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## MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND

A long planned project was launched this Fall with the creation of an Endowment Fund for the Lycoming County Historical Museum. This fund, administered by Commonwealth Bank, will insure the continuing operation of the museum by creating operating monies not dependent on government grants or outside funding sources. Monies will be deposited in a secure account and only the interest from the fund will be used. The endowment is being created by donors who may make a cash gift to the fund (all gifts are tax deductible), or by Will bequests. The following is a list of donors to whom we owe our most gracious thanks. Won't you pitch in and join them in this worthy project?

1. Clarence R. & Evelyn Antes Mutchler - \$5,000.  
This gift to be listed as the Gibson G. Antes Memorial Fund in the Lycoming County Historical Museum Endowment Fund and shall be a continuing memorial to him. (Mr. Antes was a past president of this Lycoming County Historical Society.)
2. Harold L. Tonkin Estate - \$5,000
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## COVER

Members of the North Central Chapter #8 Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology at work on the Canfield Island Excavation (36 LY 37) during the 1984 Field Season. Photo by Tom Shreiner, chapter president.

## NOTICE

The Lycoming County Historical Museum now offers a Genealogy Search Service. Our staff genealogist will conduct research on the name, or person requested for a fee of \$25.00. Please enclose a check and as much background information as possible. Send it to the Museum; Attention: Genealogy Staff.

The Museum, for \$2.00 each, will copy Civil War or World War I discharges that were registered in the Lycoming County Court House. These copies will be the same size as the Court House records. If it is to be mailed, include a SASE, otherwise it can be picked up at the Museum.

## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members:

I know you will all enjoy this Journal. It is almost completely the work of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology North Central Chapter Number 8. They have worked hard and have given us a very interesting and informative Journal.

Our first meeting of the year with Dr. George Wolf as our speaker was a great success. Not only was it a wonderful program but it was a chance for many of his old friends to see him. Dr. Wolf enjoyed the day as much as the rest of us. The letter he sent the following week is up on the bulletin board for all to read when visiting the museum.

The museum is a very busy place these days. The genealogy room is not quite finished but is already in use. We have our first customer.

We are planning our second Victorian Christmas afternoon for December 9. Mark the date on your calendar.

We are also going to be part of the American Association of University Women's Holly Trail this year. That, of course, will be in November.

Now, I would like to thank you all for your contributions to all the requests the past few months. I wish I could personally thank each one of you; you have all been so generous.

Sincerely,



Jane W. Ingersoll,  
*President*

## PAGES OF DIRT

by James P. Bressler

Rare indeed is the person who has no interest or curiosity about some phase of history. To most of us the word history takes on the school age atmosphere of a book from which we study factual data about things past. Actually history is an account of anything past, whether written or not. You, as a person, are becoming history in a sense, every moment you live.

The archaeologist looks at written history too. In addition he reads a book that is written in a different fashion. Furthermore he has ever so much more latitude in which to maneuver. While we take such justifiable pride in the history of Lycoming County and the exciting part it played in the growth of a nation, we are actually confined to less than 200 years of recorded historical facts, give or take a few years. To be sure more has happened in that short time to affect the physical appearance and human population of this river valley than occurred in all the days before. These events are all recorded in a fashion that makes it real, and gives it life and feeling. Then again, this is history of our own people, and how we got what we have. That in itself involves us directly through our ancestors. It is the history of our time.

The archaeologist on the other hand, goes back in time as much as 10,000 years or more — 50 times the span of our recorded history. He alone knows the language of this history book, and the skill he must develop to read it. Really he has a frontier all his own, trying to put a puzzle together from the most meager



pieces of evidence. His language is one of stone and bone, and his pages are written in dirt, layer upon layer as the red man left it. From the artifacts he finds, the position in which he finds them, the prints of ancient huts, the burials of the dead, the refuse heaps, their pottery of stone and clay, the wicked and deadly arrowheads, all these and many more are his words and tell his story. He must be able to dream a little too, for his whole book, age by age is one of the imagination based on what he finds. He must truly put flesh on the bones and make them live. He sees fierce combats of the wild; of man against a vast unbroken wilderness full of wild beasts, wars of annihilation, the wild beauty of a savage

kingdom with strange tribal customs, witch doctors in hideous costumes like ghosts in the flicker of a campfire performing antics to drive the evil spirits from the sick and the wounded. He can see brown skinned savages spearing fish in the Loyalsock or the Susquehanna, squaws grinding maize on stone mortar or scraping hides for winter clothing. He sees a single file of dusky warriors creeping through the dim half light of our mountain valleys, bound for a distant land to make war on a hostile tribe. He puts each arrowhead into the bow of some ancient hunter and tries to picture the mission that lost the arrow to be found a thousand years later. These things he must see by himself, for the Indian had no written history otherwise. Archaeology is more than finding stones.

Cultivation of the fields in which the ancient villages stood has broken up many of these pages of dirt and he must dig below to find more accurate reading. As he does so he knows too that these pages can be read only once for he must destroy one to get to the next. The deeper he goes the older the story and the words become more obscure. He must record and photograph as he goes, and even at best he cannot be sure of all his translations. He deplores the depredations of his well meaning but poorly informed friends who destroy his pages of dirt merely to find strange and curious objects without recording the facts he needs to read the real story.

Here in the Susquehanna Valley and in the hills about rest in silence many of the secret stories that are just as thrilling, just as vital a part of our cultural heritage as the recorded history of our times. With this motive in mind local people interested in archaeology have organized so that some of the unwritten history may be studied and preserved so that all may learn. Our historical society has a direct interest in this for it becomes the medium whereby this evidence can be displayed and the story told.

Many people in all levels of society find this field a refreshing relaxation and are excitingly rewarded in material and cultural enrichment. We hope the interest will grow, for it is already late to begin writing the story of our ancient past. The evidence is rapidly being gathered up and the pages are becoming fewer. And yet there is time to help in this work if you are willing to learn a new language — written in pages of dirt.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER NO. 8 OF THE SOCIETY FOR PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGY

by Harry Rogers

*Material for this article was obtained from "The History of the North Central Chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology" by David S. Wilson, Lycoming College and the Volume 1, Number 1 issue of the quarterly Newsletter of the North Central Chapter, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology issued in October, 1956.*

On July 10, 1955 a group of interested people met in the Director's Room of the local Y.M.C.A. in Williamsport, PA to discuss a new chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology. The meeting was opened and the group was addressed by James P. Bressler of Williamsport, who talked of the needs of a chapter of the Society in the north central area of our state. P. Schuyler Miller, president of the state organization then spoke of the activities of the parent group and the operation of other local chapters in Pennsylvania. Following this



talk, Mr. Vincent Mrozowski, the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology secretary, outlined the procedure for organizing a new chapter. Mr Miller presiding, the group moved and voted unanimously to form a local chapter. The name "North Central Chapter" was officially adopted. SPA secretary Mrozowski said the new chapter would be the eighth chapter formed in Pennsylvania and, hereafter, would be known as the North Central Chapter No. 8 of the parent society.

The following slate of officers was elected for a term of one year, with the task of forming a constitution and by-laws: president, James P. Bressler, Williamsport; vice-president, John S. Koch, Williamsport; secretary/treasurer, Ray L. Taylor, Milton. Serving on the first Board of Directors were Dr. Lloyd E. Wurster of Williamsport, William A. Remaly, Berwick and Frank W. Bauder of South Williamsport.

Miss Katherine W. Bennett of the James V. Brown Library offered the use of the Library's Community Room, which was accepted. It was decided to hold meetings there on the second Friday of each month. Membership dues were agreed upon, with active membership of one dollar per year.

In October of 1956 the Chapter started publishing a quarterly Newsletter. This publication was regarded as one of the finest in the state. It proved to be so good that many people joined the Chapter just so they could receive the Newsletter. Members did not necessarily have to live in the north central area of Pennsylvania to become a member and receive the publication; and as a result, by the end of the fifties, members would come from Northumberland, Clinton, Union, Snyder and Lycoming Counties.

