



**THE MASSACHUSETTS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY**

# Newsletter

**Vol. 33, No. 1  
Winter/Spring, 2007**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Tonya Largy*



I am happy to report that activity is increasing both within the Society and the Robbins Museum. One exciting accomplishment is the recent expansion and ongoing development of our website.

I hope you take a few minutes to have a look. Our address is: [www.massarchaeology.org](http://www.massarchaeology.org). Liz Diaz, who is based in Texas, set up our website design which is being enhanced and maintained by Tom Largy, Chair of the Technology Committee. Liz has graciously continued to advise Tom on a *pro bono* basis – an invaluable contribution. Thank you, Liz! If members would like to publicize local archaeology events, please send a notice and we can add it to the website.

The Education Committee has developed an Outreach Program in elementary schools and small local museums in southeastern Massachusetts. They are also planning to offer a program on Saturdays. Check our website for forthcoming information. We have also received invitations from several high schools to send an archaeologist to lecture to science classes.

The Society has been awarded three grants in recent months. The Lobl Trust once again has come through with a grant of over \$8,000 to help us meet our goals of education and preservation of Native American artifacts and culture. The Middleborough Cultural Council awarded the Society \$700 to enable us to reprint our publication, *Wapanucket*, which has gone out of print. This book, originally published in 1980, reports the excavation of a site with significance far beyond the borders of Massachusetts. See the article below for information on events we have planned to celebrate.

One of our long-time members, who prefers to remain anonymous, gave a grant of \$3,000 to fund needed repairs to our building. We depend on our members to assist us in the work of the Society and the Robbins while we continue to search for other sources of funds. Another longtime member, Elinor (Fuzzy) Downs, facilitated the donation of 44 stackable chairs for the Luedtke Lecture Hall, given by Springhouse in Jamaica Plain. This item has been on our wish list for several years. Thanks you, Fuzzy!

The Spring meeting of the Society will be held on April 14<sup>th</sup> at the Briarwood Community Center, at 65 Briarwood Circle in Worcester. The Archaeological Society of Connecticut is co-sponsoring this semi-annual meeting with MAS this year. The Program Committees of both Societies have an exciting program of speakers lined up. Please come and meet others who share an interest in archaeology. The program and registration information are included in this Newsletter.

A major action undertaken by the Trustees was a carefully considered vote to bring the Robbins Museum under compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). To this end, our volunteer staff has undertaken the large task of completing the computerized inventory of our collections, which is more than 50% complete. Assisting us in this effort are members of the Native community, led by Kenny Alves, of the Wampanoag Confederacy, whose time and work is greatly appreciated.

Come visit the museum when you can. I would like to meet each one of you and hear about your interests!

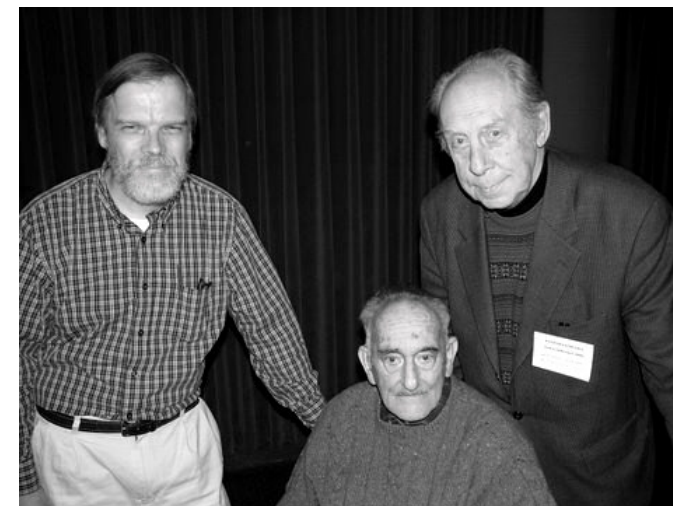
## MAS CO-HOSTS 73<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL ESAF MEETING

From November 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, MAS co-hosted with the New England Antiquities Research Association (NEARA) the 73<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation, at the Crown Plaza Best Western Hotel in Fitchburg, MA. This was a highly successful meeting, with 243 attendees from all over the eastern U.S. and adjacent Canada. For the first time in several years, ESAF made a profit on the meeting – and shared these profits with the host organizations. As well, sales of publications were brisk, and netted more profits for our organization.

Highlights of the meeting included presentations from all of the New England State Archaeologists; a showing of the latest version of Ted Timreck's film, "*Hidden Landscapes: A Northeastern Ceremonial Landscape*", which showed that professional archaeologists, antiquarians, and Native people can cooperate to identify ancient stonework sites in the Northeast; a session dedicated to the memory of Dr. James Petersen; a panel discussion on efforts by Native people and town officials to preserve stonework sites in three New

England towns; and a keynote address by Dr. Brian Robinson, "Unique Potential of the Bull Brook Paleo-Indian Site", in which he discussed new research into the excavation of this famous site.

All who attended reported that they were very pleased with the conference, which broke new ground in several areas. This was a real feather in MAS' cap!



**Above:** Keynote banquet speaker Dr. Brian Robinson, "Bull Brook Boys" Bill Eldridge, and MAS Trustee Gene Winter.

**Below:** MAS President Tonya Largy, Mary Lou Curran, and Shelley Hight



## EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

*Kevin Quackenbush*

### Education –

A long term goal of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society is the education of our youth to the joy of knowing our rich past. To be certain, over the years there have been various opportunities for MAS to successfully share archaeological information with different groups, including children (e.g. the Herring Run Day Celebration). However, there have been no

sustained programs that reach out to a wide audience of grade school students. These children are the future of our society, and of archaeology itself. There are very real financial and personnel obstacles as well. These have not lessened to any great extent, but we are now renewing our focus on establishing a series of programs and events that will carry forward from year to year to reach increasing numbers of children across the State. We have great plans for 2007, and beyond. It will take a prodigious effort to get started, and a group effort to keep going, but the rewards are well worth the hard work. These programs and events will also require support from all our members, and others. Moral support and encouragement are welcome, but we also need volunteers and, of course, donations.

