

THE HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGIST

PUBLISHED BY THE HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

EDITORS, H. Mewhinney, Robert W. Stevenson

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PROGRAMS

This section of your newsletter will henceforth be devoted to recent or proposed programs sponsored by the H.A.S., and also programs of other organizations of interest to our membership. If you know of any such programs please drop a line to one of your editors.

A demonstrated lecture on flint chipping was delivered by H. Mewhinney, your senior editor, as the program for our February meeting. This lecture was scheduled for our January meeting, but Mr. Mewhinney was unable to attend because of minor illness. He pointed out to us the problems of visably demonstrating the minute and complex art of flint chipping without elaborate cameras and apparatus, but he then proceeded to make the best of the situation with the materials at hand. We were well pleased with the endeavor.

For our January program Dick Worthington substituted for Mr. Mewhinney with an interesting lecture on the Hueco tanks. Mr. Worthington's talk was illustrated by some very fine color slides. After this talk I imagine we will each of us visit the Hueco tanks if we are ever in the El Paso area. Mr. Neyland brought a guest, Mr. Alex Lemmon who gave a talk on underwater photography in the Caribbean Sea. His talk was also illustrated with color slides. In his talk Mr. Lemmon pointed out the possibilities for underwater archaeology in the Caribbean.

For our March meeting Mrs. H. W. Anderson will speak on "Some Excavation of Indian Mounds in Southern Illinois". Everyone who has read the report of the Harris County Girl Scout dig of 1957-58, is aware of Mrs. Anderson's competence in the field.

For our April meeting Norvill Wilson will report on some of his work in Mexico. Norvill is one of our most active members who is currently working at the Bellville site, which was reported in issue #1 of this newsletter, "An Austin County Burial Site".

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The "Houston Archeologist" is an occasional newsletter which will be published as news on hand and the condition of the treasury shall determine. All our readers are urged to support this newsletter by contributing news and reports. If you have a flare for writing, we will publish your reports in your own words under your name. If you prefer that we report it, we will gladly do so, but report your activity. Remember If it isn't published it isn't archaeology. Address all contributions to either H. Mewhinney, The Houston Post FA 3 3131 in Houston or Robert Stevenson 719 So. Iowa St. GA 1 3360 in La Porte.

Dr. Junius Bird, Curator of Archeology at the American Museum of Natural History, will give an illustrated lecture on New World Archeology at 3:00 P.M. Thursday February 23 in Mondred Library Lounge, Rice University. H.A.S. members are cordially invited to attend.

Dr. J. L. Fisher, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Tulane University will give a lecture entitled "Language and Cultural Evolution" at 7:30 P.M. Thursday, March 2, in the M. D. Anderson Library Auditorium, University of Houston. H.A.S. members are cordially invited.

### SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

#### A POINT FROM PEGGY LAKE

By G. F. Bailey

On December 17, 1960, this writer found on the beach at Peggy Lake a triangular projectile point bearing some unusual features.

Peggy Lake is an inlet or bay opening onto the Houston Ship Channel. Practically the entire beach for a distance of 100' to 300' inland is composed of a number of overlapping shell middens. Wave action is constantly washing artifacts out of the middens and exposing them on the beach.

The first thing to be noted about this projectile point is that it has been reworked from a previous supposedly broken point. This is apparent in that the original artifact acquired a marked degree of patination and the patination was not completely removed in working it into its present form. Depth of patination is .020" (determined by depth micrometer).

