



The HEADHUNTER

The Official Newsletter of the

"Indian Artifact Collectors Association of the North East"



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Spring is coming and I know we are all eager to get out and start hunting arrowheads. I myself have not gone out in a couple years, but it is on my to do list to enjoy it a few times, might even bring my 18-month-old son along! The start of the year has been exciting for IACANE with the second annual York County Artifact Show as well as members from the club meeting up at the nation's largest show- Collinsville, Illinois. Also, a lot of anticipation for the annual Marysville show coming up in April!

York County Show Update:

The show drew in a lot of new faces as well as many familiar ones! The Dover/York community was eager to support and was fun to see this event be a family fun event with activities for kiddos and adults alike. Attendance was strong with over 215 attendees, 114 of which were non-members and 42 children under 12 years old. IACANE offered activities including "crack your own geode", "mock archaeology dig" and flint-knapping demonstrations. The displays and vendors, as always, were fantastic! This is one of two shows that also had awards with the following categories and recipients:

- 2025 Best of Show: Large Projectile (single, 3" and over)-**Tie! Damon Thayer and Alan Atkins**
- 2025 Best of Show: Small Projectile (single, less than 3")-**Alan Atkins**
- 2025 Best of Show: Personal Find of the Year-**Keith Cicero**
- 2025 Best of Show: Projectile Frame-**Damon Thayer**
- 2025 Best of Show: Non-Projectile Frame-**Keith Cicero**
- 2025 Best of Show: Tool/Utilitarian Object (single) (axes, celts, gouges, adzes, net sinkers, etc)-**Wayne Shelby**
- 2025 Best of Show: Drilled Stone Artifact (single) (banner stones, pendants, boatstones, gorgets, etc)-**Mike Gilbert**
- 2025 Best of Show: Most Unique Artifact-**John Selmer**



2025 York Co. Show Award Winners



Thoughts on building strong collector relationships:

This is something that I have been thinking about, which started at my time in the York County Artifact Show and then brought up thoughts again when attending the Collinsville, Illinois Artifact Show. Relationships within the collector community are so important and integral to the entire concept of collecting. Why collect if you cannot share it with others, friends, family and more? We have all heard the term “closet collector”- someone who collects and lets no one see it. For different reasons, some collectors feel this is a good avenue and I suppose I cannot blame them. The world we live in can be filled with various emotions including envy, jealousy, fear (of stealing among other reasons), embarrassment and more. It can also be filled with positivity, mutual respect, encouragement and joy. I am sure we have all felt a combination of these feelings, however I am hopeful that the latter is felt 99% of the time compared to the former. These positive attributes are what, I feel, collecting is all about. Of course, we want to preserve history and holding an artifact that is 1000’s of years old is INCREDIBLE. However, we also want to feel good about doing this, feel good about the people we engage and collect with and most of all look back and have fond memories of our collecting journey.

For me, the artifact shows are just that—avenues to encourage positivity in the collecting community and to lead by example for younger generations about what this hobby and collecting community is all about. Being at both of these shows just reinforced this idea to me and thoughts of which I wanted to share. Take some time to reflect on how you have been feeling about collecting in the past year—which end of the spectrum do you feel most often? I am hopeful the IACANE collecting community continues to bring you towards that positive end and that you look back on your collecting years as some of the best.



