

STRATA

Newsletter of the Peterborough Chapter of the Ontario Archaeological Society



Somewhere deep within the new storage chambers at the Peterborough Museum and Archives, Peterborough Chapter Treasurer, Deb Mohr prepares to count down the hours until the New Year.

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President's Annual Report

by Tom Mohr

2014 was the Peterborough Chapter's 'Year of the Symposium,' and planning for the 41st annual OAS event dominated most of that period. A number of local institutions and First Nations communities joined in to create a week-long celebration of all things archaeological, commencing with a proclamation from the Mayor and the raising of the OAS flag over City Hall. We hosted CCI's Archaeological Conservation Field Techniques workshop at Fleming College, a first for an organization rather than an institution, and sponsored two First Nations Liason staff from local communities. We were picked up by lots of print and broadcast media, including CBC radio's *Ontario Morning*. All told, the symposium was a great success, with some 185 registered participants.

In September, we were once again invited to join the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority for their annual Dig Day. A number of our members participated in this excavation of a 14th century Huron/Wendat site in North Pickering. Once again, our appreciation goes to the TRCA. Thanks to our City of Peterborough community outreach grant, we were able to partner with Fleming College's Museum Management and Curatorship program to refurbish one of the OAS's original edukits, and also create displays from a number of unprovenienced artifacts. These new modules debuted at this year's Gemboree in Bancroft, where we established an OAS presence for the first time. We were enthusiastically received by participants, alongside OAS Board member Chris Dalton and fellow knappers Dan Long and Darcy Fallon.

We've been busy in expanding our brand locally and in the regional cultural heritage sector. Director Morgan Tamplin has been representing the Chapter at Peterborough's EC3, while I have been working with the Kawartha Lakes Culture and Heritage Network. Morgan has seen success in getting us on the



Above: Tom raises the OAS Flag at Peterborough City Hall.

TV as well. With his guidance, COGECO Cable has assembled a series of clips starting from last October's symposium and featuring various activities of the chapter. It also deserves mention that Morgan was awarded the Killarney Award for Outstanding Service

This award was presented to him at the 2014 symposium 'in recognition of the continuing long-term support and active participation of OAS members' (*see photo below*)



In regional outreach, we also assisted the Kawartha Land Trust in pitching their mapping program to potential interns at Lindsay's Fleming Campus, and the POAS presented at the Oshawa Museum's Archaeology Day in October.

This year we featured the following public presentations:

- September – Jamie Hunter – *Huronian: An Overview of the Populations, Settlement and Trade in Southeastern Georgian Bay AD1400-1800*
- October – 41st annual OAS Symposium, held in Peterborough.
- November 25 – David Bilton – *Gulf of Georgia Prehistory Revisited.*
- December – Pot Luck Dinner & AGM, featuring Doug Stenton's Franklin Expedition TV broadcast.
- January – Eugene Morin – *Neanderthals: Who Were They?*
- February – Popcorn Social for members only – *Passage*
- March – Tom Mohr – *Was Duffin Really Up the Creek?*
- April – Brock Kingston – *New Field Data Collection Technologies and their application in Archeology.*
- May – Morgan Tamplin – *Screening Archaeology: Movies, Media and Community Television*
- June – John Raynor – *The Cartographer Left No Map.*

We have collaborated with Trent University's TUARC program so that our general meetings are now held on campus, providing us with more engagement with the students there. Four issues of our newsletter, *Strata*, were produced, thanks to Editor Dirk Verhulst, and our membership currently stands at 41. Dirk has further applied his editorial talents to compiling a book telling stories of local archaeology in this culturally rich area. Assisted in layout by OAS Board member Grant Karcich, the volume boasts contributions from archaeologists, knowledgeable enthusiasts, and commentary from the First Nations community. Congratulations go out for a job exceedingly well done, and *Peterborough Archaeology* was available for purchase at the Symposium in Midland.

One of this year's Symposium's high points was the awarding of the Peggi Armstrong Public Archaeology Award to our chapter secretary Dirk Verhulst, in recognition of his efforts in assembling

Peterborough's Archaeology Week to accompany the 2014 OAS Symposium. This award, presented by the Ottawa Chapter in memory of long-standing member Peggi Armstrong, is handed out to acknowledge excellence in the promotion of public interest in the study of archaeology.

