

# VAS Newsletter

A publication of the Vermont Archaeological Society, Inc.

.....

## CULTURAL RESOURCES FROM THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

(Ed.'s Note: This excellent article was submitted for publication last spring. Although the Forest Archaeologist has engaged in many archaeology projects during the 1989 field season, we hope this article will set the stage for the next update.)

### Introduction

The Green Mountain National Forest manages the wide variety of natural resources contained within its 320,000 acres in south-central Vermont. The Forest ranges from the Bristol Cliff Wilderness area in the north to the gentler portions of the Green Mountains near western Massachusetts. Among our responsibilities is the management of Cultural Resources--generally realized as the identification, protection, evaluation and interpretation of prehistoric and historic/industrial archaeological sites. I have been the Forest archaeologist for more than two years now, and thought that VAS members ought to receive an update on how we are trying to serve Vermont's heritage. I hope that any of you with an interest in our management direction; who simply would like more information about what, where, and how we conduct our work; or who would like to get involved, will get in touch.

### The Compliance Process

The bulk of the archaeological work conducted on the Forest to date consists of compliance-type surveys associated with timber sales. Smaller scale or less intensively ground disturbing projects (not necessarily the same thing!) are also subject to archaeological survey. In fact, these latter projects are

numerous, but the cumulative acreage has, in the past, always tilted toward the timber program.

For most projects, Forest Service paraprofessionals--located on the Ranger Districts in Middlebury, Rochester and Manchester--conduct preliminary historical surveys consisting of documentary background search and subsequent walkover reconnaissance. I review the resulting reports, supplementing them as needed with evaluations of prehistoric sensitivity. As a result, historic period sites are identified on the ground, recorded, and then flagged and protected. Areas with prehistoric potential are either removed from the project area, tested to determine site presence/absence or, in some cases, designated as "over snow" logging areas. (Experiments on a similar Forest showed that over-snow logging had no adverse affect on lithic-dominated subsurface sites.)

In 1988, more than 2,000 acres were surveyed, resulting in the confirmation or discovery of a large number of historic (largely 19th century) farmstead, kiln, and mill locations; an historic hilltop grave (on the Manchester District), and a family plot (on the Middlebury District); and two prehistoric loci (a non-diagnostic quartzite bifacial knife findspot along the upper Deerfield River, and a hearth feature on a terrace of the White River). These sites have been included in our site inventory (now more than 350 entries); follow-up investigations on the prehistoric sites is anticipated during 1989. It is our hope that--in conjunction with the DHP's State Plan and the Forest's soon-to-be-  
(continued)

## Forest, continued

improved computer capability--a systematic evaluation of our entire inventory will become a reality over the next several years.

Starting with the 1989 field season, our Cultural Resource program will expand its scope by moving beyond project-specific compliance work, and into broad-scale survey of the landscape. Our goal is to survey approximately 10% of the Forest each year, so that we will have total (walkover) coverage by the turn of the century. This first season will be something of an experiment as we try to reach an effective balance between total coverage, efficient methods, and reasonable costs.

### Other Cultural Resource Activities

While the Forest's obligation to cultural resources can get bogged down in a mundane "identify-and-protect" mode (not unlike patterns in the private sector), we are striving to go beyond that. In the past year (1988), the following new or ongoing projects have received attention.

\* Christy McDonnell (University of Connecticut, Storrs) has been doing analysis on a deep pollen core from Little Rock Pond in Wallingford. Her two-tiered goal is to provide a paleoenvironmental reconstruction of the evolution of forest types since glacial retreat, and to examine this record for evidence of intentional (human) burning activities. We expect that this will give us greater insight into one of the ways that Native Vermonters manipulated their environment in times past. At the moment we are awaiting the results of a second set of C-14 dates from the core which will allow for more meaningful comparisons with reconstructions from elsewhere in the Northeast.

\* In conjunction with rerouting a portion of the Appalachian/Long Trail system over Stratton Mountain (and aided

by the advocacy of the Green Mountain Club's Mark Haughwout), we have made a commitment to preserve the Civilian Conservation Corps' ca. 1930s Stratton Mountain fire tower. It is a classic example of the style and materials used for this once ubiquitous structure type. As the number of such towers continues to decline, it serves as a reminder of our economic history--both Vermont's intimate ties to the logging industry and the nation's trauma and resolve during the Great Depression. Last fall, the Forest had the tower's risers and cab floor replaced and the entire exterior repainted. It is our intention to nominate the site to the National Register of Historic Places. We hope to have interpretive materials available on-site by next year.

