



The
BEAD FORUM
Newsletter of the Society of Bead Researchers

Issue 87

Autumn 2025

Society News

Annual Members Meeting Announced

The SBR has not held a general meeting of the members in several years, and we feel it's important to resume this as an annual activity. The meeting will be a general discussion about the direction of the SBR—no votes will be held during this meeting. The zoom link is below.

Topic: SBR Members Meeting
Time: Nov 14, 2025 01:00 PM Pacific Time/03:00 PM Central Time/04:00 PM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://ua-edu.zoom.us/j/84254364982?pwd=0uK-DTVohSFbnBQWky2YDn3kKLRxxff.1>

Elections

Last June an election for a new Secretary was held to replace retiring Secretary Alice Scherer. After the election was held, a family issue prevented the new candidate from accepting the position after all. Therefore, the position of both President and Secretary are presented for your vote. Please register your vote for the below positions by following this link: https://oregon.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxfSIsdk3yhomma.

Voting will conclude on November 21, 2025.

Secretary/Treasurer

Our long-time Secretary/Treasurer, Alice Scherer, has completed her last term in office. After a long search, we now have a candidate who has offered to stand for office: Emma Derry. Emma is a bead scholar who has published several times in BEADS.

In her own words: "I'm an Associate Curator at Jamestown Rediscovery, where I began as an intern in



Emma Derry

2018 while completing my undergraduate degrees in Biology and Anthropology at William & Mary. I have a master's degree in Human Osteoarchaeology from University College Cork, and have experience with archaeological materials from sites including Hawaii, Ireland, and Virginia. At Jamestown my focus is now on human osteology, but my first major project was an assessment of the approximately 5,000 glass beads in our collection. Since then, I have continued to research not only our glass beads, but also those made from other materials including stone and wood."

President

Dr. Elliot Blair's term as President concludes at the end of this year and he is running for a second term (2026-2028). Dr. Blair is a leading scholar in bead research, and will continue to bring insight and enthusiasm to our community. His ongoing support of research and scholarship continues to enrich the Society's mission.



Dr. Elliot Blair

**Cast your vote
for President and
Secretary by
November 21, 2025:**

https://oregon.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxfSIsdk3yhomma

SBR Student Conference Travel Award

Miriam-Helene Rudd, a recent graduate of the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation, is our latest award recipient. Her paper, "Approaches to the Stabilization of Beadwork," was presented at the 15th Biennial North American Textile Conservation Conference held in Banff in September of 2025. It provides an overview of the current approaches to beadwork stabilization including examination, documentation, and treatment. The care and treatment of beadwork has been periodically addressed in conservation literature, but stabilization methodologies had not been previously compiled. This paper is the culmination of an independent study conducted during graduate studies in objects and textiles conservation. Consultations and a literature review were conducted, detailing the treatment of a beaded garment by designer Ann Lowe that was presented as a case study.



Miriam-Helene Rudd

Learn how to apply for the Student Travel Award at our website:
<https://beadresearch.org/student-conference-travel-award/>

Research Projects

Beads in the Making: A Gathering of Beadmakers in Ribe Nina Schreuder

On Friday, the 27th of June 2025, I headed off to Ribe (Denmark) to attend an annual gathering of glass beadmakers in the Ribe VikingCenter—a weekend full of new techniques and beautifully crafted beads. People came from many countries: Germany, Denmark, Norway, the United States and the Netherlands (like myself) to share techniques, exchange knowledge and experiment with historical methods of glass bead production.

The city of Ribe was an important centre for craft and exchange already in the 7th century CE. Here, archaeologists found a glass bead workshop with remains of furnaces. Additionally, remains of beads, semi-finished products, glass threads, tesserae, glass shards and tools were found (Figure 1). Ribe is situated on the river Ribe Å which was connected to the Wadden Sea, a system of tidal flats along the North Sea coast. Connections with the networks around the North Sea and beyond allowed goods to be exchanged over long distances, with Ribe-type beads ending up in many cemeteries all over Europe.



Figure 1. Glass bead production remains at Museet Ribes Vikinger, Ribe. Photo by author.

