

Professional Archaeologists of New York City

NEWSLETTER

Number 92

September 1999

PANYC

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NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: 29 SEPTEMBER 1999
New York Unearthed, 17 State Street (Note Location Change)
Executive Board: 6:00 P.M.
General Membership: 6:30 P.M.

Minutes of the PANYC General membership meeting: 19 May 1999

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

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Ricciardi announced that the National Park Service is hiring for the Liberty Island excavation.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Freeman stated that there is a balance of \$1860.31 in the PANYC treasury and requested payment of dues.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Dallal stated that Glumac was not allowed to speak at this meeting because work is still ongoing at City Hall Park. She was told she could not visit the site. A discussion about the Army Corps and Kennewick ensued. Cantwell spoke about improving relations with Landmarks, perhaps over lunch. Dallal stated that PANYC's letter writing has been a problem for Landmarks. That is why the letter of commendation to Raab was suggested, stated Dallal. Spritzer said the letter should be a thank you, not one of commendation. The writing of any letter regarding Raab's role in the new Seaport Museum investigation was questioned. Stone and Wall stated that more information is needed to determine if the letter should be written.

Dallal related that Gerstman wrote to Landmarks about the City Hall Park contract. Silberman stated that the letter was received, however, there was no response. Mike Elkin called Dallal and said Archaeology is interested in his story about archaeology in New York City. Elkin stated he would reinterview everyone quoted in the article and resolve problems in the text. Elkin assured Dallal he was not attempting to be destructive to New York archaeology.

Dallal said that Geismar had investigated the possibility of not-for-profit status for PANYC. The cost would be \$260. There is also a form to completed. President Dallal was contacted about the cistern at West 11th Street. The investigation of the cistern was discussed. Dallal called Kuhn regarding Stone Street and asked if ISTEA funds are presently being used for Stone Street. Harris recommended reforming the Stone Street committee and asking the question again. Dallal discussed the White Hall Ferry terminal project. Louis Berger and Associates are conducting the archaeology, which will include excavation units and trenches in Peter Minuit Park. The project will start next week. Pickman submitted the 1A for the South Street Seaport Museum. The revised Section 106 regulations were discussed by Dallal and Harris.

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND: The Friends of the African Burial Ground wrote a letter to Charles Rangel expressing their concern with disturbance of skeletal remains at Elk Street and City Hall Park. A discussion ensued about sending a letter from PANYC. Ricciardi stated that we should think carefully before the letter is written. Stone talked about her City Hall Park investigation.

EVENTS: Consult the newsletter for upcoming events.

MEMBERSHIP: Bonasera will mail applications for PANYC membership to the persons suggested by Freeman.

METROPOLITAN CHAPTER OF THE NYSAA: Harris and Pickman presented a paper at the annual meeting.

NEWSLETTER: Cantwell compliments Rakos for the fine job on the newsletter and the quality of the scanned photos.

NYAC: Harris stated that she is the Vice President. Stone is on the Board and is co-chair of the Standards committee. Stone related that she is co-chair with Louise Basa, and stated that Basa approves of the SEQR technical

manual. Stone has been studying manuals of other states. The issues of monitoring and standards was discussed by Harris and Stone. Harris asked the PANYC membership to consider joining NYAC. There is a \$20. fee for NYAC membership.

PUBLIC PROGRAM: Dallal announced that the excellent program had the highest attendance in years.

WEBSITE: Ricciardi stated that S.U.N.Y at Purchase could not host the website because we do not have not-for-profit status. Pickman and Dallal stated that PANYC should become a not-for-profit organization. Stone asked about paperwork. It's done once every five years, Ricciardi replied. Freeman asked about book sales. We would be able to conduct them. Wall and Pickman stated that we need to form non-profit status prior to finding a home for the website. Ricciardi said it would take four to five months to get the paperwork completed for non-profit status.

OLD BUSINESS: Cantwell noted that Ralph Solecki is moving to New Jersey when his house in Texas is sold.

NEW BUSINESS: There was a unanimous vote by the membership present to have a PANYC barbecue. Details of the PANYC barbecue are debated. After discussion, it was agreed by vote that up to \$150. from the PANYC treasury would be used for the barbecue. The barbecue committee members are Bonasera, Rakos and Freeman. The date was discussed.

Freeman stated that Peter Primavera has a new office at 1400 Broadway. Greenhouse Consultants is conducting a search for new employees. The site for the next PANYC meeting is discussed.

Stone moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Wall at 8:15 P.M.

ROBINSON SQUARE
313 HAMILTON STREET
ALBANY, N.Y. 12210

MARC S. GERSTMAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW

TELEPHONE:
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April 12, 1999

Mr. Mark Silberman
General Counsel
Landmarks Preservation Commission
100 Old Slip
New York, N.Y. 10005

COPY

Re: City Hall Park Project

Dear Mr. Silberman:

The Professional Archeologists of New York City, pursuant to the Freedom of Information of Law, requests the opportunity to inspect and copy records maintained by the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the following issues:

1. Selection of archeologist(s) for investigations being performed under contract or subcontract with the New York City agencies or the Commission;
2. Any lists of archeologists maintained by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in connection with the selection of archelogists for contracts with New York City agencies or subcontractors;
3. The contract or subcontracts for archeological investigation issued by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation in connection with City Hall Park project since 1997.

For purposes of this request, the term records includes, but is not limited to, documents, memoranda, correspondence, telephone logs, notes, agreements and any other written records.

