

iowa archeological society
newsletter

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Issue 136

NEWS FROM HERE AND.....ELSEWHERE

by Dick Slattery
President, IAS

NO FALL MEETING

Apologies are in order for not having an IAS fall meeting this year. The possibility of arranging a meeting to be held in Des Moines September or October was discussed by the IAS Board and mentioned at the 1990 Annual Meeting; however, due to various circumstances the planning was not concluded. We will try to do better in 1991.

SPRING MEETING

The details for the 41st IAS Annual Meeting are rapidly being formulated. As the arrangements now stand we will meet on Saturday, March 21, 1991, at the Iowa State University Memorial Union, Ames, Iowa. Our meeting will be in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Central States Anthropological Society (CSAS) which will also meet at the Memorial Union. However, their meeting will be for the period March 21-24. We will be provided a free room for the entire day and evening Saturday to conduct our programs and banquet. A modest registration fee will cover IAS expenses plus a small contribution to the CSAS. In return, IAS attendees will be free to sit in on any CSAS programs presented.

A special announcement will be mailed at a later date to all IAS members detailing the program and motel accommodations. This is shaping up to be an excellent meeting. Plan early so we can have a record attendance.

KAY SIMPSON DEPARTS

Both regrets and congratulations are the emotions we feel due to the departure of

our secretary, Kay Simpson. The regrets are for losing her from the State Historical Society of Iowa and as Secretary of the IAS. Congratulations and best wishes go to Kay in her new position as Senior Archaeologist with Louis Berger and Associates, Inc., of Raleigh, North Carolina.

BURIAL LOOTERS

Remember that case of the ten men accused of looting 600 Mississippian age burials at the Slack Farm site in Union Co., Kentucky? The story made most of the newspapers and the National Geographic. Well, they were indicted all right; however, when their case came to court the County Attorney, Everly Davis, was reluctant to prosecute the offenders. District Court Judge, René Williams placed the men on one year's probation and warned them that if they were caught grave robbing again they would have to stand trial for their depredations at the Slack Farm. Archaeologists and Native Americans throughout the Ohio River Valley were dismayed to learn that the charges had been dropped. The case, however, did have a positive affect in focusing national public attention on the problem of preservation and protection of cemeteries.

[From Archaeology, Sept./Oct., 1990.]

SITE IN NEW MEXICO

"Pre-Clovis Barrier Broken in New Mexico?" was the headline on the August, 1990 issue of the "Mammoth Trumpet." The article reported on an excavation in Pendejo Cave directed by Dr. Richard S. MacNeish. The cave is on the grounds of Fort Bliss, New Mexico, in the Chihuahua desert. The cave is dry with excellent preservation of organic materials in the upper level. This cave was chosen primarily for this reason.

However, after carefully collecting sandals, corncobs and baskets the crew explored lower into the cave's deposition. The cave was discovered to be beautifully stratified exposing some 21 separate layers of ash of varying colors ranging from black to orange and white.

Zone A contained recent material. Zone B contained brownware pottery sherds and chipping debris probably dating to 1700 BP. Zones C to F were mainly debris from Archaic periods ranging back to 8000 years BP.

At this point the excavations were 80 cm into the cave deposits. Below this level bones of extinct mammals first appeared, including giant and medium size horse, extinct species of antelope, giant bear, and many small mammals. Zone G contained all of these fauna plus a lithic artifact assemblage, including three snub-nosed scrapers and a graver.

Below G, both faunal remains and artifactual materials changed. Zone K contained bones of giant turtle, tapirs and smaller species. Zones L through O were dominated by small and medium sized horse and small camelids.

Dr. MacNeish said that some 89 cultural artifacts were recovered in the lower levels from G to O; for example, from H-J levels unifacial side scrapers, large spokeshave like implements, utilized flakes and large ovoid cores. Spokeshaves and utilized flakes continued into Zone K with the addition of a bifacial core and a knife fashioned from a rib bone.

