October 26, 2013

Dear Michael,

It is a distinct pleasure to present you with the Philadelphia Archaeological Forum’s *Award of Merit*. This award was established in 2012, and honors individuals or organizations whose sustained actions help preserve, protect, and or educate others about Philadelphia’s remarkable archaeological heritage.

Over the course of a long career, your efforts to further the study and promote the preservation of this city’s archaeological record have helped to bring long forgotten stories of Philadelphia’s past into the present. By your work at Old St. Paul’s Church, the Blockley Almshouse, Wyck in Germantown, the Fairmount Water Works, and along the Delaware Waterfront – among many other sites – you have continuously advanced the expectations for excellence in archaeological studies. In more recent years, during work at the National Constitution Center Site, your cheeky and insightful sense of humor constantly reminded everyone how much fun urban archaeology can and should be, and imparted the deep-felt sentiment that you are a joy to work with. Through it all, the example you have set for others has helped to inspire a new generation of urban archaeologists to follow in your footsteps, and to build on the body of work you have established. Moreover, your desire to share the city’s archaeological sites and discoveries with a broader public audience has played a critical role in the foundation of this organization.

Among your many professional accomplishments, two specific examples deserve special recognition for the impacts they have made. Your seminal work at the First African Baptist Church Cemetery, at Eighth and Vine Streets, set important precedents in the conduct of public archaeology, the effective public interpretation of archaeological sites, and in the establishment of vital descendant community collaborative outreach programs. As one of the co-authors of *The Buried Past, An Archaeological History of Philadelphia* – a monumental volume that is considered to be the “Bible” of Philadelphia archaeology – you were able to bring previous archaeological explorations of the city out of the shadows and into a wider public awareness. By doing so, this work has helped focus national attention on Philadelphia’s rich archaeological past, and has enabled many in the local community to better appreciate what could be lost in the absence of continued preservational vigilance and archaeological exploration.

It is in recognition of these considerable contributions that the Philadelphia Archaeological Forum honors you with this *Award of Merit*.

Sincerely,



Douglas Mooney

President

Philadelphia Archaeological Forum