

Welcome to an exhibit about the Newark Earthworks Center!



The Ohio State University at Newark

Made possible by a grant from the Global Arts + Humanities Discovery Theme

Land Acknowledgment

To date, The Ohio State University does not have an official land acknowledgement statement. In brief, this means that our university has yet to formally recognize the tremendous amount of territory and other forms of wealth that have been taken from Native Americans over the past several hundred years.

However, there are faculty, staff, and students who are currently working to fill that gap. When this happens – and it is when, not if – Ohio State’s land acknowledgement will have four defining features.

First, we will recognize the Tribes who were forcibly removed from their historic homes in service to the founding of the state of Ohio. Here, we will acknowledge that territories taken from Tribes such as the Delaware, Miami, Ojibwe, Peoria, Potawatomi, Seneca, Shawnee, and Wyandotte were used to build Ohio State’s six campuses.

Second, we will recognize the Tribes whose land was taken – often through brute force or lopsided treaties – and then sold to raise monies that contributed to the founding of The Ohio State University. Here, we will acknowledge that the Morrill Act of 1862 has a dark and bloody history that preceded the development of Ohio State and other land-grant institutions.

Third, we will make certain that the Land Acknowledgment focuses on the past, present, and future; that is, recognizing the past wrongdoings, the present harm that continues to be visited upon American Indians, and the future need for Ohio State to engage in ongoing dialogue and reparative activities associated with these injustices.

Fourth and finally, we will work directly with Tribal Leaders and community representatives to ensure that Ohio State’s Land Acknowledgment accurately reflects the perspectives, values, and traditions of Tribal communities.



The Octagon Earthworks marks within its observation points the complete moon cycle: 8 alignments over a period of 18 years and 219 days (18.6 years)

***Geometry & Astronomy in Prehistoric Ohio* by Ray Hively & Robert Horn, 1982**

NEC Team

- **Dr. John N. Low, Director - Associate Professor**
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Citizen
- **Marti Chaatsmith, Associate Director**
Comanche Nation Citizen/Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma descendant
- **Megan Cromwell, Contractor, Research Assistant**



The lunar rise at the Octagon Earthworks – Newark Earthworks

NEWARK EARTHWORKS CENTER

- The Newark Earthworks Center is an interdisciplinary academic center of the Ohio State University.
- We research and develop projects featuring the Indigenous cultures that built the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks.
- We emphasize American Indian cultural and scientific achievements in the Ohio River Valley, from the last Ice Age through to the present.
- We support tribal governments' self-determination and cultural sovereignty in their essential roles relating to the preservation, interpretation and stewardship within Ohio.
- We initiate reciprocal and sustainable relationships between American Indian tribal governments and Ohio State University faculty, staff, and students.



I am very excited to be part of a small but passionate team at the Newark Earthworks Center, as we build upon the foundations laid by former director Dick Shiels and interim director Marti Chaatsmith. The Center will continue to grow and evolve. As a center for The Ohio State University, we have a unique opportunity to promote scholarly engagement and research as well as contribute to the efforts of World Heritage Ohio to have the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the future we will also expand our focus to include earthworks and mounds throughout Ohio, and reach out to scholars, constituents and stakeholders around the world as we make the Ohio State Newark Earthworks Center a world class research institution.

Director: John N. Low, Ph.D.

Summary

Since 2006, The Newark Earthworks Center has been an academic research center within the Ohio State University that relies on the support, trust, and partnership of the constituents and stakeholders of ancestral Indigenous sites in Ohio. It is the only academic research center on an OSU regional campus.

Mission

The mission of the Newark Earthworks Center is to promote and support research and engagement by faculty, students, scholars, Indigenous peoples, and other stakeholders with an interest in the ancestral and contemporary Indigenous places, peoples, cultures, and experiences within and around *Ohio*.



Items found in mounds indicating vast travel and trade networks active 2,000 years ago.

