



# Ontario Archaeological Society

## Arch Notes

New Series Volume 18 Issue 4

ISSN 0048-1742

July/August 2013



**When exploring the ghost towns of Haliburton, artifacts can shed light on tragic situations. Two decaying tombstones illustrate that one settler family lost two of their daughters to disease, within only one day of each other. Circumstances like these illustrate the difficult lifestyle frontier pioneers faced. Photo by C. Martinello. (See article starting on Page 9)**

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# Ontario Archaeological Society

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Neal Ferris  
519-473-1360  
president@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### President-Elect

Rob MacDonald  
presidentelect@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Treasurer

Jim Montgomery  
treasurer@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Vice-President

Sheryl Smith  
vicepresident@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Avocational Services

Bill Fox  
avocational@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Chapter Services

Chris Dalton  
chapters@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Heritage Advocacy

Peter Popkin  
advocacy@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Membership

John Sleath  
membership@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Membership Services

Lindsay Foreman  
memberservices@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Education

education@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Publications

Grant Karcich  
publications@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Public Outreach

Megan Brooks  
publicoutreach@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Director of Student Services

students@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### Executive Director

Lorie Harris  
PO Box 62066  
Victoria Terrace Post Office  
Toronto, Ontario M4A 2W1  
Phone/fax: 416-406-5959  
executive-director@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

### APPOINTMENTS

#### Editor, Ontario Archaeology

Chris Ellis  
oaeditor@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

#### Editors, Arch Notes

Sheryl Smith & Carole Stimmell  
aneditor@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

#### Editor, Website

Jean-Luc Pilon  
jlucpilon@hotmail.com

#### First Nations Liaison

TBA

#### Symposium 2013/Niagara Falls Liaison:

Sheryl Smith  
symposium@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca

#### Moderator – Ontario Archaeological Society Listserve (OAS-L)

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/OAS-L/>  
Vito Vaccarelli

**The Ontario Archaeological Society gratefully  
acknowledges funding from the Ministry of  
Tourism and Culture through the Provincial  
Heritage Organization Operating Grant Program.**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**A**nd here we are moving into the middle of summer... Hopefully the summer is going well for everyone!

It has been a busy year so far. On the home front in the OAS, we are still waiting for your feedback on the draft strategic plan (appearing in the last issue of *Arch Notes*). Any feedback you want to provide on that draft would be most appreciated prior to it being adopted.

Another activity that is taking up a lot of time is the work the conference committee has been doing to pull together this fall's conference in Niagara Falls. This includes some interesting tours of regional heritage and wine making sites... Always a pleasant combination!

There is information elsewhere in the newsletter detailing conference planning at this point. We are also still looking for participants, so please send in your abstract as soon as possible for the conference.

The OAS and various OAS chapters have been able to offer members a number of field opportunities this season, thanks to the folks at the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Timmins Martelle Heritage Consultants, and Dr. Christopher Watts. Opportunities to participate on site excavations are a regularly identified activity that members indicate they would like the OAS to provide. The challenge traditionally has been that undertaking a site excavation also entails lining someone up who is willing to direct the project under their license, and take on the responsibility of writing up the license report, and care for the collections afterwards.

That is often more than a volunteer is willing to undertake. However, we've increasingly been able to partner with researchers and consultant firms who are undertaking an excavation (of which hundreds of such projects occur every year), and, because of project

circumstances, are willing to accept OAS members as volunteers. We have been able to increase our liability insurance for all OAS activities, which means formally sponsored OAS (and OAS Chapter) events, such as members participating in field projects, are properly covered. This makes it easier to partner with ongoing field projects, as a result.

Hopefully this move will continue to provide members even more opportunities to volunteer on excavation projects that are occurring anyways, and in doing so solve the challenge the Society has faced in not being able to direct such projects directly for members. Plus, it is always good when we can partner with and support a project that can use the volunteer assistance!

Until next time, have a good rest of the summer.

**Neal Ferris  
President**

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## **WHY THE OAS SYMPOSIUM IS A 'GO TO' EVENT**

**A**mong the top reasons to attend our Annual symposium – this year is our 40th!

10. You get to stay in an historic hotel away from (pick one – kids, grandkids, pets, deadlines).

9. The presentations are, for the most part, stimulating and have lots of cool artifact pictures. If they are not stimulating, the room is dark so have a snooze. You probably need it.

8. The local tours usually feature wineries. If not, great scenery and lots of interesting historic sites.

7. Organizers put their hearts and souls into providing a great mix of talks, tours, cultural experiences and friendship. And they know where all the best restaurants are.

6. Speaking of friends, you can meet up with people you haven't seen in a while. Maybe have a beer.

5. If you haven't attended before, you can make new friends, or hang out with the

people you travelled with and meet their friends. Maybe have a beer.

4. The banquet is usually pretty tasty and you can congratulate deserving award winners.

3. The Silent Auction and Book Room are great places to pick up early Christmas gifts for that hard-to-buy-for person on your list.

2. Students and new graduates can schmooze and network with people who are hiring. Or you can hand out business cards and do the hiring.

