



Louisiana Archaeological Society

NEWSLETTER

CHERIE A. SCHWAB, NEWSLETTER EDITOR

COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS, INC. BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70802

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FROM THE EDITOR

It is my pleasure to announce that Junior Doughty has been formally appointed as a member of the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Archaeological Society. Junior will serve as webmaster (editor) for the Society's webpage. To learn more about Junior, go to www.laarchaeology.org and click on the "Officers" link.

It is also my obligation to notify the membership that the by-laws of the LAS will be officially amended to reflect the recent changes in membership dues. The by-laws state: "The voting members of this society by a majority vote may make, adopt, amend, and repeal the by-laws of this corporation by either of the following methods: (1) at any regular or special meeting convened for the purpose after notice to the voting members; or, (2) by a mail ballot." A vote on the amendments will take place at the Business Meeting at the LAS Annual Meetings in February. Please make an effort to attend and vote. A copy of the by-laws can be viewed on the website.

Don't forget that the 29th Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society will be held at LSU's Cook Conference Center February 7-9, 2003. Meeting info is available on the website. If you are planning on presenting get your abstract in now (see p. 11 this issue). Hope to see everyone there!

Cherie Schwab
Newsletter Editor

MINUTES OF THE

LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 16, 2002
Henderson, Louisiana

Reported by
Maureen Downey
LAS Secretary

The Executive Committee of the Louisiana Archaeological Society met Saturday, November 16, 2002, in Henderson, Louisiana. Prior to the meeting, Chip McGimsey conducted a very interesting tour of Bayou Portage Guidry, a late Coles Creek/Plaquemine mound group and village site, ca. 1200-1400 A.D.

President Joe Saunders called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m. Members present were:

Joe Saunders - LAS President
John Polk - LAS Vice President/President Elect,
Delta Chapter Representative
Maureen Downey - LAS Secretary,
Chip McGimsey - LAS Bulletin Managing Editor
John Doughty, Jr. - LAS Web Master
Cherie Schwab - LAS Newsletter Editor
Robert Neuman - LAS Member
Bill Downey - LAS Member
Lena Polk - LAS Member

Inside this issue. . .

Investigation and Preservation of the Conly site	5
LAS Meeting Final Call for Papers	10

MINUTES

The minutes of the July 20, 2002, meeting of the LAS Executive Committee were read by Secretary Maureen Downey. There being no corrections or additions, Chip McGimsey motioned that the minutes be approved. John Polk seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Membership

David Jeane was unable to attend the meeting. However, regarding declining membership, President Saunders stated that David has remarked this is not a problem unique to the LAS; membership has declined in other archaeological societies as well. Methods of increasing membership were discussed. Although reminder renewal letters were unable to be sent for 2002, reminder letters will be sent in the future to members who have not renewed their membership by a certain date. Updating of the membership list has been completed, and some members who have not paid dues may be disappointed not to receive the newsletter.

Bulletin Report

T.R. Kidder was unable to attend the meeting, but Cherie Schwab reported that she has received partial submissions of the next two bulletins from him. Cherie hopes to have at least one of the bulletins completed by the upcoming 2003 Annual Meeting. It will be in the new 8.5 x 11 format which should greatly increase the quality of the graphics.

Newsletter Report

Newsletter Editor Cherie Schwab reported that only 205 copies of the Fall 2002 newsletter were mailed, the smallest amount she has ever mailed. The low number of newsletters mailed was due mainly to the large number of unrenewed memberships. Cherie suggested an article in the next newsletter addressing membership. She announced that the next newsletter would be out in December. Cherie urged everyone to make submissions for that news-

letter soon. She also requested submissions for the next newsletter. John Polk made a motion to accept the Newsletter report. Maureen Downey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Web Page Report

Junior Doughty reported that the web page was averaging 10 visits a day. He also reported that Barnes & Nobles book sales totaled \$238.64 out of which the LAS will receive a commission of 5 %, or \$11.93. Junior said that three copies of Jon Gibson's latest book on Poverty Point were sold. Junior outlined the specifications for enabling credit card payments for membership and purchasing of publications on the web site. The charge for this process will be \$.30 plus 2.9% for each transaction. All credit cards will be accepted. After conferring with David Jeane, Junior will proceed with the process of enabling credit card use on the LAS web site. John Polk made a motion to accept the Web Page report as presented. The motion was seconded by Maureen Downey and passed unanimously by the Committee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Awards

Chip McGimsey placed the five criteria for the Ford award and the three proposed criteria for the Saucier Award in the Fall 2002 newsletter. A motion was made by Cherie Schwab, and seconded by John Polk, that the criteria for the Saucier Award as published in the Fall 2002 newsletter be adopted. The criteria for the Saucier Award will be placed on the web page. Discussion on the award followed. Two resolutions concerning the award will be placed on the web page for a vote by the Executive Committee.

