

PANYC



Professional Archaeologists of New York City – Newsletter

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I. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we enter March, and this endless winter continues, I think we're all hoping that spring is around the corner and the thaw can begin.

For PANYC it's also a time of change. The results of our election will be announced in approximately two weeks at PANYC's Annual Meeting. It has been an honor serving as President this past year. I am most excited by the number of new members that have joined since last year. Let's hope this trend continues and we can continue to increase awareness of New York City archaeology.

The change in the Executive Officer's and Board Members is not the only change to PANYC. The By-Laws committee is hard at work putting the final touches on a revised draft proposal. That document should be going to the general membership soon. The web site committee is also planning for a major upgrade to our web page and online presence. You may also notice that we've updated how we approve our General Meeting minutes so the most recent record is now included in the Newsletter. Finally, after almost a decade, our Newsletter Editor is stepping down. We need to find a replacement and are looking for a volunteer.

There is a lot going on in the world of NYC archaeology including, as one PANYC member has stated, the first ever mention of NYC Archaeology on Saturday Night Live. As our city continues to change and re-develop itself, it is up to us to remind everyone of the importance of pursuing our past.

The next regularly scheduled PANYC meeting is PANYC's Annual Meeting. It will be held on Thursday, March 20, 2014 6:30pm at The Neighborhood Preservation Center. We look forward to seeing you there!

II. MEETING MINUTES

PANYC GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 15, 2013

Neighborhood Preservation Center

232 East 11th Street

New York, NY

6:30 PM

Present: Cantwell, Czerkowicz, Geismar, George, Hulse, Julie Labate (from GRA), Linn, Loorya, Spritzer, Stone, Wall

Secretary's Report: Linn thanked Ricciardi for taking the November meeting minutes meeting, and stated that they were approved via email. Stone reminded everyone that it should be noted on the November minutes themselves that they combined the minutes from the Board and General Meetings.

Treasurer's Report: Spritzer reminded everyone that the dues for 2014 will now be \$20, as was decided at the November meeting. Linn will send out dues notices soon. 2014 dues are due before the March meeting.

President's Report: Loorya announced that it has been relatively quiet recently. She related more information about the issue with Bob Diamond. A few months ago, Bob Diamond had posted libelous and false accusations about PANYC's relationship with LPC and the Bloomberg administration, and specifically named Sutphin. LPC's counsel refused to step in and defend Sutphin. Sutphin wrote a personal letter to Diamond asking him to remove the false statements about her from his website. It appears that he has. George checked his website and was unable to find any mention of PANYC or Sutphin. Loorya relayed that Diamond recommended that PANYC remove information from our website that had misled him into believing PANYC had undue influence over the mayor and LPC.

A Board member added that there was a recent podcast on ABC Gotham about the Atlantic Avenue Tunnel that referred listeners to Diamond's website, so it does get some public attention.

Loorya stated that there were several papers about NYC archaeology at this year's SHA annual meeting in Quebec City. Loorya, Geismar, Janowitz, Linn, and George, among others, presented papers. The meeting was well attended, despite travel difficulties due to the "polar vortex."

Committee Reports: (only those committees who reported something during the meeting are included)

Awards: Cantwell remarked that it is time to send out calls for the two PANYC awards: the student paper award and the non-archaeologist award. Schuldenrein is now chair of the Awards Committee, but was not present at the meeting. Members asked Hulse and Labate, who work with Schuldenrein, to relay the message to him.

Bylaws: Stone announced that the committee is reviewing how to incorporate the principles that the Board approved. Five of eleven articles are affected, and they are also considering how to best make these changes, either to add the changes at the end to an otherwise unchanged document or to rewrite the bylaws so that the changes would be fully integrated. The committee will also be discussing using the Columbia University Law Clinic that was instrumental in developing our original by-laws (and incorporation).

HHT: Linn sent an email to Vagnone on behalf of PANYC asking if HHT could use another archaeology intern. She has not yet received a reply, but has noticed that there are a couple of internships, including a Community Research Intern and a Curatorial Intern, advertised on the HHT's webpage at:

http://www.historichousetrust.org/page.php?p_id=26

Membership: Loorya will resend Ted Roberts's membership application to the Board to determine whether the Board would recommend the membership voting him in during the next meeting.

Met Chapter: Wall announced the following Met Chapter events:

Jim Moore will give a talk at Columbia on Jan. 28th at 6pm.

Chris Matthews will give a talk about Eastern Long Island on Feb. 12th (place TBA)

Richard Veit will give a talk in March (topic, date, and place TBA)

Newsletter: Ricciardi apologizes for not yet sending the newsletter. He has been ill with the flu.

Nominations: Loorya announced that members should be receiving nomination forms for 2014 PANYC officers and board members within the next 48 hours. They are due back in 2-3 weeks. Please fill it in and send it back. Membership participation in the nomination process is extremely important and greatly helps the nomination committee. This year you will also receive a list of current members to help think of people to nominate.