The gathering in Ribe was therefore not only a chance to observe skilled beadmakers at work but also to see how experimental archaeology can bring aspects of early medieval beadmaking to life. Most people at

the gathering in Ribe used Viking-type furnaces that are fuelled with charcoal and operated using double bellows (Figure 2). However, there were also experiments with cone-shaped volcano furnaces for which no bellows are required. These furnaces work with natural draft and can



Figure 2. Viking-type furnace with bellows. Photo by author.

be used without the help of someone else (Figure 3).

The volcano furnaces worked best when they were set up in a sheltered location, such as in the Beadmaker's House at the Ribe VikingCenter. Here the furnaces were not exposed to outside gusts of wind, which would disrupt the airflow and make it difficult to maintain a steady working temperature.

These practical insights become much clearer when you start doing experimental work, which is why this is such a crucial part of researching this subject. On these furnaces, glass beads are made by winding hot glass around a mandrel (an iron rod). Decorations can for example be made using thin strands of glass (Figure 4), small mosaic glass pieces, or by denting the surface of a bead with a chisel.

Overall, the opportunity to work together, exchange knowledge about production techniques and furnace set-ups is what makes beadmaking so enjoyable. Gatherings



Figure 3. Volcano-type furnace. Photo by author.

like this are valuable because they create a bridge between the expertise of skilled craftspeople, and the archaeological interpretation of the production remains, and the finished beads in the archaeological record.

Watching artisans reproduce ancient bead types highlights the skill that is needed to do so, but also how technical knowledge is shared, adapted and disseminated—and it draws attention to where the archaeological record alone cannot fully answer all our questions.

NINA SCHREUDER
PhD Candidate
University of Groningen
nina.schreuder@rug.nl



Figure 4. A wound bead is decorated above a volcano-type furnace with dot decorations using a thin strand of glass. Photo by author.

Nina Schreuder is an archaeologist and a PhD candidate at the University of Groningen. Her research focuses on early medieval glass beads from the Northern Netherlands and Lower Saxony, combining their decoration and production techniques with analysis of the chemical composition to understand more about regional expressions of identity and exchange connections. The project is funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

Renew your membership at <https://beadresearch.org/membership/>
and don't miss our Member meeting on Nov 14, 2025

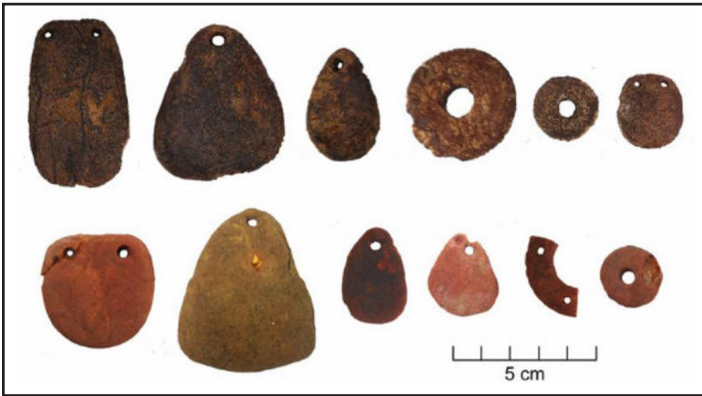
01:00 PM Pacific Time/03:00 PM Central Time/04:00 PM Eastern Time

Recent Publications

Ahola, Marja, Aija Macāne, and Kerkko Nordqvist

2025 'Symbolically Overloaded' Burials: Early Fourth-Millennium BC Hunter-Fisher-Gatherer Mortuary Practices from North-Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Archaeology*; <https://www.academia.edu/127183669/>.

One of its characteristics of the Typical Comb Ware culture (TCW) is a wealth of “amber” or “ocher” graves and mortuary practices. This article concerns the graves' key elements (including amber beads and pendants), their distribution and frequency, and their relationship to the TCW phenomenon.



Ai, Wanqiao, Hui Wang, and Guoke Chen

2025 Emergence of Carnelian/Agate Beads in the Gan-Qing Region, Northwest China: New Evidence from the Western Hexi Corridor. *Archaeological Research in Asia* 43; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ara.2025.100625>.

During the 2nd millennium BCE, benefiting from the growth of long-distance exchange networks, some people in the Hexi Corridor were among the first to use carnelian/agate beads. These later spread to the eastern Gansu-Qinghai region, but their use remained limited until the Zhou elite incorporated them into their funerary rites.

