

NEWSLETTER

ARCHIVES
OFFICE OF THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY, IOWA 52242

APRIL 1975

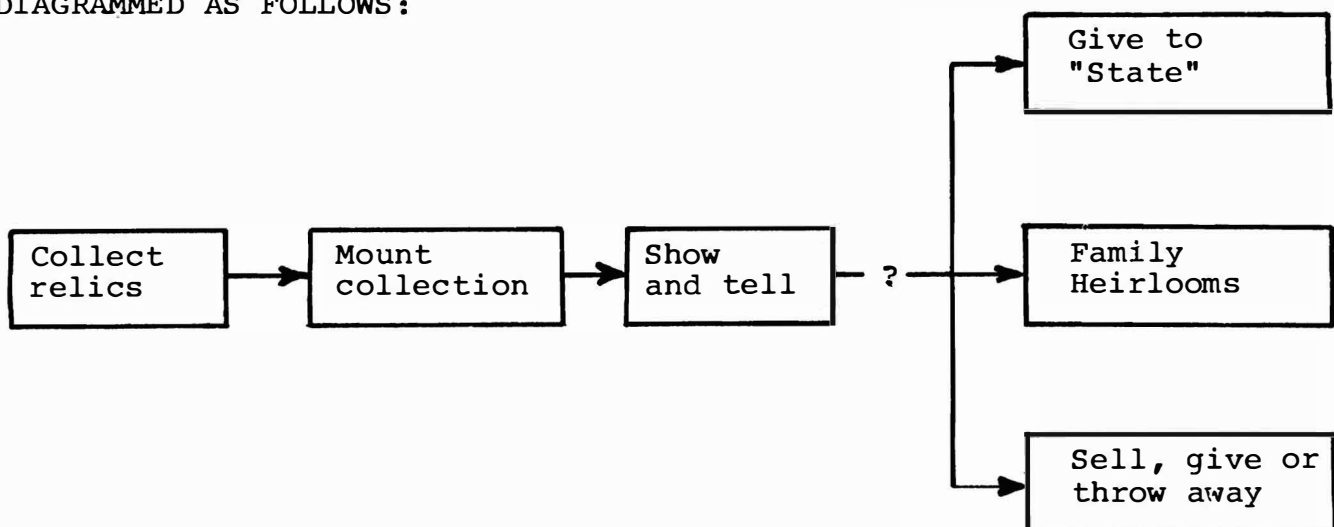
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

AT THE TIME OF THIS WRITING, MATTERS RELATING TO SOCIETY LEADERSHIP AND THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF OUR ARTICLES AND BYLAWS ARE PENDING DISCUSSIONS AT THE UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETING IN AMES.

REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENS, IT APPEARS THAT THE SOCIETY WILL BE MOVING FORWARD ON MANY FRONTS. THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE CHANGING SCOPE OF ARCHEOLOGY AS IT APPLIES TO THE LAYMAN IN IOWA.

BEFORE THE IOWA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY WAS ORGANIZED, IOWANS INTERESTED IN RELICS COLLECTED ARTIFACTS AND GENERALLY STORED THEM IN BOXES OR MOUNTED THEM ON PLAQUES. LITTLE USE WAS MADE OF THE COLLECTIONS UNLESS VISITORS CAME BY, AT WHICH TIME "SHOW AND TELL" SESSIONS WERE HELD.

WHEN A PERSON DIED OR LOST INTEREST, HIS COLLECTION OCCASSIONALLY GOT INTO PUBLIC HANDS (MUSEUM, HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ETC.), BUT MORE OFTEN IT REMAINED IN THE FAMILY WHERE ITEMS WERE KEPT AS HEIRLOOMS--GENERALLY WITH LITTLE OR NO DATA. ALL TOO OFTEN COLLECTIONS WERE BROKEN UP OR DISCARDED. THE GENERAL FLOW OF EVENTS DURING THIS PERIOD CAN BE DIAGRAMMED AS FOLLOWS:

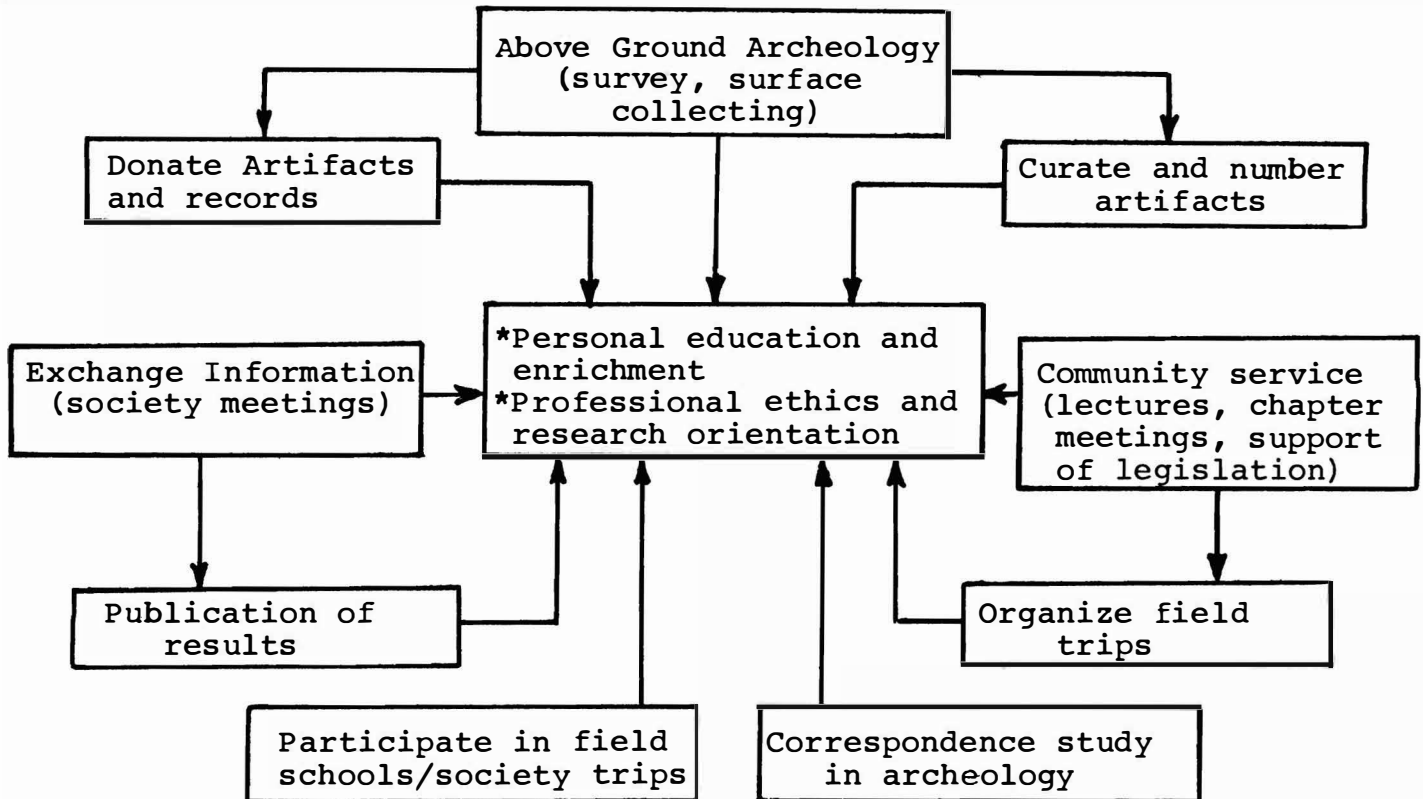


OVER THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, LAY ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN INCREASED AND ENRICHED THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE IOWA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND ITS AFFILIATED CHAPTERS. MANY INDIVIDUALS HAVE BECOME INVOLVED IN ABOVE GROUND ARCHEOLOGY PROJECTS AS WELL AS A VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. OFTEN PRIVATE ARTIFACT COLLECTIONS ARE NUMBERED AND CATALOGUED TO PREVENT DATA LOSS AND THERE IS AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS AND COLLECTIONS BEING PLACED IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS WHEN THEY ARE NO



LONGER WANTED BY THEIR OWNERS. THERE IS ALSO AN INCREASE IN LAY INVOLVEMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE. IAS MEMBERS AND CHAPTERS HAVE ORGANIZED LECTURES, FIELD TRIPS AND FIELD SCHOOLS, EXCHANGED INFORMATION AND HELPED PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS.

