

**A SAA Webinar: The Future of Cultural  
Resource Management in the United States**  
8 February 2023

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The Historical Context of the 1974 Airlie House Seminars on Managing  
Archeological Resources

# The Airlie House Seminars

## **The Management of Archeological Resources**

THE AIRLIE HOUSE REPORT

*edited by*  
Charles R. McGimsey III  
*and*  
Hester A. Davis

SPECIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY / 1977

- The AH seminars were designed, by Bob McGimsey (who by his own description benefited from the input of many others).
- McGimsey and his Arkansas Archaeological Survey colleague Hester Davis organized the meetings and co-edited the report, the text of which was written and edited by the seminar participants.
- Funding was provided to SAA by the National Park Service, Interagency Archeological Services program, then headed by Rex Wilson, the Departmental Consulting Archeologist and Director of Interagency Archeological Services.
- The issues and ideas described in the report (image of the report cover on the left of this slide) have shaped public archaeology and CRM in the US and elsewhere over the past five decades.

# 1974 -- A Busy Year for the Development of Cultural Resource Management in United States Archaeology

25 January	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation publishes important regulations to implement the NHPA, Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties," 36 CFR 800, "Section 106 Procedures."
11 & 12 April	1974 Cultural Resource Management Conference, Federal Center, Denver, Colorado held.
24 May	The "Archaeological Recovery Act," more commonly known as "The Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974" or "the Moss-Bennett Act" was passed and enacted.
Spring & Summer	"A Conservation Model for American Archaeology," by William D. Lipe published in the Spring & Summer issue of The Kiva vol. 39, No. 3/4 (Spring-Summer), pp. 213-245.
Between July & November	<b>Six week-long seminars on topics related to "The Management of Archaeological Resources," organized by the Society of American Archaeology and funded by the NPS are held at the Airlie House Conference Center in northern Virginia.</b>

Other related events:

- 1966: Enactment of the **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**
  - Creation of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
  - Creation of the State Historic Preservation Officer network
- 1970: Enactment of the **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**
  - Creation of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
  - Requirement for Environmental Impact Statements related to federal agency actions.

1971: Presidential action: **Executive Order 11593--Protection and enhancement of the cultural environment**

# Airlie House Topics and Seminar Participants

The Management of Archeological Resources: The Airlie House Report (* also participated in the 1974 Denver CRM conference)	
Seminar Title	Seminar Participants
A Consideration of Law in Archaeology	Lawrence Aten*, Vernon Bellecourt, Joe Brecher, Michael Moratto, Charles R. McGimsey III*, Marvin Woolf
Cultural Resource Management	Adrian Anderson*, Hester Davis*, Mark Grady William D. Lipe*, Bruce McMillan, Lloyd Pierson* Margaret Weide
Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of Archaeological Reports	Keith Anderson*, Hester Davis*, Rob Edwards Michael B. Schiffer, Stanley South, Gwinn Vivian*
The Crisis in Communication	Louis Brennan, Brian Fagan, Frank Hole, Alice Kehoe. Tom King*, Charles R. McGimsey III*, Nathalie Woodbury
Archaeology and Native Americans	Vernon Bellecourt, Hester Davis*, Cynthia Irwin-Williams, Elden Johnson, Clydia Nahwooksy, Emory Sakequaptewa, Marion White
Certification and Accreditation	Edward B. Jelks, James Judge*, Charles R. McGimsey III*, Stuart Struever, Raymond H. Thompson*, Fred Wendorf

In his commentary, provided by the SAA on the Webinar webpage, Bill Lipe (one of the participants in the CRM seminar at Airlie House, notes several factors in the early 1970s pushing the development of CRM and a "conservation ethic" in archaeology

- the increasing dissatisfaction with the "emergency or salvage" approach to archaeology;
- the substantial increases in development (e.g., highways, water control systems, clean water facilities and infrastructure, urban development) by public agencies; and,
- the new laws and public policies reflecting public support for and aimed at broadening public attention to environmental conservation and historic property preservation.

In my own academic and professional experience, I first encountered the results of the Airlie House seminars as a second-year graduate student at SUNY-Binghamton (now Binghamton University) in a Seminar in Public Archaeology, taught by Margaret Weide, another of the participants in the Airlie House seminar on CRM). Margaret used the draft report of the CRM seminar (dated 13 May 1975 and edited by Hester Davis) as one of the supplemental references for her course.

Bob McGimsey, writes in his Preface to the Airlie House Report that the "...seminars served well to allow the profession to 'sit back and review where it was going and thus suggest how to get there.'" The conference that is being considered, and for which this webinar is partial preparation, might aim for a similar result.

# Airlie House Seminar Topics (1974) and SAA Survey Topics (2022)

Airlie House Seminar Topics	SAA survey topics
1. A Consideration of Law in Archaeology	1. Education and Community Engagement
2. Cultural Resource Management	2. Data Management and Information Sharing
3. Guidelines-Preparation & Evaluation of Archaeological Reports	3. Academic Training and Workforce
4. The Crisis in Communication	4. Engaging Descendant Communities
5. Archaeology and Native Americans	5. Working with Collections/Collections Mgmt.
6. Certification and Accreditation	6. Climate Change Anthropogenic Impacts
	7. NHPA (Sec. 106 procedures/National Register
	8. Impacts of New Technologies
	9. Decolonizing Archaeology—Seeking social and environmental justice

A quick look at the similarities (there are obvious differences, as well) of the topics "Airlie House CRM" seems to have a link to at least half of the 2022 Survey topics, (e.g., #s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8).

- "AH Guidelines on Archaeological Reports" seems to link with Data Management & Information Sharing.
- "AH Crisis in Communications" seems linked with Education and Community Engagement, Data Management and Information Sharing, and Engaging Descendant Communities.
- "AH Archaeology and Native Americans" clearest link is to Engaging Descendant Communities (also includes communities in addition to Native American, e.g., Black and Brown Americans, Asian-Americans, local and traditional communities). Also a link Decolonizing Archaeology?

"AH Certification and Accreditation" links with Academic Training & Workforce.

# Use of the Airlie House Report Today

- The “Introduction” of the Airlie House Report includes helpful information regarding how to conduct, organize, and report on the anticipated conference that this Webinar aims to help structure.
- The Airlie House Report is an important historic record of the range of perspectives within the discipline of archaeology as the cultural resource management approach began to develop in the US.
- Bill Lipe summarizes a useful perspective in his reflection about participating in the Airlie House seminars. “...the report provided a useful overview of the state of American archaeology in the mid-1970s, structured around identifying recent and ongoing changes in...six broad areas...It was intended to foster future acceptance of practical accommodations and actions responsive to these changes but not primarily to provide detailed predictions of what those changes might be.” Such a perspective on a future conference will be useful to its planners.