

Iowa Archeology News



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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by

IAS President Bill Anderson

Greetings to all members! I consider this report to you as a real opportunity to introduce myself and make you aware of where the IAS is at this time and where we are heading in the future.

When Steve Lensink called me last year and ask me to consider serving as President of the IAS for 2003, my first thought was "wow." To follow the leadership of our last 2 Presidents, Joe Tiffany and Doug Jones, and all those before them, would be a tough act to follow. But then, I thought, why not. I have long had an interest in archaeology, and being retired, I would have the time to devote to the responsibilities of this important position. Having served on the IAS Board previously, I knew something of the responsibilities the position might entail. Above all, however, was my background of many years in public education which I felt was important to bring to the organization.

So with this being said, let me share with the membership the successes of 2002 and a preview of 2003.

After a successful Spring Meeting last May at Pioneer Ridge Nature Center near Ottumwa (thanks to members of the S.E. Iowa Chapter for hosting this event), we were welcomed to the Fall, 2002 Meeting sponsored by the Lynn County Conservation Board. Our meeting was held at the brand new Wickiup Hill Interpretive Center. This facility is located in the Cedar River Greenbelt. A most impressive program was assembled, featuring Jack Gladstone, an enrolled member of the Blackfoot Nation of Montana and nationally known. If you missed this wonderful program, you missed a gem. If you were there on November 2, how well you know what a tremendous presentation we were blessed with. Special thanks to Tom Chadderdon and Lynn Alex for making these arrangements and presenters Gail Barels, Maria Schroeder, Kathy Gourley, David Benn, and Lea Rogers for the morning program. A tour of the archaeological sites at Wickiup Hill was lead by Lea Rogers in the afternoon.

Plans are being formulated now for the Spring Meeting, which will be held on May 24 at the Mesquaki Settlement. The Black Hawk Chapter is making plans for this to be one of our best IAS meetings we have ever had. Watch for more details soon.

Another successful Archaeology Month was held in September of 2002. The theme was "Bags, Bowls, Baskets, and Boxes: Life Before Plastic". Lynn Alex, Public Archaeology Coordinator for the OSA, put together a varied number of impressive presentations that were held in every corner of the state. Speaking of the work of Lynn Alex, a sustained effort is being undertaken by the OSA Advisory Committee to seek assistance from the University of Iowa to make this a full time position. At the present time, the position of Coordinator of the Public Education

Program is not a funded position. We believe it should be and the OSA and the IAS are working hard to achieve this goal. What an opportunity to bring archaeological opportunities into the classrooms of our Iowa schools, as well as to the general public.

Beth Pauls assumed the position of State Archaeologist in 2002. Beth comes to us from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Beth has expressed a strong interest in archaeological education and outreach and brings strong leadership skills to this position. We are indeed pleased to have her aboard the OSA and IAS team.

The IAS has received an invitation for its members to make presentations at the Cedar Valley Rock and Mineral Club Show held in Cedar Rapids on March 15 and 16. This is a real opportunity for the IAS, which allows us to provide an organizational table and space for portable exhibits and posters, along with presentations by our members.

Special thanks to IAS Board Member Jerry Baker for designing the new IAS Logo and pin. This attractive pin has gold lettering, a white Clovis point, and a brown Oneota pot on a green background. This pin is available at meetings, through local Chapters, and directly from the OSA. Proceeds will go to the IAS Research and Education Fund. Cost of the pins is \$5.00 each.

One of the exciting Field Exercises in 2002 and extending into 2003 is the volunteer excavation that was undertaken at the Bonaparte Pottery Site. This project has been headed up by Maria Schroeder (OSA) and Lea Rogers (Tallgrass Historians, L.C.). Follow-up laboratory work is currently being carried on at the OSA through the Winter month by volunteers.

Lynn Alex has assured me that there is a possibility of two, and perhaps even three Field Experiences being contemplated for 2003. Being considered is a mapping project at the Ridged Field Site in O'Brien County and a pedestrian survey / metal detector survey / geophysical survey and limited testing of an underground railroad property in Lewis County with the State Historical Society. A possibility exists of limited testing of a site associated with Herbert Hoover in Cedar County.

A great deal of concern has been expressed about the budgeting shortfalls of the State of Iowa and how that affects the humanities. A cut in these funds seriously impacts the programs of the OSA. Working through the Iowa Cultural Coalition and participating in Cultural Advocacy Day on March 6, it is essential that we work together to restore funding for historic preservation in Iowa. This is a top priority for the OSA and our IAS membership.

Accolades to Michael and Nancy Heimbaugh and Joe Thompson for our informative and professional Newsletters and the IAS Journal. We receive these fine

publications in a timely manner and they are truly a credit to our organization.

I have heard so many favorable comments about the Field Trip a few years ago sponsored by the IAS, I would like everyone to give serious thought to undertaking another trip of that nature sometime in 2003. Suggestions on where that trip might take us is in order and could be directed to any Board member.

Membership Secretary Michael Perry informs me we finished 2002 with 501 IAS memberships. This is terrific news. We have listed 19 new members and now we need to make sure we take care of renewing our present memberships. Michael needs to hear from you soon if you haven't taken care of this responsibility.

IAS Treasurer Tom Harvey reports we are on solid footing with our treasury balance, our membership has been increasing, and our individual Chapters are active. It seems to me that we are well on our way for another successful and productive year. Our Executive Board works well together for the benefit of all IAS members.

