

THE WYOMING ARCHAEOLOGIST

VOLUME IV

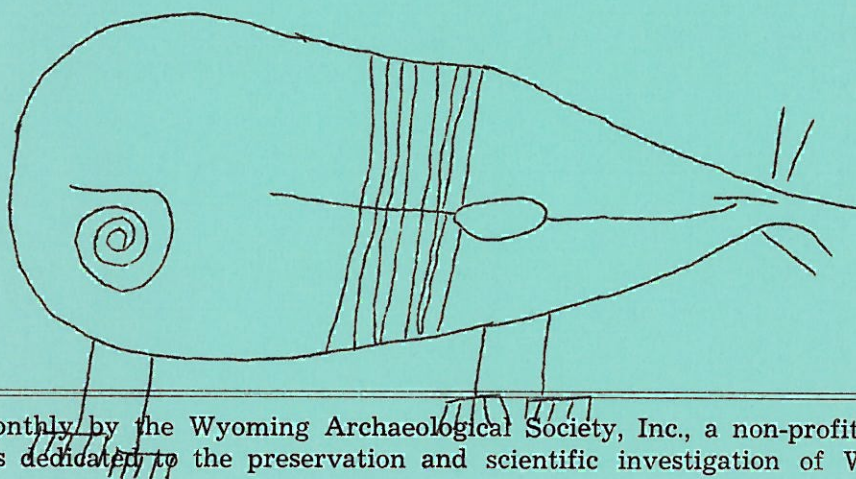
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Castle Garden Petroglyphs



Published monthly by the Wyoming Archaeological Society, Inc., a non-profit group of amateur archaeologists dedicated to the preservation and scientific investigation of Western prehistory.

State Secretary: Florence Castle, 1438 Salisbury, Cody.

REPORT OF THE STATE MEETING

Election of state officers and the modification of the Society's constitution were the primary items of business at the meeting of the State Executive Committee at Thermopolis on February 11.

The new state officers are:

President: R. W. Brown, 336 Sinclair Place, Casper
 Vice-President: Tom Knapp, Box 759, Cody
 Secretary: Florence Castle, 1438 Salisbury, Cody

Two new offices were created at the meeting, and officers were appointed to the positions. These were:

Legislative Coordinator: Dr. R. C. Bentzen, Box 795, Sheridan
 Editor: Don Grey, Sheridan College, Sheridan

The two new officers were given voting powers in the state executive committee.

Several modifications of the state constitution were effected. These are outlined below.

1. Modification was made which would permit sending appointive delegates to a meeting of the state executive committee in the event that an elective delegate is unable to attend. Such appointive delegate has only temporary office for the duration of one meeting, and has only one vote.

2. Officers of the state are elected by the state executive committee from the state executive board and from past officers of either state or chapter.

3. A state editor, to be appointed by the state executive committee, will have control of all publications of the society, and shall be a voting member of the state executive committee.

4. Each chapter shall appoint a member to serve on a legislative committee to study and suggest modifications on the statutory matters of the society. The state executive committee shall appoint one of these members to be chairman of the committee, and this chairman shall be a voting member of the state executive committee.

5. Persons or institutions wishing to receive the monthly publication by mail are required to pay an additional 50 cents to cover postage and handling.

The members of the legislative committee are: Dr. Bentzen, Sheridan, Chairman; Burton DePue, Cody; and Ted Weber, Casper.

A complete copy of the revised constitution will appear in the April issue marking the anniversary of the Wyoming Archaeological Society.

CODY CHAPTER REPORTS

The Cody chapter reports the following officers for the year 1961.

President: Bob E. Will, 519 Circle Drive E., Cody
 Vice-President: Tom Knapp, Box 579, Cody
 Secretary-Treasurer: Edna Knapp, Box 579, Cody

Board of Directors:

Dr. Harold McCracken, 2nd year, Box 1020, Cody
 Burton Depue, 2nd year, Meeteetse, Wyoming
 Florence Castle, 1st year, 1438 Salisbury, Cody
 Wayne Breitweiser, 1st year, 510 Division, Powell

Appointive Officers:

Chapter legislative coordinator:	Burton Depue
Expeditions and Digs:	Wayne Breitweiser
Publicity:	Edna Knapp
Programs:	Cliff Merithew, 596 Ave. D. Powell
Librarian-Historian:	Florence Castle
Social:	Mrs. George Rickell, Box 1143 Cody
Membership-Public Relations:	Mrs. Wesley Oliver 1832 Bleistein, Cody
Committee Coordinator:	Tom Knapp, Bob Will

The Cody chapter also reports that current projects include the study of a table-top model of an archaeological site, with intention to learning some of the rudiments of field techniques preparatory to working a site next summer.