MOST WOULD AGREE THAT THE REWARDS FOR SYSTEMATIC INVOLVEMENT IN IOWA ARCHEOLOGY LIE IN THE AREAS OF PERSONAL EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT. LAY ARCHEOLOGISTS ARE ENJOYING AN INCREASED SENSE OF SATISFACTION FOR PERFORMING AN IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY PUBLIC SERVICE FUNCTION. THE NETWORK OF ACTIVITIES THAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPING WITHIN THE IAS OVER THE YEARS CAN BE DIAGRAMED AS FOLLOWS:



ON THE DIAGRAM ABOVE IT IS APPARENT THAT AN INDIVIDUAL CAN BECOME INVOLVED ON ANY LEVEL, AND TO ANY EXTENT HE WISHES. TOTAL INVOLVEMENT IS THE IDEAL AND CARRIES WITH IT A CODE OF ETHICS AND AN ORIENTATION TOWARD RESEARCH THAT CERTAINLY ELEVATES THE PRACTICE OF LAY ARCHEOLOGY OVER WHAT IT USED TO BE.

NOW IT IS NO LONGER ACCURATE TO THINK IN TERMS OF "AMATEURS" AND PROFESSIONALS." THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO IS NOT ONE OF KIND, BUT ONE OF DEGREE, WITH THE DISTINCTION BASED ON A PERSON'S TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT.

WITH THIS IN MIND, I THINK IT IS TIME THAT WE BEGIN THINKING OF OURSELVES, BOTH LAY AND PROFESSIONAL, AS ONE GROUP OF PEOPLE, MORE OR LESS INVOLVED, WHOSE OBJECTIVE IS TO PRESERVE AND INTERPRET IOWA'S INTERESTING PAST. TOGETHER WE MUST INTENSIFY OUR EFFORTS TO CONSERVE OUR DWINDLING ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES AGAINST THE INCREASING PRESSURES OF NEW LAND USE PATTERNS AND THE EVER-PRESENT LOOTERS AND ARTIFACT MARKETEEERS WHO THREATEN THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST.

DUANE ANDERSON

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Archaeological Research at the Chan-ya-ta Mill Creek Culture Site,
Buena Vista County, Iowa

by

Joseph A. Tiffany

This past summer, a University of Wisconsin crew in conjunction with the Iowa Archaeological Society Field School conducted an extensive excavation at the Chan-ya-ta site (13BV1) in Buena Vista County, Iowa. This excavation was part of a dissertation project by the author on Mill Creek Culture currently in progress at the University of Wisconsin. The project was supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation, the Iowa Archaeological Society, and the State Historic Preservation Program of Iowa. Ten students from Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Illinois formed the nucleus of the crew with support from members of the I.A.S.

The project was designed to obtain information about the nature of Mill Creek houses and architecture and to gather data from these houses to study intra-site relationships of a Mill Creek village. Chan-ya-ta was an ideal site for this purpose because it is a single component site underlain by loess subsoil and has never been plowed. Hence, architectural features, storage pits and so forth could be easily defined and the artifacts from these features could be recovered in good contexts.

During the summer, several houses and four test trenches were excavated in the west end of the site. Two of these test trenches were in the area where surface depressions indicated the presence of a fortification ditch. No conclusive evidence, however, was found for a fortification ditch from our tests. The other two test trenches were laid between adjacent house depressions so that the village stratigraphy could be studied. These test trenches revealed the presence of the old village living surface approximately 16 inches below the present surface. It was defined in one area by the presence of a paleosol, or buried soil horizon, and in

other areas by a thin concentration of artifacts, bone and debris. This old living surface follows the modern surface contours of the site. In general, the village stratigraphy seems to indicate a single, relatively short occupation of the site.

At least three different house types were found at Chan-ya-ta. In one house depression, Feature 4/, an eleven feet square house (west house) with a possible storage area or extended entryway was found (Figure 1). This structure was superimposed on a 15 by 22 feet rectangular house (east house) with a central hearth and a probable entryway in the contact area with the west house (Figure 2). In Feature 6/, a rough 20 by 20 feet square structure with an extended entryway was exposed (Figure 3). While in Feature 9/, at least two other small rectangular houses with hearth were found (Figure 4). Each structure was built in house pits that varied from 9 to 14 inches deep. The pit walls for each structure was in the B soil horizon while the floors were in the subsoil loess. The post hole patterns for these houses indicate that they were constructed of light wall posts set next to the edge of the house pits and supplemented by slightly larger central posts which probably supported a gabled or domed roof. Evidence obtained from the small square house, which had burned, suggests that the superstructure of the Chan-ya-ta houses consisted of wattle and daub walls and a thatched roof. The diameter of the post holes indicate the use of posts in the construction of these houses which seem to be too small to have supported a sod roof. Further, no evidence was found for the use of leaners against the walls as in historic earthlodges nor was there any clear evidence that the walls had been banked with earth.

