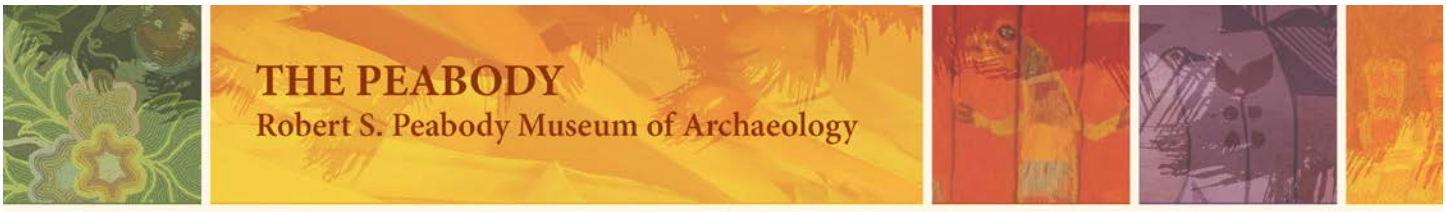


REGIONAL DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTIONS

Northeastern United States

Evaluation of the Northeast Archaeology Collection: Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology

James B. Richardson III, *Carnegie Museum of Natural History*

Beginning with the Peabody Founder collection, Robert S. Peabody Museum has been in the forefront of reconstructing cultural development in New England, especially in Massachusetts and Maine. Many of the prehistoric Native American sites that were excavated by the directors and staff of the Robert S. Peabody Museum are the cornerstones and foundation of our understanding of the cultural trajectory and adaptations to a myriad of environments. This record begins with the original inhabitants some 11,000 years ago to the period of European contact. For example the Clovis period Bull Brook and Debert sites research was the first to substantiate the fact that the northeast had an early occupation within 500-1000 years of their western counterparts. Warren K. Moorehead worked extensively in Maine and was responsible for developing the concept of the Red Paint Culture from excavations at Archaic Period sites. These breakthroughs are noted repeatedly in the archaeological literature as providing the cultural building blocks for our understanding of Northeastern United States prehistory. The first major interdisciplinary research in North America, focusing upon the geological and environmental context of these archaeologically known cultures, was done at the Boylston Street Fish Weir in Boston.

One could go on at length to extol the importance of the research that the staff of the Robert S. Peabody Museum has conducted over the past 100 years. This research was not more of the same -- duplication or an addition to an already existing body of archaeological data – but a first discovery of many long buried and unknown cultures and societies of New England before the European invasion. Through the publication series of Robert S. Peabody Museum, these reconstructed cultures were brought to the attention of the scientific community, who in turn used this new information in their formulations and interpretations of New England Prehistory. Moorehead published extensively and wrote statewide syntheses on the research that he conducted such as in his *Archaeology of Maine* (1922). A more recent and excellent use of Robert S. Peabody Museum research results can be seen in Dean R. Snow's, *The Archaeology of New England* (1980) which is partially illustrated from artifacts from the famous sites that Robert S. Peabody Museum excavated. These and other publications and texts have provided high school to college/university students with the basis for a better understanding of cultural development in New England. Robert S. Peabody Museum has been a key player in providing research data that has reached and educated a large segment of the public on 11,000 years of adaptation and change in New England.

There are over 200,000 archaeological specimens from New England representing over one/third of the holdings of the Robert S. Peabody Museum. These collections, especially those from Maine and Massachusetts, represent the cultural patrimony, of these states. Since Massachusetts does not have a state museum, such as in Maine, the Robert S. Peabody Museum is defacto, along with a number of other repositories (Peabody Harvard, Robbins Museum, and others.), a "sub" state museum of the Commonwealth. The holdings from Massachusetts include the two sites that Byers and Johnson excavated on Martha's Vineyard, the first archaeology done on this island. Major collections, such as the Ross Moffett collections from Cape Cod, make the holdings of the Robert S. Peabody Museum the best for southeastern Massachusetts that exist. These are

superb educational collections that have the potential to teach PA students about the world around them, over an 11,000 year period, right in their own "neighborhood."

