



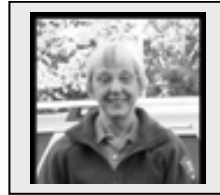
THE MASSACHUSETTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Newsletter

Vol. 37 No. 2
Spring 2011

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

This has been a very challenging winter for those of us who stay in New England. Yet knowing that March is drawing to a close and that the Spring Newsletter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society is about to be published, makes me sure that the warm and sunny days of summer are truly going to come.



Your Board has been busy planning for the Society to have its Annual Spring meeting on May 21st at the Fuller Conference Center at Old Sturbridge Village (OSV) in Sturbridge MA, a favorite spot of many for meetings. We will meet jointly with the Archaeological Society of Connecticut (ASC), one of our sister societies, for a day of stimulating papers from archaeologists in New England relating to their current research on topics of local and world interest. As an attendee, you may purchase lunch at the café at OSV with no entrance fee to the Village needed; or you can lunch in the larger business district of the town of Sturbridge. In either case, you will have time to meet new or current friends and to walk among the domestic scenes and spring beauty of the Old Village. I urge you to preregister now or as quickly as possible from this newsletter (See insert). We need to know how many will attend two weeks before the meeting so that OSV Conference Center can prepare for the coffee, tea and goodies we will enjoy during the morning social hour and meeting.

I am happy to report that the Society has had an especially good Annual Appeal this year, perhaps more than ever before, thanks to the generosity of many members and friends whose names are listed later in this letter. A big thank-you is due to all! I am also pleased to announce that we again are recipients of a

generous grant from the Frederick Lobl for Charities Trust, Bank of America N. A., Trustee. The amount of grant will be given later in this letter. Lastly, our Treasurer announces that for several months running we have had a positive cash flow, something that he has seldom seen before. It will be good for us to continue this status!

We are keeping up with outreach in our education programs, thanks to our volunteer Education Committee chair. We also can count on prepared trustees and other volunteers to do an education program or tour within the Robbins Museum for grade school students, special groups, visiting adults and older students. Presently we are upgrading MAS information for our Website and are grateful for the careful work of our volunteer Technology Committee and Manager in doing this.

Society and Board members at the Museum understand that the presence of today's Native peoples among us can help us teach children and adults about lifeways of the past, and inspire us to treat archaeological sites with respect and conservation. We welcome you to come often to the Robbins to see our continuing work!

Sincerely,
Frederica Dimmick,
President

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF CRM

Compiled by John Rempelakis

In Massachusetts this past year, a number of interesting CRM archaeological surveys were conducted by cultural resources firms for federal and state agencies and private developers tasked with complying with environmental/historic preservation laws and regulations. The following project summaries



afford a glimpse of some of the important archaeological work that has taken place recently in Massachusetts.

Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge

Contributed by Duncan Ritchie (PAL, Inc.)

In 2010, PAL conducted a Phase III Archaeological Data Recovery Program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the locations of proposed road and trail improvements in the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The refuge property includes land in the towns of Maynard, Sudbury and Stow, Massachusetts. The data recovery program involved two significant pre-contact Native American archaeological sites (Puffer Pond Site and Site 34-1) within the area of project effect.

The Puffer Pond Site (19-MD-657) and Site 34-1 (19-MD-654) were first identified by PAL in a 1985 archaeological survey of the former Fort Devens Sudbury Training Annex facility that included land now in Assabet River NWR. Based on the results of a Phase I Archaeological Identification survey conducted by PAL in June 2009, the Puffer Pond Site and Site 34-1 were determined to be eligible for listing in the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Both of these multi-component sites are in an environmental setting with wetlands, streams and ponds some distance from the Assabet River, and contain evidence of repeated occupation over a roughly 7500 year span from the Middle Archaic to Late Woodland period.

On the Puffer Pond Site, two concentrations of cultural materials and features were associated with Middle and Late Archaic period components. One concentration area consisted of a Middle Archaic lithic workshop with a dense deposit of gray-green rhyolite and quartzite chipping debris and a deep pit feature radiocarbon dated to 7330 +/- 40 years B.P. The second concentration also contained a Middle Archaic deposition with a Neville point and bifacial tool blades of local mylonite that are most likely preforms for Stark points. A few Squibnocket Triangle and small stemmed points and a pit feature radiocarbon dated to 3880 +/- 60 years B.P. were in a Late Archaic component on this part of the site.

On Site 34-1, a small dense cluster of Middle Archaic material included a lithic workshop locus with Neville points, bifacial preforms and over 1000 pieces of chipping debris all of a distinct rhyolite. This lithic material may be local to the upper Sudbury or Charles River basins. A sequence of Late Archaic activity was represented mostly by Brewerton, Squibnocket Triangle and small stemmed points. A deep Terminal Archaic pit feature was radiocarbon dated to 2630 +/- 50 years B.P. Features within an important Early to Middle Woodland component yielded radiocarbon dates of 1890 +/- 40 years B.P. and 1660 +/- 30 years B.P. Woodland period activities on Site 34-1 included the construction of burnt rock features related to some type of resource processing activity and use of ceramic vessels with cord marked surfaces, dentate and rocker stamped decoration. A substantial amount of chert debitage found on this site also appears to be associated with the Woodland component. The data recovery program yielded a significant amount of information that will add to what is known about Native American settlement patterns, site formation processes and lithic technology in the combined Sudbury/Assabet/Concord river drainage.

