

STATE—Cloudy, chance of rain to-night, low in 50s. Partly cloudy Thursday, high in 70s.

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Without, or With, Offense to Friends or Foes, I Sketch Your World Exactly as It Goes

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BOONE MAN'S COLLECTION UNIQUE

Strip Mines Yield Artifacts

By ROBERT KELLY
Of The Daily Mail Staff

During the 1950s, a Boone County man followed strip mining bulldozers wherever they went.

David Turner, 62, was digging, but he wasn't interested in coal.

At his home in Madison, the fruits of his labor are neatly displayed in clear plastic cases. He could charge admission to his museum. The collection consists of 3,000 Indian artifacts, many of which were buried for 10,000 years.

"It's a good collection . . . an important one," said Daniel Fowler of the W.Va. Geological and Economic Survey.

"Until Turner's time, there hadn't been a lot of digging in mountainous areas. Now, in a few other states, people are beginning to pick up the search in what we ordinarily would have thought wouldn't have been habitable country," Fowler said.

Turner has found a few celts, some mashing implements fashioned from granite, pottery pieces and a circular stone with a hole in the middle, once part of an Indian game. However, most of his prizes are what laymen would term "arrow-heads." Archaeologists refer to the small, chiseled pieces of flint as "projectile points," because they pre-date the bow and arrow by several thousand years.

Persons who roamed Boone County thousands of years ago lashed projectile points to shafts and launched them with a spear-throwing device much like a sling.

Fowler said it is likely that early Indians wandered along the New and Kanawha River basins, making random forays along Boone County ridgetops, where they left evidence of their presence at water holes that have long since vanished.

Turner's collection includes points identical to those found during construction of the John Amos power plant in Putnam County. Known as the Amos Notched Corner type, these were used between 6980 B.C. and 7900 B.C.

The bulk of Turner's collection is the (Turn to Pg. 8A, Col. 2)



ANCIENT CELT IS ATTACHED TO HANDLE HEWN BY COLLECTOR David Turner, Of Madison, Collects Indian Relics

—Daily Mail Photos by William Tiernan



BLUNT MASHING TOOL AND GROOVED AX, LEFT, CONTRAST WITH DELICATE ARTISTRY OF PROJECTILE POINT



8A Charleston Daily Mail WED., JULY 7, 1976



INDIAN ARTIFACTS — David Turner displays approximately a fifth of the collection he has acquired by following ancient Indian trails in Boone County.

ARTIFACTS

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Kanawha Stemmed type. Carbon dating establishes the period at 6210 B.C.

"Some days you can dig all day and not find one," said Turner, whose hobby has spanned 50 years.

Not until strip mines uncovered the mountaintops did finds become plentiful, he said. "I dug about five or six years in the James Creek area and found 630."

A trowel, screen sifter, plenty of elbow grease and access to a strip mine site are the ingredients of a successful search. "And my wife Estelle tells me that you don't have to be crazy, but it helps," Turner said.

The former miner has given away hundreds of projectile points — mostly to schools and relatives.

Surveying the expanse of flint on his kitchen table, he said, "This has no value monetarily. But there is value in the knowledge that is gained by it."

Fowler, a professional, labels Turner "a darned good amateur archaeologist." Each object in Turner's collection is coded and matched to precise documented observations of the collector as to where it was found.

Turner abides by a rule which may seem peculiar to professionals. If he didn't, his collection probably would be much larger.

"I've never dug a mound. It's against my principles," he said. "Because there are remains there, the mounds should be controlled like a cemetery. I'd like to see a law passed."