Results of Votes on Resolutions from 7/20/02 Executive Committee Meeting

Results given by Maureen Downey were as follows:

Resolution No. 1 - Appointment of Junior Doughty as editor of LAS Web Page and member of the Executive Committee. Passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 2 - Judges for "Best Student Paper" at Annual Meetings. Judges will be appointed by the President and will be one professional archaeologist, one avocational archaeologist, and one teacher/educator. Passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 3 - Request for funding for radiometric dating of three samples from Poverty Point. The Executive Committee recommended funding one sample. Passed.

Resolution No. 4 - Request from Division of Archaeology of donation for Louisiana Archaeology Week. Passed unanimously, however, the Committee was informed that the Division of Archaeology did not follow through with their request so the donation was not made.

Resolution No. 5 - Entire Contents of LAS Special Publications placed on Web Page. It was decided that, on a trial basis only, a sample of each publication would be placed on the Web Page.

Annual Meeting Packet

Joe Saunders is continuing work on the packet for the Annual Meetings. He did note that registration fees should continue to be set by the host chapter and approved by the Executive Committee.

Louisiana Book Festival

Cherie Schwab reported the Louisiana Book Festival, held on November 2, 2002, in Baton Rouge, was very well attended and that she believes that the LAS's presence there was positive. Many LAS brochures were distributed. (She and Rich Weinstein corrected by hand the membership dues and website information on the brochures.) Three Bulletins and nine special publications were sold at the Book Festival for a total of \$81.00. She said she received several suggestions at the Festival for increasing sales of LAS publications. One suggestion was to place LAS publications in local bookstores. The Executive Committee is to check with bookstores in their respective communities to see if this is feasible. Another suggestion

was to publish some material specifically for children. President Saunders thanked Cherie for representing the LAS at the Louisiana Book Festival. Cherie then reported the sale of eight Bulletins and three special publications for a total of \$118.50 at the Southeastern Archaeological Conference on November 7-9, 2002.

LAS and Schools

John Polk placed in the Fall 2002 Newsletter his idea for increasing future membership in the LAS by, 1) enlisting schools as institutional members, 2) having a designated person at the school to receive and disseminate archaeological information, and 3) encouraging each school to form an Archaeology Club. He will institute "a pilot program" in his parish and will report on it at the Annual Meeting

Updating LAS Brochures

The LAS brochure needs to be updated to reflect the change in the membership dues. Chip McGimsey will retype the brochure including the changes in the membership dues. Cherie Schwab will investigate costs and funding for the printing, and Joe Saunders will oversee the distribution of the new brochures.

NEW BUSINESS

By-Laws

A copy of the LAS By-Laws will be placed on the LAS web page. Because of recent changes in membership dues in the institutions/organizations category and the student membership category, the By-Laws must be amended. The amendment will be presented to the membership at the 2003 Annual Meeting.

On-Line Executive Committee Meetings

John Polk requested the Executive Committee consider the feasibility of conducting meetings on-line. After discussion, it was decided that an experimental chat room will be set up on the LAS web page. If this works well, further consideration of on-line meetings will be undertaken. Other ways of making the Executive Committee meetings more convenient for members to attend were also discussed.

Purchase of a Camcorder

John Polk explained the importance of videotaping the Annual Meetings. He has done this for the last ten years. However, a new camcorder must now be purchased and someone must operate the camcorder. John will soon be taking over the position of President of the LAS and he will need help to record the meetings. Joe Saunders volunteered to help John record the meetings. John will present estimates for camcorders at the next Executive Committee meeting and a decision will be made on purchasing a camcorder at that time.

Presentation by Robert Neuman

Bob Neuman presented a proposal that he requested the Executive Committee to consider. Favorable discussion was held regarding his proposal.

