

NEWSLETTER

Representing Nassau & Suffolk Counties

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BLYDENBURGH 19th CENTURY FAIR
Blydenburgh Park, New Mill Rd., Smithtown

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 1 - 4 PM

Civil War Military Encampment

North & South Cavalry & Foot Units

Parading * Drilling * Shooting

Ladies Aid Society Encampment

19th Century Music and Dance

Antique Tool Sales

Pony Rides

Craft Demonstrations

Blacksmithing

Carpentry

Spinning & Weaving

Period Cooking & Foods

Children's Activities

Portraitist

Guided Hikes

Historic House Tours

Archaeology Exhibits

Period Gift Shop



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Suffolk Co. Archaeological Assn
88th New York Infantry
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Nassau/Suffolk Horseman's Assn.
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L.I. Tool Collectors Assn.
Forestwood Civic Association
Smithtown Pines Civic Assn.



Doing the Right Thing: Ethics in (American) Archaeology

Anthropology Newsletter/September 1995

By Nathalie F S Woodbury

Anthropology deals with people—in the present, in the past, alive or dead. And in doing so its practitioners encounter situations that require ethical standards that will enable the anthropologist to live not only with her/himself but with colleagues and the people with whom s/he is working. Archaeologists have been faced in recent years with responsibilities deriving from the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, requiring an approach to unearthed burial evidence quite different from the earlier dig, remove, analyze, store or display (and sometimes discard). Now burial remains and their associated artifacts may be determined by today's descendants to be untouchable or requiring reburial. Ernestene Green points out in the Introduction to her *Ethics and Values in Archaeology* (1984) that there has been "a rapid expansion in archaeology [in the past 20 years], probably more than at any other time in the history of the discipline" (p ix). She notes that this growth has "resulted in increasingly diverse values and conflicting ethics" as archaeology has expanded from the world of scholarship into the worlds of business and government. Increasingly, American archaeologists have paused in this period to review their ethical challenges and to publish their conclusions. The latest consideration is in the Society for American Archaeology's (SAA) Special Report, *Ethics in American Archaeology: Challenges for the 1990s*, edited by Mark J Lynott and Alison Wylie, which appeared in March this year. This publication had its inception in a workshop convened by the editors in 1993. Position papers from the workshop were presented with commentaries at the SAA's 1994 annual meeting; these comprise the Special Report. Greeted with skepticism by some and thought by a few critics to be more philosophical than practical in some respects, the volume's papers nonetheless provide a comprehensive background and update. And it does not isolate archaeology from the rest of anthropology in its discussions.

The first published statement of ethical standards by the SAA was in the Society's amended constitution, published in the October 1954 *American Antiquity*. It includes, among other purposes, "to advocate and to aid in the preservation of archaeological data;

and to discourage commercialism in the archaeological field and to work for its elimination." Further, "the practice of collecting, hoarding, exchanging, buying, or selling archaeological materials for the sole purpose of personal satisfaction or financial gain, and the indiscriminate excavation of archaeological sites are declared contrary to the ideals and objects of the Society."

Charles R McGimsey III in his chapter in the SAA Special Report, "Standards, Ethics and Archaeology: A Brief History," reviews the development of standards in the profession from the Society's first statements into the 1990s. The aftermath of World War II brought a quantum leap in the number of archaeologists, many of whom trained with GI bill support and found jobs not only in new or expanded anthropology departments but in federally funded or required applications for archaeology such as the River Basin Survey or highway salvage projects. In time private companies were established to provide cultural resource management. With a growing number of archaeologists pressure increased for more specific statements on ethics and standards. An SAA committee co-chaired by Frank H H Roberts and Waldo R Wedel of the Smithsonian defined "levels of appropriate activity and responsibilities based on training and experience," drawing on definitions for US government employment. Their report, brought to the Society in 1954, was discussed but not adopted. Jesse D Jennings, SAA president in 1960, responded to the growing need for a code of ethics and definition of professional standards by establishing a committee of ten, chaired by John Champe (U Nebraska), which came up with "Four Statements for Archaeology" in these categories: Definition, Methods, Ethics, Training. The full text appears in the October 1961 *American Antiquity* (pp 137-38). The third statement, "Ethics in Archaeology" follows:

Collections made by competent archaeologists must be available for examination by qualified scholars; relevant supporting data must also be accessible for study whether the collection is a museum or other institution or in private hands.

It is the scholarly obligation of the archaeologist to report his findings in a recognized scientific medium. In the event that the significance of the collection does not warrant publication a manuscript report should be prepared and be available.

Inasmuch as the buying and selling of artifacts usually results in the loss of context and cultural association, the practice is censured.

