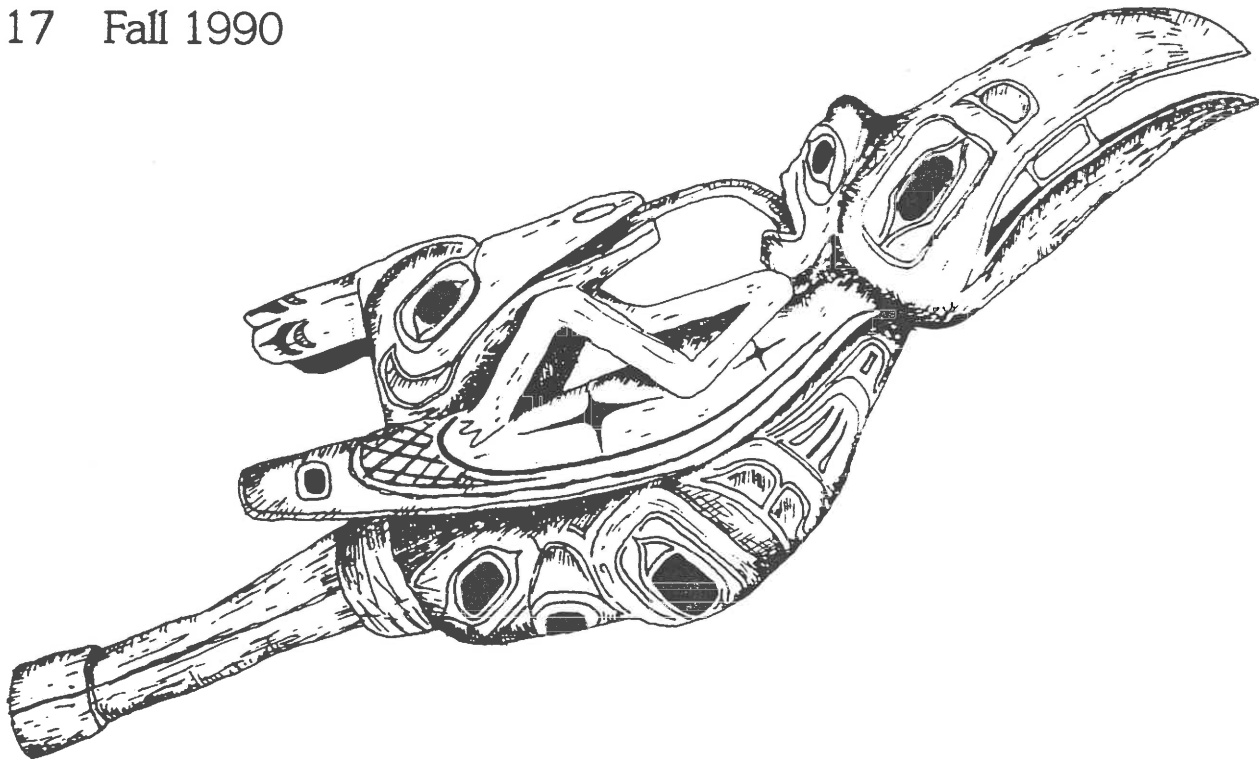


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No. 17 Fall 1990



**IN THIS ISSUE . . .**

This issue of *TAN*, like the last, is devoted to precollege archaeology. While the recent rapid growth of this field is exciting, *TAN* reminds readers and potential contributors that contributions to precollege cultural anthropology, physical anthropology and linguistics are welcome — if not overdue!

Archaeology Takes Off

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by Parker B. Potter, Jr.

