



# Ontario Archaeological Society Arch Notes

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PHOTO: RUDY FECTEAU

**Marti Latta points out a possible archaeological feature in Killarney Park during the OAS Symposium**

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# Ontario Archaeological Society

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the turning of the seasons once again. It has been a busy time for the OAS and its Board the last couple of months, as the planning for, attending and aftermath of the annual symposium came upon us. I would like to again extend our gratitude and thanks to the very competent symposium organising committee who pulled together an excellent conference this year, up in Killarney. At the time, coming from Southwestern Ontario, it was very much like travelling into the future, weather-wise, as all the colours were out. A very exciting and excellent programme, a lunch outing to the pier for a chilly but hearty meal on the water, and a perfect banquet were all highlights. Thanks again!

During that banquet a number of awards were announced, including our newest J. Norman Emerson Medal holder, and our first Killarney Outstanding Service award recipients. Please refer elsewhere in this issue of Arch Notes for a write up on those most deserving members and join us in congratulating them all. Also, we were able to present to the Society itself, an acknowledgement from Ontario's Premier, the Hon. Dalton McGuinty, and his congratulations to the OAS on the occasion of our 60th anniversary. That citation now sits proudly in the OAS office, and you can find a transcription of this elsewhere in *Arch Notes* (page 16).

Several decisions from the Annual Business Meeting are worth mentioning here. First, the membership voted to ratify the proposed changes to the OAS governance structure, as was detailed in our May/June 2010 issue of ArchNotes. Your Board will be busy next year implementing the transition so we go into 2012 newly re-packaged!

Also, we were able to announce that, starting in 2011, Dr. Christopher Ellis will be taking over from Dr. Andrew Stewart as editor of *Ontario Archaeology*. Andrew's efforts have been stellar at the reins, and we believe Chris is well suited to continue that high standard. We were also able to announce that the vexing, chronic issue of getting *Ontario Archaeology* out in order to fulfill annual subscription obligations will also be addressed this year. Communications Director Carole Stimmell reports that a double issue is close to completion and will be in your hands by the end of this year. Additionally, it was with great pleasure that we announced, through the gracious support of the London Chapter of the OAS, that members who had subscribed to *Ontario Archaeology* in 2008 and 2009 will also receive (before the year is out) a massive, four volume issue of *Ontario Archaeology*. This volume, based on a 2006 OAS conference session in London honouring Dr. Michael Spence on the occasion of his retirement, is currently set to go to the printers. This 13

article, 300 page manuscript will be jointly published by the Society and the London Chapter's OAS Occasional Publication Series, and will mean that OA, for the first time in a decade, will be caught up! And with both guest edited volumes in various stages of development and articles coming in, we should be able to stay current for the next few years to come. Yeah!

We also were able to confirm plans for upcoming symposia for the next three years, as Chapters all took up the banner for the Society. Next year the Ottawa Chapter will be hosting the symposium in Ottawa and already has a wide slate of exciting plans for the event. For the following year, the London Chapter has proposed to organise the conference in Southwestern Ontario around the theme of the War of 1812, while in 2013 the Huronia Chapter has proposed to organise the symposium for us. It was nice to see this embarrassment of riches, and to have these plans set for the next few years!

The membership also voted to support a motion put forward by Jean-Luc Pilon and seconded by Margie Kennedy, to build on the OAS's successful Task Force with Ron Bernard and the Pikwàkanagàn First Nation. That first iteration of the Task Force was focussed on soliciting input from First Nations across the province on the Ministry's technical bulletin for consultant archaeologists around engaging with Aboriginal peoples. The new motion proposes that the Task Force continue, under the leadership of Ron Bernard and the Pikwàkanagàn community, "...to seek the development by the Aboriginal peoples of Ontario, of a common approach in regards to archaeological practices and procedures in Ontario." This will be a lot of work but clearly it is an important aim for the OAS to support, and with continued efforts from Ron Bernard, Ian Badgley and Jean-Luc Pilon, we will be able to contribute meaningfully to this core principle of the OAS's own code of ethics.