Zones L-N are dominated by unifacial points and utilized flakes and possible worked bone. Level O, the last artifact level is heavy on chopper and pebble tools.

The size of the excavation was approximately 3m X 5m and by X 2m in depth. A radiocarbon date for Level L has been reported at 24,420 ± 560 BP.

AULWES FIELD SITE IN CLAYTON COUNTY

Durst Points Found in Northeast Iowa Site Explored by IAS Member

Aulwes Field Site
Clayton County, Iowa
Lower Buck Creek Bench

by Arnold D. Roggman
Garnavillo, Iowa

For a long time I had wanted to check the farm field at the Aulwes site (13CT47) which was part of the bench that included the finger ridge where Dr. Mallam had directed excavations. When arriving at the field there was a newly seeded growth of alfalfa. Not wanting to trample this I decided to walk around the field in the path of the outer plow-furrow. After rounding about three-fourths of the field and noting nothing special I crossed a shallow ravine and there upon a rise of ground was a heavy cover of flint discard.

Here, no doubt, was the location where the grandfather of John Aulwes would tell of hearing flint continually scraping against his plow. Walking along this flint-covered location that covered an area of about one-half block I picked up a small Durst point that had a round hole through it.

I spent some time checking the surrounding area and found that a spring was just down the bank. Stepping into the brushy timber bordering the location, I noted a long rise of ground. My first thought was of a linear mound, but it carried along in a curve.

On my return home I stopped and asked John Aulwes about this long mound of earth and he responded, "That's easy, the field has been farmed for over 100 years and we always plowed outward until there was built up quite a rise of ground." This "rise of ground" interested me because the build-up was from a flint covered area and I asked if he would give permission to check it by allowing that a five-foot wide trench be excavated across it.

He agreed and on August 1, 1988, I began work at clearing a width by using a sharp shovel to cut away the heavy growth of weeds and brush at ground level. While doing this I could hear flint

scraping against the shovel. At that time I set stakes and ran strings to encompass a three-foot by 25 foot trench. I had planned on a five-foot trench but decided to check first by something smaller. If this three-foot produced well then another two-foot width would be done. Even though this was worked-over ground it was exceedingly hard. John Aulwes had warned about this and called it "gumbo." After the first rain it was better going. The trench was located where the Durst point was found on the surface.

On August 5 my nephew, James Fiete, accompanied me and as he worked with a trowel I skimmed plot five with a shovel. There were no dull moments; many chips were taken and two Durst stems were found. It was such an easy and simple excavation as there was no need to take any measurements, it was all in ground that was worked over many times.

We realize that if measurements were to be taken that they should be metric. We make excuses and go back to the friendly yardstick. An old acquaintance, a successful Colorado goldminer, uses this rubber stamp, "No metric here. Never was and never will be."

Getting back to the trench, the following four persons helped at the dig: James Fiete, Art Moellering, Jr., Eunice Johnson, and Mark Borcharding. Each gave a half day and were good help.

In the fall of 1988 I broke my leg and that ended our presence at the Aulwes site until the spring of 1989. When I returned I expected to find the trench badly damaged by turkeys and deer, but I had everything back in order in less than an hour. After the three foot trench was finished, stakes and strings were placed to excavate the adjacent two feet. 1988 was the year of the heat and we were working in temperatures of 103 degrees in the shade, and we were in the sun.

All plots were taken down to unworked ground. Excavation depth was from near zero at each end to 18 inches at the deepest.

Of the seven unbroken projectiles, five were Durst. Of the fine stems and bases, four were Durst. The presence of the many stems and bases would indicate this

to be a village or camp site. The heavy predominance of Durst specimens would give us a Durst Site in our opinion.

Near the beginning of the work at the site I needed to pass through a barnyard and while opening a gate a nearby three-fourth grown colt came up to me and I stopped a bit and rubbed its nose and patted his neck. After that, the colt would come running to me even if it was far off in the pasture, and I always stopped. He never missed. One day I decided to take along a treat for my pastured friend and when he came up to me I offered a fresh jelly roll. The colt sniffed it for a split second - turned on its heels and ran away as fast as it could go. Apparently colts don't like jelly rolls and from that time on he never came up to me again, even if nearby. I felt badly about the break-up as I looked forward to the daily greeting.