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Meetings

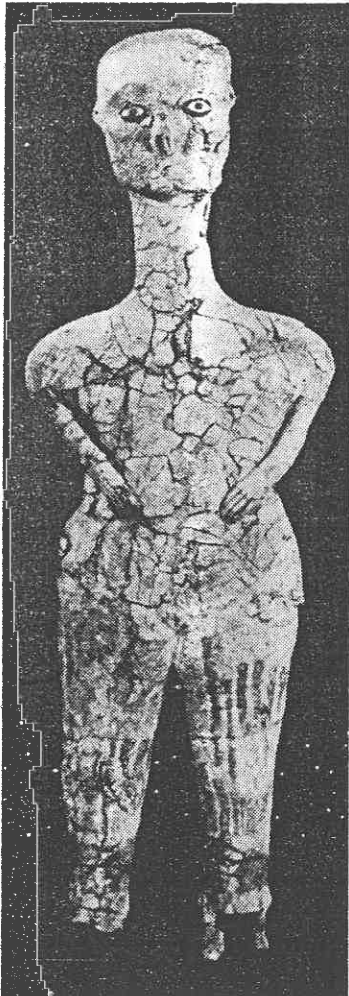
Notes on Contributors

## TEACHING ANTHROPOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Every year, precollege anthropology is taught more often and in more places. Anthropology is now part of many history, science and social studies curricula.

*Teaching Anthropology Newsletter (TAN)* promotes precollege anthropology by providing curriculum information to teachers, creating a forum for teachers to exchange ideas, and establishing communication between teachers and professors of anthropology.

*TAN* is published free-of-charge semiannually in the Fall and Spring of each school year by the Department of Anthropology, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3C3. Items for publication should be submitted to Monica Lewis, Circulation Manager, or Paul A. Erickson, Editor. Deadlines for submission are October 1 for the Fall issue and March 1 for the Spring issue. News, reviews and articles are solicited!



## Archaeology Takes Off

The growth of precollege archaeology appears to be accelerating.

The Archaeological Assistance Division (AAD) of the U.S. National Park Service is an important cause of this acceleration through the activities it describes in *Federal Archaeology Report*. The AAD distributes a number of monographs about teaching archaeology free. For a list, write to the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Archaeological Assistance Division, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127.

The Society for Historical Archaeology's (SHA) newly created Education Committee also has a strong commitment to precollege archaeology. Its plan of action calls for arranging teacher workshops at SHA meetings, creating a core bibliography and other teaching resources and expanding networks of communication through professional education associations. Two Canadians working for the Committee are Karolyn Smardz of the Archaeological Resource Centre in Toronto and James Tuck of Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) has created its own Public Education Committee, intending to promote precollege education as part of a broad range of ambitious initiatives. For information, write to Ed Friedman, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver Federal Center, P. O. Box 25007, Attention D-5530, Denver, CO 80225-0007.

*TAN* wishes all these educators well — and asks them to keep us informed.

## Historic Preservation Goals for Archaeological Education in New Hampshire

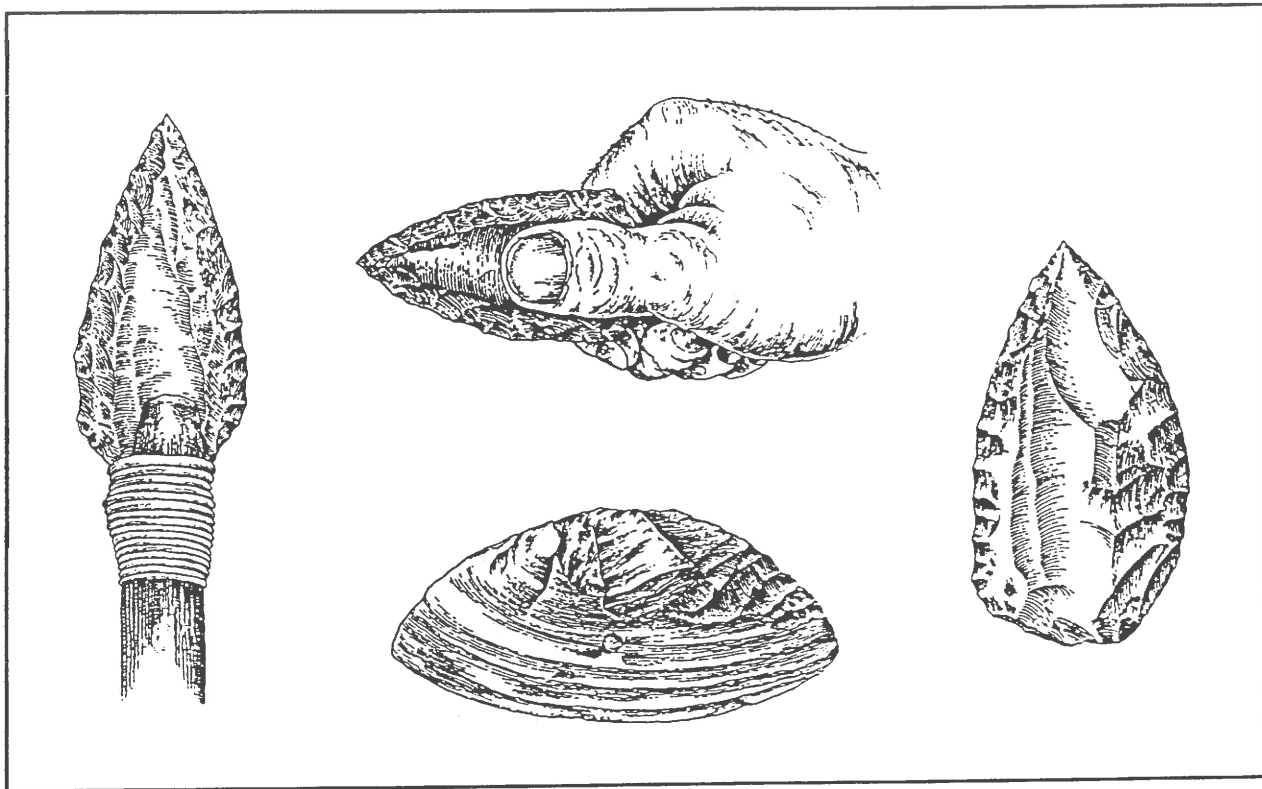
by Parker B. Potter, Jr.