Please call me to arrange for inspection of the documents when they are available.
Thank you for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

Marc S. Gerstman

cc. PANYC Executive Board

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Editor, City Section
The New York Times
229 W. 43 St.
New York, NY 10036

June 3, 1999

To the Editor:

It was with dismay that the Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) read Nina Siegal's article, "Through Bottles, Darkly, Glimpses of the Past" (City Section, The New York Times, May 30th, 1999). As an organization devoted to protecting New York's dwindling archaeological resources, PANYC feels that it was irresponsible of your newspaper to publish a piece which glorifies treasure hunting and appears to encourage the destruction of potential archaeological sites.

Archaeology makes a tremendous contribution to knowledge of the city's past. The stratified record of New York's history that is present at the few remaining undisturbed sites is a rare and precious resource. Professional archaeologists operate under a terrible burden, knowing that to excavate is to destroy. There is only one chance to do it right. This fact encourages background historical research, careful excavation procedures, meticulous recording, publication of site reports and (hopefully) donation of the artifacts to a museum.

Many of the objects Magee and Jordan recovered from the "well" on Perry Street will be sold in flea markets, taken home by individual collectors and any information that might have been learned about life in the West Village, lost forever. Magee and Jordan call themselves "historians," we think of them as thieves of New York's collective past.

In contrast, PANYC would like to call attention to New York City's "unofficial repository" of archaeological collections—the South Street Seaport Museum. More than two million artifacts from professionally-excavated archaeological sites are stored within the Seaport's 12-block historic district. These objects provide physical evidence of Manhattan's cultural history and, as such, serve as a priceless cumulative database for scholarly research and interpretive exhibits for the citizens of New York. The objects paint an accurate portrait of the past based upon the meticulous research of scholars rather than "information" gathered from the haphazard looting of sites.

There is a long tradition of excavations by students and community volunteers in Greenwich Village. Most recently, concerned preservationists reported the discovery of an old cistern in a backyard in the West Village (see "Old Garbage Seen as Precious" by David Kirby, The New York Times, March 28, 1999). If the property owner grants permission, Dr. Diana Wall of City College hopes to document the history of the site and investigate the cistern with students, community volunteers and members of the Metropolitan Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association. Any artifacts recovered would be processed by students at City College under the direction of Dr. Wall and after study would belong to the property owner. One can only imagine the outcome and the educational opportunities if the property owners on Perry Street had contacted PANYC or one of the local colleges or universities instead of Mr. Jordan and Mr. Magee.

Over the years, The New York Times has published numerous articles about privies, wells and cisterns excavated by professional archaeologists and volunteers on public and private lands (See, for example, "Digging Up History" by Barbara Whitaker, January 18, 1998). PANYC is hopeful that the Times will once again choose to write stories that encourage citizens to protect their shrinking archaeological resources rather than destroying them "for fun and profit."

Sincerely,



Diane Dallal
President, PANYC
c/o South Street Seaport Museum
17 State Street
NY 10004
212-748-8628

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Honorable Jennifer Raab
Commissioner
New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
100 Old Slip
New York, New York 10005

June 30, 1999

Dear Commissioner Raab,

The Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) is writing to express concern about the impact that proposed paving and/or walkways might have on the significant human remains recently uncovered in City Hall Park. The number of burials concentrated several yards from the eastern wall of City Hall, near the entrance to the Lexington Avenue subway line, strongly suggest that archaeologists have encountered the graveyard or cemetery associated with the City's first Almshouse.

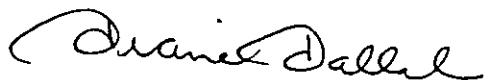
PANYC is concerned that proposed plans for paving over the burials and/or construction of a walkway over the human remains, many of which appear to be in shallow graves only 4-12" below ground surface, will expose them to negative forces such as ground percolation, freeze-thaw conditions, or crushing under the weight of the walkway.

While PANYC was heartened by Deputy Mayor Rudy Washington's comments in a recent New York Times article ("Ghosts from a Long-Ago Poorhouse in City Hall Park," June 11, 1999), that the boundaries of the cemetery would be defined by archaeologists and construction plans adjusted accordingly, PANYC hopes that the human remains will be treated with the respect they deserve and that the cemetery site will be demarcated and protected as a visible memorial to those long buried here.

PANYC also hopes that if burials need to be moved, time will be set aside for study by a physical anthropologist and the burials reinterred. A comparison of the human remains from the Alms House with those of the African Burial Ground would offer rare insights into the undocumented lives (and deaths) of the city's poor and make a tremendous contribution to the knowledge of the city's past.

While we know that relations between Landmarks and PANYC have sometimes been strained, we would like to cooperate in protecting historic and archaeological resources. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,



Diane Dallaal
President, PANYC
c/o South St. Seaport Museum
17 State Street
New York, NY 07055

cc: Rhonda Wist
Mayor Rudolph Giuliani
Deputy Mayor Rudy Washington
Robert Kuhn, SHPO ✓
Friends of City Hall Park
Amanda Sutphin, NYCLPC

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Diane Dallal
PANYC President
South Street Seaport Museum
17 State Street
New York, NY 10004

August 18, 1999

Honorable Rudy Washington
Deputy Mayor for Community
Development and Business
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Deputy Mayor Washington:

The Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) was pleased to learn that the City of New York has provided funding for the archaeological excavations which have been undertaken in conjunction with the ongoing construction in City Hall Park and for the scientific analysis of human remains removed from the ground during this project.

PANYC is deeply disturbed, however, that the funding for this project is apparently inadequate to provide for two of the most important parts of this or any other archaeological project: the analysis of the artifacts recovered during the excavations and the writing of a report presenting the results of the archaeological project. It is our understanding that the contractor presently has no plans to carry out either of these tasks. Not only is this professionally unacceptable, but it apparently violates the terms under which a permit was issued for the construction work. It is our understanding that the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Binding Report for City Hall Park, as amended 1/21/99 (CRB98-6355), requires that the archaeological consultant submit a final report for the Commission's approval that details the work performed and the results of the analysis.

