

PRESERVATION CHRONICLES

THE NEWSLETTER FOR CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

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OBAMA'S PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The first two months of President Obama's administration has witnessed a breathtaking pace of political change, seemingly moving out on all fronts, ranging from stem cell research and equal pay for women, to the drawdown of troops in Iraq to the trillion dollar American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. What many cultural resource managers may be wondering is if there is a place for historic preservation among the many and varied commitments voiced in the beginning of his first term.

Unlike some of his predecessors, President Obama seems acutely aware of his place in history. In response to a recent criticism that he was doing too much, too fast, Obama retorted that President Lincoln fought a war, while chartering the first transcontinental railroad, and sponsoring the Homestead Act. The comment reflects a deep understanding and reverence for the past that is uncommon among workaday politicians. However, will President Obama's sophistication with regard to the presidential legacy translate into programs for documenting and preserving the nation's history?

Bruce Milhans, of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation says, "We expect dramatic changes, but don't know what effect that will be." Twenty-three members of the Advisory Council are appointed by the President who serve terms of up to four years. There will be nine new members of the



Permanent authorization of the Preserve America Initiative and set asides for historic preservation in the Recovery Act have made cultural resource managers hopeful about the future of the profession under Obama

A NEW LOOK AT GROUND PENETRATING RADAR

At a cultural resource orientation seminar this past December, a noted archaeological historian and professor of history, confided his disappointment with the inadequacy of standard nomenclature used in Section 106 Phase I archaeological evaluations that conclude "no further review needed" after only a cursory field survey and topographic map analysis. He explained that on more than one occasion he had discovered subterranean resources at sites that had been summarily dismissed in just such a fashion. In his view, further evaluation is always indicated.

What is due diligence in the context of an archaeological investigation? Is it a visual surface inspection, turning a shovel full of dirt, or does it demand something more comprehensive?

For years archaeologists have made good use of ground penetrating radar in a variety of demanding environments, yet the technology has not been readily adopted for general use by the profession. Whether considered too costly or time consuming, it is becoming increasingly difficult to overlook the expedience of GPR surveys.



Archaeologist, Shawn Patch uses GSSI's ground penetrating radar to identify features consistent with previous buildings, wells, and privies at a former plantation built in 1795 in Greensboro, North Carolina. The GPR data was used to guide excavations at a summer field school.

OBAMA'S PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



council, but fewer than half of the members are federal.

The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior are permanent members of the Advisory Council. Other members of the council include the General Service Administration, and the Departments of Transportation, HUD, Commerce, Education, and Veterans Affairs. The Chairman of the National Trust is always, by legislation, a member of the Council, and the Architect of the Capital is not directly appointed by the President, and serves a ten year term.

According to John Fowler, ACHP Chairman, newly appointed Secretary of the Interior, Kenneth Lee Salazar made some encouraging remarks when

he mentioned a new approach to historic preservation, including reopening the Statue of Liberty's Crown to tourism. However, the key appointment will be the director of the National Park Service, says Fowler. Outgoing Director, Mary A. Bomar was a staunch advocate for historic preservation and presided over the largest urban redevelopment project in America, the \$340 million reconstruction of Independence Hall. Finding someone to fill Bomar's shoes will be an especially difficult challenge.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which was signed into law on February 17, the National Park Service has received \$750 million and stands to gain another \$750 million for construction of roads, comments NPS communications director, Jeff Olson. Then on March 26, 2009 the Office of Management and Budget issued a guidance that recognizes compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as a requirement for all Recovery Act projects, a move that should bolster enforcement of current regulations.

One of the most significant expenditures for historic preservation to result from the Recovery Act is \$15 million that has been designated for historic preservation projects at historically black colleges and universities (HBCU). What is unusual about this, says Olson, is that Congress has waived the requirement for matching funds from local sponsoring agencies, which



The Recovery Act has designated \$15 million for historic preservation projects at historically black colleges and universities, which would provide 100 percent of the funding for repair and renovations for building such as the Fisk University Jubilee Hall depicted above, which was designated a National His-

PASSPORT IN TIME

A Volunteer Program of the USDA Forest Service

Passport in Time (PIT) is a volunteer archaeology and historic preservation program of the USDA Forest Service. PIT volunteers work with professional FS archaeologists and historians on national forests throughout the U.S. on such diverse activities as archaeological survey and excavation, rock art restoration, survey, archival research, historic structure restoration, oral history.



