



OAS to join search for new evidence of Tulsa Massacre

Barring a turn for worse in the Covid-19 pandemic, OAS is on track for a 2021 Spring Dig.

The research will take members of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society to Tulsa and the site of the 1921 race massacre. Dig dates will be set for on or near Memorial Day, OAS President Ray McAllister said.

For years, the massacre was a topic often ignored by historians. Now the tragedy's facts are summarized in a video by Dr. Scott Hammerstedt, Senior Researcher at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, and Dr. Kary Stackelbeck, State Archeologist at the Survey.

Hammerstedt has been conducting a geophysical survey of the site. He uses a gradiometer, an electrical resistance meter, and ground penetrating radar.

In a video recently posted on YouTube, Dr. Hammerstedt and Dr. Stackelbeck outlined the historic massacre and the work under way.

On May 30, 1921, Tulsan Dick Rowland was alleged to have ill-treated elevator operator Sarah Page. Rowland was black, Page was white. The next day, Rowland was arrested.

A white mob formed at the courthouse. Black men also arrived, some carrying weapons. An attempt was made to disarm them. A shot was fired, followed by a white invasion of Tulsa's Greenwood District, also known as a successful Black Wall Street.

On June 1, looting, burning and murder ravaged the district. Before martial law finally brought order, as many as 300 people died, although that's an estimate. Property damage amounted to more than \$1.5 million in real estate and \$750,000 in personal property.

Historians say the massacre left as many as 10,000 black people homeless. Many were placed in internment centers.

In 2018 the Survey and the City of
(See *Tulsa Page 2*)



Jennifer Haney

State Survey adds staff archeologist

An archeologist with over 20 years of field experience has joined the Oklahoma Archeological Survey in Norman.

Jennifer Haney started Aug. 1. Until recently she was Archaeology Laboratory Director with Shreveport, La. Cultural Resource Analysts (CRA). She provided oversight on the analysis and curation of collections.

Dr. Haney joins the OAS staff as a research archeologist specializing in paleoethnobotany. Her specific interest is plants and their use in indigenous cultures.

Her PhD dissertation focused on the use of fuel wood along the South Florida coast.

She is looking forward to learning more about the role changing climates and shifting vegetation played in plant domestication in Oklahoma, she said.

While many people know of the "three sisters" farmed by Indians – corn, bean and squash – their diet varied. Also among the indigenous plants of North America they used were marsh elder, sunflowers and goosefoot.

They often cultivated or gathered wild berries, prairie turnips and onions.

Board gathers for virtual meeting

The summer 2020 Board meeting of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society was held via a series of emails due to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

The virtual meeting exchanges occurred July 20-31. President Ray McAllister presided.

Fiscal report, prepared by Treasurer Bob Sweet for the period Jan. 1 through June 30, 2020, showed \$105,905 in bank balances and an income of \$2,832, expenses of \$2,929. The Board approved the report.

Website Renewal – Permission was granted by the Board to continue to fund the OAS website. The 2020 cost is \$140.75.

Membership report as of July 21, 2020, prepared by chair Pam Leader, showed membership of 160 compared to 181 in 2019, to 198 in 2017, and to 296 in 2016. The Board approved the report.

OAS Grant – Board members supported the Society in expanding its 2021 Grant Program to include undergraduate applications.

Spring 2021 meeting – President McAllister proposed the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City as a venue for the 2021 OAS Spring Meeting. The museum is hosting a Spiro mounds exhibit Feb. 12 to May 9.

OAS Fall Membership meeting was canceled due to concerns over the Covid-19 pandemic and probable poor meeting attendance.

Fall Dig – The 2020 OAS Fall Dig was set for Oct. 1-18 at the Andrews site. (*Editor's note: The 2020 Fall Dig was later canceled due to concerns with the Covid-19 pandemic.*)

OAS Spring Dig – The Society will assist excavations in Tulsa concerning the 1921 race massacre.

Open officer positions showed the Society needs volunteers for several important officer positions, including vice-president, secretary, dig committee chair and publications editor.



Trowel Marks

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OAS grant project adds undergraduates

The Oklahoma Anthropological Society will accept proposals and applications for a \$1,000 grant in 2020. The grant offer now includes undergraduates, President Ray McAllister said.

Eligible are graduate students, undergraduate students or professionals working on archeological projects in Oklahoma. Priority will be given to proposals that include Society members assisting applicants in field work.

Grant money may be used but not limited to:

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

Applicants must be a member of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society at the time of the award. They also must be majoring in anthropology, an allied field, or be a degreed archeologist.

Recipients will be expected to share their findings with the Society.

Trowel Marks Newsletter

Oklahoma Anthropological Society
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President's Letter

Ray McAllister

Hello, fellow Society members. I hope this communication finds everyone safe and healthy.

I regret to inform the Society that Oklahoma Archaeological Survey archeologist Scott Hammerstedt and I have decided to cancel the Fall Dig at the Andrews Site. While the number of Oklahomans infected with the Covid-19 virus seems to have leveled off in the past few weeks, statistics have not trended down as much as we had hoped when we planned the dig earlier this summer.

I deemed the value of the information we uncover from the dig not worth the chance of a viral outbreak and serious illness. My hope is we will be over the pandemic in 2021 and can again return to the Andrews site next year.



Tulsa

Tulsa agreed to form an interdisciplinary team of researchers. Their search for the mass graves mentioned by historians is under way.

Several months ago in an effort to support the research, Society President Ray McAllister contacted Dr. Alicia Odewale, assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Tulsa. She plans to reanalyze historical evidence of the tragedy and welcomes the assistance, McAllister said.

In any case, the Fall Dig would probably sparsely attended, and I don't like the idea of being known in the Society's annals as responsible for the infamous 2020 OAS Dig of Death. (It would make for a great T-shirt, though).

The Society and OKPAN, the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network, are developing online programs for Oklahoma Archaeology month in October. Follow the Society's and OKPAN's Facebook pages for more information.

The Society is also planning to visit Tulsa in the spring of 2021. There we can support the ongoing Tulsa Race Massacre investigation.

This will be a great opportunity for Society members to participate in an important excavation without driving for hours to a remote location. I expect the profile of the Society will be elevated by participating in this important effort.

In the meantime, I hope all will have an autumn free of health concerns and I expect the Society will have a busy and interesting 2021 exploring Oklahoma's unique past.

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 online at <https://okanthropologicalsociety.org>