And the # 1 reason you should attend the OAS Symposium: It is your right as a member to have a say in what goes on, and the Annual Business Meeting is a good place to do it.

Seriously, the OAS symposium is usually an intimate gathering of up to 150 people, so there are lots of opportunities to hear what is going on around the province, meet and interact with members of other chapters, and listen to presentations given

by the people whose articles you read in *Arch Notes* or *Ontario Archaeology*.

This year's meeting will be held in late October in beautiful Niagara Falls, at the historic Crowne Plaza Fallsview Hotel, right at the falls. The theme will revolve around the archaeology of the Niagara Peninsula and beyond. Registration, a history/wine tour, and government workshops will be Fri. Oct. 25 and talks will be in two concurrent sessions all day Sat. Oct. 26 and Sunday morning Oct. 27. Our Saturday banquet speaker is the renowned Rick Hill from Six Nations of the Grand River. A special lithic workshop is also being offered on Sunday morning. Information is in *Arch Notes* and check the Symposium link on the OAS Website for registration details.

**Sheryl Smith,  
Vice-President**

Reprinted with permission from Strata (Spring 2013), Newsletter of the Peterborough Chapter of the OAS

**THE ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
**AGENDA FOR THE UPCOMING ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

**SATURDAY, OCT. 26, 2013 FROM 4:30 TO 6:30PM**

**CROWNE PLAZA FALLSVIEW HOTEL**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. President's opening remarks</b><br><br><b>2. Minutes of the previous meeting</b><br><br><b>3. Matters arising from these Minutes</b><br><br><b>4. President's report</b><br>i. Remarks by incoming President<br><br><b>5. Treasurer's report</b><br>i. Endowment funds | <b>6. Election of Directors</b><br><br><b>7. Next Symposium</b><br><br><b>8. 2014 - 2019 Strategic Plan</b><br><br><b>9. Other business</b><br>i. Motions of thanks<br><br><b>10. Adjournment</b> |
|--|---|

**ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

**HOLIDAY INN AMBASSADOR BRIDGE, WINDSOR, ONTARIO**

**NOVEMBER 10, 2012 AT 4:30 P.M.**

**Board members in attendance:**

Neal Ferris, President  
 Sheryl Smith, Vice-President  
 Jim Keron, Treasurer  
 Jim Montgomery, Treasurer-elect  
 Chris Dalton  
 Meagan Brooks  
 Grant Karcich  
 Morgan Tamplin  
 Alistair Jolly  
 John Moody

**Regrets:**

John Sleath  
 Ryan Primrose

There were 36 members in attendance.

**Call to Order:**

President Neal Ferris called the meeting to order and expressed his thanks to the Windsor and London chapters for hosting a very successful conference so far.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Upon motion (Keron, Jolly) the minutes

of the 2011 annual business meeting were approved with no changes.

**Matters Arising from These Minutes:**

No matters were identified.

**President's Report:**

Neal Ferris noted that the report was printed for members to examine. A comment made that would be good to have ABM reports available to all, in advance of the conference, even online. The next executive will be tasked to look into doing all reports via electronic methods, and in *Arch Notes* for distribution, in a timely fashion. This should include chapter reports as well.

The executive was asked to make sure all officers know and adhere to the deadlines for all administrative matters. Agreed.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Jim Keron noted that this is his final year as Treasurer.

We have switched to a new accounting system, Quick Books, that positions us ready for any legal audit. Quick Books is an industry standard.

He remarked on the various investment funds. The Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund has a great deal of money in it, but is still an active fund, with some contributors annually. He wondered if there were options for moving a sum of money into another fund, such as the Valerie Sonstenes Student Scholarship Fund, to start issuing bursaries sooner? We would need a legal opinion on whether we can do that. He asked for comments from members.

After discussion of a number of ideas, consensus was that the interest from the fund could be used to add cash to another fund, but that the principal in the Publication Fund should not be touched at this time. <sup>(1)</sup>

The executive was directed to clarify which money is available to us and report to members. Neal Ferris stated that we

would use the strategic plan as the vehicle to explore the issue and constraints.

Upon motion (Keron, Dalton) Thamesford Accounting was appointed as auditors for 2012. Carried.

Jim Keron was thanked for his many services to the society especially as Treasurer in the past term.

#### **Election of Directors:**

The Nominating Committee under the chair of Dena Doroszenko presented a slate of candidates for consideration. A President-Elect, Vice-President and three directors need to be chosen. Thanks were extended to Morgan Tamplin and Alistair Jolly, who declined to serve another term as directors.

The slate presented was: Vice-President (2 years), Sheryl Smith; President-Elect (1 year), Robert MacDonald; Director (3 years), Lindsay Foreman; Director (3 years), Peter Popkin; Director (3 years), Chris Dalton. Following the call for further nominations from the floor, the slate was acclaimed.

Thanks were extended to Dena and her committee, Eva MacDonald and Hugh Daechsel, for their work.

#### **Next Symposium (2013):**

The Board has begun exploring locations in the Niagara area, and has established a committee to report back to the membership as to exact location.

Dates established are Oct 23 – 24, 2013. We will be looking for volunteers to help coordinate the symposium.

