

# NEWSLETTER

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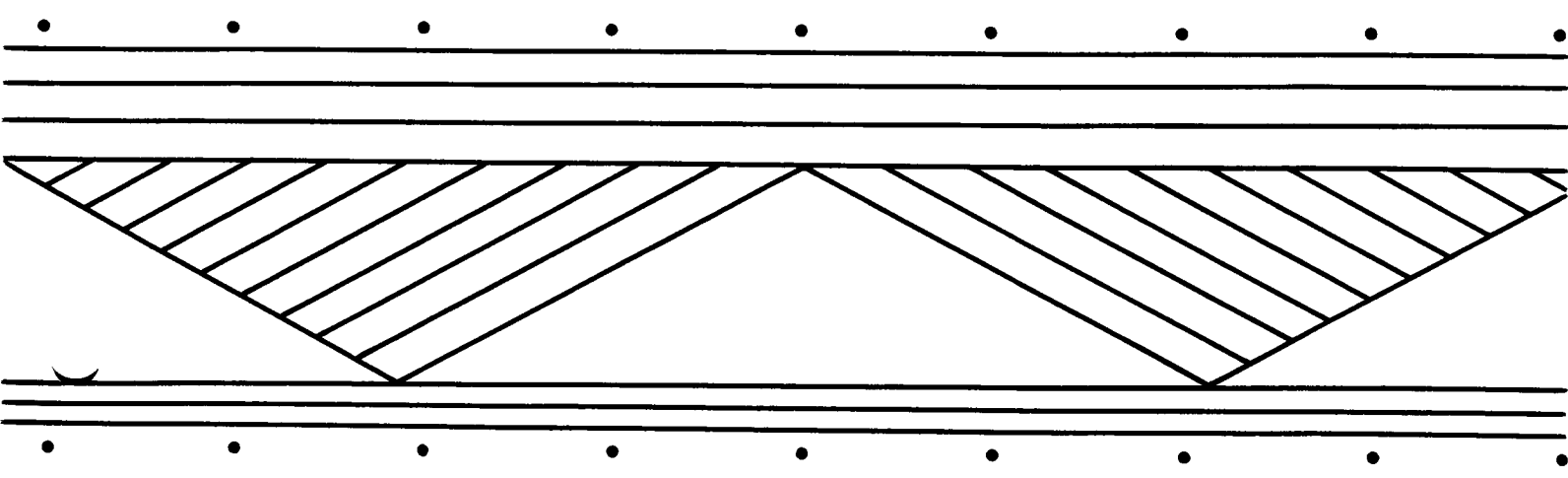
## HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Number 23

December 1967

"Archeologists are persons who use data taken from archeological contexts as a guide to recreating and interpreting the past. Most archeologists excavate. By our modern standards, we identify as archeologists only those who are professionally employed as such. As a practical matter, it is rare for a nonprofessional to have the full range of requisite skills and understanding to carry through a substantial piece of excavation, analysis, and reporting. On the other hand, there are many amateurs who do archeology and their work has sometimes been of great importance. For the most part amateurs contribute by discovering sites, helping in digging them, and making preliminary analyses of the excavated material."

--- Frank Hole, Rice University and  
Robert F. Heizer, University of  
California, Berkeley.  
"An Introduction to Prehistoric  
Archeology" - 1965



The Newsletter is published four times per year by the Houston Archeological Society. Contributions of news items, short articles and information of archeological significance should be sent to the Editor - Alan R. Duke, 1706 Oaks Drive, Pasadena, Texas 77502.

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#### Officers 1967-68

Chairman - Charles K. Chandler, 1151 Chamboard, Houston, Texas  
 Sec.-Treas. - Louise Caskey, P. O. Box 93, Bellaire, Texas  
 Directors - Alan R. Duke  
               W. L. Fullen  
               J. W. Sharp

Charles Chandler has been elected to fill the Chairman's position vacated, because of the press of other work, by Lawrence Aten. Jay Sharp will fill the Director's job left open by the move. Lawrence will leave town to work toward a degree in Anthropology after he receives his degree in Geology from the University of Houston in January 1968.

Our thanks to Lawrence for a job well done and a pledge of support to Charles for the coming year.

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#### Front Cover

We amateur archeologists like to feel that we do contribute occasionally to the advancement of science and acknowledgement in print, by professionals, is welcome indeed.

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#### Past and Future Programs

- November 1967 - Lou Fullen discussed the Texas Archeological Society Field Schools and requested constructive criticism and comments.
- December 1967 - Lawrence Aten spoke on "Seriation Analysis and the Construction of Culture Chronologies in Coastal Southeast Texas".

