

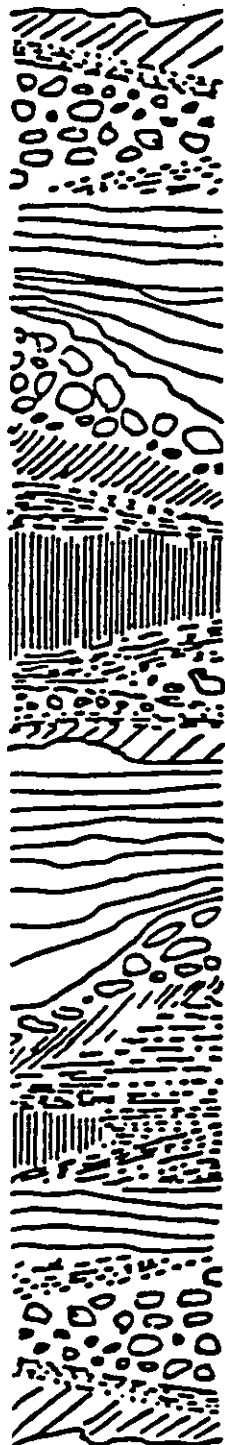
Professional Archaeologists of New York City

NEWSLETTER

PANYC

Number 91

May 1999



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NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: 19 MAY 1999
Room 1127 Graduate Center, C.U.N.Y.
Executive Board: 6:00 P.M.
General Membership: 6:30 P.M.

Minutes of the PANYC General membership meeting: 24 March 1999

President Yamin called the meeting to order at 6:39 P.M.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The minutes of the last General Membership meeting were accepted with the following corrections: Under NEW BUSINESS: Lattanzi did not make the statement attributed to him. Under PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Owsley was misspelled. Pickman moved to accept the minutes and Ricciardi seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Freeman reported a balance of \$1808.72 in the PANYC treasury. She requested remittance of dues, and discussed a drive to install new members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Yamin initially spoke about a letter regarding Paul Huey in the PANYC newsletter. She stated that she had invited Glumac to this meeting. In response to Yamin's question, Ponz discussed the excavation at City Hall Park. Pickman asked if cultural material extends below the excavation depth. Stone expressed concern that the report of her City Hall Park investigation was not included in the scope. A discussion commenced about shallow intact surfaces which Stone documented. Pickman asked when the project will end and Yamin responded it will extend into May. Glumac is also working on the Gowanus Expressway project. Discussion related to City Hall Park continued.

Stone talked about the Stone Street RFP. The latest work will be implemented with review of the archaeologist's report by a second archaeologist. Ricciardi asked about LPC's Certified Local Government status and the extent of it's authority. Yamin asked Ricciardi to research the issue of Certified Local Government status with Harris. Yamin stated that crew positions on the City Hall Park project are available. Sutphin had told her an outline of the urban standards was being written.

Geismar went to the D.O.T. presentation on Beverwyck. The D.O.T. is willing to allow excavation of the site by an archaeologist with funds. The Liberty Island investigation is scheduled for four weeks in August and September. Ricciardi was going to excavate but had prior commitments. He reported that the NYC Parks department wants to hire a historic archaeologist.

ELECTIONS: The election results are as follows: President - Diane Dallal, Vice President - Joan Geismar, Treasurer - Patience Freeman, Secretary - Mike Bonasera. The executive board members are Anne-Marie Cantwell, Wendy Harris, Arnold Pickman, Nan Rothschild, and Linda Stone.

EVENTS: Stone informed the membership about upcoming events which are in the newsletter. She described Kate Morgan's work at the Seaport in a childrens education program.

MEMBERSHIP: Philip La Porta's application for membership will be voted on by the membership.

METROPOLITAN CHAPTER OF THE NYSAA: Donna Seifort spoke about Washington D.C. brothels at the joint AIA, Met. chapter meeting.

PUBLIC PROGRAM: The upcoming presentations were discussed.

WEBSITE: Finding a home for the web site has been problematic, stated Ricciardi. Not for profit organizations can not give the PANYC web site a home because we are not a non profit organization. Susan Dublin referred him to S.U.N.Y. at Purchase. Recent images for the website are requested and discussion continues regarding the format of the webpage.

NEW BUSINESS: La Porta's membership application is approved. Pickman and others debated the annual placement of a PANYC membership list in the newsletter. A majority of the members in attendance approved the list which will include E-mail and home addresses and phone numbers.

Outgoing President Yamin thanked the membership and is applauded. She turned the meeting over to President Dallal who thanked Yamin for her excellent work and accomplishments. Dallal spoke about the importance of striving for a good working relationship with Landmarks. She expressed the hope that Landmarks will allow PANYC to participate in formulating urban standards, and stated that Landmarks and the city are aware of the importance of a city repository. She would like to bring more academics into PANYC and asked about the membership composition of the PANYC committees. Pickman stated that the secretary should compile a list of committee members.

Dallal stated that Wall told her about about a cistern at West and 11th Streets that was exposed by construction of an adjacent building. Stone asked about the nature of the constuction. Dallal will investigate with another individual. Dallal suggested that a letter of commendation to Jennifer Raab should be written for her insistence that a Phase 1A investigation be implemented for the site of the new Seaport museum. The topic is debated.

Ricciardi suggested consideration of the possibility of becoming a not for profit organization. Discussion included a reference to the perception of PANYC as contractors seeking work. Dallal asked the members to reflect on the goals PANYC should strive to accomplish.

Stone moved to end the meeting, and was seconded by Yamin at 8:13 p.m.



