



## THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# *Newsletter*

Vol. 34, No. 1  
Winter/Spring, 2008

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*Tonya Largy*

There is excitement at the Robbins Museum on several fronts. We received a real publicity boost from an article published in the *AAA Horizons* newsletter sent to their Plymouth Chapter, which includes 164,000 households. We have had a steady stream of visitors who read that article, all of whom tell us they didn't know of the Robbins Museum's existence. This is the kind of publicity I have been seeking, to let the world know about the Robbins and what we have to offer. Our website [www.massarchaeology.org](http://www.massarchaeology.org), which publicizes our Museum and Society activities and educational offerings to our members, to the general public, and to the schools in our area, also contributes to this goal.



Funding continues to be an issue, as it is with many non-profit organizations like MAS, especially in today's fiscal climate. We depend on our members to support us in the work of the Society and the Robbins Museum while we continue to search for other sources of funds. Thanks to all who donated to our Annual Appeal at the close of 2007. We appreciate your assistance, which is essential to our operations. The Lobl Trust continues to support us by joining A.D. Makepeace in funding the Native American Educational Outreach Project, as have the local Cultural Councils in four surrounding communities. Still, much remains to be done.

The Spring meeting of the Society will be held on May 3<sup>rd</sup> in conjunction with the Archaeological Society of Connecticut. ASC co-sponsored the 2007 Spring Meeting hosted by MAS, and this year ASC reciprocated by inviting MAS to co-sponsor the 2008 Spring Meeting. It will be held at the new Archaeology Center at the University of Connecticut at Storrs. Please come and join our neighbors who share our interest in archaeology. The program and registration information is included in this newsletter.

We bid farewell to Judith Scott, our volunteer Development Coordinator, who has helped MAS tremendously by writing successful grant proposals during the last two years. We express our sincere thanks and wish her well as she moves on to other activities. I invite anyone who would like to assist us by working with the Development Committee to prepare grant proposals to please call me at the Robbins.

### **LIBRARY REPORT**

*Kathy Fairbanks*

Library volunteer Diane Parent's work of last summer has been paying off in terms of increased efficiency. Thanks to her "reading the shelves" (librarian language for checking on the correct placement of every book), and her sorting of those (still plentiful!) boxes of "mixed media", the task of hunting down material for a researcher has become easier and faster. Topics we chased lately: King Philip's famous war club, the Taunton River drainage, and everything we had on the Upper Delaware Valley. (We stacked up so much for that guy that we haven't seen him since!)

I had wondered whether things would be faster if we also merged the three files called Booklets, Reprints, and Pamphlets. When Diane proposed doing this too, I knew we should try it. It works because you can search all three files with one click. The transfer now is complete, save my checking to make sure everything there shows properly in the catalog. Then on to continuing the task that feeds those files: sorting the remaining boxes we call "mixed media", boxes donated by members who are making house room for other needs. That final checking process has the plus of making me more familiar with our materials.

Martha Maynard has started entering periodicals card file data to our computer periodicals file. It will list by date and number the issues of the 351 periodicals in we have holdings.

### **TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE REPORT**

*Thomas Largy*

The MAS Website, [www.massarchaeology.org](http://www.massarchaeology.org), is your online view of the Robbins Museum and MAS. Some items that are online and viewable include:

"The Native American Educational Project" This offering, developed by Mary Concannon, the Robbins Museum Educational Coordinator, has programs featuring Archaeology and the Robbins Museum which fit into the Massachusetts Education Curriculum Frameworks for Grades Three through Seven. A bonus is the Robbins Museum Bingo Game for young visitors to the museum.

**2008 Robbins Museum Educational Program** – The complete 2008 schedule of monthly courses for youngsters is on the “EDUCATION” Page.

**Chapter Events** - Monthly meeting notices for the Central Massachusetts and the Northeast Chapters are posted, look under “EVENTS”.

**MAS Documents on the Web** – Recent MAS Newsletters and the “Round Robbins” are online in downloadable PDF Format.

**Robbins Museum Gift Shop Online** – It’s not here yet but the Trustees have approved it and we’re looking into how to do it. Watch the website for progress.

**Robbins Museum Visitor and Educational Events** – There are always lively photos and descriptions of recent events, such as the October “Education on the Go” event at the Boston Museum of Science, where hundreds of kids were introduced to archaeology.

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

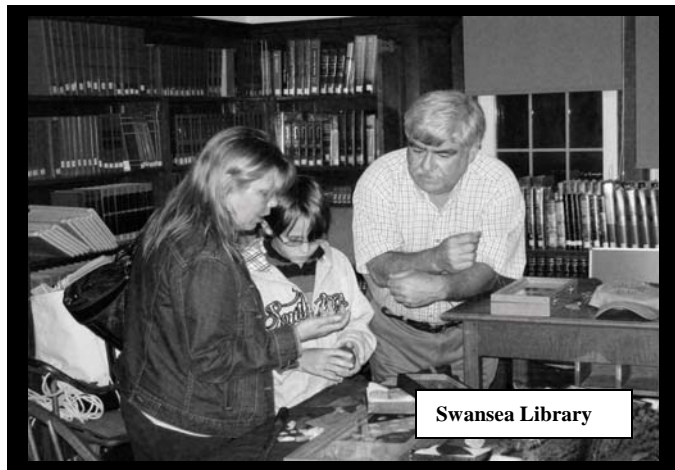
*Kevin Quackenbush*

Hi! I thought for this newsletter you might find it interesting to see some snapshots of kids of all ages taken at various archaeology sessions the past few months. The sessions are always high energy, interactive and, of course, educational. The hands-on format assures a continuous dialogue with each group, with really quite astute questions and insights offered by the participants! This outreach effort does more than spread the word about MAS and the Robbins museum, it is planting the seed of wonder in very fertile young minds and, if even some take root, then we have been successful. These are the minds that will propel archaeology into the future

Just a few of the schools represented in recent months, both local and a bit farther afield, are the Martin school and the Roosevelt school in North Attleboro, the Oakham school in Oakham, the Mullen Hill Academy in Lakeville, the Burkland School in Middleboro, as well as the Swansea Library, and even the North Attleboro Senior Center. ‘Young’ and inquiring minds can be found at all ages!

