



Students and staff pose during the 2013 Public Archaeology Field School.

Tablet Computers Help Archaeologists Study Fort Vancouver

by Doug Wilson, NPS Archaeologist

For many years, archaeologists have used information and communications technology (ICT) to map archaeological sites and record digital images of features and artifacts. Tools such as global positioning systems (GPS), geographic information systems (GIS) and geophysical remote sensing (like ground-penetrating radar) are being used to explore subsurface sites and plan excavations.

However, some archaeologists have been slow to adopt integrated digital recording techniques, relying to an inordinate degree on paper-based recording systems to collect data on archaeological phenomena, like historic house sites, activity areas, and burial monuments. When archaeologists have utilized

integrated digital data, the resulting databases often can answer only very specific research questions.

Last year's joint NPS, Portland State University, and Washington State University Vancouver Public Archaeology Field School used tablet computers (iPads) at Fort Vancouver to adapt and replace existing archaeological paper forms. Digital ICT forms were used during excavation, gravestone recording in the old city cemetery, and laboratory processing of artifacts. The use of ICT in digital recording provided data to help further develop, troubleshoot, train, and implement digital recording on multifaceted archaeology projects.

Our experience last summer with tablet computers was surprising and informative. The students quickly grasped the entry of data using the tablets and troubleshooted the use of digital forms, using the tablets they drew plan maps for floor levels, profiles, and detailed plan sketches.

At the Old City Cemetery students directly entered data on monuments and collected digital images on the fly. Use of tablet computers in both of these types of activities greatly decreased errors tied to bad handwriting, non-standard artifact identification, and so on. It has greatly streamlined our ability to extract and analyze elevation information on specific levels we have dug.

...continued on page 4



NCRI Director's Letter:

The unique thing about cultural resources is that they can intimately connect events and people of the past to those living today. A few years ago, we had Dr. Alfredo Gonzalez-Ruibal speak to the public archaeology field school. His research explores the relationship between the modern and the material. In one of his articles, he explores how collective memory influences heritage sites. He suggests that some places have been touched by such important events that they are linked to our memory and have become a part of our collective heritage. Places like Ground Zero (the 9/11 memorial in New York City) or War in the Pacific National Historical Park are places where something so significant happened that it is irrevocably burned into our national memory. These are sacred, significant places that may stir disparate emotions, including triumph, grief, and pride. Gonzalez-Ruibal calls these Places of Memory.

In contrast, Places of Abjection are those that people intentionally want to forget or that have been erased from our collective consciousness. Massacre sites and the empty decaying factories of failed commercial endeavors are examples. These are sites where memorials are not built and commemorative plaques are not placed. I would suggest that many of these places are remembered by some, reminders of a struggle or event that transcends the ordinary. They are considered Places of Memory by a certain community.

Archaeologists, museum curators, historians, and other cultural resources fields can help return these places to the national consciousness. The African-American burial ground and places tied to the Stonewall riots in New York City are places that have emerged from obscurity, "rediscovered" by people who wanted these places and the lessons they offer to be remembered.