Vision

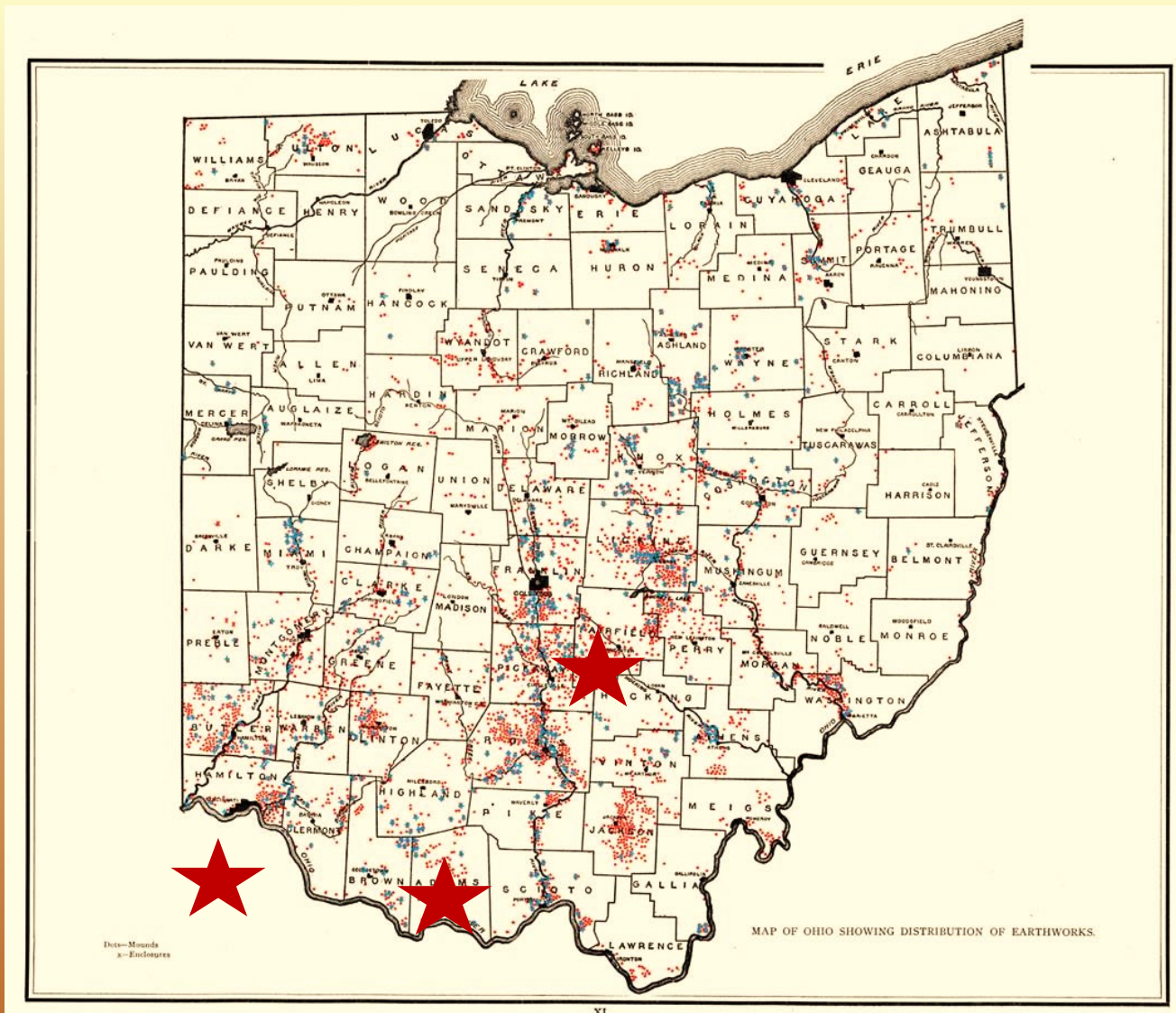
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Organization Profile

The Center's value and relevancy is founded on respect, recognition, preservation, celebration, and promotion of Indigenous peoples and their achievements, past, present, and future.

The Center's mission-driven uniqueness has guided the organization since its formation. And it is that mission that has been so powerfully effective for over sixteen years in attracting faculty, students, constituents, stakeholders, and the public to become united with our efforts. A physical center will serve then as the nexus for the activities and efforts of the NEC.



