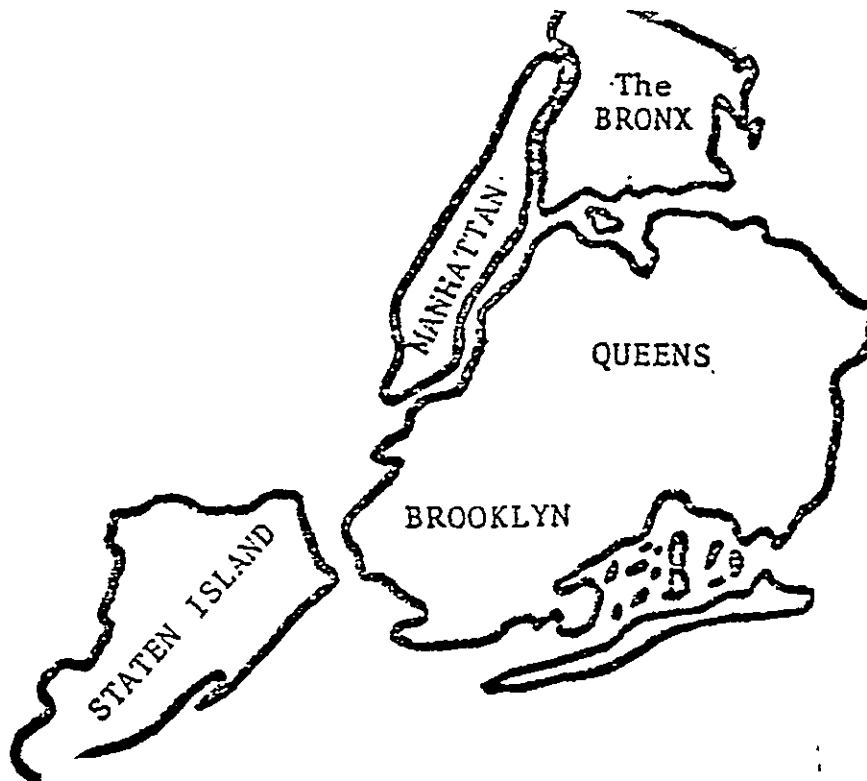


PROFESSIONAL **A**RCHAEOLOGISTS OF **N**EW **Y**ORK **C**ITY



NEWSLETTER NO. 32
January 1987

CONTE

1. Minutes of the November Membership Meeting.....	1
2. Obituary: Martin C. Schreiner, by Ralph Solecki.....	3
3. Digressions Archaeological, by Ralph Solecki.....	4
4. Media Items of Archaeological Interest.....	5
5. Membership Application.....	17

Erratum: The last issue of the PANYC Newsletter (Number 31) was incorrectly dated. The date should read November 1986.

Materials for inclusion in the PANYC Newsletter should be sent to the editors, Anne-Marie Cantwell and Diana diZerega Wall, Department of Anthropology, New York University, 25 Waverly Place, New York, N. Y. 10003.

Minutes of the PANYC General Membership Meeting
CUNY Graduate Center, Room 1126, November 18, 1986

Wall called the meeting to order at 7:00

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the September 24, 1986 meeting were corrected to read: "President's Report: ...O'Dwyer..."; "City Archaeology Policy: ...Henn would like to meet..."; "Museum: ...its lecture series effort..."; "Research and Planning: Sue Henry and T. Klein are planning..."; "Standards: ...PANYC accept standards on trial basis, for one year..."; "Old Business: 2. ... opportunities and hazards. ...While the program...NEPA,..." With these corrections the minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Wall for Winter, balance in PANYC account \$1,115.53 as of this meeting.

President's Report: 1. Regarding the 17 State Street project, an exhibit is to serve as mitigation at site. The final E.I.S. contained five proposals for an exhibition and the Developer supported the solution proposed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) (which stipulates that the developer provide 1,500 sq. ft. of space; \$100,000 a year for curatorial staff; and insurance and security costs). The developer is to select the designer and curator while LPC is to approve the exhibit content. Landmarks proposal has not been approved by the Board of Standards and Appeals. 2. PANYC members are urged to write letters to Herbert Sturz, Chairman of City Planning alerting him of the need to close the loophole in the law that allowed the developer for 17 State Street to destroy archaeological deposits before they were assessed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Action: No report.

AIA Participation: Salwen noted that arrangements were being made for self-guided walking tours of downtown and Greenwich Village sites during the 1987 meeting scheduled for December.

Awards: No report.

City Agency Policy: Name of committee confirmed by membership. A letter was sent to Baugher on behalf of PANYC requesting a meeting.

Curation: No report.

Legislation: Advisory Council Regulations for 36 CFR 800 are in the November Newsletter.

Museum: Geismar reported that this committee met with Robert MacDonald, Director of the Museum of the City of New York, and he is open to having a Museum sponsored program on archaeology. In the future there is a possibility of an exhibition on archaeology.

Native American Affairs: Cantwell announced that there will be an open meeting of this committee on December 16th at 7 P.M. at New York University. Basa and Vetter will provide an overview of national and regional issues on Native American concerns and the archaeology profession.

Newsletter: Cohen and T. Klein were thanked for photocopying the November Newsletter. Wall and Cantwell are working on the next Special Publication of the Newsletter; please send contributions for this publication to them.

Public Program: Orgel reported that the date for the next public program at the Museum of the City of New York is set for Saturday, March 21, 1987. Speakers on Manhattan are needed. Speakers include Askins, DeCarlo, Ceci, Geismar, Gilbert, Stone, and Winter.

Research and Planning: Robinson announced a New York City workshop on "A Synthesis of Urban Archaeological Research" (scheduled for December 12 at New York University) in preparation for a workshop at the 1987 SHA meeting. Topics include: 1. consumer behavior and socio-economic status (Wall); and 2. urban geography (Geismar). Data Standardization Schemes (prepared by T. Klein) for participants to organize information were distributed.

Standards: Pickman for Rothschild, names and addresses of persons to whom standards should be sent should be mailed to Nan Rothschild at Barnard College.

Old Business: 1. Nurkin noted that the Abandoned Shipwreck Act S.2569 was re-introduced in Congress and in its current form gives salvagers an important position on rights of action that allow them compensation for their activities. States will also have difficulty enacting laws to prevent salvagers from the forementioned such that protection of submerged archaeological resources is endangered. Salwen proposed that an ad hoc committee be formed to formulate a PANYC position statement on S.2569 for presentation to SHA. Nurkin, Robinson, and Pagano volunteer. 2. Nurkin noted a "Windsor Terrace" case in Brooklyn where the concept of the CEQR as of right permit is reviewed. Ruling states that a Historic District location does not require archaeological work unless resource was made known to agencies that issue permits.

New Business: Salwen announced a request for cooperation in planning of an archaeology of Greenwich Village project. Research questions on suburbs in the late 18th century have been developed and will be tested.

Respectfully Submitted, Daniel N. Pagano, PANYC Secretary 1986/87

Martin G. Schreiner

Martin Schreiner, or Matt, as we all knew him, died in his sleep at his College Point home on Nov. 29, 1986. He was 76 years old. He had been ill off and on for a couple years, with check-up visits to hospitals. A life-long friend, he was an ardent student of local archaeology. He was one of the founding members of the Metropolitan Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association.

