

THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY — OCTOBER 4, 2021

# WHAT'S IT?



Fig. 1 (top to bottom): Top view, left side view, bottom view. PHOTO: © 2020 Norm Frisch

## ARTIFACT 20-05

### SPECIFICATIONS:

Material: Iron and wood. Overall length = 61.6 cm (24 1/4 in).

Wooden handle: Circumference = 10.64 cm (4 3/16 in),  
length with metal ferule = 37.78 cm (14 7/8 in).

Iron oval shank: Width = 0.95 cm (3/8 in), thickness = 0.79 cm (5/16 in).

Head: Width = 3.49 cm (1 3/8 in), length = 7.30 cm (2 7/8 in).

Teeth angled outward from center.

Weight = 372 gm (0.82 lb)

### CLUES & QUESTIONS:

The “Floating” Artifact

So, with no horsing around, what could this artifact be?

This is the only “floating” artifact we have encountered to date. While doing research for this particular artifact, we learned about the Hardie Hole.

It is a square hole built into a large anvil that receives several other square

*continued...*

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Fig. 2: Close up of top of distal end. Might any part be replaceable? Why not now if so?  
PHOTO: © 2020 Norm Frisch



Fig. 3 (above): Close up of bottom of distal end. Note that grooves are angled differently.  
PHOTO: © 2020 Norm Frisch

shaped base inserts with different tools attached to the base head, e.g., tools that help bend heated metal rods into S shapes for hooks, tools that employ custom jigs, and other iron implements that require a firm foundation against which heated metal might be pounded to a desired design.

A cobbler's shoe peg rasp (a very coarse file) was a common tool that could be used in conjunction with the Hardie Hole. Think of the end of the artifact as being a rasp, except that it has a square base that fit into Hardie Hole. Cobblers (shoemakers) use this type of tool to shave down the wooden pegs that held the heel of a shoe onto the sole of the shoe. Very clever!

But guess what, that's not what this artifact was used for! So what could it possibly be?

Look at the length of the handle. Why is it so long compared to the tool at the end? Is there a patent date on the tool? Why are there ridges in the handle? If you can answer the question as to why the rasp is so far from the handle, you'll be on the right track.

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## HOW THIS WORKS:

Every so often an artifact will be on display in the Seymour Library near the information desk and also be posted simultaneously on the Museum website. Seeing the artifact in person at the Library is best because there it can be viewed from different angles and distances (touching the artifact is not allowed).

## YOUR GUESS?

Prediction cards can be found near the exhibit display at the Seymour Library and on this page. Fill either card out and return it to "Ye Olde Prediction Box" near the exhibit display.

## ELIGIBILITY

Open to everyone.

## DEADLINE

All entries must be received by: **Monday, Nov. 22, 2021 !**

## ANSWERS

Answers will be available near the exhibit display at the Seymour Library and published on the museum website around **December 6, 2021** when the next artifact will go on display.


## PRIZES

There are NO prizes, but winning entrants names will be posted. (unless you indicate otherwise on the prediction card).

## PREDICTION CARD

THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY

# WHAT'S IT?



Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info (voluntary): \_\_\_\_\_


Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Artifact Number: \_\_\_\_\_ What do you think this object might be, and how would it be used?


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue on back of card, if necessary.




Scan the QR code for more details!



Brockport Community MUSEUM  
A MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS

Visit us at <http://brockportcommunitymuseum.org>



A collaboration of the Brockport Community Museum, Seymour Library and the Brockport Central School District.

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# WHAT'S IT?

## BACKGROUND

“WHAT’S IT?” has been a feature of the BCM website since its inception in 2007. In 2017 Brockport Community Museum board member Archer “Buck” Noble, a Brockport Central School District teacher (now retired) developed “The Mystery of History” school project that encouraged fourth and fifth grade students to use observational and investigative techniques to help determine the type and use of different historic artifacts.

That project was introduced to the general public during a Brockport Community Museum outreach presence at the 2017 Brockport Sidewalk Sale. That success led to this collaboration between the Brockport Community Museum, Seymour Library and Brockport Central School District.

## GET INVOLVED

- **Take your best guess** regarding the current artifact.
- **Do you have an artifact** you would like to know more about? Open your query to a larger audience.
- **Have a suggestion** about how we can improve this project?

### If so...

Leave your contact information in “Ye old prediction box” near the exhibit display.

## CREDITS

### *Museum project committee*

Archer “Buck” Noble

Norman Frisch

Garrett W. Roe

### *Seymour Library*

Jennifer Caccavale, Director