



Andrews Site on fall agenda for OAS dig

OAS volunteers will make one more trip to the Andrews Site near Muldrow. Previous research there has produced artifacts dating as far back as 9,000 years.

A tentative OAS dig is set for late October, pending permission of the landowner and clearance from Scott Hammerstedt, the project's principal investigator.

However, unknown at present is the autumn status of Covid-19. If still dangerously infectious, the virus could postpone gatherings.

Some news reports say the pandemic may taper off by late summer. Others predict the virus toxicity may mount another wave in the next year.

OAS research at the Andrews site started in 2017. The area is near a perennial creek and is a distant neighbor of Oklahoma's best known archeological site, Spiro Mounds.

Mel Phillips, former OAS President and an ancient artifact enthusiast, continues to meet collectors in the area, helping them identify and organize their findings.

Phillips said the landowner recently dug a pond adjacent to the Andrews site. The pond will not disturb the site, he said. The dig has produced a mano, an ancient stone used to grind wild seeds, nuts and other foods.

"It's evidence that people did live there, or at least camp there. That's true of most creeks in Oklahoma," Phillips said.

OAS digs are open to adults and students. Participants must be OAS members.

Free memberships are available to students 10-18 who are participating in OAS-sponsored field activities and accompanied by an adult.



Landowner Stephen Andrews shows a mano he found while digging a new pond near the OAS Andrews Dig Site.

Board meeting adopts virtual format again to sidestep Covid-19

For the second time OAS board members attended a virtual board meeting in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The winter Board Meeting was held by email, as was the autumn session.

"It's what we may be doing this spring and summer, but let's plan on a regular board meeting in the fall," McAllister said.

The annual Spring Dig also is postponed. Instead, a fall dig is planned at the Andrews site near Muldrow (see story this page).

The winter board session approved an OAS financial grant to Alanis N. Ramos Berrios. Selected Dec. 13 by the Grants

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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>

Phillips on mission to help more people i.d. ancient artifacts

Mel Phillips has a passion for identifying pre-contact objects. At a moment's notice he will reach for a camera, shoot several photos, and ask where the ancient object was found.

While he's not an archeologist, Phillips enjoys looking over artifacts. He's a frequent speaker at historical meetings. Recently he spent several days visiting people near the Andrews site. He was busier than expected.

"They brought me hundreds of objects to photograph" said the retired state program administrator from Oklahoma City. "One collector said she was going to get her master's degree in May and wants to dig with our group.

"When you establish a fellowship with collectors, then you establish a trust. People are pretty shy about outsiders.

"When we got through with our
(See Phillips Page 2)

Nominations open for board positions

OAS President Ray McAllister has agreed to serve two more years unless another candidate steps up.

Election is at the OAS Annual Meeting in April. Positions are open for vice-president, secretary and dig committee chairman. All other board positions remain the same.

The position of publications editor is open. It is typically held by some with knowledge of archeology who has writing and editing skills.

Also sought is a volunteer for Publications Editor. It also is held by someone with knowledge of archeology and good writing skills.

Those interested in serving can contact the nomination committee comprised of President McAllister, Newsletter Editor Jon Denton and Past President Mel Phillips.



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Phillips

meeting, a community center leader said he was inviting me back to talk more to collectors. He is not a collector but he leads activities in that area."

Phillips is a long time member and past president of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society. He's been at dozens of digs over the years, troweling dirt, shooting pictures and learning about pre-contact cultures.

On OAS digs, members don't keep artifacts they find – they turn them over to a private property owner or museum. They are interested in the culture that produced the item.

Phillips knows once an object is moved from its find spot, it loses its importance to archeology. Provenance is vital. But that doesn't make an item useless, collectors tell him.

When he meets people to shoot pictures of artifacts, he has abundant experience to draw on. In Muldrow his audience was impressed when he identified stone points not hundreds but thousands of years old. He said a beautiful Dalton point dated back as much as 9,000 years.

"I think I identified 37 point types in the collections," he said.

Trowel Marks Newsletter

Oklahoma Anthropological Society

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President's Letter

Ray McAllister

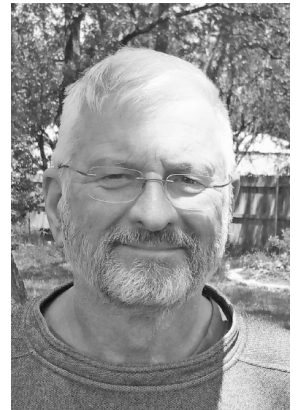
Hello society members -- I hope all have stayed warm through the chilly weather we have experienced lately. The Society continues to wait out the pandemic while our human herd reaches immunity. Until then, there are some online opportunities for us to enjoy.

The Arkansas Archaeological Survey is holding several online programs in March during their Archaeology Month. Find out more at their website at AASociety@Arkarch.org.

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Congratulations are due Alanis N. Ramos Barrios, winner of the 2021 Oklahoma Anthropological Society Grant. Ms. Ramos Barrios is an anthropology graduate student at the University of Oklahoma, Norman. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Arlington.

The Society grant will support her master's project, an analysis of bone and residue materials acquired from the Ravenscroft site in the Oklahoma Panhandle.



Board

Committee, the University of Oklahoma graduate student will receive \$1,000. Her work will help promote archeological projects within the state.

In other topics, President McAllister suggested the Board approve printing of an updated OAS Memoir titled "From Mountain Peaks to Alligator Stomachs: A Review of Lithic Resources in the Trans-Mississippi South, the Southern Plains and Adjacent Southwest," by the late Larry D. Banks. The memoir was originally published in 1990. Board approval was unanimous.

The annual election of OAS officers is under way. President McAllister has agreed to serve two additional years. The nominating committee, composed of McAllister, Jon Denton and Mel Phillips, is asking volunteers to step forward. Positions are open for Vice-president, Secretary, and Dig Committee chairman.

Also sought is a Publications Editor. It is held by someone with knowledge of archeology and possessing good writing skills.

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The Cowboy Hall of Fame has a fascinating exhibit about the Spiro Mounds. The Society may organize an informal get-together towards the end of the exhibition, pandemic notwithstanding. Watch the Society's Facebook page and your emails for further details.

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Volunteers are needed for several OAS Board positions. The viability of the Society depends on engaged members willing to invest some of their time and unique skills. Contact the OAS Facebook page or website to pitch in (see story Page 1).

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It has been a lean year for Society activities. As the pandemic retreats, we will again be able to meet and share our interest in our state's past.

Like the rest of the Society, I am looking forward to getting back to our accustomed activities. Hopefully, autumn will bring us the opportunity to again explore and support archeology in Oklahoma. See you then.