Important Hopewell era architecture and cultural sites; the stars on the map represent the locations of the Newark Earthworks State Memorial, Hopewell Cultural National Historical Park, and the Fort Ancient Earthworks



Ohio's Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks are expected to be the next sites nominated by the Department of Interior to be World Heritage Sites

Newark Earthworks State Memorial:
The Great Circle + Octagon Earthworks

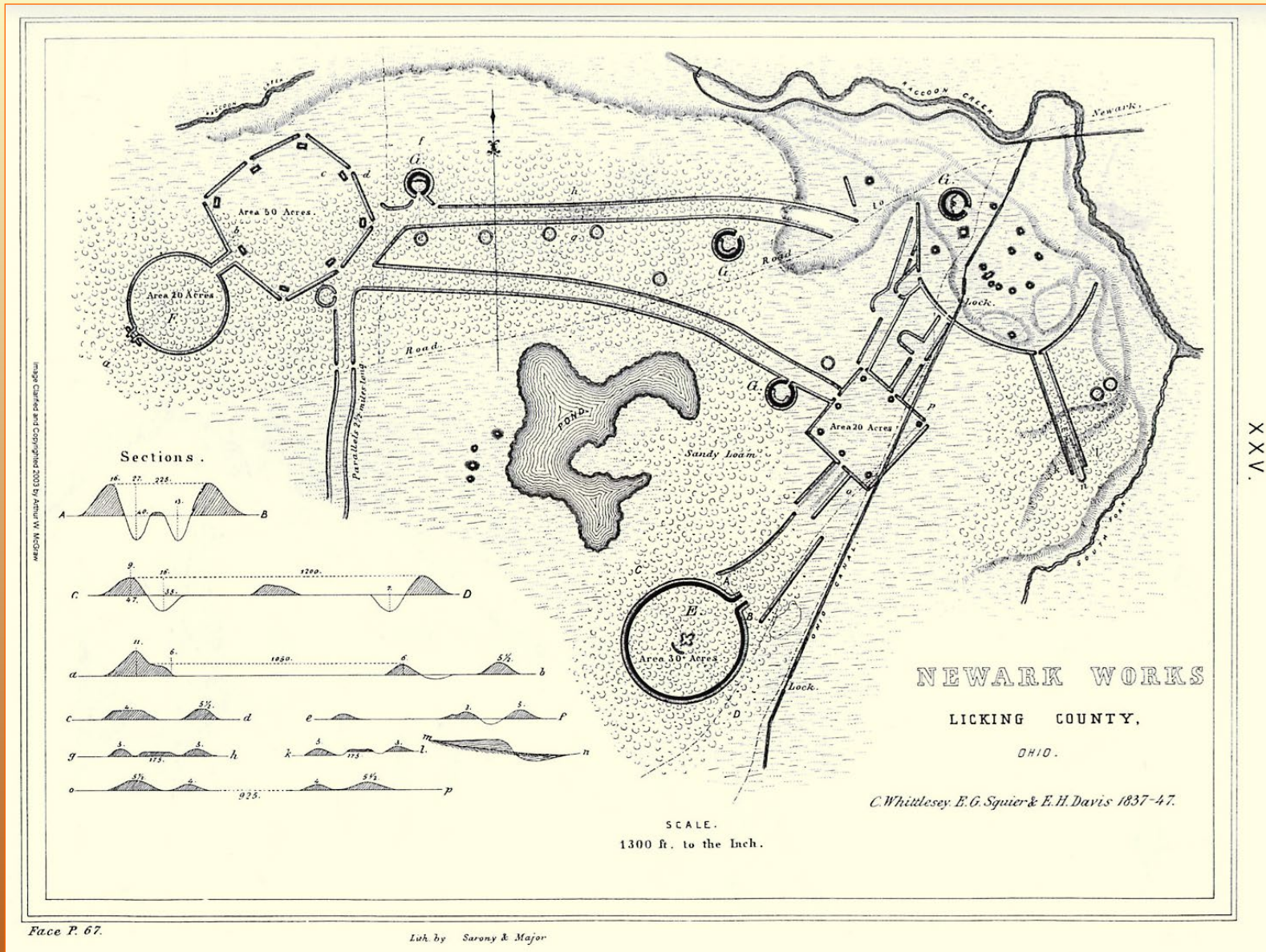
Fort Ancient State Memorial

Hopewell Culture National Historical Park Sites:
Mound City Group + Hopewell Mound Group
+ Seip Earthworks + High Bank Earthworks
+ Hopeton Earthworks

~ and the next site will be Serpent Mound ~

More than a pile of dirt...

The Power of Earth



Face P. 67.