Although Matt never had the benefits of a university education, nevertheless he was well read in archaeology, and keenly followed the current news in his chosen avocation. I first met Matt on the College Point dig site just about 50 years ago. He became one of the core members of the Flushing Historical Society Anthropological Group, which included Carlyle Smith, John E. Wilson and myself as most active in the field. Those were extremely busy week-ends before World War II, when developers and road builders seemed to compete in tearing up the last vestiges of landscape in Brooklyn, and Queens on western Long Island. Through Carlyle Smith, who had taken a job directing WPA workers on archaeological digs in Nebraska, Matt had a long field season with the Nebraska Historical Society. The war put the situation on hold for all of us. Matt was taken into the army originally on a one year service stint, which lengthened to something more serious. He saw combat in North Africa and Italy in the European theatre. After the war, when Smith went to teach in Kansas with a brand new doctorate, and I took a position with the Smithsonian Institution, Matt kept up his interest in local archaeology. He joined forces with Julius Lopez and Stanley Wisniewski in the investigations of the fast dwindling sites. After Julius Lopez's unfortunately premature death, Matt continued on with Stanley in local field investigations. One of the locales they explored was in the neighborhood of Stanley's summer home at Miller Place.

We are deeply indebted for Matt's diligence and his not small part in helping put together the corpus of knowledge about western Long Island archaeology. Without his efforts, we would certainly have been that much poorer in our understanding of local prehistory. We will miss his cheery smile, thoughtfulness, and simply good companionship.

Matt left his field notebooks with me, part of the record of sites our group had investigated. His collection of material has been deposited in museums as part of joint gifts.

Ralph Solecki

Ralph Solecki

American archaeological English can present problems of understanding to the non-Americans. Worse, when a colloquialism is used. To give an amusing example of how a simple phrase, but one full of meaning, can cause consternation to a foreign reader, I cite one case here. Parenthetically, I should add, it taught me a lesson. Write so that a foreigner with a reading knowledge of English will understand clearly the point I am making. It was in Baghdad in the early 1950's, and I was arranging for work at Shanidar. Robert Braidwood had just come out with a publication following his work at Jarmo. We all remember his many popularisms like "incipient agriculture", which has given many of us some pause. I still vividly remember the day over 30 years ago when I opened the door of the Director of Excavations in the Iraq Museum, and found the room hazy blue with cigarette smoke. No one thought of associating cancer of the lungs with cigarettes in those days. I could barely see the director, Fuad Safar, who was practically enveloped in fumes. Normally a chain smoker, on this occasion he was a virtual smoke-stack. He was obviously very agitated, seated at his desk, bouncing up and down on his spring cushioned chair. He greeted me by name with a loud shout, almost startling me, his face breaking out in a huge smile. Open before him were several dictionaries, English-Arabic, Arabic-English, Aramaic-English, German-Arabic and a copy of Braidwood's new popular book on Near Eastern archaeology, just out. Safer's first words were, "Rolf, what is 'catch-as-catch-can culture'? Scholar that he was, he had been thumbing through his dictionaries, looking up and pondering the meaning of "can" (both the verb and tin can), "catch", "as", and of course, "culture", back and forth to no satisfactory outcome. There was no one in Baghdad knowledgeable for help that morning, that was sure. I doubt that even if he had collared someone from the American Embassy, they could not have helped. Finding a place on his desk after pushing aside a large ash tray heaped with stale cigarette butts, I tried putting the phrase to a definition. It gave me plenty of pause as I remember. How to translate an American colloquialism to an educated Arab of new Mesopotamia? But in the end I think I must have satisfied him. And after that, he pressed a buzzer behind his desk, and had the attendant who appeared immediately bring us a couple rounds of good strong tea. We were able to get around to my problems of getting supplies for Shanidar Cave.



New Findings Reveal Ancient Abuse of Lands

Archeologists say idea of noble savage protecting the environment is a myth.

By MALCOLM W. BROWNE

RECENT discoveries in the southwestern United States, southern Greece and the South Pacific have persuaded a growing number of archeologists that primitive people were much more destructive to their habitat than had been generally believed. The current trend may finally put an end to what Dr. Jared M. Diamond describes as "the environmentalist myth" — an alleged bias of many scientists toward "the romanticized concept of the 'noble savage'" proclaimed by the 18th-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Writing in the British journal *Nature*, Dr. Diamond, a professor of physiology at the University of California (Los Angeles) School of Medicine, cited the destruction of plant species on Easter Island and in the Chaco Canyon in northwestern New Mexico as glaring examples of primitive human abuse of the land.

"The reason for this bias," he said in an interview, "is that primitive peoples have been so horribly treated by whites over the centuries that many whites today justly feel a sense of guilt. Scientists, among others, sometimes tend to compensate for this in inappropriate ways. For example, it has become politically and socially inexpedient to write or speak of the role of the Maori aboriginals of New Zealand in the extinction of the moa (a large flightless bird), or of early Polynesian settlers who brought about the extinction of various Hawaiian birds."

Dr. Diamond and like-minded archeologists believe that some societies have directly contributed to their own demise by abusing the lands on which they lived. At the same time, a declining society is likely to abandon sound conservation, he said, and the spiral of decay becomes tighter.

Strong support for Dr. Diamond's revisionist point of view has come from Julio L. Betancourt, an archeologist, and his colleagues at the University of Arizona, who have extensively studied the Anasazi Indian civilization that flourished in New Mexico's Chaco Canyon from about 1000 A.D. to 1200 A.D.

The Chaco Canyon has long fascinated and mystified archeologists. Its vanished inhabitants, believed to have been ancestors of modern-day Hopi and other Pueblo Indian groups, built the largest and tallest buildings then known in North America prior to the advent of skyscrapers at the end of the 19th century. Hundreds of 12th-century Chaco Canyon families were housed in huge stone-and-adobe apartment buildings that stood as high as five stories and whose ruins are still impressive.

Relics of this culture form an exhibit scheduled to open March 6 at New York's Museum and Natural History.

Although archeologists consider Chaco Canyon culture to have been almost as advanced as that of the Maya in Central America, Chaco Canyon inhabitants were unable to sustain the life-giving qualities of their environment. Mr. Betancourt has unearthed some clues as to what happened to them, thanks to the preservative qualities of

crystallized rat urine.

"Throughout the Anasazi region," Mr. Betancourt said in an interview, "pack rats established nests and left middens" or dungheaps. "The feces and scraps they left in the middens were soaked in urine, which dried and crystallized, preserving the seeds and plant fragments the rats had eaten."

The rats always foraged within a 50-yard radius of their nests, he explained, and as many as 30 different plant species are represented by fossilized seeds and twigs in each midden. The age of the material is determined by analysis for radioactive carbon 14.

"This gives us a series of snapshots of what plant species were growing in the Chaco Canyon region at various times during the history of the region," Mr. Betancourt said.

From this kind of evidence, he said, "you can see abrupt deforestation in the Chaco Canyon. As stark as night and day, as obvious as it is on Easter Island in the Pacific. Prior to 1,000 years ago there was pinyon-juniper woodland in the Chaco Canyon, and for the past 1,000 years it was gone. The change was irreversible."

Although the cause of the deforestation is debated by scientists, Mr. Betancourt believes the evidence supports the view that as the Chaco Canyon builders used up local woodlands for fuel and building, erosion destroyed the top soil and deepened the surface water channels that had been important for irrigation, converting them into agriculturally useless arroyos.

"This accounts for the fact that the geological record shows us a major deepening of water channels in the area between the 12th and 15th centuries," Mr. Betancourt said. "It's perfectly evident to me that people beat the hell out of the environment there, and then they moved."

Today, he said, inhabitants of other parts of the Southwest are once again "attacking pinyon-juniper woodlands, this time with trucks and chain saws," using the wood as fuel. It is essential that the Federal Government protect its national forests from further inroads, he said, if the fragile Southwestern habitat is to be preserved.

