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Scene of a Winter Bison Kill 5900 Years Ago

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Will Thomson, Lynn M. Alex,
and Stephen C. Lensink

Today West Lake Okoboji is a popular tourist destination in northwest Iowa. But according to a just-received radiocarbon date, prehistoric Iowans were dispatching and butchering bison out on the lake ice on a wintery day nearly 6000 years ago.

The discovery in 2000 by scuba divers of 250 bison bones on the lake bottom began a detective story that has only unraveled with careful study and research. The addi-

tion of the radiocarbon date has elevated the detective story to a real thriller.

Mark Peterson and Cheri Schillinger of Spencer, Iowa, were on their fourth dive in Lake Okoboji between Atwell Point and Fort Dodge Point eight years ago when Petersen noticed what looked like a piece of driftwood. "We see a lot of driftwood, but I thought this piece looked different," Petersen said. "When I pulled it out of the muck, I knew that it definitely was not a piece of wood" (Truesdell 2000). What the

—continued on page 2

divers had plucked from the lake bed was bone, and when they went back, they located more.

The bones were found scattered across 400 m of lake bottom at depths of 10–15 m and 120 m from shore. The lake bed slopes steeply in the site area, but many of the bones were found where the slope flattens out to form a narrow shelf or bench. The bones appeared to lie buried in compact, non-gravelly oxidized sand covered by several centimeters of loose, historic silt. The divers exposed the bone by fanning the loose silt with their hands. They videotaped the discovery and recorded the location with reference to surface landmarks such as buoys and nearby houses. Joe Artz, Director of OSA's Geospatial Program, recorded the site as 13DK108.

The bones were not densely concentrated in any one area, although vertebrae occurred in clusters of three to four, suggesting that portions of the spinal column may once have been articulated. The recovered elements were mostly long bones, vertebrae, scapulae, and pelvis fragments, with fewer skull elements. The bones were identified by Steve Anderson, then at the Great Lakes Maritime Museum, as the remains of about five modern buffalo, *Bison bison*.

Several of the long bones exhibited systematic percussion removal of their articular ends and splitting of shafts, presumably for marrow extraction. Bone marrow was one of the many parts of the bison used by Native Americans for food. Possible cut marks observed on one scapula indicate that a

tool was used to remove tissue. A grooved stone maul was found in close proximity to the bones. Grooved mauls like this one were used relatively unchanged for thousands of years.

How long ago did all this take place? The original assumption was of a fairly recent event, possibly just before the last resident bison disappeared from Iowa 150 to 200 years ago. This October, however, the results of radiocarbon dating of a tibia from the site considerably altered this picture. The date, reported by Thomas

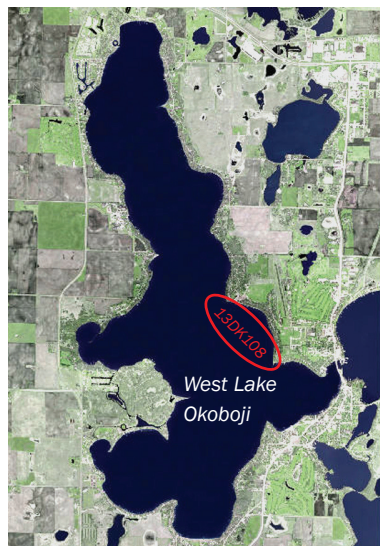
Stafford, of Stafford Research, Inc., Lafayette, Colorado, is 5040 ± 15 radiocarbon years before present (RCYBP). This age yields a calibrated calendar date of 3930–3976 B.C. (1σ), or approximate 5900 years ago, making the Lake Okoboji bison Middle Archaic in age. Stafford noted that the bones were well preserved due to the cold, anoxic waters in which they resided over the past six millennia.

How did stone tools and butchered bison end up in the bottom of

the lake, over 100 m from the modern shoreline? Could lake levels have been lower at the time? Data derived from pollen cores collected nearby in Little Miller's Bay (Baker and Van Zant 1978), combined with information from lake sediments, indicate that northwest Iowa 5040 RCBP was recovering from one of the severest periods of drought of the Middle Holocene. At its peak, 7000–6300 RCBP, prairie vegetation had expanded to the lake shore, and water levels dropped so low that Little Miller's Bay was almost dry. After 6300



George Catlin (1796–1872), "Buffalo Hunt on Snow Shoes," oil on canvas, 25½" x 32.



Bison skull from 13DK108.



RCBP, however, the lake was making a comeback. By 5040 RCBP the presence in the pollen cores of aquatic plants such as bulrush, water milfoil, and green algae indicate rising water levels. At the time the bison were killed, the lake was 7–10 m shallower than today, but the water level at the site location was still 3–10 m deep.

A reasonable scenario is that the bison must have been butchered on a frozen lake surface. After stripping the hides, collecting the meat, and extracting the marrow by breaking open the bones with the maul, the unused remains were left on the ice, and when spring came, they fell through in scattered fashion across the lake bottom.

The age of the bones has surprised even the experts. Plans are now underway to take a closer look at both the bones and the ground stone maul. This discovery remains a work in progress.

Acknowledgments

Others who assisted the project were Steve Anderson, Bill Crumbaugh, and Dave, Sr., Pat, and Dave, Jr. Peterson. Bill Green, Director of the Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit, Wisconsin, and Joe A. Artz of OSA, offered interpretations based on an examination of the Baker and Van Zant studies combined with bathymetric maps from Lake Okoboji. The radiocarbon date was funded by the OSA with arrangements by John F. Doershuk, Director.

References

- Baker, Richard G., and Kent L. Van Zant
1978 Holocene Vegetational Reconstructions in Northwestern Iowa. In *Cherokee Excavations: Holocene Ecology and Human Adaptations in Northwestern Iowa*, edited by Duane C. Anderson and Holmes A. Semken, Jr., pp. 123–138. Academic Press, New York.

- Tom Truesdell
2000 Treasures from the Deep. *Discover* Newspaper, 7 September.



Okoboji Bone Bed Exhibit at the Iowa Great Lakes Maritime Museum

The Iowa Great Lakes Maritime Museum was founded to promote the collection, development, and presentation of Iowa Great Lakes nautical history with emphasis on steamboating, wooden boating, fishing, and sailing. It was established in 1984 to be an aid in the collection of funds for the building of the Okoboji Queen II, a double decker excursion boat modeled from the 19th-century Queen.