I was going back and forth from the highway and the Aulwes home with my three-wheel Honda; this saved time and hard hill climbing and was safer as a bull of low degree was present. Anyone with me would walk closely alongside. The bull would glare mean and menacingly but the funny looking machine was apparently too much of a challenge.

This Aulwes Bench site is near a growing community. I feel that there is always the threat that the location would attract development as it overlooks the Buck Creek bottom and the Mississippi valley. So far, archaeologically, the site has hardly been touched. I have talked to John Aulwes and others of his family about this, but they feel that there is no danger. Just last summer we found where someone had spaded over a considerable area just near to where Dr. Mallam worked and at another location along the field near where I had excavated this five-foot trench as described in the foregoing. John did not know about this as they worked where they could not be seen. Each area covered much more than our last year's five-foot trench. Ponder what they must have taken.

List of specimens found:

1. Flint cores and large flint-discard - 70.
2. Large flint chips.

DURST ARTIFACTS FROM AULWES SITE

3. Small flint chips and flakes - 1,046.
4. Durst projectiles - 5; and Durst bases or stems - 4.
5. Apparently a Steuben, black, glossy with fine workmanship.
6. We have determined this to be a Pelican Lake projectile, white, heat-treated, good workmanship.
7. Crude stem section of large spearpoint, not heat treated.
8. Mid-section that cannot be identified, glossy, heat-treated, thick, fine workmanship and material.

9. Tip section, cannot be identified, glossy, fine material and good workmanship, edges smoothed. This may have been used as a drill.

10. Worked chip, flat on both faces, edges flaked, the tip hooks downward and is worn smooth. May have been used to design pottery. Material is white and glossy.

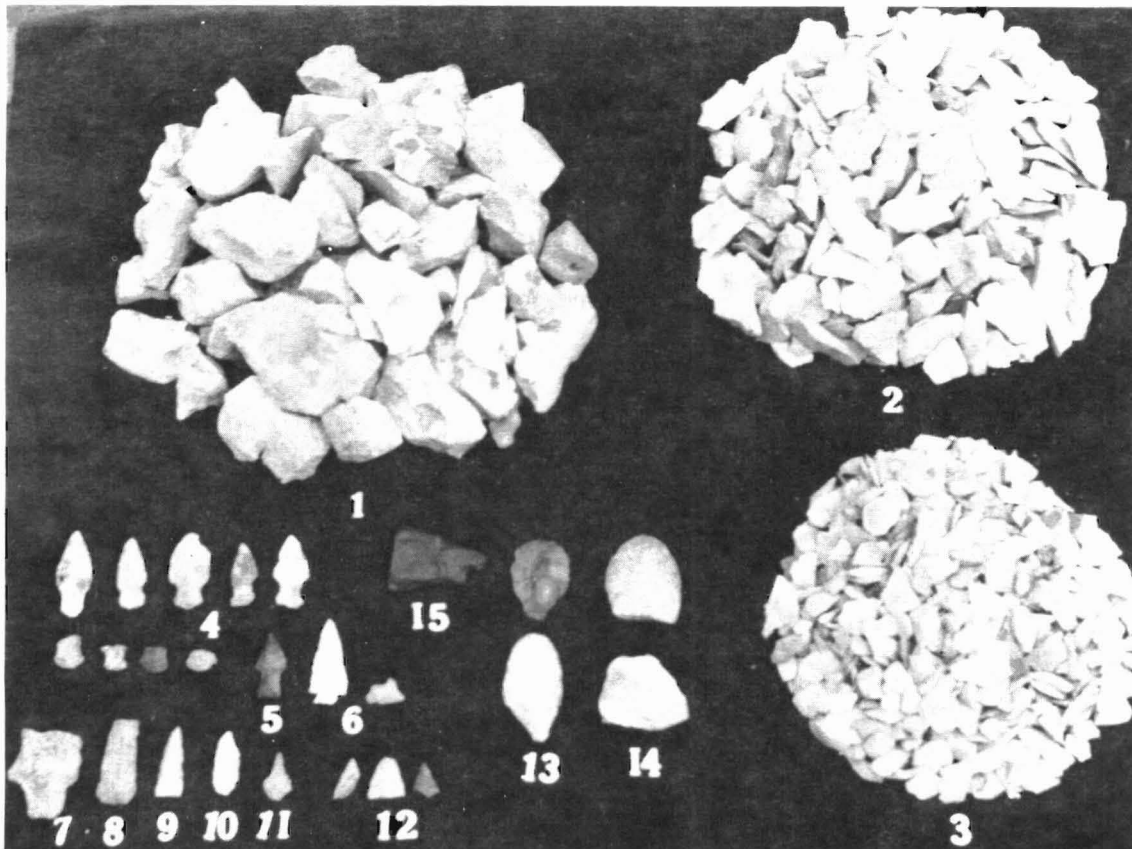
11. Small drill fashioned from a chip, one side flat and unworked. Tip length is beveled, edges are smooth from wear. Apparently a drill.

