



Association of Professional Archaeologists Newsletter

Mid-Year, 2000
www.apaontario.org

Message from the President: CURRENT APA NEWS

A couple of updates are in order for our members. First, we have now instituted a regular program of financial support for C14 dating for APA members! Two dates will be awarded each calendar year! One award will be by lottery at our Annual Symposium and the second will be an award on the basis of site significance. The winner of this spring's lottery C14 date was member Tom Ballantine - long time volunteer for membership services. Congratulations Tom and we look forward to seeing the results. The second date, recently awarded by the Executive, was to long-time member Donald Simons to support analysis of the Gainey type site in north-central Michigan. For those of you unaware of things Palaeo-Indian, there are NO current radiocarbon dates for anything Early Palaeo-Indian in the entire Great Lakes region, let alone for the type site of the earliest phase of human occupation. That's right, zero chronological markers of the absolute statistical kind! Don has recently completed the entirely voluntary excavation of Gainey, a multi-year project, and has yet to receive any institutional funding or support. He reports on recovering relatively large amounts of charcoal from features excavated this year. Good luck with this one Don! APA is pleased to be the first organizational sponsor of the massive Gainey site excavations and to be able to reach out, as Canadians, to assist American colleagues who believe in us!

For future reference, any APA Member may nominate a deserving candidate site for C14

dating by writing in to describe a sample which they feel would make a significant contribution to Great Lakes archaeology. The recipient must be an APA Member. Make your submission for 2001 to:

C14 Awards,
Association of Professional Archaeologists,
P.O. Box 404,
Peterborough, ON K9J 6Z3

Attendees at the Annual Spring Symposium are automatically entered for a second C14 date announced by draw the same day. The value of the award is currently \$230.00 paid by the APA to the dating institution. We recommend Brock University since this is their current fee.

MEMBERSHIP

Current membership in the APA stands at 52! This represents a majority of consulting and academic archaeologists in the Province. If you are not a member, your voice is not being heard in this increasingly powerful provincial organization. Benefits of Membership include: participation in lobbying and professional issues, Newsletter received three times yearly, Annual Spring Symposium in Peterborough, accessibility to radiocarbon dating grant program, access to our on-line electronic journal (to be announced) and incidental seminars and workshops such as our working meeting with members at the OAS Symposium in Midland.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Please note that the APA Special Achievement Award for 1999 went to Paul Lennox, Ministry of Transportation, for his excellent work in planning the Ontario Archaeological Society's Building Bridges Symposium. Nominations are now being accepted for Year 2000 Awards. Please address your nomination for a Special Achievement in Ontario archaeology to:

Special Achievement Award,
Association of Professional Archaeologists,
P.O. Box 404,
Peterborough, ON K9J 6Z3

Past recipients of this award include:
Christopher Ellis, Nick Adams and
Neil Ferris.

MCZCR REVIEW

On behalf of its members, the President and Vice-President of APA, Drs. Lawrence Jackson and Gary Warrick, will discuss operation of the current licensing system with external review co-ordinator Allen Tyyska. We appreciate having input into this process. We will keep our members updated with any developments in this MCZCR operations review process. So far, the informally announced process consists of an informal two hour interview to be followed up by a public meeting in the early fall. Project manager is Louise Barry, Archaeology Customer Service Project, Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation.

NEWSLETTER

As announced in our most recent Newsletter, Editor Andrew Hinshelwood will be stepping down. However, with a little arm-twisting he has agreed to produce

one final installment. After that, long-time member and APA award winner Nick Adams has agreed to help out with at least one issue. So, we appear to be covered until early next year. Your comments and contributions are always welcome as APA members - keep us informed and everyone else will be. Nominations for full time APA Newsletter Editor, an unpaid but highly rewarding position, should be made to:

APA Executive,
P.O. Box 404,
Peterborough, ON K9J 6Z3

ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM

The APA/OAS questionnaire, compiled by Andrew Murray, on consulting practices and wages has just gone out with this issue of Arch-Notes. Results will be discussed at a Special Meeting, open to all members of both organizations, held at the OAS Annual Symposium in Midland. The meeting is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. Come and meet your representatives!

How do you feel about current pay practices in Ontario? Should basic crew wages for similar types of consulting projects range from below \$10.00 hr with benefits to \$20.00 hr without? Do you think that Stage 1 assessments should be undertaken independent of Stage 2? Should site visits be required to carry out a Stage 1? These and other fascinating questions will be the subject of our meeting and will result in Resolutions from the Floor for APA Recommended Practices.