In Mill Creek sites, flecks of daub in the midden accumulation is a common feature. Fugle (1962) reported superimposed houses in the Phipps site which he suggests were of wattle and daub construction. While the houses at the Chan-ya-ta seem small, they do have the same rough length to width ratio of Middle Missouri houses. The post hole patterns from the Wittrock site (130B4) (McKusick, n.d.) and the Kimball

site (13PMI) (Orr, 1963) suggest similar if somewhat larger structures. The small square house seems to have no antecedents in Mill Creek Culture, but Gradwohl (1969) has reported two small square houses with extended entryways from a Nebraska Culture site.

The Chan-ya-ta houses seem to have their closest antecedents in this region with the Great Oasis houses excavated by Henning in 1969 at the West Broken Kettle site (13PM25) and appear to be part of a broad cultural pattern in Late Woodland-Early Mississippian style architecture in the eastern woodlands-prairie continuum.

A large artifact sample was obtained from the house depressions and from the storage pits. The most abundant item was pottery fragments, but in addition, projectile points, knives, axes, celts, and scrapers as well as bison scapula hoes, bone awls, a bison horn scoop, an elk horn flesher and other bone and stone tools typical of a Mill Creek assemblage were found. Besides recovering a sample of Mill Creek pottery, several shell tempered sherds were found including two restorable Mississippian trade vessels, a Powell Plain and a Ramey Incised vessel.

During the summer, test excavations were also conducted at the Bultman site (13BV2). This dig was designed to complement earlier studies on climatic change and the Mill Creek Culture (Henning, 1968) and to obtain radiocarbon dates and a pottery sample to tie Bultman more firmly into the Little Sioux valley sequence.

All data recovered from Chan-ya-ta have been taken to the University of Wisconsin for analysis. Two of the University of Wisconsin crew members, Steve Wagner and Richard Johnson respectively, will analyze the carbonized seeds and lithics from two Chan-ya-ta houses for their Senior Honors theses. Another crew member, Dean Thompson of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, will analyze the Bultman material for his Senior paper at Luther.

I would like to thank the members of the I.A.S. who gave of their time and experience on this project; their support helped make the excavation a success. I would also like to give special thanks to Duane Anderson for his support and

