

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay
Spring Bay Day at Chop Point
13 May 2025

Brief Report of Archaeological Excavations

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On 12 May, Ed Friedman, Jay Robbins, Fred Koerber, and Becca Peixotto opened three units on the large lawn at Chop Point, removing the sod and overburden to expose the tarps left in 2018 (Figure 1 Figure 2). Ed used a metal detector to locate corner pins from the 2018 excavation. Tarps were encountered in units P-894 S and P-895 S at about 16 cmbs. In unit P-884 S, we did not encounter a tarp and made a decision to begin screening soil at approx. 10cmbs.



Figure 1: L to R Becca Peixotto, Fred Koerber, and Jay Robbins lay in units at Chop Point on 12 May 2025.



Figure 2: Becca Peixotto helps cut sod to expose units for excavation at Chop Point on 12 May 2025.

At the end of Bay Day, we replaced the tarps and backfilled the units, including doing our best to reassemble the sod blocks. Fourth grade students excavating under the supervision

of Becca Peixotto, Cyndie Lamoreau and Dana Cary were from Fisher-Mitchell School in Bath, Pittston-Randolph Consolidated School in Pittston and Woolwich Central School in Woolwich. Approximately 33 students conducted the archaeology during the course of three 50-minute sessions of eleven students each.



Figure 3: (Left) Students share what they found during a 50-minute excavation session during Spring Bay Day. (Right) Students use trowels and other tools to excavate a unit at Chop Point on Spring Bay Day



Figure 4: (Left) Cyndie Lamoreau helps students identify artifacts in their screen during Spring Bay Day at Chop Point. (Right) Dana Cary supervises students digging a unit during Spring Bay Day.

Unit P-894 S

See Figure 5. Excavated to an average depth of 25cmbs. Soils: 7.5YR 3/2

Artifacts collected:

- Brick – 2110g (discarded, see Figure 8 for example)
- Nails – 9 fragments of which 2 are possibly modern, at least 2 are cut (see Figure 11 for examples)
- Redware – 14 fragments of which 3 are unglazed, 1 slipglazed, 1 possibly black glazed, 9 other glazing. (Figure 9)
- Glass – 4 fragments of which 2 are flat/window, 1 green bottle, 1 colorless and curved
- Pipes – 8 fragments of which 2 are stems and 6 are indeterminate
- Lithics:
 - 1 side notched projectile point fragment with parallel sides and loss of tip, rhyolite(?) (Figure 12)

- 8 flakes of which 2 are quartz and 6 are rhyolite(?)



Figure 5: Units P-894S and P-895-S after removal of tarps buried in 2018. The 2025 Bay Day excavation began at this depth.

Unit P-895 S

Excavated to an average depth of 28cmbs. A new strata was visible across about 50% of the unit when the students finished excavating so we brought the unit down to a consistent depth (Figure 6). Soils: mottled 60% 10YR 3/4 with 40% 7.5YR 5/1 with charcoal fragments visible.

Artifacts collected:

- Brick – 3195g (discarded)
- Nails – 16 fragments of which 1 is a possible wrought, and 1 is a possible bracket or handle
- Redware – 14 fragments, all glazed. 2 rim(or foot?) fragments refit, 1+ slipglazed, 1 possibly black glazed
- Glazed Ceramic – 1 fragment , possible tea cup rim. Perhaps white salt glazed stoneware because of fine orange peel texture, though this piece seems thin.
- Glass – 10 fragments of which 3 are green bottle, 5 are flat/window, and 2 are possible table glass. A few of the fragments are burned/heat affected and one of the table glass fragments is a rim with molded decoration. (See Figure 10)
- Pipes – 2 fragments – 1 stem and 1 bowl
- Other Historic period – Metal - possible mouth harp
- Miscellaneous – possible grit tempered low fired pottery, possible calcined bone (or burnt pipe frag?)
- Lithics
 - 13 flakes of which 3 are quartz and remainder are rhyolite (see Figure 12 for examples)
 - 1 fragment of English (dark) flint with cortex



Figure 6: Unit P-895 S at 28 cmbs, ending depth on 13 May 2025. Note the natural change in strata. Munsell: mottled 60% 10YR 3/4 with 40% 7.5YR 5/1 with charcoal fragments visible.