Dr. Diamond noted that deforestation also occurred on Easter Island in the South Pacific. Instead of moving on, however, the Easter Islanders abandoned their early artistic culture and land conservation practices to become warriors and cannibals. The island was once heavily covered with palms and other trees, but when its Polynesian population burned the wood and began allowing livestock to graze throughout the island, irreversible erosion destroyed the topsoil. By the beginning of the 18th century, Easter Island was barren, and remains so today.

Another form of support for Dr. Diamond's thesis is emerging in a series of papers published by a team of Stanford University archeologists who recently completed a three-year expedition to the Southern Argolid — a tongue of land protruding from southern Greece into the Mediterranean, that has been inhabited by human beings for the past 50,000 years. The Stanford group gathered information and samples from 319 sites, seeking to determine whether a relationship existed between the vigor of regional society through the ages and the record left in the soil.

One of the team leaders, Dr. Curtis N. Runnels, believes the results tend to confirm Dr. Diamond's view that early man strongly influenced his environment, often for the worse.

"But this is not to say that man's impact was always destructive," Dr. Runnels said in an interview. "Throughout the history of the Southern Argolid, there have been times when man has conserved the land and prevented erosion, and other times when he let things go to pot. One can gauge the health of a society well from the amount of soil that erodes from high slopes and washed down its silt in the valleys."

Most of the region's original topsoil was stripped away by the ravages of the last ice age, Dr. Runnels said, but when the human population began to grow rapidly, they soon made their mark on what was left.

"Roughly 5,000 years ago, at the beginning of the Bronze Age," he said, "the population of the Southern Argolid increased dramatically, land was cleared as agriculture became intensive, and there was a period of severe erosion. We see it clearly in the great volume of silt that was washed down into the valleys and bays at that time."

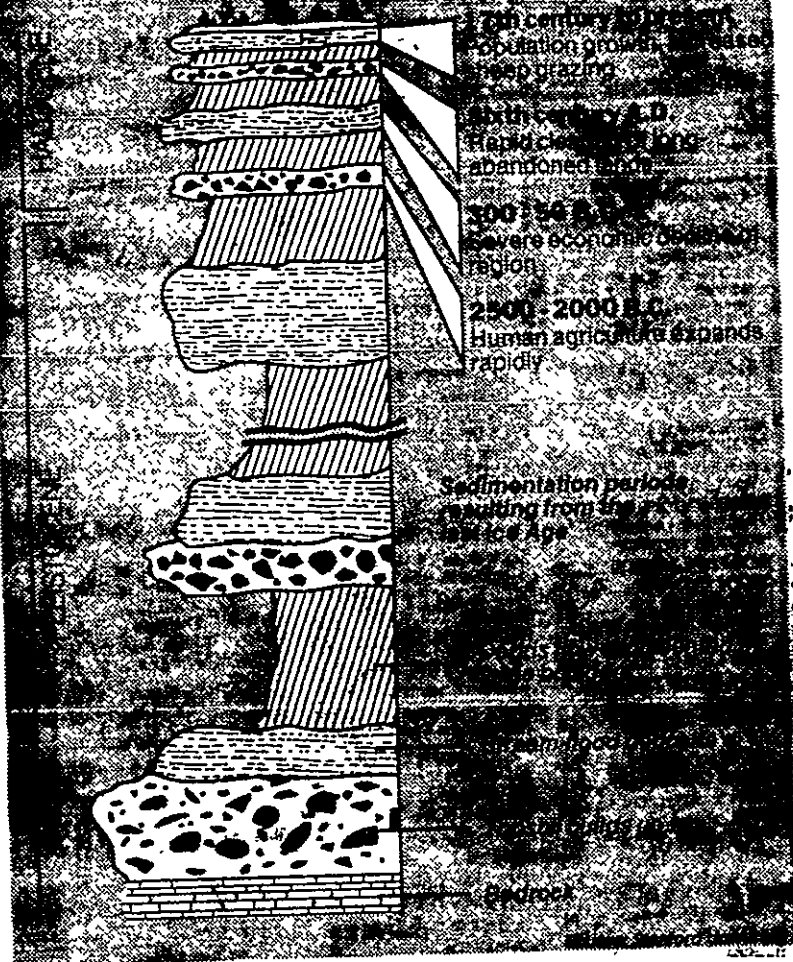
To gauge the thickness of various silt deposits offshore, the Stanford team used a side-scan sonar apparatus towed behind a boat to make echosoundings of the sea bottom around the Southern Argolid. They discerned the position and extent of offshore silt as well as changes that had occurred in the sea level since the last ice age.

Dr. Runnels said that the team eventually learned to build terraces to prevent erosion. Dr. Runnels said, "From the height of the great Mycenaean civilization in about 1,600 B.C. until its fall in 1,000 B.C., we find no erosion at all. The Mycenaeans were great builders, of course, and they probably put up some of the original terraces and check dams that have been rebuilt over the ages and are still around."

continued . . .

Reading a region's history in its soil

Layers of sediment in southern Greece show the effects of the age followed by periods of human life and about 1900 B.C.



But the great disadvantage of terracing, Dr. Runnels said, is that terraces must be constantly repaired and kept from leaking. If livestock are allowed to trample and damage a terrace, rain water soon cuts a channel through it, dragging down the dammed-up topsoil and initiating runaway erosion that may be irreversible.

The silting record shows that severe erosion occurred after the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization, and that conservation practices were reinstituted only after the Classical Greek period began some five centuries before Christ. With the decline of Greek political power between the third century B.C. and about 50 B.C., another period of severe erosion is detectable in silt patterns, Dr. Runnels said. A revival of sound agricultural practice occurred during the Roman era, but erosion set in again in the sixth century A.D. after the fall of Rome. Two more social crises in the Southern Argolid are discernable in silt patterns of the medieval period and of the past two centuries, Dr. Runnels said.

The current silting may be related, he said, to increased grazing on upland slopes, neglect of terrace re-

pairs, the cultivation of such high-value crops as lemons (which consume large amounts of water), and the growth of the tourist industry at the expense of soil conservation.

"Right now, the people of the area are pushing for fast profits. But even a slight downturn in world conditions, or a decrease in the buying population of Athens, or a war interrupting shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean — any of those things could wreck agriculture in the Southern Argolid. The terraces would go to pot and what little topsoil is left would slide into the sea."

"At least in the Southern Argolid of Greece," Dr. Runnels said, "the vigor and intelligence of Greek society clearly marked the soil record. Many of us suspect that this relationship between land use and social health will be found elsewhere."

The tendencies of mankind have changed little over the centuries, Dr. Diamond believes. "By nature, present day man is neither more nor less destructive of the land than was his forebears," he said. "It's just that the technology of destruction is vastly more efficient than it was in the past. There never was such a thing as a noble savage."

The New York Times
23 August 1986

The Importance Of Significance

Col. Fletcher H. Griffis, who came into prominence in the battle over striped bass and Westway, is now Professor Griffis, although he still answers his telephone, "Colonel Griffis."

After a career in the Army Corps of Engineers, Colonel Griffis began his new job this week as professor of civil engineering at Columbia University. He has been an adjunct professor there for years.

"Old engineers have an obligation to teach to spend time telling the next generation what you've learned," the 42-year-old colonel said from his new office at Columbia.

"I had 25 grand years in the Corps," he said, "and I wouldn't trade a minute of them, despite the striped bass."

It was the colonel who gave the go-ahead for the controversial highway to be built along the Hudson River from the Battery to 42d Street after the Corps reported that the project would have minimal effects on the fish.