The following are just a few of the ideas the Education Committee will be targeting through 2007, and beyond.

**1.** Promote, arrange & schedule an Archaeology visit to as many Fifth grade classes/schools as possible during the year. (see box below), for the students to actually handle and marvel over the artifacts being passed around, while discussing that artifact group. Actually being able to hold and examine the artifacts unquestionably makes the visit unique. There are fifth grade classes in more than 45 schools within a 30 mile radius of the Robbins, all with multiple classes in each school! These are our future members, waiting to have the magic of Archaeology revealed to and kindled within them

**2.** Hold an "Archaeology hour" Show & Tell once a quarter at the Library for all ages with games for smaller kids.

**3.** Hold an archaeology-related essay contest and/or drawing contest for fifth grade classes in each participating schools and advertise the winner. Appropriate 'prize' for the winner (see box on next page).

**4.** Add the Robbins Museum to the list of Fifth grade School Calendars as a 'Things to Do/Places to Visit' entry.

And there are others! Can we implement them all? Why not? It's a reach, but, with perseverance and your support, we can make it a reality! I very much welcome comments and ideas. Please feel free to contact me at:

[j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com](mailto:j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com)

## GRADE SCHOOL ARCHAEOLOGY SESSIONS

In-school archaeology sessions for Massachusetts fourth, fifth and sixth graders are offered by Kevin Quackenbush, an avocational archaeologist. Mr. Quackenbush, a Trustee at the Massachusetts Archaeological Society and chairman of the MAS Education Committee, has been providing grade school sessions discussing archaeology for several years. The 'hands on' format of the session, offering students the opportunity to handle, and marvel at, the stone tools and projectile points of long past cultures, never fails to elicit great interest and classroom energy. If you are interested in arranging a session, Mr Quackenbush can be reached by e-mail at [j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com](mailto:j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com)

## THE MAS ESSAY AND POSTER CONTEST FOR MASSACHUSETTS FIFTH GRADERS

In late spring 2007 we will announce The First Annual Massachusetts Archaeological Society [MAS] Essay and Poster contest for Massachusetts Fifth Graders. Open to all Fifth graders across the state, the students are invited to enter either an Essay or a Poster, or both ... which relates to New England Archaeology. There will be prizes for First, Second and Third place in both the Essay and the Poster contest and Honorable mentions. Prize presentations will be at the MAS Museum, and at the winner's school.

Educators are encouraged to contact Mr. Quackenbush, a Trustee at the Massachusetts Archaeological Society and chairman of the Education committee (MAS) by e-mail at [j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com](mailto:j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com) or, call the Robbins Museum 508-947-9005 for entry guidelines and dates.



Kevin Quackenbush presents a traveling archaeology program to elementary school children.



### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**Richard Lynch**  
12 Greenbrier Rd.  
Greenville, RI 02828  
[hstrclrsch@aol.com](mailto:hstrclrsch@aol.com)

## ROBBINS MUSEUM UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Massachusetts Archaeological Professionals (MAP) is now offering Saturday morning educational programs for children 6-12 years of age on the third Saturday of every month at the Robbins Museum of Archaeology. The programs that have been scheduled from February 2007 to January 2008 are listed below:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>February</b>  | <i>Bones, Bones, Bones</i>  |
| <b>March</b>     | <i>Roman, Roman, Roman:<br/>Life in Roman Britain</i>             |
| <b>April</b>     | <i>How much does a Grecian<br/>Earn: Greek Life</i>               |
| <b>May</b>       | <i>Mummies, Mysteries and Pyramids:<br/>Life in Ancient Egypt</i> |
| <b>June</b>      | <i>Introduction to Archaeology</i>                                |
| <b>July</b>      | <i>Look Out! Here Come the Vikings!</i>                           |
| <b>August</b>    | <i>Ancient Science</i>  |
| <b>September</b> | <i>Native Americans of Southeastern<br/>Massachusetts</i>         |
| <b>October</b>   | <i>Introduction to Archaeology</i>                                |
| <b>November</b>  | <i>Pilgrims of Plymouth</i>                                       |
| <b>December</b>  | <i>Ancient Science</i>  |
| <b>January</b>   | <i>Introduction to Archaeology</i>                                |

The programs will be one hour in length and will run from 10:30-11:30 am at the Museum. Admission to the program is \$7.50 per child and \$6.00 for each additional child for families with multiple children attending the programs. The Robbins Museum will be receiving 33% of the registration total. The programs are limited to 20 children and pre-registration and pre-payment will be through MAP at our website [www.parp4kids.com](http://www.parp4kids.com). Registration will include admission to the museum and it is hoped that the parents and siblings of the children attending the programs will stay and explore the Museum. MAP will provide some activities (coloring pages, scavenger hunt in the Museum) available for anyone waiting for program participants. This program is being used as a test case for the educational potential at the Museum and it is hoped that in the future these programs will expand to include an Archaeology Club (possibly with Saturday morning meetings) and other Saturday and school vacation programs. Anyone with any suggestions for educational programs or education ideas, or who wishes to volunteer to assist with any of the MAP programs should contact Craig S. Chartier, Director MAP ([plymoutharch@hotmail.com](mailto:plymoutharch@hotmail.com)), or Kevin Quackenbush head of the Education Committee.

[www.massarchaeology.org](http://www.massarchaeology.org)

## MUSEUM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

*Eugene Winter*

You may notice a new addition the next time you visit the Robbins. We have a new storm door at the office entrance to the Museum. The old one had seen better days but the wind finally destroyed it.

Exhibits at the Robbins Museum are progressing well, but much work remains to be done. Presently, we are working on an exhibit to illustrate the Contact period and Historic period. We also need to develop an exhibit of present-day Native Americans, including their work, recreation, foodways and the traditions they wish to maintain in the modern world.

A truckload of construction debris has been removed from the basement. Much of it was left in the building when the M.A.S. moved into the Read Building in 1988. Old plumbing items, pipes, scraps wire and air ducts were finally hauled away. Now we can dream of future expansion.