Anderson, Carrie

2025 Amsterdam, Accra, America: Glass Beads, Pearls, and Ersatz Gems in the Dutch Atlantic. *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art / Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek Online* 75(1):126-153; https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004710740_007.

Discusses the important role that glass beads played in the Dutch transatlantic trade.

Becerra, María Florencia, Eleonora Freire Espeleta, Emilia B. Halac, María Reinoso, María Cecilia Castellanos, and Verónica Isabel Williams

2025 First Characterization of Beads and Minerals from the Pre-Columbian Calchaquí Valley, Northwestern Argentina. *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 64, 105165; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2025.105165>.

Analysis of 15 bluish and green beads revealed that most were turquoise, with two being made of chrysocolla.

Bechar, Shlomit, Anastasia Shapiro, Yinon Shvitiel, and Uri Berger

2025 An Intermediate Bronze Age Bead Assemblage from a Burial Cave at Giv'at Rehelim (Tell es-Safa) in Northern Israel. *Bulletin of the American Society of Overseas Research* 393(1); <https://doi.org/10.1086/734713>.

The rich funerary assemblage included dozens of beads made of carnelian, faience, red coral, and stone. Some of these materials are non-endemic to the southern Levant, and some of the beads were made using technologies that are foreign to the region, all indicating trade contacts with distant manufacturing centers.



Caplan, Candice, Franck Notari, Féodor Blumentritt, and Eric May

2025 Coloured Glass Coating of Quartz Beads before the 13th Century: An Undocumented Sapphire Imitation. *Archaeometry*; <https://doi.org/10.1111/arcm.13100>.

Among the gemstones set into the Great Shrine of Saint Maurice (13th century) at the Abbey of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune in Switzerland are two quartz beads coated with blue glass in imitation of sapphire. The identification was made using Raman and chemical analyses.

Cordeiro, Jeanne, Angela Buarque, and Alice Táboas

2025 As contas de escambo do Rio de Janeiro no século XVI. *Revista de Arqueologia* 38(2):36-49; <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/391827948>.

The glass beads traded to the Tupinambá groups in southeastern Brazil by Europeans, especially the French, during the 16th century include Nueva Cadiz, seven-layer chevron, and striped varieties.



Derry, Emma

2025 Faceted Finds: Lapidary Beads at Jamestown, Virginia. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*; <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-025-00781-x>.

The Jamestown Rediscovery collection contains 133 lapidary beads fashioned from a variety of materials including quartz, amethyst, chalcedony, agate, carnelian, amber, and jet.

Dussubieux, Laure, Alok Kumar Kanungo, Yadubir Singh Rawat, and Pankaj Sharma

2025 Indian Ocean Connections and Regional Trade: An Elemental and Isotopic Study of the Glass of Vadnagar, Gujarat. *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 66, 105252; <https://www.academia.edu/129965826/>.

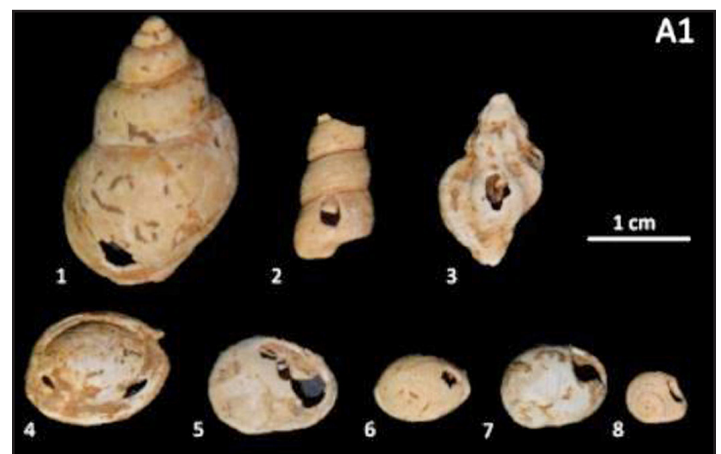
Compositional analyses of beads and other glass artifacts revealed a wide variety of glass types, testifying to the dynamism of the trade conducted in the region and of multiple connections, with ramifications sustained over very long periods of time, throughout South Asia and the Indian Ocean trade network.



Gazzo, Silvia, Emanuela Cristiani, Fabio Negrino, and Julien Riel-Salvatore

2025 Early Upper Palaeolithic Marine Mollusc Exploitation at Riparo Bombrini (Balzi Rossi, Italy): Shellfish Consumption and Ornament Production. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 17, 46; <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-024-02148-5>.