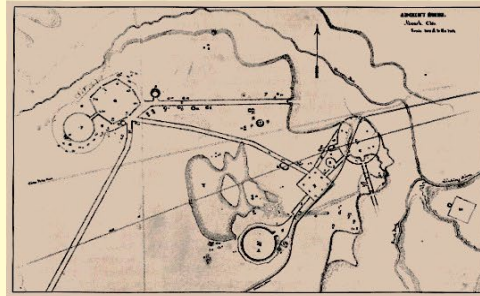
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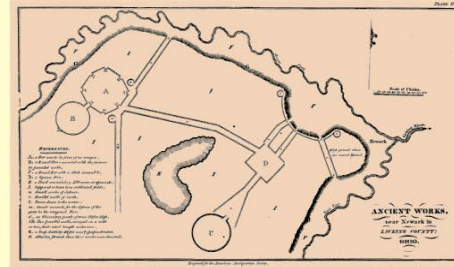
A copy of an original survey map of the Newark Earthworks - created by Whittlesey, Squire, and Davis, 1837-47

- ❖ The Earthworks are built of material probably most sacred and special to the Hopewell Era Peoples – the earth itself!
- ❖ The Earthworks were NOT sacred because of human activity. In other words, the Earthworks do not make the space sacred – the earthworks were built where they are because the location was *already* sacred!
- ❖ The Earthworks hug the earth in their construction. If the Octagon was set on its end, it would be taller than the Giza Pyramids of Egypt!
- ❖ The Earthworks may have had many uses, daily, monthly, seasonal, annual ceremonies and rituals, but also a place for naming ceremonies of infants, memorials to the deceased, playground, lacrosse or stickball field, wedding venue, reunion spot for families and/or clans, a place of teaching and learning, particularly mathematics, science, engineering, and astronomy and a place for the exchange of ideas!
- ❖ The Earthworks may have been a place of trade and commerce and community celebrations – perhaps akin to contemporary pow wow grounds!

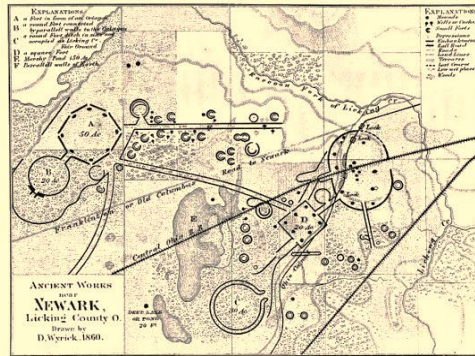
Early Maps of Newark Earthworks



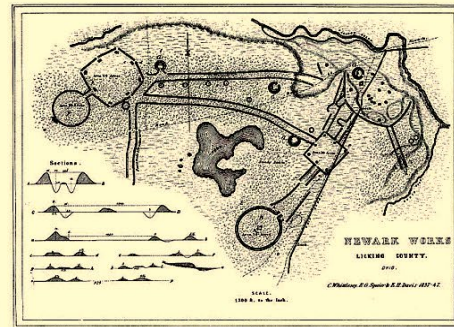
Salisbury 1862



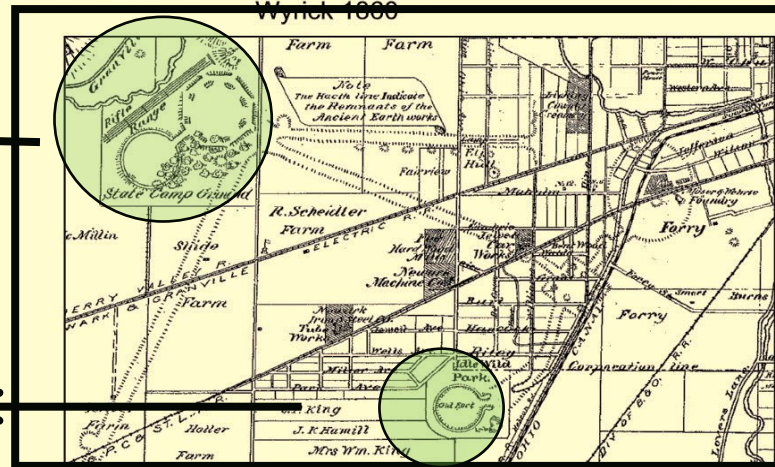
Atwater 1820



Wyrick 1866



Squier and Davis 1848



Charles H. Wells + Co. 1902

The Octagon Earthworks

The Great Circle

Maps of the Newark Earthworks, 1820 to 1902.

