

The Ontario Archaeological Society



ARCH NOTES edited by Nancy Powell

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Address: 57 Chestnut Park Road Toronto 5, Ontario		Address: Library, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto 5, Ontario	

APRIL MEETING

WHEN:	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 1965
WHAT TIME:	8:00 p.m.
WHERE:	Room 251, Education Centre, 155 College Street, Toronto 2B
WHO'S SPEAKING:	MR. KEN DAWSON, Port Arthur, Ontario
WHAT ABOUT:	Archaeology in Northern Ontario

Our speaker for April, Mr. Ken Dawson of Port Arthur, is well qualified to tell us about archaeological activities in Northern Ontario. In a letter to the Society he reports on some of the recent projects in this area. During 1962 work was done on a Late Woodland Blackduck site in the Whitefish area. The following year, salvage operation was undertaken for the National Museum of Canada on a Paleo Indian site. Last year a survey of the Whitefish, Lac des Mille Lacs and Shebandowan area recorded some sixteen sites including Archaic, Laurel and Blackduck material. Historical projects were also begun such as the French Portage Way Station between French Lake and Windigoostigan Lake. Mr. Dawson was also the supervisor of an underwater archaeological project on the Kaministikwia River.

For his talk to the Society this month, Mr. Dawson proposes to tell us something about both these prehistoric and historical projects. He will deal with recent Acqua Plano Paleo Indian finds tying these in with earlier work done in the area followed by Archaic including the Old Copper Complex then Woodland, Laurel, Blackduck as the manifestations appear at the Lakehead together with sites further west.

The end of the Blackduck period marks the beginning of contact culture so a discussion of historic sites will follow. These will include the underwater activities on the old fur trade routes, the excavation of a way station in the Quetico region, a survey and excavation of the early trading post at Longlac and general observations on other posts stretching up to Hudson Bay.

Mr. Dawson will illustrate his talk with slides. I hope many of us will be able to attend what promises to be a most interesting meeting.

This time I trust that weather conditions will be a little more agreeable than those that attended our last meeting on March 17th. Green was nowhere in evidence on this particular St. Patrick's Day evening as Toronto was buried under a sudden heavy snowfall. After struggling through knee deep drifts in a flimsy pair of high heeled shoes, I arrived at the Education Centre on that memorable night and found a few hardy members clustered miserably in the lobby. Further trials awaited us when it developed that our usual meeting room was not available that evening. Another room on the sixth floor was offered to us and we trooped up there only to discover that the door was locked. At this point, Dr. Dailey, Mr. De Ryck and myself came to the unanimous decision that the only merciful thing to do under these trying circumstances was to declare the meeting cancelled. We waited until 8:15 or so in case any other intrepid members turned up and then trudged wearily homeward.

For those of you who made a similar trek, may I first offer my congratulations for your determination and hardiness and, secondly, apologies for the disastrous turn of events. I know that many of us were eagerly looking forward to Mrs. Monture's talk and had boned up on Iroquian history especially for the event. However, the situation is not entirely lost as Mrs. Monture has promised to speak to us at a later date, most probably at our May meeting.

To turn to a slightly warmer, sunnier clime than ours has been this last while, our Past President, Miss Phyllis Bowland, has received a letter from Dr. Clarke, our Past Vice-President, who is currently doing biological research in East Africa. Miss Bowland is planning a trip to Africa herself this summer and Dr. Clarke was telling her of some of the archaeological sites she might find interesting to visit. He reports that Dr. L.S.B. Leakey is reopening a site near Nakura in Kenya. Dr. Clarke had also found some material himself at Ileret near Lake Rudolph in Kenya which he was leaving in the museum at Nairobi.

Dr. Clarke had also found time to witness some fascinating native ceremonies such as the tribal dance of the Gallaba at the Omo River delta. He visited some sacred sites in the Meru forest region near Mt. Kenya. Just recently, he was the guest of two of the greatest laibons (a laibon is much higher in the scale than a chief) of the Masai tribe in Tanganyika. He sat in on a discussion between the tribal council and three moran over a lion skin! He describes the moran as "slender, lithsome teenagers with ochred skins, plaited hair and bagles, like pretty girls, with handsome faces and big, lustrous eyes, trembling before the great men". Dr. Clarke closes his letter with the comment "saw 62 lions on my last safari!".

Meanwhile, back in Toronto, the big event this month is the Conference on Underwater Archaeology to be held at the Royal Ontario Museum from April 15 to 17. Anyone planning to attend is advised to register as soon as possible for a very large attendance is expected. Registration forms can be obtained from Dr. A. D. Tushingham, Chief Archaeologist, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto 5.