12. Tip sections - 3.

13. Scraper (bottom), not heat-treated, both faces chipped, good workmanship, but little wear. Scraper (upper), both faces chipped, fine material and good workmanship, no indication of wear by usage.

14. Blade section (lower), thick, coarse workmanship and not heat-treated. Blade section, fine material, heat treated, chipping both faces, excellent workmanship.

15. Black material, thickness generally a quarter inch, one face natural break, smoothed at location of hole, opposite end straight and polished and one side is beveled and smoothed. Hole is quarter inch diameter on one side and smaller on other side - tapering. Whole piece is worn smooth as from pocket wear, even the broken surfaces.



ARTIFACTS FROM AULWES SITE, 13CT47

RADIOCARBON DATES FOR ANOTHER DURST SITE

Durst Style Artifacts Dated to About 600-800 B.C.

by William Green
Office of the State Archaeologist

The article by Arnold Roggman in this issue of the Newsletter describes a site with a Durst phase component. The Durst phase is a Late Archaic complex originally defined in southern Wisconsin. The diagnostic artifact type is the Durst Stemmed point, a small projectile point with a relatively narrow stem and sloping shoulders. This point type was found in some abundance at the Durst rockshelter and other shelters in Wisconsin, where radiocarbon samples indicate a range of about 600 to 1100 B.C. (see Stoltman 1986; Wittry 1959). Even before the radiocarbon dates were available, Perino (1971) and Morrow (1984) assigned a date range of 500 to 1000 B. C. to the Durst point.

Recently the opportunity arose to obtain a radiocarbon date on a Durst phase site in Iowa. Site 13CT228 is located on the Turkey River in northeastern Iowa, about seven miles south of the Aulwes site discussed in Arnold Roggman's article. I tested the site with John Cordell in November, 1987, and found a Durst point and a few other artifacts between 3 and 3.3 meters (10-11 feet) below the present ground surface. We collected soil samples, which we processed through flotation to separate plant parts and other microscopic remains.

We submitted wood charcoal from the flotation samples to the radiocarbon lab of the Center for Climatic Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison. The resulting date was 2580 ± 60 B.P., or 630 B.C. (sample WIS- 2051; Steventon and Kutzbach 1990:210). Correcting the results using the now-standard Stuiver and Becker calibration provides a calendar date estimate of 793 B. C., with a 68% chance the actual date is between 662 B.C. and 806 B.C. and a 93% likelihood that the actual date is between 517 B.C. and 836 B.C.

