

VAS newsletter...

A PUBLICATION OF THE
VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Prudence Doherty, Editor

PETERSEN TEAM COMPLETES PRELIMINARY REPORT ON SHELBURNE POND AREA

STUDY REFINES TYPOLOGIES OF VERMONT PROJECTILE POINTS AND CHIPPED STONE TOOLS

by Peter Mills

Archaeological Investigations in the Shelburne Pond Locality, Chittenden County, Vermont has recently been completed by James Petersen, Jack Wolford, Nathan Hamilton, Lauren LaBar and Michael Heckenberger. The 42-page report provides a preliminary synthesis of 31 sites located around Shelburne Pond, including the Ewing and Auclair sites.

Examination of these sites was undertaken with the broad objective of defining hunter-gatherer settlement and subsistence systems in a mid-latitude temperate forest. Much of the analysis concentrated on the Ewing site, where the high degree of preservation of faunal and floral remains, including bone, seed and nut subsistence remains, coupled with the presence of bone and antler tools and lithic and ceramic artifacts, provides particularly significant data.

The report includes sections on the environmental setting of the study, on past archaeological investigations conducted in the area, on the cultural chronology revealed by the 31 sites, and some tentative conclusions about the settlement and subsistence patterns that characterized prehistoric use of the area.

No other locality within the Lake Champlain drainage basin or the State of Vermont provides such a relatively complete sequence of prehistoric occupation in such a relatively small area. Evidence of 8000 years of occupation was found, from Swanton corner-notched Early Archaic points to extensive Late Woodland materials.

This report provides an excellent synthesis of available information on the prehistory of an important area in Vermont. Unlike many reports, the technical presentation has been done in such a way that the report is very readable. This report, if made available for distribution to the general public, could provide one of the best

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1984 DUES ARE DUE

If you are not sure whether you have paid your dues for calendar 1984, drop a note to the Treasurer, VAS, Box 663, Burlington, VT 05402. We value your interest and support.

A recent undergraduate study by Peter Mills at the University of Vermont examined 1,110 projectile points from the Champlain Valley, Vermont for typological purposes. Previous to this research, there had been only one comprehensive typological examination of this area (Squire 1977). Squire's research, however, only presented a few holotypic examples of each projectile point "type". Thus, her research did not demonstrate the significant variability that could occur within any given type. Furthermore, sample sizes and data sources were not specified. The more recent study arranged the projectile points into morphological categories that were presented in photographs, scatterplots (when a significant amount of data were available), and metric data. Cross-correlation of these projectile point forms with those in surrounding areas was used to discuss regional influences and probable temporal ranges when such information was not locally available. The material used to make the projectile points was also examined to suggest regional influences.

The sample of projectile points that was examined is part of the collection amassed by the Fleming Museum at the University of Vermont in the later part of the nineteenth century and the earlier part of the twentieth. Due to time limitations, this study was only able to scratch the surface of the vast amount of information available in the Fleming collection; only the first 1,110 of numerous thousands of projectile points could be examined. In order to organize this data, a computer-cataloging system was developed that would record the locational information and various morphological characteristics for each of the projectile points.

Almost all of the projectile points in the Fleming collection were collected in the counties of Franklin, Chittenden and Addison, Vermont. Due to the non-random nature of collection of these projectile points and other factors such as non-random organization of the artifacts in the Fleming collection, an interpretation of the quantified data as representations of population distributions and frequencies was cautioned against.

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1 Shelburne Pond

insights into local archaeology for an interested general audience.

(The report was funded by the Cecil Howard Charitable Trust, the Vermont Historical Society and the U.S. Department of the Interior with a matching grant administered through the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.)

1 TYPOLOGIES REFINED

Findings

Various projectile point forms previously known to be in the Champlain Valley were identified in the sample, including: fluted, bifurcate-base, ground-slate, Otter Creek, Normanskill, Genesee, Atlantic, Perkiomen, Susquehanna-like, Orient fishtail, Meadowood, Adena, Jack's Reef corner-notched and pentagonal, and Woodland triangular points. Other singular specimens that were identified were Snyder and turkey-tail points associated with western New York and the Ohio River Valley during the Early Woodland Period.

