

Commonwealth's Archaeology Program

Spring Quarterly Report

Covering the Period of April 1, 2001 through June 30, 2001

Introduction

The Commonwealth's Archaeology Program (CAP) of the Pennsylvania and Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) serves as an archaeological field, laboratory, and management program. The program's mission is to facilitate the Commonwealth's responsibilities under Act 70 of the Pennsylvania History Code and to conduct public outreach and educational programs. The program is responsible for conducting archaeological investigations on sites that are potentially threatened by privately funded projects that involve state licensing or permitting, typically Department of Environmental Protection permits. The investigations are carried out in two ways: 1) in-house by the CAP staff (the most frequent scenario); and 2) by contracting the largest and most time-consuming projects out to professional consultants managed by the CAP program. In addition, CAP is responsible for the annual public archaeology and education program that takes place on City Island during Archaeology Month, as well as other educational and public relations activities.

This report summarizes CAP's activities for the 2001 second-quarter period. During this quarter, CAP has: 1) conducted investigations of potentially threatened sites that have been identified through environmental review of state-permitted projects; 2) undertaken laboratory analysis and collections management, both in-house and through consultants; 3) conducted educational/public-relations activities; and 3) provided technical assistance.

Environmental Review Projects

During this period, 181 state-permitted projects were reviewed, and four of these involved archaeological sites that required some level of field investigation by CAP (Table 1). In addition, three projects reviewed during the end of the last quarter were investigated at the beginning of this quarter, for a total of seven field visits/investigations during the April 1 - June 30 period. Two of these projects involved plowed upland lithic scatters that required further investigation in the form of controlled surface collections as well as some test pitting to examine soil conditions. In both cases, this work was conducted in-house by CAP staff.

The remaining permits that were resolved consisted of cases in which no work beyond an initial site visit and fact-finding mission was necessary. These projects involved, variously: situations in which a site recorded by avocationalists was mislocated; situations where the project impacts did not affect the site(s) in question; situations where no site was present at all; or a situation in which the impact area had been significantly disturbed.

The two projects that involved further archaeological investigation by CAP staff were the Gouge Subdivision Site in Chester County, and the Cypress Energy Site, also in Chester County. Both projects involved shallow upland sites with components of the Middle and Late Archaic periods, and, at Cypress Energy, Middle and Late Woodland components were also present. Both sites were the remains of short-term procurement camps that had accumulated and overlapped over time, and both were located in shallow contexts in agricultural fields.

Replowing and controlled surface collections supplemented by test pits to look at soils conditions were conducted at both sites. In each case, this level of work was deemed sufficient to recover representative

samples of artifact types and distributional patterns, effectively mitigating effects of upcoming construction. All materials recovered were processed, inventoried, catalogued and entered in the data base, and their reporting will be included in a volume addressing these types of sites, using accumulated CAP data (see below).

Table 1: ER Project Field Activities

<p>01-1812-045 : Delaware County Commercial development</p> <p>Resolved (potential lithic raw material naturally-occurring in artificial exposure in road cut; no cultural materials present)</p>
<p>01-1761-039-A : West Meade Township Industrial Park, Crawford County</p> <p>Resolved (cut-and-fill area; site apparently destroyed prior to project initiation)</p>
<p>01-1489-029: Cypress Energy facility, Berks County</p> <p>Resolved (Controlled surface collections, test pits)</p>
<p>01-1866-089-A: J. Park Parcel, Monroe County</p> <p>Resolved (no site present; site destroyed or mislocated)</p>
<p>01-2561-071-A: Graywood Dairy Farm Expansion, Lancaster County</p> <p>Resolved (no site present; site mislocated)</p>
<p>01-0473-029: Gouge Subdivision, Chester County</p> <p>Resolved (Controlled surface collections, test pits)</p>
<p>2001-2522-055: Beacon Lights Housing Development, Franklin County</p> <p>Resolved (disturbance already present in site area; no cultural materials found)</p>
<p>01-1272-003-B: Proposed Home Depot, Allegheny County</p> <p>Resolved (project in fill area and will not impact location of previously recorded site)</p>

Laboratory Activities

Ongoing processing of materials recovered from CAP projects conducted both recently and in past years has come to fruition: As of this month, all artifacts recovered from all CAP Environmental Review projects

conducted to date (both recent and backlog) have been processed, catalogued, and entered into the data base. In addition, all artifacts from all seasons of the City Island project have been processed, catalogued, and entered into the data base. The City Island assemblage accounts for a total of 12,163 artifacts from this one archaeological site alone, and is inclusive of all of the excavations conducted by BHP/CAP from 1994 through 2000. As a first step toward dissemination of the information that has been recovered from the site, an illustrated booklet that synthesizes this information and presents it in a format that is user-friendly to the general public will be prepared.

