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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

E. Ann Smith

This volume of *Northeast Historical Archaeology* marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of a regional group to promote historical archaeology in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada. In 1966 the Symposium on Historic Site Archeology met for the first time, and the participants decided there was a need for regular meetings and for an elected board to organize the meetings and other activities. This group became the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology, which continues to hold annual fall conferences and since 1971 has published the journal, *Northeast Historical Archaeology*.

The first meeting in 1966 was a small, enthusiastic gathering of professional and amateur archaeologists interested in military site research. Training in historical archaeology was rare, and information exchange was vital. The field as a whole was new, and the founders of the council were pioneers in every sense. The organizational structure of the council has become more formalized over the past 20 years, and the membership and officers are now for the most part professionally-trained archaeologists and students enrolled in archaeology programs. The council, however, remains a small, essentially informal group whose aim is still, as it was in 1966, to encourage the collection, preservation, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge concerning the study of historical archaeology. Making historical archaeology relevant to the general public, giving conference experience to students, and providing a forum for current research remain important goals. The conferences, held in different locations in the northeast, now draw anywhere from 100 to 150 participants. The size of the meeting still allows for an easy exchange of information—both formal and informal—among participants.

In celebrating its 20th anniversary, CNEHA applauds the contributions of its founding and early members both to the council as well as to the field of historical archaeology. Jack Mead, Wallace Workmaster, Edward Lenik, Budd Wilson, and Paul Huey all deserve recognition and credit for their pioneering efforts. CNEHA has been very fortunate to have had long, active board involvement by these individuals. They provided enthusiasm and continuity as well as their expertise over the years.

It is appropriate that this anniversary volume contains retrospective papers given at the 1986 Troy, New York, conference by two of these long-time members. Paul Huey, a board member for over 15 years, reviews the beginnings of historical archaeology in the northeast and the background and origins of the council. Budd Wilson, a founding member who stepped down from the board in 1986, provides a very personal reminiscence of the council's early days.

The bulk of this volume is composed of a bibliography on historical archaeology in the northeast. This bibliography reveals the beginnings of historical archaeology in the northeast, the trends in research and publishing over the past 20 years, the impetus and sustained research support given by government archaeological agencies such as the national parks services in the United States and Canada, and the directions historical archaeology is taking in the 1980s. The council is grateful to the compiler, David Starbuck, for volunteering to undertake this enormous task. Thanks are due also to other board members, in particular Pierre Beaudet, who provided additional references.

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