



national association
of
state archaeologists

- NASA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER -

July 1980

- MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT -

This first President's Message from me will be brief, as there is little to report this soon in my term and I see no use in merely taking up space. There are, though, a few things to discuss and report.

It has been suggested that we appoint a committee to look into the possibility of encouraging legislation to create the position of State Archaeologist in states that have no such legislation. I believe this could be a good and effective committee that would help to establish such positions in statute. I am asking your opinion on this and if anyone would care to volunteer for this committee I would appreciate your letting me know. If I do not hear to the contrary, I shall appoint such a committee within the next 60 days.

I have begun discussions with the Executive Office of the National Conference of SHPOs in Washington and with the President of that organization as to how NASA and the NCSHPO can most effectively work together. Nothing yet to report on this, but I expect a report to you by next Newsletter.

I am taking the liberty of placing our Immediate Past President of NASA on our mailing list as our "Founding Father." Bruce Rippeteau remains interested in NASA, though he is no longer a State Archaeologist, and his advice and counsel will be helpful to all of us.

All good wishes to all of you, and please write me or send items to Sheila Stump for the Newsletter if you have any ideas, suggestions, or criticisms. We can only be effective if we keep the channels of communication open.

Bob Stephenson
President

- REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT (PRO TEM) -

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERS
ANNUAL MEETING March 1-5 1980, San Antonio

I. General Comments

This, the second meeting outside Washington, was clearly a vigorous and class assembly. The usual concerns of the NCSHPO for business, and a particular attention to the two new heritage bills (including NCSHPO formal revisions) were worthwhile. However, the special, singular event was Forum Day.

- REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT (PRO TEM) - continued -

On the whole, never was archaeology so visible and so on the lips of speakers. In attendance were Dena Dincauze (COPA/SAA), Hester Davis (CCONUS/SOPA), Cal Cummings (ASCA), Kathy Gilmore (SAA), Bruce Rippeteau (NASA), Peter Smith (SCA), Jerry Rogers (HCRS), Bob Crecco (DOT), Tom King (ACHP), Merle Wells (SHPO-ID), Hal Jensen (BLM), Jacqueline Fehon (NC), Val Talmage (MA), Curtis Tunnell (TX), Bert Drennen (OH), Jim Ayers (SHPO-AZ), and Ross Morrell (FL).

II. Forum Day

Some 27 national organizations interested in Historic Preservation (including Nasa, with a very nice introduction as a parallel NC organization) were called by NCSHPO President Tise to this meeting, and made short statements about their goals and view. This assemblage was very interesting and exceptionally informative vis-à-vis political organization and influence. The forum was a "Who's Who" in the field. Archaeology, in the aggregate, was solidly in it.

The views which I expressed for NASA will, with others, appear as a National Conference publication in the near future.

Bruce Rippeteau
(Past) President Pro Tem

- EDITORIAL -

In the months since the founding meeting of November, 1978, NASA has been about the business of establishing parameters for membership, drafting bylaws, developing relationships with other organizations, and otherwise getting established. Now that the foundation of NASA has been built, our newsletter can be directed toward broader issues. Proposals for a revised newsletter format were discussed at our annual business meeting, held in Philadelphia in conjunction with the SAA meetings last May. Following is a discussion of the suggestions generated by that meeting. We encourage you all to respond to these ideas with suggestions, topical items, and information.

The newsletter will be published quarterly. Each issue will lead off with a MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT. We are certain that our newly elected President, Bob Stephenson (SC), will have a sufficient quantity of information and wisdom to fill four issues each year.

The EDITORIAL column is my chance to correct all the mistakes I made in the last issue and to pass on information and ideas that don't seem to fit elsewhere.

The LETTERS section is your chance to point out all the mistakes I made in the last issue and to pass on information and ideas that don't seem to fit elsewhere.

The GUEST COLUMN provides a forum for communication from outside the membership. It affords us an opportunity to hear from the SHPOs, Indian tribes, other management archaeologists, amateurs, and others and provides them with a means of contributing their views and ideas.

In each issue we would like to focus on one or more state programs. Each FOCUS ON will outline the organization and program emphasis of a particular state. This will give us all an idea of how other states tackle the various problems and goals we all

- EDITORIAL - continued -

share and perhaps can provide us with new approaches. Obviously, this will require cooperation and contributions from each of you.