IAS KEYES-ORR AWARD WINNERS

1977	Don Spears
1978	John and Barb Feeley, and Ruth Thornton
1979	David Carlson
1980	Mildred Wedel and Henry Field
1981	Arnold Roggman
1982	D.D. Davis
1983	Pat and Paul Williams
1984	Betsy Lyman and Gary Valen
1985	(No award given this year)
1986	Alton K. Fisher, and Richard Slattery
1987	Duane Anderson
1988	(No award given this year)
1989	(No award given this year)
1990	Dale Henning
1991	Arlo Johnson
1992	Donald and Thelma Pidcock
1993	Deb Zieglowsky Baker
1994	Dennis Miller
1995	Shirley Schermer
1996	Joe Beals
1997	David Gradwohl
1998	Dale and Marian Gifford
1999	W. D. Frankforter and James Pilgrim
2000	Merle Simonsen
2001	Reynold Ruppe, Charles and Shirley Smith
2002	William Green and Robin Lillie

IAS Announcements

Events-Education-News

Iowa Archaeology Month 2002: Bags, Bowls, Boxes and Baskets: Life Before Plastic **Lynn M. Alex, OSA**

Iowa Archaeology Month 2002 has come and gone. This year over 80 events were held in 50 communities statewide throughout September, reaching an audience estimated at about 30,000. Coordinated and funded by the Office of the State Archaeologist, direct financial sponsorship totaling over \$10,000 was also received from seven organizations including the Iowa Archeological Society, State Historical Society of Iowa, Humanities Iowa and the National Endowment for the Humanities, National Park Service, Fred Maytag Family Foundation, Association of Iowa Archaeologists, and the Iowa State University Archaeology Laboratory. In addition, a number of local hosting organizations provided honoraria for speakers and Menards of Kewanee, Illinois donated equipment for two field weekends at Bonaparte Pottery which provided the kick-off event for IAM 2002. Dozens of hosts including libraries, county historical societies, county conservation centers, IAS chapters, and schools offered programs and often arranged for the more than 50 individual presenters this year.

The IAM 2002 theme highlighted the importance that containers of various styles, shapes, and kind have played throughout Iowa history and the evidence they might leave in the archaeological record. The workshops, demonstrations, exhibits, tours, and presentations offered throughout September admirably addressed this theme focusing on a myriad of examples including pottery, historic kilns, basketry, boxes, tinware, feed and clothing sacks, lunchboxes, wooden bowls and boxes, and pipebags. From the earliest Native American pottery of the first century B.C. to the late 20th century baskets of Amana artisans, Iowa cultures have met shared needs for cooking, storage, and transport through containers of different materials, shapes, and styles. Vessels of various kinds found in archaeological and historic sites demonstrate that people create different, often fascinating solutions to needs that are universal reminding us of the similarities and connections between cultures past and present. As illustrated by the IAM presenters, containers also reflect dynamic social processes such as invention, interaction, adoption, trade, and the impact of a market economy.

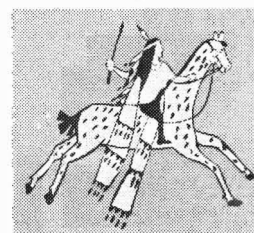
While many events incorporated the IAM 2002 theme, other types of programs also proved popular with audiences. These included Artifact Road Shows, flintknapping demonstrations, prehistoric Time Capsules, tours of sites, Archaeology Days for kids and adults, and slide programs on topics ranging from forensics and archaeology to local updates on field work at Iowa locations including Ft. Des Moines 2 and sites along highways 218 and 34.

3000 copies of the Iowa Archaeology Month Poster, entitled "The Space Within," composed by Will Thomsen of Armadillo Arts in Iowa City, were distributed. The poster featured photographs of historic containers submitted by organizations and individuals statewide. Aaron Greiner, photographer and graduate student in Anthropology at Iowa State University, took over a third of the photos at the Sac and Fox tribal office in Tama and the Iowa State University Archaeology Laboratory. Last year's IAM poster won third place in the national contest sponsored by the Society for American Archaeology.

This was the tenth anniversary of Iowa's annual celebration on archaeology, which expanded from a week to a month four years ago. In one decade IAM has matured from a tenuous event that required annual reestablishment of partnerships to one that is now included on the regular fall schedule of organizations across the state. With this decade-long history, it is time to evaluate whether IAM is addressing its intended mission of promoting awareness of Iowa's nonrenewable archaeological heritage while encouraging public participation in its understanding and conservation. Both the Education Committee at the Office of the State Archaeologist and the IAS Board has been asked to assist with this retrospective and determine where to go from here. If IAS members or others who are familiar with IAM would like to offer their opinions and suggestions please contact Lynn M. Alex at the Office of the State Archaeologist.

The success of Iowa Archaeology Month continues to derive from partnerships established with dozens of organizations, presenters, hosts, and sponsors statewide. This year was no exception, and sincere gratitude is extended to these individuals, organizations, and communities.

Membership Reminder



It's a good day to pay membership dues!

If you have not already renewed, please do so soon.

Check your 2002 **IAS Journal** for the nifty

Renewal Return Envelope.

Don't miss any 2003 newsletters or the next Journal.