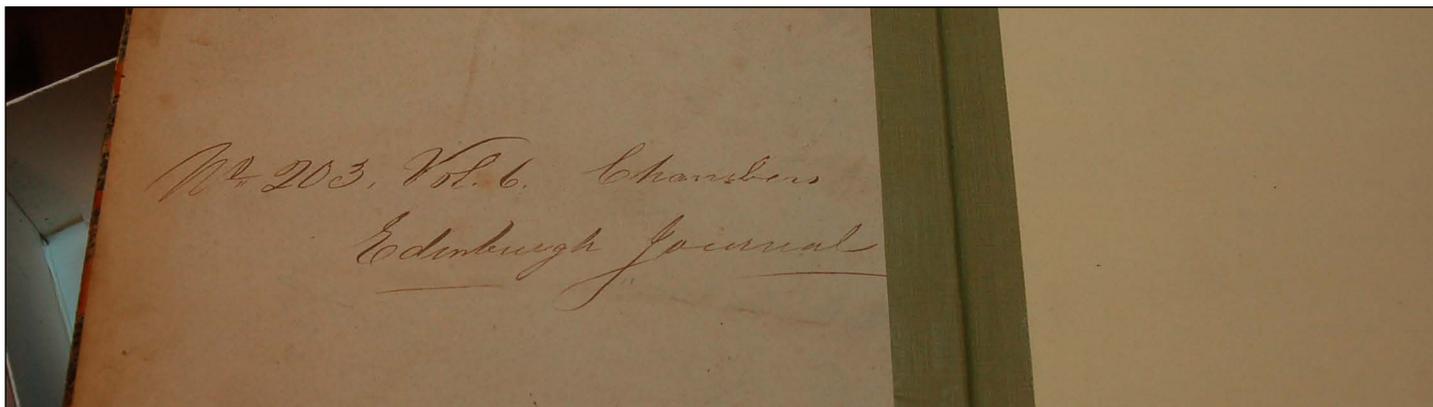
We must recognize that many of our country's most special places have both brilliant and terrible histories. Heritage sites must be able to engage their visitors on many levels and make history matter. We must keep these places in the forefront of our research, interpretation, and commemoration. History cannot be trivialized or become a cliché. The role of cultural resources work should be to broaden the story and explore more deeply the people and events that touched a site. It is with these sentiments that the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute was created and I hope will be sustained for years to come.

Doug Wilson

An iPad in the hands of a student at the 2013 Public Archaeology Field School.

The Columbia Library: The Northwest's First Book Lending Service

by Theresa Langford, NPS Curator



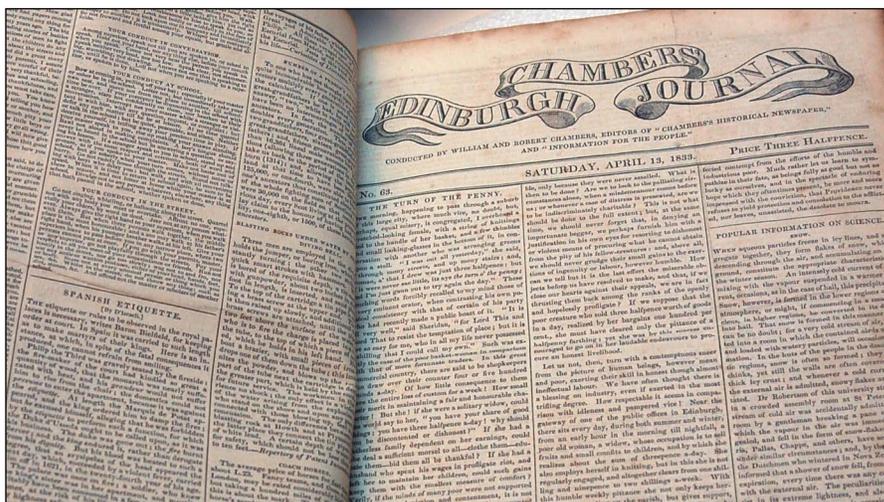
Inscription on the inside of one of the bound volumes of Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal*.

