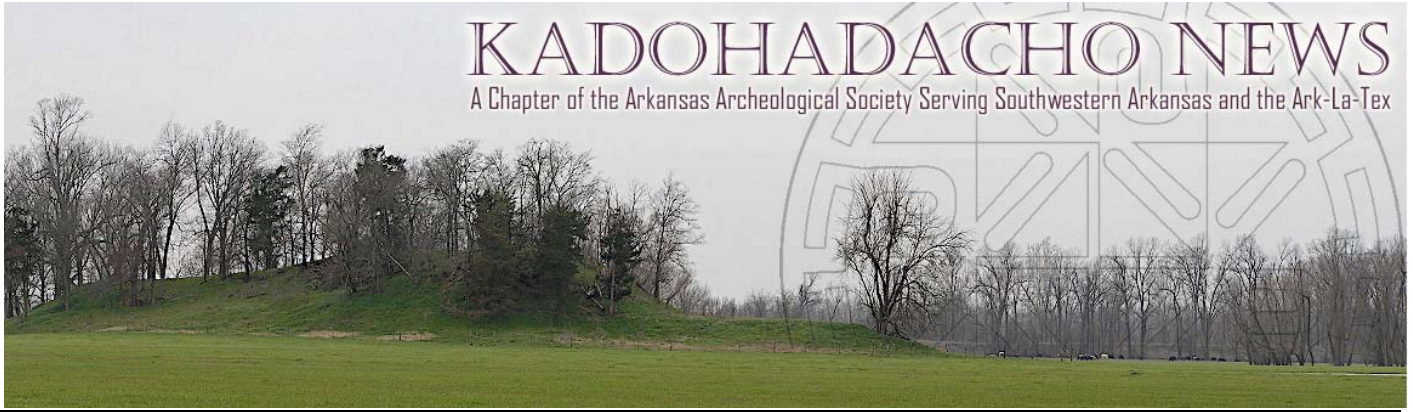


KADOHADACHO NEWS

A Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society Serving Southwestern Arkansas and the Ark-La-Tex



New Series, Volume 5, Issue 3

April, 2010

April 13th:

Toltec Mounds: A Late Woodland Ceremonial Center in Central Arkansas

Our program for our April meeting will be Dr. Jane Anne Blakney-Bailey, the AAS Research Station Archeologist at Toltec Mounds State Park. Dr. Blakney-Bailey will be talking about recent work at Toltec Mounds and how you can get involved in her plans to excavate at the mound site this summer (see *Arkansas Archeological Society Training Program* section below).

Toltec Mounds, located on the bank of an oxbow lake in Lonoke County, Arkansas (just southeast of Little Rock), was one of the largest sites in eastern North America during the Late Woodland period. The site was constructed and used by the people of the Plum Bayou culture, whose members lived at Toltec and at camps and villages along other natural levees and bayous in central and eastern Arkansas between around AD 650 and 1050.

The Plum Bayou people constructed 18 mounds around two rectangular plazas, as well as a one-mile long earthen embankment that encompasses three sides of the 100-acre Toltec Mounds site. It is likely that the tallest mounds were used to support civic or religious structures, and the more numerous low mounds were used as platforms for houses. The plaza, which may have been the venue for many kinds of social and ceremonial activities, may also have been kept clean of trash and buildings. The embankment, and the ditch that ran parallel to its exterior, may have represented a kind of symbolic

boundary between the secular world on the outside and the sacred or ceremonial world on the inside.

Although mound-building was a part of Southeastern Indian cultures in centuries prior to the construction of the Toltec Mound site, the types of mounds (platform mounds that supported structures), the number of mounds, and the sheer size of the Toltec Mounds site was unusual for the Late Woodland period. Radiocarbon dates indicate that most of the construction of the elaborate ceremonial landscape at Toltec Mounds probably took place during the AD 800s and 900s. The early manifestation of



A map of Toltec Mounds showing the mounds, plaza and ditch/embankment.

a mound-plaza complex at Toltec may indicate that the social and political organization of the Plum Bayou culture was an important element of the burgeoning sociopolitical network and cosmology that eventually swept across the Southeast in the later Mississippian period. It seems that the people of central Arkansas were ahead of their time!

