

VAS newsletter...

A PUBLICATION OF THE VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Annual Meeting Issue

Inside, you'll find the details of the 1980 Annual Meeting. Make plans to come, because with its late start, the autumn foliage should be beautiful. Don't forget to mark the ballot for the election of trustees. You can mail it in or bring it with you to the meeting. The dinner reservation for the occasion must be mailed in by October 14. The program is a good one; bring a friend. Bring two!

ARCHEOLOGY BUFFS FOUND CHAMPLAIN MARITIME SOCIETY

The Champlain Maritime Society was incorporated in June, 1980, by a number of local residents who recognized the need to centralize knowledge about the maritime history of Lake Champlain. The Society plans to stimulate individual and cooperative efforts to collect and preserve information and artifacts pertinent to the maritime history of the Champlain Region. It will use a number of approaches to accomplish its objectives. These will include conducting searches for submerged archaeological sites, establishing a facility for interpretation, conservation and exhibition of related artifacts, and educating members and the public on the important role that the Champlain Region played in the history of Vermont, New York and Quebec.

The Society is currently sponsoring the Phoenix project as its first effort to promote the study of maritime history. The submerged wreck of the lake steamer Phoenix constitutes one of Vermont's most valuable archaeological resources. The project will highlight shipwreck sites—the partial legacy of over three centuries of exploration, military ventures, commerce, and recreation on Lake Champlain—as valuable cultural resources. The first part of the project involved an underwater survey to record the characteristics of the existing structure. The second segment will involve archival research and drafting scale plans. The final product of the project will be a booklet about the Phoenix for public distribution.

The first public program sponsored by the Society will be held on September 26 at 7:30 PM.

♦ 2

Diving on the Phoenix

By Kevin Crisman

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although most of us are fascinated by one of archaeology's newest frontiers—underwater—few of us are likely to participate in an underwater project. VAS member Kevin Crisman was a Phoenix project team member, and has provided an account of a typical dive and an underwater view of the wreck.

During this past August, an important first step was taken in the assessment of the information potential of the steamer Phoenix I. The Phoenix, the second steamship built for Lake Champlain, was launched in 1815, and served for four years until a tragic fire on September 5, 1819 reduced the vessel to the waterline and left six persons drowned. The remains of the vessel drifted on to a reef off Colchester Point, where the engines were removed and placed in a new vessel. The burned hull disappeared at some point after this; it was probably carried by ice into deeper water.

Diving instructor, Arthur Cohn, became interested in the remains of the ship after reading an account of the sinking, and was granted a permit by the state of Vermont to look for the vessel. Another diving instructor, Donaly Mayland, discovered the missing remains by accident while on a training dive in August, 1978. He contacted Cohn, and together they made several reconnaissance dives, after which it was concluded that the charred hull was indeed the Phoenix.

Working in conjunction with the Champlain Maritime Society and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, the two organized a week-long mapping expedition on the wreck. The team selected for the project included: Mayland and Cohn, who planned and directed the project; Jack Chase, who put together a detailed plan for dealing with the wreck mapping; Kevin Crisman, draftsman; and Mike Janson, Scott McDonald, Dean Russel, and Buzzy Lambert, all certified, experienced divers. Bill Brown captained his motor-yacht Pussycat, which served well as the team's dive boat.

The objective of the project was to collect enough detailed measurements to reconstruct a

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1 ▸ MARITIME

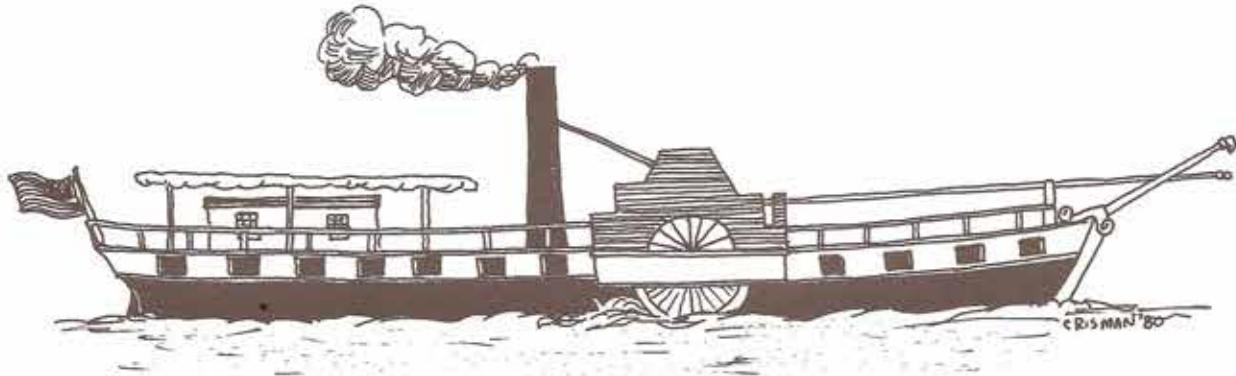
aboard the Ticonderoga at the Shelburne Museum. Several individuals will give presentations on the Phoenix project. Further information about the meeting and the Society can be obtained by calling (802) 862-8270.

