

Chapter 8 Concluding Observations and Recommendations

(Last updated: Nov. 25, 2008)

Our 2008 field season at the New Philadelphia town site was highly successful. Two new residential sites were uncovered and investigated extensively, new aerial and ground-based geophysical survey data were obtained for future exploration, targeted testing of the roadways of the town site proved very productive, core sample testing of terraces revealed surprisingly undisturbed stratigraphy for future excavation, and our search for the remains of an African-American school house within the town site was significantly expanded and will be continued in future field seasons. The educational component of our NSF-REU field school in 2008 was also a resounding success. At the time of writing this report, at least four of our field school participants are applying to graduate programs in African-American archaeology and history, including two individuals of African-American heritage and one of Latin-American heritage.



2008 New Philadelphia Archaeology Field School Participants.

Based on data obtained through survey, excavation, and archival research to date, our 2009 research and field work efforts will likely focus on the following locations and tasks:

- a. Undertake targeted geophysical surveys and excavations in the area of Block 12, Lots 1-4, in which a shovel test pit survey in 2005 uncovered indications of occupation site remains; there also exists limited evidentiary leads indicating this block may have been a location for an African-American school house.
- b. Continue core sampling and excavations of the site of Louisa McWorter's house on Block 13, Lots 3 and 4, on which geophysical surveys and partial excavations were undertaken in 2005.

- c. Continue core sampling and excavations of the site of a blacksmith shop located in the area of Block 3, Lots 1 and 2, on which geophysical surveys and partial excavations were undertaken in 2006.
- d. Undertake targeted geophysical surveys, and subsequent core sampling and excavations, in the area of Block 11, Lots 1-2, on the eastern edge of the town site; historian Claire Martin's research indicates these lots were owned in the mid-1850s by Josephus Turpin, an African American with a small household listed in the 1855 state census, and who served as a sergeant in the 29th Colored Infantry during the Civil War.
- e. Use a hammer-driven soil core sampler to test thermal anomalies from the 2008 low-altitude aerial survey and to further explore the stratigraphic profiles of earthen terraces on the west side of the town site.
- f. Undertake core sampling and excavations on selected locations on the northernmost portions of the ridge-top of terrace 1 in Figure 7.3 of this report; AMS core samples of that terrace ridge in 2008 revealed intact stratigraphic profiles; this terrace ridge runs immediately to the west of known occupation locations in Block 4.
- g. Undertake geophysical and core sampling surveys in the area of Block 2, immediately to the east of the known occupation locations and blacksmith shop site in Block 3; commence excavations in this block where warranted by survey results.

In addition to the continuing success and productivity of the New Philadelphia archaeological field schools, this is an exciting time for the heritage of this remarkable community. In 2005, this project succeeded in placing the entire town site of New Philadelphia onto the National Register of Historic Places as a nationally significant archaeological resource. In October 2008, nomination of the town site to National Historic Landmark status was approved by the National Historic Landmarks committee in Washington, D.C. Patricia McWorter presented an eloquent and moving statement on behalf of the McWorter family at that hearing on the powerful legacies of New Philadelphia and Frank McWorter. This nomination received official support from U.S. Senators Barack Obama and Richard Durbin; U.S. Representatives Ray LaHood and John Shimkus; Illinois Senators Deanna Demuzio, Emil Jones, Jr., and John Sullivan; Illinois Representative Jil Tracy; and Governor Rod Blagojevich, among others. Upon final approval by the Secretary of the Interior later this autumn, the New Philadelphia town site will be formally designated as a National Historic Landmark. Members of the descendant and local communities, along with our collaborative team of researchers, are extremely grateful for the continuing support of the National Science Foundation's program of Research Experiences for Undergraduates, which has been instrumental in advancing these many paths of education, research, and progress.

2008 New Philadelphia Archaeology Report:
<http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/faculty/cfennell/NP/2008ReportMenu.html>

New Philadelphia Archaeology Project web site:
<http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/faculty/cfennell/NP/>