Lawrence Jackson
President APA

Members Commentary

Paul Lennox has submitted a very interesting commentary on the basic cost of survey. In it he raises a number of issues relevant to the status of archaeology as a serious profession in the province. Can proponents of developments take professional archaeologists seriously if they bid on jobs at a fraction of their "arithmetic" value, substitute a couple of high school students for the seasoned professional the proponents were expecting to do the fieldwork, and then rely on the information as it is signed off by the consultant and the review agency? As well, the relative importance of the public trust (to ensure that the cultural heritage of the province is protected and preserved in the face of development impacts) to private interest (escalating costs from intensive survey and expensive mitigations will impact on the long term success and growth potential of the consulting firm) in the minds of consultants is brought into question. How can we present ourselves to potential clients as a legitimate, quasi-scientific profession when a determination of high potential by MCzCR - the call which leads to the proponents requirement for a consultant - is rolled back in the proposal without meeting even the basic requirements of the Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines (1993)? If the subject property is high potential, then how, as Paul asks, can a bid be submitted stating that only about 12% of the property "really is" high potential?

Paul's suggestions, following a brutally clear review of how jobs should be costed out, are significant. Development proponents should begin to look seriously at rejecting the bargain bids. The potential costs arising from a poorly or improperly conducted survey could easily outweigh the benefits of a "cheap, quick and dirty" assessment. Legal liability is a slippery subject, and can often come down to the party with the best lawyers, rather than the party with the most agreeable version of the truth. Can the agency that reviews a report, knowing that the lands they initially determined to hold high potential for site presence be brought into the lawsuit? Can a good lawyer get your house as damages even though you have incorporated? Can the Oak Ridges Moraine be saved by bringing the inadequacy of archaeological survey and assessment practices to the attention of the OMB? Can you say "slip and fall - I win 'em all"?

The APA Newsletter is the ideal forum to discuss the issues raised by Paul. The last Newsletter carried an excerpt of a letter on issues relating to professionalism in consulting archaeology. It questioned the Ministry's right to restrict the transfer of an archaeological license between parties - and how this might limit a consultant's right to expand his or her business by gaining contracts and then having the field work and basic report preparation completed by people working under this license. A fair amount of traffic has been noted on this issue in the OAS email discussion list. In support of the transfer issue, the work is still being signed off by the license holder, but on the opposing side, the work being conducted in the field when the license holder is not present involves judgement, and many of the decisions being made are not at the conscious, analytic level. The OAS list can be contacted through the return address OAS-L-owner@egroups.com

Find the cost of survey.

Paul Lennox

We need to set minimum standards /expectations so that we can play the same game - no no - act professionally and make a living too. Based on a few discussions with practicing archaeologists I would like to put the following out for discussion. Comments would be appreciated. My basic point is that when licensed professional archaeologists and development proponents agree to complete an assessment under a low bid, they are agreeing to be party to a lie. Unreasonably low bids should be rejected for proposing the impossible, less than adequate, less than standard work. It doesn't take rocket science to see their fallacy.

A hypothetical question: If any agency or land owner/developer needed a professional archaeologist to do a test pit survey of a hectare of land, what would be a reasonable cost? For a hectare of "high archaeological potential" land, what would be the cost to dig a test pit every 5 metres over an area - and none of the "in our professional opinion there would only need to be 50 holes dug blah blah blah". We're talking 400 holes - how much?

Some numbers suggest that 5 to 12 test pits per person per hour is reasonable. So, let's say for easy figuring 10 holes an hour, a 10 hour day for a total of 100 holes a day. So the average hectare takes about a person week. Hardly "rocket science". I think I've heard this number from others as a good ballpark figure, but it would be nice to hear other viewpoints.

How much does a person make a week? How much would a "professional archaeologist" with a few seasons of fieldwork - not a high school student - perhaps even with a degree and some time as a field supervisor expect to earn. How about \$20/hour for easy figuring (Finlayson's article two Newsletters ago had some good points to make about remuneration). For a 40 hour week, this adds up to about \$1,000 per week. Forty hours, four hundred holes: simple. This brings us to about \$1,000 per hectare. Travel time, meals, accommodation must also be figured in unless the consultant is local. Sure, Aunt Ella will put you up and feed you sometimes, but nobody has an Aunt Ella in all parts of the Province, so add another \$100 per day.

So, a test pit survey of a hectare of high potential land would cost a basic \$1000. Perhaps there are some consultants out there who would like to comment - is this too high, too low or just right. If we can decide together on this, perhaps someone would like to take on the questions that the low bid raises concerning archaeological potential calls or liability. The APA has been talking about survey guidelines and costs resulting from the discovery of an archaeological site during construction. But let's narrow the focus in light of the basic survey cost and the low bid: who pays for the construction delay? Is it the consultant's insurance, without future consequence; the company who did the survey, the field supervisor or report author; the low bidder who hired high school students - got the job but missed the site; the proponent who hired the low bidder; the agency who approved the survey? Are any of the "weasel words" worked into the proposal and contract going to please the lawyers? Is the house in your name?

These are just some thoughts. As professionals, we need to be clear on where our bids are coming from - what is too high as well as too low. We need to develop an acceptable way of ensuring that fair bids have a good chance of resulting in a good job - and expand the criteria for selecting a consultant on more than just "lowest cost". Is it reasonable to provide direction to development proponents a "rule of thumb" guide to assessing whether a bid is low enough to be exposing them to an unacceptable level of risk, and when that bid should be thrown out?

Association of Professional Archaeologists

Executive, 2000

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