We believe that it is in the interests of the City to provide the additional funding to complete this project in accordance with professional standards. The artifact analysis and final report will add to the public's understanding of what the New York Times (6/11/99) has described as "one of the most significant historic locations in the city." Without the completion of the project by the conduct of these tasks, there is questionable justification for the public funds which have already been spent on the City Hall Park archaeological excavations.

It is PANYC's hope that funds will be made available for these important tasks in the immediate future.

Sincerely,



Diane Dallal
PANYC President

c.f.: The Honorable Henry Stern, NYC Dept. Parks and Recreation
The Honorable Jennifer Raab, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Dr. Robert Kuhn, NYS Dept. Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Dr. Lucy Breyer, CLG Coordinator

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

Editor
Downtown Express
80 8th Ave.
Suite 200
NY, NY 10011

August 30, 1999

To the Editor:

Josh Rogers, author of "50 more bodies uncovered near City Hall" (Downtown Express, August 24), did a commendable job reporting upon the discoveries in City Hall Park. However, a few details need clarification:

To begin with, I am the President of PANYC, the Professional Archaeologists (not Architects) of New York City. On June 30th, I wrote to Commissioner Raab at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission expressing PANYC's concern that proposed plans for paving over the human remains in City Hall Park and/or construction of a walkway over the burials, (many of which appeared to be located in shallow graves only 4-12 inches below ground surface), would expose them to negative forces such as ground percolation, freeze-thaw conditions, or crushing under the weight of the walkway. My letter also expressed PANYC's hope that if burials discovered near the Lexington Avenue subway line (an area which might once have been the Almshouse Cemetery), should need to be moved, time would be set aside for study by a physical anthropologist and the burials reinterred. Commissioner Raab, however, never responded to my letter.

Soon after the letter was written, however, PANYC found it encouraging to learn that a conservator associated with the archaeological project had been instructed to take measures to protect the burials from the very same "negative forces" mentioned in PANYC's letter to Commissioner Raab. It is hoped that these measures will be sufficient to prevent the human remains from being crushed under the weight of tons of concrete should the proposed walkways not be redesigned to circumvent the burials. Perhaps, it would have been prudent to remove the remains, study them and inter them elsewhere.

Sincerely,


Diane Dallal
President, PANYC
c/o South St. Seaport Museum
17 State St.
NY, NY 10004
212-748-8628

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

June 29, 1999

To Whom it May Concern:

Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC), an organization of local archaeologists, wholeheartedly supports the activities and the very existence of *New York Unearthed*, the South Street Seaport Museum's archaeological component.

The functions of this unique archaeological museum and conservation center are multifaceted and invaluable: Not only does the facility reveal New York City's historical past to visiting school children—as many as 6,000 each year—and adults through its exhibits and programs, it is also the only combined repository and conservation center for the millions of artifacts recovered from local archaeological sites. Its mandate goes beyond merely housing these collections to making them available for scholarly research. In addition, the practice and applicability of archaeological investigation is vividly presented through its displays and programs.

While *New York Unearthed* preserves and safeguards recaptured treasures, it is itself a treasure to the archaeologists that rely on its services, to the scholars who tap its resources, and to the many visitors who are invariably fascinated by what they see and learn at the museum.

Sincerely,



Joan H. Geismar, Ph.D.
PANYC Vice President

40 East 83 Street
New York, New York 10028
212 734-6512

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 30, 1999

Through Bottles, Darkly, Glimpses of the Past

Two Men Dig for Artifacts for Fun and Profit

By NINA SIEGAL

DAPPLED sunlight fell on freshly overturned soil in a quiet backyard on Perry Street in Greenwich Village. Dan Magee, standing waist deep in a pit, jabbed his pickax into something that clinked.

"Here's one side of the well," he said, tapping the pick against large chunks of rock in the hole. Then he turned 180 degrees. "Here's the other, but see how it slants out," he said, leaning down to smooth dirt away from the wall with his hand.

"The guys who built this well didn't do a very good job," said Scott R. Jordan, standing at the edge of the pit.

Nevertheless, Mr. Magee, 33, and Mr. Jordan, 41, have a certain affection for the men who built this well some 150 years ago. "We see ourselves as their modern incarnation," Mr. Magee said. The two men spend hours duplicating the efforts of their 19th-century counterparts, shoveling tons of dirt out of the ground to make holes 3 to 18 feet deep.

But Mr. Magee and Mr. Jordan are not digging wells. When they get near the bottom, they take out mesh sieves and painstakingly sift each layer of dirt, or pick through the layer with their hands, looking for buried antique glass, pieces of pottery, a porcelain face of a 19th-century doll; any refuse ever thrown down the well.

"We get down to the bottom and find a perfume bottle from 1850," said Mr. Jordan, recounting one discovery. "And when we open it, we get the first whiff of what that lady's perfume smelled like at the time she wore it."

The two men, who are sometimes joined by other amateur diggers, began working together three years ago, when Mr. Magee asked Mr. Jordan to come to his hometown, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., for a dig. They jokingly refer to themselves as "night soil men," after the workers who emptied privies in the late 1800's. But there is one name they do not want to be called: archeologists.

"We're not archeologists, we're historians," Mr. Magee said. "We're historical diggers." They do not have degrees in archeology, and they say some archeologists resent them as intruders.

They dig only on private land, with the owners' permission, and are sometimes invited to visit construction spots. They find sites, usually south of 49th Street in Manhat-

tan, from historical maps at the public library. They try to locate privies or wells, where many artifacts are tossed.