NYAC: Stone reported that the next NYAC Board Meeting is in February, so there has not been much news since the November PANYC meeting. This year NYAC's annual Archaeology Season poster will feature South Ferry. Next year Chrysalis is partnering on the poster, so there will be two years in a row that the poster will focus on archaeology in NYC.

Parks: Members discussed a piece of park-related business that had circulated via email among the Board. Parks had apparently asked to change Type II Action CEQR laws so that they would be exempt from having to go through the standard environmental review process. Among the proposed changes was eliminating environmental review on properties of less than 10,000 Square feet. Sutphin informed Geismar that Parks was not granted this exemption and that they would still have to go through LPC. Geismar went to a hearing about this to make a statement in defense of archaeology, but the hearing was very short, and she did not make it in time. She did, however, give a written copy of her statement to Amanda Burden, Chair of the NYC Planning Commission.

Spritzer suggested that PANYC partner with other organizations concerned about this possible exemption (e.g., environmental groups).

George stressed that we really need to find out if there are, in fact, new requirements and what the text of these new requirements is. Geismar volunteered to make inquiries.

The membership proposed creating a new committee to take on this issue. The following members volunteered: Geismar, George, Hulse, and Linn.

Public Program: Stone announced that the Program this year (the 34th!) will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2014 from 1-3pm at the Museum of the City of New York and will be dedicated to PANYC's first president, Ralph Solecki. The program title is: "New York City Archaeology Then and Now: Continuing Stories from the Underground."

The program will include a dedication to Solecki and will focus on sites that Solecki excavated and that have since been excavated again, showing how much information can be gained from repeated examination of archaeological sites and highlighting the changing context of archaeological sites and of archaeology in the city. Some of Solecki's family members will likely attend.

Website: Loorya reported that the website committee put together a few ideas and examples of websites that they liked for Donny (Britt's husband who will be redesigning the site), and they will meet with him soon. Loorya also worked out a new deal for no extra cost with Go Daddy for the PANYC website and email address that enables us to have enough space.

Stone reported that NYAC and NYSAA are developing a new single website for NY archaeology. There will be one portal for both organizations.

New Business: Linn still has copies of Solecki's recently published NYSAA volume about the archaeology of Maspeth. They are available for \$10-\$15 (she has to check the price). She will bring copies to the Public Program.

Wall, who is chair of the committee working on creating a volume of Solecki's work about NYC, explained the premise of this volume to members. She indicated that the goal was to make available Solecki's published articles about NYC archaeology that are currently not widely available. These publications include: articles published in the *Suffolk County Newsletter* and his book on forts. A bibliography of all Solecki's work will also be included along with a short biography, Geismar's recent interview with Solecki, and a photographic essay being put together by Loorya and Ricciardi.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM

Respectfully submitted by Meredith Linn, PANYC Secretary.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

2014 Scheduled Meeting Dates

May 20, 2014, Tuesday

Current Board Members (2013-2014):

President: Alyssa Loorya

Vice President: Linda Stone

Secretary: Meredith Linn

Treasurer: Shelly Spritzer

Board Members: Kelly Britt
Anne-Marie Cantwell
Joan Geismar
Jessica Striebel-Maclean
Lynn Rakos

Past President: Christopher Ricciardi

To Contact any Officer or Board Member please email: info@panyarchaeology.com

IV. Media Coverage

The logo for DNAinfo New York, featuring the text "DNAinfo New York" in white serif font on a dark red rectangular background.

Mystery Artifact Unearthed at City Hall Is 19th-Century Feminine Device



By [Irene Plagianos](#) on February 19, 2014 6:35am @[IrenePlagianos](#)

CITY HALL — An excavation at the city’s political center has unearthed a 3-inch artifact that initially baffled archaeologists — until they realized it was one of the earliest documented feminine hygiene products in New York.

“At first we thought it was maybe a spice-grinder or needle case,” said Alyssa Loorya, president of [Chrysalis Archaeology](#), the firm that oversaw the dig, part of a [Department of Design and Construction](#) rehabilitation project at City Hall. “We were stumped.”

The early incarnation of a douche — a hollow, cylinder with small holes at its top made from unidentified mammal bone — was found in a massive heap of buried garbage that dates back to between 1803 and 1815, Loorya said.

The centuries-old trash, in a pile found three feet underground and extending to a depth of about six feet was also filled with liquor bottles and various items associated with food waste, suggesting it may have all come from one celebratory event, Loorya said.

The team was long confounded by the late 2010 discovery on the north side of City Hall, until archaeologist Lisa Geiger made a fortuitous find.

“I was working as a docent at the [Mutter Museum](#) in Philadelphia, and came across a back archive of what they called vaginal syringes,” said Geiger, 28. “These were glass or brass, and from later in the 1800s, but all of a sudden, I made the connection.”

