

An Investigation of the Brodhead Site

The Brodhead Site was one of a series of archeological sites investigated by W. Fred Kinsey III as part of his work for the National Park Service in the upper Delaware Valley during the planning for the proposed Tocks Island Dam. The Brodhead Site is located about a mile north of the village of Bushkill, PA, in the flood plain adjacent to the Delaware River.

The park is constructing a 32-mile cycling/hiking trail in Pennsylvania parallel to the Delaware River, known as the McDade Recreational Trail. The trail will pass near, but somewhat inland from, the area of Kinsey's 1965 excavations. Since more recent archeological investigations have revealed the presence of pre-historic archeological materials in nearby locations, the park determined that the area should be tested prior to construction.^{1,2,3}

To accomplish this work, in 2001 park archeologist John Wright developed a partnership with the Department of Anthropology and Sociology of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. Working under a cooperative agreement, the university's archeological field methods classes hold their field exercises at the Brodhead Site, satisfying both the National Park Service's goal of maximizing educational opportunities in the parks, and protecting potential archeological sites from disturbance.

In addition to the Kutztown students, members of Chapter 14 of the Society for Pennsylvania Archeology have also participated in the fieldwork. The Society brings together people with an interest in archeology. Some members have been active in Delaware Valley archeology for many decades and have worked on sites key to developing knowledge of the region's prehistory.

As work progressed, interest spread. Veteran participants brought family members, friends, and co-workers to visit and, in some cases, to work. Teenagers came to gain first-hand experience and, perhaps, explore whether archeology is something they wanted to pursue as a career. Kutztown students from previous years have returned to lend their expertise. The variety of participants permitted the pairing of students and others new to the field with seasoned volunteers, thus enriching the experience for both groups. Other visitors have included a Girl Scout troop and a criminal law forensics class from East Stroudsburg University.

Despite the large number of individuals who have participated, the progress of the work has been slower than hoped. Weather and ground conditions in February and March restricted fieldwork by the Kutztown University class to about five Saturdays in April and early May, just before the semester ends. Work continues intermittently with a combination of Kutztown University students who live locally and a variety of volunteers. Generally, no more than half a dozen people are present on any one day. This permits a less hectic setting than when the field class, usually about 12 students, is present. Novice volunteers can be given close attention and instruction by the more knowledgeable participants, and many a story of past experiences, both in the field and "apres" field are exchanged.

The down side of running the excavation with this type of crew is the lack of continuity in personnel. Just when the Kutztown University students are beginning to get the hang of things, the semester is over and nearly all are gone. The Chapter 14 members and other volunteers have

KU students performing field investigations at the Brodhead Site. NPS photo.



Professor Perazio explaining site excavations to a local Girl Scout troop. NPS photo.

busy lives with many commitments to things other than archeology. With the team constantly changing, much time is spent bringing new workers up to speed.

The 1965 investigation by Kinsey does not appear to have included any deep excavation.⁴ The cultural components are described as shallow and mixed, including dateable points and ceramics associated primarily with the Early through Late Woodland periods. Very few artifacts attributable to any portion of the Archaic were found. However, the Kutztown University excavation of the Brodhead Site has recovered thus far artifacts, including archaic diagnostics, at some depth below the base of the plow zone. The presence of these materials indicates that it is at least possible that the archaic materials, which appeared to be missing from Kinsey's study area, are in fact buried at greater depth.

The Kutztown class has now spent two seasons at the Brodhead Site. A planned Pennsylvania Department of Transportation roadwidening project immediately adjacent to this location will both increase the area to be examined and raise the urgency for completing the fieldwork. National Park Service staff and an expanded pool of volunteers will join the



Kutztown University archeological field methods class this year determined to bring the field investigation to a completion in 2002.

Notes

- ¹ Fred W. Kinsey III, *Archeology in the Upper Delaware Valley, a Study of the Cultural Chronology of the Tocks Island Reservoir*. (Harrisburg, PA: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1972).
- ² John R. Wright, *Archeological Investigations South of Randall Creek and South of Bushkill Access and Additional Archeological Investigations of the Stoehr Site, 36 Pi 148, Bushkill Access in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Lehman Township, Pike County, Pennsylvania*. (Bushkill, PA: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, 1997).
- ³ John R. Wright, and Lori Rohrer, "Preliminary archeological investigations of portions of the proposed Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Monroe and Pike County, Pennsylvania." In progress. (Bushkill, PA: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area).
- ⁴ Fred W. Kinsey III, *Archeology in the Upper Delaware Valley, a Study of the Cultural Chronology of the Tocks Island Reservoir* (Harrisburg, PA: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1972), 257, 259.

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Volunteers sifting for artifacts at the Brodhead Site. NPS photo.