Detailed analysis of the Creekside Manor Site collection recovered in 1999 has been completed, the artifact distribution maps have been prepared, and a report is in progress. In addition, analysis of a set of backlogged upland prehistoric sites that have been investigated by CAP in the east-central parts of the state is complete. These particular sites are similar types of prehistoric ephemeral camps, most of which are located in similar types of interior settings. The results of investigations of these sites will be presented within the format of a single technical report. This document will report the findings and analyses of each site and provide a synthesis of these related sites and their settings, and their roles in regional settlement patterns.

For the purposes of graphic presentations that are to be included in our upcoming reports, site maps and charts and maps artifact distributions are being prepared, and artifact photography is being conducted.

Report Priorities:

1. Creekside Manor (currently in progress)
2. City Island Preliminary Report
3. Upland Sites and Synthesis

Contracted Services

KCI technologies, Inc., on contract with PHMC, completed drafts of three different data recovery/mitigation activities conducted by CAP at the Willow Creek, Louv Farm, and Medford Farm sites. These drafts were reviewed and commented on by CAP, and the final reports were submitted before July 1, 2001.

Education-Related Activities

As part of CAP's mission of increasing the public's awareness of the Commonwealth's archaeological and historical resources, various presentations, lectures, and workshops were conducted. These include the following:

- A lecture on the City Island canoe reconstruction (at State Museum)
- A lecture on Lancaster County Native Americans (at Elizabethtown Masonic)
- A lecture on experimental archaeology (Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster)
- A presentation to Pennsylvania Municipalities Groups on the CAP program
- As part of the State Museum's Teacher Workshop for Archaeology, a presentation/lecture on the City Island Archaeology Program
- In conjunction with ecology/biology presentations by the Game Commission, a presentation on

Pennsylvania's prehistory at the Clemson Island Wildlife Propagation Area, the site of the former Clemson Island Mound (36DA1)

- Presentation on archaeology and Pennsylvania Prehistoric Indians to youth groups, Valley Baptist Church, Middletown

We have received unsolicited feedback on these presentations, all of which has been very positive. Though involving relatively small amounts of time in the greater scheme, these types of presentations help to bolster PMHC/CAP's image as a "public" program that is responsive to people's interest in the Commonwealth's past and how their resources are being managed.

We are also in the process of doing the preliminary planning for this year's City Island project. The kickoff/press conference will take place on September 19th, and the program is scheduled to be open to the public through October 6th.

Professional Activities

At the beginning of this quarter, CAP had a strong presence in its direct participation at annual meetings of the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, the Society for American Archaeology, and the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology. A total of eight papers were presented by CAP and other PHMC personnel. Papers addressed cultural resource management issues relevant to the Commission's work, new research on Pennsylvania prehistory, and subjects related to CAP's archaeological work and experimental archaeology on City Island.

Technical Assistance Project

New Dugout Canoe Discovery, Hunt Lake, Susquehanna County

Another dugout canoe has been discovered in the glaciated Poconos Plateau area, and this example is in remarkably fine shape. The vessel was discovered when Douglas McLearn and James Herbstritt were notified by Mr. Bruce Van Deusen that a crude wooden boat that appeared to have some antiquity had been found in Hunt Lake, AKA Loch Eden, in Susquehanna County, near the town of New Milford. The property is owned by Mr. Frank Innes and is largely undeveloped woodland that has been in his family for generations. According to Innes, there is no oral history in his family that mentions seeing the vessel or that this type of vessel had been made or used there.

CAP was asked for technical assistance and invited to look at the find in order to provide identification and advice with regard to its preservation. Accordingly, a preliminary investigation of the vessel was made on site. The vessel was examined in its present location in about 10 inches of water at the lake's edge, where it was photographed and drawn in plan

Results of the vessel's inspection indicated a handmade dugout canoe rather than a commercially made boat. Measuring about 17.5 by 2.75 feet, the dugout has been hand-hewn from pine or hemlock, and some invasive vegetation is presently growing in its bow and stern. The bottom is flat, and the interior has been formed through a combination of intentional charring and cutting with what appear to have been metal tools. A wide notch, intentionally prepared, has been chopped on the right side, however, and its function is unknown. This, in addition to the shape of the bottom, appears to be unusual for this type of vessel. Other than these characteristics, this find is similar to several other dugouts found in northern Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the exact age and ethnic affiliations of such vessels remain undetermined.

The Commonwealth's Archaeology Program has previously been involved with the recovery and preservation of a dugout that may have been of similar age and cultural affiliation, and a report that addressed this find as well as current knowledge of dugout canoes in the east was issued ("The Curtis Pond Canoe: The Identification, Recovery, and Context of a Dugout Vessel from The Pocono Highlands", by Joe Baker, *Commonwealth Archaeology Program Report #2*, March 1998). Consequently, this more recent find does not exist in a vacuum, but instead provides information to add to a slowly growing knowledge of this unique class of cultural resources. As the information is made available, more such finds will likely materialize, and our understanding should increase correspondingly.

The owner and his associates have requested technical identification and advice on conservation of the Hunt Lake Canoe. We have discussed this vessel with the PHMC's conservation lab staff, and they have expressed interest in examining the canoe on site in order to provide the best technical approach possible to those interested in ensuring its preservation and eventual presentation to the public.