Some of our Wampanoag friends are now helping with the inventory of artifacts which we have held in storage but which have not been inventoried due to limited volunteer availability. It is very helpful to have this kind of assistance with museum projects and we extend our gratitude to Hartman Deetz, Melanie Deetz, Elizabeth Perry, Geoffrey M Peters, Carol Wynne, and Phillip Wynne for their time and assistance. Special thanks to John Peters, Jr., Director of the Commission on Indian Affairs and Ken Alves, Assonet Repatriation Officer for organizing and directing this important effort.

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE REPORT

*Thomas Largy*

Please visit [www.massarchaeology.org](http://www.massarchaeology.org) for a look at the MAS website. It's still a work in progress, but photographs have been added to the website to give an idea of the kind of exhibits that can be seen at the Robbins Museum and also to show the excitement of some young visitors to the museum.

It might seem that MAS and a small museum like the Robbins wouldn't need much computer technology, aside from things such as membership lists, office, and financial reports. However, as with the rest of our society, computers are used in many ways at the Robbins. For example, several Wampanoag tribal members have volunteered to work on an inventory of the museum's collections to help us meet NAGPRA requirements (see the President's report). They have been entering this data into our computerized collections database, so that this information can be easily retrieved in the future.

I'm pleased to be able to say that for what has been a very modest cost to the Society, the Museum has a nice system of network attached computers, as well as the MAS website. This is due to some very generous donations from individuals,

as well as a computer grant received a bit over a year ago from IBM.

More recently, the Central Massachusetts Chapter of MAS made a \$250 donation to MAS to be used for computer technology needs. These funds came from earnings on a bequest made by longtime MAS and Ekblaw Chapter stalwart Lillian Harding, now deceased. The Charlestown Meadows site on her property was a primary archaeological experience for many, and since computer technology is used to advance the archaeological mission of MAS, she would have approved.

Also, software was needed to help with the publishing of photos on the website, and another donor stepped up with a contribution for the purchase of that software. MAS, as a non-profit organization, also gets a very reduced rate for software purchases.

However, there are still technology problems to be solved. For example, slides and slide projectors are quickly going into disuse with the advent of digital cameras. In archaeology, as with other fields, almost all new presentations require the use of a digital projector (\$800 or so), and we are trying to figure out how to acquire one for the museum conference room. Another problem is how to extend the computer network to the back of the museum, so that computers used there such as in the conference room, for archival work, and the library can access the Internet.

(Please note that MAS will accept as donations only newer equipment that is network capable, has USB ports, adequate memory and disk, and so forth. The attic of the museum contains a number of outdated computers and monitors that may cost the Society money to dispose of.)

The members of the MAS Technology Committee include Curt Hoffman, Phil Graham, Gene Winter, Dave Dimmick, Jeff Stevens, Dan Lorraine, and John Rempelakis, with Tom Largy as Chairman.

## MAS CHAPTER REPORTS

### NORTHEAST CHAPTER

*Glenn Mairo*

The Northeast Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society meets at the R. S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM from September through May. A brief business meeting is held followed by a presentation from a guest speaker. Refreshments are served at the conclusion of the meeting.

This 2006/2007 season finds the Northeast Chapter doing well in all areas. Membership and attendance is up from last season. Expenses have been greatly reduced and are well managed. A major reason for the chapter's continued high

morale and enthusiastic feedback has been the creative programming scheduled by our chapter treasurer and program chair, Jules Gordon. This season we have been treated to enlightening and engaging talks by: Paige Newby on "The Process of Peopling in the Americas", Jack Dempsey on "New Secrets from the Labyrinth: Bull-Leapers, Great Kings and Kingship, Peter Sablock on "Non-Invasive Remote Sensing", Eugene Winter on "An Atlantic Phase Assemblage", and Curtis White on "Joseph Jenkes of the Saugus Iron Works."

We are already gearing up for the "5<sup>th</sup> Annual Massachusetts Atlatl Field Days and I.S.A.C." that will be held at the Rebecca Nurse Homestead in Danvers, MA on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007. This well attended annual event has become one of the most popular of its type in the Northeast with many repeat attendees. Last year we had several of the world's finest throwers enjoying the unbeatable combination of a primitive skills weekend held on the 27 acre Nurse Homestead; one of the country's finest 17<sup>th</sup> century historic sites. This is a great event for all ages and skill levels. Hopefully, we will see you in September in Danvers!

The R. S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology continues to integrate itself with, not only the students, but with many of the educational departments at Phillips Andover Academy. This summer, the museum hopes to offer (pending student interest) a field school of archaeology at the Rebecca Nurse Homestead in Danvers, Massachusetts through Phillips Andover's Summer Session program. The Nurse Homestead grounds contain a wealth of material, ranging from the mid-Archaic through first period English colonization eras.

For further information regarding the Northeast Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society; please contact chapter chair Glenn Mairo at 978-580-9437 or [gmairo@hotmail.com](mailto:gmairo@hotmail.com).

## CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

### *Maryanne MacLeod*

For our first meeting of the season, Susan Jacobucci, an MAS Trustee who recently received her M.A from Boston University, spoke about changes in the land use and land use practices. These changes were revealed in her analysis of pollen and charcoal recovered from the Eastern Pequot reservation in Connecticut.

In November, Anthony Mariano, Ph.D., who is a consulting exploration geologist and a world traveler spoke on the mineralogy of the New England landscape and other places he has visited.

In December, Chapter members and guests viewed a French film on prehistoric France which included some beautiful examples of cave art found in Europe dating back to the last Ice Age.

Aaron Miller, who holds a Master's Degree in Archaeology, was the featured speaker in January, 2007. He gave a

presentation entitled "Excavating Taylor's Fort: Uncovering Everyday Life on the Mid Eighteenth-Century Western Frontier of Massachusetts". His presentation explored the 2006 excavation, which he directed, at the site of a circa 1754 fortified farmstead in Charlemont, Massachusetts. The site, known as Taylor's Fort was the fortified and garrisoned home of two families living through the Seven Years' War between France and England for control of North America.

