



Professional Archaeologists of New York City Newsletter No. 85

March 1998

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NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: 18 MARCH 1998

Room 1127 Graduate Center, C.U.N.Y.

Executive Board: 6:10 P.M.

General Membership: 6:30 P.M.

Minutes of the PANYC General membership Meeting: 21 January 1998

President Harris called the meeting to order at 6:37 P.M.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Cantwell moved to accept the minutes of the last General Membership meeting with the following corrections: Under NOMINATIONS: Add elections after executive board at the end of the first and only sentence. Under PANYC/NYAC URBAN STANDARDS AND STONE STREET: Add "to date" to the last sentence of the first paragraph which should read, Stone Street committee members Geismar and Rothschild toured the excavation site and reported that to date the current excavations are limited to disturbed areas. Typos in the RESEARCH and PLANNING (ad "ed" to attend in third sentence) and WEBSITE (add A to PNYC in first sentence and apostrophe to members in the last sentence) sections were also corrected. Stone seconded the move to accept the minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Stone reported \$1,069.01 in the PANYC treasury. She also announced that dues were due by the next meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Harris announced that Arthur Bancroft of the New York City Landmarks Commission would make a slide presentation to the meeting to answer any and all questions pertaining to the Stone Street investigations. She also reported that PANYC's concerns regarding Stone Street had been made known through conversations with SHPO staffers and members of NYAC. The general concensus is that the best course of action is through regulation by amending National Register nominations of historic districts within the city and borough to include archaeological resources. Harris reported that Peter Schaffer of the SHPO's office encourages PANYC to amend the Stone Street nomination.

Geismar asked how we might go about expanding districts to include archaeological resources. Bancroft said it was a long and arduous process since districts and landmark buildings are grandfathered in and stay the way they were originally defined in the documents. Bancroft has talked to Landmarks about this process, but has received a minimalist reply. Landmarks claims that their obligation is only to serve as a watchdog. According to Bancroft, however, under the the Certified Local Government (CLG) program, there is a three year period to be in a certain amount of compliance and a five year period to be in complete compliance. Stone asked whether a CLG can act as its own SHPO. Harris said she would talk to other archaeologists in other cities and states about the program. Bancroft explained that New York has not taken advantage of being a CLG

yet. Harris wanted to know if being a CLG brought archaeological resources to the same level as above-ground resources.

Bancroft said that Jennifer Raab said last week that she would have nothing against adding archaeological resources to the Stone Street National Register designation. He thinks we should all push for it.

Other topics discussed by the president were the imminent solicitation of material for the PANYC website and the NYAC meeting on urban archaeology scheduled for January 24th in Albany.

ACTION COMMITTEE: Although the chair of the Action Committee was not present, it was announced that Eric Byron had expressed concern at the Metropolitan Chapter meeting of the NYSAA that more work was going to be done at Ellis Island which would involve the destruction of certain above-ground resources including autoclaves for beds, some of which he thought should be saved. Harris said that Steve Pendery of the National Park Service had suggested PANYC contact him about this issue. Geismar urged PANYC to be sure they knew what had or had not been documented before taking any action.

AWARDS: Ann-Marie Cantwell announced that it was again time to nominate appropriate people for the student and civilian annual awards.

EVENTS: Linda Stone announced an addition to the events calendar--an exhibit opening on Thursday February 12 organized by Ed Platt. The exhibit, to be mounted at Fort Totten, is entitled, "Archaeology, Preserving Cultural Heritage." She also announced that the Metropolitan Chapter of the NYSAA will hold a joint meeting with AIA on submerged archaeological resources.

MEMBERSHIP: Two applications for membership were considered and voted upon. Some discussion ensued concerning membership qualifications. Cantwell moved to accept Gregory Lattanzi and Michael Bonasera as new members. Bergoffen seconded.

METROPOLITAN CHAPTER OF THE NYSAA: Stone reported that Richard Schaeffer made a presentation on chamber pots to the last meeting. The next meeting will be held at February 2. Diane Dallal is the new president of the organization.

NEWSLETTER: Harris complimented Fitts on the *New York Times* article that was included in the newsletter about his work on a cistern in a Brooklyn backyard. Fitts requested that people send current research and newspaper articles for inclusion in the newsletter. The membership list that he would like to publish once a year is not complete, but it is a start.

NOMINATIONS: Harris, as acting secretary, sent out a call for nominations requesting they be returned by February 2nd. The ballot will go out February 24th and should be

returned by March 17th. The nominations committee noted that the schedule in the by-laws is not synchronized with PANYC's meeting schedule.

URBAN STANDARDS: Harris will represent PANYC this Saturday at NYAC's meeting on urban archaeology and standards. Yamin will give a talk on research design and analysis at the meeting (called "Big and Small: They Both Count"). Geismar and Stone will also try to attend.

PUBLIC PROGRAM: Eugene Boesch, assisted by Nan Rothschild, will develop a tour of the Bronx for the public program. All boroughs are now covered and a planning session was to be held after the PANYC meeting.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING: Rothschild and her students completed a preliminary summary of the research and planning symposium that was conducted in October and submitted it to Schuldenrein. The summary will be published in the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) newsletter. A more thorough summary is underway. Dallal suggested that the summary also be included in the PANYC newsletter.

