

MAS Annual Meeting and Dinner

The Archaic and Its Problems for Minnesota Archaeology



Profile of Archaic site in Clay County with stratigraphy of diagnostic artifacts and C-14 date. (Courtesy of Dr. G. Holley)

Michael Michlovic's biographical sketch: I grew up in Pittsburgh and studied anthropology and archaeology at the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Illinois, specializing in prehistoric archaeology. Since 1970, I've taken part in or directed field projects in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Illinois, and the Samoan Islands. From 1975 to 2015 I was professor of anthropology at Minnesota State University Moorhead. During that time, I focused my field efforts on the archaeology of the Red River Valley of Minnesota and North Dakota. This work included numerous surveys and excavations, including large-scale, multi-year excavations at the Canning, Shea, Rustad, Sprunk and Biesterfeldt sites. I served on the State Review Board for the National Register, as editor of *The Minnesota Archaeologist* and president of the Council for Minnesota Archaeology. I helped found the joint department of Anthropology and Earth Science at MSUM in 1999 and served as chair until 2011. I retired in 2015.

Friday, April 20, 2018

6:30-10:00pm

Anderson Center #304 & 305,
Hamline University, Saint Paul

The Minnesota Archaeological Society will be holding its annual meeting/dinner on Friday, April 20, 2018. The event is scheduled from 6:30-10pm at Hamline University (Anderson Center #304 & 305). Dr. Michael Michlovic will be presenting on "The Archaic and Its Problems for Minnesota Archaeology."

A separate registration form will be mailed/emailed to MAS members .

Presentation Abstract:

Archaic sites in Minnesota include finds in many private collections and surface contexts; however, our best information for the Archaic comes from excavated sites. These are found in various settings including river sediment, alluvial fans, and relict beach deposits. Unfortunately, only a few sites have been excavated for this long-enduring cultural period, some are mixed deposits, and some have not been fully reported. Anyone working with Archaic sites or materials will need to confront several issues: dating and assigning sites to a chronological scheme; characterizing the adaptation; taphonomy of the cultural materials; significance of diagnostic projectile point styles, and the importance of cultural innovations assumed for this period.

Letter from the President

By Dan Wendt

The letter from the President is intended as a vehicle to inform the general membership of the Minnesota Archaeological Society of recent Board of Directors activities. The following is a brief recap of the events, discussions, and decisions that transpired during the past quarter.

Spring Events: In February our board had an update from Steven Blondo on the Twin Cities Alpha Sites project. The project is focused on documenting sites that were reported to the Minnesota Office of the State Archaeologist by the public but have never had a professional archaeologist visit and validate the record of the site. We have an invitation to be involved in outreach with our local county historical societies and with fieldwork this summer. Watch our website and Facebook for more information.

March saw the return of the biennial Lithic Workshop to the Fort Snelling Archaeology offices. It was the fifth lithic conference and brought together researchers and an interested avocational community from Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin. Kent Bakken had an interesting update on a lithic procurement site in the Minnesota River Valley just upstream from Fort Snelling. Mark Anderson from the Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist gave an update on an interstate online lithics database. At the conference we got to see two amazing collections from Minnesota that represent caching behavior as a strategy for managing lithic resources. Thank you to everyone who worked to host and everyone who participated in the event.

On April 20th we will have our annual dinner meeting. Dr. Michael Michlovic will be our guest speaker and will discuss the Archaic Period in Minnesota. Among other sites, he will discuss his work with Moorhead State University at the Rustad site that provided a rare look into life on the prairie 7000 years ago. At the meeting we will award the Hill-Lewis Award to recognize an individual who has made outstanding contributions to Minnesota archaeology as an avocational archaeologist. Please plan to join us for this annual celebration.

Board Changes: We will be affirming the 2018 Board of Directors at the annual meeting on April 20th. We have made great progress on our goal of involving a new generation in the board of the Minnesota Archaeological Society.



2018 Lithic Workshop, Fort Snelling Visitor Center

MAS Board

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Kent Bakken, *Minnesota Ar-
chaeologist* Managing Editor

Upcoming Events

Note: Be sure to double check date, times, and prices of events with sponsoring organization before attending!

Alpha Sites Project by Steven Blondo (Blondo Consulting) - Multiple Dates

Multiple events and presentations on archaeological research and methods, including Twin Cities area field-work. Check the project's Facebook page for event descriptions and schedule (<https://www.facebook.com/AlphaSiteArchaeology/>).