Editor
The Villager Newspaper
80 8th Avenue
Suite 200
New York, N.Y. 10011

November 11, 1998

Dear Editor,

It was with dismay that the Metropolitan Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association (NYSAA) read Lincoln Anderson's article, "Buried Treasure in Village Privies," published in The Villager on June 12, 1998. NYSAA, composed of 850 professional and avocational (amateur) archaeologists including members of our chapter, feels it is irresponsible of your newspaper to encourage and glorify the looting of potential archaeological sites.

"Scouring Riverside and Central Parks," in search of Native American artifacts is not only unethical, it is illegal. We also assume that bribing guards to attain access to construction sites is also illegal. What might be worse than breaking the law, however, is that these offenses result in the loss of important archaeological information.

We would also like to express our concern about the author's statement that unlike "academic archaeologists, Jordan works rapidly. Using sharpened broom sticks, and a pulley and bucket, Jordan and his partner Dan Magos can remove 30,000 pounds of dirt from a privy and fill it in two days." (A collective groan went up from every member of our organization, after this statement was read aloud at a recent meeting). By publishing statements such as these without qualifying them, and by advertising Jordan's telephone number, your newspaper appears to condone this reprehensible behavior.

Archaeology makes a tremendous contribution to knowledge of the city's past. The stratified record of New York's history that is present at the few remaining undisturbed sites, is a rare and precious resource. Professional archaeologists work carefully and only appear to be working "slowly" to the ignorant bystander,

because the archaeologist's primary goal is not just to find more "stuff" but to extract the maximum information from the soil. To excavate is to destroy and professional archaeologists are only too aware of the fact that once the "dig" is over, the site is gone forever.

The Metropolitan Chapter of NYSAA is displeased with The Villager's biased view. You appear to condone illegal activities which are represented as "archaeology." What you present as "archaeology," is not. We would like to see you do a well-researched story about our profession. There are many resources within New York City for information on private contract, academic and avocational archaeology. You could use these resources to prepare an article on any number of sites or archaeological concerns. (For a responsible article about the excavation of a private backyard Brooklyn privy, please see "Digging Up History" by Barbara Whitaker in The New York Times, Sunday, January 18, 1998).

Sincerely,



Diane Dallal
President, Metropolitan Chapter
New York State Archaeological Association

NEWSLETTER

Representing Nassau & Suffolk Counties

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James Ernest Truex
Former S.C.A.A. President,
Dies January 12, Age 85

Jim Truex, son of noted actor Ernest Truex, was a man of many talents and many careers; among them was active participation on behalf of Long Island archaeology. He served as SCAA President from 1978 to 1982.

Born in Great Neck, he was educated at the Leighton Park School in Reading, England, and the Mohonk School, a Quaker preparatory school then located in Mohonk Mountain House, New Paltz, N.Y. This is where a teacher took students to excavate in nearby rock shelters, thus interesting him in archaeology, a life-long avocation and later profession. Jim was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Haverford College.

Jim was a juvenile actor in many Broadway plays, including "Pygmalion." He served as a Navy officer in the Pacific in World War II, moving with his actress wife, Victory Abbott, and daughter Penelope to Middletown, NY in the late 1940s. During this time he wrote historical dramas and early television shows, including the "Hallmark Hall of Fame" and "You are There." His writing skills were utilized by SCAA in editing Vol. V, *The Second Coastal Archaeology Reader*, in 1982 and in co-writing the student booklet, *A Way of Life: Natives of Long Island, Prehistoric Period*, 1985.

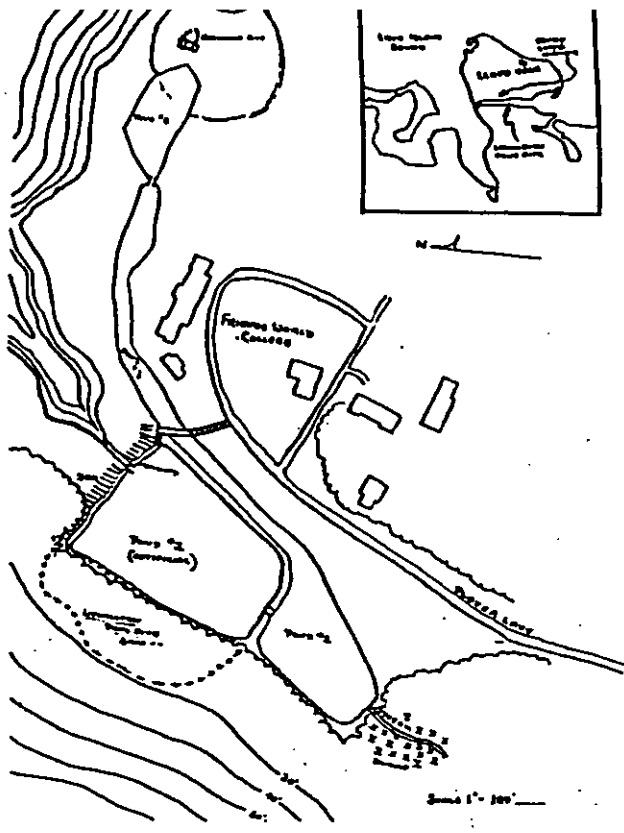
He was very involved in publishing the volumes of SCAA's series, *Readings in Long Island Archaeology & Ethnohistory*.

His public service career began as public relations director for the State Department of Public Works during the Harriman administration from 1955-58. He then became press secretary and later deputy county executive for Nassau County Executive Eugene Nickerson from 1962-1971. It was here that he became involved with Nassau County archaeology through Commissioner Edward Patterson's founding of the Garvies Point Museum and its first director, Ronald Wyatt.

Jim assisted with Wyatt's extensive excavation of the Wading River site, Wading River, NY, sites in Glen Cove, etc. After his years in government Jim's major excavation, the Livingston Pond Site and the adjunct Bath House and Big Tree sites, occurred during his years as vice-president of Friends World College in Lloyd Harbor N.Y. In 1983-84 Jim and Donna Ottusch-Kianka had a firm, Bi-County Archaeological Consultants, which carried out surveys in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

In commemoration of the passing of a unique and valuable person, Jim's Bath House Site report is printed herein.

