

LIVING ARCHAEOLOGY WEEKEND

GENERAL VOCABULARY

Agriculture - the intensive production of **domesticated** plant and animal foods on a large scale with complex tools and methods

Archaeology - the study of past human cultures based on the analysis of **artifacts** and **sites**

Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) - a federal law that protects the remains of ancient and historic cultures on Federal and Indian lands, making it illegal to excavate, remove, damage, or alter archaeological resources without a permit

Artifact - any object made or used by humans, such as tools, containers, and ornaments

Blow gun - a tube-shaped bone or wood tool used to propel a small dart

Break - to soften a hide

Collecting - the legal and ethical recovery of **artifacts** by people other than archaeologists

Context - the three-dimensional location of an **artifact**, and its spatial relationship to other **artifacts**

Corn meal - made by crushing and grinding dried corn, this plant food was an important part of both Native American and early pioneer diets

Domesticate - human control of the breeding process so that plants and animals develop traits (like large seed size and increased milk production), making them more useful to humans (for food, transportation, and the like)

Earth oven - a cooking pit in the ground lined with heated rocks and covered with soil

Eastern Agricultural Complex - a set of eight seed-producing plants (sunflower, sumpweed or marshelder, goosefoot or lambsquarter, maygrass, erect knotweed, giant ragweed, amaranth, and little barley) that formed the basis of early **horticulture** in eastern North America beginning 5,000 years ago

Feature - a soil anomaly produced by past human activity, such as an earth oven, hearth, or post mold

Fleshing - to remove the flesh and fat from a hide

Freshwater mussel - a common mollusk found in Kentucky's rivers. Native peoples used the shells of this animal as spoons, and in the manufacture of pottery and ornaments, like beads and pendants.

Hearth - (1) a place where humans **domesticated** plants and animals; (2) the remains of an ancient campfire; (3) the area in front of a historic fireplace, often used for cooking

Historic - the time after the invention or adoption of writing

Hominy hole (Bedrock mortar) - cylindrical holes in sandstone and limestone rocks that Native Americans may have used to grind nuts or other plant foods

Horticulture - the production of **domesticated** plant foods on a small scale with simple tools and methods

Kentucky Antiquities Act - a state law that protects the remains of ancient and historic cultures on state, county, and city property, making it illegal to excavate, remove, damage, or alter archaeological resources without a permit

Looting (pot hunting) - the illegal or unethical destruction of archaeological resources to obtain artifacts like **arrowheads** and **ceramics** for personal use or for sale

Maize - a Spanish word for **corn** derived from a native word *mahis*

Mill stone - circular stones, made of tough, fine grained rock like sandstone, used one on top of the other for grinding wheat or other grains. A mill stone's flat surface has deep grooves that work to grind the grain into small pieces and also push the ground flour or meal out from the stones

National Register of Historic Places - the official list of our country's most significant historic, architectural, and archaeological districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects, and the ones deemed most worthy of preservation. The Red River Gorge is on this list.

Parched corn - the process of drying and cooking corn that was used by Native Americans and early pioneers to make corn last longer

Petroglyph - **rock art** images that have been carved, pounded, incised, or ground into a stone

Pictograph - **rock art** images that have been painted or drawn on stone

Post mold - a soil stain created when the underground portion of a house post or fence post decomposes

Prehistoric - the time period before the invention or adoption of writing

Preservation - a program or plan to prevent damage or destruction of an archaeological site

Rock art - any design or picture created on a rock surface, including **petroglyphs** and **pictographs**

Rockshelter - a recessed area under a rock overhang that people used for a variety of reasons

Site - a place with material evidence of past human activity

Stratigraphy - the layering of deposits in archaeological **sites**

Tanning - the process of cleaning and softening an animal hide

Venison - deer meat

PREHISTORIC VOCABULARY

TOOLS AND WEAPONS

Arrowhead - the small (generally less than 2.5 inches) stone, bone, or metal tip of an arrow

Atlatl (Spearthrower) - a hand-held bone or wood tool used to propel a spear with considerable thrust and distance

Billet - a soft antler, bone, or wood tool used by a **knapper** when making a **chipped-stone tool**

Chert (flint) - a fine-grained, brittle rock that can be shaped into tools

Chipped-stone tool - any tool made by striking a piece of brittle raw material, like **chert**, into a desired shape

Core - a piece of unmodified raw material, like **chert**, from which a **knapper** makes a chipped-stone tool