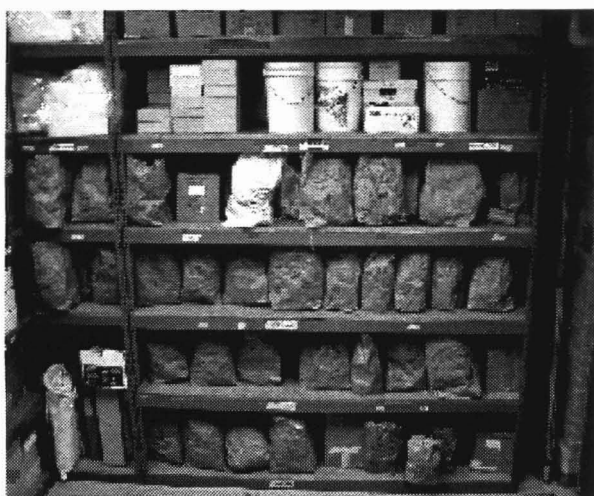


BONAPARTE POTTERY LAB WEEKENDS

by Maria Schroeder

Supervisor IAM Bonaparte Project

The Bonaparte Pottery Factory (13VB200) lab weekends have been going well beyond expectations! Thank you to everyone involved. As many IAS members know, we collected a lot of resources from the Bonaparte Weekend Field Project, sponsored by the IAS as part of Iowa Archaeology Month last summer. Resource materials brought back to UI-OSA's lab for processing included fragments of the vessels and other wares produced by the potters, fragments of the kiln fabric (materials that were part of the kilns), fragments and whole pieces of kiln furniture (materials that were used to help steady, stack, protect, and monitor conditions in the kiln), materials associated with standing structures during the time of the pottery's operation, tools used by the potters, and other miscellaneous cultural resources. Included in this last category are the occasional pre-contact Native American materials such as flakes, stone tool(s), FCR, and maybe some Woodland pottery. As more detailed cataloging is done, this material should become more obvious.



Thanks to the efforts of IAS members and other volunteers, everything (100%!) has been washed and rough sorted. However the Bonaparte material needs to be further processed. This next step of processing includes detailed sorting, inventorying, cataloging and initial analysis. The inset picture should give members an idea of how much material awaits this further processing. Keep in mind that the bags in the picture are grocery sized and many are stacked two deep along the bottom four shelves.

After this phase of processing, there is another series of steps. These will include, but are not limited to, some labeling, refitting, and further analysis. Further analysis includes determining minimal number of individual vessels (MNI). Once the MNI of vessel types is known there are many other avenues of research to be explored. Examining the relationship between types of ware being produced at

the factory and change in the mid to late Victorian, agrarian-based economy/society in Iowa is just one. Other materials to be analyzed further, such as kiln furniture, may indicate firing conditions within individual kiln firings. Hopefully this will contribute to a correlation between types of wares produced, number of kilns, and changes in the overall operations of the pottery in space and time. But, before any conclusions can be drawn, data entry and basic numbers crunching will have to be done.

So, even though the initial processing has been completed, there is more work to do. If you have a few hours on the weekend and would like to become involved with the Bonaparte lab weekends, please do! Or if you have been involved and thought we were almost done, there is still plenty more to do! Several IAS members and others pursuing their own research have requested copies of the original 1995 Bonaparte Contract Completion Report. With the help of Beth Pauls, I am trying to get economically – priced copies made through the University of Iowa. So, hopefully before the annual IAS meeting in May, these copies will be available at a reasonable rate.

Enclosed is a list of IAS members and other volunteers whose contribution to the Bonaparte lab weekends has made it such a success. Thank you again, and I encourage you to continue with your contributions to Iowa's archaeological research (especially historic, just kidding).

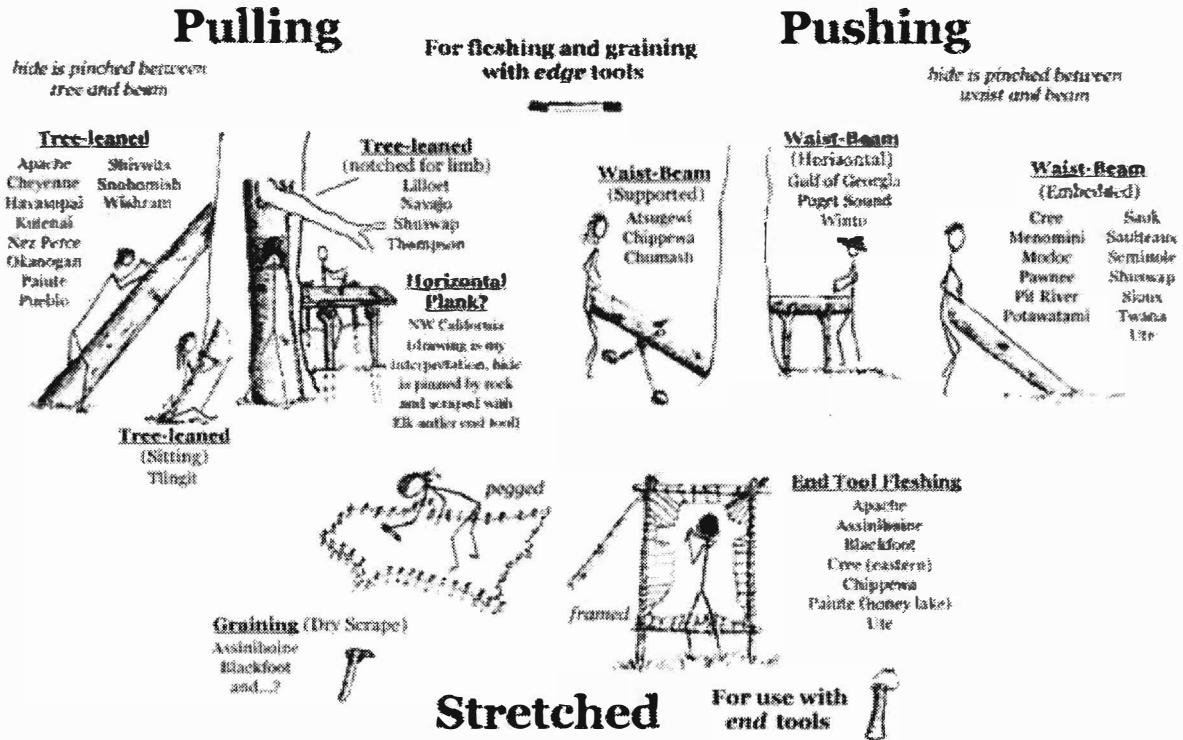
Bobbe Akre	Meredith Goodry
Mary Noble	Don Thomas
Lynn Alex	Myrna Gray
Sarah Pitzen	Marilyn Thomas
Bill Anderson	Steve Hankin
Don Raker	Helen Vogel Brady
Danise Baldus	Rosemary Harding
Tom Redlinger	Cheryl Walsh
Mike Bresnahan	Tom Harvey
Courtney Richenbacher	Jeanne White
Matt Bricker	Lisa Hayes-Hines
Wayne Shannon	Alex White
Orsen Chantooni	Catherine Hunter
June Silliman	Thomas Whittington
Gary Dalecky	Molly Ketchum
Jessica Smith	Charlotte Wright
Mark L. Dillon	John McLure
Juana Smith	Kathryn Wynes
Lowell Doud	Milo Mendenhall
Jane Swails	Fred Gee
Gail Nichols	Ginalie Swain