- Gaynell Stone, Donna Ottusch-Kianka



AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT ON THE BATH HOUSE SITE
Livingston Property, West Neck, Suffolk County, NY

James Truex,
Archaeological Consultant
140 Carpenter Avenue
Sea Cliff, NY 11579

The Bath House Site is located at the south shore of Lloyd Harbor, a narrow body of water which lies between Lloyd and West Neck on the North Shore of Long Island, New York at the western edge of Suffolk County (AMS Lloyd Harbor Quad 5365-NNW). It is at approximately 40 54' 50" by 73 27' 30".

From 1969 to the present, the property has been owned by the New York Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. This extensive waterfront property functioned for more than a decade as the North American Campus of Friends World College. As a Public Relations Director and then Vice-president of the college – and as a part-time archaeologist – I devoted my spare hours to the excavation of an extensive pre-historic Native American site on the west bank of Livingston pond that lies at the western edge of the campus.

In the spring of 1976, it was noted that shells and prehistoric artifacts were leaching from a well-worn path leading to the Lloyd Harbor Beach See area map #1). This site appeared to exist both adjacent to and

under the Bath House, which stood only 12' (3.65 m) south of the Lloyd Harbor Beach.

While it cannot compare in size or scope with the Livingston Pond site, there are aspects of the Bath House site that give it special significance. The small building, approximately 20' by 12' (18m x 3.65m) was erected in the early part of the 20th century as a waterside changing room for the property owners and their guests. With the occupancy of the property by Friends World College in 1969, the Bath House came under frequent seasonal use by students, faculty and staff. Despite the inevitable disturbance of the area surrounding the building, it was hoped that enough archaeological evidence might have survived to permit judgements concerning the use of the area by Native Americans.

Since the ground slopes downward as it approaches the sandy beach, cement blocks had been employed to maintain the level of the building. This meant that at the north end the Bath House porch facing the water was some 4' elevation for less than (1.2m) above ground level – enough elevation for less than comfortable excavation activities. Furthermore, the squares as they were laid out had to take into account the positioning of the cinder block supports. As work progressed southward, headroom inevitably diminished.

A datum point was established cement block supports near the northeast corner of the building at 8.5' ASL (2.6m). The shell midden layer beneath the Bath House was clearly marked by concentrations of shell, including hard and soft shell clam, oyster, scallop and—occasionally—whelk. The midden layer under the building proved better preserved than in adjoining areas.

The first square excavated, S1E2, was on fairly level ground 4" (1.83m) east of the Bath House porch and south of the large oak tree. Layer #1 of this square consisted of brown, loamy soil 3.5" in depth (8.84cm). The layer yielded 27 very worn hard and soft shell clam fragments. Near the surface were two rusted round nails and two white glazed china sherds. Also in layer #2 there were ninety-nine one quartz and two chert flakes. Artifacts consisted of one smoky quartz, crudely shaped but sharp-edged cutting tool, one 1 broken point of a biface quartz tool or spear point and one narrow-stemmed Wading River type point with the point broken. Layer #3 was orange soil with pebbles, no shell particles, and no further flakes or artifacts.

The next square chosen for excavation, S1M1, was parallel with S1E2 but located in the crawl space directly beneath the northeast corner of the building and somewhat disturbed in several places by the supporting cinder blocks. Layer #1 consisted of a dry,

powdery brown soil 1" or 2" thick, followed by a darker brown soil with pebbles and a few shells. This time the contemporary debris consisted of two round nails, one small, oval metal ring and two white china fragments. However, also found were one hundred twenty quartz and seven chert flakes. Despite the fact that it was 7" to 9" in depth (17.8cm to 22.9cm) and contained a wealth of lakes, this layer contained very few artifacts. They were four in number: a very small triangular point of quartz (2cm x 2cm x 2.5cm) ; the broken tip of a large quartz point or knife; an unfinished quartz point broken lengthwise (4.5cm tip to base), and a reddish, grit tempered sherd with seven fine incised lines on its exterior. This sherd was found to fit a companion sherd similarly incised but located in the upper part of Layer #2.

Layer #2 contained as well a heavy concentration of oyster, hard and soft clam shells and a few fragments of scallop. Also found was the inner column of a whelk. Artifacts consisted of point end of a chert projectile, as well as the basal half of a small, quartz Wading River type point with a narrow stem and weak shoulders. It was broken across the mid-section. There were also four sherds including the one that matched the sherd Layer #1. Two others were much worn but were grit tempered, reddish, and may have been part of the layer #1 vessel. There was also a grit tempered sherd, shell-scraped on its interior. The exterior was firmly incised with four parallel lines and one diagonal. A large grit tempered sherd (5cm at its greatest width) had a fabric-marked exterior and smooth scraped interior. Finally, at the base of the layer a fist-sized hammerstone was found which was pitted in three distinct spots. Again, the midden layer contained no features, no charcoal and no bones. Layer #3 had orange-yellow soil with pebbles but no flakes or artifacts.

Out of concern that too much digging beneath the Bath House might affect the stability of the building, only the northernmost 1.5' (45.72cm) of square S1WE were excavated. Like its neighbor to the east, the first layer was composed of dusty, dry, grey-brown soil. This layer, which was 7.1" deep (18cm) contained two modern nails and a small, cylindrical piece of lead containing two holes. It was probably intended as a fishline weight. As with square S1W1, this layer contained many flakes. The total was fifty-two 51 quartz and 1 chert).

