

Starting Over and Managing the Past: The Archaeology of the Hudson's Bay Company Staff House, Moose Factory Island

Dena Doroszenko

Archaeological investigations took place at the Moose Factory Island Hudson's Bay Staff House in 1979 and 1980 under the auspices of the Ontario Heritage Trust. This article summarizes the archaeological investigations of these two projects as well as additional archaeological reconnaissance projects undertaken on the island. Recently, the Ontario Heritage Trust completed curation histories of all its archaeological collections and rehoused these collections into stable archival materials. This paper discusses the responsibilities associated with archaeological curation as well as the challenges that result from the management of archaeological collections, using the Moose Factory collections as a case study.

Introduction

Since 1967, the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT; formerly Ontario Heritage Foundation) has been dedicated to identifying, preserving, protecting, and promoting Ontario's rich and varied heritage for the benefit of present and future generations. In pursuit of these aims, the Ontario Heritage Trust currently holds 190 cultural and natural heritage properties, eleven of which are designated National Historic Sites. The most northern property, located on Moose Factory Island, consists of the Staff House for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in the nineteenth century.

Moose Factory Island lies in the middle of the Moose River, approximately 15 km upriver from James Bay (Figure 1). The island is flat, approximately 4 by 1.5 km in size. Most of the island consists of late glacial and postglacial marine sediment and till deposit and rises almost 8 m above the river (Luegar 1984:2). The island is sub-divided into a Reserve belonging to the Moose Cree First Nation (approximately two-thirds of the island); land held by the federal government; and an area that contains, among other things, a hospital, the HBC buildings (including Northern Stores), and the Anglican Church.

This article summarizes the archaeological investigations that have occurred on the island,

with particular emphasis on the Staff House, and the recent evaluation of the archaeological collections held by the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Historical Background and Previous Archaeological Research

Originally called Moose Fort, Moose Factory was established in 1673 as the main trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company and has long been credited with being the first English-speaking settlement in Ontario. The Hudson's Bay Company began as a fur trading enterprise in 1670 and evolved into a trading and exploration company that spanned Canada and part of the United States. Moose Fort was the second post to be established in North America by the company. It also served to protect the HBC from the French traders to the south—and for good reason, because in 1686, the French under Pierre de Troyes captured by surprise Moose Fort as well as the Charles and Albany forts. Under the French, Moose Fort was renamed Fort St. Louis. In 1696, British forces recaptured all the HBC forts and burnt Moose Fort to the ground (OHF 2002). Having changed hands several more times, the post was ceded to Britain under the Treaty of

Utrecht in 1713 and then abandoned until 1730. By 1730, a new post had been built 2.5 km upstream from the original location on the island at the request of the Cree, who found the canoe trip to the James Bay posts too dangerous. Despite another fire in December 1735, where the majority of the Moose Fort again burned to the ground, the HBC rebuilt and continued operations. By the 1770s, it was supplying the inland posts that had been built to compete with the North West Company. After the two companies merged in 1821, Moose Fort became the supply point for posts as far inland as Lake Timiskaming on the Ottawa River watershed and became known as Moose Factory. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Moose Factory served as a regional HBC administrative centre. During the mid-nineteenth century, a mission was established to serve the Cree and Metis population. In 1903, Révillon Frères founded a trading post on the mainland north of Moose Factory, known today as Moosonee. The

railroad reached Moosonee in 1931 (Luegar 1984).

The HBC Staff House on Moose Factory Island, constructed between 1847 and 1850 and currently owned by the Ontario Heritage Trust, is the last-known surviving Hudson’s Bay Company officers’ dwelling in Canada and the oldest building in the James Bay area (Judd 1980). It is a large, two-storey structure built in the late Georgian style using squared timbers in the “*pièce sur pièce*” technique. The house rests on a stone foundation, has a cellar, and is clad in white-painted clapboard. The officers living there were recruited from the British Isles and came to Moose Factory as doctors, ship’s captains, clerks, and secretaries on five-year contracts. In summer, the men occupied the first floor of the house and in winter, the second floor, where it was easier to heat the rooms. Meals were served at the mess house nearby. Initially, the house consisted of bachelors’ quarters. After the turn of the century, it also contained a store and apartments for married

