

THE BIRMINGHAM ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

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THE BIRMINGHAM INQUIRER

Our April 4th meeting was both well attended and well enjoyed. The main reason was a most interesting talk by our friend and fellow member, Mr. David L. De Jarnette. With the aid of some excellent slides he developed the theme of the place and use of archeological methods in research. His illustration was of the extensive "dig" at the Tanneville Furnaces. For two months of full time, Mr. De Jarnette and his associates measured, trenched, explored, and followed the traces and trails that this "dig" developed using typical archeological field methods. The results of this detective operation on a pre War Between The States trio of furnaces, with its many artifacts and old methods and operations brought to light, were both fascinating and enlightening. Member speakers, Mr. Martin Hullender and Mr. Randolph Grey, followed the main program with brief and well developed vignettes on Indian Religion.

Edmund Wilson, author of THE SCROLLS from THE DEAD SEA, now comes up with a new book, RED, BLACK, BLOND, AND OLIVE. RED is the ZUNI INDIANS, a society virtually unchanged for four centuries; BLACK, HAITI, struggling for progress against a tradition of poverty, illiteracy, and rank superstition; BLOND, a first hand report on RUSSIA just before the IRON CURTAIN descended; finally, the paradox of ISRAEL, a modern republic with a Biblical heritage, which must battle both internal dissent and external enemies.

The high cost of "living and giving" has hit a new high in Hollywood, where anything that is not costly is "no go". Whereas the ancient Indian could make a tepee with a few skins and the labor of a couple of squaws, Mr. Disney says that it cost \$35,000.00 to build thirty five authentic tepees for the epic, "WESTWARD, HO THE WAGONS". It is reported that the \$1,000 tepees have the same conveniences that the earlier ones had, namely, western exposure, central heating system--fire-place-- that is, mountain view, and running water in a nearby stream, (outside).

Time was, two hundred years ago, or less, a fellow could have bought a complete tribe, squaws, papooses, and dogs, all thrown in, for that amount of money plus a little firewater and a few trade beads.

Columbia University has recently acquired a Bible which is written in the ALGONQUIN language which was that of the MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY INDIANS.

An Indian petitioned a judge of an Arizona court to give him a shorter name.

"What is your name, now," asked the judge.

"CHIEF SCREECHING TRAIN WHISTLE," answered the Indian.

"And to what do you wish to shorten it?" asked the judge.

The chief folded his arms majestically, and grunted, "TOOT, TOOT."

Spring is bursting out all over. So are the poets. Janet Wuehrmann, one of the most enthusiastic and faithful of our junior members (age 10) came through for this issue with the following:

ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is a study of Indian bones
About pottery that looks like stones
At some sites arrowheads are found
Really those Indians knew how to pound.

It's a study of what Indians used to do
Of what they ate and what they grew
About their customs and their rites
And the outcome of their fights.

But through this study we can see
What this world has come to be
And we can hope come what may
That we will be as smart as they.

Janet Wuehrmann

Another of our members (not the Editor) came up with the following ditty:

I've read Byron, Shelley, and Keats,
But since I've read Josselyn,
I t'ink I queetz.

A country weekly editor in a rural North Carolina community called at the home of Uncle John Reynolds, the county's oldest resident to interview him on the occasion of his 102nd birthday. He asked the usual question:

"To what do you attribute your great age?"

"It's very simple," said Uncle John. "I've been taking vitamins pills since I was 99."

(Gastonia (N.C.) Gazette)

How the Olmecas, a tribe of Mexican Indians, moved heavy objects over a great distance, is one of the puzzles archaeologists are trying to solve, Jalapa reports.

The question was raised with the recent discovery in the Mexican states of Tabasco and Vear Cruz of giant heads of stone, finely sculptered and polished. They vary in height from five and one-half to ten feet and are considered the most artistic sculptures of the Olmecas.

Some scientists say they were carved before the Christian era, others guess the second century A.D. The basalt from which the heads are made came from two sources, both many miles from where the heads were discovered.

MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY OFFICERS

President ----- Brittain Thompson 3609 Montrose Road TR 1-0698
Vice President ----- Floyd R. Taylor 2331 33rd Avenue No.
Secretary & Treasurer -- Martin F. Hullender 202 18th Way SW 58-8900

Meetings: First Friday every month, 7:30 P.M., Birmingham Public Library,
3rd Floor, Art Room, unless otherwise announced.

May 4th: Guest Speaker - Dr. Carl Sensenig, Professor of Anatomy
University of Alabama

Subject: - "Story of Evolution"

Dr. Sensenig received his BS in Biology from University of Iowa, and his PHD in Anatomy at the University of Michigan. He is a member of The American Association of Anatomists, and The American Association of Physical Anthropology.