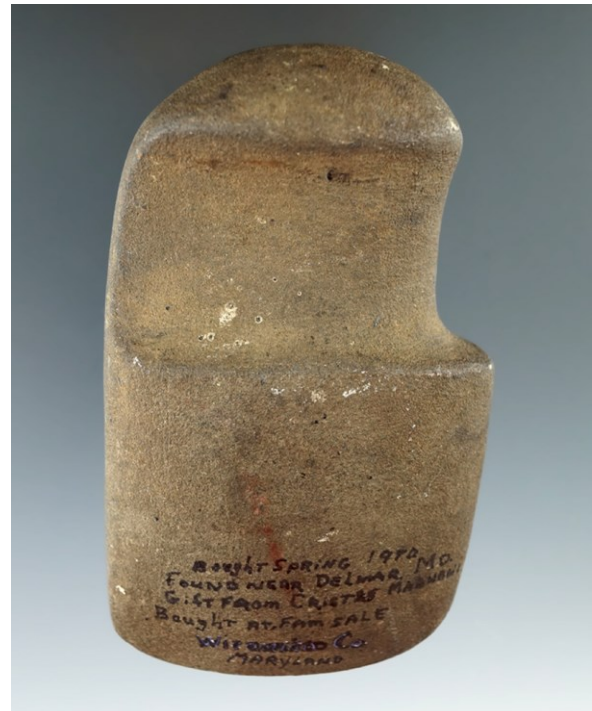
Maryland 3/4 Grooved Axe

By John M. Selmer

I get a kick out of how some of the old time collectors wrote the artifact's provenience/provenance on the piece. I know my handwriting is not good enough to do this and if I tried, it would be more like illegible graffiti and ruin the artifact. Instead, I put a single 5/16 inch diameter circular label on the backside of each of my artifacts with my collection number on it. That collection number corresponds to a series of artifact photographs I keep on my desktop computer. Then all of the information I can gather about the artifact is contained in an Excel spreadsheet. This is important because if you don't capture the history now, it will only get harder for the next collector. Most of this information should be passed to the next collector when the artifact leaves your collection. My Excel spreadsheet captures everything I know about the artifact and I update the file when I learn more about the artifact over time. Here is what I capture in my collection catalog spreadsheet: Catalog Number, Artifact Description, Cultural Era, Provenience (where the artifact was originally recovered), Provenance (who owned the artifact previously), Notes, Cost, When Collected, Certificate of Authenticity information (if any), and if the artifact has been published and where. I would encourage everyone to develop a cataloging system for your collection that works for you and keep it up-to-date.

This 3/4 grooved hardstone axe is 4-5/16 inches long by 2-3/4 inches wide by 1-5/8 inches thick. It is from the Archaic cultural period and was found near Delmar in Wicomico County, Maryland. It was purchased at a farm sale in that area in 1970. The artifact has flecks of white paint and smears of red paint on it; probably from sitting on someone's barn workbench. It is nicely patinated, deeply grooved, highly polished, and well-made. A previous collector wrote the following on the bit:

*Bought Spring 1970
Found near Delmar MD.
Gift from Cristas Magnani
Bought at Fam Sale
Wicomico Co
Maryland*



Maryland Archaic 3/4 Grooved Axe

Facebook Posts by Keith Cicero

ANCIENT RESHARPENINGS

I posted this over a year and a half ago but I wanted to share again as I was recently discussing spears that were resharpened anciently. This photo displays this wonderfully-it shows two Jasper Perkiomens I owned from the Berk County, PA area. They both exhibit the same size base and originally would've been very close to the same size. The piece on the right was heavily resharpened multiple times in its useful life - to its current form. The one on the left is not resharpened much -if at all. I felt it's a great visual with the two pieces side by side to showcase how the natives used these pieces until exhaustion and would not just discard a damaged or worn piece. This is one reason why larger spears are so rare in the area.

Left - Ex Lee Hallman & Cicero collections (current Wilhide)

Right- Ex Walt Podpora & Cicero collections



IROQUOIS SHELL DUCK EFFIGY



Here's a very beautiful piece of Iroquoian ornamental art- a shell "Duck" effigy. The piece is very well preserved and features detailed incising. It is perforated at the neck for suspension. This was found on the Upper Cayuga Site (Big Gully or Great Gully Site) near Union Springs, Cayuga County, NY decades ago. The site was destroyed along with many others during the Sullivan Campaign in early fall 1779. The piece measures approximately 1 1/2" long!