WEBSITE: Riccardi summarized the general format of the web page which he and Griggs have developed. Griggs emphasized that the page should include a contact address for the public to use to report undertakings with archaeological impacts. Greg Johnson has been approached about using the Hunter College server for the web page, but has not yet responded. General ideas discussed for the web page included: current events in New York City, past highlights in New York City archaeology, a featured site that would change from time to time, material from the PANYC exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York. Harris expressed a need for a committee to decide what gets on the Web Page. She and Arnold Pickman will serve on the committee with Griggs and Riccardi.

LANDMARKS: The meeting concluded with Arthur Bancroft's slide presentation on the archaeological testing he conducted for the Landmarks Commission on Stone Street. Although he found no intact strata in the trenches examined along Stone Street, Diana Wall made the point that previous investigations have found intact deposits in similar situations.

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca Yamin for Lynn Rakos, PANYC Secretary 1997-8.

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Wendy Elizabeth Harris, President
545 West 111th Street, #6C
New York, New York 10025

February 4, 1998

Mr. Lee Fawkes
Executive Director
Bureau of Standards and Appeals
40 Rector Street
New York, New York 10006

Dear Mr. Fawkes:

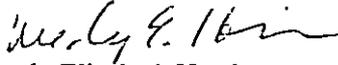
I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) regarding the environmental review for the proposed development of the Towers Nursing Home at 455 Central Park West between 105th and 106th Streets in Manhattan. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (CEQR No. 87-299M; BSA No. 744-89-BZ; December 1992) for the project has determined that the site is archaeologically sensitive. The same document stipulates that the developers of the site must conduct a phased archaeological testing program. This program is to be coordinated with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). However, as of February 2, 1998, extensive subsurface backhoe trenching was underway at the site and no plans or reports assessing the status of the site's archaeological remains had been received by the Landmarks Preservation Commission's staff.

As detailed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the area which is now being developed for the Towers Nursing Home was the site of military activities during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Ground surfaces within an open courtyard area depicted in the FEIS have never been subjected to construction activities and thus may contain artifactual materials associated with the Battle of Harlem Heights. Artifacts dating to this period have been discovered in Central Park, adjacent to the project area.

If archaeological remains survive, this site has the potential to yield important evidence of the city's role in the Revolutionary War. In recognition of this fact, the FEIS directed that archaeologists assess the site before construction begins. Such work would proceed in accordance with procedures laid out in the CEQR Technical Manual, issued by the City of New York. We urge you to investigate this oversight. If you have any

questions or require additional information, please contact me at (212) 865-1463. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Wendy Elizabeth Harris
President, PANYC

Cf:

The Honorable Jennifer Raab, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Ms. Ronda Wist, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Dr. Arthur Bankoff, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Mr. Robert Dobruskin, NYC Department of City Planning
Mr. Joseph Rose, NYC Department of City Planning
Ms. Joyce Johnson, Community Board 7
Ms. Penny Ryan, Community Board 7
Ms. Tamar Lynn, Community Board 7
Ms. Jan Levy, Community Board 7
The Honorable Philip Reed, City Council
The Honorable David Patterson, NYS Senate



February 5, 1998

Wendy Elizabeth Harris, President
Professional Archeologists of New York City
545 West 111th Street, #6C
New York, NY 10025

Re: 455 Central Park West

Dear Mrs. Harris,

Thank you for your letter dated February 4, 1998. We appreciate your concern about this important site.

On January 22, 1998, we retained Historical Perspectives, Inc. to perform the work set forth in Chapter IV A of the FEIS, which includes the submission of a report to the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Please be assured that no construction work has begun on the site. In early January our structural engineer dug two test pits on the most westerly portion of the property to determine the condition of the foundation. In addition, all garbage and weeds were removed. No other work has been performed in the courtyard which will be investigated by Historical Perspectives.

Sincerely,

Christopher Schlank

cc: The Honorable James Chin, Bureau of Standards and Appeals
The Honorable Jennifer Raab, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Dr. Arthur Bankoff, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Mr. Robert Dobruskin, NYC Department of City Planning
Mr. Joseph Rose, NYC Department of City Planning
Ms. Joyce Johnson, Community Board 7
Ms. Penny Ryan, Community Board 7
Ms. Tamar Lynn, Community Board 7
Ms. Jan Levy, Community Board 7
The Honorable Philip Reed, City Council
The Honorable David Patterson, NYS Senate
Christina Plattner, Allee King Rosen & Fleming, Inc.
Betsy Kearns, Historical Perspectives
Jay Segal, Greenberg Traurig

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES INC.



February 11, 1998

Wendy Elizabeth Harris, President,
Professional Archaeologists of New York City
545 West 111th Street #6C
New York, New York 10025

RE: The Towers, 455 Central Park West

Dear Wendy,

The PANYC letter of February 4, 1998 and the letter of reply by Christopher Schlank of Savanna Partners dated February 5, 1998 have come to our attention. Historical Perspectives, Inc. was retained by Savanna Partners on January 22, 1998 to undertake archaeological investigations on the Towers site. A scope of work is being prepared in accordance with procedures agreed upon in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) of 12/23/92 and will be submitted to and discussed with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) prior to any testing. The 1992 FEIS testing plan was stipulated by Grossman and Associates' *Archaeological Analysis* on this parcel.

