



**Newsletter of The Ottawa Chapter, Ontario Archaeological Society – A Tradition Since 1976**

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Learning to kayak in Nuuk, Greenland (page 10)



**Happy New Year and Happy Volume 50!**

We are pleased to present the first issue of Volume 50. It begins with “teamwork”, then our land acknowledgement (complimented by a seasonal white and grey landscape), and a list of 2026 speakers and events assembled by Brad Drouin. Phil Trottier’s 2025 President’s Report is followed by a “Save the Dates” reminder for Archaeology Days in July. Some reminiscences from Jean-François Beaulieu related to his years as our newsletter editor are followed by Rory MacKay’s second *Adventure along the Little Bonnechere River*, as well as a book review. We trust you’ll find something of interest. Enjoy!



**Teamwork on a trench excavation across a possible shanty foundation mound at the Dickerson Site, July 2025.**

*Image courtesy of: Rory Mackay*

Le chapitre d’Ottawa de la Société ontarienne d’archéologique Inc. reconnaît le territoire non cédé de la Nation algonquine Anishinabe dont le riche attachement culturel remonte à des milliers d’années et dont la culture et la présence ont nourri et continuent de nourrir ces terres. Nous reconnaissons les Algonquins Anishinabe comme étant les gardiens traditionnels de ces terres et comme étant les défenseurs coutumiers du savoir du bassin versant de la rivière des Outaouais. Nous honorons leur culture, leur présence et leur long passé d’accueil de nombreuses nations sur ce magnifique territoire. En outre, nous rendons hommage à tous les peuples autochtones de cette région, de toutes les nations à travers le Canada, qui vivent à Ottawa.

The Ottawa Chapter of the Ontario Archaeological Society Inc. acknowledges the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation whose rich cultural attachment to this land reaches back thousands of years and whose culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. We recognize the Anishinabe Algonquin as the traditional guardians of this land and as customary Knowledge Keepers and Defenders of the Ottawa River watershed. We honour their culture, presence and long history of welcoming many nations to this beautiful territory. Further, we pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada who call Ottawa home.

## Upcoming Ottawa Chapter Speakers and Events

**We hope you will be able to listen to some of the speakers lined up for 2026.  
Stay tuned for Zoom registration links and other information.**

### **January 15, 2026**

Speaker: Shauna Huculak, Victoria, B.C.

Topic: [Hydrovac Use Managing Risk, Maintaining Control in Areas of Archaeological Sensitivity](#)

### **February 19, 2026**

Speaker: Ashley Cameron

Topic: [FJCa-51 \(site\)](#)

### **March 19, 2026**

Speaker: Chelsea Colwell-Pasch

Topic: [TBD](#)

### **April 16, 2026**

Speaker: Nicole Nicholls (City of Kamloops)

Topic: [Power screening and Hydro-vac in Kamloops](#)

### **May 21, 2026**

Speaker: Susan Langley

Topic: [What do the Titanic, the Bible and Superman have in Common? \(maritime archaeology\)](#)

### **July 11-15, 2026**

[Archaeology Days in Bonnechere Provincial Park](#)

## President's Report presented at the 2025 OAS Ottawa Chapter AGM



The strength of the Chapter is in large part due to the dedication and efforts of the Executive and group of active members. This commitment is very deeply appreciated as it keeps the presence of the Chapter very visible. My heartfelt thanks to all of you for continuing this participation.

**Left: Most of the Chapter Executive, along with several active members were able to offer a variety of activities and presentations during Archaeology Days in Bonnechere Provincial Park in July.**

The Chapter continues to promote interest in the archaeology of the area and in particular staffed a display table at the February Heritage Day event at City Hall and again in October at the Archaeology Day event at the University of

Ottawa. Aside from having publications on display there were displays of replicas of projectile points and stone tools indigenous to the area.

