EXCAVATION EVENTS

Ongoing: Harvard Yard Archaeology Project
Excavation (Weather permitting)
Mondays & Wednesdays 8:30-11:30 am (7/6 through 8/3)
Thursdays 1:00-4:00 pm (9/8 through 10/27)

8/3 Summer Results Day
9:00-11:30 am (Rain or shine)

9/8 Fall Opening Ceremony
1:30 pm (Rain or shine)

10/22 Open House
10 am -12 pm (Rain: meet at Peabody Museum)

10/27 Fall Results Day
1:30-4 pm (Rain or shine)

375TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

10/20 Lecture: The Ground Remembers
Archaeology of Harvard’s Founding
5:30 pm, Geological Lecture Hall

Ongoing: Exhibition
Digging Veritas: The Archaeology and History of the
Indian College and Student Life at Colonial Harvard
Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology
11 Divinity Ave., Cambridge

ARCHAEOLOGY OF HARVARD
YARD 2011

The archaeology course Anthropology 1130: The Archaeology of Harvard Yard is excavating in Harvard Yard during the summer and fall of 2011 at the site of the seventeenth-century Harvard Indian College. Four buildings comprised the seventeenth-century Harvard campus. In this area stood two of these early buildings: the Old College and the Indian College. The Old College—a large, two-story, multi-purpose wooden structure—stood to the east of this location from 1638 through the 1670s. The Indian College, the first brick building on Harvard’s campus, stood at this location, from 1655 to 1698. A plaque located on the southwest corner of Matthews Hall commemorates the Indian College. The Indian College housed students from New England Native American tribes, English students, and the first printing press in the American colonies. The first Bible printed in British North America, known as the Eliot Bible, a translation into the local Algonquian language, was crafted here in 1663.

"for all … necessary provisions that may conduce to the education of the English and Indian youth of this country, in knowledge and godliness."
— Harvard College Charter of 1650

The class is excavating to gain a deeper understanding of Harvard's early days and its early mission. The legacy of the Harvard Indian College continues in the university's several initiatives with Native peoples, including the Harvard University Native American Program, the Honoring Nations program, and a current exhibition at the Peabody Museum curated by students, Digging Veritas: The Archaeology and History of the Indian College and Student Life at Colonial Harvard. These programs and the Peabody Museum regard the excavation area as an important nexus of cultures and ideas and a place for remembering Native Americans in Harvard's early history.
In 2007, ANTHRO 1130 students excavated in front of Matthews Hall. They found 17th–19th-century artifacts including 17th-century printing type from the first printing press in the nation.

In 2009, ANTHRO 1130 students again excavated in front of Matthews Hall. They found more 17th-19th-century artifacts, as well as the foundation trench of the Harvard Indian College!

This year, we are returning to the location of the foundation trench. We hope to locate and explore the artifacts and cultural features of Harvard’s earliest history. They will connect us with hidden and forgotten stories of Harvard’s past. Experiences of colonization, culture contact, education, religion, politics, institutional change, and daily student life inspire us to ask, "What lies beneath?" and to relate our institution’s multicultural past to its present and future.

Findings unearthed from Colonial Harvard Yard. Left: a spectacle lens, cuff link or sleeve button, and a comb. Center and right: Pieces of metal print type from the first printing press in North America at Harvard’s Indian College. Right: Print type letters “H” and “M.” Front: One of many pipes. Photos by Mark Craig.