April 5

Zooarchaeology of Historic Fort Snelling and the Native Ecology of Bdote by David Mather

6pm at the John B. Davis Lecture Hall in the Ruth Stricker Dayton Campus Center, Macalester College
Presented by the AIA Society: St. Paul/Minneapolis.

April 20

Minnesota Archaeological Society Annual Meeting and Dinner

6:30 to 10pm at Hamline University Anderson Center Rooms #304 & #305.

May 28

Camping at Kathio... 1,500 B.C.

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park

Step back in time as we look at artifacts and take a short walk to locations where archaeologists found evidence of a village from the 1600s and a “campsite” dating to over 3,000 years ago. Meet at the Interpretive Center. There is no charge for this program. However, a vehicle permit is required to enter Minnesota State Parks. Vehicle permits may be purchased at the park office. Cost of a daily permit is \$7.00. An annual permit, which allows entry into all Minnesota State Parks for one year from the date of purchase, is \$35.00.

June 9-10

Artisan Festival

Join us for a culture-filled festival celebrating artists, crafters and musicians who gather to sell their hand-crafted items. Featuring blacksmiths, jewelers, glassblowers, flintknappers, woodworkers, brain Tanners, Etc. Hairy Mosquito Trading Post (Milaca, MN).

July 12th-15th

Primitive Arts Gathering, Knap-in & Rendezvous

Primitive skills artisans demonstrate, show their art and provide hands-on workshops. Hairy Mosquito Trading Post (Milaca, MN).

June 29 & 30

Arrowheads & Stone Tools Day

By shaping stone into sharp tools and projectiles, ancient people were able to hunt animals as big as mastodons. Discover the craft of making spear points and arrowheads. Watch as modern flintknappers demonstrate their skills. See dozens of finished points, projectiles, blades, and tools on display. Access to event is included with paid admittance to the MNHS site. Snake River Fur Post (formerly the Northwest Company Post) Pine City, MN.



Share your thoughts on Minnesota archaeology and find out what is happening right now across the state and region on our page.

Pareidolia, Persistence, and Provenience

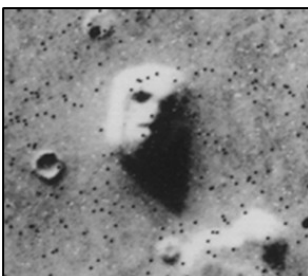
By Bob Suchanek (Science Museum of Minnesota Volunteer)

I'm an old computer software developer. The material remains of my endeavors are about as durable as sand castles on a beach. More durable stuff created by other people draws me to archaeology and the past. There may be a "bug" in my archaeological program however since what I think I see is sometimes something else.

This brings me to my favorite new word: PAREIDOLIA. According to Wikipedia, "Pareidolia (*pæri'douliə/ parr-i-DOH-lee-ə*) is a psychological phenomenon in which the mind responds to a stimulus, usually an image or a sound, by perceiving a familiar pattern where none exists."

One of the challenges that I face as a rookie archaeologist is learning to critically analyze objects, going beyond initial impressions and gathering as much empirical data as possible before announcing what I've found to the world. It's not always easy to tell if an object was made by a person and often my pareidolia gets in the way.

Great teachers, persistence, and experience will hopefully get me to a little less imaginative, more empirical state of mind. Of course asking the right question is also one of the keys to understanding every object. A big first question that I'm learning to ask is "where was the object found?" In other words, what's the provenience? Some examples:



A giant face? This high altitude photo of what appears to be a human face (looks like a monument to Sargon to me....) is less compelling when it's understood to be on the surface of Mars.



A mortar missing its pestle? The neat hole looks so contrived. Objects like this are found in many places around Minnesota, but abundantly as well are natural cobble sized rocks

with weathered voids that were pushed southward by ice sheets from an ancient Canadian rock formation. Sometimes knowing where like objects are found helps get to real understanding.

A hammer or hatchet? This could certainly be used as a hammer. I'd love to have it handy next time I set up my tent and pound in the stakes! This smooth edged rock was found in a river bed among thousands of smooth edged rocks. I think the simplest explanation for its manufacture is that the river made it.



Sharpened tool? This rock, with flakes systematically removed on both sides to create a sharp cutting edge, was found with many similarly modified rocks

on a Minnesota archaeological site (21ST45). On the one hand, people make a lot of things like this. On the other hand, rivers don't.