The local environment around 600-800 B.C. was very similar to that of the lower Turkey River valley in the early 1800s, with relatively moist forests in the

valleys and hillslopes, and a smaller amount of prairie on the uplands. By 600-800 B.C., the region had recovered from a droughty period of prairie expansion which lasted from around 3500 to 1000 B.C. (Chumbley et al. 1990). Snails found in the 13CT228 soil samples indicate the presence of a closed canopy woodland with a moist forest floor, and they also show the site was rarely flooded (Theler and Green 1988).

People of the Durst phase occupied numerous rockshelters in the upper Midwest. Our new data indicate they inhabited forested river valleys in northeastern Iowa around 600 to 800 B.C. Further research on Late Archaic sites should be aimed at helping us to learn more details of Durst phase economic systems, including technology, subsistence patterns, and community organization.

The State Preserves Advisory Board provided support for the work summarized here.

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DURST POINT FROM 13CT228

OSA NEWS

A SPECIAL SECTION OF THE IOWA
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



GRANTS AWARDED

Three new grants recently were awarded the OSA. The National Science Foundation awarded \$21,530 for "Curation of the Paul Rowe Archeological Collection." The money is for research and cataloging of Mills County artifacts collected by Paul Rowe (a founding member of the Iowa Archeological Society), of Glenwood. It will be supplemented by a grant of \$23,655 from the State Historical Society of Iowa for field checking of sites represented in the Rowe Collection. The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University, has awarded the OSA \$11,695 for "Crops of Ancient Iowa: Native Plant Use and Farming Systems," for a statewide compilation of archaeobotanical data. The project will improve our understanding of prehistoric plant use in Iowa, focusing on native cultigens and domesticates.

STAFF NOTES

The following staff members presented papers at the Midwest Archaeological Conference at Northwestern University on October 6: *Joe Artz* (with Julieanne VanNest) presented "Archaeology and Geomorphology in the Upper Mississippi Valley Near Fort Madison, Southeast Iowa"; *Jim Collins* gave "New Information on Woodland Stage Adaptations of Interior Northeast Iowa"; *Bill Green* (with Art Bettis, Blane Nansel, and Mary Whelan) presented "Interdisciplinary Investigation of Alluvial Fans in Southeastern Iowa"; and *Kris Hirst* presented "Spatial Aspects of Upland Living: Choices within the Prairie Peninsula." (Next year's Midwest Conference will be hosted by the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center and will be held October 18-20 in La Crosse, Wisconsin.) . . . *Bill Green* presented a paper entitled "Paleoethnobotany in the Prairie Peninsula" at the 12th North American Prairie Conference, University of Northern Iowa. . . . *Steve Lensink* directed four Iowa Humanities Board-funded teachers workshops in archaeology during June. *Cynthia Finlayson* and *Robert Thompson* served as instructors for the nearly 60 participating teachers. . . . *Carl Merry* is completing his third year as

an archaeologist appointed to the State National Register Nominations Review Committee, which meets quarterly to consider National Register applications for archaeology, architecture, and history.

RESEARCH

OSA staff members are conducting research in a variety of areas. Some highlights are:

**Joe Artz* conducted a Phase I archaeological survey in Lee County in which forty-three prehistoric and historic archaeological sites were recorded. Artz also conducted Phase II excavations in northwestern Van Buren County.

**Jim Collins* led a site survey in Hardin County that has provided a substantial new body of data from the prairie-plains border. Among the project's more interesting contributions is documentation of three relatively undisturbed Paleo-Indian components.

**Bill Green* and *David Asch* are conducting a statewide archaeobotanical survey with funding from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University. Botanical information from over 80 reports is being entered into a data base to facilitate preparation of summaries and syntheses of all reported plant remains from Iowa archaeological sites.

**Kris Hirst* is conducting use-wear experiments on freshwater mussel shell, particularly with reference to ceramic vessel construction and the removal of kernels from corn cobs.

**Steve Lensink* and *Dorothy Rodger* completed the initial analysis of the age structure of white-tailed deer from two previously excavated Initial Variant Mill Creek sites in northwest Iowa. Comparisons with late Mississippian sites (A.D. 1300-1500) indicate that Mill Creek villagers were harvesting considerably older deer than were Mississippian populations.

