

# NAPA

Nebraska Association of Professional Archeologists

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## NEWSLETTER

Spring 1987

### NAPA GOALS AND PROGRESS

by Steve Holen, President

One of the major goals of NAPA discussed at the 1986 Plains Conference meeting is the formation of a stronger statewide amateur archeological society. Towards this goal, we are planning to publish articles concerning archeology of a particular area in local newspapers. Also we are planning a series of public presentations in Greater Nebraska by NAPA members on various archeological topics. These public presentations are designed to generate interest in preserving our archeological heritage and to generate more chapters of the Nebraska Archeological Society (NAS).

Other goals of NAPA include the formation of a public archeologists position sometime in the near future. This also would strengthen the tie between professional and amateur archeologists by setting up a field school each summer to train interested amateur archeologists.

Last, but not least, we are still looking for a publisher for the book on Nebraska archeology. Presently this book is in manuscript form and awaits the right publisher or donor with the money to get it printed. If you have any suggestions for publication, please contact John Ludwickson.

Now that NAPA has been active for almost a year we should assess our performance. To our credit, we were successful in halting an unauthorized excavation on a National Register archeological site. We were successful in supporting legislation to protect historic structures on state property. Unfortunately, a section of the bill protecting archeological resources was deleted at the last minute. However, plans are under way for writing a more comprehensive cultural resource law. Also, we successfully opposed a bill to make the Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society an appointed position under the Governor.

We are currently active in opposing LB612, but have offered to work out a better bill in cooperation with the Nebraska Indian Commission.

Overall, we have made some progress in the past year and I am optimistic that our second year as an organization will be even better.

#### MINUTES OF SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting was held on November 21, 1986 in conjunction with the Plains Conference at the Marriott Southeast Hotel in Denver, Colorado. It was called to order by President Holen at 5 PM.

#### Old Business

Since Secretary-Treasurer Meyers was unable to attend, the business of the Executive Board meeting held on August 23, 1986 were summarized by the President. He also reported that incoming receipts had amounted to \$545.00 with expenses of \$445.16. NAPA has a current balance of \$97.34. If incoming receipts were similar to this year's, NAPA should have a year-ending balance of approximately \$350.00.

#### Education Committee

Committee Chairperson Rob Bozell reports that several avenues for educating the public about archeology were discussed at the last committee meeting. Information about NAPA and NAS were circulated at the Nebraska State Fair. There are also plans to prepare newspaper articles for circulation throughout the state. It was suggested that these could be short (1 typed page) relating to local prehistoric and historic sites. Articles could include activities for local residents.

The institution of a short amateur field school was proposed for the Bureau of Reclamation Project at Medicine Creek Reservoir. Three areas were suggested as potential field school locations: 1) a midden that is eroding out of the bank; b) at a threatened earthlodge site; or c) a survey could be done outside the government property upstream. Dr. James Hanson, Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society, has approved a contribution of one month's salary, amounting to 30% of the output needed. The Bureau of Reclamation has offered to provide the other 70% of the anticipated expenses. NAPA could be the sponsoring agency. A contract to obtain the services of an archeologist is expected to be let in the near future. The committee also suggested that a manual be developed for amateurs.

There has been some discussion of establishing a series of public speaking events at various locations in Nebraska. A \$500.00 planning grant could be acquired easily from the Humanities Council and the program sponsored by a joint effort of NAPA and NAS.

## Publication Committee

Committee Chairperson Bill Hunt reported that the second NAPA Newsletter was put out by committee members Cathie Masters and Tom McGinnis during his absence in North Dakota. The committee is also considering another publication which would include more lengthy articles. This was proposed to be published on an annual basis. It could be done as a NAPA effort alone or in partnership with NAS. Money to finance this new publication could come from NAPA and the product offered for sale. The Nebraska Council for the Humanities, the UNL Anthropology Department, and the Nebraska State Historical Society were also listed as other possible funding sources.