Opponents, however, seized on a draft report by the Corps biologist that had said the highway would have "a significant effect" on striped bass. They went to court, pointing out that in the final draft of the report, "significant" was changed to "minor."

Colonel Griffis maintained that this did not mean any change in the Corps's position. But a Federal judge killed the project, saying he found the Corps's explanation "altogether bizarre."

"I tried to explain to the judge until I was blue in the face that the word 'significant' just meant 'any' effect on the fish," Colonel Griffis said.

He said he spoke his language now, especially in court.

"I just don't use the word any more," he said.

RAIDERS OF THE SACRED SITES

Spurred on
by high prices,
looters are
ransacking
sites sacred to
American
Indians.

By Derek V. Goodwin

AT THE SOUTH-
eastern tip of Utah,
by the mouth of the
cave known as the
Mummy's Hand,
the old woman they
call Khe-tha-a-hel
fell to her knees in
prayer. Her an-
guished cries were
carried for miles by
the desert wind. She
chanted words of
desecration.

Sacred Native American burial chambers had been gutted and trashed. Some mummified bodies had been carted away; others mutilated and strewn about. Items such as priceless baskets, jewelry, feather capes, bows, sandals and fur robes had been ripped from the ground to be packaged for sale.

Although the cave had probably been looted in the past by souvenir-searching amateurs, this time it had been struck by an organized ransacking party of professional archeological looters.

With some knowledge of locating ancient shrines gained from university courses in geology and archeology and motivated by a black market that currently pays as much as \$150,000 for a pristine pre-Columbian basket, the looters came during the spring of 1984 for the graves of the Anasazi, the "Ancient Ones," to harvest artifacts unseen for almost 1,200 years. The artifacts from a single Anasazi cliff dwelling could bring up to \$1 million.

Along with ceremonial objects and ancient tools, the raiders took the mummified remains of Anasazi children. According to David L. Krouskop, lead ranger of the Bureau of Land Management's Moab district in Utah, the asking price for quality specimens starts at \$5,000. The best of these are said to have been preserved by casting them into acrylic blocks, an expensive high-tech procedure.

Along with Anasazi effects, archeological looters are also bringing to market rare and valued artifacts of the Hopi, Hohokam, Caddo, Salado, Hopewell and Mimbres cultures. The looting has struck a painful nerve for these Native Americans. "To us," says Marcus Sekayouma, a Hopi employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, "the removal of any old object from the ground is the equivalent of sacrilege."

Derek V. Goodwin is a freelance writer.

Archeologists and art historians link the present wave of desecration to the first major auction of American Indian art at New York's Parke-Bernet Galleries, in 1971. The record prices received then for domestic relics stunned the international art world, which had virtually ignored them, and caused raiders to turn their attention to treasures on American soil.

The concentrated looting that began in an area of archeological sites throughout the Four Corners area, where Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico meet, spawned a nationwide epidemic of the destruction of sacred sites. Many of these are Federal lands, from places in Florida, Alaska to California, and in most of the states in between.

Civil War battlefields in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia are, for example, now systematically being plundered by organized armies employing sophisticated electronic metal detectors in their search for military insignia and accouterments. In southern Oklahoma, two individuals stole as many as 400 pottery vessels within one year. Throughout Texas, raiders have been unearthing burial mounds in their search for reli-

ANCIENT ONES,
the Anasazi lived in
the cliff dwellings, left,
dated 1250-1300, and
declared a National
Monument in 1909,
on what is now the
Navajo Reservation
west of Kayenta,
Ariz. Earl Shumway,
right, holds an
Anasazi pot. After two
years of litigation, he
pleaded guilty to
removing items from
Federal lands and was
placed on probation.



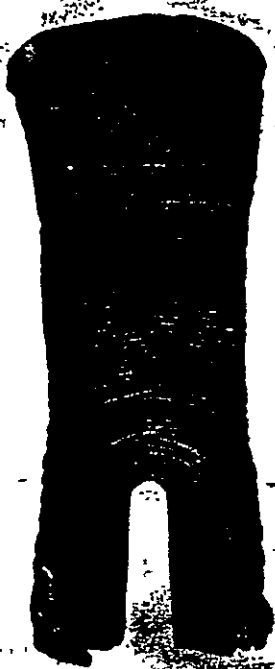
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRANCE MOORE

THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE / DECEMBER 7, 1986 65

The New York Times SUNDAY MAGAZINE
7 December 1986
CONT...

A CEREMONIAL

basket, below, used in rituals still practiced by the Hopi Indians. Is from around 1280. Its value: \$120,000.



gious offerings of the Caddo. Few among the more knowledgeable raiders have the resources, or inclination, to market effectively the objects they steal.

"College-trained ringleaders hire students to find burials, do the excavation and take the risks," says Dr. Ted G. Birkedal, a National Park Service regional archeologist now based in Anchorage. "When the students are done, a middleman markets the products. We know of one anthropologist who has made over \$1 million." The artifacts are sold to museums, galleries and private collectors, who frequently do not know, or question, how they were obtained.

The unchecked spread of the destruction has raised charges of Federal irresponsibility and pitted agents in the field against their high-ranking superiors in Washington, who, they feel, either do not fully comprehend the problem or have chosen to ignore its implications.

"We're at war and we are losing," laments Dr. David B. Madsen, Utah State's archeologist, based in Salt Lake City. "We're dealing with hard-core criminals, and those guys [in Washington] think we're talking about arrowhead collectors."

Raiders have been known, Federal agents say, to carry rifles and handguns. And in Southern Utah and Arizona, looters lease helicopters to reach pristine sites in remote areas.

Although Congress passed the Archeological Resources Protection Act in 1979 in an attempt to stop the pillage, agents in various Federal agencies say they have neither the budget nor the manpower for adequate enforcement. "When 80 to 90 percent of all archeological sites in the Southwest have been looted, and you don't have thousands of prosecutions, you've got to say the record is poor," says Philip Speser, a Washington lawyer and Congressional watchdog associated with Foresight Science and Technology Inc., which assesses the extent of archeological

(Continued on Page 84)

THE ANASAZI

mummified their dead. The remains of a baby, above, uncovered by looters in a ceremonial cave in Utah. Such graves sites often date to 550 A.D. Hair ornaments, dated 1200-1300, right, are valued at \$10,000 to \$15,000 apiece. The pair of Anasazi pottery jars below have been appraised at about \$15,000 each.



MARC GAEDÉ



JEFF MOX

damage on a national basis and lobbies for enactment of protective legislation.

From his Washington office, James M. Parker, assistant director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management, which, along with the National Park Service and the Forest Service, has jurisdiction over many of the Federal lands on which the looting has been occurring, acknowledges the frustration Echoing Reagan Administration policy, he says the primary solution is public education and developing a new public ethic. "So we try to work with church groups and others."

Meanwhile, the raiders keep abreast of new techniques and new locations where bounty is still plentiful through a number of specialty newspapers and magazines. The May 1985 edition of Lost Treasure listed "20 great new places to discover fun and fortune." Included was the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, just outside of Washington, which abounds with Civil War and prehistoric artifacts, some of which are worth as much as \$1,200 each.

A senior National Park Service archeologist at Interior Department headquarters in Washington is not shocked at the scope of the illegal digging. "It's not a question of where they are, it's a question of where they are not," she says. "No one, anywhere, has an accurate gauge on the dimensions of the problem, and they don't want to know."

IN THE BLACK MARKET of stolen antiquities, raiders are the lowest link in a chain of command at whose top are a number of experts who work in museums, art galleries and auction houses, the majority of whose employees are honest. On the fringe lurk international smugglers, who supply bounty for an extensive overseas market — primarily in West Germany and Japan — with annual sales estimated by some as high as \$25 million.

