



NEARA TRANSIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ENGLAND ANTIQUITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 22, No. 2, AUTUMN EQUINOX 2010



NEARA meetings begin with a warm welcome from registrars Bob Brown and Don Winkley. See page 10 for a report on the spring, 2010, meeting and a preview of the upcoming fall gathering in Storrs, Connecticut.

RESEARCH AND SITE NOTES

Skeleton in Armor -- Ros Strong: Mead Stapler, who died last year, was one of our earliest members and for many years served as New Jersey coordinator. He spent his vacations in Maine, and his excellent records are now finding their way into our archives. Ed Lenik sent me several binders filled with slides. Some have already been sorted and sent to the library. There are about 80 of Maine sites, all neatly labeled and mostly dated. This original data will be of great value to future researchers and reminds us all to be meticulous with our record keeping.

In the collection was this photo of the excavation of the site in Pemaquid where the skeleton with a breast plate and tubes of brass was found in 1965. This was a big story that was picked up the next day by Boston papers, and the skeleton was immediately compared to the "Skeleton in Armor" from Fall River, MA, made famous by Longfellow's poem. Mead wrote an excellent account that was published in the NEARA



August 21, 1965: Removing "Body in Armor" at Pemaquid, Maine. (Photo: Mead Stapler)

Founded in 1964, the New England Antiquities Research Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to a better understanding of our historic and pre-historic past through the study and preservation of New England's stone sites in their cultural context. The NEARA Transit is published twice a year at the spring and fall equinoxes. Please address correspondence to Susan Thompson, Editor, 11 Cotswolds Drive, North Salem, NY, 10560. Susiejt@optonline.net Volume 22, No. 2 (Issue #43, 9/1/10). The ideas and opinions expressed in the Transit are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Board of Directors or of a majority of the members.



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Journal, Volume 32, No. 1, Summer 1998. Of course the big question was how much earlier than the 1630 settlement of Pemaquid could this Indian female and infant have been buried? C-14 dates ranged from 1585 to 1630 +/- 90 years. In the publication by the Maine State Museum in 1975 about the Archaeological Excavations, Helen Camp (in striped shirt in photo) says, "As it seems improbable that these Indian skeletons would have been placed within a few feet of a building, and under what we believe was one of the paved streets, a date earlier than 1630 seems likely. krosspt@lincoln.midcoast.com

Native American stonework – Norman Muller: In Vermont this spring, Ernie Clifford showed me and two others a newly discovered feature on the old Smith site (R7-1) It appeared to



Fig. 1 (photo: Norman Muller)

be a shrine of some kind, consisting of a wedged boulder, with quartz cobbles to one side and in back, and a stone mound to the left, beyond the picture frame (Fig. 1). Ernie also pointed out a large boulder with donation stones underneath. R7-1 is such an extensive site that careful exploration will probably produce more surprises.

At the Beaver Pond site (R7-8), thick pine tree cover kept the sun from causing too many disturbing shadows, allowing for good photography. This is a magnificent site, and one is rewarded with repeated visits. One aspect I became aware of is the large number of Manitou stones leaning against the stone mounds or cairns. Ernie found one that had four! (Fig. 2). This site is not as large as R7-1, but the pine woods with the scattered stone mounds, two beaver ponds, bogs and small streams, make a very attractive place.



Fig. 2 (photo: Ernie Clifford)

Lisa Gannon and Joanna Carpenter guided me to a wonderful Indian lithic site in Bolton, just east of Burlington, on land that had recently been acquired by the Jericho-Underhill Land Trust. Called "Gateway," it consists of fascinating stone mounds in a beautiful little valley punctuated by a stream and cascades. To me, the phenomenal water features were obviously why the stone mounds had been constructed. Later Joanna showed us more interesting stone features in the hills above where we had been in the morning. One consisted of a stone row connected to a large split boulder (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 (photo: Norman Muller)

Next I went with Lisa to meet Peter Farrar, who had discovered some interesting stone mounds in Andover. He had shown these to Giovanna Peebles, Vermont State Archaeologist, and Dave Lacy, Green Mountain National Forest Archaeologist, about ten years earlier. Dave told me about the site, and I wanted to visit it. The weather had deteriorated, and we had sleet, rain and cold. While I saw the cairns and stone piles Giovanna and Dave had seen, while peering through rain fogged glasses, what we saw later that morning, when the rain stopped, proved to be outstanding. Magnificent stone mounds were seemingly clustered around the perimeter of a small pond (Fig. 4), and according to Peter, many more exist in the area. nmuller@princeton.edu



Fig. 4 (Photo: Norman Muller)

Summer Solstice – Tom Paul: This is the third year I have taken pictures of the summer solstice at Montgomery Place on the Hudson River. This photo is taken from the Hammonasset Line. As the sun sets, it walks down the north side of Lookout Mountain on the south side of the Wall of Manitou in the Catskill Mountains. This is the first year I actually saw the sun at the mountain edge. A Montgomery Place staff member went down to the stone wall at the bottom of the bluff drop off and reported the sun setting exactly on the wall direction. cthomaspaul@scbglobal.com



The Newport Tower – Jim Egan: When you are in Newport, Rhode Island, be sure to stop by the Newport Tower Museum. I will point out 15 architectural features of the Tower most people don't usually notice and review the various theories about who built it. I will also demonstrate how a camera-obscura solar-disc calendar room works and explain my thesis on who built the Tower, which is based on Bill Penhallow's astronomical observations and ten years of historical research in early Rhode Island History. The museum is at 152 Mill Street, just 50 steps from the Tower. jim@jimegan.com

Overlook North “Temple”-- Glenn Kreisberg: At just over 2900 ft. AMSL and just north of and below the west summit of Overlook Mountain in Woodstock, NY, one passes through a set of large boulders, which act as gates as you approach from the summit several hundred meters away. A second set of large boulders appear as sentries for those entering the site lower from the west.



