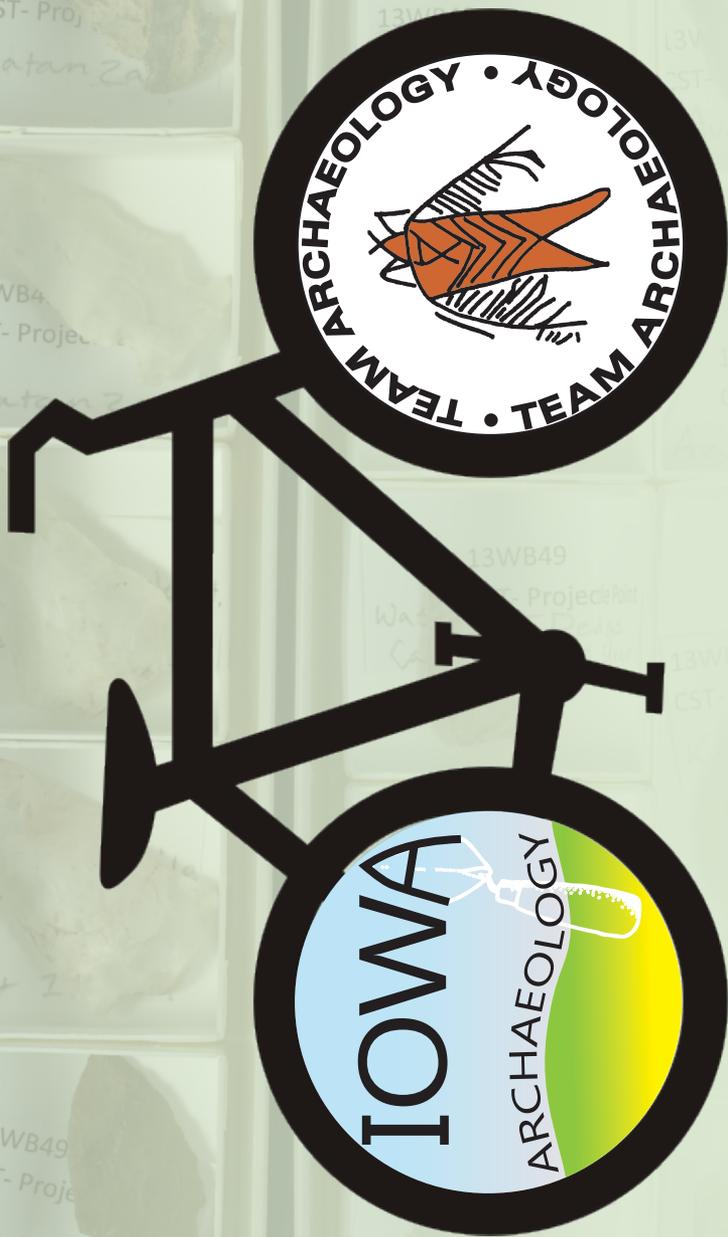


JULY 21-28, 2012



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ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE ROAD



TEAM ARCHAEOLOGY OUTREACH BOOTHS:

- Expo at Sioux Center (July 21)
- Clemens on Day 4 (July 25)
- Vinton/Shellsburg on Day 5 (July 26)

WELCOME TO ANOTHER SEASON OF ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE ROAD!

The University of Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) is delighted to welcome RAGBRAI riders to Iowa and we're pleased to share a few details of our fascinating past as you ride across the state. We hope this booklet enhances your enjoyment and helps you learn something new each day of your ride, from the ancient site at Cherokee to the late 1800s lost town site of Bowen's Prairie. Let us know if you have questions or comments!

