



Turnout gets busy on WPA artifacts

First Artifact Blitz a success at Norman's Noble Museum

A drive to sort and analyze WPA project artifacts proved successful at the Sam Noble Museum.

The Norman museum's first annual Artifact Blitz, held July 17-18, attracted 16 volunteers. Several were OAS members.

"I thought it was extremely successful," said Alyssa Giles, collections assistant for NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) at the museum. "We had a good turnout and we got a lot of work done."

Spiro Mounds struggles to clean up flood damage; Equinox Walks to continue

While he doubts Spiro Mounds Archeological Center will open soon, manager Dennis Peterson will host the Autumn Equinox Walks despite spring flooding that caused an evacuation.

The annual walks occur at 11 a.m., 2 and 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 23. They last about 2 hours and are about 1 mile of easy walking on paved trails.

On May 24, the Army Corps of Engineers gave a six-hour evacuation order for the center and for the manager's house nearby. Members of the Oklahoma Historical Society and volunteers from Spiro, Fort Smith and Fort Coffee pitched in. They found a truck to haul artifacts, important documents, and furnishings from the center. The material was temporarily stored at Spiro's First United Methodist Church.

"This has been a very long process so far and still has a while to go," Peterson said. "I will have the walks but we may not be able to use the building or have exhibits yet."

Evacuation was imminent when heavy rains caused water from the Arkansas River to rise and cover lower portions of the Spiro site.

Volunteers worked in two shifts each day, from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Lunch was provided. Several volunteers showed experience with archeological field work, Giles said.

Volunteers also got a guided tour of the Archeology Department.

Collection manager Susie Fishman Armstrong and Dr. Marc Levine, museum curator of archeology, coordinated the program. Volunteers sorted and analyzed 1930's WPA projects.

The museum is attempting to complete the job before the end



SORTING IT OUT Gerald Franklin, Norman, left, and Chester Shaw, Sheridan, Ark., were among several OAS members joining the Noble Museum's first annual Artifact Blitz.

Photo Courtesy of Sam Noble Museum

of summer.

Not everybody is suited to the task, the program's flyer said. Volunteers must possess great attention to detail, a steady hand, good eyesight and be able to lift 30 pounds.

They are taught to identify and catalog artifacts. They typically handle potsherds, stones, bones and chipped tools. All are skills beneficial for spotting artifacts in the field.

Spring Dig gets results despite deluge

Discovery of a promising area will prompt another dig at the Andrews Site near Muldrow, Dig Chairman Ray McAllister said.

Despite heavy rain, volunteers at the Spring Dig 2019 found a large organic feature about 27 centimeters deep. Among interesting artifacts found were projectile points, large pottery

shards, mud daub and two nutting stones, McAllister said.

"The site will require at least one more visit by the Society to determine if the large organic feature discovered was a structure or some other evidence of pre-contact occupation. The Society may return this fall or sometime in 2020 to complete the task," he said.

The annual dig spanned May 10-19. Dr. Scott Hammerstedt was the principal for all three digs at the site.

The area was selected from a survey of nearby Little Skin Bayou undertaken by former OAS President Mel Phillips.

While McAllister has had to deal with wet, windy weather at all three digs at the site, the spring of 2019 was

Enjoy a printed OAS Newsletter?

Electronic versions of the OAS Newsletter *Trowel Marks* are sent to all members. Printed newsletters are available for a small, extra fee. See the Membership application inside.

(See Spring Dig Page 2)

President's Letter

Ray McAllister

Hello fellow Society members. I am happy to note that we are working to improve the Society's social media and web presence.

The Oklahoma Anthropological Society now has two venues on Facebook. The first presence is the OAS Facebook page, which has been around for some time. A new presence on Facebook, the Oklahoma Anthropological Society Members and Friends Group, was created after the summer board meeting.