The OAS Symposium in Peterborough was a collective effort and many contributed to its success. However, Dirk deserves to be singled out for his role in projecting the society's aims and ambitions to a greater audience, while also forging a continuing community legacy from the conference. The Award was presented at the 2015 Symposium in Midland, which Dirk was unfortunately unable to attend, but Chapter President Tom Mohr accepted on Dirk's behalf. He, in turn, was delighted to pass it along to him at our October meeting (*photo below*). We all congratulate Dirk on receiving this honour

Finally, in addition to acknowledging all the efforts of our Chapter executive in making this a most successful year, I would like to express our appreciation to Harry Johnson (*photo below*), a charter member of the Chapter and our Treasurer from Day One. He has stepped down from our Executive due to health issues, and we wish him all the best.



First Nations and Archaeology: Sharing Data, Creating Awareness, and Engaging in Relationship

By Dr. Julie Kapyrk



(Above) *Melissa Dokis, Lands Resource Consultation Worker and hostess of the Speaker Series at Curve Lake First Nation, presents guest speaker Dr. James Conolly, with a gift after his presentation on archaeology and ancient peoples of the Kawartha Lakes.*

CURVE LAKE FIRST NATION – On Wednesday December 2nd, 2015, the community of Curve Lake First Nation hosted archaeologist Dr. James Conolly as a guest presenter in the Curve Lake Speaker Series. The Curve Lake Speaker Series offers informative and current issues based presentations every few weeks at the community centre. These presentations, sponsored by Ontario Power Generation are open to the public and also include a catered dinner for participants prior to the discussion.

The crowd consisted of a mixture of the Curve Lake First Nation community, ranging in age from children to Elders, as well as several archaeologists and historians from the Peterborough and Lindsay areas. Chief Phyllis Williams was also in attendance

as were several consultation workers, Elders and administrators.

This Speaker's Series event which included a delicious meal of baked lasagna, caesar salad, and a homestyle bun complete with dessert brownies and Nanaimo bars was a beautiful example of creating awareness, being inclusive, and of communities engaging in relationship in a positive and genuine way.

Dr. Conolly provided a presentation and talk entitled: *Archaeology and Ancient Peoples of the Kawartha Lakes*, and spoke about the value of doing archaeological research with First Nations communities and why public archaeology is important – especially within this area of Ontario.

He explained the 10,000 year history of human habitation in the Kawartha Lakes region and that his research focuses upon elucidating the connections between people and their ecosystems deep into the past. Dr. Conolly highlighted the “ecosystem engineering” that appears to have been employed in ancient times – in which people were manipulating landscapes to increase its health or to make resources better. He also pointed out the nature of seasonal scheduling of resource use, that people were engaged in certain activities at certain times of the year (e.g. ricing in September), mostly to procure more food resources.

Dr. Conolly is particularly interested in ancient population history, especially the periods around 1000 years ago when the first villages appear in this region. One of his priorities is working with First Nations and ensuring that archaeology and archaeological sites, especially burial locations, are better documented and protected from development and destruction in this area.

He spoke about his excavations at Jacob’s Island and preliminary work on Big Island and that a large part of his practice involves taking a predictive modelling approach. Dr. Conolly is pro-active in terms of improving how sites are detected and “dealt” with. He is working towards a model in which the municipalities will become informed of the likelihood of finding archaeological materials within the Kawartha Lakes region. His work has already impacted the planning regarding the construction of buildings and decisions to build or not to build in general on some of the islands. With a preventative approach to his research, Dr. Conolly seeks to avoid any unnecessary disturbance of potentially significant sites, especially burial sites.

When asked if he would like to attend and share his findings with other groups and organizations Dr. Conolly expressed his desire to work with and for Indigenous peoples and communities. By taking a community-based approach to archaeological research, the benefits are mutual and create a fuller more enriched narrative of the past. This type of methodology is inherently inclusive and thus is essentially more complete, and more comprehensive, and more circular. Archaeological research thus becomes relevant and useful to communities and hence communities help drive the research endeavour.

