

#6 AHS - INTENSIVE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY FOR AHS AND REVIEW OF COSTUME
AND TEXTILE COLLECTION BY LYNNE BASSETT --HP-- \$28,973

Amherst Historical Society
67 Amity Street
Amherst, MA 01002

Proposal to Community Preservation Act Committee

December 2016

Community Preservation Act Committee- Proposal Request Form for FY 2018

Project Title: Intensive Archeological Survey for Amherst Historical Society and Review of Costume and Textile Collection by Lynne Bassett

CPA funding category: Check all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Housing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open Space
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation

Amount of CPA Funds Requested: \$ 28,973

Submitting Entity: Amherst Historical Society

Contact Person: Georgia Barnhill

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Please complete this form in its entirety and include the following in your proposal.

Overview of Proposal: Please describe your project and your feasibility analysis.

We are presenting two projects.

- I. Continuation of archeological research begun in the summer of 2016.
- II. Review of costumes and other textiles by a specialist, Lynne Z. Bassett

I. The archeological project will build on the work by the University of Massachusetts Archeological Services undertaken in the summer of 2016 funded by a CPA grant. During that project, a complete survey of the property at 67 Amity Street was accomplished with ground penetrating radar and several sites were selected for an initial investigation. The new project will re-excavate three areas previously dug expanding them vertically and horizontally. As a result of the initial excavations, a variety of artifacts were discovered including a clay pipe, an early glass bottle, and some artifacts from the twentieth century, including a coin and a container for Three-in-One Oil. The final report has been submitted for review by the Historical Society. UMass proposes to excavate several new areas for the first time based on data from the ground penetrating radar study done in June 2016. The current project proposes the excavation of a total of 9-10 square meters. Attached to this proposal is a detailed plan prepared by the University of Massachusetts Archeological Services. Further information is available upon request.

II. As the inventory (CPA 2013) and storage (CPA 2014) projects proceed slowly and thoughtfully, it has become clear that the costume collection needs specialized attention for identification and review. Textiles are the most difficult items to house and maintain and require detailed understanding in terms of scope, materials, and storage needs when developing plans and making decisions. Beyond Emily Dickinson's famed white dress, the Amherst Historical Society collection of costumes includes nineteenth- and twentieth-century military uniforms, costumes for dolls, dresses, and baby bonnets. The inventory lists about 600 items, but Marianne Curling knows there may more items that have yet to be listed.

The Society proposes to hire Lynne Bassett, a nationally recognized independent curator and textile specialist, to review the objects in the collection and provide additional information for the inventory. Her deep knowledge of the Connecticut River Valley and costume history makes her the ideal consultant to review the collection. She will provide a collection analysis, basic review of approximately 500 pieces, prepare detailed reports for the twenty most significant items as determined during the initial review process, and provide a storage plan and collection summary. She will also advise the Society on the historical value of the collection. Our own curator, assisted by volunteers, will work closely with Ms. Bassett to prepare the collection for review, to rehouse the pieces, and update records. The budget is attached to this proposal.

Describe how your request meets the CPA criteria:

The excavations done in 2016 yielded a variety of artifacts that help interpret the use of the land surrounding the Simeon Strong House. Such research and the resulting retrieval of historical artifacts are part of historic preservation. Archeological research has the potential to reveal a great deal about the daily lives of the inhabitants of the property from the construction of the house in 1759 (that date has been established by the dendrochronological study undertaken by William Flynt and funded by CPA funds) to the present.

As noted above, costume and textile collections require the attention of specialists. Since costumes and related domestic textiles are important in understanding women's history and domestic economy, thoughtfully describing and preserving them is important. Ms. Bassett has worked on the collection at Historic Northampton and is now an adjunct curator at the Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum in Hartford. Her résumé is attached to this proposal. In any event, the first step of historic preservation is describing objects, how they were made and used.

