

A Letter from the President of the Council for Minnesota Archaeology

Fellow CMA Members,

By now, most of us are waist deep in archaeological units across the state and region. After the very wet start to the field season, the weather has improved, and work seems to be good for many I talk with. To this end, the CMA routinely does not plan a May, June, July meeting – however, continuing the newsletter over the summer seems an excellent way to stay in contact.

I am wondering if folks would like to have a late Summer event, again down at Plato Blvd with free food, beverages (non-alcoholic), and an engaging speaker or two. Currently, I have been talking with the SHPO about presenting on the ins and outs of the 106 process. If you have an idea for a speaker, please reach out to me and we can have a Saturday afternoon away from the work to relax and reconnect. This would be an excellent opportunity to again introduce your up-and-coming archaeology students to the wider CRM community.

I also want to continue to remind you about the upcoming Midwest Conference in Mankato this October (10-12, 2019). Our own Ron Schirmer is the meeting organizer and primary contact point (T: 507-389-6612, Ronald.schirmer@mnsu.edu). There are two hotels with booked rooms available through early September. Registration for regular MAC members is \$110.00 and Student MAC members is only \$50.00. Prices increase for non-MAC members, both professional and non-student alike. The CMA Executive Committee is considering offering at least two student scholarships (\$150.00 for student non MAC members). If this happens, we will put out an email blast through the list serve. Additional conference information can be found on the MAC website at the following link:

<https://www.midwestarchaeology.org/annual-meeting/upcoming>

The CMA is planning on having its next official meeting during the conference, likely during the MAC business meeting time. More information will be forthcoming.

Stay safe, hydrate, and love your work.



Jeremy L. Nienow, Ph.D., RPA
President, CMA
Owner and Principal, Nienow Cultural Consultants, LLC

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Research Briefs

Nienow Cultural Consultants

Nienow Cultural Consultants Continue Archaeological Investigations at Upper and Lower Posts, Fort Snelling.

Nienow Cultural Consultants, with its dedicated team of sub-consultants, continues to complete archaeological investigations at 21HE99, Fort Snelling. This work encompasses projects related to both the Lower Post area (commonly thought of as Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote) as well as the Upper Post (immediately north of Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport). These areas are maintained by the Minnesota Historical Society (Lower Post) and Minnesota DNR (Upper Post).

MNHS is working towards the repurposing of Building 18 into its new visitor center. Archaeological units in the vicinity have identified the structural remains of an 1870s infantry barracks as well as front and back porch related artifacts.

MnDNR is working with a local developer to rehabilitate Upper Post buildings into a creative housing solution for low income families. Archaeological work in this area has identified multiple features related to military life beginning at the turn of the 20th century, as well as a large, diffuse, Archaic component site. Data recovery, construction monitoring, and other ongoing mitigation aspects of these projects will continue well in 2020.



An intact bottle from NCC Fort Snelling excavations.



An embossed glass shard from NCC Fort Snelling excavations.

Minnesota State University, Mankato

The AGES (Archaeology, Geography, and Earth Sciences) lab at MSU Mankato and the MnDOT CRU are now in the 5th year of developing MAID (Minnesota Archaeology Integrated Database), a system designed to assemble the collections holdings for all of the public and private repositories in the state, into a single, provenience-based research database accessible through the OSA portal. We're aiming to have the system in testing by select users,

with limited data, starting on 30 June. I will be sending out queries for information from a set of repositories and consultants soon.

AGES and the MnDOT CRU are now finished with all of the Phase 4 models for MnModel. The new models are predicting site locations with greater than 90% accuracy statewide. The list of changes is massive - too much for listing here - but the models will be accessible through the AGES website at MSU by the end of June.

AGES lab faculty are initiating a multi-year geoarchaeological study of the Chippewa and Cannon Rivers, focusing on natural and cultural developmental history, geophysical study of landforms and earthworks, etc.

The Archaeology Division of the Museum of Anthropology at MSU Mankato recently received a donation of the extensive botanical comparative collection (seeds and wood), reference library, and notes of Dr. L. Anthony Zalucha. We are in the process of cataloguing everything and updating the taxonomy, and will be taking high resolution images of the seeds and wood, and making them available on the AGES website. Researchers are welcome to come to Mankato to use the collection.

Development of the AGES physical lab continues. We are developing the capacity to do fine-grained sedimentological and geomorphological studies, palynology, dendrochronology, high-resolution landscape modeling, rock varnish microlamination studies, etc.

