

06/08/2021

It's been several months since the last update so one is certainly overdue. Back in November I gave a presentation on research at the Warner farm to the Huron Valley chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society. This was the first time the presentation was given virtually using Zoom with around 30 remote "attendees". All went well with no technical issues.

The Michigan Historical Marker for the Warner Homestead was finished at the foundry of Sewah Studios in Ohio. The marker came out great and we hope to hold a dedication ceremony at the farm later this summer. The dedication would coincide with the 185th anniversary of the farm. Those that recall the 175th anniversary of the farm five years ago might question the math on this latest anniversary. Recent research, however, indicates that while the property on which the Warner house sits dates to 1841, other properties owned by Warner family members date to 1836. Three 40 acre parcels were purchased via land patent in November 1836 by Hiram H. Warner. Hiram was related to Timothy Warner but it is still unclear if he was a brother or his father due to the few conflicting historical records that exist. One of the parcels bought by Hiram in section 11 passed into the hands of Timothy Warner in 1857. Upon consultation with the Michigan Centennial Farm Association, the Warner farm in Brighton Township dates to the original purchase date of 1836 due to the family relationship, a couple of months prior to Michigan statehood.

For the first time in about 20 years, the field was plowed at the farm. A series of surface surveys were conducted that yielded a substantial amount of artifacts including toys, ceramics, glass, brick, clinker, buckles, parts of iron implements, and sawn animal bone. Nearly one hundred artifacts were recovered and plotted. The surface survey helped to determine the extent of distribution from the main living and work areas. Some artifacts were found over a 100 yards away from the farmstead nucleus of barns and house. One explanation for finding artifacts so far away could include the practice of disposing household trash with manure through the use of a manure spreader. A horseshoe, likely detached from a hoof of one of the Belgian workhorses, was recovered near the middle of the field. A laser rangefinder was used to triangulate the position of each artifact so that they can be coordinated with the unit excavation map. Ceramics included salt glazed stoneware, undecorated whitewares, sprigware, white granite, and transferwares. One whiteware sherd has an interesting shape and is currently of unknown use with possibilities as a type of lid, tray, or cake plate (see attached). The outline of the rim appears to be something other than a circle or oval and any ideas regarding this item would be appreciated. A concentration of sawn animal bone was found near the former location of the barn referred to as the "toolshed". Family members recall that this barn was the focus of processing livestock such as hogs.

One artifact recovered during the surface survey was of particular interest. Despite multiple generations of the Warner family working hundreds of acres of land in the 19th and 20th centuries, no family members had any recollection of a collection of prehistoric stone tools. The excavation of over 5,000 square feet at the site produced only one

prehistoric formal tool, a Meadowood knife, that was recovered from an excavated feature along with 19th century materials. The surface survey now adds an endscraper made on Bayport chert. Endscrapers were used for a variety of tasks, but most notably for the preparation and cleaning of hides. The source of the chert is many miles north in the area of the Saginaw Bay. An exhaustive search of the area around where the endscraper was found failed to produce any other prehistoric artifacts.

Two more iron artifacts have been cleaned using electrolysis by Central Michigan University graduate student, Julia Joblinski. Both items, an axe head and a wrench, have cleaned up nicely. Removal of considerable corrosion from the wrench allowed raised letters on the sides to be deciphered as "Princess". Julia was able to determine that this represents a brand name for the Princess Plow Company. The company was based in Canton, OH and was in operation from the 1880s to the 1910s. Additional research has found that another firm, the Gibbs and Ball Plow Company, also made a "Princess" brand plow. It is unclear which company made the wrench and the two companies may have been operated by family relatives. The wrench appears to have been used to remove and install part of the share section but any additional information would be appreciated. Many thanks to Julia for efforts in the conservation of these artifacts.

Many thanks to Suzi Klepinger for the donation of a Jenny Lind bed. This bed was her grandfather's and makes a perfect addition to the Warner home. Our youngest daughter has already claimed it as her own. Thanks again, Suzi! The pedestal tub donated by Chuck and Karen Hoover has now undergone reglazing restoration and will be installed in the bathroom soon. Thanks again to Chuck and Karen for donating the tub!

The annual conference of the Michigan One Room School Association has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 25th to be held in the Hicks school. The conference was originally scheduled for the spring of last year but was cancelled due to the pandemic. The conference will include a tour of the nearby Lyon school along with presentations on the Warner Homestead/Hicks School and the headstone restoration project conducted by the Brighton Area Historical Society. The conference is open to the public.

"Downtime" during the pandemic has allowed for work to progress on a book on the history of the Warner family. Over 90 pages of draft text has been written for the first five chapters that covers the experiences of the Warner's and other Livingston County pioneers up to 1838. The initial experiences of pioneers have always been an interest of mine and modern local histories often only provide brief mentions of the actual hardships endured by the early settlers. Information gathered from historical and genealogical research conducted over the past fifteen years along with hundreds of pictures and documents made available from extended family members is now culminating in a final product that will also intertwine archaeological research.

Plans are underway to hold the annual 6th grade student dig at the Warner Farm this fall, slated for September 9th. Volunteers with archaeological experience are needed to supervise the students - please contact me if you are interested in participating.