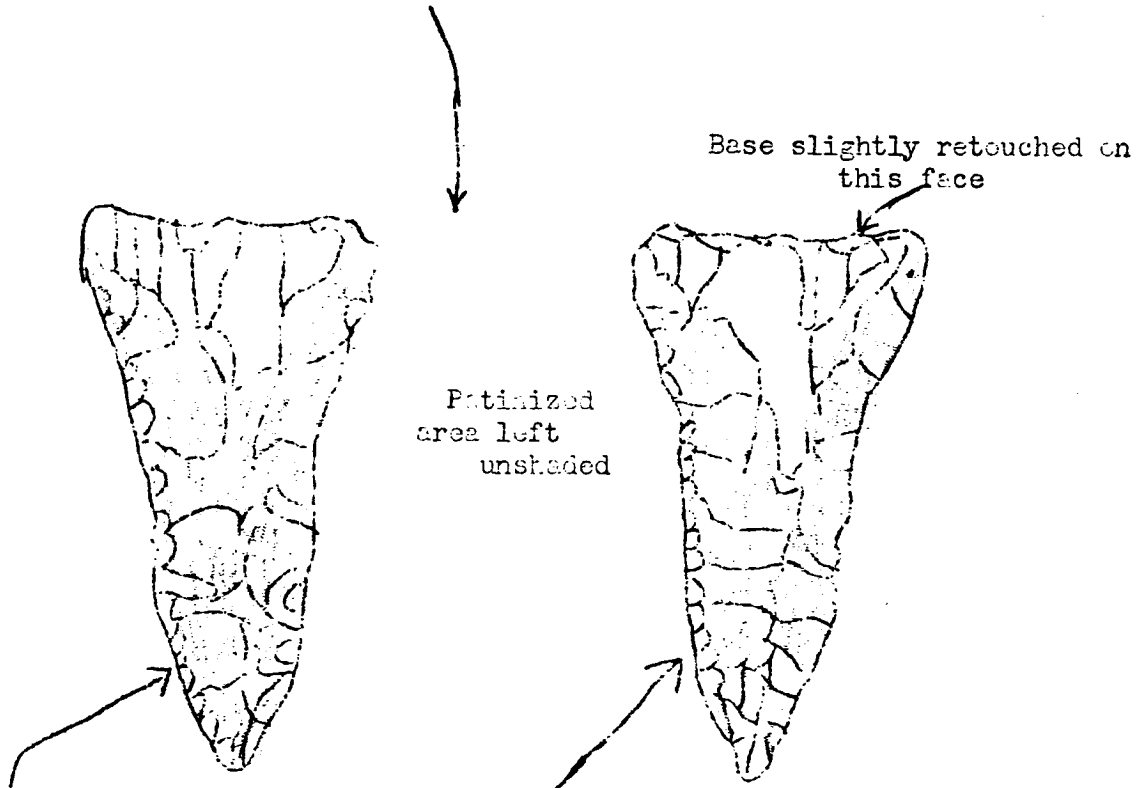
Secondly, the basal area of the original point was utilized as the base of the present artifact. The patination at the base was not removed in reworking the present artifact, thus, the workmanship at and near the base of the original artifact can be noted. Apparently, the original point was thinned at the base by the removal of long, narrow, parallel flakes running longitudinally down each face of the point. The longest of these thinning flakes is  $1 \frac{3}{8}$ " long.

Third, the present artifact resembles the projectile point type Kobs Triangular which is found in this area. The Kobs Triangular type is defined as a late Neolithic type associated with small arrow points such as the Alba, Ferdiz and Scallorn (Joe Ben Wheat River Basin Surveys Papers No. 4 Pt. 1). Both Kobs and the point in discussion have triangular recurvate blades, the Kobs usually having a convex base whereas this point has a slightly concave base. Both are unnotched.

From these three features, some general assumptions may be expressed. The degree of patination would suggest at least an Archaic affiliation. Also suggesting great age of the original point would be the basal thinning usually characteristic of Paleo-Indian types, such as Plainview and Milnesand. Therefore, it would seem that a projectile point was made whose base was thinned in a manner to be likened to techniques in use in Paleo-Indian times. This original point, being lost by its owner, was subjected to the weather for a sufficient period of time to accumulate a degree of patination. The point was found during late prehistoric times and reworked into its present form.

Note: This point illustrated on next page.