In 2008 museum designer, Will Thomson, completed a new display at the Maritime Museum entitled "The Mystery of the Bison Bones." The exhibit portrayed the bison kill as a recent, perhaps historic, event. Because of the new date pushing the bison bones back to nearly 6000 years ago, Will is in the process of amending the display to depict a much more ancient hunting event.



—STEPHEN C. LENSINK

Floyd Parker Collection Donated to OSA

THANKS TO FLOYD PARKER of Eustis, Florida, another important site location has entered the state records. Parker contacted the OSA on August 21, 2008 about Native American artifacts he had collected in Iowa. Upon learning that he could identify the location where the artifacts were found, State Archaeologist John Doershuk encouraged the site's recording. Parker described the setting of his discoveries and with the help of his niece, Bonnie Holloway, also of Eustis, was able to pinpoint the location near Searsboro, Iowa, in Poweshiek County. The new site, called the Parker site (13PH184), is a multicomponent prehistoric site. It is among a handful of sites known in Sugar Creek Township.

Parker, now 87, farmed in Poweshiek County until 1952. He and his wife, Vivian, then moved to Minneapolis where he had a long career as a machinist until moving to Florida in 1987. His father, William Ray Parker, started the artifact collection about

1925 when the family came to Poweshiek County. From 1935 to 1948, items were found by Parker or his father, and sometimes by the two together. Parker reports that they typically discovered one or two artifacts per year, although sometimes more, and usually on higher ground. Items were often spotted after a rain in a recently plowed or cultivated field. After he moved from the farm, Parker kept the collection, always wondering how old the artifacts might be.

Mark Anderson of the OSA agreed to analyze the artifacts. He is currently working on detailed descriptions and has thus far been able to identify projectile points dating from 1000 to 10,000 years ago. Surprisingly, points and related tools dating to the Early and Middle Archaic dominate the collection and include a classic Thebes point, a Dalton adz, a Thebes drill, and a Raddatz point retouched into a scraper. Anderson will identify point types, tool functions, and raw materials in order to increase the research value of the collection.

After receiving word that the Floyd Parker Collection would be accepted into the State Archaeological Repository as a permanent addition, Bonnie Holloway wrote,

Thanks so much for this. It really means a great deal to my Uncle to have these items returned to Iowa and kept together as a collection.... It would be cool for my brother who lives in Iowa (and who is a history buff) and I to see them sometime when I visit up there.



Bonnie and her brother have a standing invitation to visit the OSA when in Iowa City!

We greatly appreciate Floyd Parker's willingness to donate his artifacts and are especially pleased that he could identify the place of their discovery. The fact that this collection came from an area with so few documented sites makes it even more valuable from a research perspective. Thanks to Floyd Parker and his niece for their excellent contribution to Iowa archaeology.

—JOHN F. DOERSHUK AND MARK L. ANDERSON



Ioway and the 18th-Century Fur Trade in Southeast Iowa

Saul Schwartz



THE IOWAY INDIANS occupied a major village on the lower Des Moines River in present Van Buren County, southeast-

ern Iowa, from about the 1760s to the 1820s. An archaeological site in the area represents the remains of this village, home to hundreds of unknown individuals as well as famous chiefs such as White Cloud I (*MaxuThka*), No Heart (*NahjeNinge*), and The Orator (*Wigich^eMañi*). While the Ioways had their own name for their village, the site today is known as Iowaville (13VB124) due to its proximity to a later, nearby settlement with the same name.

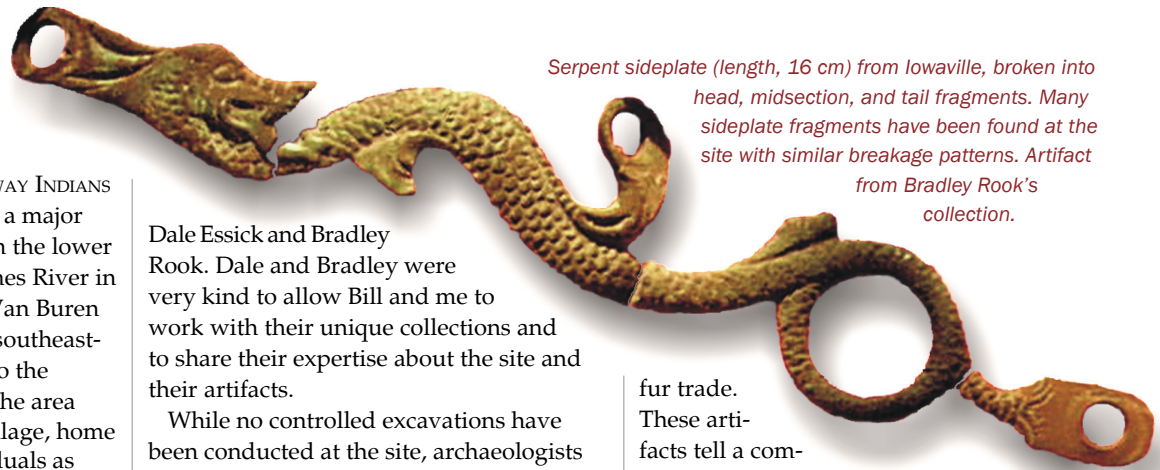
I researched various aspects of Iowaville as part of my honors thesis in anthropology and history at Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin. In addition to looking at documentary sources about the site, my advisor Bill Green and I inventoried two private artifact collections from Iowaville owned by

Dale Essick and Bradley Rook. Dale and Bradley were very kind to allow Bill and me to work with their unique collections and to share their expertise about the site and their artifacts.

While no controlled excavations have been conducted at the site, archaeologists and collectors have gathered nearly 7,000 artifacts from near the surface. The assemblage is dominated by brass, glass, and silver adornments such as beads, bracelets, earrings, pendants, rings, and tinkling cones; brass and iron tools such as axes, gun parts, hoes, kettles, knives, projectile points, and lead shot; faunal remains, especially deer; ceramics; glass fragments; and white-clay and catlinite pipes.

Ioways manufactured some of these items, notably catlinite pipes, but many are goods produced by Euroamericans and exchanged with the Ioways as part of the

Disarticulated gun parts from Iowaville including four stripped lock plates shown at the corners of the photograph. Compare these to the relatively complete assembled lock plate in the center. Artifacts from Dale Essick's collection.



