

NAPA

Nebraska Association of Professional Archeologists

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NEWSLETTER

Summer 1986

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It doesn't seem like half a year has passed since the formation of the Nebraska Association of Professional Archeologists. The summer was too busy and not as many things got done as I had hoped.

The first controversial issue we were involved with concerned the excavation of the Kurz village by the landowner and a group of interested amateurs. After a visit from John Ludwickson, John O'Shea, Tom McGinnis and myself they ceased excavation in a Nebraska Phase component (1000-1400 A.D.) which they thought was the historic Omaha Village (1845-55) until we convinced them otherwise. James Hanson, Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society is presently working with others to see if the important National Register site can be purchased and preserved, or possibly even developed.

At the recent board meeting in August several important issues were discussed. These included: several ideas for co-operative ventures with the Nebraska Archeological Society including joint educational programs across the state, joint booths at fairs and other public events, and working together to develop a publication series for short articles concerning Nebraska archeology. I feel strongly that this last point is especially important. For many years we have needed a publication outlet for short articles. Many surrounding states have a series for short articles and it is a great way to get a lot of information out which otherwise might not get published. I would like to make this a major goal in my term as president.

Another proposal is to ask all federal agencies with properties in Nebraska to send a copy of their guidelines for letting contracts to do work in the state. Apparently no such documents exist in the Historic Preservation Office. It was decided to ask H.P. to make the inquiry.

Hope to see all of you at the next N.A.P.A. meeting at the Plains Conference in Denver.

Steve Holen
President

UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 3,4,5 - Volunteer weekend for excavation at the McIntosh Site, 25BW15. Weather permitting additional fieldwork at the McIntosh site in Brown County will occur October 3,4, and 5. See the preliminary report on this important and endangered site in this issue. Contact John Ludwickson or Rob Bozell for details (402-402-471-4760). If we are beaten by the weather, we will reschedule.
- November 19-22 44th Annual Plains Conference in Denver, Colorado at the Denver Marriott Southeast. The annual meeting of the Nebraska Association of Professional Archeologists will be held here.

SIXTH ANNUAL ATLATL THROWING CONTEST by Steve Holen

In Saratoga, Wyoming, July 26, the Sixth Annual "World Atlatl Throwing Contest" was held. Atlatls and spears made from materials available 2,000 years ago are allowed in the competition. It was a fun day as several dozen participants and a few hundred spectators enjoyed the event. A flintknapping workshop, BBQ and an Early Man Symposium were also interesting events. The general public, amateur archeologists, and professionals all participated in the events and a good time was had by all.

Nebraska was poorly represented with only my family and I in attendance. Next year I hope Nebraska will be represented in the competition and demonstrations. Come along for a weekend of fun. We may have a practice session in the spring at the Dawson County Historical Society so make your equipment and practice up.

NEW EXHIBITS PLANNED AT THE STATE MUSEUM OF HISTORY by Eli Paul

The State Museum of History, Nebraska State Historical Society, has begun work on a new permanent exhibit on the state's Indian past. Entitled, "Indian Hall", the new exhibit will replace the present displays on prehistoric and historic Indians. The exhibit, to encompass about 5000 sq. ft. of gallery space on the museum's second floor, will also deal with topics relating to Nebraska's 20th century Indians. The Historical Society's extensive ethnological collection, of which many specimens have not been on display for over 30 years, will be highlighted. A September, 1987, opening is planned. For further details please contact N.A.P.A. member Eli Paul, Curator of Exhibits.

Also planned for September, 1987, is a special exhibit on the history of archeological work by the Nebraska State Historical Society. This exhibit, to be located at the State Museum of History's third floor gallery, will take a well-deserved look at the Society's 80 year involvement in Plains Archeology. The early work of E.E. Blackman and A.T. Hill will be highlighted, as well as the Society's recent archeological work at historic sites. Heading the team to prepare this exhibit is Archeologist, Gayle Carlson.