**Right: Chapter President Phil Trottier and Director Stephanie Carles with display at Heritage Day in February.**



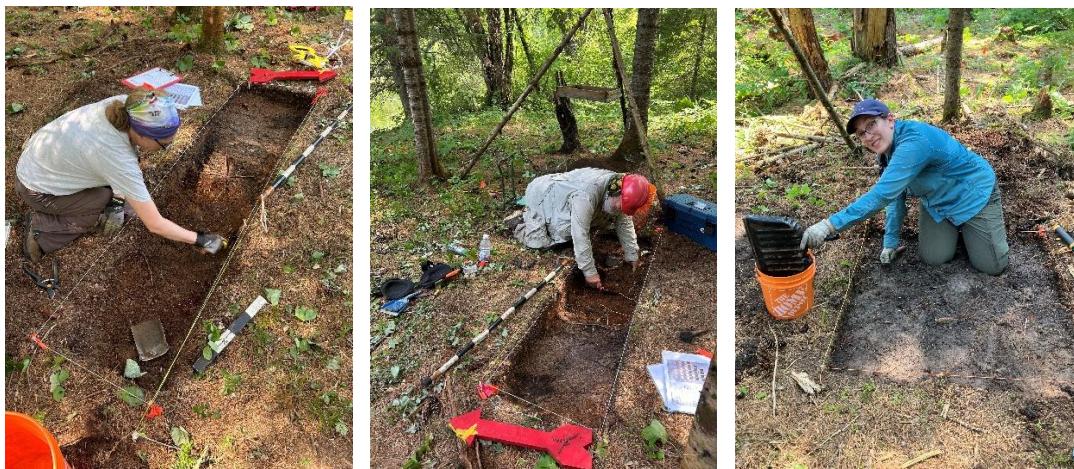
Zoom and in-person presentations were held during the year including a zoom presentation by Audrey Lapointe and Jean Luc Pilon on the Archaeo-Pontiac project. Bob Clarke gave an in-person presentation in March on Skead's Mill – a unique steam powered lumber mill on the Ottawa River. In October Laura Banducci gave a zoom presentation on changing settlement patterns in Gabii, Italy. We have a number of interesting presentations scheduled from January through April in 2026.

**Left: Skead's Mill excavation in progress.**

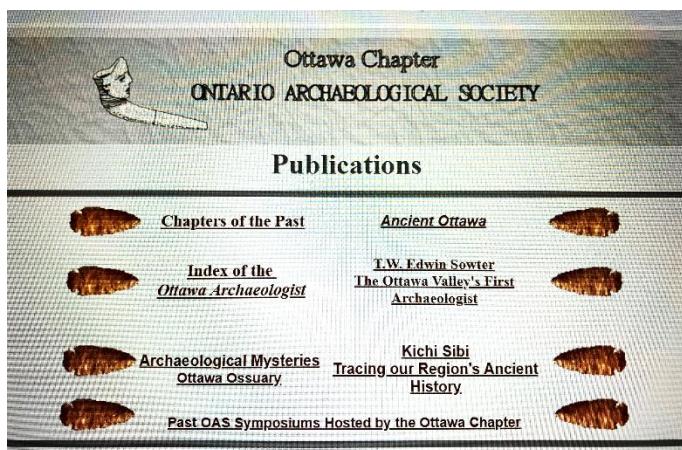
Once again, the Chapter was at Bonnechere Provincial Park in July promoting its efforts at the Annual Archaeology Days event coupled with work at the Dickerson Site. Many thanks go out to Marian Clark for organizing the Chapter participation.

**Right: A very interactive Archaeology Days ceramic activity.**





**Under the leadership of Courtney Cameron (left), the Dickerson Site received more attention in 2025. Rory MacKay (centre) and Monica Maika (right) contributed their skills, endurance and extreme heat tolerance!**



With publications being dropped from some websites, the Chapter took on the task of identifying these resource publications and uploaded them to the Ottawa Chapter website. They are now readily available to anyone doing archaeological research.

I am happy to report the motion regarding gratis Indigenous membership originally raised and crafted and discussed among the Chapter Executive, was presented and passed at the recent OAS Annual General Meeting.

