

DIGGING AND DISCOVERING ... ON CAMPUS

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Here at Michigan State, we have finished the field school, completed most construction-related projects, and are cleaning artifacts, organizing things and preparing for the new school year. I (Lynne Goldstein) am personally doing conference calls and trying to catch up on a variety of things that are due.

Doing archaeology on campus is a great way to train students, engage the public, and make people realize that archaeology is literally under their feet. It is our hope that we not only preserve and protect the campus heritage, but also that we make students, faculty, staff, and the general public aware of archaeology and why it is important.

To that end, the field school was in a great location this year – along the river and right behind the Administration Building. The location was not only lovely and prime territory for duck and goose watching, but it is also a high traffic area, with lots of people – including administrators – walking by daily. Here is a shot I took from the Provost's office:



And here is our end-of-dig crew shot:



Archaeological work outside the field may sound dull, but it really is not always the case, as I noted yesterday on Facebook:

“Sometimes meetings are very enjoyable. Just returned from a meeting about new campus historical markers, focusing on the “Sleepy Hollow” area. MSU wants to include info on the prehistoric site we found at the edge of the hollow, as well as info the MSU Campus Archaeology Program has on historic sites and events in the area.

After the meeting, we went and inspected a couple of sites, then I visited the Beal Botanical Garden because all of the Eastern Agricultural Complex domesticates were blooming – goosefoot (*Chenopodium berlandieri*), sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), marshelder (*Iva annua*), and squash (*Cucurbita pepo*).”

The Lansing State Journal ran an [article](#) this week on archaeology in Michigan, and we are very pleased that we are featured, along with Fort Michilimackinac and others.

The field school excavated a really interesting historic site that was apparently a single dump episode – in 1924, the head of grounds for the campus (also a Professor of Horticulture) remodeled and modernized his house and used the construction debris as fill for a low spot along the river, not far from the house. Everything we found dates from 1890s-1925. Field school students blogged about the work and what they found, and you can find those posts [here](#).

Our regular CAP posts continue, and this [link](#) tells you about the outhouse we found which is probably linked to Saints Rest, the very first dormitory on campus. We are very excited about this find because we have been searching for an outhouse associated with the dorm for a long time. Archaeologists like outhouses (well, old ones that don't smell anymore) because no one goes after anything they dropped into one, and people also often used them as a dump for debris.

We do have some sidewalk work to do on campus, and this often yields really interesting things. The University replaces sidewalks with some regularity (they are now trying to install “green” sidewalks everywhere), and there is often undisturbed stuff beneath the old sidewalks.