In 1960 a few problems arose which had to be overcome by the Chapter. During the year there were three changes in the offices of president, vice-president and secretary, as well as some vacancies on the Board of Directors. Also, the Chapter ran into many problems in balancing their budget. This financial difficulty was due to the fact that for the first time they paid guest speakers to come to meetings, yet still tried to keep the dues low. Soon though, with raising of dues and increase in membership, they got out of the red. Also, 1960 was the year of the fire which all but destroyed the Lycoming County Historical Museum. About 20% of the artifacts kept there, in the Chapter's headquarters in the

Museum basement, were affected. The Chapter decided to temporarily keep the artifacts in the Richardson Building on West Third Street in Williamsport, where the Historical Society was keeping its display items as well.

In 1961 the Chapter elected its first woman president, Miss Mary Belle Lontz. During her year in office she was responsible for enacting many new committees to fit the need of the Chapter. Among these were the Field Survey, Education, Finance and Nominating Committees. The most active was the Field Survey or Mapping Committee. Site mapping consisted of locating and mapping all known Indian sites in the area. The Site Map Book was filled with topographical data which tells of the location, soil conditions, various types of artifacts found there as well as what cultural periods to which they belong. The project furnishes a valuable record of information for historical and archaeological purpose. By 1965 it contained approximately 130 listed sites and was still growing.

Membership in the Chapter was still increasing in the early 1960's even though dues were increased. Although the membership did not increase with the same frequency as in the fifties, it did have a substantial gain. By 1965 North Central had a membership of 139, which made it the largest in the state. These figures are a bit conservative, because the Chapter enacted Family Memberships, which were very popular because the price was the same for two people. It was during this period that we start to see people from out of the state of Pennsylvania becoming members. Mailing addresses from Maryland, West Virginia and California appear on the membership list. It was not unusual for a guest speaker of the Chapter to join after he had come to speak. This was how Dr. Louis Leaky, the famous anthropologist whose fame came about through his study of early man in Kenya, Africa, became a member. It is interesting to note that Vincent Price, the actor, joined during these years, as well as some Lycoming College professors.

In 1957 the annual meeting of the SPA was hosted by the North Central Chapter in Williamsport, and again in 1961. At that time representatives were sent from the 12 chapters of the Society. Other than slide shows and dissertations on the SPA, the annual meetings were a time when the famed Archy Award would be given by the SPA. This award would be given to someone who, through their efforts, had increased knowledge or did outstanding work to the betterment of the SPA and archaeology in general. North Central's own James Bressler was the recipient of 1961. It is ironic to note that in 1962 and 1963 North Central members Bill Turnbaugh and Willard Schell would also receive this prestigious award.

The early 1960's proved to be very prolific for the Chapter. In the Tenth Anniversary Newsletter, editor Bill Turnbaugh wrote of the optimistic outlook of the future. The previous years produced a host of activities that developed North Central into a leader in the state organization. The success of the period was due to the interest the members had in the Chapter and archaeology. Many members had attended nearly every meeting, some having traveled up to forty miles and some came by bus and were forced to wait hours to get home. Some members were from out-of-state and joined year after year. Many wrote interesting articles to inform the readers of the Newsletter; worked at each excavation and served as Chapter and state officers. However, this optimism was not to be realized.

The period from 1965-68 was to see the Chapter's decline and eventual death. There were many reasons for this turn around. First, there was a shift in the membership from local to outside areas. People were joining just to get the Newsletter and were in no other way contributing to the Chapter. It is ironic

that the publication which had helped get the Chapter off the ground would also help kill it. Also, the members depended too much on the efforts of a few and thus "went along for the ride". In 1966 the membership was at 121; yet minutes of the meetings reveal that, in most cases, no more than fifteen came to the meetings. In 1966 there were over 100 members, in 1968 there were 50 and in 1969, after the Newsletter died out, there were six members. It was not unusual to see a meeting without a president, vice-president or secretary present, so it became impossible to carry out the business of the Chapter. Leadership was definitely lacking. Many of the dedicated charter members were old, and the new breed of amateur archaeologists were basically young and willing to dig, yet did not want to be bothered with meetings.

Another cause we must look at is the effect of the loss of the two most dominant forces in the Chapter, James Bressler and William Turnbaugh. In 1967 Bressler was named Dean of Williamsport Area Community College, which along with his other obligations, took up most of his time. Turnbaugh, a Harvard doctorate and Newsletter editor, had to quit the publication because he was in the process of writing a book. No one else was willing to take the job of editor. With the demise of the Newsletter in 1968, there was no incentive for out-of-state members to rejoin. They would get nothing for their membership dollars. It worked like a domino effect, no members at meetings meant no voting for officers or digs, and no Newsletter meant less members and, in turn, no money and no purpose. Finally a membership committee was enacted in 1968, but this could not aid the sinking ship, because there were bad feelings among the members themselves.

Summer digging was done by both amateurs and professionals alike. Disputes arose between the groups as to who should dig where and who should interpret data and assess any significant artifacts. As a result, there was no unanimity of purpose, and the Chapter was disbanded for seven years.

In February 1975 some amateurs in the area began pushing to start up the Chapter again. These people contacted Mr. Bressler and others who had been members of North Central. This small group convinced a portion of the old members that it might be profitable to reenact the Chapter with a more localized purpose in mind. Once former Chapter members became aware of this, many rejoined. It was not difficult for the group to start again because the SPA had never removed the charter or stopped identifying it. According to the SPA the Chapter had just been in a dormant state.

So the Chapter once again became active, but interest never really recovered to its heights or the early sixties. It is ironic to find that the people who had pushed to start the Chapter again quit almost the instant it did. At the end of 1975 there were 46 active members. This number remained basically the same through 1980.

At present there are 32 members. The officers are: Thomas Shreiner, president; Robert Hiller, first vice-president; James Bressler, second vice-president and Jane Schell, secretary/treasurer.

The Board of Directors are: David Gilson, Robert Kern and Rudolph Benage, Jr. A Newsletter is issued quarterly, edited by Ricki Maietta.

Meetings are held once a month during the winter months at the James V. Brown Library. During the summer months the members assemble once a week on Canfield Island where the Chapter has been excavating for several years under the leadership of Jim Bressler. These meetings are usually well attended.

Through the years the Chapter has conducted many digs, the history of which is related in an accompanying article in this Journal.

## SOME IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN LYCOMING COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY

by James P. Bressler

It is difficult to describe the archaeological history of our county without becoming overly detailed since many people, over a span of over 160 years are involved. We shall try, therefore, to avoid unessential detail and merely present a chronological sketch of what has been accomplished in our quest to understand human activity in our county since man first came here after the great Ice Age.

No one can say with certainty how archaeological inquiry began here. Prior to 1800 memories of Lycoming Countian's were yet filled with images of horror about how raiding parties of British and Indians swept down from the North to kill and plunder during the Revolution. Even during the westward push toward the Mississippi following the war, there was little interest in the Red Man except to see how best he could be gotten rid of.

Then, too, the last of the resident Indians then living in Lycoming moved westward to join the French in the Ohio Valley in 1755 in the conflict between the French and the British for control of the New World territory. Having chosen the losers as allies, the Delawares and Shawnee never returned to the East. So there was really very little first-hand contact between Red Man and White to stir up serious scientific interest in our aboriginal history.

The first written account of any cultural interest comes from John Meginness's history, which states that in 1839 Orson Fowler, a phrenologist, visited the Indian Mound at Halls Station in search of crania for scientific study. The mound in question thus became host to the first deliberate act of excavation of which we have any record.

Other than the isolated activities of specialists like Fowler, people of the West Branch Valley were probably much too busy carving out an agricultural and industrial base and cutting down its vast forests to spend much time in such matters as exploring the remains of its former residents. However, toward the latter half of the 19th century archaeology began to form a definite pattern in the lives of a few men who began collecting Indian curios in earnest. We shall mention a few of the more prominent ones although many more are known to have been active; however, we have no written account of their work.