A number of ISSUES were raised at the business meeting as being of concern to us all. The newsletter certainly can be the vehicle for discussions of such issues as curation, burials policies, data management, relationships with Native Americans and amateur groups, certification, antiquities protection and enforcement, legislation, professional standards, public education, and so on. These issues can be discussed in individual, on-going columns or can be addressed in the FOCUS ON: states. Alternatively, we can form committees to research and report on these issues. Your suggestions are hereby solicited.

The LEGISLATIVE UPDATE column will try to keep you informed as to the progress of proposed legislation and regulations. Your assistance in providing current information will be greatly appreciated, as Washington state is at the tail end of the Pony Express line.

NASA NOTES (name subject to change) will contain the minutes of meetings held, reminders of meetings to come, membership news, et cetera. Committee reports will be included here unless the ISSUES format is changed.

Well, that's about it. As I said before, nothing in this proposed format is cast in concrete. If our newsletter is going to be productive as a communications medium, it will require effort on all our parts. Keep those cards and letters coming.

Two final items of business: (1) We are in desperate need of a logo for our newsletter. You have one suggestion before you. As new ones are received, they will head future newsletters so the membership can select a final design. A rough sketch is all that's needed to see your work in print! Please send your ideas. (2) The requests for Mt. St. Helens ash keep coming in. If you'll be patient, it will get to you eventually, subject, of course, to the vagaries of the winds. Alternatively, if you'll send a stamped, self-addressed, padded envelope (small), I'll try to scrounge up a vial of it. We're more than happy to ship the stuff out!

- LETTERS -

Dear Bob and Colleagues:

On 31 March 1980, I have resigned from my beloved role as State Archaeologist of Colorado, in order to take employment in private industry. The sole motivation, put off daily for over 2 years, was economic survival in spite of remarkable professional rewards and opportunities.

This decision was the most difficult of my career. Yet there is challenge. Those of you who know me, know I have consecutively accomplished (seemingly orthogonal) goals in pure science, in academia, and in government service. My new work in industry is yet another dimension to experience. And to seek excellence at yet another frontier.

With particular regard to NASA, I feel a loss difficult to convey. With you all, my good colleagues, I made it happen, nurtured it, and now must be turned away.

My role changes, my personal qualities and professionalism do not. Nor do my deepest

- LETTERS - continued -

motivations, such as are expressed in the closing soliloquy in my Colorado Book of the Dead.

I wish you and all my many friends and acquaintances in the National Association the very best. And I ask for your continued personal friendship, and your blessings in my new experiences.

Sincerely,
Bruce E. Rippeteau, Ph. D.
State Archaeologist, Colorado

- GUEST COLUMN -

SOLVING THE CURATORIAL DILEMMA: THE WASHINGTON SOLUTION

The growth of archaeological mitigation efforts in recent years has precipitated a crisis in the curation and preservation of archaeological remains. In Washington State, with the present level of archaeological activities and the results of nearly fifty years of previous investigations, existing depositories are filled to capacity and are poorly equipped to maintain existing collections, much less assume new ones. As a consequence of this situation, the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation has funded a project concerned with planning and developing an archaeological collections repository in the state of Washington.

The purpose of the Washington Archaeological Collections Repository (WACR) will be to house and manage archaeological materials recovered through federally funded or licensed projects under the provisions of 36 CFR 66. The repository will be concerned with recovered materials, including artifacts, faunal remains, and soil and botanical samples, as well as materials documenting recovery operations--for example, field notes and maps, catalogs, and photographs.

Operationally, the repository will include three sections: processing, conservation, and storage. The processing staff will be responsible for integrating collections into the repository data management systems; for example, inventorying, accessioning, and cataloging. The conservation section will stabilize materials for storage, monitor stored collections, and apply remedial conservation as required. The storage section will be concerned with the physical storage, access, and management of collections.

In addition to protecting and preserving the recovered portion of the archaeological data base, the repository will respond to the specific needs of the archaeological community in the state. Facilities will be provided for the study of collections, photographic services will be available to researchers, and loans of collections for study or display will be coordinated by the repository. The repository also will serve as an informational resource for field projects, researchers, and other curatorial organizations, particularly in the area of conservation. One of the main functions of the WACR will be upgrading the treatment of archaeological materials before they are received by the repository. To accomplish this, the WACR is initiating a technical bulletin series to be issued at irregular intervals to the archaeological community. The first technical bulletin, for example, will be concerned with the archival stability of photographic materials and will detail procedures for assuring the permanence of the archaeological photographic record.