by Peter Thomas

1 ▸ THE PHOENIX

reasonable picture of the vessel in its present condition. These measurements include dimensions of each of the many ribs, where they intersect the keel, detailed measurements of the bow and stern areas, and information on unusual areas (such as the remnants of the engine mounts).

All of this data was not easily collected, since the ship lies in deep water, with the bow at 60 feet and the stern at



110 feet. The temperature of the water on the wreck (averaging around 48 to 50° F) necessitated the use of dry suits by all divers. The extreme depth forced all divers to be very conscious of their time limits and air supply. Decompression stops were made on all dives to minimize the possibility of the bends. Visibility on the wreck varied from dive to dive, and lights were carried and used much of the time. A typical dive on the Phoenix included the following procedures and sights.

As the Phoenix begins to materialize below each "buddy team" of two divers, it first appears as a sort of light spot in the greenish black of the water. The ribs and planking slowly take on detail, stretching off out of visual range. Leaving the anchor chain which guides them down, the divers settle in a small cloud of silt onto the hull. After taking a moment to get oriented to the darkness and the ship, they set about their task. Across from the anchor chain, and slightly forward of amidships, sit what is left of the engine mounts. Large beams are dogged tightly to the lower ribs, and here and there rows of rusty bolts indicate the position of an incinerated beam. There are several round holes in the deck, prob-

ably for water intake/outflow pipes needed by the steam engines. Brick is scattered in and about the engine mounts, remnants of either the engine or the galley.

Fore and aft of the engine mounting area little is visible except ribs and outer planking. Most of these are charred to various degrees. Nothing is left of the partitions and furniture, etc., which must have once been situated here. Here and there small pottery sherds are visible between the ribs, most of them showing signs of warping and bubbling from the intensity of the fire which destroyed the ship.

Moving forward of the engine area eventually brings a diver to the bow, which is perhaps the most eye-catching feature of the wreck. The bow curves up off the bottom abruptly for about fifteen feet. Here a diver can get a good look at the massive lower keel, which is about two feet thick. Remnants of the outer planking are still attached right up to the top

of the bow, so if a diver fins past the front of the vessel and looks back, he can get a good idea of what the front of the ship must have looked like.

Traveling down the heavily tilted ship aft of the engine mounts, the divers eventually reach the stern. It is colder here, and much darker, so a light is very useful. In the beam of light, the sternpost becomes clearly visible. It stands six feet up off the keel and still has some planking attached to it. This planking clearly shows the construction of the hull width here at the stern. There isn't much else to see at this end of the ship, the things in general look more heavily burned. One suspects that perhaps the weight of the engines in the bow raised the stern up as it burned, thus exposing more of the wood to the flames.

Time considerations and air supply cut short most dives, and divers must leave promptly at the prearranged time. The anchor chain is easily located from anywhere on the ship, since it sits at Rib #25 on the starboard side, just to the right of the engines. The ascent up the anchor chain is accomplished in a couple of minutes, and is followed by five boring minutes at ten feet, decompressing. When the lake is at all rough, this process becomes

more lively, as the divers fight to maintain a grip on an anchor chain that acts like a demented python.

Once the decompression stage is accomplished, the divers surface and splash over to the boarding ladder on the side of the Pussycat. There they hand up

clipboards, weight belts, tanks, fins, etc., to waiting hands and clamber up the ladder.