Emerging from their holes at the end of a fruitful dig, the men are often laden with artifacts. After two days of sifting through 10 feet of earth on Perry Street, they have collected more than 100 intact hand-blown bottles from the mid-1840's through the 1860's; a horseshoe; an ointment pot; a mustard jar made in Liverpool; a French bean pot, circa 1830, and a salt-glazed pitcher with a blue hand-painted design, about 1850. The haul also included five or six hand-painted marbles from 1855 or so, and a collection of white clay pipes intermingled with many shards and chips of doll heads, pottery and a bone toothbrush.

A few days later, the men are giddy as they guide a reporter through their Perry Street findings at Mr. Jordan's home in Astoria, Queens. He took a flawlessly preserved forest-green 20-ounce bottle of Hyatt's Infallible Life Balsam of New York and held it up to the light. He pointed out the small iron-filled indentation, known as a pontil scar, in the base. The scar indicated that the bottle was blown before 1860. He said there were five broken Life Balsam bottles at the bottom of the well.

"The guy was obviously very sick if he was drinking that many bottles that size," Mr. Jordan said, adding that the Life Balsam was probably 40 percent alcohol. "The image in my mind is an old man in a bed saying to his grandkids, 'Get me more Hyatt's.'"

There were also two antique glass syringes in the well, and a clear rectangular bottle labeled "Distilled Dew." Some tiny hand-blown ink bottles indicate that the man was probably doing a lot of writing, Mr. Magee said.

In what is a typical arrangement, one-third of what they have discovered at Perry Street will be given to the owners of the property, Joyce and Seward Johnson, who is an heir to Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals. Mr. Jordan and Mr. Magee will then select a few pieces for their private collections from what is left.

Every Sunday, they take the rest of their findings to a flea market at Columbus Avenue and 77th Street. There, they set up a makeshift exhibition and fund-raising table, selling bottles, educating customers about their efforts to unearth the past and advising people on how to date glass.

"We're like 'The Antiques Road Show,'"

Article on Bottle-Diggers Glorified Theft of History

To the Editor:

Your article "Through Bottles, Darkly, Glimpses of the Past" (May 30) was interesting. But as an archeologist whose research concerns the historic period in New York City, I have several problems with it.

In my opinion, it encourages and even glorifies a practice that, rather than promoting history, steals it. I am not referring to the theft of objects because, obviously, the men involved have the permission of those whose land they excavate. But the objects they are so interested in provide significant and often intimate details about the lives of residents whose privies they empty, information that is often not recoverable by any other means. Removing those objects without recording their location in the soil, without noting what other artifacts were associated with them, insures that only a small fraction of their potential ability to provide knowledge is realized.

Some of the objects described would allow us to understand 19th-century medical care better; others

could inform us about consumer practices in buying foreign-made goods. And if all these objects dated to a single family's occupation of the house, and there was documentary evidence on its residents, what a full picture of that household's life could be defined! However, none of this is possible because of the way the artifacts were removed.

The practices you have described will encourage more people to look for bottles in privies, to rob sites of information "for fun and profit." If your readers want the fun of digging things, they should join archeological projects.

NAN A. ROTHSCHILD

East Side

The writer is a professor of archeology at Barnard College.

To the Editor:

It was with dismay that the Professional Archeologists of New York City read your article. In contrast we would like to call attention to New York's "unofficial repository" of archeological collections: the South Street Seaport Museum. More than two million artifacts from professionally excavated archeological sites are stored in the seaport's 12-block historic district. These objects provide physical evidence of Manhattan's cultural history and serve as a priceless cumulative database for scholarly research and interpretive exhibits for New York's citizens.

The objects paint an accurate portrait of the past based on meticulous research, not the haphazard looting of sites.

DIANE DALLAL

President, Professional
Archaeologists of New York City

— CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE —



Frances Roberts for The New York Times

Mr. Magee said.

Mr. Jordan started digging for antiques 29 years ago growing up on Governors Island, where he and other teen-agers discovered items dating to 1812 in the moat of Old Fort Jay. Mr. Magee, who also works as a handyman, started digging about 10 years ago in Poughkeepsie. Because his great-grandmother was one of the last people to live in Gracie Mansion before it became the mayor's residence, he has always been fascinated with history, he says.

Mr. Jordan, who is also an artist, makes collages out of the broken bits and shards he finds. His large, pizza-shaped plaster pieces cover every wall of his house not already taken with glass bottle displays. Some are organized thematically, such as one with doll arms and doll faces emerging from the plaster. But most are organized by site.

One piece contains artifacts dug up in Chinatown from the Civil War period, when the area was inhabited by Irish laborers. In it are clay pipes, marbles, and such a varied assortment of pottery that Mr. Jordan thinks the residents were so poor that they pieced together a set instead of buying one. Another, put together from a construction site at South Street Seaport, features shards of pottery from Holland, England and America from the 1650's to the 1790's. Each piece depicts a small part of the city's heritage.

Mr. Jordan has exhibited his artifact art at a gallery in Nantucket, Mass., and hopes to show it in the city soon. Both men would

Dan Magee, left, and Scott R. Jordan collected more than 100 intact hand-blown 19th-century bottles in two days of digging at this pit on Perry Street in Greenwich Village. One of their finds is shown below.



TIPS

Dating Tips

How do you estimate the age of a glass bottle? Scott R. Jordan and Dan Magee, amateur diggers, point to several clues.

The bottom of the bottle

CLUE A pontil scar, or a small round indentation with a sharp ring of glass on the bottom.

DATES 1600 to 1860

WHY During this period, a pontil rod, or metal stick, was used to hold a bottle from the bottom as it was cut free from the blow tube. The rod was then chipped off.

