TROWEL AND PEN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

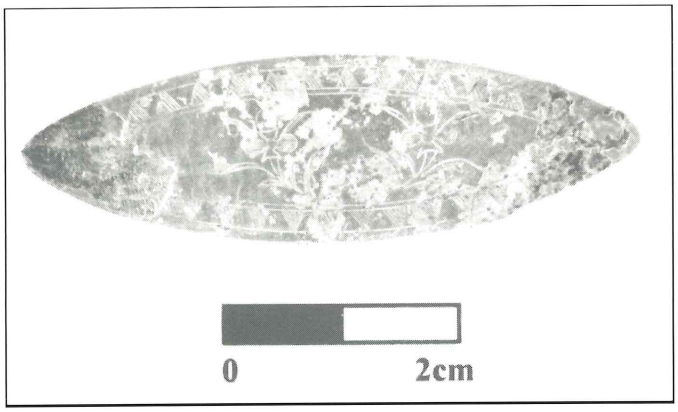
Volume 6 January 2001

ARCHAEOLOGY AT ASHLAND, THE HENRY CLAY ESTATE

Ashland, the site of the home of Henry Clay, a prominent Kentucky politician during the first half of the 19th century, was an important plantation within the Lexington area. Clay operated the property as a large farm with slave labor to raise hemp and grains. He was particularly interested in breeding and raising sheep and cattle.

Today, the main Ashland house, a replacement structure built by Clay's son, James, is a museum. It is surrounded by nearly 20 acres of grounds that contain a cottage, two ice houses, a privy, and a combination meat house and carriage house. But a large mid-19th century working plantation would have included many other outbuildings, as well as work areas and pens full of farm animals. Few of these structures appear on maps of the plantation.

So, in the summer of 2000, KAS launched a long-term research and education program to better understand the layout of the plantation and life beyond the main house. With highway enhancement funding (ISTEA) from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and support from the Henry Clay Memorial Foundation, professional archaeologists, volunteers, and over 200 students worked together to learn more about this site. Activities consisted of thoroughly surveying the grounds around the house and intensively investigating outbuilding remains.



This delicate incised piece of shell might have been inlaid in a small boxlid or other personal item.

KAS archaeologist excavates one of the two Ashland horse skeletons as visitors look on.

Researchers located the remains of three barns and four cellars, all of which likely had structures over them. Among the more exciting finds - judging from the interest of the many visitors to the excavation - were the skeletons of two very young horses. Historical research in the Ashland records indicates that at least two sets of twin foals were stillborn at Ashland.

Another exciting discovery was a long linear concentration of bricks, nails, and window glass

Continued on Page 2.

DID YOU KNOW...

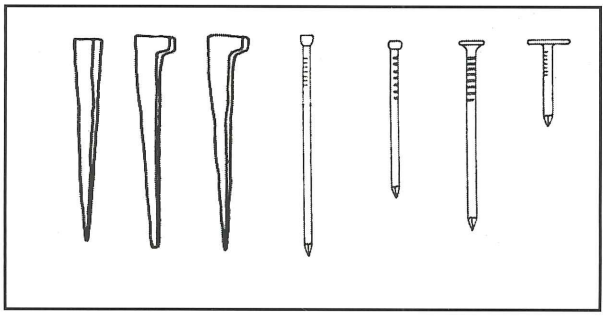
that nails can help archaeologists understand the history of a building? By reading the nails collected from a building site, archaeologists can discover information about a building's age; the history of the changes made to it; and how it was constructed.

Archaeologists can figure out how old certain types of nails are just by looking at them, because nail shapes and how nails are made have changed over time. The first nails were handmade by blacksmiths. They have irregularly shaped heads and shanks. In the 1790s, machines were developed that cut nails from sheets of metal. Thus throughout much of the 1800s, builders used wedge-shaped, square, machine-cut nails in building construction. In the 1870s, nails made from strong wire began to replace machine-cut nails. These wire nails with their round heads are the common type of nail we use today.

When analyzing a collection of nails from an old house site, if only square, machine-cut nails are recovered, then archaeologists know that the structure was built after the 1790s and before the 1870s, even if no written documents are available.