Brain Tanning

by Kathy Dice/Naturalist

Louisa County Conservation Board

Tanning was a method for Ancient Iowans to process the skins of animals into soft, flexible material for coverings or containers. There are as many different ways to tan a hide as there are tanners. In a single group, there may have been considerable variation from person to person.



Brain tanning usually entailed using the emulsified oils in brain tissue to keep the fibers in a skin loose and flexible. The skin must first be prepared to absorb these oils. The inner membrane of the hide must be removed along with the tough, outer layer of skin, known as the grain along with the hair.

Dry Scrape

Large, tough hides such as buffalo, moose, and elk were most likely dry scaped. This would entail stretching the hide out on a wooden frame or staking it out on the ground. The hide would then be fleshed and scraped using a variety of tools. Muscle, fat and membranes would be removed from the flesh side. The hide would be allowed to dry, then flipped so the

hair side was assessable. The dried hide would then be scraped to remove the hair/fur and grain. This is best done with very sharp, smooth tools. Mussel shells could work or well-knapped flint.



Because the hide is stretched tight and dry, any nicks in the edges of fleshing tools could easily slice through a thin hide. Dry scraping worked well on large, thick hides. Hides could be thinned in the scraping process and were easier to handle in a frame or on the ground.

Wet-scraped or beaming

For processing thin hides such as white tail deerskins, the wet scrape method would have been more practical. This technique would involve laying the hide over a smooth wooden beam. The hide was usually pinched between the beam and the body of the worker or between the beam and the supporting structure to stabilize the hide.

The tanner would then use long, flat tools for scraping. The tools needed a definite edge, but do not need to be very sharp. The ulna radial from a deer has a ready-made edge for scraping. Wrapping the ends in moss would allow for more comfortable grips. A straighter edge could be had from the hump vertebrae of a buffalo, or a straightened rib. A wooden handle with embedded flint would also work.

After scraping off muscle and fat from the flesh side, the hide would be flipped and the grain and hair removed from the other side.

Removal of the grain and hair was made easier by soaking the hide in a solution of wood ash and water for 2-4 days. After scraping off the grain and hair, the hide would then need to be rinsed in a stream or pond to remove all of the ash-water. This technique requires access to water but the alkali solution affects the fibers of the skin, allowing for easier penetration of the brain's oils.

Braining

At this point the hide could be stretched and dried and used as rawhide. To make leather, further treatment with some type of emulsified oil is necessary. A variety of materials can be used including jayoba berries or saguaro cactus seeds but by far the most common was brain. An animal usually has enough brains to tan its own hide.

The brains can be removed from the animal's skull using a 2 – 10 pound stone with a narrow edge. Pounding along the cranial fissure at the top of the skull would be most effective.

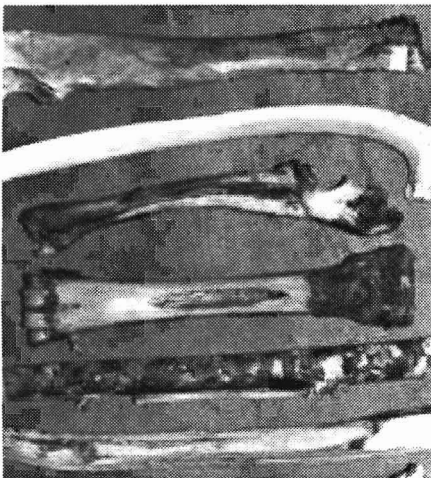
The brains could be mixed with equal parts of hot water. The hide could be soaked in this solution, or the mixture pasted onto the hide.

Excess moisture could then be wrung out of the hide. By repeating the soaking and wringing steps several times, the fibers in the hide would be evenly coated with the emulsified oils.

Softening

The now damp, well-wrung hide would need to be kept stretched and flexible as it dries. Abrading the hide while stretching and drying creates a softer texture. The damp hide could be stretched in a frame and softened. Any tool with an abrasive or sharp edge could be hafted to a stick and used on the framed hide. This would have been handiest for large, heavy hides.

Smaller hides could be worked by pulling back and forth over a sharp or abrasive edge. Tree saplings with rough bark, braided rope or leather or sinew, buffalo scapula with the center removed, tied to a tree, a wooden post with an embedded piece of flint.



Reference:

Richards, Matt. *"Deerskins into buckskins how to tan with natural materials: a field guide for hunters and gatherers"*. Backcountry Publishing, Cave Junction, Oregon 1997.