CLUE The pontil scar contains a rusty red or blackish deposit, from iron.

DATES 1845 to 1860

WHY Glass blowers developed an improved pontil, which left an iron residue on the glass.

CLUE No mark on the bottom.

DATES 1860 to 1910

WHY Glass blowers switched from pontil rods to metal tongs to hold the bottle.

Other bottle characteristics

CLUE An organic-looking bottle with bubbles or other imperfections, like an uneven base.

DATES 1600 to 1860

WHY Many bottles were free blown, made without molds, before 1860.

CLUE Horizontal lines on the glass.

DATES 1880's to 1890's.

WHY Bottle makers tried to keep a free-blown look by using a turn mold, even if they weren't making moldless bottles much anymore.

CLUE Uniform appearance. Seam from bottom of the bottle all the way to the lip.

DATES 1903 to present

WHY In 1903, the Owens Automatic Bottle Making Machine was invented and, slowly, hand-blown bottles became extinct.

like to display their collections at city museums and reach a wider audience than they can at the flea market.

"You can see how design patterns and quality of products changed," Mr. Jordan said. "In the 1830's and 40's, there was

incredible pottery and very few bottles, but in the 1850's and 60's, the types of bottles just rose up and were in their height of beauty, and pottery declined. It's like the society went through a change in standards, and it's neat to see."

DOWNTOWN EXPRESS

THE NEWSPAPER OF LOWER MANHATTAN

VOL. 12 • ISSUE 5 • JULY 20 - AUGUST 2, 1999

WHAT'S UP
DOWNTOWN?

The most complete guide
to leisure and pleasure

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CLASSIFIED PAGES
PAGES 25-29

A NEW LIFE

FOR BOSS TWEED'S NEGLECTED GEM



Tweed Courthouse, undergoing renovation

photo by Lorenzo Caglio

By JOSH ROGERS

It was known for over a year that Tweed Courthouse would get at least \$20 million for a renovation and city visitor center. But what

about restoring the stairs for the landmark building, a symbol of great public architecture as well as Boss Tweed's corrupt administration? So why wouldn't you do the stairs? Probably because it will mean blocking

one lane of Chambers St. — a main feeder into the Brooklyn Bridge.

"We plan to put the steps onto Chambers St.," said Melvin Glickman, senior vice

Continued on page 6

City plans to restore the steps

A new life for Boss Tweed's neglected gen

Continued from page 1

president of the Economic Development Corporation.

And with a simple sentence at a Community Board 1 committee meeting July 13, Glickman answered the long unanswered question about Tweed Courthouse, located at 52 Chambers St.

Scaffolding has been surrounding the building for most of the '90s. The building was vacated last year of all city employees except security guards watching a few bone fragments discovered nearby — perhaps part of the African Burial Ground. The fragments have recently been moved to Brooklyn College for storage.

The project, scheduled to be finished by 2001, will have exhibition space inside the courthouse, a visitors center called Gateway New York, a museum on city history, a restaurant, conference rooms and perhaps a room for the press. Glickman did not say whether it would be a second press office or if the current office, located on the first floor of City Hall and used mainly by reporters from daily newspapers, would be moved across the street.

E.D.C. has been meeting with the Landmarks Preservation Commission regularly about the building,

designated an interior and exterior landmark. Glickman said the agency will soon talk to the city Dept. of Transportation about widening the sidewalk in front of the old courthouse in order to extend the steps.

Glickman and the project's architect, Robert A. Petito Jr., said because people usually park illegally near the courthouse, eliminating the eastbound lane should not affect traffic.

"Even though it's not permitted for parking, people park there all day long," said Petito, whose firm, John G. Waite Assoc. is based in Albany.

Transportation did not return several calls for comment about the proposed changes.

Under the plan, the sidewalk will be widened by about 10 feet. From the diagrams, it looks like the wider sidewalk will extend to about 30 feet on either side of the building. Glickman said the areas where the sidewalk narrows back could serve as drop-off points for tour buses. E.D.C. showed the diagrams at a public community board meeting, but did not release them for publication.

The stairs were boarded up in 1940 to make Chambers St. wider. The narrowing of the street should fit in with the plan to make the end of Chambers safer to pedestrians. As part of the reconstruction of City Hall Park, a crosswalk will



Photo by Lorenzo Caputo

Aerial view of City Hall, foreground, and Tweed Courthouse, showing the skylight, designed by Leopold Eidlitz.

be added near the Municipal Building, and the turns onto the bridge will be changed to be more pedestrian-friendly.

Construction on the Victorian structure began in 1858 and was designed by John Kellum. Boss Tweed and his cronies are believed to have stolen about \$10 million from the building's construction money. Stones taken from the Tuckahoe Quarry have held up well over time, but Tweed also bought cheaper stones, which have had to be repaired over the years.

When the building opened as a courthouse in 1868, it was two separate wings, and one of the rotundas did not have a roof. Leopold Eidlitz designed the wing that connects the building and bears his name. He also designed the building's largest skylight, which is 35 feet long. The Eidlitz Wing was completed in 1878, the year Tweed died in prison.

Although the building has always been connected to Tweed's corruption, it has nevertheless been universally praised architecturally as one of the city's most impressive government structures.

Under the plan, the interior will be restored and the windows replaced. In recent years, in addition to housing some deputy mayor offices, it was also the setting for scenes in courtroom dramas such as the movie "The Verdict" and the TV show "Law & Order."

Glickman said the television show painted a wood trim

in the interior, which will be removed.

