

Professionals and volunteers map out their goals and start excavations during the 2008 OAS Spring Dig at Fort Gibson. In 2009 they will continue to search for remnants of the original 1824 fort.

Pioneer forts protected Indians and settlers

Military Forts in Oklahoma were set up to deal with settlers – legal and illegal – as well as the native Americans, speakers at the OAS 2009 Spring Meeting said.

The groups were in constant conflict. While the outcome became clear before statehood, the military moved around the state, trying to bring peace and order to one of the last pioneer territories in the country.

If the Indians stayed, they had to become farmers. If the pioneers arrived, they had to leave the Indians alone. Neither plan worked very well, a predicament that often called on soldiers to intervene.

Held April 25 at the Museum of the Great Plains in Lawton, the annual OAS meeting paused for a brief Saturday morning business meeting, then turned the lectern over to the experts on the state's forts.

Towana Spivey led off. As director and curator of the Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum, Lawton, he discussed "Military Forts on the Red River." After a quick look at Fort Towson, he focused on Fort Sill. Among those at the fort were Jef-

erson Davis, George Catlin, George Custer, William T. Sherman, Kiowa Chief White Bear, Apache Chief Geronimo, Comanche Chief Quanah Parker, and David "Boomer" Payne. The fort was also home to the Buffalo Soldiers.

K.C. Kraft, Stillwater, a compliance archeologist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the OAS Journal editor,

(See Forts Page 4)

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Historic fort yields clues

OAS Spring Dig pursues early Fort Gibson footprint

Although remnants of the original Fort Gibson are not going anywhere, they remain a challenge to locate, identify and place in context.

That task will resume at the 2009 OAS Spring Dig, May 23-31. OAS volunteers will assist archeologists from the Oklahoma Archeological Survey and members of the Oklahoma Historical Society staff in the effort.

Professionals and volunteers will take up shovels, measuring tapes, sifting screens, trowels and picks, hoping to expand military lore in early day Oklahoma.

While all are invited to visit the dig site, excavators must either belong to the OAS or the two groups conducting the dig. Applications to OAS membership and to join the dig will be available at the site, said Charles Cheatham, OAS President. Participants will get help at the registration tent beside the stockade.

Trina Menzie, of Walters, is contact person with archeologist Lee Bement, the dig director. Charles Surber, Tulsa will be in charge of paperwork (site forms). Cathy Compton, Oklahoma City, has the registration booth. Tom Purdin, Tahlequah, and Connie Masters, Canadian, direct social activities.

Fort Gibson was built in 1824 to parlay peace between the Osage and the Cherokees. Over the next quarter century, it was occupied and abandoned several times. The site's chaotic history includes operation by the Union, Confederates and Indians. It has been moved, disassembled and rebuilt. Although not the scene of a big battle, it has been razed by fire, attacked by legions of mosquitoes and swept by deadly malaria.

While much has been recorded, a definitive history of Fort Gibson remains to be written.

Dr. Bement has nine days to continue archeological research he

(See Spring Dig Page 3)

The Oklahoma Anthropological Society

Oklahoma Archeology Newsletter *Trowel Marks*

The Oklahoma Archeology Newsletter is a publication of The Oklahoma Anthropological Society

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Membership

An application to join The Society or renew your membership for the year, and information about its activities, publications and its contribution to Oklahoma archeology, can be found in this OAS Newsletter and on the OAS Website www.okarcheology.org.

OAS offers varied memberships. All members receive The Society's annual Journal, Oklahoma Archeology, and the quarterly Oklahoma Archeology Trowel Marks Newsletter. Contributing, Sustaining, Life, and Institutional members receive all memoirs. For more information, contact Curt Hendricks, OAS Assistant Secretary-Treasurer for Membership.

Publications

Order handbooks, point guides, memoirs, and other publications of The Society from Mary McHard, OAS Publications, 812 NW 42, Oklahoma City, OK 73118 or by contacting her via email at dmmchard@flash.net. Publications are listed on the OAS Website www.okarcheology.org

Contact the OAS Newsletter?

Questions are welcome by the Editor, Jon Denton, 11550 Bartons Butte, Mustang, OK 73064 or at jonrdenton@aol.com. Opinions, unless otherwise identified, are those of the editor and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of The Society.

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~ Events of Interest ~

May

11-30 Excavation, U.S. Forest Service, Holocene campsite and possible Dalton component, Ouachita National Forest, Langley, Ark.

"Unconquered: Allan Houser and the Legacy of One Apache Family," Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City (to July 3).

17 Atlatl Tournament hosted by Austin Archery Club, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Emma Long Park, Austin, Texas.

23-31 OAS Spring Dig, Fort Gibson

23 Certification Seminar S3 General Excavation Techniques, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Fort Gibson (preregistration recommended).

June

6 New exhibit opens, "The Gault Site: A Wealth of New Archaeological Evidence," Bell County Museum, Belton, Texas.

13-20 TAS Field School, Texas Archeology Society, directed by Scott Brosowske, HQ Wolf Creek Park, Lake Fryer, near Perryton, Texas

27 Certification Seminar S12 Report Writing, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Oklahoma Archeological Survey Office, Norman (preregistration recommended).

27 Oklahoma Artifact Show No. 1, Archaeological Society of Oklahoma, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Payne County Expo Center, Stillwater.

September

25-27 Annual Meeting, Arkansas Archeological Society, Best Western Inn, Eureka Springs, Ark.

October

3 OAS Fall Meeting "The Caddo of Eastern Oklahoma," Sam Noble Museum of Natural History, Norman.

14-16 Plains Anthropological Conference, hosted by Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Embassy Suites Inn, Norman.

Why Oklahoma Anthropological Society?

Why is it Anthropological Society and not Archeological Society? In order to practice archeology, we need to understand the relationship between anthropology and archeology. Anthropology is the broad study of people, past and present. Archeology is a branch of anthropology often focused on the distant past. In order to interpret what is found at archeological sites, we need to know how people organized themselves long ago. Knowledge of cultures yesterday can be derived from studying cultures today. Anthropology gives us that bridge to understanding.

Trowel Marks

Charles Cheatham
OAS President

About 45 people attended the Spring Meeting in Lawton on Saturday, April 25. The speakers were great! Special thanks to staff members at the Museum of the Great Plains for hosting us, and to members of the OAS Lawton chapter who brought food and refreshments and helped with planning.

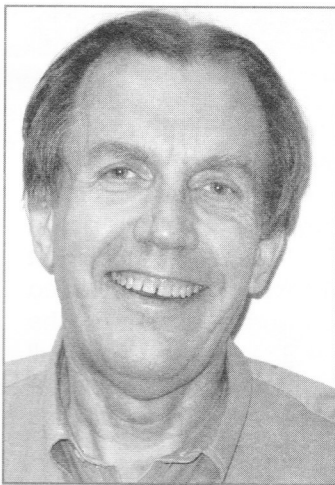
The reenactors at the Trading Post on the museum grounds were very interesting. Debra Baker's behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's archeology collection was also a highlight.