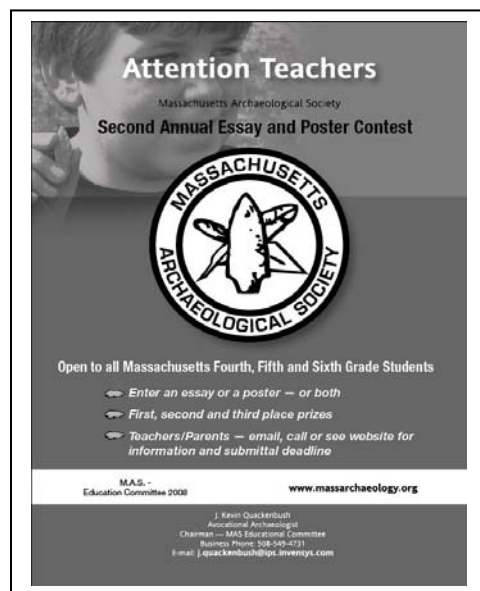


Martin School 5<sup>th</sup> Grade



Swansea Library

I would also ask the assistance of all those reading the *Newsletter* to help spread the word about the Second Annual MAS Essay & Poster contest. This year it has been expanded to include all Massachusetts Fourth, Fifth and Sixth grade students, public and private, and home-schoolers. It is a great way for the students to be involved and engaged, and learning while representing their schools and themselves with an excellent chance for an award they’ll remember all their life!



**Please contact me for information concerning the Contest, or the in-school Archaeology sessions at 508-549-4731**  
**[j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com](mailto:j.quackenbush@ips.invensys.com)**

Sometimes the Archaeology sessions have unexpected results. The following is an e-mail I received recently referring to an archaeology session I held at the East Smithfield RI Library a few months ago;

*“Dear Mr. Quackenbush,*

*You spoke at the East Smithfield Public Library last summer. I brought my two young grandchildren, Alex, 7, and Ben, 5, to hear your presentation. Although it was advertised for all ages, I believed that this lecture would be*

too advanced for my boys. I was truly mistaken. Thanks to your attention to them, allowing them to pass rocks [artifacts] and other materials around the room, it seems we have budding geologists. They collect rocks from many sources, including their driveway, Disney World, and wherever I can purchase them, including the Audubon society in Bristol, R.I. They put on lectures, introducing themselves as you did, presenting the various rocks, their names, and where the rocks were found. They alternate as to who is the presenter and who is the assistant (not always amicably), but we are all obliged to be a part of the show. They speculate as to what the rocks may have been used for, and discuss their color. I have purchased various books about rocks, but we would like to find a source of good information and educational material for my grandchildren, as this seems to be something they will continue to be interested in, thanks to you. My daughter and son-in-law are engineers, so they are thrilled with the boys' interests. Any information that you might have would be greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for your visit, and for opening a new door for my grandchildren, simply by your kindness and generosity of spirit. We appreciate your time and commitment to this field.

Sincerely,  
Jeanne M.”

We know not what seeds we plant, nor what fruit they may someday yield. Thank you in advance for supporting the ongoing efforts for the education of our youth.

**The Children are Our Future, and the Past belongs to us All.**



## **SITE CONSERVATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE**

*Alan Smith*

In the last newsletter, this committee spoke of cautious optimism at the state and federal levels regarding cultural and natural resource protection. The change in the governor at the state level and new faces on the federal side produced leadership that favored preservation issues, which brought about action that augurs well for site conservation.

On December 21, 2007, Governor Patrick and EOEA Secretary Ian Bowles filed the new Environmental Bond Bill (H. 4446) with the legislature. At \$1.4 billion, it is the largest environmental bond filed in the history of the Commonwealth. The last comprehensive bond in 2002 provided \$750 million in capital funds for more than seventy-six different programs in communities throughout the state, and most of these funds have been exhausted. This new bond provides funds for programs and policy initiatives ranging from water quality protection programs that maintain the supply and quality of drinking water, land protection for important cultural and natural resources, rare species recovery for some of the 178 animals and 264 plants that are endangered, threatened or of special concern, Mass GIS, dam safety, renewable energy initiatives, to Self-Help grants and Urban-Self grants that provide local aid to

communities for protection of their quality of life. Most believe that the bond will wind its way through the legislative process and be on the Governor's desk by this summer or before. For more information visit the website at [www.envirobond.org](http://www.envirobond.org).

## **MAS CHAPTER REPORTS**

### **CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER**

*Brenda Toomey*

Soon after the first Chapter Meeting I presided over, in October 2007, the Chapter was faced with a serious problem. We were told we could no longer continue meeting at the Briarwood Retirement Home, where we had been meeting for free on the first Saturday of the month for several years. I began trying to find another place for our meetings that would be acceptable to most of our members. I soon learned that this is a difficult task since our financial resources are limited and most of our members are not able to meet on a weekday or Sunday. The libraries, churches, and other facilities I talked to don't allow groups in on Saturday nights, or charge rents we cannot meet.

We managed to meet at the Worcester Art Museum one evening, but that room is not available the rest of the spring. Currently we will be meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month in a room at the Worcester Hibernian Cultural Foundation at 19 Temple Street, Worcester. In January we met there for a wonderful presentation by Daniel Fernandez-Davila on research he has done in his native Peru. In February Richard Lynch gave a presentation on research he has done on the history of immigrant charcoal burners in New England.

However, we have learned that meeting at the Hibernian Cultural Center is not a good solution for us. They rent out a large meeting room, directly over the room we have reserved, for large parties on a frequent basis. It isn't possible to keep the noise from these large parties from interfering with our meetings. In this setting, we will always be at the mercy of the type of party occurring over our heads.

