

THE TRIBAL NATIONS EXCHANGE

INFORMATION SHARING ON

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Chief of Engineers, Senior Headquarters Staff Receive Native American Awareness Training

What began a few months ago as a Staff Ride to the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument for the Chief of Engineers, Lieutenant General Robert Flowers, and his senior Headquarters staff, ended July 10, 2002, as a day-long training session officially titled "The Chief of Engineer's Native American Cross-Cultural Workshop."

In its earliest planning stages, the Staff Ride was to include an intensive tour of the battlefield site. The Chief of Engineers was also keenly interested in meeting with tribal leaders and elders to discuss historic and contemporary issues and concerns. Eventually, though, budgeting and scheduling conflicts made the Staff Ride to the Little Bighorn impossible to accomplish. LTG Flowers, however, instructed the staff to keep the July date open for a program on Native Americans and planning for the cross-cultural awareness session went into high gear.

When finalized, the agenda for the Chief and Senior Staff offered a varied set of Native American subjects, lesson settings and views. The day began with cultural awareness overviews provided by Dr. Michael Trimble, Director of USACE's Mandatory Center of Expertise for Curation and Management of Archeological Collections and Ms. Roberta Hayworth, St. Louis District Native American Coordinator.

Following lunch, the group was addressed by Mr. Michael Tosee, Professor at Haskell Indian Nations University. Mr. Tosee has been engaged in a multi-year videography project interviewing Native American Armed Forces Veterans from the World Wars, Korea and Vietnam. He spoke about his work with young people, the importance of preserving Indian heritage, tradition and history and, he presented excerpts of video interviews with Native American Medal of Honor winners, survivors of the Bataan Campaign and Vietnam Veterans

The afternoon began with an on-site meeting with staff of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian at the museum's Suitland, Maryland Research Center. The USACE group heard from architects, curators and repatriation specialists working on the development of the new museum. The highlight of the visit was a tour of the collection center, containing almost one million artifacts and ethnographic pieces that will form the basis for exhibits in the completed museum.

Following the Smithsonian visit, the USACE Senior Leaders screened the film "In the Light of Reverence" (see review box) and completed the day with an

Two Thumbs Up for "In the Light of Reverence"

Andy Petefish, a commercial climbing guide says, "*To me, climbing lifts my spirits more than any other activity. . . When I climb the tower and I get up on top there, I'm fully engaged with nature. . .*" Johnson Holy Rock, a Lakota Sioux elder says, "*As I look up at the climbers on the tower, it imparted to me a feeling of violation - a sense of desecration. And I thought to myself, Why are they doing this? Don't they have any respect for anything?*"

Both men are speaking of the same place, Devils Tower, Wyoming to Mr. Petefish; Mato Tipila (Bear's Lodge) to the Lakota. Their different visions go to the heart of a new film from the Sacred Land Film Project, "In the Light of Reverence". "In the Light . . ." "explores cultural and land-use conflicts at three North American sites considered sacred by the Lakota, Hopi and Wintu: Devils Tower in Wyoming, the Colorado Plateau in the Southwest and Mount Shasta in California."

The film expresses powerful views of cultural diversity and cultural division because it shows people like Mr. Petefish, Mr. Holy Rock and others as they express their own thoughts, interests and beliefs. A miner talks about the Colorado Plateau in terms of resource use and exploitation while a tribal elder talks about the sacred sites destroyed by mining; a Wintu healer makes you feel the power of a mountain stream and nearby, New Age celebrants mimic Native American songs and dances.

The filmmakers clearly find it easy to compare and contrast the clashing world views and judiciously use outsiders from government and the legal community to add to the commentary. The attorneys interviewed for the film are themselves a study in contrasts. The corporation attorney has the look and sound of a Washington power-type, while the lawyer championing Native American views is a University of Colorado law professor with all the natural looks of a Coors commercial

"In the Light . . ." is an important new film, not only for its quality of presentation but for the message it provides to the Corps community. The film was recently viewed by the Chief of Engineers' senior staff (see lead story above) and it provoked considerable discussion among the audience. The Deputy Commander, Major General Hans Van Winkle, in his closing remarks reflected on the power of the Native American views and beliefs expressed in the film. He noted that seeing films such as this will help the engineering community more clearly understand tribal imperatives and improve the quality of interaction between the Corps and Indian tribes.