On Sunday, those who stayed over had another treat — close to a three-hour tour of the Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum, led by Towana Spivey, the director/curator.

He gave us a special preview of the impressive Native American warrior museum, scheduled to open in June. We got a look at the fully-furnished restored barracks, kitchen, and dining hall, with running commentary on people, places, events, customs, and everyday life at the post in the 1870s.

Afterward, OAS members ate lunch at The Plantation in Medicine Park, viewed the town's cobblestone buildings, and toured a local winery.

The OAS Spring Dig returns to Fort Gibson May 23-31, directed by ar-



Charles Cheatham

cheologist Lee Bement. We will dig to further define the foundations on the west side of the original fort (west of the road and railroad track, for those familiar with the area.)

We may do some test digging where outbuildings were located, including the original commissary (farther northwest, toward the river, in an area where

the Oklahoma Department of Transportation will build a new bridge).

While there will be no dig chairman this year, several persons will divide the committee's tasks. OAS members can help by volunteering onsite for supervisory or supporting work, whenever you see something that needs to be done. That generally happens without asking, and it makes every dig go smoothly.

Bring everyone. They can dig by joining OAS on the spot. Also please donate your extra five-gallon plastic buckets.

* * *

I would like to welcome members who have joined OAS recently. Membership Chairman Curt Hendricks passes their names along. They are:

(Contributing) Eva Kimble, Purcell; Carolyn Boyd, Eldorado.

(Active) Aaron Brummitt, Fort Sill; Robert Cast, Mustang; Don Folger, Ada; John Taylor, Broken Arrow; Phil Floyd, Lexington.

(Full Time Student) Sarah Dumas, Norman; Cari Foster, Oklahoma City; Kara Underwood, Tulsa.

* * *

Finally, please mark your calendars for the OAS Fall Meeting, set Oct. 3 at the Sam Noble Museum in Norman. It will have a Caddoan theme.

Spring Dig seeks historic fort layout

(Continued from Page 1)

started four years ago.

A thumbnail summary of archeological events at the site:

2003 – Four test excavation units were made inside the stockade replica built by the WPA. A National Park Service Heritage Preservation Grant was awarded the Fort Gibson National Historic Landmark.

2006 – Dr. Bement is named principal archeologist at the site. His task is to explore the fort's original footprint.

Using remote sensing, maps are made of the stockade exterior. Sub-

surface mapping and coring identifies viable sites for a closer look.

2007 – Dr. Bement and members of the OHS staff dig in. They uncover remnants of the original fort foundations in a spring excavation. In autumn, OAS volunteers join the effort.

2008 – The professionals return, and OAS helps them mount a second dig. Excavators use shovels and trowels to unearth buckets of artifacts. They find rock foundations, the oldest cellar in Oklahoma, nails, military buttons, glass sherds from medicine and liquor bottles, gun flints, pottery shards, clay pipes,

even a handmade domino.

2009 – The search for the fort's early footprint expands at the OAS Spring Dig May 23-31. During the dig, members of the Survey office and Fort Gibson staff will present after-hours programs. A documentary video, "Finding Fort Gibson," will debut.

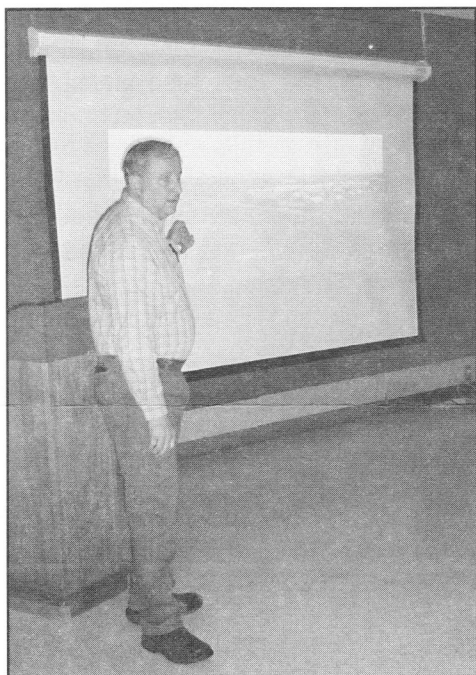
More information is available on the OAS Website www.okarcheology.org.

Pioneer forts

(Continued from Page 1)

discussed Fort (Camp) Nichols. Located in what later became the west edge of the Oklahoma Panhandle, the fort was built by Kit Carson. He attempted to protect the Cimarron Cutoff on the Santa Fe Trail from outlaw, Kiowa and Comanche raids. The fort only lasted a year.

Charles Wallis, Norman, archeologist with the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Office, introduced Fort Reno. Located west of present-day Oklahoma City, the fort was established in 1875 after a Cheyenne uprising, and remained to protect the more peaceful Five Civi-



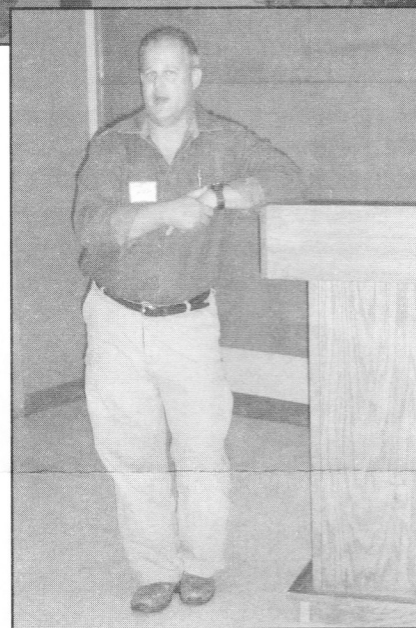
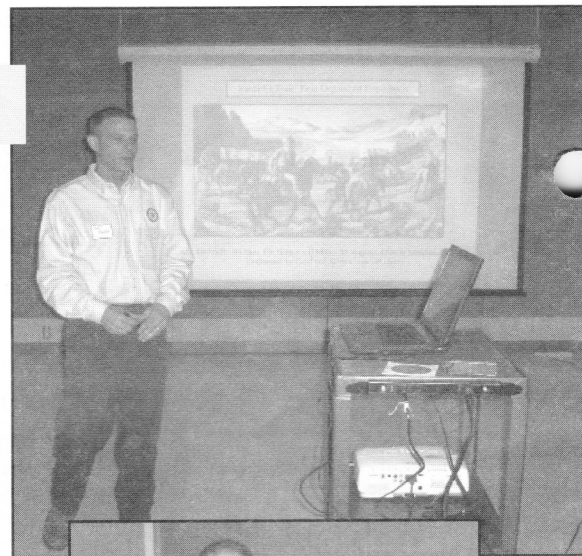
Towana Spivey

K.C. Kraft

lized Tribes. Buffalo soldiers were stationed there. The military later dealt with the Sooner-Boomer land rush. Restoration of the fort is under way, although lagging.