Curtiss and Tobi Hoffman gave a talk in February on their experience at Maya sites in Belize which were part of an anthropological study tour sponsored by Bridgewater State College.

The Chapter donated \$250.00 to the Robbins Museum to be used to help meet the computer technology needs of both the Museum and the Society. The donation was made from the bequest of the late Lillian Harding, a long time MAS and CMC member and trustee.

The Chapter will host the MAS Spring Meeting in conjunction with the Archaeological Society of Connecticut on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. The theme for this conference is "Archaeology and Ecology" which will include aspects of hunting, fishing, agriculture and population density as it affected the land, the environment and society.

The Central Massachusetts Chapter holds its meeting on the first Saturday of the month at the Briarwood Community Center in Worcester, MA. The public is cordially invited to attend its lectures. For more information, call Maryanne MacLeod (978-368-8552) or [marmacster@comcast.net](mailto:marmacster@comcast.net).

## NEWS FROM THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF MASSACHUSETTS

### *John Rempelakis*

In response to historic preservation and environmental laws and regulations, MassHighway, on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration, sponsors archaeological investigations for federally funded bridge and roadway projects across the state. Some of the more recent archaeological work undertaken by MassHighway is summarized below.

### **South-Central Massachusetts**

Intensive (locational) and site examination surveys were conducted within a 3.8-mile section of the proposed Blackstone River Bikeway. A portion of the proposed route parallels the Blackstone River adjacent to portions of the towpath of the former Blackstone Canal. Several canal related features including bridge abutments, locks, basins and vestiges of the canal trench and towpath are recorded in the project corridor.

During the intensive survey four pre-contact Native American archaeological sites were identified that could contribute additional information to the archaeological record of the

Blackstone River drainage. Three of the four sites were interpreted as low-density lithic scatters, with the fourth site representing a moderate-density campsite with diagnostic artifacts and possible cultural features. The presence of steatite sherds indicates this site dates to the Orient Phase of the Transitional Archaic Period (3600–2500 B.P.).

A site examination at each site undertaken to collect sufficient information (site boundaries, size, integrity, complexity, period of occupation, seasonality) to assess site significance confirmed the importance of three of the sites. Given their proximity to one another, two of the sites have been combined and represent a high-density multi-component campsite dating from the Middle to the Late Woodland Periods. Chipping debris composed of quartzite, quartz, rhyolite and jasper, diagnostic tools such as Jack's Reef and Levanna projectile points and some shell and fish remains have been recovered from the site. The third important site contains temporally distinct loci representing the Late Archaic/Transitional Archaic and Late Woodland Periods. Chipping debris composed of felsite, Pennsylvania and Saugus jasper, rhyolite, argillite, quartz and chert, diagnostic tools such as Brewerton-eared, Madison, Susquehanna Broad and Squibnocket Triangle projectile points and some shell and calcined bone have been recovered from this site. MassHighway, in consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, is currently assessing the National Register eligibility of each site and investigating the feasibility of design changes to avoid each of the sites.

### **Southeastern Massachusetts**

In 2003, an intensive (locational) archaeological survey conducted for the proposed Route 24 Access Improvements project area identified the Buffinton-Wordell Site, a remarkably intact farm complex that was in use from at least the mid-nineteenth century up until the early twentieth century. Based on the deed research, it appeared that the house and barn were constructed earlier than suggested by the archaeological record. Avoidance of the site was not feasible and a site examination was conducted in 2006 to assess the significance of the site. The site examination investigations resulted in the recovery of primarily late nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural material. A small amount of eighteenth-century domestic (ceramic, bottle glass and clay pipe fragments) and architectural debris (nails, window glass, brick) also was recovered from several of the test pits and excavation units, indicating an earlier occupation of the site and corroborating deed research to that effect. The density and integrity of these earlier materials, however, has been severely compromised by later occupations at the site. Furthermore, the results from the field investigations and laboratory analysis indicate that the integrity of the Buffinton-Wordell Site has been compromised as a result of long-term occupation and subsequent post-occupation activities. MassHighway, in consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, is currently evaluating the National Register eligibility of the site. A. Peter Mair II (*PAL, Inc.*), *John Rempelakis (MassHighway)*

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS November 2005-October 2006

### *Judith Francis Zeitlin*

#### *M.A.S. Representative to the M.H.C.*

The Massachusetts Historical Commission held nine formal meetings between November 2005 and October 2006. As the M.A.S.-designated commissioner, I was able to attend all but the most recent meeting, and I offer you here a summary of the more important issues that came before the Commission during the past twelve months. Commission meetings are chaired by Michael Maresco, as the Secretary of State's representative; Brona Simon, the State Archaeologist, has been serving as Acting Executive Director of the MHC since Cara Metz resigned in June 2005. The routine matters taken up by the MHC include 1) the approval of individual properties and historic districts nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, 2) the review of Local Historic Districts proposed by town governments, and 3) the review of matching fund grant applications made to either of two MHC funding programs, the Survey and Planning Grant Program, and the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF).

National Register nominations may include archaeological sites as well as above-ground features and buildings. Five of the 30 nominations approved by the MHC in the past 12 months are ones with prehistoric or post-contact archaeological significance, or they have special historical value related to Native American groups in the state. Examples of the latter include the Vanderhoop Homestead in Aquinnah, now leased for use as a cultural center and museum, which was the residence for several generations of a family descended from Wampanoag and Euro-American lines.

Another particularly significant Native American site was the Hassanamesitt Woods property in Grafton, which was part of lands associated with the Nipmuc. The collaborative effort between the town and the tribe to save the property from development received recognition from the MHC through a Preservation Award. Intensive investigation of the occupational history of its Native owners through archaeology and archival research conducted by the Fiske Center at UMass Boston provided the necessary documentation for the Preservation Award.

