



Archaeology News

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WINTER 2004

Highway 14/61 Project Begins Along South Avenue

Wendy Holtz-Leith, Research Archaeologist

In the summer of 2003 MVAC began archaeological excavations for the Highway 14/61 DOT project area, located within the Sanford Archaeology District (SAD) in the City of La Crosse. The SAD is a 26-block area that has been identified by MVAC archaeologists as culturally significant. The area is an Oneota village and dates from ca. AD1350-1600. This project is part of ongoing investigations within the District which have clarified how this area of La Crosse was occupied for the last 700 years.

The Oneota were agriculturalists who occupied the La Crosse terrace and similar environments across the Midwest in the late prehistoric period (ca. AD 1100-1650). The Oneota lived in permanent villages, with some of the population likely going west in the winter months to hunt bison. The main occupation of the SAD is from 1350-1400 and was quite intense.

The current project area is located along South Avenue/ Highway 14/61 from the corner of Farnam Street to Jackson Street. Work began in the southern end of the project area, at the southeast corner



Supervisor Jon Baker examines the floor of a unit at the Highway 14/61 project.

of Hood Street and South Avenue with excavations by the UW-La Crosse archaeology field school and concluded on a cold day in early December of 2003.

Eighteen undergraduate students participated in the six-week summer field school. They learned a variety of archaeological skills including survey techniques, shovel testing in Trempealeau County and field walking in Vernon County. There were also mini courses on laboratory methods, water flotation, site reporting, faunal and plant remains. However, the main focus of their experience was the excavations within the SAD. Here they not only learned the excavations techniques that can be the foundation for future cultural resource management

careers, but they also gained insight into lives of prehistoric peoples.

The students began to question and understand how the site was formed, why artifacts and features are located where they are, and that sometimes the artifacts that are not immediately the most eye catching are the most important for comprehending the site.

Excavations did continue after field school was completed and when we closed the site for the year in December, more than 100 storage/trash pit features have been found and excavated in this area. These features are the remnants of food storage pits that were filled with garbage by the Oneota after the food was removed.

Artifacts recovered have included broken pieces of pottery diagnostic to the Oneota and dating to 1350-1400; lithic (stone) debitage and tools; animal remains including deer, elk, turtle, and fish; plant remains; and fired rock. Excavations will start up in the spring as soon as weather permits. During the summer of 2004, road construction will also commence, so once again it will be a busy summer.

MVAC at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Archaeology News

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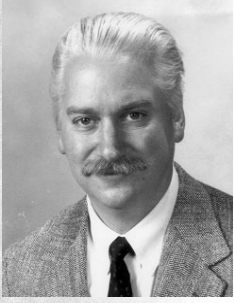
From the Editor

This year Archaeology News will have two different formats per issue: one paper copy and one digital copy on the MVAC web site. We continue to highlight recent archaeological excavations and special finds, along with keeping our members informed of upcoming events and important announcements. We will post additional articles and complimentary photos on the MVAC web site (www.uwlax.edu/mvac) in conjunction with each issue. One further change is that the Archaeology Education Program's teacher newsletter will also be on the web, making its archaeology content, lesson plans and resources available

to educators everywhere! If you do not have access to the web and would like a hard copy of the digital newsletter, please contact me at the address at left. We hope you enjoy the change in format and check the web site for new postings throughout the year.

*Jean Dowiasch
Editor*

From The Director: Joseph A. Tiffany



Joseph A. Tiffany

Hello everyone! MVAC has undergone some changes during the fall. We are in the process of moving our field equipment out of the "bunkers." The bunkers are the old coal bins under the patio on the east side of the building. The bunkers go back to the days when the Archaeology Center and Laboratories was the university power plant. This is not a good place for either equipment or for the portion of our collections now stored there to be housed. As you might imagine we are glad to finally get out of this area! The collections will go into MVAC's repository

space and collections presently in MVAC's repository will be moved to Wimberly Hall in space we now share with the Archaeology Studies Program that is being remodeled for our collections curation. The equipment is now housed in a storage facility in north La Crosse. The process should be done by mid-winter and will be a great improvement to the day-to-day field operations and collections management at MVAC.

