

# SMOKE SIGNAL

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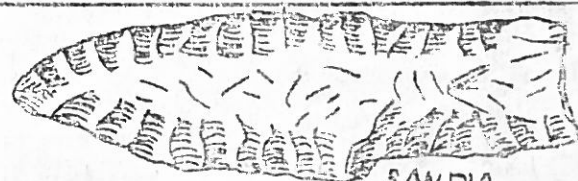
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## THE WILDERNESS PRESERVATION BILL

Did you know that the wilderness areas of our state are not protected by law? They are set aside by executive order, and that order could be rescinded at any time. There is before the senate a bill (Senate Bill number 4028) which is designed to provide protection of law for the wilderness areas. Members of the Archaeological Society are vitally concerned with the preservation of these areas, and should familiarize themselves with this bill, and urge its support. The addresses of the two Wyoming Senators are:

The Honorable Gale McGee  
Senator from Wyoming  
Senate Office Building  
Washington 25, D. C.

The Honorable Joseph C. O'Mahoney  
Senator from Wyoming  
Senate Office Building  
Washington 25, D. C.

## MAN IN AMERICA

Al Dimont

The question of early man in America raises several problems. Did man evolve here from an early primate ancestor? Did he migrate here as a modern type? Did he migrate here as an ancestral type? How long has he been here?

Archaeological studies and paleontological investigations have revealed some pertinent information relevant to these questions. The paleontologists tell us that fossil primates are almost absent in this country, and that therefore it is unlikely that man evolved here. On the other hand, archaeologists are beginning to learn that man has been here for some time.

The idea that man is an old-timer here was bolstered with the Folsom discovery in 1926. A radiocarbon test of the bones found at Folsom put the age of man in America at about 8000 B.C.

Gypsum Cave site in Nevada yielded bones of extinct ground sloth, camel and horse, along with indications of inhabitation by man. Estimates on geological and archaeological grounds gave an age of about 10,500 years. Carbon dating gave ages of 8,527 years for one sample, and 10,455 for another in a deeper zone.

Carbon samples collected at Tule Springs in 1932 by Hunter and Silberly were dated in 1954 by Dr. W. F. Libby. The actual age of the samples was beyond the capacity of Libby's apparatus, which meant that it was greater than 23,800 years. The samples had been taken from ash beds that contained numerous split and charred bones of extinct animals such as elephants, camels, and horses. Among the bones were discovered to owl-like bone implements and part of a third. Several crude but distinctly chipped stone implements, not in the ash beds but nearby, and on the same level, were also recovered. A large scraper was found which was worked on one surface only. No projectile points were found.

It was fortunate that the investigators had saved ash and charcoal from the site, even though carbon dating had not yet been invented. The material was stored at the Southwest Museum of Los Angeles.

With the advent of  $C^{14}$  testing, it was decided to date the charcoal. The samples had been mislaid, but finally, in 1954, were discovered in a locked closet. These samples were tested by Dr. Libby, along with some other samples from the site that had been stored at the American Museum. The samples proved to be older than 23,800 years.

Subsequent investigations at the Tule Springs site have revealed more charcoal which will be dated, and also another stone artifact.

After these early campsites were abandoned, a rainy period ensued and ponds or lakes were created, as indicated by pond-type shells found on or in the ash beds. Water borne soil deposits became as deep as 21 feet over some of the ash beds with an average thickness of 14 feet. During a very dry period, erosion set in and carried away some of the lake deposits and revealed the ash beds.

Another discovery of importance was that of the Lewisville site in Texas in 1951. This site yielded quantities of bones of extinct animals, including mammoth, Bison Taylori, horse, camel and others. The site also yielded fire pits, and points of the Clovis types. The charcoal from two fire sites was submitted to the radiocarbon laboratory of the Humble Oil Company and was found to be older than the capacity of the instrument which was 37,000 years. Thus there is strong presumptive evidence for an age of over 37,000 years for man in America. Neither the Tule Springs nor the Lewisville site gave any evidence of the type of man that had used them.

The discovery of Tepexpan man in the Valley of Mexico in 1947 caused considerable controversy as this evidence was offered of man's existence in this hemisphere as far south as Mexico at the end of the last glacial period. Dr. Helut de Terra, the geologist who made the discovery, assigned the age of 11,000 to 12,000 years to it. Five years later, and only two air miles from the site of the discovery of Tepexpan man, there was the sensational find of the skeleton of a prehistoric elephant along with six human implements. One of these artifacts was a chalcidony projectile point similar to the Scottsbluff point. Other artifacts were of green-black obsidian and could have been used to cut meat from the elephant. The antiquity of this find was set at 12,000 to 14,000 years, but  $C^{14}$  tests have placed it nearer to 9,000 years. Since no living or fossil primates have ever been found in the New World, Tepexpan man is a migrant. From whence he came, and when, is still a mystery.