Lastly, on the theme of Ministry of Tourism and Culture, I can report that I attended an information session held by the Ministry, with other archaeologists in early September, to bring us up to date on their draft Standards and Guidelines. They reviewed for us stakeholder feedback they had received on the last draft and highlighted some changes that had been made to the document.

As of Nov. 1, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture have posted a final set of Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists, along with the Technical Bulletin, Engaging Aboriginal Communities in Archaeology. According to the Ministry, these documents will come into effect Jan. 1, 2011. Copies of the final document can be accessed at [www.ontario.ca/archaeologystandards](http://www.ontario.ca/archaeologystandards).

A hearty congratulations for a long slog and job done to the Ministry and countless Ontario archaeologists, First Nation communities and others who have commented on and helped shape the final content of these documents. No doubt there will be plenty of challenges ahead to meeting and interpreting these standards, but at least we all will be dealing with a world post implementation, having finally moved on from over a decade of preparation and pre-implementation! No doubt there will be plenty of opportunity for members and the Society to provide further input as we all take a step forward into working with

articulated Standards and Guidelines.

Finally, I am pleased to report that as of mid October, we had received confirmation from the Minister of Tourism and Culture, the Hon. Michael Chan, that our Provincial Heritage Organisation operating grant has been approved for 2010. And we subsequently learned the cheque will be in hand in the following week. Most excellent and a big thanks to the Ministry!

**Neal Ferris**  
President

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## **OAS NEWS AND NOTES**

**J**oe Blackburn, a member of the Toronto and London Chapters (from Waterloo), wrote to us recently:

"I landed in Winnipeg a little too late for some contract work, and learned that since my stint here in 2008, funding has been met to proceed with reconstruction of Upper Fort Garry. Plans are for a reconstruction, museum and interpretive centre. In preparation, a Field School was held this summer, locating footings and establishing the layout. You can read about it here, with photos:

<http://www.upperfortgarry.com/news/index.cfm/cat/Upper%20Fort%20Garry%20Field%20School>

"As it happens, Upper Fort Garry is directly below my apartment building in downtown Winnipeg! The photo at the bottom of the web page shows the original North (main) Gate, from 1870, which is all that still stands of the original fort."

### **AGM of the Association of Professional Archaeologists**

The APA Annual General Meeting will be held at Trent University on Saturday, Nov. 27, starting at 10:30 a.m. This year, the Six Nations Lands and Resources Department will be providing a Land Rights presentation for those archaeologists, First Nations members and others who missed this summer's presentation at the University of Western Ontario. Lonny

Bomberry, Director of the Six Nations Lands and Resources Department and Phil Monture, Six Nations Land Rights Expert and Research Consultant will give a one hour presentation which will provide the audience with an in depth explanation of how the Haldimand Tract Treaty of Oct. 25, 1784 came to be and why the people of the Six Nations of the Grand River are involved in their Land Claims/Land Rights processes of the modern day. This will include an explanation of each of the individual Land Claims in the Tract and which of these have been validated by the

Canadian Government.

The meeting is free to all APA members, while others are welcome to attend with contributions accepted at the door. The AGM will take place immediately after lunch and cover current issues in Ontario archaeology.

The venue is Bagnani Hall, Traill College. Access to the hall is from London Street between Stewart and Reid (290 London St. is the closest street address). Parking on the street is fine, and there is also a lot on the south side of London Street.