"In many ways we are hopeful that the environmental bent of this administration will include the cultural environment. We think preservation can be an integral component of the sustainability agenda"

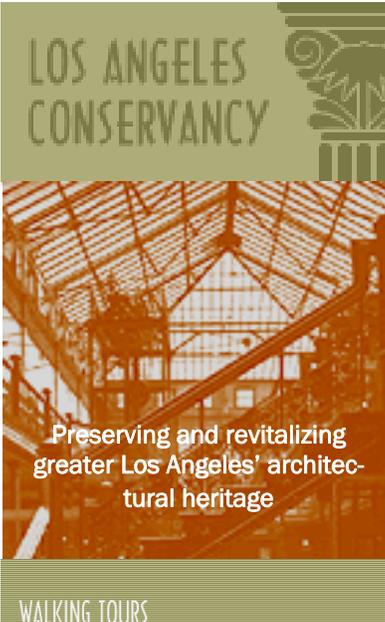


The historical and cultural resources professionals at EarthTouch have completed more than 1,000 projects for private corporations and government agencies in the western United States, including:

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OBAMA'S PLAN –CONTINUED



The Los Angeles Conservancy has nine regularly scheduled docent-led walking tours, including:

Angelino Heights

Art Deco

Biltmore Hotel

Broadway Historic Theater District

Most tours begin at 10:00 a.m. and last approximately 2.5 hours. The cost is \$10.00 for the general public and \$5.00 for children 12 and under.

would normally have to raise at least half the total cost of the project. The grant program will provide funding for such things as structural stabilization; masonry work, and abating environmental hazards for campus buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Perhaps one of the most anticipated new laws is the Omnibus Public Lands Bill. The bipartisan bill, which passed by a simple majority of the House on March 25, 2009, will permanently authorize the Preserve America Initiative, which was originally sponsored by Hillary Clinton. Preserve America encourages communities to develop their historic resources through matching grants, and recognizes the contributions of individuals and organizations through Presidential Awards and other honorarium. Clinton's appointment as Secretary of State may bode well for our participation in the international community in regards to historic preservation, says Fowler. "In many ways we are hopeful that the environmental bent of this administration will include the cultural environment. We think preservation can be an integral component of the sustainability agenda."

One of the great unresolved questions impacting cultural resource management professionals in the upcoming agenda is the status of Section 4(f). According to Elizabeth O'Hara of the National Trust for Historic Preservation one of its major priorities is to strengthen and pro-



U.S. Representative James Oberstar, chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, will preside over the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU.

tect Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. Section 4(f) was enacted in 1966 to protect historic resources from federal highway construction, yet it has met with resistance and challenges because of perceived fiscal impacts and building delays. U.S. Representative James Oberstar will preside over the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act (SAFETEA-LU), a six-year \$500 billion bill, which could limit existing protections for cultural resources. Proponents of Section 4(f) recommend that cultural resource professionals contact their local congressman to let them know that the law is still relevant and should be preserved.



The passage of the Omnibus Public Lands Bill will permanently authorize Preserve America, which provides awards and matching funds for projects like the 2008 President's Award recipient, Corinth and Alcorn County Mississippi Heritage Tourism Initiative.

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GROUND PENETRATING RADAR—CONTINUED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

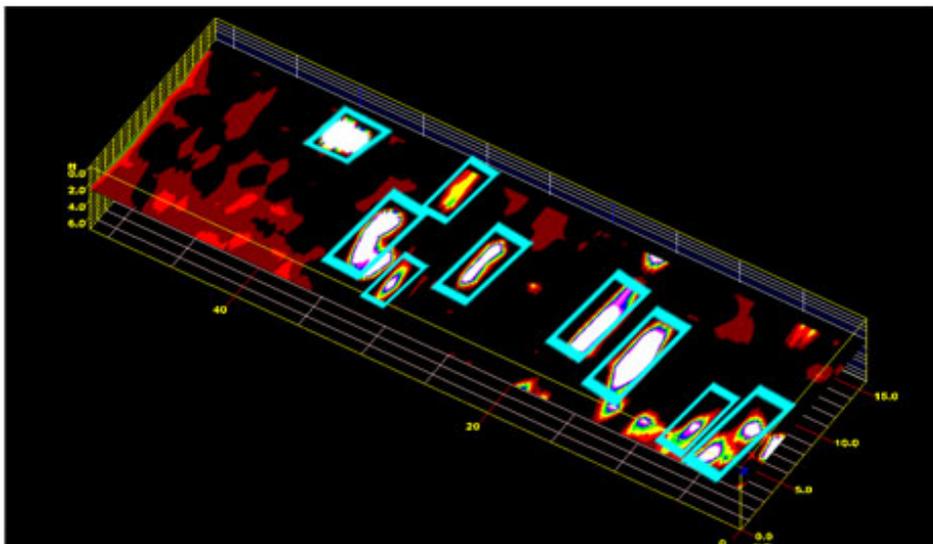
Dan Welch of Geophysical Survey Systems, Inc., which is the manufacturer of the Subsurface Interface Radar SIR System, refers to archaeology applications as an important prestige market. "In terms of overall sales it's not a significant part of our business." The device is geared primarily for infrastructure applications such as geology and construction; however, the small, rugged, and reliable design has made the device desirable for both markets, he says. Some of GSSI's archaeology customers include Lawrence Conyers at the University of Denver, Ken Kvamme, University of Arkansas, Steve DeVore at the Midwest Archaeology Center, and Shawn Patch at New South Associates.