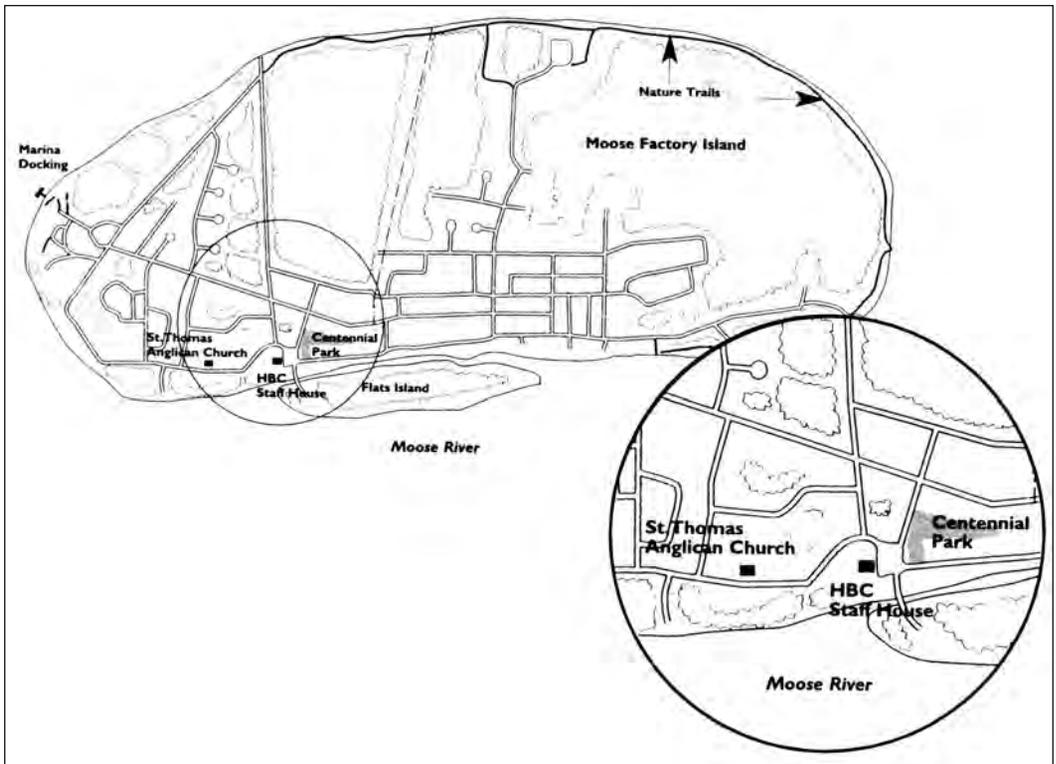


Figure 1. Location of Moose Factory Island and the Hudson’s Bay Company Staff House.

officers. In 1915, a kitchen and a dining room were installed, after which the house was known as the Staff House. The Company now used it to lodge male employees and visitors. By the mid-1960s, all employees were being hired locally, so the building was used as a guest house for hunters and business people.

In 1978, the OHT acquired the building and began to undertake extensive historical research. In 1979, it started archaeological excavations. Minor archaeological work had been conducted on the island prior to the OHT excavations. Ken Dawson excavated sixteen test pits on the island in 1968 in an attempt to locate the original 1673 Moose Fort, but was not successful (Dawson n.d.). His considerable reconnaissance, including oral interviews with island residents, led Dawson to propose areas in which to conduct further explorations in the future. A second search for the original fort was conducted in the early 1970s by Walter Kenyon of the Royal Ontario Museum. This survey did not identify the location of the fort either, but it did prompt Kenyon to publish a brief summary of the fort's early history (Kenyon 1975).

In 1978, Thor Conway (Regional Archaeologist with the former Northeastern Regional office of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, now the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport), spent several days at the Staff House excavating four test squares, completing one of these. Based on Conway's recommendations, the OHT commissioned archaeologist Richard Luegar to conduct intensive archaeological investigation of the Staff House in advance of the OHT's restoration of the masonry foundation.

Archaeology of the HBC Staff House: 1979 Field Season

Luegar's work in 1979 focused on the cellar and exterior perimeter of the building foundation (Figure 2). The excavations revealed details on the original use of the basement, as well as the exterior access to the cellar and main floor of the Staff House. Luegar adapted and applied the provenience system used by Parks Canada. He designated the Moose Factory site as 5V, that is,

the fifth non-Parks Canada historic site in Ontario excavated by the late 1970s (Luegar 1980:11). The OHT has kept the 5V designation on the artifacts, but the Borden number, EhHd-1, is its preferred designation when referring to the Staff House site. Following the Parks Canada (1977) recording system, Operation numbers were used to delineate large excavation areas. Upper-case letters were used to designate the individual excavation units, called Sub-operations. The actual soil layers uncovered during excavation were referred to as Lots. In a departure from the usual Parks Canada provenience system, Luegar also used feature numbers. In addition, he used level designations, in an attempt to regroup arbitrary lots into more stratigraphically and historically meaningful units across the site (Luegar 1980:12). These levels used roman numerals in reverse chronological order, often followed by lower-case letters, for the purpose of discussing discrete features within levels. All of Luegar's levels have been evaluated and correlated into phases, as shown in Table 1.