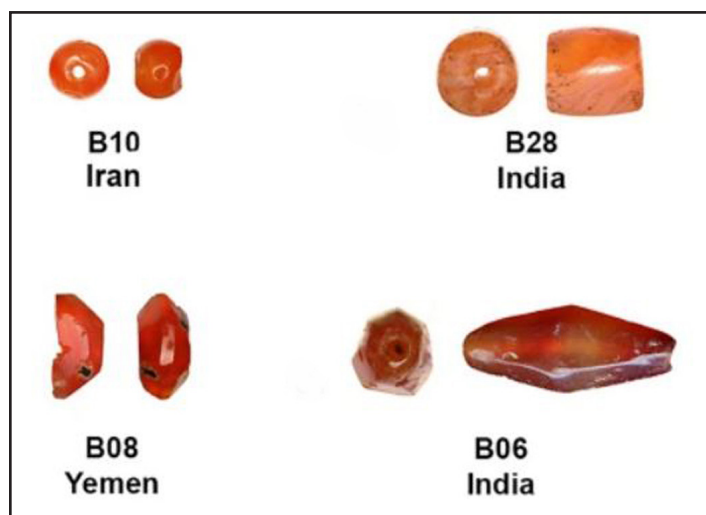
The bead assemblage consists of 91 perforated gastropods and four modified scaphopod segments. Includes information concerning perforation technology and use-wear.



Kenoyer, J. Mark, Joanna Then-Obłuska, Randall Law, and Laure Dussubieux

2025 Tracing the Origins of Carnelian Ornaments in Northeast Africa: Morphological, Technological and Chemical Compositional Analyses of Beads from Medieval and Post-Medieval Upper Nubia, Sudan. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 17, 121; <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-025-02228-0>.

The findings provide new insights into issues of technology transfer, stylistic variation, and trade networks linking medieval and post-medieval Nubia to distant regions of West and South Asia.



Langbroek, Mette, Alicia van Ham-Meert, Bernard Gratuze, Joep Hendriks, David Strivay, Line van Wersch, and Frans Theuws

2025 Early Medieval Bead-Boogie: LA-ICP-MS Analyses of Complete Glass Bead Sets from the Merovingian Cemeteries Lent-Lentseveld, Elst-’t Woud and Wijchen-Centrum. *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters* 51/52:129-184; <https://hal.science/hal-05108039/>.

Compositional analysis of glass beads from three 6th-century sites in the Netherlands suggests that they were imported over long distances to the region on several occasions, and once strung, the beads tended to remain together as a distinct set.

Lopiparo, Jeanne and Rosemary A. Joyce

2025 Afterlife Cycles, Cosmology, and Social Integration: Burial Practices in the Lower Ulúa Valley. *Ancient Mesoamerica*, First View; <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956536125000021>.

During the Formative period, child burials at Playa de los Muertos, Honduras, wore necklaces and wristlets

which incorporated shell and greenstone beads, as well as pendants in the form of skulls (shell) and duckbills (greenstone).

Ludvik, Geoffrey and J. Mark Kenoyer

2025 Indus-Aegean Interaction in the 3rd Millennium BC: A Comparative Analysis of Indus-style Beads in the Aegean, the Near East and the Indus. In *There and Back Again: Afro-Eurasian Exchange in the Neolithic and Bronze Age Periods*, edited by Marie Nicole Pareja and Robert Arnott, pp. 19-35. Archaeopress, Oxford. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.20590286.7>.

Provides new evidence for indirect long-distance socio-economic links between the Indus Valley Civilization and Aegean societies based on a multifaceted study of carnelian and other hard-stone beads.

Pelton, Spencer R., David G. Eckles, Connor C. Johnen, Rachael Shimek, Damian R. Kirkwood, Alexis Hollander, and Carolyn Buff

2025 Early Eighteenth Century Plains Indian Adornment at the River Bend Site, Wyoming. *Plains Anthropologist*; <https://doi.org/10.1080/00320447.2025.2530336>.

Dating to the early post-Contact period (1700 and 1725), the site revealed extensive evidence for bead and pendant production from riverine mollusk shell. Other recovered ornaments include beads made of bird and canid bone, *Olivella* shells, and steatite, as well as elk-ivory pendants.

