A. The vessel had been made from a glistening actinolite-chlorite schist; the symmetry and artistry of the carving is outstanding.

Fig. 1j is an example of the bird-woman form of baked clay figurines from the site. Fig. 1k and l are carved hematite plummets from the Lemley collection, now at Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa; k shows a webbed foot of an aquatic bird, presumably duck or goose, engraved in opposed and reversed vertical position on two sides of a black hematite plummet. Fig. 1,l is a stylized owl representation in carved intaglio, on a dark red polished hematite plummet.

Many other contemporary and subsequent prehistoric peoples showed bird symbolism in their art forms and construction. Bird effigy mounds are numerous in the northern valley. Other examples are the carved bird-stones of Late Archaic and Early Woodland cultures across the northern United States, bird representations on Hopewell-Marksville pottery vessels and stone platform pipes, bird adornos on the rims of Mississippian pottery bowls, bird effigy stone bowls, and the widely varied bird manifestations

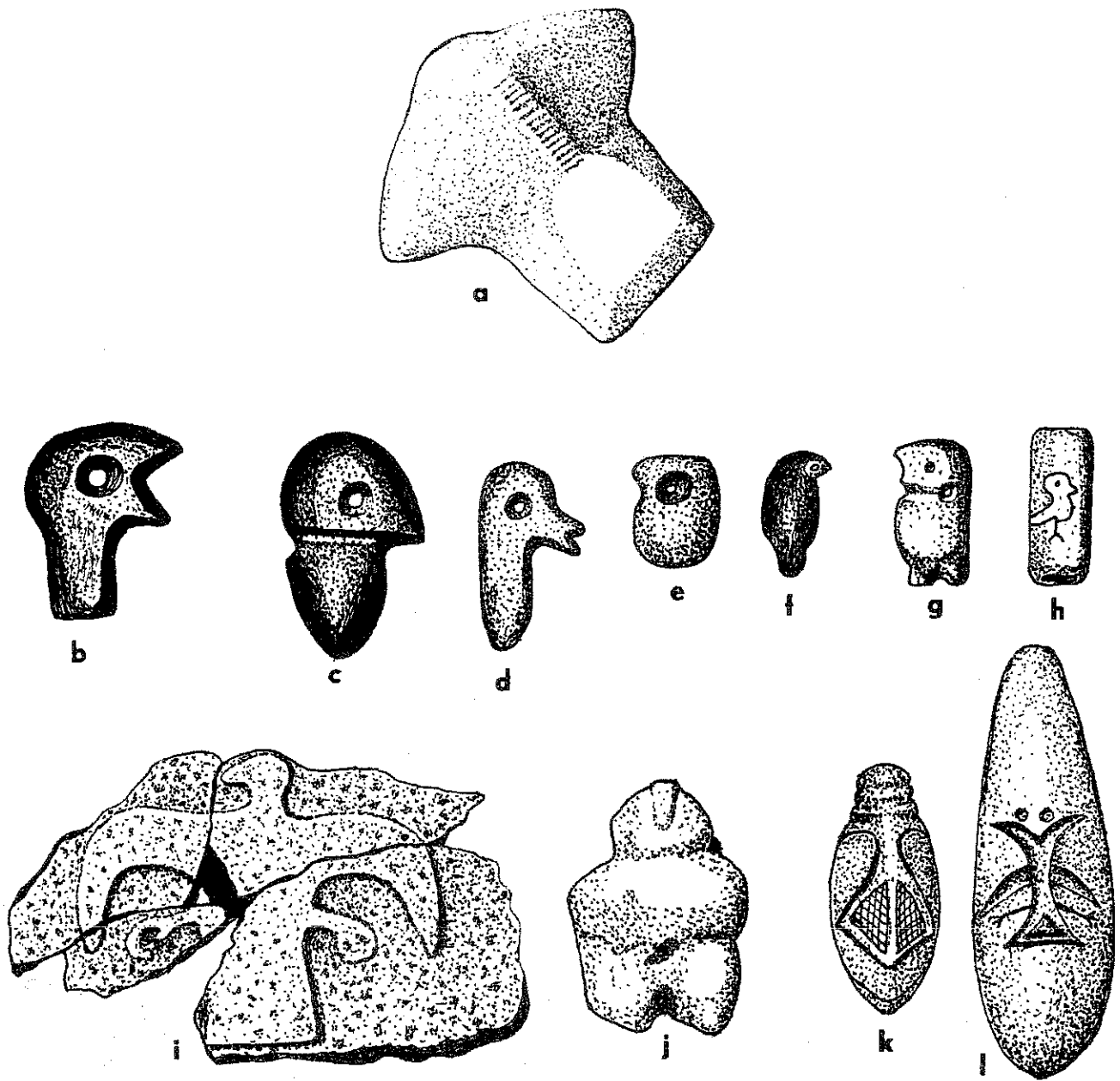


FIG. 1. BIRD REPRESENTATIONS IN POVERTY POINT CULTURE: a, bird effigy Mound A; b-d,f, bird pendants of polished stone, Neild collection, Louisiana State Exhibit Museum; e, bird pendant from Claiborne site, courtesy James Bruseth; g, red jasper owl pendant, Ford and Webb, 1956; h, engraved bird on bead, author's collection; i, eagle in relief on steatite sherds, Webb, 1944; j, bird-woman clay figurine, Alexander collection; k,l, webbed foot and owl design on plummets, Lemley collection, Gilcrease Museum. All except e from Poverty Point site. Not to scale.

of the Southern Cult across the Southeast. Among the latter, at 1100 - 1500 A.D., are the carved eagle effigy stone pipes in early Caddoan ceremonial burials, the raptorial bird-men on copper plates, carved shell cups and pottery vessels, the Falconidae markings of the "Weeping-eye" symbol, and bird representations on shell gorgets, stone discs and ear spools. Although these are found in many places, the most famous sources of the bird ceremonial objects are Spiro, Etowah and Moundville sites. The birds most often reproduced are eagles, falcons or hawks, pileated or ivory-billed woodpeckers, and turkeys.

Swanton mentioned or recounted bird myths and legends among the Tunica, Chitimacha and Natchez, in the Lower Mississippi Valley. He stated that the eagle was revered by the Chitimacha. Early French narrators described carved wooden birds atop the roof of the Natchez temple. It seems evident that bird symbolism was important in the Lower Valley and the Southeast from Poverty Point times until the advent of Europeans, a period of 2500 years.

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#### CHAPTER NEWS