The importance of the collection as a resource to the educational curriculum of PA cannot be understated. When coupled by such programs as Pecos Pathways, these collections and the people that produced and used these cultural artifacts once again become alive. The value of inert objects cannot be underestimated in teaching the current generation of PA students about the past as they prepare for their future. When "harnessed" by the Robert S. Peabody Museum staff, these artifacts can spring to life and speak volumes about the societies that existed over 11,000 years in the Northeastern United States. This educational reservoir of past cultures at the Robert S. Peabody Museum is creatively used to educate and inform PA students about our forbears and to make them appreciate more fully that, as residents of this rapidly changing planet, we must heed the lessons of the past.

Massachusetts Collections

James W. Bradley, *Former Director of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology*

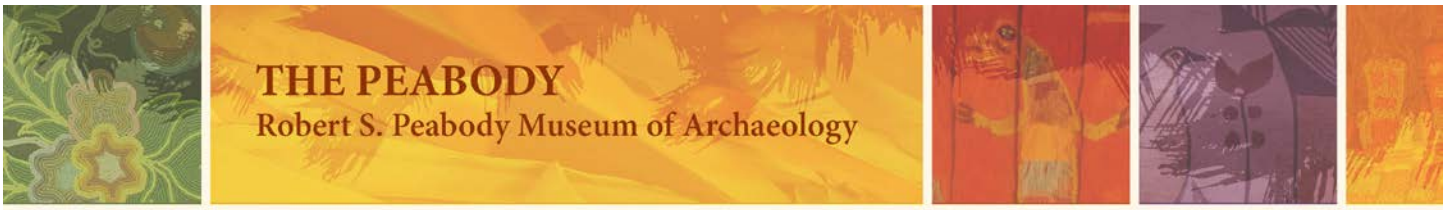
Warren King Moorehead's work in Massachusetts produced some important early collections that derive from Essex County and the Merrimack Valley, including the Shattuck Farm Site near Andover. Moorehead's survey of Merrimack River valley was the first systematic assessment of the Merrimack drainage. Other areas where important collections were made include southeastern Massachusetts in Plymouth County and central Massachusetts, especially towns like Sutton and Milbury where prehistoric soapstone quarries were located.

Through the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeological Research, Doug Byers and Fred Johnson introduced a greater focus on excavations. Johnson’s Boylston Street Fish Weir and sites excavated by Byers in Martha's Vineyard during the 1930s are still considered foundations for the development of interdisciplinary scientific archaeology, not just in New England, but nationally.

The museum continued to sponsor survey work in the tradition of Moorehead, but using a more rigorous standard. Ripley P. Bullen's survey of the Shawsheen River valley during the mid-1940s still stands as the model of systematic survey of a river drainage. He used stratified sampling techniques that were followed by excavation of portions of key sites. These more intensive surveys led to focused excavations in Essex County at the Clark's Pond site near Ipswich, and in southeastern Massachusetts at the Grassey Island and Titicut sites. These well controlled, regional archaeology projects were consistently published and serve as models of their type. It was the Peabody Museum's reputation for high quality work that led to involvement with other important sites like Bull Brook, the first well-documented paleoindian site in New England. Byers and Johnson also attracted the donation of important avocational collections made by Ross Moffett and Howard Torrey on Cape Cod, which still represent the foundations of all subsequent investigation on the Cape and the Islands.

Under the direction of Richard S. MacNeish, the tradition of well-focused research within the Merrimack Valley and Essex County continued with reinvestigation of Shattuck Farm and new work at the Posnik site. Additional donation of important avocational collections furthered the museum’s goal of building the archaeological record for eastern Massachusetts.

During the 1990s the museum did not sponsor fieldwork but attracted additional private collections and continued to strengthen holdings in its most important Massachusetts locales. Forbes Rockwell, Wally Smith, and Gene



Winter all donated private collections from Essex County. The museum acquired the well-documented southeastern Massachusetts collection of Fred Carty, especially valuable for its strong paleoindian and Archaic components.

The Massachusetts collections are particularly comprehensive for Essex County, the Merrimack drainage, and Boston south throughout the Cape and the Islands as a result of these acquisitions. Collection highlights include the paleoindian assemblages from Bull Brook and Neponset, Archaic sites from Essex County, Plymouth County (the Carty collection in particular); and Woodland through historic period collections from Essex County, Cape Cod and the Islands.