All remaining flakes of original  
point struck longitudinally



SAME EDGE OF OPPOSITE FACES SHOW SECONDARY SHARPENING

LENGTH - 2 7/8"

Width at Base - 1 1/2"

Thickness - 9/32"

Color - Deep Brown

## BAYTOWN PREHISTORIC MOUNDS

By W. L. Atwood

I have reviewed letter received from Dr. Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., Director, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington 25, D. C., dated February 4, 1960. In order to clarify the type of Indian mounds found along the Galveston Bay area, this letter is being quoted in full:

"It is a little difficult to state precisely what characteristics are necessary to determine that a mound was purposely constructed by aboriginies. In the case of those structures containing refuse material, potsherds, etc., I do not think there would be any question. It is not uncommon to find a situation such as you describe where a natural formation was used as the base for a subsequent mound. In the case of shell mounds particularly it probably is attributable to the fact that the Indians camped on the natural eminence and in the course of their occupation built up a mound as a result of the throwing away of the shells and other refuse from their food, together with the natural accumulation incident to an occupation area. I am not familiar with examples where use apparently was made of the wind to help build mounds. In the case you describe it may have been intentional or it could well have been a purely accidental result of the location and prevailing direction of the wind.

"I am enclosing a partial list of mounds and their carbon-14 dates. There are others which have been dated, but we do not have the information as to their ages at this time. The oldest mounds thus far dated have been shell mounds. In view of the fact it would seem that your date of 3300 years before the present is not too old.

"In view of the shell deposits and midden refuse incumbent in the mounds which you have studied, it seems to me that you would be justified in classing the feature as a mound."

After having spent considerable time and effort in establishing that these sites were the result of the work of prehistoric men, I have reached the conclusion they should be classed as Indian mounds, but not the type previously found in the western hemisphere. Some of the mounds show occupational strata, while others do not. Radio carbon test has been obtained from wood that came from one of these mounds, and the results show the mound was constructed 400 years ago. Artifacts found in the soil from this same site are of a much older period, therefore, it would appear that these objects were in the soil when this portion of the mound was constructed. This is the only site I have ever heard of where there is conclusive proof that Indians transplanted trees, apparently for the purpose of having either a hedge row, or possibly a windbreak. The idea of a hedge row may have been obtained from ship-wrecked sailors of the same period.

The evidence is quite clear that these mounds were constructed as a result of silt, sand, clay, and even midden refuse, being removed from mud flats and deposited on high ground. The purpose may have been to increase production of Rangia clams, which was apparently a staple food for the Indians of the area for a long period of time. Perhaps the term ABORIGINAL SPOIL BANKS would be more appropriate.

LITERATURE

Your junior editor spent the last week-end reading the last eight editions of the G.C.A.S. newsletter and emerged from the task with a sweet humility which naturally results from the discovery that we aren't alone in the field and that many of our co-workers are extremely competent. If there are any other such native members in our society who haven't read any of these newsletters, we heartily recommend that you take the first opportunity available to do so.

Many good newsletters are being published around the state which we need to read in order to consider ourselves active amateur archeologists. This is the conscience of your editors speaking. We haven't read enough of them to discuss them as they should be discussed. So any help from members concerning the contents of these various newsletters will be welcome.

"The Mustang" published by the Texas Memorial Museum frequently has articles of interest to Archeologist due at least in part to the fact that the director has his Ph. D. in Anthropology. Dr. W. W. Newcomb Jr. is author of the article "Indian Tribes of Texas" which appeared in the last bulletin of T.A.S. and a new book from the University of Texas Press entitled The Indians of Texas from Prehistoric to Modern Times. The recent acquisition by T.M.M. of Dee Ann Suhm, the senior author of the T.A.S. handbook, has resulted in at least one article in the "Mustang" entitled "The Dam Race".