The intent of the excavations in Operation 1 was to define the former cellar entranceway, which, when excavated, was found to consist of square timbers stacked horizontally on the sides of a pit (Feature 1), lining an entranceway corridor to the cellar door. This cellar entrance was found not to be original to the construction of the Staff House, and it appeared that the area had seen a great deal of disturbance during the twentieth century (Luegar 1980:27). Traces of an earlier structure were noted, suggesting that Feature 1 replaced an earlier entranceway, probably for a short time period in the first half of the twentieth century (Luegar 1980:26, 73).

Operation 2 consisted of a trench of five units along the northern wall for the chimney base in the basement (Luegar 1980:36). The objective in basement archaeology, in general, is to examine possible earlier floor surfaces and activity areas and to establish the presence or absence of subsurface features. During 1979, a possible timber-lined well and a system of wooden floor sleepers were uncovered (see Figure 4).

Operation 3 involved two trenches in the

Table 1. *Phases and Events Correlation Chart, HBC Moose Factory Staff House 1979, 1980 Excavations.*

| Phase | Historical Event(s) | Physical Event(s) | Date Range | Stratigraphic Levels |
|---------|---|--|------------------------|--|
| Phase 7 | 2000s OHT stewardship | | 1934–1979 | Ia, Ib, Ic, Ik, |
| Phase 6 | Mid-1900s post serving community | | | |
| | | East porch replaced | 1979 | |
| | Post closed, acquired by OHT Building used as lodge for visitors | | 1976–1977 1965–1976 | |
| | | North shed addition torn down | 1960s | |
| | | West veranda torn down | 1950s | Iw |
| | | Well filled in | 1950s | II |
| | | Porch on east side built | 1945 approx. | |
| Phase 5 | Early 1900s operation of Staff House | | 1900–1934 | Ie, If, It, Id |
| | HBC administration centre moves to Winnipeg; Moose Factory serves community | | 1934 | |
| | | Post and beam support for floor joists in cellar | 1925–1950s | Ij |
| | | Well created in cellar | 1925 approx. | Im |
| | | East veranda gone | 1926–1930s | |
| | | East veranda steps in middle | 1926 approx. | F |
| | Building used for staff, family, and administration | | Early 1900s | |
| Phase 4 | 1800s operation of Staff House | | 1860s–1900 | Ig, Ii, Iq, |
| | | Repair work on foundation | 1891 | Ir, Is |
| | | West entrance to cellar built | 1890s | |
| | | West veranda built | 1890s approx. | Iv, Ih |
| | | Upper gallery removed and east veranda built with steps at south | 1863–1890 | |
| Phase 3 | Building of Staff House | | 1847–1850s | In, Io, Iu |
| | | Gallery and veranda on east Staff House built | 1850s | IIIu |
| | Used as officers and unmarried staff quarters | | 1847–1850 | II, 3-II |
| | Buildings located on Staff House site removed | | 1847 | IIIe, IIIg |
| Phase 2 | Pre-Staff House at Moose Factory | | 1730–1847 | IIIa, IIIb, IIIc, IIId, IIIf, IIIo, IIIh, IIIi, IIIj, IIIl, IIIp, IIIq, IIIr, IIIt, IIIs |
| | | Topsoil | 1847 | IIIm, IIIk, |
| | Previous building with small cellar on Staff House site | | Late 1700s–1847 | IIIh |
| | HBC and North West Company merger; fort expands; renamed Moose Factory | | 1821 | |
| | Fire in fort and rebuilding | | 1735–1742 | |
| | New HBC post built on current site | | 1730 | |
| Phase 1 | Pre-European Site Use | | Pre–mid-1600s | (no precontact artifacts or features recovered) |
| | | Subsoil | | IIIIn (subsoil) |



Figure 3. Sub-operation 5A, showing builder's trench up against Staff House.