Unit P-884 S

Excavated to average depth of 14cmbs. Clay feature extending from (grid) northwest corner to center of unit (Figure 7). Soils: Clay 2.5YR 4/3; remainder 7.5YR 3/2. The soil below the sod in this unit appeared undisturbed and as we did not encounter a tarp (even digging deeper in one corner), we began excavations at approximately 10cmbs. Information received later indicated that this unit was previously excavated to 18cmbs but with the clay feature in the NW corner, I wonder if we were excavating the unit we thought we were.

Artifacts collected:

- Coal – 4 pieces
- Lithics
 - 2 flakes



Figure 7: Unit P-884 S at 14cmbs, ending depth on 13 May 2025. Note the clay patch in the (grid) northwest. Munsell: clay 2.5YR 4/3; remainder 7.5YR 3/2

Examples of Artifacts Recovered



Figure 8: Brick fragments were abundant in units P-894 S and P-895 S. To accommodate the short 50-minute excavation sessions and the students' attention spans, students were instructed to 'save all 'interesting brick and rocks.' Artifact processing revealed about 1/3 of the material saved to be rocks and 2/3 to be brick with some redware fragments. A few lithics were also present.



Figure 9: Glazed redware fragments from P-894 S and P-895 S.



Figure 10: Glass fragments were found in units P-894 S and P-895 S, including green bottle glass, window glass, and a molded glass rim (far right).



Figure 11: Sample of nails and iron fragments recovered from P-894 S and P-895 S.



Figure 12: (Left) Side notched projectile point found in P-895 S. (Right) Sample flakes from P-894 S and P-895 S