##### A. East Central Chapter, Delson Chevalier, reporter

We at ECLAS started our new year off with several projects for '77, suggested by President Logan Sewell and Vice President Lynn Sibley. The number one priority was to obtain artifacts which were originally in the ECLAS area, these artifacts to be placed in the new museum at Harrisonburg.

We have been most fortunate in having the generous and able assistance of our good friend, Dr. Clarence Webb, who is making our number one project come true.

We were fortunate last month, having Mrs. Jo Evans of Haphazard Plantation as our guest speaker. Mrs. Evans was one of the first amateur archaeologists who was interested enough to try and capture some of our past by searching out and retaining some very fine artifacts from this area, which are to be found in museums in the South.

Our chapter was represented at the Caddo Conference in Natchitoches by Bill and Pat Baker, Lynn and Sherry Sibley, and Delson and Billie Chevalier, who enjoyed the conference and fellowship of other club members throughout the state. Chapter meetings are held at the Jonesville Library, 7:30 p.m., on the first Tuesday of each month.

##### B. Imperial Calcasieu Chapter, Myrna Fleming and Joe Frank, reporters

... to think, Louisiana's own archaeological bulletins, after all those nearly barren years! ... after having read every LAS newsletter, I feel qualified in remarking on the dedicated, wonderful people who participate

in presenting Louisiana archaeology to the public. The two LAS bulletins and the newsletters probably represent some of the greatest milestones in the progress of Louisiana archaeology (Editors: thanks Myrna, for us and for all the contributors).

Those who missed the SWLAS's February meeting are now crying in their cokes, coffee, or "whatever". Many members declared it to be one of the best ever. Wallace Stroud, of Elton, gave an illuminating discourse on Archaic sites on Bayou Blue. Wallace, a charter member of SWLAS and LAS, has excavated and researched these sites so well that he has set a formidable example for the rest of us ordinary ICC'ers to follow!

Two films, available through the Louisiana State library, were shown: "Diggers and Finders," (This is one film that will take your breath away ... it includes the Bog People mummies of Denmark, King Tut's tomb, and the original excavation of Troy.) and "Archaeologists at Work." (This delightful little tecnicolored gem was aimed at the new, new come'ers but as it turned out, there was something for everyone!)

"Smokey" Joe Frank has saved the day again for the society. This time with a ten-page paper on the Hayes site, 16CU145. The society excavated the Hayes site last May. For some of those members that "dig" was the high point of the society's spring activities and Smokey's refulgent report was a more than fitting crown for the Spring Monarch!

