



Last happened in 1300 A.D.

Spiro Mounds open again after Arkansas River flood

After almost five months of cleanup, Oklahoma's archeological jewel Spiro Mounds has recovered from a torrential storm that damaged the museum and a bridge.

Director and archeologist Dennis Peterson said while all operations at the site are back to normal, visitors will notice changes. Carpeting and tiles are gone. At floor level the drywall and insulation have been removed. An east bridge on the 150-acre site is temporarily closed.

"Now the floor is epoxy concrete paint on concrete. It's very smooth and holds up well. Much easier to keep clean, too," Peterson said.

Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center is Oklahoma's only pre-contact American Indian archeological site open to the public. About 1,200 years ago the Spiro people created

(See *Spiro* Page 4)

Archaeology Conference set March 5 at Gilcrease

The Oklahoma Archaeology Conference will welcome archeologists, students and avocationalists to Tulsa March 5-7.

The biennial meeting offers numerous speakers covering a variety of topics.

Sponsored by the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network (OKPAN), the meeting opens at Gilcrease Museum with a reception and poster session. OAS will hold its Spring Meeting at or near the Conference venue.

Previous Oklahoma biennial conferences were held in Norman in 2016 and 2018.

Conference registration can be found at the OKPAN website <http://www.ou.edu/okpan>.



Bob Cole

Facebook demographics show more women than men "follow" on Facebook

Demographics show women are the Oklahoma Anthropological Society's biggest fans, administrator Sharon McAllister said.

The popular social media reveals 61 percent of the "followers" are female and 39 percent are male, she said.

"The breakdown of working professionals in the field is also about 60 percent women and 40 percent men," she said in an interview. "I think over the years more and more women have evolved as professionals."

Basic Facebook growth statistics were reported at the OAS Oct. 19 Board Meeting. OAS to date has 1,343 Facebook "followers." Among

(See *Facebook* Page 3)

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.

New editor says major changes ahead for Bulletin

A new format, content and publication schedule will be among changes readers see next year in the Bulletin of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society.

Bob Cole, Checotah, has been named new editor. He follows Oklahoma State Archeologist Bob Brooks who retired his post after many years. During much of that time, he also served as OAS Bulletin editor.

Bob talked at length with Dr. Brooks and OAS President Ray McAllister.

"I give Bob Brooks a lot of credit for keeping the Bulletin alive and beating the bushes for articles," Cole said in an interview. "I think that we finally came to the realization that the Bulletin, for a variety of reasons, is no longer the preferred publication for Oklahoma professional archeologists and institutions, and we have to find some way to continue the heritage of the Bulletin and expand it."

OAS President Ray McAllister welcomed Cole and said an updated Bulletin has been a top goal since he took office in January. Another concern – getting an updated Web site going – also has produced found an advisor and improved format and content.

Major facets of Cole's plan for the Bulletin are:

1. Look for ways to expand subscription. At present the Annual Bulletin reaches about 100 members. To be effective and warrant publication, it needs more readers.

2. Publish two issues a year, in

(See *Bulletin* Page 2)

President's Letter Ray McAllister

Hello all, hope you are settling in for winter and the holidays.

Next spring the Oklahoma Anthropological Society will be participating in a state-wide archaeology conference in Tulsa March 5-7. Be sure to note it on your calendar. It should be a great program.

Also, don't forget, the Society grant's deadline is Dec. 20. If you know any worthy Archeology or Anthropology students who could use a hand with their projects, be sure to point them to the Society's web page for information on how to apply.

Our next Board Meeting is Jan. 25. It will start at 2 p.m. at the Oklahoma Archeology Survey office in Norman. Just a reminder that all members are welcome to Board Meetings.

We are working on developing Society activities for the spring and summer. Watch the Society's Facebook and Web page for more information.

Also, our new "Oklahoma Archeology -- Bulletin of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society" will be published in early January.



The format will be bi-yearly, and will have interesting information on recent archeological studies in Oklahoma.