I need to ask all our members to work together to help us find a permanent meeting spot for our chapter. Any suggestions are welcome.

**Chair:** Brenda Toomey  
**Vice Chair:** Al Smith, Curt Hoffman  
**Treasurer:** Thirza Joost  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Bruce McAleer  
**Recording Secretary:** Janet Bessette

### **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 on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. from September

through May. A brief business meeting precedes a presentation from a guest speaker. Refreshments are served at the end of the meeting.

The chapter has hosted five guest speakers beginning with our fall session:

**September:** Marc Paiva of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Urban Archaeology and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Archaeological Investigations at the Emerald Necklace, Olmstead Park System, Boston, Massachusetts"

**October:** Dr. Jerry Hagler, Phillips Academy, "The Changing Face of Archaeology: The Role of Ancient DNA in the Exploration of Our Genetic Roots"

**November:** Dr. Javier Urcid, Brandeis University, "Zapotec Writing: Knowledge, Power, and Memory in Ancient Oaxaca"

**December:** Graham McKay, Amesbury, MA, "A Lightship in the Merrimack, the Wreck of the Sea Scout Vessel Elk"

**January:** Dr. Martin Klein, Klein Associates, "Technology in the Service of Maritime Archaeology"

Programs for the next 3 months will feature a diversity of topics:

**February:** Dr. Curtiss Hoffman, Bridgewater State College, "Site Management and Digging in the Field of Dreams: Archaeology at the Middleboro Little League"

**March:** Field trip to the Museum of Printing, North Andover, MA

**April:** History Alive! Gordon College, "Exploring 17th Century Life Through Theatre"

The archaeological survey at the historic Rebecca Nurse Homestead in Danvers, Massachusetts concluded its second year of digging last August. Directed by Dr. Nathan Hamilton of the University of Southern Maine, members of the Northeast Chapter and staff from the R.S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology were joined at the site by students from the Phillips Academy Summer Session Field School. Analysis and documentation of findings is actively progressing. The survey site has received extensive media coverage, with articles appearing in several local magazines and newspapers, including the Lawrence Eagle Tribune, Salem News, and North Shore Living Magazine.

In January, Dr. Nathan Hamilton and Malinda Blustain, Director of the R.S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, presented at the 2008 conference of the Society for Historical Archaeology in Albuquerque, New Mexico, reviewing the Nurse Homestead survey site and Summer Session Field School.

Last September, the Rebecca Nurse Homestead was the site for the 5<sup>th</sup> year for the Annual Massachusetts Atlatl Field Days and I.S.A.C. (International Standard Accuracy Contest.) Record crowds attended the two-day event. The 6<sup>th</sup> annual event will be held once again in the fall of 2008. This is a great weekend for families to view a historic New England homestead and a rare opportunity for young and old to actually try their skill at atlatl throwing.

For further information about the Northeast Chapter of M.A.S. please contact Glenn Mairo at 978-580-9437 or [gmairo@hotmail.com](mailto:gmairo@hotmail.com).

## NEWS FROM THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF MASSACHUSETTS

*Ann-Eliza Lewis (MHC), John Rempelakis (MassHighway)*

In response to historic preservation and environmental laws and regulations, the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration, sponsors archaeological investigations for federally funded bridge and roadway projects across the state. Updates on several projects described in previous MAS newsletters are provided below.

### Transportation Collections at the MHC

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is continuing to work on its ISTEIA grant from MassHighway. The grant has two goals: to improve the curatorial condition of older archaeological collections excavated pursuant to transportation-related construction projects and to "enhance public appreciation" of the work through exhibits and publications. Over the last year the MHC has passed through grant money to the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) and to UMass. Amherst's Archaeological Services to invest in new shelving for collections, upgraded packaging material, and other curatorial supplies. UMass. Boston was also contracted to provide conservation assessments to MHC, BLC, and UMass. Amherst's Archaeological Services. The final assessments will be submitted to the MHC shortly and should provide guidelines for establishing curatorial priorities for the facilities. The exhibits and booklets will be designed and written by UMass. Archaeological Services and the MHC. As mentioned in the previous issue of the newsletter, the first booklet will summarize the many excavations that have been conducted over the last 30 years and the significant contribution they have made to our overall knowledge of prehistoric and historical archaeology in Massachusetts. There will also be short booklets on the Late Archaic through Middle Woodland Period Flagg Swamp Rockshelter in Marlborough, and on the Late Woodland Period site of Indian Crossing in Chicopee. Indian Crossing will also have a small exhibit as will the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Sampson's Tavern in Lakeville and the 17<sup>th</sup> century Skerry House in Salem. The first products should be available by mid 2008.

*A. Peter Mair (PAL Inc.), and John Rempelakis (MassHighway)*

### Southeastern Massachusetts

PAL has completed intensive and site examination archaeological surveys along several alternatives for a major transportation improvements project in southeastern Massachusetts. The project area is located in the vicinity of the lower Taunton River in an area that was heavily utilized by Native Americans. Archaeological evidence has shown that the lower Taunton River area is considered one of the richest archaeological resources areas in the Commonwealth. Historically, the project area was generally used as farmland/agricultural fields. Other activities in the general area included extractive industries such as lumber and

granite. An historic quarry is located to the south and west of the project area.

Subsurface investigations for the intensive (locational) surveys entailed the excavation of 386 test pits, producing low densities of pre and post contact cultural material, as well as one pre-contact Native American (Other Side of the Tracks Site) and two post-contact Euro-American archaeological sites (Barnaby-Wordell and Old House sites). Also during field review the Tribal Historic Preservation Office of the Wampanoag of Gay Head (Aquinnah) identified several "areas of special interest".