Two excavations for the society members are now in the planning stages and if all goes well we should be delving at the "digs" this summer.

Myrna Fleming

In response to the recent executive committee meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society, the Imperial Calcasieu Chapter will compile information and slides for a program on the shell middens in the marshes of Southwest Louisiana.

Tim Dugas of Lake Charles presented a very interesting program to the Southwest Louisiana Archaeological Society, Inc. for its March meeting. In conjunction with Tim's talk, two films entitled "Road Building in the Coastal Marshes" and "Ancient America Speaks" were shown. Tim has been very active in recent years working closely with the Coushatta Indians of Elton.

The Southwest Louisiana Archaeological Society meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in Frasch Hall auditorium on the McNeese State University campus.

Ten Imperial Calcasieu Chapter members were judges for the Anthropological Division of the Region V Social Studies Fair held at the Burton Coliseum in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Students in Region V from elementary through senior high displayed excellent projects in all phases of anthropology. Topics varied from the American Indian to Ramapithecus.

Joe Frank

C. Northeast Louisiana Chapter, Les and Claire Davis, reporters

The March meeting of the chapter and society featured a talk and slides by Paul Smith, a Baptist missionary who went to Jordan in 1958 to study archaeology. It concerned the archaeological remains at Petra/Edom, which brought to life the Biblical account of Moses and the Israelites who were told by the King of Edom that they must go around Edom--which they promptly did. The April meeting is to be addressed by Jeremiah (Biblical again) F. Epstein concerning archaeological investigations in northern Mexico.

The T.E. Salsbury site on Ouachita River was located by a survey in 1976. Six to eight weeks of exploration by Glen and Lorraine Greene and their Northeast staff were carried out between January and March. Included are shell and earth middens, prehistoric and historic burials. In addition to sherds, discoidals and chipped stone lithics, a dozen pottery vessels were found in the aboriginal cemetery. Analysis is incomplete but possible cultural influences include Caddoan, Natchezan and Plaquemine.

(Editor: I am including herewith a brief article by Glen Greene which appeared in the NLAS Newsletter, just because I liked it).

THE ETHICS OF PRESERVATION VS.  
THE PASSION FOR COLLECTING

by Glen Greene

In this era of massive construction projects and an expanding agricultural base, the loss of archeological sites is astounding. We are losing our prehistoric heritage faster than salvage teams can recover it. If we assume, as I think we must, that a hundred years from now archeological technology will be tremendously improved, then the next question follows directly: will there be anything left?

Mankind has always been a collector. He has collected everything from stuffed animals to shoe horns. But one of the greatest tragedies is that he is a collector of human artifacts, tools of the irretrievable past. Often this line of hobbyism has led to wholesale site looting for the simple quest to own, to harbor and clutch artifacts like a child with a teddy bear. Some have even reduced the passion to a commercial enterprise even when there is no intrinsic worth in the prehistoric item.

As any person with a modicum of archeological training knows, an archeological site is like a book that can be read only once. After each page is read, it is torn out of the book and burned never to be read again. Therefore a correct reading must be rendered the first time or the cultural information will be lost forever. The passion

for collecting and commercializing human artifacts is the basic cause of the initial loss.

I would ask the collector: would you enter the American Museum of Natural History and try to steal human artifacts encased there? Overwhelmingly he would reply NO! But, in essence, the random, careless, unthinking excavation is an act of theft, for is not an archeological site a kind of museum? The heritage within that site is the heritage of all men everywhere rather than a precious few who feel compelled to sneak into the forest to covet the most precious gift of mankind - his past. These thieves are stealing from you and me and future generations. It behooves all of us to instill in younger generations a respect for what is uniquely the past human condition. These artifacts are not free, they have been charged with the greatest of all man's properties - his imagination. Do not let men strip them of their meaning.

The Northeast Chapter meets on the third Friday of each month, except June, July, August and December; meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on 3rd floor of Hanna Hall at Northeast Louisiana University.

D. Delta Chapter, excerpted from March issue of Quarterly Newsletter

The Delta Chapter is still basking in the glow of hosting the Annual Meeting of LAS, with lingering refrains of Stu Neitzel's music (Editor: we are basking, too, with 178 attendance, and isn't the man Stu a wonder?). After the warm glow diminishes and the warmer sun dries the marshes, the chapter will resume its work at Ile Bonne.

Arrangements are being made for a date (Oct. 9) for the chapter members to view the Egyptian exhibit (King Tut) as a group, at the New Orleans Museum, City Park.

