



Cowboy Hall prepares showcase exhibition of Spiro culture objects

More than a decade has gone into gathering a 200-object Spiro culture exhibit to open Feb. 1 at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

"Spiro and the Art of the Mississippian World" will seek answers about a nearly forgotten people. They are said to have one of the most highly-developed civilizations in the Americas.

The exhibit runs through April 28 at the Oklahoma City museum. A companion publication and symposium has been developed in collaboration with the Caddo Nation, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, and scholars from over a dozen universities and museums from across the United States. More information is available at nationalcowboymuseum.org

How did the works of art and other treasures from all over North America end up hidden for hundreds of years, and why? The show tries to answer the questions in the first major museum exhibition on the Spiro Mounds of southeast Oklahoma.

The prehistoric Spiro people created a highly sophisticated culture, said to equal any others in the Americas, including the Aztec, Maya, or Inca. It consisted of a trade network, a highly developed social, political, and religious center, and part of a large artistic complex that dominated the region from A.D. 800 – 1450.

The hall reunites extraordinary objects separated since the site was looted and archeologically excavated in the 1930s and 40s. The show explores the religious and ceremonial activities, farming and hunting practices, and daily life of the Spiro people.

It explores how the Little Ice Age may have led to the site's ultimate abandonment. There are lessons to be learned as the globe faces ecological changes today.

The exhibition also connects the art and artistry of the Spiro people to their modern descendants.



Scott Hammerstedt

Popular OAS memoir due updated reprint

A revised version of a popular sold-out memoir is under way. It awaits expected approval by the OAS Board.

A new version of "From Mountain Peaks to Alligator Stomachs: A Review of Lithic Sources in the Trans-Mississippi South, the Southern Plains, and Adjacent Southwest," is a strong candidate for reissue.

"We are looking into republishing it," said archeologist Scott Hammerstedt. A member of the research faculty at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, he oversees memoirs as a volunteer in the Oklahoma Anthropological Society.

Originally published in January, 1990, the memoir was written by the late Larry Banks. The University of Oklahoma Printing Office published it. It has been recommended as an excellent resource for archeologists.

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Covid health hazard prompts OAS board to call virtual session

Due to health hazards of Covid-19, a fall meeting by email was called by OAS President Ray McAllister. Board members were sent the agenda and invited to respond.

The session was held Nov. 1, 2020. Board members were asked to interact by email. A similar virtual session was successfully conducted as the summer board meeting.

Topic 1 – Spring meeting and other activities. No in-person activities are scheduled for the rest of 2020 due to the viral pandemic. Scheduling for all 2021 activities is postponed until the January 2021 board meeting.

However, possible future activities include a volunteer spring cleanup day at Spiro Mounds and a day visiting the Spiro exhibition at the Cowboy and Western Heritage museum in Oklahoma City. Also, field operations near Muldrow are possible but depend on the decline of the coronavirus threat.

Topic 2 – Memoir No. 4 reprint. Society Facebook Editor Sharon McAllister suggested a reprint of the OAS memoir "From Mountain Peaks to Alligator Stomachs" by Larry Banks.

President McAllister contacted retired Oklahoma State Archeologist Don Wyckoff in an attempt to get permission for a memoir reprint.

Dr. Wyckoff said Banks passed away two years ago. However, he left with Dr. Wyckoff a significantly updated manuscript of the memoir.

Dr. Wyckoff suggested publishing the newer version, a plan that would solve any copyright issues. Dr. Hammerstedt, the Society's Memoir Editor, said he would be willing to follow through.

Topic 3 – OAS Grant. President McAllister said he would email academics and others interested in

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President's Letter

Ray McAllister

Hello, society members. Tired of the pandemic? Me too! The 'rona has shut down almost all the Society's activities since the statewide Tulsa meeting in March and the prospects of accomplishing anything in the field before late spring are looking slim.

The Norman chapter has produced several excellent online programs this fall to satiate our interest in archeological subjects. Thank you Ella Crenshaw for organizing those.

The Tulsa chapter met the evening of Nov. 23 for the first time since March. Featured was Miriam Belmaker at Tulsa University, a paleolithic archaeologist with a specialty in environmental



changes in pre-history.

Beyond that, I hope the second half of 2021 will see a decreased coronavirus threat and the Society can again have interesting in-person activities. I wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season and look forward to the Society getting active again in the coming year.

Board

promoting the grant. The grant deadline is Dec. 20, 2020.

This year, the \$1,000 grant is extended to undergraduate candidates as well as graduate students and professionals. The intent of the grant is to promote archeological projects within Oklahoma.

An award may not necessarily be made during a given period. More than one award may be made in the event of equal merit among top applicants and the budget allows.

Topic 4 – Spring Excavation.

As discussed earlier, planning for 2021 excavations will wait until the pandemic has taken its course or a vaccine has been widely distributed.



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