The ladder, it should be noted, failed to survive the week of mapping. On the final day, this author deftly removed the top two rungs with his hurtling feet, and a subsequent team of divers broke it in half in their rush to get aboard. Captain Bill Brown has been compensated from project funds.

VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Sheraton-Burlington Inn

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1980

1-2 PM REGISTRATION, UNIVERSITY SOUTH ROOM

2-4:30 PM AFTERNOON SESSION

A BRIEF LOOK AT ANDEAN PREHISTORY Brian Alberghini and Kevin Crisman

GLIMPSES OF THREE EGYPTS Sanborn Partridge

STATE ARCHEOLOGIST'S REPORT Giovana Neudorfer

RECENT ARCHEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN THE LAMOILLE AND MISSISQUOI WATERSHEDS

Peter Thomas

4:30-5:30 PM HAPPY HOUR

5:30 PM DINNER

BIOGRAPHIES OF NOMINEES FOR TRUSTEES 1980

Joyce Daniels

was born in Rutland, Vermont and grew up in Pittsford. Later, she came to Burlington and graduated from the University in 1939 with degrees in history and psychology. She recently retired as a social worker with the state after 33 years experience. Her early interest in archeology was sparked by the presence of Indian sites on her family farm. She continued this interest after having been introduced to archeologist Tom Daniels. Through him, she met her future husband, Tom's brother, John.

Dee Brightstar

Most VAS members will remember Deanna Brightstar as Dee Martin. The recent change in her name acknowledges her substantial Indian heritage. Dee was born in Vermont and educated in Burlington, but has traveled extensively. While in Turkey, from 1967-69, she was invited to participate in an archeological dig, but declined because of her lack of experience. Back in the states, she worked for Dr. Robert Johnson, an avid amateur archeologist, and participated in excavating the Ewing site. She has been a member of VAS since 1971.

Sue Gallagher

joined the Society in 1977. She's librarian at Lyndon State College. Her love of history and the outdoor life turned her interests to the pursuit of amateur archeology. Sue represents a part of the state where there are many opportunities for archeological activity but where membership has been sparse.

Kevin Crisman

has become an enthusiast of underwater archeology, but his interest began in 1977 when he participated in the Chittenden County survey. He worked at the Winooski site and last year was employed in UVM's Cultural Resource Management Program. He spent three and a half months in Peru this year and dug at the Huari site. More recently he did field research in the Missisquoi delta region for a honors thesis as a fourth year anthropology major. He was a diver and draftsman on the Phoenix Mapping project reported on in this issue.

Gina Campoli

Is a graduate student in UVM's Historic Preservation Program where her studies emphasize cultural archeological preservation. A graduate of Williams College in 1977, with a BA in American Civilization and Environmental Studies, she has been employed since 1978 in the con-

tract archeology program at UVM. She is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

Prudence Doherty

is a historical geographer who has worked for the UVM contract archeology program since April 1979. Her special interest is historic and industrial archeology and programs for public interpretation of cultural resources. Recently, Prudence was appointed editor of the VAS Newsletter (this is her first issue). She received her BA in American History and her MA in Geography from the University of Chicago. She is a member of the National Trust and the Society for Industrial Archeology.

Gordon Nielson

Gordon is a ten year member of the VAS. He works as an entomologist and Pestiole Coordinator for the University's Extension Service. He is probably the most knowledgeable person about archeological sites in the state and maintains the VAS site survey file. Dr. Nielson lives in Hinesburg and is a stock car racing buff. He has just completed a three year term as VAS trustee.

Donna Jerry

has been a member of the VAS since 1977. She has worked for the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation as an historical researcher and participated in the Chittenden County Archeological Survey. She is presently working with the papers of Calvin Coolidge. Donna graduated from Johnson State College with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology. She is a member of the National Trust, the Vermont Historical Society and the Northeast Folklore Society. She has just completed a three year term as VAS trustee.

Sanborn Partridge

comes from Proctor and is an educator, geologist and history buff. He holds graduate degrees in law, business and geology. Since 1961 he has been a state representative from 1961-1968 and since then, a senator from Rutland County. He holds memberships in several local and state historical societies, as well as the Vermont Geological Society. His other public service comprises a long list that includes presidency of the Proctor Free Library Association and trusteeship (including a year as chairman) of the University of Vermont.