In other news, the MVAC Board has reorganized itself under revised bylaws. The revised bylaws clearly spell out the relationship of the MVAC Board to MVAC and MVAC's role and responsibilities in the university community. The Board will now meet quarterly to provide advice and support for MVAC's mission and policies. In the new structure, the board's maximum size is reduced to 15, and its membership will now include a mix of university officials, faculty, regional archaeologists and community members. The integration of an advisory board composed of professional, university, and public representatives will provide new energy and ideas for MVAC in our mission as the leader in Upper Mississippi Valley research, education and preservation.

I now serve as President of the Board; the new board Chair is Don Smith. Ron Schnick is the Vice Chair, and UW-L Dean John Magerus is the Secretary-Treasurer. Continuing Board members include Bill Gresens, Richard Hilliker, Maria Roswall, Charles Sans Crainte, and Bruce Walters. I want to thank again those members who are coming off the board for their service and dedication to MVAC: William Agger, Ellen Alexander, James Brown, Barb Davis, Garth Dimon, Jim Gallagher, Elaine George, Joan Greendeer Lee, Bill Green, Bruce Johnson, Chris La Shorne, Eleanor Robinson, Orrin Shane and Dave Solie. And, a special thanks to past President Carole Edland for her help and support to me in my first year at MVAC and for her 19 years of service to the MVAC. Carole, you are much appreciated by all.

2004 Ireland Walking Tours

Jim Gallagher, UW-L Emeritus Professor and MVAC founder, will be leading two walking tours to Ireland this year:

June 10-19, Seacoast and Islands of County Donegal July 9-18, Peninsulas of Southwest Ireland

For more detailed tour information you may contact the UW-L Office of Continuing Education and Extension at (608) 785-6506 or contact Jim at (608) 784-8042.

Jim will be presenting two slide programs on Walking in Ireland including preview of the upcoming tours:

Thursday, January 29, 7:30 p.m.

in the meeting room of the Onalaska Public Library.

Tuesday, February 3, 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the La Crosse Public Library at 8th and Main Streets.

Both presentations are free and open to the public.

Winter is report writing time, but we are already looking ahead to the spring and summer on several large scale projects that we are in the works. Among these is a cooperative agreement being developed by Ryan Howell and Ernie Boszhardt with the Natural Resources Conservation Service for conducting cultural resource work related to federal conservation projects funded by this agency. Ryan oversaw approximately 30 NRCS surveys over the summer and assisted in NRCS training sessions. He also supervised excavations near Wausau this fall and is active in the early planning for final excavations at the Highway 18 corridor in Prairie du Chien.

We will be continuing work in the Sanford Archaeological District in La Crosse next summer under Wendy Holtz-Leith's direction as part of a street realignment project. More than one hundred Oneota storage pits have been found and excavated so far, and much of the winter season will be devoted to washing and cataloguing the artifacts.

Wendy also directed excavations at a series of sites in southeastern Iowa this fall. Vicki Twinde is completing the write up of the emergency excavations at Second Fort Crawford, and finished fieldwork along State Highway 33 east of La Crosse this fall.

The summer 2004 university field school will be under the direction of Dr. James Theler and will be held in the Bad Axe Valley where university students will survey and test for archaeological sites as well as begin excavation on a Woodland habitation site. The location of the public field school has not been determined yet, but possibilities include a return to the Stoddard Terrace complex or work in the Bad Axe Valley. Barb Kooiman continues work on an architectural and historic sites survey of Bennett County in the South Dakota Badlands.

Plans are now being made to formally dedicate MVAC's Native American garden this spring to the late Merlin Red Cloud, Jr., a Ho Chunk advisor who donated corn, squash and tobacco seed stock to start the MVAC garden. Bonnie Christensen has been working with the Ho Chunk Nation, who will sponsor the memorial that will be unveiled at the dedication.