Pedagogically, the Massachusetts collections demonstrate change through time and space, man's relation to the environment (especially in terms of maritime adaptation), and the interactions with external cultural groups to the west and north, especially. They represent significant regional research collections and some, such as the Bull Brook material, have national importance. Unfortunately the majority of sites that the collections came from are now gone, and the Peabody now curates a significant portion of the state's prehistory.

New Hampshire Collections

Richard A. Boisvert, *Deputy State Archaeologist, NH Division of Historical Resources*

This essay is in response to your invitation to review the archaeological materials from New Hampshire held by the R.S. Peabody Museum in order to provide you with an overview of these collections and to assess their potential research value. I regret that time constrains me from presenting a detailed description and summary of all the collections. The Museum curates hundreds of artifacts from NH that range in age from Paleoindian through the Contact period and represents a wide variety of stone, ceramic, and faunal (animal bone) materials. In fact, it is clear that several graduate theses could be written using the NH collections. The following summary is intended to provide an evaluation of the research potential of the collections and to highlight some of the more important characteristics. This is by no means a definitive assessment and I am sure that a more detailed review with a focus on certain aspects such as ceramic decoration/manufacturing characteristics or the raw material of certain lithic tools could reveal additional areas of significance. Even so, I feel that it is clear that the NH collections are important and unique.

The collections from New Hampshire evaluated by the volunteers on December 14 can be attributed to 28 localities. Some are relatively specific and can be related to particular sites while others are more general and reflect only township provenience. The collections are summarized below by region and by aspects of their significance.

The Lakes Region

The major portion of the collections derives from the shores and islands of Lake Winnipesaukee and Lake Wentworth. Dominating the collections are assemblages from an area known as "the Weirs." This is a locality in the City of Laconia centered around the outlet of the lake known as the Weirs, or Weirs Beach. As the name implies, this was the location of fishweirs and historic accounts report that large numbers of Native Americans would seasonally congregate there in order to take advantage of the renowned fish runs. Although well known in historic references and anecdotal accounts, there has been comparatively little professional investigation. Interestingly, Warren K. Moorehead appears to be the earliest investigator, having established a headquarters

for his 1930 survey here. Although his report is mute on any findings at the Weirs, it is quite likely that his interest in the area was spawned by the large collections in the Museum's possession. There appear to be four localities/collections from the area, listed as "The Weirs", "Weirs", "Near the Weirs" and "Field near the Weirs". There is no apparent distinction among these collections, although a more thorough assessment might be revealing. The Weirs materials confirm the very long occupation of the locality, with artifacts identified from Late Paleoindian through all successive cultural temporal periods up through the Contact period. Of particular interest are the Late Paleoindian points. Their general morphology would place them contemporaneous with the radiocarbon-dated component reported by Bolian in the 1970's. Their presence confirms the potential for additional components. The observations on the ceramics from Weirs reveal a rich and very interesting assemblage of widely varying decorative motifs. Karen Mack, who has extensive experience in ceramics analyses for northern New England, recognized representatives of all ceramic periods except the earliest. Perhaps more interesting is the observation of charred organic residue on the interior of several sherds. We have had success with protein analysis of similar residue on sherds from the Ingalls site in northern NH which as been reported in a Master's Thesis from Harvard by Ronald Tetu. It is also possible that AMS dates might be obtained from the same organic residue. Thus there is a real potential to gain new data from these old collections. One final item of interest from the Weirs was the identification of a fairly substantial sample of European flint. This was quite likely ballast flint obtained from the seacoast and taken inland to be exploited by the Native Americans during the early years of contact between the two cultures.

Other collections from the Lakes Region include ones from 40 Isles, Melvin Village, Lake Wentworth in Wolfboro and from Stonedam Island. The latter collection is relatively large and contains a series of projectile points that replicate the assemblage from my own investigations there in 1990 and 1991. As such this data may help fill the gaps present in that assemblage and assist in enlarging the potential sample size for possible statistical analyses. Also, the combined Lakes Region collections contain a significant number of ground stone tools, especially those that might be reasonably associated with woodworking. The potential exists for analyses of use wear patterns and for an assessment of raw material and style of manufacture.