#### **Other Business:**

Alicia Hawkins raised the issue that two years in a row we have been presented with a slate of executive members for acclamation, rather than having paper elections. If the issue is one of expense, could we explore the idea of having an electronic ballot like the Canadian Archaeological Association uses?

Neal Ferris commented that we would need to review the Constitution to see if

such would be allowed, but perhaps it could be amended. He also spoke to the process that was used in 2011 to appoint a Vice-President for the first time, since it was a new position.

Norma Knowlton spoke to the need for a parallel voting process with paper ballots, for those who prefer mail-in ballots and proxy votes. Agreed.

#### **Revisions to the Strategic Plan:**

Neal Ferris spoke to the need to revise and use the Strategic Plan as a guiding document and take up new ideas. Should we update the existing one, or completely revise the 2009 – 2011 plan?

Consensus was to revise and streamline the existing plan. Members suggested preparing a list of achievements showing what has been finished (a report card), using tools such as Survey Monkey to keep up with members' ideas, keep trying to engage members using various communications tools, involve chapter presidents in seeking ideas and make presentations to all chapters about the strategic planning process.

Neal Ferris acknowledged that the executive could publish a report card, with the original plan, considerations and survey results together to be informed. We also need an analysis of what was not doable, what did get done and why or why not. Board members will discuss this at length in their next meeting (November 24).

Board members were asked to comment on their assessment of achievement in the past three years.

Treasurer Jim Keron pointed to the financial system now in place and the aggregation of symposium data in a spreadsheet that brings comparatives together like registration fees, delegates, sponsorships, etc.

Director of Advocacy Morgan Tamplin did not feel we had achieved the advocacy objectives set out in 2009, which were very detailed and specific at the time. His report sets out some new proposals that define more achievable results eg. seeking

partnerships, making official presentations to ministries who post consultations on the Environmental Bill of Rights webpage, etc.

President Neal Ferris felt that several communications objectives were achieved such as the enhanced website, theses database, stronger online presence, a new brochure and English and French translation.

Member Jean-Luc Pilon was thanked for his work in translation.

Certainly some things are lacking – eg. social media is starting to be important and that needs a point person to take it on.

Other comments were that a volunteer board can only do so much, and that we should assign one person to steer that direction so progress can be measured. Another suggestion was to break the plan down into objectives with yearly deadlines so we can focus more, and to break it down further into more regular goals. Goals should be made the first order of business at every executive meeting.

Neal stated further that this was a very detailed Strategic Plan to follow. We need to use all our members and their various talents to make sure the next one gets done. That being said, the 'considerations' page in the ABM report is where the board wants to focus its effort.

General direction was to have the Board review and rip apart the old plan, get down to earth with what was stated, examine each item and decide how to deal with it. It should be shorter. As to receiving feedback, we should draft a document and publish it in *Arch Notes*, and have a board member go to each chapter to explain it and seek input.

Neal Ferris said that the board needs to communicate more regularly with members, and committed to publishing board minutes regularly online in future.

#### **Adjournment:**

Upon motion (Jolly, Mohr) the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

*1. Ideas included: find other research papers not usually in OA, use interest as a backup in case we no longer receive provincial grants, format and publish online content, do an online update of existing research, publish research guides eg. ceramics, point types and so on, co-publish with other organizations on themes like War of 1812.*



# The Ontario Archaeological Society

## Proxy Form

I \_\_\_\_\_, a member in good standing of the Society, hereby exercise my right of proxy by identifying:

- \_\_\_\_\_, a voting member in good standing, or
- the President of the Board of Directors

As my proxy to attend, act, and vote on my behalf at the Annual Business Meeting of members to be held on Oct. 26, 2013,

- 1 Regarding agenda items in the Notice of Meeting for which I have full knowledge and understanding - circle one of – For, Against, Abstain, At Proxy’s Discretion
- 2 Regarding amendments from the floor regarding agenda items in the Notice of Meeting -circle one of – For, Against, Abstain, At Proxy’s Discretion
- 3 Regarding items that arise in Other Business -circle one of – For, Against, Abstain, At Proxy’s Discretion

### Optional

I wish to present the following amendment to Agenda Items No \_\_\_\_\_ which I wish my proxy holder to propose:

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Further, I wish to register the following limitations to the exercise of my proxy with respect to any Agenda Item or amendments thereto;

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please ensure delivery to the OAS Office on or before  
Thursday, Oct 10, 2013**

## ENDOWMENT FUNDS OF THE ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY – AN UPDATE

It is important for the membership of the Ontario Archaeological Society (OAS) to consider the value of our primary asset, the four endowment funds that have significant

monetary value and which can be used only for the specific purposes as designated for each fund. Any amendment to the use of these funds requires membership approval as

specified in the constitution of the OAS.