The Group is closed, which means members and friends of the Society must first request to join the Group. Facebook groups operate differently from Facebook pages – the group structure allows everyone to post to the group. Facebook groups help build community, whereas Facebook pages help build brands.

Please join the Oklahoma Anthropological Society Members and Friends Facebook group and like the Oklahoma Anthropological Society Facebook page.

Here's how:

1. Go to Facebook
2. Type "Oklahoma Anthropological Society" into the search bar
3. To join our group: Click the Join button that appears to the right of our group's name, Oklahoma Anthropological Society Members and Friends.
4. To like our page: From the same search results display, click the Like button (a thumbs-up icon) which appears to the right of our page name, Oklahoma Anthropological Society.

After you are accepted into the group, please participate in our community by posting interesting topics or photos related to the broad field of anthropology.

Why are we doing this? Facebook offers an easy way to allow members and friends of the society to stay in touch. A Facebook group allows everyone to create posts as well react to the content that is posted.

Additionally, by sharing, liking, reacting

Spring Dig gets results

unusually wet in eastern Oklahoma, he said. "We found the site mucky and damp as we arrived. On Saturday Morning we experienced a heavy rain in the area, delaying excavations for one and one-half days."

As the pasture dried out, the group focused on two areas that Dr. Hammerstedt's instruments indicated may be signs of occupation.

While the first area yielded few artifacts and no features, the group investigated an



and commenting on the post content, many individuals on Facebook will see the Society's posts. At the end of the day, we can all work together to build greater interest in the work of our Society.

Also, the Society has a new Website. Look for it at okanthropologicalsociety.org.

* * *

It is with deep regret that I inform the membership of the passing of OAS past President Charles Cheatham. He died Aug. 22 from complications of lung cancer.

Charles was President of the Society when I joined in 2007, and I worked with him as a fledgling excavator on several sites through the years. He donated a huge amount of time and expertise to leading the Society, and we are all in his debt for his contributions.

area partially excavated in a previous dig. Among artifacts found there was an intact base of a pre-contact ceramic vessel.

Students from the University of Oklahoma and the University of Central Oklahoma joined during portions of the dig.

OAS grant success encourages repeat for the year 2020

The outcome of an initial research grant program is encouraging, OAS President Ray McAllister said.

"Following the success of its 2019 grant, the Oklahoma Anthropological Society will again offer a \$1,000 grant for the year 2020," he said.

Slight changes have been made to the OAS grant program. Applicants must be an active student majoring in anthropology or an allied field, or a degreed archeologist. They also must be members of the Society at the time of the grant award.

The deadline for grant applications is Dec. 20, 2019. Applications and questions concerning the grant may be sent to okanthrosociety@gmail.com.

Alexandra Flores, a master's student in anthropology at the University of Oklahoma, won the \$1,000 study grant among several applications. Her thesis is focused on a geophysical survey at Brackett, a Spiroan mound site near Tahlequah.

Applicants are expected to share their findings with the Society. They can present a program to local OAS chapters and/or submit an article for the Society's Trowel Marks newsletter or Annual Bulletin. Presentation must be within one year of receiving the award.

The grant may be used for, but not be limited to four categories:

- Expenses related to field excavations such as lodging, food and transportation.
- Radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic, dendrochronological or other dating fees.
- Specimen and artifact analysis to include, but not be limited to lithic, floral, faunal, pollen and phytolith items.
- Remote sensing/geophysics activities

Other details and requirements may be found in the official grant announcement. It will be posted on the Society's Facebook page the first week of September.

Also, the grant announcement is now or soon will be posted on the OAS Website.

Board considers varied projects from comics to digital Bulletin

OAS Board Members are considering several novel projects ranging from an archeological comic book to a digital version of the OAS Annual Bulletin.

The Board met Aug. 3 at the home of President Ray McAllister. Signing the roster were Ray and Sharon McAllister, Pam Leader, Bob Sweet, Jon Denton, Dot Linn, Mel Phillips, Charles Wallis, Dean and Tamara Vernon, Bob Blasing, Byron Sudbury, Dean Afendras, Bob Cole and Curt Hendricks.