\* In an effort to establish a reliable inventory of historic cemeteries within the Forest, Annie Harlow (Middlebury) searched site files and town histories, interviewed long-time residents, and did field reconnaissance. We anticipate that her research will lead to an active preservation and restoration program, and to an interpretive guide to at least a handful of cemeteries addressing the economic and personal lifestyles from a slice of nineteenth-century Vermont.

\* Motivated by the ongoing interest and stewardship of the Rochester district's Bruce Flewelling, the Forest hired Bob Hasenstab (UMass/Amherst) to map four early twentieth century splash dams on Chittenden Brook, Bingo Brook and its tributaries. These dams were constructed and used by the International Paper Co. to create impoundment ponds to flush winter-cut logs down the White River in the spring. At least one of the ponds probably also had pulp wood logs in the pond which were then floated down river. The dams are threatened with total washout with each successive spring thaw, and we wanted to create a permanent record of their remains before they disappeared altogether.

(continued)



## Forest, continued

\* Alan Rixon (Rutland) has spent the last few seasons enthusiastically volunteering his SCUBA expertise at historic Lake Silver in Leicester. In addition to discovering two submerged

dugout canoes, Alan has recovered numerous artifacts from an underwater dump from the 19th century historic hotel and religious retreat once located at the northern end of the lake. He has organized some of his project's results into a display which is exhibited seasonally at the Branbury State Park (Lake Dunmore) nature building.

\* Work at the Homer Stone prehistoric quartzite quarry continued last year, although on a more modest scale than the previous two seasons. In response to annual spring flooding and erosion of a part of the site, several paraprofessionals and volunteers (including Eric Bowman of Rochester) spent two days replacing a corrugated, subsurface culvert with an open, stone-lined trench. This required some small excavation units to be placed on either side of the trench location. New information gleaned from this small project included the observations that cultural deposits extend deeper than previously thought (to at least 60 cm in some places) and that, in at least this part of the site, it is clear that there is a spatial separation of stone tool reduction tasks. It is our intention to limit any further field work at the site until more analysis has been done on the materials already collected.

\* Nearly last, but certainly not least, erstwhile VAS member Vic Rolando continues his research in Vermont, including--as usual--many spots within the National Forest on his itinerary. Vic's inventory of industrial sites has enriched our knowledge and enhanced our ability to manage the Forest's more recent historical base.

\* Finally, in conjunction with the

multi-agency initiative to reintroduce Atlantic salmon to the Connecticut River drainage, and stimulated by research by Cathy Carlson (UMass/Amherst), we have begun a modest attempt to investigate whether there is a reasonable historical and/or archaeological basis for trying to do so in our area. The Fisheries program on the Forest has provided Cathy with funding to do historic background research in relevant towns. We plan to do subsurface testing along a sensitive stretch of the White River (a series of bedrock-protected terraces with alleged "salmon holes").

If anyone has questions or advice, I would be glad to hear from you.

David Lacy  
USDA/Forest Service  
Box 519  
Federal Building  
Rutland, VT 05702

## EAST CREEK PROTECTED

The Nature Conservancy has begun efforts to protect land along East Creek in Orwell. Although this effort is important for wetland and farmland preservation, it is equally important for protection of the rich archaeological sites in the area. According to the Vermont Nature Conservancy newsletter, archaeological resources range from prehistoric sites where Indians hunted, fished and lived along the resource-rich marshlands to sites related to the Revolutionary War battles fought between American and British troops at Mt. Independence, adjacent to East Creek (Oak Log Spring/Summer 1989, p.3).

## IA SURVEY UPDATE

Despite the variety of other projects that Vic Rolando undertook this past field season (indexing the VAS Newsletter, planning and leading the recording exercise at the Forest Dale ironworks, and finalization of his manuscript on the Vermont iron industry for publication by the Ironmonger Press in 1990), he also continued archival and field investigations. In the field he was assisted by Bob West of Rutland. More charcoal and lime kiln remains/ruins and an eighteenth-century bloomery forge site were surveyed and reported to the Division for Historic Preservation for inclusion in the state inventory.