Article 4 – Fiscal Management part 3 of the constitution states that:

“Any Funds of the Society

ENDOWMENT FUND PERFORMANCE 2012		
<b>Sonstenes Student Scholarship Fund</b>	Value at Start of Year	\$ 10,340
	Investment Fund Gain/(Loss)	640
	Donations	2,115
	Value end of year	<b>13,095</b>
<b>Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund</b>	Value at Start of Year	157,892
	Investment Fund Gain/(Loss)	9,768
	Donations	520
	OA Surplus (Deficit) on the year allocated to OA Fund	967
	Value end of year	<b>169,147</b>
<b>Awards Fund</b>	Value at Start of Year	4,013
	Investment Fund Gain/(Loss)	248
	Donations	100
	Withdrawals	(310)
	Value end of year	<b>4,051</b>
<b>Future Fund</b>	Value at Start of Year	88,862
	Investment Fund Gain/(Loss)	5,498
	Donations	398
	Operating Surplus (Deficit) on the year	1,900
	Value end of year	<b>\$ 96,658</b>

restricted for specific use cannot be used for purposes other than authorised by that Fund. Such Funds are identified in the Audited Financial Statements of the Society, and existing restrictions on the use of these funds can only be revised by way of a two-thirds vote at the Annual Business Meeting of the Society.”

The activity within the funds during the year ended December 31st, 2012 is summarized in the table below.

Jim Keron (OAS Treasurer from 2009 to 2012, and Director of Chapter and Professional Services in 2007 and 2008) contributed an in-depth article on the subject of OAS Endowment funds to *Arch Notes* in 2012 (March/April issue) which I will briefly summarize here to describe the funds and the restrictions placed on them.

The Valerie Sonstenes Student Research Fund was established in 2011 with a \$10,000 bequest from the estate of Valerie Sonstenes. Its purpose is to support student research that relates to and advances knowledge on Ontario's archaeological record.

The Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund is dedicated to provide long term income for publication of at least one issue per year of the journal, *Ontario Archaeology*.

The Awards Fund is intended to provide income to support the awards program administered by the OAS.

The OAS Future Fund was established to provide a secure source of funds to support the administrative expenses of the society and insure its viability as an organization for the future.

It is important to recognize here a fifth fund, the Peggi Armstrong Award for Public Archaeology. It is administered separately by the Ottawa Chapter of the OAS, so that donations accumulated during the year by the OAS are forwarded to the Chapter and not held by the OAS at year end. Launched in 1996 in remembrance of Peggi Armstrong (1957-1997), it is awarded annually at the OAS annual symposiums in recognition of

outstanding commitment to a greater public awareness of archaeology.

Each of the funds' value is determined by donations including bequests, investment income or loss, and withdrawals of funds for the designated purposes. In addition, the OA Publication fund is added to by the annual surplus in OA operating income (or reduced by an operating loss). Similarly, the OAS Future fund is added to annually by an amount equal to the Administration surplus (or drawn down by the Administration deficit).

Total value of the funds at the end of 2012 was \$282,951.

Over time, it is important for the membership to address changes to operating costs that occur as well as the relevance of the endowment funds for addressing current membership expectations. For instance, it may be useful to request that members target certain funds over others when considering how to designate their donations. Currently the Sonstenes Fund needs contributions so that it can grow enough to generate annual income that could be used to issue student scholarships. The Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund is in the opposite situation. It has been built up over a long period of time, during which costs of producing *OA* (printing and mailing) were much higher than today as more and more members chose to receive the publications electronically.

As Jim Keron reported at the Annual Business meeting of the Society during the 2012 Symposium, the OA Publication Fund now has more revenue from donations and subscriptions than *OA* costs to produce. In fact, the current value of the fund could finance the publication far into the foreseeable future without any new income.

Therefore, I propose the following options, for which the Board will request direction from the membership at the next Annual Business Meeting to be held in Niagara Falls, Ontario on October 26, 2013.

#### **OPTION 1:**

- close the Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund to donations (potential donors to the OA fund would be asked to direct their donations to any of the other funds).

- allocate any OA annual surplus (subscriptions less production expenses) to the Sonstenes Fund.

- reduce the student subscription fee for OA by 20% and other subscription fees by 10%.

#### **OPTION 2:**

- close the Ontario Archaeology Publication Fund to donations as in option 1.

- allocate any OA annual surplus (subscriptions less production expenses) to the Sonstenes Fund as in option 1.

- cap the subscription fee for OA at the current level.

- transfer an amount of \$50,000 from the OA Publication Fund to the Sonstenes Fund to put the OAS in a position to start issuing student scholarships.

#### **OPTION 3:**

- any combination of Option 1 and Option 2, plus transfer a specific amount (to be determined ) from the OA Publication Fund to cover expenses related to revamping the OAS website.

As it is the intention of the Board to reflect as accurately as possible the needs and wishes of the membership, we look forward to your comments and suggestions for making the best possible use of the OAS endowment funds. Specific comments may be forwarded to me at [treasurer@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca](mailto:treasurer@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca) in advance of our annual meeting and I would be happy to take all suggestions to the Board for discussion at our September meeting before placing this item on the agenda of the Annual Business Meeting in October.