CURRENT RESEARCH IN NEBRASKA

Survey and Testing at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park by Rob Bozell

A brief archeological survey and testing program of the 500+ acre Eugene T. Mahoney State Park near Ashland in Cass County was completed in August by Nebraska State Historical Society Archeologists, Rob Bozell, John Ludwickson and Tom McGinnis. The park is in the early stages of development and the archeological work was geared toward identification and National Register evaluation of cultural resources potentially impacted by interior access roads. It is anticipated that additional reconnaissance will be required in conjunction with development of other recreational facilities next year.

The project resulted in the identification of ten previously unrecorded Native American archeological sites. Controlled subsurface testing and plowzone removal with heavy equipment indicated that nine of these sites are not eligible for the National Register as a result of low integrity due largely to past agricultural activities. The final site, the Philpot Ossuary (25CC214), has been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office. The ossuary is within a small natural or artificial mound and contains intact human remains associated with a variety of artifactual debris. Diagnostic remains are sparse in the deposit but ceramics recovered point to a Nebraska Phase (A.D. 1050-1400) association, although there is reason to suspect the site may contain stratified deposits.

Negotiation between the SHPO, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the Department of Roads resulted in a decision to develop minor roadway design changes facilitating avoidance of this important prehistoric resource. Furthermore, monitoring of road construction throughout the park will be implemented to insure that previously undetected cultural deposits are properly evaluated.

Dawson County Archeological Survey
by Steve Holen

The Dawson County Archeological Survey was recently completed. It was the result of a Historic Preservation contract with the Dawson County Historical Society to do an initial reconnaissance level survey to determine what kind of archeological resources were present in the area which had received little professional work previously. A total of 56 sites were recorded including the complete Native American temporal range from Clovis to Pawnee. Several Oregon Trail and early Union Pacific Railroad sites were also recorded. Survey methodology was informant-based with a small amount of sampling. In conjunction with the survey a preliminary study of the geomorphology of Dawson County was completed by David May of the University of Northern Iowa. Site location and geomorphological data were used to develop a preliminary predictive statement concerning site location. Further sample survey and testing has been recommended to determine National Register eligible sites.

Preliminary Report on the McIntosh Site, 25BW15: An Itskari
Phase Campsite in the Sandhills of Brown County, Nebraska
by John Ludwickson and Rob Bozell

Introduction

Late in June, 1986, the Nebraska State Historical Society learned that an archeological site of some importance had been severely damaged some weeks earlier due to road repair work in south-central Brown County. An emergency two-day trip to the site revealed that extensive damage had been done, the site almost completely destroyed. The bottom of one storage pit remained in the area from which sand had been removed, and after securing permission from the land owner, Mrs. Vera McIntosh, and the ranch manager, Jack Raymond, we excavated the remains of this pit in the evening of July 2, 1986. We wish to thank Mrs. McIntosh and Mr. Raymond for their cooperation and assistance in this work. The pit, and all other evidence we observed, leads us to conclude that the site was occupied by people of the "Central Plains Tradition", specifically the Itskari phase, sometime between A.D. 1100 to 1350.

Background

The Nebraska Sandhills occupy about 22,000 square miles (77,000 square kilometers), or about 29% of Nebraska. Archeological sites are rare in the Sandhills, and the picture which has emerged from past investigations is that the area was only sporadically occupied by small groups of people. The exceptions to this include some sites, poorly known, which have a great deal of artifacts eroding from "blow-outs". Still, there are abundant artifacts from Paleo-Indian lance points to glass trade beads and iron arrow points, to document that people occupied the Sandhills for thousands of years. Our current

hypothesis is that most, maybe all, occupation of the Sandhills area took place around its numerous lakes, but today we cannot prove whether these blowouts were around lakes (as we suspect) or were in other locations.

The Sandhills were certainly good hunting grounds prehistorically, with buffalo, pronghorn, waterfowl, and other species available--even abundant. Horticulture was almost certainly out of the question, but the harvest of wild rice from Sandhills lakes may have been feasible.