Archaeology offers endless opportunities for assessing objects to determine the ways that people may have made and/or used them. Getting beyond the creative power of nature and the imaginative nature of human pareidolia is part of clearly understanding the past.

The Art of Making an Archaeology Documentary – Part 1

At the 2016 Annual Meeting, the idea was put forth to Minnesota Archaeological Society general membership, and received positive feedback and support, to begin the long process of making a middle - school age documentary focused on scientific endeavor, cultural norms, and archaeology. In 2016, the Minnesota Archaeological Society applied for, and received, a Minnesota Legacy Amendment grant for the first phase of this process centered on research, interviews, and script writing. Phase II will be documentary production. These grants are overseen by the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS).

As part of the grant writing process, MAS established a project Advisory Committee consisting of Bill Gardner (MAS Member at Large), Dr. Guy Gibbon (UofM), Dr. Ed Fleming (Science Museum of Minnesota), Dr. Mike Michlovic (Retired, UofM-Moorhead), and Pat Emerson and Dan Wendt (MAS Board Members). MAS worked with Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) representatives Daniel Bergin, Leya Hale, and Tom Trow; and Jeremy Nienow as Project Manager. They also went through a strict procurement process to hire a production team to complete the work once funding was secured. MAS awarded the Phase I contract to TPT, with Daniel Bergin (Producer) and Tom Trow (Production Management). Former MAS Board Member, Dr. Jeremy Nienow of Nienow Cultural Consultants, was hired to act as grant manager.

With the process underway, Dr. Nienow, Dan Wendt, and TPT developed recommendations for the Advisory Committee in terms of program topics, questions, and individuals to interview. Advisory Committee members met in May 2017, when filming dates, interviews, and next steps were agreed upon. The first round of four interviews were completed at the Fort Snelling

Archaeology Labs in early July and included Dr. Scott Anfinson (Former MN State Archaeologist), Amanda Gronhovd (Current State Archaeologist), Dr. Mike Michlovic (Retired, UofM-Moorhead), and Jasmine Koncur (Science Museum of Minnesota). A second day of interviews was done later in the month at Hamline University and included an interview with David Mather (MN State Historic Preservation Office) as well as shooting B-Roll of students processing and analyzing artifacts in the Hamline lab.

After these interviews were completed and processed, Dr. Nienow organized a group of MAS volunteers to transcribe the interviews. Special thanks goes out to Valerie Woelfel, Melanie Michaela, Jennifer Tworzyanski, and Joyce Palazzotto for their much valued, hard work. Once the interviews were transcribed, TPT finalized a draft script in early September and the draft was submitted to Advisory Committee members and MNHS as part of the 75% grant completion milestone. A second Advisory Committee meeting was held and their insights incorporated and submitted as an updated draft on Oct. 1 to three outside reviewers. Their comments were greatly appreciated and used to again revise the script.

A final draft of the script was presented to MAS by TPT on October 25th. Twelve copies of the final script were produced by the Project Manager and presented to the MAS board in December. All related documents, products, invoices, receipts, etc. were packaged together and submitted to MNHS to close the grant. We look forward to applying for the second round of funding in 2018 and producing the video before the end of 2019.

Stay tuned to the MAS Facebook page and website, where we hope to add links to the interviews and other documentary content.

Three Questions with Dr. Sean Dunham, CNF Archaeologist

What got you interested in archaeology?

Like many children I was fascinated by dinosaurs when I was small. My family lived in Chicago, and at that time I had the opportunity to visit the Field Museum on a fairly regular basis. It didn't take me long to become entranced with the ethnographic exhibits and archaeological displays. I remember getting a booklet called something like "Indians of Old Chicago" at the museum and that started to reel me in. I had an anthropology elective in high school and learned archaeology was a subfield of anthropology. This knowledge led me to a dual major in anthropology and history at Michigan State University (MSU) as well as my field school at the Marquette Mission site, a 17th century French Mission and Huron village site in St. Ignace, Michigan. I was hooked!

What question/research topic are you most interested in?

My research interests converge on the relationships between people, their culture, and their landscapes. Here at the Chippewa National Forest (CNF) I think about and see a palimpsest of intertwined landscapes. The creation and maintenance of the Forest Service (FS) landscape has dominated the past century and is directly responsible for much of the modern socio-economic (logging, recreation, etc.) and physical (vegetation, roads, dams, etc.) landscapes. While this is an obvious example, such patterns are also observable in the past. For example, a preliminary study concerning fire history on the CNF suggests that pre-European settlement fire intervals in parts of the Forest may be related to intentional Native American burning prior to Euroamerican settlement of the area.