Ossipee Region

One of the gems of the Robert S. Peabody Museum New Hampshire collection is the Tyzzer Collection. Mr. Tyzzer donated a very sizable number of artifacts to the Museum, most of which were obtained from sites in Massachusetts. However, he made several forays into New Hampshire and recovered artifacts from Ossipee Lake and along the Ossipee River towards the Maine border. At a location he identified as "Ossipee Campground" Tyzzer collected a series of artifacts that relate to the historically documented "Ossipee Village". This site was the location of a fort reported to have been built for the Ossipee Indians by English carpenters in the 1600's. The collection contains cut and worked pieces of European kettles, gunflints, fragments of iron tools, a Jew's Harp, ballast flint, and even a charred fragment of a horse's tooth (one wonders how a horse was provisioned in the woods, but then again it was evidently eaten!). An important component of the Tyzzer collection from Ossipee Campgrounds is a clay pipe assemblage. Deborah Duranceau, a historic archaeologist with considerable experience in the contact period, recognized several European-made clay pipes dating to the 17th century, providing confirmation for the historic textual references. Especially interesting were the Ossipee collections that complement similar finds made at the Hormel Site, only 5 miles east on the Ossipee River. The Ossipee Village site was evidently explored by Tyzzer and his artifact collection from that site helps put the Hormel site into a better historical context. Equally important as the artifacts are Tyzzer's field notebooks. His field journal corresponds to his collections and provides extremely valuable clues as to the location of this village. Evidently its location was so well known through the 19th century that no one bothered to record it. The exact site is currently unknown, although Tyzzer's notations provide some tantalizing clues. This summer we will research the Ossipee Village and the Tyzzer data will be extremely important to our investigations of its location.

In addition to the Ossipee Village materials there are a few artifacts listed from the Ossipee shores and the nearby town of Madison. Though not especially numerous, these too have significance. The fully grooved Madison axe is exceptionally large and complete. It should be included in any comprehensive study of this tool type in New England. There is also an excellent example of a ground stone rod from the Ossipee shore and an adz of unknown provenience (but still reported from NH) in Tyzzer's collection. These represent an array of woodworking tools recovered in the Ossipee Region that is similar to collections from Lake Winnipesaukee.

Merrimack River Valley

There is a comparatively small but still significant series of collections from the Merrimack River Valley. These range from the Amoskeag Falls and Lake Massabesic in Manchester through the towns of Derry and New Boston to as far south as Pelham. There is a rare, unbroken example of an atlatl weight from near the Amoskeag Falls and an even more uncommon example of an unbroken slate ulu reported to be from Pelham, in addition to ground stone gouges from New Boston and pestles from Derry. There appear to be a disproportionate number of unusual ground stone artifacts in the collections from the Merrimack Valley. I suspect that this is a collector's bias as we have many assemblages with enormous numbers of chipped stone tools the Merrimack Valley. Still, it is notable that these comparatively rare forms are present and provide an important extension of our knowledge of the region in general. Less dramatic, but in some ways more significant, is a fairly sizable collection of material from Massabesic Lake. Two sites, or at least two collection areas, are represented and seem to reflect a broader range of artifacts. Archaic projectile points, bifaces broken in manufacture and chipping debris are all represented, making this collection comparable to those that might be made today by systematic survey. The Massabesic area is undergoing rapid private development today and these collections may come from parcels now completely destroyed archaeologically.

The Seacoast Region

There are only four collections reported for the southeastern portion of New Hampshire near the seacoast. On the Salmon Falls River in Dover there is a collection of Middle Woodland ceramics and Late Archaic points, the coincidence of which suggest the presence of a multi-component site. In Durham we have a collection of Middle and Late Woodland ceramics along with some extremely well preserved faunal remains. From Hampton we have another complete fully grooved ax and there is a large gouge fragment from Portsmouth. Each of these sites are potentially very significant, though lacking any additional provenience information they will remain only suggestive.

Collections Records

As part of the acquisitions documentation we were able to review some of the records associated with the collections. Time did not permit even a cursory reading of the records and even a minimally useful review would require many days of inspection. Still we made two very important discoveries in the files. One has been referenced above, the information found in Tyzzer's journal, which may lead us to the currently unrecorded location of the Ossipee Village. The other was piece of correspondence, which does not even relate to a collection in the Museum. This document is a letter to Moorehead from Solon Colby (a noted early amateur archaeologist in NH) requesting information on a variety of cut and polished shell artifact that Colby had recovered. This group of artifacts are unique in NH and it appears that they are extremely rare if in unique in New England. The information in that correspondence represents the only documentation we have for that collection. In addition, I have had the privilege of reading some of Moorehead's correspondence related to his

last field expedition, the Merrimack Survey of 1930. Even though he published the results of the survey, there are substantial numbers of letters, notes and field journals that present data not reported in the publication. A good example is the reference to the investigations by one of Moorehead's field crews of the "Indian Mound" in the town of Ossipee. It appears that his field investigators probed the mound and found that it was a natural topographic feature, probably of glacial origin. Moorehead elected not to report this finding so as not to "disappoint" the local residents who took great civic pride in their "Indian Mound".