### THE EARLY COLLECTORS

#### Dudley Martin

The first serious collector we know of was Dudley Martin of DuBoistown, whose activities began in the late 1800's. Many of the artifacts he recovered along the river on sites from Williamsport to Lock Haven are presently housed in the Lycoming County Historical Museum, thanks to the generosity of the late Dr. L.E. Wurster who purchased much of the collection as it became available, and donated it to the museum. Dudley Martin, who himself was part Indian it is said, befriended many members of western tribes and became an adopted son in one of them.

He had the uncommon foresight to attach notes to many of his artifacts, designating their exact origin and so began a catalog of immense value. Many of the sites he describes are since destroyed.



### Emerson Hyman

Another early collector, whose activities began with the finding of a six-inch spearpoint while a boy hoeing corn on his father's farm above Millers Run (where C.A. Reed now is) in 1907, was Emerson Hyman. He acquired an immense collection of local artifacts to which he later added some choice purchased pieces from western sources. Fortunately, he shared his vast knowledge about the sites he visited quite freely, so that we have fairly good records of sites now destroyed or lost.

For some time during his later years he exhibited his collection in a building he built himself (he was a stone mason by trade). This was the Sheshequin Trail Museum located on Wold Run below Trout Run. Upon his death, the collection was sold at auction and dispersed to all parts of the country.

His descriptions of sites laid bare by the 1936, 1946 and other floods are almost beyond belief, and much of his collection was made at such times.

### J.M.M. Gerner

Another name often associated with early Indian history of the Muncy area is J.M.M. Gerner, businessman and newspaper editor (*Muncy Now and Then*) who is reputed to have had a collection of over 7,000 choice artifacts from the Muncy area. Since his collecting activities spanned the middle to late 1800's he may rank with or precede Dudley Martin as a pioneer in the field. We are not aware of how his collection was passed on. Some of the 1880 *Now And Then* issues provide interesting insights into some of his spectacular finds.

### John Koch

A contemporary of Emerson Hyman, with whom he often shared site information was John Koch, formerly of Newberry and later of Elimsport. A charter member of North Central Chapter, John amassed a huge collection from a somewhat wider area than that of Emerson Hyman. Upon his death his collection, too, became dispersed.

### Other Collectors:

Some collections made by J.H. McMinn, Collins and Arthur Pepperman are partially or wholly in the Lycoming County Historical Society. Little is known about their method or time of collection.

While there were undoubtedly many more who made artifact collections around the late 1800's and early 1900's, their work is not documented, but the groundwork for more serious inquiry was being laid by these early collectors. It remained now for the state and other groups to organize and formalize the science of archaeology so that experiences could be exchanged and documented. Without such media, archaeology as a science could not have become effective in our county.

## THE SOCIETY FOR PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGY

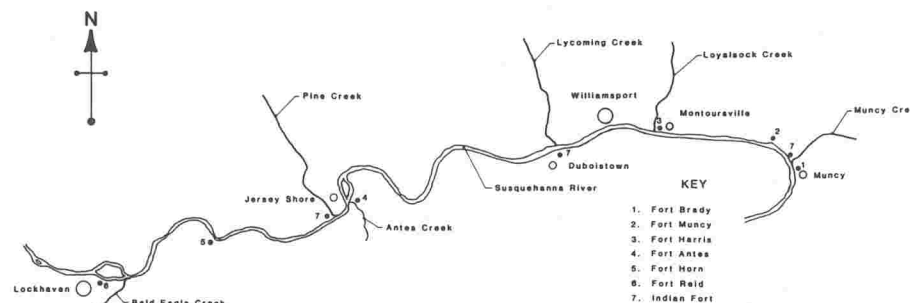
The organization of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology in 1929 under the leadership of Frances Dorrance was a major milestone in crystalizing interest in archaeology in the state. Further, the new society issued a quarterly magazine that allowed members to keep up-to-date on work being done in the Commonwealth. It also provided a forum for the exchange of ideas of interest to members. Archaeology was no longer simply relic hunting but was on its way toward becoming a disciplined science within the framework of Anthropology.

More importantly, perhaps, the parent organization in time organized local chapters centered in those areas where strong interest and activity could be identified. In August, 1956 the North Central Chapter No. 8 was organized with

Williamsport as its hub. The chapter became affiliated with the Lycoming County Historical Society as a base from which to conduct its operations.

But first let us look at some early excavations in the county that set the stage for excavations conducted by North Central Chapter in more recent years.

## SOME EARLY EXCAVATIONS IN LYCOMING COUNTY



Among the first "formal" digs in the county were those conducted as make-work projects by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) around 1937 during the Great Depression. While the methods employed would leave one gasping when compared with modern techniques, they nevertheless established documented records of a few local sites that local collectors had carefully kept to themselves. The total records of four excavations conducted in the county by WPA is composed of several pages of notes and diagrams along with a few photographs.



"Before and after at Halls Mound, 1936/7 W.P.A. excavation."

### Halls Mound

The first WPA excavation involved digging into what remained of the well-known Indian mound at Halls Station. A number of artifacts and the sparse records of this effort are in the museum collection. The mound was apparently a repository for the dead from a Clemsons Island village adjacent to the mound, but contained artifacts as grave goods from other cultures as well indicating its use over an extended period. Since the work was done with pick and shovel mainly, it was more an exercise in hunting artifacts than it was a scientific inquiry.



One has to remember, though, that the archaeology of the time was limited by a lack of time perspective. No one had much idea about the tremendous depth of time over which cultural evidence was spread. Early archaeological reports recognized only two major groups - Algonquin and Iroquoian, and any artifacts found were assigned to one or the other of these two divisions. With the advent of more aggressive and more scientific methods cultures were further delineated; and with the development of radiocarbon dating the framework for a more reliable time scale for human activity in our valley was realized.

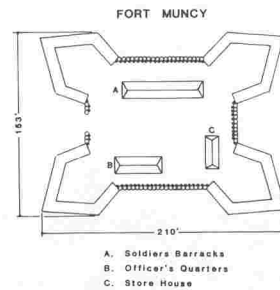
But this was 1937 and times were depressed. Workmen were hired not as trained archaeologists but because they needed work. The chief object of these projects, then, was to create work, and if anything of archaeological interest was discovered in the process, that was incidental.

### Halls Village

Adjacent to the mound in the large river-bank field was an Indian site that was "excavated" by digging a trench in a corn field. From the pottery recovered, we assume the village site to have belonged to a Clemsons Island group, although the site was also used by much earlier cultures. Clemsons Island Indians were likely the first farmers to occupy this site, and lived here around 1000-1200 A.D.

### Site of Fort Muncy

A third excavation on the same property as the mound was the site of the Revolutionary War Fort Muncy. A considerable amount of material recovered from this dig is in the museum collection, some of it on display. A map of the original fort, which was burned by the Indians and later rebuilt, was also furnished but it is not known whether it was based on excavation data, or on archival records.



### Reach Road Burial Ground

A fourth, but less extensive excavation conducted by Harry Schoff, head of the WPA digs, was conducted near a small one room school house on Reach Road adjacent to the present Vitolin farm.

It consisted of a series of burials that yielded some grave goods with the skeletons. This site was classified as Shawnee but it is not stated how this identification was arrived at. How they were able to tell Shawnee from Delaware on such meager evidence is unclear.

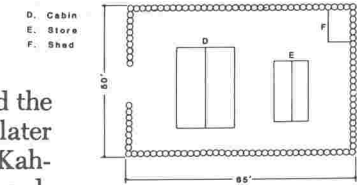
## THE KAHLER EXCAVATIONS

Several excavations conducted in the vicinity of Muncy by Clark B. Kahler about the same time as the WPA digs at Halls, involved the stockaded house of John Brady on Glade Run and the Wolf Run Earthworks or Indian fort described by Conrad Weiser in his travels of 1737.