On Tuesday, February 3, HPI personnel were initially on site for about one hour in order to assess site conditions and to verify the security set-up. Not being on the project team during any earlier development stages, we were unaware of any previous excavation activity. We did, however, note one machine cut (approximately 4' x 5') adjacent to an Annex foundation wall in the central courtyard. We have been subsequently informed that this testing was for foundation stability.

We understand PANYC's concern about this site and have been assured by Savanna Partners that the project will proceed according to the FEIS procedures discussed above and the LPC guidelines for professional excavations.

Sincerely,

Betsy Kearns
Cece Saunders

cc. Jay Segal, Greenberg Traurig
Christopher Schlank, Savanna Partners
Christina Plattner, Allee King, Rosen & Fleming
Dr. Arthur Bankoff, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Wendy Elizabeth Harris, President
545 West 111th Street, #6C
New York, New York 10025

March 2, 1998

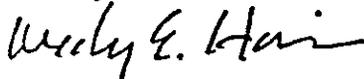
Mr. Christopher Schlank
Savanna Partners
80 Fifth Avenue, 18th Floor
New York, New York 10011

Dear Mr. Schlank:

I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) regarding the environmental review for the proposed development of the Towers Nursing Home at 455 Central Park West between 105th and 106th Streets in Manhattan. In correspondence dated February 4, 1998, we contacted Mr. Lee Fawkes, Executive Director of the City of New York's Bureau of Standards and Appeals, expressing PANYC's concerns that no archaeological assessment was being undertaken for this project. Within two days we received a letter from your office notifying us that on January 22, 1998 you had hired the consulting firm of Historical Perspectives, Inc. to undertake this review. You also explained that the trenching that occurred on the property had been undertaken by the structural engineer in order to evaluate a foundation wall. Subsequently we received a letter from Historical Perspectives, Inc. confirming that an archaeological review was being done in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and that the work would be coordinated with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

PANYC wishes to thank you for your consideration in this matter and for your prompt response. We are very interested in the history and archaeology of this portion of Manhattan and look forward to the results of this investigation.

Sincerely,



Wendy Elizabeth Harris
President, PANYC

Cf:

The Honorable James Chinn, Bureau of Standards and Appeals
The Honorable Jennifer Raab, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Ms. Ronda Wist, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Dr. Arthur Bankoff, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

Mr. Robert Dobruskin, NYC Department of City Planning
Mr. Joseph Rose, NYC Department of City Planning
Ms. Joyce Johnson, Community Board 7
Ms. Penny Ryan, Community Board 7
Ms. Tamar Lynn, Community Board 7
Ms. Jan Levy, Community Board 7
The Honorable Philip Reed, City Council
The Honorable David Patterson, NYS Senate
Betsy Kerns and Cece Saunders, Historical Perspectives, Inc.

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Wendy Elizabeth Harris, President
545 West 111th Street, #6C
New York, New York 10025

March 10, 1998

Mr. Peter A. Sneed
Senior Program Analyst
Portfolio Management Division
General Services Administration
26 Federal Plaza – Room 1609
New York, New York 10278

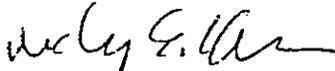
Dear Mr. Sneed:

I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) regarding the environmental review for the proposed disposition of Governor's Island. Last December, as part of the scoping process for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), our organization sent a letter to the General Services Administration providing comments and requesting that special consideration be given to addressing cultural resources in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. We specifically expressed our concerns regarding resources that are associated with Native American cultures. The letter also requested that our organization be furnished with copies of the DEIS (scheduled for publication in May 1998), including the cultural resources appendices.

Recently we became aware of the existence of a Programmatic Agreement (PA), signed by your agency and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Additionally, a brief article in the January 19, 1998 issue of *New York Magazine* mentioned the discovery of human remains dating to the eighteenth century and Native American artifacts on Governor's Island. In order to assist us in our review of the DEIS, we are now requesting that the copy of the DEIS to be provided to PANYC be accompanied by a copy of the PA as well as copies of Section 106 correspondence between your agency and the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at (212) 865-1463. PANYC greatly appreciates your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Wendy Elizabeth Harris
President, PANYC

c.f.: Don Klima, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Dr. Robert Kuhn, NYS Division of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

Dr. Christopher Lindner, New York Archaeological Council

Dr. Ellis E. McDowell-Loudan, New York Archaeological Council

Dr. Arthur Bankoff, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Fact Sheet Provided to Society for American Archaeology, Forum on Regional, State, and Professional Councils

PANYC was founded in 1980 and is composed of archaeologists who work on issues related to the archaeology of New York City. The membership includes approximately fifty archaeologists who are employed by universities and colleges, consulting firms, museums, and by city, state and federal governments. The primary mission of PANYC is to ensure the protection of the city's rapidly disappearing archaeological resources. To this end, PANYC advises government agencies on regulatory matters. PANYC also provides a forum for local archaeologists to discuss their professional concerns. In addition to five annual meetings, PANYC sponsors symposia dedicated to topics of interest to the profession and to students. PANYC is also dedicated to educating the general public in order to heighten their awareness of the city's archaeology. For eighteen years, PANYC has sponsored an afternoon public program at the Museum of the City of New York, consisting of presentations that deal with archaeological topics of interest to New Yorkers.