Serpent sideplate (length, 16 cm) from Iowaville, broken into head, midsection, and tail fragments. Many sideplate fragments have been found at the site with similar breakage patterns. Artifact from Bradley Rook's collection.

fur trade. These artifacts tell a complex story of cultural change and continuity at the site—one that contrasts with popular notions that the fur trade quickly led to Indian acculturation and dependency on technologically superior foreign goods. While the Ioways certainly understood and used Euroamerican products, they did not lose their Ioway culture as a result. Rather, the Ioway culture influenced to a significant degree how they interacted with foreign goods.

Gun parts from Iowaville demonstrate the complex and variable ways in which the Ioways adopted and adapted trade goods for their own purposes. The Ioway understood gun technology and repair, and used guns for hunting and fighting. They also altered gun parts and adapted them for uses not part of Euroamerican culture. A large number of disarticulated gun parts, including stripped or nearly stripped lock plates, have been found at Iowaville, indicating that the Ioways understood how to disassemble and reassemble their guns, probably to repair them by replacing broken parts from one firearm with the working parts of another. Breakage patterns in sideplate fragments found at the site suggest that the Ioways removed these serpent-shaped pieces of metal and used them for other, unknown purposes that made sense in an Ioway context.

The 48 metal projectile points recovered from the site also testify to the persistence of bows and arrows, despite the availability of guns. Documentary sources suggest the Ioways found bows and arrows better than guns for hunting buffalo (Morgan 1959:99).



Projectile points from Iowaville. The left four examples are iron, and the right eight are brass. Artifacts from Bradley Rook's collection.

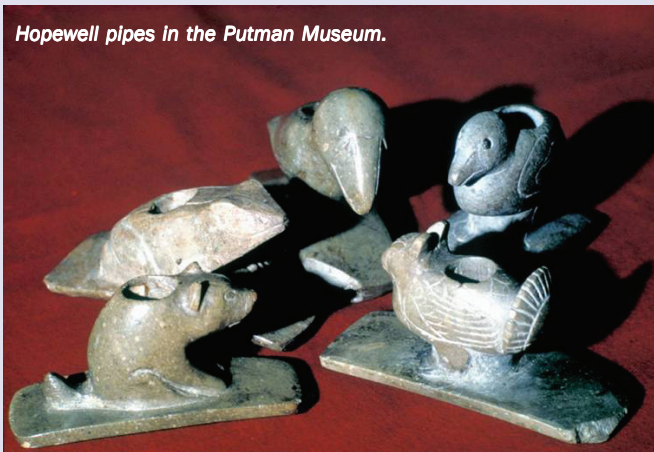
Overall, the Iowaville community accepted certain Euroamerican goods, technologies, and practices into their own culture at the same time that they modified foreign products to meet their own needs, and preserved older aspects of native material culture. While research on the site is only just beginning, it is already clear that Iowaville will make a significant contribution toward understanding important aspects of Iowa's and America's past.

Reference Cited

Morgan, Lewis Henry
1959 *The Indian Journals, 1859-62*, edited by Leslie A. White. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Charles R. Keyes writing in 1920...

"The only other large find of relics like these...was that made by Squier and Davis near Chillicothe, Ohio, during the forties and, as most of this found its way to England, these Scott and Louisa county collections are, I believe, the largest and most important of their kind to be found in any American museum. The time has perhaps come when these relics should be reexamined and fully illustrated by methods which were not known to the workers of the seventies and eighties."



Hopewell pipes in the Putman Museum.

Regarding the treasure-trove of Middle Woodland pipes excavated by the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences in the 19th century from bluff-top mounds of the Mississippi valley.

Source: "Some Materials for the Study of Iowa Archeology." *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 18:357-370.

Iowa Archaeologists

Wikipedia Needs Your Help

This spring one in five Americans accessed the Internet web site Wikipedia.com for general information. Wikipedia is usually the first source of information for children researching school projects, and politicians commonly rely on Wikipedia for general knowledge about topics with which they are unfamiliar. Regardless of how you feel about open-source databases, a resource this important deserves our attention. Most individuals seeking information about Iowa archaeology will look to Wikipedia before they try to find copies of the *IAS Newsletter* or *Journal*, or any other limited-circulation publication about Midwest archaeology.

Currently Iowa archaeology has a modest presence on Wikipedia, with a basic entry under "Iowa archaeology" and a handful of short articles on individual archaeological sites. We need to dramatically expand this presence, creating entries for every impor-

tant site in Iowa, and converting the main Iowa archaeology feature into a comprehensive portal that introduces web surfers to the wonders of Iowa's prehistoric past. So far the following are the only Iowa archaeology related-sites in Wikipedia, and most are short, one-paragraph summaries which need to be expanded:

- Blood Run site
- Edgewater Park site
- Effigy Mounds National Monument
- Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve
- Hartley Fort State Preserve
- Iowa Archeological Society
- Iowa archaeology
- Little Maquoketa River Mounds State Preserve
- Phipps site
- Plum Grove Historic House
- Slinde Mounds State Preserve
- Toolesboro Mound Group

Some of the most important sites in Iowa missing from Wikipedia include Bowen's Prairie, Broken Kettle West, Buxton, Cherokee Sewer, Fort Atkinson, Fort Madison, Gast Spring, Gillett Grove, Iowaville, Milford, Rummells-Maske, Sand Run Slough West, Simonsen, Turin, and Wittrock. Also absent are pieces on major cultural entities such as Great Oasis, Mill Creek, Glenwood, and Iowa Oneota.

The readers of this newsletter are the most informed about important Iowa sites, and most of us are also computer literate. Wikipedia markup is easy to learn. If we work together we can dramatically improve the public's knowledge and understanding of Iowa's spectacular archaeology. If every reader made just one Wikipedia entry or revision, we'd have the best representation of any state in the nation.