Bridge Replacement Project, Millis

Contributed by Bruce Clouette (AHS, Inc.)

In complying with the environmental requirements

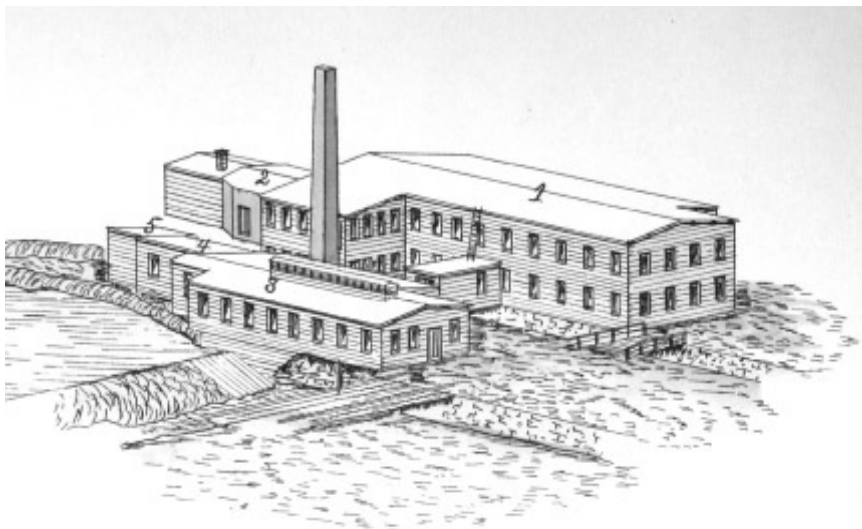
for one of its bridge projects, MassDOT hired Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. to prepare inventory forms for a potential historic district and an industrial site associated with water-powered enterprises dating as far back as the 1680s. A walkover survey noted the remnants of a stone dam across the river, channel walls along the river, stone walls that appeared to represent the remains of building foundations, and several concrete features that most likely were bases for machinery. All of these were probably associated with the site's last industrial use, a small factory that made felt from 1884 to 1920. Documentary research in the archives of the Millis Historical Society and the American Textile History Museum revealed a rich record of industrial enterprises at this location, including not only the felt mill, but also an early gristmill and sawmill, a scythe-making shop, a machine shop, a bonnet-wire factory, and a cotton



Concrete machinery bases at Felt Mill

Cedar Swamp Sites 1, 2, and 24, Westborough

Contributed by Nichole Gillis and Alan Leveillee (PAL, Inc.)



Insurance-survey sketch of the Rockville Felt Mill, 1893 (American Textile History Museum)

factory that produced, at one time or another, thread, twine, candle wicking, batting, and wadding.

At the height of production the Rockville Felt Mill employed about one hundred people. This made it the largest single industrial enterprise in Millis.

Despite record snow cover, concrete bases for the felt mill's machinery were readily visible on the site of the mill. The mill site is now a small public park.

PAL recently completed data recovery excavations within three sites (Cedar Swamp 1, 2, and 24) located on Cedar Swamp's central island in Westborough. The sites are part of the Cedar Swamp Archaeological District, a National Register-listed district that includes more than 30 pre-contact archaeological sites. These sites were first recorded in the early 1980s by the Ekblaw Chapter of the MAS and Dr. Curtiss Hoffman from Bridgewater State College. PAL conducted site examinations of Cedar Swamp Sites 1, 2 and 24 in 1988-89 and in 2010.

The data recovery excavations uncovered evidence for intensive pre-contact occupation between approximately 7,500 to 1000 years ago, spanning the Middle Archaic to the Middle Woodland periods. Approximately 8,000 pre-contact artifacts were collected including chipping debris, chipped stone tools, ground stone tools, Native American pottery sherds, and organics including calcined bone (e.g., fish, mammal, and turtle) and plant materials. Seventeen features were also identified including hearths, pits, and a lithic cache.

The cultural assemblage includes an extensive Laurentian component, comprised of numerous Brew-



Kenneth F. Burns Memorial Bridge Replacement Project, Shrewsbury and Worcester, MA.

Contributed by A. Peter Mair, II (PAL, Inc.)

In 2010, PAL conducted a terrestrial and marine archaeological investigation for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) proposed replacement of the Kenneth F. Burns Memorial Bridge that carries Route 9 over Lake Quinsigamond between Shrewsbury and Worcester. The Kenneth F. Burns Memorial Bridge is the most recent of a number of bridges to be built at this location connecting Shrewsbury and Worcester. The first crossing was a floating bridge that consisted of logs chained together to carry horse-drawn wagons on the Boston-Worcester Turnpike. The current structure dates from 1916 when it replaced an "earthen" causeway embankment that was built in 1861. The causeway provided a vital link along the Worcester to Boston transportation corridor, but severely limited the movement of water vessels. The "new" bridge allowed for passage of water traffic and enhanced the visual character of the area. The original bridge carried vehicular traffic as well as trolley traffic along tracks installed in the center of the bridge. The existing bridge has undergone repairs/modifications in

erton-Eared Triangle projectile points, Brewerton-based drills, net weights, axes/choppers, and an ulu. A significant Transitional Archaic/Early Woodland component was also identified and included two steatite vessel lugs, Vinette I type pottery fragments, and three features (e.g., hearths and pits) that produced firm Early Woodland radiocarbon assays (cal B.P. 2740-2340). Evidence of Middle Woodland Period occupation within the site area included a large pit feature (cal B.P. 1180-1050).