The Itskari Phase (Itskari is the Pawnee term for what we call the "Loup River"; it means "many potatoes", for the abundance of "Indian Potato" (Glycine apios)). These peoples lived in small farmsteads, hamlets or villages of earth lodges along the several branches of the Loup River and its tributaries south and southeast of the Sandhills. These sites were probably abandoned during the summer, the people going on long-range buffalo hunting trips into the Sandhills--and beyond. Many of the kinds of stone from which these people made their arrow points, knives and hide scrapers occur only in the Pine Ridge and Badlands country of northwest Nebraska, the Black Hills, and sources in Wyoming. Therefore we know that these people had to cross the Sandhills periodically to reach the sources of the stone they preferred for tool-making. The McIntosh site seems to be one of the kinds of camps these people stayed at during their periodic crossings of the Sandhills.

The McIntosh Site

The McIntosh Site, 25BW15, was located on a sand knoll at the southeast edge of Enders Lake. From the site there is a good view of the lake, and Enders Marsh. The site had originally been about 250 by 250 feet in size, but recent borrow-taking for road building has destroyed about 80% of the site. On the bladed surface was a fairly dense scatter of chipped stone debris, a few stone tools, cord-marked pottery body-sherds and quite a bit of buffalo bone. One pronghorn bone was also observed. The artifacts were in a dark, compact sandy soil horizon two to three feet below surface. Below this was light-colored archeologically sterile sand.

Most importantly, we observed what seemed to be the remains of a storage pit, a dark circle intruding into the light-colored sand. The upper three feet of the pit had been removed by the road-building, leaving only about the bottom-most ten inches of the pit intact. The pit proved to be circular in plan, and sixty inches in diameter; it must originally have been about four feet deep. The pit appeared to be slightly "bell-shaped", i.e. flat bottomed and tapering toward the top.

The pit contained more buffalo bone, stone waste flakes from tool-making or re-sharpening, and small pottery fragments. One of the pottery fragments was thicker and may be suggestive of a nearby, slightly older, Woodland site. Although the contents of the pit are not impressive in themselves, they are sufficient to

conclude that the people were of late prehistoric Central Plains Tradition affinity, almost certainly of the Itskari phase. The storage pit itself is significant, however, for a review of the records of previous archeological work in the Sandhills reveals that no such pits have been excavated in this region before. We would argue that sites like the McIntosh Site are not as scarce as this fact might suggest, but rather that we just haven't been seeking them in the right places.

Conclusions: Sandhills Oases

Enders Lake and other nearby Brown County lakes are on a line from the North Loup River Valley to the Niobrara River. Presuming Itskari phase people set out in early summer on a trek towards the northwest Nebraska stone quarries, they could follow the river for three or four days (assuming about twelve miles travel a day), but then they would have had to strike out across the Sandhills. There are few lakes southeast of Enders Lake on this route. After two or three days a good camping spot would be necessary, and the shores of Enders Lake and other nearby lakes would have appeared attractive "oases". The presence of the storage pit at the McIntosh Site suggests this was just such a prime camping spot, and was probably the scene of a several day-long lay-over before resuming the march toward the Niobrara. From southern Brown County to the Niobrara, lakes become more frequent, thus around any lake further to the northwest there would be fewer campsites since the same number of people would be able to choose between any number of prime lakeside locations. The entire trip to northwest Nebraska would probably have taken twenty to thirty days, and a similar length trip returning.

One alternative explanation is feasible, but unsubstantiated. Full-time, year-around occupation of the Sandhills by residents who acted as middle-men in a trading network, getting pottery from Itskari people to the southeast, and northwest Nebraska stone tools from the other direction. Such a lifestyle was possible, but it would be almost impossible to distinguish from the kind of periodic seasonal use outlined above. There are several techniques which could be applied to try to solve this problem, since if a year-round occupation could be demonstrated this alternate idea would be greatly strengthened. Further work at the remnant of the McIntosh Site may throw light on the solution to this question.

