Shortly after the War of 1812, pioneers began to move westward to settle the Illinois frontier. As histories of New Philadelphia, Miller Grove, and Carrier Mills (among other numerous places) have shown, some of these settlers were free African-Americans looking for a chance to build communities in relative safety from the dangers of enslavement. One such community, located in present-day Lawrence County near the small village of Pinkstaff, has been the recent focus of a cooperative community history and archaeology project, which focuses on the homestead of the Morris family, who came to Illinois along with the Anderson and Tann families in the early nineteenth century.

To this day these families inhabit some of the oldest continually occupied family farms in the state. This project focuses on the documentary and archaeological history of the Morris family homestead, one of these such farms. Our ancestors have lived in the same area of Lawrence County since the nineteenth century, and we consider the standing farm today our ‘homeplace.’ For us, the homeplace represents many things: the strength and centrality of family, memories, stories, and not least of all, our rich heritage as descendants of some of Illinois’ first Black settlers. This project uses archaeology and history to explore that heritage.

HISTORY
During the War of 1812, several small forts were built in what was then Indiana territory, mostly for defense of settlers and safety of supply lines. One such settlement was Fort Allison, which was settled by the Allison, Morris, Anderson, and Tann families. After the conclusion of the war, these families were given military land grants in the area and many of them settled there. The first land in Lawrence County purchased by free African-Americans were two 40-acre plots registered by John and Scion Morris in 1816, when the area was still part of Indiana territory. For many
free African-Americans looking for settlement away from the danger of enslavement, the unsettled frontier of Illinois, with its rich soil and plentiful timber, may have made for an attractive place to build a home and a community. An 1875 Atlas of Lawrence County describes their settlement:

The colored inmates of Fort Allison began a settlement in the neighborhood of Pinkstaff station, and as they were law-abiding like their fair-complexioned fellow-citizens, so they shared equally with them the blessings of protection and civil liberty. [W.R. Brink & Co., 1875, Atlas of Lawrence County, Illinois. Philadelphia.]

Despite such a rosy depiction of race-relations, things were difficult for free African-Americans living in Illinois, and these settlers faced serious obstacles in making their home here. Harsh laws called “Black Codes” made it illegal for Black settlers to enter into lawsuits. Free African-Americans entering the state were legally obligated to provide written proof of emancipation and register their presence with the county where they were moving, as well as to provide a $1,000 bond to ensure that they wouldn’t be a “burden” on the state of Illinois.

The tension of the Civil War would make life even more difficult for Black farmsteaders. This excerpt from a letter written by Francis Woolard (a white farmer), who lived in Lawrence County at the time of the Civil War, describes some of the challenges to free African-Americans as he remembers them:

Almost all abominated an “Abolitionist”. Ostracism was only one of the penalties attached to an abolitionist. The sentiment cost him dearly...Free negroes were tolerated, but had a hard time. They were not allowed to testify against a white man; and were often outraged by white men who passed counterfeit or other worthless bills upon them, or refused to pay their just debts. Only by the testimony of white people could a negro recover his just dues and this was sometimes difficult. This was often impossible. [Letter, Francis Woolard to E.L. Bost, 1909. Emphasis in original. Manuscripts Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.]

The Black pioneers living with these challenges had to fight hard to maintain a foothold in such a harsh landscape. Ultimately farming proved successful for many of the first Black settlers, and as time passed more and more Black families moved to the area from places like South Carolina, Indiana, and Kentucky. Oral histories indicate that the area began to be referred to as “Little Africa” because of the number of Black families living there. The community grew and began to build its own institutions and in the latter half of the nineteenth century, an AME Church was raised. Adjacent to the church the local families pulled together and built a one-room school, since at that time, Illinois law did not necessarily provide funds for the education of African-American children. By 1875, Black farmers accounted for hundreds of acres of farm land in the area near “Little Africa.”