Our next public events will be a February 10 talk by Jim Theler and Ernie Boszhardt on their book: *Twelve Millennia: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Valley*, followed by the annual *Artifact Show* on March 13 at Valley View. Happy New Year!

MVAC Staff Contacts:

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Newsletter submissions:
(608) 785-8454 or dowiasch.jean@uwlax.edu

MVAC Educational Programs Are Supported By:

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Announcements

Christmas Tree Sale

A big Thank You to board member Dick Hilliker for donating beautiful Fraser and Spruce trees to MVAC for the second annual Christmas Tree fundraiser. More than \$800 was raised as a result of the tree sales. Thanks to everyone who purchased a tree, and to the MVAC staff who volunteered during the sale.

Artifact Show

Collectors interested in displaying their artifacts at the March 13 Artifact Show should contact Jean Dowiasch at (608) 785-8454 or dowiasch.jean@uwlax.edu for registration information.

Books for Sale at MVAC

To purchase these books directly from MVAC, call 785-8463 for more information or visit the MVAC web site for an order form.

NEW!
A Projectile Point Guide for the Upper Mississippi River Valley
By Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt
\$14.95

Deep Cave Rock Art in the Upper Mississippi Valley

By Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt
\$24.95 - Special price for MVAC members - \$19.95

Minnesota's Indian Mounds and Burial Sites

By Constance Arzigian and Katherine Stevenson
\$40.00

Twelve Millennia: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Valley

By James L. Theler and Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt
\$27.95



There will be a link to the digital newsletters on the MVAC Home Page at www.uwlax.edu/mvac

Look for the following articles in the Winter 2004 Digital Newsletter:

- Archaeology for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA), by Ryan Howell
- Teaching Teachers about Wisconsin Archaeology through a web-based class, by Bonnie Christensen and Connie Arzigian
- The Native American Garden at MVAC, by UW-L student Quinlan Stefanik

In the Education Newsletter: Our new theme for 2003-04 is Rock Art with information and lesson plans for educators.



Estate Planning

Successful estate planning is a valuable way to continue your support for MVAC into the future. By giving a gift in your will or estate plan, you are providing for future programs in archaeological research, public education and site stewardship. Please consider MVAC when planning for trusts, gifts and bequests. Contact Marcee H. Peplinski, Development Director at the MVAC office for more information, (608)785-8463.

MVAC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Consider becoming a member of MVAC

MVAC's innovative public education program brings the excitement of archaeology to children and adults throughout the area. Become a member of MVAC and receive our newsletters, which report on programs, current research, upcoming events, and volunteer opportunities. Also, as a member, you will receive reminders of special "members only" events. Please remember that your contribution is tax-deductible.

☐ **Yes!** I want to support the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center Programs!

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____

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Please make checks payable to UW-L Foundation, Inc. for MVAC, and send to MVAC, 1725 State St., La Crosse, WI 54601. Gifts to the UW-L Foundation for MVAC qualify as charitable tax deductions to the full extent of the law as applied to the individual circumstances of each donor. You can increase your gift's value if your employer has a matching gift plan. Check with your human resource office.

Membership Categories

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Supporting.....\$100-499
Contributing.....\$50-99
Active.....\$25-49

*Thank you
for your support.*



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Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise noted, events are free and open to the public. Contact MVAC at (608) 785-8454 for more information or visit the web site:

www.uwlax.edu/mvac

Twelve Millennia

Dr. James Theler and Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt
Tuesday, February 10, 2004
7 p.m., Port O'Call
UW-L Cartwright Center

Artifact Show

Saturday, March 13, 2004
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Valley View Mall, Onalaska

Forensic Anthropology

Brian Allen, D.O.
Tuesday, April 13, 2004
7 p.m., Port O'Call
UW-L Cartwright Center

Check the MVAC web site now for spring and summer field opportunities!