PASTIMES

Newsletter of the Panhandle Archeological Society

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The Panhandle Archeological Society will hold it's next meeting on Wednesday January 19, 2011, at 7:00pm, at the Wildcat Bluff Nature Center Science Building, 2301 N. Soncy Road, in Amarillo, Texas. Our program will be presented by Ann Coberley.

Cultural Anthropology and Archaeology: Cousins In Search Of Culture

Cultural Anthropology is the least known sub-field of the four sub-fields of anthropology, and yet it is the sub-field most related to archaeology in terms of research questions and goals. While both cultural anthropologists and archaeologists have developed theories which define their work as scientific, the question remains if the study of human culture, past or present, is an appropriate topic for scientific method.

Ann and Chance Coberley

Ann was born in Pampa, TX but lived in New York City for 30 years. She did her undergraduate work at Fordham University in New York and graduated with degrees in both history and anthropology. She holds an MA from Hunter College in anthropology and a Ph.D in anthropology from the City University of New York Graduate Center. She also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Ferrara in Ferrara, Italy. She was on the staff of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research in NYC for over 20 years, where she analyzed grant proposals for research in Europe - her area of expertise. She also taught cultural anthropology part time at Pace University. She returned to the Texas Panhandle in 2002, where she married Chance Coberley, retired detective from the APD. Ann teaches 3 classes in anthropology at Amarillo College, volunteers in the archaeology department at PPHM, and serves on the boards of Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation and Amarillo Little Theatre. Since returning to Texas, she has developed a strong interest in the history and archaeology of the peoples of the southwest.

Inside this issue

Please note the volume and issue numbers have been revised. This is to insure the correct sequence for the year.

Studer Banquet Lecture: Updating the Calf Creek Horizon

At the 2010 Panhandle Archaeological Society Annual Studer Banquet our guest speaker was Dr. Don G. Wyckoff. Don holds a dual position at the University of Oklahoma as Associate Curator of Archaeology for the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History and Associate Professor with the Department of Anthropology. Don's lecture was entitled "Updating Calf Creek". The Calf Creek horizon is a poorly understood Middle Holocene foraging adaptation on the Southern Plains. This lecture provided a much needed overview of additional information that has come to light since the publication of two important volumes on the Calf Creek horizon by the Oklahoma Anthropological Society in the mid-1990's (i.e., Wyckoff and Shockey 1994, 1995; see also Thurmond and Wyckoff 1999)

The primary diagnostic artifact of the horizon is the distinctive Calf Creek projectile point (Figure 1). Similar, and presumably related, dart points from central and south Texas are the Andice and Bell types. The distribution of these projectile points is shown in Figure 2. Radiocarbon dates and geoarchaeological studies suggest that the Calf Creek horizon dates from about 5500 B.P. to 4900 B.P. This time period corresponds to a brief interlude of climatic amelioration on the Southern Plains. Increases in rainfall, and presumably bison populations, likely led to the development of this unique cultural complex.

One trend recognized by researchers is a very distinctive patterning in lithic raw material use by Calf Creek societies (see Wyckoff 1995). Within the distribution of the complex are numerous raw materials suitable for chipped stone tool production, including Frisco and Edwards chert, Ozark and Florence flint, Alibates silicified dolomite, and Ogallala quartzite. Throughout this distribution are several individual clusters of Calf Creek sites characterized by lithic assemblages dominated by one of these raw materials. For instance, in central and southern Oklahoma assemblages are comprised primarily of Frisco chert. In eastern Oklahoma chipped stone items are almost entirely produced from Ozark flint. In north-central Oklahoma and southern Kansas Calf Creek assemblages are dominated by Florence flint. Western Oklahoma and Texas panhandle assemblages are composed of a combination of Alibates and Ogallala quartzite. These patterns suggest several contemporaneous Calf Creek groups occupying geographically distinctive territories.

Figure 1 Calf Creek Projectile Point

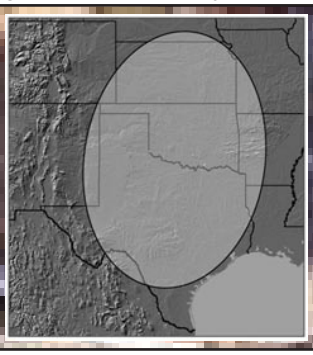

Figure 2 Geographic Distribution of Calf Creek and other Related Horizons

The Calf Creek horizon is also well-known for incorporating multiple heat-treating events into their biface reduction process (see Wyckoff et al. 1994). Initially, very large flakes and early stage bifaces produced by soft hammer reduction are subjected to heat-treating. Later, bifaces are heat-treated one or more times throughout the reduction process. These multiple heat-treating events are identifiable by differences in the color and sheen of flake scars and have been replicated through experimental studies.

