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## Season Not Even Underway Yet, but Michilimackinac Archaeologists Find Artifact

MACKINAW CITY, MICH. — While the official opening day of the archaeological field season at Colonial Michilimackinac is today, May 30, the archaeology team couldn't wait to begin unearthing amazing artifacts. On Friday, May 26 while preparing the site for the season, Field Supervisor Beth Kerton-Schmit discovered a bone or ivory gaming die.

“Our clean-up/set-up week ended with a very nice find, a bone or ivory gaming die,” said Dr. Lynn Evans, Curator of Archaeology for Mackinac State Historic Parks. “It came from the central cellar. It is the second die found in this house.”

The excavation will be fully staffed and running seven days a week through August 19, weather permitting.

The current excavation site is House E of the Southeast Rowhouse at Colonial Michilimackinac. Numerous exciting finds have been made at the site in recent years, including a Compagnie des Indes lead seal dating between 1717 and 1769, a brass sleeve button with an intaglio bust on it, a potential structural post dating to the original 1715 fort, and engraved “Jesuit” trade ring, a brass serpentine sideplate for a British trade gun; complete remnants from a creamware plate; and many other items. The archaeological dig at Michilimackinac began in 1959, making it one of the longest-running archaeology programs in North America. House E was first occupied by Charles Henri Desjardins de Rupallay de Gonneville, and later by an as-yet-unidentified English trader.

Colonial Michilimackinac is a reconstructed fort and fur trading village located just west of the Mackinac Bridge. Costumed interpreters provide demonstrations and tours throughout the day, and active archaeology takes place during the summer months. More information on the site can be found by clicking here.

A higher resolution version of the die is attached to the email. A downloadable version of this release can be found here.

*Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan's Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, the Biddle House, featuring the Mackinac Island Native American Museum, Benjamin Blacksmith Shop, The Richard & Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, American Fur Co. Store & Dr. Beaumont Museum, McGulpin House, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks' rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or on the web at [www.mackinacparks.com](http://www.mackinacparks.com).*

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