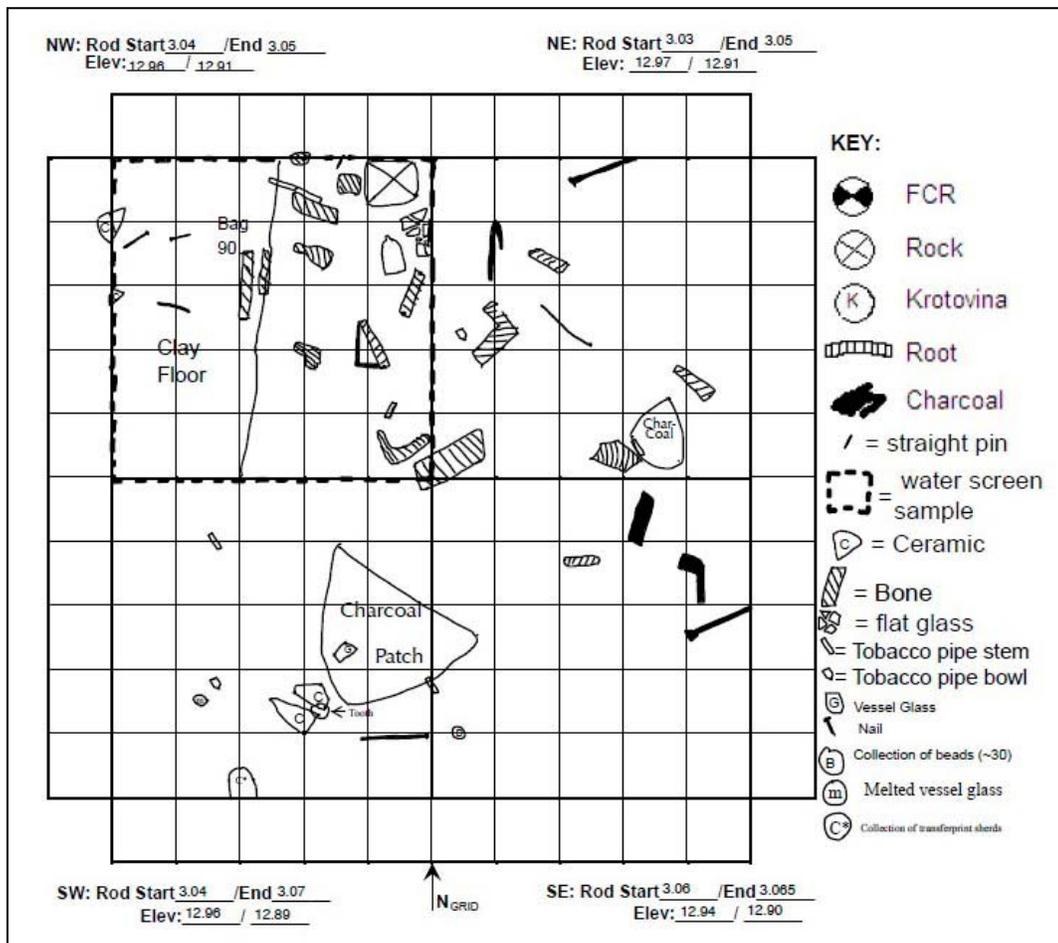
Within the Bachelors' Hall at Fort Vancouver, the series of connected dwellings that housed the post's junior officers and their families, there were two libraries. One belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company, and one was a subscription service called the Columbia Library. The 26 volumes in the Company library are listed on inventories, and include dictionaries, medical treatises, and accounts of explorations. In addition, the Company imported bound volumes of European newspapers for circulation in the region.

The full contents of the Columbia Library are not known, though given John McLoughlin's wide ranging interests and support of education generally, it was likely a diverse and thorough collection given the limitations of time and place. Several of the books from the Columbia Library ended up in the possession of the McLoughlin Memorial Association and were subsequently donated to the National Park Service. This year, those books are undergoing conservation treatment at the NPS Harper's Ferry Center to stabilize them after decades of use and environmental fluctuations.

Books from the Columbia Library in the Museum Collection

- William and Robert Chambers *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*. Two years of bound newspapers
- Patrick Tyler *History of Scotland, Vols II-V*
- W.F.P., C.B. Napier *History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France from the Year 1807 to the Year 1814*





Example of a digital plan map created with the iPad.

Also, we have begun to see how different data sources associated with the tablet computers can be integrated to improve data collection.

This past fall, National Park Service archaeologists explored the use of tablet computers on a dig in the East Vancouver Barracks. Their experiences were very similar to the field school staff and students. While some of the tasks proved somewhat more lengthy, it became quite apparent that the quality of the data being collected were better and that more data were being collected than had been for the traditional

forms. The early indication is that ICT will change in positive ways how archaeologists record sites. We have even dabbled in the creation of 3-D models of our excavations. Having a model we can revisit during the analysis or review of site data is an extremely useful tool. A few of these models of the William Kaulehelehe site have been converted to short flyover videos and are available at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXZ6vT6Y5OY>
and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOB3110qhxY>



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve is a partnership of the National Park Service, the City of Vancouver, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Army. It includes Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Vancouver Barracks and Officers Row, Pearson Field and Air Museum, portions of the Columbia River waterfront, the Water Resources Education Center, and the McLoughlin House unit in Oregon City, Oregon.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Announcements

Museum Collections Open Houses 2014

Curious about what can be found in Fort Vancouver's collection of two million archaeological and historic objects? Find out at our Museum Collection Open House tours! In this popular program, visitors go behind the scenes inside our curation facility to get up close to actual artifacts. Each month's open house focuses on a different topic—ranging from military history, to hygiene and health, to our present-day archaeological excavations.