**FOCUS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

The “Little Africa” landscape has changed significantly through the twentieth century, as the racializing effects of Jim Crow significantly decreased Black landownership, and farming is no longer the self-sustaining vocation it once was for most of the area’s population. Still, a significant descendant population continues to live and work in Lawrence County and at least two of the original homesteads are now “Centennial Farms,” which have been owned and operated by the same families for over 100 years (in reality closer to 150 years).

To learn more about the lives of our foremothers and fathers, and how they responded to the challenges faced by Black pioneers on the Illinois frontier, we’re conducting a community archaeology project on one of the oldest farmsteads in the area. From its conception, this project was supported and spurred on by many members of the descendant community and their desire to know more about our ancestor’s experiences, and from the need to preserve our deep history for future generations. The project is also interested in making this history accessible to the local community, in sharing our rich diverse heritage, history, and the science of archaeological exploration here in our community. We seek to demonstrate that by putting together the skills, resources, research and memories of the local community and archaeological methods, will make some exciting and interesting discoveries about our past.

We are exploring the archaeological remains associated with the Morris family homestead, originally acquired by Mason Morris, who came to Illinois from Kentucky in the early 1820s, and by 1848 was able to purchase 160 acres of farm ground where he and his wife Patience built their homestead. After his passing in 1876, the land was distributed amongst his children, and eventually two more farmhouses joined Mason’s on the family land. The third house has been continuously occupied, functioning as a farmstead since its construction, and constitutes what we consider present-day homeplace. Our archaeological project focuses on two of these three homestead sites: Mason’s original homestead, and the standing homeplace.

Our archaeological search began by looking for surface evidence of the original homestead built on the site, occupied first by Mason, his wife Patience and their children, then later by their unmarried daughters Martha and Evaline. The first of three homestead sites to be investigated, this earliest house had left no standing architecture. After using documentary research and oral histories to locate the general area of the original farmhouse, in July of 2012 we conducted excavations at what we believe to be the site of Mason Morris’s original homestead.
As we began to find and map artifacts on the surface, the tangible evidence of our ancestors and their labors to create and keep their hearths and homes with familiarity, recognizing these objects can briefly bridge the distance between our presents and our pasts. As excavations continued, we have located many metal fragments of farming implements, and the project has greatly benefitted from the ideas and identifications by folks who’ve spent their lives around farming culture.

Suggestions of artifact identification at times took the form of remembrances; metal objects that could have been horse and buggy furniture prompted more than one site visitor to recall that Martha and Evaline, the aunts who had lived at the house, had their own buggy and were very proud of this and the horses that pulled it. They were independent women who (rather fearlessly) drove their own buggy, regardless of weather, to the AME church a mile and a half away for church services every week. This is just one example of the ways in which artifacts were the beginning of many stories, which enriched our time at the site, our analysis, and our understanding of our ancestors and the connection to the material remains we unearthed.

After the pedestrian survey, the team placed a grid of 48 auger test pits to further narrow our search for the house structure and its associated activity areas. After these initial test pits, the team opened a total of 23 1m-x-1m (3.3 ft.-x-3.3 ft.) excavation units, which uncovered an intact domestic activity layer likely associated with the house, as well as two posthole features that confirmed the structure’s location.

Artifact analysis is still in its preliminary stages; however the materials covered by our excavations are largely reminiscent of self-sustaining farm life in the nineteenth century. Among the objects are large ceramic vessels likely used for storage, which likely points to home industries such as dairy or molasses production. Tablewares, faunal remains, canning jars and ceramic lid closures, as well as patent medicine bottles press us to examine the ways in which rural farming becomes a self-sufficient method of survival, utilized often by disenfranchised groups of people. The daily practices of rural farm life may have also served as a way for this community and others like it to maintain a way of life that was able to support their families through the years, despite the challenges racism presented with each successive generation.