Sanchez-Gomez, Daniel, José Ángel Garrido-Cordero, José María Martínez-Blanes, Rodrigo Villalobos García, Ana Catarina Sousa, María Dolores Zambrana Vega et al.

2025 A Forest of Green Beads: A Machine-Learning Based Framework to Determine the Geological Provenance of Prehistoric Variscite Artifacts. *Journal of Archaeological Science*; <https://ssrn.com/abstract=5214878>.

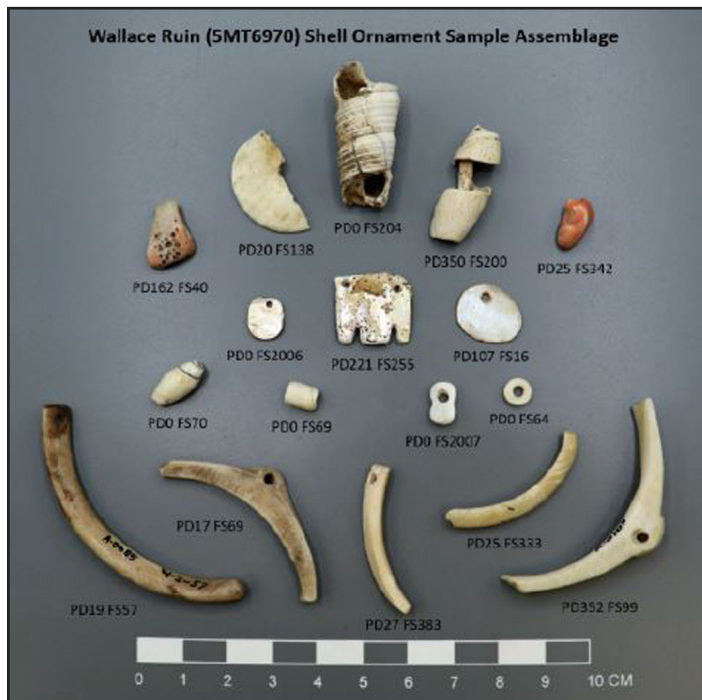
Presents a scalable, data-driven approach which integrates portable X-ray fluorescence (p-XRF) analysis, machine learning, and information theory to address critical gaps in the provenance analysis of variscite and related green phosphate minerals which serve as key tracers of prehistoric socio-economic networks in Late Prehistoric Europe (ca. 6000-1200 BC).

The Bead Forum

Schleher, Kari L. and Michelle Turner

2025 Items of Personal Adornment as Reflections of Diversity and Identity in Communities: A Case Study from the Northern Southwestern United States. Unpublished manuscript; <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4682041>.

Sites in the Lakeview Pueblo community (AD 900-1300) in southwestern Colorado yielded a large assemblage of beads and pendants made from a wide range of materials. These are used to provide insights on identity and connections to the outside world at two of the sites, Wallace Great House and Ida Jean.



Sepúlveda, Marcela, Benjamín Ballester, José Cárcamo-Vega, Sebastián Gutiérrez, and Francisco Gallardo

2025 Mineral Beads of the Formative Period (3500-1000 BP) in the Atacama Desert: An Archeometrical and Regional Approach. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 17, 64; <https://www.academia.edu/129129151/>.

Synthesizes all previous analytical studies of mineral beads in the Atacama Desert and northwestern Argentina, and then reports on the mineralogy of a large set of beads from archaeological contexts associated with the Formative Period in northern Chile.



Vitezović, Selena

2024 Taking the Deer by the Antlers: Deer in Material Culture in the Balkan Neolithic. *Arts* 13, 64; <https://www.academia.edu/122237751/>.

Ornaments made from deer skeletal elements include antler pendants of various forms and perforated red deer canines, as well as imitations of the latter fashioned from bone.



You can help keep *The Bead Forum* interesting and useful by submitting short articles on your bead research, as well as announcements of new publications and relevant conferences or symposia. Send to beadforumnewsletter@gmail.com.

Next deadline:
1 April 2026

With Great Appreciation...

Retirement of Alice Scherer as Secretary/Treasurer

There is no way to overstate how much Alice has done for the Society of Bead Researchers over nearly two decades of service. Her dedication to the Society has been extraordinary, and her talent unmatched.

