PARTICIPATE IN ARCHEOLOGY

Photo courtesy NPS Midwest Archeological Center.

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources

Departmental Consulting Archeologist
Archeological Assistance

The Value of Archeology

Archeological sites are the physical remains of the past that can be studied by archeologists and other scholars to answer questions about history and prehistory. They include building remains, trash, garbage, and other physical evidence of past societies and cultures. These remains often have been buried by later human activities or natural processes, and now must be studied with the help of archeological excavation and other techniques.

Archeological sites are especially important to the preservation and understanding of our nation's heritage because they are the main source of our knowledge about the prehistoric past. In addition, more recent archeological sites can provide information on aspects of history that were never written down, even though they occurred at a time when written records were kept.

All archeological sites are fragile and irreplaceable; they cannot be rebuilt or remade. Even excavation by professional archeologists, using modern techniques, by its very nature destroys some information, so archeologists are careful to dig only as much as they need in order to address important questions or enhance public interpretation of our past. Archeologists frequently concentrate their work on sites that must be destroyed for other reasons, such as to make way for highway or building construction, or at those places that can aid them the most in developing better ways of managing many other such sites.

Learning More About Archeology

Many people are fascinated by archeology; it can spark wonder, delight, surprise, and reflection. There is within many of us a natural human curiosity about the past. We want to know more about it, to understand it, and sometimes to try to experience it again. Archeology is one way to do these things.

There are different ways to participate in archeology. You can read a book or article about an archeological site, excavation, or other kind of archeological topic. You can visit a museum or a public site or park with archeological collections on display and archeological interpretations. If you are especially interested and willing to spend some of your time, and possibly money as well, you can participate in an archeological investigation, such as an excavation or dig, an archeological site survey, or work in a laboratory with artifacts.

This brochure provides information about how you can participate in archeology in these different ways. There are several annotated lists of good written introductions to archeology, magazines, and journals that contain articles about archeology, and video tapes and television programs about archeological topics. Should you prefer to visit archeological museums, sites, or excavations there is a list of references and public agencies that you can contact for up-to-date information. For those of you who wish to participate in archeology first hand, there is a list of public agencies and private organizations that provide opportunities for members of the general public to participate in legitimate, high quality archeological investigations.

Collecting artifacts from the surface or digging on your own is not a constructive way to participate in archeology. Unauthorized collecting or digging for artifacts is illegal on Federal land and many other kinds of public land, as well as on private land without permission. More importantly, doing archeology without the proper training and professional support destroys potentially important archeological information about the context in which artifacts and structures are found.

Visiting Archeology

There are thousands of archeological sites and museums throughout the country that interpret archeological remains. These sites and museums are operated by Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private organizations. ***Archaeology*** magazine publishes in each issue a listing of current archeological exhibitions at museums throughout the country. **Archaeology** also publishes two travel guides each year; the March-April issue lists sites in the Old World that can be visited or at which individuals can volunteer to excavate. A similar listing in the May-June issue each year provides information about similar opportunities in North, Central, and South America. The most complete listing of archeological sites and museums in America north of Mexico that can be visited appears in ***America's Ancient Treasures*** (third revised and enlarged edition, 1983) by Franklin and Mary Elting Folsom, published by the University of New Mexico Press. This book is a guide to hundreds of archeological sites and museums that can be visited in the United States and Canada. Many entries have very detailed descriptions of the exhibits and archeological remains at the sites.

Another source of information about sites and interpretative exhibits is ***LEAP: Listing of Education in Archeological Programs,*** available from the LEAP Coordinator, DCA/ADD, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. This is an annotated listing of programs and publications done by archeologists for the public. Each entry includes a contact person from whom additional and updated information can be obtained. Among the types of public outreach programs listed in the publication are archeological tours and exhibits.

Photo courtesy Bureau of Reclamation.

Doing Archeology

Photo courtesy NPS Midwest Archeological Center.

Until recently, the only way for most people to become involved directly in a professional archeological study was to enroll in a college course on archeology that involved field or lab work. Normal work schedules and college semesters being what they are, it was difficult for many people to take advantage of these courses. There are many such opportunities available: they can be found in the following two listings: ***Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin,*** Archaeological Institute of America, Department AFOB, 675 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215, (617) 353-9361; ***Summer Field School List,*** American Anthropological Association, 1703 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 232-8800.