I am certain that there are many more documents in the Museum's files that will clarify the provenience and context of the collections and also shed light on other archaeological data not directly represented in the holdings. It is also clear to me that the value of the documentation relevant to New Hampshire archaeology (as attractive as it may be to my own parochial interests) is considerably smaller than the potential contributions to be found for Massachusetts, Maine and many other areas. Extracting such information would be a complex through rewarding process. The Tyzzer journals are a good example of the value and, at the same time, the difficulties present. Tyzzer maintained records in a diary format, that is to say his information is organized by calendar date. We found reference to is digging in Ossipee and Freedom during a week's time one July. There may be other references in his journal to these (or other) sites made months or years before or after his success at the Ossipee Village.

Summary and Conclusions

The Robert S. Peabody Museum holds a modest sized, but very significant collection of artifacts from New Hampshire. The artifacts represent nearly the full range of time periods and artifact types recorded for the state. Provenience on the collections is variable, making the research utility uneven. Still, there are specimens present that are rare examples of their type which retain research value. Some collections are from areas known to be destroyed and constitute all that we can ever hope to learn from those sites. There are also extensive or well documented collections that may hold the key to explaining some of the most important sites in the state. The collections from the Weirs and Ossipee are among these, but I am convinced that there are others probably just as significant also present in the Museum's holdings.

The artifacts are only a part of the value--the notes, reports, correspondence and other supporting documentation constitute the lion's share of the significance. Given the integrated nature of the documentation, as well as the collections, the Robert S. Peabody Museum's New Hampshire collections retain a great deal of the research value.

Maine Collections at the R.S. Peabody Museum: Vital Research Value along with History

Arthur E. Speiss, *Maine Historic Preservation Commission*

A century ago, Maine was the focus of national archaeological excitement and debate as intensive fieldwork by Warren K. Moorehead of the R.S. Peabody Museum brought public and professional attention of a series of Native American cemeteries with spectacular stone grave furnishings and red ochre pigment. Harvard Peabody's C.C. Willoughby had done less energetic but pioneering work on the same type of sites in Maine, and these two prominent archaeologists joined others in a heated public debated on how old the graves were and what they meant to American Indian prehistory.

This subject, the “Red Paint” graves, has been revisited by archaeologists in the last decade, producing a new understanding of Northeast prehistory. The R.S. Peabody collections were a critical resource in this work, and as such are also central to an understanding of how the science of archaeology advances, and an object lesson in maintaining museum collections accessible for research (and teaching).

We now know that the area from New England to the St. Lawrence River was the focus of the development of a Native American religious tradition about 9000 years ago that lasted for more than 5000 years. Based on the work started by Warren K. Moorehead, Brian Robinson of Maine (and a Research Associate of the R.S. Peabody) who has lead this recent work has named this cultural phenomenon the Moorehead Burial Tradition.

Maine was the geographic focus of this religion, with its most intensive development. Although the Native Americans of the time practiced a hunting and gathering economy, they were not socially “simple” folk. Reuse of individual cemeteries for hundreds of years, in geographic patterns that reflect territories along river valleys and the coast, coupled with evidence in individual graces for social status, reflect an unanticipated level of social complexity.

This region, centered on Maine, may be among the earliest in the Americas to start developing complex social organization on a regional scale after the last ice age. Work done by the R.S. Peabody Museum, the resulting artifact collections and paper and photographic records, have now proven invaluable as resources to research archaeologists with modern laboratory tools to apply to the collections. Moreover, in the century since Willoughby and Moorehead, archaeologists have developed the perspective that hunter-gatherer economic organization does not necessarily mean a simple social/political situation. These collections are an important reservoir of information as further advances in laboratory techniques improve and as archaeologists become more sophisticated about understanding Native American lifeways of the past.