**Jim Montgomery**  
**Treasurer**



# ABANDONED KENNAWAY: HOW THE CIVIL WAR HELPED CREATE ONTARIO GHOST TOWNS

**By Christopher S. Martinello**

Cottage country in Haliburton, Ontario, draws people from all over the world, especially during the hot summer months when the region's many forest-hugged lakes come alive with motorboats and jet skis. Haliburton County, skirting the southern border of the enormous Algonquin Provincial Park, is especially blessed with scenic forests and sparkling lakes, scattered across the rolling, rocky hills of a geological formation called the Canadian Shield. The Shield covers much of Northern and Central Ontario, and for more than 150 years, its shallow soils have seen mining and lumbering operations come and go, reaping the rewards of its mineral-rich deposits and abundant pine. Regular cottagers and tourists, however, out on treks through the near-impenetrable foliage, occasionally stumble upon something more mysterious.

As hikers struggle around bushes or over boulders, they may suddenly be faced with unexpected sights – the ghostly relics of ruined log cabins, moss covered and falling in, abandoned to the encroaching woods perhaps a 140 years ago. The products neither of mining camp nor lumber mill, these cabins and the artifacts associated with them are all that remain of a completely different tradition in Haliburton, one long since gone in the region – the tradition of the pioneer farmer.

Pioneer yeomen in Haliburton? On the rocky soils of the Canadian Shield, which barely cover some of the continent's

most ancient bedrock? Why would people attempt to chop farmsteads out of the ancient forest many miles away from the populated areas of Ontario, surrounded by moose, bears and the now rarely seen Algonquin wolves, and what can the artifacts of their fields and dwellings tell us about what happened here? Where did all the settlers go, and why did they abandon their settlements after the painstaking work needed to create them? The answer to this last question, at least in part, can arguably be derived from an unlikely source: the U.S. Civil War.

An investigation of one of Haliburton's ghost towns, once called 'Kennaway', reveals more answers to these questions, and sheds light on how some of Ontario's last old-time pioneers on the "northern frontier" lived.

Before a ghost-town explorer clambers through Kennaway's log cabin ruins, they may find themselves asking one question about the ill-fated pioneer villages in the dense forests – why would pioneers attempt to farm in the uniformly poor soils of Ontario's cottage country? The notion of attempting to farm in the area can be traced back to the 1850s, a time when the political landscape of Canada was very different than it is today.

Before Confederation in 1867, the nation of Canada did not exist. What is now Ontario was a British colony called Canada West (Quebec was known as Canada East), and the entire region of the Great Plains, today including the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, was the property of the British owned Hudson's Bay Company and therefore not 'open for the

**Ontario's Haliburton region is home to several lost pioneer settlements, which are now covered by thick forests. Old log cabins sit in various states of decay, abandoned after the settlers began flocking to the Canadian West after the province of Manitoba was incorporated in 1870. Photos by C. Martinello.**



taking' as the American West seemed to be.

What was more, by the 1850s, most of the prime agricultural land in Southern Ontario – the province's breadbasket – had been cleared and claimed by immigrants, especially the United Empire Loyalists, former Americans who relocated to Ontario after U.S. independence (Jones 1977: 31) and veterans of the War of 1812. The approaching end of available land for farming was a worry to the government of Canada West, which believed that a steady influx of immigrants was essential to economic prosperity.

### SETTLING HALIBURTON

What, then, could the government use to attract pioneer immigrants? To some legislators, the answer lay to the north: the rugged and inhospitable Canadian Shield. In the 1850s and '60s, the northern forest was surveyed and mapped out into lots and concessions, and advertised to potential pioneers. To this end, two settlements were originally founded in the area that would become Haliburton County. Haliburton Village began to grow in the west of the county, and Kennaway in the east. The pioneer settlement of Ontario's northern frontier had begun.

Perhaps not surprisingly considering the isolation and shallow soils, immigrants did not flock to the forest in droves. Kennaway's initial population of fewer than 20 families was a mix of immigrants, mostly from Scotland and Ireland, and children of already-established Ontario farmers from neighboring regions to the south, as well as some First Nations families. Census rolls for Kennaway record families of Watts, Scotts, Williams, Coles, McCreas, Naraseaus and Burtons (Library and Archives Canada, Census of Canada, 1871).

Other historical records show that Kennaway, like so many of its Southern Ontario and American counterparts, had all the

makings of a proud and growing pioneer settlement. In 1869, a Charles Roberts secured a \$1,200 grant to establish a grist and saw mill (Dobrzensky 1985: 130, Cummings 1993: 92) (nothing of these remain today), and he became the village's first postmaster in 1876, putting the hamlet on postal maps everywhere.

In 1870, Kennaway pioneers helped build a one room log schoolhouse, and with an average family size of seven, they helped to fill it every September. When those children were not in school, they were helping their parents tend the crops and livestock.

Early tax assessment rolls suggest that families could clear an average of 3.3 acres per year, and they filled them mostly with potatoes, oats, and a handful of cattle and sheep, with a few milk cows and even a horse for the privileged few (Municipality of Dysart et. al. Tax Assessment Rolls, Harcourt Township, 1874–1903). The types and quantities of produce and livestock reveal that early Haliburton pioneers were not practicing commercial farming by selling surplus, but were relying on subsistence farming, generating only what they could eat. So far, this fits the formula every pioneer settlement used to grow into a larger town: a start from humble beginnings and blossoming when more people came, practicing increasingly diverse trades.