Additional archeological opportunities now are becoming available for people who would like to participate in professionally supervised archeological investigations and are willing to spend some time, and in some cases, money doing so. The travel guides published annually in ***Archaeology*** magazine mentioned above include some listings that offer opportunities to volunteer and participate in excavations, surveys, or lab work. There are several private organizations that provide opportunities to take part in similar archeological activities. Examples of these are: ***Crow Canyon Archaeological Center,*** 23390 County Road K, Cortez, CO 81321, (800) 422-8975; ***University Research Expeditions Program,*** Department J-4, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, (415) 642-6586; ***Center for American Archeology,*** Department B, Kampsville Archeological Center, P.O. Box 366, Kampsville, IL 62053, (618) 653-4316; ***EARTHWATCH,*** 680 Mt. Auburn Street, Box 403N, Watertown, MA 02272, (617) 926-8200; ***Foundation for Field Research,*** P.O. Box 2010, Alpine, CA 91001, (619) 445-9264; ***The Smithsonian Institution,*** Smithsonian National Associates, Research Expedition Program, Suite 4210, 490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC 20560, (202) 357-1350.

Some local governments are establishing programs led by professional archeologists that include substantial participation by volunteers. Interested individuals should contact their local parks, historic preservation or planning departments, or museums to check on such opportunities.

Agencies of the Federal State, and Tribal governments are organizing similar opportunities for the public. For example, the U.S. Forest Service has begun a nationwide program called "Passport in Time" that invites the public to participate in Forest Service archeological and historic preservation projects throughout the country. These projects are supervised by professional archeologists or professionals in other appropriate fields. Interested individuals can write to: Passport in Time Clearinghouse, c/o CEHP Inc., P.O. Box 18364, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 293-0922.

Photo courtesy Francis P. McManamon.

Photo courtesy NPS Midwest Archeological Center.

Other public agencies sometimes provide similar opportunities. In order to find out about what is available, interested individuals can contact the State Archeologist, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the division, project, regional, or State offices of a variety of public agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, or State Transportation Department.

Contacts About Archeology

Every State and Territory, the District of Columbia, and some Tribes have official Historic Preservation Officers who have information about regional and local archeological programs. A State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), who frequently is associated with a State museum or historical society usually can be located under State government listings in the telephone directory. A listing of SHPOs is available from the National Conference of SHPOs, Suite 332, Hall of the States, 444 North Capitol St., Washington, DC, 20001-1512; telephone (202) 624-5465. Many States have State Archeologists and archeology programs in State Transportation Departments, and Federal agencies have regional, State and local offices with archeological staffs who can provide archeological information if contacted.

Acknowledgements

This brochure was developed and designed by the Departmental Consulting Archeologist/Archeological Assistance Program, National Park Service, in cooperation with the Public Awareness Working Group, which is comprised of senior Federal archeologists whose mission is to establish public awareness programs within their agencies.

Appreciation is extended to the following agencies that contributed in the printing of the brochure:

National Park Service
Department of the Interior

Department of the Army

Bureau of Reclamation
Department of the Interior

U.S. Forest Service
Department of Agriculture

Federal Highway Administration
Department of Transportation

Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
P.O. BOX 37127 (436)
WASHINGTON, DC 20013-7127

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Movies, Television Programs, and Videos About Archeology

Nearly everyone has seen one of the Indiana Jones movies that have done much to make archeology a household word. There is plenty of adventure in modern archeology, but not the same sort of rough-and-tumble adventure that is the focus of the Indiana Jones films. The real adventures of modern archeology are often portrayed in videos and television programs. Many of these can be seen regularly on public broadcasting stations. The ***Nova*** series sponsored by PBS frequently has shows on archeological topics, for example. Other series or individual programs on archeology also can be found each month on these stations.

Some of the television shows, as well as other films not produced for television, can be obtained for rent or purchase through video rental stores or film distributors. Some recent good videos are listed below:

Caracol, The Lost Maya City, Pyramid Films, 490 East Webster Ave., Winter Park, FL 32798. 1988. An introduction to Mayan archeology and the Mayan civilization through the story of excavations at the site of Caracol in Belize.

Archaeology: Questioning the Past, University of California Extension Media Center, Berkeley, CA 94704. 1987. A first-rate introduction to archeology using footage from excavations in California and the American Southwest, classroom presentations, and the laboratory.

Applied Geoarchaeology, Center for Geoarcheological Studies, Box 19049, The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX 76019. This film presents a case study of the investigation of the River Bend site near Fort Worth, TX. The various methods and techniques of modern archeological field work and the context of archeology done in advance of a development project are shown.

Assault on Time, National Audiovisual Center, Customer Service Staff, 8700 Edgeworth Drive, Capitol Heights, MD, 20743-3701. This film shows the destructive impact on the country's cultural heritage caused by looting and vandalism of archeological sites, and discusses the importance of this national heritage and laws aimed at protecting it.

Nova series, Coronet/MTI Film and Video, 108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield, IL 60015. ***Nova,*** *a highly successful series of science programs on public television, regularly includes features on archeology. High quality programs from this series are available in video. Titles related to archeology include:* ***The Case of the Ancient Astronauts, Buried in Ice, The Mystery of the Anasazi, The Red Paint People, The Williamsburg File, Secrets of Easter Island,*** and ***Lost World of the Maya,*** among others.