WILLIAM E. WHITTAKER

Gillett Grove

A 17th-Century Oneota Site in Northwest Iowa



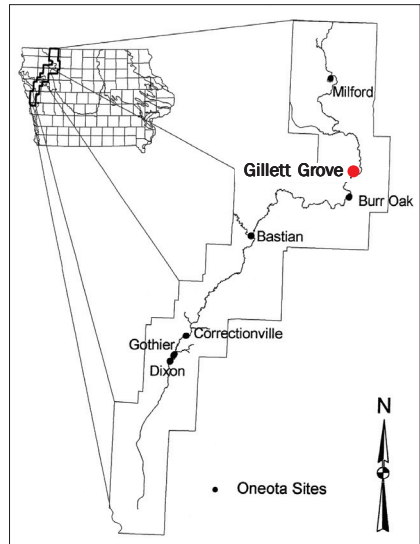
John F. Doershuk and Kayla D. Resnick

The Gillett Grove site (13CY2), located adjacent to the Little Sioux River in southern Clay

County, Iowa, has been since 1995 the subject of ten seasons of field school research sponsored by the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Like other large Oneota villages along the Little Sioux such as Milford, Burr Oak, and Bastian, Gillett Grove has long been known to both collectors and professionals. An area newspaper account in 1920, for example, mentioned Gillett Grove as having had copious “Indian relics” collected there as early as the 1860s.

These northwest Iowa Oneota sites are typically identified with the late Classic or Historic horizon (Henning 1995), but few radiocarbon dates have hitherto been available. The sites share in the presence of large quantities of distinctively “late” Oneota pottery (cf. Allamakee Trailed), and stone tool use clearly dominates, but small numbers of European-origin trade goods are consistently recovered. A total of 146.25 m² has been hand-excavated at Gillett Grove, and over 60,000 artifacts recovered, including 154 glass and metal items. What, if any, contextual evidence exists for linking Gillett Grove to the fur trade?

The 1837 Ioway map typically associated with No Heart, *NahjeNiŋe* (IAS Newsletter 2007:10), shows extensive Ioway use of a broad area west of the Mississippi. Although drafted from a native cartographic perspective, rivers, trails, and villages, including possibly Gillett Grove, are evident on the map. The depiction of



cultural memory of landscape, incorporating aspects of both time and space onto a flat dimension, makes it difficult to ascertain the time depth represented, although it seems reasonable to assume that pre-European contact elements are illustrated. The existence of well-established prehistoric trade relations across northern Iowa ex-



Aerial photo of Gillett Grove.

plains how small amounts of European-origin goods may have arrived at the Gillett Grove site long before any French trappers appeared in the vicinity.

Extrapolating the archaeological context at Gillett Grove from three different field schools led by three different directors—John Doershuk, Michael Shott, and Joseph Tiffany—has been challenging. Sampling during each field season resulted in the exploration of different portions of the site. It is evident, however, that a pasture area west of a north-south fence line across the site area has never been plowed. These intact deposits are stratigraphically identical to the sub-plow zone deposits within the currently cultivated portion of the site. While the surface and plow zone have yielded incredible numbers of artifacts, the

focus here is on correlating stratigraphic information from the excavated non-plowed and sub-plow zone contexts with the artifacts of European origin and radiocarbon dates.

Recent radiocarbon dates allow refinement of the chronological placement of Gillett Grove. A total of five dates are now available for the site. Three of these are accelerator mass spectrometer (AMS) dates—two from charred residues on sherds and one from wood charcoal. Two conventional dates were also obtained on wood charcoal. Statistical tests reveal that the mean of the wood charcoal dates is significantly older than the mean of dates for the residues. This suggests that the charcoal was from old wood which grew and died before the occupation of the site and that these dates

should be rejected. The mean for the remaining two AMS dates yields a radiocarbon age of 238 ± 17 years with a calibrated calendric date of A.D. 1648–1664 (1 σ). The Oneota Historic horizon in northwest Iowa is usually defined as beginning at A.D. 1650 (Henning 1995), a remarkably good fit with the Gillett Grove radiocarbon estimate. Obviously, similar AMS dating on residues or annual seeds is needed for the other Oneota sites on the Little Sioux River—Dixon, Gothier, Anthon, Correctionville, Bastian, Burr Oak, and Milford. Currently, there are no AMS dates from these sites.

Gillett Grove reflects Oneota adaptations prior to known face-to-face European contact and prior to the influx of fur trade goods. How did the Oneota people adapt



Top left: possible gun flint (Knife River Flint); top right: pipestone bead; remaining: recast glass (European-origin) beads. Shown life size.



Pipe (shown life size) from the Burr Oak site with an engraving of an historic gun.

their traditional technologies in the face of the initial appearance of European trade goods? The minimal quantity of these goods recovered suggests no major economic shift in subsistence had yet occurred, although exotic materials certainly stimulated cultural responses. The relatively large proportion of melted and apparently recast glass beads recovered at Gillett Grove indicates native experimentation with a previously unknown medium. For the brief period when European beads and scrap brass and copper were scarce, the Gillett Grove residents preferred to use them as raw materials rather than simply emulate European function. The recovery of a single example of a pipestone bead at the site matching the morphology of a large-

sized glass bead, however, suggests that effort was invested in duplicating form in a familiar material. Gun technology is generally poorly represented at Oneota Historic horizon sites except at Milford, but a probable gun flint has been recovered at Gillett Grove made not of European material but rather of Knife River Flint, indicating likely native production. Lastly, an engraved pipe from Burr Oak depicts an early gun on what is probably an item of ceremonial importance, perhaps the depiction reflects acknowledgment of the power or desire to possess such a weapon.

References cited

- Alex, Lynn M., and Stephen C. Lensink (editors) 2007 Iowa Archaeology Month Native Ioway History Week October 7–13, 2007. *Newsletter of the Iowa Archeological Society* 57(3):10.
- Henning, Dale R. 1995 Oneota Evolution and Interactions: A Perspective from the Wever Terrace, Southeast Iowa. In *Oneota Archaeology: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by William Green, pp. 65–88. Report 20. Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa, Iowa City.

Paul Sagers standing at the entrance to Levsen Rockshelter (13JK4), Jackson County, April 23 1933.