Charcoal kiln sites were located at Bristol (a single, stone-type on South Mountain) and Winhall (two stone-type kilns in the Snow Valley area). Lime kiln ruins were identified in Brandon (Seager Hill), Fair Haven (two, at Scotch Hill), Benson (Howard Hill), Rochester (Emerson), Mount Tabor (near Devil's Den), Dorset (Emerald Lake State Park), Arlington (two, at Judson Quarry and on Red Mountain), and Townshend (Harmonyville). The early bloomery forge site was found along the Poultney River, just downstream from the Route 4 bridge in Fair Haven.

Rolando reports that the forge site is interesting beyond its early date of operation (1788-ca. 1803), as it demonstrates the connections between the Vermont iron industry and iron working elsewhere in the Northeast. Gamaliel Leonard, builder of the forge in Fair Haven, was a descendant of James Leonard, who landed in this country twenty years after the Pilgrims and has been credited with building the first forge in the United States. Gamaliel was born in Raynham, Massachusetts, an ironworks town in its own right. He migrated to Lenox in 1783 and worked at a furnace there for two years. He left for Hampton, NY in 1785, accompanied by a member of the Fuller family. (The Fullers built forges at Ferrisburg, VT and Fullerville, NY

many years later.) By 1788, Gamaliel was in Vermont, operating the forge in Fair Haven. He was also part owner of a furnace in northern New Haven on the Otter Creek from 1801-1810. That furnace had been previously owned by John Gilbert, owner of the Lenox (MA) furnace about the time that Gamaliel worked there. The connections between iron works families continued into the next generation. Gamaliel's son Charles married Betsy Colburn, sister of John P. Colburn, builder of a blast furnace at West Haven, VT. Another son ran a small furnace near Davey's Ironworks in Fair Haven village. -VR

## RECORDING SESSION AT FOREST DALE

Thirty people joined in the four-day Memorial Day weekend recording and archaeology session at the state-owned Forest Dale furnace in Brandon. Volunteers came from the Brandon Historical Society, the Northern and Southern New England Chapters-Society of Industrial Archeology, Camp Keewaydin, the Division for Historic Preservation, and the VAS, as well as many nonaffiliated volunteers.

The project included excavation of an area near the furnace stack, accurate recording of the stack and grounds, clearing dozens of tires and other debris out of the waterwheel pit, and general thinning of the foliage in the vicinity of the furnace stack. Intermittent rain failed to dampen the enthusiasm of the workers; hordes of mosquitoes encouraged activity among those who stopped too long to rest.

Much was learned at the session. Nearby residents reported which houses in Forest Dale used to stand inside the furnace grounds. Also, stone wall terraces were uncovered from brush just east of the furnace which may have protected a charcoal making area.

A complete survey was made of the  
(continued)



### Furnace, continued

entire area using tape and transit. The stone furnace stack was precisely measured with string and level, steel tape, and ladders. Plaudits to the four who braved the 60-foot climb to the furnace top on metal ladder which, although firmly cross-roped to trees and hand-supported at the bottom, wobbled and oscillated the climbers who ascended to the top: Peter Voorhees (who cleared the treetops), Dave Starluck, Shelley Hight (who took photos of the top), and Krista Jackson.

The session also attracted correspondent Ed Barna of the Rutland Herald. See "Historic Sites Mapped: Town's Historic Past Uncovered" (5/31/89) and "Blast from the Past" (7/20/89). -VR

### VAS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING NOV. 9, 1989

The Nov. 9, 1989 meeting of the Vermont Archaeological Society Board of Trustees was called to order by outgoing President Bill Murphy at 7:00 PM in the library of St. Michael's College. The following members were present: Vic Rolando, Sandy Partridge, Joe Popecki, Louise Basa, Prudence Doherty, David Lacy, Sherry Mahady, and David Starbuck. Former trustees present included Bill Murphy and Dee Brightstar.

