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Cover Feature

Obessed with Old Technology
By Tamar Stieber
A special breed of archaeologists will do virtually anything to replicate ancient technologies.

TRAVELS THROUGH ANTIQUITY
By Nancy Harbert
Our lives are informed by those of our forbears. As evidence of this, attendance at archaeological sites is increasing. These five sites are well worth visiting.

DIGGING FOR DE SOTO
By Michael Ray Taylor
Did Hernando de Soto visit Parkin State Archaeological Park? One of the country’s most advanced archaeological parks is determined to answer the question.

new acquisition:
INSIDE THE GOVERNOR’S HOUSE
The Conservancy’s first preserve in North Carolina includes the manor house site of two important governors.

new acquisition:
ARCHAEOLOGY ALONG THE MOHAWK
A 13th-century Mohawk village site avoids becoming a shopping center.

new acquisition:
PRESERVING A GOOD GRAY CULTURE
The Mary Rinn site is an example of a typical late-prehistoric Indian village.

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Cover: Experimental archaeologist Bruce Huckell flakes a large piece of obsidian by striking it with a quartzite cobble hammerstone. (Photograph by Darren Poore)
Archaeologists are learning much about early cultures by working to replicate ancient arts, crafts, and technologies. The cover feature in this issue of *American Archaeology* examines the progress experimental archaeologists and others are making in reproducing tools, pottery, and baskets. While telling us much about how early people lived and worked, there is another aspect that has far-reaching ramifications for historic preservation. Most of the artifacts now sold in shops and on the Internet are uncannily ripped from their context by professional looters, destroying sites in the process.

Craftsmen can now replicate the finest Clovis points and Anasazi pottery, which means that responsible collectors can now buy reproductions that are virtually indistinguishable from the originals. Artists like Clint Swink can make an “Anasazi” pot that is so good even an expert can’t tell it from an 800-year-old Mesa Verde vessel. They’re pieces everyone would be proud to have on their mantels, and their manufacture does no harm to our cultural resources.

A thriving market in high-quality, authentic replicas would diminish trade in the antiquities market, which drives the wholesale looting of ancient graves and villages. Artists and archaeologists should team up with dealers, museums, and national parks to promote a new business that will reward responsible collectors while protecting our national heritage.

Joining Forces for Responsible Collecting

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Crow Canyon Archaeological Center
21390 Road K, Cortez, Colorado 81321 (800) 422-8975 www.crowcanyon.org
Longing for Lone Star Archaeology
As a student in anthropology and geography with a focus in Texas prehistory, I would very much like to see more articles on Texas archaeology and more information on Southern field schools.

Along with these suggestions, I would like to comment on the well-written articles in American Archaeology magazine. I really love the down-to-earth articles and the focus on archaeology in the United States.

Charlie Burton

Editor’s Corner
One thousand years ago the Vikings gained a beachhead at L’Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland. Recently they made landfall in a variety of media, this magazine included.

One aspect of this story is the controversy regarding the authenticity of the Vinland Map (see In The News).

The map’s history is curious. It engendered an intellectual crossfire between believers and skeptics, with scholars’ reputations suffering wounds. Though the latter group is said to be significantly larger than the former, the map is valued at millions of dollars. Despite recently calling it a fake—seemingly reversing its previous position—the Smithsonian wanted to display the map at a Viking exhibition it’s staging, but couldn’t afford the exorbitant insurance. Yale University, which owns the map, has been accused of restricting its study. Some of its own scholars called the map a forgery when Yale acquired it.

The map will undergo further analysis, but, whatever the results, personal and institutional agendas will likely continue to fuel this controversy.

Michael Bawaya, Editor

American Archaeology recently won the Silver award in the Magazines and Bookseller’s Annual Magazine Cover Contest. The winter 1999/2000 cover took second place in the circulation under 100,000 category, beating out approximately 55 other entries.

Sending Letters to American Archaeology
American Archaeology welcomes your letters. Write to us at: 5301 Central Avenue NE, Suite 1218, Albuquerque, NM 87108-1517, or send us e-mail at archcons@nm.net.

We reserve the right to edit and publish letters in the magazine’s Letters department as space permits. Please include your name, address, and telephone number with all correspondence, including e-mail messages.

The Shape of Inca History Narrative and Architecture in an Andean Empire
By Susan A. Niles
“This finely crafted volume demonstrates the importance of historical change and political context in the analysis of Inca architecture. . . . An original and intellectually satisfying volume which should not be missed by those interested in Prehispanic America or in the analysis of ancient architecture.”—Richard L. Burger, director, Peabody Museum of Natural History and professor of anthropology

The Shape of Inca History considers the ways in which the Inca concept of history informed their narratives, rituals, and architecture.

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By Lynn M. Alex

“Distilling information from hundreds of archaeological studies, [Lynn Alex] builds a fascinating story of thirteen thousand years of human achievement, adaptability, resilience, interaction, and survival. This book is indispensable for archaeologists, historians, educators, and everyone interested in the native peoples of Iowa and surrounding regions.”—William Green, state archaeologist of Iowa

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The Role of the Magazine: American Archaeology is the only popular magazine devoted to presenting the rich diversity of archaeology in the Americas. The purpose of the magazine is to help readers appreciate and understand the archaeological wonders available to them, and to raise their awareness of the destruction of our cultural heritage. By sharing new discoveries, research, and activities in an enjoyable and informative way, we hope we can make learning about ancient America as exciting as it is essential.

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NEW EXHIBITS

Grace Hudson Museum & The Sun House
Ukiah, Calif.—The new exhibition “A Continuous Thread: Navajo and Spanish-American Trade Textiles from the Belikove Collection” explores the artistic and historic connections between Navajo weaving and the Rio Grande blankets of early Spanish-American settlers of New Mexico. The exhibit features more than forty large rugs and blankets dating between 1865 and 1950. (707) 467-2836 (June 10–October 15)

Anasazi Heritage Center
Dolores, Colo.—More than a century ago, explorers of the Four Corners region of the Southwest brought home extraordinary prehistoric artifacts that have since been misplaced or scattered through various distant museums. The new exhibit “The Landscape Remembers: Reverse Archaeology in Canyon Country” traces the origin of these artifacts from museum collections back into the canyons from which they were collected. Created by the Utah Museum of Natural History, this timely exhibit includes historic photographs of pioneer expeditions and artifacts that have never before been displayed in the region, such as prehistoric tools, sandals, pots, woven bags, and several unidentified items. (970) 882-4811 (Through September 4)

University of Oregon
Museum of Natural History
Eugene, Ore.—Despite 200 years of acculturation, Native American women of the Columbia Plateau have kept many of their traditional ways alive. “Song to the Creator: Traditional Arts of Native American Women of the Plateau” celebrates their traditions, skills, strength, and songs. (541) 346-3024 (Through September 10)

CONFERENCES & FESTIVALS

Museum of Man’s 17th Annual Indian Fair
June 10-11, San Diego, Calif. This popular festival celebrates Native American culture by bringing together more than 100 native performers and artists representing dozens of Southwestern tribes. The famous “Indian Market,” with vibrant artwork, traditional dance and musical performances, and authentic cuisine, is the highlight of the event. (619) 283-8896

Native Awareness Week 2000
June 19-24, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Canada. A city-wide celebration of native arts and culture. Native elders from southern Alberta will share their stories and memories of artifacts in Glenbow’s collection during daily discussions, entitled “Through
**Events**

**Commonwealth Museum**

Boston, Mass.—Before construction began on the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project (commonly known as the “Big Dig”), archaeologists conducted excavations in Charlestown, the North End, South Boston, and on Spectacle Island. The newly-opened exhibit “The Archaeology of the Central Artery Project: Highway to the Past” provides detailed information about life and events in Colonial Massachusetts. Among the recovered colonial-era and prehistoric artifacts on display are ceramics, glassware, shoes, toys, and the oldest lawn bowling ball in North America. (617) 727-8470 (New long-term exhibit)

**Southwest Museum**

Los Angeles, Calif.—“Ancient Trails: Connecting the Gran Chichimeca” explores similarities and connections in pottery, architecture, and culture from A.D. 1000 to 1400 in the region once known as the Gran Chichimeca (now the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah). A highlight of the exhibition will be a Fiesta Weekend July 24–25 at the museum with pottery-making demonstrations, the sale of Casas Grandes-style pottery, and folklorico dancing. (323) 221-2164 (July 10-July 30)

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**Summertime 2000**

June 24-25, Sunwatch Prehistoric Indian Village/Archaeological Park, Dayton, Ohio. This annual festival features archaeologists presenting talks on the history of this Fort Ancient site, native crafts demonstrations, story telling, a children’s area with games and take-home crafts, traditional entertainment and food, and a marketplace. (937) 268-8199, www.sunwatch.org

**Mashantucket Pequot Reservation Archaeology Walks**

Selected Tuesdays in June, July, and August, the Pequot Museum, Mashantucket, Conn. Visit active sites on the reservation. Call (800) 411-9671 for dates, times, and further information.