» John Doershuk, State Archaeologist

TO CONTINUE OUR CELEBRATION OF IOWA ARCHAEOLOGY 2012, JOIN US AT THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

Additional information on event times and locations at:

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/teamarcho.html>

AUGUST 4—HOOVER HOMETOWN DAYS (WEST BRANCH)

AUGUST 9–11—MESKWAKI POWWOW (MESKWAKI SETTLEMENT, TAMA)

SEPTEMBER 7–9—LAKESIDE LAB WEEKEND (MILFORD)

- "10,000 Years of Living on the Lake: The Archaeology and Landscape of the Iowa Great Lakes Region"

SEPTEMBER 15—PINE CREEK GRIST MILL HERITAGE FESTIVAL (MUSCATINE)



THE CHEROKEE SEWER SITE

The Cherokee Sewer Site (13CK405) at the south end of the town of Cherokee, Iowa, is the oldest extensively excavated archaeological site in the state. In the early 1970s, construction of a new sewage treatment plant prompted an investigation which revealed layered deposits containing a series of ancient campgrounds within an alluvial fan in the valley of the Little Sioux River. Work conducted by an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists, soil scientists, geologists, paleontologists, and paleobotanists demonstrated that small bands of Native Americans, perhaps 15-30 in a group, camped at this location between 9500

and 7000 years ago. Here families butchered and processed bison—extracting the nutritious bone marrow and grease—prepared and sewed hides, and manufactured bone and stone tools including the weapons used in hunting bison ambushed and killed not far from the site. Later occupants left behind one of the oldest musical instruments ever found in North America, a bone flute made from a swan bone.



OCTOBER 12–14—NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY “DAY” (UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, IOWA CITY)

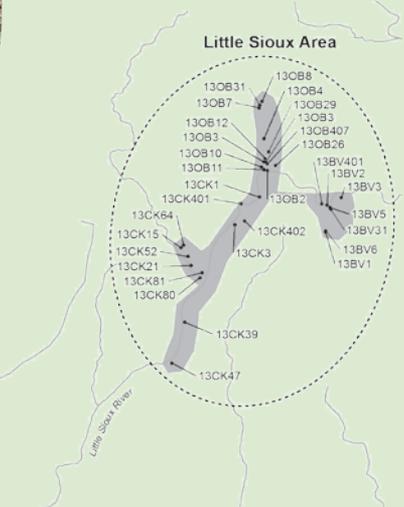
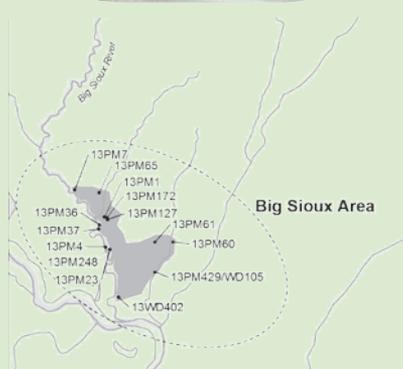
- Public lectures by visiting archaeologists
- Lab and Repository tours at OSA, Museum of Natural History, Departments of Classics and Anthropology
- Tent exhibit outside Museum of Natural History, atlatl dart throwing, flint-knapping demonstrations, and interactive Native American children’s games.
- Johnson County Historical Society Museum:
 - » Gilbert’s Trading Post exhibit and presentation on new UI research at the Patterson Trading Post (Iowa County); local Hurt Artifact Collection display and presentation on artifact care; tour/open house at Plum Grove; interactive tour of the Oakdale Cemetery.



MILL CREEK CULTURE

Some of the earliest Plains Indian villages appeared in northwest Iowa between A.D. 1100 and 1250. Although the specific Indian groups or tribes who created them remain a mystery, these communities, situated along the Big and Little Sioux rivers and their tributaries, are known by the name of Mill Creek. Each village is composed of tightly spaced, rectangular earth-and-timber lodges aligned in rows, often with an encircling wooden palisade and ditch. Excavations reveal the presence of abundant storage pits—mini root cellars—and an enormous variety of artifacts and other material items. Bone digging implements, garden plots, and botanical evidence show that maize (corn)-based farming was important but wild plants were also eaten and had medicinal, ceremonial, building, decorative, and utilitarian purposes. Animal bone and hundreds of bone and stone tools testify to hunting, trapping, and fishing. Most of the four ceramic wares are of local clays and are types shared with contemporary sites in eastern South Dakota and southwest Minnesota. Some vessels, however, indicate copies or actual trade pieces derived from communities hundreds of miles away including the metropolis of Cahokia on the Mississippi River near modern St. Louis. In Iowa, of the 48 known Mill Creek sites, 26 occur along the Little Sioux River and its tributaries, in Buena Vista, Cherokee, and O'Brien counties. Archaeologists have

investigated two of the deeply stratified Mill Creek sites near the town of Cherokee, the Phipps (13CK21) and Brewster (13CK15) sites.