Layer #2, the shell midden area, while no more than 4" (10.16cm) in depth, contained 220 flakes, only five of which were of chert, the rest quartz. Despite this prodigious amount of debitage, the layer held only four unequivocal artifacts: the broken point of an unfinished quartz knife or projectile point: a large, flaked object of quartz, suitable for use as a cutting tool; an oval stone with minor indentations;

hammerstone; and a grit tempered sherd. This sherd had a crudely scraped interior and an exterior decorated with four parallel incised lines, and a fifth bordering them at an angle. These incised lines overlay cord-wrapped paddle stamping. In most respects it resembles Bowmans Brook Incised vessel, which would place it chronologically in the early component of the Clasons Point Focus (see Smith, C 1950: 192) .



The Southwest Corner of the Bath House.

Layer #3 of S1W2 consisted of yellow sandy soil with many pebbles. Forty-five flakes were found, all of them quartz, plus a few pieces of shell. And once again the layer contained no features, no charcoal and no bones.

Square N1W2 lies in the northwest corner of the porch. Since a major portion was severely disturbed, only the northern quarter was excavated. Layer #1, approximately 5" (12.9cm) in depth, a dusty grey at the surface, turning brown after the first inches. As the digging progressed, the soil contained a scattering of pebbles and shell fragments. Human debris consisted of a slivers of glass. Near one of the cinder blocks was a small, oblong sherd. it was grit tempered, reddish, very worn and difficult to categorize. The layer also contained eight quartz flakes. Layer #2, 6.5" deep (15.6cm), contained thirty-seven quartz and two chert flakes. Layer #3, dug to a depth of 4.5" (11.4cm) , was brown, pebbly soil with small shell particles and contained no historic or prehistoric artifacts. Square S2E2, immediately south of S1E2 and east of the Bath House path, was the last of the squares to be excavated. The soil texture of Layer #1 was fine sand with some pebbles, and varied from 2" (5.04cm) to 4" 10.08cm, north to south. The western portion was somewhat disturbed by the path. The soil toward the base of the layer was mixed with some gravel. As with S1E2 several modern nails were found. The only evidence of aboriginal occupation consisted of three quartz and one chert flake.

Layer #2 was a loose, dark brown soil with a scattering of broken shell, mostly clam. Since it was

located on a northward slope, the depth of the layer varied between 2" (5.08cm) and 6" (15.24cm). Found were forty-four quartz flakes and two white glazed china sherds. Also unearthed were one crudely worked quartz cutting tool and one more carefully worked gray chert point, broken at the base.

Layer #3, dug to a depth of 3" (7.6cm) to 4" (10.2cm), paralleled the lowest depth of the path in that area.

Square N1W2 is located toward the northwest corner of the Bath House. The area was so much disturbed by cement blocks and stairs that only a small quarter section at the northwest corner of the Bath House was excavated. Layer #1, approximately 5" (12.9cm) in depth, was dusty gray at the surface, turning brown as digging progressed, and yielding a scattering of pebbles and shell fragments. Modern debris was confined to a few pieces of glass. A single very small prehistoric sherd came from the base of this layer. It was of red clay and grit tempered. The surface treatment could not be determined.

Layer #2 of N1W2 consisted of pebbly brown soil and frequent shell. In addition to twenty-one quartz flakes, a small, rectangular hammerstone was unearthed. Layer #3, dug to a depth of 4.511 (11.4cm) held brown, pebbly soil with few shell particles and no artifacts. The base of the layer displayed no pits, hearths, post mold patterns, or other indication of aboriginal settlement.

The last of the squares to be excavated, S2E2, was east of the Bath House path and 2' south of S1E2. The texture of layer #1 was fine sand with some pebbles. The depth varied from 2" (5.04cm) to 4" (10.08cm). The western portion was disturbed by the path to the beach. As with S1E2, several round nails were found. The only evidence of aboriginal occupation were three quartz and one chert flake.

Layer #2 was a dark brown soil with a scattering of broken shells, mostly clam. The depth of the layer varied between 2" (5.04cm) and 5" (12.70cm). Found were forty-four quartz flakes and two white china sherds. Also found were one crudely worked quartz cutting tool and one neatly made blue-gray chert point broken across the mid-section. Layer #3 consisting of yellow-brown soil and pebbles, contained few shell fragments, no flakes and no artifacts.

A total of only eleven sherds were found in the various layers of the five squares excavated. All of them were grit tempered, all but one were small, and only one bore an incised decoration on its exterior. This sherd may well have been part of the shoulder of a Bowmans Brook Incised vessel.

Following a severe thunder storm, a number of sherds were found to be leaching from the east wall of the path as it reached the oak tree. Within this narrow strip of soil there were eighty-three sherds in all. Though there were no rims, there were fourteen exteriors near-rims. These sherds had smoothed interiors and exteriors decorated with horizontal rows of cord-wrapped stick impressions. The remaining sixty-nine sherds, quite evidently from the main body of the vessel, were impressed with a cord-wrapped paddle. This combination of attributes strongly resembles Carlyle Smith's East River Cord marked category, a vessel type that is "fairly common on all sites of the East River Aspect" (Smith 1950, p.193).

DISCUSSION

The Bath House site, lacking as it does hearths, charcoal, post holes and storage pits, and yielding a very limited assortment of potsherds, is not likely to have served as an aboriginal habitation site. What purpose, then, did it serve?

While seventeen quartz and chert cutting tools or points were found, all of them were broken or unfinished. Where it was unusually well endowed, was in the number of quartz and chert flakes yielded by five excavated squares.