Thanks for your interest in Oklahoma's past. I am looking forward to another year of rediscovering the fascinating story of our state.

Bulletin

the winter and summer, in collaboration with the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network. OKPAN will provide spring and fall coverage in a digital OKPAN publication.

3. Expand content. The Bulletin will continue to have some scholarly reporting, a Society heritage since inception, Cole said. But it also will seek topics of interest to novice archeologists and the general public.

4. Provide digital as well as hard copy publication.

5. Include a two-page quarterly version of OAS Trowel Marks Newsletter. It would continue the President's Letter, highlights of Board Meetings, news on spring and fall digs, a calendar, and events of interest around the state.

"I think a Bulletin with this kind of content will be attractive to the Society's general membership and hopefully to some segments of the public," Cole said. "At this point they are the audience we should pay attention to."

He welcomes suggestions and can be reached at RobertLCole@hushmail.com

For your Calendar

December

8 "Firing of the Christmas Guns"

2-4 p.m. A tradition brought by German immigrants, the discharging of firearms such as cannons and guns was believed to dispel evil spirits in preparation for the upcoming holiday. Also storytelling, good food and a visit from Santa. Fort Reno, El Reno.

12 "Water/Ways" Smithsonian Museum traveling exhibit explores the centrality of water in our lives, its effect on environment and climate, its practical role in agriculture and economic planning. Fort Towson Historic Site.

14 "A Civil War Christmas" 3-5 p.m. photos with Santa, Christmas crafts, soldiers in period attire, refreshments Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah. Donations accepted.

14 "Christmas at the Fort,"

1-3 p.m. Fort Towson Fort. Visitors can bundle up and enjoy a wagon tour of the grounds featuring historical interpreters. After a visit with Santa, enjoy cider and cookies at the Old Sutler's store.

20 OAS Annual Awards deadline (contact President Ray McAllister at okla.anthro.society@gmail.com)

22 "Winter Solstice Walks"

guided walks at 11 a.m., 2 and 7 p.m. Learn about the winter solstice and how prehistoric American Indians dealt with changes in the seasons. Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center east of Spiro.

25 Merry Christmas!

January

1 Happy New Year!

25 OAS Winter Board Meeting 2

p.m. Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Norman

February Events TBA

March

5-7 Oklahoma Archaeology Conference at Gilcrease Museum and Helmerich Center for American Research, Tulsa.

7 OAS Spring Members Meeting

At or near Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa. Members and public welcome.

Expanding Website, Facebook win OAS Board praise

Improving OAS Website and Facebook operations won praise at the Fall Board Meeting of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society.

Meeting highlights:

The Board gathered Oct. 19 at the Overholser Mansion Carriage House. Board members present were President Ray McAllister and Sharon McAllister, Pam Leader, Bob Sweet, Jon Denton, Mel Phillips, Dean Vernon, Tamara Vernon, Bob Blasing, Dean Afendras and Paul Roberts.

The updated OAS Website (<https://okanthropologicalsociety.org/>) is now active. Among topics offered are About Us, How to Join OAS, photos from several spring digs, information on the 2020 OAS grant, and OAS Chapters.

Also links of interest including the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Oklahoma Public Archeology Network (OKPAN), and the Tulsa OAS.

The President said he has finished digital copying the Trowel Marks Newsletters and will soon have a complete set on the website.

Although Trowel Mark Newsletters date back many years, the current version, Vol. 1 No. 1, appeared in Winter, 2009. While there

Facebook

those are 1,309 who “like” the page. The new, closed Facebook group – Oklahoma Anthropological Society Members and Friends – has 33 but is growing.

Comparing age, the largest group of visitors are those 35 to 44 years old, the second largest are 45 to 54, and the third largest group are 23 to 34.

McAllister speculates younger people are busy going to school and getting a job. The older group are settled and busy with a family.

Finally, the largest group is

was a four year hiatus starting in 2014, publication resumed in Winter 2018.