The main topic on the agenda was the election of officers. The Board elected the following: President--Vic Rolando; Vice-President--Sherry Mahady; Secretary--David Starbuck and David Lacy (alternate meetings); Treasurer--Joe Popecki. Prudence Doherty will continue as editor of the Newsletter.

The Board established a meeting schedule for the coming year. Board meetings will be held on the second Thursday of every other month. The next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 1990. Interested members are encouraged to attend. (See below for information on

the Jan. 11 meeting.) Tentative dates for the spring and fall meetings were also established (April 28 and October 20, 1990, respectively.)

Discussion focused on several areas.

1. More copy is needed for the Newsletter so that issues can be published more frequently.
2. Vic Rolando will publish his book on ironworking in Vermont himself in late 1990.
3. The need for a Publications committee was discussed but no decisions were made.
4. Effective coordination with programs and objectives of the Division for Historic Preservation and the State Archaeologist.

The Board decided to ask Eric Gilbertson, DHP's Director and Giovanna Peebles, State Archaeologist, if a joint meeting of the VAS Board and the DHP archaeology staff can be held. The proposed agenda will include the following topics for discussion.

1. Status of preservation law in Vermont. Can the VAS help develop new legislation?
2. Does archaeology figure in DHP's plans for the state's bicentennial?
3. Does DHP have an agenda for legislative action this year?
4. How can VAS volunteer programs be developed to help DHP with projects? The Board would like to hold this meeting in Montpelier on Jan. 11, and follow it with the scheduled Board meeting. Vic Rolando will make arrangements with DHP.

### CURRENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Louise Basa (1991\*)  
Cindy Cook (1990)  
Fred Cowan (1991)  
Prudence Doherty (1990)  
David Lacy (1991)  
Sherry Mahady (1992)  
Sharon Murray (1990)  
Sanborn Partridge (1990)  
Joseph Popecki (1992)  
Vic Rolando (1991)  
David Skinas (1992)  
David Starbuck (1992)

\* Date indicates when term expires



## MOUNT INDEPENDENCE REPORT

The University of Vermont, the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, and the Fort Ticonderoga Association have begun a longterm field project for the recording and interpretation of Mount Independence, a major Revolutionary War site located on Lake Champlain in the town of Orwell, Vermont.

This 400-acre site was home to an American army in excess of 10,000 men throughout 1776, and--together with Fort Ticonderoga--it formed the principal deterrent to a British invasion from Canada during the early years of the American Revolution. General John Burgoyne commanded a British, German and Canadian army of some 8,000 men that drove out the American defenders in July, 1777, and then a small German contingent built and manned five blockhouses to keep the Americans from returning. In November of that year, upon learning of Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga, the German troops burned the many structures here and retreated to Canada. The entire Mount subsequently returned to forest, and the total lack of later-day construction has permitted the survival of over 100 foundations from huts, barracks, batteries, artificers' shops, hospitals, and a star-shaped wooden fort.

The Mount is today owned and administered jointly by the State of Vermont and the Fort Ticonderoga Association, and the State is now conducting background research and planning in preparation for the construction of a visitors' center at the site within the next 2-3 years. Local efforts are under the direction of Audrey Porsche, Regional Historic Sites Administrator, who is responsible for designing interpretive programs and exhibits for the Mount. The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has given this research effort a very high priority because Mount Independence was the only military fortification ever constructed on Vermont soil, and little archaeological research has ever been

conducted at the site. However, a large number of maps have survived from 1776 and 1777 that identify key structures atop the Mount, and pertinent military journals and personal diaries are abundant, although widely scattered.

During July and August of 1989, the University of Vermont's archaeological field school, under the direction of David Starbuck, completed its first season of mapping and excavation at the Mount. Nearly 60 VAS members, students from UVM and other colleges, and volunteers from throughout the region took part during the six-week project. The crew chiefs were Bill Murphy, Dennis Howe, and Sherry Mahady. Surveying and mapping were under the direction of Gordon DeAngelo and David Pinkham. About one-third of the team had prior field experience; many worked at the Ferris site in Panton in the summer of 1988.