The site's major function appears to have been the manufacture of tools, knives, projectiles and other stone objects for use by Native Americans whose actual habitation sites were elsewhere. The leading candidate for this role is the Livingston Pond site, which is less than 700' west of the Bath House. This large site has all the characteristics of extended occupation. Carbon 14 tests from charcoal found at this much larger and complex site indicated occupation as early as 325 A.D., and as late as 1450 A.D. This lengthy time period is of little help in determining when the Bath House site may have been in actual use. However, the potsherds a single vessel found in the Bath House path offers a clue to period during which the site was in use. The parallel horizontal lines of stamping encircling the rim and neck areas, together with the cord marking of the body exterior, identify the vessel as Bowmans Brook Stamped. This vessel type, according to Carlyle Smith, makes its appearance in the Bowmans Brook focus of the East River aspect, and dies out during the Clasons Point focus.

Several vessels found at the Livingston Pond site have been identified as belonging to the same classification. Thus, this small, special purpose Bath House site probably was in use as a stone tool manufactory and shell fish gathering place during a considerable portion of the late Woodland period.



Frances Roberts for The New York Times

Preservationists say they've been denied access to this 19th-century cistern.

Old Garbage Seen as Precious

When a 19th-century house on West 11th Street was demolished about a month ago, neighbors noticed a round brick structure in the ground and identified it as an old cistern. Now preservationists want to excavate it, but they say they have been denied access to the site, which may be filled with historically significant junk.

The cistern appears to straddle two properties, a residential building at 370-372 West 11th Street, and a construction site on the corner of West Street. "We want to excavate the cistern before the new building goes in and we lose access to it forever," said Barbara Pokras, who lives nearby.

Ms. Pokras contacted the New York Historical Society, which alerted Diana Wall, an associate professor of anthropology at City College, who has worked on excavations, including cisterns and a privy on West 12th Street.

"In nearly every backyard in the Village there's a cistern and a privy," Ms. Wall said. "But they are usually covered by buildings, so this is a wonderful opportunity, especially this far west, which really hasn't been looked at archeologically."

Cisterns were used to collect rainwater for household use before the advent of running water, which was introduced in the city in the 1840's. Wealthy families near Washington Square, Ms. Wall said, got plumbing first. Not until

the 1880's could people of more moderate means, like those along the waterfront, tap into the water supply.

"That's when something useful became a hazardous hole," Ms. Wall explained. "So people would fill them in with domestic garbage, animal bones, old wine glasses, drinking glasses, china, toys, dolls, marbles and pieces of furniture." Such debris provides clues to "the family that lived there when the cistern was filled," she said. "We can place people according to their level of wealth or class and learn what home life was like. What cuts of meat were they eating? What kinds of fruit pollen do we find?"

Ms. Wall said the cistern could be excavated in two weeks. But the executive director of the Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront, Ben Green, said efforts to inspect it had been rebuffed.

An owner of the construction site, Steven Haskell, declined to comment. The owner of the apartment building next door, Michael Waldman, did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Mr. Green said that "the cistern is just the tip of the iceberg of what could be buried." He added: "We don't know how much we don't know. But this development blitz taking place piecemeal along the waterfront means losing archeological treasures forever."

DAVID KIRBY

The New York Times,
Sunday, April 4, 1999

Owner Gives Green Light To Dig Into History

It looks as if a 19th-century hole in the ground on West 11th Street, one with potentially historic significance, just might be excavated after all. The owner of a property with access to the old cistern said last week that he would gladly allow preservationists to dig before a new building goes up on the site.

"I had no idea it was even there," said Michael Waldman, owner of an apartment building at 370-372 West 11th Street, whose backyard has access to the cistern. He said he had been out of town and unaware of the efforts of neighbors and preservationists who want the cistern excavated because they think it may have been filled with garbage that could provide clues to the people that once lived there.

The cistern spans two properties, including a construction site next door on West Street. Neighbors said they tried to gain access to it through the construction site, but were rebuffed. Steven Haskell, an owner of that site, refused to comment. But Mr. Waldman said he would try to persuade Mr. Haskell to provide access to the cistern from his property.

Diana Wall, an associate professor of anthropology at City College, said

the excavation could take a couple of weeks.

DAVID KIRBY

Workers rescue artifacts from the

Blaze levels Museum Village building



Firefighters inside the Broom Shop at Museum Village in Monroe were able to save some antique equipment.

By JULIET GREER, Staff Writer

MONROE — A fast-moving fire ripped through a building at Museum Village yesterday, destroying some of the museum's artifacts and the building itself.

Despite a whipping wind, the fire was contained to one building. Nobody was seriously injured, although one firefighter was removed from the scene and believed to be suffering from exhaustion.

The fire was spotted around 11 a.m. on the cedar-shake roof of the Broom Shop.

A parent chaperoning a school trip at the museum saw the fire, called 911 on a cellular phone, and informed the workers.

One worker ran into the Broom Shop and told Cheryl Riccardi, who was working in the 500-square-foot building that it was on fire.

"The first thing I thought was about the artifacts," Riccardi said. "I just started grabbing stuff off the walls and carrying it out."

Several of the 18th century craft museum's workers, some wearing period costumes, ran into the burning building to rescue precious artifacts inside. They saved about 90 percent of the building's collection, said Museum Director Joanna Szakmary.

Workers darted in and out of the burning building several times to save the artifacts.

They also ran to other buildings to inform each other about the fire, in much the same way one imagines people would have in such a village 200 years ago.

Worker Donna Buel took off from behind the snack bar with fire extinguisher in hand when a co-worker rushed in to tell her about the fire.

"I could hear the fire on the roof

above me when I was in there," she said.

"I just started hauling stuff out of there. I was scared, but I just thought about the artifacts."

None of the museum workers or 110 elementary school children visiting the museum from Wappingers Falls were injured.

The children, who were not near the fire, were kept away from the scene and taken home immediately.

South Blooming Grove Fire Chief Mike Bellucco said the fire's cause has not been determined, but that it appears to have started from a wood-burning stove.

A small fire had been burning in the stove in the Broom Shop, where visitors watch museum workers dressed in 18th century-style clothes make brooms with old-fashioned machinery.