The two north sentry boulders(Photos: Glenn Kreisberg)



The circular enclosure wall on the slope below

The site's main feature consists of a large, circular stone wall enclosure which rings a set of large boulders. The circular enclosure wall is approximately 1.5 meters tall and slightly less than 100 meters across.

The site is configured facing north with a low wall on the west that points towards the summer solstice setting sun on the mountain top horizon to the northwest. A second, much more substantial wall runs due east from the first and is very well constructed, with large, dressed cap stones.

Southeast and upslope from the straight, low walls, is the circular wall enclosure. The wall encloses a half dozen large boulders, most of which are flat or nearly flat on top, but are covered with leaves, soil, moss and other ground debris. Perhaps it is a livestock pen associated with the overlook Mountain House which operated nearby some 100+ years ago. But to me the area feels like a place where people once congregated to observe something in the sky to the north, to which the site affords a very good view. cliffrover@aol.com



Looking up the wall enclosure from the north

Investigation of the ruins of a mill in Quebec -- Gérard

Leduc: A wrongly read symbol on a 19th century map of the Eastern Townships of Quebec made a big difference in the interpretation of an archaeological site in Potton. Following an investigation of the ruins of an old mill at the Jones site in Vale Perkins, archaeologists Robert Bilodeau and Pierre-Jacques Ratio published a report of their work in 1995 in *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies*. I had participated in the dig as representative of the Potton Heritage Association.



Stone ruins at the Jones site (Photo: Gérard Leduc)

The archaeologists concluded that the stone ruins built in the Vale Perkins Brook on Harry Jones' property went back at most to around 1850. The strongest point to support their conclusion was an 1864 map which showed precisely the Jones' site. At the location of the Vale Perkins Brook, one can see two letter symbols, one is SH (School House) near the road, and one, downstream, SM (saw mill).

The archaeologists mis-read SH as SM and assumed that, in 1864, there was a saw mill behind Harry Jones house. *It could not have been older than the mid 1800s.,* they wrote. And *the location of the second mill (near the Jones' house) is the determining factor in the understanding of the architectural remains at the Jones site.*

We owe this discovery to Hilary Head from Potton who, while preparing an exhibition on the old one room schoolhouses of our township, examined the map. I missed that detail in the past. There was no sawmill at the spot indicated on the map but a country school (SH).

Today, one can see heavy cut stone foundations whose origin has been hotly debated. Several large cut stones are neatly stacked but were never used, suggesting that the site was intended to be a mill but was never completed. The presence of masons' tools (the first evidence of iron tools in pre-Colonial Quebec) suggests the site was abandoned suddenly. Archaeologists refused to consider the foundations very ancient even though oral tradition placed them in a pre-colonial period. Harry Jones had never heard of a mill in operation behind his house. *The stone foundations had always been there,* he said. David Perkins and Leverett Jewett said their great grandparents went to the site to pick up cut stones to build their own houses over 150 years ago.

These foundations were obviously abandoned long before the arrival of the Jones in Vale Perkins around 1850. But when? The masons' tools found lying in charcoal were radio carbon dated at the University of Toronto to around 1500. The base of a worked wood stake gave a similar date.

One can propose that very clever stone workers who handled stone blocks weighing over four metric tons a piece lived in Vale Perkins over 500 years ago. A challenge to history! Who were they? Research is ongoing. leduc.potton@xplornet.com

COORDINATORS' REPORTS

Maine – Ros Strong: An interesting stone structure was reported in Round Pond (on the Bristol Peninsula). Sue and Clayton visited and were puzzled. It has unusual features and needs more study. The friendly owner said the local story is that it was a bear trap, something that has been suggested for other enigmatic stonework over the years. A search through old site reports showed that one in Maine had been investigated years ago. The conclusion was that it could never have functioned. This one also seems impossible as a trap.

The incredibly hot and humid summer (yes, even in Maine) has kept us from scheduled field trips, but Clayton has been continuing to search on Ducktrap Mountain in Lincolnville with Dennis Cerrotti from MA who owns a camp nearby. One of their first finds was a mound that really looks like a turtle. And there are other cairns that may have significant alignments. There are unusual walls, and there is quartz in many of

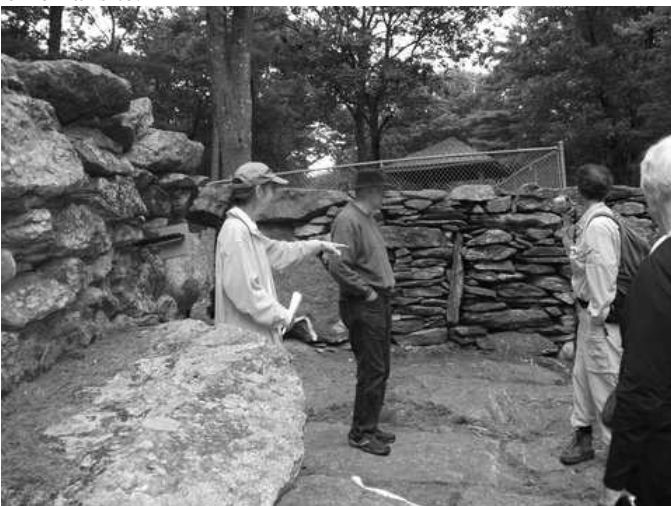


The Round Pond structure: trap? chamber? (Photo: Sue Carlson)

them. A new friend in southern Maine, Rob Sirois, has been roaming the woods for years and reported a potentially interesting mountain near Sebago previously unknown to us.