Graduate Student Highlights

Alec Anton – Minnesota State University, Mankato

Alec Anton's graduate thesis research at Minnesota State University, Mankato is centered in using archaeological investigation to contribute to the understanding of Dakota lifeways during the early Contact Period in southeastern Minnesota. The appearance of archaeological assemblages associated with early Contact Period Dakota peoples in southeastern Minnesota is relatively unconfirmed. Prairie Island, north of Red Wing, Minnesota, is a promising prospective location for collecting data to clarify this portion of the archaeological record because of its mention in multiple early Euro-American accounts of southeastern Minnesota, the dense archaeological presence on the island, and the existence of nearby Contact Period archaeological sites. Additionally, an archaeological research project on Prairie Island would provide local indigenous communities with the opportunity to use and participate in anthropological research. Alec has also aided in the development of Phase 4 of the Minnesota Department of Transportation's statewide archaeological predictive model, MnModel, and Minnesota State, Mankato's Minnesota Archaeological Integrated Database while a research assistant at Minnesota State, Mankato. Following completion of his graduate research, MSc. Degree in Applied Anthropology, and GIS Graduate Certificate, Anton plans to continue contributing to the protection and development of regional archaeology.



Alec Anton watches as fellow excavator Pete Froelich closely examines a test unit.

Luke Burds – Minnesota State University, Mankato

Luke Burds' graduate research at Minnesota State University, Mankato focuses on the use of geophysics to investigate both prehistoric and historic sites of archaeological significance. For his thesis, Luke will use ground penetrating radar (GPR), magnetometry, and electrical resistivity surveys to noninvasively investigate a set of mounds located in western Wisconsin along the Chippewa River. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire discovered the mounds while using LiDAR to examine cliff top dunes along the river's banks. The AGES laboratory, a collaborative team of researchers in the fields of Archaeology, Geography, and Earth Sciences at Minnesota State, Mankato, was consulted for further investigation. The noninvasive investigation of these features will provide archaeologists and the Native American population insight into the interactions between prehistoric peoples and their environment in this significantly understudied part of the Midwest. In addition to his thesis work, Luke has been helping a local Lutheran parish at the Church of the Redeemer in Belle Plaine, Minnesota, locate clandestine graves in their nearby cemetery using geophysics. Burial records of interred individuals were lost to fire in the early 1900's, creating problems as the cemetery continues to grow. By using geophysics, Luke and the AGES lab can provide the Church of the Redeemer information regarding the likely location of these clandestine graves so their positions can be documented and avoided in any future developments. Upon completion of this work and his MSc in Applied Anthropology, Luke hopes to either continue to a PhD program focusing on similar studies, or venture into a career performing similar geophysical geoarchaeological investigations.



1GPR Survey at Church of the Redeemer.

Announcements

The Office of the State Archaeology

The Office of the State Archaeologist has begun settling into our new location at 328 West Kellogg Boulevard. We are located across Kellogg Boulevard from the MHS History Center. Our new contact information can be found on the OSA web site linked below. Phone numbers are new, but emails stay the same.

<https://mn.gov/admin/archaeologist/the-public/resources/contact/>



The entrance to the OSA offices is through a door off of College Avenue. The OSA and the MHS archaeology staff are located on the lower floor of the building. You can see the tops of some of the windows of the MHS staff offices in front of the blue pickup in the picture, the OSA is located on the other end of that lower floor. The parking lot at the

front of the building is a pay lot, but you can however park on College Avenue West. That lot is to the left and below the parking lot for two hours without a permit.

Entrance into the building is still rather complicated. The upper two floors are alarmed separate from the lower level where the archaeologists are located. However, the buzzer to let staff know you have arrived is at the top of the ramp on the right side of the building on the parking lot level. You need to buzz in and speak to someone and then go back down the ramp and down the stairs from the parking lot to College Avenue West to the lower level entrance. You can also give us a phone call to let you know you've arrived or come to our side of the building and knock on our windows.

We will be planning an open house sometime later this summer. Meanwhile, we are open for business.

Bruce Koenen
Research Archaeologist
Office of the State Archaeologist

Upcoming Events

Deadline for Submissions for the Fall CMA Newsletter

Tuesday, September 17th

Please send your submissions to Anastasia Walhovd, Anastasia.walhovd@gmail.com by the end of the day.

Midwest Archaeological Conference

Thursday – Saturday, October 10-12th

Mankato, MN

See www.midwestarchaeology.org/annual-meeting/upcoming for more details.

Council for Minnesota Archaeology Meeting

TBD between Oct. 10th – 12th

Mankato, MN

The CMA will host its next meeting during the Midwest Archaeological Conference this October. Time and specific location will be announced at a later time.

See these events and more from other archaeological organizations in Minnesota on our website!

<http://mnarcheology.org/>

Would you like to see your event included on the CMA website? Send the event details to Anastasia Walhovd.

Anastasia.walhovd@gmail.com

Updates? Corrections?

Please send any corrections to Anastasia Walhovd at Anastasia.Walhovd@gmail.com.