I will briefly summarize the three other sites with Native American affiliation known through archaeological data. An earlier environmental impact review at Sachem Rock Farm in West Bridgewater for a sewer line survey documented the presence of prehistoric occupations prior to the historic-period usage of that site as a meeting ground by Native groups, and added to that property's cultural significance. The Major John Bradford House in Kingston was nominated primarily because of its importance to colonial history, but excavations conducted there in the early 1970s by James Deetz and a team of researchers from Plimoth Plantation revealed a prehistoric occupation at the site as well. I would also note that the house's 1719 date has been confirmed through dendrochronological analysis. A final National Register property with

known prehistoric significance but no systematic archaeological study is the Old Indian Cemetery in West Brookfield, where collections of projectile points and other lithic artifacts point to a significant usage of an area primarily known for its significance in Native-Settler conflict.

Although none of the projects that were submitted in the past year for MHC matching grants through the MPPF or Survey and Planning Grant programs entailed archaeological research, these funds have been important instruments for facilitating archaeological surveys and excavations that lead to National Register nominations, as was the case with the Hassanamesitt Woods study. It would be wonderful if more communities took advantage of these grant competitions to inventory their cultural resources through archaeological surveys. As the MHC's 2006-2010 State Historic Preservation Plan noted, only about 1% of the state has been covered by systematic survey thus far. It estimates that the present inventory of 6000 archaeological sites represents only 3-5% of the existing archaeological resources in the Commonwealth. While not all of these sites might merit nomination to the National Register, their presence on the state inventory and MACRIS database is vital for regional planning and for conservation. When the State Archaeologist's professional staff begins one of the approximately 10,000 environmental reviews of construction projects that it conducts each year, the state inventory is first consulted; absent specific known archaeological sites, predictive models based on established site distribution with respect to environmental features are used to determine the likelihood of prehistoric sites being affected by the project in question.

Inclusion on the National Register is the ultimate line of defense for historic properties, however, as is clear from recent legislative pressures on both the federal and the state levels. Congressional efforts to limit the application of section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act environmental review mandates to properties listed on the National Register were thwarted in late 2006, due in large part to the concerted letter-writing campaign by national and state archaeology organizations, MAS included. Various interest groups continued to exert pressure to limit or bypass the review process. This pattern was seen closer to home this past March, when a proposal to build a Liquid Natural Gas terminal on Outer Brewster Island made its way to the state legislature. After being notified by the State Archaeologist of this initiative, Tonya Lary wrote on behalf of the MAS, as did the archaeologists from UMass Boston and UMass Amherst, to protest the negative impact the LNG terminal would have on archaeological sites first documented by the late Barbara Luedtke. In light of these new pressures, it is especially appropriate that this year's Archaeology Month observed the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1906 Antiquities Act. The MHC is using the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act as a theme for public education efforts this year. As it looks forward to the next five years, the MHC has set a number of planning goals for protecting archaeological sites, prominent among which is to "develop the advocacy role of local avocational archaeological groups, Native American tribes, and local preservation commissions to further the protection of archaeological resources." The Massachusetts

Archaeological Society is identified as an important "preservation partner" in this effort, and I am happy to be a liaison between MAS and the MHC toward this end.

## Wapanucket Celebration

Thanks to a grant awarded to MAS by the Middleborough Cultural Council, *Wapanucket* will be reprinted during the month of February. It went out of print in 2006. We have planned several events to celebrate to which all are invited.

**1.** A free lecture will be presented to MAS members and the general public at the Middleborough Public Library on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 1:30 pm. Dr. James W. Bradley will present "Middleborough's First People: PaleoIndians at the Wapanucket site", discussing the results of his recent research on artifacts from Wapanucket with a focus on the Palaeoindian component. Copies of the *Wapanucket* publication will be available for purchase.

**2.** An Open House at the Robbins Museum will be held immediately following the lecture at 3 pm. Of special interest is the ongoing exhibit on the Wapanucket site, including dioramas of the village and house plans inferred from post molds that were discovered at this site, the first evidence ever found for houses from the Late Archaic period. All are invited to see our updated *Walk Through Time* exhibit and other recent displays. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

**3.** An exhibit of artifacts from Wapanucket will be set up in the Middleborough Public Library during the months of March and April to inform the public about this important excavation undertaken in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Cohannet Chapter on the shore of Assawompsett Pond.

## REPORT FROM THE CAPE AND ISLANDS WORKSHOP

*Frederica Dimmick*

A second meeting of the Cape and Islands Archaeology Workshop was held in Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts, on November second. Elizabeth Chilton of the University of Massachusetts organized the meeting. Among those attending were Cheryl Andrews-Maltais, THPO of the Aquinnah tribe; Richard Burt, past president of the Vineyard Archaeological Society, Fred Dunford of the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Diana Doucette of the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.; Katie Dambach, graduate student at UMass; Steve Perlman, resident of Vineyard Haven and archaeologist, who hosted the meeting at the Twin Oaks Inn; and Freddie

Dimmick, Archeologist at the Cape Cod National Seashore and MAS Vice President.

Discussion at the meeting centered on archaeological site protection and preservation issues for the many groups working to preserve historic lands both on Martha's Vineyard and the Cape. The chair of the Martha's Vineyard Commission joined the meeting to emphasize that land protection groups need guidance from archaeologists in preparing strategies for dealing with land developers. The Workshop made tentative plans for a spring conference and a series of workshops in Vineyard Haven to bring the Vineyard's archaeological past into focus for preservation groups and to provide information about this heritage to the public.

## NEWS FROM THE ROBERT S. PEABODY MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY, ANDOVER, MA

*Malinda Blustain*

The Museum continues to develop its new strategic plan for presentation to the Trustees of Phillips Academy, the governing body of our parent institution, in the winter of 2008. Upon approval of the plan, the Museum will embark on a course of measured, sustainable growth in its program.

We are again offering our "Introduction to Archaeology" field school to all students (not just students enrolled at Phillips Academy) entering 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades as part of the Phillips Academy Summer Session ([www.andover.edu/summersession/home.htm](http://www.andover.edu/summersession/home.htm)). We will continue excavating at the Rebecca Nurse Homestead, a 17<sup>th</sup> century house and property in Danvers, MA. Last summer's testing produced prehistoric and 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century artifacts, as well as copious amounts of later material associated with continual habitation of the house up to the present day. Dr. Nathan D. Hamilton, Associate Professor in Anthropology at the University of Southern Maine, will direct the field school. Dr. Hamilton, a Peabody Museum Research Associate, is great with kids and very highly regarded as a teacher and scholar. We are extremely fortunate that he has chosen to lead our project.