For further information contact:

Anne-Marie Cantwell
14 Stuyvesant Oval, #4C
New York, New York 10009
(212) 677-7209
acantwell@andromeda.rutgers.edu

or

Wendy Elizabeth Harris
545 West 111th Street, #6C
New York, New York 10025
(212) 865-1463
wendy.harris@nan05.usace.army.mil

REAL ESTATE

Rolling the Bones on Governors Island

WHEN MGM CASINO EXECUTIVES CAME TO scope out Governors Island last week, their City Hall tour guides undoubtedly skipped a few points of interest to potential buyers—

like the island's little-known historical burial ground. In 1994, workers laying high-voltage cables inadvertently sliced through the remains of two skeletons with a backhoe. Work was halted, and seven bodies dating from the eighteenth century were exhumed and reinterred nearby.

That might have been the end of that—if only the federal government, when it decided to vacate the island, hadn't commissioned a com-

plete archaeological survey, which yielded, along with more bones and Civil War artifacts, 3,000-year-old aboriginal ceramics, presumably from Native American settlements. Next week, archaeologists will return for further digs, in hopes of locating additional pieces.

All this could yet delay—or even halt—any large-scale redevelopment plans. “If there was approval given to install utilities here, developers would have to do a full-blown dig first,” says Lew Wunderlich, coordinator of the island survey. “Honestly, we aren't entirely sure what we're dealing with out there. After all, archaeology is a crap shoot.”

KATE COYNE



NYT 2/12/98
**Private Group Signs
Central Park Deal
To Be Its Manager**

By DOUGLAS MARTIN

Making formal New York City's gradual surrender of operational control of Central Park, a private group yesterday officially assumed much of the day-to-day management of the city's premier open space.

Under the deal, the Central Park Conservancy will take over control of the park's daily operations, with the city ultimately giving it up to \$4 million a year based on how much private money the group raises. The city, however, will continue to handle larger decisions about the park, deciding, for instance, when and where to hold concerts and how to deploy police officers there.

Marcia Reiss, policy director for the Parks Council, a Manhattan-based advocacy group, said she knew of no other city in the nation that has such a contract with a private group to run a major urban park.

The conservancy has already played a significant role in reversing the fortunes of the park, sprucing up what had by the 1980's become a badly tarnished jewel.

At a news conference on the roof of the Arsenal, the Parks Department's headquarters in Central Park, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani said the deal with the conservancy would safeguard Central Park "for many, many years to come."

But park advocates and community residents expressed nervousness

Continued on Page B5

Private Group Will Now Run Central Park For the City

Continued From Page A1

about whether their interests would be protected. Some expressed doubts about the conservancy's responsiveness to park users; some said they were worried about whether the growing reliance on private money for parks would hurt parks in poorer neighborhoods, and some suggested that the city might be moving to escape the demands of labor unions representing city park workers.

The Central Park Conservancy gets the bulk of its money from foundations, corporations and wealthy individuals, many of whom live near the park. Over the last decade, the conservancy has focused on restoring the park's architectural and landscape treasures, but recently it has increasingly concentrated on maintaining and managing the park.

"The conservancy is an efficient, money-raising capital machine," said Elizabeth Starkey, co-chairwoman of the parks committee of Community Board 7 on the West Side of Manhattan. "But sometimes, the public's voice falls on deaf ears."

While praising the conservancy's impact on helping to restore a park that was near collapse two decades ago, Ms. Starkey said she worried that the group has ignored the concerns of many city residents. In recent years, the conservancy has battled with local groups over issues ranging from directional signs to playground design.

"There's a lot of concern about making the park look beautiful," she said, "but not much about the needs of people who want to play softball or soccer on the Great Lawn."

But the agreement drew approval from the Citizens Budget Commission, a business-financed group that monitors city finances. "If this plan hadn't been created, there wouldn't be any additional money for the park," said Dean Meade, who keeps track of parks for the commission. "The conservancy has shown itself to be very adept at caring for the park, so it's hard to see a downside."

On a day-to-day basis, the agreement will change nothing immediately, city and conservancy officials said, as the changeover to conservancy control had been evolving over the last decade. These days, three-quarters of the parks workers are employed by the conservancy, and under the deal signed yesterday, the group will be running everything from the concessions to tree planting to educational programs. But the city still will handle some functions, like granting softball permits and managing use of police officers in the park.

Parks Commissioner Henry J. Stern promised that the agreement would result in significant long-term improvements. While declining to give details, he said Central Park would now be able to do things of "worldwide importance."

"They'll do things that have never been done in a public park anywhere," he said, citing the potential for an unending source of funds beyond the city parks budget.