More N.S.H.S. Survey and Excavation by Gayle Carlson

During the 1986 archeological field season, Gayle Carlson was on a number of field trips of short duration (from one to five days). More extended periods of field work were not possible because of the need to be in Lincoln on a fairly regular basis to take care of Historic Preservation responsibilities regarding review and compliance for archeological sites on federally funded projects. Tom McGinnis was his field assistant on most of the field trips.

One week was spent surveying in Nuckolls County. Both Oregon Trail-related historic sites and prehistoric sites were visited during this period. Twenty-three new sites were recorded and a number of previously known sites were investigated to learn more about their exact locations and present condition. Assisting in this survey were Gerald Schmitt of Ord and Russ Genung of Juniata, former Nuckolls County residents.

One week was spent doing emergency salvage work at Fort Robinson in northwestern Nebraska. This work focused on the remains of rear additions to the 1874 adobe officers' quarters, and was made necessary because of grading by the Game and Parks Commission to improve drainage at that location.

Two days were spent in Furnas County, accompanied by Curt Peacock of the Nebraska State Historical Society Art Department, visiting Republican River jasper quarries and outcrops. The purpose of this trip was to gather material and information to be used in the preparation of a new display on stone procurement that will be a part of the new Indian Gallery at the State Museum of History.

Several one-day trips were made (Adams, Merrick, Saunders, Lancaster, and Nuckolls Counties) to examine known or reported sites. One of the thrusts of this field work was to gather more information on known or suspected Archaic sites for future research purposes, although a variety of sites were visited. One site in Nuckolls County, which had produced mammoth remains, was visited to see if it might be a Paleo Indian kill site, but it proved to be a paleontological site instead. Another site, in Adams County, which was located by the landowner and reported to the Society, proved to be the Sand Hill Pony Express Station.

One of the Historic Preservation-related responsibilities was to compile a list of the archeological sites recorded and number of acres surveyed in Nebraska during the period October 1, 1985, to August 31, 1986. The totals arrived at were 205 newly recorded sites and 46,748 acres surveyed during this period. The list is included on the following page.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES RECORDED

Federal F.Y. 1986 (minus September)
 (October 1, 1985 - August 31, 1986)

<u>Principal Investigator</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres Surveyed</u>
Don Blakeslee	66	37,440
John Ludwickson, Rob Bozell (Highway Survey Program)	49	7,941
Steve Holen	43	325
Gayle Carlson	31	270
<u>Misc. Contractors and Informants</u>		
Lynn Johnston Powers Elevation John and Mavis Greer Larson - Tibesar Gilbert - Commonwealth UNL, Dept. of Anthropology Forest Service Several Informants	16	772
Total	205	46,748

Excavations at the Lincoln Pottery Works (25LC42)

Between May 19 and August 22, 1986, the Department of Anthropology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, conducted excavations at the site of the Lincoln Pottery Works. Dr. Peter Bleed was the Principal Investigator and Christopher Schoen was the Project Director. The project was undertaken to mitigate the historic archeological remains of the LPW prior to construction of the "K" and "L" Streets connection of the West Lincoln Bypass. Funding was provided by the Railroad Transportation Safety District, in conjunction with the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Federal Highway Administration. The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office/Nebraska Highway Archeology Program provided professional liason and advisory support throughout all stages of the project.

The primary goal of the excavation was to identify and document the archeological deposits relating to the LPW. However, architectural and archeological configurations associated with the second period of occupation at the site - the German-Russian households - were also recognized as important cultural resources.

Two field schools were involved in the project. Dr. Bleed instructed twenty-five students in archeological techniques and theory during the first eight weeks of the summer. An additional seven students participated in a five week session under the

guidance of Chris Schoen. A crew of four archeologists worked throughout the fourteen week project. Volunteers contributed an estimated 600 hours to the excavations as well.