This contribution to *TAN* is inspired by the increasing appearance of archaeology in precollege curricula at all levels. Specifically, I would like to discuss the goals of archaeological education. By way of introduction, I should note that instead of "goals," my real topic may be "objectives," or perhaps even "effects." I display this lexical confusion simply to indicate my unfamiliarity with educational terminology, which, in turn, demonstrates the fact that I work as an archaeologist in a State Historic Preservation Office, rather than in an explicitly educational setting. The basis for the following comments is a four-week archaeology unit designed jointly by the Archaeology Bureau of the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR) and the Anthropology faculty of Rundlett Junior High School (RJHS) in Concord, New Hampshire.

There is a variety of ways to characterize the planning sessions that preceded the first year of the DHR/RJHS archaeology program. Sitting around a large table were two preservation

archaeologists, State Archaeologist Gary Hume and I, and two ninth grade Anthropology teachers, Glen Ring and Marsha Turner from Rundlett. At one level, we hashed out dozens of technical pedagogical details, but at a deeper level, our planning sessions amounted to a negotiation of interests. The goal was to fashion a program that served a function within an Anthropology curriculum while at the same time serving to advance the cause of historic preservation.

The increasing popularity of archaeology at the precollege level is testimony to the wide variety of uses teachers have found for archaeology. Archaeology has proven to be an effective way to teach science, math, history, language arts, and other subject areas. Some teachers have developed ways to use archaeology to teach students with learning disabilities and special needs. From what I have read in *TAN* 16, archaeology is proving to be a good tool for teaching cultural relativity, a cornerstone concept in cultural anthropology. There is no question that archaeology can be an effective topical focus for "critical thinking," "differential curriculum," or any other teaching strategy advocated in the literature of educational theory. Finally, it is certainly the case that artifacts, hands-on activities, slide presentations, and field trips are popular with students and hold their attention.



This partial listing of the classroom uses of archaeology is one side of teacher interest in archaeology. This technical interest is often augmented by the personal interest of individual teachers; many have done some archaeology or would like to do some.