Sagers Collection Comes to OSA

John L. Cordell and Stephen C. Lensink

Paul Sagers (1909–1982) was an avocational archaeologist whose work helped define the Woodland cultural sequence in eastern Iowa. Born near the village of Iron Hills in Jackson County, Iowa, Paul and his brother Fay, as teenagers, became interested in archaeology through Frank Ellis, a friend of their father's. Ellis amassed a large collection of material from rockshelters and other archaeological sites in the Maquoketa, Iowa, area and introduced Charles R. Keyes to Paul. Probably at Keyes' request, Paul began keeping a journal of his excavations, making maps, and labeling some of the artifacts from the rockshelters. Soon Sagers and Keyes were corresponding regularly. Keyes frequently visited Sagers' sites, made notes, and photographed specimens. Sagers' collections from Mouse Hollow and Levsen rockshelters were used by Keyes and Wilfred D. Logan to define Woodland pottery types and cultural complexes.

The Paul Sagers Archaeological Collection contains nearly 16,000 objects, one of the largest and most significant archaeological collections in eastern Iowa. Amassed between 1925 and 1936, the collection includes materials from 16 recorded sites in Jackson and Jones counties. Eleven of these are rockshelters. Notable are the collections from Mouse Hollow Rockshelter (13JK59) and Levsen Rockshelter (13JK4).

Sagers' desire to display his collection in a formal setting accessible to the public, led to his completion of a small museum in 1951. He spent the prior eight years quarrying and shaping limestone blocks for the

structure built near the entrance to Maquoketa Caves State Park. He and his wife, Nettie, operated the facility on a seasonal basis for over 30 years. In 1988, six years after his death, the State of Iowa purchased the Sagers Museum, and his archaeological collection became an unrestricted gift to the state from Nettie Sagers. In 1990, thanks to a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the OSA cataloged the 259 separate collections, took 290 black-and-white photographs of culturally diagnostic artifacts, and prepared the *Catalogue of the Paul Sagers Archaeological Collection*.

This past year, with the permission of the IDNR and with support from a State Historical Society of Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection grant, the bulk of the Sagers Collection was transferred to OSA for curation, care, and interpretation. Both the IDNR and the OSA desire to insure the long-term curation, security, and accessibility of the collection.

In the coming months, the OSA will enter each of the 259 separate collections into the OSA Accession Record. The objects from the collection currently on display in the Maquoketa Caves State Park Visitor's Center also will be photographed, inventoried, and recorded in the OSA Loan Record database. A five-year renewable loan agreement will be made between the OSA and IDNR for the exhibited objects.

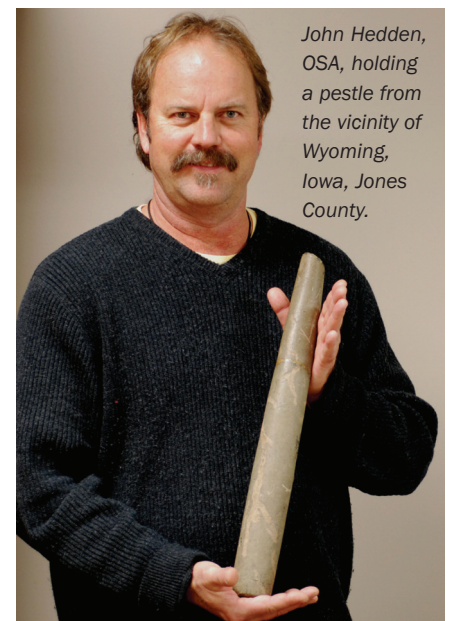
Each of the collections will be rehoused into standard, acid-free archival OSA repository boxes. Oversized objects will be made available as possible exhibit objects.



Maquoketa Caves State Park Interpretive Center, formerly the Sagers Museum Building. Current exhibited collections in the Center will remain.

The OSA will convert the 1990 *Catalogue of the Paul Sagers Archaeological Collection* to a Microsoft Access database which will make the catalog more accessible for research. The negatives of photographs taken in the 1990 project will be scanned, and approximately 200 new color digital photographs of culturally diagnostic artifacts in the collection will be taken.

The project intends to have a positive public impact on eastern Iowa, especially for the residents of Jackson and Jones counties. It honors the intent of Paul Sagers to make his collection publicly available by not only carefully curating the items but by expanding their interpretation. Four new exhibits prepared for the lobby of the OSA will focus on the contributions of Sagers and the significance of his collection and its careful documentation in understanding eastern Iowa prehistory and preserving sites for the future. This story will be set within a broader context that describes the geological formation of rockshelters, their use as habitations by prehistoric peoples, their archaeological potential, and finally their place in the Woodland time period. Once the new exhibits are completed, the



John Hedden, OSA, holding a pestle from the vicinity of Wyoming, Iowa, Jones County.

OSA will host a dedicatory open house inviting members of the Sagers' family, local Jones and Jackson counties community members and organizations, the director and staff of the IDNR, IAS members, State Historical Society of Iowa staff, and UI dignitaries including President Sally Mason.

The OSA will also coordinate two public programs on Paul Sagers and the collection at Maquoketa Caves State Park. The presentations will emphasize the collection's significance, the importance of its long-term curation, and its continuing availability for programming and exhibits in the local community. Invited presenters will include individuals intimately familiar with the history of the collection and its importance to Iowa archaeology. Future loans of collection materials will provide for rotating exhibits at Maquoketa Caves State Park.

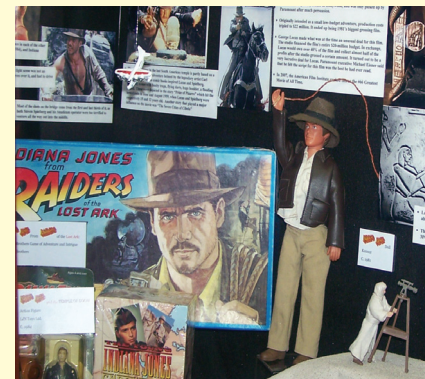
An on-line exhibit gallery of images showing individual items from the Sagers Collection will extend this story to a much broader audience. The exhibit gallery will become a permanent feature on the OSA website, www.uiowa.edu/~osa. The curation of the Sagers Collection at the OSA will have additional impact on the Midwestern and national archaeological community through enhanced accessibility. The current collections in the OSA Repository represent over 10,000 archaeological sites and are a research resource used by

Prairie Incised reconstructed vessel from Levens Rockshelter (13JK4), Jackson County, Iowa.



professional and avocational archaeologists throughout the state, Midwest, and the nation. The OSA has loaned materials to researchers from thirteen different states, and researchers from seven different states have visited the OSA to

examine collections. The curation of the Sagers Collection at the OSA will attract researchers interested in Woodland cultural sequences and rockshelter site studies, as well as those interested in the Archaic and Mississippian artifacts contained in the collection. The items shown here are just a few of the remarkable artifacts preserved and recorded thanks to the efforts of Paul Sagers and his family.