### Fort Brady

Clark Kahler, amateur archaeologist, took great interest in the historical assets around Muncy, especially the site of the Revolutionary War fort, Brady. From the start, however, Clark allied himself with some of the best known professionals of his time, names such as Ritchie, Parker, Witthoft and Butler. From these he obtained opinions and directions regarding his methods and finds so

than his reports and documentation are infinitely more professional and useful than those of the WPA projects.



Following extensive research, he determined the probable location of the fort. This project was later expanded by the help of some WPA labor but Kahler was able to obtain and control accurate records of the fort and its stockade. The square stockade measured 50 x 65 ft. and contained the Brady house and another building as well as access to the spring.

A complete description of this project is found in several issues of North Central Chapter's newsletter (Spring 1963 and Summer 1963).

### Wolf Run Earthworks

As early as 1934 Kahler began his preparations for the excavation of the Indian fort on Wolf Run, an unusual monument left by an unknown tribe ages ago. Clark consulted with T.B. Stewart and others regarding his plans. As a result of careful groundwork, the excavation methods were quite thorough, with the result that during the several years of the dig as complete a record as could then be obtained was plotted for the fort and its stockade. A complete account of this dig can be found in the newsletters of North Central Chapter for Winter, 1961-62; Spring, 1962; Summer, 1962; and Fall, 1962.

The fort was a stockaded village, last occupied by Shenks Ferry Indians and much like the Bull Run stockade except that artifact preservation was much better because it was located on better drained ground. Kahler believed then that it was built by the Andaste, but we must remember that at that time the Shenks Ferry had not yet been isolated as a separate culture.

While the fort and its structures are well documented, we are not aware of what happened to the artifacts. Mr. Kahler, now in his 80's is living in Honduras.

## EXCAVATIONS BY NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER NO. 8

Since its organization as a regional chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, North Central Chapter has conducted nine major digs and three resting operations, all of which obtained important new information. Artifacts from these ventures are stored for research purposes at the Lycoming County Historical Museum.

A synoptic description of these efforts follows:

### First Brock Testing Operations

On the riverbank bluff at Halls Station near the site of the WPA trenching, members of the chapter excavated a refuse midden laden with bone and lithic material from Clemsons Island times (ca. 1000 A.D.). The site number is 36 LY 1. A spectacular find by Clark Kahler and John Koch on this same site was a carved bone effigy face with fresh water pearls for eyes.

### Second Brock Excavation

An organized dig was conducted on a mixed site, but largely Archaic on Turkey Run (36 LY 6). While the artifact yield was limited, the dig served as an early training school for surveying a site and using proper techniques,

### First Canfield Dig

Under difficult conditions, the first Canfield dig (36 LY 37) was successful in excavating approximately 15 squares (25 sq. ft. each) to depths of up to 70 inch-



# MAJOR INDIAN PROJECTILE POINTS OF CENTRAL PENNA.



## Paleo

8,000 B.C.  
10,000 B.C.



CLOVIS



PLANO



DALTON

## Archaic

1,000-8,000 B.C.



BIFURCATED



BARE ISLAND



SNOOK KILL



BREWERTON



CANFIELD



VOSBURG



LAMOKA



OTTER CREEK



KIRK

## Transitional

800-1,800 B.C.



SUSQUEHANNA



ORIENT  
FISHTAIL



PERKIOMEN

## Woodland

1,000 B.C.-A.D 1,500



MEADOWOOD



JACKS REEF



ADENA



FOX CREEK



LEVANNA



MADISON

## Contact

A.D. 1,780  
A.D. 1,500



BRASS  
ARROWHEADS



**PALEO PERIOD** - Small bands of nomadic hunters following migratory big game such as mastadon, musk ox and caribou. Other diagnostic artifacts include scapers, choppers, knives and graters all basically related to the demise and butchering of the animals they stalked.

**ARCHAIC PERIOD** - Localized small groups dedicated to a life of small game hunting and food gathering. Camps were generally seasonal. Other diagnostic artifacts include grooved axes, atlatl weights, adzes & stone drills.

**TRANSITIONAL PERIOD** - A carry-over of the Archaic Period with a mixture of hunting and gathering still prevalent. Occupational areas more frequently occur along major rivers suggesting more use of riverine resources. Other diagnostic artifacts include soapstone cooking vessels, end notched net sinkers and grooved axes.

**WOODLAND PERIOD** - The introduction of crop cultivation ultimately leading to the establishment of the semi-permanent village environment. Sometimes villages were stockaded for protection. Other diagnostic artifacts include: Ceramic pottery, stone hoes, pipes and net sinkers.

**CONTACT PERIOD** - The coming of white man and adoption of European styles, household articles and weapons. Village life continues basically as before. Other diagnostic artifacts include: Iron axes, brass kettles, glass trade beads and guns.

es. Several strata were then recognized which have since been more thoroughly explored. Only one of the original crew is still active (the author).

The several cultural strata embracing the so-called Transitional Period of 1200-1500 B.C. and the now-christened Canfield Levels (1600-2000 B.C.) were the important levels.

#### **Daugherty's Run**

A portion of an Early Woodland Meadowood component (200-700 B.C.) was excavated just east of the confluence of the run and the river. It yielded a flat mortar and some Vinette type pottery, an early type cordmarked on the inside and outside. Hammerstones and other household tools were also found.

#### **Fort Antes Excavation**

During the 1964-65 summer seasons an extensive trenching operation was conducted in all those areas above the site of the Antes mill where the fort might have been located. This involved the hill to and beyond its crest and eastward to and beyond the only spring which could have served the fort.

Only in the vicinity of the spring had postmolds from the fort survived. Elsewhere on the open hill previous farming operations had so eroded the soil that no traces of postmolds remained. It was our conclusion that the fort was located immediately above the mill and possibly connected to it. The hill has since been largely removed for road building materials.

#### **The Rall Site**

As a sequel to the Fort Antes dig, the Rall Site (36 LY 76) was gridded and partially excavated. This site begins at the base of the Fort Antes hill and stretches to Antes Creek. It is a Late Archaic camp of considerable size and was probably used for centuries as a favorable fishing locus. Some postmolds were discovered but they did not form more than a semi-circle. A description and analysis of this dig is found in the book, *Man, Land, and Time*, by Dr. William Turnbaugh.

#### **Sylvan Dell Tank Farm Salvage**

At the time when Gulf Oil Corporation excavated a base for its huge oil tanks, evidence of Indian occupation was uncovered by the bulldozers. Subsequent salvage digging revealed buried living floors of what we would now call Laurentian or Late Archaic (2000-3000 B.C.) cultures. While no formal layout was possible under such circumstances chapter members excavated numerous buried features and got a preview of what was to come later directly across the river on Canfield Island.

Here also was discovered a faceted lump of coal, now on display in the museum as the first known use of coal by man.

#### **The Airport Site**

Chapter members under the direction of Robert Higgins and later Dr. William Turnbaugh excavated a site in 1964 (36 LY 34) on or below the airport complex which was in imminent danger of destruction for sand and gravel removal. It yielded the entire postmold pattern for a Clemsons Island house along with numerous artifacts and burials of that period. Some artifacts recovered pertained to a white European settlement but later than Madame Montour.

Some pits on this site also contained sherds of Shenks Ferry pottery but of the earlier Blue Rock phase, indicating extended use of this site over centuries.

#### **The Grays Run Rock Shelter**

In 1975 a rock shelter was discovered on Sugar Camp Mountain several hundred yards from its base near the lower end of Grays Run. It was excavated by

Willard Schell and the author. This unique shelter was apparently a pottery dump where for a reason known only to themselves, the Clemsons Island people brought their broken pottery for deposit in one special place. Such dumps are known elsewhere, especially in New York state and may have had a ceremonial purpose. Besides over 700 pieces of pottery, the shelter contained a large pit, a fireplace, and an assortment of stone tools.

It is believed that the Sheshequin Trail ran along the bench of the mountain on which this shelter is located.

After excavation, the site was carefully restored to its original contours, but word leaked out and by next spring this shelter was completely wrecked by vandals.