It is routine to keep a fire in the stove, Riccardi said.

Several workers said yesterday that work had been done over the years to fix piping and fix problems with that stove.

A fire extinguisher has not been in that building since last summer, said former worker Ginny Gregman.

The museum director said she will move the spared Broom Shop artifacts to another location.

About 50 firefighters responded to the call. They fought a whipping wind to keep the fire from spreading to a roughly 150-year-old log cabin next door to the Broom Closet. The fire spread rapidly. Within 20 minutes, the Broom Closet was a charred black shell.

The museum will be open to schools today. The museum's managers said they plan to open to the general public on Sunday as scheduled.

It will be the museum's 49th opening day.

Museum workers plan strike

By JULIET GREER, Staff Writer

MONROE — Museum Village workers announced last week that they planned to strike, in part because they don't like the way artifacts are cared for.

They said they still plan to strike on Sunday, the day the museum opens for the season to everyone.

The museum, which is closed during the winter, is now open only for school trips.

The workers plan to hold a press conference at 2:15 p.m. tomorrow to outline their reasons for the strike, which include alleged mishandling of artifacts by management, alleged illegal firings, and safety issues concerning buildings and grounds. Most of the workers are highly educated and are paid the minimum wage.

"In our opinion, this (fire) is just another symptom of the carelessness with which management runs Museum Village," said Jerry Ebert, organizer for the workers' union, Communications Workers of America Local 1120.

"Management is careless about artifacts and careless about safety in gen-

About Museum Village

Museum Village, located off Route 17M on the Monroe-Blooming Grove border, comprises about a dozen buildings. Each building is used for a different service that would have been provided in a typical 18th century village.

People dressed in costume show visitors around the village. It is New York state's largest "living history" museum, and about 38,000 people visit the museum each year.

It is supported by ticket sales; \$8 for adults and \$6 for senior citizens.

Most of the artifacts were donated by Rosco Smith, a benefactor most well known for founding Orange & Rockland Utilities.

eral."

When the union announced plans to strike, Jeanine Wadson, co-president of the board, said she wanted to work with the employees to solve some of the museum's problems.



Joanna Szakmary, program director, center, is consoled by Museum Village staff workers after a fire ripped through a building there yesterday, destroying some of the museum's artifacts and the building itself.

African Burial Ground Update: Status of the Archaeological Investigation—Part 2

Jean Howson, Ph.D.

Coffin hardware is the most common artifact found at the African Burial Ground. One of the most important aspects of our current analysis is coffin style. Of the people buried in the excavated portion of the African Burial Ground, 94% were in coffins, a total of 401. With this large number, it will be possible to develop a typology. Variability in coffins should be related to several factors: changes in coffin style and construction techniques over time, differences among colonial New York City's artisans (whether African or European) who built the coffins, differences in cost, and differences in beliefs about what was a proper burial.

We will shortly be inventorying the coffin hardware, and at the same time we will continue using the field records and drawings to determine shapes and sizes, and sometimes construction details. The development of a useful typology is still ahead, but promises to be an important means for both describing the African Burial Ground and interpreting it as the site of meaningful activity in the past.

We are, as always, using what available documents there are as well as archaeology. One question we asked was who provided the coffin when an enslaved African died? We also wanted to know who made coffins for enslaved and free Africans in the New York community. There is some evidence



Fig. 1. The heart-shaped symbol which appears on the coffin lid of Burial 101 was made of iron tacks. This individual was a man who was 30-35 years old when he died. Two bone button fragments and two shroud pins were recovered with this burial.

Photo: General Services Administration.

that in New York at least some enslavers paid for the coffins of captive Africans.

Records of one 1750s colonial cabinetmaker, Joshua Delaplaine, include orders for coffins for 13 Africans. The orders were placed by others, presumably enslavers, as they read "coffin for his negro woman" or "coffin for his negro child." These records also give us other kinds of information: the coffins cost from 10 to 14 shillings for adults. Extras like screws or rosin made these coffins more expensive.

Childrens' coffins were 4 to 5 shillings. Various kinds of decoration were available, though the 13 cases we know of from Joshua Delaplaine were mainly very simple. In contrast, coffins for Europeans could be very fancy, made with expensive hardwoods, lined and decorated, costing up to £4 or £5. Though we know the range of

prices Africans would have had to pay to have coffins built at this one shop, African artisans may have priced their wares differently.

Burial 101's coffin, has a decoration on its lid which we have interpreted as a Sankofa symbol from the Akan people in West Africa. Its meaning is, in essence, that we need to learn from the past in order to be ready for the future. This symbol may or may not be an indicator of extra expense. It is likely that some Africans would have donated their labor in preparing coffins for family or community members. [For a fuller discussion regarding the Sankofa symbol, see Update Vol. 1, No. 8, "Identification and Validation of the Sankofa Symbol," by Professor Kwaku Ofori-Ansa, an art historian at Howard University].

Still, the materials for the hundreds of coffin fragments we have recovered would have cost money, perhaps collected from mourners or

provided by secret burial societies. The presence of the symbol itself, of course, indicates resistance to the dehumanization and homogenization that this community's enslavers attempted.

The final aspect of the archaeological investigation that I want to briefly discuss is the comparative research being conducted. This Project, for the first time, brought together specialists to pool their research and this has allowed us to broaden our vision of the African Burial Ground as an archaeological site. Members of the research team, including archaeologists, cultural anthropologists, and historians, have been collecting information on the death beliefs and practices in relevant parts of Africa and of other Africans in the diaspora. We're also researching precolonial West African villages and the great fort towns on the coast during the centuries captives were taken to the Americas. At Elmina, for example, the graves of Africans who died were recovered by Dr. Chris DeCorse, a member of the archaeological team, who conducted excavations in the area.

