

*16th Annual Native American
Archaeology Roundtable*

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND ARCHAEOLOGY: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



October 30, 2021 | Virtual Conference

AGENDA

1:00 - 1:45 PM

NAYYAG: INTERSECTION OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, GRASSROOTS DECOLONIZATION AND A PATH FORWARD

Nohham R. Cachat-Schilling (Massachusetts Ethical Archaeology Society)

1:45 - 2:30 PM

COMBATING ERASURE THROUGH TRIBAL ARCHAEOLOGY: STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE'S MEETINGHOUSE AND OX ROAST INVESTIGATIONS

Bonney Hartley (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation)

2:30 - 3:15 PM

COLLABORATIVE ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE EASTERN PEQUOT RESERVATION

Brenda Geer (Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation)

3:15 - 3:30 PM BREAK

3:30 - 4:15 PM

RESEARCH AS RECONCILIATION: THOUGHTS ON TRANSFORMING REPATRIATION PRACTICE

Margaret M. Bruchac, Ph.D. (University of Pennsylvania)

4:15 - 5:00 PM

FOSTERING RESPECTFUL STEWARDSHIP

Catherine Labadia (Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office)

ABSTRACTS

NAYYAG: INTERSECTION OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, GRASSROOTS DECOLONIZATION AND A PATH FORWARD

Nohham R. Cachat-Schilling (Massachusetts Ethical Archaeology Society)

Where the central Connecticut River forms double peninsulas in Hampshire County, Massachusetts is called Nayyag (naia+ak = "pointed land," Ives, 2016, at NalwottogNaiag, Queens County; Nyack, Orange County, both New York). Within a three-mile radius, Nayyag captures more than a dozen known Indigenous archaeological sites spanning more than 10,000 years of occupancy. These ancestral Indigenous heritage places have been serially erased by Euro-American development without preservation of a single site or any form of public interpretation/education. Alongside, Colonial heritage has been carefully preserved in the now-named City of Northampton as a reservoir of places and public interpretation, mostly through taxpayer funds. In 2021, the most ancient and unique of all known sites at Nayyag was to be paved over for a traffic circle. Grassroots resistance by Massachusetts Ethical Archaeology Society, local Indigenous descendants of unrepresented nations, regional federally-recognized tribes, and Euro-american preservation allies, alongside neighborhood residents and businesses halted the planned demolition of the unique, 10,000-year old ancestral place. But their efforts were met with misinformation campaigns and public attacks from local politicians, mainstream media, and even some Indigenous people. Eventually, the Northampton Historical Commission voted to recommend preservation of the site after passionate pleas by local citizens, motivated schoolchildren and a federally-recognized tribal cultural resources officer. Looking closely, the intergenerational trauma of genocide against Indigenous people in Massachusetts, the dynamics of hegemony, and events of the Great Dying are re-enacted under present policy regarding rescue archaeology and historic preservation, highlighted in the Nayyag case. Looking forward, the Nayyag case presents a clear path toward equity in archaeological preservation.

COMBATING ERASURE THROUGH TRIBAL ARCHAEOLOGY: STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE'S MEETINGHOUSE AND OX ROAST INVESTIGATIONS

Bonney Hartley (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation)

The Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation has deep history in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, both pre-contact and in the 18th century when the Town was founded as a colonial mission for the Tribe. Despite this history, there is little visibility in Town today of the Tribe's immense contributions or the preservation of its cultural places. Mohican presence is largely erased. Community-led archaeology projects such as the Tribe's 2021 Meetinghouse and Ox Roast site excavations have been powerful agents of truth-telling and have invigorated the Tribe and Town alike in understanding their relationship to place.

ABSTRACTS CONTINUED...

COLLABORATIVE ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE EASTERN PEQUOT RESERVATION

Brenda Geer (Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation)

As collaborative Indigenous archaeology continues to mature in North America, more attention is needed on the role of authoring and authority by descendent community members in the heritage practices of archaeology. We will discuss the role of contemporary collaborative practice and address the ways these have materialized in the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation context in southeastern Connecticut. As a way to accentuate Eastern Pequot authoring and authority, we use examples of a Commemorative volume published as a community rather than an academic product; the return of all archaeological collections to Pequot homelands from their curatorial storage at a university; and the actual content of this article itself with 100% Eastern Pequot authorship.

RESEARCH AS RECONCILIATION: THOUGHTS ON TRANSFORMING REPATRIATION PRACTICE

Margaret M. Bruchac, Ph.D. (University of Pennsylvania)

Despite the advent of repatriation legislation and truth and reconciliation commissions, many museums in North America are still entangled in disputes concerning Indigenous heritage. In principle, curators should be eager to learn about and re-associate sacred and patrimonial objects, but repatriation claims are often stymied by museological interests and arguments over identification, ownership, and scholarship. Here, I offer discussion of several successful cases of regional repatriation – which might also be considered rematriation – that bring us closer to the ethics of reconciliation by recognizing and supporting the sovereignty of tribal nations and the survivance of Indigenous traditions.