**Pecos Conference**

August 17–20, Mesa Verde National Park, Colo. The 73rd annual conference on Southwest archaeology. Tours of sites in the Four Corners area will be conducted on the 20th. For more information, send e-mail to linda_towle@nps.gov or visit the Web site www.swanet.org@pecosconference.html

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**7th Annual Symposium of the Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, D.C.**

September 16, U.S. Navy Memorial, Downtown Washington, D.C. This year’s symposium, entitled “Are We Having Fun Yet? Pleasurable Activities in Ancient America,” examines recreational and pleasurable activities in the pre-Columbian Americas. For more information, contact PCSWDC Registration: 11104 Bucknell Drive, Silver Spring, Md. 20902, or send e-mail to leisure@ancientamerica.net
The Vinland Map: Genuine or Fake?

The authenticity of this controversial Viking map continues to be debated.

“I know for an absolute fact that the map is fake,” said Kirsten A. Seaver, a cartographic scholar who is writing a book about the map. As evidence, she cited information in the map’s legend, which she said was taken from a well-known book, *The History of Greenland*, published in Germany in 1765.

“It still seems impossible to assert categorically whether the Vinland Map is authentic or not. I certainly feel the views of the leading scholars who contributed to our second edition (of *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*) are persuaded it’s authentic,” said John G. Ryden, the director of Yale University Press.

One of those scholars, Thomas Cahill, a professor of physics at the University of California Davis, stated, “If it’s a forgery, it’s probably the world’s best forgery.” He observed that no one has identified a good motive for forging the map.

Fitzhugh said microchemical tests of the ink are likely to be conducted in the near future if Yale agrees to them. The tests, he believes, will conclusively determine whether it is genuine or not. A number of tests have been proposed, some of which have been approved, according to Robert Babcock, a curator at Yale’s Beinecke Library, where the map is stored. But a resolution of this controversy may not be imminent.

Even if future tests conclude the map’s a forgery, Babcock believes its supporters will still insist it’s genuine.

—Tamara Stewart
An excavation near Victoria, approximately 90 miles northeast of Corpus Christi, has determined the location of Fort St. Louis, the French colony that was the first European settlement in Texas. The excavation also has revealed the first of several locations of Presidio La Bahia, the oldest Spanish fort found in the state.

In 1684, French explorer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle led an expedition of four ships and a crew of 300 to the New World. His intention was to construct forts along the mouth of the Mississippi River to maintain France’s control of the Louisiana territory, as well as to invade and conquer the Spanish in Mexico. But finding the mouth of the Mississippi was no simple matter.

“Maps at the time showed the Mississippi River going through Texas,” said Jim Bruseth, the archaeology division director of the Texas Historical Commission, the state agency for historic preservation.

Not surprisingly, La Salle landed 400 miles off course in Matagorda Bay, southeast of Victoria. The 180 survivors of the storm-ravaged expedition dragged their possessions, including eight 900-pound cannons, some 20 miles along an inlet, where they established a settlement.

Prompted by the 1996 discovery of the cannons, the Texas Historical Commission’s team of archaeologists began the excavation in mid-January. It’s expected to continue through October.

Alarmed by the French settlement in their portion of the New World, French are buried and which the excavators hope to find. The remains, said Bruseth, could be extremely informative about the diet and health of the French.

The archaeologists are examining the soil with a magnetometer, a device so sensitive it can detect one one millionth of the magnetic force required to move a compass needle.

The excavation is being conducted on private land. Should the archaeologists find the cemetery, the Texas Historical Commission is negotiating with the City of Victoria regarding transferring the remains to city land and setting up an exhibit.—Michael Bawaya
Strange Bedfellows

An Ohio golf course has occupied a Hopewellian site for nearly a century. But the proposed rebuilding of the clubhouse is causing concern.

The Moundbuilders Country Club in Newark, Ohio, recently submitted plans to rebuild its clubhouse. Such an action might ordinarily go unnoticed, if it weren’t for the fact that Moundbuilders is located on the Octagon Earthworks, an important archaeological site.

Concerns have been voiced that the proposed construction will damage the earthworks. The Ohio Historical Society, which owns the land and leases the site to the club, is currently reviewing the plans to ensure the impact on the earthworks will be minimal, though some damage is likely to result.

Brad Lepper, an archaeologist at the Ohio Historical Society, says that the earthworks, which are at least 1,650 years old, are very significant for a number of reasons. The site is one of the best-preserved Hopewellian geometric earthworks, and it is one of only three North American sites listed in a recent book on the 70 ancient wonders of the world by the Cambridge University archaeologist, Christopher Scarre.

Moundbuilders has been leasing the land for 90 years. When the Ohio Historical Society took over the property in the 1930s, the course and a clubhouse were already in place, and a 50-year right-of-occupancy agreement had been established, according to Dr. Gary Ness, director of the society. The current agreement allows the club to renew its lease until 2027. The society receives almost $30,000 a year from Moundbuilders.

It is uncertain if the site’s use by the country club has done more to damage or preserve it. The club has built cement pathways in high-traffic areas to prevent erosion and damage by golf carts and foot traffic. But the construction of these pathways, as well as water pipes, sand traps, and other elements of the golf course, have required digging into the site.

—Martha Mulvany

Men Caught Digging at Mimbres Ruin

Three men have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Las Cruces, New Mexico, for looting an archaeological site in the nearby Gila Wilderness Area. Mike Quarrell, James Quarrell, and Aaron Sera were found digging at the East Fork site, surrounded by pottery fragments and bones. The men also had shovels, rock hammers, dirt picks, and a gun. Since damage to the site is in excess of $500, the suspects, if found guilty, may face hefty fines and as much as two years in a federal penitentiary under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

The looted site is a classic Mimbres pueblo ruin. Gail Firebaugh, the U. S. Forest Service archaeologist who helped assess the damage, says it was a very significant ruin that could have been eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. As the pueblo had never been excavated and was only minimally documented by archaeologists 30 years ago, the suspects “probably knew how to recognize an archaeological site,” says Firebaugh. Mike Quarrell was convicted under the Antiquities Act in 1976, which suggests the men are experienced looters.

Forest Service officers placed seismic sensors near the site after a hiker reported in January that the site showed evidence of vandalism. The sensors detected the suspects’ presence and the men were arrested while digging there. They denied any previous excavation of the site.

Firebaugh says the recovered artifacts may go to a museum or be reburied.—Martha Mulvany
in the NEWS

Wreckage Identified as Mid-18th-Century Steamboat

A project team led by the Oklahoma Historical Society, studying the remains of a boat found in the Red River, has determined that it was a very early side-wheel steamboat. The boat is believed to be the Caddo, which plied the waters of the Red River during the short-lived era of the Republic of Texas.

“I am at least ninety percent certain that this is the Caddo,” says J. Barto Arnold, director of Texas Operations for the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University, which is working with the Oklahoma Historical Society. “The boat fits the historic record in terms of the type of vessel, size, and location.”

The Caddo, which was built in 1839 in Pittsburgh, was a single-engine side-wheel steamboat that operated out of New Orleans. The boat had apparently started back downriver after picking up a cotton bale from a plantation when it hit a snag and sank on April 13, 1842. The remains were discovered near the historic site of Fort Towson, an important military outpost in the early 1840s.

“Whether it is determined to be the Caddo or not, this find is highly significant as an example of transitional technology from single to double engine steamboats,” says Bill Lees, principal investigator for the project and director of the Historic Sites Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society. “It is one of the first of this type of western river steamboat to be used on the Red River. This technology was obsolete by 1840.”

Because there are no existing architectural plans available for this type of watercraft, the wreckage is the only example researchers have of this technology and design.

Test excavations will take place in the early summer, with full-scale excavations planned for the fall.

—Tamara Stewart

Pre-Clovis Site Confirmed in Virginia

A variety of tests have conclusively shown that the lower layer of artifacts located at the Cactus Hill site, south of Richmond, Virginia, pre-dates the Clovis culture, once widely believed to be the oldest prehistoric culture in the New World.

Joseph and Lynn McAvo of Nottoway River Survey-Archaeological Research, who have been directing work at the site since 1989, discovered two distinct layers of cultural material at this repeatedly-used site, one of which was Clovis-era, and the other containing tools of a different style and material (see In the News, American Archaeology, Fall 1997). After three years of intensive investigation, the results of radiocarbon, geologic, and other tests combined to date the lower level at approximately 17,000 years (15,000 radiocarbon years) ago, as much as 4,000 to 5,000 years before the accepted date for the Clovis culture.

Members of the research team, including soil scientists James Baker and Robert Hodges, anthropologist and luminescence dating specialist James Feathers, paleobotanist Lucinda McWeeney, and zooarchaeologist Thomas Whyt, recently presented their findings at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology.

“The site is very unique because of the presence of a verifiable level of human occupation located below a verifiable level of Clovis occupation,” says Joseph McAvo. “This is extraordinarily solid evidence for a pre-Clovis culture.”