An archaeological site presents problems which must be handled by the excavator according to a plan. Therefore, members of the Society for American Archaeology do not undertake excavations on any site being studied by someone without the prior knowledge and consent of that person.

Willful destruction, distortion, or concealment of the data of archaeology is censured, and provides grounds for expulsion from the Society for American Archaeology, at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

A decade and a half later, with the increase in cultural resource management, a perceived need for more stringent regulation of behavior and for professional certification resulted by 1976 in the founding of the Society of Professional Archaeologists. Its very explicit Code of Ethics covers the Archeologist's Responsibility to the Public, to Colleagues, to Employers and Clients, together with what an archaeologist shall *not* do. Not all practicing archaeologists are members and thereby certified by SOPA, but its standards together with the less stringent guidelines and codes of such organizations as the SAA, the Society for Historical Archaeology, the American Society for Conservation Archaeology and the Archaeological Institute of America have brought the profession along the paths it should follow to function responsibly.

The SAA's Ethics in Archaeology Committee proposes six "Principles of Archaeological Ethics" in its Special Report (pp 23-24), each discussed in an essay, followed by a section of commentary. These are: Stewardship (the Central Principle of Archaeological Ethics), Accountability (the Responsibilities of Archaeologists to Other Interest Groups), Commercialization (Ethics and the Selling of the Archaeological Record), Public Education and Outreach (the Obligation to Educate), Intellectual Property (Ethics, Knowledge and Publication) and Records and Preservation (An Ethical Obligation).

Janet E Levy, in her commenting essay (Special Report pp 86-93), draws on the published report of the AAA Committee on Ethics, of which she was chair (Feb 1994 *AN*, p 1). She states that the grievance procedures of the AAA's Principles of Professional

Responsibility do not work. Sanctions against those archaeologists who ignore the codes of ethics are so far only implicit; Levy recommends on the basis of her AAA experience that any code adopted by the SAA should be "a relatively generalized statement of goals and ideals rather than a detailed code of daily behavior" (p 90). She warns (p 91) that it is important to be aware of the historical setting of ethical codes because contemporary circum-

stances both inspire and shape the result: Vietnam gave rise to the AAA's PPR; contract archaeology in the 1970s led to the founding of SOPA; repatriation and looting crises in the 1990s have brought the SAA to consider and elaborate the ethical code presented in its Special Report.

Looting or just random surface collecting—projectile points, parts of pots, pieces of shell gorget or whatever picked up on the farm or on a walk—has threatened the archaeological record since earliest time. As prehistoric objects acquired art status and cash value they have been subject to mining operations by hand or by machinery. Even when money is not an incentive, the lure of finding "treasure" to keep is powerful. Selling sites to play on this human trait is another challenge archaeologists must meet. Last autumn a Pagosa Springs, CO, real estate handout offered acreage with archaeological sites explicitly described. Keep your finds or sell them was implied—your investment at least returned and probably exceeded. A more responsible approach to site selling is that of the Indian Camp Ranch development (31 housing lots on 1200 acres), also in southwestern Colorado. Two hundred Anasazi sites have been identified. Property owners can excavate on their own land but only under the supervision of a "certified archaeologist." Excavated material will belong to a museum to be built in the development; owners can exhibit artifacts in their residences but must assign them to the museum at their deaths. Peer pressure and penalties such as quadrupling members' dues are expected to keep the residents in line together with their initial interest and understanding of the value of the archaeological record. Burials will be treated with respect and in consultation with Native Americans concerned. Indian Camp Ranch first came to national attention in the news media; *Archaeology* (Mar-Apr 1995), published by the AIA, car-

ried a column on the development captioned "Building on the Past."

The land uses proposed by Indian Camp Ranch and even by the "sites for sale" realtors are quite legal, as antiquities on private property are not protected in the US by federal or state laws. Brian Fagan, in his foreword to another book on archaeological ethics (*The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture? Whose Property?*,

Phyllis M Messenger, ed, 1989), addresses this situation:

Who owns the archaeological record? An individual landowner, the descendants of those who created it, the nation, or does it form part of the heritage of all humankind? Do people have the right to collect artifacts, even from privately owned land, and to excavate for personal profit and gratification? Or should all artifacts be deposited in museums for the common enjoyment of everyone? [p xvii]

STUDENT SUMMER ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOLS

Nassau BOCES Gifted & Talented Program sponsored a full day Archaeological Field School for over 20 Nassau students the week of June 26th, and a teachers' Field School July 5-7th. Channel 12 reported on the students' program and NEWSDAY also wrote about it. The last two weeks of July Eastern Suffolk BOCES sponsored a half day Field School for Suffolk students, greatly enjoyed by all. The students carried out test pitting, excavation, cataloging, mapping, flotation, and other archaeological tasks as well as doing blacksmithing, spinning and weaving, 19th century carpentry and cooking. Nassau BOCES plans to double the length of the Field School and the number of students attending this coming Summer.