The terms call for the city to contribute \$1 million to the conservancy this fiscal year if the group raises \$5 million, roughly the amount it has been raising annually. In the next fiscal year, the same terms apply, but the conservancy would get an additional 50 cents for each \$1 it



Andrea Mohin/The New York Times

Taking it easy by Turtle Pond yesterday in Central Park were, from left, David Gottlieb, Julia Zhou, Lauren Whalen and Naomi Chen. Under a new agreement, the city park will be run by the Central Park Conservancy.

raises beyond \$5 million, with a \$2 million cap in the city's subsidy.

The city's contribution could increase even more, hitting a ceiling of \$4 million in 2001, based on how much the group raises in private donations and concession revenue. The deal also marks the first time that a park will get to keep some of the concession revenue it generates, rather than returning it to the city's coffers.

In this fiscal year, Central Park's

The city will base what it spends on a park on what its management raises.

share of the city's parks budget is nearly \$3 million.

Advocates for the city's parks generally praised the agreement. Ms. Reiss of the Parks Council called the deal "great" for the conservancy, saying that the group had had a positive impact on the park's fortunes. As an advocate of a steadier stream of guaranteed financing for parks, she also applauded the city's making such a large commitment in advance to a park.

"Locking in a certain level of fund-

ing has never been done before," she said. "In the past, the experience has been that the more private groups raised, the more the city took away."

She said she worried that the large amount of money given Central Park could ultimately spell trouble for smaller parks in poorer neighborhoods that cannot get private financing. The Mayor's proposed budget includes a reduction of about 2.5 percent for park operations.

In fact, Mr. Giuliani said he would be "very enthusiastic" about extending the deal to other parks, including giving other park groups a proportion of increases in their concession sales. Mr. Stern, the Parks Commissioner, singled out Prospect Park, where the Prospect Park Alliance has played a major role in raising money for the park.

Henry Christensen 3d, chairman of the Prospect Park Alliance, said his board would welcome such an arrangement but on a considerably smaller scale. "We're dwarfed by Central Park," he said, noting that his group could never match the fund-raising ability of Central Park.

Of more immediate concern, Mr. Christensen said, was that Central Park's boosters would now be less in advocacy of general city financing for parks. "If Central Park is taken out of the political equation, I'm not sure it's good for other parks," he said. "What about the smaller parks and playgrounds?"

Beyond the money, the biggest

sticking point in negotiating the Central Park deal was the extent of private control of a public park. Ira M. Millstein, the conservancy chairman, emphasized that the city would retain decision-making control over major matters affecting the park. "They have a management contract, not a control contract," he said.

Reporters at the Mayor's news conference asked several questions about whether part of the motivation for the jurisdictional change was to replace the unionized city work force with nonunion conservancy workers. Of the nonmanagement workers in Central Park, about 150 already work for the conservancy, with 59 on the city payroll.

Mr. Millstein said he could not predict what might happen on the labor front. "This is New York," he said. "We'll see."

One person attending the signing ceremony was Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, who founded the conservancy in 1980, when the park was in such bad shape that there was talk of asking the Federal or state government to take it over. She and a few others very gradually built up their new organization from a local charity into a fund-raising powerhouse. Two years ago, she stepped down as conservancy president and as Central Park administrator.

"Day by day, year by year, we made progress," she said. "And something was created that goes beyond my own time and energy."

Insights—



Changing Career Paths and the Training of Professional Archaeologists: Observations from the Barnard College Forum

The Many Faces of CRM

Part I

Joseph Schuldenrein

Nowhere was the disjunction between academic and private/public sector archaeology more keenly apparent than in the latter's responses of high dissatisfaction with their academic preparation for their current careers, and the discrepancy between their career expectations and their actual careers...

M. Zeder in *The American Archaeologist: Results of the 1994 SAA Census*, *SAA Bulletin* 15(4)

Melinda Zeder's article in the *SAA Bulletin* underscores the often divergent trends in contemporary archaeological training and practice. A recent forum on this theme was organized for October 1997 by the Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) as a sounding board to sample the range of opinion from varied segments of the archaeological community on the issue of graduate education and professional employment. This is the first in a two-part article summarizing the results of the forum and polling contemporary thinking about the direction of archaeological training at the dawn of the new millennium.

The focus of the session was the disjuncture between expanding career niches in cultural resources management (CRM) and shrinking opportunities in more traditional academic tracks. The greater New York area was an appropriate locale for the forum, since it is a microcosm, perhaps even a harbinger, of national trends. New York is a major center for all sectors in archaeology: academic research (Old and New World); public education and museum venues; government compliance archaeology (federal, state, and especially municipal); and for private-sector opportunities (preservation and heritage management).

The forum took nearly a year to plan and involved the collective efforts of PANYC committee members representing each sector. Invitations were extended by post and electronic mail to institutions, organizations, and individuals in the metropolitan archaeological community. An overarching objective of the forum was to sample student sentiment and response to the changing employment picture at a time when formal graduate training has become more costly, time consuming, and demanding than at any time since the emergence of the traditional four-field curriculum. A measure of the compelling nature of the forum was that it was attended by 50 archaeologists, approximately half of whom were students.