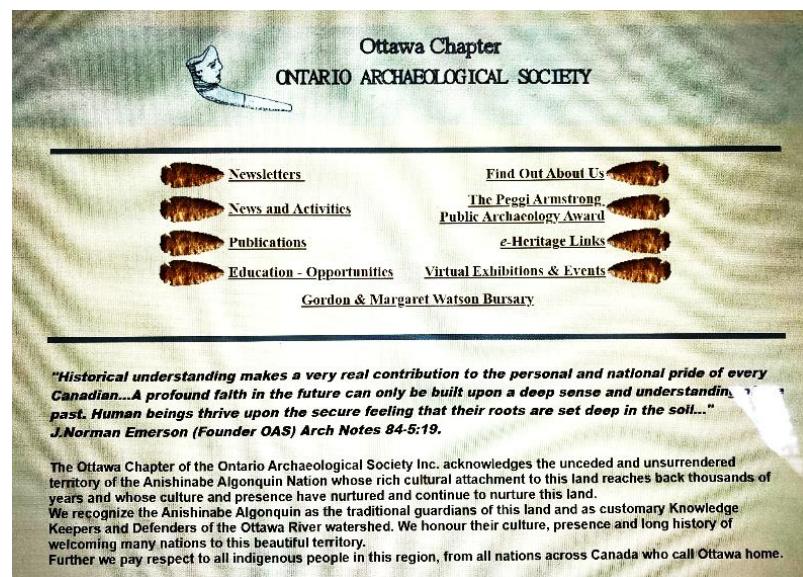
We continue to reach out through our website and Facebook page and our Newsletter. Our thanks go out to Yvon and Ellen for the substantive efforts put in to

produce such informative high-quality products. As well, we continue to promote the activities of other OAS Chapters.

Again, I would like to note the team approach of the Executive has been very productive this past year and has already made very positive results in the upcoming months. Again, my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the members of the Executive for the efforts put in to keep the Chapter moving forward.

Sincerely,

Philippe G. Trottier  
Ottawa Chapter President



*"Historical understanding makes a very real contribution to the personal and national pride of every Canadian...A profound faith in the future can only be built upon a deep sense and understanding of the past. Human beings thrive upon the secure feeling that their roots are set deep in the soil..."*  
J. Norman Emerson (Founder OAS) Arch Notes 84-5:19.

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**Save the Dates**  
**Archaeology Days in**  
**Bonnechere Provincial Park**

**July 11-15, 2026**  
**(July 11-12 - Public Archaeology Programming)**  
**(July 13-15 – Dickerson Site – 3 days of excavation)**



## Reminiscing on my Newsletter Editor Years

by Jean-François Beaulieu, B.A Honours Classical Studies, M.A History

From 1981 to 1982, I volunteered at the Zooarchaeology Identification Centre located at 491 Bank Street. This was part of the Museum of Natural Science, under the directorship of Dr. Stephen Cumbaa. He is the person who suggested I become an Ottawa Chapter member, which I did in 1985. In the 1980s and 1990s, I volunteered and catalogued artifacts from several archaeological sites in which the Chapter was involved including South Lake, Basin Depot, and the Stockade Barracks.

In March 1997, a tragedy struck the Ottawa Chapter. It hit the Chapter members hard. In the spur of the moment, I decided to offer to become the Newsletter Editor of *The Ottawa Archaeologist*. I had no experience in that field. It was all new to me but I did this to the best of my abilities. Attending executive meetings and coordinating with board members were also new experiences.



As editor, I had to constantly find ideas for the newsletter. I had to write and edit using MS Word on my desktop computer, and insert graphics and photos. Articles sometimes included those related to archaeology in the *Ottawa Citizen*. Other content could be news of attending events organized by Parks Canada or articles related to attending CAA conferences. Contributions from local members and cultural heritage organizations were always appreciated, including news related to the Cumberland Township Historical Society or the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum. *The Ottawa Archaeologist* also included AGM director annual

reports. The Chapter President usually had a column in the newsletter; sometimes there would be special announcements.