Overall, the Calf Creek horizon is primarily known through the analysis of surface collections. Buried and intact sites containing Calf Creek components are rare. However, as this lecture demonstrated, recent multidisciplinary studies are beginning to yield important information regarding locations on the landscape where these elusive sites may be preserved. In particular, these studies have demonstrated that Calf Creek sites are often deeply buried in alluvial settings. Nonetheless, the excavation of these sites will be crucial for compiling a more detailed reconstruction of Calf Creek horizon lifeways.

Scott D. Brosowske

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Studer Banquet Wrap-up

The 33rd Annual Studer Banquet was held December 15th at the Country Barn Steakhouse in Amarillo. This has become the highlight event for the Panhandle Archaeological Society that is eagerly anticipated throughout the year. The entire evening was a rousing success enjoyed by everyone in attendance, providing food, fun, and fellowship recapping the previous year's endeavors while looking forward to next year's adventures.

A lively social hour and early bidding on items available through a silent auction kicked off the evening activities. Members mingled and browsed the many items donated for this year's fund raising auction. Later, Alvin Lynn offered a blessing and the evening meal was served. The staff at the Country Barn provided a choice of chicken fried steak or grilled chicken for the entre, with vegetables and cobbler rounding out the meal.

Dr. Jeff Indeck was surprised to discover that he was this year's Panhandle Archaeological Society's Honoree. Paul Katz presented Jeff with a plaque in recognition of all his contributions and dedication to the field of archaeology and history in the Texas panhandle. Jeff was quite taken back and surprised by the recognition from his fellow PAS members, who throughout the evening had managed to keep Jeff from reading the program with his name and picture in it!

The guest speaker for the evening was Dr. Don Wyckoff from the University of Oklahoma who was accompanied by his wife, Ruth. Dr. Wyckoff has dedicated the vast majority of his professional career to the study of archaeology on the Great Plains. His topic of discussion for this evening was Updating Calf Creek, a Middle Holocene hunter-gatherer group. The lecture and accompanying power point presentation was extremely informative as well as enjoyable.

The final event of the evening was the completion of the silent auction. Members had been bidding on donated items throughout the evening, ranging from new and used books, archaeological tools, knick knacks, and handmade items. While a grand total is not yet available, it appears over $300 dollars was raised this year.

S. L. Brown

Dr. Jeff Indeck mingles.

PAS members enjoying a meal.

A Native American Arrow Shaft Debarking Tool

The arrow shaft debarking tool, occasionally referred to as an arrow rasp, is frequently found in historic period Indian encampments. This native made tool has often been mistaken for an object that is used by Euro-Americans in food preparation. The debarking tool was used specifically in removing the bark from saplings or shoots that would later be crafted into arrows.

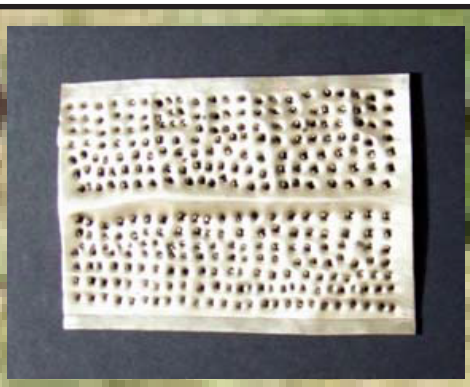
It was a simple tool made by cutting out a rectangular shaped piece of tin from a discarded can. First the longer sides of the rectangle would be folded over flat along the edge. This strengthened the tool and ensured that the user did not cut themself on a sharp edge. Then a nail, awl, or some other pointed object was used to pierce a series of holes in the tin. In doing this three areas are created on the surface. Two areas will have jagged holes from being punctured separated by a non-punctured area down the middle of the tool where it will be folded. The many jagged holes give this tool the look of a modern food grater except that the working surface is on the interior of the tool. The sharp edges of the holes create a rough area that is very abrasive and excellent for rasping off bark.

In the process of making an arrow a shoot or sapling was selected for size and straightness and then cured with the bark on to keep the wood from splitting. To remove the bark the shoot was placed lengthwise into the debarking tool and the working surfaces of the tool were squeezed together. Then the wood was pulled through the tool with just enough pressure to remove the outer and inner bark and any small imperfections in the wood. The arrow shaft would be slowly rotated until all bark is removed.