Kenneth F. Burns Memorial Bridge



Bottom topography in causeway area

1948 and 1983. The 1948 modifications included removal of the trolley tracks and modifications to the sidewalks, bridge railing, and deck, as well as repairs to the arch ribs, spandrel columns, and concrete deck slabs. In 1983, major modifications were made to the superstructure floor system and the roadway width was widened from 43 feet to 68 feet.

While the terrestrial intensive (locational) archaeological survey did not produce any evidence of potentially significant archaeological sites, the marine survey produced some interesting information relative to earlier bridge structures. The reconnaissance marine archaeological survey, conducted by Fathom Research, LLC as a subconsultant to PAL, revealed that the majority of the underwater Project APE was disturbed/buried as a result of impacts related to the construction and partial destruction of an earthen causeway across the lake that preceded the current bridge. Data collected during the reconnaissance survey enabled the creation of a 3-D image of the former causeway 3-D (see graphic above). The survey also identified one side scan sonar target and 28 magnetic anomalies, none of which were interpreted to be potentially significant archaeological deposits.

'ROUND ROBBINS

New Exhibits

By David DeMello

If you've had the good fortune to visit the Robbins recently, then you've seen the new display case in the Ethnographic / Doll room. This case, acquired through the efforts of our museum coordinator Gene Winter, holds articles of Native American clothing.

One of the items that is currently on exhibit is a "Plains Indian hair-trimmed and beaded deerskin shirt" (see the accompanying photograph). This piece of apparel was originally owned by Mr. Chester Tyler, whose mother was a Micmac Indian from Pictou, Nova Scotia. It was then acquired by Russell Gardiner, a Wampanoag named Great Moose, who donated it to the Society. The Gift Certificate states that the shirt dates to the turn of the 20th century.

The MAS archives contain a number of documents



connected to this object, including impressive photographs of the previous owners each wearing the shirt. These photos have been included in the display.

With the description of the shirt is the statement that "...the leather was softened by Indian Women chewing it in the old manner." Native American clothing, particularly pre-contact, generally was made from animal hides. The skins were prepared using a number of procedures including chewing. However, this method, although common among the Inuit in the northern part of the hemisphere, was rare in the Northeast. It is believed that this shirt was brain tanned. Using the oils contained in the mammalian brain to soften and preserve the hides was the most common method employed in the Northeast. Most mammals, including deer, have just enough oils in their brain to cure their hide.

The photographs of the owners show them wearing the deerskin shirt and eagle feather "War Bonnets". Why would a Wampanoag and a Micmac, both Northeastern groups, wear Plains Indian apparel? During the early part of the 1900's a Pan Indian movement was founded to promote Indian unity across tribal lines. As a part of this movement Great Plains dress was adopted nationally.

Museum Store

The Robbins Museum Gift Store situated within the Robbins Museum of Archaeology, 17 Jackson Street, Middleborough, MA, has been serving the archaeo-

logical community for over 20 years. The store offers a wide selection of archaeological and anthropological items. New and exciting merchandise has just arrived, such as Native American craft kits, Mayan baskets, unique jewelry, colorful hats and decals, Eastern Spirit incense, and many other items. Other recent additions to the Museum are two new, fully searchable CDs containing all MAS Bulletins for only \$19.99 each. Disk 1 covers Bulletins published from 1939 to 1976, volumes 1 – 38(1&2); while Disk 2 includes Bulletins published from 1977 to 2010, volumes 38(3) – 71.

The Robbins Museum store has a large variety of books that will interest students of every age who want to learn about the lives of earlier inhabitants of New England. There are over 45 different books in stock from, Jeff Boudreau's popular best seller *A New England Typology of Native American Projectile Points* to the recently released *Nantucket & Other Native Places: The Legacy of Elizabeth Alden Little*, a collection of papers written by archaeologists who knew Betty Little, a noted archaeologist and a past president of the MAS, to several Massachusetts Archaeological Society publications.

Our on-line store, at www.shop.massarchaeology.org, has made shopping easier. Many of our archaeology related publications, including the Bulletin CDs, as well as MAS memberships can now be purchased from the convenience of your home.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Development Committee Spring 2011 Newsletter Update

Suanna Selby Crowley, Committee Chair
development@massarchaeology.org

The past few months have been a very busy time for the Development Committee, but we can happily report the receipt of the following three awards.

First, we gratefully acknowledge the support of the Mayflower Bank which has generously responded to our request for funds to continue the Sustainability Initiative at the Robbins Museum. This program, based on the recommendations of the ECHO energy audit conducted last summer, seeks to improve the

energy efficiency of the building and operations. The award is going toward replacement of the Museum's incandescent Exit signs with energy efficient LED fixtures that will save approximately \$500 in electricity costs. It's an amazing, but simple, step in the right direction. Our thanks again to President Edward Pratt and the Mayflower Bank for its continued support of the MAS.