Figure 4. Sub-operation 2E inside the Staff House, illustrating basement well feature (Feature 2) with timber lining.

south and central parts of the basement, respectively, each 1 m wide with 13 units. Evidence of the wooden sleeper joist system, as well as a possible root cellar (Feature 3; refer to Figure 2), which was partially excavated, was recorded in this area. The root cellar consisted of a rectangular pit cut into subsoil. Wooden planks covered the floor, and there was possible evidence of upright wooden planks lining the pit. This feature may be the cellar of the Mess Store, which was demolished in 1847 to make way for the Staff House (Luegar 1980:72).

Another objective of the 1979 field season was to explore up against the exterior foundations of the Staff House in order to establish the existence of a builder's trench. Operation 4 consisted of three units at the northeast corner of the building. The stratigraphy uncovered miscellaneous late nineteenth- to twentieth-century deposits, the Staff House builder's trench, and pre-Staff House deposits (Luegar 1980:48). A pit feature noted in level 4-IIIj in the northern area of Sub-operation unit 4A yielded early nineteenth-century artifacts that predate the construction of the Staff House. Artifacts included creamware sherds, seed glass beads, and hand-wrought nails. Another pre-Staff house level, 4-IIIc, included tin-glazed earthenwares, Chinese export porcelain, coarse stoneware, coarse earthenwares, glass beads, hand-wrought nails, a lead musket ball, clay pipe fragments, and a fish hook (Luegar 1980:50). The builder's trench (Level 4-II) was fairly wide, measuring 42 cm across, and continued to a depth of 85 cm. Luegar noted numerous post moulds at various levels, which in some cases appeared to be of the pre-Staff house era and in other cases clearly related to the construction of the Staff House or the subsequent use of the building by the HBC.

Operation 5 consisted of two sub-operation units in front of the building, near the southeast corner. Luegar (1980:55) recorded structural evidence of an earlier veranda and 11 distinct layers and deposits. The pre-Staff House deposits contained similar materials to those described above, namely, tin-glazed earthenwares, Chinese export porcelain, lead shot, glass beads, and hand-wrought nails. The builder's trench in this area was wider, measuring 65 cm, due to the partial

collapse of the foundation (see Figure 3).

Operation 7 examined the rear veranda area of the Staff House and noted evidence of an earlier veranda as well as the presence of pre-Staff House deposits (Luegar 1980:62-65). Level 7-IIIk, noted 40 cm below surface, consisted of a deposit with eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century ceramics: Delftware, white salt-glazed stoneware, Chinese export porcelain, creamware, and pearlware. Level 7-IIIc was interpreted by Luegar (1980:64) as representing the surface layer up to the time of construction of the Staff House.

The presence of pre-Staff House deposits in the basement (Feature 3) seems to indicate that an earlier building, also with cellar, occupied this site. It was Luegar's speculation that this feature had been backfilled within a few years prior to the construction of the Staff House (Luegar 1980:72). Luegar was unable to explain the three other deposits that clearly predate the Staff House due to the limited information available at that time.

The artifact assemblage recovered from deposits relating to the Staff House suggest a mid-nineteenth-century construction date, which correlates with historian Carol Judd's date of 1848-1850 for the construction of the building (Luegar 1980).

Luegar's 1979 excavation program generated a number of recommendations for further work, which he carried out in 1980.

Archaeology of the HBC Staff House: 1980 Field Season

The primary objective for 1980 was to excavate a trench around the perimeter of the Staff House (Figure 2) to permit adequate recording of information and recovery of artifacts before the planned consolidation and repair of the building's foundations (Figure 3). While the continuation of this project was clearly aimed at supporting the architectural restoration of the Staff House, during the course of the field program, Luegar was also directed by the OHT to complete the basement excavations of the well (Feature 2) and root cellar (Feature 3), both of which had been partly excavated in 1979.

Feature 2 (see Figures 2 and 4), a well with an

upper shaft of timber framing and a lower shaft of poured concrete, was found to date to the second quarter of the twentieth century. It had been filled in by c. 1950 (Luegar 1981a:3). Artifacts recorded but not retained were of mid-twentieth-century vintage (e.g., a tin can that had once contained processed meat) (Luegar 1981a:4).

The excavation of Feature 3 (see Figure 2), interpreted as a pre-Staff House cellar or root cellar (measuring 2.7 m by 2.9 m), revealed plank flooring and upright sections of wood. The floor of this feature was 1.7 m below the current basement surface. Also recovered were a large number of artifacts, including dozens of Blue Willow ceramic vessels datable to the 1830s to 1840s, bricks, creamware sherds, and wine bottle fragments. Luegar (1981a:4) suggested this feature may have been an earlier building that was torn down in order to construct the Staff House, but he by the end of the field season he was no longer confident of this interpretation.