LAS At-Large Representatives:

Because of very unfortunate events, the Executive Committee needs to appoint two new At-Large Representatives. Nomination for one of the positions has been made and the person will soon be contacted. However, the other At-Large position still needs to be filled. Suggestions would be appreciated.

Announcements

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on February 7, 2002.

There being no further business, a motion was made by John Polk and seconded by Chip McGimsey, to adjourn the meeting. President Joe Saunders adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Announcement and Call for Papers 2003 Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Archaeological Association February 21-23, 2003

The festivities of the 2003 Meeting of the Mississippi Archaeological Association will be held on February 21, 22, and 23 in beautiful south Mississippi. The conference hotel is the Baymont Inn at the junction of I-95 and Hwy. 98 in Hattiesburg. The conference rate is \$59. Phone number (601) 264-8380.

Friday evening we will have the traditional reception and general social event beginning at 6:00 P.M. and continuing until closing time at a local eatery called Donanelle's. They also have wonderful food and spirits. The preliminary schedule calls for general papers on Saturday at the Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby. For lunch, we will have a local Cajun restaurant open their doors on a day off for everybody. On Sunday morning from 9-12, we will have a lithic workshop at the U.S. Forest Service office in Wiggins. The workshop will feature lively discussions on point types, use of experimentation, and flakes. We will also have a raw material show-n-tell. Please bring rocks (no matter what form - point, tool, chunk) from your area to show others.

There are numerous motels and hotels in Hattiesburg of varying prices (\$42-100). There is one motel outside of Camp Shelby called Dru's Inn (601) 544-6837.

Robert Reams has graciously agreed to serve as Program and Local Arrangements Coordinator. Send paper titles to him by February 7, 2003. In addition, any ideas (or gripes) can also be sent to him.

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INVESTIGATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE CONLY SITE, A 7500-8000 YEAR-OLD OCCUPATION IN BIENVILLE PARISH

Jeffrey S. Girard

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

INTRODUCTION

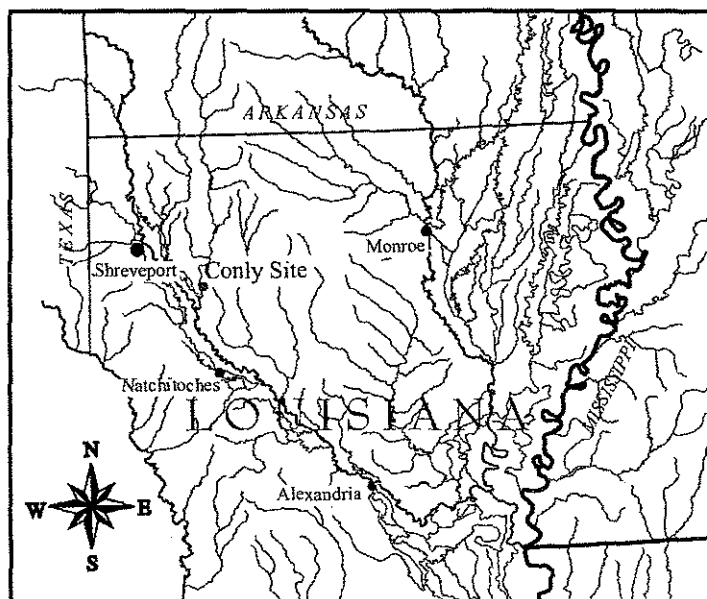
One of the earliest habitation sites yet discovered in Louisiana and the Southeastern United States is being preserved in Bienville Parish thanks to the efforts of several individuals and agencies. The landowners, Bill Conly and other family members, donated an archaeological conservation servitude to the Louisiana Archaeological Conservancy, Inc. Their donation enabled a project, jointly funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state of Louisiana, to construct a rock retaining dam to prevent slumping of the Loggy Bayou cutbank where the site is exposed.

Radiocarbon dates indicate that the Conly site (16BI19) was occupied primarily between 7500 and 8000 years ago. The site consists of a midden and numerous pit features buried beneath more than 3 m of clay. The midden contains abundant, well-preserved faunal remains and stone tools. Several human burials, the earliest known in Louisiana, also are present.

Although known to archaeologists since the 1970s, the site recently was subjected to increased erosion and access by treasure hunters after closure of Lock-and-Dam No. 4 on Red River. Concern for preservation of the site by another local landowner, Skipper Dickson, led to a project in the fall of 1999 by the Regional Archaeological Program of Northwestern State University. This project demonstrated the antiquity of the site and the rich nature of the cultural remains. The site was subsequently nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and listed on the register in September 2001.