"For years, collectors ignored American antiquities because they thought they were inferior," explains Mark Michel, president of the nonprofit Archeological Conservancy, based in New Mex-

ico "Suddenly, we were discovered."

Now there is a growing appreciation of early Native American cultures whose ceramics, textiles and intricately woven baskets, jugs and urns are crisply detailed, subtle in shading and finely tooled.

"Right now, the American Indian market is stronger than African and Oceanic and all other cultures ... and [most] American collectors are not selling," says John A. Buxton of Shango Galleries, in Dallas, who abjures any illegal activities or trafficking in stolen artifacts. "A masterpiece-quality object, such as a great Northwest Coast mask, could go for \$70,000 to \$100,000. There are more people interested in American Indian art and there are fewer pieces; therefore it is more valuable."

Because of this, a serious problem has arisen about the source of some of the materials now coming on the market. "If dealers had to prove their artifacts were not stolen from public lands," says Richard E. Fike, a Bureau of Land Management archeologist, "the whole market would shut down."

"That's absurd," counters Douglas C. Ewing, a well-known New York art dealer and president of the American Association of Dealers in Ancient, Oriental and Primitive Art. "How can you tell where a pot came from? If I have any suspicions at all that something has recently been dug I won't buy, whether it came from Federal or private land," which cannot be protected by Government agents.

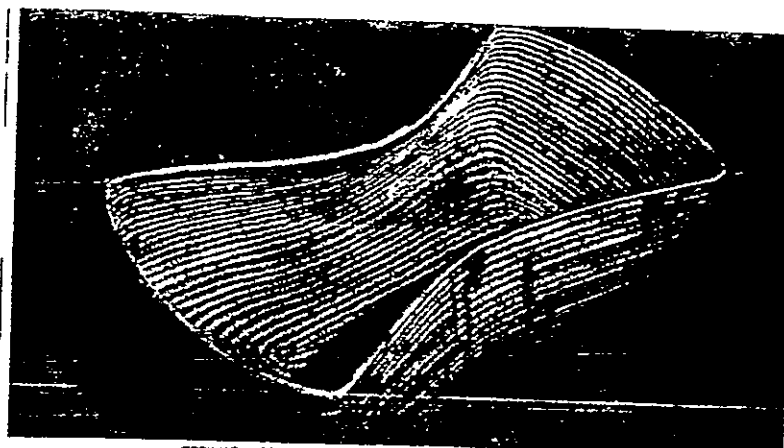
No transfer of title or deed comes with the purchase of fine American Indian art or historic antiquities discovered on public lands. Instead, dealers provide what is known as provenance, or information on the origin of the article. Sometimes it is issued in writing, more often not.

In what is being referred to as the Meryl Platt case, the inner machinations of a black market that has operated largely unchecked is slowly being laid bare.

The case involves looters, dealers and galleries in five states, and nearly ruined the reputation of one of this country's leading scholars in Indian culture. It also demon-



Peter Hester, owner of Fourth World, an art dealership in Camp Verde, Ariz., is serving two years probation for looting.



JERRY JACKA COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WESTERN ARCHEOLOGY CENTER, TUCSON, ARIZ. An Anasazi ceremonial basket from Arizona, dating from 1200-1250, held ceremonial items.

strated how easy it is to circumvent provenance.

For several hundred years, the high priests of the Hopi tribe of northern Arizona would, from time to time, retrieve their sacred masks, which they stored inside earthen kivas, subterranean ceremonial chambers. The masks, used in ritual rites of passage, are thought to be the embodiments of living spirits so powerful that few Hopi have ever looked directly upon them. In the autumn of 1979, when the Hopi spiritual leaders went to retrieve their religious objects, they were discovered missing. To this 9,000-member tribe, the theft threatened a way of life that predated the arrival of white men on this continent by some 10 centuries. Without the sacred masks, the Hopi could not worship completely.

"Without our religion, we die," says Neilson Honyakewa, a Hopi religious leader.

Contrary to the popular belief that artifacts without provenance will find no socially acceptable market, photographs of the masks, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, passed through the hands of established, reputable dealers of fine art in Dallas, Los Angeles, Chicago and Arizona who would have been expected to question their origins but evidently did not.

Through an intermediary, the masks were accepted as a donation from two Chicago businessmen by Dr. Evan M. Maurer, curator at the time of the department of primitive art at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago and author of "The Native Amer-

ican Heritage: A Survey of North American Indian Art," a standard academic text constantly referred to by commercial galleries and auction houses.

"If this happened to Evan," says a curator at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, who asked to remain anonymous, "you can bet no one is immune, not us or the thousands of private dealers worldwide who strive for honesty and excellence." William R. Keefe, an F.B.I. special agent who worked on the case, believes that Maurer was duped because he knew the person with whom he was dealing.

In the world of American antiques, Meryl Pinsoff Platt, a Chicago art dealer, was considered a minor player. A member of a well-established and moneyed family known for its community involvement and support of the arts, she operated out of her home in the fashionable North Shore suburb of Wilmette. In lieu of provenance, she provided dealers with a trusted family name.

No one is certain exactly when or how she obtained the Hopi masks, but in December 1979, after having visited several art dealers, she approached John Buxton of the Shango Galleries in Dallas, using Maurer's name for introduction. Questioning only their authenticity, Buxton agreed to share the cost of having the masks authenticated by a third party. When he sent transparencies of the masks to Dr. Barton A. Wright, a well-known scholar on the Hopi culture who now lives in Phoenix, a chain of events was set in motion that

would end in the recovery and return of the masks to the Hopi and the arrest and conviction of Meryl Platt.

"I know this may sound like scare tactics, but you have hot merchandise on your hands or in those of your friend," Wright responded. "I believe the tribe [can bring] charges of grand larceny...."

Assuming Meryl Platt was also being duped, Buxton immediately sent a copy of the letter to her. She shredded it, throwing the paper into a garbage can. Unknown to her, its contents were being collected by the F.B.I. and Internal Revenue Service.

Knowing that her market was threatened, she sold what Federal agents called a "tax package" to two Chicago businessmen, who paid \$11,770 for the masks. She then certified the masks' value, in writing, at \$37,500. On behalf of her clients, she quickly arranged a donation to the Art Institute of Chicago through an unsuspecting Maurer.

"You judge people by their connections and actions, and she was always open and honest," Maurer says. "She had become one of many, here and from Europe, who became contacts. I made a mistake in judgment, and one with heavy consequences."

Meryl Platt, who pleaded guilty in November 1985 to dealing in stolen property and aiding and abetting in a false document presented to the I.R.S., was fined \$6,000 and sentenced to 30 days in incarceration, and an additional 10 consecutive weekends of confinement, in a plea-bargain arrangement to assist in the penetration of the black market in Indian artifacts.

"There have to be legal guidelines" on provenance, Maurer says.

"Most important," he adds, "innocent people must be alerted to the extent of this problem."

Among those caught up in the Platt investigation was Peter Hester, owner of Fourth World, a Native American art business in Camp Verde, Ariz., who the F.B.I. alleges had brokered one of the masks before they came into the possession of Meryl Platt. His connection with the case came to light during the course of routine cross-checking by Federal agents of his numerous activities.

"It was no big deal," says Hester. "The Hopis say they use them every 10 years. That's a lot of bull. You can't believe anybody. This is not a crime. These people [the F.B.I.] want to assassinate me both emotionally and financially." Hester, who could not be indicted in the case of the masks because the statute of limitations had run out by the time his involvement was discovered, is currently serving two years' probation, having pleaded no-contest in a looting case in Arizona.