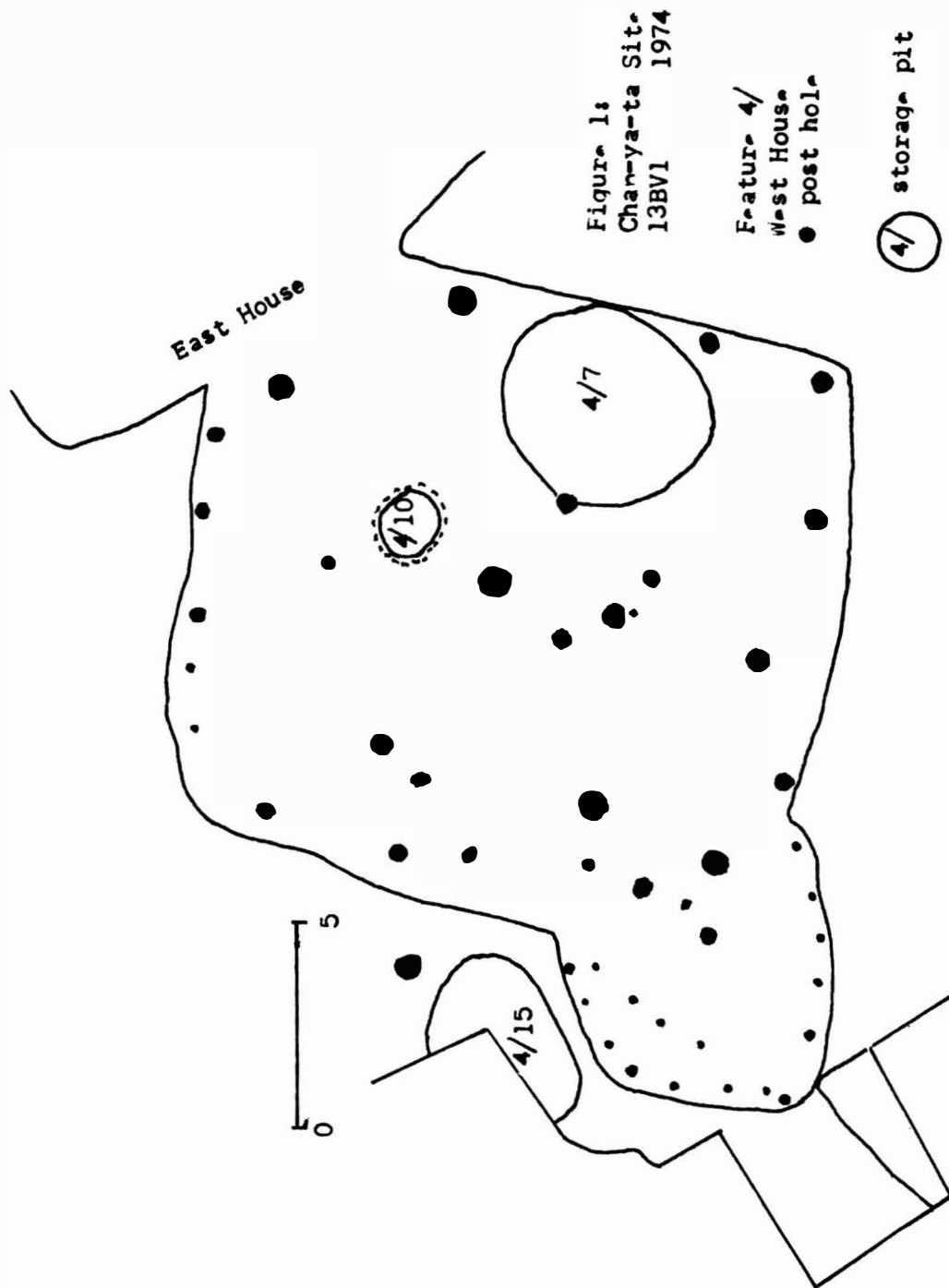
encouragement of this project since its inception two years ago. In general, I feel that the I.A.S. field school is a good idea and that it met with some success on this project. I also feel, however, that for future field schools there is plenty of room for improvement. I would suggest considering a shorter field season (ten days to two weeks), working on a more centrally located site and so forth. Perhaps the Newsletter can be used as forum for those who attended this summer and for other I.A.S. members to express their ideas about this field school and future ones. Hopefully, the ideas presented can be discussed in detail at the annual meeting in Ames.

Chan-ya-ta Mill
Creek Site (13BV1)

Feature 4/ West
House (See Figure
1, page 7) Super-
imposed on the
East House (See
Figure 2, page 7)



Entryway or storage
area, West House
(See figure 1, page 7)