Because it was clear that the site contains an immense amount of important data that needed to be extracted in a controlled and careful manner, efforts were directed toward preserving the site rather than a hasty excavation of the remaining deposits. Preservation also would enable research in the future when it is likely that more advanced techniques and analyses will be available.

After a series of meetings organized by Skipper Dickson, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agreed to carry out an emergency bank stabilization project if the state would share the costs. However, in order to acquire funds, a public interest in the property was needed. The Conly family generously donated a servitude to the Louisiana Archaeological Conservancy to satisfy this requirement. This would not have been possible without the considerable efforts of attorney and LAS member Marc Dupuy in revitalizing the con-



The Conly site is located southeast of Shreveport along a major tributary of Red River.

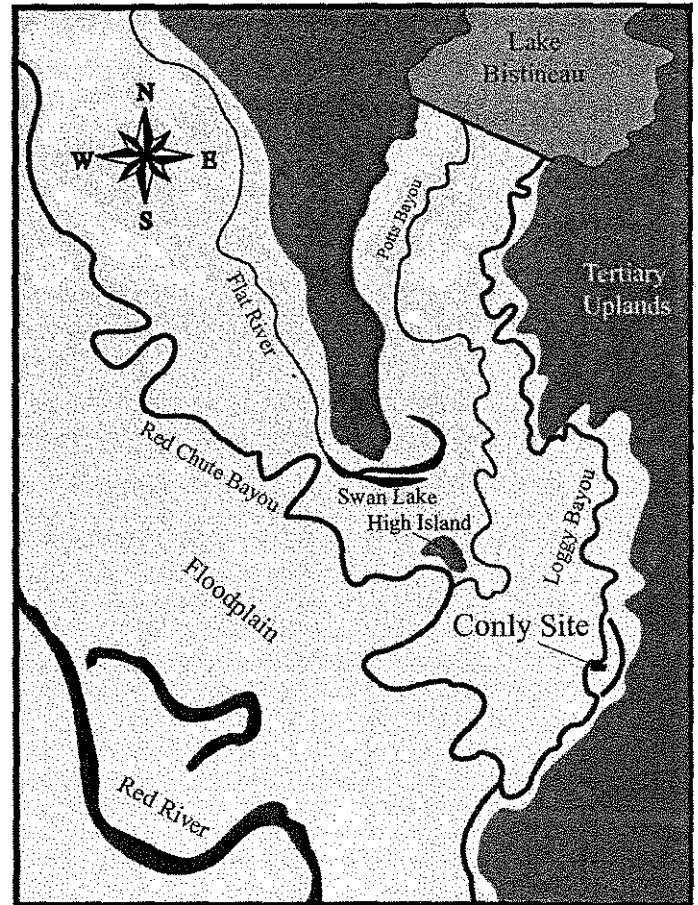
servancy and preparing the necessary legal documents. The Red River Development Council (Leland Scoggins, Director) agreed to be the state sponsor in the cost share agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Senator Foster Campbell of Elm Grove requested the matching funds from the state legislature and his request was approved in the summer of 2002.

A number of federally recognized tribes were consulted, but the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma and the Mississippi Band of Choctaws took active interest in the project and assisted with development of the plans to stabilize the site. Both groups consider the Conly site as having cultural and religious significance for their people.

Setting of the Conly Site

Archaic period sites in Louisiana tend to be situated in upland settings that have undergone little or no sedimentation during the Holocene. Consequently, materials from long time spans generally are mixed together, making it difficult to understand regional chronologies or changes in human lifeways. The Conly site, located along the lower reaches of a tributary of Red River, is an exception to this usual situation.

The site is visible as a dark stratum exposed in the cutbank of Loggy Bayou, the name of the lower portion of a major tributary of Red River known as Bayou Dorcheat. The stratum, a dark gray silty clay loam, is the buried A soil horizon that developed on a landform of Pleistocene age. At the time the site was occupied, the landform was a gently sloping rise in the Loggy Bayou floodplain. As the floodplain aggraded, the rise was buried by stratified alluvial clays. The clay deposit has the distinctive reddish brown color of Red River sediments indicating that floodwaters backing up from Red River were responsible for its deposition. Extensive leaching of carbonates, the absence of material culture post-dating the Middle Archaic period, and the excellent preservation of faunal remains suggest that burial of the site began during the Middle Holocene.