Mike McKay, a University of Oklahoma PhD graduate student, presented "Archaeology at Fort Gibson: Summary and Surprises." McKay, active several seasons at the Fort Gibson excavations, reviewed previous work and plans for the 2009 OAS dig in May. Work will explore the fort's original stockade fence, an old porch, and several outbuildings.

Tim Poteete, living history interpreter at the Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton, discussed the museum's own fort. Known as Coffee's Station and the Red River Trading Post, the log cabins are on the museum grounds. Several pioneer style re-enactors discussed and demonstrated life in the Oklahoma frontier.



Mike McKay

OAS Board Minutes

April 25, 2009

At the OAS Spring meeting, the board recommended printing abbreviated minutes in the Trowel Marks Newsletter, then referring members to the OAS Website for the complete version.

A summary of the OAS Board meeting at the April 25 meeting at Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton, follows (only items voted on are included):

President Charles Cheatham called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Minutes were approved as presented by out-going secretary Jon Denton; the fis-

cal report was approved as presented by Treasurer Cathy Compton.

The board approved an amendment stating that in order for the OAS liability to cover a chapter event, the event must be submitted and approved by the board in advance of the event.

The position of Newsletter Editor was made a board position, as is the Journal editor.

In separate action, the board approved a motion to hire a newsletter editor and pay compensation of \$30 per page. The board covers all printing, mailing and other direct costs associated with Newsletter publication.

To cover increasing costs of

copying and mailing out-of-print OAS publications, the board approved new rates of \$1 per page for all per-page copies and \$3 for shipping and handling each publication.

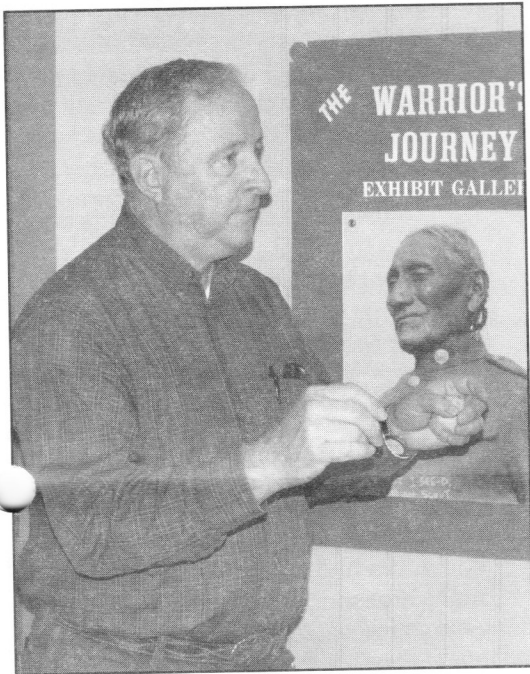
At the day's membership meeting, members elected by acclamation Charles Cheatham, returning as President, and Kathy Gibbs, returning as Vice President. Elected At-Large Directors, each with three-year terms, were Debra Baker, Lawton; Liz Leith, Norman; and Allen and Monica Marshall, both of Oklahoma City.

For a full copy of the April 25, 2009 minutes, see the OAS Webpage at <http://www.ou.edu/cas/archsur/oas/>

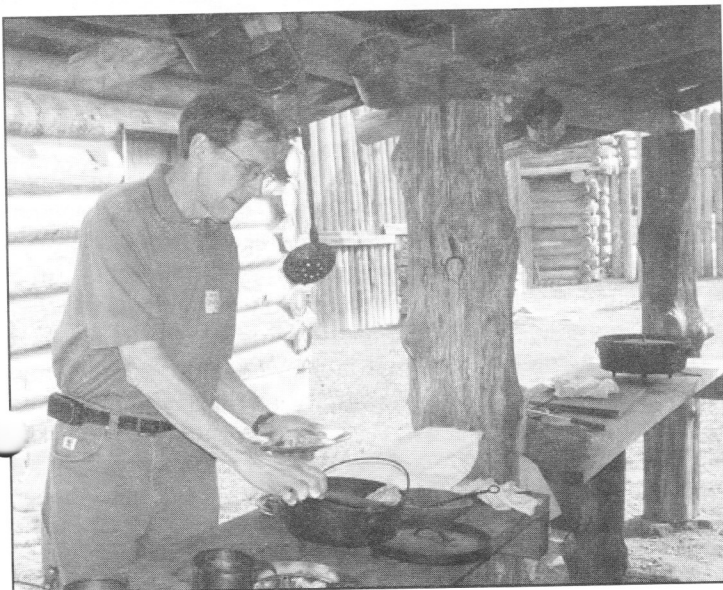
OAS meeting adjourns to tours

Lawton field trips show pioneer Oklahoma life

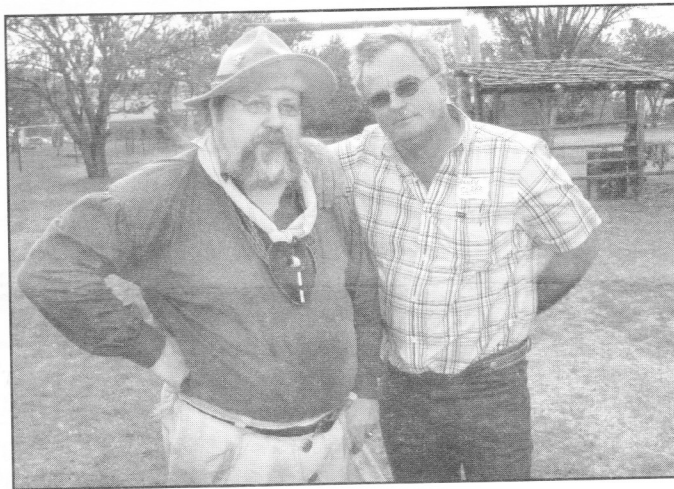
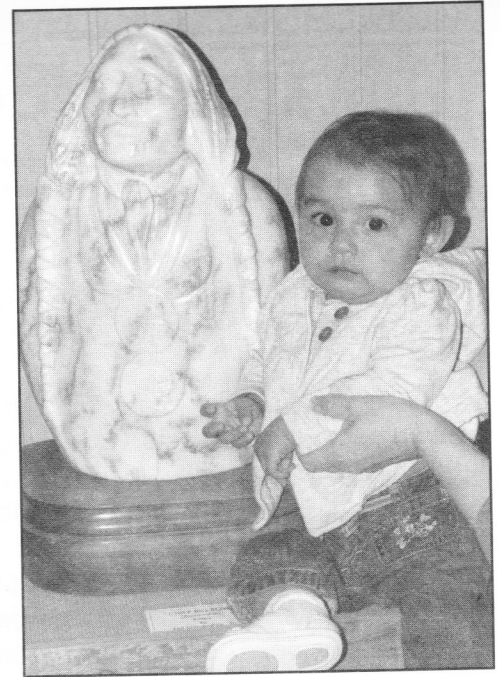
Participants in the April 25 OAS Spring Meeting used Saturday afternoon and Sunday to tour the Lawton area. Field trips included the Fort Sill Museum and Coffee's Station, a village within the Great Plains Museum where visitors looked at pioneer cabins, inside and out. There reenactors, dressed in western garb, described the rugged frontier life and showed the clothing, store goods, tools and food the pioneers used.