Projectile points that have commonly been referred to as "Brewerton corner-notched" points in the Champlain Valley appear to be on a morphological continuum with what are referred to as "Vosburg" points. Almost all of these points are made from local materials. These two factors suggest that "Brewerton" and "Vosburg" points in the Champlain Valley were made by local peoples who had some temporal or cultural association.

Furthermore, a largely unrecognized point form in the Champlain Valley that is associated with Maine, Quebec, and Labrador was identified in the Fleming sample. This consisted of 20 broad-bladed, long-stemmed points that were mostly made of quartzite, and at least one specimen was made from Mistassini quartzite, from Mistassini Lake, Quebec. Similar points are illustrated by Snow at the Turner Farm Site, Maine (1980:214), and by McGhee and Tuck from the Strait of Belle Isle, Labrador (1975:219, 221, 223).

Another interesting finding was in regard to the Woodland triangular points. It has generally been held that the Woodland triangular points in Vermont consist mostly of the "Levanna" form and that the smaller "Madison" form is only found in Vermont in small numbers (Haviland and Power 1981:133). However, a scatterplot of the 216 whole, Woodland triangular points in the collection revealed that the largest cluster was in precise correspondence with the average range of Madison points from New York, described by Ritchie (1961:33). Snow (1980:315) states that relatively recent analysis of the Madison and Levanna forms suggests that the differences are not so much regional or cultural, but a general trend from larger to smaller projectile points over a 600-year period.

In general, it appears that the Vermont Champlain Valley shares common projectile point

forms with the rest of southern New England and New York. However, these projectile point forms rarely correspond precisely with their distant counterparts and, in some cases, there appears to be a merging of two different point forms in the Champlain Valley (e.g. Brewerton and Vosburg points). Furthermore, certain southern New England projectile points (e.g. Squibnocket points) do not seem to occur to any great degree in the Champlain Valley, while other forms occur in the Champlain Valley that are not known to occur in the rest of southern New England (e.g. the broad-bladed, long-stemmed points found in Maine, Quebec and Labrador). The amount of variation within a projectile point "type" was found to be extensive. It was suggested that this variation could be the result of a number of factors, including material, personal, regional, or temporal differences. It was also suggested that many of the highly variable and cruder bifaces may have been produced in the hands of children who were gradually acquiring the skills of flint knapping. Thus, typological systems should not blindly view all prehistoric tools as a representation of a culturally desired product.

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NOTE: It was not possible to include the plates and figures that illustrate Peter Mills' findings. These are included in copies of his thesis which are on file at the Department of Anthropology and in the University Archives at the University of Vermont.

**Look for Information on
the 1984 Annual
Meeting in the Next Issue**

U.Mass/Boston Field School Researching Windsor Historic Site

The following article appeared in the "Current Research" section of the Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter, Vol.17, No.2, June, 1984, p.35.

Research is being conducted on the Green Mansion and Store Site in Windsor, [Vermont] with archaeological, architectural and documentary data recovered in the 1983 University of Massachusetts/Boston Summer Field School directed by Dr. Suzanne Spencer-Wood. This site is particularly interesting because the Green family lived here from 1866-1956, and the principal structures remain intact, with few alterations by three subsequent owners. When Larry Bowser and Holly Taylor bought the property they offered Dr. Spencer-Wood the opportunity to excavate the property and record indications of the sequence of construction, including the 1866 house and the apothecary built by 1793, which was later expanded into a dry goods store. The developers plan to restore the structure as much as possible to its original appearance, to be used as an inn with a small museum exhibit of the results of the archaeological research.

Two kinds of archaeological research are planned with the excavated data. First, UMB graduate student Scott Heberling will use the data to calculate Miller's ceramic index and relate it to historical information on the socio-economic status of the family. Documentary data indicate that the Greens were one of the most wealthy and socially prominent families in Windsor, who were known throughout New England as manufacturers of Oxygenated Bitters, and locally as storekeepers who co-directed the town's two earliest banks and the Cornish covered bridge. The family member who stayed in Windsor for each of three generations married a relative of family business partners, thus keeping wealth in the family and forming a rural elite. The ceramics may not reflect the family's high socio-economic status due to New England frugality or other variables. This study will add to information regarding the relationship between ceramic consumption patterns and status. The second research problem is concerned with determining the extent to which this family, and the community through their store, chose to consume glass and pottery from distant in contrast to local manufacturers. The trade networks for this rural crossroads town will be compared and contrasted with those for other rural and urban sites to determine whether Windsor conforms to the pattern of more long distance than local trade for glass and pottery at rural sites. Similarly, the family socio-economic ceramic index will be ranked on a scale including Boston working class and middle class sites, in order to determine whether their ceramic consumption patterns reflected their relative degree of wealth.