#### **Other Side of the Tracks Site**

The Other Side of the Tracks Site represents a small temporary campsite. The site boundaries have not been defined, but the site is at least 10 m in diameter. Test pits placed within this area produced a small concentration of cultural material consisting of quartz and rhyolite chipping debris and two quartz bifaces. Despite the small size and low artifact density the site is considered potentially significant. The assemblage of cultural material suggests a small limited activity site focusing on lithic manufacture and maintenance. Most of the recorded sites in the lower Taunton River are located in close proximity to the river and its tributary streams. The Other Side of the Tracks Site represents a small, limited activity inland site, and further investigation may shed light on the relationship between small upland sites and the more heavily utilized and occupied riverine environs. Mass Highway is presently exploring design alternatives to avoid the site.

#### **Barnaby-Wordell Site**

The Barnaby-Wordell Site comprises a historical farm complex consisting of house, barn, and silo foundations. Archival/deed research revealed that the identified house foundations are the remains of the former Barnaby House, built ca. 1740 and occupied until the early twentieth century after which time it, and the barn, likely were dismantled. Two major occupations were identified, of the Barnaby family heirs, who lived on and/or rented out the property until 1894, and of the Wordell family who farmed the lot until 1923.

Subsurface testing resulted in the recovery of a total of 1,163 pieces of post-contact cultural material including domestic and architectural debris ranging from the early eighteenth through twentieth centuries (Westerwald and English white salt-glazed stoneware, creamware, pearlware, redware, yellow ware, delft, whiteware, machine-cut and hand-wrought nails, brick, dark green bottle glass, and window glass). The contents of a builder's trench identified along the west side of the house foundation corroborated deed data suggesting initial occupancy of the site in the early eighteenth century, and also provided a late eighteenth-century date for a northern addition to the house that was subsequently razed in 1914. None of the historic cultural materials, however, were recovered from soil contexts sufficiently stratified to discern distinct residential occupations as gleaned from the deed research.

The site examination conducted at the Barnaby-Wordell Site provided archival and archaeological data with which to establish the site boundaries and to make limited observations concerning the occupational history and construction sequence of the former Barnaby House. No stratified cultural material concentrations or features were identified. Based on the results of the archaeological site examination, the site was found ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Old House Site**

The Old House Site consists of a house foundation and possible outbuilding foundation. The main foundation is L-shaped and measures 10 by 8 meters. The foundation and associated back and side yards contained a significant amount of eighteenth century cultural material including domestic classes such as ceramics, glass, pipe stem fragments, shell and animal bone, and structural materials such as brick and mortar, and rose head nails. The majority of the ceramic materials, white salt glazed stoneware, trail-slipped redware, tin glazed earthenware (delft), Jackfield, and imported stoneware, dates primarily to the early-mid eighteenth century. Also noted was dark green bottle glass and wrought nails indicative of an eighteenth century occupation. More importantly, there is very little evidence of later post-contact cultural material.

Excavations across the site revealed intact A-zone deposits with moderate to high densities of artifacts noted around the foundation. One excavation unit uncovered a previously undocumented outbuilding foundation six courses deep. Preliminary interpretation is that it may be a root cellar. Another excavation unit uncovered a single coarse foundation wall adjacent/appended to the north wall of the foundation. This may represent an outbuilding or additional building campaign for the house. No evidence of a builder's trench was noted, but the lack of soil stratigraphy is telling. It appears that the natural topography/slope of the area was utilized when digging the foundation and soil removed during the excavation of the cellar hole was not used to create a berm around the foundation.

Analysis of the artifacts is currently in progress. However, based on the evidence collected to date, the Old House Site represents a rare, undisturbed site from the early to mid eighteenth-century with no later historic intrusion or disturbance. The site examination uncovered several undocumented foundation walls, as well as a midden deposit and intact A-zone soil deposits. These deposits and features combined with the "pristine" nature of the site, in the opinion of PAL, make it a significant archaeological resource and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. MassHighway will be consulting with the MHC regarding PAL's recommendation for the National Register eligibility of this site, as well as possible ways to avoid the site.

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## NEWS FROM THE ROBBINS MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

*Diane Pereira*

In the past few months, a lot has been going on at the Robbins Museum gift shop. We've not only rearranged and cleaned up the showcases; we've also increased the products we sell. Over the past couple of months, we've acquired, under consignment, over two dozen handcrafted gorgeous pieces of jewelry made by local Native Americans. We have also pulled older inventory which had not been on display out of storage, but which now is available for purchase. These are just a couple of minor changes, but already we have seen an increase in sales. In the future, we will continue to acquire more variety of products on consignment. We are looking for more products related to the museum's mission for consignment.

Most exciting of all, Tom Largy and Diane Pereira are working on an online store, which will hopefully reach a higher number of shoppers and potential MAS members. If all goes well, the online museum store should be up and running this spring. Please relay any suggestions for the museum gift shop to gift shop manager Diane Pereira at ([drgypsy@comcast.net](mailto:drgypsy@comcast.net)).

**Important Notice:** The Spring issue of the *MAS Bulletin* will be a special double issue celebrating Cape Cod archaeology. We apologize to any members or subscribers who expected a Fall issue.

## BOOK REVIEW

### *Ground –Penetrating Radar for Archaeology*

By Lawrence B. Conyers (Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, Lanham, New York, Toronto, Oxford, 2004. 203 pp.)

*Reviewed by Timothy Fohl*

This book is an introduction to one of the newest and most promising geophysical techniques being applied to archaeology: Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR). It is the first of a planned series on geophysical methods for archaeology.

