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Society for American Archaeology

New Affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science

THE formal existence of the Society for American Archaeology began on December 28, 1934, when an organizational meeting following the annual dinner of Section H of the AAAS accepted a proposed constitution and elected a slate of officers. The institutional predecessor of the Society was the Committee on State Archaeological Surveys, created in 1921 by the National Research Council and later given financial aid by the Carnegie Corporation. Formation of the Society was the outgrowth of a need for better communication among archaeologists working in the Americas and for an effective method of informing the public of the unique character and scientific value of archaeological sites in order to prevent irresponsible destruction of the materials. Provision was made in the original constitution for a quarterly journal, annual meetings, and establishment of regional divisions. The objectives of the Society are set forth in Article II of the constitution:

Section 1. The objects of the Society shall be to promote and to stimulate interest and research in the archaeology of the American continents; to encourage a more rational public appreciation of the aims and limitations of archaeological research; to serve as a bond among those interested in American Archaeology, both professionals and non-professionals, and to aid in directing their efforts into more scientific channels; to publish and to encourage the publication of their results; to foster the formation and welfare of local archaeological societies; to advocate and to aid in the conservation of archaeological data; and to discourage commercialism in the archaeological field and to work for its elimination.

Section 2. The practice of collecting, hoarding, exchanging, buying or selling archaeological materials for the sole purpose of personal satisfaction or financial gain, and the indiscriminate excavation of archaeological sites are declared contrary to the ideals and objects of the Society.

A most important regular activity of the Society is the publication of *American Antiquity*, a quarterly journal devoted to technical articles, book reviews, and notes on American archaeology. Memoirs of the Society are issued at irregular intervals; nine have been

published at the present time. Annual meetings are held in May of each year. The constantly growing number of papers submitted for presentation has led in recent years to a three-day session. Special meetings are frequently held in conjunction with other scientific meetings such as those of the AAAS and the American Anthropological Association. Another annual activity is the nomination of a recipient for the Viking Fund Medal and Award for Archaeology; this award is presented yearly by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc. on the recommendation of the Society.

Several individual projects have been carried on from time to time as a result of special problems that have arisen. An example is the appointment of a Planning Committee in 1944 for the purpose of appraising the status of the unpublished materials accumulated by the many archaeological projects carried on by various relief agencies and making appropriate recommendations leading to their utilization. Subsequent establishment of the Smithsonian River Basin Surveys proved to be a satisfactory solution, and the Committee was dismissed.

Officers of the Society are: pres., Gordon F. Ekholm, associate curator of archaeology, American Museum of Natural History; 1st v. pres., George I. Quimby, Jr., curator of exhibits, Department of Anthropology, Chicago Natural History Museum; 2nd v. pres., Isabel Kelly, Reforma 34, Mexico, D.F., Mexico; sec., James B. Griffin, director, Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan; treas., Richard B. Woodbury, associate professor of anthropology, Columbia University; editor, Jesse D. Jennings, professor of anthropology, University of Utah. The representative to the AAAS Council is Douglas S. Byers, Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.

Membership in the Society as of April 18, 1953, included 224 institutional members and 901 individual members.

ALBERT SPAULDING
Society for American Archaeology

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