Member Speaker - Floyd Taylor

Subject: - "Indian Foods"

June 1st: Guest Speaker - Dr. Lewis Larsen, Professor of Archaeology,
University of Georgia

Subject: - "Yucatan"

Member Speaker - Mr. Sam Shannon, Jr.

Subject: - "Indian Law"

July 6th: Guest Speaker - Dr. James McCabe

Subject: - "Visual Determination of Age Through Teeth"

We are very pleased to tell our members that there appears to be a good possibility that Dr. Carl Miller, Archeologist for the Smithsonian Institute, who is now doing work in Russel Cave in North Alabama, will find a space in his schedule to permit him to appear before our members and tell us of his activities. If necessary, we will arrange a special meeting.

OUR CHILDREN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Saturday, May 5th, is the day (if it does not rain) we will make our field trip. This will be a picnic affair and we feel that the children will, as usual, provide a happy day for the grownups who act as drivers. Volunteers for driving are asked to call either Mr. Simon Jones, TR1-2654, or Mr. Brittain Thompson, TR1-0698, We will meet at 9:15 A.M., corner of Route 31 and Oxmoor Road.

On the 6th day of April, Dr and Mrs. Harry Wheeler opened both the doors of their school and their hearts and were host to some forty five children and adults. We were aware that his collection of geological material was the most outstanding in this area and he made not only the whole of it available to view, but also a wide variety of his Indian Artifacts. This is the cream of a full life of discriminating collecting and contains both beautiful and unusual specimens. Prizes of geologic material were given to some of the children. The adults have promised themselves a return trip. Our warmest appreciation and thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Wheeler.

"Excavating Is Fun" was the dual title and the way Junior Member Randolph Grey got one first and one honorable mention at the Alabama Junior Academy of Science Convention. This convention, held at the Alabama College at Montavallo on March 30 and 31, was open to all members of science clubs throughout the entire state. The fields covered were Geology, Chemistry, Industrial Science, and Biology. Randolph chose for his exhibit the first two of these fields. One section of his project explained Indian culture from Paleo Man to the present, and the second section covered archeological methods, analysis, and excavating. His exhibit, about twelve by four feet on a table with posters, artifacts, sketches and explanations, was the outstanding, first prize getting one. The paper that he gave with the same title won only an honorable mention for the simple reason that the rules permitted only one first to any exhibitor. We are most proud of Randy.

A Science Fair at Howard College on the 27th and 28th of April is open to any student. We are betting on Randolph, the President of the West Endventors, the West End High School Science Club.

A suggested field for research which has had only desultory treatment is the collecting of the speeches and pungent sayings of the Indians. One of their greatest orators, wise, dignified, and eloquent was Red Jacket the Seneca, who was a contemporary of our country's fathers. He had two Indian names, Sagoyewatha, which means "He keeps them awake" and Otetiana, "always ready". Few whites or red men slept when he spoke. This chief, gifted with the ability to see the white's superiority, was always ready to resist any attempt to take away the lands of his people or to mould them in the pattern of the Yankee. His name, Red Jacket, derived from his first red jacket, the gift of an English officer. His scarlet coat became his badge. It is told that at a treaty council of the Iroquois he placed two logs before all the chiefs, one he filled with nine Indians and one white, the other with nine whites and one Indian. In this graphic way did he illustrate the changed status of his people after the "Whirlwind", as the Senecas called the Revolution. He then stood before his people and told the future as he alone seemed to see it, "We stand as a small island in the midst of great waters. The wild spirit rides upon the blast and the waters are disturbed. They rise, they press upon us, and the waves are settled over us.....and we disappear forever".

There are many illustrations of this Chief's declamatory ability, but there is little that would illustrate his basic philosophy more clearly than these two brief examples--- Red Jacket rebuffed the religion of the "Black Coats". When one tried to convert him by telling the story of the Crucifixion, he listened and then quietly said; "Brother, if you white people murdered the Savior, make it up yourselves. We Indians had nothing to do with it." The other well authenticated story of this Demosthenes of the Senecas concerns his briefest speech. He was traveling in the area of the Genesees and had been invited by a friend to go on a little trip. On the Niagara River he observed a bridge being built to Goat Island. Sadly he realized that his people could never cope with the ingenuity and enterprise of the whites, and he uttered two words that years later thousands in war torn Dixie were to echo, "Damn Yankees". For simplicity, imagery, and strength in prose, there are few sources that present as rewarding an area for study as that of our American Indians.

"One thing only I know -- the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

- Albert Schweitzer