ANNUAL MEETING DINNER RESERVATION

VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Please accept reservation(s) for _____ individual(s)

_____ Roast round of Beef, aujus @ \$9.50

_____ Baked Boston Scrod @\$8.00

Dinners include Soup du Jour, Garden Salad, Broccoli with Bernaise Sauce, Baked Potato, Rolls & Butter, Deep Dish Apple Crisp, Coffee Tea or Milk. Prices include Tax and Gratuity.

PLEASE RETURN BY OCTOBER 14th, 1980. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, Box 663, Burlington, VT 05402.

Name of Person Making Reservation _____

Other in Party _____

Address _____

BALLOT

VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE OFFERS THE FOLLOWING NAMES FOR ELECTION AS MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF THE VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR THREE YEAR TERMS. EACH INDIVIDUAL HAS CONSENTED TO BE NOMINATED AND THE COMMITTEE OFFERS ITS THANKS FOR THEIR WILLINGNESS TO BE NAMED AND SERVE. VOTE FOR SIX FROM THE LIST BY MARKING BOXES.

Joyce Daniels

Prudence Doherty

Dee Brightstar (Martin)

Gordon Nielson*

Sue Gallagher

Donna Jerry*

Kevin Crisman

Sanborn Partridge*

Gina Campoli

* Denotes members who have just completed serving a three year term.

YOU MAY MAIL THE BALLOT WITH YOUR MEETING RESERVATION OR BRING IT WITH YOU TO THE ANNUAL MEETING. BALLOTS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

Application for Membership or Renewal

Vermont Archaeological Society, Inc.

Mail your check payable to the Society and mail to Box 663, Burlington, VT 05402

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY OR TOWN
STATE
PHONE

ZIP
DATE

DUES
NEW RENEWAL

Life.....	\$100
Contributing.....	25
Sustaining.....	12
Institutional.....	8
Family.....	8
Individual.....	5
Student or Senior Citizen...	3*

*State age: under 18 or over 65

IF YOU ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT YOUR DUES , PLEASE CONTACT THE TREASURER.

Stone Blast Furnaces in Vermont

This list of furnaces was accidentally omitted from last issue's article by Victor Rolando, entitled, "Search for Vermont Furnaces Yields Dramatic Discoveries."

BENNINGTON		ST. JOHNSBURY	
Furnace Brook	1793-1803	Paddock Iron Co.	1828- ?
Sage & Olin	1804-1823	SHAFTSBURY	
* Hunt	1822-ca. 1840	Douglass & Bangs	ca. 1829- ?
* Benn. Iron Co.	1822-1853	H. Burden & Sons	1863- ?
Benn. Iron Co.	ca. 1831-ca. 1840	SHELDON	
BRANDON		Keith #1	1799-1823
Conant	1820-ca. 1860	Keith #2	1824-ca. 1850
* Forestdale	1823-1855	TINMOUTH	
DORSET		William & Perry	ca. 1810- ?
Curtis	ca. 1840- ?	* (unknown)	ca. 1815- ?
* Dorset Iron Co.	ca. 1846-1875	* Rathbone & Vaughan	1815-1837
FAIR HAVEN		TROY	
Lyon	1788- ?	* Boston & Troy I. Co.	1837-1846
PITTSFORD		VERGENNES	
Keith	1791- ?	Monkton Iron Co.	1809-1816
Gibbs & Co.	1795-1824	Rathbone	1824-1830
Leach	1824- ?	WOODFORD	
Granger	1853-1865	Robinson & Quimby	ca. 1820- ?
* Vermont Iron Co.	1865-ca. 1880		
PLYMOUTH			
Tyson	1837-1872		

* Standing or identifiable furnace ruin

ACADEMIC PRESS PUBLISHES SNOW'S NEW BOOK ON NEW ENGLAND ARCHEOLOGY

Dean Snow has just completed a book entitled, *Archaeology of New England* (Academic Press). Members will remember Snow well because he has been a featured speaker at Society meetings on at least two occasions.

His book is written to appeal to both the professional and the avocational archeologist. He expresses a deep concern about the widening

gap between these two groups and about the declining membership of many archeological societies. Snow feels that archeology will lose much of its character if it loses its non-professional component and one of the implicit aims of his book is to negotiate a new "contract" between the two. We'll have a review of the new book in an upcoming issue.

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BOX 663, BURLINGTON, VT 05402

FIRST CLASS

TO