

ADAMS HERITAGE

3783 Maple Crest Court,
RR#1 Inverary, Ontario K0H 1X0
Phone (613) 353 1463 Fax (613) 353 1463
email: nickadam@rideau.net

Mary Jarvis MCIP RPP
Director of Planning, Land Development
Urbandale
2193 Arch Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1G2H5

January 7, 2011

Dear Mary,

re: Visual Inspection of the 'stone circle', Lot 7, Concession 2,
(geo) Township of March (KNL Lands)

In 2003, my company was hired by KNL Developments Inc. to undertake an archaeological assessment of the proposed KNL Development lands within Parts of Lots 6, 7, 8 and 9, Concession 2 and Parts of Lots 7, 8 and 9, Concession 3 in the geographic Township of March, now part of the City of Ottawa.

Our examination of the property consisted of a Stage 1 assessment (background research, examination of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture's (at that time, the Ministry of Culture) archaeological database, historic research etc.) and a Stage 2 archaeological assessment which included both test pit survey and surface survey of areas of moderate and high archaeological potential. All work was conducted in accordance with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture's "Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines (1993)" as required under the terms of my archaeological licence.

As required, I submitted copies of the report (dated August 2003) to the Ministry of Culture for review. In June 2004, I received a letter from Chris J. Andersen, Regional Archaeologist at the Ministry confirming that "*all work was done in compliance with the Ministry's Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines*" and that "*the Ministry's concerns for cultural heritage resources have been adequately met for this project and our office has no further concerns regarding the lands affected by this undertaking. Accordingly, it is recommended that all and any archaeological or cultural heritage related conditions of approval may be considered as having been addressed to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Culture.*"

It is my understanding that in July 2010, a local resident found a circle of stones in the bush on the north side of the beaver pond.

In company with yourself, along with representatives from Colautti Group, J.L. Richards & Associates Ltd, South March Highlands – Carp River Conservation Inc., the City of Ottawa (Marianne Wilkinson), and Ron Goddard, I viewed the ‘stone circle’ which had been brought to public attention following its discovery in July. The ground was covered with a dusting of about an inch of snow and light snow was falling intermittently during the viewing.

The stone circle consists of six unmodified sub-rectangular blocks of the local Canadian Shield bedrock, arranged in a circle around a slightly larger, central rock of the same material. The rocks which form the circle average approximately 25cm per side, while the central rock is slightly larger, being roughly 35 cm square. Although the individual rocks are not modified, their arrangement is clearly not natural, thus the stone circle is definitely of human origin. The whole arrangement is just over one metre in diameter.

A single large irregular shaped rock, approximately 75 centimetres across lies less than one metre to the north-east of the stone circle. Proceeding south-west from the stone circle, the land rises slightly on to the crest of one of the many bare bedrock knolls which protrude through the forest within this portion of the KNL Lands. Most of the surface of the knoll is smooth, although towards its western end, a cluster of irregular, shattered rock fragments are present. Some rocks appear to have been recently removed from this area to support a nearby fence stake. Because of the vegetation and snow cover it was not possible to examine these in any detail, however it appeared to be an area of fractured rock typically created by the shattering action of the passage of glacial ice. Such fractured areas are a common feature of virtually every glacially smoothed knoll in the Canadian Shield.

Two further blocks of rock, each approximately 30 centimetres square were present on the surface of the knoll. It was not possible to determine whether these had been deliberately placed by human hands, or had been deposited by natural mechanisms. Isolated boulders, rock fragments and blocks are frequently found, deposited by natural action, on bedrock knolls in the Canadian Shield, thus there is no need to assume that these rocks were positioned by human hands.

Since the stone circle is sitting directly on the surface of bedrock, traditional techniques of archaeological investigation to determine context, association and relative age are not possible.

Instead, it is necessary to rely on logic, careful observation and context.

The remains of a wire fence line was noted passing less than 5 metres to the south of the stone circle. This fence line, which is traceable from Goulbourn Forced Road, throughout the length of the property, lies along the property boundary dividing the North and South halves of Lot 7, Concession 2. It lies roughly along a Northeast - Southwest axis (Figure 1).

Lot 7 was first granted in 1828, and right from the start, was divided into North and South halves, and the two halves were owned by separate owners. Thus even from the earliest period of Euro-Canadian settlement in the area, it would have been necessary for the owners to physically establish the dividing line between the two halves of the lot. And while the main lot

divisions and concessions would have been cut by the surveyors of the township, the interior lot divisions would not. It would probably have been left to the respective lot owners to determine the limits of their possession.

It is my opinion that the stone circle is probably part of an early attempt by the respective half-lot owners to define and mark their property boundaries to their mutual satisfaction, before a more formal survey could be organized. Wherever possible, posts would have been erected or trees blazed to define the property line, however, where bedrock was at the surface, a small stone marker would have sufficed.

The assertion has been made that the stone circle, and now the rocks in the immediate vicinity, could be the remains of a 'medicine wheel'. While I do not know upon what authority or intelligence this determination was made, I find it speculative, unlikely and not based on any substantive data.

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture's archaeological sites database does not contain any instances of 'medicine wheels' in Ontario, although a number of petroform features have been recorded in extreme north-western Ontario at the Manitoba border (MTC 2011). To the best of my knowledge, there is no documentary record of such features having been identified, noted or recorded during the Euro-Canadian settlement and exploration of this province, although many other types of archaeological site (settlements, villages, pictographs etc.) were noted in detail.