The excavation units around the Staff House revealed the builder's trench to be significant along the east and south sides of the house and virtually absent along the north wall. Late nineteenth- to twentieth-century repair trenches were documented along the north wall. Additional features, such as post moulds, upright wooden posts and associated holes, and several unknown pit features, dating to the pre-Staff House period and the nineteenth century, were also documented.

Table 1 shows the Phase and Event correlation with Luegar's excavated levels at the Staff House. To synthesize both years of excavation, the 1980 lots were put into the 1979 levels using the information found in Luegar's report. This table allows for the assignment of significance to the artifact collection and for the creation of interpretive reference collections.

Luegar (1981a:12) documented the location of pre-Staff House deposits, which seemed to concentrate in the southeastern portion of the site. However, he questioned the lack of substantive eighteenth-century deposits—deposits that would be expected because the area in which the Staff House sits has been continuously occupied since 1730 (Luegar 1981a:20). While he made no

recommendations at the end of his report, it is clear that additional archaeology might resolve some of his questions.

During the 1980 field season, Luegar also directed an archaeological survey of Moose Factory Island, in conjunction with Amisk Heritage Planning and Research on behalf of the then Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation. The survey was intended to assess archaeological potential within the following areas: the proposed route of new water and sewer installations on the island; the presumed site of the 1673 Moose Fort; the site of the 1762–1871 Moose Factory; the location of various nineteenth-century HBC buildings; the Cree encampment; and the location of HBC servants' dwelling houses.

The greatest effort was expended on the search for the 1673 Moose Fort and the 1762–1871 Moose Factory. The goals set for the proposed water and sewer installations and the search for the various nineteenth-century HBC buildings were partly accomplished. The assessment of the Cree camp sites and the HBC servants' dwellings was not attempted that year.

Luegar's search for the 1673 Moose Fort focused on the Point of Pull area, along the eastern shore of Moose Factory Island (Operation 10), a shallow point downstream of the village. Despite the absence of evidence suggesting significant shoreline erosion, Luegar examined the eroding banks, conducted soil sampling over selected areas, excavated more than 70 test pits, used a metal detector, conducted oral interviews with island residents, and also attempted to use parapsychological methods (defined in his report as rhabdomancy and radiesthesia, both of which produced inconclusive results according to Luegar). At the end of this survey, Luegar suggested that the site of the original HBC fort had eroded into the Moose River. He recommended that "no further effort should be made to locate the site of the 1673 Moose Fort" (Luegar 1981b:138).

Testing of the core area of the 1762–1871 and 1871–1959 HBC factory sites (Operation 8) proved much more successful. Although Luegar suggested that most of the central area of the post, along with the southwest and southeast bastions,

is completely lost, he located remnants of the 1762–1871 south curtain wall (Sub-operation 8N) and the northwest and northeast bastions (Sub-operations 8C and 8E, respectively). Remnants of the 1871–1959 foundation wall of the factory were uncovered in Sub-operation 6D (see Figure 2). Consisting of limestone slabs, this foundation wall was located 6.5 m north of the 1762–1871 factory (Luegar 1981b:159).

Operation 9 sought to locate the c. 1855 bakehouse (Judd 1980). This structure was one storey high, with a cellar, and consisted of two rooms. It was built of logs faced with clapboard and was heated by two stoves (Luegar 1981b:163). Luegar uncovered fill deposits, dated primarily to the second and third quarters of the twentieth century, on top of a wooden floor. These deposits likely related to the demolition, razing, and levelling of this structure.

Operation 11 examined an area west of St. Thomas Church in an attempt to locate Cree camp sites. Luegar conducted a brief surface inspection and excavated a few random test pits. He determined that there appeared to be shallow culture-bearing deposits with relatively few artifacts, most of modern-period manufacture (Luegar 1981b:171).

Operation 12 sought to locate the HBC joiner's shop, the Men's House, the shops, and the stables (Operation 12). Luegar discovered that a great deal of earth-moving had occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, which led to a mix of heavily disturbed contexts in the search area of this operation. Sub-operations 12A and 12B were placed in order to locate the Men's House, dating to c. 1844 (Judd 1981), which in 1899 had been moved closer to the river (Luegar 1981b). Evidence was found of a shallow cellar with a plank floor. Sub-operation 12C was placed beside the cemetery, in the expectation of recovering evidence of the joiner and cooper shops. Unfortunately, there were indications that the soils had been deposited in the twentieth century.