Paul Goldstein, district manager of C.B. 1, whose office is across the street from Tweed, was enthusiastic about the plan. "I think the proposal is great," said Goldstein, who works at 49 Chambers St. "It sounds very exciting to turn it into something for the public."

"I can tell you there are hundreds of times, I stopped for directions. This is a very popular tourist area. The restaurant idea is very nice. Hopefully, they'll get [fixing] our building next."

Councilmember Kathryn Freed, whose office is at 49 Chambers, said, "Lord knows we could use a decent restaurant," referring to the dearth of eateries near the eastern end of Chambers. "But it's probably going to be a cafe for tourists."

Glickman said he's hoping for an upscale restaurant, but later said "it may be a sandwich shop." His intent was to make enough revenue from the building to support all of the services offered.

Tweed had been under the jurisdiction of the Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services (formerly Dept. of General Services) until several months ago, when Economic Development took over. Janel Patterson, an E.D.C. spokesperson said her office is handling the project since it supervised the renovation of the other historic buildings in City Hall Park, namely City Hall.

Freed said, "I like the idea of putting the steps back. It does seem to me there's going to be traffic problems."

It is likely there will be only one eastbound lane, two westbound on Chambers. When asked if it might make sense to switch one lane in the afternoon to better accommodate rush hour traffic, Freed was skeptical whether it could work.

"They don't really do that in New York," said Freed. "Philadelphia does it with their main street every day. Things tend to shake up New Yorkers. It would probably confuse people."

Even though it's not permitted for parking, people park there all day long.

Washington, president of the Friends of the African Burial Ground, said Landmarks should never have moved them out of the courthouse without a public hearing.

"Whether they are black, pink, or purple, they need to be treated with respect," Harrington said of the remains. "Landmarks needs to follow guidelines, and part of following guidelines means they need to include the public."

Harrington said an earlier agreement not to study the remains should be reopened since DNA tests eventually enable people to see if their genetic ancestors were buried near City Hall.

Terri Rosen Deutsch, spokesperson for Landmarks, said there was nothing secretive about this process of removing the remains from Tweed, noting that Harrington was one of the members of a working committee, which discussed moving the remains. The Landmarks committee, which included many of the Burial Grounds political advocates such as state Senator David Patterson, did however, have open-door meetings.

CITY

Ghosts From a Long-Ago Poorhouse in City Hall Park

Researchers Uncover Bones of Residents

By DAN BARRY

The distant and sorrowful past of New York City continues to resurface in the soil of City Hall Park.

Construction workers and archeologists working on the renovation of the historic park discovered the remains of 11 people this week, including those of at least two children. City officials say they suspect that the dead were once residents of an almshouse that sat on the property for much of the 18th century.

"We have some babies with their others," Deputy Mayor Rudy Washington said with a touch of both wonder and sadness. "The almshouse was like a homeless shelter."

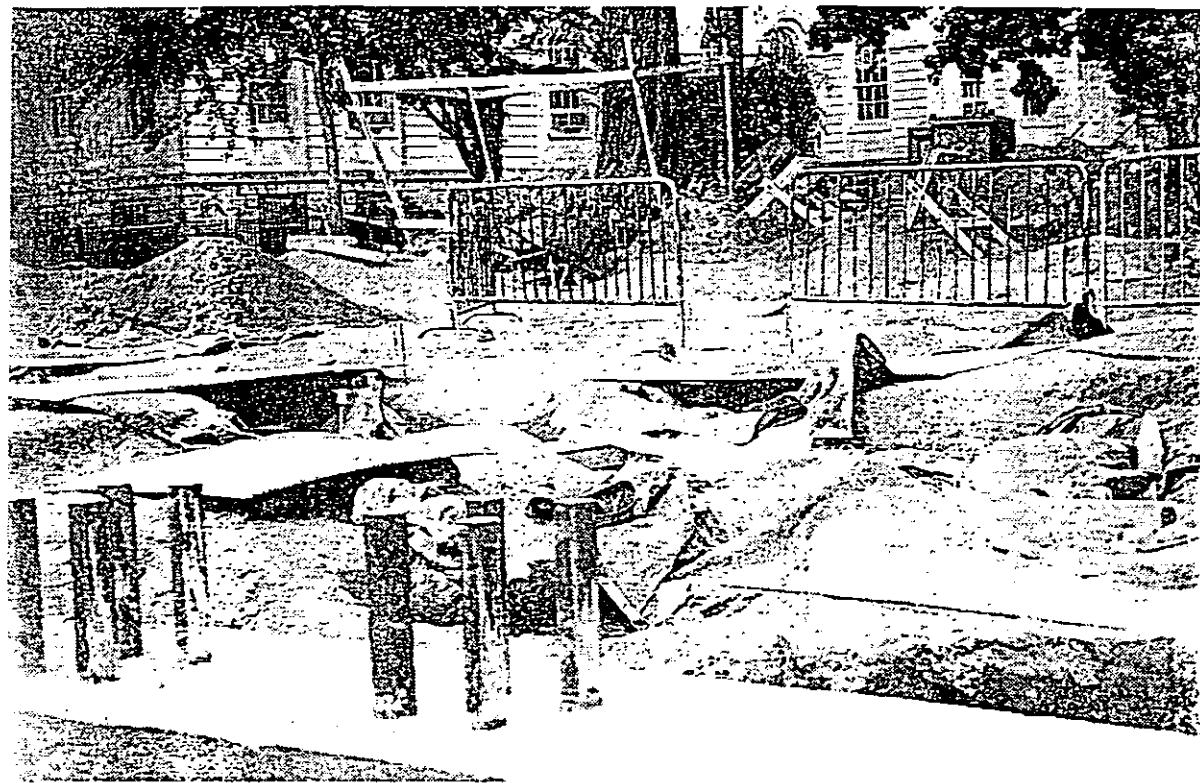
The discovery of human remains in the park's clay was the third this year by workers. In late February, two sets of skeletal remains were recovered at the northwestern corner of the park, near the intersection of Chambers Street and Broadway.