The Conly site is situated between Loggy Bayou and an old cutoff stream channel that probably was a backwater slough when the site was occupied. Upland hills are located a short distance east of the site.

Site Investigations

The landowner, Mr. Bill Conly, brought the site to the attention of archaeologists in the late 1970s. Dr. Clarence Webb of Shreveport funded a limited investigation of the site in 1980. Two test units and three features exposed in the cutbank were excavated. Unfortunately, recovered materials were never analyzed and only an unpublished summary of the fieldwork was produced following the work.

In the summer of 1999 I was notified by a local landowner, Skipper Dickson, that water levels of Loggy Bayou had risen following closure of a lock and dam on Red River. The site now was easily accessible to treasure hunters and was undergoing accelerated erosion. Remnants of two human burials were exposed in the cutbank. After consultation with the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma and Tom Eubanks,

State Archaeologist and Chairman of the Unmarked Burial Sites Board, we excavated the remaining exposed bone from one burial and planned additional work on a point projecting into the bayou where the second burial was reported. The clay overburden had already eroded from this point leaving the midden exposed on the surface.

In the fall of 1999, we conducted a small block excavation on this exposed surface in order to: (1) obtain better data on the nature of the deposits and the ongoing impacts, (2) recover material for radiocarbon dating, and (3) look for sub-midden features. The project enabled us to acquire the data necessary to nominate the site to the National Register of Historic Places. The work was conducted through the Regional Archaeology Program based at Northwestern State University of Louisiana. Funds were provided by the Louisiana Division of Archaeology and the National Park Service. In the field I was assisted by Louis Baker of Benton and several other members of the Louisiana and Texas Archaeological Societies.

Results of the Investigations

Initially, Thurman Allen and Mark Bordelon, soil scientists with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, excavated a series of auger tests through the clay to determine how much of the site remained beneath the existing bluff. They were able to identify the top of the buried landform in all of the augers. Dark midden deposits were present to about 25 m from the bluff, but were not detected further back.

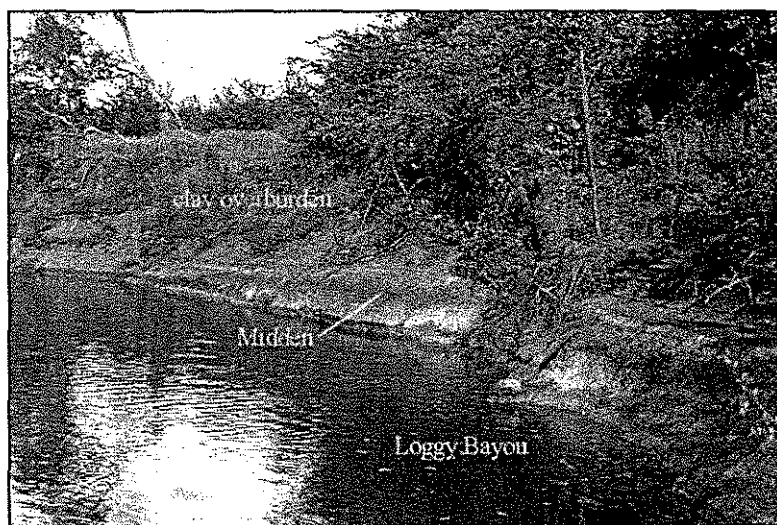
The block excavation consisted of 14 1-x-1-m units into the exposed midden. The midden consisted of very dark gray clay loam that contained abundant fire-cracked rock, faunal remains, and a few chipped stone artifacts. Encountered beneath the midden were several small circular pit features that possibly relate to former structures. However, no patterns were identifiable in the area excavated.

Four larger pit features also were encountered. One, Feature 7, was completely excavated and contained much of the same kinds of material as the midden, but in higher densities. Clusters of freshwater mussel shell and numerous deer antlers were encountered in the feature.

Another was actively eroding from the cutbank and had to be excavated from a boat. The original functions of the large pit features are not clear. Ash lenses were present in two of the pits and greater percentages of bone were charred in the pits than in the midden. However, it did not appear that burning took place within these features.