The Newsletter Editor had to print a final draft and bring it to Sure Print in Orleans. I then had to insert the newsletter copies into envelopes, to which address labels and stamps were affixed. Then they were mailed to the membership and friends on the official mailing list. Being newsletter editor was almost a full-time job. You have to do time management. Today, the newsletter is posted on the Ottawa Chapter website and the steps of going to a print shop, stuffing, labeling, stamping and mailing are all unnecessary.



In 2002, I resigned from the Newsletter Editor position and stayed on the executive until 2004. I had to work my Master's degree. The editorial experiences did help me in writing and editing my major research paper. My experience on the executive also helped me when I was on the CTHS (Cumberland Township Historical Society) board. As newsletter editor, you find interesting articles to share with chapter members. You also meet interesting people and make friends. It's definitely a learning experience.

Since stepping down, I continue to write and contribute to *The Ottawa Archaeologist* on an occasional basis.

For those who might be interested...

### Celebrating the International Day of the Greek Language

On Monday, March 9, 2025 at 7 pm, there will be a reception organized by the University of Ottawa Department of Classics and Religious Studies, the Greek Embassy, and the Parnassos Hellenic Cultural Society of Ottawa. This event, to celebrate the Greek language, will be held at the Desmarais building at DMS 12102. Wine and finger food will be served. Last fall, the United Nations (UNESCO) recognized the Greek language's 3,000+ years of continuity and contributions to world culture. There will be a discussion on the importance of the language throughout history.



## Rory's Adventures along the Little Bonnechere River: A Picnic at the McGuey Farm

by Rory MacKay



McGuey descendant Jessica Robertson (L) holding *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere* first edition and friend Andrea Ruzzo (R) holding the second edition, at the McGuey Farm at Bridge Dam on the Little Bonnechere River.

*Image courtesy of Rory MacKay.*

In the winter of 1975, the Algonquin Park Museum hired me to conduct oral history interviews with Park old-timers. Among the people I interviewed were three adult children of Dennis and Margaret McGuey; Hannah, Peter and Henry. The McGuey family had lived on a farm along the riverbank many kilometres up the Little Bonnechere River from Basin Depot. Dennis and Margaret ran a stopping place, where travellers on the road could get a meal or a place to sleep, be they lumbermen walking into the lumber-camps or teamsters taking in sleigh-loads of supplies. Dennis also tended to the Bridge

Dam and the Mill Dam upstream. That was before the family moved to Basin Lake and later had to move out when Algonquin Park expanded east in 1914, sixty years before I met them.

I had completed two interviews with 86-year-old Hannah and one interview with 84-year-old Peter, and one interview with 82-year-old Henry, when Hannah suggested she would like to see the old farm once again. Hannah was in luck because in 1976 a logging road was still drivable to the former farm fields. I drove up from my home in Kingston to

meet Peter, Hannah, and Hannah's son Clifford Hyland at Basin Depot. We followed the logging road down to an overgrown field by the river.

Hannah usually got around in a wheelchair, but the ground was uneven so after a picnic lunch of sandwiches she stayed in the car next to my Datsun 510 while Peter gave me a tour of what little remained of the farm buildings. A bit unsteady, Peter held my arm as we walked around. Here was the barn, there was the old road, there was the milk-house and close-by, at a bend in the road, a grave where Peter's twin had been buried as an infant. When locations of buildings were uncertain to Peter, we made our way to Clifford's car to ask Hannah. Gradually a sketch map of the farm structures was drawn.

