

# Minnesota Archaeological Society

*The inscriptions below are from a 1,000-year-old pot that was discovered in 1957 near Red Wing, Minnesota by an MAS member.  
The thunderbird motif is representative of Middle Mississippian iconography.*



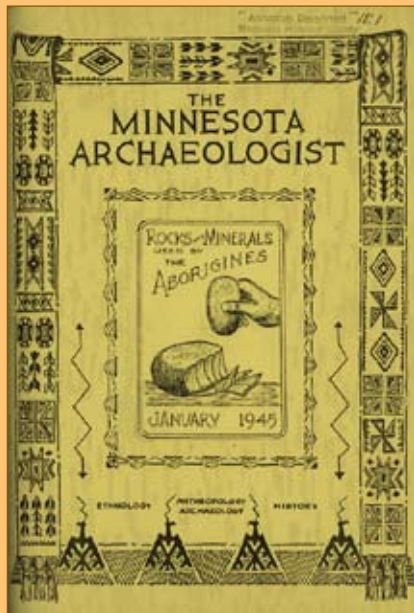
## Fall 2011



By Anna Morrow

### A Look Back Into MAS History

*Portions reprinted from a 3-part article written for "The Minnesota Archaeologist" in which we dig into the records - minutes, correspondence, and the journals - and without too much comment present excerpts, as written, in hopes of capturing the way in which things were then perceived. During the 1930s the minutes are written by hand and each recorder is unique.*



In 1929 Monroe Killy had just begun his career with Eastman Kodak. While on a delivery run to Thayer's Jewelry Store in St. Paul, he noticed a display of artifacts in the store window. He became friends with the store owner's son, Will (Burton W.) Thayer, and together with Bill (W. Ramsey) McIver and George Flaskerd the Minnesota Archaeological Society began.

We begin with the first minutes found in the archives, written when the society was already four years old. These old records are dusty, yellowed, and flaking around the edges. But the enthusiasm for archaeology and collecting fairly leaps off the pages.

(Jan. 11, 1934) Meeting held at the home of W. R. McIver where was on display his collection of old Montana Blackfoot bead work, quill work and old Spanish & Mexican relics. The meeting was called to order by President George Flaskerd who announced that he had approached both Dayton & Donaldson Dept. Stores regarding displaying the clubs complete collection of Indian

Relics in their Nicollet Avenue windows. Will Hickey showed us a rare and very complete moving picture of the Navaho Snake dance.

The record sheets of 1935 list 58 members and only a handful did not attend all the sessions. Ten speakers are listed for the 12 meetings with two meetings "worked cleaning & refilling [display] cases."

The first meetings were held in members' homes extending well into the night. These meetings ended with a meal and always proper thanks were extended to the cooks.

In 1935 the move was made to the Walker Art Gallery where the MAS had their display cases and their meetings. The group had displays of their artifacts at the Annual Sportsmen Show, the Hopkins

*MAS History Continues on Page 5*

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[www.mnarchsociety.org](http://www.mnarchsociety.org)

## Letter From The President

The Minnesota Archaeological Society is sound and on track with specific goals and programs focused on public archaeological awareness and education. In order to achieve these objectives we sponsor and co-sponsor a number of events throughout the state. Recapping the major events and activities of the Minnesota Archaeological Society of the past quarter I am pleased to report we have been successful in our endeavors.

### Sponsored Activities & Outreach:

The Outing Historic Trade Route Celebration was held on August 13, 2011 and was a great success. The weather was near perfect and attendance was exceptional. (See Sept. website letter)

Kathio Archaeology Day, October 1, 2011, with the help of Mother Nature providing great fall colors, again was a great success with record attendance. We also made the October 4, 2011 Lakeland Public Television 10:00 news. (See Oct. website letter)

The Bloomington Minnesota River Rendezvous, an annual History Fair with focus on education of elementary age school children, was held at the Pond Mission site, September 19 through 24. Although this was not an MAS sponsored event, I was honored by participating as a presenter, introducing an archaeology overview. A simulated dig produced much interest and excitement with the kids. Saturday September 24th was open to the general public. I was then able to provide M.A.S. membership forms, information, and back issues of The Minnesota Archaeologist to the adult visitors.