The program was divided into two segments: a formal session with invited speakers and an open floor discussion affording participants the opportunity to question speakers and to air particular concerns. The balance of Part I of this article summarizes the issues articulated by the speakers in the formal presenta-

tion. Part II will address the themes that emerged from the open discussion. Not surprisingly, passionate and often unanticipated responses were registered from all quarters of the archaeological community, converging on several core themes that, irrespective of individual or collective attitudes, appear to be paramount in fashioning longer term discourse. These are currently being synthesized by PANYC's steering committee in a position statement to conclude Part II.

Formal Presentations

Speakers were selected from a cross-section of archaeological perspectives and work settings in the metropolitan New York area. Included were academic archaeologists (Nan Rothschild, Barnard College; Anne-Marie Cantwell, Rutgers University); a CRM-based academic (David Bernstein, SUNY-Stony Brook); a museum archaeologist (David H. Thomas, American Museum of Natural History); a government archaeologist (Louise Basa, New York Department of Environmental Conservation/retired); CRM consultants (Joel Klein, John Milner Associates; Joseph Schuldenrein, Geoarcheology Research Associates); and two advanced graduate students (Chad Gifford, Columbia University; Susan Dublin, City University of New York).

Academic Perspectives

Anne-Marie Cantwell's opening remarks set the tone for the forum emphasizing that since preservation concerns and the law are the main forces currently driving the archaeological profession, educators must ask themselves if traditional training is adequate to meet the needs of those students filling newly created jobs. What will the new generation of archaeologists need to know? Are we concerned that students not only be equipped to fill positions but that they remain true to the stewardship of the resources under their charge?

Rothschild underscored the significance of the information explosion as a double-edged sword; on the one hand, the expansion in archaeological knowledge opens up new vistas in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, while, on the other, tight university budgets are shifting the onus of teaching increasing amounts of material to fewer faculty. Given the need to train students for "real world" issues, the challenge to university professors grows progressively more daunting. Her solution to the "overload" in the academic system is to encourage students to pursue their own interests and to integrate these with formal principles in method and theory acquired in the classroom. She

Continued on page 32

noted that this track is being followed by most North American archaeologists who buttress their training with summer work in contract settings and/or more formal internship programs. She also identified the need for occasional formal instruction in CRM by practitioners.

David Bernstein offered insights into the fast-fading world of CRM programs housed under the university umbrella. Paradoxically, while no formal CRM courses are currently offered at his institution, most graduate students will end up in CRM irrespective of initial regional or methodological specialization. He bemoaned the fact that since most practitioners will probably begin their careers outside their chosen expertise, their initial work attitudes would be—wittingly or unwittingly—partially negative. It is therefore imperative that university departments be candid with entering students about career expectations and options. Bernstein sees a general decline in the future of university-based CRM programs with the exception of the western states. On the immediate horizon, the greatest opportunities for CRM growth are in the international arena. Training programs must stress the paramount role of writing—doing it rapidly and well—as the main tool for success in either CRM or academic spheres. Further, the demise of the university field school leaves students without the basic empirical and adaptive skills to work as archaeologists in challenging settings. Universities will not add “CRM specialists” to faculty, because of financial constraints, and he proposes that larger CRM firms network to fund training programs and faculty lines. “On-the-job” training appears to be the most immediate solution to bridging the gap between CRM employment and the conclusion of academic training.

The Museum in Transition

David Hurst Thomas pointed out that the dynamics of museum–archaeology interaction has undergone a full-scale metamorphosis over the past 20 years. He reviewed the history of the American Museum of Natural History, recalling that institution’s pre-modern vision of the Native American as “vanishing savage,” a perspective that once motivated contributions and museum-sponsored excavation across North America. Progressive paradigms of preservation and the ethic of multiculturalism have completely altered the model, while the emergence of CRM, the Section 106 process, and most instrumentally, NAGPRA, have completely overturned the museum’s mission. Generally, museums are no longer owners of the past; they are, at best, its stewards. Such institutions now find themselves on the defensive, struggling to control collections that have been warehoused for decades. With respect to employment, he noted that archaeological excavation has nearly disappeared as a centerpiece for museum activity, in part for the reasons cited above, but also because the institutions have been technologically outpaced by private industry that can run excavations more efficiently and with fewer constraints. Thomas praised the explosion in high quality data reporting—the “gray literature”—noting that its broad reach has facilitated a transition in the role of museum

archaeology divisions from data collectors to data synthesizers. Most significantly, the museum’s charge may serve a growing demand to educate the public in new ways.

The Government Window

Louise Basa reflected on the unique transition between academia to the workaday world of government archaeology. Her experiences span the past 25 years, a period when the regulatory environment was actively evolving. The pace of change has been dynamic, but the anthropological perspective on cross-cultural exchange facilitated communication between a “wet-behind-the-ears academic” and the government bureaucrats who had no idea how their duties would be transformed as a result of environmental and preservation laws of the late 1960s and 1970s. Basa argued for maintenance of the four-field approach tempered with a healthy influx of empirically relevant courses. This will ensure that contemporary practitioners can tackle delicate planning issues armed with a working familiarity of the compliance process as well as a grounding in well-formulated research designs.