These interests are all valid, but they can sometimes conflict with the interests of historic preservationists. In most of the examples cited above, the best results are generally said to come from educational experiences that encourage students to assume the role of the archaeologist in one way or another. However, very few of the precollege students who participate in archaeological programs will ever become archaeologists either professionally or avocationally. When the Assistant Principal at Rundlett suggested that Gary and I were training the next generation of archaeologists, we replied that we were actually training the next generation of real estate agents, heavy equipment operators, lawyers, landowners, elected officials, taxpayers, and voters. Our schools produce thousands of citizens each year — but only a handful of archaeologists. In the end, it is the citizens we train rather than the archaeologists who will have the greater impact on historical and archaeological resources. Given this, the DHR/RJHS archaeology program does not have an excavation component, and more importantly, its archaeological content is carefully framed by discussions of archaeological resources, contemporary land use and historic preservation as the active link between past and present.

I do not mean to condemn classroom exercises that involve the simulation of archaeological activities; the DHR/RJHS program contains several. Rather, I mean to suggest that neither archaeological findings nor archaeological techniques should be ends in and of themselves; they should be subordinated to a broader preservation message. Further, I do not mean to suggest that current programs of archaeological education are uniformly lacking a preservation component; many of the programs with which I am familiar do discuss historic preservation, or at least mention the concept. However, from my vantage point in a State Historic Preservation Office, I am for the most part obligated to see historic preservation not as one part of the archaeology story but, instead, as the basic framework within which archaeology is practiced and taught.

## What We Do

In the initial classroom visit of the DHR/RJHS archaeology unit, I define historic preservation as the set of perspectives and strategies that allows contemporary societies to find the appropriate middle ground between two extremes: 1) saving absolutely everything that is old, and 2) tearing down and discarding everything that is old in favor of new construction. Obviously, neither of these two extremes is feasible or desirable, and historic preservation is the process of identifying, evaluating, and treating those objects and properties from the past that we feel are essential for living in the present and moving into the future.

After giving this definition of my discipline, I present a paradox that explains the main point of this article: I am an archaeologist who is paid *not* to dig archaeological sites. My job is to *preserve* archaeological sites. One way to do archaeological preservation is to recover data from archaeological sites, spending three or four months in the field documenting a single threatened site by excavating two or three percent of its surface area. Or, I can spend three or four weeks at my desk drafting a planning document that will guide the preservation of 10 archaeological sites. The point is that archaeological excavation is an extreme measure, and an expensive one. Once an archaeological site is professionally excavated, it is documented, but it is also every bit as destroyed as it would be if it were bulldozed for condominiums.

Focusing on archaeology as a way of teaching historic preservation is similar to a doctor teaching public health or preventative medicine. Dentists know how to pull teeth, and physicians know how to perform surgery, but both would prefer less extreme solutions. So, too, with preservation archaeologists. We would rather train a generation of archaeological flossers than a generation of extractors. If one of my Rundlett students becomes an avocational or professional archaeologist, that is fine, but the ones who do not become archaeologists will have a far greater effect on the archaeological record. Budding archaeologists will take care of themselves; I need to reach everybody else with a preservation message.

## How We Do It

So far, this discussion has been largely theoretical. Now I would like to describe several of our specific techniques for teaching historic preservation. For one thing, there is the overall

"trajectory" of the unit. Rather than looking at the prehistory and history of a particular area by starting at the "beginning" and moving forward through time, we begin and end the unit firmly rooted in the present. At the start, Gary and I devote a significant block of time to describing our office, our jobs, how we came to do the kind of work we do and our specific reasons for teaching the unit. At the end, we focus on a stretch of the Merrimack River and talk about all the contemporary activities that influence the pattern of reported archaeological sites along the River, factors ranging from collector interest (high or low) to construction activity (brisk or slow). Our point is that a large (or small) number of dots on a map of archaeological sites may tell us something about where people lived in the past, but it also tells us about where people today have looked for sites — and about places where we no longer have the chance to look. In all, the unit moves from present to past to present.



Another way we deal with preservation is through our selection of in-class examples and field trip destinations. In each case, we try to select places that have been utilized in a variety of ways, both prehistorically and historically. The extensive archaeological sites at Garvin's Falls and Sewall's Falls (both in Concord) are a good example of this. In each place, the natural falls of the Merrimack River attracted Native American Indians who caught fish and, later, Euro-Americans who built hydroelectric dams. These are only two of the many uses people have

found for these places over the millennia, but just these two uses are enough for us to begin showing students that for almost any spot in New Hampshire, there have been — and there continue to be — a wide range of different values, perspectives and uses. In an important way, our focus on multiple perspectives and multiple uses is an application of the concept of cultural relativity. And in all this, we discuss historic preservation as the process of mediating between several different interests in, and ways of seeing, a single property.