Facebook administrator Sharon McAllister said followers increased from 1,244 in August to 1,305 as of Oct. 18. Demographics show 61% are women and 39% are men (see story Page 1).

The Bylaws committee will survey OAS Members for suggestions of changes, Ray McAllister said.

President McAllister said he would contact members about cancellation of the 2019 Fall Meeting. Plans are still forming for an OAS Spring Dig. Scott Hammerstedt of the Oklahoma Archeological Survey will hold a field school for students in spring 2020 at Spiro Mounds. OAS might be able to work at Spiro with the field school, McAllister said.

As for future dig sites, Afendras, a field archeologist, said he knows of a promising area north of Muldrow near the Parris Mound site. Preliminary work shows it has artifacts as deep as one meter, a nearby Civil War site, and the Sequoyah Salt Works.

Bob Cole, an experienced field excavator, is the new OAS Publications Chair. Cole suggests

more established in careers, getting involved with the community and finding more time to follow their interests.

Facebook statistics shows the majority of OAS “followers” in the state are in proportion to the larger cities. Oklahoma City has 174, Tulsa 115 and Norman 101.

As for outside the state, the top city for OAS Facebook “followers” is Fort Smith, Ark., with 13 people.

Reaching far beyond that, 4 Facebook “followers” are each found in the United Kingdom, Italy and Egypt.

the annual OAS Bulletin return to bi-annual publication with shorter, less technical content, McAllister said.

Chapter representatives with updates included Dean Vernon, Central Chapter; Paul Roberts, Tulsa Chapter; and Pam Leader, Cleveland County Chapter.

OAS Facebook Group option now available to members, friends

Recently the OAS Board decided to create a Facebook Group to help build community.

OAS now has two venues on the social media site: Facebook Page and Group. They support what OAS does but serve different purposes. A Group platform gives everyone in the group the ability to post.

Over time OAS Facebook Administrator Sharon McAllister expects the Group to gain traction, she said. That’s especially true with OAS activities like digs, lab days and field surveys.

On the Facebook Page platform, only administrators can post. The Page platform is useful to the Society: It helps build interest and promotes activities to a broader audience than only current members.

Sharon McAllister invites OAS members and friends to join the Group platform.

Here’s how:

1. Go to Facebook on your cell phone or computer.
2. Type “Oklahoma Anthropological Society” in the search bar
3. Click the Join button that appears to the right of the name “Oklahoma Anthropological Society Members and Friends.”

When members are accepted in the Group, they can participate by posting interesting topics or photos related to the broad field of anthropology.



Trowel Marks

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Trowel Marks Newsletter

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Spiro

a sophisticated culture which influenced the entire Southeast.

On May 24, 2019 the Spiro center staff was forced to make an emergency evacuation after historic flash flooding pushed the nearby Arkansas River out of its banks.

The contents of the center and Peterson's nearby home were quickly packed into waiting trucks

and trailers. Temporary storage was found at Spiro First United Methodist Church. Volunteers appeared from Oklahoma's Spiro and Fort Coffee and Arkansas's Russellville and Fort Smith communities.

Their generosity and quick response saved Spiro Mounds thousands of dollars in damage, Peterson said. They also allowed repairs to be quickly arranged.

Because Spiro Mounds is an agency of the Oklahoma Historical Society, costs are covered by the state, Peterson said.

"We had not quite \$100,000 in costs and the cleaning and restoration process," he said.

The center reopened Oct. 19, timed to celebrate International Archaeology Day and Oklahoma Archaeology Month.

Asked if he could relax now that everything is back in place, Peterson said he couldn't count on it staying that way.

"In the last 30 years, we've had two 100-year floods, three 50-year floods, and now one 500-year flood. Change is constant."

It reminds him of a similar event at Spiro around the year 1300 A.D., he said.

"The river flooded in the bottoms because of changes in rainfall and the torrential aspect of floods. I'm sure in 1300, the leaders here in Spiro said the same thing ... We see the patterns all over again," Peterson said.



2020 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) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ Email _____

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