



## ETHNOHISTORY CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 2012

Tribal Historic Preservation Director Brice Obermeyer, Archaeologist Greg Brown, and tribal member and historian Nicky Michael will present papers at the 2012 Ethnohistory Conference, November 7-10, 2012, at Springfield, Missouri. The papers will be part of a panel entitled "The Delaware and the Ozark Frontier in the early 19th century," chaired by DTHPO Director Brice Obermeyer.

### Panel Details

**Abstract:** As one of many Eastern Woodland tribes removed west of the Mississippi River prior to the Indian Removal Act, the Delaware were confronted with several new challenges and opportunities following their relocation to the Ozark region of what is today southern Missouri. Panelists will explore this unique but brief period of Delaware history through recent archaeological, historic and ethnohistoric research.

Note: The panel will be followed by a guided tour of the National Register-eligible Delaware period sites in the James River Valley south of Springfield.

### Participants

**John Bowes, Associate Professor of History, Eastern Kentucky University, [John.Bowes@eku.edu](mailto:John.Bowes@eku.edu)**

*Trail Beginnings and the Delaware in Missouri*

An oft-used quote from the American colonial era describes the Shawnees as the "greatest travelers," and it is not a description without merit. Yet even a quick glance at the journeys and migrations of Delaware individuals and communities west of the Mississippi River in the mid-nineteenth century indicates that the Delawares of that era may challenge for that title. In the midst of relocations and removals that are more established in the historical narrative, the stories of widespread Delaware movement casts light on a more expansive history. Delaware traders on the Santa Fe Trail and Delaware scouts on military expeditions with the Pathfinder, John C. Fremont serve as only two examples of a larger picture. In this paper I examine the notion that before the border towns of western Missouri became a jumping off point for Americans heading west, the region was already a starting point for the many trails Delaware Indians traveled west of the Mississippi River.

**Gregory J. Brown, NAGPRA Archaeologist, Delaware Tribe Historic Preservation Office, [gbrown@delawaretribe.org](mailto:gbrown@delawaretribe.org)**

*One Step in a Long Journey: Integrating Delaware Town Archaeology into a History of the Lenape People*

The journey of the Delawares near Delaware Town in the early 1800s was a short episode in a much longer story spanning many thousands of years. This paper describes an ongoing project aimed at enabling modern Delaware descendants to understand and disseminate their own history. Efforts are



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described to place the archaeological evidence for Delaware Town into a context that also incorporates language revitalization, stories and knowledge passed from tribal elders, historical research, NAGPRA-funded repatriations, and electronic digitization and analysis of allotment maps and other cartographic resources.

**Melissa Eaton, Ph.D. Candidate, College of William and Mary; Anthropology Instructor, Metropolitan Community College -Longview, maeato@email.wm.edu, Melissa.Eaton@mcckc.edu**

*"I [Have] You All By the Hand": Practical Politics of Identity at Delaware Town 23CN1*

Long recognized as the "Grandfathers" of other Eastern Algonquian groups, the Delawares held a special status among other indigenous groups and colonial governments in the East. However, upon crossing the Mississippi River, the main body of the Delawares found themselves under new administration that did not recognize this status and preferred the business of Osage rivals. This paper, as part of my dissertation, examines both documentary and archaeological resources to illustrate key ways that tribal leaders negotiated and exerted their collective identities as Delawares to affect political, economic, and social outcomes of their choosing.