### What We Don't Do

Finally, we don't preach. Instead of presenting historic preservation as a perspective that always demands the "don't build" option, we focus on the processes of research and negotiation that allow us to make informed decisions about which things from the past should be saved for the future, and which things may be let go in the interest of positive, productive growth. Thus, we do not automatically condemn the grocery store that stands on the site of a famous contact period village as long as the historical values of the village have been identified, evaluated, and recovered conscientiously. People need food, and grocery stores are important. All we want is for the builders, developers, and taxpayers of tomorrow to know that in most cases, new construction means that there are choices to be made between the old and the new, between legitimate contemporary needs and historical resources, which are fragile, non-renewable, and diminishing in number with each passing day.

The obvious difficulty with all this is that the test to which I teach won't come for five or ten or twenty years. We can evaluate students to determine their retention of archaeological concepts and their knowledge of archaeologically recovered data, but none of us who have created the DHR RJHS program have figured out a way to predict how one of our student citizens will act as a Planning Board member 25 years from now. But that shouldn't stop us from trying to use archaeological education as a tool for historic preservation.

### Want More Information?

Anyone who would like to know more about the DHR RJHS Archaeology Unit can write me at: New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, P. O. Box 2043, Concord, NH 03302-2043.

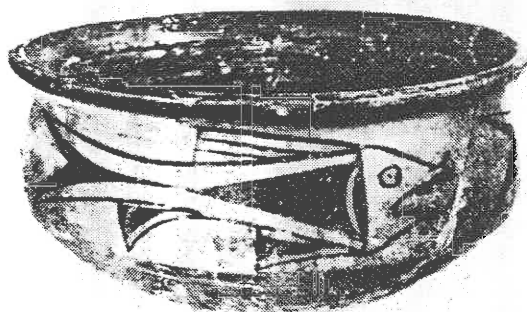
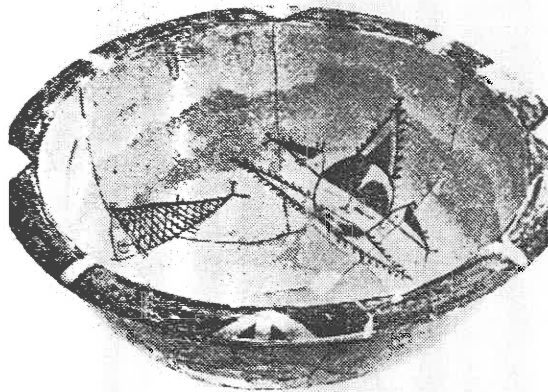
## Footnote to Fifth Grade Archaeology

Limited quantities of lesson plans for Patti Bell's fifth grade science unit in archaeology (described in *TAN* 16) are available. Write to her c/o Prehistorics - Cultural Connections, P. O. Box 1858, Bozeman, MT 59771.

## Innovative Teaching

The theme of the October 1990 issue of *Anthropology Newsletter (AN)* is Innovations in Anthropology Teaching. While focused on college teaching, the issue should interest any precollege teacher who thinks that "a teacher is a teacher" regardless of student level. A number of the reported innovations, especially computer-assisted innovations, could be adapted to the precollege classroom. Teachers should enjoy Patricia Rice's (West Virginia) article showing that what makes a teacher "best" is neither knowledge nor communication — but attitude!

*AN* Editor David Givens invites dialogue on teaching innovations in the form of letters to the editor or lengthier commentaries. Write to him c/o the American Anthropological Association, 1703 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, DC 20009.



## The Excluded Past

reviewed by Paul A. Erickson

*The Excluded Past: Archaeology In Education*, edited by Peter Stone and Robert MacKenzie. London: Unwin Hyman, 1990. xxxiii + 314pp. \$55.00

Knowledge is power.

A cliché? Not when it comes to early education, and not according to *The Excluded Past*, a book that shows how excluding prehistory from precollege curricula robs people of roots that can only be exposed by archaeology.

