

VAS NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 1969

PUBLISHED OCCASIONALLY BY THE VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

This is the first newsletter of a new and thriving society. As you will note from the news items below, the prospect for the VAS is interesting and exciting. (Mrs.) Brenda Morrissey has been selected by the Board of Trustees as the editor of the newsletter and you may contact her at 3 McKinley Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 with any information you may have for publication in future issues.

THE SUGARBUSH AFFAIR

More than half of the membership of the Vermont Archaeological Society attended the first annual meeting of the Society held at the Sugarbush Inn, October 19, 1968. Since the Society was incorporated in June, 1968, the Steering Committee has been governing the work of the VAS and picked a nominating committee for its Board of Trustees. It also drafted a constitution and by-laws which was brought to the floor for approval by the membership at the first meeting. Everyone who attended the meeting agreed that everything from the food to the program was first-rate and all the members were pleased that a great amount of business was conducted under the most pleasant conditions.

The meeting began about noon on Friday, October 18, with registration and luncheon. At 2 PM, the first general session was held and included lectures by two members of the Society which were followed by spirited discussion. Professor William Haviland of the University of Vermont discussed the "how to do it" of archaeology based on the work he had done in Guatemala toward his doctoral dissertation. His lecture was accompanied by many slides and an interesting commentary. Professor John Hartnett, of the Biology Department of St. Michael's College, discussed some of the contributions that science could make to the practice of archaeology. Specifically, he discussed such matters as the various ways in which Archaeologists date their findings and come to the conclusions that they do. Although the meeting was long, the interest of the group was high and sustained to the very end. At 5 PM, after a brief walk in the beautiful country side, the members assembled for cocktails and conversation in the lounge of the Sugarbush Inn, and at 7 PM, adjourned to the dining room for the banquet. After dinner, the group assembled in the auditorium to listen to a fascinating talk by Dr. Douglass Byers, formerly of the Peabody Foundation. Dr. Byers reminisced about the distinctively different experiences in the archaeological field which were his good fortune to participate in. His excellent talk on the interplay of many disciplines in the practice of archaeology provoked a lively discussion from the floor which included numerous contributions from the many youngsters of school age who have become members of the Society.

After the meeting disbanded, the members of the Steering Committee and those members of the Society who have been chosen by popular vote to be the trustees of the Society met in the lounge to conduct the first business meeting. The content of this meeting is related below and was announced to the membership the following morning, Saturday, October 19 at the first annual business meeting of the Society. This included

the report of the Steering Committee, the presentation and approval of the constitution and by-laws of the Society, the announcement of the results of the election, and the development of the field program for the year 1969.

The closing event of the day was a luncheon at 1 PM.

THE INEVITABLE FIRST BUSINESS MEETING

Ralph Roberts, the president of the Steering Committee of the VAS, convened the first business meeting and carried the process to the point of the announcement of the trustees and the election of officers from among the trustee members. The secretary of the Steering Committee, H. N. Muller, read the results of the ballots for the first Board of Trustees. They were: Mrs. Inez Harlow, Joseph Popecki, Charles Morrissey, Dr. Durwood Smith, Dr. M. Coleman Twitchell, Ralph N. Hill, Ralph Roberts and H. N. Muller. Other members of the Steering Committee who were present were: William Haviland, Kenneth Varney and Mrs. Durwood Smith. The officers elected by the Board of Trustees from among its membership were: President, Joseph Popecki; Vice-President, Charles Morrissey; Treasurer, Dr. Durwood Smith; and Secretary, H. M. Muller.