BAULK

4/14

4/5

4/12

4/8

4/9

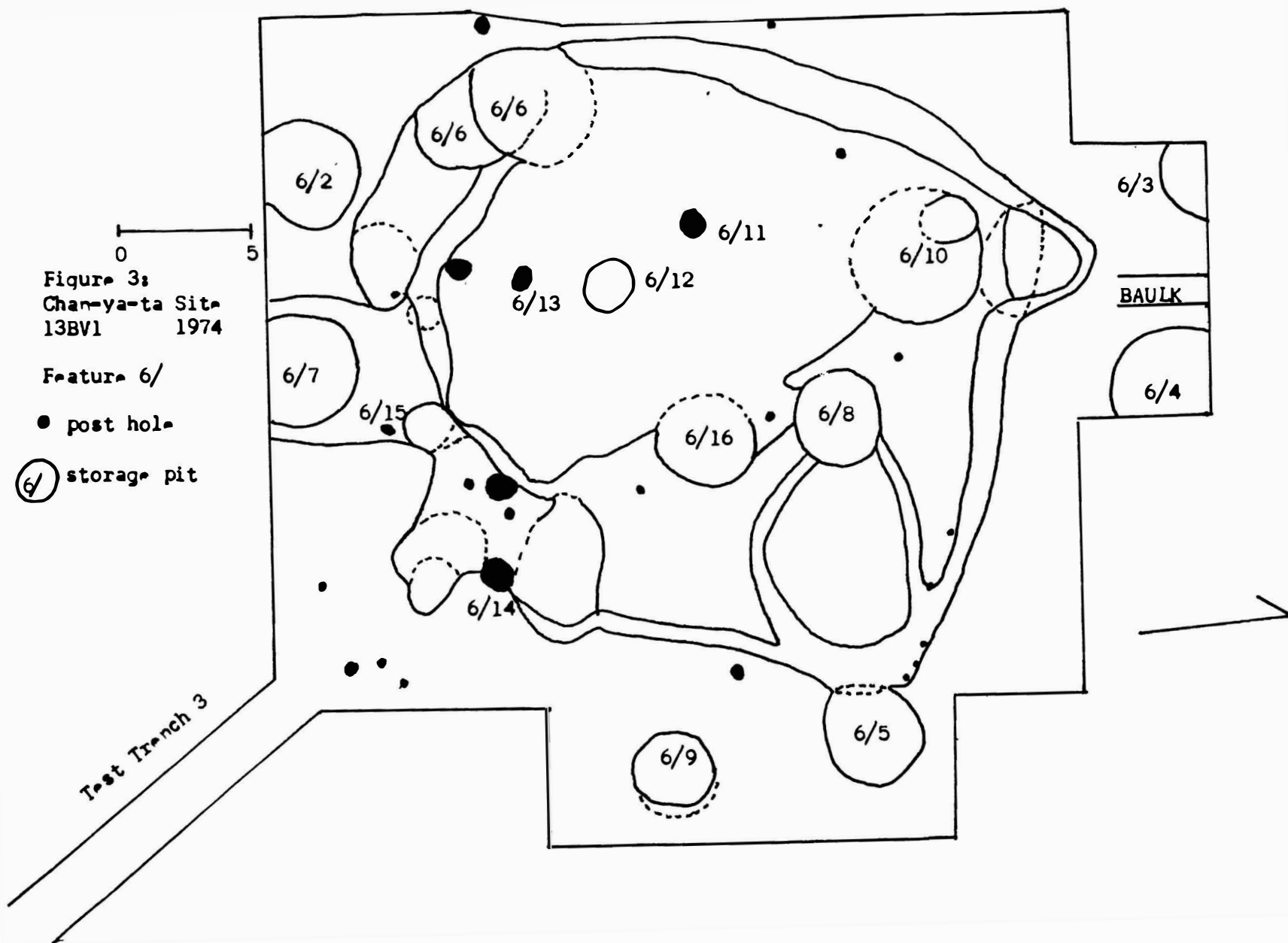
Figure 2:
Chan-ya-ta Site
13BV1 1974

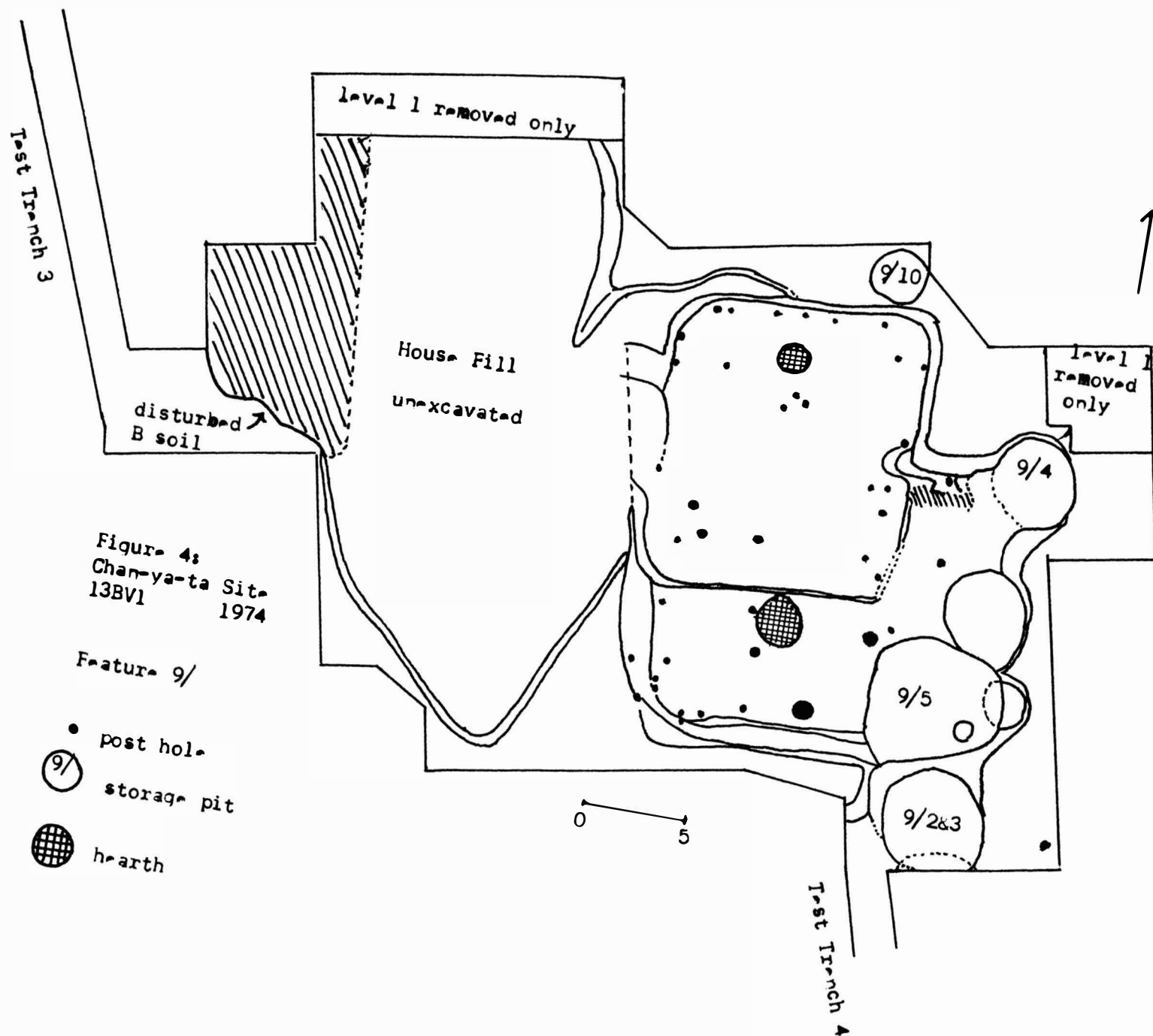
Feature 4/
East House

- post hole
- storage pit
- hearth

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3





Iowa Archaeological Society Field School Participants
and Volunteers

Sandy Hay
David Hovde
Gordon Linge
Herb Sovereign
Kathleen Byerley
John & Jean Harkin
Jean Heibult
Robert Guevera

Don Spears
Arnold Roggman
George Horton
Rex & Chris Hansman
Richard Slattery
Ruth Thorton
Gary & Betsy Valen and friends
Northwest Chapter, et. al.

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1962 Mill Creek Culture and Technology. Journal of the Iowa Archaeological Society. v.11:4.
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1969 Prehistoric villages in eastern Nebraska. Publications in Anthropology, n.4. Nebraska State Historical Society.
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1968 Climatic change and the Mill Creek Culture of Iowa. Journal of the Iowa Archaeological Society. v.15:1-2.
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1963 Iowa Archaeological Reports 1934-39. Ten volumes. Archives of Archaeology. v.20.
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The Iowa Archeological Society is a non-profit, scientific society legally organized under the corporate laws of Iowa.

Members of the Society are amateurs and professionals with a serious interest in the archeology of Iowa and the Midwest.

The Newsletter is published four times a year. A Journal of the Iowa Archeological is issued once a year. Back issues are available through the editors. The reprinting or use of any material in the Newsletter is forbidden without the consent of the Society.

Send all material, comments, questions to:
Iowa Archeological Society
Office of the Newsletter Editor
Gary Valen and Betsy Lyman
R.R. 3
Indianola, Iowa 50125

MINUTES

The IOWA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY Trustees meeting was held at the Brenton Student Center, Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa on March 15, 1975. Officers and Trustees present were: George Horton, Richard Slattery, Duane Anderson, Betsy Lyman, James Reysack, Herbut Sovereign, D. E. Pidcock, David Carlson, Pat Williams, Nancy Osborn and Gary Valen. Others present were Michael Weichman, Midge Graden, Carol Anderson, Diana Anderson, Luis Moscoso, Jeff Marck, Louise Pratt, LeRoy Pratt, John Hotopp, Loren Horton, John Tandarich, James J. Reysack, Dave Cook, Adrian Anderson, Eugene Newhouse, Don Spears, Paul Williams and David Gradwohl.