Several weeks ago, archeologists found the partial skeletons and bones of at least 20 people in the northeastern corner, near Chambers and Centre Streets.

These awkward encounters with a past have forced city officials at times to slightly alter their designs of the park's renovation so that remnants of the city's past, including primary burial sites, were not disturbed. But officials overseeing the project knew from the start that City Hall Park is one of the most significant historic locations in the city.

The park, a 10-acre triangle, often served as center stage for the human drama that unfolded as the lower portion of Manhattan island evolved from meadow-land to metropolis. Even before the completion of City Hall in 1812, the land was considered to be a grassy pulpit for those wishing to exercise their right of free speech. It was also the community's southern boundary, the place for military barracks, gallows — and poorhouses.

In the 1730's, the Common Council built the first almshouse — roughly where City Hall now sits — as living quarters for orphans and adults who fit the following description: "disorderly persons, parents of bastard children, beggars,



Billy Smith 2d/The New York Times

The remains of 11 people from the 18th century, including at least 2 children, were discovered this week by workers renovating City Hall Park. The discovery was the third this year of human remains at the park.

Remains from a possible 1700's homeless shelter.

servants running away or otherwise misbehaving themselves, trespassers, rogues and vagabonds."

The location also "made it possible to further isolate the diseased poor from the general population," the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission noted in a 1993 study. "The institutionalized poor also were more easily subject to control."

Within a few years, the numbers of the poor and infirm had grown so large that a second building was erected, as well as a fenced-in burial ground to the east. A portion of that burial ground, several yards from City Hall's eastern wall and only a few feet from the entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall subway stop on the Lexington Avenue line, is what workers think they came upon in the last few days.

"We didn't anticipate this," Mr. Washington said, explaining that city

officials thought the burial ground was either farther south, or that it had been churned up at the turn of the century with the construction of the subway station.

Even so, much has been anticipated. The park renovation, which is estimated to cost from \$22.5 million to \$28 million and is to be completed by November, includes plans for Victorian-era street lamps and bluestone paths through gardens. It also includes procedures for archeologists to work a few steps ahead of construction workers so that the design can be altered if necessary.

For example, when the two bodies were discovered in the northwestern corner, the plans for a perimeter fence were changed so that the remains would not be disturbed. Archeologists are still dusting off and cataloguing the bones found in the northeastern corner. They suspect that these remains were dug up and dumped elsewhere when the Tweed Courthouse was completed in 1878.

With this week's discovery, Mr. Washington said, he has instructed archeologists to spend a few days exploring the eastern side of the park further so that the boundaries of the

burial site can be defined and the construction plans adjusted accordingly. "We don't want to rush redesign only to find we've come upon some more," he said.

That might be a logical approach, said Kenneth T. Jackson, a historian and editor of "The Encyclopedia of New York City" (Yale University Press, 1995). "If you dig around lower Manhattan, you're going to find bodies," he said. "So much of the city was a burial ground" that has been ripped apart or built upon over the centuries.

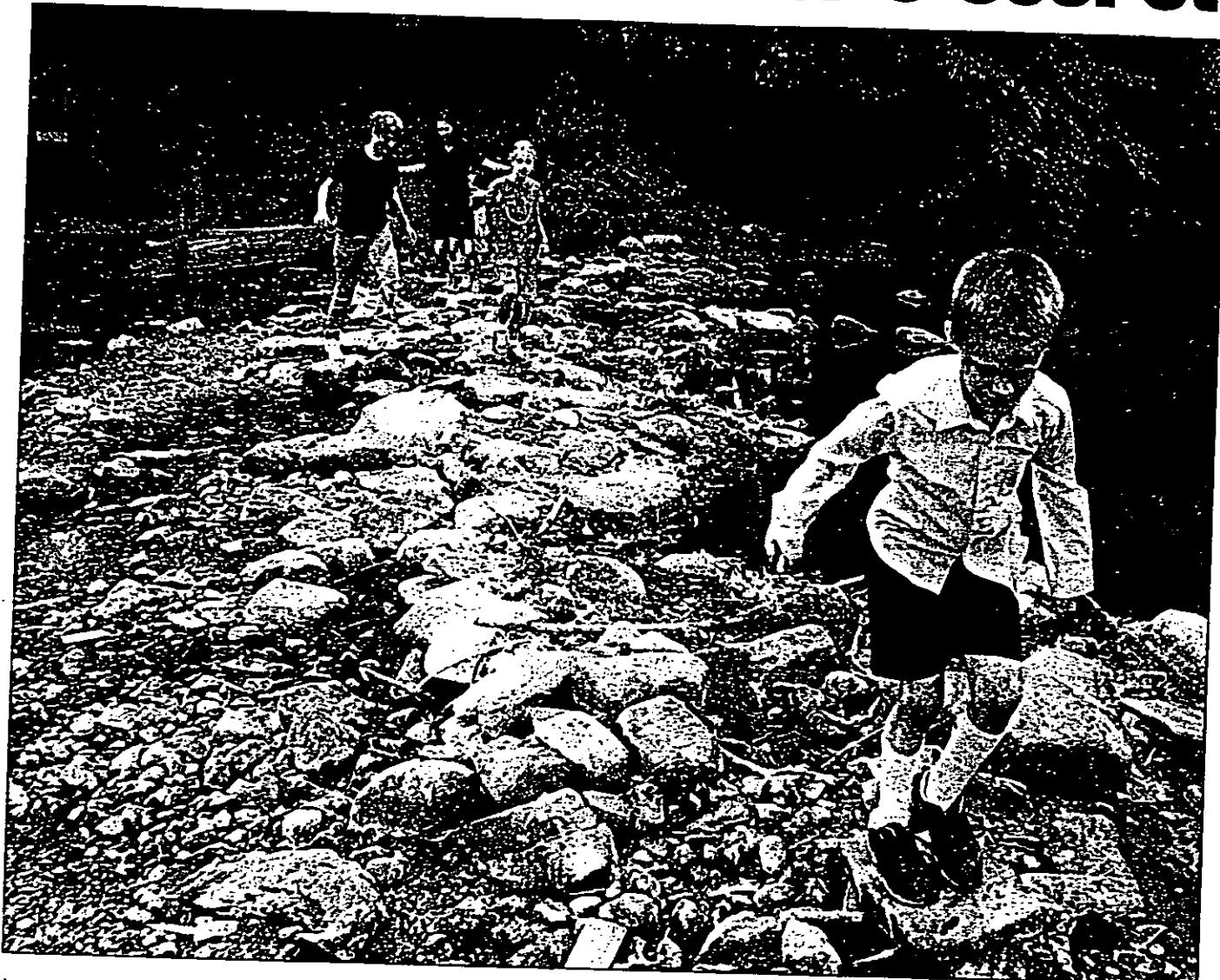
Even more poignant is the memory of the remains of almshouse denizens, he said. "These people are totally forgotten."