In doing so, this kind of archaeology becomes “active” – it moves beyond the confines of the “business of archaeology” and delves into issues that are of significant importance to Indigenous peoples and communities today. In this sense archaeology can become a valuable tool to help advocate for the environment, the waters, the plants, the animals, and the earth – in essence, for healthy ecosystems. For example, his research is showing that wild rice harvesting in the Kawartha Lakes has been going on for some 4500 years. Dr. Conolly’s work is revealing archaeological proof that people have been engaged in this activity deep in time and thus also involved in maintaining the health of their environment for as long.

I have always strongly acknowledged that archaeologists and Indigenous peoples and communities should work closely together, that they have a lot to offer each other. Positive relationship building and working in true partnership produces long lasting mutual benefits. This event demonstrated the value and potential of community based research and community collaboration. It highlighted that archaeological research designed around the needs of First Nations communities can be extremely relevant and useful to communities now and that true equal engagement in the process of archaeological research can result in uncovering peoples’ activities in the past. And this results in significant contributions not only to the archaeological knowledge of the Kawartha Lakes region but also to Indigenous peoples, knowledges, and communities. A true collaborative and community based approach to archaeology.

And thus we can all learn something valuable – about the past, about people in the past, about activities in the past, and how people are still engaged in these activities today demonstrating the longevity of interaction of people within this ecosystem that is the Kawartha Lakes. The Kawartha Lakes region has a rich geographical, archaeological and cultural history. We should all know about this land, its history and its peoples. It is where we all live now. Hence the value of public archaeology and a public speaker series and most of all the creation of trusting respectful relationships between First Nations and archaeologists.

Gchi Miigwech to Curve Lake First Nation and Dr. James Conolly for bringing these two aspects together! The future of community based archaeological research in the Kawartha Lakes has

been “visioned.” And it is a model worth striving for.

The next Curve Lake Speaker Series presentation is on December 16th and will feature Elder Doug Williams and scholar Dr. Leanne Simpson speaking about: “Old Stories of Curve Lake and Michi Saagiig (Mississauga) Resurgence.” Dinner is served at 5pm and the presentation begins at 6pm.

To book a spot or for more information on the Speaker Series at Curve Lake First Nation please contact Melissa Dokis at 705-657-8045 or email MelissaD@curvelake.ca

New Lithic Collection at Trent University

by *Bill Fox*



The Trent University Lithic Reference Collection has been growing over the last few years, to include a range of material used for both chipped and ground stone tool production from southern and northeastern Ontario. In September, the collection was given a major boost with the donation of the extensive MTCS samples housed in London. This material includes both tool stone and paint stone assembled during the 1970's and '80's from throughout Ontario and Quebec: as well as the northeastern and midwestern United States. Now the substantial task of organizing and curating the collection, and making it publicly accessible through the construction of an electronic database has begun. Stay tuned!

Peterborough Arts, Culture, Heritage Forum

by *Morgan Tamplin*

Tom Mohr and I represented POAS at an “Arts/Culture/Heritage Forum” at the Peterborough Evinrude Centre on Wednesday November 23. This meeting was actually a focus session organized by the “Rethink Group”, specialists in leisure services planning and management, who are contracted by the City of Peterborough to produce the Vision 2025 10-Year Strategic Plan for Recreation, Parks, Arenas and Culture.

Some public meetings had already been held in the community but at this one, invited representatives of various ACH organizations who met at various discussion tables to answer two questions:

- 1 What’s great about arts, culture and heritage in Peterborough?
- 2 What’s needed over the next ten years to improve arts, culture and heritage in Peterborough?



We sat at the Heritage Table with city staff, representatives of the Public Library, Museum and Archives, Trent University Archives and Peterborough Historical Society. Groups at other tables discussed Visual Arts and Crafts, Performing Arts and Music, Volunteering; there was even a table for ‘others’!

After an hour of brainstorming discussion, each table reported their conclusions. These were recorded on the usual flip charts and discussed again by everyone.

Tom pointed out the lack First Nations representatives at the meeting and recommended their inclusion in future discussions. I argued that local interest in protecting archaeological sites in the Peterborough area influenced the development of Ontario archaeology. We introduced archaeological repositories into a discussion of the fragmented archival resources in Peterborough and defined ‘ethical archaeology’ as the principle of ‘do no harm’ to heritage resources.

After the discussions are collated and reviewed there will be further public meetings in 2016 including committees of City Council.

We can still add our voice to a survey by December 18. A draft version will be submitted at the POAS AGM in December.