The Cactus Hill site provides more evidence for the argument that the first Americans may have come in a series of migrations from different areas over a long period of time, rather than in one mass migration across the Bering Land Bridge.
The past is indeed prologue. Our lives are informed by the lives of our predecessors, their ambitions and limitations, their triumphs and failures.

As evidence of this, more and more travelers are visiting archaeological sites, sometimes taking in a number of sites in one trip. This summer, Grave Creek Mound Historic Site will host hundreds of visitors, as will Indian Grinding Rock State Park, and Moundville Archaeological Park, where the people of the Mississippian culture lived and worked.

The reasons for this are clear. A 10,000 year-old bison kill site at Lubbock Lake Landmark State Historical Park, for example, or the only known Viking settlement in North America at L’Anse aux Meadows (above), brings the past into the present in a tangible way, offering insights that help us better understand ourselves.

Each of the five sites described on the following pages represents a unique slice of history.

NANCY HARBERT is a freelance writer based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her article “A Land Left Behind” appeared in the Fall 1999 issue of American Archaeology.
More than 12,000 years ago, the waters in Yellowhouse Draw cut a 30-foot-deep horseshoe bend that coursed through the high plains. The stream that developed attracted the animals of the day: bison, mammoth, giant armadillo, several species of extinct horses and camels.

Hunters weren’t far behind. During the ensuing years, mostly before agricultural irrigation dried up the springs in the 1930s, the draw provided sustenance to scores of settlers and travelers.

“The 12,000-year record of continuous human occupation is unparalleled in North America” says Susan Shore, museum educator at the landmark, an archaeological and natural history preserve.

Today, life-size bronze statues of bison, giant armadillo, mammoth, and giant short-faced bear (three times the size of a grizzly) greet visitors who wander the four miles of interpretive trails that run through the 300-acre preserve. An interpretive center inside the park contains interactive exhibits and three life-size dioramas of Native American lifeways. Guided tours can be scheduled for groups over 10. “We offer lots of workshops on cultural and natural history,” Shore says.

The preserve’s field research season runs from mid-June to mid-August. Visitors are welcome at several areas being excavated, one of which features a 1,000-year-old bison-butchering site.

“People can see what’s going on and talk to the people who are working on the sites,” says Shore.

Getting There:
Lubbock Lake Landmark (806-742-1116) is located on the northwestern edge of Lubbock, Texas, about a six-hour drive from Dallas. The preserve is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 A.M.–5 P.M. and on Sunday from 1–5 P.M. Admission is free. Camping and lodging are available in Lubbock.

Nearby Attractions:
Museum of Texas Tech University in Lubbock; Blackwater Draw Archaeological Site and Museum, 5 miles north of Portales, New Mexico on U.S. 70; Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument, 30 miles north of Amarillo, Texas; Panhandle Plains Historical Museum at West Texas State University, in Canyon, Texas.

For more information go to www.ttu.edu/~museum/ill/LLLhome.html

(Above) Archaeologists place a plaster cast on a mammoth skull. The cast allows them to remove the fragile skull from the ground.

(Right) A life-size statue of a bison antiquus, which became extinct about 8,500 years ago. This is one of four life-size statues of extinct Ice-Age animals that resided in the area.
Like most early cultures, the Adena people were industrious, spending their days coaxing food from the soil, fishing in rivers, and hunting game in the lush hillside of the eastern United States. Unlike their predecessors, the Adena, who entered the scene around 1000 B.C., developed a mound-building practice that would endure for more than 2,000 years.

Without the aid of wheels or horses, the Adena people most likely moved many thousands of pounds of dirt by the basket-load to erect conical mounds that were used primarily for burials. One of the largest of these is Grave Creek Mound, which was built in stages between 250 B.C. and 150 B.C. in the Ohio River Valley. More than 60,000 tons of soil were moved to erect the imposing structure, which stands 69 feet tall and has a base diameter of 259 feet. Originally, it was encircled by a 40-foot-wide moat.

"Its age alone is very significant," says Susan Yoho, director of the historic site. "This mound has survived where a lot of other mounds have not."

Though the mound has persevered, little else remains of this once influential culture. Artifacts such as chert projectile points, shell necklaces, pipes, and mica and copper ornaments can be seen at the Delf Norona Museum, situated adjacent to the mound.

The site sets aside one day every year to honor the contributions of the Adena culture. This year’s annual celebration will take place on October 14, during West Virginia Archaeology Month. Admission will be free and special exhibits from the tri-state area of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio will be on display.

Archaeologists will be on hand to identify ancient items brought by visitors and demonstrations will include flintknapping, atlatl throwing, and pottery making.

**Getting There:**
Grave Creek Mound Historic Site (304-843-4128) is located in Moundsville, West Virginia, 12 miles south of Wheeling. The site and Del Norona Museum are open Monday through Saturday from 10 A.M.–4:30 P.M. and on Sunday from 1–5 P.M. Both are closed on major holidays. Admission is $3. Camping can be found east of Wheeling, with lodging in Moundsville and Wheeling.

**Nearby Attractions:**
Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, Chillicothe, Ohio; Moundbuilders State Memorial, Newark, Ohio.

For more information go to www.wvculture.org/sites/gravecreek.html
For the Miwok Indians who settled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the towering oak trees that surrounded their world provided more than beauty. The Miwok made the most of the resources available to them, and the acorns, which in fall hung in abundant clumps from the trees, served as a staple of the tribe's diet.

The acorn harvest was a time of intense labor. After cracking and shelling the nuts, the women placed the nut meats in a stone mortar cup, which was carved from rock. Nearly 2,000 mortar cups have been carved from the marbleized limestone at Chaw’se, which is the Miwok word for grinding rock. The nut meats were then pounded into a fine meal with a stone pestle. Hot and cold water was then poured through the meal to leach out tannic acid, a bitter chemical contained in the nuts. The acorns, used in soup, mush, bread, and cakes, were stored in granaries.

Two short trails wind through the park, which includes a reconstructed Miwok Village, acorn granaries, gaming field, and a ceremonial roundhouse 60-feet in diameter. During the weekend of September 23–24, local Native Americans dress in ceremonial regalia and perform traditional dances inside the roundhouse. Arts and crafts booths and Indian tacos add to the festivities, which draw large crowds.

Out of respect for the wishes of the local Native American community, little excavation and no detailed studies have been conducted here, says Curtis Kraft, supervising ranger at the park. But within the park is the Chaw’se Regional Indian Museum, which tells the story of area tribes through exhibits of basketry, jewelry, feather regalia, and a variety of tools. The museum, which resembles the roundhouse in design, also houses a research library which is available to visitors who make an advance reservation with the librarian.

(Getting There: Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park (209-296-7488) is located 45 miles northeast of Stockton. The park is open from sunrise to sunset daily; the Chaw’se Regional Indian Museum is open Monday through Friday from 11 A.M.–3 P.M. and on weekends from 10 A.M.–4 P.M. Admission is $5 per vehicle. Camping is available inside the park and lodging can be found in Stockton.

Nearby Attractions: Central Valley Region State Indian Museum in Sacramento; Yosemite National Park (reconstructed Miwok village) northeast of Merced; Haggin Museum in Stockton; Old Calaveras County Courthouse in San Andreas.

For more information go to www.sierra.parks.state.ca.us/igr/igr_main.htm
In its heyday, 3,000 people lived within the confines of a wooden stockade at Moundville, a ceremonial center that served 10,000 additional people in communities as far as 50 miles away. The society was highly stratified, and the 185-acre community overlooking the Black Warrior River was carefully designed in a rectangle, with separate areas for living quarters, industrial complexes, public compounds, and recreation.

“When it was at its height (A.D. 1200), Moundville was the largest city in North America,” says Park Director Bill Bomar. The community was occupied from A.D. 1050–1500. All that remains are 28 truncated earthen pyramids, and an impressive array of artifacts including effigy bowls and an engraved sandstone disc that has been named the official state artifact of Alabama. The mounds, the largest of which stands 60 feet tall, were built in stages, often over many years. They were accessed by ramps and served mostly as foundations for wattle and daub residential and ceremonial structures.

Most of the mounds can be approached via a loop road through the park, but for the more intrepid visitor, the Douglass Nature Trail passes by two mounds that remain as they were when discovered more than 100 years ago. Artifacts from the site and interpretative exhibits are found inside the Jones Archaeological Museum, and a reconstructed Indian village contains four small houses, each of which is furnished with a life-size diorama.

Every fall, anthropology students from the University of Alabama conduct excavations inside the park and discuss their work with visitors. The park’s big event of the year is the annual Moundville Native American Festival, which takes place October 4–7. It features several hundred Native Americans from throughout the southeastern United States who cook foods and fashion crafts using traditional methods. Traditional games, dances, music and storytelling also are performed.

Getting There:
Moundville Archaeological Park (205-371-2234) is located 13 miles south of Tuscaloosa. The park is open daily from 9 A.M.–5 P.M., except for major holidays. Admission is $4 for adults, $2 for seniors and children. Camping is available inside the park and lodging can be found in Tuscaloosa. Admission is $5 during the Moundville Native American Festival.