Small-scale excavations were conducted within the best-preserved German blockhouse, and within 12 huts and barracks, five three-sided shelters, and six support buildings located on the outskirts of the fort. The most common ceramics found in all areas were redware and thick, utilitarian stonewares, but small quantities of creamware, white salt-glazed stoneware and delft were also found. Wine bottle fragments were ubiquitous, as were musketballs, grapeshot, gun flints, buttons and buckles. Animal bones were rare, although the presence of large fish vertebrae suggests that fishing was conducted in Lake Champlain to augment the soldiers' provisions.

Work during the early stages of the project is focusing upon ordinary living areas in order to compile a profile of daily life on the Mount; the hospitals, fort and batteries will not be examined until future years. Militia from several New England colonies were encamped here, each on different parts of the Mount, so it is hoped that regional troop differences can be examined, as well as

(continued)



## Mount, continued

the expected differences between officers and enlisted men.

Laboratory work on the artifacts has been underway at the University of Vermont this fall, and written reports on the dig will be available by late spring. The field work will definitely resume at the Mount in the summer of 1990, once again under the sponsorship of UVM and DHP. As Vermont's bicentennial approaches, we hope that Vermonters will take increased pride in their own history and will choose to visit and enjoy Mount Independence and Vermont's many other historic sites. -DS

## AWARDS

--Douglas Frink and Ruth Sprague received the third place award from the Chittenden County Historical Society's bicentennial grants program. They received \$100 which will be used to write a book for children about a recently excavated prehistoric site in Milton, Vermont. The CCHS Bulletin (vol. 24, no. 4, p. 2) notes that the book "will serve as an introduction for school children to the extremely early history of this area when it was occupied by native Americans living before the Pyramids of the Great Wall of China had been built."

--Through the VAS, Vic Rolando was awarded \$500 from the Vermont Bicentennial Commission to be used toward the publication of his definitive history of the iron industry in Vermont.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Thanks to: David Lacy, William Murphy, Vic Rolando, David Starbuck.

## HUBBARDTON BATTLEFIELD

A four-day excavation was conducted at the Hubbardton Battlefield during mid-May. The Division for Historic Preservation plans to expand the visitors' center, and needed to know if the building extension would affect historic archaeological deposits.

Led by David Starbuck, four VAS members and the Site Manager excavated four pits in the proposed building area. No significant archaeological material was recovered, although there was evidence of the original visitors' center construction in all pits--wire nails, concrete residue and tar paper.

The team then proceeded to the foundation of what is reputed to be the Selleck cabin, where wounded Americans, British and Germans were taken after the battle. Previous excavation here by Beth Bower in the late 1970s recovered artifacts that appeared to support the cabin's early date.

The four test pits excavated at the cabin site this year contained a substantial number of artifacts, but recovered items dated from the early to mid nineteenth century; none substantiated association with the Revolutionary War period. -WM

## PREHISTORY FOR YOUNG READERS

The First Dog, written and illustrated by Jan Brett. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, 1988. Hardcover, [28 pp.] \$13.95.

Paleowolf becomes the first dog and friend and protector of Kip the cave boy in this prehistoric adventure for readers 4-8. The lively watercolor and pencil illustrations are inspired by cave paintings and prehistoric artifacts.

IF YOU CAN'T FIND YOUR DUES RENEWAL NOTICE OR ARE A NEW MEMBER,  
USE THIS FORM



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

☐ NEW  
☐ RENEWAL

I SUBSCRIBE TO THE PURPOSES OF THE SOCIETY AND HEREBY APPLY (OR REAPPLY) FOR  
MEMBERSHIP IN THE CATEGORY CHECKED BELOW.

Please print or type:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ (If student or senior citizen)

If you want a membership card, include a stamped self  
addressed envelope. You may photocopy this form.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### DUES SCHEDULE (please check one)

- ☐ Individual (\$7.50)  
☐ Family (\$14.00)  
☐ Student or Senior Citizen\* (\$3.00)  
☐ Contributing (\$15.00)  
☐ Sustaining (\$50.00)  
☐ Life (\$125.00)  
☐ Non-profit Institutional (\$10.00)  
☐ Institutional (\$15.00)

Under 18 or over 65 years of age.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE VERMONT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. AND MAIL TO  
SOCIETY, BOX 663, BURLINGTON, VT 05402 0663

Vermont Archaeological Society, Inc.

Box 663

Burlington, VT 05402 0663

FIRST CLASS

TO