Indiana Jones Exhibit

Nineteen years after the last installment of the original three-film series, Indiana Jones rides again. A temporary exhibit at The University of Iowa Museum of Natural History (MNH) celebrates the most recent Indiana Jones movie which opened in theaters, May 2008. The exhibit was designed and installed by MNH interns and University of Iowa students Vanessa Soo and Elizabeth Fox during the 2008 Spring Semester. The memorabilia in the exhibit are on loan from the collection of longtime IAS members George and Midge Horton of Vining, Iowa.

While designing and building the exhibit, Vanessa and Elizabeth had a great time doing background research (i.e., playing with the toys), finding pictures, watching the movies, and learning all the interesting facts associated with the production of the films. They also worked with Sarah Horgen, MNH Education Coordinator, on educational programming during their internship. Their time at the MNH was interesting, fun, and a great learning experience, which they plan to use in their future careers.

—SARAH HORGEN

What's the Point?

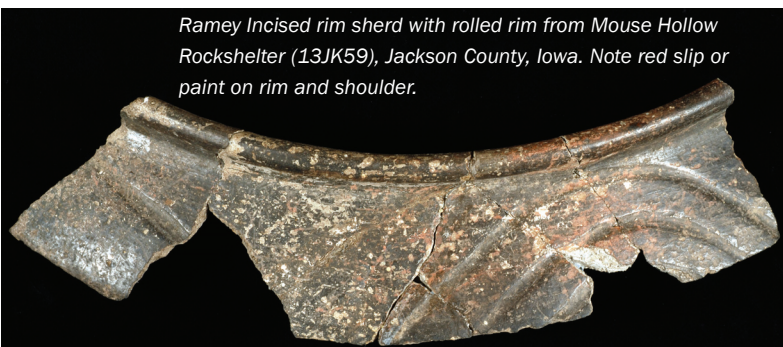
Identify the artifact shown here (life size). This photo was submitted by Betsy Combs of Stockton, New Jersey. She found the point in a field near Cardinal Marsh, adjacent to the Turkey River in Winneshiek County, Iowa.



Guess the material, age, and point type. Send your responses to Lynn Alex at lynn-alex@uiowa.edu. Answers will be listed in the next issue.

Last issue's winners are IAS members Paul Naumann, Gary Stam, and Ed Thelen who all correctly identified the point as an Old Copper complex socketed spear point. It is made of copper and dates to 3800-1000 B.C.

Ramey Incised rim sherd with rolled rim from Mouse Hollow Rockshelter (13JK59), Jackson County, Iowa. Note red slip or paint on rim and shoulder.



Minott's/Madison Cord-Impressed ware rim sherd from Mouse Hollow Rockshelter.



The Destruction of the Koppenhaver Mound Group

Matt Donovan



ON OCTOBER 10, 1940, Walter M. Rosen—a prominent banker, ornithologist, and avocational archaeologist from Boone County, Iowa—wrote to Charles R. Keyes regarding a chain of earthen mounds the two had visited during the summer of 1925.

You may recall that a number of years ago I showed you a chain of mounds down below Moingona between Moingona and the 16 to 1 bridge. There were six or seven in a row. A large gravel company have bought that field and are furnishing gravel for the paving of highway #169 and they have run their drag lines through most of them. However they found lots of human bones in the bottom of the largest mounds at least ten feet below the top of the mound. These seemed to be assembled together and not a regular burial. I have plenty of these but thought, perhaps, you might be interested in being on hand when they went further through this big mound. They will probably do that some time later tomorrow October 11th.

Rosen hoped that Keyes would travel immediately to Boone County to observe the destruction of the mound group and document any discoveries. He concluded his letter with a sense of regret and disappointment in seeing “This fine chain of mounds so completely destroyed as they were the best ones near here.”

Prior to 1940, the Koppenhaver Mounds (13BN65) had long been appreciated for their scenic value along the Des Moines valley in Boone County. Reports of their existence and that of other archaeological sites attracted Charles Keyes to Boone County in June 1925. Keyes’ traveling companions included Rosen, H. R. Morgan, an amateur archaeologist and businessman, and Carl “Fritz” Henning.

Henning, the future custodian and administrator of the Ledges State Park and an avid Iowa naturalist, was no stranger to Boone County archaeology. Seventeen years earlier in 1908 he helped organize and excavate the Middle Woodland Boone

Mound under the direction of friend and peer, Thompson Van Hyning, and acted as a field assistant and surveyor.

During Keyes’ field visit to the Koppenhaver Mounds on June 30, 1925, Rosen, who was also an amateur photographer, took photographs of the

“expedition party” standing along the side and top of the chain of mounds. At that time, no one in the group knew who owned the tract of land where the mounds stood. Rosen later reported to Keyes that the property was owned by D. A. Koppenhaver.

Following the 1925 visit, the mound group became a semiofficial attraction for Des Moines valley tourists. In the 1929 Ledges State Park Grand Opening pamphlet, the Koppenhaver Mounds were touted as a good example of “Indian Mounds” in Boone County accessible south of the village of Moingona along Moingona Road, just above the “16 to 1 bridge.” Little mention of the mound group occurs in the public record after this date until the property was leased to a gravel company in 1940. The company intended to use excavated materials for the Highway 169 project in western Boone County and other local road projects.

Keyes did not accept Rosen’s invitation to observe the impact of the quarry operations. In a letter to Keyes dated October 12, 1940, Rosen expressed his disappointment but offered additional details about the discoveries.

The burial was deep down in the gravel as there was only about three or four feet of stripping (black dirt) over the gravel. The hole was filled however with black dirt and the operator said that it was extremely hard and even difficult to penetrate with big shovel. I cannot understand why they should bury so deep especially when it was secondary as it appeared to be. There has been no pottery nor any arrows, spears, or axes found at all. Nothing but two piles of bones. The first one was not in a mound at all but beside one.

According to Rosen, no additional human remains or artifacts were discovered in the October 11 excavation of the mound.