"I excavated over a hundred ruins, big deal," says Hester. "I dug 185 pots in Arizona last year. When it comes to Southwest archeology, I'm the best. I'm one of the last outlaws, man." Few in the know would disagree with him on either point.

IN THE COMPLEX WAR against career grave robbers, the Federal arsenal currently consists of two weapons, which are supposed to work in tandem. First is "Take Pride in America," an

educational program aimed at potential weekend hobbyists. Second is the resource-protection act, which many law enforcement officers say is nearly impossible to enforce because it puts the burden on the Government to prove materials have been taken from Federal lands, and to show beyond a reasonable doubt that the diggers knew they were on Federal land.

Charles S. Allaire, a United States Forest Service special agent, who has probably been involved in more investigations and prosecutions of looters than any other Federal officer, believes that lawmakers in Washington do not understand what they are up against. He also feels that the general impression articulated by politicians, that most looters are family campers picking up a few artifacts, only makes matters worse.

"Most hobbyists have quit [since the resource-protection act was passed], but commercial looters are now more active than ever," Allaire says. "One group of 700 looters we've identified includes everybody from construction workers to prominent politicians and entertainers. If we had money and a real commitment, we could stop them."

Interior Secretary Donald P. Hodel, who has traveled to Utah to gauge the problem personally, says the commitment already exists. "The problem is a matter of public will and attitude," he explains. "By instilling a new sense of pride, we hope to recruit Americans in all walks of life to be the new stewards of our national lands."

Martin McAllister, until recently a Forest Service archeologist, says, "Sooner or

... CONT

later, some family out for a hike is going to get into one of these situations [with looters], and make a wrong statement like, 'You shouldn't be doing this, I heard it was illegal.' And they are going to be killed."

Although the resource-protection law was enacted to protect the estimated 700 million acres of Federal land, the potential penalties for each offense — \$100,000, 10 years in prison, or both — have not stemmed the tide. Enforcement efforts are almost nonexistent, or, at best, thinly spread, in many of the hardest-hit areas. "The area we work [eight Southwestern states], with a staff of 10, covers about one-fifth of the entire United States, and all the agencies are in the same boat," says Larry D. Banks of the Army Corps of Engineers. "How do you get a handle on it?"

Nowhere is the application of the protection act or the current Federal commitment better illustrated than in Utah. With the assistance of a special state task force, the two special agents and two rangers charged with fighting archeological looting in the entire state of Utah, nevertheless managed to bring off a major arrest that then boomeranged.

Earl Shumway of Blanding, Utah, was caught in 1984 with more than \$2 million worth of artifacts alleged to have been stolen from Federal lands. The outcome of his case was eagerly awaited by other looters, archeologists, dealers, Federal prosecutors and law enforcement agents.

"He pleaded guilty," says Brent D. Ward, United States Attorney for the District of Utah, who supervised the Government's case, "to excavating and removing approximately 32 rare baskets, constituting perhaps the most unique find of its kind in history." The discovery, scientists say, is the equivalent of uncovering the lost tomb of an ancient king.

Before pleading guilty, Shumway said that he did not know he was on Federal land when he took the artifacts, that he had merely stumbled onto a cache secreted by other looters a century ago.

After some 20 months of investigation and almost two years of litigation that included one mistrial, Shumway pleaded guilty under the resource-protection act and was sentenced by Judge J. Thomas Greene of the United States District Court to probation. "Theoretically," says Ward, "he probably

could have received 10 years in prison and \$20,000 in fines."

In most cases tried under the protection act, for prosecution to be successful it must be proved that the violator knew he was exploiting Federal property. Manuel R. Martinez, the Forest Service special agent responsible for all of Arizona and New Mexico and portions of Oklahoma and Texas, says, "It's the only law I know of where ignorance [of the law] can be successfully used as an excuse."

IT MAY ALREADY BE too late to preserve the majority of Utah's richest Anasazi sites, says David Madsen, the Utah State archeologist.

Mesas torn apart with shovels and plows resemble the downfield end of a mortar range. Man-made craters are everywhere. Discarded human bones lie scattered over desolate plains.

The looting would stand a better chance of being contained if a national strike force were established, which would function like the President's Commission on Organized Crime, infiltrating criminal networks and seeking stiff penalties against those who deal in plunder from Federal lands. Start-up costs for such a program could be between \$2 million and \$5 million, and would include increased protection for sites that face certain annihilation. But during a period of fiscal restraint, professionals from all sectors feel they will have to settle for the Interior Secretary's public education program.

According to official Government documents, from January 1985 through October 1986 there were at least 47 documented cases of looting, including that of historic and prehistoric archeological sites and human burial sites. On National Park Service lands within an 80-mile radius of Washington, the remains of Confederate soldiers and slaves have been removed from their burial grounds. And for every incident reported, at least four others go unreported, says Dr. Stephen Potter, the National Park Service regional archeologist responsible for 88,000 acres in the Washington area.

"If the current rate of destruction continues unabated," says Potter, "we will soon witness the loss of 12,000 years of human history in the Potomac Valley, just as we stood by and watched the systematic destruction of the Four Corners."

Researchers Cover Up A Link to Minute Man

CONCORD, Mass., Nov. 22 (AP) — A cellar thought to be part of the home of a Revolutionary War captain was covered after archeologists removed artifacts that they say will aid in their identification efforts.

The cellar was thought to be that of Capt. David Brown, who led the Concord Minute Men into battle with the British in the opening battle of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775.

The National Park Service closed off the site, and the discovery of the cellar was kept secret for a century of Capt. Brown's life.

It was not until the discovery of the cellar that the site was identified as a Revolutionary War site. The structure was the home of Capt. David Brown, said Fred Szarka, supervising ranger at Minute Man National Historical Park. He said Monday the structure was taken down in the 1860's.

The dig was part of a five-year project by archeologists for the National Park Service to locate and establish the significance of archeological sites in the park.

Since the park service policy does not permit reconstruction of historical structures, the dig was covered up Monday. "Once destroyed, they are gone," Mr. Szarka said. "Fifty years ago they were building everything anew. It's nice to know it's there."

The New York Times
23 NOVEMBER 1986

Bid to Bar Removal of Tribal Bones Rebuffed

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 25 (UPI) — A Federal district judge has refused to block the removal of Chumash Indian bones from an ancient tribal cemetery discovered six months ago in dredging a flood-control channel.

Judge Pamela Ann Rymer denied the injunction sought by a Chumash faction that sued to halt dredging of the Calleaguas Creek channel near Point Mugu on the ground that disturbing the remains would violate their religious practices.

Frank Steh, Ventura County's assistant counsel, said the judge had held that the faction, the Southern Council of the Coastal Band, "had failed to estab-

lish the breach of any First Amendment right" necessary to justify halting the reburial project.

Sidney Flores, a San Jose lawyer representing the Chumash group, could not be reached for comment, his office said.

Archeologists hired by the county have been working since Dec. 5 to remove the bones of about 20 Chumash, estimated at 1,500 years old, from excavations in the channel bed. The \$80,700 project, which is financed by the county, calls for all the remains to be removed by next week and reburied in the village of Thousand Oaks.

The project was prompted by threats

from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to withhold \$785,000 in flood-control funds unless the county acted to save the human remains from being washed out to sea.

The cemetery, part of a previously studied Chumash site, was uncovered last July in the course of work to deepen the channel.