Debitage - the fragments of stone (**flakes** and **debris**) left-over after making a **chipped-stone tool**

Flakes - flat-shaped **debitage**

Flintknapping (Knapping) - the process of making a **chipped-stone tool** from brittle rock, like **chert**, by striking the raw material

Grinding stones - hand-held stone tools in a variety of shapes (like conical mortars-pestles and flat manos-metates) that Native Americans used to grind up plant foods

Hafted - a tool that is attached (with sinew or glue) to a handle or shaft

Hammer (Hammerstone) - a hard stone tool used by a **knapper** in making a **chipped-stone tool**

Knapper - a person who manufactures a **chipped-stone tool**

Knife - a sharp, hand-held or **hafted chipped-stone tool** used for cutting and slicing

Lithics - artifacts made from stone, such as **arrowheads** and **grinding stones**

Pecking - a way of making **ground-stone tools** by striking the stone with blows from a stone **hammer**

Percussion flaking - a way of making **chipped-stone tools** by striking the stone with blows from a stone **hammer** or an antler, bone, or wood **billet**

Pressure flaking - a way of making **chipped-stone tools** by removing material through the application of pressure with a bone or antler knapping tool. Usually the final step in shaping a **projectile point**

Projectile point - any object **hafted** to a pole, stick, shaft, dart, or spear of some kind, fashioned for use as a weapon. All arrowheads are projectile points, but not all projectile points are arrowheads. Some projectile points tipped spears, which were used with an **atlatl** before the bow and arrow were invented.

Scraper - a sharp, hand-held or **hafted chipped-stone tool** used for scraping hides

Spear point - a medium-sized to large stone, bone, or metal tip of a spear

CERAMICS

Ceramics (pottery) - baked, fire-hardened clay objects like pots and figurines

Sherd - a broken piece of a **ceramic** pot or vessel

Temper - sand, stone, shell, clay, or plant fibers added to clay to prevent **ceramics** from shrinking or cracking during firing

BASKETS AND TEXTILES

Canebrake - a large, thick stand of river cane

Cordage - a thread or string made by twisting two or more strands of plant fibers together

Diagonal Weave - a method of weaving in which the elements interweave with themselves

Double woven Basket - a basket that is woven to be two layers thick

Plain Weave - a method of weaving that is done as over one, under one

Rivercane - one of the common names used for *Arundinaria Gigantea*, a species of bamboo native to the U.S. The others are *Arundinaria Tecta* (Swamp Cane, Switch Cane) and *Arundinaria Appalachia* (Hill Cane, Mountain Cane).

Textiles - objects like clothing, bags, blankets, sleeping mats, and nets that are made of woven plant material (leaves stems, stalks, bark)

Twilling - a method of making baskets and **textiles** that produces parallel diagonal lines

Twining - a method of making baskets and **textiles** that involves twisting the plant fibers and produces parallel horizontal lines

Warp - the horizontal or lengthwise threads or cords of a basket or **textile**

Weaving - a method of making baskets and **textiles** that involves winding the plant fibers in-and-out

Weft (Woof) - the vertical or crosswise threads or cords of a basket or textile

BLOWGUNS

Blowgun - a tube made of **rivercane** or similar hollow plant that native peoples used to hunt small game such as rabbits, squirrels, and birds

Darts - the projectile that is shot from the **blowgun**

Fletching - the material on the end of the **dart** (**thistle**, feathers, cotton, and animal furs) that clogs up the bore of the **blowgun**. It allows pressure to build up, causing the **dart** to shoot out. Fletching also stabilizes the **dart** in flight.

Rivercane - the premier material for making **blowguns** (see BASKETS AND TEXTILES)

Shaft - the stick that the **fletching** is applied to. Traditional shafts were locust, hickory, oak, and **rivercane**

Thistle - a thorny weed with purple flowers that grows along roadsides today. Thistle (many different species were used) is the most recognized type of **fletching**.

Quiver - a holder for **blowgun darts**. Although no one has recovered any archaeological examples, the technology of the time suggests native peoples would have made them from bark, gourds, rawhide, or buckskin.

FLUTES

Duct Flute - equipped with a mechanism to guide the air from a blow hole to the **sounding edge** without requiring **embouchure**

Embouchure - the technique of using the lips to shape and direct the air onto the **sounding edge**

End-blown flute - a flute the player holds vertically

Fipple - a block inserted into the end of a flute, either internally or externally, to guide the air

Fipple Flute - a type of flute notched a little away from the mouth end, with a block inserted in the end to guide the air. Examples include recorders, tin whistles, flageolets, and eagle bone whistles.