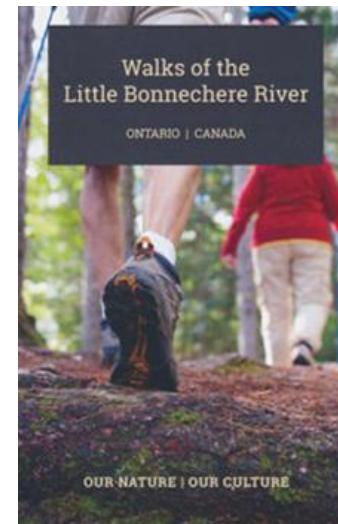
After the McGuey "children" had left, I stood, reviewing the map, which is now in the Algonquin Provincial Park Archives and Collections. Maybe it was the sound of wind in the pines or the soft gurgle of the Bonnechere River but even though I was alone amongst the raspberries that had taken over the fields, I could swear I heard children playing; children that could not be there.

One day, years later, I was having dinner at the Mad Musher restaurant in Whitney. That was before there were fancy machines you could just tap with a credit card. The waitress had to make an imprint of your credit card, which meant taking the card from you to swipe on a mechanical device. Well, the young waitress took the card and stood studying my name on it. She asked if I had written *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere*. I said yes, and she then told me that she was Peter McGuey's great granddaughter. She said she hoped to pass on a copy of my book to each of her two children, but she had only one copy and copies of the book were no longer available from the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. Jessica is why I approached The Friends of Algonquin Park to produce a second edition for a new generation to read.

Four and a half decades after our picnic, I was asked to share a copy of the map I made that day with Jessica Robertson. She and her friend Andrea planned to walk into the old McGuey farm (one of the *Walks of the Little Bonnechere*). There they

read, in both the first and second edition copies of *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere* they had taken in with them, Peter McGuey's story about the day the goose on her nest was swept away when the Bridge Dam broke. The goose came back but the nest did not.

(Getting to the farm is difficult now, due to recent logging that has obscured the trail).



## References

MacKay, Roderick

1996 *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere – A History of Exploration, Logging, and Settlement 1800 to 1920*. Friends of Bonnechere Parks, Pembroke, Ontario.

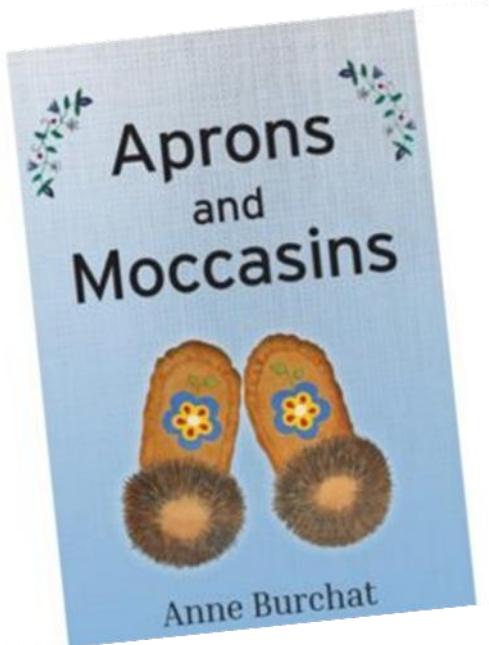
2016 *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere – A History of Exploration, Logging, and Settlement 1800 to 1920. Second Edition*, Friends of Algonquin Park, Whitney, Ontario.

MacKay, Roderick and Mark Stabb

2021 *Walks along the Little Bonnechere River, Ontario, Canada – Our Nature, Our Culture*. Friends of Bonnechere Parks, Ottawa Valley Tourist Association, The Friends of Algonquin Park, [no city indicated].

Stabb, Mark and Roderick MacKay

2002 *Walks along the Little Bonnechere River*. Friends of Bonnechere Parks, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Friends of Algonquin, Renfrew, Ontario.