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Belitz. "Brain Tanning the Sioux Way".

Skinner, Alanson. "Ethnology of the Ioway Indians". Bulletin of the Public Museum of Milwaukee Vol V. Milwaukee: 1926.

Perishable Material Culture

by

Tim Weitzel and Wendy Robertson

At first thought, the study of perishable materials from antiquity may seem counterintuitive. We all know that, if left to the elements, it takes only a few years, or perhaps even months for these materials to decompose. Anyone who has spent even a small number of hours on a typical large-scale excavation in Iowa is painfully aware of how infrequently bone, shell, or plant remains, like charcoal and seeds, are found intact and approximately within their original context.

Lithic and ceramic analysis have dominated the methodology of Midwestern archaeological taxonomy. It is plainly difficult to construct cultural sequences from materials other than projectile points and pottery fragments. Still, when perishable materials are found, they offer a wealth of information about past cultures. In fact, so much more can be gained by very small samples of perishable material culture that it is generally worth the trouble to use more extensive research techniques and far greater amounts of labor than are typically undertaken on archaeological projects. This area of study is rapidly becoming more widespread and even in the Midwest it promises to offer new and exciting additions to the tools with which we study past cultures.

Perishable materials can be generalized to the extent that they include all culturally modified material that would normally decompose if left to the elements. These are generally organic materials, such as bone, antler, wood and other plant remains, and coprolites. While everything will eventually decay, given enough time, the slower rate at which ceramics and especially of lithics decay, puts these artifacts in the nonperishable category. These nonperishable artifacts are just a small fraction of what once were used by prehistoric cultures. It is estimated that 90 to 95 percent of prehistoric objects were made of perishable material. A long list of perishable materials both utilitarian and of a more symbolic nature have been recovered in archaeological contexts, including: plant leaves, plant stems, wood, skins, fur, sinew, hair, bark, feathers, gourds, carapace, and shell. Many objects that once were made of multiple material groups, such as hafted tools, may only be partially preserved, as in arrow points, hoes, adzes, axes, and mauls. Many of the objects made of these materials were highly complex and labor intensive to make, indicating a significant amount of what people did in the past is ignored if we do not study perishable materials.

There is a fairly limited set of circumstances under which perishable materials might be preserved. The most likely possibility in Iowa is the carbonization of materials as a result of being burnt. Although transformed by fire, carbonized remains of seeds, bone, wood, and plant stalks can all be identified, provided a sufficient amount of the material was carbonized and the material is carefully recovered from its archaeological context. In a manner similar to carbonization, perishable fibers made of plant materials can also be preserved by prolonged contact with metals. As the metal oxidizes, some of the oxidized material essentially mineralizes the plant fibers, replacing the perishable materials with non-perishable mineral salts. Sometimes the actual article is preserved, because the local environment in which the object is located lacks either oxygen or water—critical components in the process of decay. Perishable materials have been found in caves and within perennially dry soil protected against moisture from the surface. Similarly, articles made of plant materials have been found in totally submerged conditions, called an anaerobic environment because of the lack of oxygen. Perishable material can also be preserved within permafrost, a circumstance not found in Iowa. In certain circumstances, these finds are exciting and obvious upon first encountering them. Nearly complete examples of fabric and footwear have been found in caves, for instance. More frequently, evidence of perishable material is fragmentary and is recovered through careful examination of specially-treated flotation samples or through advanced analytical techniques.

Indirect evidence can also be used relatively often. Very detailed images of fiber materials can be derived by studying the impressions past peoples made with them, either intentionally, as in the impressions made on ceramic vessels, or by association, as on daub, burnt earth, or cave floors. Silhouette images of perishable materials preserved where they once lay can be identified through analysis of residues of such as starches, lipids, proteins, and silica opal phytoliths. The latter, in fact has revealed ghosted images of fabric objects on archaeological living surfaces outside of the Midwest.

Midwestern archaeologists often study animal bone and carbonized plant remains found in archaeological contexts. Faunal analysis is not new, and its techniques are quite specific, so that discussion will not be included here except to say that traditional faunal studies tend not to concentrate on areas outside of number of species and individual animals identified and number of specimens recovered and may or may not include observation of modifications to bone. Similarly, paleoethnobotanical analysis could be included

under the heading of perishable fibers, as could radiometric dating, and in fact are employed to identify traces of perishable materials that have already perished, but the techniques used to identify, classify, and obtain dates from carbonized seeds and other plant materials are highly specific and better left to other discussion.

Fiber studies have been conducted for many years, but until recently, this research was focused in the southwest U.S., Mexico, and Central and South America. In the last decade, there has been a rapid increase in the amount of research activity concerning prehistoric fabrics specifically east of the Rocky Mountains. It is the study of objects of material culture, particularly perishable fibers, that is fairly new, especially in Eastern North America. The term *fabric* is used as the generic term for all things made of fibers, including basketry, mats, twining, loom woven cloth, cordage.

Fabric examples are found throughout North America and date backward from the present to at least the Paleo-Indian period East of the Rocky Mountains. The oldest surviving textile from a reliably dated context is from Meadowcroft Rockshelter, Pennsylvania and is dated between 13,670–11,930 and 12,000–10,600 years ago. This fragment of a vessel wall, possibly a basket, was made of simple plaiting (one over one), a technique used to weave strips of reed, cane, wood, or in this case, bark. This same technique is used by children today to make placemats out of strips of construction paper.