Next, we extend our appreciation to the Middleborough Cultural Council, the local affiliate of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which has awarded the Robbins a \$450 matching grant to support a new program highlighting the ethnographic collections. The program, entitled "Native American Craft and Iconography of the Doyle Dolls," looks forward to announcing a speaker event and updates to the display of the extensive doll, figurine, and clothing exhibit in the front of the Museum. If you would like to participate in the process of updating the exhibits or would like to learn more about the program as it is planned, please contact development@massarchaeology.org for information. We will be working on this during the summer, with plans for an early fall program.

Finally, we announce the receipt of a \$13,000 award from the Frederic Lobl Trust for Charities to support new Sustainability and Heritage Management Initiatives at the Robbins. Continuing the work of making the Museum more energy efficient, part of the award will address additional updates to the building envelope and fixtures. Further, we will be revamping part of the collections management systems at the Museum, as the holdings now exceed 140,000 objects and records. We hope to put in place new computer hardware and software systems, along with improvements to the display and archival spaces for the objects. Again, the Robbins Museum deeply appreciates the support of the Lobl Trust and we invite you to come see the changes as they take place in Middleborough.

In addition to these programs, the Development Committee is looking to transition some of our communication with the membership to electronic formats, particularly email. If you would like to sign up for email notices about events or activities, please contact development@massarchaeology.org to learn more. Don't forget to "friend" the Society on Face-

book, too! Help us reduce our paper consumption and Go Green!

As always, if you have a good idea which will help to continue the work of Society, the Development Committee welcomes your input. Please feel free to contact the Chair at the Museum by phone or the email address above. Thank you again for your continuing support of this organization.

Membership Secretary's Report

Curtiss Hoffman

As of April 5, 2011, the Society's membership was 452, including all categories. The following members have joined or renewed their MAS membership at higher than regular levels of contribution:

Patrons:

Ted Ballard
Shirley Blancke
Barbara Brown
Marilyn Crary
Mike Cronin
Thomas DeGirolamo
Lorri McGarvey Devlin
Frederica Dimmick
Elinor "Fuzzy" Downs
Adrienne Edwards
Timothy Fohl
Curtiss Hoffman
Harriet "Hatsy" Hornblower
Julia Kennedy
Tonya Largy
Joanne Miller
Laurie Stundis

Supporting:

Peter Burns
Thirza Joost
Edward Matalka
Darrell Pinckney
Thomas Skibinski
William Taylor

Sustaining:

John Ausevich
Ruth Carol Barnes
Ashton Bradshaw
Esther Braun

Bernard Cooper
Andre Cormier
R. David Drucker
Sandra Durham
Donna Frehill
Linda Grubb
Henry Hammond
Vin Ioannilli
Susan Jacobucci
Royce Kahler
Lloyd Keyes
Tim Largy
Mark Lyons
Gerald Macomber
Frederick Martin
David McKenna
Charles Metzger
Bill Moody
Tana Palson
Joseph Petronio
Robert Scheer
Brona Simon
Mark Simonitsch
Chester Soliz
Robert Zeitlin

New Life Members:

Marshall Becker
Janet Bessette
James McAvoy

There have been 59 new members who joined MAS since March of 2010:

Donald Allen
Russell Bixby
Paul Brodeur
Michael Brown
Adam Canfield
Ben Canfield
Jennifer Canfield
Steven Chubb
James Compton
Jennifer Cormier
Paul Crofts
Thomas DeGirolamo
Christian Demling
Cathleen Dinsmore
Steven Dlugosz
Timothy Fletcher

Virginia Fletcher
James Foote
Victoria Gavin
Miranda Goodwin
William Griswold
Shari Heller
McKayla Hoffman
Gary Jones
Cortney Keegan
Thomas Kelley
Julia Kennedy
Christine Kimbrough
Brad Luscombe
Karen Luscombe
Jeffrey Matteson
Daniel McCann
Ryan McCann
Charles Metzger
Jeffrey Moore
Susan Peltier
Mary Poitras
Addy Prescott
Ian Prescott
Hannah Prescott
Matthew Prescott
Zachary Prescott
James Reilly
Susan Reilly
Vicki Rourke-Rooney
Ralph Savery
Carolyn Silvia
Charles Smith
Shirley Smith
Steven Sullwold
Jack Szelka
Arthur Tarlow
Chester Timmins Jr.
Chester Timmins III
Nancy Timmins
Gary Trench
J. Lee Varvaro
Linda Walsh
Carol Weed

Since the call went out in early November 2010, the Society's Annual Appeal has succeeded in raising \$7698. Thanks to our generous donors whose names are listed below, we will be able to implement many of our planned 2011 programs. We welcome

additional contributions to the Appeal!