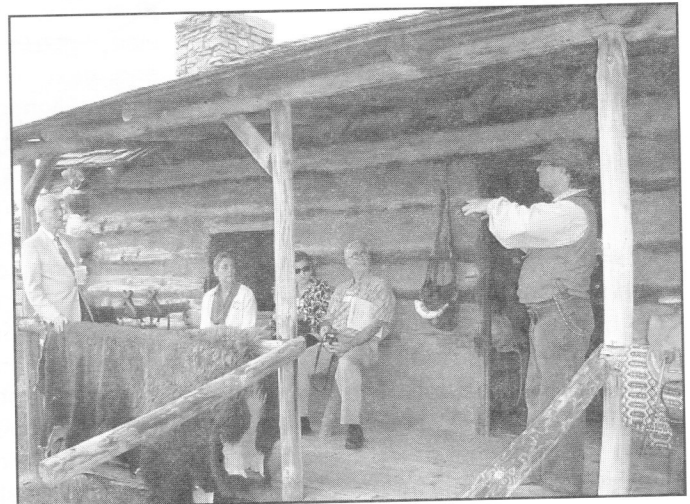
Above, Towana Spivey, Director/Curator of the Fort Sill Museum, pauses beside a poster of Kiowa Scout I-See-O. Below, OAS President Charles Cheatham tries some tasty pioneer vittles.



Zoe Jo White Rose Baker, infant daughter of OAS Lawton members Debra and Randy Baker, poses beside a statue of her great-great-great-great grandfather, noted Kiowa Chief Big Bow (Zep-ko-ette), at the Fort Sill Museum.



Reenactor Steve Strickland, Lawton, visits with OAS member Randy Clark, Grandfield, during the Coffee's Station tour.



Reenactor Tim Poteete, living history interpreter at the Museum of the Great Plains, talks about pioneer life with, from left, Gene Hellstern, Francie Sisson and Mimi and Curt Hendricks.

Walk like an Egyptian

By Guy Folger
OAS Correspondent
Part I

When I signed up for a trip to Africa and Jordan, it was solely for the Petra portion of the tour. Along the way, however, I discovered the magical and fascinating Abu Simbel, Egypt.

By the time we got to Abu Simbel, I was indeed doing my own personal impression of walking like an Egyptian, having twisted my knee (don't I always) at the pyramids on day three. Even so, I struggled along, unable to resist the lure of a world famous landmark.

Located in south central Egypt on Lake Nasser, Abu Simbel presents two huge temples originally chiseled out of the mountainside. The monuments are credited to the reign of Pharaoh Ramses II, carved some-time between 1244 BC and 1224 BC.

Ramses had the temples constructed as a lasting monument to himself and to his queen, Nefertari. When I say huge, I mean massive. As I stood inside each temple, I was in awe at the size of the enclosed statues and side chambers. These structures were carved into the side of a mountain more than 3,000 years ago.

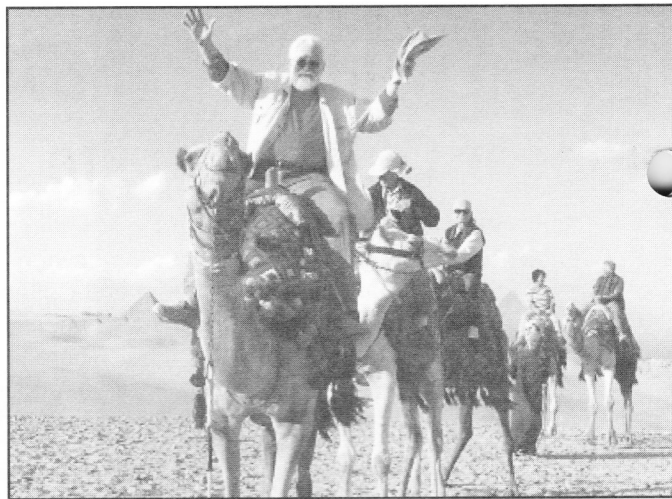
With the passage of time, however, the temples became covered by sand and forgotten. They were rediscovered in the early 1800s by two explorers led by, as local legend has it, a young boy named Abu Simbel.

* * *

Construction of the Aswan High Dam in the early 1960s put the temples under threat of rising waters from the river Nile. Between 1964 and 1968, the entire monument site was cut into 20-30 ton blocks and dismantled. It was reassembled some 210 feet higher and 650 feet back from the river.

Outside Ramses' Temple, or the Great Temple, are four 65-foot-high statues of the Pharaoh. The one to the left of the temple entrance was damaged during an earthquake, leaving only the lower part of the body intact.

Nefertari's temple, or Small Temple, is about 300 feet northeast of the Great Temple, and has six, 32-foot statues of Ramses and Nefertari adorn-



OAS member Guy Folger mounts up and prepares to ride, Oklahoma style, during his trip to Jordan and Egypt.

ing the outside. Oddly breaking with tradition, the statues of Ramses and Nefertari are of the same height. Traditionally, while the statues of queens stood next to their pharaoh, they were never taller than his knees.

Supposedly, Ramses had some 200 wives and concubines, but I am guessing that Nefertari was his favorite and most beloved.

Our group stayed for a light and sound show in the evening, then rose early the next day for Mother Nature's own sunrise spectacular. As designed, the Great Temple would become aglow at sunrise, the sun striking firestone inside, lighting one statue, then the next and next. However, the sun stopped short of lighting the last statue, Ptah, the Egyptian god of the underworld. He belonged in his own Stygian darkness, in deep shadows and ink black crevices.

The monuments' original design supposedly caused the lighting phenomenon to occur only twice a year, on Feb. 20 and Oct. 20. Legend says those dates are the king's February coronation day and October birthday, but there is no proof to support these claims.

However, it seems now the natural light show occurs every day. For us, our anticipation was as invigorating as the chilly morning air, but well worth the wait, as first one statue was engulfed in golden sunshine, and then the next and the next, until all except Ptah were aglow, just as it happened day in, day out, over the span of centuries. What a way to start a day.