Moorehead ran an active archaeological survey in Maine from 1912 to 1920, covering many of the major interior river and lake systems as well as the coast. And he advocated for establishment of a formal State archaeological survey and protection of archaeological sites, a full 50 years in advance the establishment of such a program with the passage of the NationalHistoric Preservation Act. In this and many other ways, he was a man way ahead of his time. His paper and photographic records of this work are thus invaluable to the history of science and conservation, as well as specific sources of archaeological knowledge.

Douglas Byers was one of Moorehead’s successors as Director of the R.S. Peabody (1938-1968). Byers owned a summer home in Maine, and this coincidence made a major contribution to Moorehead’s legacy. Beginning in 1940, Byers excavated at the Nevin Site on the coast of Maine, where a later prehistoric shellmidden overlies a “Red Paint” cemetery. The shells, among other factors, helped neutralize soil acids and preserved bone tools and grave furnishings from the Moorehead Burial Tradition that are just as spectacular as the stone tools Moorehead himself found. These people were hunting swordfish, presumably from dugout canoes, along the Maine coast during summer. Elaborately decorated moose bone daggers are, perhaps, bone equivalents to long slate bayonets used in this offshore fishing activity as well as other hunting. In any case, the Nevin collection at the R.S. Peabody provides a major addition to our knowledge of coastal life about 4000years ago.

The R.S. Peabody Museum owns the vast majority of archaeological collections from the Moorehead Burial Tradition, including the spectacular Nevin collection. One of the questions raised by Moorehead’s work on the “Red Paint People” sites was how old they were, and why were the materials so different from those of more recent Native Americans? Moorehead and Willoughby eventually settled on a culture history defining the “Red Paint” material as pre-Algonkian, and more recent materials as “early Algonkian” and “later Algonkian.” They

used the term “Algonkian” (Which is a language family) as a shorthand expression for being more closely related to the Native inhabitants of New England when Europeans arrived. Older and younger were relative concept, established by the state of preservation of archaeological materials and geological layering (or stratigraphy), until the discovery of radiocarbon dating (1949, but effective in the early 1950s). [As an aside, Douglas Byers was among the first archaeologists to submit samples for radiocarbon dating.] We now know how old the “Red Paint” material is, and that about 4000 years have passed since this religion disappeared. Archaeological work since 1960 has proven, essentially, that Moorehead and Willoughby were correct in their conclusions that the Red Paint material was not closely related to recent inhabitants of New England. There have been at least one and perhaps several major cultural changes in New England, probably marking the immigration of new people, between 4000 years ago and the arrival f Europeans to begin recording the distribution of languages of Native American tribes in the region.

In fact, neither Moorehead not Byers exclusively collected “Red Paint” or Moorehead Burial Tradition in Maine. The R.S. Peabody collections contain important materials from Maine that are later in age, mostly what we now term “Woodland” or “Ceramic Period”, dating from the last 3000 years of prehistory and the early years of historic contact with Europeans. Byers closely collaborated with Ted Stoddard on a systematic collection around Passamaquoddy Bay in eastern Maine. This area is suffering from rapid coastal erosion, and consequent archaeological site loss, because of a localized geological phenomenon (coastal bedrock subsidence).Consequently, sites that Stoddard and Byers collected 40 years ago are now gone, making the R.S. Peabody collections an irreplaceable source of evidence for regional eastern Maine archaeology.

Economic and legal changes in the status of Maine’s Native American tribes (1980 land claims settlement)m has increased Native American interest in their archaeological heritage. The recent passage of a Federal statue (NAGPRA) mandating repatriation (usually, return) of human skeletal material and associated grave goods that are culturally affiliated with modern tribes has also moved the archaeological question of “Who were they?” from an academic exercise into a legally relevant question. Archaeologists in Maine feel that cultural affiliation can be demonstrated back to about 1000 years ago, when we see larger villages forming in the archaeological record, and therefore possibly “tribal formation.” Consequently, we do not see the Red Paint or Moorehead Burial Tradition material as culturally affiliated with modern tribes. The R.S. Peabody has taken a National leadership role in repatriating culturally affiliated associated grave goods, and mostly completed the NAGPRA process. What remains, none the less, is the vast majority of the original collection from Maine. And this collection has research potential and interest now not just to archaeologists, but to Native Americans as well.