

Foreword

There is widespread interest in archeology among the American public—and I am not talking about New Age or Fantastic treatments of the subject. Witness the popularity of magazines, television shows, newspaper reports, museum exhibits, site tours, and adult education programs that present real archeological materials and interpretations in a credible way. Archeologists and citizen activists have tapped this widespread interest to promote laws and regulations requiring federal and state agencies to include archeological resources among the historic properties to be considered in project planning and execution. At the local level, however, public interest in archeology has seldom been translated into effective preservation of sites. Decisions by local governments and actions by private developers that result in destruction of archeological resources have more often been met by mere laments from the archeological community than by effective action to address the problems. Yet the widespread occurrence of local ordinances providing some type of protection for historic buildings demonstrates citizens' willingness to support reasonable restrictions on development in order to preserve historic values.

The important set of papers in this issue of *CRM* show what archeological preservationists must do to gain similar consideration for archeological resources at the local level. There is no single magic approach that will work everywhere. Each success must be built from the grassroots up on the basis of hard and patient work that takes the specific character of each community into account. Because archeological sites, unlike historic buildings, are seldom highly visible, proponents of archeological preservation must work doubly hard to show what can be learned from sites if they are protected. These papers provide tools and models that archeological preservationists can adapt to their own communities. They will also stimulate communication among local groups working for archeological preservation throughout the nation.

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