A LOOK BACK IN TIME

THE USE OF RATTLESNAKE VENOM ON ARROWHEADS by Rich Gulyas

Although most of us are aware of the use of poisonous plants, snakes and frogs throughout the history of mankind I wasn't aware that some Native Americans tribes used rattlesnake venom on their arrowheads to hunt game and in warfare. In fact, some scientists believe Native Americans used poison points to hunt large game even during the Paleo Period.

Recently while reading a book on the early history of Tioga County, published in 1883, I came across a reference to a Native American campsite near the town of Mansfield, PA. According to the author of the book, every time the site was plowed numerous artifacts could be found. He alone found over two hundred arrowheads as well as several pestles, grooved axes, net sinkers, pottery shards, and round stones that were double pitted. Wouldn't you love to find this site! What was really interesting is that the early settlers believed the Native Americans had three different types of arrowheads. The first type was made to fasten to a shaft in the typical manner using sinew. The second type was made to give the arrow a revolving (spiral) motion while passing through the air, we now know a spiraling projectile helps to improve accuracy. The third type was a poison point made to insert into the shaft without fastening it allowing the arrowhead to remain in the victim and not be easily removed. As I read further the author described how the Native Americans would put Rattlesnake venom on this point. According to early settlers, Native Americans in that area would take a piece of rotten deer liver bitten by Timber Rattlesnakes held in confinement until it was full of poisonous venom, then they would thrust the arrowhead into it and use it to shoot at their enemies.

Since I don't know much about rattlesnake venom and its use by Native Americans, I decided to do some research on the subject. Guess what I found? According to a New York Times article written in 1964 called "The Deadly Point" poisoned points were not unknown to the North American Indian. In fact, over 80 different tribes were known to use poison on their points for both hunting game and in warfare. The Osage tribesman of what is now Missouri and Arkansas made poison by enticing a rattlesnake to bite a piece of liver which was then diced and pressed into a clamshell for preservation. In wartime, the shells were entrusted to the women, who carried them into the battlefield and helped the warriors dip their arrowheads into it. In another article I read Native Americans would capture a rattlesnake or copperhead, then they would pin the snake with a forked stick so it would strike the liver until it was exhausted. If there wasn't enough poison in the liver, they would capture another snake and repeat the process. When there was enough venom, they would beat the liver to a pulp to form a glue like substance and the arrow would be dipped into the mixture. Native Americans believed if venom was introduced into the bloodstream of a human enemy it would lead to a painful death or a never healing wound. To top it off, I suspect the rotten liver was full of harmful bacteria that we now know can survive even the harshest environmental conditions. Remember there were no antibiotics at this time to help stop infections. The Powhatan of Virginia also used arrows poisoned with rattlesnake venom according to early settlers, the arrowheads with a flat side and especially those with corrugated edges (serrated) were intended to carry a poison from rattlesnake glands made into a paste.

One of the earliest references I found on arrow poisoning came from Jesuit missionaries that visited tribes in the N.E. around the mid 1600's. They reported the Erie used arrows poisoned with rattlesnake venom during the war with the Iroquois, 1653-1654. During that war the Iroquois charged an Erie palisaded village and the Erie's poisoned arrows kept them at bay for hours. Jesuit missionaries also

reported that the Erie's could fire 8-10 arrows before a musket could be loaded and discharged. Several other tribes also used poison arrows including the Seneca, Micmac, and Onieda as well as a number of western tribes up until the mid-1800's. While reading information on rattlesnake venom itself I also found some interesting scientific discoveries. Rattlesnake venom (stored under controlled conditions) can last up to 35 years without much degradation and even remain potent after it's dried for up to 28 years. Rattlesnake venom is also digestible and can also be safely used to hunt game. Poison would help to increase the success rate of hunts because poisoned projectiles do not have to strike an animal's vital organs to be effective.

Until recently there has been little research on the prehistoric use of poison arrows by archeologists even though there is extensive literature that describes its use by both ancient and modern hunter-gatherers. Also, most of the research is geared towards the use of poisonous plants due to new breakthroughs in testing for plant toxins and residues on artifacts. Why deer liver was used in the process is still a mystery, maybe it would help to preserve the venom or make it more potent. We may never know just when Native Americans become aware of the use of rattlesnake venom as a poison on arrowheads but as technology and research improves in this field maybe we will.