Nearby Attractions:
Alabama Museum of Natural History in Tuscaloosa; Etowah Mounds State Historic Site north of Atlanta, Georgia; Poverty Point in eastern Louisiana.

For more information go to www.ua.edu/moundville.htm
Historical accuracy is taken seriously at L’Anse aux Meadows. This reenactor is not only dressed and armed exactly as the Vikings were, but his height and build are also typical of theirs.
Two years ago, a Viking ship set sail from Greenland, its destination a sheltered cove at the tip of Newfoundland. Named the Snorri, the 54-foot-long boat arrived at L’Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site, where 1,000 years ago Viking explorer Leif Eriksson established the first known European settlement in North America, which he called Vinland. From here, Eriksson explored southward.

On July 28, a dozen more Viking ships will sail to L’Anse aux Meadows, bringing passengers from Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. They will come to join an eight-week celebration of the 1,000th anniversary of Eriksson’s voyage. A historical replica of a bustling port of trade, called Norstead: the Grand Encampment, will be erected near L’Anse aux Meadows from July 17–September 8. It will feature up to 100 people reenacting Viking life. Everything from a wedding to boat-building techniques will take place.

As for its permanent attractions, L’Anse aux Meadows has a visitor center featuring exhibits and artifacts. Tourists can stroll along a boardwalk leading to the Viking encampment, a living-history exhibit. This encampment, like the aforementioned Norstead, recreates the distant past. Inside three smoky sod huts, people dressed in period costumes perform the daily tasks of long ago, from cooking over an open fire to carving bowls and needles from wood. Beside the reconstructed huts are the remains of the original shelters, which overlook the crystalline waters and floating icebergs of the Strait of Belle Isle.

“People don’t just drop in to L’Anse aux Meadows; most know about it before they come,” says Debbie Anderson, the site supervisor who has worked there for 20 years.

In fact, in 1960, when Norwegian adventurer Helge Ingstad discovered a series of overgrown ridges that proved to be the walls of eight sod buildings, no roads led to the site. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, L’Anse aux Meadows is the northernmost stop on the Viking Trail, a route that snakes its way along the rugged Newfoundland coastline.
The tools of the experimental archaeology trade: 
(clockwise from top) deer antler tines for pressure 
flaking, a bifacial chert preform, a sandstone 
square, a partially flaked obsidian core, quartzite 
cobble hammerstones and deer and elk antler 
hammers for percussion flaking, partially flaked 
cores and pieces of chert. Above the deer antler 
hammers are waste flakes that result from the lithics 
manufacturing process.
EXPERIMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS GO TO GREAT LENGTHS—
EVEN EXTREMES—TO PRECISELY RECREATE ARTIFACTS.

BY TAMAR STIEBER

SEVERAL YEARS AGO FLINTKNAPPER BRUCE HUCKELL received a call. Colorado’s state archaeologist wanted to alert him and several others who make and use Paleolithic tools that a sick circus elephant would be euthanized in Denver several days hence. The carcass, the state archaeologist said, was theirs for the asking to poke, prod, and puncture as they saw fit. This was nothing short of an experimental archaeologist’s dream—a rare chance to test his craftsmanship in flesh rather than theory and perhaps experience a tiny slice of Paleo-Indian life.

Huckell spent the next few days feverishly manufacturing a series of Clovis points—spear points replicating those made 13,000 years (11,000 radiocarbon years) ago by some of the earliest Americans—and mounting them on short wooden foreshafts. In Denver, he socketed the unfinished weapons into the main shafts one of his colleagues brought. Their spears were ready, as were they.

“We wanted to better understand how effective thrusting spears would be as weapons for hunting,” recalled Huckell, a senior research coordinator at the University of New Mexico’s Maxwell Museum of Anthropology and a research associate professor in UNM’s anthropology department.

They had at the dead animal. They pierced various parts of its anatomy, took numerous skin measurements, analyzed its physiology.

(Above) A matched group of North American Paleo-Indian projectile points, consisting of casts of original prehistoric specimens and replicas.
“We concluded that spears thrust low down in the abdominal region might be a good way to bring an animal down,” said Huckell, who surmised as much several years earlier after butchering an elephant carcass with stone tools. The Denver experiment, however, yielded some unexpected results.

“What we found is that in designing spears, you need to have relatively gradual changes in diameter if you wanted the spears to penetrate deeply to reach the internal organs and inflict mortal wounds,” Huckell stated.

The group was thrilled to discover that the minor, mendable breaks in spear points with sudden changes in diameter were exactly like breaks they’d seen in ancient spear points excavated from Clovis mammoth kill sites.

Huckell’s elephant encounters are graphic examples of experimental archaeology. Dating back at least two centuries, the practice involves replicating artifacts using only original materials and technologies—a means, said renowned archaeologist James Adovasio, to “capture the nature of a technological process on the one hand and to figure out who the players are on the other hand.”

Whether experimentally building mammoth-bone houses, firing pots, or manufacturing stone tools, the goal of these endeavors is to “understand the means whereby the maker produced the signature artifacts of humanity,” said Adovasio, founder and executive director of Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute in Erie, Pennsylvania, and chairman of Mercyhurst College’s Department of Anthropology and Archaeology.
Indeed, experimental archaeology applies to a variety of media. But it’s the siren call of stone that beckons the loudest. Lithics have long held tremendous fascination for archaeologists and hobbyists alike—so much so that nearly everything we know about the Ice Age and Paleo-Indians comes from studying stone artifacts. The reason is obvious: rock endures. But stone tools and weapons represent at most only five percent of the material culture of that period, said Adovasio. The other 95 percent—baskets, clothing, rope, wooden tools, etc.—perished with the ages.

A specialist in perishable artifacts, Adovasio doesn’t argue with the value of lithic studies. But he laments that other equally, if not more revealing technologies have suffered as a result. For each specialist in ancient perishables, he estimates there are 50 to 100 studying stone.

“You can have every perishable materials archaeologist in this office and still have room to breathe,” he observed.

Adovasio is experimenting with a 27,000-year-old textile from the Czech Republic. It’s three times older than any other textile on record, he noted enthusiastically. Describing the cloth as “frozen in time” on bits of fired clay, Adovasio said it left tiny impressions that suggest the material could be made from nettles. His team is trying to replicate the cloth to test that hypothesis. But even if their hypothesis is correct, there’s no guarantee they will have used the same methods as the original weavers.

Michael B. Collins, a University of Texas archaeologist, defined this important caveat in a word: “Equifinality. That means you can come to the same endpoint by different paths.”

In other words, said Collins, a research associate at UT’s Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, “just because you’ve replicated a finished form of some prehistoric stone tool doesn’t mean the way you did it was the way it was done in the past.”

Frustrating? You bet it is. But it hasn’t dampened the enthusiasm of intrepid experimental archaeologists like Collins, who realize that even getting it wrong provides valuable insight into ancient civilizations. For example, Collins experimented on and off for six years trying to understand better how and why prehistoric toolmakers...
Eight hundred years after it was last fired, Camp Kiln, a genuine Anasazi trench kiln, blazes again.
heated chert to make it more flakable. Through trial and (mostly) error, he, like other experimenters, found that slow heating over 24 hours will prevent the stone from exploding; another 12 hours of steady heat followed by a 24-hour cooling period yielded a nicely chippable flint.

Describing the process, and those who discovered it, as “pretty sophisticated,” Collins suggested it may well have been a precursor to metallurgical technologies generated later. One question still eludes him and his colleagues: Was this process, which dates back at least 15,000 years, invented once and then spread across the globe? Or was it “invented” many times over in different locations?

**Such questions are the backbone of archaeology.** But for self-confessed zealots like Huckell, they’re certainly not a prerequisite for experimentation; curiosity is excuse enough. Huckell readily acknowledged that some experiments yield little more than “archaeological trivia” to feed someone’s personal obsession. He speaks from personal experience when he says that such obsessions “form an itch that you can’t stop scratching.”

For artist Clint Swink, that itch began about 20 years ago when images of Anasazi pots literally started emerging in his wildlife and landscape paintings; just a rim poking through the ground, at first, then large sherds, and finally entire vessels. Eventually pottery became the focal point of his canvas. It was time for a model.

“All I wanted was a black-on-white pot to use in my painting,” recalled Swink, a resident of Ignacio, Colorado. “I couldn’t afford originals and nobody would loan them out.”

Ever resourceful, Swink started making his own pots. His initial efforts were “terrible,” he admitted. But he kept at it, tenaciously pursuing the authentic process, what he called “the discovery of a lost art.”

“I had inadvertently discovered a market for ‘ethically correct’ pots,” he said, meaning he’s a pot-maker, not a pot-hunter. Nor is Swink a forger, though his work could...
doubtless command enormous sums on the thriving black market in ancient Indian pottery.