#### **Abbotts Run Cliff Shelter**

Under an imposing cliff where Abbotts Run emerges from the McIntyre plateau we discovered artifacts from an Indian campfire of probable proto-Susquehannock times of around 1550 A.D. Because the camp was built on a base of broken rock it was well drained so that all bone material and pottery was well preserved. Deer and elk bone suggests the kind of game they hunted. This is the most spectacular shelter we have ever seen in the east. A Mesa Verde style cliff, together with a high and natural waterfall only 50 feet away makes this a scenic part of our landscape.

#### **The Bull Run Site**

During the 1976-77 seasons the chapter was engaged under contract with the Army Corps of Engineers and PennDOT in excavating the Bull Run site (36 LY 119). This was a stockaded Shenks Ferry village built over an ancient Transitional-Orient village. Carbon dates for the Shenks Ferry people ranged from 1230 to 1480 A.D., and 1220 B.C. for Orient.

Data obtained from this site illuminated further the Late Woodland story in the West Branch Valley and brought into focus the Stewart phase of Shenks Ferry, heretofore poorly understood.

#### **The Second Canfield Excavation**

Now in its seventh season, the Canfield Island excavations continue to yield important new evidence concerning the total scheme of human development in our valley.

Currently chapter members are working (when weather permits) on strata that were occupied seasonally about 5000 B.C. and are seeking even earlier camps below.

Especially important was the finding of what are now called Canfield cultures in a stratified position that allows comparison with both earlier and later components.

As the dig winds to a conclusion it is hoped that some of the highlights from Canfield can be translated into interesting and informative displays in the museum. A major objective of the North Central Chapter is to use the results of such excavations as Canfield and others not yet planned, to enhance education regarding the total history of man in Lycoming County.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TIME PERIODS IN PENNSYLVANIA

by Gary Fogelman

There are presently 4 recognized archaeological time periods. These are: Paleo, Archaic, Transitional and Woodland. A brief description of each follows. Keep in mind that dates are tentative.

### PALEO INDIAN PERIOD - 12,000 to 8000 B.C.

Currently, the earliest period for which identifiable tools and life-styles are known is termed the Paleo Period. There are intimations of earlier cultures, but at present bona fide information or tool forms are lacking.

The Paleo Period is characterized by sparse populations inhabiting large areas. It is felt that these earliest people came across the Bering Strait from Siberia, following migrating or wandering herd animals into the North American continent. They continued southward, eventually populating North, Central and South America. As the southern climes of North America became more hospitable, more evidence is found in the south and southwest areas of the United States than the northern climes.

Paleo Indian lifestyles relied heavily on herd animals for existence. These included some animal species that we know today, such as deer, bear and caribou, but also included some now extinct species such as woolly mammoths, mastodons and others.

It is believed that Paleo Indians traveled in groups of no more than 25-30 people, consisting of an extended family of parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. Bands probably migrated in loosely-defined territories following herd animals and supplementing this hunter lifestyle by also gathering available nuts, berries and other vegetal foodstuffs along the way.

Due to sparse populations, warfare was minimal, and most bands probably had peaceful relations with each other. It is also surmised that bands would gather occasionally for feasts, rituals and finding mates.

Weapons included hand held and hand thrown spears tipped with a distinctive type of fluted or grooved projectile point. Also known are scrapers and flake tools and possibly drills.

As the environment changed and populations grew, the next time period, the Archaic, came to be. This was a gradual process, and occurred at different times in different areas.

### THE ARCHAIC - 8000 to 2000 B.C.

Environmental changes and hunting pressure saw the demise of many of the large herd animals. Population growth demanded a different lifestyle. Man came to depend more on smaller animals, and a more confined area from which to subsist.

With new resources to draw upon, such as fishing and the harvesting of nuts and berries, the band could tolerate more people. A seasonal pattern developed, with the group returning again and again to favorite spots for fish runs and nut and berry harvests.

Due to competition for resources, warfare did occur, but not as often as it would later on. Neighboring bands in most cases were related. Dwellings were bark huts or lean-tos. Weapons included a wide variety of stemmed, side notched and corner notched projectiles. The notched and grooved ax began to appear. The atlatl, or spearthrower, reached its zenith as a weapon. This consisted of a wooden shaft, approximately 2-2½ feet in length, with a hook at one end. The butt of the spear was set against the hook, and the spear thrown. Much more

force could be obtained due to the lengthening of the throwing arm than with a hand thrown spear.

Fishing was important to most groups, as evidenced by the great amount of net weights, or sinkerstones found on some sites of this period. The bola, consisting of 3 or more thongs with a stone tied to the end of each, was used to bring down animals and waterfowl. This hunting-gathering-foraging way of life was widespread and lasted for a long time. Many of the artifactual remains found today are from this period.

### THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD - 2000 to 800 B.C.

The term Transitional is somewhat misleading, as all of prehistory is a series of transitions. However, this period is highlighted by the onset of pottery making, beginning with the use of one-piece bowls chiseled out of steatite (soapstone), and evolving into stone and shell tempered clay vessels.

This period is also characterized by large projectiles termed Broadpoints, which evolve into slender "fishtailed" points at the close of the period. Assemblages of artifacts from this period also show that people of this time had decided preferences in the materials they used for their weapons, often transporting and traveling great distances to obtain them.

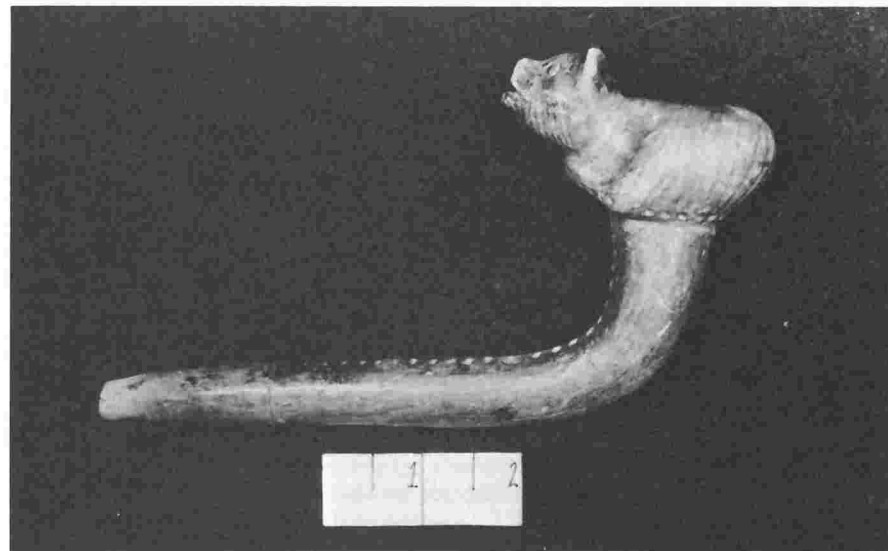
There was still a settled way of life, relying again on seasonal foodstuffs, fishing and hunting. Peaceful conditions prevailed, as there is not much evidence of warfare. Tool types and weapons, besides the Broadpoints, were axes, drills, strike-a-lites and scrapers. Beads, gorgets and pipes can also be related to this time.

### THE WOODLAND PERIOD - 800 B.C. to 1500 A.D.

The Woodland Period has many facets setting it apart from previous times. The bow and arrow came into general use. Crop cultivation was widely practiced, with fishing, hunting and foraging complementing it.

A larger population could be supported now, and large encampments were not uncommon. Trade routes developed at some stages, and materials and artifacts from far-ranging areas can occur.

Competition became intense for resources and territory, and large palisaded villages indicate that warfare was ever present.



## COLONIAL AND INDIAN FORTS OF THE UPPER WEST BRANCH VALLEY

by Tom Shreiner

When the first permanent settlers moved up the West Branch Valley in the mid-1700's they soon discovered that, as in all frontier areas, a need existed for communal gathering points, whether it be for protection from foes or for any other reason. It was this basic need that spurred the building of several forts or fortified dwellings in Lycoming County. With the exception of Fort Muncy all of the following fortifications were private ventures constructed by groups of pioneers interested in protecting their families and possessions. It must, however, be stated that there is every indication that the settlers had the total support of the military in their personnel occupying these so called private forts during hostile times.