### MnArch.

The Minnesota Archaeologist Volume # 69 for 2010 was mailed on Oct. 5, 2011. This issue was dedicated in tribute to Monroe Killy, who passed away in 2010, honoring his years of service and dedication to this organization.

Articles of special interest to me included "Archaeological Investigation of the Ranelius Site (21DK04), Dakota County, Minnesota 1654-1955 and 2010," by Ed Fleming and Travis Hager, and "Geology and the Age of the Kensington Inscription" by Michael G. Michlovic.

I have set a goal to get The Minnesota Archaeologist back on track, publishing issues corresponding with the current year. I am informed by our editor that work is beginning on the 2011 volume. It is hoped that we will be able to print and mail by early 2012 so that the 2012 volume can be finished before the end of that year.

### Rod Johnson: President

*For comments or suggestions, send a letter to President: Minnesota Archaeological Society, Ft. Snelling Center, St. Paul, Minnesota 55111 or email [rodjohn33@msn.com](mailto:rodjohn33@msn.com)*

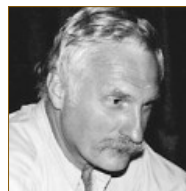
## In Memoriam



**Janet Spector**, the pioneering Associate Professor Emerita, who retired from the University of Minnesota in 1998, died of breast cancer Sept. 13 at her home in Albuquerque, N.M. She was 66.

With a fine blend of energetic curiosity, intellectual firepower and personal charm, Spector not only contributed significantly to the field of American archaeology, but also helped pave

the way for other female scholars, according to colleagues and friends.



**Frederick Alexander Cooper**, Professor Emeritus, Department of Art History, University of Minnesota died on September 25th. Although Fred taught in the Art History Department, he was

a classical archaeologist and did a great deal of fieldwork in Greece.



# A Mille Lacs History Lesson, One Short Chapter At A Time

## Minnesota State Parks | Archaeology Day

By Brian S. Peterson

brian.peterson@brainerddispatch.com

Onamia, it wasn't far from the bustling playground and other Archaeology Day activities. But shaded and sheltered on a bright and sunny day by towering trees on the edge of the forest, the area seemed far removed. It is a far-away place, this archaeological playground, both in where it's been and where it still may lead.

The excavation site several hundred yards from the Interpretive Center at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park was meant to be a centerpiece of sorts for Archaeology Day, an annual event held recently at the park.

Archaeological films played inside the Interpretive Center throughout the day, and most other displays and activities were just outside its doors.

There was a flintknapping demonstration, an interactive pottery station and an area for kids to sift dirt for treasures, and an archery display and archery and spear-throwing. And the playground, which appeared to serve as a final destination of sorts for the kids and their parents after experiencing all the day had to offer along the way in this family friendly event. But, go one step farther, all the way across the Interpretive Center grounds and into the shade on the edge of the forest and there it was — a one-meter hole. That's it — until Archaeology Day 2012. That in itself makes this a special project.



Brainerd Dispatch/ Brian S. Peterson

*Archaeologist David Mather worked on a dig project Oct. 1 during Archaeology Day at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park near Onamia.*



Brainerd Dispatch/ Brian S. Peterson

*Archaeologists Jim Cummings (top) gestured to onlookers while David Mather worked at an excavation site during Archaeology Day on Oct. 1 at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park.*

