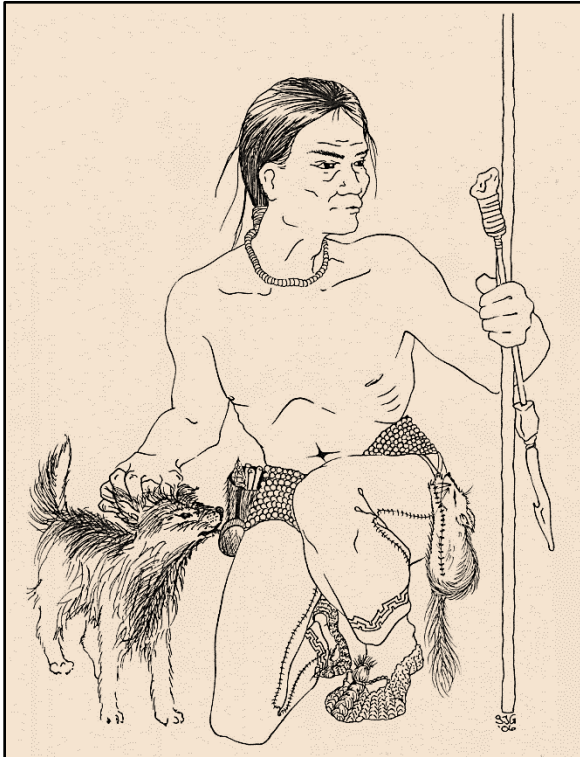


KAS RADIO - Episode 2

Dogs in Early Kentucky A *Think History* Radio Spot

Episode Transcript



A Native man and his dog prepare to leave on a hunting trip from their camp in Kentucky's Green River Valley, sometime between 6,000 to 3,000 years ago.

In his left hand, he holds his atlatl and spear. His squirrel-skin medicine bag hangs from his sash, which is decorated with tiny shell beads. A rigid deerskin container filled with spear foreshafts is tied to his sash, too. Credit: Sarah Jane Gray/Kentucky Archaeological Survey.

The very first people to step foot on Kentucky soil over 10,000 years ago were not alone. Their dogs were with them.

Side-by-side, dogs and humans had made their long, long trek across the marshy Bering Land Bridge. Moving southeastward, they had passed through Western Canada's narrow, ice-free corridor, out onto North America's vast Great Plains, and finally into what is now Kentucky.

Thus, throughout Kentucky's long human history, dogs have been by our side.

In ancient Native Kentucky, dogs were an asset to both family and clan. Dogs were pets and companions, but they also had to work. They carried loads, such as firewood and household wares, on their backs. Native hunters and their dogs were a team: the dogs flushed out game or tracked down wounded animals.

And just like families today, long-ago Native American families sometimes buried older male dogs in grave pits prepared especially for them. Families buried these dogs in the same cemeteries as their human family members.

To Read More

...About dogs in ancient Kentucky, go to:

Hunters and Gatherers of the Green River Valley by A. Gwynn Henderson and Rick Burdin. Kentucky Archaeological Survey Education Series, Number 7 (2006).

<https://www.kentuckyarchaeologicalsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Green-River-Archaic.pdf>

Describes the prehistoric lifeways, technology, and health of the people who lived in west-central Kentucky 5,000 years ago, drawing on information collected from the region's world-famous shell midden sites. A pdf can be downloaded from the KAS website.

Man's Best (Prehistoric) Friend by A. Gwynn Henderson published in **dig Magazine** Volume 9 (July/August), Number 6, pages 27-28 (2007).

<https://www.kentuckyarchaeologicalsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/dogs-article-dig-mag-july-aug-2007.pdf>

Short children's article discusses the roles dogs played in ancient Kentucky and Green River Shell Mound Archaic dog burials. A pdf can be downloaded from the KAS website.

...*About archaeological discovery of ancient dogs in the Midwestern and Southeastern United States, go to:*

Prehistoric American Dogs, compiled and written by Christopher Koeppel. Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, Indianapolis, IN.

https://secure.in.gov/dnr/historic/files/american_dogs.pdf

Short article about dog domestication and New World dog genetics, historical references to indigenous dogs in North America, and brief descriptions of dog burials discovered at Midwestern archaeological sites.

Early and Mid-Holocene Dogs in Southeastern North America: Examples from Dust Cave by Renee B. Walker, Darcy F. Morey, and John H. Relethford, published in 2005 in **Southeastern Archaeology**, Volume 24, No. 1 (Summer), pages 83-92.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/40713562.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Afc410922cfc090d21216cd1d607050de>

Excellent article discusses not only the four intentionally buried dogs encountered during excavations at Dust Cave in northwestern Alabama, and summarizes information about dog burials in the Midwest and Southeast.

Continued Dog Burial Research in Tennessee, a 2017 blog by Meagan Dennison.

<https://tennesseearchaeologycouncil.wordpress.com/2017/09/29/continued-dog-burial-research-in-tennessee/>

Current research on indigenous dogs found in Tennessee, their pathologies, their diet, and how humans may have managed them.



Listen to *Think History* on WEKU-FM Radio 88.9 at 8:19 am and again at 5:19 pm every Monday through Friday.