Excavations at various points throughout the United States have given us a picture of the Indian culture since 9,000 B.C. From sites in the eastern part of the country it has been shown that several cultural stages preceded the Indian society as it was first observed by the early colonists. These cultures have been divided into four stages or horizons: Folsomoid, Archaic, Burial Mound, and Temple Mound. Each of these has its distinctive style of artifacts.

The flint points discovered along with a group of skeletons of an extinct species of bison (*bison antiquus taylori*) near the northeastern New Mexican village of Folsom in 1927 were chipped with long flakes removed from the blade face (fluted). Blades of this design are typical of the Folsom culture and have been discovered in every state of the Union.



The Folsomoid stage lasted from about 8,000 B.C. to about 6,000 B.C. This was still the age of the mastodon. The people were hunters and their unusual fluted dart points were narrow bladed, which suggests that they were used for hand throwing, and could be easily pulled from the animal for re-use.

The Modoc Rock Shelter of southern Illinois was intensively excavated in 1952 and yielded points of a culture classed as Archaic. This is of more recent origin than the Folsomoid and places the earliest occupancy of the site at 7,922 B.C. The Modoc Shelter revealed Early Archaic implements at depths of 21 feet to 5 inches to 27 feet 5 inches. Those at the bottom gave a carbon date close to 8,000 B.C. In this earliest layer the weapon points were notched, narrow-bladed, and in stemmed forms and leaf shapes. Some points had concave bases similar in form to those of the preceding Folsomoid culture. Transition from early Archaic to Middle and Late Archaic were observable and were found in depths from 5 feet to 20 feet. Ground and polished tools and weapons constituted part of the find that consisted of axes, adzes and celts. Stone spear weights were used and broad-shouldered flint heads that were hurled with either a spear or atlatl were recovered. Such points would be difficult for a wounded animal to dislodge.

The Archaic period was succeeded by a period of farming that has been called the Burial Mound Stage. The conical burial mounds of these people are still found throughout the United States today. In the upper five feet of the Modoc Shelter were found remains of the early levels of this horizon. These people flourished around 500 B.C. to 700 A.D. They ranged from as far north as Michigan south to Florida and from the Atlantic seaboard west to present day Kansas. Their conical mounds were tombs. The bones of the dead along with personal effects were put into a log-roofed vault and heaped over with dirt up to depths of seventy feet. Artifacts bespeaking a relatively fixed culture have been attributed to the Burial Mound Stage. Decorated pottery was in use and some farming tools were being used. The Modoc Shelter has revealed the remains of several cultures and a span occupying almost 10,000 years from the last major ice sheet down to the present. It has helped close the apparent gap between the Folsomoid and Archaic horizons and gives us a pattern of gradual transitions in Indian cultures.

The last Indian culture in what is now eastern United States was a barbaric civilization styled the Temple Mound stage, the elements of which were probably introduced from Central America about 900-1000 A.D. The base of social organization and control was a religion of sun-worship. Structures such as temples, priest's dwellings, and other sacred structures were erected on top of rectangular mounds of earth. These mounds were generally forty to fifty feet high and were arranged around open courtyards where ceremonies could be held. The farmer Indians lived near these ceremonial centers and raised such crops as corn, squash, beans and tobacco. The advent of the Spaniards and their horses opened a new avenue to the aboriginal inhabitants of America and made possible the nomadic cultures of our Plains Indians.

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Natural History, Nov. 1957: The Modoc Shelter; Early Man in America

Dec. 1955: Man's Oldest Date in America

Apr. 1953: The Mystery of the First Mexican

## THE BIG HOLLOW AREA

Al Dumont

Big Hollow is a wind-eroded basin southwest of Laramie, and is easily accessible as it is bordered on the north and east by paved highways and is criss-crossed by numerous passable trails and roads. This basin is deeply eroded and comprises an area of about 90 square miles bounded by the Big Laramie river on the east and Sheep Mountain on the west. The north rim, which lies at considerable height above the basin floor, has a highway running along it. From this road one gets a good view of the Big Hollow basin with its many small alkali lakes.

It is around the shores of these lakes that many points and chippings can be found. After the heavy rains that are quite frequent in July and August afternoons, the freshly eroded area around the perimeter of the lakes prove to be good hunting grounds. Considerable wind erosion also takes place because of the scanty plant covering and loose, sandy soil.

The region abounds in Indian rings, too. In two trips to the site, I found no artifacts or chips near the rings. All finds were made along the lake shores.

The points were small, triangular, with side notches and straight bases, and showed rather crude workmanship.

To the southeast of this region and proximal to the Wyoming-Colorado line are deeply eroded sandstone cliffs with overhanging cornices that could have afforded protection or provided homes for human habitation. This area, too, might prove to be a rather productive one upon search.