By 1902, only 2 of the 4 enormous earthen enclosures remain.

The Earthworks – worship and the passing of knowledge

T -topography

A -astronomy

G -geography

S -social collaboration

Chinese International Students visit the Great Circle in 2019



Newark Earthworks complex – 4 square miles – the largest set of geometric earthworks in the world.

Great Circle:

- **Earthen entrance rises 14 feet**
- **Inner ditch borrow pit – held water and sides were yellowish clay**
- **Diameter = 1200 feet (four city blocks)**
- **May reflect three levels of the indigenous world – below, surface and above**
- **Great Circle = seven million cubic feet of earth - one basket at a time**
- **Eagle Mound**

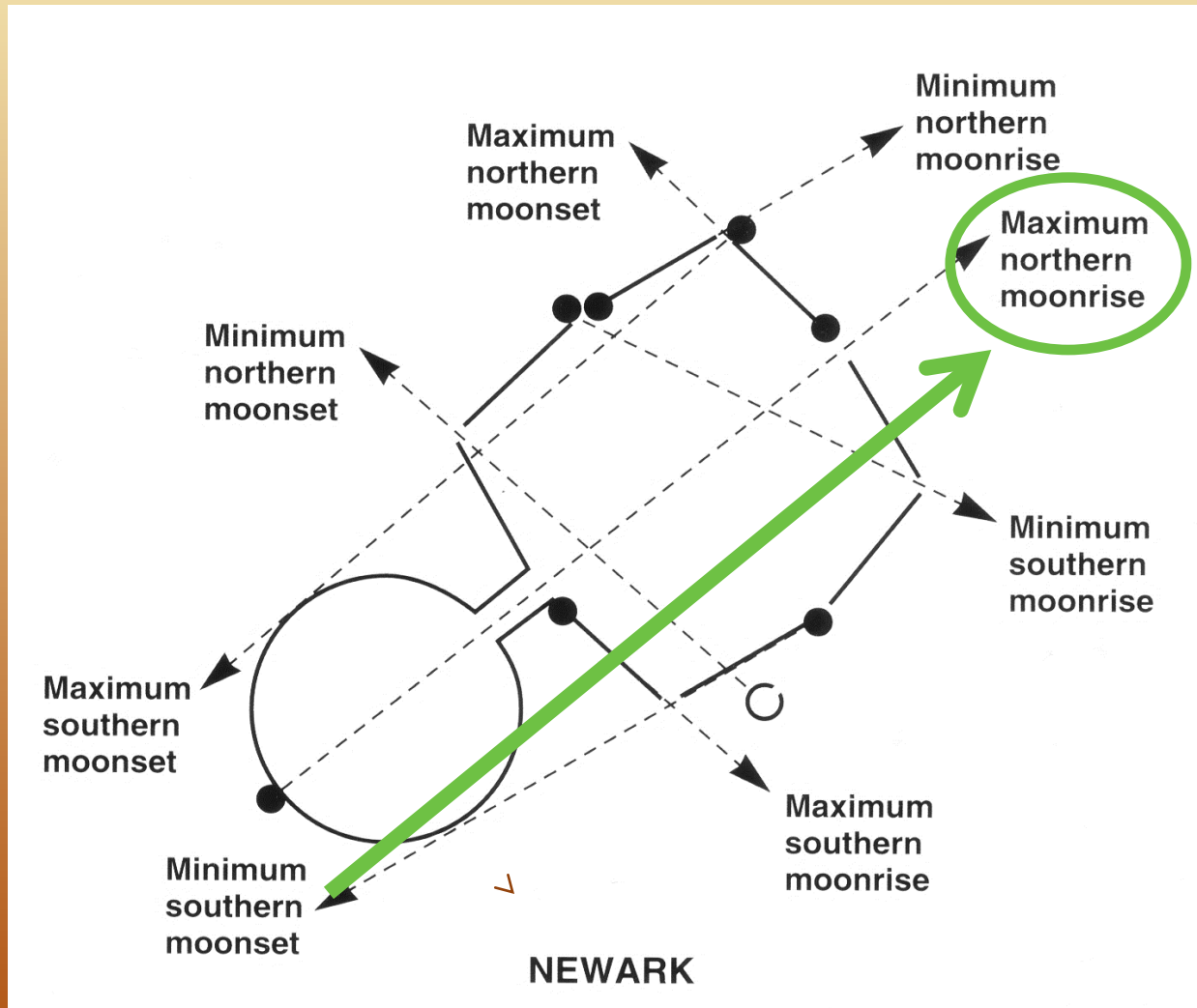
Octagon Earthworks:

- **Observatory circle**
- **Observatory mound**
- **Lunar observatory circle's diameter is 1054 feet**
- **From the center of the circle to the center of the octagon is 2x that distance**
- **A square of 1054 feet touches four corners of the octagon**
- **The Octagon has eight walls, each approximately 550 feet long**
- **Because of the precision in measurement, the dimensions may have represented the human connection to the "sacredness of geometry" – an idea that took hold around the world at various times and explains much of the world's architecture**

**The Newark Earthworks
are composed of large,
precise, geometric shapes.**



2,000 years ago, Indigenous people developed specialized knowledge to construct the Octagon Earthworks to observe the complete moon cycle.



"Geometry and Astronomy in Prehistoric Ohio"

Ray Hively and Robert Horn, 1982

Archaeoastronomy (Supplement to Vol. 13, Journal for the History of Astronomy) 4:S1-S20.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NEWARK EARTHWORKS CENTER

- ❖ We hosted tribal government visits by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, & Wyandotte Nation.
- ❖ We host American Indian experts, scholars, artists, writers, activists, elders, and tribes at the earthworks.
- ❖ We published The Newark Earthworks: Enduring Monuments, Contested Meanings (University of Virginia Press, 2016).
- ❖ We created The Ancient Ohio Trail (<https://www.ancientohiotrail.com>) in collaboration with CERHAS at the University of Cincinnati.
- ❖ Our projects are multi-disciplinary.

The Center's Commitment to Engagement

“We can honor the ancestors by reclaiming the sites today as places of gathering and ceremony”

Ohio's American Indian community is included in the planning and participation of events and projects hosted by the Newark Earthworks Center at the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks.



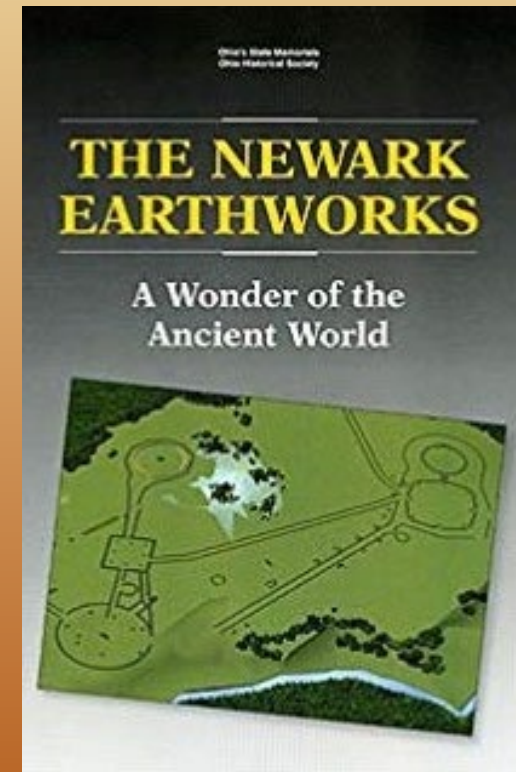
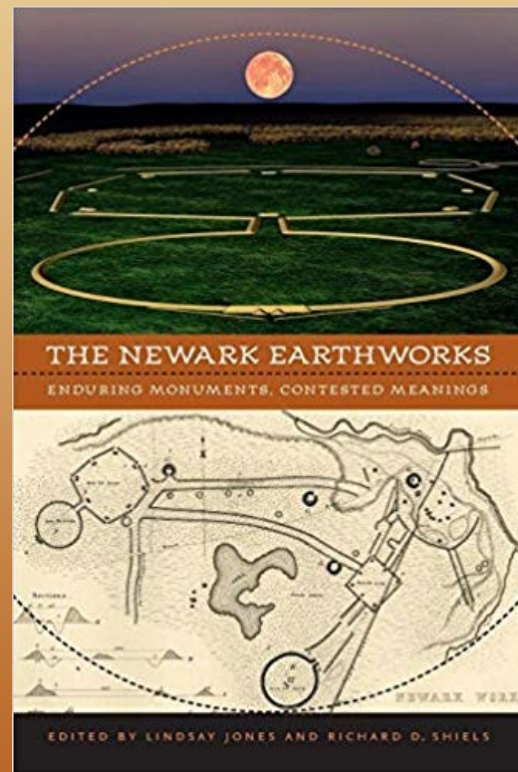
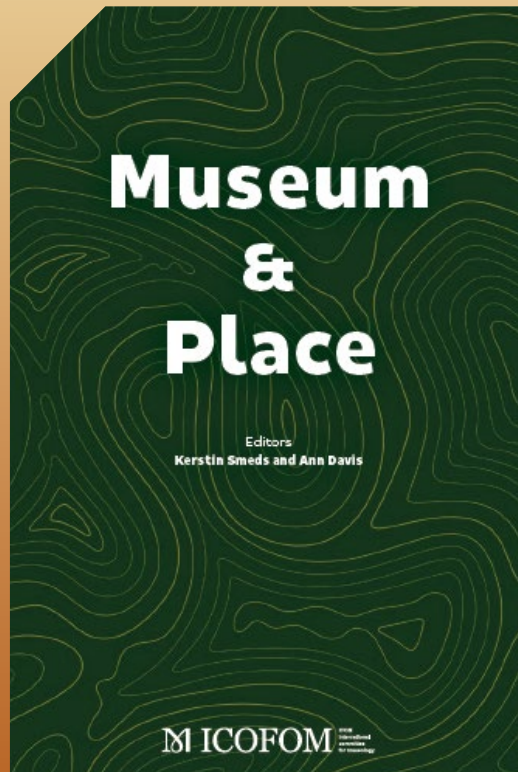
“Walk with the Ancients” Newark Earthworks Center Public Program at the Octagon Earthworks, 2009. Photo courtesy of Tim Black

