



## *The Adena Way of Life*

*The Adena culture refers to the customs and lifestyles of many different woodland-dwelling peoples who inhabited the central and southern regions of Ohio 1,900 to 2,800 years ago.*

*They lived near streams and rivers clustered throughout the Ohio Valley that stretches across Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky and parts of Pennsylvania and New York.*



**An Adena Hut**

*The Adena were unusually tall and powerfully built; women over six feet tall and men approaching heights of seven feet have been discovered, according to Robert Silverberg in his book "Mound Builders of Ancient America."*

*The Adena culture is named for the large mound on Thomas Worthington's early 19th century estate called Adena in Chillicothe.*

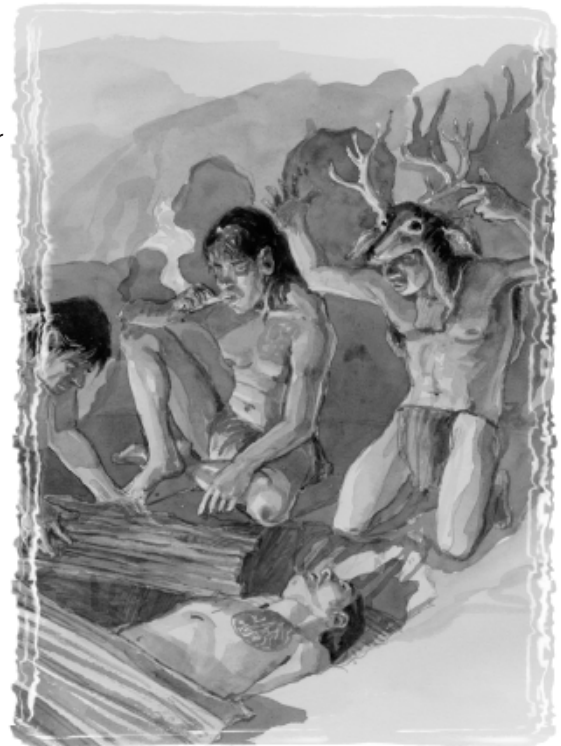
### **Importance of Water**

*Since Ohio's deep forests precluded easy movement, the Adena people used streams for passageways to travel throughout the region. They traded with other cultures for such things as seashells and copper that they used for making decorative jewelry.*

### **Lifestyle**

*The Adena people were considered Ohio's first farmers. Initially, they grew sunflowers, pigweed, knotweed and ragweed but later grew squash from seeds obtained through trading. Through contact with other cultures, the Adena learned to make clay pots, used for cooking and storage. Adena homes were circular, from 20 to 60 feet in diameter. The conical roof was made of wood or grass and walls were built*

*by weaving branches between posts. They lived in small settlements of usually no more than four or five houses.*



**An Adena Burial**

### **Mound Building**

*Many prehistoric cultures constructed burial mounds to pay homage to their dead. The Adena culture centered on a religion of complex rituals.*

*They frequently built conical earthen*

mounds over the graves of their deceased relatives. As more and more burials were added to a site, it grew in size. These simple graves grew into burial chambers that not only contained the deceased but also earthly treasures such as shells, jewelry, finely carved pipes and other articles. These mounds ranged in size from 2-3 feet in height to structures nearly 70 feet tall and 300 feet in diameter.

Unfortunately, prehistoric mounds have not stood the test of time. According to a 1914 map, Franklin County was home to at least 162 prehistoric mounds and Delaware County had 75 prehistoric mounds and earthworks.



**Effigy pipes in the shape of people or animals were used for ceremonial purposes by the Adena people**

Development, farming and vandalism have destroyed most of these. We are now left with remnants of what was once a large collection of our past treasures. In fact, there are only

about 10 Adena mounds left around Columbus.

### **Where to Go**

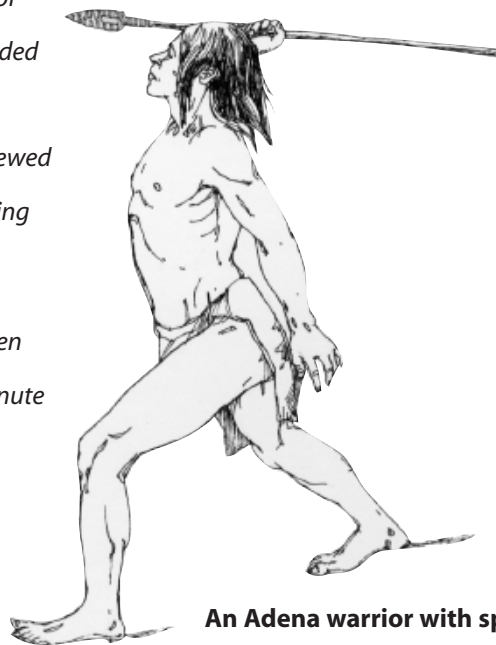
Highbanks Metro Park has two Adena burial mounds. Highbanks Mound can be seen on Powell Road just west of Route 23. Much of this mound eroded away over the years and was reconstructed in 1988. It can be viewed from Powell Road and while walking the Unimproved/Pet Trail.

Highbanks Mound II has never been excavated. The mound is a ten-minute walk from the nature center.

Highbanks also has a prehistoric earthwork from the later Cole Culture that is at least 800 years old. Both mounds and the earthworks are on the National Register of Historic Places. Battelle-Darby Creek Metro Park

has six Adena burial mounds scattered throughout the park.

In addition there is one Fort Ancient Mound. The Old Maid's Orchard Mound is located at Chestnut Ridge Metro Park.



**An Adena warrior with spear**



**An Adena burial mound at Highbanks Metro Park**