"Dig This: Unearthing the American Past," is another Summer Session course designed for PA's new Lower Summer Institute. This course makes extensive use of electronic resources available through the PA Library and teaching units developed around Peabody Museum collections. The Lower Summer Institute (<http://www.andover.edu/summersession/lowerSchool.htm>) is designed for all students entering the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. Please contact Malinda Blustain at 978-749-4490 or [mblustain@andover.edu](mailto:mblustain@andover.edu) for more information.

The Peabody's two expeditionary learning programs for PA students, Pecos Pathways and BALAM (Bilingual Archaeological Learning Adventure in Mesoamerica) will be taking place again this summer. These trips have been

described by students as "life-changing," attesting eloquently to the power of first-hand experience.

The Peabody expanded its repertoire of hands-on activities this winter through a collaborative project with PA's History department. It involves a trebuchet, built from a kit, which flings small projectiles. Although not directly related to our subject matter, the trebuchet is a further elaboration of the physical principles of leverage and mechanical advantage that made atlatls so effective. And besides, it's a lot of fun! Our students found soft fruit to be the most effective ammunition, due of course, to its satisfying "splat!"

Mr. Eugene Winter, our Honorary Curator, is compiling a complete bibliography of works produced by Peabody directors, curators, staff archaeologists and others that concern work performed under auspices of the museum or concerning its collections. Although not yet complete, it is already a quite impressive list. This effort is part of a larger project to document the history of the institution and its contribution to American archaeology.

Upcoming public events include the following talks co-hosted with the Northeast Chapter of the MAS:

### "Cracked Flints and Singed Fingers: Lessons from Living History for Firearms Archaeology"

by Dr. Neal L. Trubowitz,  
February 20th, 2007 at 7:30 PM.



### "More than Dirt and Rocks: A Geoarchaeological View of Archaic and Woodland Settlement Patterning on the Upper Susquehanna River, New York"

by Suanna C. Selby,  
March 20th, 2007 at 7:30 PM



### "In the Drowned Lands: Adaptive Strategies to Near Swamp Environments"

by Carol S. Weed  
April 17th, 2007 at 7:30 PM

**All events are free and open to the public.**



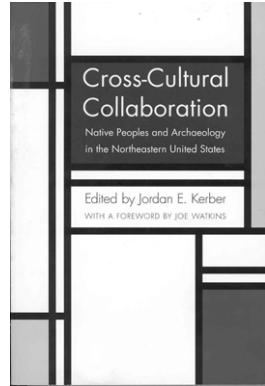
**The Rebecca Nurse Homestead under excavation.**

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Cross-Cultural Collaboration: Native Peoples and Archaeology in the Northeastern United States*

Editor: Jordan E. Kerber (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE and London, 2006. 379 pp.).

Reviewed by Curtiss Hoffman



One of the most significant developments in the practice of Northeastern archaeology since the passage of the 1989 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA, PL 101-601) has been the emergence of cooperative efforts between archaeologists and indigenous peoples. Prior to NAGPRA, most archaeologists in the region had operated under the pretense of a cultural vacuum, in which the views and sensibilities of indigenous peoples were overlooked or even dismissed as inauthentic. This led to the general acceptance by archaeologists of field and laboratory practices which would today be regarded as unacceptable, especially with respect to human skeletal material and associated grave goods. NAGPRA, and its accompanying regulatory framework, gave indigenous people a significant voice on archaeological matters for the first time in their history. While some of the interactions at the outset were characterized by hostility on both sides, since the mid-1990s a more salutary relationship of mutual respect has slowly emerged. This has been of benefit to both groups, though the ultimate outcome remains to be seen and will doubtless vary from case to case.

Kerber's anthology directly addresses and explores this relationship throughout the region (and a bit beyond – there are four case studies from what is ordinarily regarded as the middle Atlantic region: Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey), by means of a carefully structured pairing of voices from indigenous community leaders and archaeologists. In some cases, chapters are co-authored by representatives of both communities; in others, adjacent chapters give the differing perspectives of the two communities. This accurately represents the range of relationships. One gets a good feel for both the points of tension and the points of synergy from these case studies.

The book's 20 chapters, by 33 authors, are organized into three broad sections: Collaboration and Regulatory Compliance – Burials and Repatriation; Collaboration and

Regulatory Compliance – Sites and Places; and Voluntary Collaboration – Research and Education. In the first two sections, the two communities are sometimes engaged, sometimes at cross-purposes – indeed, there is some insightful discussion in the chapter by Dean and Perelli (“Highway Archaeology in Western New York: Archaeologists’ Views of Cooperation between State and Tribal Review Agencies”) on the alternative meanings of the word “collaboration”, either indicating cooperative work or co-optation of members of a politically weaker group by a stronger one. In the third section, where the cooperation is more voluntary in nature on the part of the archaeologists, the purposes of the two groups merge, and become more difficult to distinguish from one another. These studies are the most forward-looking, in that they represent ways in which the archaeological record is being integrated into indigenous education programs to the benefit of the tribe as a whole, and tribal members are directly involved in archaeological fieldwork.

The anthology is comprehensive as to regions of the Northeast, and it provides an outlet of expression for the feelings of tribal members on the difficult and painful period of contact and colonization (especially the chapter by Jack Rossen (“Research and Dialogue: New Vision Archaeology in the Cayuga Heartland of Central New York”). However, there is one area which the book does not explore: the archaeological investigation of non-burial sacred sites. This is understandable, given both the Native communities’ reticence to identify these sites for fear of vandalism, and the archaeological community’s tendency to dismiss many of these sites as being nothing more than the work of post-Contact Euro-American farmers clearing fields, building stone walls, or promoting “aesthetic farm maintenance” (Nicholas Bellantoni, personal communication). However, a 2003 resolution by the joint Education and Heritage Committees of the United South and East Tribes (which comprises 29 of the Federally recognized tribes east of the Mississippi) has designated a “sacred corridor” of sites within eight towns in eastern Massachusetts. USET members and archaeologists are “collaborating” on the preservation of these sites, as well as similar sites throughout the Northeast. James Petersen, to whose memory *Cross-Cultural Collaboration* is dedicated, was involved in the exploration of a site of this type in Rochester VT shortly before his untimely death, along with representatives of the Western Abenaki nation. The author of this review has also been involved with representatives of the Narragansett and Aquinnah Wampanoag nations in the identification and preservation of sites of this type in eastern Massachusetts and Connecticut, and has presented joint papers with them at regional conferences on this subject. I would recommend that if this anthology is revised, it should include a section on sites of this type.

