



It all adze up

Archaeologist Barry Gray discusses a rare find with co-worker Amanda Brittin. The stone adze Gray holds dates from the 17th century, Gray believes. Gray and his team are conducting a re-excavation within the

pallisades of Sainte-Marie among the Hurons this summer. Visitors are invited to look on, as the dig progresses.

Curious can see daily digs

Every day at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons fascinated onlookers watch archaeologist Barry Gray and his team as they search for clues in the tantalizing puzzle of Huronia's past.

A bright blue head, a fragile boot sole, a scrap of animal bone...each carefully excavated artifact is significant.

The quiet drama goes on daily between the palisades at the south end of the historic site. Since June 29, Gray and his assistants Allisan Bain, Jeanie Tummon, Amanda Brittin, Paul Rocher and Mike Henry have invested a good deal of sweat and muscle in the project. They first removed the top 20 to 40 cm of topsoil to reveal undisturbed subsoil. Every shovel full of removed soil has been screened and every square centimetre of land has

been marked on a grid.

Artifacts, when they are detected, are removed with painstaking gentleness then stored in brown paper bags, labelled with site, square and feature number, date and the name of the finder. Equally valuable are discovered stains in the soil, which are also charted on the grid.

The actual artifact yield has been plentiful, varied and enthralling to spectator and professional alike.

Ceramic pieces, many of them bearing decorations are, Gray believes, definitely related to the 17th century or perhaps earlier. One pot shard has carbonized material clinging to the interior.

"If we could get that material analyzed," Gray said wistfully, "we could actually find out what was

cooked in this pot over 300 years ago." Such analyses are exceedingly expensive.

A delicate fashioned arrowhead is made of Hudson Bay Lowland chert. A bystander is amazed. Gray explains "it's not unusual to find material that has come from a long distance. There was lots of exchange between groups".

One of his brown bags holds a piece of clay pigeon, a relic from the early 20th century when the area was a hunting preserve. Related to the same period are shotgun casings and some iron shot.

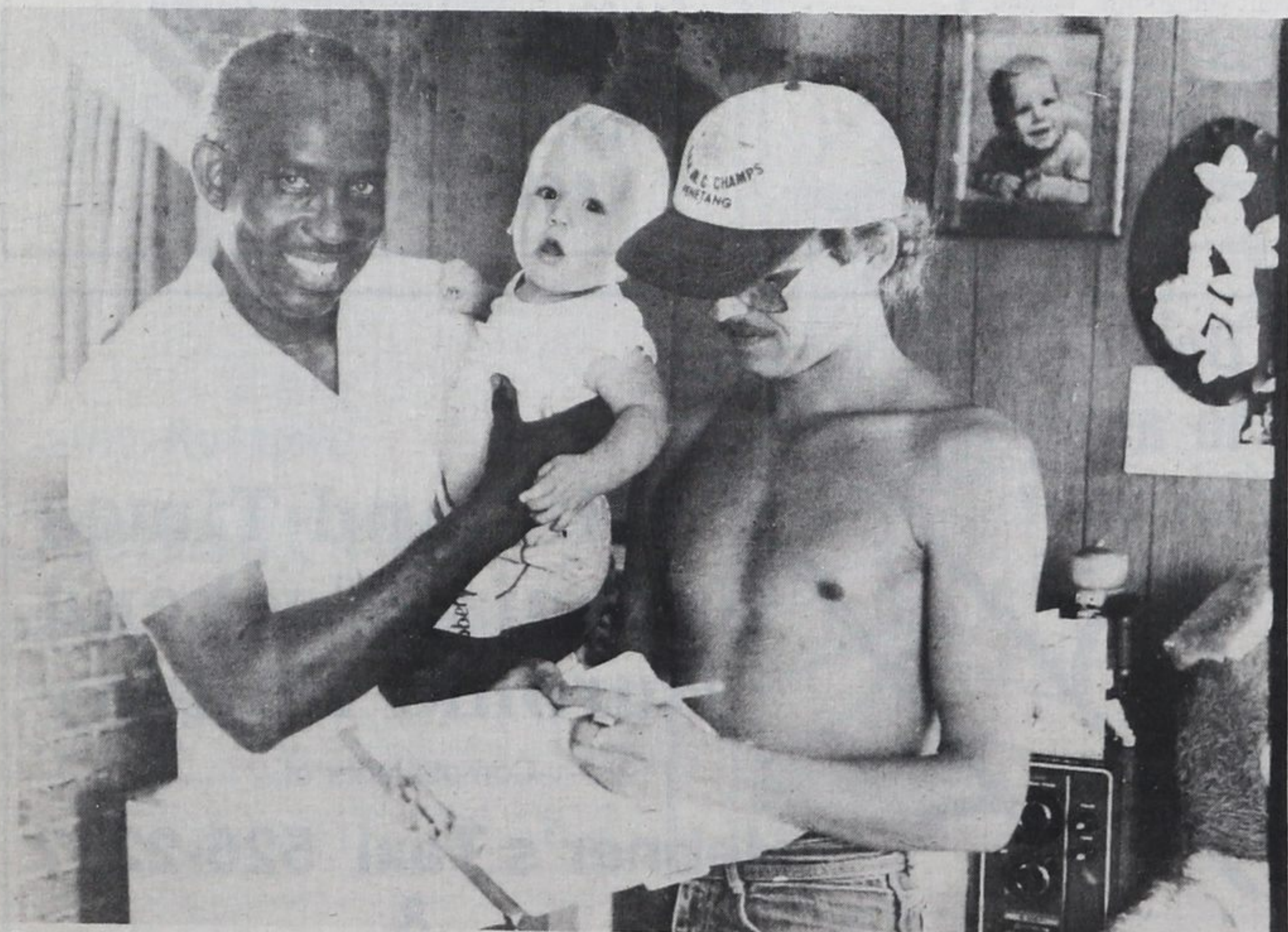
"Everything we find tells something about the use of the property," says Gray. "The archaeologist delves into another bag and produces a battered aluminum foil potato chip bag, faded blue red and silver. He

identifies it.

"This is 20th century garbage mixed in with 17th century material. It could tell us something about when this feature was disturbed."

The prize discovery so far this summer is a stone adze, its polished edge still sharp to the touch. "This is almost certainly from the time of Sainte-Marie," says Gray. "After 1620 the native people came quite dependent on the iron of European newcomers so this is an interesting find."

Copper fragments, chert flakes left from some 17th century project, a tin box with wax crayons showing through rusted holes in the lid - everything unearthed is labelled and charted and pieced together to penetrate the mysteries held by the land.



On the trail

NDP candidate Fayne Bullen was on the campaign trail in Penetanguishene on Thursday. Bullen stops

to talk with Jeff Bates and his one year-old son Adam at their home on Fox St.

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