**Gina S. Powell, Kansas State Historical Society and Missouri State University, and Neal H. Lopinot, Director and Associate Research Professor, Center for Archaeological Research, Missouri State University, NealLopinot@missouristate.edu**

*"What's for Supper?" Plant and Animal Remains from the Delaware Town Site*

The assortment of plant and animal remains in 12 flotation samples from excavated features at the Delaware Town site (23CN1) are described. In particular, the fill of Feature 2, a sub-floor pit associated with a residential structure (Feature 3), perhaps even the home of Chief Anderson, contained a considerable amount of charred plant and animal remains, as well as a great array of artifacts diagnostic of a Delaware occupation. The contents of the samples indicate a diverse subsistence strategy that included crop cultivation and animal husbandry, as well as gathering, hunting, and fishing. This subsistence strategy is consistent with a traditional mixed economy dominated by horticulture and hunting, although perhaps some crops and domesticated animals may have been purchased from traders and other Euro-Americans living nearby in southwest Missouri. The analysis also reveals a conspicuous absence of Old World domesticates such as peach, watermelon, cantaloupe, etc.

**Nicky Michael, Adjunct Instructor/Language Manager, Rogers State University and Pawnee Nation College/Delaware Nation, maxkwe@yahoo.com**

*"A Nation of People"*

This paper will explore mid-nineteenth century Kansas and Texas Delawares' expression of cultural/ethnic unity. Within this expression of ethnic identity the Delawares included and shared with other tribal nations. This shared sense of ethnic identity played a role in the Kansas Delawares final 1866-67 Removal to the Cherokee Nation. Kansas Delawares did not conceive of the Texas Delawares as a separate nation or separate identity. To the contrary they saw themselves as originating from the same ethnic Delaware



whole. Both groups even shared some of their same leaders and a number of members travelled back and forth regularly.

From the time of Delaware leader William Anderson, Kik Tha We Nund, one can see the top priorities for their removal to Kansas in 1831, was to induce the federal government to provide the Delaware Nation a good reservation in Kansas where he thought the Delawares could draw in splinter groups from the rest of the country and Mexico. In addition, Kik Tha We Nund sought to revitalize Delawares' traditions. Thirty-five years later, to physically reunite with their brothers and sisters who were living in Texas, the Delawares sought to include the Texas Delawares in their November 1866 Agreement with the Cherokee Nation for their final reservation in Indian Territory.

Upon removal to Indian Territory in 1867, the Kansas Delawares were unable to secure the reservation that they thought they had gained. In part, the federal government's goal of destroying Native American cultures included the separation of the Delawares.

**Brice Obermeyer (Chair), Director and Associate Professor of Anthropology, Delaware Tribe Historic Preservation Office/Emporia State University, [bobermeyer@delawaretribe.org](mailto:bobermeyer@delawaretribe.org)**

*"When we lived back east": Contemporary views on Delaware Removal and Settlement on the American Frontier*

The Delaware Tribe is the descendant political organization of the Munsee and Unami speakers that coalesced with other eastern Algonquin and Woodland peoples to form the main body of Delaware by the late 18th century. An overview of this coalescence, dispersal and eventual removal to Southern Missouri and finally eastern Oklahoma is provided to help introduce the session and the Delaware experience. Particular emphasis is placed on viewing this removal experience from the perspective of contemporary tribal members.

**Marcie Venter, Lecturer of Anthropology, Northern Kentucky University and Missouri State University, [mlvent0@yahoo.com](mailto:mlvent0@yahoo.com)**

*Delaware along the James: A Decade of Ethnohistorical Archaeology in Southwest Missouri*

As a result of the Treaty of St. Mary's (1818), the main body of the Delaware migrated from the White River valley of Indiana to the James River valley of southwest Missouri. Led by Captain William Anderson, they made the region their home, settling along the banks and terraces of the river and its tributaries from about 1821 to 1830. Information gleaned from ethnohistoric and historic sources has inspired, guided, and at times complicated the archaeological study of Delaware Indian occupation in the region. In this paper, I review the recent history and challenges of problem-oriented Delaware research in southwest Missouri, synthesize what complementary documentary and archaeological data have told us about the group's Removal period occupation, and suggest areas for future investigation.

**Steve Warren (Discussant), Associate Professor of History and Chair, Augustana College, [stephenwarren@augustana.edu](mailto:stephenwarren@augustana.edu)**