



THE WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGIST

WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, WASHINGTON STATE MUSEUM, SEATTLE 5, WN.

NEXT MEETING: Seattle Chapter - Wednesday, May 10, 1961 - 8:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Washington State Museum
4037 15th Avenue N. E.
Seattle 5, Washington

SPEAKER: Mr. Walter J. Eyerdam

TOPIC: Pictures of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego

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FOURTEENTH ANNUAL NORTHWEST ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Dr. Wayne Suttles representing the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of British Columbia at Vancouver, B.C., played host to the Fourteenth Annual Northwest Anthropological Conference April 14th and 15th, 1961. Sessions were divided between archaeology and cultural theory. Those sessions devoted to archaeology and ethnology are listed:

Antiquities Legislation in the United States: Status and Trends
Gifford S. Nickerson, Seattle Pacific College

The Old Cordilleran Culture in the Pacific Northwest
B. Robert Butler, Idaho State College Museum

The Archaeology of Windust Cave
Harvey S. Rice, Washington State University

The Archaeology of Wilson Butte Cave, South Central Idaho
Ruth Gruhn, Idaho State College Museum

The Archaeology of Birch Creek, 1960
Earl H. Swanson, Idaho State College Museum

Preliminary Report on Archaeological Excavations at Brooks River,
Katmai National Monument, Alaska, in 1960
Don E. Dumond, University of Oregon

Petroglyphs of the Klamath Basin
B. K. Swartz, Jr., Klamath County Museum

A Report of Excavations in the John Day Dam Reservoir Area,
David L. Cole, Museum of Natural History, University of Oregon

Excavations at Site DjRi 3, Fraser Canyon, British Columbia
Charles E. Borden, University of British Columbia

A Preliminary Report on the Fishtown Site, 45Sk33
C. G. Nelson, Washington Archaeological Society

A Preliminary Report on the Snoqualmie River Site, 45Sn100
Delmar Nordquist, Washington Archaeological Society

An Evolutionary Model and Northwest Coast Culture History
Alan L. Bryan, Harvard University

Problems in the Interpretation of Marius Barbeau's Tsimshian Material
Wilson Duff, British Columbia Provincial Museum

System Change in Salish Kinship
William W. Elmendorf, Washington State University

Abstracts of the above papers will be published in this and succeeding issues of the Washington Archaeologist, subject to their availability.

The conference was a success on all points: the interchange of information on current work was remarkably complete; 'interaction' activities were at a tempo that only unlimited hospitality produces; and, attendance was high demonstrating the genuine interest of the participating institutions. It is very very encouraging to see some of the work being done in the 'northwest.' The work completed and planned in British Columbia is very impressive. Borden's work at Site DjRi 3 will undoubtedly be one of the landmarks of northwest archaeology. Idaho State College Museum is producing equally impressive work in their area and demonstrates the real value of a dynamic program. The University of Oregon's ten-year program has been fruitful and certainly has a bright prognosis. Washington State University will be working in eight separate areas during the current season including ethnographic work with the Nez Perce Indians. The Klamath County Museum under Swartz has

a research program under way including publications which shows that the 'small' museum without 'large' institutional support can make its contributions. These programs create a frame of reference for the work being done by the Society. By comparison our efforts are extremely modest. The encouraging aspect is that we can fill a need and with proper direction have a great potential: this is the challenge.

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A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE FISH TOWN SITE, 45 Sk33

In the early summer of 1959 the Washington Archaeological Society began limited excavations at the Fish Town Site. The site is located at the mouth of the North Fork of the Skagit River as it enters Skagit Bay. More, precisely, the site is in the Northeast quarter of Section 7, T33N, R3E, Skagit County, Washington. The site was originally reported by Alan L. Bryan in his thesis *An Intensive Archaeological Reconnaissance in the Northern Puget Sound Region*.