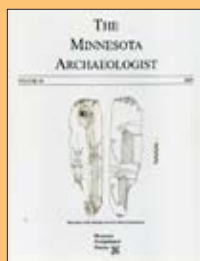
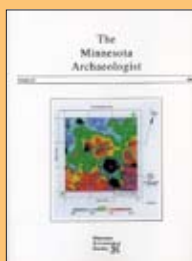
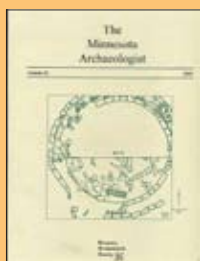
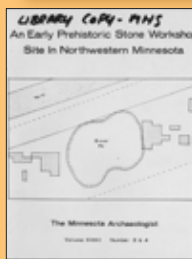
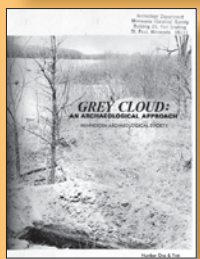
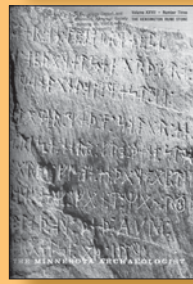
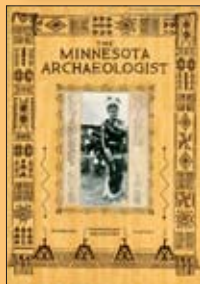
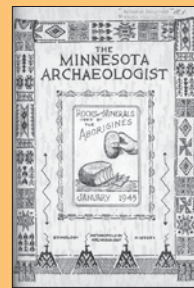
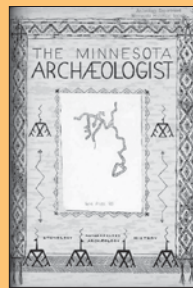
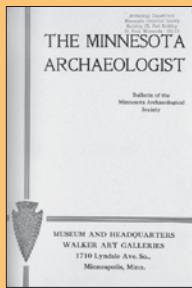
In many digs, archaeologists steadily work a site at their leisure. But here, Jim Cummings and Dave Mather worked that one-meter spot Oct. 1 and nothing more. Cummings, who will return as park naturalist at Kathio in November after working on archaeology projects in the state this summer, provided history and background and the like to the dozen or so onlookers who had found their way across the grounds and to the site early that afternoon.



Mather, a national register archaeologist, removed soil from the site and an assistant sifted through that soil. At the end of the day, the soil was returned and the hole filled.

Next year, the dig will extend to the next one-meter section of what Cummings said could be an earth lodge that burned in the 1600s, possibly of the Mdewakanton Dakota people, who were thought to have inhabited what is now Kathio at that time.

“We don't have a crew of archaeologists and we all have other job responsibilities so we decided to try something entirely different,” Cummings said of the annual one-meter digs, which started in 2006 — meaning six cubic meters have been worked in six years. “All excavations begin with one square meter. But instead, we do just one a year. That way we can fit it into our busy schedule of work. We can study it without our

*Kathio continued on page 6*




A Selection  
of Minnesota  
Archaeologist  
Cover  
Designs Over The Years




*MAS History continued from page 1*

Hennepin County Fair, and the Minnesota State Fair, as well as department stores; at the same time their museum collections were updated, first at the Walker and then later at the Minneapolis Public Library.

**A publication was proposed on March 6, 1935.**

The first issue appeared June 1, 1935, as a monthly. The early years in some ways reflect a folksy quality – the illustrations are done by hand and many “fillers” are part of the journals. “Facts,” “Indian Facts,” and “Tipi Talk” are examples. By 1936 the Bylaws and Constitution were complete. An Executive Council of Board Members were formed at the end of 1936 and the Society was incorporated. Requests for membership were taken very seriously, which entailed formal voting for the candidates proposed by members. Meetings in the 30s included a raffle of an artifact donated by a member and this part of the agenda was very popular. The yearly banquet and celebration became standard.

(August 18, 1934) Dr. Kuehn then led us to his outdoor stadium where he had arranged a lantern slide show of old Indian photos and paintings.