Burials have also been found beneath the houses of Africans who were formerly enslaved on plantation sites like Seville and at Maroon enclaves in Jamaica. In Suriname, where Dr. Kofi Agorsah, another Project team member works, there is also a growing body of information on how African peoples have treated their dead and how that relates to systems of belief. Some of this information comes from archaeology but we have also learned a great deal from written documents and ethnography, the study of cultural groups.

Narrow interpretations are discarded as we examine all of the ways beliefs about death can be

expressed in material practices. I'll touch on two examples of what I would call narrow interpretations. The first is that the overwhelming presence of coffins suggests assimilation to European customs.

Burial in coffins may represent an Akan practice which became widespread in colonial New York's broader African community; or a belief that those buried here were ultimately going to be taken home and therefore were not placed directly in the ground; or active resistance on the part of New York's enslaved Africans, who insisted their enslavers pay for, but not attend or participate in decent funerals.

The second interpretation is that burial in a segregated place, as was the case in New York, reflects domination or coercion by white Europeans. We've learned of cases in Africa where burials outside the town would be the norm. It also occurred at Caribbean plantations where Africans lived in villages where burials beneath the house would have been possible. In New York they lived in the homes of their enslavers and community-formation among Africans from diverse backgrounds required getting together away from their households, in a separate place from Europeans. As a result, this African Burial Ground location may speak more to resistance than to oppression.

The evidence from Africa and the diaspora has caused us to question and re-question all of our interpretations of the mere archaeological data. We are, and I think I speak for the others on the team as well as myself, humbled by the sheer

complexity and richness of African diaspora history. But, painstaking and tedious as it often seems, the archaeological research has given us new insight into that history.



Bembe wooden mask from the lower Congo area © 1971 Geoffrey William

Want to learn more about the African Burial Ground?

1. *Become a Volunteer* — to date OPEI has nearly two hundred individuals who devote their time or various skills to the Project.
2. *Become a Student Intern* — OPEI is currently accepting applications for college interns for the Summer of 1999
3. *Attend OPEI's Quarterly Educators Symposia and Film Festivals* (see schedule this issue page 6)

**HISTORIC PLACES/PUBLIC SPACES:
THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF NEW YORK'S
HISTORIC SITES**

Sunday, April 18, 1999 at the Museum of the City of New York

NINETEENTH ANNUAL PANYC SYMPOSIUM

WELCOME

Diane Dallal, South Street Seaport Museum, Chair, PANYC
Public Program 1999

**ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE ATTIC: UPSTAIRS IN THE
SCHERMERHORN ROW BLOCK**

Steven H. Jaffe, South Street Seaport Museum

The Schermerhorn Row block built in 1810-12 on the East River waterfront of lower Manhattan, is the centerpiece of the South Street Seaport Historic District and Museum. Over nearly two centuries, its buildings have served successively as merchants' countinghouses, warehouses and offices for coffee and fish dealers, and hotels for seamen. Curator and historian Steven H. Jaffe will explore the vestiges of these past worlds as they survive in the architectural fabric and fixtures of the Row's upstairs loft spaces.

**MANHATTAN "MIKVAH" MYSTERY: BATH
HOUSES ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE**

Celia Bergoffen, Archaeological Consultant

The Eldridge Street Project is restoring the synagogue, built in 1886, which was the first temple erected by Ashkenazi Jews on the Lower East Side. Its congregation was interested in upholding traditional Jewish observances against the rising tide of the Reform Movement; it seemed reasonable to suppose that they would have respected the all-important laws governing the use of the Jewish ritual bath, or "mikvah." The existence of a bath house nearby, suggested that it might also have housed a ritual pool. No references to this bath house were found among the synagogue's records, however, nor any accounts of any other mikvah connected to Eldridge Street.

BURIALS FROM GOVERNORS'S ISLAND

Meta Janowitz, Louis Berger and Associates (LBA)

In the summer of 1994 the coroner was called to the U.S. Coast Guard Support Center on Governor's Island when excavations for an electrical utility trench encountered parts of a skeleton. The coroner determined that the remains were indeed human and not recent. The Coast Guard arranged for LBA to conduct an intensive data recovery investigation of the area. Burial shafts were found in the vicinity of the trench and six skeletons were eventually recovered, all buried without either coffins or shrouds. Osteological and paleopathological analysis of the bones revealed some parts of the life histories of these late eighteenth-century New Yorkers.

Break (2:20-2:35) (15 minutes)

**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY EXCAVATIONS AT ROSE
HILL MANOR IN THE BRONX**

Alan S. Gilbert, Fordham University

For the past 14 years, students at Fordham University in the Bronx have had the opportunity to learn fieldwork techniques at the Rose Hill Manor, a significant historic site located on the college campus. Remains investigated to date have provided information about the sequence of building and modification. Artifacts from the later levels of the site represent the day-to-day activities of boys at St. John's College, including their writing implements, tableware, soda and medicine bottles, games, and articles of personal grooming.