Nail size provides clues to how a building was constructed. Carpenters used small nails to attach wooden shingles to roofs, and used medium-sized nails for flooring and siding. Large nails were used for house framing.

To learn all about the kinds of information contained within the lowly nail, read *Nail Chronology As An Aid to Dating Old Buildings*, by Lee H. Nelson, Technical Leaflet 48, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, TN or History News vol. 24, no.11, Nov. 1968.

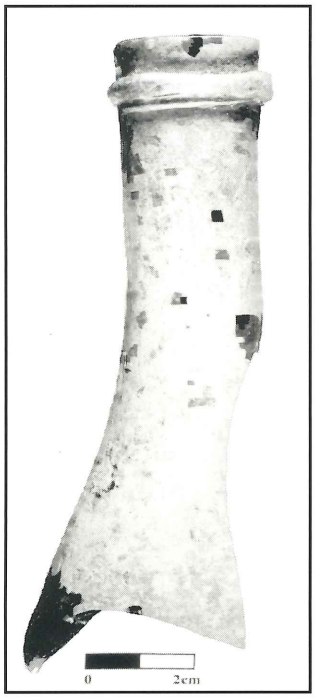


Nail size and shape help archaeologists infer the age and history of old buildings.

Continued from Page 1.

preserved in the grounds behind the house. This may be the remains of slave cabins. Mixed among the brick rubble are china and bottle glass fragments, and personal items such as buttons.

Analysis of the artifacts is on-going and we will continue our investigations at this fascinating site in the coming year. Be sure to contact us if you are interested in volunteering and stay tuned for future updates on the progress of our research at Ashland.



The neck of a 19th century wine bottle.

PROJECT ARCHAEOLOGY

Project Archaeology workshop participants discover the science of archaeology and its applications in their classrooms by doing lessons from Intrigue of the Past: A Teacher's Activity Guide for Fourth Through Seventh Grade, and using additional materials focused specifically on Kentucky. Each workshop is lead by a facilitator team made up of a teacher/educator and a professional archaeologist.

Workshops are planned in 2001 at the following locations:

Land Between the Lakes	March 30-April 1
Salato Wildlife Center & Kentucky History Center	June 21-22

For more information, call Gwynn Henderson at 859/257-1919; email her at aghend2@pop.uky.edu; or visit the Survey's web page **(http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/khc/kas.htm)**.

KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY VIDEO SERIES

The first three episodes in a series of short documentaries about current topics in Kentucky archaeology premiered on KET, The Kentucky Network and on the STARS channel, KET's school television channel, in November and December 2000. Each episode in **KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY** examines a unique aspect of the Commonwealth's archaeology, with a blend of interviews, artifacts, rare archival images, and video of ancient American Indian sites in Kentucky.

Episode 1: Ancient Fires at Cliff Palace Pond (10:30 min) examines landmark research on Kentucky's first forest managers. Archaeologist Cecil Ison takes viewers to a spectacular site in Daniel Boone National Forest where soil core studies show how American Indians have been using fire to manage the environment for over 3,000 years.

Episode 2: The Adena People: Moundbuilders of Kentucky (6:00 min) examines the legacies of the Adena people whose ancient culture is renowned for massive burial mounds. Dr. Berle Clay examines the search for rare Adena settlements, which could tell archaeologists much about the lifeways of these prehistoric American Indians who lived over 2,000 years ago.

Episode 3: Saving a Kentucky Time Capsule (9:00 min) documents efforts to preserve dozens of ancient American Indian mud glyphs (drawings) discovered deep inside a Kentucky cave. Archaeologists Valerie Haskins and Dan Davis lead viewers on an unforgettable journey to see rare legacies from Kentucky's early occupants.

Companion guides for teachers, consisting of eight classroom-tested, cross-curricular activities have been developed by Judy Sizemore for each program. Grade level varies from middle school to high school, depending on the video's subject matter. Visit the Series web site (**http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/khc/video.htm**) to read detailed summaries of the episodes (soon to be posted) as well as brief descriptions of the companion guides, which characterize the lessons, and list the essential questions and the specific Kentucky Academic Expectations addressed in each guide.

Pending funding, the Heritage Council hopes to produce additional episodes. *Episode 4: WPA Archaeology in Kentucky* is currently in production. A Fall 2001 release date is anticipated.

KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY was commissioned by the Kentucky Heritage Council and is produced by Voyageur Media Group, Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio. Financial support for the series' first three episodes came from the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the Kentucky Heritage Council, the Kentucky Archaeological Survey, the National Park Service, the Kentucky Humanities Council, and the Kentucky Arts Council.

The first three episodes in **KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY** can be purchased on a single tape from the Kentucky Heritage Council, 300 Washington Street, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601. The cost is $10.00 plus $4.00 shipping and handling. Make checks payable to the Kentucky Heritage Council and be sure to provide a shipping address. If you have any questions about the series, contact David Pollack at 502/564-6661 or email him (**David.Pollack@mail.state.ky.us**).

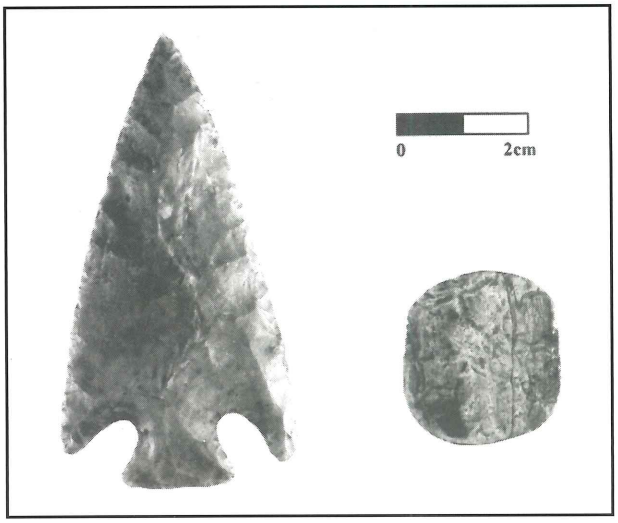
Companion guides for the first three episodes in **KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY** can be downloaded (as they become available) from the Council's **KENTUCKY ARCHAEOLOGY** video series web page (**http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/khc/video.htm**).

RAISED SPIRITS ROCKSHELTER

In the fall of 2000, KAS archaeologists investigated Raised Spirits Rockshelter, located in Powell County in Natural Bridge State Park. This site is a rare one, for unlike many eastern Kentucky rockshelters, the deposits at Raised Spirits were undisturbed. Our work was supported by the Kentucky Department of Parks, with funds provided by the Heritage Land Conservation Fund.

Analysis of the materials from Raised Spirits is ongoing. What we know so far is that Native Americans used the shelter periodically from around 1500 B.C. to A.D. 1700. This is based on the recovery of diagnostic spearpoints and pottery. Two spearpoints, a Wade and a Cogswell, were found at or near the bottom of the deposits and mark the earliest use of the shelter. Prehistoric peoples made these kinds of points during the Late Archaic (3000-1000 B.C.) and into the Early Woodland (A.D. 1000-200) periods.

Just below the surface, KAS archaeologists recovered very thin, shell tempered ceramics, including a decorated rimsherd from a handled jar. Fort Ancient



A 3,500 year old Wade spearpoint and a 300 year old shell gorget found at the Raised Spirits Rockshelter.

groups who lived in the Red River Gorge area very late in the Late Prehistoric period (A.D. 1550-1750) made these kinds of ceramics. Associated with these sherds was a small shell pendant and a large quantity of animal bones. The presence of the animal bones suggests that Fort Ancient people used Raised Spirits as a hunting camp.

This newsletter is published annually by the Kentucky Archaeological Survey, jointly administered by the Kentucky Heritage Council (State Historic Preservation Office) and the University of Kentucky Department of Anthropology

1020-A Export Street
Lexington, Kentucky 40506-9854
Voice 859/257-5173 Fax 859/323-1968
Website: *http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/khc/kas.htm*

It is the mission of the Kentucky Archaeological Survey to provide technical assistance to state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations and to work with educators to develop public education programs by establishing good working relationships with other agencies and organizations, conducting archaeological surveys and other research, and providing educators with information on Kentucky archaeology.

Nonprofit Org
US Postage Paid
Lexington, KY
Permit 51