We will again be conducting a second field season of excavations this July, this time on the second of the two households in our study, the current standing homeplace. The site and our archaeological investigations will open to the public, and visitors, groups, and volunteers of all levels of experience are accepted. If you’re interested in visiting the site, or volunteering please contact Annelise Morris for more information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The work on this project would not have been possible without the support and participation of the local community and descendants, who volunteered their time, their research, and their resources to help make this project a success. In particular, I’d like to thank Larry Curry, Russell and Cynthia Morris, Eleanor Morris, Judy and Jim Gallion, Margaret Harris, Jan Brinkman, Carl Curry, and Gene Hays. The project is supported by the Stahl Fund at the University of California, Berkeley, and The National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. Generous thanks are due to all of these contributors, but any factual errors or mistakes are the author’s own.

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For over fifty years, the CAA has offered award-winning research and educational programs for archeology enthusiasts, professionals-in-training, and for those who have a general interest in the fascinating prehistoric communities who once lived along the banks of the Illinois River. From our early years at the famous Koster Site to our current innovative research program at the Mound House site, we strive to fulfill our mission by supporting integrated programs of archeological investigation, educational outreach, and cultural stewardship.

**Adult Field School July 15 - August 9**

The Adult Field School includes focused, intensive field excavation and laboratory work at our 2000-year-old Middle Woodland/Hopewell village site (ca. 50 B.C.-A.D. 250). Participants may enroll for 1 to 4 weeks, and limited scholarship support is available to women students.

**Flintknapping Workshop May 27 - 31**

Expert knapper Tim Dillard will lead the course. Experienced and novice flintknappers are welcome to join; for participants 18+.

**Archaeology Day**

**July 13 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

You’re invited to join us for a fun-filled day of exploring the fascinating prehistory of the lower Illinois River valley region. There will be activities to see and participate in for the whole family, with free admission. Kampsville is located on Route 100 in Calhoun County, IL; it is around 90 minutes from either St. Louis, MO or Springfield, IL.

The Center for American Archeology offers many additional educational programs, including Past Lifeways Program in the spring and fall for school groups, Scouts, and homeschool families, and welcomes visitors throughout the field season. Programs for a full range of ages include Family Excavation Day, Family Dig It Weekend, Adult Excavation Day and High School Field School, as well as the Arizona State University Field School under the direction of Dr. Jane E. Buikstra. The CAA Visitor’s Center and Museum with free admission is open from April 30 to November 1, 2013. For more information write to: CAA Education Program, P.O. Box 366, Kampsville, IL 62053, 618-653-4316 or www.caa-archeology.org.

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**FIELD SCHOOL IN ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**Campbell Center**

**FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**Mount Carroll, Illinois**

**June 10-29, 2013**

This field experience will include an introduction to historic preservation law and practice and the role of archaeology in historic preservation, including archaeological survey and excavation at the site of a mid-nineteenth century windmill on the historic Mount Carroll Seminary campus. The focus of research this year will be locating the windmill and associated structures.

Adults interested in archaeology and historic preservation may register for one or more of four sessions:

- **Session 1:** June 10-12, Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- **Session 2:** June 13-15, Archaeological site Identification and Evaluation
- **Session 3:** June 16-21, Archaeological Field and Laboratory Methods
- **Session 4:** June 22-29, Archaeological Field and Laboratory Methods

Undergraduates from Lawrence University, Appleton, WI will take the entire course for credit. All participants will stay at the Campbell Center dormitory, where breakfast and lunch will be provided. For costs and additional information go to www.campbellcenter.org or contact project director Peter N. Peregrine, peter.n.peregrine@lawrence.edu.
The combined William Rainey Harper College, Elgin Community College, and McHenry County College summer archaeological field school will be working along the Rock River on the Macktown National Historic Site in the Macktown Forest Preserve just south of Rockton, Illinois. We will be excavating at the site of the William Shores house built about 1842. This will be our fourth field season at the William Shores house, and we will encounter both historic and prehistoric artifacts that date from about 8,000 years ago to the time of European settlement. The excavation will be led by Dr. Rochelle Lurie (Principal Investigator) and Steven A. Katz, M.A. (Field Director). Additional information is available at www.midwestarch.net/fieldSc.html.