Rosen informed Keyes that a local, unidentified dentist had examined the mandibles and teeth recovered from the burial. His examination suggested that one of the individuals had been a child of less than eight years of age as surmised from the presence of “baby teeth.” The additional mandibles and teeth appeared to represent the remains of three or four adults. Rosen noted that these individuals had been found buried close together.

Rosen kept the skeletal remains intending eventually to deliver them to Keyes. Rosen proposed a series of dates when he and Keyes might meet to visit the mound site, at which time he could hand over the remains. Four months later, on February 25, 1941, Rosen wrote Keyes telling him that he would be in the vicinity of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, on his way to lectures in Cedar Rapids and Dubuque. Rosen noted that this would be an excellent opportunity to “bring those bones along and leave them with you as I go to Dubuque.” It seems likely that this referred to the skeletal remains from the Koppenhaver Mound group. There is no indication that this or any other meeting ever took place between Rosen and Keyes or that the two ever corresponded again about the Koppenhaver Mounds.

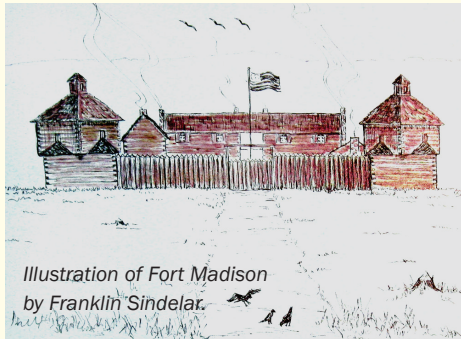
The gravel operation continued through the winter of 1940, destroying the remaining mounds. The property itself remained a gravel pit until the 1950s. From then on the area was used as a cattle operation.

Rosen passed away during the fall of 1941, leaving behind a legacy of brilliant work in the study of ornithology as well as inquiries into Iowa’s natural history. Many of his contributions, particularly his photographic studies, can be found at the Special Collections Department of the Parks Library at Iowa State University, Ames. Rosen’s expression of disappointment and sadness in seeing the “fine chain of mounds” destroyed is perhaps the most fitting comment to the fate of the Koppenhaver Mounds.



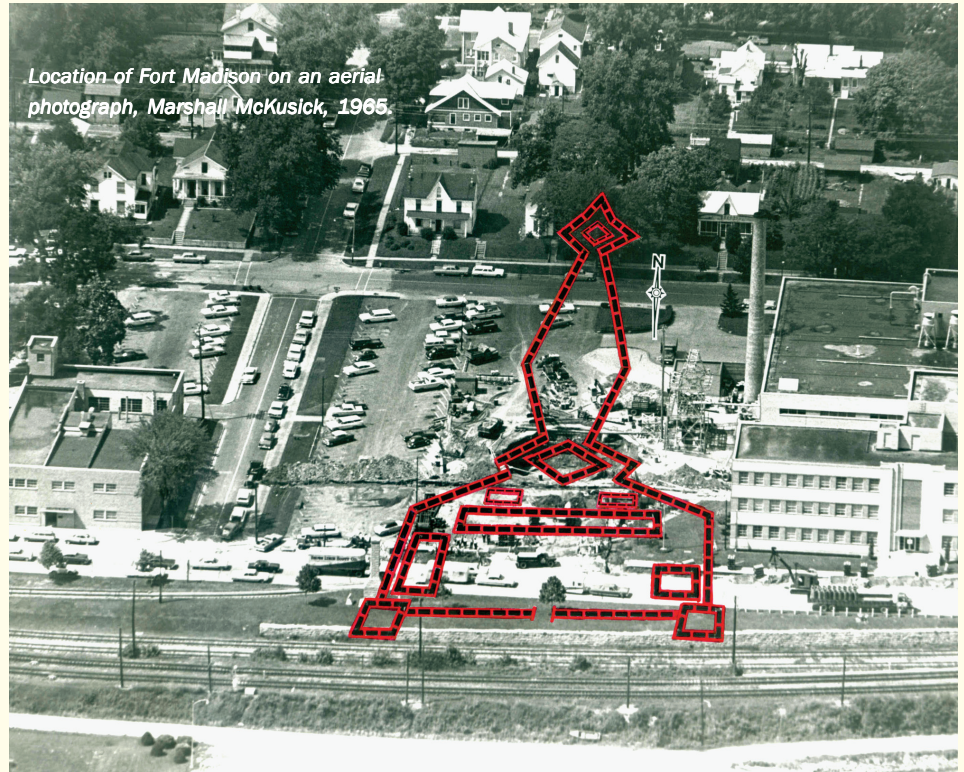
Urgent Preservation Efforts at Fort Madison.

The OSA and the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) are undertaking efforts to save the Fort Madison site (13LE10), arguably the most important historic site in Iowa. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Fort Madison was built by the U.S. Army in 1808 and was burned and abandoned in 1813 after it was besieged by British-supported Native Americans including fabled Sauk Chief Black Hawk. As the first U.S. military post in the Upper Mississippi and the scene of the only War of 1812 battle west of the Mississippi, it was also the only fort in Iowa ever to be attacked by either foreign or Indian forces. The siege of Fort Madison proved a turning point in the life of Black Hawk, who soon rose to prominence, and the fort has deep symbolic meaning to Native Americans. The defeat at Fort Madison led to a change in U.S. policy towards Indians, accelerating their forced removal from the Midwest.

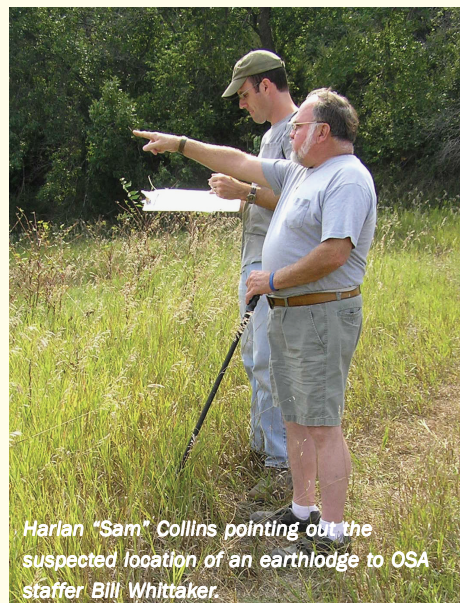


Although hidden under blacktop, much of Fort Madison is intact. Emergency excavations of part of the fort by Marshall B. McKusick of the OSA in 1965 demonstrated that the foundations were buried by silt and historic fill, and that the heat of the burning fire carbonized and, therefore, preserved much of the fort that collapsed into the foundations.