April 12, 2014: Dining at Fort Vancouver

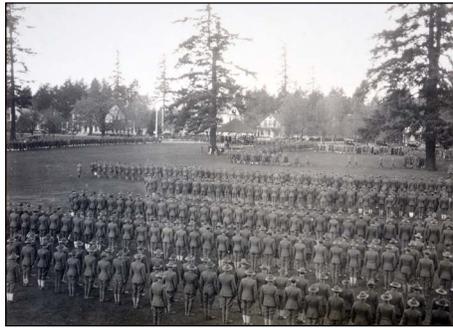
What did the residents of Fort Vancouver eat? When did they eat? Where did their food come from? Discover the answers to these questions and more by seeing archaeologically recovered dinnerware and the remnants of historic meals!

May 10, 2014: Motherhood at Fort Vancouver

On the day before Mother's Day, find out what it was like to be a mother on the frontier at Fort Vancouver and Vancouver Barracks.



One of John McLoughlin's grandchildren.



Spruce Mill soldiers during Armistice Day inspection formation.

July 12, 2014: Spruce Mill Soldiers

During World War I, Vancouver Barracks was home to the world's largest Spruce Cut-Up Mill. Historic and archaeological artifacts in our collection tell the story of this huge complex, built to make lumber for airplanes, and the soldiers who lived and worked here.

August 9, 2014: Vancouver Barracks at the Turn of the Century

At the turn of the 20th century, troops from Vancouver Barracks played a large role in many world events: the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906. Discover the effect of these troop movements and global events on Vancouver through historic and archaeological artifacts.

October 11, 2014: Slipware

While dinner was served on transferprint ceramics, slipware ceramics were everyday, inexpensive wares kept in the kitchen. View our beautiful and colorful collection of slipware recovered from archaeological excavations.

Learn more at: <http://go.usa.gov/K2qG>

Current Research and Publications

2012 Douglas Deur

An Ethnohistorical Overview of Groups with Ties to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Northwest Cultural Resources Institute Report No. 15.

2014 Kristen Converse

Searching for Bricks and Their Makers in the Oregon Territory: The INAA of Fort Vancouver Bricks. In *Alis Volat Propriis: Tales from the Oregon Territory, 1848-1859*. Edited by Chelsea Rose and Mark Tveskov, pp. 43-65. Association of Oregon Archaeologists Occasional Papers No. 9.

2014 Doug Wilson

The Decline and Fall of the Hudson's Bay Company Village. In *Alis Volat Propriis: Tales from the Oregon Territory, 1848-1859*. Edited by Chelsea Rose and Mark Tveskov, pp. 21-42. Association of Oregon Archaeologists Occasional Papers No. 9.

Recent Theses

2014 Stephanie Simmons

An Archaeology of Capitalism: Exploring Ideology Through Ceramics from the Fort Vancouver and Village Sites
Master of Arts in Anthropology
Portland State University

Material Culture Notes: Slipware

From the late 18th to the early 20th century, “slipware” served as inexpensive, utilitarian household goods, mostly jugs, mugs, and bowls. Made out of the same refined earthenware as more expensive transferprinted ceramic dinnerware, slip was the cheapest kind of decoration available on high quality ceramics.

To make slipware, unfired ceramics were dipped in a “slip”—a mixture made from natural clay and water that could be used to change the vessel’s color to white, cream, red, brown, or buff. Colorants could also be added to the slip—cobalt for blue, cobalt with antimony or iron for green, or iron and manganese for black. After a piece was dipped, a variety of decorations could be added. The vessel was then fired, glazed, and fired a second time.

Many different kinds of slipware have been found by archaeologists working at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. These brightly colored, artistically decorated fragments tell us what kinds of everyday kitchenwares would have been used by the inhabitants of Fort Vancouver.