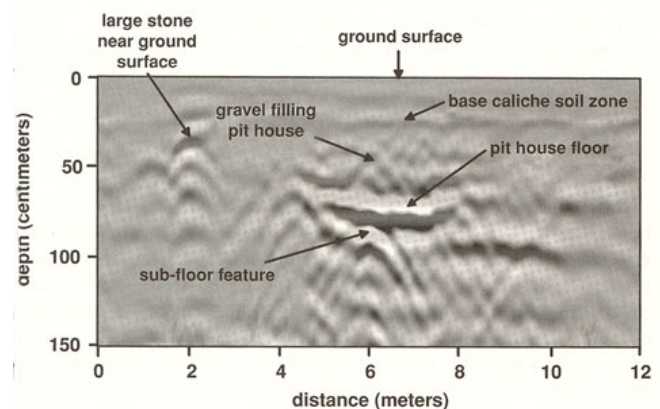
GPR makes use of reflected radio frequency electromagnetic waves which have been projected into the ground. It is a completely non-invasive technique that can yield a three-dimensional picture of subsurface features to depths of several meters. It is, however, a complex and somewhat esoteric technology. In this book the basic technology and the subtleties of its application are described in a way that is accessible to people who are not trained in physics or engineering. I would recommend it to anyone who is planning to use GPR for archaeology, even if the actual measurements are done by specialists.

The author is a professor of Anthropology at the University of Denver. Before getting involved in archaeology he worked in exploration geophysics for seventeen years. Many of the archaeological GPR techniques are derived from this field. He has written two books and numerous publications on GPR.

Some of the earliest experiences with ground penetrating radar involved some unfortunate malfunctions of radar altimeters on the Greenland icecap in the 1950's, with which I had direct experience! In the 1970's applications to archaeological problems began to appear. The earliest work was confined to looking for "anomalies" as a precursor to digging. With development, information about features and soil conditions has gotten more sophisticated to the point that it is sometimes possible to construct a complete three-dimensional model of terrains and structural remains before doing any excavation or even without digging at all. Much of the economic force behind these developments comes from fields outside archaeology such as construction, and some adaptation is needed.

The book covers various aspects of the technology in a systematic and clear way with many practical examples. The important physics and mathematical concepts are described. The practical methods of field measurements and subsequent data processing are also given a clear critical review.

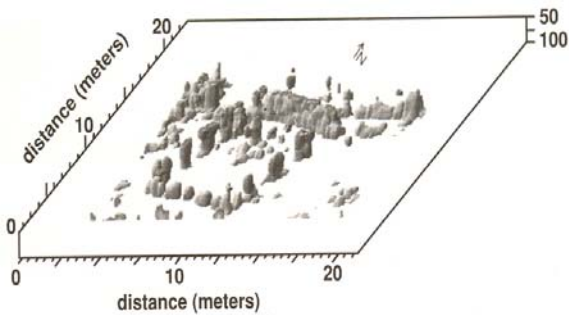
The basic process of collecting data involves pulling a combined sending and receiving antenna along transects laid out over the area of interest. The antenna sends radio waves into the ground at frequencies between those of microwave ovens and FM radios. Slight changes in the electrical characteristics of the ground and buried objects cause reflections, which are recorded and interpreted. The depth of features is calculated from the time delay of the reflections and the speed of propagation in the ground. A typical record of a single pass along a transect is shown in Figure 1. (Illustrations are from the book.) The shadows are indications of strong reflected signals from underground features.



**Figure 1. GPR data from a single pass over some features**

Such data is available in raw form in the field and can be used interactively with an excavation or with continued scans. However, it is not obvious to an inexperienced observer what is being seen. Processing in computers in the field or at a later date removes noise, provides calibration, enhances desired features and presents data in an easily grasped form. An example of a three-dimensional

reconstruction is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. A computer built model from GPR data on a buried structure**

GPR data is being obtained from an increasingly broad range of environments. It generally works best at sites where the soil is dry and the terrain is smooth and level but it has been used in peat bogs, open water (not salty) and on irregular terrain — even on vertical surfaces. The book gives guidance on assessing site suitability and site preparation.

Although there has been a tremendous amount of progress in GPR technology in recent years, it is clear that much more is in the offing. This will make the technique more useful to the archaeological community, especially in an environment where digging is becoming more restricted. It may be an essential tool for many situations.

## **MAS ANNUAL APPEAL**

***Curtiss Hoffman, Membership Secretary***

Our loyal membership has responded generously to the 2007-08 Annual Appeal. The following donors, including all of the members of the Board of Trustees, have responded to the appeal:

Ann Allen	John Ausevich
Ted Ballard	David Baskin
Janet Bessette	Shirley Blancke
Jim Bradley	Barbara Brown
Peter Burns	Jennifer Caldeleri
Bernard Cooper	Wilford Coutts
Pat Crawford & John Shea	Margo Muhl Davis
Freddie Dimmick	Kathy Fairbanks
Tim Fohl	Don Fulcher
Phil Graham	Curtiss Hoffman
Susan Jacobucci	Royce Kahler
Tom & Tonya Largy	Dan Lorraine
Tom Lux	Rick Lynch
Ruth McInnis	David McKenna
Joanne Miller	Ann Mires
John Pretola	Kevin Quackenbush
John Rempelakis	Fred Robinson
Bruce Rusch	Robert Scheer
Suanna Selby	Al Smith
Laurie Stundis	Carol Sullivan
Bill Taylor	John Thompson
Paul Warren	Eugene Winter

To date, we have collected a total of \$4,369 on 40 checks.  
**Thanks to all who have responded to the appeal!**



**William Francis Galvin**  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff  
Telephone: 617-727-9180

January 29, 2008

### **STATE HISTORIC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORTS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE**

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is pleased to announce the availability of the State Reconnaissance Survey Reports for download on MHC's website. Regional Reports for the Boston area (1982), Southeast Massachusetts (1982), Connecticut Valley (1984), Central Massachusetts (1985), and Cape Cod and the Islands (1987) are available. Town reports are available for 319 of the Commonwealth's cities and towns.

The reports are the result of a statewide reconnaissance level survey undertaken in the 1980's to establish both local and regional contexts for historic and archaeological properties and sites across Massachusetts. The interdisciplinary team included architectural historians, industrial historians, geographers, and archaeologists. The series has been out of print for many years. While the information has not been updated, the reports remain a useful resource for researchers and planners.