"In the Light of Reverence" is a production of Bullfrog Films, Oley, Pennsylvania.

informal dinner and facilitated discussion with Native American guests and dignitaries. Visiting Native Americans included Ms. Pemina Yellow Bird, Cultural Resources Coordinator for the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation ; Ms. Karen Atkinson, Senior Majority Counsel to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee; and, Mr. Terry Snowball of the Smithsonian Institution. The USACE attendees heard from, and interacted with, the Native American guests to discuss and consider a wide range of issues important to Native Americans and the Corps.

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Quote of the Issue

“The buffalo represents our most sacred animal, the pipes represent peace and prayers, and the two teepees represent the two World Trade Center buildings.”

Vera Big Talk, a Sioux grandmother from Brockton, Montana, describes two specially made star quilts she will present to the Mayors of New York City and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2002.

Pow Wow on the National Mall

September is a great time to visit the Washington, D.C. area and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian is adding to the important list of events with the Inaugural Pow Wow on the National Mall, September 14-15, 2002. The Pow Wow is described by a museum announcement as “. . . a gathering to dance, sing and visit.” It will be a time to “reaffirm traditions and preserve a rich heritage” and an opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones. The Host Drums for the event will be the Black Lodge (Blackfeet) and Cozad (Kiowa). MC's are Mr. Wallace Coffey (Comanche) and Dale Old Horn (Crow). The Pow Wow will be held on the National Mall, adjacent to the future site of the National Museum of the American Indian. The museum will open in 2004. For additional information, visit <http://www.americanindian.si.edu/>.

Editor's Note: The following newspaper article was brought to our attention by Judy Wood, Savannah District archeologist. Mary Musgrove was the daughter of a South Carolina trader and a Creek Indian princess. In 1732, she and her husband established a trading post on the Savannah River at Yamacraw Bluff. This bluff would come to be the site of Savannah and Mary Musgrove would become an important figure in the founding and development of this first settlement in the English colony of Georgia. The archeological work performed by Georgia Ports Authority is associated with USACE's Regulatory Program permitting requirements.

270-year-old site found

Dig at Georgia Ports site may have uncovered Mary Musgrove's legendary trading post.

***By Mary Carr Mayle
Savannah Morning News***

All indications are that, some 270 years ago, it was Mary Musgrove's legendary trading post, the hub of early Georgia commerce where Creek Indians and colonial settlers swapped deerskins for weapons and rum.

Today, the excavated dirt cellar -- part of a 90-acre tract high on a bluff some four miles upriver of downtown Savannah -- is one of the greatest archeological finds in Georgia history.

Next year, it will be a giant expanse of concrete -- the site of Georgia Ports Authority's new Container Berth 8.

The discovery of the trading post, as well as significant artifacts ranging from prehistoric periods to the mid-1800s, presents a virtual map of the state's history, said Gail Whalen, assistant curator of the Savannah History Museum.

"This is an unbelievably significant find," Whalen said. "It illustrates the early years of Georgia from the Native American occupation to colonization and beyond. It tells us a lot about how the colonists and the Native Americans interacted. This shows us what life in the early days of our state was really like. Right here on this bluff was truly the frontier."

The riverfront site was first deemed historically important in 1994, when a preliminary archeological survey conducted for Georgia Ports indicated the land might be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. GPA bought the property in 1995 and, in compliance with federal historic preservation laws, hired Southeastern Archeological Services, Inc. of Athens to do a more extensive excavation of the site.

The field work began in April and will wrap up next week. Work on the new berth, which will give GPA an additional 1,700 feet of dockage and room for 180,000 more piggyback shipping containers, is set to begin within the next few months. But no one, including Southeastern Archeological's principal investigator Chad Braley, expected to find something as striking as traces of Musgrove's trading post on the property.

"I've been in this business for 27 years and I can't say that I've ever seen a site quite like this one," Braley said. "It has been virtually undisturbed and an undisturbed Colonial period site is extremely rare."

While Braley can't say with absolute certainty that the site is Musgrove's famous trading post, all signs point to that probability, he said.

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Among the findings were bottles, gunflints, coins and buttons that dated the site to the 1730-1750 period. More than 50 musket gunflints and a number of gun parts appeared to be new, like those that might be stocked at a trading post. Also found were bottles that most likely contained rum, also a popular trading item.

Close to the cellar, a shallow pit is filled with the bones of butchered animals, coinciding with historical reports that Musgrove dealt heavily in the deer-hide trade.