Odyssey series, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698. This series of videos was shown on public television during the early 1980s. The treatments of archeological topics are first rate. Titles related to archeology include: ***The Ancient Mariners, The Chaco Legacy, The Incas, Maya Lords of the Jungle, Myths of the Mound Builders, Other People's Garbage, Seeking the First Americans,*** and ***Shipwreck: La Trinidad Valencera.***

Plunder!, PBS Video, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698. This remarkable piece of investigative journalism describes the looting of archeological sites in Latin America and the commercial system that drives it. Although focusing on Latin America, the points made about the antiquities trade and its results are valid for other areas of the world, also.

Those interested in finding more videos about archeology can consult the comprehensive list in ***Archaeology on Film,*** compiled and edited by Peter S. Allen and Carole Lazio, Archaeological Institute of America, Boston, MA 02215. Videos that have appeared since the publication of this book in 1983 may have been reviewed in ***Archaeology*** magazine. These reviews can be found in back issues of the magazine at many public libraries.

Magazines and Journals about Archeology

Several popular and readily available magazines regularly publish well-researched and well-written articles about archeology. ***Archaeology*** magazine, (published bimonthly) is filled with articles, book and film reviews, travel and exhibition news, and regular columns on archeological topics. Other magazines regularly publish articles on archeological topics: ***National Geographic*** (published monthly), ***Natural History*** (published bimonthly), ***Scientific American*** (published monthly), and ***Smithsonian*** (published monthly). Of special interest for younger readers are the Children's magazines ***Cobblestone*** and ***Faces,*** both of which have devoted issues to archeology and archeological topics. All of these magazines are available from book sellers and at local libraries throughout the United States.

Photo courtesy Alexandria Urban Archeology Program.

There also are a large number of more specialized journals that publish articles about archeology. For example, in most States there are statewide archeological organizations whose members are particularly interested in the archeology of their areas. Members include both those who are interested in archeology as an avocation or hobby and full-time professional archeologists. Typically, these organizations publish a quarterly journal about archeological investigations and research results within the State.

In addition, there are a number of regional and national journals that publish articles about American archeology, comments or opinions on archeological topics, and reviews of archeological books. Many of the articles in these journals are detailed and technical, but they will provide readers with an up-to-date view of the American archeology scene. There are about a dozen regional journals, such as ***Arctic Anthropology, Man in the Northeast, Southeastern Archaeology, Plains Anthropologist, The Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology, Kiva,*** and others.

The national archeological journals include: ***American Antiquity, Canadian Journal of Anthropology, Historical Archaeology, Journal of Anthropological Archaeology, Journal of Field Archaeology, Latin American Antiquity,*** and ***North American Archaeologist.*** International journals also regularly publish articles on American archaeology. These journals include: ***Antiquity, Journal of World Prehistory,*** and ***World Archaeology.*** While these more technical journals will not be found in every local library, they typically can be found in university libraries or large public libraries. Interested readers also may be able to obtain copies of these journals through interlibrary loan programs. Consult your local librarian for help in this regard.

More Detailed Discussions of Archeology and Archeological Topics

A History of American Archaeology, second edition. Gordon Willey and Jeremy A. Sabloff, W.H. Freeman, San Francisco. 1980. A detailed history of the intellectual development of archeology as a profession in America.

American Archaeology Past and Future. David J. Meltzer, Don D. Fowler, and Jeremy A. Sabloff, editors, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. 1986. A collection of articles by leading archeologists on the past and current state of various aspects of the disicipline.

Ancient North America: The Archaeology of a Continent. Brian M. Fagan, Thames and Hudson, New York. 1991. A well-illustrated introduction to North American archeology.

Archeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice. Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, Thames and Hudson, New York. 1991. A well-illustrated, wide ranging introduction to archeology.

Elusive Treasure: The Story of Early Archaeologists in the Americas. Brian M. Fagan, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1977. Nicely illustrated with historic photos, maps, and drawings, this is a history of the first descriptions and interpretations of antiquities found in North America with a special focus on Mesoamerica, the southwestern United States, and the eastern United States.

Ethics and Values in Archaeology. Ernestene Green, editor, The Free Press, New York. 1984. A series of articles by noted archeologists on a variety of contemporary issues.

Footsteps: Nine Archaeological Journeys of Romance and Discovery. Bruce Norman, Salem House Publishers, Topsfield, MA. 1987. A nicely-illustrated book, companion to a series on public television, about historic archeological discoveries and the development of early archeological methods and techniques.

In Small Things Forgotten: The Archeology of Early American Life. James Deetz, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York. 1977. Archeological method and techniques revealed through examples drawn from historical archeological projects and sites.

