

Minnesota Archaeological Society

NEWSLETTER Summer 2009

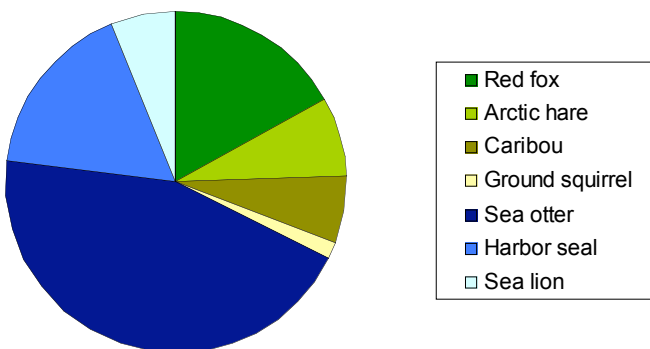


Hamline University's *Aniakchak Archaeology Project* The Analysis Stage: Lab Volunteers Needed!

Professor Brian Hoffman of Hamline University has been directing an archaeological study in Aniakchak National Monument on the Alaska Peninsula since 2004. Three seasons of excavation at the *South Aniakchak Bay Village* site have produced a wealth of archaeological materials from occupations that span the last 2000 years. The site's well-preserved shell midden contains an amazing quantity of animal remains, stone and bone tools, and manufacturing debris. Everything from delicate eyed needles made from bird bone to pecked stone lamps were tossed into the middens or left on the house floors at this site. Though only a small number artifacts may be considered artwork and objects of adornment, the site has produced an interesting variety of carvings, beads, and other "non-utilitarian objects".



Aniakchak's Mammal Assemblage



NISP = 311

Faunal remains show the site's occupants spent most of their year living in the village. They took advantage of the abundant cod, salmon, sea otters, harbor seals, cormorants, and shellfish found in the Pacific waters surrounding their home. Hoffman's Preliminary analysis of 'skeletal parts' has begun to provide some specific insights into the Aniakchak villager's subsistence practices. The villagers apparently hunted caribou some distance from their coastal home since only the 'meaty bones' from these animals were found in the excavated assemblage. Red fox skeletal parts found at the site show a very different pattern.

Fox elements were almost exclusively heads and feet, a pattern often associated with fur trapping because a quick skinning leaves the bulk of the heavy carcass (and bones) at the kill site.

Dr. Hoffman and his students are still intensively engaged in the laboratory stage of this project. Approximately 200 bags of shell midden and house floor deposits still need to be sorted and cataloged. Sorting can be very rewarding but challenging because a sorter must know a little bit about everything in the assemblage. For example, sorters need to distinguish ceramic sherds from pumice pebbles, fish bone from bird bone, and stone tools from manufacturing waste. The reward is finding that amber bead, tiny projectile point, or bone needle mixed amongst the shellfish remains and natural rock. Each find, large or small adds to a valuable and growing data set. MAS members are encouraged to contact Dr. Brian Hoffman if they would like to volunteer this summer in his laboratory. A lot of work remains. Additional help with sorting may help realize the goal of completing the laboratory processing by the start of the school year.



LEGACY FUNDS WILL BENEFIT ARCHAEOLOGY

Rhoda Gilman

In all the dark news of budget-cutting, there is a bright spot for Minnesota archaeology. The so-called "Legacy Funds" mandated by a constitutional amendment and to be raised by an increase in the state sales tax, have been distributed in an act passed by the legislature and signed by the governor. An estimated \$22 million will be available for history in the next biennium. It must be spent on new projects, not used to replace budget cuts.

This fund will be administered by the Minnesota Historical Society according to various categories specified in the law. One such category is a statewide survey of historical and archaeological sites to which a total of \$500,000 is assigned. The law reads:

"\$250,000 in 2010 and \$250,000 in 2011 are appropriated to the Minnesota Historical Society for

a contract or contracts to be let on a competitive basis to conduct a general statewide survey of Minnesota's sites of historical, archaeological, and cultural significance. Results of this survey must be published in a searchable form, available to the public on a cost-free basis. The Minnesota Historical Society, the Office of the State Archaeologist, and the Board of Indian Affairs shall each appoint a representative to an oversight board, to select a contractor and direct the conduct of this survey."

Another possible source of funding for archaeological research is a category of grants under which \$6,700,000 is appropriated "for history programs and projects operated or conducted by or through local, county, regional or other historical or cultural organizations; or for activities to preserve significant historic and cultural resources."