The new President immediately launched into the business of the moment which was the resolution of the report to the membership for the following day. When this problem had been disposed of, the attention of the group turned toward discussion of the activities and program of the Society for the coming year. It was the ambition of all present that the momentum and enthusiasm shown to this point by all the members of the Society should be sustained throughout the coming year. The following business was transacted during the evening:

1. It was agreed that the editor of the Society should not have to be chosen from among the members of the Board of Trustees but could be selected from the general membership. This would insure that a person of willingness and talent for the job could be chosen. The editor serves without vote as an attendee at trustee meetings.
2. Mr. Morrissey, the Vice-President, who is also director of the Vermont Historical Society, suggested that one of the mid-winter seminars of the Society be devoted to a joint meeting of the VAS and the VHS. The purpose of this meeting would be to demonstrate to the members of the Historical Society the purpose and activities of the Vermont Archaeological Society. The President suggested that it would be advisable to establish an inventory of skills and interests of the members of the Society. The inventory might be conducted by means of a questionnaire and could lead to a series of educational sessions on archaeological methods.
3. Mr. Morrissey suggested that a spring tour of the Mount Independence site could be arranged and would make an interesting and popular trip. He agreed that he would discuss the feasibility of such a trip with Colonel John Williams.
4. William Haviland announced plans to explore a site in the Colchester area of Burlington some time in May and indicated his willingness to accept volunteers from among the membership of the Society who are interested in learning the practical aspects of "a dig".

5. Mr. Haviland also suggested that the Vermont Site Survey which he and Ralph Roberts had begun should be continued and expanded as a principal activity of the Society.
6. Dr. Coleman Twitchell suggested that, in order to accomplish the many things that the Society hoped to do, that it would be advisable to have a newsletter to keep its members informed of the plans and developments within the Society.

The members of the Board of Trustees next agreed on the establishment of three committees:

1. The Projects Committee. Kenneth Varney was chosen as chairman and was charged with the duty of preparing for consideration and approval projects which would form the basis of the Society's activities.
2. A Site Survey Committee. As noted before, this committee would continue the work done by Mr. Haviland and Mr. Roberts in locating and identifying archaeological sites throughout the state. Mr. Haviland agreed to head this committee.
3. Ralph Hill suggested the establishment of a Museum Committee which would undertake to collect, identify and preserve those archaeological materials which the Society has or will collect in the future. Dr. Durwood Smith was selected as chairman of this committee.

Because of the great amount of highway building activity in the state, it was agreed unanimously that some form of liaison was necessary with the highway department to insure that sites would not be destroyed in the process of extending Vermont's highway system. Mr. Morrissey, who resides in Montpelier, agreed to serve as liaison with that department. Dr. Durwood Smith moved that the trustees establish honorary membership in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and by-laws, and suggested that the first such membership should be given to Dr. Douglass Byers, the principal speaker at the first annual meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Dr. Durwood Smith submitted a financial report to the trustees which showed, as of October 18, 1968, a modest balance of \$119.00. Ralph Hill suggested to the Board the possibility that some state support be solicited because of the fact that the state of Vermont does not have an Archaeologist. Charles Morrissey suggested the next date for the meeting of the trustees and it was set for Burlington, Vermont at noon on Monday, November 10.

The results of the meeting of the Board of Trustees were duly announced to the membership at the business meeting of the following day and several items were discussed enthusiastically by the members present. The by-laws of the Society came under a close scrutiny and some debate before being passed by the membership. Other matters were brought to the floor, such as the possibility of creating and circulating traveling exhibits to schools and other public institutions, the pooling of equipment needed in the proper excavation of archaeological sites, the coordination of the activities of the VAS with other professional societies in the state and in the New England region, (particularly the Eastern States Archaeological Federation), the compilation of a bibliography of

reading material which might maintain the momentum of member enthusiasm through the winter months, the possibility of a repository for archaeological materials, and some practical printed directions to be used as a guide for members who were participating for the first time in archaeological digs.

The President was able to announce to the members that a temporary home for the possessions of the Society had been secured through the efforts of the Treasurer, Dr. Durwood Smith. A part of a basement and a concrete vault which was part of the Medical School Annex has been secured on a rent-free basis from the University of Vermont to house the materials which might be collected in the near future. It is the ambition of the Society to establish an independent home of its own eventually, but it gratefully accepted this offer of temporary help from the University of Vermont.