1. Description of funding needed, including:

a. Documentation of cost estimates, budget

I. The University of Massachusetts Office of Grants and Contracts is responsible for the creation of their budget. Their total cost for additional intensive survey, including the permit application, subsurface testing, artifact analysis and curation, completion memorandum and final report is \$19,993.

II. For the costume project, the budget includes \$4,500 for nine days of Lynne Bassett's time (\$500/per day) and an additional \$4,480 for Marianne Curling, the AHSM curator who will supervise the project. Budget detail for both projects is attached.

b. Other sources of funding, e.g., grants, self-funding, fund-raising

The Amherst Historical Society has no other sources for this project. The Society's fund-raising efforts go towards the basic needs of the Strong House—utilities, insurance, salary for administrative services done by the consulting curator. Volunteers will provide unpaid assistance.

c. Timeline on how CPA funds would be spent, including over multiple years

Both projects will occur in the summer of 2017. The final report of the archeological project will probably not be available until early in 2018 since it takes time to describe, date, and preserve any artifacts that are found.

2. Urgency of the Project, if any.

Given that Ms. Bassett is often completely booked by large projects, I rank the textile project first in terms of priority. The archeological project should take place before any construction occurs at the Jones Library. Although the Historical Society anticipates that the construction would impact the Historical Society's property, if heavy equipment should need to be moved across the property in front of or to the east side of the building, the compaction of soil will only complicate the excavation of any subsurface features.

Lynne Bassett's time is often devoted to large projects requiring every moment of her time. However, she will be available this coming summer for this project.

3. Estimated timeline from receipt of funds to Project completion.

The archeological project will begin in the summer of 2017. The project will not be completed until the final report is delivered to the Amherst Historical Society, probably in early 2018.

The textile project will begin in July of 2018 and will take less than one month from beginning to end.

4. Acquisition or preservation of threatened resources.

Both projects will preserve collections of the Historical Society. We do not know what will be found under the surface of the property, but preserving artifacts long buried is clearly important. We do know that the textile collection needs attention.

5. Population(s) to be served by the Project.

The Amherst Historical Society and Museum is open to the public, free of charge.

The general public as well as specialists will be served by this project. The Historical Society makes artifacts available to students in the public school system and the Five Colleges. The organization is committed to sharing its collections with the public.

6. How will the CPA investment in your property, facility or project be maintained over time?
The Amherst Historical Society will continue to maintain the Strong House and will seek improvements over time.

7. Which relevant Town committees and/or commissions are you working with?
Historical Commission

8. Other information regarding the Project deemed necessary for CPAC
This project dovetails nicely with the study undertaken by William A. Flynt of Historical Deerfield of the timbers of the Simeon Strong House with CPA funding. The archeological project continues the exploration of the property and its uses.

Amherst Historical Society and Museum CPA Request FY18 Additional comments

As Jim Wald so cogently stated in the AHSM request to the Community Preservation Act Committee a year ago, "The Amherst Historical Society and Museum is to material culture what its neighbor, the Jones Library, is to books and manuscripts: the repository of the Town's heritage and collective memory. Good stewardship of these resources means not simply holding them but also maximizing the potential for deriving information from them and providing for their conservation and secure storage so that future generations may enjoy and benefit from them as well. As in public policy, we follow a process of: inventory, assessment, and action."

During the past year, the AHS has moved forward on the CPA-funded inventory and storage projects that provide for better access of the collection of some 7,000 artifacts. Upgrading storage continues and consideration is being given about providing public access to the inventory and the accompanying photographs. Now that the textile collection has been recorded in a very preliminary fashion, an expert needs to be called in to provide an assessment of the collection. We are fortunate in the Pioneer Valley that one of the leading specialists in the nation resides in Palmer, Massachusetts. The AHSM proposes to engage her services. The AHSM is requesting funds for Marianne Curling's time that will be devoted to this project. Otherwise, it would take Lynne Bassett twice as much time to accomplish the project.