Private Sector: The Buck Stops Here

Private-sector concerns were perhaps the most controversial, contrasting the urgency of business performance with the more deliberate pace and scope of university training. Joel Klein intimated that either an overhaul in curricula or a significant complement of CRM courses might help rectify the discrepancies between private-sector demand and more typical university syllabi. Realistically

“...the sophistication of the CRM profession is such that on-the-job training is no longer practicable for freshly minted Ph.D.s beginning their careers on a CRM track.”

he proposed a comprehensive and thorough course in CRM, which stressed the topic of ethics above and beyond other concerns. He expressed fears that the expanding reach of large engineering firms threatens to endanger cultural resources whose stewardship will become a sacrificial lamb to larger ticket items on the firm’s agenda; unsavvy (i.e., CRM-deficient) archaeologists could be unwitting victims of these trends. A CRM course must also disabuse students of the notion that there is always a research topic under every project umbrella. The conservation ethic stresses conservation; preservation in place is the objective of most projects and cannot be compromised in the interests of an archaeologist’s pet research topic.

Klein also highlighted the changing business climate in CRM, echoing Bernstein’s observation that international CRM may emerge as the main growth sector for the industry. Klein concluded with an examination of the emerging employment hierarchy in the CRM world, noting its advantages and pitfalls. There are three nested employment levels ranging from archaeological technician, to field director/principal investigator, and project manager. Archaeological technician is the most transient position, although recent unionization threatens to limit mobility and access to new graduate students. Ironically, the field director slot may be most palatable to younger Ph.D.s because it still affords direct research contact and publication and research op-

portunities. The highest rung, project manager, necessitates increasing distance from the research front, since the position entails more managerial and marketing responsibilities. The transition to "Archaeology as Big Business" is a lesson that must be imparted to graduate students even if they proceed to academic careers.

Joseph Schuldenrein's presentation placed the emergence of CRM archaeology in historic perspective. He demonstrated that demographics and economics accounted for the emergence of archaeology as a profession. The late 19th- and early 20th-century archaeological pioneers were rich, leisure-class white men (Carter, Flinders-Petrie, Wooley, Putnam, Mercer) and women (Kenyon, Caton-Thompson, Garrod) who pursued an antiquarian interest. Between the 1920s and 1960s emergence of the middle class and the postwar boom in the United States created an equilibrium in the university and government sector, wherein those few individuals disposed to archaeology could be accommodated by a wealthy and expanding economy. This period peaked in the 1960s and 1970s (Vietnam war era) as the early baby boomers pursued "sexy" topics in paleoanthropology, Mesoamerican studies, and origins of agriculture. Academic departments and funding agencies financed these ventures, prolifically at first, but by the late 1970s this brief surge came crashing down. Once well-funded programs dried up and the onset of the depressed financial cycle had serious ramifications on research and university training programs. The only subsequent boost to archaeological work was the tandem emergence of the environmental and preservation movements. However, the financial fortunes of university programs have remained in relatively steady decline, thus creating a crisis in traditional university employment. Courses, programs, and, most significantly, career choices are being offered by tenured faculty who were weaned, trained, and matured in the boom years; their trainees are students who are coming of age in an archaeological environment light years removed from that of their mentors. Schuldenrein argued that with CRM driving 85 percent of the domestic funds designated for archaeology, the industry must play a more active role in revising university curricula. Empirical skills—including high technology, sophisticated sampling, heritage preservation, and public education—should work their way into comprehensive archaeological programs. He emphasized that the sophistication of the CRM profession is such that on-the-job training is no longer practicable for freshly minted Ph.D.s beginning their careers on a CRM track. Recent informal surveys have shown that well-structured internship venues may be the most palatable solution for university and CRM programmers alike.

And What about the Kids?

The two graduate student presenters assessed their graduate training experiences with an eye toward future employment. Contrasting perspectives emerged from each. Susan Dublin proposed that much of the conflict between academic and CRM sectors may simply be a "habit of thinking"; the reality is that most students incorporate the methodological and theoretical stances of their mentors but acquire empirical skills in the CRM sphere. CRM is a necessary stepping-stone in the graduate school experience for both pragmatic (i.e., economic survival) and training reasons. Because of the need to work in the private or public sectors, the duration of post-B.A. through Ph.D. training has soared from eight to 14 years between 1964 to 1994. Dublin noted

that the adjunct teaching tract was notoriously exploitative, consuming inordinately high levels of energy and time for low pay. She credited private-sector archaeology for honing her own proposal-writing skills and singled out contract firms for instruction in high-tech and public information skills, benefits not readily available in the classroom. Dublin underscored the need for "fluidity" for young professionals who will be constantly shuttling between academic and CRM settings for much of their careers. She is supportive of dialogue between academia and the CRM world, suggesting that "hands on" archaeology begin as early as the undergraduate level. Internships and apprenticeships must be explored. While unqualified revamping of curricula is unwarranted, Dublin sees a need for practical knowledge (i.e., CRM skills, preservation law) to be imparted in the classroom.