*This review appears in the current issue of the American Anthropologist, reprinted courtesy of University of California Press.*

### *Fossil Legends of the First Americans*

by Adrienne Mayor (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2005. 446 pp.)

Reviewed by Curtiss Hoffman



Sometimes a book comes along which literally opens up a new field of inquiry. *Fossil Legends of the First Americans* is certainly such a book. Adrienne Mayor, an independent researcher who has written previously on the role of paleontology in Graeco-Roman culture, has done a fine job of collecting information from all parts of North America to support her surprising thesis: that Native peoples, both before the arrival of Europeans and ever since, have been aware of fossils and have incorporated them into both their beliefs and their ritual practices. Well-trained in paleontological fieldwork, Mayor draws her information from three main sources: the archaeological record, historical accounts of early explorers and others who were led to fossil beds by Native guides, and Native legends. There is a surprising uniformity in these accounts, taken from groups as far afield as Mexico and Kentucky, and this leads her to her main conclusion.

The book is organized into chapters dealing with different areas of the continent: the Northeast, New Spain, the Southwest, the Prairies, and the High Plains. Framing these chapters is an introductory chapter which provides an anecdote in the fossil-hunting history of the U.S.: a 1739 visit by a group of French soldiers to Big Bone Lick in Kentucky, led by a group of Abenaki scouts who were well familiar with the fossil bed and its contents; and a final chapter, “Common Ground”, which introduces some of the ethical issues involved in collecting fossil evidence from Native reservation lands. This latter issue will be familiar to anyone who has had to deal with NAGPRA: in the view of many Native traditionalists, the bones of the past animals are to be respected, observed, but not removed from their resting places. Part of the reason for this is the persistent belief among Native peoples that the fossils still retain life, and that it is dangerous to disturb them.

Well-written and engaging, *Fossil Legends of the First Americans* seeks to establish the primacy of Native peoples in the discovery and interpretation of the fossil record in North America. Their views on the pre-human past were in many cases anticipatory of evolutionary theory: they knew that these were animals which no longer existed; they knew that there had been several sequential groupings of them over time; and they also understood that some of them were the

“grandfathers” of the animals that they knew. In some cases, Native legends may preserve memories of the late Pleistocene, when Paleo-Indians and megafauna actually coexisted. This certainly cannot be said of the Mesozoic fauna which are so frequently encountered in erosional cuts in the West – but the Native imagination was clearly stimulated by these finds, and legends about cosmic battles between thunderbirds and water monsters abound in their myths. When compared with the views of contemporary 19<sup>th</sup> century European students of what was then called Natural History, the Native views seem much more advanced and closer to what we have come to understand through paleontological science.

Mayor is particularly engaged to refute the claims of the famous evolutionary biologist George Gaylord Simpson, who stated in 1942 that, “various reported Indian legends of fabulous beasts represented by fossil bones have little ethnological and no paleontological value.” She often returns to this statement and opines that, were Simpson still alive today, the evidence she has collected would convince him of the error of his ways. This appeal seems on its surface to be wistfully nostalgic, but it is probably not apt. At the time in his career when he wrote this, Simpson was well known for his vehement defense of gradualism (he was one of the chief opponents of plate tectonics, though he later reversed his position in the face of overwhelming evidence), and surely one the chief reasons he rejected Native lore about these materials is that at its root it embraces catastrophism – the idea that extinctions were not gradual but sudden and drastic. That is the reason why Georges Cuvier was so interested in these fossils and their accompanying legends – he was the chief late 18<sup>th</sup> century exponent of catastrophism. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, when Simpson was most active, catastrophism had been relegated to the dustbin of history – only to reemerge in the 1970s with the discoveries of the Alvarezes and the writings of Stephen Jay Gould. Though he anticipated some of these developments in his later writings, today’s paleontology is much more sympathetic to these kinds of explanation than Simpson would likely have been.

Readers familiar with the archaeological sequence will also find Mayor’s use of the term “Paleo-Indian” troubling. She appears to apply it to all pre-European groups in some cases: for example arguing that Paleo-Indians built the mounds in the Ohio Valley 2000 years ago. Her knowledge of Northeastern materials goes no further east than the Connecticut Valley; one is left to wonder what Native people would have made of the Cambrian trilobite fossils of the Blue Hills, or of the fossil shark teeth in the collections of many archaeological museums in our region. But it is not unlikely that some of her observations from elsewhere in the continent would apply here also. She describes dinosaur gastroliths in terms very similar to my own description of “polished pebbles” from the Middleboro Little League site, and her description of a Cheyenne legend about a giant water serpent overturning a Native canoe brings to mind the Titicut petroglyph. But these are minor faults in what is altogether an absorbing and eye-opening book.

## ANNUAL APPEAL RAISES \$3145

*Curtiss Hoffman*

The MAS sixth Annual Appeal has been a success! To date we have received \$3145 in donations from 32 members. This is several hundred dollars more than we received last year. Donations were received in the following categories:

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Our sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the Appeal. Your donations help to make the work of the Society possible! For all those who have not yet contributed, it is not too late to add your name to the list.