The Society sponsored also, along with Houston Society of the Archeological Institute of America, a viewing of the film "The Egyptologists". Professor George R. Hughes, Oriental Institute of Egyptology, University of Chicago, introduced and commented on the film which was preceded by a reception and dinner at the Rice University Faculty Club.

January 1968 - Dr. Edward Norbeck, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Rice University, will discuss a phase of cultural anthropology - "Achieving People and Achieving Nations - The Will to Work as Linked with Economic Development".

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### Texas Archeological Society Annual Meeting

The T.A.S. Annual Meeting, hosted by the Houston Archeological Society, was held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday November 3, 4, and 5. The business meeting on Friday evening and the regular meeting on Saturday were held at Rice University while the banquet was served Saturday evening at Ye Old College Inn. The field trip on Sunday included a visit to shell sites in the Wallisville area.

We believe the affair was a success archeologically, socially and financially with 13 interesting papers presented at the regular meeting, a variety of artifacts displayed and discussed, a trip to Bayou Bend for the less ardent archeologists and a pleasant dinner plus an interesting "after dinner" presentation by Dr. Frank Hole titled "A New Look at Ancient Oaxaca". For the record, 142 people registered for the regular session, 103 attended the banquet and 50 persons went on the field trip. The Houston Archeological Society had 32 members present at the affair.

Our thanks to all who worked to make the affair a success and special thanks to Rice University and Frank Hole for providing excellent facilities. Oh yes, we were able to turn over a \$40.00 excess to the T.A.S. after all the bills were paid.

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### News from Other Societies

The Midland Archeological Society will start excavating in the Robert Lee Reservoir area in January 1968. The Society will cooperate with the Texas Archeological Salvage Project and only MAS members who have attended excavation school sessions can participate.

The Coastal Bend Archeological Society will meet in the new Corpus Christi Museum when it is completed. This young but active group has started field work in the Corpus Christi area and soon we should be getting important information through their efforts. Perhaps we can prevail upon them to provide us with some material for our Newsletter.

According to Raymond Walley, the Gulf Coast Archeological Society's salvage project at Lake Jackson is gaining momentum again after a dormant period while members watched the professionals excavate - an excellent way to learn the proper techniques!

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### "Welcome" to a New HAS Member

Miss Evelyn Sneed, 4401 Stillbrooke, Houston, Texas

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### Pre-Paleo Indians In America

Dr. George F. Carter, formerly Professor and Chairman of the Isiah Bowman Department of Geography at Johns Hopkins University, is a strong proponent of the controversial concept of extremely early migration of man to America. He is now associated with the Department of Geology and Geography at Texas A&M University. His publications include such articles as "On Pebble Tools and their Relatives in North America", "A Cross Check on the Dating of Lake Mojave Artifacts" and "Archeology in the Reno Area in Relation to Age of Man and the Culture Sequence in America".

Dr. Carter is very interested in obtaining additional information on pre-projectile point artifacts in Texas and graciously agreed to write an article on the subject for the Newsletter. The suggested antiquity of man in America may surprise you but the evidence is beginning to appear more frequently:

### Pre-Projectile Point Technologies in America?

George F. Carter

Pre-projectile point material is certainly present in Texas. At least one Texas collection includes artifacts that duplicate material from California, and other pre-projectile point assemblages of artifacts from Alabama and Louisiana duplicate still other pre-projectile point assemblages from California. It is most unlikely, then, that these same people did not live in Texas.

At least four sets of pre-projectile point artifacts have been repeatedly found in pure sites in America, often with evidence of high antiquity. In probable order of antiquity these are:

- I. A complex of tools emphasizing very steep-edged scrapers, a moderate percentage of concave scrapers seemingly for working wooden spear shafts, and with a lower percentage of crude bifacially flaked core tools (1). In one site this work is associated with anvil flaking (tool struck against a boulder, preferably a sharp-edged one). In America one site of this type presents such extremes of weathering as to be certainly pre-Wisconsin (last glacial).
- II. A complex marked by bipolar flaking. A core is placed on an anvil and struck with a hammer. Flakes tend to be long and parallel sided. Worked cores crudely resemble Mexican obsidian and Adena blade cores. The technique is at least as old as *Sinanthropus* (500,000 years), and in America such material appears in interglacial valley fill at San Diego (2), at the base of the stratigraphic column at Avery Island (beneath Paleo-Indian levels) (3), and at Sheguiandah in Canada (4) sophisticated striking of blades from quartzite extends beneath the glacial till. At San Diego such cores and blades are accompanied by crude steep-sided scrapers, concave scrapers, and rare bifacially worked cobbles suggesting some possible relationship to the preceding tool assemblage. The dating of the San Diego site (Texas Street) is more than 35,000 years by C-14, and last interglacial (100,000 years <sup>±</sup>) by geomorphology, pedology; and climatology. The Sheguiandah site is at least interstadial. Avery Island is at least pre-Paleo Indian.