Bob Witter, paleontologist, who has worked at the Horner site with Dr. Jepsen, has offered to help the Cody chapter with its first dig.

Mr. Cliff Merithew is instructing the group in field techniques through the use of the table-top model and a lecture series.

The summer of the 1960 season was used to explore a number of sites and to evaluate them from the point of view of possible investigation. Some nine sites were visited with varying results.

The first site visited by the Cody chapter was the Pine Ridge site reported by Gene Smith. Some 16 members made the trip. The site revealed a rather extensive workshop, and a number of artifacts were found on the surface. Some firepits were noted, but no excavations were attempted. Among the artifacts found were a number of side and end scrapers, a knife, and several points. Judging from the enclosed sketches, the oldest point found was a McKean, although some of the photocopies of the drawings are none too clear. Most frequent among the point types shown is a triangular point with a corner notch. A quartzite maul or pestle is also shown.

The second field trip was made on June 5, 1960, with 30 members present. The site was on Shell Creek. The site is a vast manufactory and camping area, which is perhaps three miles wide. The area is very sandy and wind erosion frequently exposes new cultural materials. A number of fire-sites are noted, although many of these have been disturbed.

A continuation of the June 5th trip was made to the Trapper Creek site reported in this publication earlier. Photographs of some of the abundant petroglyphs at the site were made.

Field trip number three was made to Castle Gardens, south of Moneta, on June 18-19. Some 14 members were present. The site is well known for its

petroglyphs. A number of petroglyphs were photographed and sketched, and a number of artifacts were found. The artifacts included McKean and later types, mostly corner-notched. One triangular unnotched type was found. Two of the petroglyphs are sketched on the cover. The bear, with the line through the mouth to the heart is one of a very characteristic style that occurs over large areas of the north plains.

The Clark's Fork Site was visited on July 10, by 41 people. Many fire pits mark the site, and surface finds were relatively plentiful. Unfortunately, some of the fire pits were disturbed, and their dates would now be of little value. The Cody Chapter regards the site as a definite possibility for a future dig. Some digging has been done at the site over a period of years, and large numbers of artifacts were reported. A careful investigation might serve to clarify some of the lithic sequences here.

The Fifteen Mile Site was visited by 16 members on July 16-17. The site is remote and dry and should only be visited by groups. Surface finds were very scarce, although a number of artifacts were found at the site during the previous year.

Devil's Kitchen near Shell Creek was visited on August 27 by some 22 members. This is part of the same site visited in June. Many firesites, and much lithic material, mark the area. Blow sand made surface finds few, but the site sounds as if it may have been an important camping area in more humid times.

A site North of Cowley was visited by some 24 members on September 11. A small knoll revealed several firepits and a number of artifacts and chips. Another area about eight miles distant was also visited and some additional surface artifacts were found. No description of the artifacts is included with the report, so it is difficult to assess the finds. The sites are reported to be considered as possible sites to be dug.

The last trip of the season was made by some 30 members on October 16. A campsite on Alkali Creek was visited and a number of artifacts was found. A rather well-defined occupational level was noted in the sandy soil. The site is considered a good prospect for a dig.

HOW OLD IS MAN IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE?

One of the questions which plagues archaeologists in the Americas is the date of man's arrival in the area. Everyone seems to be agreed that the American Indian came from the Mongoloid stocks of the old world, and that the route of his coming was clearly across the Bering Straits. The question of the time of arrival is by no means agreed upon.

Not so many years ago, almost any anthropologist would have made a guess of about 8,000 years ago as the earliest date of arrival of man in the Western Hemisphere. Subsequent finds of man's tools with some of the extinct fauna of the Pleistocene Age have forced a revision of this date of earliest arrival, and some people will now admit of the possibility of man having arrived as much as twenty thousand years ago, and a few brash souls will even exceed this.