The discovery drove Geiger, an anthropology masters student at Hunter College, deep into research about the unusual topic of the early years of douching — a practice that has long since gone out of favor in the medical community.

After months of research, Geiger presented her findings at [Society for Historical Archaeology Conference](#) in January.

“Women used them for contraception, shooting solutions of astringents made from minerals or tree roots and barks into themselves before or after sex,” Geiger said. “They also used them as means to do what they thought was cleaning themselves.”

The modern version of the douche first started appearing in America and Europe in the early 1800s, part of what was a misguided way to treat women’s issues including menstrual cramps and venereal disease, Geiger said.

“Those solutions they were injecting with these vaginal syringes did affect their reproductive systems, but in a negative way, and that may possibly have helped decrease pregnancy,” Geiger added.

While the douche discovery is a first for the Chrysalis team, [they've found thousands of other artifacts in Lower Manhattan while overseeing numerous city projects](#), including, in August, [a trove of 18th-century liquor bottles](#).

"Other archaeologists were pretty interested in the findings," Geiger said of the find. "There isn't a huge amount of research on the topic, even though it was apparently [a] very common practice in the 19th century — people still don't know what they are when they find them in digs."

The team found also found a second douche, but it wasn't completely intact. The artifacts are currently in storage.

"In New York, it's been documented that women gave them as wedding presents to each other," Geiger added. "Several later versions were found in digs near brothels in New York [near the former Five Points neighborhood] more than 15 years ago — but whether you were a prostitute, or upper class, it seems women across economic and social lines were using them."

Newsletter Editor’s Note: This story was picked up in over two dozen different national and international media outlets including web based, print, television and radio. It was also featured on both the Howard Stern Show and the Weekend Update portion of Saturday Night Live

<http://www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/weekend-update-pt-2/2753026>

during the last week of February 2014 – what is probably a first for New York City Archaeology – to be included in “non-news” programs such as those.



The New York Times

[N.Y. / Region](#)

South Bronx Students May Have Found Site of Slave Burial Ground

By [LISA W. FODERARO](#) JAN. 25, 2014

In a snow-covered park in the Hunts Point section of the South Bronx, an enclosed cemetery in the park's center evokes a much different neighborhood from the one now jammed with auto-glass shops and wholesale produce markets. Headstones engraved with "Hunt" and "Leggett" hark back to the 18th and 19th centuries, when prominent New York families had mansions in the still-rural Bronx.

But a group of students and teachers from nearby Public School 48 may have discovered another piece of New York City history at [Joseph Rodman Drake Park](#), one long forgotten: an African slave burial ground. Poring over census data, maps, photographs and wills, the students identified an area outside the handsome wrought-iron fence surrounding the cemetery as the likely site of the final resting place for scores of slaves.

Last September, a team of scientists from the United States Department of Agriculture used ground-penetrating radar at the site and found "anthropogenic features," suggestive of skeletal remains, about six feet beneath the parkland. On Friday, students and staff from [P.S. 48](#) — which is also named for [Joseph Rodman Drake, a poet](#) who lived from 1795 to 1820 — were joined at a news conference by state elected officials and community leaders to call on the state [Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation](#) to officially recognize the burial ground.

The investigation by the local elementary school began with a single black-and-white photograph from 1910 showing an overgrown landscape with several markers resembling headstones. On the back it was labeled, "Slave burying ground, Hunts Point Road." It was brought to the attention of a teacher at P.S. 48, Justin Czarka, by Philip Panaritis, an official with the city's Education Department who oversees a federally financed grant program for the Bronx called [Teaching American History](#).

"That was the initial spark for the project," said Mr. Czarka, who teaches English as a second language and who led the research project with another teacher at the school, Grace Binuya. "Phil was going through archives from the Museum of the City of New York and came across that image, and he sent it to me and the principal. I had an 'aha' moment and thought this is a perfect opportunity for an authentic learning experience."

According to old maps, Hunts Point Road, which no longer exists, ran along what became Drake Park. The city's parks department took control of the land around the time the photograph was taken; the new park was dedicated in 1915.