(Oct. 6, 1934) The Klammers, Jr. & Sr. agreed to photo & map out the Pond Mound Group near Sha kopee to be recommended to the Minn. Conservation Committee for state ownership. Carl Schjoll extended an invitation to all members for a free trip thru Harmony Cave at Lacrosse to be visited the following Saturday. Mr. Schjoll reported that he had reached an agreement with Mr. Wilbur the engineer in charge of the excavation of the Mpls & St. Paul Sewer Disposal Plant that all aboriginal artifacts be turned over to our organization. It was decided that Mr. Gunnerson who had donated a Sioux wood dugout canoe to our group be elected to honorary membership since he was also interested in archaeological subjects.

(Dec. 1, 1937) Dr. Thiel’s subject (with slides) was “Glacial Geology in Reference to the Discovery of the Minnesota Man” [In our files is a news clipping from The Minnesota Journal of December 18, 1932, on Jenks’ discovery.]


**The members showed endless patience at these early meetings.**

(April 3, 1935) Reverend J. T. Bergan, Missionary to the Western Tribes showed us slides and talked about the Indian of early days contrasting him with the present day Indians. He said the best way to make our Indians better citizens was to first make them Christians.



*“An Indian Relic Collectors Nite-Mare”  
#1 “Let him have it!” #2” Yes Sir, this is the guy I saw in Centerville Today”*

*MAS History continued on page 7*



**June 1, 1935** **Contest**

*“This is the day and age of contests. Over the radio, in magazines newspapers, everywhere you go it’s “tear off” the label write your name on the back and win anything from a package of Samson’s Soothing Shaving Soap to \$10,000 in cash. So - not to be outdone, the Editor is offering one arrow head as a prize for the best name for this little publication of the Minnesota Archaeological Society. Nothing to buy! No box tops to tear off! No puzzling slogans - just a good name. Hand in as many names as you wish and don’t forget this contest closes at midnight June 15, 1935.*

*Note: Please don’t expect a four-inch “Folsom Point” in this contest. (Unless Mr. Thayer wishes to donate one.)”*

*Kathio continued from page 3*

bosses saying we're spending too much time doing it." "Each fall it's usually the last Saturday in September (the dig/Archaeology Day). It's right by the picnic area and we like to include the public. We actually open up excavation over three days — we prepped Thursday and on Friday we had 250 school kids come through and Saturday it was part of Archaeology Day."

While the current dig and study started in 2006, the site also was studied in the 1960s. But "tragically and ironically, all those field notes from the '67 excavation burned in a house fire," Cummings said. "Dave and I were walking through here one year and saying how we would like to do more (projects) like they did in the '60s when they uncovered a house that had burned," Cummings said of revisiting the project. "There was a layer of charcoal down in the ground and we wanted to learn more about it. In the notes, they noted that the house they excavated was one of what may have been five or more in a village. They presumed from the ceramics and shape of the floor of the house that it was from the time period of the 1200s. That was interesting because when we reviewed the artifacts, most of the ceramics appeared to be from later — the 1400s to 1600s.

"We sent samples (of the charcoal) to a lab in Coral Gables, Florida, and it all came back as structures that had burned in the 1600s. That matches the ceramics we were looking at. We're learning as we go along. It's still a mystery." Of the one-meter-a-year approach, Cummings added, "We're working with very small pieces. It's different than doing it in normal fashion because you'll have discussions day after day. In a way it's frustrating because there's such little information to work on. But it causes us to reflect in detail. We're on the periphery of what was a house, maybe an earth lodge. We just have some clues so far. We've only excavated a small portion." Between the excavation and other demonstrations and events, Archaeology Day drew 1,049 visitors



## ETC...

**Due to popular demand**, the DVD with The Minnesota Archaeologist Volumes 1-48 & Occasional Publications is again available for \$100. There are a few CDs still available at \$25.00.