Now some random thoughts about traveling to Egypt. You may know about the recent bombing in the Cairo marketplace. That was the same market we visited just two weeks earlier.

However, I can tell you that I felt absolutely safe during our entire stay in Egypt, and would not hesitate a New York minute to make a return trip.

With an organized tour, and a reputable company, the security is awesome. We had an armed Tourism Policeman, dressed in suit and tie, and fitted out with an automatic pistol on his hip. He was on every bus we used.

In fact, we had a police escort through some of the villages and cities. I think we even got to feeling like celebrities.

Our guide, noted Egyptologist Dr. Wahid Gad, was an invaluable source of information and, to my amazement, was even able to read hieroglyphics. After telling him about OAS, and with a little bit of archeology talk here and there, we developed a lasting bond. One thing of special interest to me: He said Egypt wasn't conducting many archaeological digs of late. The country simply lacked the space to store the artifacts.

Witness to that fact was the Cairo Museum. It resembled a warehouse more than a showcase. It had rows and rows of statuary, as far as the eye could see.

Next issue: Limping through Petra.

Guy Folger is an OAS Lifetime Member, member of the OAS Board and McAlester Chapter, and a dedicated excavator.

OAS Fall Meeting focus on Caddo

The archeological evidence for Caddoan people in two sections of eastern Oklahoma will be examined at the Fall OAS meeting.

The session is set for Saturday, Oct. 3 at the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History, Norman, said Charles Cheatham, OAS President.

Coordinating the program will be Don Wyckoff, the museum's Curator of Archaeology and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oklahoma, and Jim Cox of Norman, a former OAS board member and authority on the Caddo culture.

Dr. Wyckoff plans



to contrast Caddo activities in two areas of importance to Oklahoma – the Arkansas Basin and Red River Basin.

“The overall theme will let us talk about Spiro Mounds and other key sites in both major basins,” he said.

Preliminary plans include soliciting presenta-

tions by Luther Leith on Fourche Maline, as well as research that Patrick Livingood, Scott Hammerstedt and Amanda Regnier are doing in McCurtain County in southeastern Oklahoma.

It is hoped that Caddo Nation representatives also will be willing to speak, Dr. Wyckoff said. Displays of Caddo materials may also be set up.

Details on the meeting will be available in the next OAS Trowel Marks Newsletter. They also will appear on the OAS website, www.okarcheology.org

OAS elects officers, additions to board at Spring Meeting

Officers and board members were elected by acclamation at the OAS Spring Meeting. The session was hosted by the Museum of the Great Plains in Lawton.

The nominating committee asked Charles Cheatham to return as President and Kathy Gibbs as Vice President. Both accepted.

Named to join the board as At-Large Directors, each with three-year terms, were Debra Baker, Lawton; Liz Leith, Norman; and Allen Marshall and Monica Marshall, both of Oklahoma City.

Held April 25, the annual session accepted recommendations from the nominating committee. It was led by Gibbs and included Curt Hendricks, Thomas Purdin, Connie Masters and Jon Denton.

OKLAHOMA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Membership Application Form

Would you like to become a member of the OAS? Then simply fill out this form and send it with payment (check or money order) to Curt Hendricks, Membership Chairman, Oklahoma Anthropological Society, 6424 Sudbury Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73162-1725

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY DESIRED

- Active** \$20 Receive issues annually of Oklahoma Archeology, Journal of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, and the OAS Newsletter Trowel Notes.
- Student** \$10 Same as Active, but limited to full-time students (any age). Enclose copy of Student ID.
- Contributing** \$30 Receive issues annually of Oklahoma Archeology, Journal of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, the quarterly OAS Newsletter, and memoirs published by the Society.
- Sustaining** \$40 Receive issues annually of Oklahoma Archeology, Journal of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society, the quarterly Newsletter Trowel Notes, and memoirs published by the Society.
- Associate** \$5 For one additional member of your immediate family, \$10 for two or more.
- Life** \$500 Provides all benefits of a contributing membership throughout the lifetime of member.
- Institutional** Domestic \$30 () Institutional Canada/Mexico \$35 () Institutional Other Foreign \$40
- OAS New Member Handbook** \$6. Recommended for new members. Everything you need to know about the Society: its history, meetings, field activities, publication series, and more.

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Home Phone () _____ Cell () _____ Email address _____



OAS awards spotlight members' contributions

Three veterans of OAS history were recognized with awards at the Spring Meeting in Lawton.

Vice President Kathy Gibbs arranged for plaques and citations. On hand April 25 to receive awards were Charles Wallis, Norman; Gene Hellstern, Edmond; and Jimmie Martin, Lawton.

Wallis, an Oklahoma Office of Historic Preservation archeologist, received the Dr. Robert E. Bell Award. Nomination by Norman archeologist Don Wyckoff cited Wallis as the backbone of the historic archeology program in Oklahoma for almost 50 years.

Hellstern received the Special Recognition Award. Gibbs said Hellstern, a retired history professor at the University of Central Oklahoma, welcomed her to her first chapter meeting as he did others for many years. He is a veteran member who attracted many to the Society, eagerly joined field research, provided leadership in every aspect of the Society, and continues to serve as a role model.

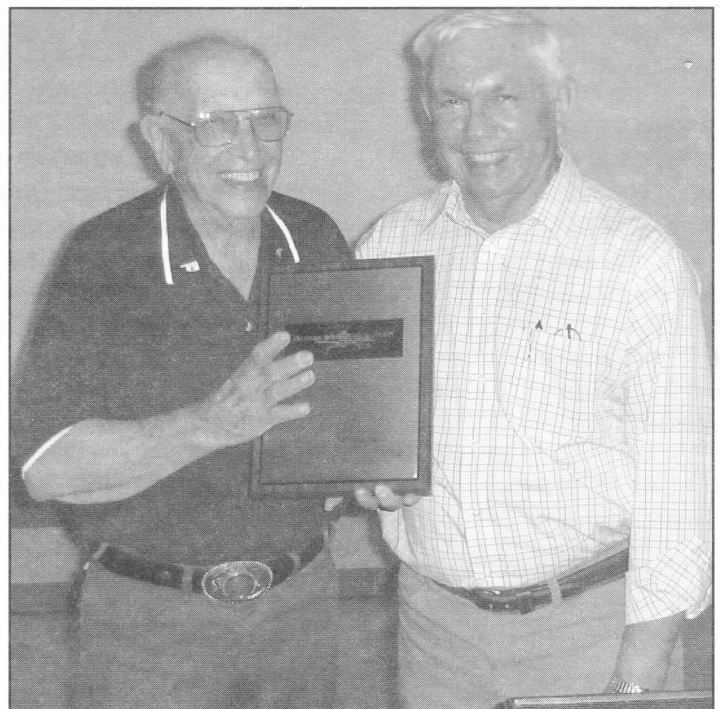
Martin received the Lifetime Service Award. Nominator Jana Brown, Lawton, joined Don Wyckoff in presenting the plaque. A retired Lawton firefighter, Martin is a founding member of the original Lawton OAS chapter and an OAS member for a half century. He was active for many years in research and chapter programs. Last year he celebrated his 90th birthday.