In two days of hearings on the injunction that ended Monday, several Coastal Band "medicine people" testified that the burial site, which they called the village of Muwu, should be left alone. The tribal religious leaders said they believed the souls of the dead would be disturbed.

The New York Times 26 DECEMBER 1986

Bones Are Buried in Mohawk-Methodist Rite

By PHILIP J. GUTIN

Six human bones, believed to be anywhere from 100 to 500 years old, were buried yesterday under one of the city's oldest churches in a ceremony that mixed Methodist hymns and Mohawk prayers.

The reburial — marked equally by boisterous singing and quiet reflection on the often unhappy history of American Indians and the Europeans who settled their land — was also a break with longstanding scientific practice. By burying the bones rather than putting them in a museum, city and American Indian officials said they were seeking to treat the remains with "the

respect and dignity they deserve."

Construction workers found the bones in January while strengthening the foundations of the John Street United Methodist Church in lower Manhattan. The church's site, at 44 John Street, was once a Methodist cemetery and had previously been used as an Indian village. It is not clear which era the bones were from.

Sprinkled Tobacco Leaves

The ceremony, which participants said was the first in memory in the region, combined elements of a Methodist "love feast" with parts of a traditional American Indian message of thanksgiving.

After being pronounced by the Rev. Warren B. Smith, pastor of the John Street church, about 100 people gathered at the church for the ceremony. The bones, which are believed to be of Indian origin, were placed in a small wooden box. The construction then transferred from a church hymn to a prayer and a reburial and ended with the Methodist rite of reconciliation.

The ceremony culminated when Frank Nottoway, a Mohawk chief from Kahnawake, Canada, stood before the small wooden box that contained the bones and, as is traditional, sprinkled shredded dried tobacco leaves over them.

Speaking in Mohawk, the 59-year-old Mr. Nottoway, dressed in a dark gray suit, said he "reaffirmed the proper burial ceremony" and also asked his ancestors "to take away our diseases, our worries and anything that may be of trouble to us."

The bones reburied yesterday were the first to be found in lower Manhattan since archeological digs began in the area about six years ago, said Dr. Sherene Baugher, the city archeologist and a staff member of the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission. Since 1980, more than nine acres have been examined, she said, but only at the John Street church have human remains been found.

On the Land Since 1794

The 148-year-old John Street church is only a block from what is believed to

have been the site of "Golden Hill," which historians think once was an ideal location for an Indian village. The Methodist congregation, which has occupied the land since 1796, also once had a small cemetery on the grounds.

Once the bones were discovered, Dr. Baugher said, "the whole thrust of the dig centered on moral and ethical issues."

"Since it was possible they were American Indian burials, we asked the Indian community and the city's Indian Affairs Commission for advice," she said.

"Often when bones are discovered they are treated as scientific evidence," Dr. Baugher continued. "But we believe that human remains are found and should be treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve."

Michael Bush, the executive director of the American Indian Community House, a provider of social services at 842 Broadway, at 13th Street, in Manhattan, said he was "enormously pleased" that the church thought to include representatives of the Indian community and its traditions in the reburial.

The bones — which included three fragments from a femur, part of a toe, a vertebra and part of the pelvis — were among 1,000 artifacts discovered at the John Street site in January, Dr. Baugher said.

Scientists at Hunter College have been examining the bones since January, and have determined, Dr. Baugher said, that they belonged to at least two adult males and had been previously disturbed.

The New York Times 23 NOVEMBER 1986

Archaeologists excited

EDISON — A prehistoric hunting tool and other ancient chips of stone are among the objects being found on an ancient Indian site in the Dismal Swamp.

Archaeologists compared the find to an art collector discovering an unknown Picasso.

In addition, they said the site could yield heretofore unknown scientific and historical information about the behavior and culture of the nomadic people living in the area 3,000 years before the birth of Christ.

The exploration is being conducted by the Research & Archaeological Management on behalf of developer Erwin Fisch.

While the real digging has yet to begin, initial exploration of the site thus far has yielded fragments of stone tools used by Indians dating back about 3,000 to 5,000 years.

The period begins at the end of the Ice Age, about 9,000 years ago, lasting until about 3,000 B.C., according to RAM archaeologist Charles Bello.

"The glaciers were retreating about 10,000 years ago," said Bello. "There developed much more diversity in the ecological climate as the temperatures got milder."

Most of the artifacts recovered so far have been inch-long charcoal-colored chipped stones which flaked off a larger stone used to sharpen Indian tools.

But the real treasure has been the bifurcated "stem point," which the archeologists believe could be 8,000 years old.

Bello believes the toothlike object with serrated edges could have been attached to a wooden spear and used to hunt giant elk and deer in the Dismal Swamp.

The archaeologists believe the prehistoric Indians were hunters who migrated to the swamp on a seasonal basis. But they don't know yet how many Indians used the site.

"Everything's tentative based on a typological identification," said Bello. "We have yet to go out and really do the digging."

Larry Randolph, an archaeologist from South Plainfield who discovered the site in 1977, alerted the developer and the Edison Township Council to what was barely hidden on the land.

"Actually, we relocated this site," Randolph explained.

He said the site was listed on a 1913 U.S. Indian Sites Survey, but was marked incorrectly on the 73-year-old maps.

"We actually pinned it down, and corrected the 1913 survey," Randolph said. "The discoverer of the site is probably unknown to history."

Neither Randolph nor RAM officials will reveal exactly where the site is, fearing that scavengers and souvenir hunters will destroy fragile historical pieces.

RAM officials prefer to see the artifacts used for some educational exhibit, possibly at the Edison Historical Society.

"It would be real nice if the township would develop a slide show or lecture series as part of an educational program for the school system," said RAM President Peter Primevera.

— ERIC GREENBERG



"Shh. Listen! There's more: 'I've named the male with the big ears Bozo, and he is surely the nerd of the social group—a primate bimbo, if you will.'"

Dismal Swamp digging uncovers ancient artifact

By ERIC J. GREENBERG
News Tribune staff writer

EDISON — Mixed in with broken beer bottles and mattress springs, not far from the Bound Brook stream, archaeologists have found an inch-and-a-half long tooth-shaped stone — a relic they believe dates back to the dawn of civilization.

The sharp-edged white stone point used by prehistoric Indians roaming the Dismal Swamp could be 8,000 years old — among the oldest such finds in the state.

But the site on which the artifact was found is slated for destruction to make room for hundreds of apartments and townhouses.

And a local environmental group which believes the site should be preserved as an educational resource for Edison said their proposals to township officials have fallen on deaf ears.

Charles Bello, an archaeologist from Research & Archaeological Management (RAM) Inc., said the ancient projectile points discovered on the site "will be a real contribution to history."

RAM Inc. of Highland Park has been hired by developer Erwin Fisch to determine how big the site is, and exactly what is in it. Bello said the approximately 300-by-300-square-foot site has never been plowed or built upon, making it a unique find in heavily developed Central Jersey.

"The significance is that a great portion of the site has never been disturbed — that's not well known at all," in this area, said Bello.

In order to save as many relics as possible and allow Fisch to proceed with his plans for 2,230 units in the Dismal Swamp, RAM has recommended a process called salvage excavation. The work includes establishing precise boundaries, digging out the artifacts, photographing them and then cataloging them for future display.

"The most sensitive alternative to preservation would be to salvage the scientifically important data through a program of professional archaeo-

logical excavation," said RAM's preliminary report.

But a state archaeologist and a local environmental group say the land should be preserved for educational and scientific purposes.

Lorraine Williams, chief archaeologist for the New Jersey State Museum, said preservation is always the best course for an archaeological site, and it could be accomplished if Edison officials pursued it.