Clovis Contributors (\$1000 and up):

David DeMello

Eden Enablers (\$750):

Curtiss Hoffman

Bifurcate Benefactors (\$500):

Christmas Tree Shops
Frederica and David Dimmick
Paul Gardescu
Charles and Peg Luedtke
Fred Robinson

Brewerton Backers (\$250):

Shirley Blancke

Vosburg Volunteers (\$100):

Ted Ballard
Michael Cavanagh
Suanna Selby Crowley
Timothy Fohl
Don Gammons
Herbert Jensen
Lloyd Keyes
Tonya Largy
Dan Lorraine
David McKenna
Arthur & Joanne Miller
Al Smith
Laurie Stundis
Bob Trotta
Gene Winter

Squibnocket Supporters (\$75):

Bill Moody
Barbara Palson
Chester Soliz
Ann Whitman

Other Contributors:

Harry Anderson
Margaret Atkins
David Baskin
Paul Berube
Bernadine Birch
Richard Bourn
Esther Braun

Margo Davis Brooks
Jennifer Calderi
Bernard Cooper
Andre Cormier
Wilford "Red" Coutts
Cathleen Dinsmore
Ruth Doyle
Friends of Boyden Refuge
Don Fulcher
Lester Garvin
Dave Gilbert
Elizabeth Goldberg
Jules Gordon
Phil Graham
Stanley Greenberg
Elizabeth Greene
Paul Gregory
Eleanor Hammond
Susan Jacobucci
Nancy Kenney
Frank Kostka
Mary Kuliopulos
Tim Largy
Dwight MacKerron
Richard Marchand
Richard McCarthy
Athena McInnis
Ruth McInnis
Jeff Moore
Andre Navez
Paige Newby
Barbara Palson
John Pierce
John Rempelakis
Gladys Robinson
Bruce Rusch
Heidi Savery
Jack Silvernail
Ninian Stein
Jeff Stevens
Paula Wiggin
David Woolman

The MAS Board of Trustees has decided to extend to the recent Friends of the Robbins Museum who have not yet joined MAS as indicated in our last issue of the Newsletter one additional issue of the Newsletter. On the address label on the front of this issue, the expiration date of your membership appears after your

name. If there is no date there, that means that we have not yet received your Friends membership. If this is the case, please make sure to join MAS, at least at the Friends (\$15) or Senior Friends (\$10) level, to ensure that there will be no lapse in your subscription to the Newsletter and to other MAS member services. You can do this on-line through our website (www.massarchaeology.org) or by sending a check or money order made out to MAS at P.O. Box 700, Middleborough MA 02346.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

MAS Northeast Chapter Update Spring 2011

Suanna Selby Crowley, Chapter Chair
info.nechapter@massarchaeology.org

We are rounding out another successful season at the Northeast Chapter and we want to thank all the speakers who have joined us for many enjoyable evenings. We invite you to check out our March 2011 program with Drs. Diana Loren and Christina Hodge of the Harvard Peabody Museum of Archaeology. Their program last month was recorded and is now available as a web audio broadcast at: <http://www.peabody.harvard.edu/node/638/#veritas>. Our thanks to the Harvard Peabody for making the audio widely available.

Our final two speakers of the year, Dr. Paul Goldberg of Boston University and Dr. Francis Talty of UMASS Lowell, are slated to speak in the coming months. Dr. Goldberg will present on the subject of geoarchaeology, specifically on microscopic techniques for understanding human habitation patterns across the globe. He will join us on April 19, 2011. Dr. Talty will be speaking on the excavations of an Irish immigrant settlement related to the construction of the Pawtucket Canal in Lowell during the mid 19th century. He is scheduled to speak on May 17, 2011. Both talks will be held at 7pm in the Kemper Auditorium on the campus of Phillips Andover. Please email the chapter for more information.

We want to extend our thanks also to the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology staff for accommodating our meetings at the Kemper Auditorium while the Museum undergoes extensive renovations. Director Malinda Blustain and the educators at the

Museum have been very helpful and gracious about providing assistance to the Chapter this past year. We look forward to our return to the new and improved Peabody with the start of the fall speakers program, when the Northeast Chapter will welcome back Victor Mastone, Director and Chief Archaeologist of the Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources in Massachusetts. He will be speaking on "The Siege of Boston: The Battle of Chelsea Creek" and recent archaeological work on the investigations of the first naval battle of the Revolutionary War. This meeting is planned for September 20, 2011, at R.S. Peabody Museum. Be sure to join us for the talk and a reception to follow.

Mark your calendars for some summer fun! The Chapter is planning an "Artifact Encounter" program at the Topsfield Library on the evening of Thursday, June 16, 2011. We will be posting more information about this event through Facebook, on our webpage (http://massarchaeology.org/events_northeast_chapter.htm), and via monthly email blasts which now reach more than 75 recipients. We are excited about bringing this program to the North Shore and hope to see many new and familiar faces.

If you are interested in joining our email blast for news and updates about archaeology on the North Shore, contact us at the email address: info.nechapter@massarchaeology.org. Both the Chapter website and the Facebook page disseminate information and garner feedback as the Chapter reaches out to the surrounding communities of the North Shore. We invite you to virtually "friend" our Chapter Facebook page (search for "Massachusetts Archaeological Society – Northeast Chapter") or bring a real friend and future member to one of our upcoming meetings! Thank you for your support of the Chapter. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Massasoit Chapter Update Spring 2011

Judy Macioci, Co-Chair

The Massasoit Chapter continues to meet every third Thursday at Members' homes on the South Shore. This season's highlights include the following:

Paul McCarthy, an avocational marine archaeologist, gave a presentation of his latest discoveries in the

North River.