Delta Chapter has been approached again by the River Road Historical Society about archaeological excavations at Destrehan Plantation. An appended note states that this exploration started April 30, 1977.

Delta Chapter has paid all of its bills and has money in the bank, which is more than some of us can say after April 15. But don't try to pass any rubber checks on them or sell them any fake Indian artifacts: they have just been warned by Brian Duhe how to avoid being bilked by fakes and how to Fight Fakes (Editor: Brian wrote on the subject so fervently that I suspect he has been burned with a fake or so).

The Chapter meets usually on the last Thursday of each month, at 7:30 p.m. in Room 272, Liberal Arts Building, U.N.O.

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CONTEST

CONTEST

CONTEST

The Executive Committee of the LAS is sponsoring a contest to compose a bumper sticker slogan for the Society. The contest is limited to LAS members and only one entry per member is permitted. The Executive Committee will choose the best slogan to be printed on bumper stickers for LAS members. The winner will receive a free one year regular membership in the LAS. Deadline for entries is July 1, 1977. Send your favorite slogan with your name and address to:

Brian J. Duhe  
Corresponding Secretary  
Post Office Drawer B  
Reserve, Louisiana 70084

(Editorial comment: don't anyone dare send in "I DIG YOU, MAN". This was suggested by me and I was almost run out of Natchitoches).

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FROM THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S OFFICE

Debbie Woodiel

On March 22, 1977, the State Archaeologist's office began emergency salvage excavations at the St. Gabriel site, 16IV128. The mound and village area, located on the site of a new Department of Corrections reception center south of Baton Rouge, was headed for immediate destruction, but a timely phone call from a local resident allowed the State Archaeologist's office to intervene. After several on-site inspections and meetings with officials of the Louisiana Department of Corrections and the construction companies and architect, it was agreed that the State Archaeologist's office would excavate the mound and test surrounding midden areas. All firms and agencies involved in the project have been extremely cooperative.

At this writing approximately 0.5 meters has been removed from the top of the mound, originally 2 meters high and 24 meters in diameter. A large central firepit was uncovered, as well as 30 postmolds arranged in a circular pattern. However, the pattern is incomplete as portions of the mound were previously disturbed by vandals, trees, and a late historic occupation. The historic component included a number of coffins unearthed near the mound by construction crews. Only a few artifacts have been recovered from the entire site. They indicate an age somewhere within the mid to late Coles Creek period, but we cannot be more specific at this time. Also, two perpendicular backhoe trenches were excavated on the north and west sides of the mound, exposing a profile indicating two probable stages of construction and an old humus zone approximately one meter below the present surface. No burials have been located thus far.

The continuing excavation hopefully will uncover more features. We are scraping the mound surface horizontally both by hand and in thin layers with a bulldozer in the hope of delineating features. All features have been carefully mapped and described and samples for C-14 and pollen analysis will be secured, as well as flotation samples.

The mound could not be saved because it provided a place of concealment within a high security prison area. However, a lower mound in the range a meter high will not interfere with visibility from guard towers and can be kept mowed. Corrections officials, therefore, will reconstruct the mound to the height it had after the first stage of construction. The commemorative mound will be marked by a plaque identifying the age and cultural affiliation of the builders. More complete information will be contained in a report to be written by the Louisiana Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission.

Announcement:

The next meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission will be held on Thursday, May 12 at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the State Parks and Recreation Commission on the 6th floor of the Land and Natural Resources Building at the corner of Riverside Mall (formerly 3rd Street) and North Street. The meeting is open to the public and all interested persons are welcome. Please direct any questions concerning the meeting to the State Archaeologist's office, telephone (504) 389-6751.

On February 25, 1977, George Castille spoke to the New Orleans Antique Bottle Club. The lecture included a slide show of various historic sites and artifacts which have been excavated in the recent past. The purpose of the talk was to encourage cooperation and communication between the Bottle Club and the State Archaeologist's office. The New Orleans Antique Bottle Club is the largest bottle club in Louisiana and its membership extends throughout the southeastern part of the state. Members have in common the collection of historical artifacts such as bottles and ceramics, and an interest in local history.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS, BOOK NOTICES

4-7 Jan. 1978: 11th Annual Conference of the Society for Historical Archaeology and 9th Advisory Council (formerly International Conference) on Underwater Archaeology at the St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. General Chairman: Kathleen Gilmore, North Texas State University, Institute of Applied Sciences, N.T. Box 5057, Denton, TX 76203; SHA Program Chairmen: Dan Scurlock, Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711; and Thomas Hester, Center for Archeological Research, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX 78285; ACUA Program Chairman: Barto Arnold, Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711.