There also has been some discussion about a manuscript on Nebraska Archeology. At present, there is an ongoing search for a publisher. Don Blakeslee reported that there has been a couple of nibbles by the Regents Press and the University of Alabama Press. Larry Zimmerman will try to interest the University of South Dakota Press. The University of Nebraska Press appears uninterested in an archeological book because of the poor sales of Waldo Wedel's new book. It was suggested that the book might possibly be a series. There was some interest in having a chapter on reminiscences by early archeologists in Nebraska. It was suggested that these chapters could be part of an annual NAPA publication.

## Membership Committee

Steve Holen reported for absent Chairperson John Ludwickson. The organization now has 36 Fellow members and 6 Associate Members.

## NEW BUSINESS

I. Bill Hunt reported attending a meeting of the North Dakota counterpart to NAPA, the Professional Council for North Dakota Heritage (PCNDH). Unlike NAPA, however, this organization is somewhat more inclusive in its scope in that it includes historians and architects interested in cultural resource preservation. At present, PCNDH is planning a program which might be emulated by NAPA for educating the public about archeological preservation while at the same time providing incentives for protecting archeological sites in the state. They call their effort the North Dakota Cultural Resource Conservation Program. It is designed to honor landowners with significant sites on their properties who have made a commitment to preserve that site. Sites are evaluated and recommended by the members of the organization. If the landowner is committed to preserving the site, an "intent to preserve" form must be completed. This is merely a document expressing goodwill on the part of the landowner and does not restrict them in any way with regard to their property rights.

As an incentive to participate, the PCNDH will examine the site and provide the owner with any and all information that he or she may request about it. In addition, the organization will examine and comment on any artifacts or structures associated with the site. To honor of their commitment to preservation, a plaque will be presented to the owner with their name and the name of the site prominently displayed. A certificate of recognition signed by the Governor of North Dakota is presented along with the plaque by the Governor at an annual meeting held at the State Capitol. The press is invited to this meeting and the names of the recipients will be made public unless otherwise requested by the award winner. Funding for this program is derived entirely from PCNDH's treasury.

II. The upcoming elections being held at the Nebraska State Historical Society were discussed. Candidates for the Board of Directors for NSHS were discussed and Steve Holen mentioned that he and others had sent out a letter supporting some candidates.

III. Steve Holen stated that he had two major goals as NAPA President. First, he wanted to get a publication series started in 1987. These could be short articles of local interest. Second, he wanted to establish a better public archeological program in Nebraska. This may involve such things as providing a training excavation every year in the state.

IV. Greg Fox suggested that NAPA could sponsor a symposium on Nebraska Archeology somewhere in Nebraska. This could involve having a day of archeological related activities (flint knapping, atlatl throwing, etc.). This would provide an opportunity for amateurs and professionals to be involved in something together. He also noted that a meeting like this was an annual event in North Dakota. Bill Hunt moved that NAPS contact NAS for a joint meeting of this kind. The motion was seconded by Peter Bleed and passed unanimously. Steve Holen will contact them and offered the Dawson County Historical Society as the meeting place.

V. There was a suggestion that a symposium on Nebraska Phase be included in the program for the next Plains Conference in 1987.

#### REBURIAL LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS

The Native American Historic Preservation Bill (S2952) was introduced into Congress last session and is presently being discussed by the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs. This bill sets up a mechanism of the federal level for reburial of skeletal remains and repatriation of "sacred" artifacts. It establishes a Native American Museum Advisory Board. The voting members of the board consist of 6 Indians, 1 Native Hawaiian, 4 members of Congress, 2 people representing archeology and anthropology, and 2 people representing universities and museums. The governing body of any Native American organization can file

petitions with the board relating to disputes with museums or other institutions on the disposal of skeletal remains and sacred artifacts; e.g., the reburial of skeletal remains and sacred artifacts. Any institution receiving federal monies would need to comply with the "compromise" reached by the board or risk losing federal funds.