"Everything I make (is) a perfect fake," Swink said with a mixture of pride and caution. "That may or may not be a good thing, depending on your viewpoint. But if people were afraid to purchase actual artifacts because they're afraid of buying a perfect fake, perhaps trafficking in artifacts would be diminished."

That's not to say Swink doesn't sell his work. His pots—one of which was purchased for Hillary Clinton's Save America's Treasures program—fetch anywhere from $100 to $2,000. But they're clearly identified as "authentic replicas." So authentic, in fact, that even experts can't always tell his work from the real thing without scientific testing.

That's because Swink is a perfectionist who does his homework. It's what he calls a "marriage of science and art." His clay comes from the same place as the piece he's reproducing; he uses only wooden, stone, and bone tools; he fires his pots in a replica Anasazi trench kiln he built on his property. And he does it over and over again until he gets it right.

"I always get the biggest kick being around his house at the kiln," Swink's collaborator, Joel Brisbin, said. "There's broken pottery everywhere—in the trees, on the ground. That's how he learned about it."

The two met in 1993 after Brisbin, a research archaeologist at Mesa Verde National Park, excavated nine prehistoric trench kilns in Mesa Verde. The kilns were in such pristine condition, Brisbin recalled, that they revealed the firing sequence the Anasazi used to make Mesa Verde black-and-white pottery "like it was written out." Brisbin didn't yet know he'd stumbled on Swink's Achilles' heel. Although the artist was producing decent replicas, the firing process wasn't quite right despite six obsessive years of trial and error.

"I was totally consumed with the thing," Swink admitted. When he learned of Brisbin's find, he was on the phone immediately.

"Look," he told Brisbin, "I have at present 199 pit firings to my credit.... Why don't we get together and compare notes?"

They did more than that. In approximately a week they were firing pots in Swink's replica kiln. Swink's 200th firing wasn't perfect, but it was better. It took a few more days of trying until they hit pay dirt by fine-tuning the firing sequence and covering the smoldering kiln in earth. In doing this they chose to ignore conventional wisdom, which stated that covering the kiln would turn their pots black.

"We tried it and it worked," said Brisbin, who co-authored with Swink several papers on their experiments. It's this attention to archaeological authenticity that has earned Swink the respect of archaeologists. Among his legion of fans is Eric Blinman, assistant director of the Museum of New Mexico's Office of Archaeological Studies and acting associate director of MNM's Laboratory of Anthropology/Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, both in Santa Fe. Blinman credits Swink with "matching the past context much, much, much better than anybody else."

Originally a flintknapper, Blinman started to "play around" with pottery in the early 1980s, eventually forsaking stone for ceramics. Nonetheless, he finds lithics "far more relevant to archaeologists than pottery."

"Pottery is really fairly isolated in occurrence in ancient cultures," Blinman explained. "You don't have it on
OLD TECH GOES HIGH-TECH

In a biology laboratory at Oregon State University, far from the butchered animal carcasses and the replica trench kilns, a different kind of experimental archaeology is being conducted.

Molecular biologist Walt Ream, director of the genetics program at the university, does genetic tests to determine if experimentally-generated tools share properties with the originals. In one example, Ream and a graduate student, Orin Shanks, performed tests on experimentally-made obsidian tools called microblades.

This project was born after Shanks returned from an excavation in Wyoming where 500-year-old stone tools were found. When analyzing the tools, Shanks found blood residues, which made him wonder how the residues remained on the tools.

“He decided that perhaps the cracks produced during the tools’ manufacture were harboring these residues and sequestering them from the elements,” said Ream. “We wanted to test this.”

Microscopic cracks also formed in the microblades during their manufacture, and the first step of the tests determined the depth and width of these cracks. Shanks then took white blood cells from cow blood and stained DNA, as well as protein, with fluorescent dyes. He soaked the microblades in the stained blood and then washed their surfaces. Using a confocal microscope, a sophisticated microscope used by cell biologists, he detected DNA and protein residues trapped in the cracks, despite the thorough washing.

As for what the tests conclude, Ream said it’s “very difficult” to prove that experimentally-made and ancient tools are similar. But he added, “Everything we’ve found (testing the microblades) is consistent with what other people working on ancient tools have seen.”

Though Ream said he is one of only a few scientists doing this kind of work, he “absolutely” expects the ranks to increase.

—Tamar Stieber
Research Assistant Tim Mulvihill holds artifacts excavated in an area of the Parkin site known as Locus 4. The artifacts are two Nodena arrow points and Barton Incised and Parkin Punctated sherds.
Smelling smoke, Penny King, a resident of Wisconsin and the road, pulled her 27-foot RV to the shoulder of a state highway in North Dakota. It was a fall day in 1999 and she was en route to Arkansas to begin her second season as a volunteer excavator at Parkin Archeological State Park, 35 miles west of Memphis. King barely had time to save her three cats and small dog, her purse, and laptop computer before the RV burst into flames. She stood beside the highway, clutching her terrified pets as the vehicle—her home for several years—burned to its frame.

Although the loss was devastating, within days she had filed an insurance claim and picked up a slightly battered 1982 Transvan at a used-car lot. She pressed on, determined to make the excavation, which was the last planned at Parkin for several years.

“I have such a feeling for the work there,” King explained on the phone to worried relatives.

Such is the lure of the 21-foot-tall green mound and surrounding plain that 500 years ago marked the center of a thriving Mississippian city. From around A.D. 900 through the early 1500s the Mississippian culture dominated the American Midwest. By the time European settlers arrived, many of the culture’s great settlements—marked by large mounds and walled village compounds—had been abandoned. Although farming and looting have badly damaged many late-Mississippian sites, Parkin remains largely intact. Its pristine condition led the state of Arkansas to create the state park, with help from The Archaeological Conservancy, which purchased most of the land and transferred it to the state. The park opened in February 1994.

In addition to being one of the youngest archaeological parks in the nation, Parkin is one of the most advanced, according to Station Archeologist Jeff Mitchem and others within the Arkansas Archeological Survey, the public agency charged with protecting and studying the state’s archaeological heritage. Parkin boasts an on-site laboratory, a Ph.D. archaeologist on staff (Mitchem), an active interpretive center and educational program, and a professional archaeological crew augmented by dedicated volunteers. The University of Arkansas conducts field courses at the site, which Mitchem said leads to useful excavation and lab work by student archaeologists. But he emphasized that some of the most valuable labor is contributed by amateurs like King, who return season after season.

But then King may not be the first traveler to face challenges en route to the 17-acre village. Tantalizing clues point to Parkin having been visited by the first European expedition to penetrate the interior of North America.

The Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto visited the city of Casqui in 1541. Casqui may now be Parkin Archeological State Park, one of the country’s most sophisticated archaeological parks. Parkin is employing its formidable resources in the hunt for evidence of de Soto.

by Michael Ray Taylor

(Above) This head vase was excavated at Parkin in 1991. Head vases often show details such as hairstyles, facial scars, and ear piercings, giving clues to the appearance of the people of Casqui.
Archaeological evidence and historical records suggest that Parkin was once the city of a “great chief” named Casqui, visited by Hernando de Soto and his weary band in June 1541. The evidence is scant: two brass bells and a glass bead—the kind that de Soto carried as trade goods—a flattened bronze coin, and a couple of musket balls that may or may not date to de Soto’s time. But the location matches de Soto’s account, as does the layout of the city: a walled, rectangular compound, bordering the St. Francis River. Water-filled moats surrounded the other three walls. A commanding mound, the highest spot for miles around, dominated the town’s western edge, according to descriptions published by several of those who accompanied de Soto.

The St. Francis is a meandering river that parallels the Mississippi. It is rich in fish, turtles, mussels, and fowl that could have helped sustain a permanent settlement. The river is now 15 feet lower than it was in the 1500s, but the dry moats are plainly visible. They were likely to have been filled with water during part of the time of occupation.

De Soto described Casqui as the ruler of the surrounding Indian province, which he governed from a large central town. In the earliest accounts, both the province and the town bear Casqui’s name. The town of Casqui had hundreds of houses and thousands of inhabitants. De Soto claimed that residents of many surrounding villages were loyal to Casqui. At the behest of the chief, as many as 15,000 warriors attended a ceremony in which the Spanish explorer erected a large wooden cross, built of two trees, on the central mound.

A 1966 excavation by the University of Arkansas recovered remains of a large wooden post that Mitchem believes may be part of de Soto’s cross. In 1993, Mitchem conducted radiocarbon dating on the wood, identified as bald cypress, which determined that it was cut between 1515 and 1663. Eventually, he hopes to excavate a large enough piece of the post to conduct a tree-ring analysis to find an exact date.

“The quality of the 1966 sample suggests that we could conduct ring dating on a larger piece,” Mitchem said. “If the date came as 1541, that would be convincing evidence.”

The possibility of finding evidence of early European contact with Native Americans helps draw volunteer exca-
vators, as well as student archaeologists from the University of Arkansas and other colleges. But Mitchem and Research Assistant Tim Mulvihill emphasized that the scientific value of Parkin extends beyond the question of whether the site is in fact de Soto’s Casqui.