Vice President Kathy Gibbs presents an OAS Special Recognition Award to Gene Hellstern during the annual Spring Meeting April 25 in Lawton.



OAS President Charles Cheatham, right, presents archeologist Charles Wallis the Dr. Robert E. Bell Award during the annual Spring Meeting in Lawton.



Lawton OAS member Jimmie Martin, left, accepts a Lifetime Service Award from archeologist Don Wyckoff during the annual Spring Meeting.

Central Chapter, Oklahoma City (Bruce Sanderson) In April, the chapter had its Annual Book Auction. In May, we heard "The Best of Gene Hellstern;" June is open; in July, the annual chapter picnic; in August, Joe Watkins, Norman, Kennewick Man; September, OAS Vice President Kathy (the world traveler) Gibbs on "Peru: Been there, got the T-shirt;" October is open; November, John Davis, Fort Towson historical properties manager, on reclaiming the Red River Steamboat; in December, the Annual Central Chapter Christmas Party.

Cleveland County Chapter, Norman (Liz Leith) In May, the chapter will hear Dr. Lee Bement on past and future excavations at Fort Gibson. The chapter takes summer months off, so the next meeting is in September.

Greater Southwest Chapter, Lawton (Jana Brown) On May 23, we plan our chapter's trip to Fort Gibson. We also hear guest speaker Kurtis Koll of Cameron University, Lawton. On June 27, Chapter members will help the Museum of the Great Plains move the archaeological collection into temporary storage area to prepare for installation of a compact storage system! There is no meeting in July.

McAlester Chapter, McAlester (Connie Masters) The chapter has had two fund raisers to cover the cost of the annual Echoes of the Past festival. In our April program, we heard former OAS President Gene Hellstern. In May, forensic archeologist Kent Buehler, Norman, speaks on the Sandman historical burial in western Oklahoma; in June, we hear Oklahoma historical archeologist Charles Wallis.

Tahlequah Chapter, Tahlequah (Thomas Purdin) In April, Connie Masters and Thomas Purdin presented a Power Point program on "Sewing: One of the Oldest Known Professions." The May meeting is cancelled after a date conflict with the OAS Spring Dig. In June, we hear Kenneth Shingleton, Tulsa, archeologist with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Tulsa Chapter, Tulsa (Charles Surber) Our April 27 speaker was Bill O'Brien on three TAS projects from past years. Our May speaker was Oklahoma film maker Andy Slaucitajs and his videos on Jake Bluff and Fort Gibson. In June, the speakers are Choctaw Nation historians Olin Williams and Ian Thompson. In July, we have a membership show-and-tell.

Forest Service seeks volunteers for Arkansas dig

The National Forest Service seeks volunteers to help test a prehistoric site in east Arkansas.

Excavation is expected to continue through May in a mountain valley near Langley, Ark. Archeologist Roger Coleman directs the work, said Meeks Etchieson, Heritage Program Manager for the Ouachita National Forest in Hot Springs, Ark.

Coleman identifies the site as prehistoric with early-middle Holocene components (10,500-5,000 years BP). The site may have been a campsite, with a Dalton component.

The excavation is in Brooks Hollow on the Caddo Ranger District, Langley vicinity. Coleman will reserve transportation and leave for the site at 7:30-8:30 a.m. Volunteers are advised to dress for full sunlight and wear sturdy shoes.

Coleman will serve as the excavation professional. Assisting him will be technicians and volunteers, including members of the Arkansas Archeological Society. Volunteers are asked to contact Coleman at the Forest Service office at (501) 321-5252.



OAS Chapter Meetings



Ark-Homa Chapter, Fort Smith, Ark.
7 p.m. third Thursday
Echols Building, University of Arkansas, Fort Smith, Ark.
Contact: Tim Mulvihill (479) 788-7812 or Lexie Rue-Harris (479) 675-3233

Byrds Mill Springs Chapter, Ada
7:30 p.m. second Tuesday, Valley View Hospital, Ada
Contact: Carl Gilley (580) 332-3812

Central Chapter, Oklahoma City
7 p.m. first Thursday
Will Rogers Park Garden Center, 3400 NW 16, OKC
Contact: Bruce Sanderson (405) 722-2331

Cleveland County Chapter, Norman
7 p.m. first Monday
Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, Norman
Contact: Luther Leith (405) 321-3558

Kay County Chapter, Ponca City
6:30 p.m. third Thursday, Ponca City Library
Contact: Richard Sherrod (580) 765-9661

Greater Southwest Chapter, Lawton
2 p.m. fourth Saturday, Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton
Contact: Debra Baker (580) 581-3460

McAlester Archeological Society, Krebs
7 p.m. second Thursday, Krebs City Hall, Krebs
Contact: Connie Masters (918) 470-3781

Tahlequah Archeological Society, Tahlequah
7 p.m. fourth Thursday, Tahlequah Public Library
Contact: Tom Purdin (918) 284-2410

Tulsa Archeological Society, Tulsa
7 p.m. fourth Monday, Central Library, Tulsa
Contact: Charles Surber (918) 743-2307.

Archeological Rendezvous has fine day at Echo Ridge

By Connie Masters
McAlester OAS Chapter

Thank you everyone who helped make Echoes of the Past IV Rendezvous a huge success.

The morning of April 4 was warm and sunny, even though it was windy for some of the craft items on display. A breezy wind didn't deter the artists or guests who came to Echo Ridge, Arrowhead State Park near Canadian, for the displays and demonstrations.

As in the past, the OAS McAlester and Tahlequah Chapters sponsored the festival.

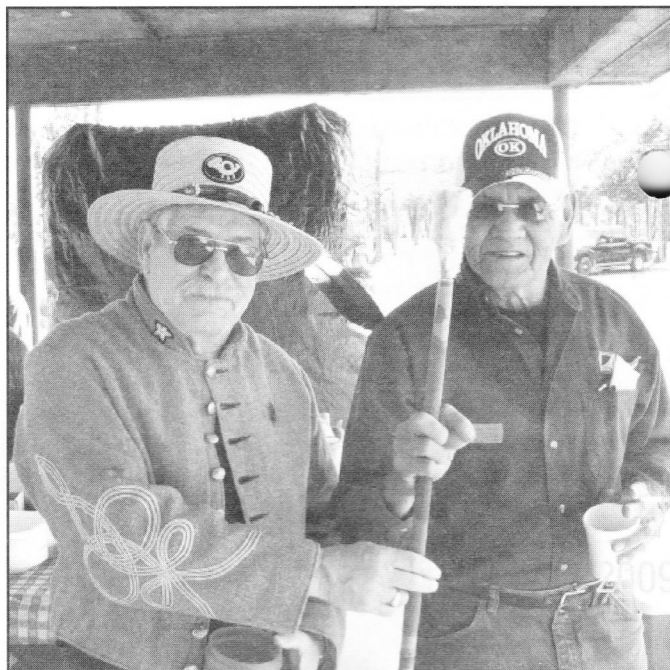
There were displays of spear points, atlatls, blow guns, bows and arrows, quivers, native art, pipes, walking sticks, dream catchers, baskets, beaded jewelry, finger weaving and crochet.

