

Footprints in the Sand

by JIM STUART, CEDAR POINT



Photo: Peter Davis

The Huronia chapter of the Ontario Archaeological Society — a group of professional, research and avocational archaeologists — first got together in May 2009. The group joined with the OAS in promoting ethical archaeology in North Simcoe or Huronia. Today, the chapter's activities encompass many issues and opportunities of interest to Tiny residents.

Perhaps the best documented first contact between Indigenous people and Europeans in all of North America took place in Huronia. Over 600 archaeological sites have been identified in an area between Tiny in the west and north, Orillia in the east, and Orr Lake/Bass Lake/Tiny Marsh to the south, which reflects the boundaries of the Wendat Confederacy. Of these sites, about 125 are in Tiny, with 25 being ossuaries or burial sites.

The Huronia chapter of the OAS remains actively involved. For instance, did you know that Simcoe County is preparing an archaeological management plan that will help local planners and property owners avoid inadvertently destroying identified and unidentified archaeological sites? This county initiative can be found at www.simcoe.ca/dpt/pln/AMP.

For those with an interest in Tiny's history and archaeology, two of the best research resources are hidden away in secure rooms at the Penetanguishene and Midland Public Libraries. You might need to make an appointment to get in. As well, our chapter's blog contains a reading list at www.oashuroniachapter.com.

With the OAS, the Huronia chapter encourages the protection of our local heritage and cultural resources. We strongly discourage the practice of looting. But, if you walk the beaches, dig in the dirt or keep your eyes open on your walks in Tiny, you may very well find an artifact. If you would like guidance or advice on what you have found or already have on hand, please contact us. We may all learn something new from the discussion.

How you can get involved

If you are interested in exploring Tiny's history or what may lie in the earth beneath your feet, feel free to drop into any of our monthly OAS chapter meetings. They take place at 7:00 pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the North Simcoe Sports & Recreation Centre in Midland.

Throughout the year, we offer a variety of presentations by knowledgeable individuals and experts on history, archaeology and research topics — usually but not always local. The evening events offer an opportunity to mix with others having similar interests, and provide a forum for discussion. Meetings are open to the public at no charge.

If you would like to get your hands dirty and participate in local archaeological digs, please ask to be put on our email list about such events.

For more information on what we do or how to become a chapter member, contact us through our chapter blog, our Facebook group, Google, or through our chapter president, John Raynor, at jraynor@rogers.com.



Good News About Controlling Invasive Phragmites!

by LYNN SHORT, WYMBOLWOOD BEACH



Photo: Lynn Short

Lynn Short and Ingrid Egner holding a 3.5m Phragmites stalk cut from the control section, September 2018

Phragmites is an aggressive, invasive, non-native reed literally choking some of Tiny's beautiful shorelines. People want to know what they can do to fight back. For the past three summers, I have conducted Phragmites control research, supported by Tiny Township, at a private site on Wymbolwood Beach. This research has demonstrated that a spading technique can be successful in dramatically reducing the presence of Phragmites in as little as three seasons with regular non-chemical treatment. The technique is ideal for use by community groups and individual property owners wishing to rapidly and effectively control infestations.

The research site is divided into four sections. The Phragmites stalks in three of the sections were spade cut just below the soil surface at different times. The fourth section remained untouched, serving as a control section to document Phragmites growth with no interference. Measurements of Phragmites density, height and diameter were collected for each section over three seasons, as were observations of other plant and animal species present.

Each season, there was a reduction in stalk density in the treated test sites compared to the control section. The third season revealed the most dramatic results. In 2018, while the control section remained consistent at a density of about 115 stalks per square metre, the section that had been cleared 3 to 4 times a season for 3 seasons started out at about 20 stalks per square meter in spring and ended in the fall, after removals, at about 5 stalks per square metre.

Importantly, this spade-cutting method also enabled native shoreline plants to return. The three to four cuts per season section had the least Phragmites, as well as the greatest number of other native plant species. These plants were not introduced into the site. They appeared on their own after the removal of the Phragmites. A diverse native seed bank was always present in the soil just waiting for an opportunity to grow.

This research demonstrates that the more Phragmites stalks are spade cut in a season, the more quickly the invader can be controlled and the more quickly native plant biodiversity is re-established.

For an informative postcard showing how to use the spading technique, go to the Ontario Phragmites Working Group website (www.opwg.ca) and search for "Spading Postcard".

Lynn Short is a Professor of Horticulture at Humber College. Her spading technique has been used in a parallel study in the Humber River Valley.

Invasive Phragmites Research: Volunteers Needed

Professor Lynn Short is continuing her research at Wymbolwood Beach for a fourth season investigating non-chemical control of invasive Phragmites. Volunteers are needed for Friday mornings from May to August to record data measurements or remove Phragmites using the spading technique. All tools will be provided. Practical clothing, work gloves and sturdy footwear are suggested. Come out and learn about this problem plant that is taking over our beaches.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Lynn at lynn.short@humber.ca or 647-273-5966.

Hurononia Chapter Meetings, June-September 2019

Expand your understanding of local archaeology by attending these meetings. They're open to everyone. Unless otherwise indicated, they take place at 7:00 p.m. at North Simcoe Recreation Centre in Midland.

- **June 12** — **Dr. Alicia Hawkins**, Laurentian University Department of Archaeology, on recent pottery finds in Huronia, use of clay chemistry analysis, and ongoing research in collaboration with the Huron Wendat.
- **July 10** — **"Flesh Reborn"** by Dr. Jean François Lozier, University of Ottawa Department of History. Dr. Lozier will draw on a range of ethnohistorical sources to reconstruct the early history of the 17th century Jesuit mission settlements in the St. Lawrence valley and their Algonquin, Innu, Wendat, Iroquois, and Wabanaki founders.
- **August 14** — **local historian Art Duval**, on his research and findings on Council Rock. Time and location of this meeting to follow.
- **September 11** — **Jim Shropshire**, presenting a new perspective on Kenneth Kidd's 1940 excavation of Sainte-Marie among the Hurons based on research he has been doing at the site since 2001. Find out more at www.oashuroniachapter.com

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