Peterborough Chapter Members Visit the Petroglyphs

On Sept. 24 members of Peterborough Chapter of the OAS enjoyed a field trip organized by directors Tom Mohr and Harry Johnson.

The day began with a visit to Curve Lake’s Whetung Gallery and cultural centre. Our host was Anne Taylor from Curve Lake.

After a pleasant lunch at Hamblin’s restaurant in Lakefield, we drove to the Petroglyphs where we viewed an excellent video about the site.

Anne led a fascinating discussion about the site while standing beside the Teaching Rocks. She drew extensively on both her Anishinaabe and Irish ancestry.
Archaeology at the Lindsay Jail

By Tom Mohr

On Victoria Day of this year, the Victoria County Historical Society (VCHS), of the City of Kawartha Lakes, opened the 1863-ERA Lindsay Jail as a regional museum. In early April, though, the Olde Gaol was visited by members of the Peterborough Chapter of the Ontario Archaeological Society, who undertook to sort and analyze some of the facilities First Nations’ cultural material. On hand were Sheryl Smith and Bill Fox from Parks Canada; Gordon and Patricia Dibb from York North Archaeological Services; Morgan Tamplin, last of Trent University; Harry Johnson and Tom Mohr, Board Members of the Peterborough Chapter; and Doug Williams, and Aboriginal Elder from Curve Lake and Director of Studies for the Ph.D. program in Indigenous Studies at Trent U.

After a quick tour of the Olde Gaol, Doug performed a traditional smudging of the artifacts to speak to the spiritual nature of our investigations. Then we descended upon the collection. Even given the wealth of experience around the tables, the exercise felt like Christmas as boxes were unpacked and artifacts emerged from their protective wrappings-some for the first time in many years. The nature of the artifacts ranged from common Archaic points of the sort often ploughed up by local farmers, to a number of more exotic items, including a mammoth tooth, numerous ground-stone tools and examples of the great range of contact and pre-contact trade conducted by our indigenous peoples.

A good deal of the Victoria County Historical Society’s collection can be associated with sites attributed to the St. Lawrence Iroquoian people who travelled through this area up to about 1580 A.D. However, some material has tentatively been dated to the Paleo-Indian era and reflects a continued occupation in our region by First Nations for many thousands of years. There are also numerous 19th century items from the Mississauga peoples,
in particular a wooden war club whose authenticity was later confirmed by Kenneth Lister from the Royal Ontario Museum. The VCHS extends its thanks to all those involved in the day. While the analysis is not yet complete, we had many pieces from our collection available for viewing on opening day of the Ollde Gaol Museum, providing evidence that our region has been home to diverse peoples for a long, long time.

(Reprinted with permission from Arch Notes July/August 2011)

**STRATA Special Feature**

Our feature article this issue is by Chapter member Bill Fox. His return to Ontario last summer has rekindled his interest in lithic or toolstone sources utilized by former Native groups. The article concerns some materials derived from the Precambrian (Canadian Shield) formations to the east and north of Peterborough. Bill intends to initiate a series of articles over the coming years, describing the various sources of the Ontario chert (“flint”) types he has defined over the last forty years, as summarized in his 2009 Mercury Series volume chapter entitled *Ontario Cherts Revisited*. He hopes to have the first in the series, regarding *Trent chert*, ready for publication in our next newsletter issue.
Mysterious Metasediments

William Fox

Listening to Janice Teichroeb’s entertaining talk concerning the West Burleigh site at the Peterborough Chapter March meeting, I was reminded of the Aza site (BdGk-1) on the Crowe River to the east (Figure 1). During a stay at an Elizabethan cottage in the 1970’s, I had visited a set of rapids just downstream and collected some debitage from an eroded campsite. In addition to the usual Canadian Shield quartz industry, there were some flakes that I did not recognize as southern Ontario chert. A Borden registration form was filed with the Province and the small collection was deposited with the South Central Region archaeology office of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation. As I viewed Janice’s artefact slides, I felt that there was a substantial possibility that the mysterious Aza site material was similar to the metasediment described by her, but that the chances of recovering the collection for study was unlikely (picture the final scene from “Raiders...”!). Unfortunately, a return visit to a much changed site in July failed to produce more debitage of that particular material; however, a piece of Trent chert (Fox 2009: 359) was noted, in addition to the ubiquitous quartz.