Rim-Blown Flute - played by blowing across the top of a tube, sometimes with a notched or beveled edge. Examples include the Anasazi, Mojave, Shakuhachi (Japan), Ney (Middle East), Xiao (China), and Quena (Andes) flutes and most panpipes.

Side-Blown or Transverse Flute - a **simple flute** the player holds horizontally. Examples include modern concert flutes, Celtic and Renaissance style flutes, fifes, the Chinese Dizi, and many others.

Simple Flute - a hollow tube. The player blows directly on the **sounding edge** to make sound, requiring **embouchure**. This is the oldest known type of flute, found nearly worldwide in ancient cultures. The oldest European and Asian examples were used over 35,000 years ago.

Sounding or Splitting Edge - the beveled edge that, by splitting the player's breath stream, produces vibrations that produce sound

Two-Chamber Native American Flute - flutes that contain a Slow Air Chamber (SAC) with a divider that separates it from the sounding column/**variable tube**

Variable tube - a tube with finger holes or a sliding "blockage" that will change the length of the vibrating air column and thus, pitch

Vessel Flute - a type of flute that often contains an internal or external **fipple**, but the resonating chamber is an enclosed vessel. An example of this kind of flute is an ocarina.

HISTORIC VOCABULARY

BLACKSMITHS

Anvil - a basic blacksmithing tool, an anvil is a stationary block with a hard surface on which another object is struck. Because the anvil is so heavy, all the blacksmith's energy and strength can be transferred to the piece being worked on.

Bellows - a tool that delivers a certain amount of pressurized air to a particular place. Blacksmiths use the bellows to make the fires or coals hotter.

Bending - heating steel to a yellow-orange heat allows bending. The blacksmith can bend a piece using the hammer to swing it over the horn of the **anvil**; or the blacksmith can insert the piece into one of the holes in the top of the **anvil** and swing the free end to one side.

Drawing - lengthens the metal by reducing one or both of the other two dimensions

Finishing - the final step in the process of blacksmithing. There are many different ways to finish a piece. The blacksmith can hit it on the **anvil** to break off **scale**, and then brush the piece with a

wire brush. He can use files to finalize the shape, remove burrs and sharp edges, and smooth its surface. Using grinding stones, abrasive paper, and emery wheels also can help further shape, smooth, and polish the surface. The blacksmith can apply paint, varnish, oil, or wax to the surface to change how the piece looks and to help prevent rust.

Flux - powdered borax, silica sand, or a combination of the two, used to clean surfaces to be **welded**

Forging - the process of shaping metal; also referred to as sculpting. The iron is hammered into shape in five basic steps: **drawing**, **shrinking**, **bending**, **upsetting**, and **punching**, generally with a hammer and **anvil**.

Heat Treating - an operation involving the heating and cooling of a metal in the solid state in order to alter the physical, and sometimes chemical, properties of the metal

Punching - a blacksmith may do this to make a hole or to decorate a piece. A chisel is used to cut or slit a piece.

Scale - a dark-colored deposit that forms on metal surfaces during heating

Shrinking - the opposite of drawing

Upsetting - making metal thicker in one dimension by shortening it in the other dimension

Vise - a tool used to hold or clamp a piece steady to allow work to be performed on it

Welding - joining together pieces of the same or similar kind of metal

SPINNING*

Distaff - this tool keeps fibers untangled and makes spinning easier. Unspun fibers are wrapped around it, and tied in place with a piece of ribbon or string. A distaff is most commonly used to hold flax, and sometimes wool, but it can hold any type of fiber.

Drop Spindle - is a wooden spike weighted at one end with a circular **whorl** (weight). It is used for spinning wool and other plant, animal, or synthetic fibers into thread.

Niddy Noddy - a tool used to make **skeins** from yarn. It consists of a central bar, and two crossbars at each end, offset from each other by 90 degrees. This is the hand-held version of the **weasel** and so it does not have a counter.

Spinner's Weasel - a mechanical yarn-measuring tool. This spoked wheel has an internal ratcheting mechanism that clicks every two revolutions. It makes a "pop" sound after it has measured out the desired length of yarn.

