

# THE WYOMING ARCHAEOLOGIST

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With the approach of the end of the year, and the time for the election of new officers, it is time to review the events of the past year and consider what improvements in the organization and operation of the society might be made. The society has been operating on a statewide basis, with three chapters, for a year now, and enough has been learned about the functions on the state level to offer a basis for improvement in the future.

At the last meeting of the Sheridan chapter, a number of proposals for amending present procedures was brought forth. A committee was appointed to formalize some of the proposals so that the officers could take them to the state executive committee meeting for action. This committee, composed of Margaret Powers, Elaine Hilman, Hila Gilbert, Bud Campbell, and Hans Kleiber, brought its proposals to the December meeting. The proposals are outlined below so that other chapters will be acquainted with them before the time of the meeting of the state executive committee.

1. In order to facilitate closer liaison between chapters of the organization, it is proposed that each chapter must submit a summary of its activities and meetings to the publisher of the society publication so that all chapters shall be aware of the activities of other chapters.

2. The proceedings of all state executive meetings of the society shall be published in the Wyoming Archaeologist for the information of the members of the society.

3. Adequate notice of all meetings of the state executive committee shall be given, with each member receiving notice of the meeting not less than one week before the meeting date.

4. Officers unable to attend the meetings of the state executive committee shall have the privilege of absentee ballot in the election of state officers.

5. The duties of each particular office in the state administrative organization shall be clearly stipulated in the by-laws of the society.

Also discussed, but not formalized, were several additional topics including the following: A statement of the qualifications for a supervisor of any official dig of the society; a statement of the qualifications of the various state officers; the possibility of electing state officers by and from the general membership rather than from the state executive committee.

It is hoped that the various chapters will send to the state meeting in February a set of requests for improvements in the operation of the Wyoming Archaeological Society. It has become apparent that the society has outgrown its present system of administration, and that liaison between chapters is inadequate. Present administrative personnel are too burdened with society and personal work to properly train and administer to newly formed chapters. At the present time, the burden of this training must be borne by the new chapter itself. They must take upon themselves the responsibility for study that will lead to competence

in field work. A joint operation with an existing chapter then serves as an internship, and the chapters are expected to provide further training for those members who will constitute the first dig supervisors in that chapter. This further training is preferably obtained by work with a professional archaeologist, many of whom will welcome a serious amateur who is willing to listen and learn. Training may also be obtained from attendance at digs conducted by other chapters who have some trained dig supervisors.

Nothing in the present constitution necessitates a chapter observing the above rules of procedure. The adherence to a rigid code of self-discipline and dedication has been a matter of conscience up to the present time. It has been suggested that admission of a new chapter be conditional upon the obtaining of such training and the presentation of a serious program of self-education. This would necessitate a proposed new chapter sending members to digs to obtain training, and the submission of a concrete training program before a chapter charter could be issued. Perhaps this proposal is too drastic, but it is something which could be discussed at the next state executive board meeting in February.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF THE SHERIDAN CHAPTER

At the November meeting, the Sheridan chapter discussed the possibility of having an archaeological display in the spring. The display would feature miniature dioramas of some of the site which the society has investigated, and possible reconstructions of some of the sites as they were when occupied. In addition, the displays would afford general educational items about the broad pre-history of the United States and Wyoming in particular. Items of Indian craft, artifacts, and relics would be displayed along with informative statements about their use and manufacture. The theme of the exposition would be educational, and the objectives would be twofold. First, the display would help educate the public to the operations of the society and of archaeology in general. Second, it would help to attract new members and provide additional financial support for the society's operations.

The principal item of the business at the meeting was a discussion and criticism of the general functioning of the state-level organization. As outlined above, a committee was appointed to study the matter and to make formal recommendations.

Don Grey reported that he had purchased a number of metal storage lockers from a cold-storage plant that had closed down, and asked if the society would be interested in purchasing some of these for storing the materials from the various sites which have been excavated. It was voted to buy part of the lockers.

The December meeting was devoted almost entirely to the discussion of the recommendations of the committee on proposed constitutional amendments.

At the November 8th meeting of the Casper chapter there were 21 members and 4 guests. Art Randall read a letter from Norman B. Gray State Attorney General, concerning the legality of obtaining permits from the state for our society. Also Art read a letter from Dr. Humphrey, President of the University of Wyoming, about the progress of the Wyoming Highway Salvage Bill, in which Dr. Humphrey stated he would be glad to help the Archaeological Society in passing such a bill.

A tape recording taen earlier in the year in Casper at a joint meeting of the Wyoming Geological Association and the Wyoming Archaeological Society was re-run for the members. Dr. Agogina was the speaker on the tape and spoke on the Piltown hoax. Secretary Bob Brown informs us that the tape is available for other chapters for the postage cost.

Art Randall reported on events at the annual banquet. Dick Ecklund, Joseph Snowden, and Grover Phelan were appointed as a nominating committee for officers for the following year.