The fort site had been protected by the generosity of the Sheaffer Pen Company, which owned the parking lot that covers most of the fort. Sheaffer helped fund McKusick's excavations and prevented development of the lot. In 2007 Sheaffer's parent company, BIC USA, Inc., sold the Sheaffer factory as well as the parking lot to a private developer. This developer is considering his options for the site and has not stated a commitment to preservation. Attempts by the OSA and SHSI to negotiate a preservation plan that protects the site have not yet resulted in an agreement.



Loess Hills Survey Underway. OSA crews are in far western Iowa surveying new and previously recorded archaeological sites in the Loess Hills region. Recent meetings with landowners and artifact collectors resulted in the documentation of more than 20 potentially significant sites, including more than a dozen previously unrecorded Late Prehistoric earthlodges. The survey is part of Golden



Hills RC&D's mission to gain national recognition for the Loess Hills National Scenic Byway (LHNSB) as a distinctive All American Road. Better understanding of the unique archaeology of the region will help to increase the significance of the LHNSB.

The OSA survey includes mapping and subsurface testing of earthlodge sites to determine how well preserved the lodges are. More than 300 earthlodges have been recorded in western Iowa, most concentrated in the Glenwood region south of Council Bluffs. New construction in southwest Iowa threatens many of these sites.

Folkert Mound Group Update. The enigmatic Folkert Mound Group (13HA30) in Hardin County (see *Newsletter* Issue 203) has successfully passed the first hurdle towards listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Folkert NRHP nomination was accepted at the state level and is now under consideration by the national review committee. At the Midwest Archaeological Conference in Milwaukee in October, Jim Collins of the OSA presented a summary of the latest Folkert research including discussion of some intriguing alignments within the mound group. Jim promises IAS members a research update in a future *Newsletter*.

IAS Members 2008

IAS treasurer and membership chair, Alan Hawkins, provided the names of the following new Society members for 2008 and individuals who attained their thirty-year honorary membership status.

L.M. Anderson, Grand Rapids, Michigan
Jonathan Baker, Knoxville, Tennessee
Mary M. Betzler, Reston, Virginia
Katie Blackstock, Cedar Rapids
Julia Blair, Iowa City
Charles Block, Fort Madison
Mary Bryant, Clive
Pat Byrnes, Harlan
Jon Christensen, Spirit Lake
Michael Christensen, Ft. Dodge
Nick Cleveland, Woodbine
Mike Coffey, Bettendorf
Frerichs family, Iowa City
Donald Gaff, Cedar Falls
Leonard Grimes, Marshalltown
Heather Grotluschen, Hartley
Eric Harvey, Adel

Linda Lee Herman, Pisgah
Mathew Hill & Margaret Beck, Iowa City
Carol Hoffman, Bloomfield
Darryl & Marlis Horgen, Marshalltown
Rodney Houck, Dubuque
Lera Joyce Johnson, Glenwood
Russell and Florence Jondle, Callendar
Ulf Konig, Danville
Nathan Kruse, Iowa City
Fran Linhart, Coralville
Gregory Littin, Iowa City
Ferdinand Marie, Washington
Laura McCullough, Ames
John Meester, Iowa City
Anita Miller, Independence
Steve Miller, Dubuque
Greg Olson, Greenwood, Missouri

Terry O'Neill, Washington
Wayne Phipps, Glenwood
Jane Punke, Nevada
Dean & Regina Schantz, Davenport
Thomas Scott, Ames
Jim Stephens, Washington
Bradley Van Gorden, Des Moines
Jay Vavra, Marion

Thirty Year Honorary Members

Bill Green, Beloit, Wisconsin
Jim D. Feagins, Belton, Missouri
Kathy Gourley, Johnston
Roger B. Natte, Fort Dodge
Gary L. Valen, Poolesville, Maryland

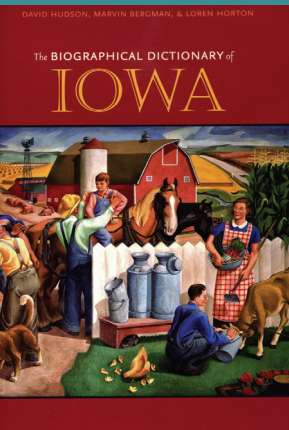
Book Notice

The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa Hudson, Bergman, Horton (eds.)

The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa, published this year for the State Historical Society of Iowa by the University of Iowa Press, presents sketches of more than 400 Iowa citizens who the editors—David Hudson, Marvin Bergman, and Loren Horton—proclaim “made significant contributions to the public life

of the state and the nation.” Among these prominent and lesser known individuals are four outstanding for their contributions to Iowa archaeology—Duren Ward, Charles R. Keyes, Ellison Orr, and Mildred Mott Wedel. While the biographical outline and accomplishments of each was composed by a different author—L. Edward Purcell, Michael J. Perry, David M. Gradwohl, and Lynn M. Alex, respectively—the stylistic format for all entries in the volume is identical. This insures that a reader can quickly discern and compare each individual’s chronological range, background, career or avocation, and significant contributions. The brief bibliography that follows each sketch offers the opportunity for the interested to learn more.

—LYNN M. ALEX



Membership Information

Contact the Membership Secretary, Iowa Archeological Society at The University of Iowa, Office of the State Archaeologist, 700 Clinton Street Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1030.

Membership Dues

Voting

Active	\$20
Household	\$25
Sustaining	\$30

Non-Voting

Student (under 18)	\$9
Institution	\$30

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. The *Newsletter* is published four times a year. All materials for publication should be sent to Editors Lynn M. Alex and Stephen C. Lensink, The University of Iowa, Office of the State Archaeologist, 700 Clinton Street Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1030. Email: lynn-alex@uiowa.edu or steve-lensink@uiowa.edu. When submitting articles, please provide text, captions, tables, and figures separately. All digital photographs should be at least 300 dpi at full size. Graphics, if supplied digitally, should be high-resolution tiff or eps files. Paper versions of articles and photos are also acceptable.

IAS web site

www.uiowa.edu/~osa/IAS/fiashome.htm.

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