Encrusted decorations

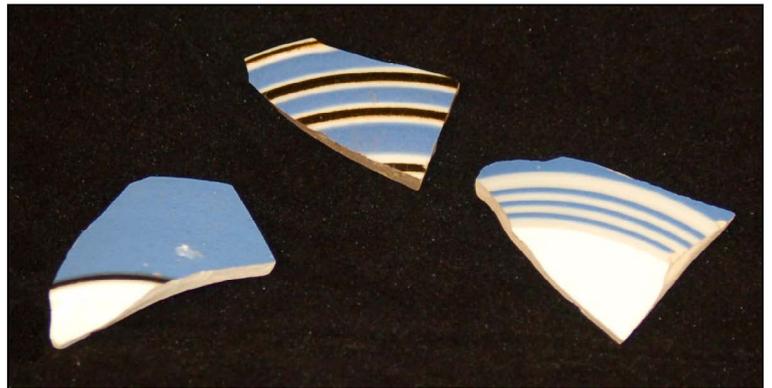
Though it may not look like it, this is also a form of slipware. While the slip was still wet, the vessel was rolled through grout, or crumbs of dried clay, to create this encrusted decoration. These artifacts were excavated from the site where the fort’s Harness Shop once stood.



Bandedware

Known as bandedware, these fragments were decorated by applying colored slips in bands to the ceramic vessel while it turned on a lathe. Bands were applied using a special kind of applicator called a “blowing pot.” The potter would blow into the blowing pot, and the air would force the colored slip through a spout. Spouts could be wide for wide bands, or narrow for narrower bands.

These bandedware bowl fragments were excavated from the fort site.



Cat’s Eye and Cabled decorations

Cat’s Eye decorations were made by using a special three-chambered pouring pot to drop three different colors onto the surface of the vessel.

Layering cat’s eyes into a twisting worm shape creates a cabled decoration, which you can see on these bowl fragments from the employee village site.





Marbling

A marbled decoration on slipware was created by first dipping the vessel in an all-over slip color, then dropping wet, multicolored blobs of slip across its surface. A pointed stylus was drawn through the different colors of slip to mix them together and create a look that resembled marble.



Mochaware

Mochaware is probably the most well known type of slipware decoration. The unique pattern was created by touching a "tea" soaked brush to wet slip. The "tea" used to create mochaware was an acidic solution that contained tobacco, stale urine, and turpentine. The solution reacted with the slip to create unique, tree-like designs.



Social Aspects of Pipe Smoking at Fort Vancouver

by Katie Wynia, NPS Partner



Photograph courtesy of John Edwards

A pile of tobacco pipe fragments excavated at Fort Vancouver NHS.

Tobacco in the fur trade is often associated with its role as a trade good and its use in business negotiations. It certainly played a significant part in trade, but was also part of the wider fur trade culture as a common habit amongst employees. Documentary and archaeological evidence indicates residents at Fort Vancouver frequently used tobacco. As a shared and social practice, tobacco consumption aided users in the multi-ethnic community to cross cultural boundaries.

Many fur trade participants used tobacco, but their ethnic backgrounds influenced their views on consumption. Europeans viewed tobacco as a recreational, social drug due to its history as “a uniquely social substance” (Norton 2008:159) since the late 16th century. For some Native American groups the plant had other ceremonial and spiritual connotations. In business relations, fur traders often exploited these connotations to build trading alliances and more easily achieve their goals. The shared usage of tobacco also provided a kind of shared “language and humanity” between Native Americans and Europeans (Von Gernet 1988:245). Other cultural groups in Fort Vancouver’s diverse workforce

likely brought additional views, as tobacco was available worldwide since the mid-1600s. Despite these differences, evidence points to widespread tobacco usage amongst the fur trade population.

The documentary records at Fort Vancouver indicate most employees and their families used tobacco. Employees could purchase tobacco and clay pipes at the Sale Shop, and their daily work schedule included two smoking breaks. Various historical accounts record tobacco smoking accompanying social activities. For employees, smoking tobacco was part of their daily work routine and their leisure time.