The debarking tool was used by historic period native craftsmen to easily accomplish the task of removing the tough bark from a sapling or shoot of wood that was destined to be used in hunting or warfare. Native Americans were able to take a trade item such as a tin can and adapt it into a tool once it's orginal intended use had come to an end. A debarking tool is another example of native technology.

James Coverdale

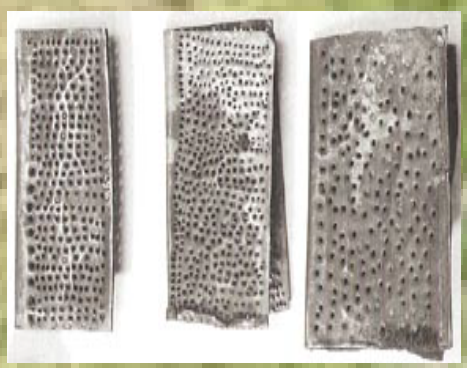
Rectangular piece of tin with the edges folded.



Holes punched by a hammer and a square nail.

The rough interior working surface of the debarking tool.

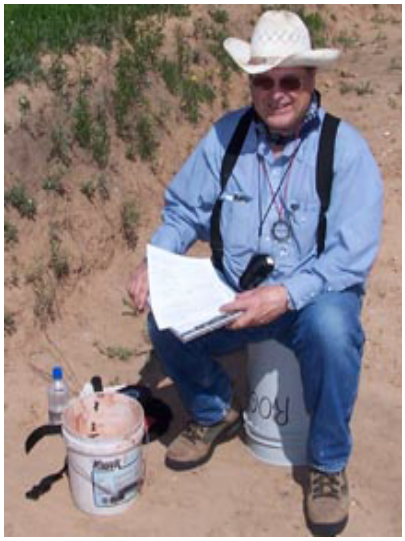
Debarking tool being used to remove bark from sapling.



Examples from the Smithsonian Institution (Greene 1997:fig. 138)

Fragments recovered from archaeological contexts.

PAS Member Highlight



1. Member's Name: Rolla H. Shaller

2. How long have you been a member of PAS? 40 years, Charter member, also was present at the first organizational meeting. Not many of us are still around.

3. What first sparked your interest in archaeology? It was not finding an arrowhead in a plowed field, but rather a visit to the Mesa Verde Ruins as a youngster.

4. What is your best find or most interesting moment with PAS or with archaeology in general? Found a basal fragment of a Folsom point at the Lipscomb Bison Kill Site. Donated it to the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum. Jack Hofman has used illustrations of it in one of his reports.

5. If you could have any choice, what would be your dream find, site, or location? Finding the trash dump at Col. A. W. Evans 1868 Supply Depot.

6. What would be your vision for PAS in the next ten years? If they are still around in 10 years, I hope the membership has grown and includes more of the younger generation. That the PAS membership becomes more involved within the society, making sure that its mission to protect and preserve our archeological resources through education and other means is fullfilled.

7. What is your favorite archaeological site or topic? The 1907 Excavations at the Buried City in Ochiltree County. This has been a topic of interest for a long time. Probably due to the connection of the Expedition to Canadian's Baptist Academy and Professor T. L. Eyerly

8. Tell us a little bit about yourself: Born and raised in Canadian, Texas to a pioneer family. Joined the Army after high School served in Germany during the Cold War. After Military service returned to Canadian and on to college at West Texas State University. Here I met Dr. Jack T. Hughes and Billy R. Harrison, who became my mentors. Received my degree in Biology and a minor in Anthropology from WTSU. Worked as Curator of Exhibits at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum for a short period of time. Worked for a general building contractor, before returning to the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum in the Exhibits Department and later transferring to the Archeological Department as Assistant Curator of Archeology. Retired in March 2008. Still volunteer part-time at the museum. Served as PAS President in 1987, Last time the PAS hosted the TAS Annual meeting. My wife, Sidney and I met at the museum we have one daughter, Amanda, a registered nurse at BSA. My vocation is my hobby and my hobby is my vocation. It doesn't get any better.

9. What is a fun fact or something most people don't know about you?
I was on the two man Browning Automatic Rifle Team that won the Post Championship at Fort Carson Colorado while I was stationed there.

Upcoming Events, and Announcements

- Society for Historical Archaeology SHA 2011 Conference. Austin, Tx. Jan, 5-9, 2011
- Panhandle Plains Historical Museum Archeology Day, Canyon, Tx. Jan. 20th 2011
- Society For American Archaeology SAA 76th Annual Meeting. Sacramento, California March 30th - April 3rd, 2011