

A DAY AT MICHILIMACKINAC – JULY 25, 2013

July 30, 2013 Lynn Evans Day of Archaeology 2013, Excavation Fort Michilimackinac, fur trader, Michigan

I am Curator of Archaeology for Mackinac State Historic Parks. In the summer my primary responsibility is to direct the archaeological excavation at Colonial Michilimackinac State Historic Park. We are currently excavating a fur trader's house within the palisade walls of reconstructed Fort Michilimackinac. The house was one unit in a five unit rowhouse originally constructed in the 1730s and demolished in 1781 when the garrison was relocated to Mackinac Island.

I just opened a new 5' x 5' square this week, so I spent most of my day removing sand and a buried sod layer from twentieth century park activities.



This is the new square I recently opened.

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Most of the squares we are working on at the moment are below the floor level of the house.



Deep pocket of 1781 demolition matrix with barrel bands and hinge exposed.

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Because we are excavating in the middle of a popular living history site, we devote a lot of time to educating our guests.



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Most of the time it is great to work in a state park with running water and many other modern amenities. The big excitement today was a broken waterline, snapped during a landscaping project.



Here is the broken line.

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Many of the artifacts we find are tiny, the kind of items that were swept through the cracks in the floorboards, such as fishbones, seed beads and lead shot. To find them, we waterscreen our deposit.



Robert H. spraying down some deposit.

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The broken waterline slowed that process down for 1.5 hours, but our park operations crew got the line fixed and we were back to recovering little bits of history.