**Treasurer Jim Keron and his lovely wife Jan Vicars sent us this incredible picture from their trip to Olduvai Gorge. "The anthropologist's dream: A beautiful woman in one hand, the fossilized skull of a Homo Habilis in the other." Larson (1984:214)**

# EXOTIC GIANTS

by William Fox  
Research Associate, Canadian Museum of Civilization

Last year, when David Brose and Patrick Julig invited me to review the lithic collection from the Killarney Bay 1 (KB 1) site (Greenman and Stanley 1941), curated at the University of Michigan, I was reminded of an OAS bus tour to Michigan which I had led in 1978. The Museum of Anthropology kindly provided access to the Great Lakes Range collections for our participants, and we were soon excitedly opening cabinets and drawers to inspect their impressive collections. One of my most vivid memories was the surprise at seeing preserved basketry and large chert bifaces with intact wooden hafts from their excavations at Killarney (Greenman 1966: 550, Fig. 19).

I had often thought of this collection subsequently; and so, was excited to receive a communication from David Brose in 2006 concerning the production of a long-awaited publication concerning this important site. I immediately put him in touch with Patrick Julig, as I was aware of the Laurentian University field program on the Spiegel site – immediately adjacent to Greenman’s excavations (Devereux 1982).

Prior to joining David and Pat in Ann Arbor last December, I made a detour to Buffalo, where the Museum of Science houses the Holland Lithic Laboratory – the most extensive reference collection of chert samples from North America. William Engelbrecht kindly facilitated my visit to the collections with my old friend John ‘Jack’ Holland (Figure 1), and I spent several hours with Jack, refreshing my memory concerning cherts from the Midwest and Northeast.

Jack was even able to identify a KB 1 biface of mysterious material, which turned out to be Muldraugh chert from Harrison County in southern Indiana – a material I had never before seen (Cantin 2008: 56-60, Holland 2008a: 21). My subsequent review of Greenman’s KB 1 artifacts, reminded me of ‘Flint Ridge’ or Vanport chert (Kagelmacher 2001: 95-105) biface caches from southwestern Ontario I had recorded in the 1980s, including one in the Canadian Museum of Civilization recorded as coming from Shebahoaning or Killarney a century ago! The larger bifaces of exotic material also reminded me of some early reports by David Boyle in the Annual Archaeological Reports for Ontario (Boyle 1888: 9-11, 46-47 and 1889: 11, 41, 44). So, began my journey into the hazy universe of the Middlesex Complex and the reputed migration of Ohio valley populations across the Northeast some two millennia ago.

My first step was to arrange visits to Kristin Thor and to the Royal Ontario Museum during a visit to Ontario in June. Kristin had just completed a thesis at Laurentian University

concerning a family collection from the Schlegel site in Honey Harbour (Thor 2006). She displayed the material and shared her thoughts about the site and lithic identifications. I was impressed by the accuracy of the latter.

While there were only three exotic chert bifaces measuring over 100 mm in length in the collection, there was a wide variety of lithic material from the site; including small lobate stemmed points similar to the Spiegel site at Killarney (Buchanan 1992: 26) and to the Fitzgerald site in southwestern Ontario (Parker 1997: 128, Fig.5), and to bifaces from several sites on Thompson Island in the upper St. Lawrence (Figure 2).

The Fitzgerald site, situated on the north shore of Lake Erie, has produced an unusual, for the region, assemblage of HBL chert scrapers; in addition to lobate stemmed bifaces of local Onondaga chert and exotic Bayport, Norwood and HBL chert and Lorrain quartzite. I noted a similar component of lobate stemmed bifaces from two sites on Thompson Island in the upper St. Lawrence, when viewing the CMC collections earlier this month. Most are manufactured of Onondaga chert; however, there are three possible exotics, including Mercer formation cherts from