BREWSTER SITE

Three miles north of Cherokee, the Brewster Site (13CK15) occupies high ground adjacent to Mill Creek, the name chosen for the cultural group to which the site belongs (see Day 2 article on Mill Creek Culture). Even after years of erosion, cultivation, and periodic surface collection of artifacts, archaeology at the site in 1970 produced a wealth of information about the diet and the material culture of Mill Creek peoples.

The six-foot deep deposits at Brewster allowed archaeologists to trace changes in pottery styles and hunting over the decades people lived at the site. These studies suggest that the site was not occupied as long as the scientists once thought. Overall, the site confirmed that Mill Creek largely represents a local, grass-roots development.



DAVID CARLSON, LASTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO IOWA ARCHAEOLOGY

After 40 years of combing the valleys and glacial lakes of Webster and Hamilton counties, David Carlson of Otho, Iowa, magnanimously donated his meticulously documented archaeological collections from over 80 sites to the state collections maintained at the Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa. Not only did Dave record his sites in the official Iowa Site File, he kept his collections in superb order—curating them by site number, using the Smithsonian trinomial system, and labeling the more diagnostic items. Because of his methodical care, Dave's collections of more than 60,000 items are invaluable to the research on north central Iowa prehistory. He is shown here with State Archaeologist, John Doershuk.



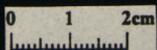


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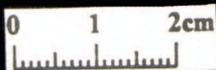
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Catlinite pipes

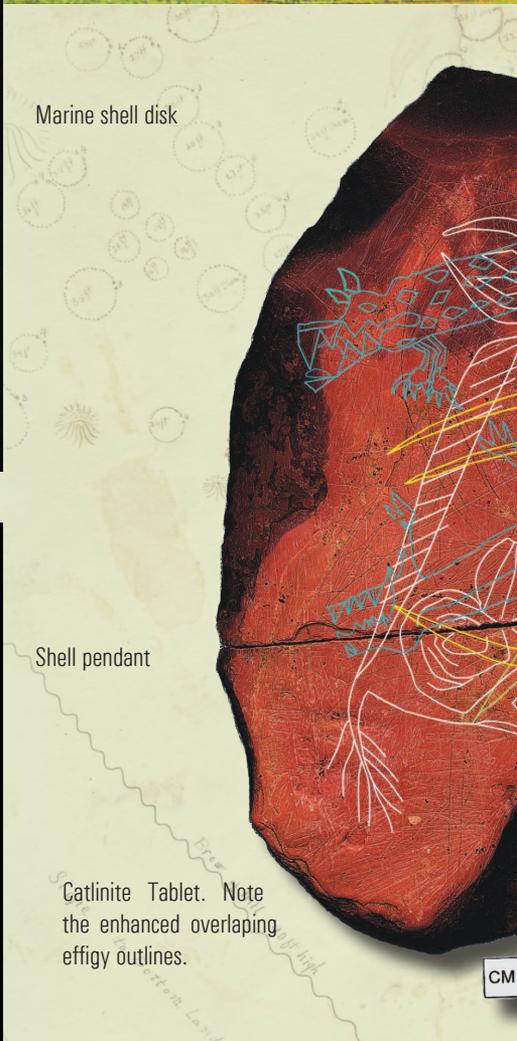


Marine shell disk



Shell pendant

Catlinite Tablet. Note the enhanced overlapping effigy outlines.



CM



BLOOD RUN

The Blood Run site is located on the eastern bank of the Big Sioux River in Lyon County about 31 miles northwest of Sioux Center. Named for Blood Run Creek, the site was home to numerous prehistoric and protohistoric groups. Most notably it is the largest known and most complex site of the late prehistoric Oneota tradition. Euroamerican recognition of the site can be traced to the 1860s. Just over 100 years later, the site was evaluated for National Historic Landmark status because of its extraordinary archaeological record and the immense history it tracks over 8000 years. Numerous earthen mounds and enclosures, enigmatic pitted boulders, and rock circles dotted the landscape. Below the ground is an astonishingly well-preserved archaeological record that reflects changes in village social organization, diet, economic patterns, trade, and ceremonial practices in the form of ceramic, stone, bone, antler, shell, and metal items, food remains, and numerous elaborately decorated catlinite pipes and the byproducts of their manufacture. National Historic Landmark status was bestowed on Blood Run by The Department of the Interior in 1970.