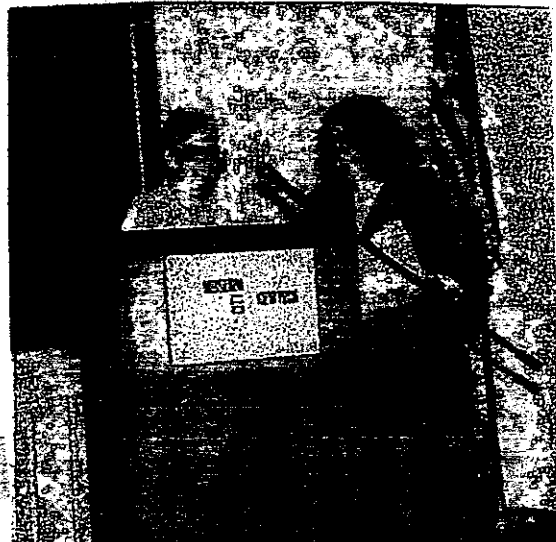
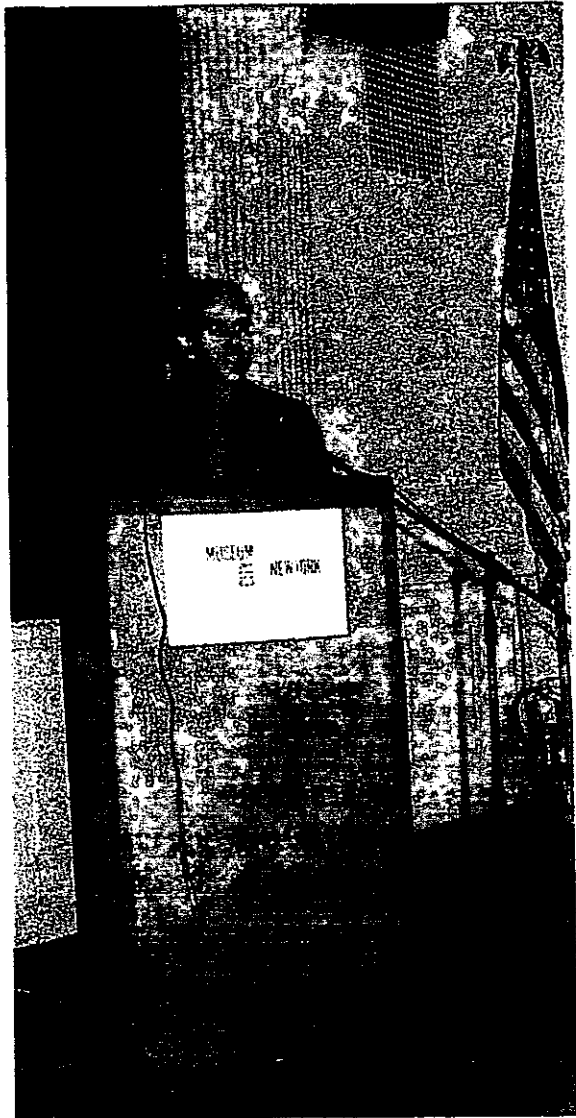
**GIULIANI NEXT TO HISTORY: THE
ARCHAEOLOGY IN CITY HALL PARK**

Sherene Baugher, Cornell University

Surrounding Mayor Giuliani's City Hall are silent reminders of New York's colonial past. Buried in the ground are the remains of several British military barracks, an 18th century workhouse known as the Bridewell, a colonial jail, a paupers burial ground, and the kitchen of the colonial almshouse. Archaeologists began to unearth remains of these buildings in 1989. This paper discusses the location of various sites in City Hall Park as well as the findings from some of the archaeological excavations, especially material associated with the almshouse. Some of the social issues that concerned colonial New Yorkers continue today, along with a return to some remarkably similar solutions.

Questions from the Audience

SCENES FROM THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL PANYC SYMPOSIUM
Sunday, April 18, 1999 at the Museum of the City of New York



PANYC EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT - May 18 - September 30, 1999

EVENT	SPEAKER	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PHONE #	FEE
Inside the Silver Vessels	Barbara Ketcham Wheaton	Wed. 5/26	6:30 PM	Cooper-Hewitt Museum	212-702-1390	registration
Ranks of Life: Native American Populations	Robert Grumet	Thurs 6/3	7:30-9 PM	American Museum of Natural History	212-769-5100	\$20
Hidden Treasures from the Attic	Elizabeth Leckie	Sat 6/5	1 PM	King Manor Museum	718-206-0545	\$4
Ranks of Death: Disease, War and Population Declines	Robert Grumet	Thurs 6/10	7:30-9 PM	American Museum of Natural History	212-769-5100	\$20
The Cultural History of the New York City Police (Thursday lecture, Saturday walking tour)	Brian Ferguson	Thurs 6/17	7-8:30 PM	American Museum of Natural History	212-769-5100	Lecture \$12
		Sat 6/19	1-2:30 PM			Both \$20
African Burial Ground OPEI Open House		Sat 6/19	12-4 PM	6 WTC Room 239	212-432-5707	free
Washington's New York	exhibit	thru 7/4		Museum of the City of New York	212-534-1672	admission
Jewish Traders of the Silk Route	exhibit	thru 7/31		Yeshiva University Museum, Amsterdam Ave. @ 185 St.	212-960-5390	
The Huguenot Legacy: English Silver 1680-1760	exhibit	thru 8/8		Cooper-Hewitt Museum	212-849-8300	admission
African Burial Ground OPEI Open House		Sat 8/21	12-5 PM	6 WTC Room 239	212-432-5707	free
The American Century: Art & Culture 1900-2000	exhibit	thru 8/22		Whitney Museum	212-570-3676	admission
African Burial Ground Film Festival		Sat 9/18	12-5 PM	6 WTC Room 239	212-432-5707	free
Gotham Comes of Age: New York Through the Lens of the Byron Company	exhibit	thru 9/26		Museum of the City of New York	212-534-1672	admission
The Astor Place Riot: Looking Back 150 Years	exhibit	thru 10/24		Museum of the City of New York	212-534-1672	admission

If any members have events which they would like listed, please contact Linda Stone by phone or fax at (212)888-3130 or by mail 249 E 48 St. #2B, New York, NY 10017.

If you are interested in joining PANYC or if you would like to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter, please complete the form below and return it to Michael Bonasera, PANYC Secretary, 65-62 Saunders St. #7D, Rego Park, NY 11374

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Please indicate preferred mailing address and check below as appropriate.

I wish to apply for membership to PANYC and would like to receive the application form _____

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Amount of additional donation to PANYC _____