"Certainly they (the township) have the option open to them," said Ms. Williams. "Certainly if the people are interested they could ask the developer to set some land aside. The jurisdiction is with the township."

She said other communities in the state have been able to handle archaeological preservation by setting up local ordinances based on state and federal preservation statutes.

Christine Ksepka, founder of Save Our Swamp, SOS, a community group calling for the preservation of the Dismal Swamp, said the site should be used as an educational tool for school children and township residents.

"You have a rich cultural resource there, and we should use it," Ms. Ksepka said. "I brought down an archaeologist to the council to help them find out more about it but they never contacted him."

SOS had proposed a 100-acre buffer between the proposed development site and a wetlands area that would preserve wildlife and the Indian site.

"Nothing was ever done," she added. "The township should have had enough pride to do the research to protect that land."

Fisch, who owns 375 acres of the 460-acre Dismal Swamp, plans to fund the excavation of the site — something the archaeologists stress he is not required to do by any state or federal law.

"The developer is going way out of his way," Bello maintained. "Fisch came to us because he wants to help the case of history and science."

Bello's partner, Peter Primevera, said without Fisch the scientific information might be lost.

"Funding for this type of project from the state and federal government is very rare," said Primevera. "If we did not take advantage of the developer's funding it would be a great loss."

He estimated the cost to excavate at less than \$100,000.

Ms. Williams said there are no state funds available for preservation.

"It would have to be something the developer would do — it has been done."

The complete story of how many Indians used the land and exactly for what purpose will be known once the archaeologists complete their digging.

Bello and Primevera said they recommended the salvage excavation because of scientific and economic reasons.

"I really feel this is the best way to deal with the site," said Bello, who is also vice president of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey. "The value of the site is scientific and there's not much to be seen there. But it's also an economic situation. — the developer has the choice to build on what is his developable land."

According to RAM's report, the site is "fragile" because most of the artifacts are located no more than 18 inches below the ground.

Primevera adds that the site is not sacred or a burial ground that warrants preservation.

"You preserve something if it is sacred or has a religious component to it," he added. "This is not the case here."

Dr. James Kellers, former president of the state archaeological group, said salvage excavation is the best option in a case where the land is owned privately. He noted that if the land was owned by the federal or state government, law would mandate preservation.

"At one point I offered my services (to dig) the site — mostly for gratis — but they never took us up on our offer," Kellers said.

The News Tribune, Woodbridge, NJ
28 November 1986

Pre-historic settlement uncovered

EDISON — Cheops may not have yet caused the great pyramid to rise at Gizeh during Egypt's IVth Dynasty when a band of pre-historic Indians encamped along the banks of the Bound Brook in Edison's Dismal Swamp.

Remnants of that settlement have just been uncovered by a team of archaeologists, who date the site as being between 3,000 and 5,000 years old.

"How significant is this site?" asked William Bohn, chairman of the Edison Planning Board, during a recent inspection tour of the area along with Mayor Anthony M. Yelencsics.

"Extremely so," Bohn was told by Charles A. Bello of Research & Archaeological Management Inc. of Highland Park.

The firm was engaged by Edison Tyler Estates, which has plans to develop portions of the Dismal Swamp as a planned unit development (PUD), after it was reported at hearings on rezoning the property PUD that the site between Talmadge Road and Park Avenue contained "Indian artifacts."

According to Mike Seidner, an associate of Edison Tyler Estates, he took this to mean American Indians who roamed this area when it was being settled by the Dutch and English.

He was no little amazed to learn from Bello and his associate, Peter Primavera, that the Indians who left behind evidence of their life in the Dismal Swamp lived here before the dawn of written history at a time when the Bronze Age was just beginning in Europe.

Research & Archaeological Management was engaged by Edison Tyler Woods to first determine if the

reported site existed, what it contained and whether it was "significant."

After three months of work, the archaeologists determined that it was, indeed, significant.

Now Edison Tyler Woods is working with the archaeologists to determine what will be involved in financing a full-scale excavation of the site centered in the woods on elevated ground just a few hundred feet from the brook.

Seidner said that a report on what will be involved is expected in a few weeks.

However, according to Bohn, the area of the settlement will be off limits to any development until all of the artifacts have been removed.

"They'll not be able to build on it until such times that the archaeologists say it's clean," said Bohn.

Bello reported that evidence of the aboriginal inhabitants first was uncovered on the surface and that excavations of up to between 10 and 12 inches produced such objects as argillite arrow heads or "projectile points."

During the tour what appeared to be a small piece of shale kicked up by one of the visitors was identified by Primavera as a fire-cracked stone.

Used to hold the heat in underground "ovens," it was other similar pieces of stone that provided the "tip off" to the existence and location of the Stone Age settlement, according to Primavera.

What makes the Dismal Swamp find so significant, according to Bello, is the fact that so much of the site has never been plowed up or destroyed.

Bello said it was "incredible" to find a settlement *in situ* just as these pre-historic Indians left it with no "accumulation of a later occupation to contaminate it."

The archaeologists described the Indians as nomadic "hunter-

gatherers" who did not engage in agriculture and "lived off the land." And while they did not establish permanent homes, they did stake out "territories."

"It was suitable place to live," said Bello of the Dismal Swamp because it provided "high dry ground" on which to set up camp and was close to water.

It also is their supposition that the encampment, tentatively estimated to occupy an area of 300'x300', was occupied only seasonally.

"Doing the digs" to completely mine the site will be "a long and tedious process," Bohn and Mayor Yelencsics were told.

And "it speaks well of the developers," said Primavera, that

the important historic find "is now available to the scientific community."

"It is a contribution to history," said Primavera, who pointed out that failure to excavate the site could result in the ultimate loss of all that it contains.

"This is a rare, rare opportunity to grab something to make a study of it," he said.

He added that the contents of the site do not have "a high dollar value."

"It's scientific value that's buried in there," he added.

According to Primavera, Research & Archaeological Management's main interest in the excavation will be the anthropological knowledge it provides — new information about man and his physical, mental, social

and cultural development — rather than the antiquities themselves.

Primavera and Bello tentatively suggested that once studied, the contents of the settlement could be made the property of the New Jersey State Museum and then returned to Edison for permanent exhibition.

A Museum Turns To Congress for Help

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

Filling the expansive old United States Custom House with the extensive collections of the American Indian Museum is a notion that has been floated, debated and even previously abandoned. It may yet survive. Both landlord and curator want the monumental landmark to become the museum's new home.

But it will take an act of Congress.

The president and director of the Museum of the American Indian-Heye Foundation, Dr. Roland W. Force, said: "This is our only option to remain in New York. This will be a crucial year." It will be crucial because a bill will be introduced to convey the Custom House to the museum.

"We support legislation to turn that building over to the Museum of the American Indian — lock, stock and barrel," said the regional administrator of the General Services Administration, William J. Diamond.

"We're very encouraged," Dr. Force said. "It's good for the city as a whole. It's good for lower Manhattan. It's good for our collections." The museum's current home, too small and too remote for its needs, is at Broadway and 155th Street. The alternative to Bowling Green might be a move to Texas.



The New York Times

The old U.S. Custom House

The vast spaces within the Custom House, an imposing Beaux-Arts fixture on the Battery for eight decades, have been empty since 1973, when the Customs Service moved out.

After two years of remodeling, however, rooms in the upper floors ought to be ready by mid-May for new — if potentially temporary — tenants: the Federal Bankruptcy Court and the United States Trustee.



"Don't shush me — and I don't care if she is writing in her little notebook; just tell me where you were last night!"

The New York Times
5 January 1987



"The gods have mixed feelings."