Reconnaissance Survey Town reports introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with a historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purpose of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500-1620), Plantation (1620-1675), Colonial (1675-1775), Federal (1775-1830), Early Industrial (1830-1870), Late Industrial (1870-1915), and Early Modern (1915-1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and treats to these resources. The regional reports, which should be used in conjunction with town reports, provide syntheses of the historic resources of a region and include useful maps of historic transportation routes, industrial development, historical political boundaries, and core settlement areas.

To view available downloads, please visit the Massachusetts Historical Commission's web site ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)) and click the State reconnaissance Survey Reports link.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

## NEWS FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)

*Edward L. Bell, MHC*

### **John and Priscilla Alden Family Sites National Historic Landmark Nomination, Duxbury, MA.**

In December, 2007, the National Park System Advisory Board recommended listing the John and Priscilla Alden Site Family Sites, in Duxbury, Massachusetts, as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). NHLs are a designation given to exceptional, nationally significant historic properties. The Secretary of Interior is expected to approve the recommendation this year.

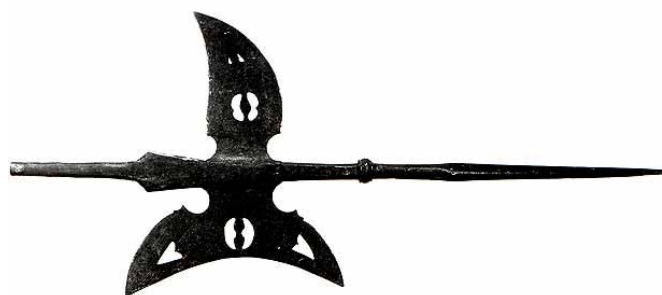
The listing includes two separate properties: the Alden House (ca. 1698), and the Original Alden Homestead Site (ca. 1630). The cellar hole of the original homestead was partially excavated in 1960 by pioneering, self-taught, historical archaeologist Roland Wells Robbins (1908-1987). His 1969 publication, *Pilgrim John Alden's Progress: Archaeological Excavations in Duxbury* (Plymouth: The Pilgrim Society), has been cited by a bevy of scholars to understand findings from other 17th-century archaeological sites throughout New England, and for comparisons with sites in the Chesapeake region. The Original Alden Homestead Site has provided crucial comparative data, particularly for the interpretation of "First Period" architecture and for studies about redware. Artifacts from Robbins' dig were part of the major 1982 exhibition, "New England Begins," at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Robbins' meticulous field documentation is in the archives of the Henley Library at the Thoreau Institute at Walden Woods, in Lincoln, MA. The curated archaeological collections, and additional artifacts and features from as-yet-unexcavated areas at the site have enormous potential to provide comparative data to inform pressing, nationally important research questions about history, life experiences, and material culture in early 17<sup>th</sup>-century North America.

Casual artifact collecting at the property occurred as early as the 1880s by George B. Frazer, whose collection is at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology at Harvard University. A magnificent halberd head (see illustration) was found in the basement of the standing house and is a featured object on display at the Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth. In the early 1950s, MAS members also did limited testing at the property. Robbins' collection includes more than 2,000 Native American artifacts that date from ca. 7,500 years ago to the 17th century. The property was occupied by generations of Wampanoag families, and provides compelling information to appreciate the timing and process of Colonial occupation and resettlement of Native homelands in Plymouth Colony.

Under the direction of Mitchell T. Mulholland, Archaeological Services at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (UMAS), undertook archaeological excavations at the property in 1995 before construction of the new visitors' center by the Alden Kindred of America. A long-term project to rehabilitate the artifact collection from Robbins'

dig has been overseen by Mulholland who published a synthetic chapter about the archaeology and architecture of the property in 1999. With MAS President Tonya Largy, Mulholland is also co-author of a forthcoming publication about the faunal remains from the collection.

In 2001, Tom McCarthy (History Department, US Naval Academy, Annapolis) began the extensive research required to prepare the lengthy and detailed NHL nomination. Many New England archaeologists contributed information to McCarthy's research that established the significance of the historic property and its associated archaeological collection. McCarthy's contacts include Emerson (Tad) W. Baker (Salem State College), Mary C. Beaudry (Boston University), Edward L. Bell (Massachusetts Historical Commission), Craig S. Chartier (Massachusetts Archaeological Professionals), Karin J. Goldstein (Plimoth Plantation), Daniel P. Lynch (Soil Sight), Mitchell T. Mulholland (Archaeological Services at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst [UMAS]), and Robbins' biographer Donald W. Linebaugh (University of Maryland). The NHL nomination includes a useful overview of comparative scholarly research in the history, archaeology, and architecture of 17th-century New England homestead sites, and substantiates the prospects of retrospective archaeological collections research projects.



**Halberd head found in the basement of the Alden House  
(wrought iron; length 63cm).**

**Courtesy of Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, MA.**



## **NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION PROGRAM ACHIEVES SOME NOTEWORTHY SUCCESSES**

*Mary T. Concannon*

In our last issue, we published an article introducing the Museum's newest initiative, the Native American Educational Outreach Project, which has been funded through the A.D. Makepeace Fund of Wareham, MA. Over the ensuing months, a significant amount of work has been achieved in getting the "first steps" of the nascent program



up and running.

### **Robbins Museum Programs & Curriculum Frameworks: Making The Connections**

Since the No Child Left Behind law was passed, school districts across the country have had to retool their pedagogical goals to meet strict educational standards. These standards – called the Curriculum Frameworks in Massachusetts – define the content educators must teach and students must learn; they additionally serve as the basis for testing and assessment. All school districts statewide (and nationwide!) have realigned their content to more closely match with these new learning goals.