The 2013 SIUC Field School will take place at the Mississippian mound center of Kincaid in far southern Illinois near Metropolis in Massac County. Kincaid is one of the two major political centers of the Mississippian period (ca. A.D. 1000 – 1500) in the lower Ohio River Valley. It is located in the Black Bottom area of Illinois, a large expanse of the Ohio River floodplain opposite Paducah, Kentucky. Details about the two sessions of field school are available at the web site http://anthro.siuc.edu/fieldschool.html, or by getting in touch with Dr. Paul Welch, pwelch@siu.edu, 618-536-6651.

At or about A.D. 1050, a planned American Indian city was built at Cahokia, opposite St. Louis, Missouri, during its “Big Bang.” The city’s central earthen pyramids and plazas were constructed, new towns were established, and missions may have been sent off to distant lands. What was behind the momentous changes that affected the history of North America for centuries to come? RELIGION! This year, we will seek evidence of missionizing and proselytism at the poorly understood Collins site. Located within Kennekuk County Park near Danville, Illinois, this mound center sits atop a wooded bluff overlooking the Middle Fork River and its floodplain. For additional information see the web site www.anthro.illinois.edu or get in touch with Dr. Pauketat at pauketat@illinois.edu.

Field School students will learn archaeology field techniques and historic archival research, as well as study of paleoecology field methods Midwest environmental history. It will be based at the Loyola Retreat and Ecology Center near Woodstock, Illinois. For additional information get in touch with Dr. Dan Amick, 773-508-3446 or damick@luc.edu.
DIGGING AMERICA’S HISTORY

Look for a new PBS documentary on American archaeology, to be broadcast in the Spring, 2014. In the meantime you can view America From the Ground Up! a 22-minute video on Cahokia Mounds at www.americasarchaeology.org. You will see views of Cahokia Mounds, the interpretive center, and archaeologists discussing aspects of Mississippian culture – some very familiar faces!

CAHOKIA MOUNDS 2013 SUMMER EXCAVATION PROJECT

The 2013 Cahokia Mounds Volunteer Excavation Project will be conducted under the auspices of the Powell Archaeological Research Center (PARC). Project funding is provided by the Cahokia Mounds Museum Society (CMMS). Excavations in the West Plaza and West Palisade areas will take place from April 8-26. East Palisade excavations will take place from June 3-July 3, with lab processing from July 8-12. Complete information and an excavation volunteer application form can be downloaded from www.cahokiamounds.org (click on “Support Cahokia” then “Assist in Lab Work and Excavations”).

In addition there will be two university field schools at Cahokia this summer. Washington University led by Corin Pursell, corincopursell@gmail.com and St. Louis University led by Dr. Mary Vermilion, Maryverm@aol.com. Cahokia Mounds Museum also offers training for the fieldwork portion of the Boy Scout Merit Badge in archaeology each summer. For information, call Bill Meister at 618-274-7000.

Dickson Mounds Museum is hosting a series of events for kids, teens, and adults – all ages can learn and experience archaeology. Call the Museum at 309-547-3721 for additional information or to register. www.experiencedicksonmounds.com

MORE THAN BOWS AND ARROWS
June 16
Enjoy hands-on activities and demonstrations of life-sustaining skills used by ancient Native Americans. Activities include throwing spears with an atlatl, primitive cooking, making arrows by pressure-flaking, pump drills, pottery making, and cultivating with a stone tools. Registration not required.

A TASTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY FOR TEENS
June 18 - 20
Gain experience as a young archaeologist. Work alongside professional archaeologists, participating in an excavation. Scouts are encouraged to participate in this program; it may fulfill some badge requirements. Registration required.

A TASTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ADULTS
June 25 -27
Ever dreamed of a career as an archaeologist? Participate in an excavation and learn how to identify, clean, organize, and sort artifacts. Teachers may earn certified professional development units. Registration required.
Be sure to attend the IAAA annual meeting this year – Saturday will include a morning business meeting, talks on Illinois archaeology and 1812-era history, historic activities, and nearby archaeological sites. The evening will include a tour of the Fife Opera House, Palestine, IL, banquet dinner and talk by Brad Koldehoff. On Sunday morning, join us for a guided bus tour of Crawford County prehistoric and historic sites.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2013

MORNING
REGISTRATION begins at 8:00, followed by business meeting and elections at 8:30, then chapter reports and lunch at the CRAWFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM beginning at 11:30 AM.

AFTERNOON
PRESENTATIONS on Wabash valley history and archaeology, including RICHARD DAY, Retired Historian, Vincennes State Historic Sites: Tecumseh vs. Harrison in the War of 1812; ROB BYRLEY, CWAC Vice President: Discovery of the Lamotte Trading Post and James Baird Site; LYNN STEPHENS, CWAC President: Review of the Findings at Swan Island Site. Beginning at 3:15 PM, tour the historical society and archaeology museum, then at 5:15 PM, take a guided tour of the FIFE OPERA HOUSE, MAIN STREET, PALESTINE, IL, where you can view Lamotte culture artifacts from the Ellis site.

EVENING
BANQUET DINNER at FIFE OPERA HOUSE beginning at 6:30 PM, followed by evening program.

Brad H. Koldehoff, Illinois Department of Transportation Chief Archaeologist
The Ancient City Under Present-Day East St. Louis: The Results of the New Mississippi River Bridge Project
Five years of archaeological excavations have occurred in East St. Louis in preparation for the realignment of Interstate 70, which will cross a new bridge into downtown St. Louis. Cutting through several city blocks and transecting the old National City Stockyards, these excavations were completed in the fall of 2012 by the Illinois State Archaeological Survey (ISAS) on behalf of the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. This massive investigation revealed the remnants of an ancient city buried beneath a post-industrial landscape. Thousands of house floors and related domestic features were documented along with dozens of monumental post-pits, public buildings, and the basal remnants of a previously unknown earthen mound. Created prior to the early Mississippian founding and expansion of the nearby Cahokia Mounds, these features and their contents attest to the urban and multi-ethnic character of the poorly understood East St. Louis Mound Center.

SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2013

MORNING
TOUR OF HISTORIC PALESTINE, ILLINOIS AREA from 9:00 AM to noon
Bus Tour includes GUIDED TOUR OF PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC SITES IN EASTERN CRAWFORD COUNTY. Interpretative guide of the replicated 1812 Fort Lamotte, the Lamotte French Trading Post Side (circa 1750), Harper House (oldest house in Palestine), Lamotte Culture Mounds, Huston/Dickson Site (1820 general store) and more. Reservations must be made prior to March 30 and are subject to booking limit. Tour will leave and return to the Crawford County Historical Museum, 408 South Cross Street, Robinson, IL. Lunch will be on your own. The Crawford County Museum will be open from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

FOR REGISTRATION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION go to www.museum.state.il.us/iaaa or contact Lynn Stephens at lynnstep3278@hughes.net or telephone (618) 546-1180. SEE YOU AT THE MEETING!
Presidents Points

The IAAA was formed 44 years ago out of the realization of many archaeologists, both amateur and professional, and conscientious collectors, that a statewide organization was needed to promote the preservation of archaeological remains in the face of advancing urbanization and other forces that were and are destroying Illinois’ past. I was the founding President. With a team of capable officers and directors, and support from the professional community, we were successful as is manifested in the IAAA of today. With its super group of leaders and dedicated membership, it continues to forge ahead.

At a recent Board meeting I was appointed President, and am happy to again lead this fine organization. I am dedicated to continue our existing successful policies, preservation efforts, excellent publications, Chapter formation and activities, and endowment fund that is funding needed archaeological research. I will share ideas that I believe will further advance our cause, with the board and members at future meetings and in Illinois Antiquity, now our full-color quarterly publication. I encourage each of you to also contribute ideas that will improve our Association and promote our enjoyment in exploring the past.

Ferrel Anderson