## NEW OFFICERS ELECTED

At the January meeting, annual elections were held. The new officers of the Wyoming Archaeological Society are:

Glenn D. Sween	President
Don Grey	Vice-president
Dr. Ray Bentzen	Secretary
Bob Frison	Director, 2-year term
Bill Sands	Director, 2-year term
Eileen Kusel	Librarian
Albert Dumont	Editor
Bob Nantkes	Program Committee Chairman

## NEW FORMAT FOR THE SMOKE SIGNAL

We'd like to see a really good cover for the Smoke Signal. Won't you please give us your suggestions? The directors have discussed the possibility of copyrighting the publication, and we'd like a really good cover style for it. Maybe we could award a genuine McCormick point for the best suggestion. Anyway, please tell us what you'd like and maybe send us a cover sketch, will you?

## ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

Registration for a course in field archaeology will take place at the Northern Wyoming Community College in Sheridan at 7:00 PM on February 10th. The fee for the course will be \$7.00 and the text for the course will be Heizer's GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD METHODS. Field trips will be made if weather permits.

The annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology will be held at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City on April 30, May 1 and May 2. All our members are invited to attend.

We have been assigned a block of numbers for Big Horn County by the River Basin Surveys. The Medicine Wheel site has been numbered 48 RH 301.

Margaret Powers and Glenn Stearn have assured themselves of credit for discovery of several sites by filing site report forms on them. As you know, in any kind of scientific work, the first person to publish, or make public in any way, a new discovery, is the person to receive the credit for it. Even if someone else is known to have found the discovery first, the credit still goes to the first person to make the information public. The reason is simple: information is of no value unless it is available to be acted upon. While none of us is a glory hound, it is only fitting that credit should go to the proper person. Be sure to respect your sources of information when filing site reports of course. If someone tells you of a site, knowing you are a member of the organization, he is making the information available for use, and is entitled to credit for discovery.

## OVER THE CAMPFIRE

We wish to thank Bob Frison for his article in the last Smoke Signal, and we are looking forward to the sequel. Those interested in patination might be interested in the comments and references on page 114 of Heizer's GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD METHODS.

Won't some of you write us items on your interesting adventures in the field? We know from talking to you that most of you have had some pretty interesting, exciting and amusing experiences. Let's share them with our readers.

The next issue of the Smoke Signal will carry a very interesting article on the McKean point by Lou Steege. Look for it, and thanks, Lou. Member Stuart Connor, of Billings, Montana, has spent a lot of time and effort in building up a file of reports of site investigations in central Montana, and now is endeavoring to organize an archaeological society in his area. Our best wishes for his efforts, and if we can do anything to help, he need only whistle.

News from Lander says the Stanley Zumbrenns are retiring on February 1st. They will make a trip through the southwest and Mexico, and hope to join us on some digs this summer.

We are happy to have Hans Kleiber home from the hospital, and to know that he is recovering from his spinal operation.

We send our deepest sympathy to Alger and Louis LaFoush in the loss of their brother Harry.

Summer will soon be here. Shovel and screen, anybody?

MEMBERS OUT



PROGRAM FOR THE SHERIDAN CHAPTER OF THE WYOMING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
Program and refreshment supervisors are shown after each date.

- Feb. 2 Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Woods, Mr. Alber Dumont, Mr. Don Grey  
Hospitality Room, Bank of Commerce, Sheridan.
- March 2 Mrs. Alice Stolcis, Mr. Robert Zowada, Mr. David Scrutchfield  
Hospitality Room
- April 6 Mr. Glenn Sween, Mr. Harold Newton, Dr. R. C. Bentzen  
Hospitality Room
- May 4 Mr. & Mrs. A. M. Kester, Mr. & Mrs. R. E. Frison, Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Sand  
Buffalo, place to be announced.
- June 7 Field trip. To be arranged.
- July 4, 5 Field project. To be arranged.
- July 26 Field trip. To be arranged.
- Aug. 16 Field trip. To be arranged.
- Sept. 7 Mr. Byron Elmgren, Mrs. Anita Deininger, Mrs. Thelma Condit  
Hospitality Room
- Oct. 5 Mrs. G. L. Mantkes, Mr. & Mrs. Zane Hilman, Mr. & Mrs. Fred Hilman  
Hospitality Room
- Nov. 2 Mr. Bud Campbell, Mr. Louis LaToush, Mr. Alger LaToush  
Hospitality Room
- Dec. 7 Mrs. Clara White, Mrs. Irene Custis & Thad, Mr. Don Eckerson  
Hospitality Room
- Jan. 5 Mr. & Mrs. Herman Kusel, Mrs. Vistor Powers, Mrs. C. H. Gilbert  
Hospitality Room

Program Committee:

Robert Mantkes, Chairman

Mrs. Clara White

Mr. Don Eckerman