“This is the most intact archaeological site of this period in the region,” Mitchem said. “The great majority of it has never been excavated. Our on-site laboratory makes possible a careful, ongoing, and systematic study of the site on a level seldom seen.”

Bag It and Tag It

A brilliant dawn burst over the flat prairie surrounding the visitor’s center as Mulvihill pulled into the parking lot. He saw King rounding up her animals after their morning romp. As with many digs in hot climes, the plan was to start early and knock off well before the afternoon heat set in. Another volunteer arrived shortly behind Mulvihill, and the three set off through the damp grass toward the dig site.

King wore ill-fitting shorts and a T-shirt, part of a Walmart wardrobe hastily purchased the day she replaced her burned RV. She and volunteer Wyatt Watkins, a semi-retired chemical engineer from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, began removing blue tarps, placed to keep the rain out, from several square holes.

Numerous postholes formed dark circles in the light gray soil. The ground was flecked with bits of daub—the reddish, plaster-like substance that coated the walls of native buildings. With Mulvihill supervising, King and Watkins stepped into a three-foot-deep hole. Two or three thin, knobby animal bones protruded slightly from one wall, fragile, tan-colored sticks that an untrained eye would likely miss.
"We have what appears to be a burn layer at the base of this site," Mulvihill said. "The dwelling may have been burned accidentally or intentionally. If it was intentional, it may have been because of death or disease in the house, or as a result of warfare."

Because of the considerable number of people who once lived at Parkin, excavation sites within the park have to be chosen with great care so as not to disturb human remains. Whenever human bones are found, the excavation stops and representatives from the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma are notified. The Quapaw may be descendants of the original Parkin residents, and they have taken responsibility for human remains from archaeological sites in northeast Arkansas. Occasionally, the tribe allows remains to be removed for reburial elsewhere, but more often excavation is simply redirected to a new area.

While occasional potsherds and larger objects were set aside to be marked and cataloged separately, most of the volunteers' work consisted of filling plastic bags and wheelbarrows with dirt. An elaborate code on each bag identified its source location within the site, the date it was excavated, and its depth. While the soil in the wheelbarrows would be water screened, followed by laboratory analysis of the fragments in it, the plastic bags would be set aside for on-site flotation—immersion in water that would allow lighter plant matter to float to the surface. This material would provide clues to diet, agriculture, climate, and even dress during the period of occupation.

But for any conclusions drawn from fragments to be scientifically meaningful a statistically significant number have to be recorded. As the sun ascended, dirt began to pile up alongside the hole in which King and Watkins worked. Other volunteers arrived, and were put to work in nearby plots. Within three hours, there was enough dirt to build a levee that could stop a flood.

A five-gallon bucket at King’s feet contained a few potsherds, some in the cross-hatched style she recognized as “Barton Incised.” "There's a couple of nice shards there," she said. “But the really good stuff is in the dirt.”

Many types of Mississippi Valley pottery are named after archaeological sites in the area. This pottery vessel, known as Parkin Punctated, takes its name from the Parkin site.
Laboring in the Lab

Trench work tends to be more exciting than lab work, and because of this an enormous backlog of material from the previous five seasons of excavating had accumulated. Consequently, Mitchem and his supervisors agreed that this excavation would be the last. The last, at least, until all the stored material has been analyzed and properly cataloged in the lab’s computer system.

“There’s a great wealth of information bagged in the lab,” said Mulvihill. “But it will take years of close examination to learn and understand it.”

The storehouse includes hundreds of bags of dirt and debris, and many thousands of small items: potsherds, building fragments, animal and fish bones, plant seeds, tool fragments, stone points—the myriad artifacts from which a way of life can be deduced.

Once the digging concluded, the lab work commenced. Parkin staff and volunteers began washing bags of screened material from the excavation. When the washed material had dried, volunteers and students sifted through it, making an item-by-item inventory, which would be entered into a computer for statistical analysis. In order to move this massive undertaking along, Mitchem arranged for a University of Arkansas course in archaeological laboratory methods to be taught at Parkin.

Slowly, a detailed picture of Mississippian life has emerged from the lab analysis. Hundreds of species of animals and plants that sustained the culture have been identified.

“We can point to about 35 species of fish and turtle as part of the regular diet,” Mitchem observed. He believes some of these species may have been grown in pens, much like the catfish farming that now takes place in this region.

Much of the lab work, Mulvihill added, has been devoted to separating the deeper, pristine strata from later material, which has been infiltrated by modern debris.

As valuable as the ongoing lab work is, Mitchem regrets suspending the excavation—especially since no significant artifacts were found in the recent dig. “In hindsight,” he stated, “we could have used more time for excavation before we went to the lab.” One factor limiting Mitchem and Mulvihill’s time in the field was the discovery of human burials at a pre-Mississippian village site a few miles from the park (see “Parkin Assists in an Important Find”). “Work on the Meador site definitely kept us from getting much done at Parkin,” Mitchem said.

While further excavation is years away, Mitchem has made preliminary arrangements for an examination of Parkin’s central mound by ground-penetrating radar, believing it could provide evidence of de Soto’s visit.

“If the base of de Soto’s cross is there, this should pick it up,” he said.

Meanwhile, the slow sifting of bagged material continues. One of the volunteers who decided to stay after the excavation was done was Penny King. “Until the lab work is caught up, we can’t dig,” said King. “And digging has been such a wonderful experience, I decided to help with the lab work, too.”

Though King prefers the trench, the lab, too, has its moments of wonder.

“One day we were going through some bits of daub in the screened material,” King recalled. “Another volunteer picked up a piece and it split in two. Inside was a perfect impression of a seed-bearing flower from five or six hundred years ago. When you see something like that in front of you, the past jumps to life.”

MICHAEL RAY TAYLOR is director of print journalism at Henderson State University. His article “Arkansas’ Cultural Crossroad” appeared in the Winter 1998-99 issue of American Archaeology.
Inside the Governor’s House

The Conservancy’s first preserve in North Carolina includes the manor house site of two important governors.

Along with almost everyone else in the town of Edenton, landowners Billy and Wanda Bell have long suspected that the section of their farm north of Route 17 held the remnants of Edenhouse Manor, a house once occupied by two of North Carolina’s first governors, Charles Eden and Gabriel Johnston.

When archaeologist Loretta Lautzenheiser discovered two 17th-century house foundations during her excavation in 1996, she was determined to learn how they related to the better-known 18th-century site on the Bell farm. What she found surprised everyone and underlined the significance of this site, which the Bells have donated to the Conservancy.

In 1663, a grateful King Charles II gave a vast tract of land to eight of his friends who provided funds or troops toward the king’s restoration to England’s throne. This act of staggering generosity (or hubris, depending on your point of view) established the “Royal Proprietorship,” the first representative government of what are today the states of North and South Carolina.

Still, the settlement of North Carolina lagged 50 years behind that of Virginia. This late start may have been the source of disrespect for North Carolina by its neighbors to the north and south. Statements by William Byrd, a visitor to Edenton in 1728, are typical of an outsider’s reactions to North Carolina’s frontier towns: “A citizen here is counted extravagant if he has ambition enough to aspire to a brick chimney. Justice herself is but in-differently lodged, the Court House having much the air of a common tobacco house.”

Lautzenheiser and her firm excavated the two earliest house sites ever discovered in the state, which were in the path of a road expansion project for the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The so-called Edenhouse site dated to 1663, and contained the remains of two dwellings, a barn, and a defensive stockade.

“When Governor Eden moved from Bath in 1718 and bought the property on the Chowan River, this earlier site became part of what we know as Eden’s plantation,” explains Lautzenheiser. “In fact, Eden probably lived here as he was building the manor house. Our research shows that the earlier houses were renovated at the time Eden bought the property.”

Queen Anne appointed Charles Eden governor of North Carolina in 1713. He was the second most recognizable citizen of Bath, a town south of Edenton on the banks of the Pam-
lico River. The most recognizable was Edward Teach, alias Blackbeard. It was widely known that the governor benefited greatly from his business relationship with the pirate. Historical records indicate Eden officiated the marriage ceremony between Teach and his only known wife, the daughter of a Bath planter. For his part, Blackbeard relied on the protection that Eden afforded him.

In 1718, however, Virginia’s governor Alexander Spotswood—who was understandably less sympathetic to Blackbeard’s predations than his North Carolina counterpart—sent a ship to capture the brigand. Teach was killed in the ensuing sea battle off Ocracoke Island, ending the “golden age of piracy” in Southern waters. Soon after Blackbeard’s death, Eden decided to leave Bath, whose residents were resentful of the governor’s association with the pirate. By 1719, Eden had moved himself and the governorship to Edenhouse from his home in Wilmington. Johnston’s 18-year reign as governor saw North Carolina grow from a frontier territory to a colonial powerhouse.

“Edenhouse manor was built at a time when North Carolina as a colony was growing rapidly,” says Lautzenheiser, who has performed only remote sensing and field surveys at the Conservancy preserve.