## SITE CONSERVATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

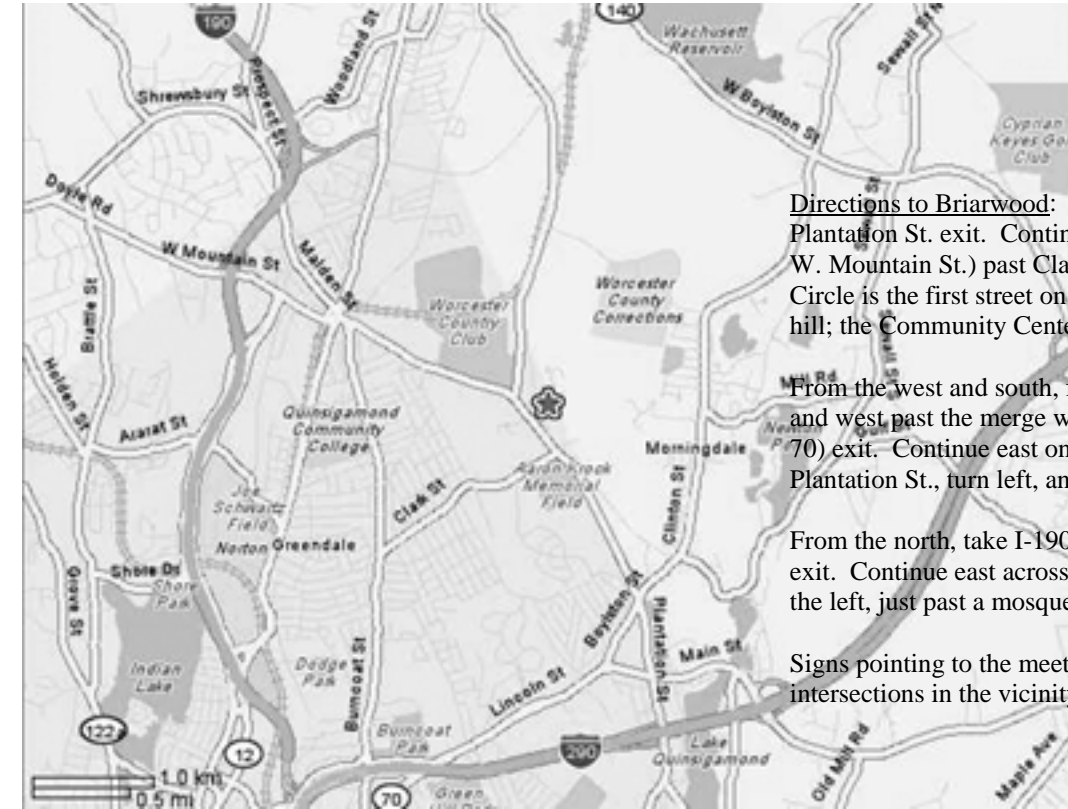
*Alan Smith*

The last few months have been one of change on the legislative scene. The November elections brought about many changes at the state and federal legislative level. Massachusetts elected and inaugurated a new governor and installed the present legislature for the next four years. At the federal level the November election saw the Democrats put into a majority position in both the House and Senate. These changes have caused cultural and natural resource advocates to become cautiously optimistic about the future – a mood change that has not been seen in several years.

A couple of significant events affecting cultural resource protection took place at the state level in the last few months. In November, before Governor Romney left office, he used his executive powers to cut \$425 million from the state budget even though state revenues were at an all-time high. This resulted in reductions to operating budgets and projects for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Park maintenance and staffing, plus the watershed and drinking water protection programs were cut. In addition, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' Office of Geographic Information Systems lost their funding for the production of land use maps that would help state agencies, municipalities, and other organizations make educated decisions about land use. Efforts are underway to restore these cuts.

On December 22, 2006, cultural resource protection and preservation were given a major boost when, after fifteen years of languishing in the legislative system, An Act Relative to the Taxation of Forest, Farm and Recreation Land (S.2683), also known as the Chapter 61 Reforms (a bill which this committee has followed for many years), was signed into law by Governor Romney at the urging of many groups and individuals. This bill had passed the Senate in a July 2006 informal session, then made its way through the House Committee on Ways and Means where it had resided for the past decade, on through the House Committee on Steering and Policy, to Bills in Third Reading; and then, in an unusual informal Friday session, it passed the House on December 8, 2006 to be signed by the governor. This legislation corrects most of the ambiguities, inconsistencies, and loopholes in the original 1973 law. The original law provided for a reduction in property taxes for land enrolled in active forestry (Chapter 61), productive agriculture or horticulture (Chapter 61A), and open space and recreational uses (Chapter 61B), and this kept many Massachusetts working farms and forests in business by allowing them to get a tax break. This will continue, thereby also protecting the cultural resources on these properties. The new law also enhances the opportunities for municipalities to protect working farms, forests, and recreation lands once they lose their Chapter 61 status.

On the federal level, most advocates for historic preservation believe that the Democratic majorities in the next Congress may bode well for historic preservation. The key victim of the Democratic sweep was Representative Richard Pombo (R-CA) who chaired the House Committee on Resources. Most believe that dramatic changes to the Historic Preservation Act (Section 106), the Endangered Species Act, and the Environmental Policy Act which he proposed can be laid to rest now that Pombo has been sent home. Pombo built his political career around the repeal of the aforementioned Acts and the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. Most new key committee chairs support cultural and natural resource preservation, and this can be seen in their past voting records – so you can see why there is cautious optimism.



**Directions to Briarwood:** From the east, take I-290 west to Plantation St. exit. Continue north on Plantation St. (becomes W. Mountain St.) past Clark St. (traffic lights). Briarwood Circle is the first street on the right. Come up to the top of the hill; the Community Center is on the right.

From the west and south, from exit 10 on I-90 take I-290 north and west past the merge with I-190 to the Lincoln St. (Route 70) exit. Continue east on Lincoln St. to the intersection with Plantation St., turn left, and continue as above.

From the north, take I-190 south to the West Mountain St. exit. Continue east across Route 12. Briarwood Circle is on the left, just past a mosque on the right.

Signs pointing to the meeting location will be posted at major intersections in the vicinity of Briarwood.

**The Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Inc.  
Robbins Museum of Archaeology  
P.O. Box 700**

**Middleborough, MA 02346-0700**

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