In Pursuit of the Past: Decoding the Archaeological Record. Lewis R. Binford, Thames and Hudson, New York. 1983. A description of how archeological data are interpreted using modern theories, methods, and techniques by an archeologist who led in the development of new archeological approaches during the 1960s.

Martin's Hundred. Ivor Noel Hume, Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1982. A firsthand account of one of the most important excavations in American historical archeology: the discovery of a lost plantation and the most extensive evidence available of English colonial life in early 17th century Virginia.

Predicting the Past: An Introduction to Anthropological Archaeology. David Hurst Thomas, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York. 1974. An informative and brief introduction to the variety of archeological methods and techniques.

Protecting the Past. George S. Smith and John E. Ehrenhard, editors, CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL. 1991. Includes articles by 48 experts on protecting, preserving, and interpreting archeological sites.

Quest for the Past: Great Discoveries in Archaeology. Brian M. Fagan, Waveland Press, Prospect Heights, IL. 1988 (originally published 1978). A book about important archeological discoveries and the archeologists who made them. It also describes the scientific methods necessary to interpret these exciting discoveries.

The Great Journey: The Peopling of Ancient America. Brian M. Fagan, Thames and Hudson, New York. 1987. The story of the first Americans and the archeological search for them. The book provides a history of how interpretations of the ancient Americans have changed since the European discovery of America.

The New Archaeology and the Ancient Maya. Jeremy A. Sabloff, Scientific American Library, W.H. Freeman and Company, New York. 1990. A beautifully illustrated description of how recent advances in archeological method and theory have led to the modern interpretation of Mayan archaeology and the ancient Mayan civilization.

Reading About Archeology: Introductions to Archeology and Archeological Topics

A Field Guide to Conservation Archaeology in North America. Georgess McHargue and Michael Roberts, J.B. Lippencott Company, Philadelphia. 1977. An introduction to the basic principles, methods, and techniques and to the need to conserve archeological sites.

Atlas of Ancient America. Michael Coe, Dean Snow, and Elizabeth Benson, Alfred A. Knopf Co., New York. 1986. A large format atlas by three experienced archeologists, providing summaries about major archeological sites, time periods, and areas of the Americas.

Clues to America's Past. The Special Publications Division, National Geographic Society, Washington, DC. 1976. Well-illustrated descriptions by noted archeologists and journalists of several prehistoric and historic period archeological investigations.

Digging to the Past: Excavations in Ancient Lands. W. John Hackwell, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1986. An introduction to modern archeological methods, techniques, and data told through the story of an archeological investigation in the Middle East; for elementary school readers.

Discovering Our Past: A Brief Introduction to Archaeology. Wendy Ashmore and Robert J. Sharer, Mayfield Publishing Co., Mountain View, CA. 1988. A summary of the basic principles, methods, techniques, and issues in contemporary scientific archeology.

Diving to the Past: Recovering Ancient Wrecks. W. John Hackwell, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1988. An introduction to marine, or underwater, archeology; for elementary school level readers.

I Can Be an Archeologist. Robert B. Pickering, Children's Press, Chicago. 1987. A short introduction to the kinds of activities that an archeologist performs by an archeologist and physical anthropologist; for beginning readers.

Secrets from the Past. Gene S. Stuart, National Geographic Society, Washington, DC. 1979. An introduction to archeology through the reconstruction of activities and events likely to have occurred at selected ancient sites.

The Adventure of Archaeology. Brian M. Fagan, National Geographic Society, Washington, DC. 1989. A well-illustrated, general introduction to archeological methods, techniques, history, and findings by an experienced archeologist who is the author of many popular books on archeological topics.

The Archaeology of North America. Dean R. Snow, Chelsea House Publishers, New York. 1990. Introductory information about prehistoric archeological sites and ancient cultures of North America; for ages 10 and up.

The Practical Archaeologist: How We Know What We Know About the Past. Jane McIntosh, Facts on File Publications, New York. 1986. A well-illustrated presentation about archeological methods and techniques with short summaries of specific archeological sites or topics that demonstrate the points made. The examples used are mainly from Great Britain, Europe, and the Mediterranean by an archeologist well acquainted with these areas and topics.

The World of the American Indian. W.A. Chafe, D. Damas, V. DeLoria, Jr., J.C. Ewers, R.F. Heizer, J.D. Jennings, D. McNichol, N.S. Momaday, A. Ortiz, and W.S. Sturtevant, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C. 1989. A well-illustrated, general introduction to a selection of ancient and modern Indian cultures and societies by a host of notable and well-informed authors.

The Young Scientist Book of Archaeology. Barbara Cook and Sturand Reid, EDC Publishing, Tulsa, Oklahoma. 1987. A lively and colorfully illustrated introduction to archeological method and techniques; for upper elementary and junior high school grades.