BLOOD RUN



MILDRED MOTT WEDEL

Mildred Mott Wedel, born in Marengo, Iowa, was one of the first professionally trained female archaeologists in the country. Best known for her efforts to link historic Iowa tribes with archaeological cultures, Mildred became a renowned scholar. Perhaps inspired by her father, Luther Mott, Professor and Director of the School of Journalism at the University of Iowa, Mildred seemed destined for a career in academia. She majored in history at the University of Iowa, and in 1934 headed to graduate school at the University of Chicago to study anthropology, the first woman there to receive a fellowship in that field.



In the summer of 1938, Mildred served as field director for an archaeological excavation near Webster City supervised by Charles R. Keyes, a founding figure in Iowa archaeology. The project, financed by MacKinlay Kantor, Iowa's Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and author of *Andersonville* and *Spirit Lake*, investigated the Willson Mound Group (13HM1) and the Humble Village Site (13HM2), both Woodland tradition sites in Hamilton County.

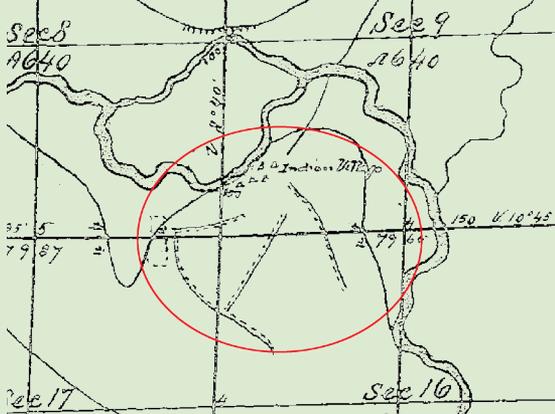
MARSHALLTOWN TROWELS

Just about every archaeologist in this country owns at least one. The Marshalltown Company, based in Marshalltown, Iowa, has been manufacturing trowels since 1890. Marshalltown trowels are a preferred trowel for archaeological excavation because of their flat base, sturdy construction, and ease of resharpening.



THE MESKWAKI VILLAGE

The location of the 1846 Meskwaki Village is just northwest of the current Meskwaki Settlement in sections 9 and 17, T83N-R16W (Indian Village Township). The first written account of this village comes from the General Land Office (GLO) surveyor. When mapped, Indian settlements are depicted as “teepee” shapes. The quantity of teepees does not correlate to the actual number of wickiups present; the surveyor just mapped as many teepees as he thought reflected the population or size of the settlement. The “Indian Village” was mapped in October and November, 1846 with Samuel W. Durham was the lead surveyor.



DIG AT WICKIUP HILL OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTER, LINN COUNTY

More than 30 Iowa Archeological Society members participated in a two week-long archaeological investigation at Wickiup Hill during the summer of 2011. Site 13LN85, which previously yielded evidence in the form of pot sherds and stone spear points, was further sampled with an emphasis placed on determining if a village had ever existed at this location. The participants, young and old, learned how to record archaeological data in systematic fashion. Careful excavation and recording of the soil layers and artifact associations revealed that the site area was a favorite place for small camps rather than one large long-term occupation. These briefly occupied camps were probably created and used by American Indian ancestors from differing cultures through time.



Matanzas point
from 13LN85
Wickiup Hill.

Iowa Archeological Society member Fred Gee
contemplating soil stratigraphy at 13LN85 Wickiup Hill.



FLOOD RECOVERY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN CEDAR RAPIDS

Disastrous floods over the past decade have impacted archaeological sites along many of Iowa's waterways including the Cedar River in Linn County, Iowa. Bear Creek Archeology recently conducted test excavations in backyard trash deposits of the former Bohemian neighborhood of Cedar Rapids where a new river levee will be built. One excavation area is directly across the river from the RAGBRAI campground.

Site 13LN1034: a privy pit (outhouse) excavation beneath the concrete City parking lot.