I continue the grueling task of preparing archival material on Grand Lake Stream. Call if you are visiting Maine, and we can direct you to some sites including the petroglyphs on the Kennebec. krosspt@lincoln.midcoast.com 207-882-9425

Massachusetts – Peter Anick: In June, Massachusetts joined forces with New Hampshire for a trip to “America’s Stonehenge”. The enigmatic stonework on the hill in North Salem, New Hampshire, has been the subject of much speculation since it caught the eye of author William Goodwin in the 1930’s. He believed it to be the work of 8th century Irish Cul-dee monks. Others have explained it as the work of 19th century farmers. Our guides, Mary and James Gage, argued that the most likely explanation is that it is a Native American ceremonial site.



Mary Gage, left, pointed out features at America’s Stonehenge (Photo: Donna Thompson)

Mary, author of *America’s Stonehenge Deciphered* (2006), retraced her thinking for us as she pointed out many of the hill’s subtler features. These included niches in walls, a series of grooved drains in the bedrock and a narrow well providing access to a vein of natural geode that once lay on the surface

but at some point was buried under a terrace of soil. Based on Indian ethnography from other areas as well as archaeological evidence that Native Americans used the hillside for the past 3000 years, Mary hypothesized a chronology of construction for ritual use involving water (drains), crystals (geodes), and sky (astronomical alignments). Regardless of the conclusions, Mary’s keen eye for detail made for an eye-opening visit even for those of us who had been to the site before.

Next we visited the nearby Danville Chamber, discovering some perhaps previously unnoticed lithic features in the immediate vicinity. We then headed north to Auburn, where Donna Thompson led us to a large rock shelter she had recently located along a ledge on Rattlesnake Hill. This involved some deft footwork but it was well worth the effort. From within the talus caves along the ledge, natural stone features suggested a large bird and turtle. One narrow passage sported a (possibly manmade) circular engraving at the rear, raising some speculation about shadow effects from sun alignments.



Enjoying the view from the top of Rattlesnake Hill: Scott Pulsifer, Chris O’Connell, Suzanna Wolfe, Donna Thompson, Patrick Ruster, Nancy Feraco, Allen Ruster and Alan Hill. (Photo: Peter Anick)

This fall we will likely venture south to Rhode Island and/or Connecticut, and I’d love to find a volunteer to lead a trip to sites in western or northeastern Massachusetts. (Please email me). Trip news will be posted online to the neara members group and the NEARA website.

One other bit of news is the completion of Daniel Gaucher’s documentary “Written in Stone”. You may have run across the Emerson College film maker at a NEARA conference or field trip. His documentary does a great job of presenting the thinking behind the alternate theories of New England’s lithic sites, from William Goodwin through Mavor and Dix. For folks relatively new to NEARA, the film helps to put the organization and its work in a clearer historical context. For more information, visit www.writteninstonedoc.com peter_anick@yahoo.com

New Hampshire – Donna Thompson: In June we hosted the MA chapter to visit Mystery Hill, the Danville Chamber and some spectacular rock shelters in Auburn (see Peter’s report, above). We had a full day of exploring despite the rainy weather. Thanks to all of you who were bold enough to follow me around over rocks and through caves. Thanks, too, to Mary and James Gage.

With Pat Baker, I visited a promising site in Westmoreland, NY, that includes a crystal-filled spring, a large platform-type rock pile and some unusual stone walls. Pat is working with the owners to arrange a small survey this fall. She is also setting up a clean-up date for a site in Whitingham, VT. Look for details on the NEARA Yahoo group.

In July I was able to squeeze in some “dig time” at the NH State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (SCRAP) just outside Concord. I managed to enjoy myself despite the lack of artifacts, outrageous heat and blood-sucking deer flies. If this sounds attractive, let me know and I will forward the information!

In August several of us visited the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge, MA. We checked out the Mayan/Aztec collection, the Native American artifacts and saw the blown glass flower collection at the Harvard Museum.

Email me or watch our members group site fall field trips dates I look forward to seeing you! rubyruby@comcast.net

New York – Polly Midgley: Comprehensive study of North Salem stonework facilitated by Town Historian Susie Thompson culminated in a tour of local stone chambers in May. Hosted by the North Salem Historical Society, the event featured six chambers on private property. NEARA guests also saw the serpent wall, a turtle cairn and Balanced Rock.

A project to clear trees and other growth from the top of the Peach Lake Chamber emerged from this study. Valentine Godinez-Spear, Gerry McLoughlin and John Bierce (on top of the chamber, below), Donna Savino, Teresa Bierce and I gathered on a Sunday morning with equipment and tree clearing experience to do the job. The chamber owners were appreciative of the assistance, and we believe the chamber's structure is now more secure.



The long standing question about the alignment at the Meads Corner Chamber in Kent has been answered. Terry Bierce reports, “When I witnessed the spring equinox sunrise alignment move across the right wall to the back of the chamber, and the summer solstice sunrise do the same on the left, it could mean only one thing: an alignment in the middle! And what an alignment it was! Dyane Plunkett and I witnessed a spectacular, near perfect sunrise alignment on July 31, 2010. It would have been perfect if the stones on the right side had

been put back in the original position when the chamber was repaired over 20 years ago.” This was on the summer solar cross quarter day known to the Celts as Lughnasadh.