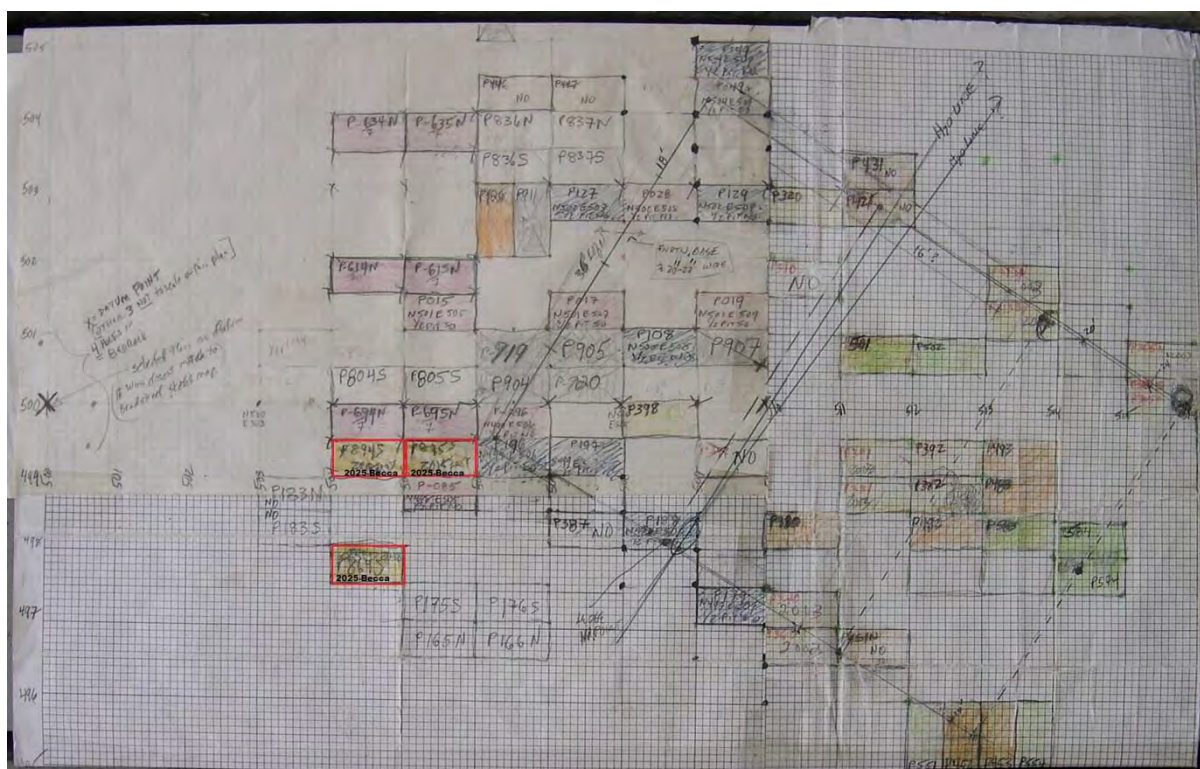


Figure 13: Chop Pt. archaeology site plan (Jay Robbins, Fred Koerber, Becca Peixotto). Red units continued: 2025

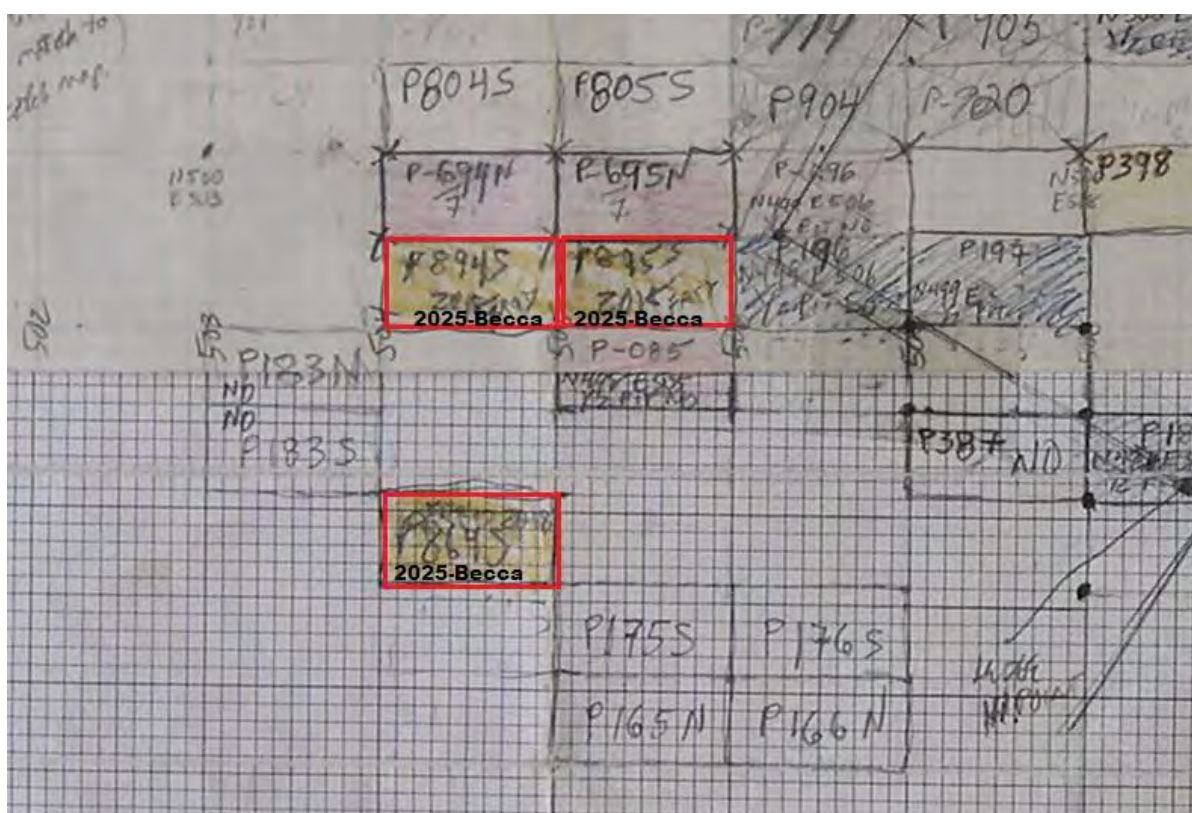


Figure 13: Plan close up. 2025 units started in 2018 by Fred Koerber