**Mike Perry* completed a survey of the lower Pony Creek valley in Mills County which resulted in the location of six newly recorded Nebraska phase sites.

**Shirley Schermer* is developing a computerized data base utilizing 15 years of data collected by the OSA Burials Program. Through this program human skeletal remains are comprehensively examined and detailed data are compiled.

GRAND PIANO UNEARTHED

In May 1990, the archaeological remains of a baby grand piano were discovered in the course of an otherwise routine Phase I road corridor survey in Mahaska County. The massive iron frame, or "harp," of the piano, along with many of its strings and other metal parts, were found inside the burned-out foundation of a former Baptist Church by *Joe Artz* and *David Waite*, Highway Archaeology Program. The church served a rural congregation from the 1880s to the 1930s, and was briefly reopened in the 1950s and 1960s. After that the building was used as a hay barn until the roof collapsed. The piano was apparently burned along with the structure five or six years ago.



Glenwood locality sage D. D. Davis (center) instructs whippersnappers from The University of Iowa in shaker-screen etiquette during recent Highway Archaeology Program project along Pony Creek, Mills County. (Photo submitted by whippersnappers Mike Perry and Jim Collins.)

1991 FIELD SCHOOLS; CALENDAR

A New Publication Available

A Guide to Native American Artifacts in Iowa Hall by Allison Laird is a new special publication offered by the Office of the State Archaeologist. The publication contains illustrations and complete descriptions of all 433 Native American artifacts displayed in Iowa Hall, a gallery of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Iowa. The exhibits focus on the Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland, Mill Creek, Glenwood, Oneota, Iowa, and Mesquakie cultures.

This exhibit guide provides systematic documentation on each specimen, aiding visitors, students, and researchers in understanding and appreciating the artifacts, their uses, and their broader cultural contexts.

This paperback guide is 60 pages and contains 15 figures and a reference list. The cost is \$6.95. The document number is ISBN 0-87414-062-5 and may be ordered from the:

Publications Order Department,
Oakdale Campus,
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242.

FIELD SCHOOLS 1991

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:

Bill Green, State Archaeologist, said that a two-week field school opportunity

for IAS members is being formulated in conjunction with the University of Iowa field school for 1991.

The University of Iowa session will likely fall between May 28 and July 6. The IAS two weeks will probably be in June.

The 1991 fieldwork will be a follow-up of the 1990 season in Louisa County. Specific dates and other details will be provided later.

A report of the 1990 survey field work can be found in the last IAS Newsletter, Issue 135, on pages 3 and 4.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY:

John Bower, professor of anthropology, said that field school opportunities for IAS members will be available summer 1991. The last week of June and the first week of July will be open for member participation. This field experience will be in conjunction with the six-week University sponsored course in June and the first half of July. More specific information will be made available later.

Excavation will again be at the Buchanan Site near Ames. The work is a continuation of a comparative research project connected with a site in Poland. For brief descriptions of the site see Newsletter Issue 129 on page 5 or Issue 128 on page 5. Fuller descriptions of the site and two field seasons may be found in Issue 124 on pages 1 and 2 and in Issue 131 on page 5.

CALENDAR

March 23, 1990 Iowa Archeological Society Annual Meeting, Iowa State University, Ames will be in conjunction with the Central States Anthropological Society.

April 19-20, 1991 Iowa Academy of Science Annual Meeting, Loras College, Dubuque.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES VOTING:

1. Active	\$10
2. Household	\$17
3. Sustaining	\$25
4. Benefactor	\$250 minimum

NON-VOTING:

1. Student (under 18)	\$7
2. Institution	\$10

SEND DUES TO:

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The Iowa Archeological Society is a non-profit, scientific society legally organized under the corporate laws of Iowa. Members of the Society share a serious interest in the archaeology of Iowa and the Mid-west.

The Newsletter is published four times a year. All materials for publication should be sent to the editor:

Sheila Hainlin, 1434 44 St., Des Moines, IA 50311.