Do Kennaway's ghostly remains also show this idealistic pattern? Like pioneer villages everywhere, Kennaway's yeomen started their farms with their eyes on their primary need – shelter. The pioneering model that they imported from southern Ontario led them to begin by constructing that obvious symbol of the pioneer lifestyle, the log cabin. As a series of three 19 century diagrams show, the settler's ideal was to begin with the storied 'shanty in the woods', and then to progress to a wooden plank home, with more of the forest beaten back and more wild



**In 1870, Kennaway's settlers built a one room schoolhouse. Now the headquarters of a hunting club, the schoolhouse was also immortalized in a 1930 drawing by a Red Cross Outpost nurse stationed in the nearby village of Wilberforce. Drawing by Gertrude LeRoy Miller (used with permission).**



**A set of three drawings from the 1800s illustrate the ideal pioneer progression from a log shanty in the forest, to an established farm with plank house, and finally to a bustling estate with barns, mills and several outbuildings, all arranged in a neat order. The remains at Kennaway and other Ontario ghost towns demonstrate the attempt to replicate this pattern.**

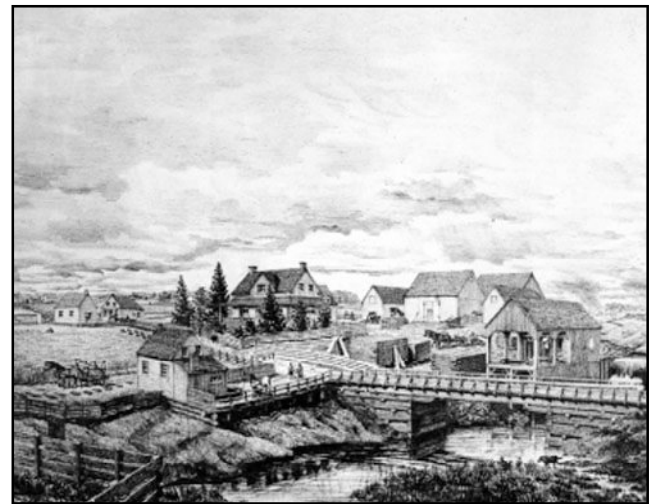
land ‘domesticated’ for human use. Finally, as a pioneer settlement evolved into a larger town, even the plank house might be replaced by a brick home, surrounded by more permanent amenities like bridges, fences and outbuildings.

The wild land was increasingly sectioned off into checkerboards of rectangular plots, each for their own purpose, with fences neatly arranged in right angles. Thus, the North American pioneer thought, nature itself could be harnessed and brought under control for human purposes (Guillet 1972: 70).

In existing towns that are the result of this pattern, there are few log cabins left standing. A ghost town of nothing but log shanties, then, reveals that something else happened here, something that disrupted the procession of the pioneer pattern of improvement, but what? A walk through all that’s left of Kennaway reveals how ‘Ontario’s last pioneers’ at least began to tame the ancient forests before abandonment left their efforts literally in ruins.

### **CONSTRUCTION METHODS**

As the explorer hikes from one forested former farmstead to another, peering into the rotting ruins of log shanties, they notice that early Haliburton settlers incorporated a diverse range of building styles and materials in their homes. After chopping down enough pine trees to make a cabin, the homesteader had to decide which method to use to fit the logs together at the structure’s four corners. This was an important consideration, since strong corner joints literally held the home together and supported the weight of the roof. If pioneers generally used the same corner making style as their fathers did, then it seems that



many forefathers of Haliburton’s settlers preferred the dovetail corner method. In this style, pioneers cut slanted notches into the tops and bottoms of the ends of the cabin’s logs, tapering shallower as the notches extend towards the outside ends of the logs. In doing this, the bottom of the end of the log resting on top of the end of the log below it would sit secure, and the pull of gravity would help lock the logs in the walls together, instead of trying to pull the walls apart (Clemson 1974: 30). Of course, savvy homesteaders were reluctant to rely solely on gravity. They needed to nail the notches together to form the final fit.

Exploring the remains of cabins on the properties once belonging to Scott, McCrea, Watt and Palmateer families, we can clearly see the expertly fitted dovetail corners, still working to hold up the remnants of the structures. A rarer corner style on the Haliburton frontier, but perhaps easier to make, was the saddle notch style. In Kennaway, only the cabin of Archie Scott (circa 1867) exhibits this method. In the saddle notch style, the settler chops crescent shaped grooves into the bottoms of the ends of the logs so that they can straddle the top of the end of the log in the adjoining wall (Pope 1985: 123).

The strong corner fitting styles used on Ontario’s northern



**Most pioneers on Ontario's frontier opted for the dovetail corner making method (left) when constructing their log cabins. The tight fits of the ends of the logs would help ensure that homes were strong and secure enough to withstand the region's bitterly cold winters. A few of Ontario's pioneers chose the saddle notch style of cabin building (right). Crescentshaped grooves chopped into the ends of the logs helped them sit snugly on each other.**

frontier show us that the hardy settlers took pride in forging sturdy homes for their families, and wanted to properly apply the pioneer recipe for success. The next step would be just as important – keeping the elements out of the cabin.

