

# profile

Newsletter: Toronto Chapter Ontario Archaeological Society  
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## UPCOMING SPEAKERS

All talks are in room 246, 19 Russell Street, and begin at 7:30pm. University of Toronto.

September 16, Dr. Jock McAndrews, University of Toronto, "Did a Comet Kill Clovis?"

October 21, "Diet and Food Economy at the Western Basin Krieger Site,"

Christopher M. Watts  
Rebanks Postdoctoral Fellow,  
Department of World Cultures, Royal Ontario Museum

November 18, Michael Chazen, U of T, on the new U of T Archaeology Centre.

## 2010

January 20, Members Night

February 17, Ron Williamson, ASI, on the Don Jail Project.

March 17, Steven Cox Thomas will be talking about some of his projects analyzing faunal remains on Ontario archaeological sites.

April 21, Rudy Fecteau, on Botanical Remains

May 19, TBA

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sylvia Teaves  
President, Toronto Chapter

This has been a fairly busy summer for the Chapter. Thanks to our growing relationship with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) members have had opportunities to engage in a number of fun archaeological events (see separate message from the Vice President).



Norma Hall and Sylvia Teaves excavating at Cupids, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. This was the first English settlement in Canada founded in 1610 by John Guy. (Photo provided by Norma Knowlton).

We have started our arrangement with the OAS parent body to do the mail-outs of Arch Notes which is resulting in the addition of some welcome funds to our Chapter coffers. We will be using these funds to support a party for members at Christmas.

We have a great line-up of speakers for the fall, so check out the list elsewhere in this issue. **I would also encourage members to attend the OAS Symposium, which this year is being held in Waterloo on October 16-18.** From our experiences hosting this event last fall, we appreciate the amount of work involved, so let's support the folks in Waterloo in appreciation for all their efforts.

The next issue of Profile will include a call for nominations for our Chapter Executive. After essentially three and a half years at the helm, I feel it is time for a new President with new energy and ideas. I will therefore not be running again in 2010. This is a good time to start thinking about whether you can give some time to the Chapter by running for a position on the Executive.

I hope you all had a good summer and looking forward to seeing you at our Chapter meetings in the fall.

### **TRCA Public Archaeology and Education Events**

#### **Janice Teichroeb**

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has hosted a number of events this past spring and summer focused on education and raising the profile of Archeology in Ontario. At all of our events we promote activities that will appeal equally to children, teens and adults, giving them an appreciation for the importance of preserving our collective heritage. At the March Break event at Black Creek Pioneer Village younger kids were enthralled with the TOAS dig boxes as well as the fur and skull tables while teens and adults were surprised to learn that the artifacts on display were all found within the Greater Toronto Area.

Doors Open held at Black Creek Pioneer Village in May provided both the TRCA and the Toronto Chapter of the OAS an opportunity to display and promote Archaeology in Ontario. While the Toronto Chapter hosted Archaeology Day on Sunday May 24, the TRCA hosted their own display on Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Close to 10,000 people visited the village over the two days, and judging by the constant flow of people who wandered by the OAS display I'm pretty sure every one of them stopped by to chat about Archaeology!



(Photo provided by Janice Teichroeb)

The inaugural Claremont Archaeology Festival, held on the first weekend in June, was a vibrant mix of Archaeology and Heritage displays. On Saturday, 16 members of the Pickering Historical Society spent the day enthusiastically excavating the Historic Graham House site. Sunday activities were geared to the general public and the big draw was the opportunity to dig on a real archaeological site.

The site was fully booked for the entire day and everyone I spoke with was thrilled with their discoveries – even if they were just rusty nails and bits of broken ceramics! Events in the festival courtyard included Aboriginal story telling, blacksmithing, pioneer displays, Aboriginal craft displays, heritage musicians and more. A horse and carriage ride between the archaeological site and the festival courtyard was a welcome rest for weary diggers. The Toronto chapter display and pottery reconstruction table was a popular activity – especially for those awaiting their turn to dig. Many thanks to Sylvia, Norma Hall, and Annie for participating.

The TOAS Dig Boxes have proven to be a very popular activity for school aged children at OAS and TRCA sponsored events. The TRCA would like to thank the chapter for the use of the boxes for a number of public archaeology events this year including the March Break and Doors Open programs at Black Creek Pioneer Village, the Claremont Archaeology Festival, the King Museum Kid's Fest and Summer Camp program, plus the Cold Creek Conservation Area Humber River event. An upcoming event celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Humber as a Canadian Heritage River will provide yet another opportunity to showcase Ontario archaeology and give kids some hands-on digging experience.