Perhaps the most perilous event to occur during this time period is that of "The Great Runaway". During the summer of 1778 a force of approximately 100 British soldiers and 200 Indians entered the valley destroying everything in their path. Upon hearing of the impending danger, Colonel William Hepburn, commander of Fort Augusta, ordered the West Branch Valley abandoned. The order could not have come at a worse time, as many of the settlers had just finished their places of abode and were preparing to harvest their first crop of wheat. In compliance with the order they dropped everything and proceeded down river to Fort Augusta via anything that would float. Their move was none too soon, as right behind them came the British and Indians destroying everything left behind.

The following text is devoted to the description of all of the known frontier forts in Lycoming County. Although as factual as possible, in many cases a judgement had to be made between conflicting bits of data in order to reach a plausible conclusion and ultimate description.

### FORT BRADY

Fort Brady was located on a small tract of high land a little distance from what is now Glade Run. The Susquehanna River lies about 1,500 yards to the west and the Muncy Creek 500 yards to the north.

Captain John Brady settled in the Muncy area in 1776 on a parcel of land given to him as partial payment for his services in the Bouquet Expedition. Upon arriving in the area, Capt. Brady built a sturdy log cabin and took up the life of a farmer. Within several months of his arrival, Capt. Brady was mustered into the Continental Army and given a captain's commission. He was attached to the 12th Pennsylvania and was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine.

During this time period the Indians were making constant raids into the valley spurred by the continual provoking of the British. It was determined by General Washington that something must be done to help the settlers. Not being able to send troops because of the war effort, General Washington decided to muster out several officers who, in his opinion, would be able to organize the remaining settlers. It was to this end that Capt. John Brady was discharged from the Continental Army in the fall of 1777.

Upon returning home, Capt. Brady immediately erected a stockade around his home to be used as a place of refuge for his family and the surrounding settlers. The stockade measured approximately 65 feet by 50 feet, and was entered from the southwest via an eight foot wide swing gate. The stockade wall was constructed of a double row of posts ranging in height from 10 to 12 feet. Within the stockade wall were constructed two other buildings. One was believed to be a trading post and the other a storage shed.

No history of Fort Brady would be complete without the story of how Capt. Brady met his untimely death. On April 11, 1779, Capt. Brady and a companion traveled to the Wallis homestead (now called Muncy Farms) to obtain provi-



Common tool forms include the celt, or grooveless ax; thin, well made corner and side notched points often made of the finest of flints; and the common triangle point. Pottery and smoking pipes reached their highest degree, and often various groups can be distinguished by pottery shape and decoration.

This presents a simplified overview of not only Pennsylvania prehistory, but a much wider area as well. A fifth period, the Contact Period, can also be mentioned. This was the time immediately following contact with white man, and Indian camps of this period are characterized by the occurrence of trade goods such as beads, silver items, guns, etc..

It should also be pointed out that all groups used items made of many substances or materials that do not preserve well. These include bone, shell, antler, wood and fabrics.

sions. On the return trip Capt. Brady decided to take a short cut, which took him over Wolf Run near its mouth. It was at this spot that Capt. Brady was shot dead by an Indian war party.

Fort Brady preceded the close by military post of Fort Muncy by about one year, serving as the only place of safety the Colonists had to rely on during that time period. Its brief life came to an abrupt end when it was burned to the ground during the second "runaway" in the summer of 1779.

### FORT MUNCY

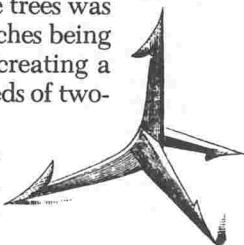
Fort Muncy has the distinction of being the only fort in Lycoming County that can truly be termed as having military origin. It was placed at a point about midway between the military outpost of Fort Augusta and the defensive works of Fort Reid at Lock Haven. The fort served not only as a place of refuge during Indian attacks, but also as a central distribution point for everything the settlers needed such as guns, ammunition and most other day-to-day needs.

The fort was located about a half mile above Halls Station, on a small rise of land directly in front of the famous Wallis stone house erected in 1769. Its site of construction was ideally chosen, as from its bastions one had a commanding view of the entire area. It was built in the summer of 1778 by Captain Andres Walker under orders from Colonel Thomas Hartley. There are conflicting reports as to the exact length of time it took to build the fort. However, one can safely say that it was begun in early August and ready for occupancy by mid September. Its speed of construction was truly amazing for that time period, especially when one considers the size of the fortification. Captain Walker was later commended for being so industrious in his construction of the fort.

The fort was constructed in standard Fort Augusta style, the stockade being fabricated from 12 inch diameter by 12 foot long timbers set deep in the soil. An interval smaller three inch post was set between each of the larger timbers, the smaller post cut short to allow for alternating rifle loop holes. Constructed at each of the four corners was a clay and earth spearhead-shaped bastion. The overall size of the stockade was approximately 210 feet by 153 feet. The fort water source was located a small distance from the southeast bastion and was said to have had a covered walkway leading down to it. The fort's main entrance was always thought to have been to the east, which was found to be untrue. During the WPA excavation of December 1936, the 15 foot wide main gate was found in the center of the western wall. Inside the fort there were three principal structures, a soldiers' barracks, officers' quarters and store. Minor structures consisted of a small blacksmith shop and powder magazine. The fort was large enough to garrison 200 soldiers.

Fort Muncy's defenses were quite extensive. Aside from its usual accompaniment of rifle-bearing soldiers, it had one four-pound cannon and three swivel guns. A farmer, while digging a fence posthole near the Capt. John Brady Grange Hall at Pennsdale, is said to have found a one-pound shot. Hand wrought from a heavy square iron bar, the two-inch diameter ball is thought to have been fired from one of the swivel guns at Fort Muncy. Directly outside the stockade was dug a deep trench, the dirt being thrown up against the base of the wall, thus creating a steep slope and preventing the enemy from hiding at the bottom of the wall. The remaining soil from the trench excavation was thrown outwardly forming a slope on which an "abattis" of large trees was laid down. The trees were defoliated with all small branches being removed. All remaining projections were then pointed creating a formidable obstruction. Beyond this were thrown hundreds of two-inch barbs that were known as "crowfoot".

It is thought that the fort was destroyed and rebuilt on at least two subsequent occasions. The first time occurred during the second runaway in the summer of 1779, dur-



ing which time the British and Indians descended upon Fort Freeland. The fort was rebuilt, and then destroyed again at a later date. The last record of the fort actually being inhabited is in the form of a birth certificate issued to the Hon. William Cox Ellis, who was born in the fort in 1787.

Remains of the fort's embankments and stone structures were said to be visible until 1840. During the absence of Mr. Hall, the owner, his over-zealous farmer decided to clear what remained of the site in order to make room for more farm land. Needless to say, Mr. Hall was furious when he found out what happened, as he had planned to preserve the site as an historic landmark.

### FORT ANTES

Fort Antes was built by Lt. Col. Henry Antes in 1778 on the east side of the Nippenose Creek overlooking the Susquehanna River. It was the most important fortification after leaving Fort Muncy, located about 25 miles up river. Fort Antes was sort of a jumping off point for the Indian lands on the west side of the river. It also served as a rallying point for the people of the region during times of danger.

Conrad Weiser may have convinced Col. Antes to settle here as early as 1772. At this time a mill site was selected at the mouth of a stream which still bears his name. The mill was probably erected about 1773, along with another crude building. The fort itself was erected in 1777 about the same time the Indians of the area became restless. It was located within a rifle shot's distance on a hill overlooking the mill.

Its construction was the usual standard of the day. A trench four to five feet deep was dug. Heavy logs 15 to 18 feet long were then placed in an upright position to create the stockade. The excavated soil was then backfilled to stiffen the structure. The completed fortification was 10 to 12 feet high with notches to hold rifles in the tops of the logs. The fortification covered the area of approximately ¼ acre and is thought to have had a cannon. The latter cannot be confirmed. However, a cannon ball was found in the area directly outside the fort.