The reluctance to extend man's antiquity to any very early age in North America is a little difficult to understand sometimes. Part of the answer lies

in the natural caution of anthropologists and other scientists. They accept nothing without proof, and certainly there has been no proof offered that man has been here for much in excess of twenty thousand years. On the other hand, there is some presumptive evidence of much greater antiquity, and caution should never be allowed to grow into skepticism. All evidence should be accepted at its face value. When, and if, the evidence becomes strong enough to stand alone, it may be accepted. If the mounting evidence indicates man is a recent comer here, then that is acceptable, too, but all too many people in the field seem to have some sort of preconceived notion of man's antiquity in the Americas, or perhaps of his lack of antiquity, and this can be very bad.

Several facts seem to indicate at least a possibility that man may have been here for some time. Consider, for example, the fact that *Sinjanthropus* is geologically dated at about 700,000 years old, or perhaps as much as a million years old. *Sinjanthropus* was a tool-using ancestor of man. His home was Africa. By about 500,000 years ago, *Meganthropus* and *Sinanthropus* were living in Eastern Asia. Man's population was increasing, and man was traveling. It seems altogether likely, in view of the extent of man's travels in his first 200,000 to 500,000 years, that, with increasing population pushing him along, he might well have made the jump across the Bering Straits as much as 100,000 to 200,000 years ago. On various occasions, there were land bridges on which he could cross, and it would be a curious thing if man had not made the crossing along with some of the animals he used for food.

Consider the fact also, that while the American Indian resembles the Mongoloid race, and is usually assigned to it, he is rather more long-headed than the Mongoloid stocks of the Old World. This might indicate some Australoid admixture, or it just could indicate that the Amerindian has been here long enough to develop a few characteristics of his own. The possibility should not be ruled out. The earliest finds here are of the same general cranial structure as the modern Amerindian, but do not resemble closely any Old World group.

Consider too, some of the more direct evidence for man's antiquity here. The Lewisville Site has yielded two carbon dates, taken from logs burned in campfires, in excess of 37,000 years. The samples were beyond the 37,000 year capacity of the dating equipment of the Humble Oil Company which dated them.

Many archaeologists are reluctant to accept the Lewisville dates because of a Clovis point found in connection with the site. The Clovis point has been geologically dated at around 11,000 years. That a culture could extend from over 37,000 years ago to 11,000 years ago seems a little hard to imagine. Yet, if the point had never been found there, the site might have been accepted on the grounds of the hearths themselves, which are clearly man-made, and which have yielded not one, but two, dates which nicely support each other. An assemblage of bones found with the site have yielded camel and horse, to mention two of the extinct members. Clearly the site is Pleistocene, and there is no reason why the carbon date cannot be meaningful.

Several other bits of evidence indicate a possibly greater age for man in America than has previously been admitted. The final proof, will, of course, have to wait for a definitive find. Perhaps a Neanderthal skull will show up in a cave one of these days. If Neanderthal Man was in the Near East as recently as 30,000 years ago, at Shanidar, and if the Lewisville date is meaningful, well - - -.

Let us hope that if such a find is made, it will be handled with due regard to its importance. Too many finds have been made under circumstances which have nullified their possible importance. Let us hope that if such a find is made, it will

be in situ, and that it can be left undisturbed until enough experts in different fields have examined it to leave no doubt of its authenticity and antiquity.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mann and Marlow, of the National Bureau of Standards, have made more accurate investigations of the half-life of Carbon 14 than heretofore have been available, and have concluded that the half-life is 5760 years. This is almost 200 years greater than the previously accepted value, and necessitates an increase of almost 4 per cent in previously calculated dates.

Dr. R. H. Brill, of the Museum of Glass in New York City, has discovered that glass in historic sites undergoes a laminar alteration process that can be used in dating the glass. This may prove to be a valuable tool in historical archaeology.

The oldest known evidence of man's travelling by water is a 9,000 year-old canoe found in northern Europe.

OVER THE CAMPFIRE

The April issue of the Wyoming Archaeologist will be an anniversary issue, and will contain complete membership lists, a revised constitution, some notes on the history and structure of the society, and will be a general Society handbook for each member.

Let's all make a resolution to do our best for scientific archaeology in 1961.

Congratulations to all the new officers.

Embers Out.