A fragment of two over three plaiting was identified at Petit Anse at the surface of a fault line salt dome and stratigraphically below a fossil elephant, and has been assigned a late Pleistocene date from its context. A textile expert has postulated that cordage, netting, and basketry manufacture, as well as the production of related fiber perishable materials may well have been part and parcel of the technological milieu of the first migrants to the New World. This ascription is based in part of the complexity of the earliest fragments of twining—a basketry technique that involves twisting pairs of horizontal strands of prepared plant fibers around vertical fibers. As with other basketry techniques, no loom is required for twining. The earliest examples of twined fabric are dated to 10,200–9,200 years ago at Graham Cave, Missouri, 9,450–9,250 years ago at Icehouse Bottom, Tennessee, and 8,950–6,950 years ago at Russell Cave, Alabama. Although these examples are reliably dated to the Early Archaic, the complexity is so great that the roots of this technique must have developed thousands of years previously to the earliest surviving examples.

Needless to say, these fabrics pre-date pottery, with baskets and bags fulfilling some of the functional roles that pottery would later subsume. The techniques to make the fabrics and the items that were made from them seem to have remained fairly stable for thousands of years across wide geographic areas. Twined bag fragments are some of the earliest textiles found in North America. They continue to have been used for thousands of years, including extensive utilization in the Woodland period, highly elaborate twined bags made by women in the contact period, and many post-contact bags which are reposed in ethnographic collections. Twined bags continued to be made into the twentieth century, but by the latter half of the nineteenth century, some of the construction techniques and designs were altered because of newly available materials.

At a certain level, all fabric constructions, including rope, string, lariats, ties, netting, footwear, belts, bags, and some types of baskets are made from cordage. Simple cordage was made from the inner bark of trees such as linden or basswood, hickory, slippery elm, cedar, and various birch, or from fibers of the leaves or inner stem of herbaceous perennial plants such as rattlesnake master, several types of milkweed and nettles, as well as dogbane. Cordage for string, ties, lariats, and the like were made from sinew and raw hide strips. Bison hair is recorded to have been spun and used like cordage to make headbands, scarves, belts, shirts and was strong enough to use as lariats.

In addition to cordage, reeds and cattails were used to make mats that were frequently recorded in the early historic period to be used within, around, and on domestic structures, as well as lining storage pits. Sometimes structures tended to be covered with bark slabs. Some items made of plant materials include more than one type of fiber, as in wood and basketry or wood and twined cradle boards, or fabrics made from a feathers or bison fur incorporated into twined fabrics.

Many perishables were made only of animal materials and include parfleche, the rawhide storage and carrying containers made by plains tribes, as well as bags, pouches, clothing, footwear, and coverings for structures and floors made from the tanned skin or furs of deer, elk, rabbit, bison, beaver, and muskrat.

From historic analogies, the materials used for any one object will vary from time to time, or place to place with raw materials with similar attributes substituted as needed or as available. The choices of raw material in themselves may indicate economic, social, and *environmental factors*. This is particularly evident in rapid replacement of many raw materials for trade items in the period of historic contact.

Probably the area of greatest potential for current study in the area of perishable materials from Iowa archaeological contexts lies in the continued study of prehistoric ceramic vessel fragments. One of the most frequent surface treatments seen on ceramic vessels from the prehistoric upper Midwest is the impressions from cordage and fabrics. Traditionally these impressions are placed into the categories of cord marks, cord impressions, net impressions, and fabric impressions, but clear definitions for these divisions have remained problematic and continue to be the subject of mild debate. This technique is not at all new and was first proposed as an analytical technique in 1896 by a contemporary of Franz Boas, the putative progenitor of American anthropology. However, with few exceptions, it has only infrequently been utilized to its fullest extent in ceramic analysis in the upper Midwest. Much work remains to be done in analysis of ceramic fabric impressions.

In addition to the vast collections of fabric castings on ceramic fragments, and the many post-contact materials preserved in ethnographic collections, there are a few examples of surviving prehistoric perishable fabrics from Iowa. There is at least one fragment of twined fabric from the Williams Site in Plymouth County and several portions of mineralized twined bags from Toolesboro Mounds in

Louisa County. Perishable artifacts are not easily found, but with careful identification and evaluation techniques, it is certainly possible additional finds of these types could be discovered. Cooking fires occur in any habitation site, and many excavations of structures have shown evidence of being burnt. Caves are more frequent in Iowa than most people would recognize and several significant finds have been located in caves in Iowa. The potential for totally submerged articles exists within the marshes and peaty bog land found in the Des Moines lobe, the lower reaches of glacial outwash channels such as the lower reaches of the Iowa, Cedar, Wapsipinicon and Maquoketa rivers as well as along backwater sloughs and cut-off channels of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

Clearly, the potential exists to find articles constructed of perishable fibers in numerous contexts throughout Iowa, especially at locations where no sites have been previously recorded. It is impossible to accurately predict what might be found in future explorations into Iowa's past. Much of the archaeology that is conducted in Iowa relies on externally motivated factors, such as national historic preservation laws. But, it is important to consider potential ways to locate and identify perishable materials so that we may more fully utilize ways to understand the past.



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE
IAS SPRING MEETING
MAY 24TH**

**There are lots of activities being planned.
IAS Members will be mailed details soon!!**

IAS Chapter News

Black Hawk Regional Chapter

Henry Helene presented *One Day's find on the Virginlona - Real Treasure in Florida* for the December 4th meeting. For the January 8th meeting, Dr. Kenneth Atkinson gave a presentation on his work with *The Dead Sea Scrolls*. Dr. Charles Adelman gave a presentation on *Myth as Art* at the Cedar Falls Public Library for the February meeting.