Figure 1: Jack Holland and Bill Engelbrecht in the Holland Lithic Laboratory

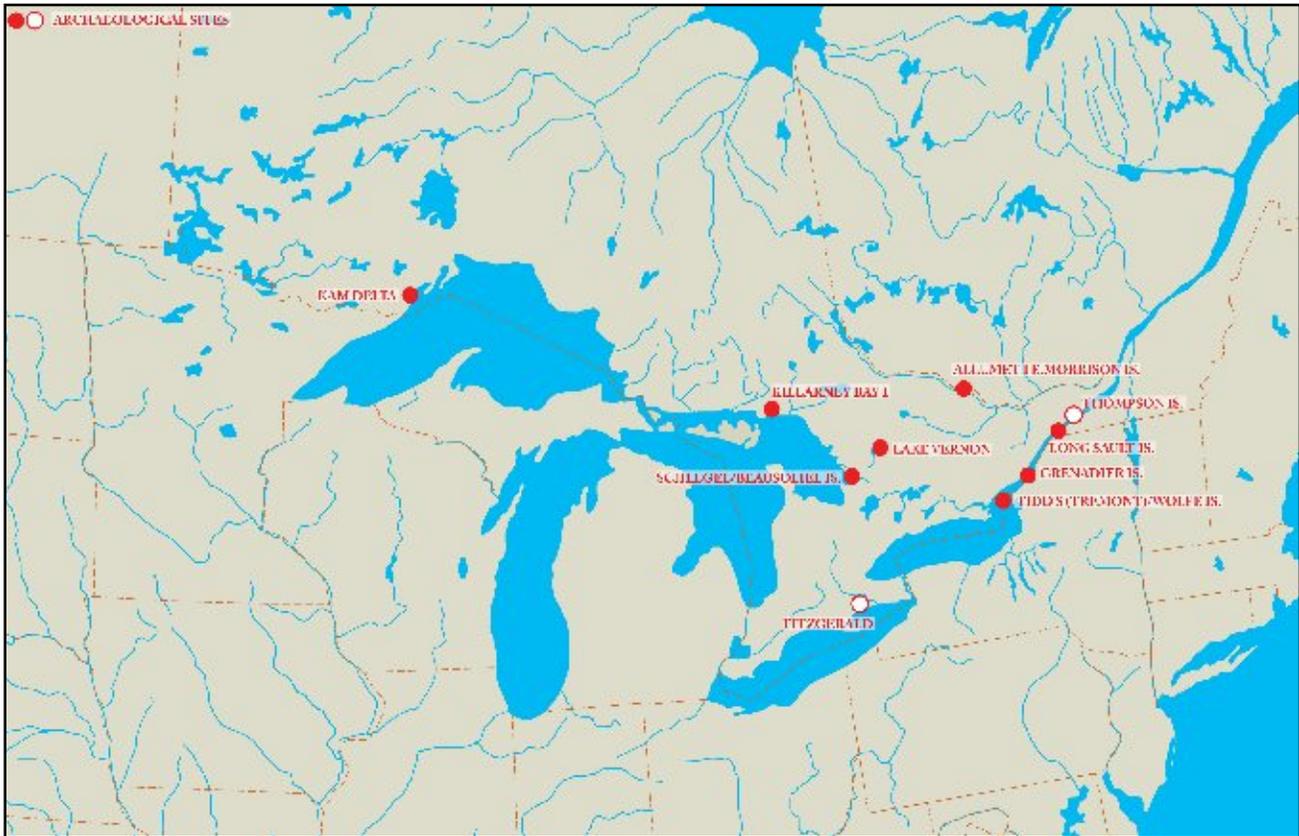


Figure 2: Archaeological Site Distribution



Figure 3: Knife River Flint Biface from Wolfe Island



Figure 4: two Vanport Chert Bifaces from Tidd's Island



**(Left) Figure 5: Morrison Island 2, Burlington Chert Snyder Biface**



**Figure 6: Morrison Island 2, Mercer Chert Little Bear Creek Biface**

central Ohio and Muldraugh chert from southern Indiana.