Patch is an archaeologist and remote sensing specialist with a background in prehistoric archaeology and maintains active research interests in lithic studies and technical applications including ground penetrating radar (GPR), geographic information systems (GIS), global positioning systems (GPS), and total station operation.

His experience with ground penetrating radar began approximately six years ago with the pur-

chase of a unit from GSSI by his department at the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The Department was specifically interested in how the system might minimize the cost involved in field studies. When Patch moved to New South Associates, they purchased the same system from GSSI, which Patch had mastered while working for GDOT. Applications for the device frequently involve cemetery work, historic sites, and the occasional prehistoric site. He often gets calls from families about identifying family plots.

Patch says that there is a perception among archaeologists that the technology is difficult to learn, which may be preventing them from exploiting its many benefits, but he says that it's fairly straightforward. The challenge is interpreting the data once it is collected. Natural features, soil horizons, high water tables, and environmental variables, make analysis difficult from the cultural resources perspective. Special challenges for the technology include marsh settings because of high salinity. In addition, if the site is under a power line certain measures must be taken to eliminate background noise.



Grave locations

The GSSI ground penetrating radar provides archaeologists with a rapid survey method that can delineate burial sites and cemetery boundaries. This 3D data set verifies the approximate depth and location of several remains.

California Preservation Foundation
 34th Annual Conference
 Palm Springs, CA
 April 16-19, 2009
 (415) 495-0349

Society for American Archaeology
 74th Annual Meeting
 Atlanta, Georgia
 April 22-26, 2009
 (202) 789-8200

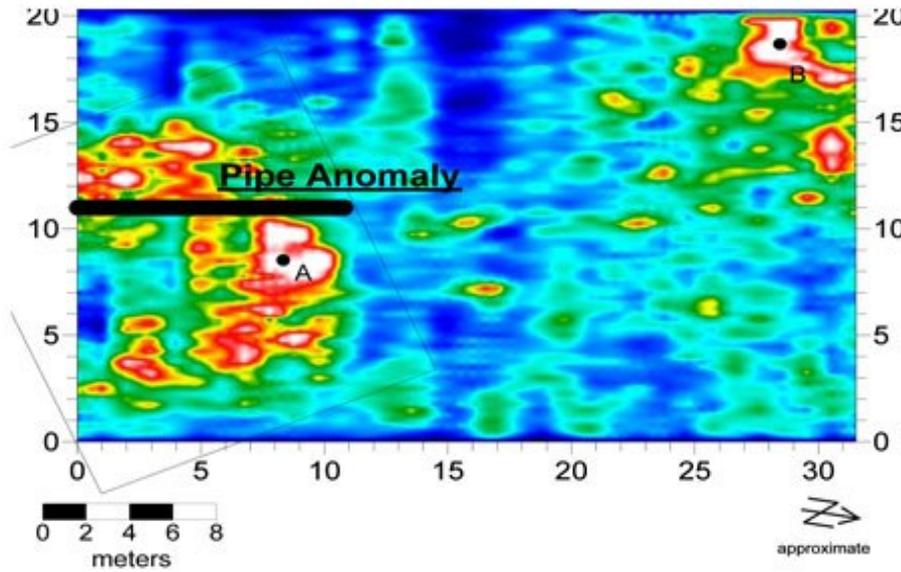
American Ethnological Society
Canadian Anthropology Society
 2009 Annual Conference
 Vancouver, Canada
 May 13-16
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Native American and Indigenous Studies Association
 2009 Annual Conference
 Minneapolis, MN
 May 21-23
 (612) 624-3492

Vernacular Architecture Forum
 2009 Annual Conference
 Butte, Montana
 June 10-13
 rschliesman@mt.gov

American Anthropological Association
 108th Annual Conference
 Philadelphia, PA
 December 2-6, 2009
 (703) 528-1902

GROUND PENETRATING RADAR—CONTINUED



Archaeologists use GSSI ground penetrating radar and EM tools during phase II site investigations to maximize phase III data recovery. This GPR time slice was processed in RADAN and imaged in Surfer 8.

The antenna rides on the ground and is either pulled with a handle or in an alternate configuration it is pushed like a lawnmower. The user walks the length of the survey grid, typically 20 meters by 20 meters. The ground penetrating radar sends out a pulse of electromagnetic energy in the ground. They measure the travel time of the pulse and the reflection of the pulse from features in the ground to produce a series of parallel profiles, which generates a solid block of data. Electromagnetic anomalies are presented as amplitude values, which may correspond with properties that are specific to burned floors, brick foundations, or grave markers. Each transect is loaded onto the computer where the profiles are stacked together into a single grid file. There are multiple processing steps. They can view the data in different planes, rotate the image, or color code different anomalies.