Test Units 1 and 5 profile: This 2.5 m deep test unit was excavated beneath the temporary City Bus Terminal parking lot and exposed a prehistoric campsite dating to the Early Archaic period (ca. 9500 years ago).

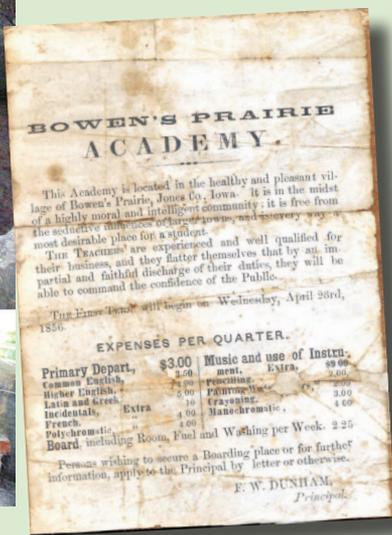
Another example of urban archaeology, not flood-related, was that conducted by Tallgrass Historians, LC. Monitoring of the U.S. Courthouse preconstruction activities in Cedar Rapids resulted in the discovery of four unrecorded archaeological sites in areas previously tested with ground-penetrating radar. A limestone house foundation (13LN915) and a brick cistern/well (13LN916) were considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Cindy Nagel and Adam Meseke in the process of uncovering the foundation.



An uncovered cistern, subsequently back-filled, is currently under the parking lot.



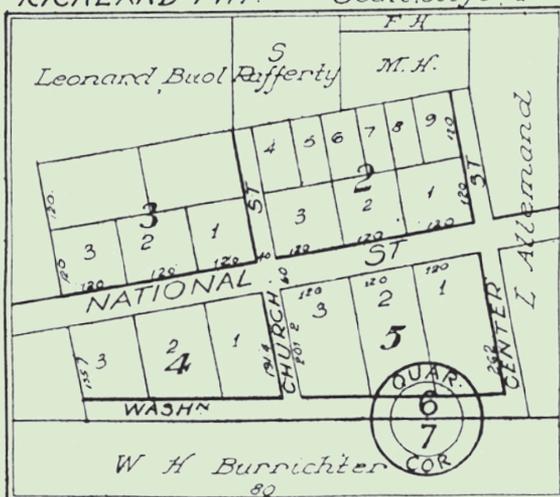
Upper: brick cistern of the Bowen's Prairie Academy building exposed during archaeological excavations. Upper right: advertisement of the Bowen's Prairie Academy from the 1850s.

THE BURIED PIONEER TOWN OF BOWEN'S PRAIRIE

Located 15 miles north of Anamosa along the Old Military Road, the pioneer community of Bowen's Prairie was established by 1836, or 10 years before Iowa Statehood. Much of what we now know about this community was gained from archaeological excavations and research conducted by the OSA in 2001. The village had a large Congregationalist population who immigrated from New Hampshire and Vermont. Located along the important Military Road, the town blossomed for only a few years. It failed to secure a railroad link, and most inhabitants moved on. By 1870, there were probably about 10 houses left in town. Today, most of the town lies under the four-lane highway U.S. 151. The Bowen's Prairie Cemetery remains preserved, next to the road.

BOWEN'S PRAIRIE

RICHLAND TWP Scale: 300ft. = 1".



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Association of Iowa Archaeologists

www.uiowa.edu/~osa/aia



www.iowahistory.org



www.earthviewenvironmental.com

HUMAN AND NATURAL HISTORY PARTNERS

The Office of the State Archaeologist is pleased to once again partner on this year's outreach with the IDNR-Geological and Water Survey and the U.S. Geological Survey, creating the "Human and Natural History Partners." This partnership begins at Expo and continues at select locations throughout the week's ride. Our groups have been doing similar educational outreach along the route for the past several years. Because we share this common venue and common goals for bringing information to the public, we decided to join forces. So keep a lookout for us at Expo, on the ride, in the campgrounds, and along the route!



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Booklet designed and edited by Angela R. Collins and Lynn M. Alex of the OSA. Additional booklet contributions from Cynthia Peterson, David Benn, Leah Rogers, and John Doershuk.