References:

History of Tioga County PA, 1883 W.W. Munsell & Co., 36 Vesey Street, New York.

The New York Times, The Deadly Point; In certain instances, poisoned darts and arrows outperform the civilized gun. March 15, 1964 by Geoffrey Vincent.

Arrow Poisons of the North American Indians, worldhistory.biz

Rattlesnake Venom & Native American Venom Use, Joshua Tree Voice, by Philip Bonafede.

Bannerstone Cores By John M. Selmer

Many of my collector friends know I like to collect rare, oddball, and unique artifacts. They always catch my eye when I'm walking around an artifact show. I find bannerstone cores fascinating. They are a rare artifact created when the ancient Native American was drilling the hole for a bannerstone with a hollow reed or cane drill. The core is the remains of the inside of the hole. When you are out looking for artifacts, most people would probably not even notice them. The two bannerstone cores in my collection are displayed below. They are from the Middle to Late Archaic cultural period (circa 4500 to 1000 BC) and both are white quartz:

- The engraved core on the left is 1-1/2 inches long. It was found in Indiana in 1977 and was previously in the Art Gerber collection. This is a very interesting and unique example because the core has been engraved to represent a rattlesnake rattle. There are at least a dozen rattle segments engraved on it. It was published in *The Art Gerber Story A Lifetime of Collecting Along the Ohio River* on page 169. It was awarded **Best of Show for Most Unique Artifact** at IACANE's 2025 York County, PA Artifact Show.
- The core on the right is 1-1/4 inches long. It was found at the Crib Mound in Spencer County, Indiana. It was previously in the Ron Walters collection.
- Both cores have been pictured in *Who's Who in Indian Relics Volume 12* on page 552 while in the Selmer Collection.



References:

1-Gerber, Arthur Joseph, *The Art Gerber Story - A Lifetime of Collecting Along the Ohio River*, Photocraft, Inc., 2007, page 169 Figure 7.109 (center towards top of page).

2-Lutz, David L., *The Archaic Bannerstone, Its Chronology and Purpose From 6000 B.C. to 1000 B.C.*, Hynek Printing, 2000,

COMMENTS ON RESTORATION by Gary L. Fogelman

I first became aware of the possibilities of restoration years ago when I frequently visited and interacted with Mickey Taylor, he of Iron Horse fame. Mickey had a fabulous, well-rounded collection, but his forte would be considered his collection of pipes. I actually tried counting them one time, but they were amassed in coffee tables and frames and drawers and after many, many hundreds I gave up. Many of the pipes, of course, were clay versions of the many Iroquois varieties and one could say Mick specialized in those forms. He was active on many sites himself and knew personally many others who were doing likewise. He actively sought out those collectors to acquire their pipes and also attended sales and auctions in pursuit of additional specimens.

During these activities he also acquired many broken specimens and bits and pieces of bowls and stems, which came in handy during his restoration activities. It has been a fact and one I witnessed early on that restoration to clay pipes and clay pots was generally accepted by the collecting community. These fragile items often were broken and otherwise suffered the ravages of time and wear and tear as one might expect. Using fiberglass, or Bondo as its commonly known, Mick would fill in breaks, holes and cracks on broken items and look through his collection of broken items to see if there was something he could use to bring the piece to conform to type. Careful shaving and sanding would be used to make the addition conform to shape and contour. Finally, the crucial last step was painting the restored area to match the original. Mick was quite artistic and good at it.

This penchant for restoration spilled over to other items, including flint. I asked myself, why not? Over the many years of collecting I, as everyone else who was afield looking for artifacts, had many finds that made me say, "what a shame." I wish that one would have been whole." After being with and watching Mick, I realized that many of these could be brought back to displayable condition, instead of languishing in the parts and pieces box.