"Texas Archeology" is the newsletter of our state society "The Texas Archeological Society". It is granted along with membership and the bulletin for \$5.00 per year. It is published under the editorship of Dr. E. Mott Davis, Research Scientist of U.T. (Alex Krieger's old job). The quality of this newsletter is high for obvious reasons. Dr. Davis is a full time professional archeologist with the experience and competency expected only from professionals. Dr. C. H. Webb "Mr. Caddo the Shreveport pediatrician being an exception. Dr. Davis (Harvard graduate, classmate of J. F. Kennedy) writes with a mastery of the English language which is a delight to the eye and a pleasure to the senses. The encouragement given to H.A.S. and other regional societies by "Texas Archeology" is commendable.

RECONNAISSANCE AND EXCAVATION

The junior editor has been burning gasoline on week-ends in an effort to learn the nature of the archeology of the La Porte area. Many sherds were found at Peggy Lake, and also one fine point last week-end which will be displayed at the coming meeting. George Bickley has also revealed the location of two fine sites on Clear Lake one of which has produced some sherds with patch holes which will also be on display at the next meeting.

The Society dig isn't dead, it's just hibernating. It will be revived with the arrival of Spring and better weather. Anyone interested in working any Sunday contact either your junior editor or Gordon Bailey and we can almost guarantee enough manpower to put in a good day. And probably transportation for anyone needing it.

MISCELLANEOUS

A progress report on the "Pottery Symposium" seems in order. The speakers were as follows:

- Dr. J. F. Epstein - "Problems Posed by the Distribution of Stirrup Spouts in N. A."
- Dr. E. Mott Davis - "Pottery Sorting, and the Meaning of Pottery Types".
- E. R. Ring - Discussion of "Galena Midden" ceramics.
- Edward B. Jelks - "Ceramic Traditions of Southeast Texas".
- Dr. T. N. Campbell - "Rockport Focus Pottery".  
The Problems of Origins
- Raymond Walley - "Pottery From Brazosport Area of Brazoria County, Texas".
- R. B. Worthington - "San Jacinto Wares, A Proposed Pottery Type".

Dr. Epstein has not been contacted as yet to determine whether or not he wishes his talk published. Dr. E. Mott Davis has submitted his paper for publication. E. R. Ring has declined to publish his talk. Edward B. Jelks has his paper which was transcribed from the tape and is at present in the process of preparing it for publication. Dr. T.N. Campbell has submitted his paper for publication. Raymond Walley has agreed to publish his paper and is now in the process of preparing it. R. B. Worthington has also agreed to submit his but has not yet finished it.

In summary, E. R. Ring has declined to submit his paper. Commitments have been obtained from all other speakers except Dr. Epstein, who has not yet been contacted. Edward Jelks, Raymond Walley and R. B. Worthington are in the process of writing or rewriting their papers. Dr. Davis and Dr. Campbell have completed their work and submitted their papers.

Although the symposium was quite a while back progress has been made. Mrs. Wm. P. Caskey has been a great help in transcribing tapes and typing drafts, Gordon Bailey also transcribed tapes. Alan R. Duke has loaned his copy of the symposium tape for this work. John J. Dieckman handled the correspondence until his recent departure for California. This project promises to be truly a society effort.