Rick Newcomb, a gemstone jeweler, gave a lecture about the history of quartz.

Murray Hamlet from Kingston gave a presentation about North Dakota and showed us his artifact collection from the area.

Bernie Otto was presented an Honorary Chairman certificate for his many years of service. Thanks to Bernie for being a mentor to all of us!

The chapter annual summer cookout was held at the home of Elaine Nudd.

Election Results:

Chair- Dennis Martin

Co-Chair- Judy Macioci

Secretary- Elaine Nudd

Treasurer- Elaine Nudd and Patty Martin

Corresponding Secretary and Newsletter- Dave Burbine

CONTRIBUTED PIECES

Book review

By Curtiss Hoffman

Cahokia: Ancient America's Great City on the Mississippi, by Timothy R. Pauketat. (Penguin Books, New York, 2010. 194 pp.)

Cahokia! A name to conjure with in American archaeology – the legendary site across the Mississippi River from the modern metropolis of St. Louis. In this brief volume written for a popular audience, Timothy Pauketat, a professor of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Urbana -Champaign, reviews the massive amounts of excavated evidence from Cahokia gathered by four generations of archaeologists and avocationalists (commencing with our own Warren K. Moorehead), plus historic documents about the site from the 17th – 19th century explorers and settlers. He provides a carefully constructed argument for the highly controversial title of the book: that Cahokia in the 11th – 14th centuries A.D. was actually a

“great city”, the only such location on this continent north of Mexico. Furthermore, he argues that it was the font and origin of the entire Mississippian “civilization” (some archaeologists would prefer to call it the “Southern Cult”); that the uniting symbolism of the chunkey game was the means by which Cahokian ideas were disseminated throughout the Southeast and beyond; that these ideas owed a great deal to influence from contemporary Mesoamerican civilization; and (perhaps most controversial of all) that the event that sparked the “big bang” of Cahokia was the supernova of 1054 A.D., which we know today as the Crab Nebula.

The lines of evidence he uses to bolster his arguments illustrate numerous trends in current archaeological methodology. Fine-grained studies of the diet of both Cahokian residents and those in outlying districts based on chemical and DNA signatures in their skeletal remains point to some real social inequalities in Cahokian society: those who lived in the central place had a more balanced diet while those in the peripheries were relying heavily on maize, which lacks a full complement of amino acids. Lithic source analysis of both utilitarian tools and chunkey stones has succeeded in tracing them back to their quarry sources in the Cahokian area, even for examples found at distant sites throughout the Southeast. Analysis of food remains from feasting areas adjacent to borrow pits and soil micromorphology of the plazas both indicate that much of the main section of Cahokia’s downtown was constructed in a single spurt of building activity. Comparisons between Cahokian elite burial practices and the ethnographically derived mythologies of Native groups in the Midwest and Plains suggest that the meaning of some of the former may be found in the latter, and vice versa.

Pauketat’s writing is smooth, eloquent, and potentially persuasive. The evidence for something rather remarkable happening both at the outset of New Cahokia and for the succeeding two centuries there is impressive and extensive. However, it is possible to read this evidence in more than one way. While Pauketat does present some alternative explanations, it is mostly to knock them down in favor of his own views, which I do not believe are fully shared by the majority of eastern Woodlands archaeologists. That in itself is not a problem; many of the ideas held to-

day by archaeologists about the past may be wrong! But he indicates in some places that he is aware that he is abandoning careful scientific methodology in favor of telling a good story.

And a wonderful story it is, too – but that doesn’t make it all true. For example, he pays great attention to the manner in which persons (mostly women) were sacrificed en masse using blunt instruments to strike the back of their heads. He relates this to the large-scale human sacrifices being practiced among the contemporary Toltecs of Mexico, and concludes that the will to administer such mass murder is necessarily a function of state societies, i.e., cities. However, the chiefdoms in the Northwest coast of North America also used “slave clubs” to sacrifice prisoners of war and other captives, sometimes in large numbers to serve as rollers for the arriving war canoes of guest lineages. Yet no one thinks that these people developed state societies, nor that they were influenced by developments in Mesoamerica.

Of particular interest to some of our members, Pauketat attempts to relate the archaeological evidence from Cahokia and its environs to the ethnographically collected mythology and to the rock art of groups in the central and upper Mississippi Valley: the Pawnee and the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) in particular. His observation of the consistent mentions of an opposed pair of twin gods who are related to astronomical phenomena, and the possible relationship of this mythological image to certain elaborate burials at Cahokia, is very interesting material indeed. However, his claims that these myths and rituals owe something to Mesoamerican ideas (for example, the tale of the twin brothers Hunahpu and Xbalanque in the Popol Vuh) are probably overblown. Myths of brothers in conflict have a world-wide distribution (not least of which is the Biblical story of Cain and Abel) and may simply reflect the presence of sibling rivalry in all societies – or it may reflect upon archetypal patterns deeply ingrained in the human psyche. In any event, Hunahpu and Xbalanque themselves are never depicted as battling brothers in the Popol Vuh; they cooperate in their battle with the Nine Lords of darkness, even to the point of genially sacrificing one another and bringing one another back to life in order to tempt Nine Lords to do the same. Nor are all ethnographic accounts from the Southeast united in

their depiction of the brothers as an opposed pair: in du Pratz's account of the Contact period Natchez of Louisiana, for example, the ritual positions of Great Sun and Great War Chief were held by a pair of brothers who cooperated in managing the ritual and military functions of that chiefdom, respectively.