Some 356 square meters were excavated at the site. The excavations revealed the remains of four pottery kilns, and extensive flue and chimney complex, and several other architectural features related to the company. Additionally, privies, drainage systems and trash pits associated with the German-Russian period were exposed. Moreover it resulted in the accumulation of thousands of artifacts from both periods of occupation. The artifacts and archeological features are currently being analyzed at Morrill Hall. The results will be published at the end of next year.

25LC42 is an unusual site. The Lincoln Pottery Works, which operated from 1881 - 1902, utilized the new technical innovations of the ceramic industry at this time: sophisticated down draft kilns, steam powered machinery, and mass production techniques. The ramifications of these technological adaptations are yet to be explored. Further, the site provides an opportunity to learn about the archeology of an ethnically distinct group of people - the German-Russians. This data set can be used to pursue ideas about how their cultural heritage interacted with a new cultural environment, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Central Plains Indian Trails
by Don Blakeslee

Don Blakeslee and Bob Blasing of The Wichita State University have begun a long-term study of Indian trails in the Central Plains. The study will include the development of a computerized database to organize the information about the trails now scattered among many sources, some of which are quite obscure. People who have knowledge of Indian trails in Nebraska or surrounding states are encouraged to write to Blakeslee at the Department of Anthropology, The Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas, 67208. References to trails are scattered among so many sources that it is only with the help of many interested parties that this research can be successful.

Blakeslee and Blasing feel that the study of the trails will contribute significantly to our understanding of Plains prehistory. Archeological sites known to occur along trails in the Central Plains include villages, campsites, burials, cairns, quarries, petroglyphs, and sacred sites such as the Big Pawnee "animal lodges" described by Parks and Wedel. Important Indian trails in Nebraska include a set that paralleled the south bank of the Platte where historic Pawnee villages are found, north-south trails that joined these at Grand Island and Plum Point, and a trail that ran along the divide between the waters of the Platte and those of the Missouri River. A trail that paralleled the Blue River later became part of the Oregon Trail of the

historic period.

Study of the trails may help to clarify some of the unresolved problems of the early historic period. Pawnee traditions of having had a "village" near Nemaha, for instance, may relate to the trail shown on the Souldard map of 1795. The trail led from the vicinity of Nemaha to Republican Pawnee villages on the Republican River. The head of the trail, near Nemaha, was used as a rendezvous point between the Pawnee and fur traders and other travellers.

The route of James MacKay across Nebraska in 1796 appears to relate to several trails. No diary of the trips survives, but the route is marked on several early maps. It appears to coincide at several points with Indian trails that were recorded on General Land Office survey maps. The maps which record his trip show several detours to high points of land. One of the detours appears to have been to the high hill near Verdel that was used as a quarry for Bijou Hills quartzite by the Ponca. The implication is that MacKay was accompanying the Omaha on a bison hunting expedition and that his companions were obtaining material for butchering tools.

Detours to several high spots in the Elkhorn River drainage might be to sacred places or to other stone quarries. The high hills visited may turn out to contain the sources of the brown jasper found in some archeological sites in the northeastern part of the state. The nearest known aboriginal quarries of this material are in the Republican River drainage, but archeologists familiar with collections from the northeastern part of the state have long suspected that a closer source might exist.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NSHS Acquires Nebraska Phase Village

In July, 1986, the Nebraska Department of Roads transferred a 5-acre tract of land containing archeological site 25SY31 to the Historical Society. The site is a Nebraska Phase village located in Sarpy County along Highway 31. Two earthlodge floors were excavated by Society archeologists in 1977 and 1984. At least two additional lodge depressions remain on the tract. At this point protecting the site is the primary goal, although interpretation and development may be scheduled in the future.