The President suggested OAS create, publish and distribute a comic book to promote interest in archeology. Two comic book artists have expressed interest, he said.

Archeologist Lee Bement, Senior Researcher at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, has agreed to serve as a consultant on the project. OAS Past President and author Kathy Gibbs will help with dialogue, the President said. The story will focus on the Cooper site in Harper County. It has been dated as early as 10,900 years ago and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Several on the Board had questions and concerns about the estimated cost of \$4,000 and how the comic books would be distributed. More discussion will be considered as McAllister gathers information. Wallis' moved to approve the project and Leader offered a second. Board approval was unanimous.

McAllister said Bob Cole, Checotah, is considering volunteering for Publications Chairman of the annual OAS Bulletin. Robert Brooks, retired Director of the Survey, was for many years Bulletin editor.

In a related matter, the Board approved a motion to allow the President to consider other ways of distributing Bulletins in addition to the current policy of mailing them to Contributing, Sustaining, Life and Institutional members. There also was discussion of possible digital distribution of the Bulletins.

Treasurer Bob Sweet's mid-

year report drew concern from several Board members. Sweet said expenses were \$4,522, income was \$2,111. President McAllister said part of the problem was OAS not collecting fees this year at the Spring Dig.

Membership chair Pam Leader said 175 people are OAS members in 2019.

In communications, McAllister said Steve Bowen, newly appointed Website Chairman, was due to return from field work soon. He was expected to launch an updated OAS Website in the near future.

Acting Facebook Chair Sharon McAllister said the OAS Facebook page had 1,114 followers in March, 1,244 followers as of August. The Facebook page facilitated the cancellation of spring dig activities due to weather. The Artifact Blitz was promoted on FB and attracted some new members. Sharon asked help in getting appropriate content for the Facebook page. The Board approved a motion to create a closed Facebook group of OAS members. They will be able to add content to the Facebook page.

In other action:

-- **Once again the Spring Dig** was heavily soaked by rain that had a negative impact on attendance. (See interim Dig chairman Ray McAllister's report on Page 1).

-- **A Bylaws Committee** was suggested by President McAllister. Members will recommend changes. Volunteering to join the President as committee members were Curt Hendricks, Jon Denton and Bob Blasing.

-- The President will prepare amendments to the OAS Grants program. He will email or phone suggestions to the Board for consideration.

-- The President proposed a virtual reality project as a Fall Meeting. The program is developed by the University of Arkansas and focuses on Oklahoma's Spiro Mounds. It is priced at about \$1,800, McAllister said. The tentative meeting date is October 5 or 6 in Norman.

-- The Board approved repair of a broken door on the OAS dig trailer.

*For your
Calendar*

September

21 Oklahoma Archeological Survey Workshop and Most Endangered Places Exhibit at Overholser Mansion, 405 NW 15, Oklahoma City.

21 Smithsonian Magazine annual Museum Day at Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore; Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee, and Oklahoma History Center and Henry Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City.

21 "More Than a Spit Bath" 10 –11:30 a.m. program on 18th century life. Presented by Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline.

21 Archeology Day 1-5 p.m. with flint-knapping, atlatl throwing, archeological sand box, talks on Native plant use. Wichita Tribal History Center, Anadarko.

23 Autumnal Equinox Walks 11 a.m., 2 and 7 p.m., Spiro Mounds, Spiro. Led by archeologist Dennis Peterson. Museum Center is closed for flood repairs.

October

1-31 Oklahoma Archeology Month

4-6 Antique Agricultural Festival, Hunter's Home, Park Hill. Tickets at the door; parking free.

5 Chuck Wagon Gathering. Museum open 10-3 followed at 5:30 p.m. with chuck wagon dinner, live music. Dinner tickets available in advance. Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher

5 **OAS Fall Meeting** (tentative)

16-19 **Plains Anthropological Conference**, Bloomington, Ind.