Delegates from all over the world are planning to attend and a most impressive list of speakers has been issued. One of the talks of interest to many of our members will be given by John Huston, President of the Council of Underwater Archaeology. His talk is entitled "Amateurs and Research of the Council of Underwater Archaeology". Other speakers include Dr. George Bass and Peter Throckmorton of the University of Pennsylvania, Robert Inverarity, Director of the Adirondack Museum in New York, and Robert Wheeler of the Minnesota Historical Society. An English delegate, Robert Forrest-Webb, Archaeological Director of the British Sub-Acqua Club, is expected to speak on archaeological discoveries in the Thames River. Another delegates from Italy, Gerhard Kapitaen, a museum specialist, will speak on the results of underwater archaeology in Sicily. Other possible speakers will be coming from Spain and the U.S.S.R.

Science and Archaeology

There have been a number of books published recently dealing with the application of scientific methods to archaeology. One of them caught the eye of a scientist friend of mine the other day. It was called Archaeology and the Microscope. He chuckled when he read the title and remarked rather sarcastically: "Well, fancy that - the archaeologist has finally discovered the microscope." Naturally I leapt to the defence of the archaeologist to the best of my limited knowledge and hastened to assure him that scientific techniques have long been employed in archaeological research. Gone are the days when the romantic and enthusiastic collector of artifacts can make any worthwhile contribution. On the contrary, he often does irreparable damage by destroying valuable evidence in his haphazard looting of sites.

To-day the archaeologist utilizes the skills and knowledge of many different fields such as geology, biology, meteorology and deep-sea diving! He must be aware of the latest scientific techniques for dating artifacts and the methods for doing chemical analyses of archaeological objects.

A new research centre called ASCA (Applied Scientific Center for Archaeology) has been established at the University Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Its purpose is to experiment with and to develop new techniques in archaeological research. In addition, investigations will be made into other fields of scientific research, especially those of the physical sciences to determine which techniques may be adapted for archaeological research.

In the first issue of its newsletter, ASCA reports on such inventions as the Elsec proton magnetometer. This instrument has been developed to aid the archaeologist in his location of buried sites. If a buried site is more magnetic than the surrounding earth, or vice versa, the magnetometer will find it.

Significant finds have already been made by means of this instrument in England, Cyprus, Majorca and other places. Closer to home, the magnetometer was used at a summer training and survey programme sponsored by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources at Fort Lennox, Ile-aux-Noix, Quebec. This was an historic site and the magnetometer was most useful in determining the location of graves and iron objects.

With underwater archaeology very much in the news these days, one of the newest developments in this field is the "Asheran", a two-man submarine built for the University Museum of Pennsylvania for use in excavations in Turkey. It is capable of operating at depths down to 600 feet and for periods from two to ten hours, depending upon the speed used. Dr. George Bass was the director of this underwater project and he will be speaking about the use of this submarine in his talk at the forthcoming Underwater Conference.

One of the most important publications in the field of scientific research in archaeology is the periodical Archaeometry. This is published annually by the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford University. A subscription costs \$2.00 and the address is 6 Keble Road, Oxford, England.

Among the many books published recently are two surveys of scientific methods published in England. Science in Archaeology, edited by Don R. Brothwell and Eric Higgs (London, Thames and Hudson, 1963) contains articles by over fifty collaborators, twenty of them from outside Great Britain. The other work has a similar title - The Scientist and Archaeology and it is edited by Edward Pyddoke (London, Phoenix House, 1963). Both books have articles on such subjects as soil analysis, radiocarbon dating and petrology.

Mr. Pyddoke is also the author of an earlier work called Stratification for the Archaeologist (London, Phoenix House, 1961). In this he attempts to describe the relation of recent geological and geographic processes to archaeological finds and the reaction of living organisms upon strata in which artifacts may be found.

Finally a note about an earlier-mentioned work - Archaeology and the Microscope. This is by Leo Biek and was published by Praeger's of New York in 1963.

And last, but not least ...

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

The word might almost be "Sorry". Sorry the weather was so bad that our last meeting had to be cancelled at the last moment, sorry that we missed a good speaker, and sorry that for those very faithful members who did battle the storm to turn up, the trip was in vain.

However, I believe that the interest shown in that meeting, those that turned up and the many that checked to see if it was cancelled, is indicative of the resurgence of enthusiasm which will carry the OAS to the heights I believe it should attain.

Elsewhere, Miss Powell, the Editor, will have dealt with the importance of the next meeting. May I underline her remarks. First, we have some important items to clear up from the snowed-out March meeting. Dr. Dailey has some very important things to say about future digs, and in particular, the next dig. We need your co-operation for his plans.

We will also have an important out-of-town speaker and I would like him to return home with the word that our meetings are well attended and that we are a very lively organization. I know you will help give that impression.

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