The Society for American Archaeology will hold its 42nd Annual Meeting in New Orleans, April 27-30, at Braniff Place Hotel.

The Southeastern Archaeological Conference will be held at Lafayette, Louisiana, hosted by the University of Southwestern Louisiana and Jon L. Gibson, at a date to be announced in October.

At the Caddo Conference, Natchitoches, last month, it was announced that the T.L. Hodges Collection of Caddoan pottery and other artifacts found in the Arkadelphia area had been donated to the colleges in Arkadelphia. This editor had the opportunity of visiting with the Hodges and studying the collections and can appreciate their value.

Mississippi Colored Bead Chart: G.B. Fenstermacher, 24 Michigan Ave., Lancaster, PA 17602, offers among other bead charts this chart from "the locale of the once main town of the Chickasaw in Pontotoc County. This town served as a winter headquarters for a number of DeSoto's men in 1540. Subsequently, a dispute arose from which bloodshed resulted. Afterwards, the remaining Spaniards built a temporary village about a league away which they named Little Chicaca. It is not possible to place a 16th century date on the beads in the chart, using the above information, because of the numerous unknown variables involved. However, the characteristics of the beads would suggest a very early time period." soft cover, \$2.00

Among new books announced by the Associated Press (thanks to Smokey Joe) are (1) THE SOUTHEASTERN INDIANS, by Charles Hudson, University of Tennessee Press, 573 pages, \$23.50. Hudson, a professor at the University of Georgia, has drawn upon oral tradition, historical documents, and accounts by observers made over a period of 400 years in compiling the survey. The book is divided into sections, dealing with the Southeastern tribes' prehistory, belief system, social organization, subsistence, ceremonies and their fate after the coming of the Europeans. (2) CHEROKEE PREHISTORY, by Roy S. Dickens, Jr., University of Tennessee Press, 243 pages, \$11.95. This book reflects a series of archaeological projects conducted in the Appalachian Summit, by the University of North Carolina and designed to investigate Cherokee antecedents. (3) POCAHONTAS, by Frances Mossiker, Alfred A. Knopf, 383 pages, \$12.95. The author has traced the story of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith back to its origins, describing the arrival of the first white settlers in the South, their contacts with the natives, the interaction between the cultures, Pocahontas' later life in England, and many of the myths that have evolved. (4) THE INDIAN LEGACY OF CHARLES BIRD KING, Doubleday-Smithsonian, 152 pages, \$19.95. A presentation in color of paintings by King of more than 100 Indian leaders who visited Washington as guests of the government. The originals, commissioned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, were destroyed by fire but King had made replicas of the most famous.

(Editor: we reproduce herewith a letter written to Mr. Ernest Sickey, Chairman of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, by Dr. Hiram Gregory as a result of a unanimous vote by attendants at the Caddo Conference. We believe that it will be of interest and value to all LAS members.)

Northwestern State  
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA

Department of Social Sciences  
Natchitoches, LA 71457

March 29, 1977

Mr. Ernest Sickey, Chairman  
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana  
P.O. Box 988  
Elton, LA 70532

Dear Mr. Sickey:

I read to the Caddoan Conference your letter to Mr. C. Paul Phelps of the Louisiana Department of Corrections.

After hearing your discussion and having our own discussion concerning archeology and its relationship to Indian people, Dr. Clarence H. Webb of Shreveport, Louisiana, made the motion that the Conference draft this letter of support for your efforts.

We agreed that no burial site could be stated to have "little" cultural significance, and that anthropologists should voice concern, as you did, whenever such statements appear.

We lament the fact that in the past so much of archeology has dealt with Indian cemeteries and hope that more balanced studies, with Indian participation, will be a healthy future orientation for archeology in the Caddoan area and the rest of North America.

The idea that all Indian history and archeology is of interest to all Indian people was especially well received and the Conferees agreed with your position.

The disposition and consultation regarding Indian artifacts, history, and certainly remains, should be a matter of communication with councils whenever possible.

We hope you will take our motion as a serious effort to communicate and work with Indian people, and that open communication, even if critical, is well received and appreciated.

We concurred with your position and offer our support. So on behalf of the 1977 Caddoan Conference, representing archeologists, ethnologists, geographers, and historians concerned with Indian people and their communities, we can only offer our thanks for your efforts and hope that they result in more positive regard for the feelings of Indian people in such matters.

Sincerely,

H.F. Gregory, Chairman  
1977 Caddoan Conference