The area of the former warehouse complex was designated Operation 13. This complex was known to have been palisaded. This palisade was interrupted by a gate facing the river and a dock on the river (Luegar 1981b:177). An excavation

unit was placed up against the c. 1867 powder house, which still stands within Centennial Park, to examine the structure's foundations and related stratigraphy. Little evidence relating to the warehouse complex was found that predated the twentieth century.

Archaeology on Moose Factory Island Post-1980

Subsequent to the major studies he undertook in 1979 and 1980, Luegar directed several smaller monitoring and salvage projects at Moose Factory. In 1984, he conducted a brief archaeological reconnaissance of six building lots toward the southern end of the island. Burials have occasionally been revealed along the shoreline in the past (Rogers 1987; Rogers et al. 1972). The 1984 reconnaissance of the building lots was prompted by the concern that some of the lots were located in close proximity to burials accidentally exposed in 1967 and 1972. After reviewing historical documentation related to early land use of the lots, interviewing local residents, and conducting a visual inspection, Luegar determined that most of the lots had not been developed prior to the mid-twentieth century. Because of their proximity to the burial sites, several of the property lots were archaeologically tested. Evidence of a fence line noted on an 1895 plan was uncovered, as were artifacts of late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century origin (Luegar 1984:9). That same year, he monitored construction activities within Centennial Park (Luegar 1984). The archaeological monitoring was limited to the excavation for nine shallow concrete foundation piers and two short utility trenches. Monitoring failed to reveal any "significant new information about the history or [...] about the architecture of Moose Factory" (Luegar 1985:4).

In the summer of 1987, Luegar returned to the island to undertake the salvage excavation of historic Cree burials (EhHd-3) exposed as a result of new sewer line installation along Front Road. Six burials were uncovered in 1987 at the following locations: along the roadway adjacent to Lot 79, where at least three burials had been

exposed in 1972; along the roadside between St. Thomas Church and the Ontario Provincial Police station, where two burials had been exposed in 1967; and along the eastern perimeter of the Old Hudson Bay Cemetery (Luegar 1987). A total of 12 burials were investigated on the island and Luegar suggested that an additional 12 may be present. Luegar (1987:1) argued that the abandonment of the Cree burial area may have coincided with the consecration of the nearby HBC cemetery in 1856. All six burials uncovered in 1987 were coffin burials (Luegar 1987:24). Funerary objects found with several of the burials consisted of a range of personal items (e.g., glass beads, fish hooks, buttons, English gunflint, a complete Ford pipe), placing the date of several of the individual burials in the second quarter of the nineteenth century (Luegar 1987:33). The presence of burials at various locations along the eastern shore of the island is an indication that burials should be anticipated almost anywhere along the Front Road allowance.

During monitoring activities related to the sewer installation itself, Luegar (1987:16-17) noted the destruction of archaeological evidence of the 1870–1959 HBC store and serious damage to the 1736–1870 store deposits. He also raised concerns over the impact that installation of improved utility systems may have on the Cree cemetery area (1987:16-17).

No further archaeological investigation was undertaken on the island until August 2010, when a small assessment project took place at the HBC Staff House under the auspices of the OHT. Because the hydraulic and heating systems of the Staff House had been subject to flooding in the recent past, the OHT determined that they needed to be relocated from the basement of the Staff House to a new location outside the building. This relocation required construction of a new mechanical shed north of the Staff House. Specifically because of Luegar's 1980 recommendations regarding to the area's proximity to Operation 8 (the HBC Factory area), this area needed to be cleared of any archaeological concerns. No significant deposits related to the HBC factory area were encountered during August 2010. The only feature noted was a buried

barrel; this event appears to date to the mid-twentieth century, for it was filled with refuse that included a brown Betty teapot as well as numerous intact bottles.

Managing the Past: Curatorial Care and Conservation Concerns

More than 40 years of archaeological activity conducted by the OHT has resulted in the recovery of large archaeological collections representing a variety of site types and time periods. All archaeological work generates an archive, from the beginning stages of a project until the transfer of a property and/or collection. Notes, forms, photos, drawings, articles, catalogues, analysis charts, and reports are just some of the records created through even a minimal amount of excavation. In 2006, the Ontario Heritage Trust initiated its Archaeological Collection Curation History Database project. Its primary goal is to provide a system of data preservation, organization, and accessibility that enables the OHT archaeological collections to be easily and fully utilized by OHT staff and other researchers. The creation and implementation of this system was informed by procedures and recommendations of the Library and Archives of Canada (Brown 2004); the Archaeology Section of The National Trust, UK (National Trust 2004); the Museum of London, UK (Grew 1998); the U.S.A. National Parks Service (Childs and Corcoran 2000); the U.S.A. Department of the Interior (1990); and the Council for the Preservation of Anthropological Records (CoPAR n.d.).