S.C.A.A. AN AFFILIATE OF S.A.A.

The Society for American Archaeology, after investigating SCAA's activities, has approved SCAA for membership in their Council of Affiliated Societies. The Council is composed of State and regional archaeological groups which subscribe to the ethics and goals of SAA, the major national archaeological association.

STATE BOARD RECOMMENDS USE OF N.Y.A.C. STANDARDS

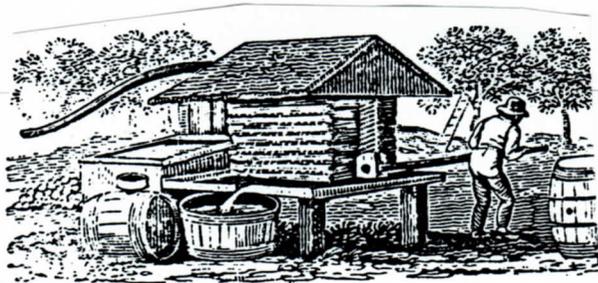
The State Historic Preservation Review Board recommended March 9th that the State adopt the Professional Standards developed by the N.Y. Archaeological Council. Their adoption should greatly enhance historic preservation efforts in the State. Adoption of the Standards must be approved by new Commissioner Bernadette Castro.

IMPORTANT FLINT MINE PROTECTED BY S.I.M.

The Southold Indian Museum recently was able to purchase a 17 acre plot which separated their two holdings totaling 46 acres at the site of the Cocksackie flint mine. In use by Native Americans for over 8,000 years, the flint was traded widely as well as to Long Island. The SIM's consolidation of the Flint Mine Hill property will preserve this important State historic site.

N.M.A.I. COLLECTIONS BEGIN MOVE

The packing and moving of over 45,000 artifacts from the National Museum of the American Indian Broadway museum site to the Bronx Research Branch is underway, where the objects will join the more than 1 million objects there. Helping with this move, is Shinnecock David Martine, who has graduate training in art and art education. In a few years another move will be made to the NMAI Cultural Resources Center being built in Suitland, MD, preparatory to the completion of the new Smithsonian-National Museum of the American Indian building on the Mall in Washinton.



CONFERENCES

Native American Film & Video Festival will be held September 22-25 at the National Museum of the American Indian at its museum in New York City; admission is free. Information: 212-825-6914.

Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology meets September 29 -October 1 at the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, Canada. Information: 902-733-2280.

Long Island Archives Conference Local & Family History Fair is being held October 7 in Nassau County. Information: 516-271-3140

Pioneer America Society annual meeting will be October 12-14 at Fredericksburg, Virginia, with field trips to the surrounding area. Information: 703-899-4329.

Northeast Document Conservation Center presents "Preservation Microfilming" October 23-25, New York City; call 508-470-1010.

Eastern States Archaeological Federation annual meeting will be held in Wilmington, Delaware October 26-29. Information: 302-368-5777. A number of archaeologists from Long Island will present papers.

Society for Historical Archaeology will meet January 9-14, 1996 at Cincinnati, Ohio. Information: 606-257-1944.

The Long Island Society, Archaeological Institute of America, has monthly lectures by archaeologists, largely classical scholars, at the Great Neck South Middle School, Great Neck, NY. Information: 627-4694.



PUBLICATIONS OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Readings in **LI Archaeology & Ethnohistory**: All volumes are \$35. except Vol. III which is \$75. + tax and shipping. Vol.s I & VI are out of print.

- I. Early Papers in Long Island Archaeology
- II. The Coastal Archaeology Reader
- III. The History & Archaeology of the Montauk, 2nd Edition
- IV. Languages & Lore of the Long Island Indians
- V. The Second Coastal Archaeology Reader
- VI. The Shinnecock Indians: A Culture History
- VII. The Historical Archaeology of Long Island: Part I: The Sites

Student Series:

Booklet: A Way of Life: Prehistoric Natives of LI	\$5.50
Study Pictures: Coastal Native Americans	\$7.50
Wall Chart: Native Technology (26X39" 3 colors)	\$13.00
Map: Native Long Island (26X39" 3 colors)	\$13.00

Exhibit Catalogs:

The Montauk: Native Americans of Eastern LI	\$3.50
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in SCAA includes 3 Newsletters per year and a 10% reduction in workshop and publication costs. All contributions are tax deductible.

Student (To age 18) \$10	Individual \$20
Family \$30	Sustaining \$50
Contributing \$100	Patron \$200
Life \$400	

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