FOSTERING RESPECTFUL STEWARDSHIP

Catherine Labadia (Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office)

The history of archaeology in Connecticut has largely followed a trajectory independent of Native involvement. In many ways, our state followed national trends, but there also are some notable exceptions. This presentation will summarize the history of archaeological investigations in the state and provide a contextual framework for reflecting on the current relationship between the Native American and archaeological communities, with some suggestions for future improvement.

CONFERENCE STARTS AT 1:00PM EST & ENDS 5:00PM EST

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SPEAKER BIOS

DR. MARGARET M. BRUCHAC

(Abenaki) is an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of Native American and Indigenous Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. She was a co-editor, with Siobhan Hart and H. Martin Wobst, of *Indigenous Archaeologies: A Reader in Decolonization* (Left Coast Press 2010). Her book *Savage Kin: Indigenous Informants and American Anthropologists* (University of Arizona Press 2018) received the inaugural Council for Museum Anthropology Book Award. She directs a restorative research project, called "The Wampum Trail," that focuses on the materiality, meaning, and recovery of historical wampum objects (see: <https://wampumtrail.wordpress.com/>).

NOHHAM R. CACHAT-SCHILLING, M.S.

focuses on Northeastern Indigenous Ethnobotany and Anthropology. He is the Chair of the Massachusetts Ethical Archaeology Society, researcher for the Oso:ah Foundation, and Medicine Elder for Bridge-in-the-Sky Medicine Circle. 2016 saw *Quantitative Assessment of Stone Relics in a Western Massachusetts Town* in the *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society*, while *Assessing Stone Relics in Western Massachusetts Part II: Patterns of Site Distribution* was published in the *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut* in 2019 and *Eli Luweyok Kikayunkahke - So Said the Departed Elders: Northeastern Algonquian Land Use Traditions in Northeast Anthropology* in 2018. Just completed is *Decolonizing Our Story: Indigenous Peoples of the Great Rivers Intervale, an Onomastic and Identity Review*. Nohham and Oso:ah Foundation are engaged in a long-term archive project, *Spirits of Kunnckquatchu: Ethnoecologic Geohistory of a Sacred Mountain*.

BRENDA GEER

is a member of the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation and the current Vice-Chairwoman of the Tribe. She has been a member of the EP Tribal Council for over 30 years. She graduated in 1985 from Norwich Regional Vocational Technical School, and is a life-long resident of Connecticut. Brenda is the Chairperson for NAHAC (the state Native American Heritage Advisory Council), with which she has been affiliated over 10 years. Over the years she has sat on a variety of Boards and Committees, mostly all Native American. Brenda currently works as a Case Manager at the Rhode Island Indian Council, where she assists unemployed and underemployed Native Americans with training & employment. She has a strong passion for helping her community with the injustices that they have faced over many, many years from the State, Federal Government and other Tribes.

SPEAKER BIOS

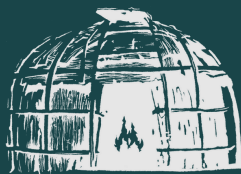
BONNEY HARTLEY

is a cultural resource professional who works to preserve, manage, and interpret indigenous cultural heritage. She is a member of the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Nation and serves as the Tribal Historic Preservation Manager from an extension office in Williamstown, Mass. In this capacity, she protects Mohican and Munsee (Lenape) cultural sites and repatriates cultural items from a variety of institutions. Prior to this role she held posts with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and with nonprofit organizations including Seva Foundation. Bonney holds a Master of Social Science Degree-International Relations, from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. She was recognized in 2013 by the San Francisco Mayor's Office as an American Indian Local Unsung Hero Awardee. Since 2018, Bonney has served on the Board of Trustees of Historic Huguenot Street.

CATHERINE LABADIA

is the Staff Archeologist and former Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office. She is a native of Connecticut, receiving her undergraduate degree from Central Connecticut State University and her graduate degree from the University of Connecticut. After completing doctoral work at Pennsylvania State University, she began full-time work for a cultural resource management firm in New Orleans before returning to Connecticut. Prior to joining the State Historic Preservation Office, Ms. Labadia started and managed her own cultural resources management firm for more than a decade. Conversant with all rules, guidelines, laws, and statutes pertaining to historic preservation, she was thrilled to begin her current position in 2014. In her current position, she is a member of the Native American Heritage Advisory Council.

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