July 31, 2010, at Meads Corner Chamber (Photo: Teresa Bierce)

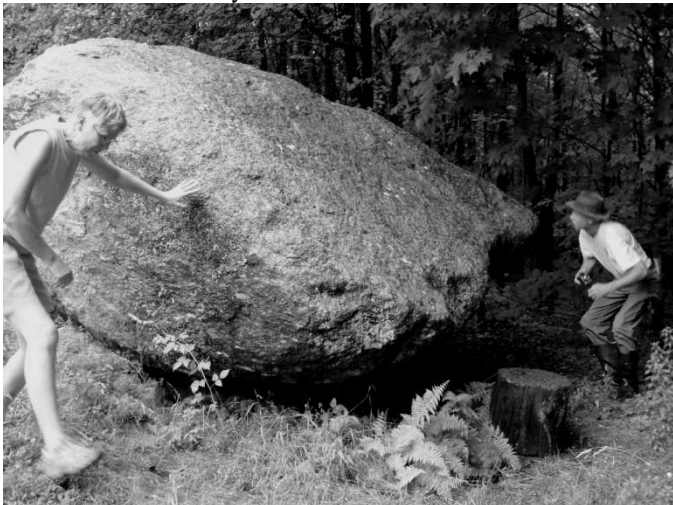
Concern about bulldozer activity in the Gilboa State Forest was expressed by a nearby NEARA resident this spring. This petrified forest in Schoharie County has fossilized tree stumps, partial tree trunks, foliage and early animal forms. It is believed to date back 400 million years and to be part of the ancient Catskill Delta. It is likened to the Mississippi and Ganges deltas of modern times. Construction was reported in the area of the tree stump fossils. We made inquiries and were told by NYS Museum Paleontologists that they were working in full cooperation with the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection), an agency protecting the NYC Water Supply. They are repairing the dam, not enlarging the reservoir. Paleontology benefits were coming to the NYS Museum and the Gilboa Museum exhibit. Specimens buried since construction of the dam were available again. However, there may be stonework of interest to us in there which is unrecognized and unrecorded. Some stonework in surrounding areas highlights water features.

This summer there has been heightened interest in the stone chambers by groups other than NEARA and established conservation organizations. Most groups profess interest in chamber preservation but are unfamiliar with previous work and research. Some lack information about what preservation actually entails. Some are naïve about the consequences of publicity and location disclosure. NY NEARA members have had to take note of these troubles and emphasize the importance of maintaining historical and archaeological integrity at stone sites and to point out that we are concerned with issues of privacy, education, proper documentation and accurate preservation.

An excellent translation of *Description of New Netherland* written by Adriaen van der Donck in the mid 1600s is available now in hard cover and paperback. The translation, facilitated by the New Netherland Project, was done by project director Charles Gehring, William Starna and DW Goedhuys. The section on the Iroquois Indians is notable. Polmidge@optonline.net

Vermont – Lisa Gannon: The BIG news in VT NEARA is that the Morgan-Slayton District, a.k.a. Calendar II Chamber Site in South Woodstock, has finally been added to the National Register of Historic Places!! We received word in early July from State Archaeologist Giovanna Peebles that the necessary signatures were finally obtained. This is largely due to the phenomenal efforts over nearly 20 years of former VT Coordinator Donna Martin. Former Coordinator Barb Sager has also contributed to this success. We are thankful for and exuberant about this recognition, and will now turn to another longer-term goal: addition to the VT Land Trust.

We have visited numerous sites and features. Late March was the 1st official visit to the “Gateway” complex of stonework in the Jericho-Bolton region, which is one of three distinct new complexes within this “district”. Cairns, donation-covered boulders and more abound in this area. New member Joanna Carpenter has been scouring these woods and turning up extensive lithic features. In April we made a visit back to the Green Mountain National Forest to examine a cairn for a possible artifact placed there. In May, member Alan Packard organized a trip to Harvey’s Lake to see a chamber and adjacent rectangular bog with stone features. In June, Ernie Clifford led a merry band through parts of North Pomfret and had invited a few of the skeptical landowners to tour what they had on their land (manitou stones, artfully balanced stone rows, etc). That was interesting! In July, we checked on the Rolling Rock in Braintree, then fanned out to notice smaller features in those woods. We examined inscribed stones at the West Brookfield church – one of them 9 feet long and apparently etched the entire length; and ended with the Brookfield chamber which is horribly overgrown but has a charming, interested new owner. lissalass@yahoo.com



Joanna Carpenter and Ken Krantz examine the Rocking Stone in Braintree (Photo: Lisa Gannon)

Maritime Canada – Terry Deveau: There are new developments in DNA evidence of early European mixing with Mi’kmaq aboriginal population in Acadia. On July 28, 2010, Paul Tufts of l’Association des Acadiens-Métis Souriquois gave a lecture at the Grand Pré National Historic Site in which he presented evidence that many of the early Acadian families from the 17th century involved marriages between single men from France and Mi’kmaq women. One of the elements of this evidence involves an analysis of the mitochondrial DNA