Notice was taken of the surprising response of the younger members of the Society. The VAS boasts about eight members of school age. At the present time, the VAS numbers about 150 individual and institutional members; this far surpasses the record, for its age, of any archaeological society established in recent years anywhere in the East.

ATTENTION FRUSTRATED DIGGERS

This summer, construction is scheduled to begin on the Burlington Belt-line, and the source for the fill for this project will be the Pine Island area in Colchester, Vermont. It is located in the marshy "intervale" along the Winooski River. All evidence indicates this would have been a prime habitation spot for pre-historic hunters and gatherers. It is therefore, important that an effort be made to recover as much archaeological data as possible as the island is removed. The construction company has offered to cooperate in this matter with Mr. William A. Haviland of the University of Vermont, who plans to excavate some remains which look quite unlike anything so far discovered in Vermont. At the same time, an intensive surface survey should be undertaken, with perhaps some further excavation. Volunteers for this work are urgently needed and the opportunity to learn the practical aspects of archaeological excavation is beyond compare. Those who can spare the time during the month of May should contact, as soon as possible, Dr. William A. Haviland, Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Vermont.

The trustees of the VAS have held three meetings since the first Sugar-bush meeting. One of the prime topics of conversation at each meeting has been the possibility of extending the practical educational experience of a "dig" to other areas of the state. Your attention is called to the inventory of interests and skills which appears on the last page of this newsletter. Hopefully, you will fill out and return this form as soon as possible, no matter how small you think your contribution might be. We are anxious to establish other educational digging sites throughout the state as early as possible, to benefit the members of the Society in their effort to forward the business of identifying the archaeological heritage of the state.

THE VERMONT SITE SURVEY

At its first annual meeting, the VAS Board of Trustees voiced the unanimous approval of continuing the project begun by William Haviland and Ralph Roberts in March, 1968, supported by funds from the University of Vermont, of assembling an inventory of available archaeological sites within the state. The technique of making a site survey has been well

defined by their early efforts and coincides with the best established practice throughout the country. It attempts to provide information on the number, location and nature of archaeological remains in the state of Vermont. This information is absolutely essential to the intelligent planning of any excavation so that knowledge is gained about those sites which may be in danger of destruction, which have been the least disturbed, and which property owners are willing to permit digs on their lands. While it is not possible to present here complete information about the nature or the technique of identifying and describing a site, such information plus site survey forms can be obtained by writing to Dr. William Haviland at the University of Vermont or to any officer of the Society. Your cooperation in assembling this information is urgently requested, because it is important that it be gained before unskilled and haphazard digging begins in the state.

NEWS AND NOTES

Officers of the Vermont Archaeological Society will explain the aims and purposes of the Society at a winter seminar of the Vermont Historical Society to be held at 8 PM, Thursday, February 20 in the Library of the Vermont Historical Society. The building is located adjacent the State House in Montpelier.

Anyone interested in learning about Vermont's pre-history is invited to attend this meeting.

Dr. Leslie Alcock, a leader in the quest for the discovery of King Arthur's legendary court, will be speaker at a convocation at Vermont College in Montpelier at 4:15 PM, February 27 in Alumni Hall on the campus. Dr. Alcock will discuss the possibility that recent discoveries on Cadbury in Somerset, England may have indeed uncovered this archaeological find.

The Vermont House of Representatives, acting on the motion by Representative John Alden of Woodstock, has tabled a bill dealing with the removal of artifacts from public waters or land owned by the state. The bill would prohibit any person from taking any historical artifacts from such lands or making any excavations for purposes of removing such objects without written permission from the Board of Historical Sites. Penalty for the violation of the law would be provided and the Board of Historic Sites would be given the duty of designating any object of historical or archaeological or paleontological interest found in or under any of the land of the state. The Vermont Historical Society would be notified of all such designations. The bill was tabled so that it could be given further study.