Secondly, 'medicine wheels' appear to be a class of sacred architecture commonly found on the Great Plains and Prairies, and not associated with the Canadian Shield or cultural groups east of Manitoba. A 1990 PhD thesis examination of 'medicine wheels' (Vogt 1990), identified 177 of these features, primarily located within Montana, Alberta and Saskatchewan. None were cited in Ontario.

In summary, I do not believe that the stone circle found within the KNL Lands is of First Nations origin or archaeological significance. It is most probably a boundary marker separating the Northern and Southern halves of Lot 7, Concession 2, Township of March.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Adams", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Nick Adams

References:

Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MTC)

2011 Robert von Bitter, Archaeological Data Coordinator, Personal Communication, Jim Sherratt, Archaeological Review Officer, Personal Communication, Jan 7th 2011.

Vogt, David Eric

1990 An Information Analysis of Great Plains Medicine Wheels. PhD Thesis, Simon Fraser University. (<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/bitstream/1892/6154/1/b14460105.pdf> Accessed Jan 6th 2011).

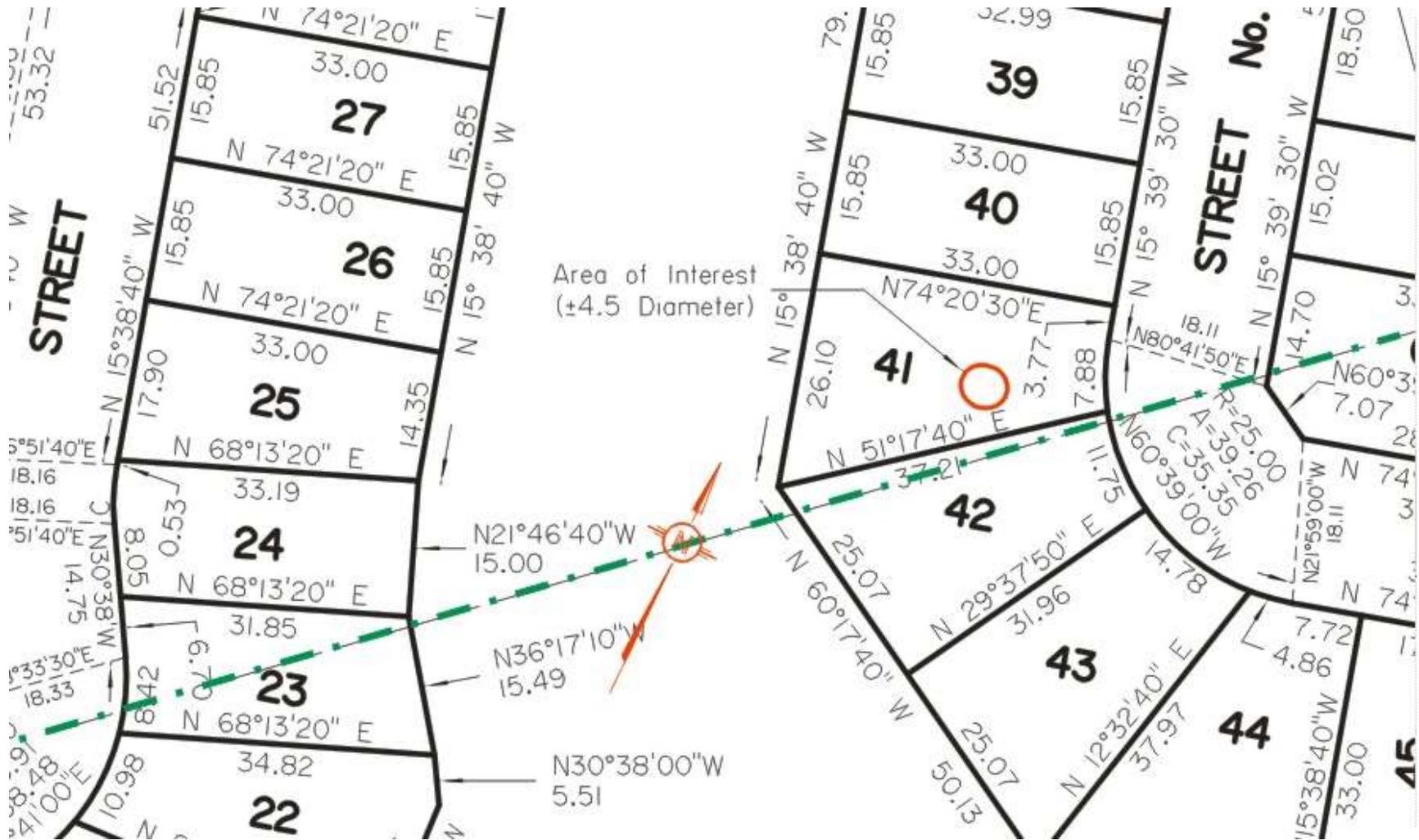


Figure 2: Location of the stone circle in relation to proposed subdivision lots and the lot boundary fence line (green) between the North Half and the South Half of Lot 7, Concession 2, March Township.



Figure 3: Location of the stone circle (red dotted line) in relation to the fence line demarcating the division between the North and South halves of Lot 7, Concession 2, March Township. The remains of the wire fence can be seen in the foreground.