Ontario's cottagers who head south for warmer climes at the end of the cottage season might be shocked at the long, bitterly cold winters in the region, winters that could kill a pioneer family if they did not insulate their log cabin properly. The explorer trekking through Kennaway's ruins can see that there

were several ways settlers could keep the cold and insects out, and the heat inside, their humble homes. To do this, they had to rely on chinking, which refers to the substances used to fill in the cracks between the logs in the shanty's walls. The variety of chinking materials used can give us clues to the differences in wealth and status, even within a small settlement.

The cabin of T. Scott and those of M. Watt and W. Watt for example, still hold small wedge shaped strips of wood between the thick logs of the walls. These shin-splints reveal that the



**Pioneers had to choose between several methods for chinking the cracks between the logs in their shanties. Some opted for cement, others for bits of cloth and rag, and still others for perishable materials like dirt and moss. Wooden wedges like the one seen above helped these materials to remain between the logs to keep heat in and pests out.**

settlers relied on perishable materials at hand, such as dirt, grass and moss, all held in place by the wedges. Other settlers, like B. McLaren, instead chiseled strips of cloth and rags into the cracks to hold in heat. Finally, homesteaders like S. McCrea, A. Scott and E. Palmateer paid for cement mix and spaded that durable substance into the spaces between the logs. It is in clues such as these that we are reminded of the ever present differences in spending power even among pioneer settlers, and the resourcefulness of people striving to overcome the elements to protect their families.

Clearly, the pioneers of the forest tried hard to emulate the classic settler model for growth and establishment, to which the diverse artifact assemblage at Kennaway can attest. Some clues to their efforts are not log cabins per se (at least, they never got to be finished as such). One forest-covered farmstead shows us how many settlers began their shanties, not by building upwards, but



**Pioneers on Ontario's northern frontier were not only faced with the difficulty of clearing their land of the towering trees, but also of the thousands of rocks and boulders that might be scattered on their plots. What better way to get rid of the rocks than by using them in straight stone fences that marked out the boundaries of the fields?**

by digging down. On W. Watt's old land, a square cut pit 21 by 23 feet drops about 5 feet deep, and is rimmed on the surface by large rocks, clearly intended to be a foundation for a structure that appears never to have been finished. Cool cellar pits helped pioneers preserve farm produce through the lean winter months. Strong foundations were not the only purpose to which stone was put.

One of the proofs that these properties were intended to be pioneer farms is the discovery of long lines of boulder fences found on many of the plots. As one can imagine, when new homesteaders arrived on their land, they not only had hundreds of trees to clear, but rocks of all sizes were likewise scattered across their future fields, and they had to be removed. What better way to demonstrate the pioneer's progress than to accomplish two tasks at once: clearing the fields, and erecting stone fences that neatly outlined the parameters of the croplands! These boulder barriers run in straight lines and tend to intersect at right angles, more indication that the pioneers imported the classic model for domesticating the wilderness from older, more established regions to the south.

Further use for the abundant Canadian Shield stone could be found in lining pit wells dug down to the water table, where it was possible to do so. A classic example of a round rock lined well can be seen on M. Watt's old property just steps away from the ruins of his cabin, where water could be drawn up with a bucket on a rope.

And speaking of water, the archaeological evidence shows us that the many lakes in the

region also played an important part in the pioneer lifestyle. In the muddy shallows of Kennaway Lake near W. Watt's old lands, two plank skiffs lie sunken, and another rots up on the shore, while yet a fourth can be found decaying in the bushes on S. McCrea's old farm. Jacks of all trades, the frontier farmers had to be able to hand make their own fishing boats, for the lake trout was a needed protein supplement to the rare times when families such as these butchered a farm animal.

Fences and boats offer clues about the pioneer diet, but sometimes the discovery of artifacts reveals more tragic features. With large families living in often cramped log shanties with no running water, daily baths were hardly possible. Add unsanitary conditions to the isolation of living in remote settlements far from professional health care, and a rather unfortunate formula could add up in hamlets like Kennaway. With the home remedies of local goodwives being the pioneer's best medical care, serious sicknesses represented virtual plagues. Since the 1870s, for example, cases of smallpox seem to have spiked (Reynolds 1973: 111). At Christmastime 1888, the McCrea family was likely not celebrating much. Two of their girls, one 15 and the other seven, were fighting off diphtheria, which was often misdiagnosed early on as a regular fever. Tragically, the elder daughter Elizabeth succumbed to her illness on January 4, 1889. As the family began mourning her loss, the pestilence claimed the life of seven-year-old Mary Ann the following day. Such tragic examples of pioneer lifestyles are illuminated by the discovery of two tombstones originally placed at the foot of a now towering maple tree beside one of the McCrea's old fields.



**Haliburton's pioneers supplemented their farm fare with fish caught in many of the hundreds of lakes that dot the region. They had to be able to build their own skiffs, most of which ultimately found their way to the bottoms of those lakes.**

Now deep in forest, the decaying wooden tombstones have been fastened to a raised metal frame to help preserve them.