The Center's Commitment to Building Relationships



Tribal elders from the Pokagon Band Of Potawatomi (Michigan) visited the Earthworks in 2014.

THE CENTER'S COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH



**OSU-NEWARK
STUDENTS ON
FIELD TRIPS TO
THE EARTHWORKS**

**THE CENTER'S
COMMITMENT TO
STUDENT
EXPERIENCE**



The Center needs a “Center” – a physical space dedicated to the efforts of the Newark Earthworks Center

The Center was housed in Baker Hall, north of campus, for many years. Unfortunately, Baker Hall had to be torn down and it is the site of a Newark Fire Department substation now. That leaves the center without a physical connection and presence on campus. This has prompted a desire to build a physical center for the Newark Earthworks Center in order to promote student and faculty experience and connections to these potential World Heritage sites. In 2021, the Knowlton School of Architecture at the OSU was asked to provide some renderings of an interior and exterior of a possible center. Using Native aesthetics, they provide an imagining of a possible Newark Earthworks Center that can further the mission of the Ohio State University and serve as a world-class facility for the Newark Earthworks Center.



Exterior View of a Center's Possible Entrance

FULFILLING OUR CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLAN:

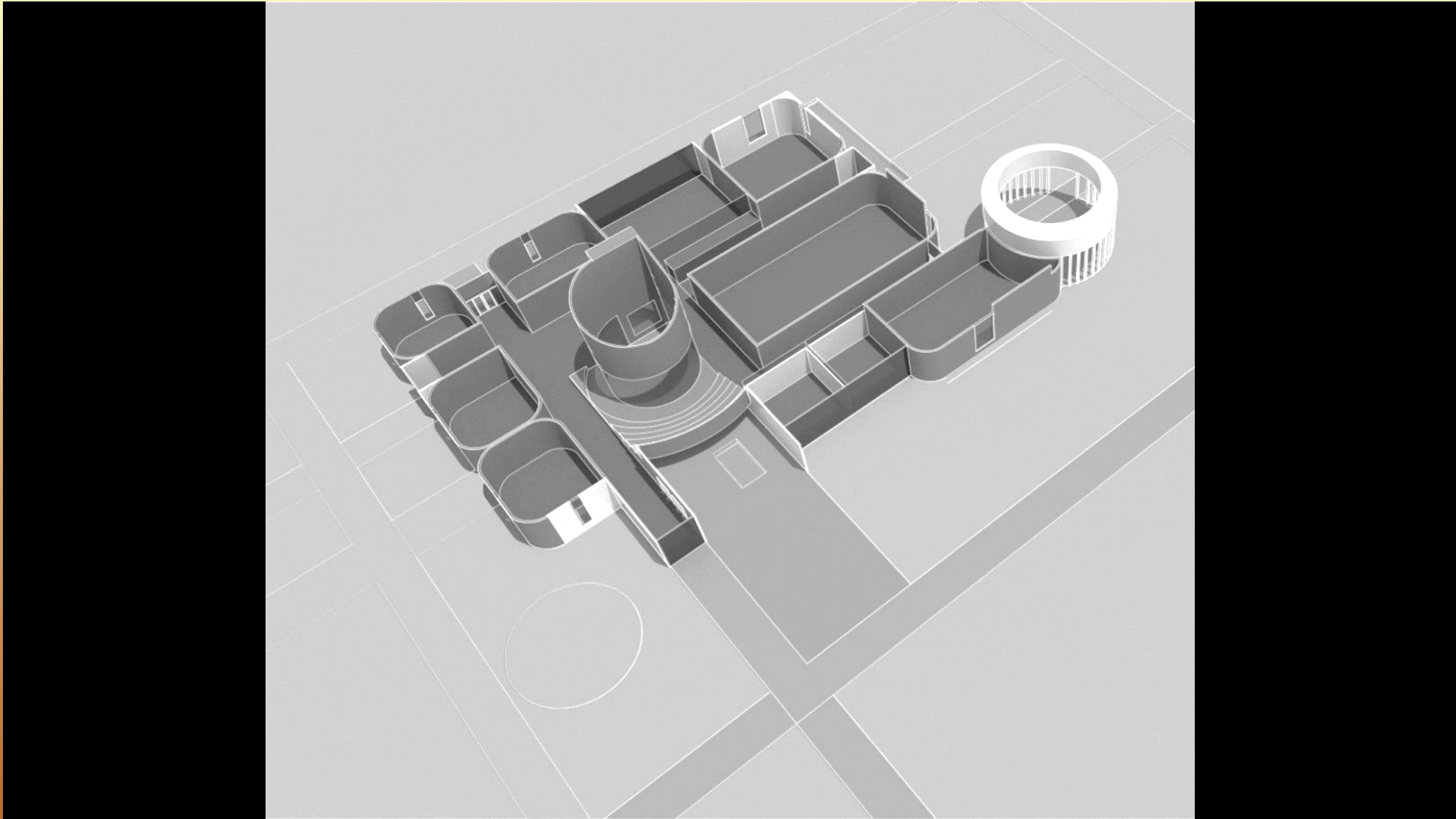
- **improve the degree to which art on campus reflects human diversity**
- **offer more intercultural, extracurricular activities**
- **build community support for student diversity**
- **develop courses that involve the Newark Earthworks**
- **continue and continue to evolve the mission of the Center**