- GUEST COLUMN - continued -

Funding for the WACR operations will be through curation charges to donor agencies and organizations. Two charges will be involved: initial and long term curation charges. Initial charges are based on the costs involved to bring a collection up to storage standards and to integrate it into the data management systems. Long term curation charges are based on the costs of maintaining a collection for a given length of time. In both cases, the charges are based on cost assessments of individual collections rather than a flat rate per unit. This approach takes into account the differences between collections in terms of perishables and their condition at the time they are received.

The lack of a systematic curatorial approach to archaeological collections has placed the profession in the uncomfortable position of not being able to assure the preservation and access of collections once they are recovered. Archaeological resources are non-renewable and are continually being diminished. Thus, our legacy to future generations of archaeologists and the public consists not only of protecting remaining archaeological sites, but of preserving materials that have already been recovered. The problem, then, has ethical overtones if we are not able to preserve archaeological materials in a condition at least equal to that in which they were found. In the case of Washington State, this problem is being addressed by the development of an institution specifically concerned with the housing, preservation, and access to recovered archaeological data.

Dr. Jeffrey E. Mauger, Director
Washington Archaeological Collections
Repository
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington

- NASA NOTES -

Editor's Note: At the NASA business meeting, a "committee on committees" was formed and is composed of Valerie Talmage (MA), Duane Anderson (IA), and Jacqueline Fehon (NC). The following excerpt is from a letter from Valerie to Bob Stephenson dated May 30, 1980.

The "Committee on committees" discussed what we saw as the role of NASA and what functions NASA members might want to assume during the coming year. We recognized that because of our roles as state archaeologists (either statutory or fait accompli!) we all share similar kinds of responsibilities and problems which separate us in one degree or another from other archaeologists. In general, state archaeologists have either statutory or implicit career responsibilities which must articulate with:

- the public
- the archaeological profession
- the government (state, local, and federal)

There are also issues and problems which are of concern to us as State Archaeologists and which usually touch on three interest-group responsibilities. We have all been struggling with issues within our states and some of us may have found solutions to several common problems. We feel that it is important to share discussion about problems and solutions in an effort to not "reinvent the wheel," and also just to mutually support each other.

- NASA NOTES - continued -

Some of the issues we discussed are:

- the relationship of state archaeological programs and the native community
- regulating the profession: review, peer review, and permits
- public education and the state archaeological program
- state legislation, regulation and funding
- relationships of the State Archaeologist with the SHPO

We discussed the possibility of sponsoring a symposium dealing with one of these issues (or others which we've missed) at next year's SAA meeting. This would allow us to discuss our roles and responsibilities as State Archaeologists with the profession concerning some issues we face. As a result, NASA may become a more viable organization which really does encourage communication flow and problem solving for State Archaeologists.

The Committee on committees was reluctant to set up a committee structure--we do feel we can act as expeditors to get people concerned with similar issues in touch with each other. Duane has offered to compile information NASA has already collected which may be of interest to NASA membership. I offered to ring-lead the committee coordination.

We suggest that individual State Archaeologists respond to me with information regarding the issues and problems that are presently concerns, and with information they feel might be helpful for other State Archaeologists. I will attempt to coordinate the responses and establish some ad hoc committees revolving around issues. Responses to our suggestion of sponsoring a SAA Symposium are also encouraged! Please write.

We also want to encourage State Archaeologists to take advantage of regional meetings and to try to get together on a regional basis to discuss regional archaeological issues. NASA would appreciate copies of reports, agenda or summaries resulting from meetings which do occur over the year.

Valerie Talmage
Vice President

Announcement: The next annual business meeting of NASA will be held in conjunction with the SAA meetings in San Diego, California sometime around May, 1981.

Call for contributions: Please send your suggestions and contributions for the next NASA Newsletter (to be published in October) as soon as possible. Deadline for contributions is October 1, 1980. We would like our next issue to contain all of the topics addressed in the editorial, along with any others our readers might suggest.

NASA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
National Association of State Archaeologists
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Vice President: Valerie Talmage (MA)
Secretary-Treasurer: Curtis Schaafsma (NM)
Editor: Sheila Stump (WA)