At the Royal Ontario Museum, Adrienne Desjardine had laid out the Tidd's and Wolfe Island lithics which were reported by Boyle and subsequently discussed by Michael Spence in his paper concerning a Middle Woodland burial complex in the St. Lawrence valley (Spence 1967). I was impressed again by the range of exotic materials and the size of many bifaces represented in these collections; including, one Wolfe Island specimen of Knife River flint from North Dakota (Figure 3)! There were also bifaces of Burlington chert (Holland 2008b: 4) from the Mississippi valley and two spectacular bifaces of



**Figure 7: Eastern North America Lithic Sources Map**

Flint Ridge or Vanport chert from Tidd's Island or Tremont Park Island, as it is known nowadays (Figure 4).

In addition to these sites situated at the east end of Lake Ontario, William Wintenberg (1928: 178) reported a large biface from Grenadier Island, a short distance east on the St. Lawrence River. Further downstream, a similar biface assemblage was reported by Ritchie and Dragoo from Long Sault Island in New York State. They report large bifaces, several of Vanport chert from Ohio and others of Wyandotte and Normanskill chert and also, quartzite (Ritchie and Dragoo 1960: 39-56). I hope to review this collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York at some point; however, I feel that their material identifications are probably secure, based on photo images and the fact that they consulted with Charles Wray – a very knowledgeable New York State avocational archaeologist.

During my last visit to the ROM, earlier this month, I was also able to inspect a large biface reported by Dr. Roland Orr from the Muskoka region (Orr 1919: 116-117). Being fully 272 mm in length, the source of the dull grey chert or metasediment from which this mammoth bipointed biface was manufactured remains a mystery to me, but may derive from the Shield edge to the south in the Burleigh Falls vicinity. As an aside, one of the frustrations of my Middlesex quest has been the fact that a fair proportion of the large

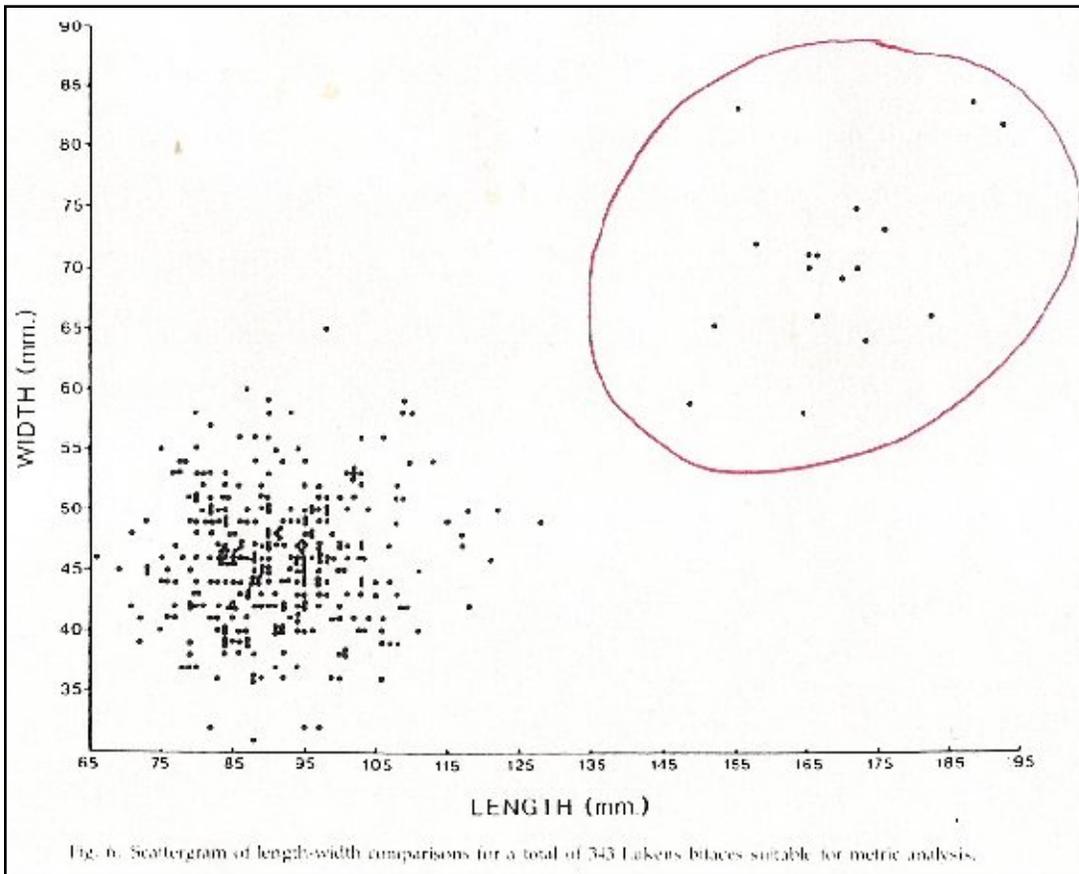
bifaces characteristic of this complex are manufactured from materials unfamiliar to me – this despite over 40 years of lithic research throughout the Northeast and U.S. Midwest!