## Aprons and Moccasins

by Anne Burchat

2025 • Burnstown Publishing House, Burnstown, ON

[burnstowntublishing.com](http://burnstowntublishing.com)

ISBN 978-1-77257-447-0 (PB) • 978-1-77257-448-7 (eBook)

39 pp. + i-vii • \$20 + HST + shipping

### Reviewed by Rory MacKay\*\*

During Archaeology Day at Bonnechere Park in July 2025, I purchased a small book written by Anne Burchat, a former Director of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. Although it is

not about archaeology, the title and the attractive and colourful cover caught my interest. I was impressed with the timeliness of the subject material; two young girls, Lena and Chenoa, become friends and discover interesting parallels between their respective Kashub and Algonquin ancestral cultures and histories. As well, they find similar artistic themes in their hobbies of embroidery on aprons and beading on moccasins. This brought the two girls closer to their families and each other. What impressed me most was that *Aprons and Moccasins* was written for younger readers in a way I find personally to be a challenge in my own writing.

I sought out an opinion of *Aprons and Moccasins* from my friend and neighbour Judy O'Grady (thank you Judy). She is a retired elementary school teacher with an interest in books for children and adults having difficulties with reading. She has read hundreds of children's books over her career. Some of her reasons for liking *Aprons and Moccasins* included that the book is about "kids learning about other's cultures in a kid's way; not being preached to but respecting how their cultures have similarities." Both cultures were "explored equally".

Judy noted that the explanations were clear and the sentence structure is easy to understand, even if the ideas and concepts are new to the reader. The historical fact of lands being taken from Indigenous people is "a sensitive topic well handled." It is acknowledged but "without rancour", and explains that both groups were seeking a better life. I consider books of this type helpful in the process of reconciliation since Judy noted it emphasizes that "different means not the same, and doesn't mean inferior".



Particularly if you have young readers, I would recommend this book. Currently it is available at a cost of \$20, plus HST and shipping, from Anne Burchat, from Burnstown Publishing House ([www.burnstowntublishing.com](http://www.burnstowntublishing.com)), and, it is hoped, also from the store at Bonnechere Provincial Park.



\*\*author of *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere and Algonquin Park - A Place Like No Other*.

## 2026 Ottawa Chapter Executive Committee

President: Phil Trottier  
Vice President: **Vacant**  
Treasurer: Bill MacLennan  
Secretary: Monica Maika  
Director at Large: Marian Clark  
Director at Large: Brad Drouin  
Director at Large: Aaron Mior  
Director at Large (*The Ottawa Archaeologist* Newsletter Editor): Ellen Blaubergs

## Don't forget to renew your 2026 OAS and Ottawa Chapter memberships

<https://ontarioarchaeology.org/get-involved/membership/>

**Thank you to everyone who has renewed!**

**Our mailing address is:**

Ottawa OAS Chapter Station E PO Box 4939  
Ottawa, ON K1S 5J1 Canada

Contact us:

[ottawaoas@gmail.com](mailto:ottawaoas@gmail.com) [ottawaoas.ca](http://ottawaoas.ca)

## With appreciation for information and contributions to this issue....

Jean-François Beaulieu, Brad Drouin, Rory MacKay, and Phil Trottier



The clay pipe in the Ottawa Chapter logo is from the Roebuck Village Site excavations undertaken in 1912 and 1915. It was reported and illustrated in *Roebuck Prehistoric Village Site, Grenville County, Ontario* by W. J. Wintemberg, National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 83; 1972 Facsimile Edition; page 163, Plate XVI, Figure 18.

## Coming up in the next *Ottawa Archaeologist*...

- Archaeology Days - Program and Information
- *Rory's Adventures on the Little Bonnechere River: Dammed if you found it and still dammed if you didn't* by Rory MacKay

## Remember...

Our newsletter is a great place to showcase images, short articles, event notifications, book and media reviews, and other related items. Please send them to [ottawaoas@gmail.com](mailto:ottawaoas@gmail.com) for consideration.

Recent current events reminded me of a trip of a lifetime to the sovereign island of Kalaallit Nunaat (aka Greenland) in June 2023. It was delightful to observe a family group encouraging this young man with his kayak lessons, right near the amazing Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu - Greenland National Museum and Archives in Nuuk.

*Image: E. Blaubergs*