FROM: MOREHEAD NEWS BUREAU
MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY
MOREHEAD, KENTUCKY

MOREHEAD, Ky.—Evidence that man lived in Rowan County and established a form of civilization as many as 15,000 years ago has been uncovered by a team of scientists from Morehead State University.

The finding of stone spear points in the skeletal remains of animals known to be extinct that long ago has provided a means of dating man’s presence here.

Making the study is a team directed by Richard G. Eversole, instructor of biology at Morehead State. A self-styled amateur at archeology, he leads the team on weekend digging excursions while teaching his regular classes during the week.

An exhibition of their findings will go on display this week. It will be open in the first floor lobby of Lappin Science Hall on Friday, March 24, and Saturday, March 25. Hours will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday.

The group hopes to establish a permanent archeological museum at which the treasures they uncover can be made available for study by scientists and the general public.

Organized in February, 1966, with funds granted by the Faculty Research Committee at Morehead State, the archeological team made its first discovery a few weeks later on the farm of Ray Perry at Bangor.

Unearthed in a semi-cave at the base of a large limestone cliff were the skeletons of 10 adults and two infants together with numerous artifacts and possessions of the people who lived in this primitive setting.

These and other excavations revealed a great volume of evidence relating to life here in a period starting in the Third Century B. C.

Carbon tests on a piece of charcoal taken from a campfire showed the wood was 4,356 years old. Tests on human bones found in a crevice at the roof of one cave were dated back to 215 B. C.
Early observations gave no indications that primitive man had lived in the caves which were later used by white settlers as shelter for their cattle, Mr. Eversole said. However, test holes revealed numerous artifacts, and when layers of the floor were stripped away secrets of the past were uncovered.

As spades were pushed deeper and deeper into the powdery dirt new treasures came to light. The search continued downward to a depth of eight feet and the original floor was reached. More than 5,000 man hours were required to remove the mountain of earth.

The cave at Bangor yielded more than 3,000 arrow points, flint knives, scrapers, pottery fragments, tools, luxury items and other artifacts.

From their discoveries, the scientists have developed many theories of primitive life in the Rowan County area. Particularly helpful have been observations made on some of the human skulls.

One was so flattened on the right rear that two-thirds of the brain was compressed into the left side. Allen Lake, associate professor of biology, explained that the malformation probably was caused during infancy. It was a practice among some tribes to carry infants strapped to cradle boards. In this case, the child apparently carried its head to one side, and pressure forced the deformity.

The teeth of a young woman of 16 to 18 years were found heavily worn by some abrasive in the food (possibly sand in ground corn.) Otherwise her skull was found in almost perfect condition and with wisdom teeth uncut.

The oldest intact skull, dating from about 4,000 years ago, was massive and quite long. Another had an extra bone of the type found by anthropologists studying the Inca tribes.

The hardships of living in those early days are reflected in the skeletal remains. Dying young was the rule and few lived past 30 years.

Mr. Eversole said evidence indicated these primitives shared with our civilization some of the same concerns for living--adequate shelter from the weather and a good food and water supply.
They chose caves located well below the crests of the hills to break the winds, faced to the rising sun to keep their homes dry and near running streams for water and to be near game.

Mr. Eversole said the work of uncovering the story of early man needs to be accomplished while much evidence remains. Highway and dam construction and land use often bury traces of the early civilization before its location is known.

He pleaded with private collectors to take precautions while excavating "so 15,000 years of history is not destroyed." His plea was not for amateurs to give up their collections, but "a plea to increase knowledge by keeping records and asking for help when it is needed."