Skein - a loosely coiled length of yarn or thread wound on a reel

Spinning Wheel or **Charka** - a food-and-hand operated device used to make yarn or thread from plant, animal, or synthetic fibers

Textile - any fabric or cloth, especially a woven one

Whorl - a weight attached to a **spindle** that acts like a flywheel and adds momentum to the **spindle**

* see also the BASKETS AND TEXTILES section

GRIST MILLS

Corn Mill - a large building where corn kernels are ground in large amounts on **mill stones**

Grist - grain that has been separated from the chaff in preparation for grinding. It can also mean grain that has been ground at a grist mill.

Hand Grist Mill - a smaller and portable machine that grinds corn or grain

Mill Stone - a large, round heavy stone that has been grooved in some way. Used in a grist mill to grind grains and corn.

Mill Race - a fast-moving channel of water that provides power for a grist mill

Mortar - a hard, heavy bowl designed to hold materials to be ground into small pieces or powder by means of a **pestle**

Pestle - made from a hard material, this rod-shaped object with a rounded end is used for crushing or grinding substances in a **mortar**

LONGHUNTERS

Firelock or **Flintlock** - a muzzle-loading weapon with a firing mechanism ignited with flint and steel. The **gunflint** strikes the metal, causing a spark igniting the powder in the barrel. This caused an explosion that shot the ammunition out of the gun. Flintlocks were used from the early sixteenth century to around 1840.

Flash Pan - is located directly underneath the **frizzen**. It consists of a shallow depression near the **touch hole** of the barrel. Very fine gunpowder (which ignites quickly) is placed in the flash pan. Once the pan is filled with powder, the **frizzen** is pushed over the pan to cover the powder.

Frizzen - another essential component of the flintlock firing mechanism. The **hammer** holding the **gunflint** strikes the frizzen, causing a spark, which ignites the gunpowder. The **gunflint** actually shaves off molten pieces of steel from the frizzen.

Gunflint - a piece of flint held in the jaws of the **hammer**. The gunflint strikes the steel **frizzen**, which produces a spark, which ignites the gunpowder. Throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth,

and nineteenth centuries, gunflints were typically made in England or France. English gunflints were a distinctive black flint, while French gunflints were a distinctive "honey"-colored flint. Gunflints came in various sizes, depending on whether they were used in **muskets**, **rifles**, or pistols. When neither English nor French gunflints were available, Native American hunters often made gunflints from local flint or **chert**.

Hammer - one of the main components of the flintlock firing mechanism. It held the **gunflint**.

Musket - a type of **muzzle loader** with a smooth *bore* (or barrel). Muskets were easier to load but were less accurate than **rifles**. Experts could load a musket in 15 seconds.

Muzzle Loader - an early weapon that hunters loaded from the *muzzle* (top of the gun barrel) rather than at the *breach* (bottom of the barrel) as modern weapons are. All muzzle loaders used black powder, a very corrosive, smoky, and explosive kind of gunpowder.

Powder Horn - the hollow horn of a cow or buffalo used as a container to hold the gunpowder. Powder horns came in different sizes and were often elaborately decorated.

Rammer - a slender piece of wood or steel used to push and shove the lead ball (used as ammunition) down the gun barrel

Rifle - a type of muzzle loader with a "rifled" barrel. The gun barrel had spiral grooves cut into it, which caused the ammunition to spin. This created greater velocity and accuracy than the **musket** was capable of. The rifle took longer to load than the **musket**.

Touch Hole - a very small hole in the gun barrel near the **flash pan**. Once the gunpowder is ignited in the **flash pan**, the spark causes the gun powder in the gun barrel to ignite.

We use these terms in our language today, holdovers from when people commonly used flintlocks.

"A Flash in the Pan" - If the gunpowder in the **flash pan** ignited (causing a spark and smoke), but didn't ignite the main powder charge in the gun barrel, it was considered to be "a flash in the pan" and had no significant affect for firing the gun. When we use this phrase today, as in, "His career was just a flash in the pan," it means that it happened quickly and was not important.

Half Cock - the position to which the **hammer** is pulled back before it reaches the full cock position. A muzzle loader cannot be fired in half cock position and acts as a safety measure. The term "Don't go off half-cocked" means to act hastily or quickly without giving any thought to your actions.

Lock, Stock, and Barrel - the main components of a flintlock gun. All components are necessary for the gun to fire. If one of the components is missing, then you can't use the gun. Today, the term is used to mean complete or that everything is included.

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