(mtDNA) of the living descendents of those early families. The mtDNA is preserved unchanged by the purely maternal line. One intriguing aspect of this research is that in a number of such cases, the mtDNA that traces back to some of these Mi’kmaq women includes markers that appear to originate in mtDNA mutations that took place in North Africa many thousands of years ago. These same markers are commonly present today in the population of the Azores (which are Portuguese), but rare in France and in other European populations. Historically, it is known that explorers and fishermen from the Azores visited Acadia throughout the 16th century, and at least two settlement attempts can be documented from that period (i.e., prior to the Spanish conquest of the Azores in 1583). It is known that the North African mtDNA markers entered the Azorean population as a result of the Portuguese slave trade. The fact that these same markers are showing up in Mi’kmaq women in the 17th century suggests that female children of Azorean mothers became part of the Mi’kmaq population in the 16th century, possibly through assimilation of failed settlement attempts, intermarriages, trading in slaves, taking slaves through violence, or all of the above. deveau@chebucto.ns.ca

COMMENTARY

From Jim Guthrie: *POLYNESIAN AMERICANS* The topic of pre-Columbian trans-Pacific voyaging has gone from being “taboo” to merely “controversial” according to Andrew Lawler in *Science* June 11 (Vol. 328, No 5984L1344-47). So much evidence has accumulated, especially for Polynesian contact, that Alan Howard reviewed part of it back in 1967 (*Polynesian Culture History*). Studies began in 1857, when the similarity of Tahitian and Chilean plank boats was noted, and scholars began to compare canoes, rank and kinship customs, tools fishhooks, art, mythology, weapons, quipus and details of music and musical instruments as well as languages and physical attributes of the people. Through largely ignored, evidence has continued to pile up so that today it takes a major contortion to wave it away. The latest round of controversy was triggered in December when skulls collected from Mocha Island, about 20 miles off the Chilean coast, were recognized as Polynesian by Lisa Matisoo-Smith, a biological anthropologist from the University of Otago in New Zealand.

Lawler quotes various archaeologists who are either happy or disgruntled by the new findings. Some know Andean sweet potatoes were carried to Polynesia by A.D. 1000 and that the oldest American chickens seem to be Asian, but most adhere to the myth of Spanish transport. None interviewed seemed aware of the many inter-hemispheric transfers documented recently by Sorenson and Johannessen (reviewed recently in the *NEARA Journal*), nor was there any mention of Nancy Davis’ annual “Paths across the Pacific” conference, held in Sitka since 2002. Change is in the wind because the new generation is beginning to use DNA data and is less constrained by tradition. As usual, it was possible to find a spokesman who is “not convinced” by scientific results. Many institutional archaeologists seem strangely out of touch. Most surprising to me is the tendency to focus on Polynesians while ignoring the much earlier and probably much more important inputs from Indonesian voyagers.

RECREATIONAL GENETICS Commercial genetics testers claim that for a few hundred dollars they can determine the geographic origins of your ancestors and help you reconstruct family histories. But, say Deborah Bolnick and 13 colleagues in *Science*, October 19, 2007 (Vol. 318, No. 5940:399-40), customers can be seriously misled by such “genetic ancestry tests.” Results based only on mitochondrial or Y-chromosome data shed light on only one ancestor in each generation, and even a more comprehensive test that used 175 autosomal markers inherited from both parents is seriously flawed.

Testers assume there are “ancestry-informative-markers” (AIMs) that are diagnostic for certain “races” or ethnic groups because they are currently most common in those populations. However, such a marker could have been inherited from a population in which it is less common or from which it has disappeared. For example, “the Ancestry-By-DNA test suggests that most people from the Middle East, India and the Mediterranean region of Europe have Native American Ancestry,” a highly unlikely result. Part of the problem is the Victorian fallacy that we are all mixtures of four “parental” populations (Africans, Europeans, East Asians and Native Americans), a fiction perpetuated by government policies. Citizens are sorted into arbitrary categories that have little basis in genetic reality, and the authors note that “commercialization has led to misleading practices that reinforce misconceptions.” While information gleaned from genetic tests may be interesting and useful, “these tests should not be seen as determining the race or ethnicity of a test-taker. They cannot pinpoint the place of origin or social affiliation of even one ancestor with exact certainty.”

Few of us have thought deeply about how closely world populations are connected. Every living person has ancestors from every part of the world who lived within the last few thousand years. Each one of us has had more than a million ancestors from just the past 500 years, and the degree of overlap is astronomical. A fascinating book on this topic for the general readers is *Mapping Human History: Discovering the Past through Our Genes* by Steve Olson (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002). I recommend it as a good read that explains genetic concepts in the context of world history and the inter-relatedness of all people.

KENSINGTON STONE A curious letter in *Archaeology* July/August 2010 (Vol. 63, No. 4:8) asserts that the runestone was proven to be a hoax by Samuel Eliot Morison in his 1971 *The European Voyages of Discovery*. The author can’t understand why controversy continues, asking, “Don’t people read credible histories anymore?” This is the first time I have seen Morison cited as an authority on the Kensington stone. His benighted, supercilious, three-page account is peppered with misconceptions and errors, starting with the misspelling of Ohman’s name as “Olaf” and later Futhark as “Futhauk.” Morison thought that Norsemen never went inland, that the inscription had been cut recently, that the inscription contained Ohman’s name, that Fogelblad carved it, that one word alone (opdagelsefard) “gives it away,” and dismissed Hjalmar Holand as a “cherry farmer.” Every geologist who studied the stone near the time of its discovery and who left a recorded opinion about its age thought the engraving was old, with estimates ranging up to 500 years. There were no exceptions. If

the letter writer had known this, he might have had a different opinion of Morison’s credibility.