During the rehousing of the HBC Staff House collection at the OHT, significant elements of the site archive could not be located. Accounted for are the licence reports, black-and-white photographs and colour slides (for 1979 only), the artifact catalogues (on paper only), and final drawings. The original field notes and field drawings are not currently within the OHT's holdings. The next step was to rehouse the collection, create an electronic database of the artifacts, and then conduct a collection evaluation, which included creation of an interpretive resource

reference collection, an evaluation of the artifacts with regard to conservation, and a report documenting this process.

The 1979 and 1980 artifacts were originally processed by the staff of the former Northeastern Regional office of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation (now the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport) in Sault Ste. Marie. A large portion of the collection had ended up back at the Staff House by the late 1980s. By 1990, 16 boxes of artifacts had been shipped from Moose Factory to the OHT in Toronto. By 1995, an additional 26 boxes had been shipped. Additional boxes were within the Ministry's care and were moved from Sault Ste. Marie to storage in Sudbury. By the late 1990s, a number of these boxes had been transferred to the OHT in Toronto. By 2011, the Moose Factory collection held by the OHT consisted of 63 boxes. As part of the collection evaluation process, a total of 48 containers were identified as containing material excavated by Luegar directly related to the HBC Staff House work in 1979 and 1980. Just prior to the evaluation, this collection was rehoused in archivally stable materials (Figure 5) and the 1979 and 1980 HBC Staff House collections were catalogued in an electronic database.

Artifact material was identified for discard, conservation, or special storage needs. Discard items were identified based on the criteria of redundancy, condition, and cultural relevance. Through this process, the collection was sampled

and streamlined, allowing it to be efficiently utilized for research, education, and interpretation activities, following Brooks' (2011) collection evaluation report.

An additional goal of this process has been to improve the condition of the artifacts by identifying existing and potential issues and storage problems. Tracking collections over time has proved difficult without an established system in place; the Moose Factory collection provided an example of the huge distances that a collection can travel over the years, and in how many different places it can end up. With this evaluation, these problems have now been clearly identified, and recommendations have been put in place to resolve a number of collection issues.

In order to allow reference materials to be more easily accessed, a reference resource collection was created by separating relevant material from the core collection (Figure 6). These reference artifacts were selected based on the following criteria: provenience, diagnostic, and interpretation value (Brooks 2011). Application of these criteria resulted in the inclusion of artifacts from proveniences significant to the occupation of the property, as well as datable rim sherds, bottle finishes, marked or rare artifacts, and unique artifacts. The HBC Staff House artifact reference resource collection now consists of three components, housed in a total of six boxes, which have been organized according to the building and occupation phases of the Staff House. The first component consists of artifacts reflecting the occupation of the site prior to the Staff House (c. 1742–1847). The second component covers the period c. 1847–1900. The third component includes artifacts for general display purposes dating to the later period of occupation (that is, the twentieth century) (Brooks 2011:4). Within this reference resource collection are some items that have need of conservation treatment. Brooks' 2011 collection evaluation report also provided recommendations for future analysis as well as storage considerations. These will be scheduled as time and funding allows.



Figure 5. *Rehousing of the Staff House artifact collection in progress. Note original packing materials.*



Figure 6. Completed Staff House reference resource collection.

Conclusions

Substantial archaeological investigations at the site of the Hudson's Bay Company's Staff House on Moose Factory Island have revealed the impact of various periods of occupation through time in and around this structure. Archaeological curation is usually defined as the process of managing and interpreting collections over the long term that renders them accessible for future generations. When caring for collections in the long term or in perpetuity, this really means for as long as the constituent materials of objects and records can be preserved. The objective of the 2010–2011 rehousing and collection evaluation of the HBC Staff House material was to determine the status of the constituent parts of the archaeological research that was conducted by Richard Luegar more than 30 years ago. Archaeological research always relies on objects and their archaeological context. Artifacts are worthless for research or interpretation unless they are accompanied by documentation that records where these artifacts were found. Without documentary records, all you have is a group of (perhaps) interesting objects—more of an antiquarian collection than an archaeological collection. The challenges of managing a collection that was excavated more 30 years ago are evident, but they now provide opportunities for the future. Archaeological collections are in the public trust in every sense of the word. When curatorial processes are poor, or nonexistent, everybody loses.