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Central Iowa Chapter

The University of Iowa's Office of the State Archaeologist: What Your State Archaeologist Can (and does!) Do for You was presented by State Archaeologist Beth Pauls at the January meeting of the CIC. For February's meeting Dr. Jill Wagner of ISU's Anthropology department presented *Investigating Heritage Tourism in the US*. For several years she has investigated images of American Indians presented at popular American heritage tourism sites such as Crazy Horse Monument, Buffalo Bill Cody Museum and Little Bighorn Battlefield. Displays and products at these sites range from the most stereotypical to those deemed authentic by concerned American Indian groups. These images and souvenirs are one component in the construction of stereotypical views of Native Americans and play a role in building a coherent mainstream American identity.

Contact Michael Heimbaugh

3923 29th St., Des Moines, IA 50310
(515) 255-4909

paleomike@msn.com

Southeast Iowa Archaeology Chapter

The Southeast Iowa Chapter held the first meeting for 2003 on February 10th. The evening was spent planning activities for the new year. The chapter's 4th Annual Archaeology Awareness Day will be held Saturday, April 5th at Pioneer Ridge Nature Center. Plans were also made to investigate a number of sites in the spring and summer.

Contact Angela Hopkins

1149 145th Street, Pella, IA 50219
(641) 626-4170

ash@kdsi.net

Keyes Chapter

Contact Keith Young

11236 Co. Rd. E17, Scotch Grove, IA 52310
(319) 465-6393 or e-mail:

pekoyoung@n-connect.net.

Quad City Archaeological Society

In November Beth Pauls, the new State Archaeologist, hosted the chapter on a field trip to OSA. The University Natural History Museum was also toured by the group. Rebecca Johnson spoke to the Chapter on the *Gast Farm Ceramics* in November as well. Quad City Chapter members Ferrel Anderson and Bernie Peeters gave a presentation on the *Kennewick Man* site in Washington State for the January program. February 25th Dave Benn of Bear Creek Archaeology, Inc. gave a talk on *Excavations of Late Woodland sites in the Mississippi Valley*.

Ferrel has represented the QCAS in efforts to continue land acquisition at Albany Mounds and finish interpretive signs for that site that will be made by a contractor. He and the President of the Friends of the Albany Indian Mounds Foundation have been asked to generate a master development plan for the site. Plans are being made to survey the Albany Mounds site, which surprisingly had not yet been done. The chapter is also continuing excavations at the DeNeve site, a multi component site that is owned by one of the QCAS members.

Contact Ferrel Anderson

1923 East 13th St., Davenport, IA 52803

(319) 324-0257

andersonfe@msn.com

Northwest Chapter

The Chapter worked on the *Van Voorhis Collection* during meetings in January, February and March.

Contact Linda Burkhart

Sanford Museum

117 E. Willow, Cherokee, IA 51012

(712) 225-3922

sanford@cherokee.k12.ia.us

Paul Rowe Chapter

Contact Dennis Miller

31126 Applewood Rd., Silver City, IA 51571

(712) 525-1007

Farming99@aol.com

Ellison Orr Chapter

Chad Burroughs presented *The Oneota of the New Albin Area and the Ed Colsch Collection in Northeastern Allamakee County, Iowa* for the January 19th meeting held at the New Albin City Library in New Albin, Iowa.

Contact Lori Stanley, (319) 387-1283

or Joe B. Thompson, (319) 387-0092

Orr Chapter, PO Box 511, Decorah, IA 52101

jjaseditor@hotmail.com

UI-OSA NEWS

A SPECIAL SECTION
OF THE IOWA
ARCHEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



Tribal Resource Kits

OSA in cooperation with members of the Meskwaki tribe (Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa) is developing six tribal resource kits focusing on Meskwaki history and culture. Funded by the Fred Maytag Family Foundation, the kits highlight the changes in Meskwaki history and culture from Contact Period times to the present. Resources will include hands-on items of material culture, maps, photographs, an audio tape of the Meskwaki language, student activities (for 4th through 8th grade), teachers' guide, brief history, and an extensive bibliography.

Four of the kits will be available for use for Iowa educators and two will be retained by the Meskwaki for local education and outreach. The kits will be ready by September 2003. To ensure dissemination to up to 150 schools in Iowa, the OSA will introduce the kits at state educational conferences and also promote them on the OSA web site, and in state-wide conservation, archaeological, and K-12 educational publications. The first twenty educators who apply will receive the kits on loan at no cost. After which they may be borrowed for a modest use fee. The OSA will retain responsibility for the curation and loan of the kits. Kits may be borrowed by schools, libraries, museums, historical societies, and county conservation centers.

2003 Archaeology Month

Iowa Archaeology Month 2003 will be held September 20 through October 19. Borrowing from the title of a presentation by Gerard Baker, the IAM 2003 theme "We Saw Them Coming," emphasizes the Contact Period on the eve of the 1804 Corps of Discovery's passage along western Iowa. Presentations will center on the native residents at that time; the affects of Euroamerican-introduced disease, technology, and policy; and what archaeology has to tell about this tumultuous period.

To schedule or offer an IAM event please contact Lynn M. Alex. For information on IAM 2003 see OSA website: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/>

Archaeology for K-12 Teachers

Iowa's 15 Area Education Agencies function as an intermediate service unit and assist the Department of Education in providing services and support to school districts and to schools. June 16-20, Southern Prairie AEA (no. 15) in southeast Iowa will offer a week-long professional development workshop for primary and middle school educators entitled "Archaeology in the Classroom," facilitated by Bill Anderson, IAS president, and instructed by Lynn Alex. The workshop will promote the integration of archaeology into existing curriculum according to social studies and science standards. Workshops such as this will prepare for the 2005 introduction of a national archaeology curriculum entitled *Project Archaeology* program to Iowa teachers.