Left: Participants (including chapter members Tom Mohr and Morgan Tamplin) at the Vision 2025 Planning Session



(Above: recent excavations at Nunalleq, Alaska)

Nunalleq (“The Old Village”)

by Dirk Verhulst

On Tuesday Nov. 24 Trent Archaeology Professor Dr. James Conolly spoke to a full house about significant recent discoveries at a new archaeological site in Alaska.

The title of his talk was "*Community archaeology and landscape ecology in the thermokarst --- recent work at the early Yupik site of Nunalleq (The Old Village), Alaska.*"

Dr. Conolly began by explaining that a ‘thermokarst’ is a land area with irregular surfaces bound by thermofrost. During the winter mobility is difficult in such areas, but in the summer, as the thermofrost

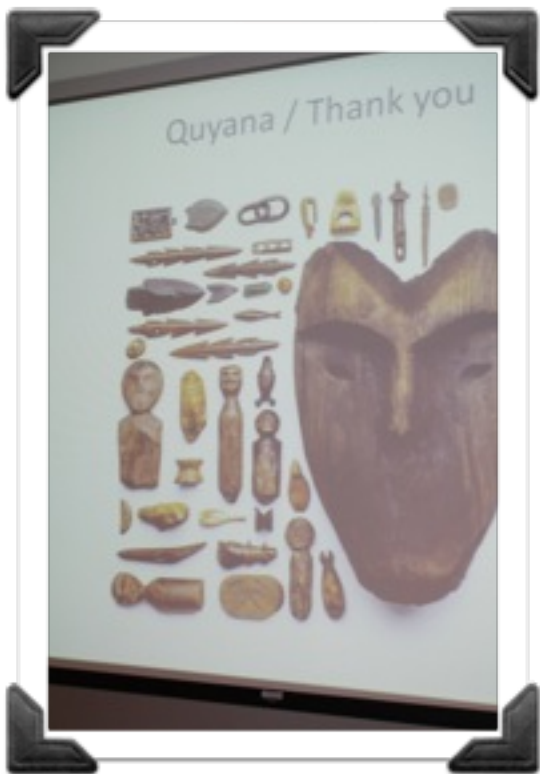
thaws working conditions become difficult, even dangerous.

“There is mud everywhere,” he said. “It rains constantly and even if it stops then the bugs come out.”

‘Rises in Bering Sea temperatures have increased the intensity of winter storms’, he noted, “the results of which have caused ongoing and severe coastal erosion of parts of western Alaska. The consequences for the archaeological heritage in this region are enormous and there are multiple sites at risk of complete loss.” Archaeologists are scrambling to save as much as possible of the cultural heritage before it disappears.

In his presentation, Prof. Conolly provided an overview of his involvement in the field work at one of these at-risk sites called Nunalleq (the old village), located near Quinhagak in the Yupik territories in the Kuskokwim Delta region of western coastal Alaska. The site in question dates to c1300 to 1650.

“Preserved in the permafrost,” he explained, “is a considerable material culture record of a Yupik community prior to Russian contacts in the 19th century.”



Recently archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a village of sod houses at the site. Artifacts included: vessels used to store fish fats and oils, tool caches, wooden spoons, organic material such as mats and knotted cords, carvings in bone of shaman masks, snow

goggles (including some with their straps still in tact), even dolls and other toys.

Prof. Conolly also spoke about community involvement in the excavations and the positive effect this partnership has had on the recovery and preservation of traditional native culture.

Prof. Conolly explained that the archaeological team leader, Prof. Rick Knecht from the university of Aberdeen in Scotland, has consistently emphasized the importance of working with local elders in all stages at the site. Community members are brought in to aid in planning, excavating and interpreting. Weekly community events are held to inform members of the community by enabling them to observe first hand what is happening at the site. Many of the discoveries and insights gained from the work are being integrated into the school curriculum.

In the 19th century Russian missionaries had banned traditional practices including native dancing. As a result of the discoveries at the site, Prof. Conolly noted, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional native culture. He even showed a brief video clip of school children singing in their native tongue and performing a traditional native dance. The smiles on their faces confirmed that, in this ‘Old Village,’ archaeology is having a significant contemporary impact.

Photo Collage of Chapter Members' visit to the new storage facility at the Peterborough Museum and Archives in October, guided by Susan Neale, Museum Director