One of the major things that I feel is lacking in this volume is more in the way of graphics. There is only a single map of the Cahokia area in the frontispiece, plus a schematic diagram of a Cahokian house under construction on page 30. For readers who are not familiar with the elaborate iconography of the "Southern Cult", it would have been helpful to include some line drawings to augment Pauketat's detailed verbal descriptions in the text. As well, some diagrams of the key features at the site – the Woodhenge, the trench burials, the feasting area behind the Monk's Mound – would have been helpful to the reader.

In summary, *Cahokia* is a very good read, provides a great deal of information about a singularly important site, and gives the reader much food for thought, even if one does not agree with all of Pauketat's ideas.

Report of a professional and avocational archaeology project in Millis, Massachusetts

By Paul C. LaCroix, President Millis Historical Society

For the past two years an archaeological dig has been underway in the vicinity of South End Pond in Millis, Massachusetts. No official reports of this activity have been issued prior to this item as the land owners of the private property involved strongly desire to maintain a very low profile. They are, however, large-minded enough to understand that the multitude of historical secrets being revealed through this investigation collectively represent an important puzzle piece to not only Millis history, but as it turns out, Massachusetts Bay Colonial history as well, and they are to be applauded.

The dig is being headed up by the author, an avocational archaeology enthusiast and President of the Millis Historical Society, Inc. After an exhaustive three-year effort to find the site of the much reputed George Fairbank's stone garrison through what maps and other documents have survived the three and

one-half centuries since its erection, the author's efforts paid off in spades on October 3, 2008, with the unearthing of physical evidence of this structure.

Permission to conduct the dig was then obtained from the property owners with the "low profile" proviso in place, along with the assurance that the investigation would proceed as professionally as practicable without involving any government agency. Enter Mr. John Thompson, PG, LSP, and certified archaeology overseer. Mr. Thompson received his archaeology training by Ms. Frederica Dimmick, professional archaeologist and President of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society. Able to see and understand both sides of the typically adversarial schools of thought that often separate the avocational archaeologist from the professional, John agreed to provide the necessary training and technical oversight for the project. Next, a group of very enthusiastic volunteers was formed from interested individuals of the Towns of Millis, Medfield and Sherborn, all of which share a common history prior to their incorporation, to be trained in the actual digging process.

Before any field work was done, several objectives were identified serving to constitute the reasons for the dig. While any such project must include a degree of flexibility, these original objectives were always the focus.

A brief traditional history of this "stone house" states that, as the first permanent structure to be erected in what would eventually become the Town of Millis, the two-story stone edifice was built (with help) and originally inhabited by Millis' first settler, Mr. George Fairbanks, around 1658. George Fairbanks was the second son of Jonathan Fairbanks, senior, builder of the famed Fairbanks house of Dedham in 1637 – oldest surviving timber-frame structure in New England, possibly the country – where George spent the last four years of his minority age. To tout the Fairbanks house of Dedham as the architectural progenitor to our structure seemed remarkable enough even without the striking similarities encountered thus far.

The reason the Bogastow farmers decided to build the stone garrison was to provide a place of refuge for the families of this group during periods of Indian insurrection. Located west of the Charles River

on the outer fringes of civilization, the fort served its purpose well by successfully repulsing a direct attack and brief siege by King Phillip's warriors in February of 1676.

Dr. David Landon, professor of archaeology and Associate Director of the Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Massachusetts Boston, agreed to come aboard in an advisory capacity after the first dig season of 2009 as the result of an outreach for more expert guidance concerning a project that was becoming a little more than we had bargained for along the lines of historic importance.

The following nine numbered items describe what features have been discovered at the site thus far:

1. Surviving structural stones, some just below the plow zone, have enabled us to determine both the precise location and dimensions of the former garrison.
2. Wall stones were discovered some two and one-half feet below grade through some very intuitive investigating, which were ultimately determined to signify a former cellar, 21'x11'x4' deep, which now appears to have been a later addition to the east end of an earlier, smaller structure.
3. Knowing now what the stones looked like that made up the former structure has enabled us to determine, in part, what became of the stones. Also, the fact that the stones were obviously quarried, coupled with clues found in traditional history, may very well lead our investigators to precisely where these stones came from.
4. The massive dual fireplace with common stack, whose huge hearthstones have been beautifully preserved just below the plow zone, indicate a typical mid-seventeenth century vernacular Colonial American domicile complete with centrally located dual fireplace flanked by the hall and parlor arrangement.
5. The location of an entry door seems to be evinced by two courses of kiln-baked bricks just outside and parallel to the north exterior wall, laid side by side directly on the ground to a length of eight feet.
6. Stones of the type that made up at least part of the structure were discovered in the dirt floor of

the cellar defining a line that cut the twenty-one foot length of the cellar directly in half. Given the placement of these stones, it is generally believed that they once served as footings to a median axis support wall of some sort.