Litka Ridged Field Site

IAS members are invited to help map the Litka Ridge Field Site (13OB31) in O'Brien County in August. Lynn Alex and Steve Lensink recently submitted a grant proposal to the Iowa Academy of Science in support of two weeks high resolution mapping of this important late prehistoric site along Waterman Creek. Aerial photographs, taken by IAS member Mary Helgevoel, and IAS investigations at the Litka site (1991 and 1994) indicate the presence of prepared, raised garden beds with approximately 15 linear earthen ridges in a two hectare area. Test excavations at the site confirmed the swell-and-swale topography marking the agricultural beds, but produced few Mill Creek artifacts. The Litka site is situated immediately north of another Mill Creek village, the Lange site (13OB7) test-excavated by IAS members in 1994, and may be associated with this community or with the more distant Double Ditch site.

If funded, the current study proposes producing a high resolution topographic site map with electronic total station technology. As Litka is the only recorded prehistoric ridged field site in Iowa, its thorough documentation is important. Electronic total station technology has the potential to record surface topography of previously photographed ridges as well as features of less visible relief. The detailed baseline map produced will offer a more accurate record of the number and extent of prehistoric agricultural features and

serve as a guide to future site research, planning, and conservation. A similar map produced of the Double Ditch Site (13OB8) revealed features not previously demarcated by either aerial photographs or excavation.

The project will be August 11-25, 2003. Participants must arrange their own accommodations. Anyone interested in assisting should contact Steve or Lynn.

Education Committee Meets

The OSA Education committee met to discuss the coming year's goals and projects. The committee consists of OSA staff, K-12 educators, county conservation naturalists and one historic archaeologist. IAS members on the committee include Leah Rogers, Barb MacDougall, Lynn Alex, Beth Pauls, Shirley Schermer, Mark Anderson, Julie Hoyer, Kathy Dice, and Gail Barels.

This year's meeting centered upon:

- Dissemination of information and materials to educators in Iowa
- Resources, web site development, workshops and institutes for educators
- Iowa Archaeology Month

The committee concluded that Iowa Area Educational Agencies provide the most economical way to disseminate information and materials to K-12 teachers. The committee advised that key people in each AEA should be contacted about specific OSA services, programming, and educational resources. Educators can also be reached through teacher conferences, specific educational newsletters, county conservation workshops and naturalists' conferences. Everyone agreed that an OSA brochure listing resources and services is needed. Resources developed for teachers must address current standards and benchmarks in the sciences, history and social studies. Dissemination of existing OSA resources remains a high priority.

Mary De LaGarza, network administrator, told of plans for redesigning the web-site and welcomed ideas for improving its general content and accessibility.

The IAM 2003 poster will have educational information on the back to help teachers integrate the poster into their class discussions. The 2003 poster will depict a scene that evokes the Contact Period and archaeological discoveries of Euroamerican materials in Native American contexts.

Archaeology Items of Interest

Calendar of Events

April 9-13 - Society for American Archaeology's 68th Annual Meeting at Milwaukee, WI

April 26-27 - First Annual Skunk River Knap-in. Oakland Mills Iowa, Water Works Park. Contact Via: www.geocities.com/flinthead99

May 16-18 - Ft. Osage Knap-in will be held at the Fort near the towns of Sibley and Buckner, east of Kansas City, MO. Call Bob Hunt at 816-228-5051.

May 18-22 - American Association of Museums' Annual Meeting and MuseumExpo at Portland, OR

May 19-23 - National Park Service's 2003 Archaeological Prospection Workshop at Cahokia Mounds. Registration is \$475.00. Contact: [steve de vore@nps.gov](mailto:steve_de_vore@nps.gov).

Volunteer Excavations in South Dakota

Plans are underway for 2003 volunteer excavations in South Dakota. The project's proposed date is June 13-24 at the Hartford Beach Village. The excavations of the Chinese District in Deadwood will begin as weather permits. Investigations will be particularly exciting with the excavations of structures of known Chinese function. For information on opportunities to volunteer call (605) 394-1936.

Work on the Bonaparte Pottery materials will continue at UI-OSA. Anyone who has not taken part in the recording of data onto the spread sheets should arrive by 9 AM to receive instructions on Saturday or Sunday the last two weekends in March. Any youngsters under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

E-Archaeology & Public Education The Winter Issue of E-Archaeology & Public Education contains articles about SAA's Public Education Award, excavations at Moundville in Alabama, and the Double Ditch Site in North Dakota, as well as news about the museums at Dickson Mounds and Cahokia Mounds. There is information on summer workshops for teachers, as well as on a variety of upcoming conferences. Web sites highlighted in the issue include ones on Great Lakes shipwrecks, the Plymouth Colony, and virtual Jamestown. Visit the site at: <http://www.saa.org/PubEdu/a&pe/index.html>.

Catalog: See *Miners, Supplying Geologists, Engineers, Surveyors, and Archaeologists World Wide* at: www.minerex.com

Membership Information

Contact Membership Secretary, Iowa Archeological Society, University of Iowa, 700 Clinton Street Building, Iowa City, IA 52242-1030.

Membership Dues

Voting:

Active	\$15
Household	\$18
Sustaining	\$25

Non-Voting:

Student (under 18)	\$7
Institution	\$20

Newsletter Information

The Iowa Archeological Society is a non-profit, scientific society legally organized under the corporate laws of Iowa. Members of the Society share a serious interest in the archaeology of Iowa and the Midwest. *Iowa Archeology News* is published four times a year.

All materials for publication should be sent to the Editor: Michael Heimbaugh, 3923 29th St., Des Moines, IA 50310. Phone (515) 255-4909. E-mail: paleomike@msn.com

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