Carolyn Matthews, Tulsa, showed how to make paint from soil, then create pictures. Rachel Cook, Sapulpa, showed how to decorate feathers. The youth who attended the rendezvous enjoyed learning both of these crafts.

There were demonstrations and instructions for making tools from stone in the ways of our ancestors.

Demonstrations of atlatls and blowguns were also on the agenda. We decided against audience participation in these skills because of the strong winds. We didn't want to take a chance on some kind of injury or damage from the wind blowing the darts out of the target area.

Artists who had displays or did demonstrations were Jim



Thomas Purdin, Tahlequah, left, presents a Native American blowgun to winner Henry Smoke, Sallisaw, during the Echoes of the Past Rendezvous, a spring festival at Arrowhead State Park.

Clay, Stigler; Mark Miller, Warner; Carl Lester, Muskogee; Curt Sewell, Hulbert; Henry Smoke, Sallisaw; Thomas Baldwin and Carolyn Matthews, Tulsa; Darrin and Marla Dirksen, Pryor.

Also Dusty and Carolyn Billie, and Rachel Cook, Sapulpa; Dee Williams, MacGregor, Texas; Bill Burkart and Thomas Purdin, both of Tahlequah; Connie Masters, Canadian.

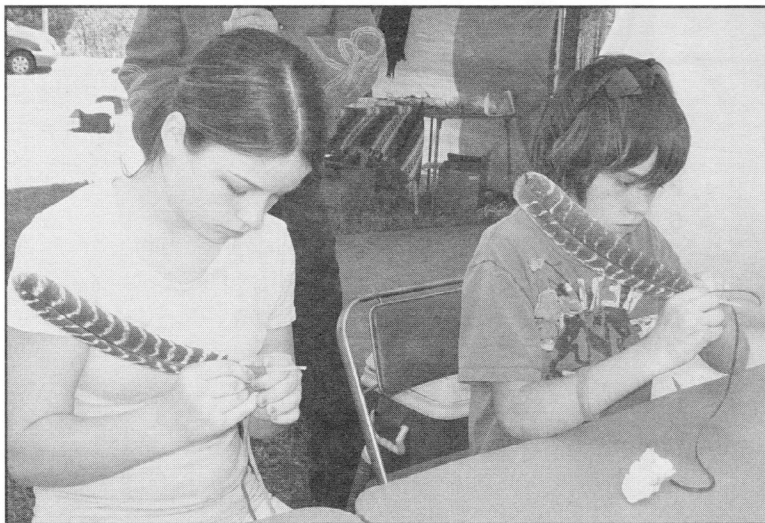
Margaret Rowland, secretary of the McAlester Archeological Society, kept the hot dogs and drinks supplied. These items were offered for \$1 for a hotdog, chips and cookie, and 50 cents for drinks. Thanks to Margaret, the refreshments were a big hit.

We held a cash drawing of the artists who participated. Dusty Billie of Sapulpa was the lucky \$25 winner.

Winners of the other drawings were Caroline Billie, Sapulpa, a bone knife donated by Thomas Purdin; Henry Smoke, Sallisaw, a blow gun donated by Curt Sewell; Othello Rowland, Haileyville, an antique crochet doily, donated by Bill Burkart; Ava Kelley, McAlester, a crochet shawl donated by Dee Williams; and Thomas Purdin, Tahlequah, a T-Shirt donated by Darrin and Marla Dirksen.

In order to help pay for the festival, the McAlester and Tahlequah chapters are sponsoring a quilt sale. The quilt is a handmade, king size bed spread with an archeological theme. Tickets are \$1 each, and when 300 tickets are sold, a drawing will be held at a McAlester chapter meeting.

For information on the quilt fund raiser, contact Connie Masters at samok56@yahoo.com.



Brando and Allie Apala learn how to decorate feathers during the Echoes of the Past Rendezvous, a spring festival at Arrowhead State Park.

Book Reviews

Jon Denton
Reviews Editor

Yucatán Through Her Eyes: Alice Dixon Le Plongeon, Writer and Expeditionary Photographer
By Lawrence Gustave Desmond, University of New Mexico Press (2009), 387 pages, \$45
(ISBN 978-0-8263-4595-0)

Reviewed by Jim D. Feagins

Desmond offers a rare insider's perspective of early Mesoamerican archeological fieldwork during the latter half of the 19th century. He has produced a fine biography of Alice Le Plongeon.

Of course, the volume's chief value to those interested in archeology is the many halftones of early photographs of Mayan ruins. There is also her transcribed diary. Found a decade ago, the diary and many of her other papers had been lost for over 80 years.

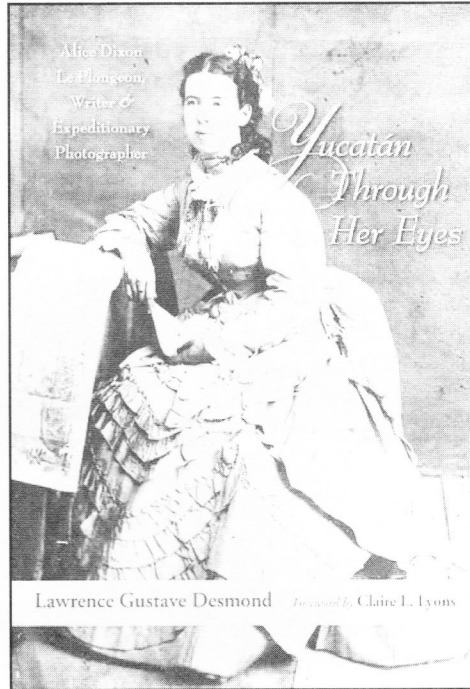
Alice and Augustus Le Plongeon, a husband and wife team, spent over a decade working in Mexico's Yucatan. They labored during an antiquarian age, long before professional archeologists began to place the discipline on a more scientific footing.

Modern students of archeology sometimes forget the coarse roots from which the profession derived. Alice's Yucatan diary is not only a reminder of just how far we have come as a profession, it contains abundant anecdotes expressing the excitement of archeological exploration.

