

Archaeologists can really dig area's early days

Stones and bones from a local farm begin to tell a story of what life in early Barrington was like. Early as in before the first white settlers came to the area. Early as in 400 A.D.

By KIRK BIRGINAL

The last Roman troops were leaving Great Britain, wrestling had long been a highly developed sport, the Franks were settling in parts of Gaul, and Constantinople University was being founded.

The time is 400 A.D., and Indians living in the Barrington area are starting to shift to an agricultural way of life. For the first time, they are able to grow a strain of corn that can survive the long northern days of summer. And a new invention is attracting a lot of interest: smaller and lighter stone points have made arrows a reality and spears a thing of the past.

THE BOW AND ARROW played a role in bringing a greater Indian population to the Barrington area in the 10th Century. With this new weapon, hunters could take advantage of the smaller, faster game that frequented a glacial upland in Barrington Hills near the edge of an oak forest. Instead of stalking migratory herd animals in more open areas, in the late fall hunters came to Barrington Township and developed a specialized hamlet where they hunted deer and smoked the hides in preparation for winter.

The site of this early upper Mississippian hunting camp is part of a Barrington Hills farm now owned by Henry and Debbie Cooke, and it has been slowly uncovered during a two-year archaeological dig. The excavation is being carried out by a team of archaeologists from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb led by Charles W. Markman, head of the university's anthropology department.

"This site is significant for the data it's providing on the origins of a corn agriculture," says Markman.

"We can view a dramatic transition

here when the Indians were becoming committed to growing corn and depending on it instead of relying only on food that could be gathered."

HE TOLD A gathering of about 200 people at Countryside School this week that the digging has unearthed the outline of what appears to have been a large house at the site. Inside the semi-circle of what appears to be holes for house posts, archaeological sleuths say they have turned up cooking pits and hearths. Discovered so far have been food and animal remains, arrowheads, pottery shards and other artifacts dating roughly from 100 B.C. to 900 A.D.

One fluted arrowhead discovered by the Cookes after it was turned up by a plow is believed to date as far back as 8,000 B.C., Markman says, which predates the building of the pyramids by about 5,000 years. The date of the arrowhead was approximated by comparing it to styles of similar points found at other sites. Those arrowheads, found along with the bones of ancient species of bison and mastodons, were dated by carbon dating, which has some margin of error.

"ONE MISCONCEPTION we have is that the history of this area begins with the pioneers and the first white settlers. But there's a very interesting local story here that begins before written history, a pre-history written in stones and bones," he says. Markman said the first white pioneers didn't arrive in this area until the 17th Century.

This summer, Markman is organizing another archaeological field school to continue excavating the site. This will be the last year of digging before the land has to be sold. The dig is partly funded by the university, but Markman said more funds will be needed to pay for

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Owner of the excavation site, Debbie Cooke, displays arrowheads unearthed at what is thought to have been a specialized hamlet where deer were hunted in the late fall. (Staff Photos by Bill Cakes)



Animal teeth among the remains discovered during a two-year archaeological dig at a Barrington Hills farm where evidence suggests a 10th Century Indian encampment existed.

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Area's early days—

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floatation tanks and heavy equipment and complete scientific dating of artifacts.

"We'd like to bring in a front-end loader this year to clear off the top soil and quickly get to the undisturbed features underneath. That way we could spend more time carefully excavating those areas," he said.

He added that he would like to see work this summer spread to other areas south on the site where he says intact artifacts from earlier periods are hidden.

Once the job is finished, he said funds

will be needed to compile the findings into a publishable form, possibly a monograph, he says.

MARKMAN SAYS THE archaeological discoveries in Barrington Hills is helping complete a picture of the pre-written history of the upper Midwest.

One find at the site was an early variety of northern flint corn that is not seen at other Illinois excavations. It indicates one of the earliest findings of complete dependence on corn in the Middle Woodland period of history.

Markman said.

From pottery at the Cooke site, archaeologists are getting some idea of the relationship between Indians here and those south on the Mississippi River. From pottery designs, archaeologists conclude people from this area were in contact with others around St. Louis, probably traveling there to trade furs.

"The picture of pre-history is like putting together minute pieces of a puzzle. The Cooke site has helped us put together some of these pieces of what was happening in the upper Midwest at this time," he said.

LEGAL NOTICE

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION

OFFICIAL NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION will be held in COOK COUNTY on:

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1986

- The GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION will be held in all precincts of each Township, the Cities of Berwyn and Evanston and the Town of Cicero, under the jurisdiction of the Election Department of the Cook County Clerk.
- The Polls for the said ELECTION will be open at 6:00 A.M. and closed at 7:00 P.M.
- At the GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION the voters of the Democratic Party and the voters of the Republican Party will nominate candidates for the following offices to be elected at the November 4, 1986 GENERAL ELECTION:

GOVERNOR

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

ATTORNEY GENERAL

SECRETARY OF STATE

STATE COMPTROLLER

STATE TREASURER

REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS

(from each Congressional District in Cook County)

STATE SENATOR

(From Legislative Districts 2 - 8 - 9 - 11 - 14 - 15 - 17 - 23 - 24 - 26 - 27 - 29 - 30 - 33 - 39)

REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(From each Legislative District in Cook County)

COUNTY CLERK OF COOK COUNTY

TREASURER OF COOK COUNTY

SHERIFF OF COOK COUNTY

SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE REGION OF COOK COUNTY

ASSESSOR OF COOK COUNTY

COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOARD OF APPEALS OF COOK COUNTY

(Two to be nominated)

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY

(Ten to be nominated in the City of Chicago)

(Seven to be nominated from outside the City of Chicago)

COMMISSIONERS OF THE METROPOLITAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF GREATER CHICAGO

(Three to be nominated)

APPELLATE AND CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES - (To Fill Vacancies)

- OFFICERS to be ELECTED at the GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION to be held in Cook County on TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1986:

STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEEMEN (Separate races for Male and Female Democratic Candidates. Combined race for Republican Candidates.)

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEEMEN

(of each political party for each Township in Cook County outside of the City of Chicago)

- LOCAL ELECTIONS - Candidates to be ELECTED at the GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION to be held in Cook County on TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1986:

VILLAGE OF WINNETKA (Three Trustees)

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