- III. A bifacially flaked core tool assemblage has been widely found (Arnold in Baja California (5); Simpson in the Great Basin (6); Renaud (7) in the Colorado, Montana, Wyoming area; Josselyn (8) in Alabama, to cite a few.) The material is found in pure sites, often associated with evidences of climatic change, on high terraces, and with the material deeply weathered. In Baja California the minimal dating suggested is early Wisconsin (70,000 years). Typologically, this material duplicates the Chellean-Acheulian of the Old World.
- IV. In Baja California this bifacial flaking is followed by thick unifacially flaked tools, often made on cores, and frequently associated with the grinding slab (metate). In the San Diego region this material is C-14 dated to 9,000 years ago, and geomorphologically it extends at least into the mid-Wisconsin. At Santa Barbara metates were found (9) at the base of the Wisconsin alluvium and at San Diego (10) under an interglacial valley fill. The age of seed grinding tools in the Old World is surely in excess of 30,000 years, and possibly greater. Unifacial core tools in pure sites are known from Tierra del Feugo to Bering Straits. This assemblage is duplicated in the southeast Asian Paleolithic (Soanian).

It seems then that there is not only a pre-projectile point period in America (now beginning to be accepted, see: Krieger (11) and Bryan (12), but that there are four or more sequential parts to this period. The antiquity suggested by climatic-geomorphic studies are high: "all of Wisconsin time" (Arnold), "begins in last interglacial" (Carter), "under a glacial till" (Lee), and one unquotable internationally known expert is said to be saying: "original peopling of America will prove to have begun in the great interglacial" (Yarmouth, ca. 500,000 years ago). It is difficult indeed to explain the resemblances to Old World paleolithic cultures without invoking very early, probably separate migrations to America in pre-Paleo Indian times, for our knowledge is sufficient to say positively that these industries are pre-Paleo Indian. Just how early is subject to lively debate, and it is time Texas contributed some data. If man was in America during the last glacial, Texas is one of the better places to look for the evidence. Gagliano's work points the way for coastal work, Arnold's for West Texas, Carter's for studies of valley fills and terraces, and the assemblages published by these men and by Renaud, Simpson, Lee, Josselyn and others supply types of tool assemblages to look for.

- (1) Unpublished sites which I cannot cite: one in Texas, one California.
- (2) Carter, G. F., 1957, "Pleistocene Man at San Diego", The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- (3) Gagliano, S., "Lithic Stage Horizons at Avery Island." In a forthcoming report Gagliano will review a number of important pre-Paleo sites, including the Texas Street site at San Diego.
- (4) Lee, Thomas, 1957, "The Antiquity of the Sheguiandah Site," The Canadian Field Naturalist, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 117-148.
- (5) Arnold, B. A., 1957, "Late Pleistocene and Recent Changes in Land Forms, Climate, and Archaeology in Central Baja California", University of California Pubs. in Geogr., Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 201-318.

- (6) Simpson, R. D., 1958, "The Manix Lake Archeological Survey": The Masterkey, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 4-10.
- (7) Renaud, E., 1947, "Archaeology of the High Western Plains", The University of Denver, Dept. of Anthropology mimeo., 135 pages. (Summarizes 17 years work.)
- (8) Josselyn, D. W., 1967, "The Pebble Tool Explosion in Alabama", Anthropological Journal of Canada, pp. 9-12.
- (9) Rogers, D. B., 1929, "Prehistoric Man of the Santa Barbara Coast", Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, Calif. For a discussion and picture of this site, see: Carter, G. F., "On Pebble Tools and their Relatives in North America", Anthropological Journal of California, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1966, pp. 10-19.
- (10) Carter, G. F., 1957, "Pleistocene Man at San Diego", The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, p. 288.
- (11) Krieger, A., "Early Man in the New World", in Prehistoric Man in the New World, Jennings and Norbeck, eds., Rice Univ. Semi-centennial Publications, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1964.
- (12) Bryan, A. L., 1965, "Paleo American Prehistory", Occasional Papers of the Idaho State Univ. Museum, No. 16, Pocatello, Idaho.

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#### Underwater Archeology

The "old-timers" in the HAS will remember Jon Kalb, former HAS member. Jon's underwater activities off Providence Island (100 miles east of coast of Nicaragua) are reported in the January 1968 issue of Argosy magazine. He worked on a Spanish galleon that foundered in 1572 and helped recover many olive jars, ceramic plates, bottles, silver coins, swords, cannons and chamber pots! We'll have to get Jon to tell us about it on his return to Houston.

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A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!