Robert E. Philips Archeological Collection Donated to the Nebraska State Historical Society

Mr. Robert E. Philips, of Lexington, donated his collection of archeological materials from eighteen archeological sites in Custer, Dawson, Frontier, and Gosper Counties to the Nebraska State Historical Society in August. The collection fills twelve specimen boxes (ca. 500 pounds total). Philips excavated the sites during the 1950's and 1960's, and always kept meticulous

field notes. The scientific value of the donation for the study of Woodland and Plains Village archeology in Central and South Central Nebraska is enhanced by these detailed notes.

Currently the collections are being cleaned, cataloged, and accessioned into the N.S.H.S. systematic archeological collections, and will eventually be used for exhibit purposes as well as research. Much of the laboratory work on the donation is being accomplished by volunteer help, and we want to thank these generous folks. If you can spare some time to help finish this job it would be greatly appreciated. If you want to view the Philips collections with an eye toward doing some analysis, contact the N.S.H.S. Archeology Department in the State Museum of History (J.L.).

Donation to N.A.P.A.

Mr. Charles H. Mousel, Cambridge, Nebraska, donated \$5.00 for the benefit of N.A.P.A., and Joe Hudak of Bennett-Ringrose-Wolsfield-Jarvis-Gardner, Inc., Minneapolis, donated \$40.00. This extra support "above and beyond" is greatly appreciated. (J.L.)

MEMBERSHIP IN N.A.P.A.

This issue of the N.A.P.A. Newsletter will be the last complimentary copy sent out to potential members and interested individuals. If you have been putting off sending in your application for membership, now is the time to get it in. You wouldn't want to miss a single exciting issue, would you?!

The following is a current up-to-date list of N.A.P.A. members. Please review it for your name and others you feel might be interested.

	Fellow	Associate
Don Blakeslee, Wichita St. U.	X	
Peter Bleed, UNL	X	
John R. Bozell, N.S.H.S.	X	
Ed Brodnicki, U.S.C. of E.	X	
Jeff Buechler, Contractor (S.D.)	X	
Michael S. Burney, Contractor (C.O.)		X
F.A. Calabrese, N.P.S.-M.W.A.C.	X	
Gayle F. Carlson, N.S.H.S.	X	
Bill R. Chada, UNL	X	
Melissa Conner, UNL	X	
Donna Cochran, Bartley, NE		X
Ellen M. Cummings, U.S.C. of E.	X	
Steven DeVore, UNL	X	
Gregory L. Fox, U. of MO.	X	
David M. Gradwohl, IA. S.U.	X	
Roger T. Grange, U. of So.FLA	X	
Mark A. Hill, Contractor (IL)	X	

Robert J. Hoard, U. of MO.	X	
Steven R. Holen, Dawson Co. Hist. Soc.	X	
G. Joseph Hudak, Contractor (MN)	X	
William J. Hunt, N.P.S.-M.W.A.C.	X	
N. Steven King, Lincoln, NE	X	
William B. Lees, K.S.H.S.	X	
John Ludwickson, N.S.H.S.	X	
Edward J. Lueck, Augustana Col. (S.D.)	X	
Kerry Lippincott, Casper, WY		X
Thomas E. McGinnis, N.S.H.S.	X	
Michael J. McNerney, Contractor (IL)	X	
Cathie L. Masters, N.P.S.-M.W.A.C.		X
David W. May, U. of No. IA.	X	
Charles H. Mousel, Cambridge, NE		X
John M. O'Shea, U. of MI	X	
R. Eli Paul, N.S.H.S.	X	
Donna C. Roper, Contractor (MI)	X	
Christopher M. Schoen, UNL	X	
Douglas Scott, N.P.S.-M.W.A.C.	X	
J. Steve Sigstad, U.S.D.A. Forest Service	X	
Terry L. Steinacher, U.S.C. of E.	X	
James M. Welch, Contractor (WY)	X	
John Weymouth, UNL	X	
Charles W. Wheeler, Contractor (CO)	X	
Cecil Williams, Bartley, NE		X
Larry J. Zimmerman, U.S.D.	X	

Please send any suggestions, remarks, or information, etc.
to:

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