In a like manner, the ground penetrating radar funded by CPA fund in FY2016 and preliminary excavations is in fact a form of inventory. Limited funding in 2016 precluded a more extensive subsurface approach; continuing this project in 2017 will provide more answers to the questions about how the property was used around the Simeon Strong House. Interesting anomalies by the ground penetrating radar need to be investigated and found objects assessed.

Scope of Work for Archeological Project:

The proposed tasks to be performed by UMAS conform to MHC guidelines (950 CMR 70) and will consist of the following:

- *Application for a Massachusetts State Archaeologist's permit:* The Principal Investigator will apply for an excavation permit from the Massachusetts State Archaeologist.
- *Recommended subsurface testing:* UMAS recommends 9-10 square meters of subsurface excavation. This would include the re-excavation and expansion of TR 3 to further examine GPR anomaly GA-13, TR 4 to investigate Feature 1, and EU 1 to investigate Feature 2. Additional units placed in the south yard at the edge of GPR anomaly GA-13 and a cluster of GPR anomalies (GA-13, LBS-01, and LBS-02) and a 2-x-2 m unit in the east yard to intersect GPR anomalies SF-04 and GA-05 are also proposed. The 2-x-2 m unit may determine if the difference between stratigraphic profiles from STP 11 and STP 12 excavated during the 2016 survey reflect the presence of a structure. Subsurface testing will be completed in a total of five working days, and is expected to yield numerous artifacts.
- *Completion memorandum:* A memorandum summarizing the fieldwork findings and making recommendations will be submitted to the sponsor within five business days of the completion of subsurface testing. After review by the sponsor, a copy of this memorandum will be sent to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for review.
- *Processing, analysis, and curation of artifacts and documents:* Any artifacts or cultural material recovered during the archaeological survey will be processed and stored at the laboratory of UMAS. Documents pertaining to the research and fieldwork will also be curated at the UMAS lab.
- *Draft and Comprehensive final report:* A draft report final report will be prepared presenting the results of the archaeological survey and making recommendations for future property management. Upon approval by the sponsor, the draft report will be sent to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for review. Upon receipt of comments from the MHC, UMAS will prepare a final report for the sponsor. Copies of the final report will also be provided to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Cost

The total cost for additional intensive (locational) survey at the Amherst Historical Society and Museum property, including the permit application, subsurface testing, artifact analysis and curation, completion memorandum, and draft and final comprehensive report is **\$19,993**.

Type of Contract: The project will be conducted under a fixed-price contract.

Review and Completion Period: The project will remain active and the University account will remain open for a period of one year after the start date (the date of execution of the contract). This will permit UMAS to respond to draft review comments by the sponsor and Massachusetts Historical Commission; allow the curation of artifacts; and to meet payroll for the work completed. The performance period remaining open is crucial to our ability to meet project deadlines effectively and has no effect on the schedule of deliverables.

Amherst Historical Society and Museum

Costume and Textile Collection Review Budget

LYNNE BASSETT			
Basic Review	80 pieces per day average	6 days	\$ 3,000.00
Detailed review	20 pieces	1 day	\$ 500.00
Collection analysis		1 day	\$ 500.00
Storage plan/collection summary		1 day	\$ 500.00
Subtotal Lynne Bassett			\$ 4,500.00
AHS CURATOR			
64 hours @ 35 per hour	Working w/with Lynne Bassett taking notes, etc.		\$ 2,240.00
64 hours @ 35 per hour	Prep collection for review, return the collection to storage, update records		\$ 2,240.00
Subtotal AHS Curator			\$ 4,480.00
PROJECT TOTAL			\$ 8,980.00

LYNNE ZACEK BASSETT
Costume and Textile Historian
Museum Consultant
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EDUCATION

M.A. Design and Resource Management, specializing in textile and costume history, University of Connecticut, 1991.

Thesis: "The Sober People of Hadley: Sumptuary Laws and Clothing in Hadley, Massachusetts, 1663–1732."

B.A. American Studies (cum laude), Mount Holyoke College, 1983.

Victorian Society of America Newport Summer School, 1992.

