



PEABODY MUSEUM
of ARCHAEOLOGY & ETHNOLOGY

PRESS RELEASE: For immediate release

Archaeologists Dig in Harvard Yard to Reveal 17th-Century College Life

(Cambridge, September 4, 2009) Archaeologist Christina Hodge is determined. “We know there are 17th-century deposits down there, and we want to find out what else from that period is down there.”

This fall the Peabody Museum–directed excavation continues in Harvard Yard, and as the holes get deeper, the anticipation builds. The area is close to the location of Harvard’s Indian College, chartered in 1650. Diana Loren, who led the summer student dig with Hodge says, “Hopefully we’ll learn more about life at 17th-century Harvard, including Native and Anglo students. That’s the story we want to illuminate.”



This fall *Archaeology of Harvard Yard*, a Harvard course, will excavate the Yard. The students will dig down to discover 17th-century artifacts. Previous discoveries from the Yard are currently on exhibit at the Peabody Museum in *Digging Veritas: The Archaeology and History of the Indian College and Student Life at Colonial Harvard* through January 2010. Pictured: *Archaeology of Harvard Yard* 2009 summer students began this season’s excavation.

Special Events: Archaeology of Harvard Yard

Sept. 10, 2009	Harvard Yard Excavation Opening Ceremony, 1:30 PM Shelly Lowe, Executive Director, Harvard University Native American Program Bruce Curliss, Nipmuc Nation
October 24, 2009	Harvard Yard Archaeology Family Program, 9:30 AM–12:30 PM. Free <i>(rain location: Peabody Museum. Free with Museum admission)</i> Meet archaeologists in Harvard Yard and find out what lies beneath.
October 29, 2009	Harvard Yard Excavation Closing Ceremony and Results Day, 1:00–4:00 PM <i>(drizzle or shine)</i> See what the excavation found. Staff and students will be available to show the artifacts and answer questions.

The summer student excavations unearthed 19th-century trash, including tiny pieces of metal print type, oyster shells, test tubes, ceramics, and glassware. Hodge explains, “People’s trash is very interesting—in ways that written records aren’t. Written records aren’t necessarily the most inclusive. But trash tells the real story.”

Harvard Yard Discoveries

Previous excavations in the Yard by the students and others have yielded clues about early Harvard, its students, and the Indian College, which was once part of the College. (See **Related Exhibition** below.)

In 2005, *Archaeology of Harvard Yard* students excavated behind Matthews and Massachusetts Halls. They found 17th-century artifacts, an 18th-century trash scatter and walkway, a 19th- and 20th-century coal ash dump, and a time capsule that student excavators deposited in 1985. A ground-penetrating radar survey in 2007 helped identify and locate concentrations of four centuries’ remains in front of Matthews Hall.

In 2007, students excavating there found 17th–19th-century artifacts including 17th-century printing type from the first printing press in the British colonies. Bruce Curliss (Nipmuc) is a descendant of a Harvard Native student who worked the printing press. “The Yard is probably this treasure trove of archaeological history. You can just imagine what’s under the whole Yard.” He looks forward to the findings from the fall excavation.

“It’s really, really, cool to be a student digging up student history. It never gets old to hold a piece of history in your hand, to have material evidence in your hands, evidence of past students and Harvard.”
– Emily Pierce (’10), a participant in the 2007 and 2009 digs.



Anthropology 1130 will be taught by:

Dr. William L. Fash, William and Muriel Seabury Howells Director of the Peabody Museum and
Bowditch Professor of Central American and Mexican Archaeology and Ethnology

Dr. Diana Loren, Associate Curator, Peabody Museum

Dr. Patricia Capone, Associate Curator, Peabody Museum

Dr. Christina Hodge, Senior Curatorial Assistant, Peabody Museum

[Related Harvard Yard Archaeology Exhibition](#)

The exhibition *Digging Veritas: The Archaeology and History of the Indian College and Student Life at Colonial Harvard* shows how today's Harvard students make sense of archaeological finds and historical documents. Student archaeologists unearthed evidence of colonial Harvard as a landscape shaped by social and religious tensions that affected everything from Native American and English settler relationships to the everyday routines of student life. The exhibition remains on view through January 2010.

About the Peabody Museum

The Peabody Museum is among the oldest archaeological and ethnographic museums in the world with one of the finest collections of human cultural history found anywhere. It is home to superb materials from Africa, ancient Europe, North America, Mesoamerica, Oceania, and South America in particular. In addition to its archaeological and ethnographic holdings, the Museum's photographic archives, one of the largest of its kind, hold more than 500,000 historical photographs, dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the present and chronicling anthropology, archaeology, and world culture.

Location: The Peabody Museum is located at 11 Divinity Avenue in Cambridge. The Museum is a short walk from the Harvard Square MBTA station.

Peabody Museum Hours: 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., seven days a week. The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Admission is \$9 for adults, \$7 for students and seniors, \$6 for children, 3–18. Free with Harvard ID or Museum membership. The Museum is free to Massachusetts residents Sundays, 9 A.M. to noon, year round, and Wednesdays from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M. (September to May). Admission includes admission to the Harvard Museum of Natural History. For more information call 617-496-1027 or go online to: www.peabody.harvard.edu.

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