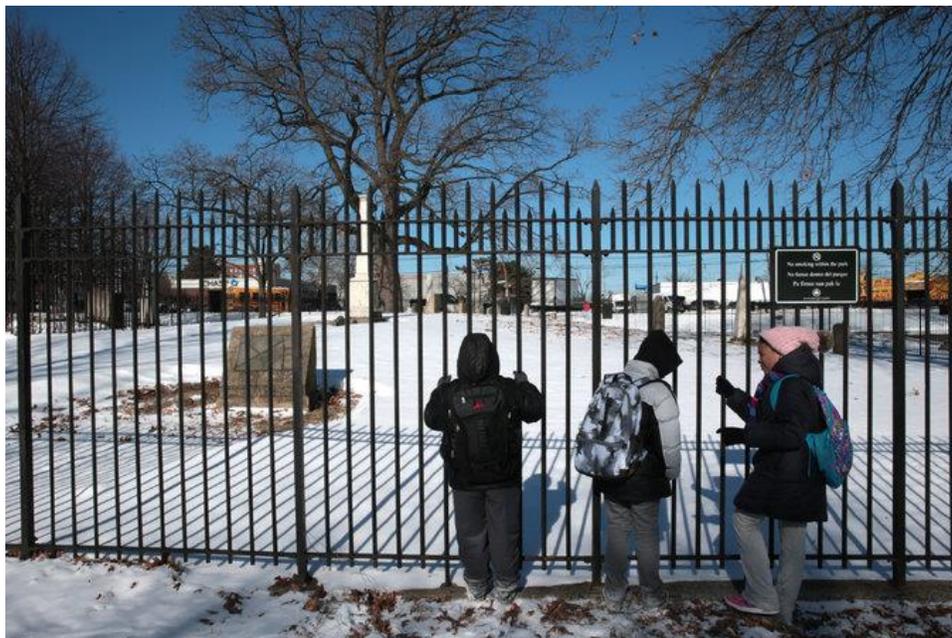
At the news conference, State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, a Democrat who represents the Bronx and Westchester County, urged that the state grant the burial site official recognition. “For over 100 years, the sacred African slave burial ground in Drake Park has been treated as anything but — with grass, asphalt and dirt covering the historic remnants of slaves in this area,” Mr. Klein said.

“The lives of the men, women and children who rest in peace here are part of the history of not only the Hunts Point community, but of New York at large,” he added.

Dan Keefe, a spokesman for the state’s Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, said the agency would consider the site for listing on the State Register of Historic Places. “We do believe it is potentially a very important site and will be happy to review the information collected by P.S. 48,” he said.

Larry Scott Blackmon, the parks department’s deputy commissioner for community outreach, said that without an archaeological dig, the evidence was inconclusive that a slave burial ground existed in the park itself. “The parks department does not dig up parkland unless there is a capital project scheduled,” he said.

But the department acknowledges that there was a burial ground in the “immediate area” and Mr. Blackmon said the agency would devise new signs for the park to reflect that history. “At the end of the day, we want to do right by the individuals who were buried there,” Mr. Blackmon said.



Fourth graders walk past Joseph Rodman Drake Park, where Public School 48 students found evidence of a slave burial ground. Suzanne DeChillo/The New York Times



The Rev. Kahli Mootoo on Friday called for state recognition for the site.
Suzanne DeChillo/The New York Times



An old photo was labeled “slave burying ground.”

V. UPCOMING EVENTS

Event	Location	Date	Contact
Brooklyn Abolitionists: In Pursuit of Freedom	Brooklyn Historical Society	Ongoing through 2018	http://brooklynhistory.org/exhibitions/currency.html
Photographs of New York City Landmarks	Brooklyn Historical Society	October 2013 through May 2014	http://brooklynhistory.org/exhibitions/currency.html
Current Research on Paleoindian Occupations in New York and the New England Maritimes	Croton Free Library, Croton, NY (NYSAA Lower Hudson Valley Chapter)	Sunday, March 16, 2014 1:30pm	
“The Disappearing Dutch in Brooklyn: Where Have All The Houses Gone?”	AIA – Long Island Chapter Lecture Series - Hofstra University	March 23, 2014 2pm	http://www.archaeological.org/events/13433
"Palaces for the People: the Guastavinos' contributions to some of America's greatest public spaces"	Museum of the City of New York	March 26, 2014	http://www.mcny.com
Society for American Archaeology – Annual Conference	Austin, Texas	April 23-27, 2014	http://saa.org/AbouttheSociety/AnnualMeeting/tabid/138/Default.aspx
Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology – Annual Conference	Long Branch, NJ	November 7-10, 2014	http://www.cneha.org/conference.html

NOTE: to view the web page please move your mouse over the highlights blue web address, hold down the “Ctrl” (i.e Control) key and click on your mouse at the same time. Your web browser will automatically open to the web page.

VI. MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP/NEWSLETTER/INFORMATION:

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:

Meredith Linn,
PANYC Secretary
Email: mbl2002@columbia.edu

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP (+ FOUR): _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please indicate preferred mailing address and check below as appropriate.

I wish to apply for membership to PANYC, which includes subscription to the Newsletter, and would like to receive the application form (\$20) ____

I wish to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter only (\$10) ____

I wish to make an additional donation to PANYC ____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in digital (e-format) ____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in printed (mailed) form ____

The PANYC Membership package can be found at: www.panycarchaeology.org

If you have any questions please email: info@panycarchaeology.org