Lautzenheiser’s work has dispelled the notion that North Carolina was backward compared to the other colonies.

“During the time of both Eden and Johnston,” she observes, “the finest things that were available in the world were available at Edenhouse, including Dutch ceramics, gold, crystal goblets, and fine glass. This gives you a picture of a people that were carrying on a very brisk trade despite all the embargoes.”

North Carolina State Archaeologist Steve Claggett thinks that Edenhouse holds the potential to answer many nagging questions facing historical archaeologists. “With what Loretta has done at the smaller, earlier sites, coupled with the big house on the property that the Bell family has donated, we now have the whole package,” he says. “Having the Conservancy preserve the archaeological component of this history is just fantastic.”—Rob Crisell
Chief Paul Waterman knew that many of the farms alongside the Mohawk River in upstate New York contained evidence of his Iroquois ancestors. After all, the Mohawk band of the Iroquois once controlled a territory that encompassed much of the state.

In July 1998, Waterman and members of the Mohawk tribe performed religious rituals at the Palatine Bridge site during archaeological investigations there. Accompanying them were New York Historic Preservation Program Coordinator Bob Kuhn and representatives of the Windsor Development Group. One excavated portion of the site revealed three human burials dating back nearly 800 years. During a repatriation ceremony, Waterman placed animal skins on top of each interment and the area was covered.

The Palatine Bridge Site was discovered in 1997 as a result of an archaeological survey performed in advance of a proposed shopping center. Excavations at Palatine Bridge revealed evidence of settlement patterns, numerous burials and storage pits, and various lithic and ceramic artifacts. Researchers estimate that perhaps as much as 75 percent of the village remains intact on the property.

Working hand in hand with the Iroquois and Kuhn, Windsor Development, led by Hank Pruyn, redesigned the shopping center to avoid disturbing any portion of the site. In December 1999, Windsor Development ensured Palatine Bridge’s permanent preservation by donating the site to the Conservancy.

“The Palatine Bridge site represents an early period in the development of the Mohawk tribe of the Iroquois,” says Kuhn. He believes the site is archeologically significant because this is “a relatively poorly understood phase of Mohawk prehistory.”

The Conservancy will keep the site in pasture, working with professionals and laypeople in the community to create a management plan for the preserve. Palatine Bridge is the Conservancy’s first Mohawk village site and its third preserve in New York. The Conservancy also owns the Tram and Steele sites, two prehistoric Seneca villages located near Rochester, New York.

“Windsor Development,” Kuhn says, “is to be congratulated for their sensitivity to Native American concerns, their willingness to redesign their development project to avoid the site and burial area, and for working with The Archaeological Conservancy to ensure the long-term preservation of the property.”—Rob Crisell

More on the Mohawk

There are several excellent museums in New York that offer information about the Iroquois. Within a short drive of the Palatine Bridge site is the Iroquois Indian Museum (518-296-8949), located just outside Cobleskill. Another worthwhile stop is the New York State Museum (518-473-4759) in downtown Albany, with its extensive exhibits on Iroquois culture.
Southwestern Pennsylvania in general and Indiana County in particular have a rich archaeological record extending from the Paleo-Indian period 10,000 years ago to the late-prehistoric period of a few hundred years ago. During the latter period, the area was well populated by Native Americans. As these cultures left no written records and were not described by early visitors to the region, we don’t know what they called themselves, or if they considered themselves a single people.

The late-prehistoric cultures of western Pennsylvania have been referred to as the “good, gray cultures” of the Eastern Woodlands because there is nothing flamboyant about them. Unlike the earlier Adena and Hopewell Cultures, the late-prehistoric people did not build elaborate earthworks or burial mounds. The dead were interred in simple pits located within the village area and usually were buried without grave goods. There is no trace of the complicated burial ceremonialism of the earlier mound-building cultures.

These late-prehistoric cultures were also less flashy than the Mississippian Culture of the Southeast and the Mississippi River Valley. The large, formally arranged mound-and-village centers of the Mississippian have no counterpart among the late-prehistoric people, whose towns lacked pyramidal temple mounds and rectangular plazas. Their typical village was only an acre or two in size, and generally consisted of a few circular houses, each about 20 feet in diameter.

The Archaeological Conservancy’s third Pennsylvania acquisition is a fine example of a late-prehistoric village. The Mary Rinn site, named for a previous landowner, is a small circular village surrounded by a palisade. Two excavations conducted at the site in the mid-1970s by Indiana University of Pennsylvania provide the only evidence about the archaeology of the site.

“Our field schools at the site were small and brief, but we did find evidence of a circular palisade and many pits and post molds,” remarked excavation leader Virginia Gerald, explaining how the nature of the site was determined.

The Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company, a subsidiary of the Consul Energy Group, donated a nine-acre tract of land containing the archaeological site to the Conservancy. Rochester and Pittsburgh’s Thomas Deberti and Ken Foster played key roles in the donation. The former was instrumental in promoting R & P’s initial decision to donate the Mary Rinn site, the latter kept the project on track while R & P was merged into the Consul Energy Group. Sarah Neusius, an archaeologist at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, is the site steward for Mary Rinn. Neusius plans a limited excavation there this summer.

“There is a lot left to be done there,” said Gerald. “It’s the best site in the county.” —Paul Gardner
Wal-Mart Donates a Portion of the Grewe Site for Preservation
SOUTHWEST—In early March, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. announced plans to donate 13 acres of its 35-acre parcel in Coolidge, Arizona, to the Conservancy for permanent preservation. The land contains prehistoric features associated with the nearby Grewe site and Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, both very significant Hohokam village sites located along the Gila River. The donation also connects the two sites. The Conservancy established the 32-acre Grewe Preserve in 1998 with the assistance of the Faul and Cole families and an Arizona Heritage Fund Grant.

The Wal-Mart announcement came after archaeological testing of the parcel showed a high density of pithouses and other features. Wal-Mart decided to build its store on a portion of the property where cultural resources are unlikely to be disturbed. Construction of the store began in mid-spring and will be completed this fall.

“We look forward to serving the citizens of Coolidge, both with our new store and with the land donation,” says Amy Hill, director of community affairs for Wal-Mart.

“In the United States, even highly significant archaeological deposits on private lands have little legal protection,” says Keith Kintigh, president of the Society of American Archaeology and a professor at Arizona State University. “Wal-Mart’s actions provide a model of public responsibility.”

Preservation Work with Pueblo of Zuni Continues at the Box S Site
SOUTHWEST—The Conservancy and the Pueblo of Zuni are moving ahead with a joint long-term management plan for the 160-acre Box S Preserve in McKinley County in northwestern New Mexico. The first phase of the fencing project to block unauthorized access to the site was completed in April, and a larger fence will be built this summer.

The Box S site is a 13th-century ancestral Zuni pueblo that was built around a large, central plaza. It once stood two stories high and contained more than 1,000 rooms. It is considered by experts to be one of the first large, planned communities in the Zuni region, and it represents the transition from the Chaco period to protohistoric Zuni sites. Part of the sandstone settlement is located within the Zuni reservation; a larger portion, which the Conservancy purchased, was privately owned and frequently vandalized by looters. The Conservancy has been working for ten years with the Pueblo of Zuni toward the acquisition of the site, which was completed in January.

“The purchase of the Box S site by the Conservancy and the planned transfer of the site to the Pueblo of Zuni is of great significance to the Zuni Tribe,” says a tribal representative. “The site, which is called Heshodaimkoskwa in the Zuni language, meaning ‘a house located at the mouth of a valley,’ was one of the settlements established during the migration of the Zuni clans in their...
quest for the Middle Place (Zuni Pueblo). The return of this ancestral site to the Pueblo allows for the site’s protection and management by the tribe.”

The Pueblo of Zuni Cultural Resources Enterprise will direct a mapping project at the site this summer, which will assist with the planned stabilization of disturbed areas. Members of Zuni Pueblo and the Conservancy will fill looting holes and revegetate the site to protect it from further vandalism and erosion.

Landowners Donate Addition to San José de Las Huertas Preserve

SOUTHWEST—The San José de Las Huertas Preserve, located near Placitas, New Mexico, just north of Albuquerque, contains what is considered by experts to be the best-preserved Spanish Colonial village in the Southwest. In December of last year, George and Nancy Shaffer donated a five-acre tract containing portions of the settlement to the Conservancy, increasing the size of the preserve to 25 acres.

San José de Las Huertas was established in 1764, when nine families of Spanish colonists petitioned the governor of New Mexico, Pedro Fermín de Mendozuela, for a settlement in the Sandia Mountains’ northern foothills. Three years later, as many as 21 families were living in the village, which continued to thrive until the Mexican Revolution forced the Spanish to pull troops out of the frontier colonies in 1810. This left isolated settlements like Las Huertas open to increased attacks from the Apache and Navajo, and in 1823 the governor ordered the remaining residents to abandon the village and move to safer settlements along the Rio Grande. Las Huertas, which may have been briefly reoccupied by one family, fell into ruin.