NEANDERTHALS AND HAROLD GLADWIN Confirmation of Neanderthal genes in modern human populations reminded me that at least 20 years ago, physical anthropologists Milford Wolpoff and Alan Thorne published persuasive skeletal evidence of admixture and that one famous archaeologist had called attention to a likely connection. This is an excellent example of how long it can take for unwelcome findings to become respectable.

In *Fantastic Archaeology* (1991). Stephen Williams took 16 pages to express his disapproval of Harold Sterling Gladwin (1883-1983), whom he characterized as the “prototypical hyperdiffusionist.” Although seemingly awed by Gladwin’s accomplishments in southwestern archaeology, Williams saw him as too much of an independent thinker, criticizing him for his anti-establishment stance and (rightly) for sometimes blurring the line between factual evidence and cavalier speculation. He stated that Gladwin “repeats such old ‘saws’ as seeing characteristic Neanderthal traits among modern populations...” Williams found that insensitive and racist.

Williams’ position was unscientific, as I noted in the *NEARA Journal* Winter/Spring 1992, pointing out Wolpoff and Thorne’s description of Neanderthal skeletal features that persisted for a long time in later Europeans. Either these traits had evolved twice – once among Neanderthals and then again in the European branch of modern man – or, as the biologists thought, Neanderthals crossed with later humans. Does this scientific observation show insensitivity and racism? I think not. We should keep in mind that DNA results, while impressive, are not the only kinds of data used by physical anthropologists to reconstruct evolutionary history.

“BATTLE FOR THE XINJIANG MUMMIES” Victor Mair, Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at the University of Pennsylvania, famous for his investigations of ancient European intrusions into northwest China, is the subject of a fascinating report by Heather Pringle in *Archaeology* July/August (Vol. 63, No. 4:30-35). NEARA members may recognize Mair as organizer of the 2001 conference *Contact and Exchange in the Ancient World* at which John Sorenson and Carl Johannessen first presented research published recently in their *World Trade and Biological Exchanges Before 1492*. Their findings appeared also in a volume of papers (2004) from that conference that was edited by Mair.

The mummies, some from 4,000 years ago, were discovered in the early 20th century but were kept out of sight until the late 1980s in order to preserve the nationalistic myth that Chinese civilization arose in isolation. Mair first saw them in 1988, auburn-haired and dressed in plaid garments like those of early Celts. At first he didn’t think they were real. Since then, in the words of archaeologist James Mallory at Queens University, Belfast, Mair has “opened up the entire study of the Bronze and Iron ages of Xinjiang and ensured that we go beyond simple description of the better-preserved mummies and deal with the really big questions such as their origin, their languages, their genetic identity and their role in transmission of culture between East and West.” Pringle’s article summarizes what has been found out so far about these questions. DNA data from 20 mummies indicate that the westerners probably came from southeast Europe. Texts going back to

A.D. 500 show that their language was Tocharian. Mair has translated Chinese texts into English and is investigating origins of the Chinese script, an interest that developed from his service in the Peace Corps in Nepal. Now, exhibition of two mummies and related grave goods in American museums suggests to Mair that some Chinese leaders want to demonstrate increasing openness to the West.

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAS

TURKEYS DOMESTICATED TWICE Scientists at Simon Fraser University analyzing DNA from turkey bones, and others at Washington State University studying turkey coprolites have collaborated to show that turkeys were domesticated about 800 B.C. in Mexico and again around 200 B.C. in the southwest. The work is summarized in *American Archaeology* (Vol. 14, No. 1:11). Modern turkeys are descended from the Mesoamerican breed, the Southwestern type apparently having become extinct. Used primarily in rituals and for their feathers in blankets and ornaments, turkeys seem not to have been eaten by Indians until about A.D. 1100. This parallels the attitude toward chickens in early South America. Stewart recounts the standard story that the Spanish first took turkeys to Europe in the 1500s, although Sorenson and Johannessen (reviewed in the *NEARA Journal*. Vol. 14, No. 1) presented evidence that American turkeys were present in eastern Europe by the 14th century and probably by the 10th. Turkeys are the only American animal domesticate now used worldwide. JG

MASTODONS IN AMERICAN ART The previous *Transit* mentioned discovery in Florida of a 13,000-year-old carving on bone that depicted a mammoth. On the same theme, *Mammoth Trumpet* (Vol. 25, No. 2:4-7, 11) has a fine article by Bradley Lepper titled "Paleolithic Art in North America." Included in representations of various animals are 11 in Utah and one in California that almost certainly portray mastodons. Although difficult to date because of variable quality of the patination and uncertainties in the dating methods now available, one reason to think they are very old is the nearly identical distribution of artwork and mammoth remains. Lepper writes, "The remarkable coincidence of mammoth remains and petroglyphs of mammoths enhances the credibility that rock artists actually saw the beasts." The Utah examples include the famous "Moab Mastodon," discovered in 1935 but now considerably damaged by vandalism, including rifle fire. One camelid petroglyph from the Mojave Desert has been dated by three methods to 12,500-16,500 years BP. Other dates from that region are more than 11,000 years BP. Lepper summarizes recent work by leaders in the field and includes a discussion of current dating methods. A discussion of elephant portrayals in early America appeared in the *NEARA Journal* 38 (1). JG

PREHISPANIC WATER PRESSURE Residents of Palenque seem to have had fountains and flush toilets as early as A.D. 400, according to a note by Paul Neely in *American Archaeology* (Vol. 14, No. 2:9). Sufficient water pressure was attained by a sudden 20-fold reduction in cross section at the end of a 217-foot aqueduct with a 20-foot drop. A nearby palace had what appear to be four limestone toilets. The conduit was dis-

covered in 1999 and studied further in 2006 by Kirk D. French who, with Christopher J. Duffy, reported the find in the *May Journal of Archaeological Science* (Vol. 37:1027-1032). As is customary, it had been assumed that sophisticated technology was beyond the abilities of Americans and that the plumbing could only have been introduced by the Spanish. JG