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MAS Offers Support for Local and County Archaeology Presentations

The Minnesota Archaeological Society is actively looking for lectures and presentations throughout the state that need support for speaker fees and travel expenses. We will be contacting local historical societies and other agencies in the future to see if some arrangements can be made. In the meantime, any readers who are interested in such a collaboration are invited to contact President Rod Johnson at rodjohn33@msn.com. Outreach and education are the twin missions of MAS and we are happy to entertain ideas toward such goals through archaeological activities, lecture series, site tours, interpretive talks, and other hands-on learning experiences.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Washburn A Mill Tour

Mill City Museum

704 South Second Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Phone: 612-341-7555, E-mail: mcm@mnhs.org

Dates: Oct. 10, 2009, Oct. 24, 2009, Nov. 7, 2009, Nov. 21, 2009, Dec. 5, 2009, Dec. 19, 2009

Time: 1 p.m.

Fee: \$12 adults, \$10 seniors and college students, \$8 children ages 6-17 and MHS members.

Reservations: required, call 612-341-7555

Take an in-depth look at the historic Washburn A Mill complex and the award-winning Mill City Museum building on this guided tour. A museum interpreter will take visitors into the building's many nooks and crannies, highlighting the lives of the men and women who worked there, how the building functioned during its peak flour milling years and the many changes to the building over time. Also covered will be the challenges of preserving the 120-year-old, fire-damaged building; its art, architecture and interior design; and the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The tour includes the museum gallery, the Flour Tower show, and the new film "Minneapolis in 19 Minutes Flat."

A Series Of Summer History Tours Offered By The Preservation Alliance Of Minnesota

Finally! It's summer! The warmer weather is an excellent chance to get out and explore the community in which you live, work, and play. This year, the Preservation Alliance is making it easy to explore the history of your community. We are offering a series of tours aimed at exploring and experiencing Minnesota history like you've never done before - we call them the PAM-o-rama Tours. Join us for one, several, or all six of our tours, beginning in June and ending in October.

Each tour will highlight a different story of our shared history. We begin with a bike tour of Minneapolis, progress to an exploratory day at the Gibbs Farm, take to the water for a canoe trip down the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, and then head to Owatonna for a tour of the sights. Finally, we end the summer with a day at Fort Snelling's Upper Post, named in 2006 as one of the nation's 11 Most Endangered Properties, and a tour of St. Paul's Fantasy Houses of the 1920's.

Each tour has a limited capacity, so sign up early to guarantee your spot. All tours are \$15.00 per person, with the exception of the Owatonna tour, which is \$22.00 per person. See the information below for the specifics of each tour, and watch the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota's website, <http://www.mnpreservation.org> for more information.

To reserve your place on a PAM-o-rama tour, call the Alliance at 651.293.9047. Reservations can be paid by credit card, cash or check and must be paid in full to reserve your place. Give us a call today!

PAM-o-rama #3 - Paddle Through the Past

Discover archaeology while canoeing down the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers

Saturday, August 8, 2009

Tour start time: Two tours, the first beginning at 10:00 am and the second at 1:30 pm

Tour capacity: 18 per tour

Tour leader: David Mather

Meeting Location: We'll be meeting at Picnic Island under the Mendota Bridge

Parking: Parking is \$5 at the state park

We will explore the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, circumnavigating Pike Island. We will see Fort Snelling and part of its National Historic Landmark District from below.

We will also see that the hydrology of the confluence was changed by mid-twentieth century engineering projects, and that expansion of the floodplain forest has altered the area's appearance from its historic condition, when the fort was first occupied in the early- to mid-nineteenth century.

We will see that transportation remains an overarching theme here. River travel and commerce are still important, but overshadowed by busy highway bridges and airplane traffic. Finally, we will see flourishing ecology and wildlife in the heart of a major metropolitan area. We will experience the deep history of this place through archaeology, primarily as it is reflected in the landscape.

Note: This tour primarily takes place on the water - please wear appropriate clothing. Paddlers of all abilities are welcome. Tour participants will be required to sign a liability waiver prior to participating in the tour.

Fur Trade Beyond the Palisade

North West Company Fur Post, Pine City MN

Hours: Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day: Thursday through Saturday, Monday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday noon to 5 p.m.

Open holidays

Schools and tour groups by appointment.

Fee: \$8 adults, \$6 senior and college students, \$5 children ages 6-17; free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.

Explore life in an early 1800s fur trade wintering camp. Learn about the global economy of the time, the lives of workers in the fur trade, cross-cultural communications, women's roles and archeological tools used to uncover information about the fur trade. Discover why a hat was the driving force behind the earliest European exploration and settlement of the region. Then try on various hats, including a stovepipe top hat made of felt. View a 24 foot long north canoe loaded with merchandise typical of the time. And try lifting a pack typical of what a voyageur would have carried.