View of a Center's Possible Exterior

FULFILLING THE PROMISE AND POTENTIAL OF THE CENTER:

- **enhance the student experience**
- **activate open spaces and engage natural systems**
- **elevate the campus identity and brand**



Interior view of a possible Center showing Grand Entry, office spaces, classrooms, auditorium, exhibition space, archives and other spaces

THE NEC FACILITY MISSION:

- **space worthy of vital research work**
- **iconic building**
- **“landing” for new visitors and scholars**
- **flexible classroom spaces**
- **inside/outside gathering space**
- **signature native landscape**



Interior of a possible Center's Grand Entry showing a welcome fire, stadium seating, and the central open-air circular access to the sky world

Get involved!

- ❖ Volunteer at the Newark Earthworks Center and learn valuable skills that transfer to your future goals.
- ❖ Join the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Organization (AIISO) at the OSU – Newark.
- ❖ Attend American Indian and Earthworks related events on the OSU – Newark campus.
- ❖ Enroll in the American Indian Studies Minor (four classes total) while a student at the Ohio State University.
- ❖ Become an informal ally and ambassador and tell your friends and family about the Newark Earthworks, the Center, and the opportunity for World Heritage Site Designation.
- ❖ Attend an Earthworks Open House sponsored by the Ohio History Connection and held four times a year.
- ❖ Consider making a financial gift/donation to the Newark Earthworks Center!

<https://www.giveto.osu.edu/makeagift/?fund=312400>

Questions?

Email Professor John N. Low at low.89@osu.edu