Janice had mentioned the presence of schist axes on her site, probably derived from the workshop at Healey Falls (Ross et al. 1997: 119, Fig. 6 and 1998: 158), further down the Trent River system (Figure 1). During a visit to the Parks Canada Ontario Service Centre in Cornwall in April, I took the opportunity to review some of the Healey Falls lithic specimens, courtesy of collections manager Cesare d’Annibale. The often massive metasediment industry on this site is based on local secondary deposits, with the glacially transported raw materials deriving from more northerly Precambrian formations on the Canadian Shield.

Such industries are not unusual; as illustrated by birdstone production activities on the Wishing Well site at Komoka on the Thames River in southwestern Ontario and the Ohio region production of a range of ground stone artefacts utilizing the same “Huronian banded slate” (or argillite), glacially transported south from the Precambrian Gowganda Formation to the north of Georgian Bay. In fact, it appears to have been quite common for Native groups to utilize secondary deposits of metasediments, cherts, and even native copper. The Nipissing lake stage Candu site reported by Fritz Knechtel (pers. comm., Figure 1) on the Bruce nuclear generating station property has an extensive lithic industry based on Lorrain Formation quartzite, glacially transported from the north shore of Georgian Bay. Needless to say, the use of glacially or long distance riverine transported lithic raw materials can create interpretive challenges for researchers studying Native trade routes or exchange networks based on lithic material distribution.
The largest biface in the Royal Ontario Museum Ontario collections derives from the Huntsville vicinity and is manufactured from a metasediment (Fox 2010: 8); while a large bipointed metasediment specimen from Fenelon Falls (Boyle 1889: 43-44, Fig. 65) (Figures 1 and 2) was also noted during a July visit to the ROM, courtesy of Adrienne Desjardine, New World Archaeology Technician. So, it appears clear that Archaic Period knappers were utilizing Canadian Shield metasediment materials for biface production. A similar situation is documented on the eastern perimeter of the Frontenac Axis, where Gordon Watson (1981) has documented a Late Archaic industry at the Inderwick site on Rideau Lake (Figure 1). The raw material, termed “red quartzite” (Watson 1981: 16), has not been identified by a geologist and may, in fact, derive from the Cambrian Nepean Formation (Fox 2009: 359). Such massive metasediment deposits were a preferred material for tool production during certain periods along the Trent-Severn Waterway (Teichroeb 2006) and throughout southeastern Ontario. This may have been due to the limited size of chert deposits available from Ordovician sedimentary formations immediately to the east and west of the Frontenac Axis, combined with a lack of regular access to supplies of larger chert biface blanks manufactured by groups to the west and south of the region.

While it has long been known that quartz was obtained and widely utilized throughout the Canadian Shield and that metasediments in the Temiskaming region were exploited for ground stone artefact blanks (Wilson 1889: 85)(Figure 1 – Bell site), no metasediment quarry sites have been documented on the Canadian Shield of southern Ontario. Metasediment deposits occur widely, and it may be that bedrock quarrying never occurred in this region as it did for Bar River Formation quartzite on Manitoulin Island (Julig 2002)(Figure 1 – Sheguiandah site) or for siltstone on Knife Lake in Quetico (Fox 1980: 136, Fig. 6). However, I am not aware that anyone has looked for such quarries on the Frontenac Axis. Even within southern Ontario, the Canadian Shield is a vast region with relatively limited road access, but this should not deter survey for such sites.