Also presented is the struggle to survive in exotic locations during the 1870s and early 1880s. At that time, transportation, food, shelter, disease, class and political turmoil, and communication with workers (who spoke only Mayan) was difficult, especially with the Le Plongeon's limited funds.

The Yucatan diary, which comprises most of the volume, is not quite an excavation notebook. Rather, it is a chronicle of personal experiences while photographing, excavating, and living among the ruins. At that early date, few individuals, especially women, studied Mesoamerican archeology — it was a relatively new field.

Alice was born in 1851 to a



middle class English family. Her father, Henry Dixon, was a well known London photographer. He taught his daughter all aspects of the trade at an early age. She traveled to North America, and as a young Victorian bride, had surprising

OAS seeks donations of archival materials

Back copies of OAS publications are always valuable. They can help fill gaps in the OAS archives, said Mary McHard, publications chairman.

An inventory is under way at the OAS storage unit in Bethany. Shelves are being prepared to move the most valuable material off the concrete floor. Donations of both publications and shelves are appreciated, McHard said.

Archive materials can be donated by contacting Mary at dmmchard@flash.net or calling her at (405) 525-7824. If needed, she can arrange to have the materials picked up and delivered to storage.

stamina and survival skills for one so slight of frame. Alice, a pioneer woman photographer, even wrote several technical articles for photographic journals in a male-dominated field.

Her much older, eccentric French husband, Augustus, was a medical doctor, photographer, and antiquarian/amateur archeologist. They worked together, clearing, excavating, making casts of monuments, and extensively photographing a host of small sites as well as the Mayan ruins of Uxmal and Chichen Itza. They were the first to excavate at these two now famous places.

The couple's extensive, systematic photographs preserve valuable evidence of many monuments before the ravages of later excavations, weathering, restoration, and looting.

During the latter part of their careers, their speculative musings, especially concerning their belief that the Maya were the founders of the early Egyptian civilization, put them at odds with mainstream archeologists. At first, such theories were acceptable. There was so much that was unknown. Later, with better archeological dating showing the Mayan-Egyptian connection was impossible, the Le Plongeon's stubborn adherence to the theory left them somewhat isolated in the profession.

In 1884, Alice, at age 33, and her husband left Yucatan and moved to New York. There she began extensively writing and giving well-received lectures to large crowds. Her Mesoamerican talks were often enhanced with lantern slides she made from the couples' photographs.

She was a multifaceted woman with wide-ranging interests, writing and lecturing on many subjects. She was a social activist. She had great amount compassion for the Mayan people on a philosophical level, while on a personal level, her diary indicates that they were sometimes dealt with high-handedly.

Alice's adventurous, unconventional career ended in 1910. She died at the age of 59. In 2004, her transcribed diary and many of her field notes, manuscripts, and photographs were obtained by the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Jim Feagins is an archeological consultant in Belton, Mo.

Book Reviews

**1491: New Revelations
The Americas Before Columbus**
By Charles C. Mann (2005)
Alfred A. Knopf Publishing
(ISBN 1-56511--978-9)

Reviewed by Neil Garrison

The premise of the book is this: Did our teachers fill our heads with a bunch of hooley?

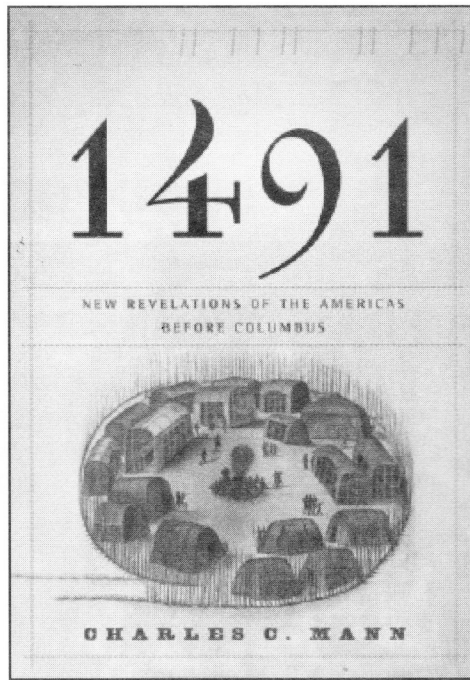
It's been said that history is written by the victorious. Does that explain why we're all taught from an early age that we need not fuss over the conquering of the Americas? That the place was an unpopulated, sylvan wilderness before the Europeans arrived?

If nothing else, this book will give you a generous dose of deep-seated uneasiness about the role your ancestors had in wreaking havoc on the New World. Assuming, of course, that you are not among those who met the boat.

I've got to admit it was extremely difficult for me to wade through this book from cover to cover. It just wasn't fun having the book's author point an incriminating finger at my ancestors.

If truth be told, I initially purchased this book and after I got frustrated, and put the book aside, and went, instead, to some other more light-hearted reading adventure.

I was then shamed by two buddies into giving it another go. They heaped nothing but praise upon the many-paged tome. So I bought an audio version and force-fed myself the book's contents, listening on my commute to



and from work.

The result was ... I still found the book unsettling and unpleasant. In short, it is not a feel good work of literature. It is not intended to be. Feel good readers must look elsewhere.

I will also admit that the book did challenge me to think. It exposed me to a radical, new interpretation of our nation's history. And it's not pretty.

That realization failed to make

made me wish my family line was more of the "Mother Teresa" or perhaps "Saint Francis of Assisi" lineage.

My one saving grace is that while we can all pick our friends, we can't choose our ancestors. We inherit them. That hardly seems a salve for the world's woes, much of which we have brought on ourselves.

The book's author cites recent scientific evidence that finds (a) the Americas were populated shoulder-to-shoulder with humans prior to Columbus, and (b) that many of the American wild plant ecosystems were actually managed, rather than primeval wilderness.

The natives were not only efficient landscapers with thousands of years of experience, their accomplishment benefited all living things. Unruly forests were combed back by fire. Meadows were created for large animals. Plants were encouraged to grow where they fed a variety of creatures, human and animal.

Despite the book's shocking thesis, it is not perfect. I wish that author had not compromised on his original goal and, instead, regressed into ancient stories that were recorded in the post-1492 conquest.

I realize that there is a dearth of written accounts prior to 1492. Still, the dust jacket of the book promised that it would be all new material, not interspersed with the same old stuff that we've already heard.

The idea of the book is a good one. It would have been better off in the hands of another wordsmith. The author is a poor storyteller -- a capable college lecturer, maybe -- but an awkward story weaver for a non-captive audience.

It's still a remarkable book, long overdue and now -- at least in my case -- greatly appreciated. If you haven't read it, or heard it, you ought to. You owe it to your sense of history and the ingenious role the Native Americans played in forging a bounteous land.

Neil Garrison, Yukon, a member of the OAS Central Chapter, is a naturalist with an avid interest in the great outdoors, flint knapping, and American history.

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