*The Excluded Past* is a critical book. It takes mainstream educators to task for teaching a brand of history that dwells on the accomplishments of politically dominant classes and races. One example is the United States, where in most classrooms history begins with the arrival of Europeans and Indian prehistory looms like a void.

*The Excluded Past* grew out of the 1986 World Archaeological Congress held in Southampton, England. The Congress featured formal sessions on education and a series of informal events culminating in an open forum on The Future of the Past in Education. The purpose of these events, organized by the book's editors Peter Stone and Robert MacKenzie, was to bridge the gap between archaeologists and educators. In preparing their post-Congress book, Stone and MacKenzie have solicited numerous new contributions from outside the West. The result is a series of reports on precollege archaeology in an impressive array of nations: Argentina, Australia, Canada, England, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Poland, South Africa, The Soviet Union, The United States and Venezuela.

Why is prehistory excluded from the world's schools? Stone and MacKenzie give four reasons why:

1. Archaeology is a relatively new subject and has difficulty breaking into existing curricula that are already overcrowded.

2. Teachers are kept out of touch with archaeology because suitable instructional materials, especially textbooks, are unavailable.

3. Archaeology seems irrelevant to educational goals and therefore a "luxury."

4. Archaeological knowledge of prehistory is suppressed to denigrate and oppress indigenous and minority groups (as in native land claims cases).

Handicaps like these keep archaeology teaching restricted, haphazard and confused. This in turn conspires to keep politically powerless people alienated from their past, unable to anchor themselves in the present and unable to project themselves into the future. According to the authors, archaeologists need to teach children that there are clues to the past often better than the written word.

What does *The Excluded Past* have to say about precollege archaeology education in The United States and Canada? Shirley Blancke and Cjigkitoonuppa John Peters Slow Turtle survey how Indian history is taught in American schools and how Indians are portrayed in textbooks. While their results are cause for concern, there are a few bright spots, in eye-opening museum education programs like at the Children's Museum in Boston. Alice B. Kehoe blames the ills of American archaeology education on the nationalist goals of American education — to produce “good” citizens. Apparently it is “good” for America to promote the myth that its precontact land mass was nearly virgin — a myth that prehistoric archaeology obviously subverts. Kehoe too sees rays of hope stemming from “revisionist” histories since the 1960s, including her own “stream of history” textbook (Kehoe 1981).

The chapters on precollege archaeology in Canada are more upbeat, focusing on two organizations that have succeeded in promoting

positive change. One is the Archaeological Survey of Alberta, described by Heather Devine, which seeks to expand archaeology from Ancient history courses into courses on Alberta and western Canadian history. Karolyn Smardz reports on the Archaeology Resource Centre in Toronto, where hundreds of students each year receive hands-on experience in archaeology and at the same time gain an appreciation of heritage resources underground. Both of these organizations have been described in previous issues of *TAN*. Like all the authors, Devine and Smardz believe that archaeologists and educators must restore the excluded past by working together.

*The Excluded Past* is written and edited with skill. Chapters are of the same approximate length and presented in the same easy-to-follow format, giving plenty of concrete examples and bibliographic references that make generalizations clear. Reading the same complaints about mainstream education over and over again is not excessively repetitious. Repetition is necessary to drive home the point that the exclusion of precollege prehistory is world-wide. Teachers who want to *include* it will find in this book inspiring arguments and examples.

#### Reference Cited

Kehoe, Alice B. 1981 *North American Indians: A Comprehensive Account*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.



## MEETINGS

1990

**Nov. 1 - 4** American Society for Ethnohistory, 1990 Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON. Contact Trudy Nicks, Dept. of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park Toronto, ON M5S 2C6.

**Nov. 8 - 11** Chacmool Conference, 23rd. Annual Conference, Calgary, AB. Contact 1990 Conference Programme Committee, Dept. of Archaeology, U. Calgary, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4.

**Nov. 29 - Dec. 1** Canadian Association of Physical Anthropology, 18th Annual Meeting, Banff, AB. Contact Anne Katzenberg, Dept. of Archaeology, U. Calgary, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4.

## Notes on Contributors

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