In addition to the remnant of the flexed burial reported by the landowners, two extended human burials, one a child, the other a young adult female, were encountered within the midden. Unfortunately, we were unable to discern the limits of the burial pits, and no definite grave goods were found. However, three dart points and several other artifacts were recovered in close proximity to the adult burial. The skeletal remains were studied by Michelle Raisor and D. Gentry Steele of Texas A&M University.

Small fragments of charcoal were found throughout the midden and large pit features enabling us to



The midden developed at the top of an old landform that eventually was buried by slightly over 3 m of clay alluvium.

obtain nine radiocarbon assays. The calibrated ages range between approximately 7500 and 8000 years ago.

Faunal remains from the Conly site are numerous and in an excellent state of preservation. Samples from 1/4-inch and 1/8-inch screened deposits have been analyzed by Susan Scott and Ed Jackson from the University of Southern Mississippi. Not surprisingly, fish and deer dominate the assemblage. Particularly important among the fish are slackwater species such as bullhead catfish, gar, bowfin, and buffalo fish. Turtle remains from a variety of species, as well as crawfish, also were present. Analysis of the ages of represented deer led Scott and Jackson to conclude that the Conly site was inhabited during all seasons.

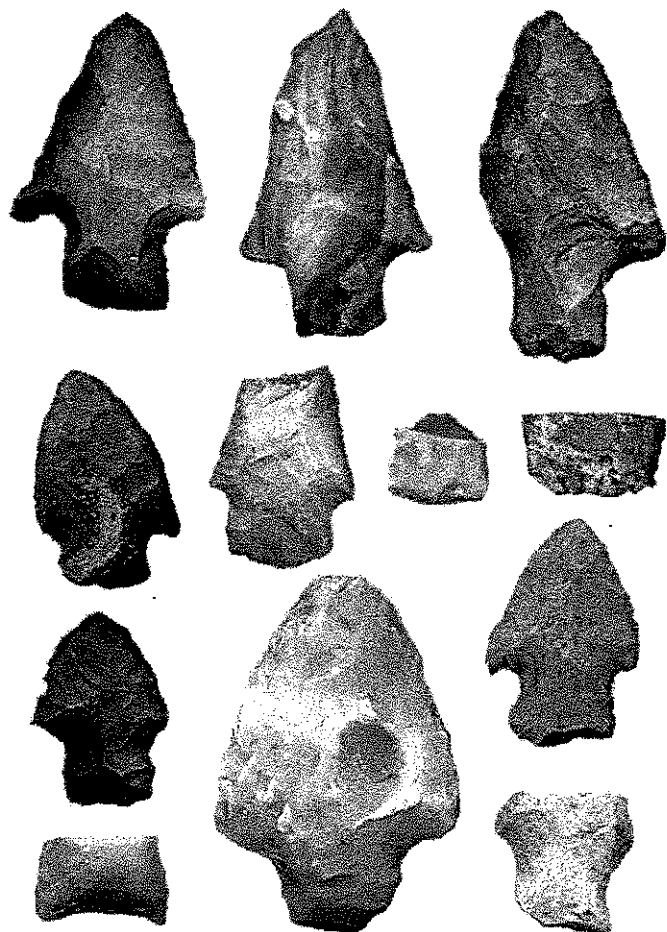
Between the site and the hills is an old channel scar that, judging by the magnitude of the arc, probably relates to a stream of Pleistocene age. If so, it likely was a backwater or slough area at the time the site was occupied, and may have been a key resource area for the aquatic fauna that constituted a large portion of the inhabitants' diet.

Samples of charred botanical material recovered from flotation processing and 1/8-inch water screening were analyzed by Phil Dering of Texas A&M University. Charred hickory nutshell was by far the most abundant material represented. Acorn shell, hackberry nutlets, and wood fragments were present in small quantities (wood included white oak, hackberry, hickory, and elm). Despite the excellent preservation, none of the oily and starchy seed plants found in later Archaic period contexts in the Southeast were identified.

Densities of food remains and fire-cracked rock were high both in the pit features and midden. In contrast, few stone artifacts were recovered. Several stemmed dart points were recovered. Notably absent are the distinctive blade-notched Evans points that occur with mound sites in Louisiana that date to

the latter part of the Middle Archaic period. Most of the points were made from local pebble chert. However, also present were three specimens of novaculite, a stone that occurs in the Ouachita Mountains in Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma. Although fragmented, these specimens all appear to have the concave bases of Johnson points, a type that is common in Arkansas, but rare in Louisiana.