One of the most unusual features that Patch has discovered using GPR was at a 17th Century historic site in Maryland. Much to his surprise, lying beneath the historic site was an ancient stream bed.

“Some people have an idealistic view of what is possible,” says Patch. “The level of detail is not

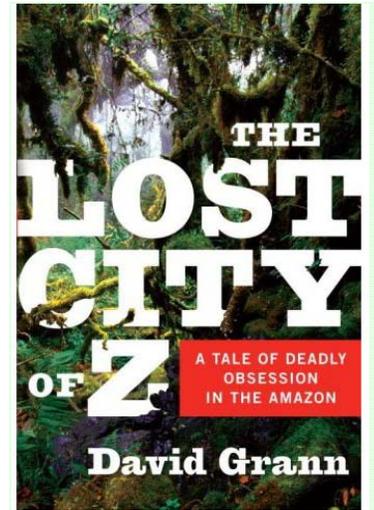
“Some people have an idealistic view of what is possible,” says Patch. “The level of detail is not what it is on CSI.”

what it is on CSI.” Environmental conditions such as highly wooded areas with surface obstacles make it difficult to navigate the system over the terrain. Soil is also a limiting factor. GPS works well in sand but not as well in clay. Much of the soil in Georgia has a high clay content that absorbs or “attenuates” the radar signal.

coastal plane I can get 6-8 feet,” says Patch. Under ideal conditions the GPR can penetrate to 20 feet.

The primary benefit of the technology says Patch, is that it’s non-invasive, so most custodians of historic sites don’t object to its use. “It’s fast and very efficient given the right candidate,” he says. “The result is a 3D image without turning a shovel or digging up anything... in a preservation setting its ideal.”

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welchd@geophysical.com



THE LOST CITY OF Z, A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon, By David Grann
Doubleday \$27.50

The Lost City of Z tells the story of explorer Col. Percy Harrison Fawcett and his mysterious disappearance in the Amazon Jungle in 1925. Fawcett was convinced of the existence of an ancient, highly cultured civilization in the midst of the Brazilian Amazon and was determined to return with relics that would prove its former greatness. Grann describes current archaeological evidence that indicates just such a civilization may have existed where Fawcett disappeared.

Farmers to Flyers, Opens to the Public Saturday, April 18th 2009, Orange County Agricultural and Nikkei Heritage Museum



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STATE BUDGET CUTS MAY THREATEN CULTURAL RESOURCE EDUCATION

Despite the sluggish economy, anyone who has tried recruiting a Secretary of the Interior Qualified Archaeologist or Historian in the state of California these days knows there is a serious shortage of these professionals. As principals are retiring, attrition rates appear to exceed the new recruits among many A&E firms. The bad news is that it appears the shortage of cultural resource professionals may only deepen as funding for education has languished.

Facing a \$14 billion budget deficit, the state of California has reduced its obligation to both the Cal State University and the University of California systems. The budget shortfall for UC is estimated at \$450 million, while CSU will see a \$312.9 million reduction.

The Cal State University system has documented the general impact of the budget cuts to its core teaching and learning enterprise and mitigation is being put in place to help students finish their preparation, says Beth Ambos of Cal State University Public Affairs. The emphasis is on helping students who are already enrolled in the system. In regards to the persistent rumor that the History department, as such, will be absorbed by English Literature, she says that she doesn't think it's very likely.

Dean of Anthropology, Jack Bedell, of the Cal State Fullerton Anthropology Department, says they have increased their faculty from two instructors to four and are infusing more cultural resource manage-

ment courses into the curriculum. "We are dealing with the problem of cutbacks by offering fewer classes that are larger," he says.

Constance Young, Management Services Officer for the UC Riverside History Department, which has one of the largest public history programs in the state, in terms of generating CRM professionals, says they haven't felt the impact of the cuts yet; however, they are working on scenarios to deal with the potential crisis. For now, they are still admitting students for fall.

It appears from the response elicited from the education community that the shoring and patching techniques used to bridge the financial gaps may resolve short term spending problems, but over the long term the picture appears much more serious. Without senior high school and freshman college students being exposed to well-funded history and anthropology programs, the curriculum may lose its attractiveness to students who will seek intellectual and professional fulfillment in other disciplines.

At the moment the Los Angeles Unified School District is deliberating over whether to eliminate 7,500 jobs. The final vote was postponed until April 14th to account for potential new federal stimulus money and last minute concessions from the teachers union. LAUSD has assured parents the classrooms will not be impacted, but could not comment on its commitment to history education.