## THE HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS

Anderson, Mrs H. W.	3710 Merrick	MO 5-4134
Atwood, W. L.	154 Ruth, Baytown	
Bailey, Gordon E.	6002 Brady	WA 1-1240
Bickley Geo. W.	729 Skylark, Pasadena	HU 4-1793
Caldwell, Charles G.	702 S. Circle, Baytown	JU 3-3968
Caskey, Wm. P.	P.O.Box 93, Bellaire	MA3 -2566
Caskey, Mrs Wm. P.	"	"
Dieckman, John J.	2637 Spruce, Bakersfield, Cal.	
Dieckman, Mrs. John J.	"	
Duke, Alan R.	1706 Oaks Dr., Pasadena	GR 2-2954
Duke, Bruce R.	"	"
Duke, Gary A.	"	"
Dunn, Damon G.	5401 Nina Lee Lane	OV 2-4220
Fleming, Charles	6511 Ardmore	WA 3-9131
Fleming, Mrs. Charles	"	"
Fleming, Mike	"	"
Frank, Anne (Mrs. W. R.)	5200 Chestnut St., Bellaire	MO 5-6802
Gallaher, Dr. Art	5867 Heron Dr.	RE 3-2674
Gallenkamp, Charles B.	P.O.Box 22433, Houston 27	HO 7-8742
Harnier, J. D.	15521 Chaplin Rd.	HI 2-4910
Harnier, K. P.	15539 Chaplin Rd.	HI 2-6643
Hartman, H. F.	Box 3292, Baytown	LO 6-5983
Hartman, Mrs. H. F.	"	"
Hartman, Daniel	"	"
Heartfield, Lorraine	1385 - 23rd., Beaumont, Texas	
Kalb, John	5580 Linbrook	MO 7-0756
Larsen, Val	1457 Curtin	OV 6-2412
Lenz, Louis	4390 Harvest Lane	JA 2-4791
Lewis, Donald R.	3642 Broadhead Dr.	MO 70282
Lewis, Mrs D. R.	"	"
Mewhinney, H.	c/o Houston Post	
Moore, Billy	8138 Lynn	HI 5-0015
Neyland, Wayne	4300 Walker	
Neyland, Dwayne	"	
Newlin, Ivan	4440 McKinney Ave.	Wa 1-5679
Norbeck, Dr. Edward	Dept. of Anthropology & Sociology Rice University, Houston 1	
Norwood, Mrs. Pat	5508 Community Dr.	MO 7-2954
Pennington, Leslie	609 Circle Dr., Baytown	
Pillaert, Elizabeth	316 S. Webster, Norman, Okla.	
Pillaert, Roseline	6421 Dayway Dr., Baytown	
Post, Charles W., Jr.	5631 Sanford Rd., Houston 35	PA 9-9402
Ray, Frank	104 Kenwood Dr., Conroe, Texas	PL 6-3420
Ray, Mrs. Frank	"	"
Ring, E. R.	1415 Lynnview	HO 5-0717
Ring, Mrs. E. R.	"	"
Sewell, John B.	5226 Enyart, Houston 21	MI 9-2938
Siever, Donald G.	5525 Huesache	MO 4-0596
Stevenson, Robert W.	719 S. Iowa, La Porte	GA 1-3360
Vare, Junior	506 E. Thomas, Pasadena	GR 2-5131
Wilson, Norvill	30 E. Shady Lane	HO 5-7120
Worthington, R. B.	4216 Walker	CA 7-5620

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Jamison, J. R.                   c/o Dayton State Bank, Dayton, Texas  
 Jamison, W. T.                   "  
 Jamison, W. T., Jr.             "  
 Jamison, Mrs. W. T. Jr.       "

Results of September 1960 election of Houston  
 Archeological Society Officers for year 1961:

Chairman - Wayne B. Neyland  
 Sec.-Treas. - Alan R. Duke  
 Directors - Richard B. Worthington  
               Charles B. Fleming  
               Gordon F. Bailey

Committee Appointments:  
 Nominating Committee (September 1960  
   nominations):

C. G. Caldwell  
 L. Lenz  
 D. R. Lewis

Artifact Display - J. D. Harmier  
                                   K..P. Harmier

Editorial Staff - H. Newhinney  
                                   R. W. Stevenson

Program                         - D. R. Lewis

Membership                   - W. P. Caskey

FLASH

An important announcement has just been recieved. Since it's anybody's guess when we will get out another issue, we are lucky to get this announcement included here.

The Shell Development Company carbon-14 laboratory located at 3737 Bellaire Blvd. is holding an open house on Wednesday, March 22 at 7:30 P.M. . Dr. E.L.Martin will explain the c-14 process. H.A.S. members are cordially invited to attend.