### THE CIVIL WAR FACTOR

The two girls would not be the only casualties of Kennaway. The settlement itself experienced its first decline through the 1880s and 1890s, perhaps predetermined by two unlikely causes; the U.S. Civil War and the opening of the Canadian West. After 1865, the United States began a painful period of healing after Union forces accepted the Confederate's surrender. Sore and in post war reflection, the American government cast its eye about for the reasons behind the near-division of the nation. Its old rival from the Revolutionary Wars and the War of 1812, Great Britain, had actually supported the South in the Civil War. Afterwards, Britain and its North American possession, Canada, seemed to represent a readily available scapegoat.

The government of Canada West realized this, and understood that the vast western prairies north of the U.S.A. had suddenly become very attractive to an expansionist America looking to fulfill its Manifest Destiny and to curtail British presence on the continent. Would the northern Great Plains ultimately wave the Stars and Stripes? Canada West launched into rapid negotiations with the British Hudson's Bay Company for the purchase of these lands. To that effect, in 1870, the prairie province of Manitoba was born, and was hastily opened up to Canadian pioneers. As the 'Canadian West' became increasingly settled over the next few decades, pioneers on Ontario's northern frontier were faced with an easy choice. Stay in Haliburton and wrestle farms from the titanic trees of the ancient forest, or take advantage of the cheap, fertile land in the west, much of which was virtually treeless? To many of Haliburton's homesteaders, it was no choice at all.

Haliburton historian Nila Reynolds remarked that "There is hardly a Haliburton County family...which has not contributed at least one member to the winning of the west" (Reynolds 1973: 127). Ironically by the 1890s when a railway was constructed through Haliburton to service its settlers, one of its primary functions seemed to be to carry them out of the region on their way to the west. Names from census records for Kennaway and other pioneer settlements thin out drastically by 1891, and many of their log cabins and farmyards grew quiet, abandoned to be reclaimed by the ever encroaching foliage of the pine forests.

Not all of Kennaway's pioneers fled the doomed settlement, but Haliburton's hamlets would evermore be tiny clusters of families on the periphery of the populated centers of Ontario. Through the early 1900s, a handful of families remained in Kennaway, enough to keep its schoolhouse open until the 1940s, when it was servicing the children from only two families. After that, Ontario's last pioneers were gone, but their diverse artifacts remain just under the thriving Algonquin forest, waiting to tell us more of their story. Further studies of Kennaway and similarly abandoned settlements have great potential to teach us lessons of the precarious balance between an area's available resources and a population's economic prosperity in fringe or frontier

environments. As temperatures warm, the northern parts of North America are increasingly populated and its resources exploited, and studies like Kennaway can help us discover the social and economic conditions that help direct the fate of small frontier communities so that new settlements in the north do not mirror Kennaway's fate.

Haliburton's scenic forests may have given up their farms, but it is clear that they have not given up all their secrets yet.

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**D**o you know someone in the Ontario archaeology community that deserves an award?

The OAS recognizes the variety of contributions its members make to the preservation and documentation of Ontario's archaeological sites. We present awards to outstanding student, non-professional, and professional Ontario archaeologists in recognition of their accomplishments and contributions to the broader understanding of Ontario's past.

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For more details about these awards and to download an application form, please visit: <http://www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca/oas-awards.php#wright>

Alternatively, contact Lindsay Foreman, the Director of Membership services at: [memberservices@ontario-archaeology.on.ca](mailto:memberservices@ontario-archaeology.on.ca).

Award nomination packages should be received by September 1, 2013.

## NOTES AND NEWS

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

Dr. Chris Watts, chair of the nominating committee of the OAS, would like to receive nominations for the following positions on the Board of Directors: Treasurer (3 year term), and three Directors (2 year term).

Anyone who wishes to be considered, or who would like to suggest a candidate, should contact Chris at [cwatts8@uwo.ca](mailto:cwatts8@uwo.ca). This is one way that your voice can be heard in the operation of the society, so please consider serving.

### **FREE ZOOARCHAEOLOGY REPORTS**

Debbie Berg, zooarchaeologist with the Anthropology Department at University of Toronto at Mississauga, has let us know that when zooarchaeologist Rosemary Prevec retired, she gave copies of all her reports to UTM.

Debbie has now completed scanning these zooarchaeology reports and advises that they are available FREE OF CHARGE for any researcher who would like a disc copy.

Contact Debbie directly at

[Deborah.berg@utoronto.ca](mailto:Deborah.berg@utoronto.ca) or call her at 905-828-3780.

We salute Rosemary's generosity in making these reports part of the lasting legacy of her work in Ontario.

### **CORRECTION**

The editors would like to apologize to long-time member and stalwart supporter of the OAS, Charles Garrad, whose surname inexplicably became "Gerard" in the last issue.



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Archaeological  
Society** Inc.

PO Box 62066  
Victoria Terrace Post Office  
Toronto, Ontario M4A 2W1  
(416) 406-5959  
**oasociety@ontarioarchaeology.on.ca**  
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