Janice has provided some leads and undertook some limited survey in the Burleigh Falls vicinity as part of her thesis research. She sent 15 artifacts for thin section and x-ray defraction (XRD) analysis to SGS Lakefield Research Ltd. (Downing 2006); and 13 were determined to be feldspathic, calcareous, ferruginous mudstone, with some feldspathic, ferruginous, argillaceous mudstone specimens (Teichroeb 2006: 126-127, Table D.1). Much of this mudstone metasediment assemblage displayed laminated beds, which is an attribute not conducive to biface production; however, the West Burleigh Bay site assemblage indicates that, although these metasediments were not the most tractable, they could be worked successfully by competent knappers. Janice determined that the most likely source of these materials were metasediment deposits found to the northeast of Burleigh Falls, and which also outcropped on Woods, Fraser, Horseshoe, and Acton Islands at the west end of Stony Lake. She felt that one source utilized by the Archaic Period peoples may have been on Fraser Island (S. Jamieson, pers. comm. 2011). This area is one of considerable geological complexity (Bright 1988)(Figure 3).
Essentially, the Frontenac Axis of the Canadian Shield is a “blank slate” (pun intended) with regard to lithic sourcing. There is no doubt that a variety of knappable material and pipestones remain to be located or relocated (Laidlaw 1898: 57-58) and characterized for future identification in archaeological assemblages. Perhaps, Peterborough Chapter members can obtain the requisite Provincial archaeological licensing and pioneer such a long-term project.

References

Boyle, D

Bright, E.G.

Downing, S.

Fox, W.A.


Julig, P.J.

Laidlaw, G.E.

Ross, B.D. and C. D’Annibale, K. Spence

Teichroeb, J.M.
2006 The Archaic Lithic Assemblage from West Burleigh Bay, Ontario. M.A. thesis submitted to the Department of Anthropology, Trent University.

Watson, G.D.

Wilson, D.

Figure 2
Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to thank Janice Teichroeb for her intriguing talk which motivated this paper, and who kindly forwarded a copy of the Downing mineralogical analysis of her metasediment artifacts. Last, but not least, the author wishes to thank David Robertson for once again providing his time and talents in producing a map illustration (Figure 1) for this article.
Coming Events

Lisa Sonnenburg  “Evidence of Tool Making from the Bottom of Rice Lake”
Tuesday, October 25 at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church (entrance off Water St.).

After drilling under the bed Rice Lake, Lisa Sonnenburg, and her team of researchers found tiny flakes of stone left behind from tool making that took place on land that now forms the bottom of Rice Lake. The discovery is significant because it represents the first use such accumulations of stone chips, called microdebitage, to pinpoint underwater archaeological sites.

“I was excited when I first saw it under the microscope, but of course I had to make sure I was seeing what I was actually seeing,” she said. “Everyone told me, ‘You're not going to find anything. You're looking for a needle in a haystack.’ Lo and behold, we found the needle in the haystack.”

Rudy Fecteau  “An Illustrated Archaeobotany of Ontario”
Tuesday, November 22 at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church

Rudy uses presentation boards, power point and a mini-lab (including microscope, reference literature and both archaeological and modern plant specimens) to provide a lively and informative presentation on the archaeobotany of Ontario. He has given recent presentations at the Museum of Ontario Archealogy in London, the OAS in Ottawa, Six Nations ‘Community Awareness Day’, and the Crawford Village Archaeology Day.

Rudy tells us he has been “working for the Canadian archaeological community for over 35 years, examining plant material from both historic and precontact contexts and have recently been sharing my findings with folks all over southern Ontario.”
Reminder: Peterborough Chapter Memberships expire in December. Don’t forget to send in your membership renewal for 2012.

The Peterborough Chapter of the Ontario Archaeological Society

Application for Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be a member of the Peterborough Chapter of the OAS, it is also necessary to be a member of the Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. The Peterborough chapter will collect the OAS fees (see below) or you may consult www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca for membership information.

Fees collected are from date signed until the end of 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough Chapter – Individual</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough Chapter – Family</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough Chapter – Full Time Student (** proof required)</td>
<td>$8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough Chapter – Donation ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Individual</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Individual with OA</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Family</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Family with OA</td>
<td>$52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Full Time Student (** proof required)</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Full Time Student (** proof required) with OA</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. – Donation ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Photocopy of student card is acceptable proof.**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Donations of $10 or more will receive a tax receipt mailed directly from the Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. Please make sure address information is correct.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Enclosed $__________ Signature __________________________ Date __________

Make cheques payable to the Peterborough Chapter of the OAS.
Send form and cheque to Treasurer:
Harry Johnson, 2 Testa Road, Apt 205, Uxbridge ON L9P 1L9, 905-852-5097, hjohnson@powergate.ca