Additional sites producing large bifaces of exotic chert include, Morrison Island 2 (Spence et al. 1990: 140), and the adjacent Allumette Island 3 (Jean-Luc Pilon, pers. comm. 2010). A large crescentic biface of quartzite from Beausoleil Island may be related to the Middlesex Complex (Brian Ross, pers. comm. 2010), and is similar in form to several bifaces from the Allumette Island cache. Considerably further west, a unique 334 mm. long leaf-shaped biface of Knife River flint was discovered in two pieces from separate locations on the Kaministikwia delta in Thunder Bay (William Ross, pers. comm. 2010), and may reflect one of the distribution routes for such items from the North Dakota source to points east in the lower Great Lakes. Returning to the Morrison Island 2 mortuary blades, there are two preforms and a Snyders style biface of Burlington chert from the Mississippi valley (Figure 5), while a Little Bear Creek style stemmed biface is manufactured from Mercer chert from central Ohio (Figure 6).

So what does all this mean? To begin with, a review of the geographic distribution of these assemblages, as opposed to the Vanport chert Robbins blade caches which I discuss



**Figure 8: Distribution of Robbins Blade Caches**



**Figure 9: Lukens Cache Biface Metrics (from Prufer et al., 1984)**

below, illustrates a consistent pattern (ref. Figure 2). All are on or immediately adjacent to the Canadian Shield and all but one are strategically located on major marine transportation routes. If one considers all assemblage bifaces for sites such as KB 1, you are faced with a wide range of lithic materials, many exotic to the area; with artifacts manufactured from at least 17 different chert and quartzite sources scattered from the Mississippi and Ohio valleys to the southwest to Lake Abitibi in the northeast (Figure 7). Other sites at the east end of Lake Ontario have produced bifaces of Mistassini quartzite from northern Quebec and Knife River flint from the west. Many of these large bifaces exhibit flake arris rounding; so-called “bag wear” associated with their transportation over the considerable distances to their final destinations. One cannot miss the correlation between the distribution of Middlesex sites and their location on major waterways with the historically documented homeland of the maritime-adapted Anishinabe peoples.

Not all Middlesex Complex components have produced bifaces with hafting modification. However, 32 notched or stemmed bifaces have been recovered from five mortuary

southern exotics. Based on Noel Justice’ typology, 18 of these bifaces fall within the Snyders cluster; very few Dickson Cluster Adena Stemmed forms are represented, but the Dickson Cluster, Little Bear Creek variant, which seems to be transitional to Snyders forms, is represented by 13 specimens (Justice 1987: 191-197, 201-204). This range of biface styles suggests that the KB 1 radiocarbon date of 90 +/- 200 B.C. is an accurate reflection of this site’s temporal placement (Greenman 1966: 543).