The site is divided into two major geographic areas. The low area of the site, El. 10, is adjacent to a small tidal flat north of Fish Town. The high area, El. 60-80, is on a ridge to the west. The excavations have been confined to a portion of the ridge. The ridge is an erosional feature formed by glacial action. The bed rock is a coarse conglomerate which is probably part of the Chuckanut Formation. The proximity of the bed rock to the surface suggests that this ridge and the two hills to the east were scoured to bed rock during glaciation. In almost every case the cultural deposits start at bed rock and end a few inches below the surface. Their depth ranges from 1 to 4 feet.

With respect to the work done on the ridge, approximately 40 squares, including test pits, have been excavated, which represents only a modest start on the site. To date 232 artifacts have been recovered: 51 stone, 95 bone, 85 shell and 1 wood. The distribution of the different types of artifacts suggests two cultural horizons. One area, El. 80, which is at the top of the ridge and some twenty feet higher than the first bench, El 60, is characterized by composite harpoon valves, chipped shell scrapers and a predominance of jade working tools. The 35 chipped shell scrapers made from the butter clam, *Sexidomus giganteus* Deshayes, are perhaps the most unusual group of artifacts recovered from this area and of the site. A detailed discussion of the chipped shell scrapers appeared in the February, 1961, issue of the *Washington Archaeologist*, Vol. V, No. 3, pp. 2-7. Faunal remains include a complete skeleton of a domestic dog which had been interred in the upper midden. The first bench representing the second cultural horizon has yielded both large and small fixed harpoons but no composite harpoon valves, shell spoon fragments, a variety of bone points, one chipped stone projectile point, two jade adze blades but no jade working tools, and dentalium beads in quantity while few have been recovered from the upper area. Feature I of the first bench area is a rock lined hearth on bed rock in T.P. 2 B.

The present plans call for a continuing program of excavations; completion of related field work, i.e., geological appraisal, mapping, identification of detritus materials, botanical estimate, soil analysis; continuing program of

related laboratory work including a review of the literature for comparative materials. This is to be followed by a published report.

C. G. Nelson
Washington Archaeological Society

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ANTIQUITIES LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES: STATUS AND TRENDS

In 1960 the Inter-Society Committee on Antiquities Legislation of the Washington Archaeological Society conducted a survey of current antiquity laws in the United States and several foreign countries. Out of this material a bill, S.B. 348, was drawn up and submitted to the Washington State Legislature, February 2, 1961, with the cooperation of both state universities. This bill died in committee at the end of the regular legislative session, but the results of the research are valuable in indicating both the status and trends of antiquities legislation in the United States today.

Out of the 50 states examined, 24 were found to lack laws specifically pertaining to prehistoric sites, objects and related materials. In fact, with the exception of New York State, there is a continuous "band" of states, from Maine to Colorado, without such legislation. Most of these states have laws relating to historic remains. Interestingly enough, Louisiana is under Napoleonic Law, apparently rendering such legislation unnecessary in that state.

Following the 1906 "Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities," state legislation was sporadic until the 1930's, when eleven states enacted antiquity laws. In the 1940's only two states passed legislation concerning prehistoric remains, but an obvious acceleration is evidenced in the period from 1951 to the present, during which eight antiquities acts have been made law.

Two trends are evident. One of these involves the tightening up of restrictions and the removing of loopholes in this type of legislation. The other concerns the increasing emphasis on educating the public to the necessity and value of systematic excavation and handling of prehistoric materials as an important, if not the only, means of reconstructing cultural history.

Gifford S. Nickerson
Washington Archaeological Society

Summary of lecture given by Dr. Alex D. Krieger:

SOME MAJOR PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Charles M. Nelson

At the April meeting of the Seattle Chapter of the Washington Archaeological Society Dr. Alex D. Krieger lectured on a variety of problems in New World archaeology including the relations between amateur and professional archaeologists, the problem of artifact typology and the peopling of the New World. In discussing amateur-professional relationships he stressed the important role amateurs can and have played in the recovery of archaeological materials.