Underwater Archeologists Locate Four Vessels from the French and Indian War

Divers from the Champlain Maritime Society have begun examining four vessels believed to date from the French and Indian War. The vessels were identified last summer by a team sponsored by the Maritime Society and funded by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Work this year is being funded by the Fort Ticonderoga Museum, and is sanctioned by the New York State Department of Education. The fort will be able to retain permanent custody of any artifacts recovered and preserved.

This is the first discovery of any ships from that time period (middle of the 1700s) built in America. Information collected from this summer's excavation project will, therefore, provide important information about naval architecture and the life and times of those who fought on Lake Champlain. Marine archaeologists will do detailed studies of the ship construction and some artifacts will be removed for display at the museum and for study. It is not expected that much of the original armaments will still be on the vessels, but stone anchors and Indian ax heads were noted last year. Because preservation of wood is difficult and expensive, there are no plans to raise the vessels from the water.

Art Cohn is directing this summer's excavation, and is being assisted by Kevin Crisman, Bill Bayreuther and nine other divers.

(This article was based on one written by Eloise Hedbor for the Burlington Free Press, Friday, July 6, 1984.)

Publications for Sale by VAS

Man in the Northeast, Number 19, Spring 1980. Six of the articles in this issue focus on Vermont prehistory. The articles include "Comments on Recent Trends in Vermont Archeology" by Peter Thomas; "Paleo-Indian Hunters and the Champlain Sea: A Presumed Association" by Stephen Loring; "Artifact Variability at the Multi-Component Winooski Site" by Marjory Power, Frank Cowan and James Petersen; "The McNeil Generating Plant Site" by Peter Thomas; and "VT-CH-94: Vermont's Earliest Known Agricultural Experiment Station" by M. Pamela Bumsted. Available for \$2.50 plus \$.50 postage and handling.

The John's Bridge Site: VT-FR-69, An Early Archaic Period Site in Northwestern Vermont, by Peter A. Thomas and Brian S. Robinson. 140 pp., including 33 figures, 16 tables, 5 plates. Available for \$5.00 plus \$.75 postage.

30 PUBLICATIONS

The Middle Woodland Ceramics of the Winooski Site A.D. 1-1000, by James B. Petersen. 50 pp., 10 figures, 2 tables, 13 plates. Available for \$3.00 (members), \$3.75 (non-members). Postpaid.

NIELSEN COLLECTION STUDY UNDERWAY

Charles Paquin has been analyzing the

extensive artifact collections made by Gordon Nielsen in the Little Otter Creek watershed in Addison County. A variety of artifacts from 72 sites identified in plowed fields in that area has been studied, recorded and photographed. Some of the sites will be field checked as well. The study is being done for the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. The VAS will contribute a small portion of the funding for the project. A more detailed report on the analysis will be presented to VAS members at a later time.