The distribution pattern of Robbins caches in Ontario is different. These Vanport chert biface preforms were being produced on a massive scale at quarry sites in central Ohio by resident Middle Woodland groups some 2,000 years ago. There are numerous caches, often from wetland contexts, reported from Ohio and surrounding states; particularly from the northeast quadrant of the state. In Ontario, their distribution is limited to the Detroit–St. Clair corridor and the lower Thames river valley; the region occupied by the poorly documented Middle Woodland Couture Complex (Spence and Fox 1986: 37-38).

The only exception to date is the Killarney cache; however, all five sites are situated on major marine

sites, and only two of this number could be considered to have been manufactured from a local raw material. Almost 50% of these bifaces are manufactured from Ohio valley cherts; including, Vanport (the most popular), Wyandotte, Mercer and Muldraugh chert. If Burlington chert from the Mississippi valley and Bayport chert (Ozker 1982: 83-86) from Saginaw Bay are added to this number, fully 75% of the hafted bifaces are manufactured from these



**Figure 10: Killarney Bay I Hafted Snyders Bifaces**

transportation routes, consistent with the Middlesex Complex and within historically documented Algonquian (albeit Central Algonquian) territory (Figure 8).

If one studies the Ohio valley literature, you will find that most, if not all such caches are not specifically mortuary related. There can be small numbers associated with specific graves on mortuary sites, but these often display use and re-sharpening. The larger Robbins caches do not display use and appear to be packages of preforms being shipped from the quarry sites. I say packages, as there is evidence of a wooden container associated with the 343 piece Lukens cache from northeast Ohio (Prufer et al. 1984: 30); while the Highbanks cache from Walpole Island was reputedly within a bark container. Challenged to explain the disposal of so many pristine preforms, some Ohio researchers have defaulted to the ritual explanation for the phenomenon. However, there may be a more prosaic explanation. Any experienced flintknapper can tell you that 'fresh' or moist cherts are easier to work than material which has been lying open to the air for some time. It may simply be that we are recording instances of mass transport transshipment sites, where subsequent pick-up and distribution or local utilization failed to occur due to historical accident. At any rate, these caches do not appear to be directly associated with mortuary ritual, unlike many Middlesex sites.

Returning to the Lukens cache in Ohio, one of the interesting observations by Prufer, Seeman and Mensforth

was that there were two discrete size clusters evident following their metric analysis (Figure 9). The more abundant smaller cluster easily subsumes the size variation within the five Ontario cache assemblages; however, the Middlesex Vanport chert specimens fall within the large size cluster from 147 to 191 mm in length or exceed that length. This, I believe, suggests a Middlesex Complex selection for larger bifaces and underscores the difference between these sites and the Robbins blade caches. Was bigger better? I will not resort to the tired sexual cliché! But if size did matter, then why?

There is a tantalizing piece of evidence from the KB1 site which may speak to this. All of the preserved wooden haft elements for the large exotic chert blades seem far too small and flimsy, considering the binding, to have served as functional handles for these heavy knives; still less as shafts for projectiles (Figure 10).

How then did they function? I will suggest that the small haft elements served to mount these exotic commodities for display during mortuary ceremonies, which culminated in their interment with select individuals. While no comprehensive use wear analyses have been undertaken on Middlesex Complex mortuary bifaces to date, none that I have seen show any substantial evidence of resharpening and many do not display hafting notching, being apparent preforms. Admittedly, notching is not a prerequisite for hafting even leaf-shaped bifaces. What is more, some of the exotic bifaces are not particularly carefully flaked or elegant in form, unlike the Vanport chert specimens; witness the Knife River flint and Burlington chert bifaces from Wolfe Island which would be better described as biface blanks. In fact the former is downright crude (ref. Figure 3), especially by comparison with its finely flaked cousin from Thunder Bay. So why was it transported over such a great distance? Perhaps its major value was not as raw material for a mundane tool, but as a statement concerning connections, both in a transportation and political sense.

Writing in connection with the terminal Archaic Williams