During the "Great Runaway" the fort was abandoned, as all inhabitants of the valley evacuated south to Fort Augusta. Following the exodus from the area by the settlers, the whole region was put to the torch by the Indians. Upon returning to the area it was discovered that the Indians were unable to burn the heavy oak logs of the stockade, nor did they take the time to try and pull them out of their firm foundation. The fort was restored by the local citizens, but soon fell into decay as peace settled on the area.

Chapter #8 of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, in conjunction with the Jersey Shore Historical Society, has since conducted a field survey of the area thought to have contained the fort. Very few signs of the fort were found. There was discovered, however, a series of postmolds leading down to an ancient spring. It is theorized that the subject postmolds are in fact the remains of an enclosed walkway, which offered protection when going for water.

The conclusion of the survey indicated that sufficient evidence was not present to firmly state the existence of a fort, at least at the location given by Meginness. It is speculated, however, that the fort may simply have been a stockade erected around the mill and homestead.

### FORT HORN

Fort Horn was the next fort upriver from Ft. Antes. It was on the south side of the Susquehanna River, or on what was called the Pennsylvania Lands. The lands on the opposite side of the river were referred to as the Indian Lands. The land beginning at the western bank of Lycoming Creek was outside the Purchase of 1768 and, as such, was off limits to the white settlers. The "off limits" was being farmed at that time by some Scotch-Irish settlers. The fort was a much-needed haven to them and the settlers on the Pennsylvania side of the river.

The fort itself enclosed the log cabin of Samuel Horn and contained approximately ¼ acre of land. It was located on a section of land that jutted into the

Susquehanna at a point where the river made a great bend. This gave a commanding view up and down the river for about one mile. A small mountain stream ran along the western side of the stockade supplying ample water for the settlers' use. It is speculated that an enclosed walkway was constructed for protection from prowling foes.

The fort was garrisoned by troops from either the local militia or the Continental Army, depending upon the needs of the time.



*"Tiadaughton Elm, Fair Play meeting site, near Jersey Shore."*

One significant event that cannot go unmentioned happened within sight of Fort Horn. On July 4, 1776, as the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to sign the Declaration of Independence of the United States, the "Fair Play Men" were signing their own "Pine Creek Declaration of Independence" from England. It was ironic that both were signed the same day hundreds of miles apart, with each group acting independently of each other.

Fort Horn was burned to the ground by the Indians during the "Great Runaway". There is no record that the fort was ever rebuilt.

#### **FORT REID**

Fort Reid was the most westerly fort on the Susquehanna. It was the last in a chain of forts that were built as an early warning system for Fort Augusta, and was a rallying point for the scouts and settlers in that part of the state.

The fort consisted of the house of Mr. William Reid, which was stockaded in the spring of 1777. It was located in the area at the mouth of the old Bald Eagle Canal, on what would now be Water or River Street. Originally a large Indian mound existed here. It was said to be as large as a two-story house and was surrounded by a series of smaller mounds. Fort Reid stood directly east of the mounds.

The defense for this fort, as with most of the others, consisted of settlers from the local area. Troops were stationed here when the Continental Army could spare them. Col. John Kelly's regiment of Northumberland County militia spent six months here in the summer of 1777. Scouting duties and guarding the locals was the primary responsibility of the militia during their stay.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS**

There are two fortifications that came to light during our research that, due to our lack of information, should possibly not even be mentioned. Both structures were referred to in Lloyd's "History of Lycoming County" and were in existence during the "Great Runaway". Fort Harris was located at the mouth of the Loyalsock Creek in the borough of what is now Montoursville. The other

fort goes by no name but is simply referred to as "a small defensive work at the mouth of the Lycoming Creek". Search as we may, no other data came to light on these two forts.

#### **INDIAN FORTIFICATIONS**

Great mystery has always surrounded the so-called Indian fortifications that are dispersed throughout the upper West Branch Valley. Although all traces are gone today, older historians make reference to the Indian forts in their writings. Meginness, in "History of the West Branch Valley" makes reference to the existence of three such forts and all, I might add, at very predictable locations: one each at the mouths of the Muncy, Lycoming and Pine Creeks.

As is generally the case whenever something is unknown, romantic speculation abounds, and the Indian forts definitely fell into this category. Some of the more exotic theories dealt with the fortifications being constructed and inhabited by a superior race, or by a tribe of white Indians. The only true facts are that the fortifications were all of similar construction and in the same state of decomposition when first discovered in the mid-1700's.

By the time archaeological practices were in use, only one such structure remained; this being the fortification at the mouth of Muncy Creek. Through the efforts of Mr. Clark B. Kahler, charter member of North Central Chapter #8, SPA, this last remaining structure was methodically excavated during the spring of 1934. Mr. Kahler's findings indicated the fort to be of Susquehannock (Andaste) manufacture, circa A.D. 1650. The entire structure covered an area of about ¼ acre. It consisted of a perimeter trench with the excavated dirt being thrown up to the inside creating a low mounded wall. To the top of the wall was added a double row of posts creating a palisade, the gate being located at the southeast corner of the palisade. Inside the fortification were found the postmolds of the small round bark huts so typical to this time period.

Artifacts recovered were also found to be typical of the Late Woodland epoch. Predominantly they consisted of ceramic pottery sherds, triangular and notched projectile points, celts, scrapers and net sinkers. There were also signs of colonial contact by the presence of some undefinable iron objects and a scattering of European pottery.

Upon making the determination that the fortification is from the Late Woodland Period, one can make a reasonable assumption as to its purpose. During the early to mid-17th Century, the area directly to our north was controlled by the Iroquois, an extremely ambitious and warlike people. To the south lay the main body of the Susquehannock empire. The upper West Branch Valley was sort of a no-man's land, or buffer zone between the two nations. With the above facts in mind, it can then be assumed that the fortifications existed as a northwestern gate to the Susquehannock empire. Though no written proof has ever been found, it can be speculated that the forts were destroyed and systematically abandoned when the Iroquois invaded the south during the 1660's.

## **ARTIFACTS and HISTORICAL SOCIETIES**

*by Barry C. Kent*

*Dr. Kent is State Archaeologist at the William Penn Memorial Museum in Harrisburg.*

Most people accumulate objects of one sort or another relating to their own special existence or to the world around them. Things which are not used frequently, but which somehow seem to have a possible future utility often wind up in the back of a drawer or in an old box. When rediscovered in a few years items such as a half used pack of matches, an empty bullet casing, a letter from a

friend, the photo of a forgotten place, etc., etc., are often discarded as junk which is taking up space. However, it seems that some people rarely discard anything, even worthless junk, usually because they just never get around to it. Others of us purposefully collect things — especially items of sentimental or personal value. Many are gatherers of bits and pieces which seem to have something of the past — of history — associated with them.

These personal treasures, real or otherwise, can meet several ends. Like any property they can be bequeathed to someone else; in which case they may be kept together, or they may be disposed. Those which survive the generations of inheritance or bestowal may eventually be considered “important” collections of antiques or artifacts. When, as it almost inevitably happens, there are no longer any kin or friends upon whom to bestow a collection, the collector or possessor may disperse it through sale or other means. But often there is a strong urge to somehow preserve or “keep it together.” This is where museums come into the chain of bestowals and acquisitions.

In a hundred years, or less, even a half used pack of matches, or a personal letter, etc., may have (to someone or some institution) a degree of historic or antique value. Historic value is especially apparent if an object (or collection) can provide some sort of new or improved insights into a past way of life. This is not to say the way of life of a single individual, although that too is often considered significant, but rather a general or broad pattern of human life in some former time.

The ability of an old object or group of artifacts to add to the understanding or appreciation of former ways of life depends largely upon certain conditions. First, it should somehow be unique, pointing to something which is not already known. For example, the pack of matches might reflect a method of making matches heretofore unknown (or unrecorded), or they might bear an advertisement for some forgotten industry or commercial endeavor. An important condition is that the object(s) has some sort of associated documentation as to its place, time or nature of manufacture. The pack of matches might carry most of that information with it in the form of manufacturer’s name, etc. Likewise, an old chair, particularly one of unusual construction which had associated with it a bill of sale or some other documentation would have far more historical significance than one without such information.