Archaeological evidence suggests tobacco smoking was a common and social activity. Clay tobacco pipe fragments are found in high numbers. Occasionally the fragments cluster in certain locations, often interpreted as smoking areas. Inside the fort stockade, these areas include the southeast corner of the Chief Factor’s House. This locale is believed to represent a meeting place along the path of traffic between the house and the Bachelors’ Quarters—here, smoking was social.

In the employee village, pipe fragments indicate smoking areas across the landscape and fragments are found near virtually all house sites. This suggests smoking was a shared practice between households. Sociality is implied by the location of smoking areas. At least five houses have smoking areas next to hearths, representing likely focal points for congregating. Another possible social smoking area is located near the crossroads at the eastern side of the Village. This was perhaps an intentional and/or fortuitous meeting place given its convenient location near the intersection of two high traffic roads.

Evidence of tobacco use in the fur trade is numerous and suggests it was socially consumed. Traders consumed tobacco with their trading partners to enable trade and employees used tobacco in their daily lives. As with trading relations, the shared practice of tobacco consumption amongst the multi-ethnic residents of Fort Vancouver provided a similarity to relate to one another amongst many differences. The commonality of tobacco usage amongst virtually all players made it an inseparable and significant aspect of the fur trade culture.

Norton, Marcy
2008 *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Von Gernet, Alexander D.
1988 *The Transculturation of the Amerindian Pipe/Tobacco/Smoking Complex and its Impact on the Intellectual Boundaries between “Savagery” and “Civilization,” 1535-1935*. Doctoral dissertation, Department of Anthropology, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. National Library of Canada, Canadian Theses Service, Ottawa.

Collections Management Internship at Fort Vancouver



Sheet music from WWI. Its small size was meant to save paper.

I traveled from Virginia Beach, Virginia, to be a Collections Management Intern for the Cultural Resources department from July 16-September 12th, 2013. I was a technical services librarian but currently working in magazine publishing when I enrolled in the Virginia Association of Museums' (VAM) management of museums certificate program in December, 2012. During the internship's time frame, I worked with Museum Technician Meagan Huff and Curator Theresa Langford to catalog a diverse collection of historic archival and three-dimensional items. I cataloged over 950 objects, including various photographs on the Kaiser Shipyards, framed Red Cross posters, books, military training manuals, medals, patches, pins and magazines (I loved the cover issues of "Colliers, the National Weekly," many from 1918), gas masks from World War I, various newspapers,



Dress owned by Idabelle Sparks.

postcards, clothing, accessories, and much more.

Some of my favorite items:

- Linear Microscope, circa 1885.
- Binoculars, circa 1880s.
- Mostly black and white and some color stereoscope cards or stereocards, most of them from 1903.
- A backgammon game shaped to look like a two volume set of Byron's poems with a cloth doll inside.
- A dress belonging to Idabelle Sparks.

Idabelle and her family lived on Officer's Row in Vancouver 1874 to 1884. I was interested to discover that she sang for President Rutherford B. Hayes when he visited Vancouver Barracks in 1880. He was also the first sitting U.S. president to ever travel to the west of the Mississippi River and his first visit to the West Coast was to the Vancouver Barracks. His home, Spiegel Grove, and gardens are

open to the public and are located in my hometown of Fremont, Ohio. One summer during high school I had volunteered in the gift shop.

After this amazing internship opportunity and experience, I am pleased to report that along with my summer volunteer projects at the Clark County Historical Museum located in downtown Vancouver (in addition to the completion of an online class in museum education throughout the entire month of August), I successfully fulfilled all the requirements of the museum certificate program, and in the near future I plan on enrolling in VAM's advanced certificate in collections care.

Thank you, Fort Vancouver, for the wonderful summer training experience and two beautiful weather months in the Pacific Northwest!

—Jennifer Wasserman



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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The Northwest Cultural Resources Institute is a cooperative partnership based at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, dedicated to fostering cultural resources research, education, and stewardship in the Pacific Northwest. The NCRI brings together National Park Service staff, university professors, and subject matter experts to facilitate research and training, provide expertise, and support other innovative educational endeavors using national parks as laboratories.

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MYSTERY ARTIFACT

This mystery object is from the HBC Fort Vancouver Employee Village. It measures 4.4 cm x 1.1 cm.



Last issue's mystery object is an egg beater.