## Minnesota Archaeological Society Membership

*Those who receive this newsletter by snail mail can check their label, which has their latest update.*

*Everyone else can check with me if there are questions.*

*Anna Morron, [anmorron@q.com](mailto:anmorron@q.com) or 612-922-7006*

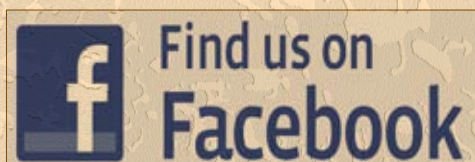
*Costs are Individual \$25.00, Senior or Student: \$15.00, Household: \$30.00, All Institutions: \$40.00 US*

*Thanks!*

### Newsletter

Send your MAS news & notices to the Editor: Michael Brey  
[mike\\_2@mkbrey.com](mailto:mike_2@mkbrey.com)

[www.mnarchsociety.org](http://www.mnarchsociety.org)





## Dates To Remember

### 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.



*MAS History continued from page 5*

(August 3, 1938) Iktomi, Sioux Indian from Fort Totten, N.D. explained his plan for restoring the Indian to his native life by utilizing tracts of waste land in the state, and employing the creative arts and crafts of his forebears.”

(February 15, 1939) It was brought to the attention of the council that the Minnesota State Historical Society had a great deal of Indian material that was obviously no use to them. Plans are to be made to try and procure this material for our Society.

**Collecting trips were common. In our present day PC environment, it is a bit uncomfortable to read some of the records.**

In a letter of 1935, “Hear you boys had great pickings at Forest Lake?” Then, referring to a mound “Saw the biggest one I’ve seen till now ... this mound is 15 to 17 feet high by 75 feet. It happens to have been excavated at the top. Be a good place to let the Society dig!” Further, the letter mentions a trip to Springfield to view possibly 200 petroglyphs and only finding 20: “The one I brought home was the smallest, poorest one there but the only one we could remove.” The sheer excitement, however, is contagious. The finders were so excited they were “speechless” and carefully listed the 43 objects “in perfect shape” as they were excavated. The Society was quite adamant that collections be kept in the state and in several instances recommended that certain sites be protected.

(April 12, 1938) “A report on the Wayzata mound was made ... the [Mound] committee attended a council meeting at Wayzata and found the members in sympathy with our cause.” In the same minutes, however, we find them “pleased” to hear of places in South Dakota where “pickings were good.”

When The Minnesota Antiquities Law of 1939 was passed which curtailed digging it came as a dilemma to some of the Society. But the group worked as closely as possible with Dr. Lloyd A. Wilford and the University of Minnesota finding many ways to still participate in excavations.

(Executive Council, Aug. 20, 1940) “Extended discussion of the University Extension Courses in Anthropology. The Executive Council approved the proposed affiliation of the Society with the Minnesota Historical Society and recommended that this matter be taken up with the membership at the next meeting.

(Oct. 7, 1942) With colored slides Dr. Hiller illustrated their trip thru northern Minnesota into North Dakota and then into South Dakota ... the movies showed [showed] Louis Franiere and the customs of feasts. [and] The dog feast included the bringing of the dog, its execution and preparation, cooking and serving with the intrepid explorers eating their share. [Note: This feast is described in detail by Killy in Journal V 12:2:46.]

**Should women be allowed to join? • We conclude the MAS History article in our next issue!**

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

- *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.*

**Become a fan of MAS by joining us on Facebook.** You can submit photos of your collections, ask questions, or leave comments. This is a place to connect with others interested in Minnesota Archaeology. We hope to see you there! If you have questions please contact: Debbie Pommer at 651-430-0137 or [pomme001@umn.edu](mailto:pomme001@umn.edu)

**Check the label on the outer envelope of this mailing** to find the year of your membership status. Please update your membership if it is not current. All the details can be found at [www.mnarchsociety.org](http://www.mnarchsociety.org) or contact Anna Morrow [anmorrow@q.com](mailto:anmorrow@q.com) 612-922 -7006.

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**Good News.** Volume 69 the 2010 Minnesota Archaeologist is in the mail. Most USA issues were mailed by October 7 and those to Canada by October 14. Note: If you have not received your MnArch by the end of the month please let me know. Some of the seal on the mailers might not be secure. Anna Morrow [anmorrow@q.com](mailto:anmorrow@q.com) or 612-922-7006