NEWS FROM ABROAD

RADIOCARBON CHRONOLOGY FOR THE EARLY GRAVETTIAN OF NORTHERN EUROPE According to R.M. Jacobi *et al* in *Antiquity*(84:323, 2010 pp. 26-40), the dates for very early occupation by humans in the UK have been pushed back even further in recent years, and new excavations in Belgium at Masières-Canal provide evidence of similar sites also dated to about 33,000 BP. The proven existence of dry land connecting Britain to the continent has made for easier acceptance of these incredibly early sites. Goat's Hole in Wales is the site of the famous burial known as the Red Lady of Paviland, discovered in 1823 covered in red ochre (and subsequently proven to be that of a young male). The similarity of stone points, pierced shells and ivory rods and rings point to prolonged contact. The authors "suggest that the tradition of 'rich' burials may, contrary to popular belief, have had its origin in the time before the earliest Gravettian" which preceded the Last Glacial Maximum. SC

NEANDERTHAL GENOME In a revolutionary feat of persistence and advanced technology, geneticists at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology announced a draft sequence of the Neanderthal genome. Samples of fossil bone from three Croatian individuals dated to 38,000-40,000 years ago produced data that were compared to sequences representing modern humans from China, New Guinea, France, West Africa and South Africa. The modern Eurasians had 1-4% of Neanderthal heritage, while the Africans had none. This means that admixture took place after *Homo sapiens* left Africa but before diversification in Eurasia between 80,000 and 45,000 years ago. Partial sequences from Russian, German and Spanish Neanderthals were used also to check certain details.

These results allow identification of features that are unique to modern humans and should end speculation that Neanderthals were completely replaced by *Homo sapiens*. However, they raise the possibility that the two varieties of humans should be considered a single species. The report by Richard E. Green and 55 authors under the leadership of Svante Pääbo, appeared in *Science* May 7, 2010 (Vol. 328, No. 5979:710-22). Perceptive comments in the same issue came from Ann Gibbons and Elizabeth Pennisi. Nicholas Wade in *The New York Times*, May 7, 2010; Rex Dalton in *Nature* May 13; and Ewen Calloway in *New Scientist* May 15 add further illumination. Calloway also mentions recent work by Jeffrey Long (University of New Mexico) suggesting that ancient Eurasians acquired diversity not only from Neanderthals, but from other *Homo* species such as *Homo erectus* and *Homo floresiensis*. Long, who based his conclusions on sequences from 100 modern populations, presented his results at an April meeting of the American Association for physical Anthropologists. JG

EPIGRAPHY The fall 2009 *Transit* mentioned a new statistical technique that measures the degree of order, or “conditional entropy” of an inscription as evidence for or against the presence of writing. Used initially in a study of the Indus script, this procedure has now been applied to some 400 Pictish pictographic “texts” of northern Britain by Rob Lee and colleagues at the University of Exeter. Results indicate “a written language rather than religious imagery or heraldic arms as has been speculated in the past,” according to Kate Ravilious in *New Scientist*, April 10, 2010 (Vol. 206, No. 2755:11). The texts were found to be comparable in “entropy” to modern language with a small vocabulary, although they have not yet been read. Lee and associates now plan to work on the “cup and ring” marks from the northern UK and Bronze Age petroglyphs in Scandinavia.

In a more conventional type of epigraphic study, it has been noted that apparent letters on clothing of Inca rulers depicted in 16th century drawings parallel Spanish captions provided by the artists to create the equivalent of bilingual inscriptions. This permits the reading of names and titles of a few prominent Incas from their clothing. Of 14 apparent consonants tentatively identified, 11 derive from symbols of the Cypriot syllabary; not surprising, in view of purported Aegean influences in the Andes that have been debated for half a century. The work is reported in *Epigraphic Society Occasional Papers* 27:66-72 (2009). JG

PRESIDENT’S NOTES – SUE CARLSON

The spring meeting in Kingston, NY, was both exciting and intense. A wide range of engaging speakers took us from Hudson Valley megaliths and lithic alignments to Peru’s Nasca lines and the Sphinx. The panel discussion about site preservation was especially eye-opening and spirited, as members debated the ways, means and frustrations of protecting stone sites from development. I’m always amazed by the energy sizzling throughout our meetings, and this one had plenty! We all enjoyed the opportunity to learn about and explore the other side of the Hudson.



Vice President and Librarian Anne Wirkkala takes a break between meeting sessions.