#### CARBON DATING PROGRESS REPORT

The first carbon dates have been produced from the apparatus being constructed by Don Grey. Synthetic standards made from ancient carbon and modern carbon mixed to simulate desired checkpoint dates have been run. These all bear out admirably. Of course the acid test will be a run of carbon which has already been dated by another laboratory. Such samples will be sent for as soon as the apparatus has been consolidated and rendered a little less "haywired." The temptation to run a significant date was great, and a sample from the 48 JO 303 site was run. This sample is represented by several pounds of carbon, so there was no danger of losing a sample. The carbon also represents a McKean level, and was therefore of particular interest. The date achieved was 5050 years, although this date is subject to revision upon re-run with better standardized equipment. It now seems that with a little cleaning up of the apparatus and redesigning for compactness, that the apparatus will probably function usably. As soon as the apparatus is functioning reliably and well, full technical data will be published for those who may wish to construct similar apparatus. The design is entirely new, and to our knowledge, has never been used before.

#### RECONAISSANCE IN THE SUSSEX AREA

During the Thanksgiving holidays, Glenn Sweem and Don Grey spent two days in the Sussex area investigating possible sites. Several items of interest were observed. It seems likely that the area was on a main route of travel for prehistoric man in that area, and that man had been in the area for perhaps 11,000 years or more.

Glenn and Don are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Turk, and son Pete, for their hospitality during the trip.

One of the first sites visited during the trip was a small camp atop Chalk Butte south of Sussex. This site produced single-notched points which were of interest to the society members. The site shows a number of firepits and many chips and flakes of material from widely distributed areas. The only other site your editor knows of which has produced these single-notched points is the Bentzen-Little Bald Mountain site which produced two such points although they were of a slightly different pattern. This site is small and would bear investigating, as it might furnish carbon dates for this complex, and is rapidly being eroded away by wind and weather.

Another site visited by the team was a series of platform burials of historic age. Trade beads, and metal items proved the sites to be recent. Here again, some interesting, if not particularly valuable, information might be obtained for a small investment in time.

A Middle Period campsite had been uncovered by road-building operations in the region, but the extent of the site or its importance would be hard to determine, without further excavation. The site is located on a hillside in what seems to be an unusual location, and the site might have importance in connection with a change in the topography due to erosion. The study of erosion and topographic change can be extremely important to the location and study of sites in this country since erosion is very pronounced in many places due to a semi-arid climate.

Still another site of potential great importance was visited on Salt Creek. Here there were ancient campsites with fresh water bivalve shells in evidence. It has been a long time since clams have occupied the streams in this country, and it seems likely that this site may date back to near altithermal times. Such clams were found at the McKean type site near Moccroft on the Belle Fourche River. This site would be a very interesting to investigate. It is on a terrace about forty feet above the present stream level.

One site was found on a tributary of Powder River which may date well back into the Early Period. Surface finds at the site include Jimmy Allen bases and a whole point which is very similar to, if not identical with, the Logan Creek point. It resembles somewhat the Turin point, but is somewhat smaller. The site itself lies on the second terrace above the stream, and appears to extend through the point of land lying in a bend of the stream. The stream may have dissected the site, as similar levels on the other side of the stream show occupational levels in the banks. Bone, charcoal, and burned rock abound at the site. This site definitely merits attention and should yield some important information for a few days work.

Part of the time in the area was spent in cataloguing the artifact collection of the Turk family. This extensive collection presented an excellent cross-section of the types available in the area. Notable in the Early Period materials were a number of Meserve points, which correlate nicely with the society's findings on Powder river in the mountains. Also in the early-man section were found Folsom, Clovis, Jimmy Allen, Eden, Agate Basin, possible Hell-Gap, and a number of fragments which could not be named. The Middle Period was well represented, although the number of McKean materials was not as

large as might have been anticipated from the size of the early-man section. This may be a part of the growing indication that the McKean complex was established in this area during the altithermal when the conditions were such that man was restricted to the mountains and to the stream valleys. Arid regions may have had little occupation at this time. The carbon date mentioned above, to the extent that it is valid, would seem to indicate this.

While in the area, Sweem and Grey visited the Fort Reno, Fort Connor and Mateo Trading Post sites. These would be excellent sites for archaeological investigation. A project such as the Mission 66 of the National Park Service would be able to recover a great amount of information about these important historical sites, and it was felt that such a project should be undertaken soon, since there was abundant evidence of vandalism at these sites. Someone with a metal locator had been over the sites and had removed many relics, and disturbed much of the area with digging.

The trip was a profitable one, and the two days were not begrudged in the least. A few such expeditions, even though time-consuming and somewhat costly, produce quantities of information which can hardly be evaluated in terms of money. It is a real privilege to live in a country so filled with ancient lore. It staggers the imagination, to use a worn cliché, to behold the abounding evidence of early man's struggle for a foothold in this land.

#### OVER THE CAMPFIRE

Because of the press of other work, such as the carbon-dating apparatus, your editor has not been very efficient this last half year. Issues have been short, several have been combined into one, and all have been late. This coming year, you will have a new editorial and production staff, and it is hoped that they can bring you the better publication which you deserve. Your patience has been appreciated, and remarkably few criticisms have been received. Your editor wishes to thank each of you for your tolerance and to wish each and every one a happy and interesting new year.

EMBERS OUT