Dr. Blakney-Bailey will be excavating on Mound P, Mound D and in areas affected by erosion and tree falls this summer. Come hear about her research and how you can become a part of it by joining the Arkansas Archeological Society Summer Training Program this summer—Tuesday, **April 13th, 7:00pm in Bruce Center room 104 on the campus of Southern Arkansas University.**



*Mounds A and B at Toltec Mounds—49 and 38 feet tall respectively. Come hear Dr. Blakney-Bailey on **Tuesday April 13th at 7:00pm** and learn how you can help her with research this summer!*

The 47th Annual AAS Summer Training Program, June 5-20, Toltec Mounds State Park

After a 20-year hiatus, the Arkansas Archeological Society Training Program will return to Toltec Mounds this June! The 2010 Annual Training Program will be held at Toltec Mounds State Park from June 5 through 20. You must be a member of the Arkansas Archeological Society to attend the Program. Minimum age is eight years. Kids eight to 16 must have a registered adult sponsor with them. Training Program activities will focus on excavations taking place at the Toltec Mounds site. Opportunities to participate in classes, work in the lab, and attend lectures will also be available.

The Arkansas Archeological Society Headquarters and the Training Program lab will operate out of a spacious, indoor (air-conditioned) pavilion near the park's visitor center. Classes and evening programs will be at Toltec Mounds State Park, as well as the Heritage Resource Center in Scott (about 3 miles away).

Training Program participants to use the park's grounds for tent and pop-up tent camping. The main camping site will be near the picnic area outside the park visitor center and pavilion.

You may come to the Dig for as long or as short a time as you would like, but you **must** have an Orientation prior to participating. For those who have never attended our program, Beginners' Orientations will be scheduled each morning as needed from June 5–13 with the final Beginners' Orientation at 5:30 pm on Monday evening, June 14, (our traditional day off for rest, recreation, laundry, etc.). For "old timers," the orientation is shorter and will be conducted in the field. After orientation, you may go to the excavations or lab, or wherever your work schedule indicates.

In addition to excavating, Training Program participants will have an opportunity to register for a variety of seminars, instructed by professional archeologists with the Arkansas Archeological Survey. The full list of seminars is included table below. Seminars meet for five days, either morning or afternoon, with the exception of Basic Excavation, which meets all day (half-day in the classroom and half-day in the field) for five consecutive days.

For more information about the upcoming AAS Summer Training Program at Toltec Mounds, check:

http://www.arkarch.org/2010_dig_info.pdf

SEMINAR SESSION 1

Monday, June 7 through Friday June 11

- Basic Excavation (am Field/pm Lecture) – Pritam Chowdhury
- Basic Lab (am) – Claudine Payne
- Site Survey (am) – Jessica Howe
- Establishing Time (pm) - Jeff Mitchem

SEMINAR SESSION 2

Tuesday, June 15 through Saturday, June 19

- Basic Excavation (am Field/pm Lecture) – John House
- Research Design (am) – Jamie Brandon
- Mapping (am) – Mike Evans
- Faunal Analysis (pm) – Julie Morrow

The significance of the Toltec Mounds site has not been lost on state and national historic preservation organizations. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. It became an Arkansas State Park in 1975. It attained status as a National Historic Landmark in 1979. The Toltec Mounds site is a regional and national treasure, and opportunities to excavate and camp at this important site are rare. Don't miss your chance. Send in your registration forms today!



Pic of the Month: Dr. Leslie C. "Skip" Stewart-Abernathy screening with local youth during the 1982 excavations at the Block House.

Return to the Block House: Digging at Historic Washington State Park March 22-27, 2010

As you will get your April issue of the *Kadohadacho News* before March is over, we thought we would take the opportunity to remind you that the Kadohadacho Chapter of the AAS will be returning to Historic Washington State Park to conduct a "Spring Break" excavation. The past two years we have been digging at the home of Grandison Royston, but this year we will return to the site of the 1982-1984 AAS Summer Training Programs—the Block House.