So, using the same procedure of fiberglass restoration, I fixed many of those with broken tips, ear or shoulder dings or clicks or chunks out of an edge. And I enjoy them every bit as much, if not more, than the many hundreds of rather mundane points that I've found over the years. Of course, most of those heartbreakers were of superior workmanship, pretty flints and/or rare forms to begin with. Over the years I've witnessed many different reactions to the topic of restoration. There are those, like me, that get great enjoyment from having their nicked and dinged items fixed up. Some have been sending me things for years. Many of these may be considered fine examples of ancient flint work and deserve to be seen, displayed, and enjoyed to their best advantage. Some keep such things in their own special frame, while others put them in with the general collection of items framed by site, or type.

What happens if someone knocks off a chunk of a famous sculpture? What happens if some idiot throws tomato soup on a famous Rembrandt? Such things are subsequently 'restored' back to their original glory. And rightly so. Why shouldn't the same be done with flint items? I'm hard pressed to see a reason why not, while others seem to view such items as somehow tarnished or unworthy. My procedure, as many, does nothing to the original form. It's still there, in its broken condition, which can be reinstated in an instant. Why anyone would totally disregard a rare, often beautiful ancient piece because it may have a bit of a tip, or an ear, or a nick restored means that such people will miss having some wonderful things. I've been able to acquire some great things like Dovetails, Lost Lakes, Thebes, Perkiomen Broadpoints and other things that would normally be quite costly but being 'marred' a little are quite attainable. Then I fix them up and make them Resurrected Glory. I've always made sure too that others are made aware if any restoration has been affected to an item. Using fiberglass to affect the restoration

means that it will always be easily detected upon usually even a cursory examination. Some use other mediums that actually mimic the characteristics of flint or slate. Some actually re-chip things, which I totally disagree with. As noted, the original condition is still there.

It helps if things are what I call 'faithfully' restored. This means conforming to the contours and nature of the item. With my method even flaking patterns can be rendered. Flintknapping and working on point typology over the years has been of great benefit for this. Perhaps the most important part is the final step, painting the restored part to match the rest of the piece. It took some trial and error and experimentation and eventually the various combinations necessary were worked out. Though I've focused on better-than-average pieces, I've done many of a more common nature, as over the years and the collections I've handled many of such nature came along and I couldn't let them go as they were. So, I began accumulating collections of the many various point types, in case I ever again ventured into the area of typologies. If I did, I'd have a nice selection of points to work with. I now have frames of the following types: Kirk, Palmer, Kline, Kessel, Amos, Decatur, Brewerton, Vosburg, Otter Creek, Dovetails, Bifurcates, Piedmonts, Poplar Island, Morrow Mountain, Canfield, Eshback, Jack's Reef, Neville, Stanley, Meadowood, Hellgramites, Perkiomen, Sus. Broad, Lehigh, Orients, Drybrook and triangles. I have a frame of extra-large points of many types. I attended some mid-western shows and garnered some great examples of Dovetail, Rice Lobed, Lost Lake, Thebes and others.

One other thing I concentrated on is bannerstones. All collections had an assortment of broken slate items to include many bannerstone halves. Currently I have over 300 restored bannerstones, including great examples of just about every known NE form and many from the mid-west as well. All of these different things would make great study specimens as to forms and variations of forms. They all will have to find new homes in the coming years, so if anyone has a penchant for any of these types or plans to do any studies of these point types or bannerstones, get in touch with me. There's some wonderful things, things that many will not be able to afford or add to their collections in any other way. One might also consider that these times are not your daddy's times. Especially for those who are getting out and finding things. Last year I found about 70 or so items. Perhaps 5 were complete, all the others had little nicks or dings. I really like looking at them in their best condition as opposed to seeing the little things they suffered from. Some others feel this way and I even taught one other the process. It isn't hard, obviously if I can do it, anyone can.