Low mounds, which form a square measuring about 400 feet per side, are all that remains of the walled village. In 1980, archaeologists excavated a two-room Spanish house outside the village for a pipeline construction project, revealing the details of a kitchen and bedroom. More than 17 unexcavated house mounds have been identified within the preserve. The newly donated portion of the site contains important features associated with the settlement, as well as a segment of an irrigation canal.

“We are very grateful to the Shaffer Family for making this important contribution to the San José de Las Huertas Preserve,” says Jim Walker, the Conservancy’s Southwest regional director. “Because so few Spanish Colonial sites have survived, preserving them is a top priority. Information gathered from them is crucial to learning about this period in history. “This is particularly true,” Walker adds, “since researchers are coming to realize that some of the Spanish chroniclers were biased in their reporting of events of that time.”

Excavating the Internet

MYSTERIES OF THE MOUNDBUILDERS
www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6558/contents.html This site, sponsored by the Hutchison Research Center, seeks to rectify cultural myths about American Indians in general and the Moundbuilders in particular.

UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY
www.nps.gov/scru/home.html A site focusing on the underwater archaeology conducted by the Submerged Cultural Resources Unit of the National Park Service. It includes shipwreck sites and pictures.

CHUCALISSA ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM
www.people.memphis.edu/~chucalissa Visit a reconstructed American Indian village on this Web site sponsored by the anthropology department of the University of Memphis.
Enduring Earthworks

CAHOKIA AND THE MIDDLE MISSISSIPPIAN CULTURE

When: September 23–26, 2000
Where: Missouri and Illinois
How much: $695 ($130 single supplement)

Join us on our exploration of the phenomenal earthworks of Cahokia and the central Mississippi and Illinois River Valleys. Inhabited around A.D. 700 to 1400, Cahokia was the premier Mississippian town and the center of the most sophisticated prehistoric Indian civilization north of Mexico. This ancient city, located across the Mississippi River from what is now St. Louis, covered nearly six square miles and was home to thousands of people. Monks Mound, the great platform mound in Cahokia’s central ceremonial precinct, is the largest prehistoric earthen construction in the New World.

In addition to Cahokia, you’ll visit Mastodon State Historic site, which has provided the only evidence of humans hunting the Ice Age elephant, and Dickson Mounds, a Mississippian mound and village center that flourished 800 years ago and today boasts a state-of-the-art interactive museum. Midwest archaeological experts will join you on this fascinating trip.

Exploring the Land of the Anasazi

BEST OF THE SOUTHWEST

When: September 30–October 10, 2000
Where: New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado
How much: $1,995 ($370 single supplement)

The American Southwest, long recognized for its spectacular cultural and scenic diversity, is also home to some of the best-preserved evidence of prehistoric civilizations in the New World. The magnificent ruins of Chaco Canyon and the massive cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde are but two vivid reminders of the complex cultures that dominated the region between the 10th and 14th centuries. The Archaeological Conservancy’s Best of the Southwest tour includes these two settlements and much more—from other prehistoric sites to modern pueblos where ancient traditions persist.

In New Mexico, you’ll visit remarkable sites such as the cliff dwellings at Bandelier National Monument, the “Sky City” of Acoma, a pueblo flourishing atop a high mesa just as it did 600 years ago, and San Ildefonso Pueblo, famous for its pottery.

In Arizona, you’ll take a jeep tour through Canyon de Chelly National Monument and visit Montezuma Valley’s seldom-seen prehistoric pueblos.

Expert archaeologists will accompany you on this memorable 10-day excursion.
Art Set in Stone

California Desert Rock Art

When: October 22–29, 2000
Where: Southern Nevada and Southern California
How much: $1,395 ($295 single supplement)

The Conservancy’s week-long tour focuses on the extraordinary rock art found throughout the Mojave Desert region. Created hundreds of years ago during sacred ceremonies, initiations, and shaman rituals, the rock art sites you’ll visit present an unforgettable array of images from diverse cultures.

Beginning in Las Vegas, Nevada, you’ll visit the Atlatl Rock Petroglyphs as well as Grapevine Canyon, a sacred site once used by shamans. In Southern California, the Blythe intaglios, found along the banks of the Colorado River, and the petroglyphs at Corn Spring, a sacred site in the Chuckwalla Mountains, await you. In the northern Mojave Desert, you’ll see rock art as old as 4,000 years, as well as examples created 200 years ago. You’ll also tour the Coso Range, home to the country’s most remarkable concentration of rock art.

David Whitley, one of the foremost experts on prehistoric rock art and author of A Guide to Rock Art Sites of Southern California and Southern Nevada, will accompany the tour.

The Mysterious Maya

Maya of Palenque and Yucatan

When: January 2001
Where: Southern Mexico

Thousands of years ago the Maya built fabulous cities of stone in the rain forests of Central America. Their culture reached extraordinary heights in art, architecture, and commerce, and then faded away as the forest reclaimed their massive cities. During the last 25 years, dramatic discoveries, such as deciphering the Maya’s hieroglyphic writing, have shed new light on this mysterious people.

Our journey offers you an opportunity to visit some of the Maya’s most impressive sites. We’ll explore the Pyramid of the Magician at Uxmal, one of the largest northern Maya cities. At Kabah, we’ll see the mosaic of stone masks that adorns the Palace of the Masks. At Chichen Itza, a magnificent city founded in the 5th century and occupied until the 13th century, we’ll tour the great ballcourt, the largest found in Mesoamerica, and El Caracol, an astronomical observatory dating from the 10th century.

We’ll spend a day touring the many wonders at the city of Palenque, deep in the rain forest. Inside the Temple of the Inscriptions, we’ll visit the tomb of Pacal the Great, who ruled Palenque from A.D. 615 to 683.

Our leader will be John Henderson, the esteemed professor of anthropology at Cornell University and author of the acclaimed World of the Ancient Maya.
Skull Wars: Kennewick Man, Archaeology and the Battle for Native American Identity
By David Hurst Thomas
(Basic Books, 2000; 326 pgs; $25 cloth; 800-331-3761)
With the passage in 1990 of the poorly crafted Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Congress unwittingly unleashed the latest chapter in the struggle between American Indians and their European conquerors that has lasted since Columbus stepped ashore on San Salvador.

In a little volume that covers a lot of history, one of America's most prominent archaeologists, David Hurst Thomas of New York's American Museum of Natural History, surveys American Indian policy from Thomas Jefferson, the first American archaeologist, to the courtroom battles of today. He documents, in a highly-readable narrative, the relations between Natives and the anthropologists who study them.

Archaeologists have at times been grisly exploiters who collected Indian skeletons with little or no regard for ancestral sensitivities. At other times, anthropologists have been in the vanguard of shaping national policy to understand, preserve, and protect Native people and culture. In his desire to be even-handed, Thomas can be forgiven for failing to ask where the Indian leaders were when archaeologists were pressing for laws (like the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979) to protect the Indians' heritage.

It is common today for Indian activists to characterize archaeologists as nothing more than grave robbers leading an assault on their traditional histories. Skull Wars puts their rage in historical perspective. At the same time, tribal interest in archaeology is on the rise with new programs and top-notch museums opening across the country. In his optimistic conclusion, Thomas demonstrates how Native and archaeological interests can merge in an era of understanding and mutual respect.

Anasazi America: Seventeen Centuries on the Road from Center Place
By David E. Stuart
(University of New Mexico Press, 2000; 264 pgs; illus., $30 cloth, $16 paper; 800-249-7737)
In a very readable narrative, University of New Mexico archaeologist David E. Stuart tells the 1,700-year story of the pueblo people of the Four Corners' states. They have maintained a vibrant culture that is unique in the United States.

Focusing on the Chaco Canyon aspect of the Anasazi, Stuart details how it took 700 years to develop the technological, agricultural, and organizational foundations for the great Chacoan culture. Stuart asserts a general theory of Chaco Canyon—a sophisticated culture that has perplexed archeologists since its discovery. Yet it all collapsed in just 40 years of minor droughts. Why? Because of social inequality between the rich elite in the great houses and the poor workers in hovels.

Skip ahead 850 years to the current descendents of the Anasazi living in modern pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona. They survived Spanish and American conquests with their culture intact—an egalitarian society that learned the lessons of the past.

Anasazi America draws a fascinating dichotomy between modern pueblos and modern America, which has failed to learn history's lessons. Stuart makes a powerful case for the way of the pueblos.

—Mark Michel

Ancient Ruins of the Southwest
By David Grant Noble
(3rd Revised Edition, Northland, 2000; 238 pgs; illus., $16 paper; 520-774-5251)
For 20 years, this title has been the authoritative guide to all the accessible archaeological sites in the Southwest. The new edition is completely revised with 13 new sites, new photographs, and updated maps. Author David Grant Noble, an accomplished photographer and scholar, also provides insights into the latest scientific research. Any explorer of archaeological sites in the Southwest needs this guide. We never leave home without it.
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