Chipping debris is very sparse and consists primarily of small chert flakes, most of which have faceted platforms and lack cortex. No biface blanks or preforms, or blocky cores of any form were recovered. It appears that chipping at the site was confined to late stages of biface manufacture or tool re-sharpening.



Only a small number of dart points and stem fragments have been recovered from the Conly site. Most of the dart points have square to slightly expanding stems.

Other stone tools recovered include a small number of pebble scrapers, cobble grinding stones, hammerstones, and a full-grooved axe.

Several bone and antler points, and antler flakers also were recovered. These specimens are being studied by Nathanael Heller.

Importance of the Conly Site

Information acquired from the Conly site indicates that, by the Middle Archaic period, habitation in some portions of northwest Louisiana began to concentrate in areas where multiple food resources were available. Intensive use of particular places in the landscape resulted in archaeological sites, such as Conly, that contain abundant and diverse tool and faunal assemblages and numerous archaeological features, including human burials. In contrast, earlier Archaic and Late Paleoindian occupations in the region have been identified only as scatters of points and scrapers in upland settings, usually mixed with artifacts from later periods.

Increasingly warm and dry conditions, ongoing in the southern Plains to the west at this time, may have had some effect on northwest Louisiana. If upland food resources were becoming patchier and less reliable, some groups may have found it advantageous to utilize intensively those areas where multiple resources were known to be abundant. The Conly site offered easy access to major floodplain, backwater slough, and upland microenvironments.

It should be noted, however, that we have no direct evidence that Middle Holocene climatic conditions in Louisiana differed significantly from those present today. A wide range of fauna was exploited by the Conly site inhabitants, but all of the species are still present in the modern landscape.

In summary, the Conly site contains the richest data base regarding Early to Middle Archaic period habitation yet discovered in Louisiana. A dense concentration of archaeological features including pits

of varying size, possible postholes, and human burials were identified in the small portion of the site tested during 1999. Faunal and botanical remains strongly suggest that occupation during all seasons is represented. The site indicates very intensive use of a particular place in the landscape during the interval from approximately 7500 to 8000 years ago.

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29th Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society

February 7-9, 2003
Cook Conference Center, LSU
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Get more info and preregistration form at www.laarchaeology.org

Final Call For Papers

29th Annual Louisiana Archaeological Society Meeting

February 7-9, 2003
Cook Conference Center, LSU
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Please send a title and abstract to:

Josetta LeBoeuf
9364 Rainford Rd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Or via e-mail
Josieaz@bellsouth.net

Presentations should be between 15 to 20 minutes. Please indicate any special needs i.e., audio/visual equipment other than slide projector and microphone).

Deadline January 10, 2003

Name _____
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| SP #1 Stone Points and Tools of Northwestern Louisiana (1981, Reprinted 2000) | () \$4.00 |
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Information for Subscribers

The *Newsletter of the Louisiana Archaeological Society* is published three times a year for the society by Coastal Environments, Inc., Baton Rouge. Subscription is by membership in the Louisiana Archaeological Society. Annual membership dues are \$20.00 for individuals, libraries, and institutions, \$5.00 for associates (relatives of individual members), and \$12.00 for students. Life membership dues are \$200.00 for individuals. Sustaining membership dues for individuals or institutions are \$300.00. In addition to the newsletter, members receive one issue per year of the bulletin *Louisiana Archaeology*. Membership requests, subscription dues, changes of address, and back issue orders should be directed to the Treasurer. Unless otherwise indicated, opinions stated herein are those of the Newsletter Editor and do not necessarily reflect society policy.

Information for Contributors

Send all notes, news, and other communications to: Cherie A. Schwab, Newsletter Editor, 7325 Meadowbrook, Ave., Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70810. If possible, articles should be submitted on computer disk or via email, preferably in Microsoft Word or Word Perfect, although most other word processing programs can be translated. Digital figures can be submitted on disk or via email in a TIFF or PICT format or in hard-copy format, if necessary. Questions regarding format should be directed to the editor (225) 767-2090, email: chereeba@cox.net. Style should conform to the guidelines published in *American Antiquity*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Oct. 1992).

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www.laarchaeology.org

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