Thus, a critical first step in creating a viable educational program here at the Museum has been researching, identifying, and creating links that detail just how the programs, exhibits, and resources at the Robbins Museum fit with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, meet MCAS needs, and link directly to Learning Benchmarks established by individual school districts. These links form the foundation for programming that leverages the support and buy-in necessary to attract local schools (and students!) to the Museum for tours, activities, and workshops.

In creating Frameworks links, I gave much time and attention to responding to ever-more frequent requests from teachers and administrators for educational materials that contextualize content and make history “real” for students. This need has afforded us a unique opportunity to expand the Learning Standards that comprise the Frameworks to include tie-ins to Native American (pre)history and culture. Thus, educators who take part in The Native American Educational Outreach Project have access to materials that offer new insights into the role Native peoples have had in shaping local and regional history.

To take a look at just how our programming meets these multiple new criteria please visit:

[www.massarchaeology.org/Education/EdOutreach.pdf](http://www.massarchaeology.org/Education/EdOutreach.pdf)

Currently, the Social Studies Frameworks for Grades 3 through 7 are available online. Art content links have been developed, and will be on the Web as expeditiously as possible!

Additionally, I have made extensive outreach efforts to school districts within Makepeace’s area of interest, and I have met and/or spoken with Curriculum Coordinators, Principals, Headmasters, and Teachers at both the district and local-school levels. The primary focus of these efforts has been getting districts to commit to and/or schedule student tours to the Museum. To date, the response from school personnel at multiple levels vis-à-vis utilizing the Museum as a key educational resource has been overwhelmingly positive. Significantly, MAS has received funding from several Local Cultural Councils to assist in defraying the costs of transportation and admission fees for Third Graders in local area schools. This funding, and the creation of the on-line Frameworks links, help leverage our outreach efforts, and make us more competitive with other organizations which are also trying to tempt schools to their sites! Thanks to Judith Scott for her hard work on the LCC

grant proposals.

### **On The Road**

This is not to say that education staff have been content to focus on the written word to reach new audiences! Rather, we have also been busy “on the road,” presenting a series of dynamic programs at a number of venues.

In October 2007, we participated in the Archaeology Fair, a two-day educational extravaganza co-hosted by the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) and the Museum of Science (MoS). The Fair attracted 3,800 participants, many of them teachers and students from across the Commonwealth. Our program, “Clues to the Native American Past”, focused on the role archaeology has played in uncovering the vibrant history, culture, and lifeways of local Native Americans, and it featured a number of hands-on activities, exhibits, and opportunities for participants to handle objects and learn more about Native American material culture.

Importantly, many of the teachers who attended the first day returned the second day to get more information about the Robbins Museum, the Society, and the ways our resources could fit with their own curricula, and we have had the opportunity to work with them and their students.

According to Ben Thomas, AIA’s event liaison, the MAS display was one of the most well-received, and generated many positive comments from those who attended! To get more information on the Archaeology Fair and take a quick “behind-the-scenes” look at our volunteers and staff in action, go to:

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

Volunteers for this event were: Margo Davis, Fred Robinson, and Al Smith; Jean-Jacques Rivard created banners and logos. Funding for hand-outs, copies, and other educational materials and supplies was provided by Invensys Foxboro through the efforts of MAS Education Committee Chair, Kevin Quackenbush. Our thanks to each for a job well done!

As well, in-class presentations were also made at the invitation of several teachers. Students at Kingsley Montessori School (Boston) and West Elementary School (Plymouth) took part in our Artifacts and Archaeology program, while first graders at South Elementary (Plymouth) explored The Story of the Wampanoag, a program designed primarily for younger students.

In addition to formal school groups, the Museum’s programs are attracting a number of Scout Troops; members are looking to the Museum not only for tours, but also for assistance in meeting Merit Badge requirements. This is exciting news, because Scout programs repeat yearly, and the potential for growth and expansion of this program is very real.

### **Other On-Site (and On-Line) Resources**

Haven’t been to the Museum lately? Come by and try your hand at our new Robbins Museum Bingo Challenge! The Bingo Challenge was crafted to engage visitors – young and

mature – in a more in-depth look at exhibits and to make the visit to the Museum an enticing, exciting, and educational one. An “elementary” level Bingo Game is being developed, as are multiple, age-appropriate versions of a Museum Scavenger Hunt. Teachers Take Note: this Challenge provides a great way to prepare your students for a tour of the Museum; as well, it can also serve as a post-visit assessment piece. To preview the Bingo Challenge, go to [www.massarchaeology.org/Education/Bingo%20MSHS.pdf](http://www.massarchaeology.org/Education/Bingo%20MSHS.pdf) or visit the Museum for a more interactive experience. Thanks to Jeff Boudreau for taking such superb images of the Museum’s artifacts for use in these activities!

And – of course – keep your eye on the Web; Tom Largy is doing a spectacular job of posting data as we expand our on-line resources.

### Final Thoughts

There has been a whirlwind of activity over the past months as staff has worked to garner interest in and support for Museum programs. There have been huge inroads made in developing more personal and effective relationships with school districts, especially those within the Makepeace community. But there are a few caveats as well.

Attracting schools (and Districts) is a multi-step and lengthy process. We have made greater strides since September than has been realized in the past, but to make our programs appealing to educators, multiple pieces must already be in place.

Fortunately, we have crested some of the larger and more time-consuming challenges that are inherent in crafting the Native American Educational Project. To continue from here, we must build upon these successes and provide educators with the resources they have told us they need and want.

By 2012, MCAS testing in Massachusetts will include a History/Social Studies component. To assist educators (and students) to prepare in preparing for this change, we will continue to create programming that meets their requirements and that fits with their pedagogical goals. Feedback “from the field” stresses the need for and interest in programming that contextualizes the sweep of history. The Robbins Museum is unique among its peer organizations; our resources are found at few other venues. To grow and build on our small successes, we must continue to develop and provide vibrant educational materials and programs that are accessible, easy-to-use, and pedagogically meaningful.