7. Hundreds of nails, slag and other miscellaneous iron found in several interior excavation units of the structure's west end point to a small blacksmithing operation.
8. A complete carpet of perfectly level, tennis ball-sized field stones have been found still in place serving as underlayment to the first course of exterior wall stones.
9. A line of wood residue found at a forty-five degree angle on the East face of the cellar's four foot high west wall, together with what appears to be the landing stone to a staircase of some sort, serve as indicators of an interior trap door type of egress into the cellar four feet below.

The thousands of artifacts that have been unearthed at the "Bogastow Fort Dig Project" are, for the most part, typical of the period put forth by traditional history, c.a., 1658-mid-eighteenth century. A few unexpected items, some of which serve to contradict tradition, include Native American artifacts of a type that, collectively, indicate a former aboriginal campsite; kaolin clay tobacco pipe fragments that, when considered together, indicate a Colonial presence in the area that pre-dates the traditional date of 1658 by perhaps as much as a generation; a "pie slice" section of an oak tree shilling, c.a., 1650-1657, used as small change; half a dozen fragments of domestically made "red clay" or "earthenware" tobacco pipes; a piece of amber colored flint of French origin; a dozen or so 9" lengths of variously sized nail stock used to cut nails; and several pieces of jewelry, including matching cuff links, a copper brooch and a pewter "peace pipe pendant!"

When all the artifacts, features and traditional history surrounding this project are considered collectively, our newly formulated theory that this site was once an early Contact Period trading post seems more and more plausible with each day's excavations.

Ultimately, our plan is to compile all our data into the form of a pamphlet or book that shall present the "Bogastow Fort Dig Project" in a way that will serve

both history enthusiasts and professional archaeologists alike. For now, however, we're still in the field work phase of the project. The year 2011 shall be the last of a three year field effort that shall always shine as the adventure of my life.

Event notice

From Elizabeth Chilton

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Center for Heritage and Society is hosting an international conference "Why Does the Past Matter?" May 4-7, 2011. The program features nearly 200 speakers from 34 countries. For more info please visit: <http://www.whyoesthepastmatter.org>

The Center is also pleased to announce a new Summer Online Program of professional training courses on digital, intangible, and community-engaged heritage, as well as courses in collaboration with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. For more info please visit: <http://www.umass.edu/chs/courses/online.html>. To receive our newsletter go to <http://tinyurl.com/64uye7u>.

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What is this?

Spring Meeting jointly sponsored by the Archaeological Societies of Connecticut and Massachusetts May 21, 2011

The Massachusetts Archaeological Society and the Archaeological Society of Connecticut will hold a joint Spring Meeting in the Fuller Conference Center at Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, MA. The theme of the meeting is, "Current Archaeological Research at Home and Abroad".

Registration: 9:00AM – 10:00AM. Program: 10:00AM – 4:00PM with a lunch break from 11:45AM to 1:00PM. For a fee of \$12 for members of either society, \$15 for non members, and \$7 for students, you not only get to hear about current research in local and worldwide archaeology but also can visit the historic colonial atmosphere of Sturbridge Village. Pre-registration is essential, see attached form. Walk-ins will be charged non-member fees. Lunch will be on your own and if you opt for a stroll through the Village, you can stop by the Bullard Tavern for a spot to eat.

Directions

Old Sturbridge Village outdoor history museum
1 Old Sturbridge Village Road
Sturbridge, MA 01566
Phone: 800-733-1830

The museum is located on Route 20 in Sturbridge, Massachusetts and is easily accessible by car from [I-84] and the Massachusetts Turnpike [I-90]. From I-90 take exit 9 to I-84. Take exit 3B from I-84 onto Route 20. Stay right and follow signs to the museum.

Detailed directions and driving distances can be obtained from the Sturbridge Village website: www.osv.org/visitor/directions.html

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2011 Spring Meeting Program
Current Archaeological Research at Home and Abroad

9:00AM – 10:00AM	Registration
10:00AM – 10:15AM	Opening Remarks
10:15AM— 10:45AM	The Search for Ezra Chamberlin and the Confederate Submarine, H.L. Hunley Nicholas Bellantoni
10:45AM – 11:15AM	The Archaeology of the Earliest Viking Settlers of Iceland John Steinberg
11:15AM – 11:45AM	Expanding the Narrative: The Archaeology and Historiography of the Pequot War Kevin McBride
11:45AM – 1:00PM	Lunch
1:00PM – 1:30PM	A True Recognition of the Past: Don Malcarne John Pfeiffer
1:30PM – 2:00PM	Archaeobotanical Investigations of Ubaid Period Kenan Tepe, Southeastern Turkey Philip J Graham
2:30PM – 3:00PM	The Deer Run Site: A Preliminary Report of a Prehistoric Site in the Uplands of West- ern Connecticut Andrea Rand
3:00PM – 3:30PM	Roasting on the River: The Results of the Phase III Data Recovery at the Garvin’s Falls Site, Concord, N.H. Thomas Mailhot
3:30PM – 4:00PM	A Comparative Examination of the Astronomical Date August 13th in Mesoamerica and New England Kaitlin Ahern

Visit the MAS website:
www.massarchaeology.org
for updates and details of the meeting.

**The Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Inc.
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