County historical societies have become one of the most common repositories for such collections. By and large these institutions accession collections pertinent to their particular county — and so it should be. Usually the registrars and curators at these museums or societies will accept almost any object pertaining to their region.

There is one class of old things which are frequently collected by many individuals, but which all too often have no accompanying documentation. This is the category of objects commonly called Indian relics. There is no county in the state where these artifacts of the past do not occur and yet in every county they have been widely gathered with no record as to specifically where they were found.

The act of collecting Indian artifacts without recording location is anti-scientific and anti-historical. Indeed it is downright destructive. Artifacts picked up in various places and carelessly mixed together in an old cigar box are, from an historical and anthropological point of view, worthless.

Almost every county historical society has stored away assortments of such Indian artifacts. Unfortunately their only use is to vaguely illustrate that Indians once inhabited, and lost things in some ill-defined area of the state.

Anthropology (and archaeology), like history, is concerned with discovering

and making more comprehensible the general way of life of human beings who formerly lived here. Historical reconstructions of prior ways of life depend upon surviving documents, and to a lesser extent upon objects, which illustrate former patterns of culture (ways of life).

Archaeologists who attempt to unravel the cultural patterns of native Americans, who left no written record of their existence, depend almost entirely upon understanding the manufacture, use, and age of any and all surviving objects resulting from their way of life. Usually the artifacts are those made of non-perishable materials such as stone or ceramics. Occasionally less durable things such as those made of wood, bone, shell, even plant fibers somehow survive the ravages of time and are preserved in the places where they were lost or buried by Indians. In any event, the understanding of them depends upon knowing precisely where such artifacts were found and the direct association of them with one another. For example, a particular shape of arrowhead which is repeatedly found in association with a certain shape of stone axe or pottery vessel, etc. would eventually enable archaeologists to equate those tools as part of the way of life of some specific group of Indians. The discovery of any one of those objects in association with charcoal or other dateable materials could tell us when they were made and used.

Indian artifacts, like the products of our own culture, were made and used according to regularly adhered to patterns. Eventually these patterns changed, just as the patterns for things in our own way of life change. It is the discovery of these arrays of tools and their changing forms at various points in time and at different places on the landscape which make possible a reconstruction of the broad patterns of Indian life.

We now know that Indians have lived in Pennsylvania for at least 12,000 years. Gradually we are collecting the bits and pieces which show the distinct patterns of life as well as their changes through time. The process of developing these *histories* of Indian cultures is slow and tedious and depends largely upon finding and analyzing the associations of artifacts.

A few county historical societies have staff or affiliated persons with the ability to undertake archaeological studies. However, the greatest contribution which any county historical society can make toward this endeavor to understand the past is to properly direct the collecting activities of its donors and patrons. Part of the responsibility of museums, especially those which are as close to the public as are the county historical societies, is to educate collectors through lectures, publications, and exhibits as to the absolute necessity of documenting collections.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in Harrisburg, the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, a few local institutions like the Lycoming County Historical Society, and especially the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology are all working toward this kind of improved public awareness. However, the success of our efforts to educate the public as to the importance of preserving, recording, and understanding our cultural heritage will depend on enlisting the aid of all historical societies and museums throughout the state.

Much can be learned from artifacts gathered on the surface of the ground providing they are carefully recorded or catalogued as to location. Anyone can do this, and most will, provided they understand its importance.

The excavation of artifacts from the earth where they may be in very special and important associations with one another is clearly not something to be performed by just anyone. Excavations which result in useable archaeological information are very sensitive and require special skills and training. Digging by untrained, unsupervised persons in unsanctioned excavations, is devastating.



Here too historical societies and museums can and must play a major role in educating the public as to the destructive effects of digging for relics. If and when such remains are exposed through construction or other earthmoving, local societies should call in trained experts to record and salvage as much as possible about these fragile and rare indicators of the former ways of life on this earth.

Improved understanding of our past depends greatly upon the cooperation and sensitivity of the individuals who encounter the evidence.



When reading archaeological reports the reader will always find mentioned the "site number". An example is the number for our current excavation, Canfield Island, 36 LY 37. The first number refers to Pennsylvania. Each state has a number. The "LY" refers to Lycoming County. Each county of each state has a two-letter abbreviation. The last number means Canfield Island was the 37th site recorded for Lycoming County.

This number is obtained by registering the site with the state museum. They will provide papers to be filled out. A map should also be sent in to pinpoint the location of the site. It is important that every archaeological site be registered with the state archaeologist. Before any type of municipal construction takes place (roads, sewage, buildings, etc.), the state archaeologist reviews the proposal for possible destruction of archaeological information. If your site hasn't been registered, it will be destroyed!



Did you know that ——— only the small triangular projectile points of the Woodland time period are really arrowheads used with a bow. All others were spear tips.



"Postmold" is a very common word to the archaeologist. It refers to the mark left in the ground where a building or fence post once was. The postmold could be ringed with charcoal, as the Indians often burned their posts to a point. It could be simply an area where the dirt "inside" the post hole is different in color or texture from the surrounding dirt. By recording the position of postmolds at an excavation, the archaeologist can plot the location, shape and size of dwellings, fences, cooking racks and any other type of structure using a post.

## AN INVITATION

by Joseph J. Zebrowski

So you've finally found an arrowhead! Maybe you've been looking for one for a long time. Maybe it was just there and you couldn't miss it. Either way it doesn't lessen the pleasure you feel with your find. You turn it over in your hand and note the fine workmanship and delicate shaping of a tool that was made by a man so long ago. You try to imagine what kind of person made this tool, how he lived, did he think the same as you do? How can you find out more about this ancient tool maker? Are you interested?

Come to an Archaeology Society meeting! We are people just like you who are interested in the ancient peoples. And no, we don't all have college degrees, nor are we professional archaeologists. We simply have a common interest and meet together to share our information. Almost everyone in the Club began with an arrowhead find.

If you've gone this far, you will find out that Club members use a system for gathering information. When arrowheads and other tools are found concentrated in an area, it is called a site, meaning a living area. The location of these sites is recorded at the state museum in Harrisburg. Every site is given a number so that relics from it can be identified as being found there. Write this number on your arrowhead. This increases the scientific value of it. Anyone who wants to study your find in the future will know from where it came. Bring your arrowhead to the Lycoming County Historical Society Museum where you can compare it with the points in the exhibits. You will learn that your point is made in a very specific style, and has a name that tells it apart from all other types. This will tell you how old it is and how it was used. Through the ages the Indians changed styles of their points at different times to suit specific purposes. Some were for hunting big game with a spear, some for harpooning fish, and small triangle shaped points were used for arrowheads. You see, not all points were arrowheads, most were spear points.

You should also learn what other tools the Indians used, and how to identify them. Some tools were used for scraping fat and flesh from hides. These are called scrapers. There are hammerstones, oval or round stones with shallow pits in the centers that were used for - you guessed it - a hammer. Some flat, small, round stones have notches chipped in the sides or ends. These are fishing net sinkers. Are you getting more interested? Maybe even excited? Then join the Archaeology Club. Come to a meeting at the James V. Brown Library the second Tuesday of each month. You will see movies about how the Indians made the tools you are finding and how they used them. Speakers will tell you how professional archaeologists work and how you and the professionals help each other. Indian relics are exhibited and discussed at every meeting.

If you are ready for the next step, maybe you would like to work on an archaeological excavation. Yes, we do have them right here in Lycoming County. Club members will teach you how to excavate and you don't have to be over 21 or under 65 to do it.

Now doesn't all this sound like a bit more fun than just keeping your relics in a cigar box in a drawer? Come to the next meeting. Call the Museum or the J.V. Brown Library for information. Join us! Archaeology can be fun!



Photo - Courtesy of Indian Artifact Magazine,  
Will Hoit

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