The Archaeology staff at the TRCA have just returned from a very successful three weeks at the Boyd Archaeological Field School. Thirty-four high-school students attended the course this year held at the Claremont Field Centre. In addition to learning about the culture history of Ontario, the students spent every other day excavating at the Graham House site. I loved the comment from one student at the end of their first day in the field who stated "I can't believe we're working on a real archaeological site, I thought you guys were planting the stuff for us to find." Units excavated this year were centered on the foundation stones revealed during the 2008 field school excavation. Last year the stone cluster was interpreted as the corner of the 19<sup>th</sup> century home of local blacksmith George Graham and his family. Excavation in adjacent squares this field season presented more questions than answers. So typical! The foundation stones did not continue where expected, and conversely, the entire circumference of a well appeared instead. Unexpectedly, hundreds of horseshoe nails were recovered in an area that was anticipated to be the house interior and leftover ends of iron bar

stock, the raw material used by blacksmiths, was found scattered across the site, even though historical records indicate Graham's blacksmith shop was located across the street. In addition, like so many other Historic sites in the GTA an Aboriginal component was identified. A fabulous, intact Netling point dating to the Early Archaic (ca. 9000 BP) was recovered from one of the student units (but sadly no other Aboriginal artifacts or features were encountered). It appears that the Graham House site may in fact be the Graham Shed site, or perhaps the Early Graham Forge site. At any rate, since we have excavated up to the fence line, next year could mean searching for the house – my guess is that it's located in the middle of the densest brush on the property. Any wagers?

**Any chapter members interested in doing a day of fieldwork this fall (date to be determined) at the Graham House site should get their trowel sharpened! Trowelling, mapping, and investigating features will be the main activities. Contact TRCA Archaeology at (416) 661-6600 ext. 6406 for more information.**

### **New Exhibition at the Buffalo Museum of Science**

**Mima Kapches**

The Buffalo Museum of Science has opened a new exhibition called "Digging into Western New York's Past"(Fig. 1).



Profile

Figure 1. Entrance to display hall.

The main focus of the exhibit is the Hiscock site which has been excavated under the direction of Dr. Dick Laub for over 25 years. I had wanted to see it with the hope that the fluted points would be displayed, more on that below.

The exhibit was in a hall with cases along the walls, each case was filled with information about the site. The cases were well done and clearly explained the process of excavation and the difficulties of excavating such a wet site were clearly illustrated with the many photographs. (I think that Howard Savage was in one of the photographs, but it was his back only so the identification is not 100%).

One case showed the Mastadon Tusks found at the site (the largest one was not displayed). There was an interesting discussion and examples of chin tusks (Figure 2). Chins tusks are thought to be from adolescent males who would have lost them while roughhousing with other males as they grew up.



Figure 2 Mastadon Tusks (Chin Tusks are in lower left corner).

There was one case on the pre-history of Western New York from the historic period to the Native past. There were also cases outlining the environmental changes and floral and faunal changes since the Ice Age. Finally there was a case with some of the artifacts from Hiscock

(Figure 3). This had some bone tools and photographs of the fluted points, but not the points themselves. I was only mildly disappointed that the real artifacts were not included.



Figure 3, Some of the Artifacts from Hiscock. The photograph of the fluted points from the site is in the lower left corner.

All in all the display was interesting and worthwhile to see. If you are in the Buffalo area it's worth a quick visit.

#### **ABSTRACTS:**

##### **September 16, Jock McAndrews, UofT and ROM, "Did a comet kill Clovis?"**

Beginning 13,600 years ago Paleo-Indian Clovis people appeared south of the continental ice sheet; they made distinctive fluted spear points adapted to big game hunting. Five hundred years later this fluted point culture disappeared to be replaced by diverse Late Paleo-Indian cultures. In addition, at 12,900 years ago mastodon and other large vertebrates suddenly became extinct. It is suggested that at this time a comet struck northern Ontario and caused a sudden climatic cooling that lasted until 11,500 years ago (Firestone et al. 2006, 2007). Fossil pollen diagrams document this cool period called the Younger Dryas. Mastodon tusks in the ROM and Buffalo Museum of Science, which

date to about 12,900 years ago, have surface traces of magnetite that may be from the comet. October 21, Diet and Food Economy at the **Western Basin Krieger Site**

**Christopher M. Watts**

**Rebanks Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of World Cultures, Royal Ontario Museum**

Krieger (AcHm-1) is one of the better known Late Woodland (Western Basin Tradition) sites in the lower Great Lakes region. It was first excavated by Royal Ontario Museum archaeologist and ethnologist Kenneth Kidd in 1949 and figures prominently in culture historical accounts from southern Ontario, southeastern Michigan and northwestern Ohio. Dating to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and located in the present-day Municipality of Chatham-Kent in southwestern Ontario, this roughly 0.5 hectare site produced some 42,000 ceramic, lithic and bone artifacts from 54 distinct or overlapping pit features as part of Kidd's work. Additionally, these excavations revealed a small secondary burial feature consisting of eight individuals, a pit feature with three to four individuals and several isolated elements found scattered across the site. While an osteobiographical account of the Krieger burials was published by Kidd in 1956, little in the way of subsequent analytical work has been carried out on these materials. This talk presents new research by the author and Christine White at the University of Western Ontario which addresses this deficiency through a reconstruction of dietary trends at Krieger using stable nitrogen and carbon isotope data derived from human dental tissue. Among other things, these data point to the exploitation of higher order trophic fish from both riverine and littoral contexts, as well as significant maize consumption within an otherwise diffuse economy and a settlement pattern geared toward the occupation of short-term campsites.

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