## A RETURN TO THE FIELD OF DREAMS: A BRIEF REPORT

*Curtiss Hoffman*

In 2006 and 2007, under renewed threat of construction of baseball playing fields, students from Bridgewater State College and MAS volunteers returned to the productive Middleborough Little League Site (19-PL-520) for further excavation at the Site Examination level, under the author’s supervision. Recoveries included 3,119 lithic artifacts, 19 potsherds, 9,165 pieces of lithic debitage, and 37 features.

The latter included two burnt rock platforms, which provided radiocarbon dates of 2220±100 B.P. and 1130±100 B.P., as well as pit features dating to 8040±200 B.P., 3850±140 B.P., 3240±140 B.P., and 2870±270 B.P. (all uncalibrated). This has substantially expanded the known range of the site’s occupation, by 2000 radiocarbon years forward and backward.



### Excavation at the Little League Site, Summer 2007

As I reported at our October Annual Meeting, the site was the locus for the production and storage of materials used in ceremonies at places like Wapanucket, 3 km upstream from the site. These include large quantities of quartz crystals, paintstones of graphite, hematite, and limonite, and polished pebbles, all of which occur in burials at Wapanucket. In addition, the site is adjacent to the sole local outcrop of the arkose slabs which line some of the Wapanucket burial pits.

Much work remains to be done to analyze the results of the 2007 field season. Susan Jacobucci is engaged in pollen analysis of soil from the rock platforms, as well as use-wear analysis of the edge tools and paleobotanical analysis of organic materials from undated features. Tonya Largy has done the paleobotanical and paleozoological analyses of organic materials from the dated features. Martin McHugh Mullane and Kyle Cramsey are working on soil chemistry to establish the presence or absence of heavy metals in feature soils, which might indicate the processing of anadromous fish from the nearby Nemasket River. Rebecca Burlingame is examining the lithic reduction sequences from features at the site. This work has been partially funded by a generous grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We intend to return to the site for one more season, as noted below.

## Field School Announcement

Dr. Curtiss Hoffman will conduct an archaeological field school at the Middleborough Little League site in association with Bridgewater State College from May 27<sup>th</sup> – July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. Registration forms will be available on the college’s website ([www.bridgew.edu](http://www.bridgew.edu)) by late March. Call (508) 531-2249 for information.

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**MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
**In conjunction with the**  
**ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY of CONNECTICUT**

**SPRING MEETING**  
**Saturday May 3, 2008**  
**Connecticut Archaeology Center – UConn Storrs**

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***Theme: Amateur Collectors and Current Research***

- 9:00 – 9:45**      **Registration: All Registration Paid at the Door**  
**MAS/ASC Members \$8.00; Non-members \$10.00; Students (with ID) \$5.00**
- 9:50-10:00      Opening Remarks: Dan Cruson (ASC) and Tonya Largy (MAS)
- 10:00-10:30      CT state archaeologist Nick Bellantoni (ASC) - “The Norris Bull Collection”
- 10:30-11:00      Candace Meader (ASC) – (tentative)
- 11:00-11:30      Lucianne Lavin (ASC) – “The Rogers Collection”
- 11:30-12:00      Gene Winter (MAS) – “Early Amateur Collectors and the Founding of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society”
- 12:00-1:30**      **Lunch (on your own)**
- 1:30 –2:00      Business Meeting (ASC and MAS)
- 2:00- 2:30      Rob Wallace (ASC) – “The Cyrus Sherwood Bradley Collection”
- 2:30- 3:00      John Pretola (MAS) – “Amateur Collections from Springfield Science Museum”
- 3:00- 3:15**      **Break**
- Current Research in Defining the Domestic Life of Past Peoples***
- 3:15-3:45      Susan Jacobucci (MAS) – “A Micro/Macro Analysis of the Middleborough Little League Site”
- 3:45-4:15      Craig Chartier (MAS) – “Home and Homelot Archaeology at the Lot Harding House, Truro, Massachusetts: What Can Be Learned from Focused, Low Impact Testing in Disturbed Areas”
- 4:15-5:00      Reception

**Directions to the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and Archaeology Center**  
**2019 Hillside Road, Storrs, CT.**

[www.cac.uconn.edu/mnhhome.html](http://www.cac.uconn.edu/mnhhome.html)

Coming from the Massachusetts area take I-90 Westbound (the Massachusetts Turnpike) to exit 9 (Route I-84 Westbound). Stay on route I-84 until you reach exit 68 (CT 195 toward Tolland/Mansfield). At the end of the exit ramp, take a LEFT. Drive down 195 for about 7.5 miles. You will come to the UConn campus. Take a RIGHT onto North Eagleville Road. There will be a church on the right hand side at this intersection as well as a stop light. Follow North Eagleville Road (which bears to the right after the intersection) and continue. Take your third LEFT onto North Hillside Road. You will go by a parking lot on the right hand side. As you drive down North Hillside Road, it becomes Hillside Road. You will pass the University of Connecticut Coop as well as Gampel Pavilion, which is a large, domed stadium on the right side. The museum is located on the right just after the Coop. It has a blue sign out front that says Museum of Natural History and it is a brick building. Parking is available on the roads surrounding the museum and the stadium. From Boston, the total drive time should be about 1 hour and 40 minutes.



Photograph ©Daniel Lorraine

### **ROBBINS MUSEUM**

17 Jackson Street, Middleborough, Massachusetts 02346

**Directions:** Take exit 4 off RT 495, the Middleborough Center - Lakeville exit. Then at the end of the ramp turn left to go north toward Middleborough Center on S.R. 105 through two traffic lights. At the next intersection, turn right onto Jackson Street. The Museum is a white building located on the right at number 17 Jackson Street. The museum is also a 2 mile walk from the Middleborough and Lakeville commuter rail station.

**The Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Inc.**  
**Robbins Museum of Archaeology**  
**P.O. Box 700**  
Middleborough, MA 02346

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