Members Please Note:

If you haven't already, **now** is the time to renew your membership. We mail the 2nd quarter newsletter to current IACANE members only. If you have any questions about your membership status, please contact John Selmer at phone # (703) 444-2841 or LSelmer@erols.com.

Also, send any address / phone#/ e-mail changes to John so we can keep our Membership database up to date.

YORK COUNTY ARTIFACT SHOW 2025



Just A Reminder:

Do you have photos from a recent or past arrowhead hunt? Maybe a story related to collecting Indian relics that you would like to share. Whether it's a short story or something longer, we are always in need of your additions to the **Headhunter**. You can contact me at mklg53@gmail.com or (610) 797-0184

Mike Gilbert

Indian Relic Show



Marysville, PA

Educational Displays - Buy - Sell - Trade

Authentic Indian relics from Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region and Northeastern USA. Books, display cases and possibly some Civil War items.

Bring your relics for free evaluation & appraisal.

Marysville Lions Club located just off Route 15 in Marysville, Pennsylvania.

Address: Marysville Lions Club, 15 Park Drive, Marysville, PA 17053

Saturday – April 5th, 2025

From 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM

General Admission \$4.00, children under 12 free

Sponsored by IACANE (Indian Artifact Collectors Association of the Northeast)

For Information call: Damon Thayer (410) 490-7411

Email: tandainc@aol.com

IACANE SHOWS FOR 2025

Indian Artifact Collectors Association of the Northeast

YORK COUNTY ARTIFACT SHOW

Dover Township Fire Hall
3700 Davidsburg Road, Dover, PA 17315

Saturday FEBRUARY 1st, 2025

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Contact: Adam Amspacher 717-479-6921

E-mail: Adam.Amspacher@gmail.com

MARYSVILLE RELIC SHOW

Marysville Lions Club
Route 11/15, 15 Park Drive, Marysville, PA 17053

Saturday APRIL 5th

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Contact: Damon Thayer 410-490-7411

E-mail: tandainc@aol.com

LEHIGH VALLEY RELIC SHOW

Schnecksville Fire Company
4550 Old Packhouse Road, Schnecksville, PA 18078

Saturday JULY 19th

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Contact: Roy Knieriem 215-416-7438

E-mail: rknieriemjr@gmail.com

ROASTING EARS OF CORN FESTIVAL

Museum of Indian Culture
2825 Fish Hatchery Road, Allentown, PA 18103

August 16th & 17th

10:00 am to 6:00 pm (rain or shine) - \$10pp

NON-IACANE SPONSORED EVENT

MEMBERS DO DISPLAY AND SET UP!

CORNING, NY RELIC SHOW

Crystal City VFW Post 524
281 Baker Street, Corning, NY 14830

Saturday September 20th

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Contact: Tim Tuttle 419-343-9412

E-mail: Tecumsehtj@aol.com

BERKS COUNTY RELIC SHOW

Leesport Farmers Market
312 Gernants Church Road, Leesport, PA 19533

****SUNDAY** October 19th**

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Contact: Roy Knieriem 215-416-7438

E-mail: rknieriemjr@gmail.com

2025 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR IACANE & CSAS INDIAN ARTIFACT COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION OF THE NORTHEAST CENTRAL STATES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETIES

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TOWN: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP+4: _____ PHONE #: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

(E-mail is for Club information only. It is used for notifications regarding Shows, News, & Updates.)

For IACANE Newsletter (*The Headhunter*), please check one:

- IACANE will mail a hard copy to above address.
- I'll retrieve on-line version myself.

For CSAS members, the Central States Archaeological Journal is mailed to above address.

MEMBERSHIP RUNS CALENDAR YEAR (circle only one below):

Single IACANE Only: \$12	Family IACANE Only: \$15	IACANE Plus CSAS: \$26
Lifetime IACANE Only: \$150 (One Time Dues)	IACANE Lifetime Members Add CSAS: \$18	

Send Application & Check made payable to **IACANE** to:
Roy Knieriem, 1970 Station Avenue, Center Valley, PA 18034