WINTER READING IN ARCHAEOLOGY

We have gathered a list of recent and interesting reading materials in the field of archaeology which will help to keep up your enthusiasm during the winter months. The books noted below are available at the University of Vermont, St. Michael's College Library, and the Fletcher Free Library, Burlington. We would be happy to receive notices of archaeological readings which are deposited or which may soon be acquired by other libraries throughout the state. St. Michael's College Library has announced that it is extending the privilege of borrowing books on a personal basis to any member of the Vermont Archaeological Society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

NOTE: Locations are given in parentheses after the entry.

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- HUDEN, John, comp. Archeology in Vermont. 1960. (FFL, UVM).
- MACKENDRICK, Paul. The mute stones speak. 1960. (FFL).
- ROBBINS, Maurice. The Amateur archaeologist's handbook. New York, Crowell, 1965. 273 p. illus. \$6.95. (SMC, UVM). This is an excellent "first" in any archaeology library. It answers the questions of "where" and "how" along with a list of "don'ts".
- SILVERBERG, Robert. Frontiers in archeology. 1966. (FFL).
- TRIGGER, Bruce G. Beyond history: the methods of prehistory. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. (UVM).
- WILLEY, Gordon R. An introduction to American Archeology. New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 2 volumes, 1966. (SMC).
- ZEUNER, F. Dating the past. London, Methuen, 1958. (UVM).

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNALS OF INTEREST

1. American Antiquity: the major professional journal is published by the Society for American Archaeology, Suite 112, 3700 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016. Not only does it include many articles on Northeastern North American Archaeology, but each year under "Current Research" reports on all archaeological work in that area.
2. Archaeology: a magazine for the layman, is published by the Archaeological Institute of America (Archaeology, Dept. NH 204, 260 W. Broadway, New York 10013). Its interests are worldwide.
3. Expedition: a magazine for the layman published by the Univeristy Museum, 33rd. and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104. Its interests are worldwide.

NAME:
ADDRESS:

Experience

1. Have you () courses in archaeology; () in a closely related subject?
2. Have you read much on the subject of () general archaeology,
() American archaeology?
3. Have you ever participated in an archaeological "dig" under the supervision of a trained archaeologist or excavator? ____; on your own? ____
4. Have you ever handled artifacts for the purpose of () cleaning,
() classifying, () labelling or () displaying them?

Skills, Training, Hobbies

Check one or more of the following as they apply to you.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| () Use of surveying instruments. | () Map or site-plan making. |
| () Cataloging, classification. | () Photography. |
| () Drafting or lettering ability. | () Close-up, slide photography. |
| () Drawing or painting from life or photographs. | () Swimming. |
| () Hiking, outdoorsmanship. | () Scuba diving. |
| () Building displays. | () Boat handling, large craft. |
| () Cabinet-making. | () Boat handling, small craft. |
| () Systems analysis. | () Woodworking. |
| | () Computer programming. |

Formal training in:

- | | | |
|---|---------------|------------------|
| () Biology | () Chemistry | () Mathematics |
| () Botany | () Geology | () Library work |
| () Archaeology | () Physics | () Museum work |
| () Languages (specify language and degree of competence. | | |

Interests

Whether or not you have been active in the field of archaeology, which of the following special interests do you have? (Check one or more.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| () Location and scouting of sites. | () Site excavation. |
| () Teaching archaeological or associated skills. | () Photographing artifacts. |
| () Cleaning, cataloging and classifying artifacts. | () Map and site plan making. |
| () Underwater archaeology. | () Designing displays. |
| () Writing reports of archaeological work. | () Making display equipment. |
| () Supervising the work of the Society regionally. | () Surveys and recording of private collections. |
| () Publishing. | () Reviewing books and articles in archaeology. |
| | () Editing. |
| | () Public relations. |

Identification of findings:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| () Bone and other anatomical structure analysis. | () Soil analysis and mechanics. |
| () Plant and animal taxonomy. | () Scientific dating methods. |
| () Mineral and rock (geological) identification and analysis. | () Other: |

Return questionnaire to: (Mrs.) Brenda Morrissey, Editor
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