Perhaps the most interesting portion of the lecture dealt with the acute problem of artifact typology. By means of simple comparison between contemporary ideas about the typology of artifacts and a pocket book of North American zoology, Dr. Krieger demonstrated the lack of unity among professional archaeologists on such points as the definition and significance of type. In the context he also pointed out how little is really known about the relationships between artifacts temporally and spatially. Many archaeologists, he asserted, are overly absorbed in the study of finite regions and fail to see the importance of comparing the artifacts they find with collections from outside the immediate prehistoric area. This lack of comparative programs is closely associated with present conflicting ideas about typology. To alleviate this problem, Dr. Krieger pointed out the conception of species which unites sciences like biology and botany, and suggested that a similar unit of classification would have to be introduced into New World archaeology.

A general discussion period followed the formal lecture which led into a stimulating examination of early man in the New World, in which Dr. Krieger outlined the probable pattern of prehistoric migration to the New World in relation to Pleistocene glaciation. When asked about the lack of archaeological evidence substantiating the theory of passage between Asia and North America in the vicinity of Bering Strait, he pointed out that archaeological work has been concentrated along the banks of major Alaskan rivers whose meanderings have probably obliterated all such evidence in their immediate areas, he also mentioned Pleistocene beach terraces in northern British Columbia which are presently as much as 1700 feet above sea level and recommends such areas as likely prospects for ambitious young archaeologists.

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Summary of lecture given by James M. Alexander:

THE APPLICATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY

The program for the November meeting of the Seattle Chapter was given by James M. Alexander of the University of Washington Anthropology Department on "The Application of Archaeological Theory." Mr. Alexander began by pointing out some of the reasons why a "working" knowledge of theoretical concepts is important, even for amateurs in the field. It was noted that this knowledge is especially pertinent for a group such as the W.A.S. which engages in work of professional quality.

Archaeology, per se, really has no theory uniquely its own; at least in the sense of theories of causation. Archaeology is, or consists of four kinds of things. It is, first of all, a method for recovering unwritten history. Secondly, it has developed a unique set of techniques to carry out its tasks, as well as borrowing freely from the techniques of many other disciplines. Thirdly, it is an analytic science in terms of descriptive analysis of data. And lastly, it is an analytic science in terms of interpretive analysis. But this last type of analysis is carried out according to the concepts and theories borrowed from other areas of anthropology, especially ethnology.

Several of the more commonly used of these concepts were pointed out and discussed. Diffusion, for instance, has been a most useful working theory for archaeologists. A basic distinction has to be made, however, between diffusion through trade and stimulus diffusion. Also, in dealing with borrowed items one must be careful to distinguish between form and function. Another idea given some consideration was the age-area concept. It was noted that a trait or complex may persist in an area for secondary reasons, even though the primary association has been lost. Therefore every trait should be analyzed in context as far as it is possible to do so.

A touch of local color was added at this point by giving some consideration to theories on Northwest culture history. It was noted that the W.A.S. has conducted digs in the interior, on the coast, and in the Cascade foothills. The kinds of comparative materials on hand, coupled with the wide varieties of personal experience and knowledge of the members of our organization should and could put the A.A.S. in a unique position to give some effective consideration to the aforementioned historical reconstructions. Among the more prominent of these theories worthy of testing would be such works as those by Drucker - on the origins of Northwest Coast culture, Ray - on the role of the Chinooks in linking Coast and Plateau cultures, and Smith - in postulating a unique foothill culture existing along the Cascades.

In another vein Mr. Alexander suggested keeping abreast of theories regarding the relationships between art forms and other aspects of culture, or psychological implications of art. The interpretation of Paleolithic art done by Levine is one example of this kind of theory.

In closing stress was again placed on the possible benefits to be gained within an organization such as the W.A.S. by the members being able to freely share their knowledge of local customs and history--much of which is not usually available to the professional archaeologist.

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