24 **AIA Lecture** 7:30 p.m. "The Minoan House of the Frescoes at Knossos: The Life and Afterlife of an Excavation," with speaker Prof. Emilia Oddo of Tulane University. OU campus, Norman Room TBA.



Trowel Marks

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Officers and Committee Chairs

President Ray McAllister
okanthropologicalsociety.org
Vice President (vacant)
Treasurer Bob Sweet
mapsterman43@gmail.com
Secretary Pam Leader
syspl@ou.edu

Membership

Pam Leader, Membership Chair
syspl@ou.edu

Dig Chairman

Ray McAllister (Interim)
alpacamack@gmail.com

Annual Bulletin Editor
(vacant)

Trowel Marks Newsletter

Oklahoma Anthropological Society
11550 Bartons Butte, Mustang OK 73064

In Memorium

Charles Cheatham, a past President of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, died Aug. 22.

He started his association with OAS at the Jake Bluff dig site in northwest Oklahoma. On occasion he was accompanied on digs by his son, Nathan.

In 2012 Charles and his wife, Nita, received OAS Golden Trowel Awards. He was a principal in updating the OAS Bylaws adopted in 2015.

Born in Stillwater and raised in Pawnee, Charles graduated from Oklahoma State University and followed at Harvard Law School. He worked for 40 years in Oklahoma City as a banking law attorney, General Counsel for the Oklahoma Bankers Association, then a senior officer and general counsel for BankOnIT, an Information Technology company.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation.

Volunteers earn admission to SAA meeting in Texas

The Society for American Archaeology is looking for volunteers willing to work a few hours for waived admission fees at the annual SAA Conference.

It's a good way for an avocational archaeologist to attend the annual meeting without paying registration and without having to be a member, said Patricia Gilman, Emeritus Faculty at the University of Oklahoma.

Anthropology professor Bonnie Pitblado said as many as 5,000 archeologists will gather for the April 22-26, 2020 session in Austin, Texas.

"Some folks might enjoy attending this meeting for free when it's going to be so close to Norman," Dr. Pitblado said.

Ray McAllister also asked OAS members to consider volunteering and attending. "This conference is huge, with every subject of archeology you can think of covered" OAS President McAllister said in an email to members.

Contact SAA at <https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting/volunteer>.

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2019 OAS Membership Form

- () **Individual \$20** Receive quarterly issues of *Trowel Marks* Newsletter.
- () **Family \$5 / \$10** \$5 for one additional member of immediate family, \$10 for two more. Receive digital OAS *Trowel Marks* Newsletter.
- () **Student \$10** Same as individual but limited to full time students. Copy of Student ID required. Receive digital OAS *Trowel Marks* Newsletter.
- () **Contributing \$40** Receive Annual OAS Bulletin, any Memoirs published by the Society, and digital OAS *Trowel Marks* Newsletter.
- () **Sustaining \$100** Receive annual OAS Bulletin, any Memoirs published by the Society, and quarterly OAS digital *Trowel Marks* Newsletter. Includes a tax-deductible contribution.
- () **Life \$500** Provides all benefits of Sustaining membership through lifetime of member.
- () **Institutional \$50 U.S. \$60 International** Receive quarterly *Trowel Marks*, annual OAS Bulletin, any Memoirs published during the subscription year.
- () **Print version** Add \$12 for Individual, contributing and sustaining members who prefer a print version of Newsletter.
- () **OAS New Member Handbook \$6.** Recommended for new members. Everything you need to know about the Society, its history, meetings, field activities, publications.
- () **Donation \$_____** I would also like to make a tax deductible donation to the Oklahoma Anthropological Society.

Name(s) _____

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To join or renew membership in the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, fill out this form. Please make checks to OAS. Send Membership Form and checks to Pam Leader, OAS Membership, 1002 Robinhood Lane, Norman, OK 73072