Acknowledgements. The author is grateful for the invaluable assistance of Meagan Brooks and Sarah Henderson over 2010 and 2011 in the curatorial management, evaluation, and rehousing of the HBC Staff House collections. The author would also like to thank the reviewers of this article, Susan Bazely and Jean-Luc Pilon for their insightful comments.

References Cited

- Brooks, M.
2011 *HBC Moose Factory Staff House Archaeological Collection Evaluation*. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- Brown, D.L.
2004 *Library and Archives Canada: Guidelines on Computer File Types, Interchange Formats and Information Standards*.
<<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/government/products-services/007002-3017-e.html>>.
- Childs, S.T., and E. Corcoran
2000 *Managing Archeological Collections: Technical Assistance*. Archeology and Ethnography Program, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.
<www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/collections/>.
- Council for the Preservation of Anthropological Records (CoPAR)
n.d. *Guide to Preserving Anthropological Records Bulletins*.
<<http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/copar/bulletins.htm>>.
- Dawson, K.C.A.
n.d. *An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the Moose Fort Fur Trade Post of 1673 at the Moose or Prince Rupert West River, James Bay, Ontario*. Ms. on file, Ontario Ministry of Culture, Toronto.
- Department of the Interior,
U.S. National Park Service
1990 Code of Federal Regulations (Title 36, Chapter I): Part 79 – Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections. Washington, D.C.
- Grew, F.
1998 *General Standards for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives Deposited with the Museum of London*. Museum of London, UK.
<http://www.museumoflondonarchaeology.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8AD07DF6-CD07-4759-B72C-87E6E6295A14/0/mol_archstds.pdf>
- Judd, C.
1980 *Moose Factory Staff House Report*. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- Kenyon, W.A.
1975 The Early Post at Moose Factory. *Rotunda* 8(2):14-21.

Luegar, R.

- 1980 *Excavations at the Moose Factory Staff House, 1979*. Part I: Structures and Stratigraphy. Part II: The Assemblage. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- 1981a *Excavations at the Moose Factory Staff House, 1980*. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- 1981b *Part Two. An Archaeological Survey of Moose Factory*. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- 1984 *A Reconnaissance of Six Lots, Moose Factory Island, Ontario, 1984*. Ms. on file, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Ottawa.
- 1985 *Archaeological Monitoring, Centennial Park, Moose Factory, 1984*. Ms. on file, Ontario Heritage Trust, Toronto.
- 1987 *An Historical Cree Cemetery on Moose Factory Island (EhHd-3): Salvage Excavations, 1987*. Ms. on file, Ontario Ministry of Culture, Toronto.

National Trust

- 2004 *Managing Archaeological Archives: A Policy and Guidance for the National Trust Archaeology Section*. The National Trust, Warrington, UK.
<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/managing_archaeological_archives.pdf>.

Ontario Heritage Foundation (OHF)

- 2002 *Moose Factory, an Exploration of Frontier History*. Queen's Printer, Toronto.

Parks Canada

- 1977 *Parks Canada Archaeology Manual Volume 1: Excavation Records System*. Parks Canada, Ottawa.

Rogers, E.S.

- 1987 The Queen: A Cree Burial at Moose Factory, May 27, 1747. *Arctic Anthropology* 24(2):32-39.

Rogers, E.S., D. Webster, and J. Anderson

- 1972 A Cree Burial, Moose Factory, Ontario. *Arctic Anthropology* 9(1):27-34.

Les fouilles archéologiques ont eu lieu au local de personnel de la Baie d'Hudson de l'Île de Moose Factory en 1979 et 1980, sous l'égide de la Fiducie du patrimoine ontarien. Cet article résume les recherches archéologiques de ces deux projets ainsi que les projets complémentaires de reconnaissance archéologique entrepris sur l'île. Récemment, la Fiducie du patrimoine ontarien a terminé les historiques de conservation de toutes les collections archéologiques et a terminé le relogement de ces collections archéologiques en documents d'archives stables. Les responsabilités associées à la conservation archéologique sont traitées ainsi que les défis associés à la gestion des collections archéologiques, utilisant les collections de Moose Factory comme étude de cas.

Dena Doroszenko

Ontario Heritage Trust

10 Adelaide St. E.

Toronto, Ontario

M5C 1J3

dena.doroszenko@heritagetrust.on.ca