Bringing Light to the Petroglyphs

Jeffers Petroglyphs Historic Site, Comfrey MN

Dates: July 31, 2009, Aug. 1, 2009, Aug. 2, 2009, Aug. 6, 2009, Aug. 7, 2009, Aug. 8, 2009, Aug. 9, 2009, Aug. 13, 2009, Aug. 14, 2009, Aug. 15, 2009, Aug. 16, 2009, Aug. 20, 2009, Aug. 21, 2009, Aug. 22, 2009, Aug. 23, 2009, Aug. 27, 2009, Aug. 28, 2009, Aug. 29, 2009, Aug. 30, 2009, Sept. 3, 2009, Sept. 4, 2009, Sept. 5, 2009, Sept. 6, 2009

Time: Daily at 3 p.m.

Fee: \$6 adults, \$5 seniors and college students, \$4 children ages 6-17; free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.

Using mirrors to capture the light greatly enhances a visitor's ability to view the petroglyphs during the day. On these special tours, a guide will use tools to give the illusion of late day sunlight and discuss the importance and meaning of the petroglyphs, the different styles, the dates of their creation and their geographic distribution.

Paul Mielke and the MAS Table

will be at Welch Station on the Cannon Valley Trail on **Saturday August 15th, 2009, 10 - 4pm.** From the Twin Cities, take Hwy. 61 through Cottage Grove and take 316 out of Hastings. At 61 again, turn left and after a few miles take a right on County Road 7. Signs are posted. Follow Co. 7 straight into Welch. Welch Station Access is located about a quarter mile south past the village of Welch.

Rod Johnson Flintknapping Demonstrations:

September 5, 2009: Trail Day, Red Wing, MN. Welch Station, Goodhue County Parks & Rec.

September 26, 2009: Archaeology Day, Onamia, MN. Mille Lacs Kathio State Park, MN State Park System

October 5, 2009: Trail Day, Red Wing, MN. Welch Station, Goodhue County Parks & Rec.

October 24, 2009: Harvest Festival, Bloomington, MN. 98 & Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington Historical Society

2009 Midwest Archaeological Conference

Sheraton Hotel
210 South Dubuque Street
Iowa City, Iowa

October 15-18, 2009

Organizer: John F. Doershuk, State Archaeologist
University of Iowa
700 Clinton St.,
Iowa City, IA 52242-1030
Ph.: 319-384-0751;
Fax: 319-384-0768
johndoershuk@uiowa.edu
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/index.html>

The **2009 MAC Annual Meeting** will be held October 15-18th in Iowa City, Iowa jointly sponsored by the University of Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) and Museum of Natural History (MNH). Both OSA and MNH are easy walking distance from the conference hotel.

*If you are presenting a paper or poster or organizing a symposium, please note that you **must** submit your abstracts AND register for the conference online at the same time.*

**Send your MAS news and notices to the Editor:
Deborah Schoenholz, 2615 Emerson Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55408, schoe030@umn.edu**

The 2008 *Minnesota Archaeologist*: Better late than never. Journals will be mailed to members as always.

Volunteer Opportunities

MAS members who would like to put in some hands-on time have several opportunities. To get more information about these current projects, please contact the individuals listed.

Archaeology Lab Night: Every Thursday evening, volunteers gather at the MHS Archaeology Lab, located at Fort Snelling History Center, to process and analyze artifacts excavated from archaeological sites around the state. No specific time commitment is required; you can tailor your participation to your schedule. For more information, please contact Volunteer Services at the Minnesota Historical Society: **651-297-2605** or volunteerservices@mnhs.org.

MAS Newsletter Editor: The Society is looking for someone who would enjoy putting together our quarterly newsletter and sending it to our membership, electronic and print. Costs are covered by the Society. The newsletter conveys important news and upcoming events to the archaeological community and maintains a prominent spot in the Upper Midwest as a venue for communication among interested persons and institutions. Please contact Debbie Schoenholz at schoe030@tc.umn.edu or **612-374-5886** if you are interested in this fun and rewarding position.

Aniakchak Lab Work: MAS members are encouraged to contact Dr. Brian Hoffman (see lead article) at bhoffman@gw.hamline.edu if they would like to volunteer this summer in his laboratory. Additional help with sorting artifacts from Aniakchak, Alaska may help realize the goal of completing the laboratory processing by the start of the school year.



Minnesota Archaeological Society
Fort Snelling History Center
St. Paul MN 55111