The bill also established a Native American Center which will function to coordinate with museums to prepare a catalog of all skeletal remains and sacred artifacts in Federal institutions or in institutions assisted by Federal funds.

It proposes to amend the Archeological Resources Protections Act of 1979 to say that if any skeletal material or sacred artifacts are excavated on public or Indian lands, the remains will be placed in storage, in a "respectful" manner, until an agreement is reached on what to do with them. These materials will be studied only to the extent that the Indian tribal government or other representatives may permit.

The problems with the bill are enormous, but the major problem is that scientists are not considered to have a right to study the material. The questions considered by the board appear to be whether any study of skeletal remains or sacred artifacts will be done before a final reburial. The scientists' right to study the remains is considered expendable. No provision is made for a real compromise; i.e., curation and study in a respectful manner.

The bill is currently in the Committee on Indian Affairs. Unfortunately, neither Nebraska senator is on this committee. To express your opinion, please write: Senator Inouye, Chair, Committee on Indian Affairs, Room SH 338, Senator Hart Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

#### REBURIAL ISSUE SURFACES AS BILL BEFORE NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

A bill very similar in form to the proposed federal legislation, has been introduced into the Unicameral by Senator Jim Pappas. Legislative Bill 612, entitled the Unmarked Human Burial and Skeletal Remains Protection Act, proposes establishment of an Unmarked Burial Sites Preservation Board whose membership would consist of one physical anthropologist, three American Indians, and a lay person. It is to be housed within the State Historical Society. It also proposed the establishment of a registry of unmarked human burial sites. No archeologist was involved in the drafting of the bill and it has a number of very serious problems with it including lack of representatives from the Historical Society on the board, provisions for returning older skeletal collections for reburial, potential for including artifact collections within the definition of items for reburial, etc. In short, the bill has been found to be vaguely worded, redundant in many ways, and not giving enough weight to scientific considerations.

On February 6, representatives of the UNL Department of Anthropology and Nebraska State Historical Society were invited to attend a preliminary meeting by the bill's drafting committee. Immediately prior to this meeting, representatives John Ludwickson (NSHS) and Dr. Peter Bleed (UNL) met informally with several NAPA members (Steve Holen, Gayle Carlson, Rob Bozell, and Bill Hunt) to discuss the positions that their respective agencies were taking on this bill. Both organizations indicated that they will strongly oppose the bill in its present form. It was indicated that the bill was too faulty to be corrected and both Ludwickson and Bleed recommended that it be scrapped. Each organization indicated that it would be glad to participate in a wholly rewritten version, would support a "sites" bill, but would prefer to see this expanded into a more comprehensive antiquities bill.

Ludwickson believed that their presentation had swayed most of the people on the committee to abandon the bill and reintroduce it in a different form next year. Nevertheless, the committee's lawyer, who had drafted the bill in the first place, plans to write a new text. However, he still provided for no coordination with archeologists and institutions who are vitally interested in its contents.

NOTE: NAPA President Holen has contacted all the members of the Board of Directors with regard to this issue. This body has voted unanimously to oppose the bill as written. It would be of great assistance if YOU would contact Nebraska Senators and voice your opposition as well! For the most recent update regarding this bill, contact President Holen. This issue will be discussed at the NAPA general membership meeting in April so please plan to attend.

#### NEBRASKA ARCHEOLOGICAL SPEAKERS' PROGRAM PROPOSED

Over the past few months, there has been some discussion of establishing a series of public speaking events at various locations in Nebraska. Sponsored by a joint effort of NAPA and NAS, the purpose of the program would be to inform the public about the state's archeological resources, its prehistory, and how to get involved in archeological research. Rob Bozell has been looking into this and found that money could be acquired for various purposes from the Nebraska Council for the Humanities. A \$500.00 planning grant could be acquired easily and a \$2000.00 mini-grant could be acquired for the speakers' program itself to pay the expenses for five speakers. The Council was particularly interested in spending their money in the western and northern parts of the state.