I am hoping to develop a project with partners to better determine if the fire interval was the result of human activity. If this is the case, then this pattern may relate to Native American enhancement of habitats for game, fruit bearing plants, and planting. Not only would such results inform us about landscape activi-

ties in the past, but they would also inform us on how we might manage the landscape in the present both for the silvicultural goals of the FS, such as red pine production, as well as the usufructuary gathering rights of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO), especially as related to the enhancement of habitats for plant and animal species of interest to the tribe. Projects like this that bring a suite of possibilities together are exciting to me.

What was/is your favorite Minnesota archaeological project or site?

While it would be tempting to say that my favorite Minnesota archaeological site was Grand Portage or the Itasca Bison Kill site, I'd have to say my favorite project is one I am working on now with the LLBO Heritage Sites Program and St. Cloud State University. These are actually two related projects both looking at late 19th – early 20th century Ojibwe homesites on the Forest. The first examines Ojibwe homesites associated with the historic Leech Lake/Red Lake Trail. One of the questions we are asking is whether people were relocating to be near the trail or if the placement of the trail did not influence where people were living. The second project is an evaluation of a homesite in advance of a development project for LLBO. We also have botanists from the CNF and LLBO looking at some of these sites to determine if there are any patterns to the vegetation that might help us understand the setting and function of these sites.

Both these projects provide a gateway to explore land use in the early reservation era. Egads, another landscape!



Reconstructed Brainerd Vessel

Brief Bio of Dr. Sean Dunham

Sean Dunham is the Heritage Program Manager (Forest Archaeologist) at the CNF. Before his career with the FS, Sean worked for a number of years as a heritage resources consultant including research on the National Forests in Michigan and Wisconsin. He holds a PhD in Anthropology from MSU and a MA in Ancient Studies from the University of Minnesota. Sean's dissertation addressed the interaction of hunter-gatherers and low-level food producers with their environment during the Late Woodland period (AD 600 to AD 1600) in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Since his field school, Sean has had the pleasure of working on archaeological projects in Europe (England and Germany) and North America (Great Lakes region, Midwest, and New England). However, through the years it has become clear that he is happiest working in the "north woods."



Featured Artifact: Lake Bemidji Point *by LeRoy Gonsior*

Recovery of similar shaped projectile points from the Lake Bemidji Shelter Building site (Beltrami County) at Lake Bemidji and the LaSalle Creek site (Hubbard County) on LaSalle Lake suggests a previously unrecognized form, which is here being named the Lake Bemidji point. Lake Bemidji points have deeply concave or bifurcated bases, convex sided blade, and shallow notches with broad rounded ears. The two points were recovered from sites at levels associated with Brainerd Ware and LaSalle Creek Ware ceramics that are part of the Elk Lake Complex. Lake Bemidji points are also similar to points from the Shingobee Island site (Cass County) on Leech Lake that was identified as an Oxbow form associated with Brainerd Ware ceramics by Christy Hohman-Caine and Grant Goltz. Additional Lake Bemidji points have been recovered from the south shore of Lake Bemidji. The Lake Bemidji point on the left from the LaSalle Creek site measures 48.2-x-19.0-x-6.5 mm and the point of the right from the Lake Bemidji Shelter Building site is 42.5-x-20.1-x-6.3 mm with the basal notching 6.1mm deep.



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

Return Service Requested

Join the Minnesota Archaeology Society

USA

Standard: \$30.00 (one person)
Household: \$40.00 (two or more)
Senior: (65 plus) \$15.00
Active student: \$15.00
Institution: \$60.00

Both USA and Canada

Sustaining: \$100. (Receive free MAS mugs.)
Benefactor: \$250. (Receive free MAS mugs plus a seat at the annual dinner meeting as an honored guest.)

Canada

Standard: \$40.00 (one person)
Household: \$50.00 (two or more)
Institution: \$70.00

•If you receive your newsletter by email and do not know when you renewed your membership, please let me know.

•Getting the newsletter by snail mail or by e-mail? Prefer the other? Let me know.

Thanks so much. Anna Morrow, anmorrow@q.com

Send your MAS news and notices to jacob.foss@mnhs.org
Thank you for supporting the Minnesota Archaeological Society