POSITIONS

1995 – 2000: Curator of Textiles and Fine Arts. Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, MA.

1990 – 1995: Curator of Collections. Historic Northampton, Northampton, MA.

2011 – present: Editor, *Uncoverings*, the annual journal of the American Quilt Study Group.

2007 – July 2016 Guest Curator; August 2016 – Present Adjunct Curator: Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT. Responsible for costume and textile exhibitions, including: "Gothic to Goth: Romantic Era Fashion & Its

Legacy," 2016; "Colts & Quilts: Remembering the Civil War" (with Alyce Englund and Erin Munroe), 2011; "The Upholstered Woman: Fashion of the 1870s and 1880s," 2010; "The Allure of Lace," fall 2009; "Foreign Accents: The Ballets Russes and Western Couture," spring 2009; "Who Was Anna Tuels? Quilt Stories, 1750–1900," fall 2008; "Making a Splash: American Beach Fashions, 1850–1920," spring 2008. Other duties have included preparing a costume collection assessment, making recommendations for acquisitions and deaccessions, cataloguing, assisting researchers, donor cultivation, supervising volunteers, etc.

Exhibitions

- Co-curator (with Madelyn Shaw), "Homefront & Battlefield: Quilts & Context in the Civil War," American Textile History Museum, Lowell, MA, 2012; New-York Historical Society 2014; Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, VT, 2014; Great Plains Art Museum, Lincoln, NE, 2015.
- Guest curator, "'What Can a Woman Do?' Women, Work, and Wardrobe, 1865–1940," Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, MA, 2009.
- Co-curator (with Deborah Kraak), "For the Joy of It: Appliqué Quilts from the Judy Roche Collection," Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, PA, 2006.
- Guest curator, "'Modesty Died When Clothes Were Born': Costume in the Life and Literature of Mark Twain," The Mark Twain House & Museum, Hartford, CT, 2004. *Winner of the 2005 Costume Society of America Richard Martin Award for Excellence in the Exhibition of Costume.*
- Guest curator, "Telltale Textiles: Quilts from the Historic Deerfield Collection," Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, MA, 2002.

Selected consulting projects

- Cataloguer for historic costume collection, Smith College Theater Department, 2014–present.
- Lead cataloguer for household textiles collection, IMLS grant funded position, New Hampshire Historical Society, 2014–2015.
- Identifying and dating costume collection, Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, VT, 2009–2010.
- Lead cataloguer for the bed cover collection, H. F. du Pont Winterthur Museum, DE, 2008.
- Costume Specialist, Connecticut Historical Society Museum, Hartford, CT, 2001–2003. NEH grant-funded position to catalogue the museum's pre-1900 clothing collection with TMS collections management system. Also organized a major symposium, "History Next to the Skin: Topics in American Costume, 1620–1865."
- Consultant for projects that in whole or in part culled and reorganized collections storage, identified and dated household textiles, costumes, and personal artifacts: Nashua (NH) Historical Society, 2016; Hatfield (MA) Historical Society, 2015; Fairfield (CT) Historical Society, 2015; Longmeadow (MA) Historical Society, 2014–2015; Gore Place, Waltham, MA, 2013–2014; East Hampton (NY) Historical Society, 2007–2010; Wilson Museum, Castine, ME, 2007–2009; Wellesley (MA) Historical Society, 2006–2009; Blue Hill (ME) Historical Society, 2007, 2012; Maine State Museum, Augusta, 2000–2005; Home Sweet Home Museum, East Hampton, NY, 2005–2006; Frankestown (NH) Historical Society, 2003–2004; John Paul Jones House, Portsmouth (NH) Historical Society, 2001, 2008.
- Consultant to the Stanley-Whitman House in Farmington, CT, to update and implement a furnishings plan for the 1725–1772 house interior, 2010.

This résumé leaves out Ms. Bassett's extensive list of publications, public lectures, and participation in scholarly symposiums to focus on her experience as an independent curator in recent years. A full résumé is available on request from Ms. Barnhill.