The Block House was built between 1827 and 1832 and is a Federal "I" Style building that served as the home of Arkansas's first documented Jewish settler, Abraham Block. The House is also the oldest two-story, wooden-framed building standing in the state.

Of particular interest in the 1982 and 1983 work (led by then AAS-UAPB Station Archeologist Dr. Leslie "Skip" Stewart-Abernathy) was the discovery and excavation of a root cellar located under what was the rear room of a detached kitchen. This cellar was about 1.5 meters wide by 3 meters long by 1 meter deep. The cellar had been abandoned in the early 1840s and filled with household trash including glass, ceramics, faunal material, fireplace clean out, and some building material. In 1999 further work at the Block House by Randall Guendling discovered the remains of an intact chimney near the

rear of the 1980s excavation area. This year excavations will further examine this chimney to determine how old it is and to what type of building it might have belonged.

Volunteers welcome, but contact Dr. Brandon in advance at 870-235-4229 or jbrando@uark.edu

Arkansas Historical Association Meeting: April 15-17, 2010

Before the War: Antebellum Arkansas

The sixty-ninth Arkansas Historical Association Annual Conference is hosted by Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, April 15-17, 2010. Sessions and luncheons are on the 3rd floor of the Student Union on the ASU campus. The sessions will take place in the auditorium and the Spring River Room, and on-campus meals will be served in Centennial Hall. Parking is available in the parking garage on the north side of the Student Union. On Friday, visitors' spaces and non-reserved spaces are available (parking fees apply). On Saturday, reserved parking spaces may be used as well.

Complete the registration form (found at the web link below) and send it with check or money order to the Arkansas Historical Association, Department of History, Old Main 416, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701. The registration fee is \$5.00. **Deadline for registration is March 15.**

The Hilton Garden Inn (2840 South Caraway Road) is the host hotel for the conference. The Hilton Garden Inn will hold rooms at a special rate of \$99 (\$111.87 with tax) until April 8. Call 870-931-7727 to make reservations; mention the Arkansas Historical Association conference to receive the discount room rate.

It looks like a great meeting with a great group of papers (including some familiar faces to those in the AAS and southwest Arkansas—Ann Early, Skip Stewart Abernathy, Peggy Lloyd, Susan Young, Josh Williams, Don Bragg and many more).

For full program and registration form, check out the AHA website:

<http://www.uark.edu/depts/arkhist/home/annual.html>

Join the Southwest Arkansas Archeology E-Mail List

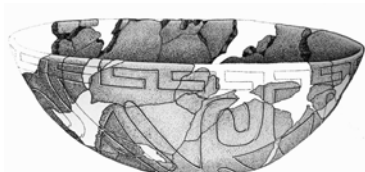
You can keep track with the latest local archeology news by joining the Southwest Arkansas Archeology e-mail list.

The Southwest Arkansas Archeology List [SWAR_ARCH] is meant to help spread information about archeological news and activities in southwestern Arkansas...and, of course, the list will remind members of the Kadohadacho Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society about the monthly meetings.

To join simply send an e-mail message to:

SWAR_ARCH-subscribe@yahoo.com

You may also join be e-mail list by contacting Jamie Brandon at jcbrandon@saumag.edu



Upcoming Conferences & Events

• **April 14-18, 2010**—*Society for American Archaeology*, St. Louis, MO. **75th Anniversary!**
Info: <http://www.saa.org>

• **April 15-17, 2010**—*Arkansas Historical Association*, Jonesboro, AR. Theme: Before the War: Antebellum Arkansas. Info:
<http://www.uark.edu/depts/arkhist/home/annual.html>

• **June 5-20, 2010**—*Arkansas Archeological Society Summer Training Program*. Toltec Mounds State Park
Info: <http://arkarch.org/index.php?pages/trainprog>

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