. Our thanks to Glenn Kreisberg for not only making great speaker arrangements, but for comfy accommodations and his

ever-vigilant eye keeping track of all the tiny details. Kudos to Polly Midgley, Dave Holden, Rob Buchanan and Glenn for field trips to new and exciting cairn fields and chambers, and to Donna Thompson and Nancy Berke, for a yeoman’s job in book sales. Don Winkley and Bob Brown provided the warm welcome and got us organized while Margaret Venator tended to membership and hawked raffle tickets

A special thank you to members old and new who bring the enthusiasm and create the dynamic interplay that characterizes NEARA. I look forward to seeing you all in Storrs, CT, November 12-14. Speakers will include author and geologist Robert Thorson, whose stone wall initiative has raised awareness of the splendid history of New England’s stone walls. His most recent book is *Beyond Walden: the Hidden History*



Above: Peter Anick and Tom Paul listen to Enrique Noguera describe Hudson Valley megaliths. Below catching up at the cocktail hour are Ann Banks, Sue Carlson, Margaret Venator, Brenda Toomey, Terry Deveau and Elizabeth Deveau.



of America’s Kettle Lakes and Ponds. Also certain to attract attendees is Duncan Laurie, whose book *The Secret Art: A Brief History of Radionic Technology for the Creative Individual* is a must read. krosspt@lincoln.midcoast.com

MEMBERSHIP – LEE MCKENNEY

Please welcome the following new members to NEARA: *Connecticut*: Theodore Hendrickson, Mystic; Lori Misura, New Haven; *Hawaii*: William Mason, Aiea; *Massachusetts*: Lucille Adams, Greenfield; Jim Vieira, Ashfield; *New Hampshire*: Marcelline Jenny, Portsmouth; Nancy Feraco, Milford;

New Jersey: Gary Donovan, Madison; *New York:* Pamela Pucci, Stormville; Karen Deeter, West Kill; Danny Johnson, Margaretville; Alexander Zdhe, Tivoli; Hanne Vorkapich, Prattsville; Arthur A. Carlson, Tivoli; *Pennsylvania:* Randall Young, Mercer; Lawrence Gallant, Finleyville; *Vermont:* Joanna Carpenter, Jericho; Aram K. Polster, Springfield. Please let me know if you change

GOING STRONG AT 90!



Our indomitable Maine Coordinator Ros Strong celebrates her 90th birthday on September 12. This extraordinary lady can hold her own on field trips and is on top of the morning science news before most of us have had coffee. Ros has worn every NEARA hat – researcher, writer, President, editor, mother hen, Maine coordinator, mentor – with enthusiasm, dedication and grace. Her blue eyes still sparkle when she shares a discovery – and when she admonishes one of us for leaping to conclusions. We wish her a wonderful celebration and many more happy years of research and discovery!

RESEARCH – DAN LEARY

Please note that my email address in the last *NEARA Journal* was incorrect. danleary@mrf-furnaces.com is the correct one, and my phone is 603-485-5655. No calls after 9:30 p.m., please.

RESOURCES AND REVIEWS

In addition to checking our own website www.neara.org you might want to visit these for news and updates in the fields of archaeology and discovery: www.archaeologydaily.com www.archaeologica.org and www.eurekalert.org

STONECHAT Sean Adcock, who holds the Master Craftsman Certificate of the Dry Stone Walling Association, is a new online friend from Wales. In addition to being a walling wizard, Sean edits an amazing newsletter *Stonechat* for the North Wales Branch of the Dry Stone Walling Association. You

will be hooked immediately by excellent descriptions of everything from Skellig Michael to innovations in America to Perge in Turkey. Visit www.dswa.org.uk/north-wales-g.asp and scroll down to the bottom of page 2. Click on a date, and that issue will come up in PDF. The online version is usually one or two editions behind hard copy, so contact Sean (details on website) if you want to subscribe. ST

Archaeologist Ed Lenik reports the publication of his ninth book **LOST ARROWHEADS AND BROKEN POTTERY: A HISTORY OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN BEAR MOUNTAIN STATE PARK, NEW YORK**. It is a history of both the Native American presence in the park and the research efforts of the Trailside Museums. Lenik reports on the Native American components of his own excavations at Revolutionary War Forts Montgomery and Clinton and discusses early 20th century work in the park. Bear Mountain Park includes Iona Island, the site of Doodletown and the Twin Forts area. The book is available from Purple Mountain Press www.catskill.net/purple/arrowpot.htm or from the Park Visitors center for \$9.50 plus tax.

CAHOKIA MOUNDS; AMERICA'S FIRST CITY by William Iseminger. History Press, 2010. \$19.99 . Reviewed by Anne Wirkkala. A 39-nine year love affair with Cahokia has resulted in an impressive career in varying capacities at this site and now in a fascinating book. William Iseminger says, "I never fail to be fascinated by Cahokia, every time I climb to the top of Monk's Mound it takes my breath away. I try to imagine what was here, what happened and what the people who built this ancient city were like."

There have been numerous archaeology books written about this site... so why another one? This one is a blend of scholarly archaeology theses, in depth studies of the people and their technology as well as a more general approach to the site -- definitely not an easy task due to the wide range of interpretations of the site from conservative and minimalist to more liberal and global. The author has created a fine balance between environmental, ecological perspectives and an emphasis on politics and power. For sources he draws heavily on his own experiences, as well as from noted authors in the field. His survey of the major features of Cahokia is enlightening, especially given his professional role in the interpretation, exhibits and public relations at the site.

Cahokia is the largest mound site in North America, with over 120 mounds, about 80 of which remain in some form today. The author has delved into both archaeological and historical archives to create a complete picture of all we know about this site both archaeologically and geologically. His liberal use of maps, drawings and photographs enhances his well written text. He answers the questions why was it built, by whom and how in a well- ocumented manner, including the mysteries of Mound 72, one of the richest finds to date. The story ends with the fall of Cahokia under its own weight, an early victim of urban blight and environmental depletion!!

This modest tome (just 174 pages) should be part of every American's book collection. It is a very readable account of our early days, not long before the historic European invasion forever changed the course of our country. awirrkala@ccsnh.edu



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November 12 – 14, 2010
Nathan Hale Inn, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

*Watch the website for information about the April, 2011,
meeting in midcoast Maine*