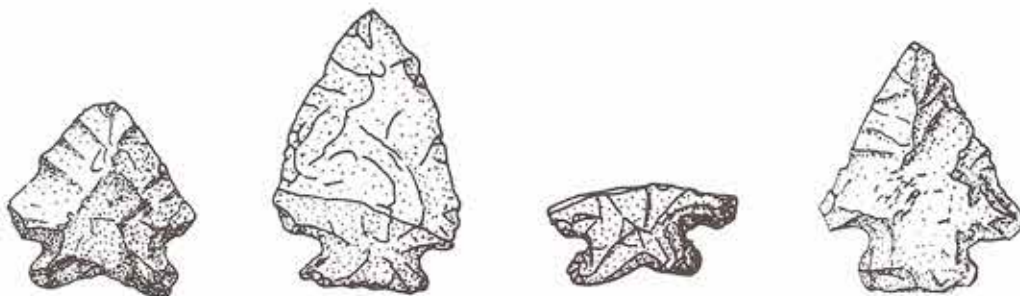
THE JOHN'S BRIDGE SITE

AN EARLY ARCHAIC PERIOD SITE IN NORTHWESTERN VERMONT

Dept. of Anthropology, University of Vermont, Report #28

BY PETER A. THOMAS AND BRIAN S. ROBINSON

The John's Bridge site is an Early Archaic period site excavated in 1979 and 1980. The site produced a distinctive tool inventory, particularly a new type of projectile point, as well as data related to hunting and fishing subsistence strategies, butchering or hide processing, cooking, tool manufacture and a possible shelter. The site was probably occupied for up to a period of several months during the fall or spring by one or two extended families. Carefully selected C-14 samples provide dates of 8,100 to 8,300 years before present for the site's occupation. Examples of the new "Swanton corner-notched" projectile points have since been identified at nine additional sites in Vermont.



140 pp., including 33 figures, 16 tables, 5 plates

\$5.00 plus \$.75 postage, from the Vermont Archaeological Society, Box 663, Burlington, Vermont 05401

Printing funded in part with the assistance of a grant from the U.S. Dept. of the Interior administered through the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

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HISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY AND
RURAL HERITAGE

A TWO-DAY WORKSHOP ON
THE GOODENOUGH-WHEELER
FARMSTEAD, KENTS' CORNER
CALAIS, VERMONT

AUGUST 24-25, 1984

GOODENOUGH-WHEELER FARM DISCOVERY DAYS

A WORKSHOP IN HISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY AND RURAL HERITAGE
SPONSORED BY THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON AUGUST 24
AND 25, 1984

Explore, map, excavate, and interpret a 19th century abandoned farm site in rural Vermont. The workshop on the Goodenough-Wheeler farm site in the Kents' Corner Historic District will give participants an introduction to the principles of historic archeology and actual hands-on field experience in preparing and excavating a site.

The workshop is designed for active adults (minimum age 18) who want to use archeology in their investigation, interpretation, and enjoyment of history. Knowledge and experience gained through this workshop will be of use to historical agency and historic site personnel, property owners who want to explore and understand the particular history of their homes and farms, students who seek to broaden their academic coursework, and teachers who want to enrich their local history and social studies curriculums.



The Goodenough-Wheeler farm site is located in the Kents' Corner Historic District in the town of Calais. The district is the home of the Kent Tavern Museum which will be the workshop base, the 1823 Old West Church, the water powered 1803 Robinson Sawmill, and numerous 19th century private dwellings. Montpelier, the capital of Vermont and a regional shopping and services center, is eleven miles south of the Kent Tavern Museum.

The schedule for this intensive two-day experience includes active participation in the investigation, discovery, interpretation, recording, and mapping of the house cellar hole and related stone-lined well and farm outbuilding sites.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Faculty: Eleanor Ott, Ph.D. in Folklore from the University of Pennsylvania, folklorist with the Vermont Folklife Center and former Goddard College faculty member who has a special interest in historic archeology and the Vermont farm, will direct the workshop. She has been involved in two recent farm site investigations and will share the results with the group. Other team members include Philip Elwert, Deputy Director and Curator of the Vermont Historical Society, and Cornelia Denker, Curator of Kent Museum and Educational Consultant for the Vermont Historical Society.

In-Service Credit: Participants seeking in-service or continuing education credits should contact their superintendents or college counselors and the Vermont Historical Society prior to the start of the workshop.

Fee: Registration fee includes six sessions, lunch and dinner both days, and an excavation trowel - \$95.00. A deposit of \$35.00 must be received by August 1, 1984.

Discount: Vermont Historical Society members deduct \$10.00 as a benefit of membership.

Cancellation and Refund: Your deposit will be refunded in full if the workshop does not meet minimum enrollment or if your cancellation is received by August 1, 1984.

Accommodations: Upon receipt of the registration form and fee, the registrant will be sent a price list of accommodations in local tourist homes, motels, hotels, and camping facilities. Registrants should make their own housing arrangements.

Information: For more information: Call the Vermont Historical Society, (802) 828-2291



REGISTRATION

*This workshop has minimum and maximum enrollment limits. Register early.
DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS AUGUST 1, 1984.*

NAME(S): _____

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I am a VHS member. Please deduct \$10.00 from my workshop registration fee.

I am not a VHS member. Send me membership information for discount.

NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS: _____ x \$35.00 deposit = total enclosed _____

*Please return this form with your check made payable to the Vermont Historical Society,
109 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602*



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