Among the personal items retrieved is a small piece of stamped brass -- possibly used to decorate a leather book or journal -- with the raised initial M in the center.

"To have a site potentially associated with Mary Musgrove and the earliest days of our colony is like finding a hidden treasure," said Steve Smith of the Coastal Heritage Foundation. "Children learn about Mary Musgrove in school, but this really helps personalize our history."

While the possible Musgrove find has been the biggest surprise, it's far from the only big discovery at the site. The brick-lined foundation of the Grange Plantation, circa 1795, was uncovered closer to the bluff and remnants of tiny slave quarters are laid out some 150 yards back from the river. Various occupations indicated at the site range from the Late Archaic Period -- some 4,000 years ago -- to the Antebellum era.

Artifacts -- from nails and kaolin pipes to shards of pottery -- cover nearly every square foot of the site, which Braley described as one of the richest he had ever seen. More than 1,200 pounds of material has been shipped to the University of Georgia, the state's official repository, where Braley's team will archive and catalog each piece.

The site itself cannot be preserved, Braley said, because the proposed construction of Container Berth 8 will require that the entire area be graded down by 2 to 3 feet, effectively destroying the archeological deposits.

Hope Moorer, GPA's program manager for navigation improvement projects, said the Georgia Ports would like to work with the Coastal Heritage Society to establish an exhibit on the project at the Savannah History Museum, with artifacts permanently on loan from the University of Georgia.

Whalen agreed that such an exhibit would be warranted. "This site has as much significance for Georgia's early Colonial period as the Irene Mound (a few miles downriver) had for the Native

American period. We need to make sure these artifacts are preserved and shared."

Sacred Lands Bill Introduced in House

On July 18, 2002, Congressman Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), introduced the "Native American Sacred Lands Act" in the House of Representatives. The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources.

The bill proposes that each Executive department or agency with administrative jurisdiction over Federal lands shall protect Native American sacred lands and shall designate lands that are unsuitable for certain types of development. The proposed legislation would add provisions on confidentiality and outlines rules for the Secretary of the Interior to develop sacred lands regulations.

Complete bill language can be viewed at <http://www.thomas.loc.gov/>. This website, sponsored by the United States Congress, can also be used to track the bill's progress through the House of Representatives, and the Senate (if a companion version is introduced there).

News from the Corps Alaska Native Liaison Office

The Corps Alaska Native Liaison team of Amanda Johnson and Johnny Duplantis are preparing monthly issues of the "Alaska District Community Relations Update." Billed as providing "a better understanding of Alaska Native issues and how we can become better educated in communicating with Tribes. . .", this newsletter contains important information for all of us working tribal issues.

The July "Update" contains informative narratives on Alaska District outreach as well as information on recent conferences sponsored by the National Tribal Environmental Council and the Environmental Protection Agency. The July issue of the "Update" is attached below.

To receive future editions of the "Update", contact Ms. Johnson or Mr. Duplantis through the USACE electronic mail system or by telephone at (907) 753-5795 or (907) 753-2829.



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Advisory Council Issues Summer 2002 Case Digest

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) has issued its Summer 2002 Case Digest, providing “information on a small but representative cross-section of (*Section 106*) undertakings that illustrate the variety and complexity of Federal activities in which the ACHP is currently involved.”

USACE undertakings figure prominently in the ACHP report, beginning with a cover photograph of the Buckeye Knoll Site, Channel to Victoria, Texas. Buckeye Knoll has been excavated by Galveston District and has yielded the largest Early Archaic cemetery (circa 5,000 BC) found west of the Mississippi River. The ACHP has entered into consultations with the District since this is a Section 106, and not NAGPRA (the land is owned by the DuPont Corporation) issue. The Case Digest contains a brief, but accurate, review of the Buckeye Knoll case.

In addition to Buckeye Knoll, the Case Digest also includes a review of USACE’s cultural resources management activities along two major river systems, the Columbia River Power System and operation of the Mainstem Projects along the Upper Missouri River. The narrative on the Missouri provides an excellent review of a recent ACHP public hearing on Corps management activities while the narrative on our Columbia River efforts offers a number of subjective and unsubstantiated observations that will leave most readers with a distorted view of our on-going program along the river.

The full text of the ACHP report can be viewed on the Council’s web site at <http://www.achp.gov/>.