Chad Gifford, a specialist in South American archaeology who has never been involved with CRM, offered his perspective. He has completed a traditional education, recognizing the uncertainties of an academic future. In support of the tenuous position of contemporary graduate students, Gifford cited examples of three freshly minted, relatively well-published New World colleagues, all of whom were doggedly holding out for academic positions and biding their time in non-CRM environments. Despite his recognition of the changing employment landscape, Gifford took issue with the forum's prevailing undercurrent that "graduate training in archaeology today is not as relevant as it should be." He contended that a less academic training would render him even less qualified to pursue his ideal job. To accommodate CRM concerns, Gifford proposes terminal M.A. programs. Should contemporary employment trends continue, he suggests a CRM component would eventually be forced into Ph.D. curricula. Given his purely academic credentials, Gifford wondered how qualified he would be for a CRM position, although he thought that with some training he could function in that context. Gifford remains a stalwart holdout for an academic track position.

What Next?

The divergence in student attitudes was surprising to some of the seasoned speakers, although the significance of the crisis in employment was recognized by all. The responses elicited by the presenters produced an array of opinions, limited consensus, and heated debate. Details of the ensuing discussion and recommendations for future action will be presented in Part II in the next *S-14 Bulletin*. ❏

Joseph Schuldenrein is president of Geoarchaeology Research Associates, a CRM firm based in New York. He is also a visiting scholar at New York University.



PANYC EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT - March 18 - May 31, 1998

EVENT	SPEAKER	TIME	DATE	LOCATION	PHONE #	FEE
Malta: Island in Time	Anthony Bonano	8:00PM	Wed. 3/25	National Arts Club	Archaeology Mag.	\$10
SAA annual meeting			3/25-29	Seattle	604-291-4182	
Reconstructing One of Egypt's Great Tombs	Elena Pischikova	8:00PM	Thurs 3/26	Bruce Museum	203-661-4654	\$5
Criminal Virtues: Women and Crime in Antebellum New York	panel	6:00PM	Thurs 3/26	Seaport Museum, AA Low Bldg, 171 John St.		
The Archaeology of Israel	Hershel Shanks	8:15PM	Sun. 3/29	92 nd St. Y		\$18
Taino: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture from the Caribbean	exhibit		thru 3/29	El Museo del Barrio	212-831-7272	\$4/2
Mid-Atlantic Archaeological Conference			4/2-5	Cape May, NJ		
Lott House Excavations	Chris Ricciardi	6:30PM	Tues 4/14	CUNY Grad Center Rm 1131		free
PANYC Public Program		1 - 3PM	4/19	Museum of the City of NY		free
Reconceptualizing Prehistory in Amazonia: A Dialogue	Neil Whitehead & Anna Roosevelt		4/27	NY Academy of Science	212-838-0230 x140	fee
The Development of Civilization in Ancient China: New Research	Anne Underhill	8PM	Thurs 4/30	Bruce Museum	203-661-4654	\$5
NYSAA Annual Meeting			5/1-3	Alexandria Bay, NY		
Small Treasures, Great Cities: The Ancient World of the Indus Valley	exhibit		Through 5/3	Asia Society	212-517-asia	admission
Excavations at Lagash: One of the Great Sumerian City States	Phyllis Saretta	8 PM	Thurs 5/21	Bruce Museum	203-661-4654	\$5
New York: Above & Beyond	bus trip series	10:30-4:30	5 Saturdays 5/16-6/20	American Museum of Natural History	212-769-5200	\$250 series/ \$65 each

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.

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

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Membership in PANYC is open to any professional archaeologist who subscribes to the purpose of the organization and who meets the following criteria:

- a. Applicants must have been awarded an advanced degree (M.A., M.S., M.Phil., Ph.D., D.Sc., or official A.B.D.) from an accredited institution in archaeology, anthropology, history, classical studies or other germane discipline with a specialization in archaeology.
- b. Applicants must have at least six weeks of professionally supervised archaeological field training and four weeks of supervised laboratory analysis and/or curation experience. Requirements for both field and laboratory experience will be considered to have been met by attendance at an archaeological field school which meets the guidelines set by the Society of Professional Archaeologists (SOPA).
- c. Applicants must demonstrate professional experience in one or more areas of archaeological activity, such as: field research and excavation, research on archaeological collections, archival research, administration of units within public or private agencies oriented toward archaeological research, conduct of cultural resource management studies for public agencies, or teaching with an emphasis on archaeological topics. Applicants meeting the education and training criteria and having other professional interests related to archaeology will be considered on a case by case basis.
- d. All prospective applicants must be approved by a majority of members present at a regularly scheduled meeting of the general membership.
- e. Applicants should submit a statement of purpose that includes their interest in New York City archaeology. Members of PANYC have a commitment to protect and preserve the city's archaeological resources and to support research and encourage publication of information recovered from those resources. Members will not engage in illegal or unethical conduct involving archaeological matters. In applying for membership it is expected that an individual is in agreement with these goals. PANYC is not an accrediting organization and is not to be used as such.

Application for membership shall be in writing and shall include a copy of the applicant's resume or *vita*.

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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 Robert Fitts 200 East End Ave Apt 2M New York NY 10128

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