The Meeting was called to order at 1:15 p.m. by President Duane Anderson. The minutes of the December 15 Trustees meeting were approved.

Duane started by relating his plans for his new position as State Archaeologist of Iowa. He mentioned that the professional archeologists working in Iowa are planning a meeting in June at Luther College to develop a statewide plan for archeology. Other items discussed were the development of a school program by the Office and the Highway Salvage Program.

It was proposed that the Society consider adopting Restated Articles of Incorporation and a new set of bylaws, as the old ones are badly outdated. A possible new format was discussed. The changing of the dues structure was considered. A dues schedule was suggested as follows: Voting members - Active \$5.00, Sustaining \$15.00, Benefactor \$1000.00; Non-voting members - Junior \$4.00, Institutional \$5.00. Pat Williams moved, Herb Sovereign seconded that these be placed on the Bylaws to be mailed out to the membership. Motion carried. George Horton was appointed to head a committee to continue investigating dues. Nancy Osborn moved, James Reysack seconded that the first order of business at the annual meeting be to present the Restated Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws for action by the Society. Motion carried.

The nominating committee for the annual election was appointed by the President. All present Trustees are to be on the committee. Richard Slattery, Marilyn Mittlestadt and Andy Brenner were appointed Co-chairmen.

James Reysack was appointed chairman of a Publications Advisory Committee to make recommendations for improvement of the Journal and the Newsletter, based on input from the membership.

David Gradwohl and Nancy Osborn discussed plans for the April 26-27 Annual meeting in Ames. Plans for the Wedels to attend are still pending, but should be set within the next week. There will be no banquet as such, but the lecture will be in the ISU cafeteria, and members may eat there if they wish. There will probably be a Trustees meeting at 12:00 with a Business meeting starting at 1:00 on Saturday. Those present were encouraged to see that the meeting received adequate publicity throughout the state.

John Tandarich gave a report for the Awards Committee. A full report is to be given at the Annual Meeting.

Adrian Anderson discussed the present status of the Office of Historic Preservation. He stressed the importance of developing a rational approach to long range problems. He discussed bills presently before congress which would allocate \$75 - \$150 million to historic preservation. If passed, Iowa would receive about \$1 million. There has also been some informal discussion of a possible "WPA" type program in archeology. Adrian is making a plan of action so Iowa will be ready in the event the program is enacted.

Two upcoming meetings related to Iowa archeology were mentioned. On April 11-13 a symposium on Indian perspective in Iowa will be held at the ISU campus. Then on April 17-19 the Iowa Academy of Science meetings will include an extended archaeology session, also on the ISU campus.

The need for goals for the Society was discussed. A committee to be headed by Pat Williams was appointed to present a report to the Annual Meeting. Gary Valen and Betsy Lyman are to serve on the committee.

It was announced that 200 copies of Vol. 21 of the Journal are to be reprinted.

The Newsletter editors reported that the Newsletter should be out before the annual meeting.

Jeff Marck announced that the University of Iowa plans excavations in south central Iowa this spring and also near Iowa City during the summer.

Don Spears suggested that complementary memberships be given to Father Devine at the Indian School at Eldora and to the Sac-Fox School at Tama. D. E. Pidcock moved, Herb Sovereign seconded that a one year membership be donated. Motion carried.

The possibility of a field trip this summer was discussed. No plans were made at this time.

John Tandarich announced that a new chapter is being formed at Iowa City.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. Coffee and donuts were provided by the Brenton Student Center and Gary Valen.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Williams

Patricia Williams
Secretary pro tempore

NEW MEMBERS

ACTIVE

WALTER H. LORENZEN

VIRGIL L. SCHROEDER

KENNETH WOLFF

ROCKWELL

ARMSTRONG

DUNDEE, MN.

SUSTAINING

DR. RALPH C. CARPENTER

MARSHALLTOWN

**A LAST REMINDER FOR THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE IAS IN AMES
ON APRIL 26 & 27. PLAN TO ATTEND.**

Iowa Archeological Society
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