In the April 2007 issue of the *Bead Forum* Newsletter, Society President Roderick Sprague noted that Alice Scherer had become the newly elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Society of Bead Researchers. He noted:

It is especially significant that Alice was willing to step forward to fill the most important elected position in the Society at a time when the Society is in need of strong leadership. We are also fortunate because Alice has both experience and a host of new ideas for improvement and reactivation of the Society. We look forward to the active participation of Alice Scherer in Society affairs.

—Bead Forum, 2007

When Dr. Sprague wrote this, he likely did not anticipate the extent to which Alice would not only “actively participate,” but lead and serve as a scholar and mentor in her position for more than 18 years.

In addition to her secretary/treasurer duties, Alice has also served as our site’s webmistress (a position she will continue for at least a while), as a proofreader for the editors, and as producer of the newsletter. Alice’s copy editing abilities are legendary, and her contributions in that realm will be missed by many.

Beyond her service in our humble organization, Alice has applied her talent for organization and motivation to a number of pursuits. She founded the Center for the Study of Beadwork in 1989 in her hometown of Portland, Oregon, to promote the field of contemporary beadwork, and to engage in research of indigenous beading traditions in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

Alice co-authored *The New Beadwork* (1992), a book celebrating the revival of the “beadwork as an art form” movement. She was also instrumental in producing the *Munsell Bead Color Book*, which was published in 2011. She has also written many articles published in *Threads Magazine*, *Ornament*, *Fiberarts*, *Beadwork Magazine*, and



Alice Scherer. Photo by Ron Petersen.

of course the *Bead Forum*.

Those of us who have worked with Alice know that her influence reaches far beyond minutes, budgets, and reports. Her support, humor, and scholarly dedication have supported every president and editor who has had the privilege of working with her. We thank her deeply for her years of service and friendship and wish her continued joy and creativity in all that lies ahead.

— Elliot Blair, President, Society of Bead Researchers

Who We Are

The Society of Bead Researchers is a non-profit corporation founded in 1981 to foster research on beads and beadwork of all materials and periods and to expedite the dissemination of the resultant knowledge. Membership is open to all persons and organizations involved in the study of beads, as well as those interested in keeping abreast of current trends in bead research. The Society publishes a biannual newsletter, *The Bead Forum*, and an annual peer-reviewed journal, *BEADS: Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers*. The Society's main website address is www.beadresearch.org.

Contents of the newsletter include society information, current research news, listings of recent publications, conference and symposia announcements, and brief articles on various aspects of bead research. Both historic and prehistoric subject materials are welcome.

The deadline for submissions for the next *Bead Forum* is 1 April 2026. Submissions should be in Word for Windows 6.0 or later with no embedded sub-programs such as "End Notes." References cited should be in *Historical Archaeology* format (<https://sha.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/HARC-Springer-Style-Guide-Nov-24.pdf>).

Send submissions to:

Michele Hoferitza

Newsletter Editor

beadforumnewsletter@gmail.com

ISSN: 0829-8726 (Print) and ISSN: 2469-8555 (Online and Electronic)

Officers and Others

President: Elliot Blair, Associate Professor
of Anthropology, University of Alabama
ehblair@ua.edu

Secretary/Treasurer: vacant.

Editor: Alison K. Carter, Associate Professor
of Anthropology, University of Oregon
acarter4@uoregon.edu

Editor Emeritus: Karlis Karklins, former Head
of Material Culture Research, Parks Canada
karlis4444@gmail.com

Associate Editor: Brad Loewen, Professor of
Anthropology, Université de Montréal
brad.loewen@umontreal.ca

Journal Layout: David Weisel

Newsletter Editor: Michele Hoferitza,
PhD Student, University of Alabama
beadforumnewsletter@gmail.com

Newsletter Design, Layout, and Mailing:
Michele Hoferitza

Webmaster: Alice Scherer, Founder, Center for the
Study of Beadwork
AS-beadweaver@outlook.com

Editorial Advisory Committee: Laurie Burgess
(chair), Gregory Waselkov, and Marvin
T. Smith

Publications Committee: Karlis Karklins (chair),
Paul Huey, and Jeffrey M. Mitchem

Finance Committee: Karlis Karklins

Society of Bead Researchers, PO Box 13719, Portland, OR 97213

beadresearch.org

beadresearchjournal.org