But Mr. Washington and others say that they have no plans to disturb primary burial sites in the name of park restoration, and will continue to treat such discoveries with care.

To that end, they have taken steps to preserve the dignity of the dead. Green plastic sheets have been draped over the park's fence to shield the scene from people passing by.

The Record 8/13/99

Drought bares river's secret



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Jonathan Ryan of Prospect Park, 8, leading his sisters, Jessica, 14, Julianne, 12, Elizabeth, 10, and Victoria, 6, across

the Passaic River between Paterson and Fair Lawn on a fish trap built long ago by Leni-Lenape Indians.

Ancient Indian fish trap becomes visible

By RICHARD COWEN

Staff Writer

The drought has revealed what time had nearly forgotten on the Passaic River: an ancient sandstone fish trap believed to have been built by Native Americans long before the first Dutch settlers arrived — and maybe even before the birth of Christ.

However old it is, the 260-foot trap that stretches across the Passaic River between Paterson and Fair Lawn is an engineering marvel. Although many nearby residents have heard about the stone dam, known as a weir, beneath the surface of the murky Passaic, it is visible only during extremely dry spells — such as the summer of '99.

"We can only study the fishweir when Mother Nature says it's OK," said Tony De-Condo, a teacher at Nellie K. Parker School in Hackensack. He has spent years studying it. "And right now it's incredible. The water level is just right."

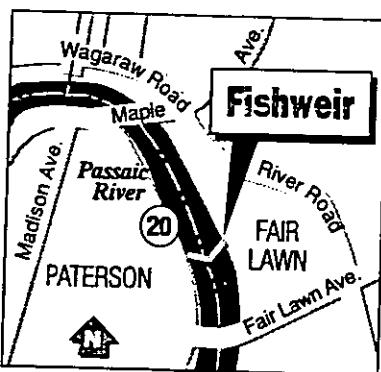
The weir is on a stretch of the Passaic between the Fair Lawn Avenue and Maple Avenue bridges. The best vantage point is from the Paterson side of the river on Route 20 north, about two-tenths

of a mile north of the Fair Lawn Avenue Bridge.

Shaped like the letter "V," the weir worked like a dam. Only the purpose was not to harness power, but to harvest fish.

At the apex of the "V" was a channel about 4 feet wide. Damming the current and then pushing the fish into the narrow channel. At the back of the channel was either a net or someone waiting to scoop the fish.

See TRAP Page A-17



RICH RAINY/STAFF ARTIST

TRAP: River history lesson

From Page A-1

out of the water with a basket.

The weir was almost certainly built by the Leni-Lenape Indians, the tribe that inhabited the region before the first Dutch settlers arrived in the latter part of the 17th century. Fair Lawn was known as Sloterdam until 1791 — the name loosely means "shut dam" — which suggests that the Dutch settlers saw something remarkable in the water when they arrived. The earliest written reference to Sloterdam dates from 1708.

Times have changed along the river since the era of the Leni-Lenape, when the Passaic was filled with striped bass, eels, alewife, and shad. Now, when DeCondo takes his students down to the river to clean the banks, there are so many tires lying in the mud that they have dubbed the place "The Goodyear Graveyard."

The motorists who whiz by on Route 20 each day probably don't know what lies beyond the brush that hangs over the guardrail. But Steven Ryan has lived all his life in Prospect Park and had heard about the weir.

On Wednesday, he went combing the muddy banks of the river with his five children. Having found the weir protruding from three feet of water — the river normally is about a foot higher —

they stood and stared out at their discovery, wondering how it got there, how old it was.

"I've grown up by the river all my life, and my mother had told me about it," Ryan said. "It's really pretty amazing."

It was almost too amazing to believe that something could survive this long. The Leni-Lenape are long gone from the area, having been forcibly removed to a reservation in Oklahoma beginning in 1836.

They were eventually replaced by dye houses that dumped so much pollution that it changed the color of the river. Ryan recalls his grandfather telling him about swimming in the Passaic River and coming out with a yellow tint on his skin.

"Each culture had a different idea about how to use the land, and I guess they just couldn't co-exist," said Ryan's daughter, Jessica, 14.

"If you look beneath the banks of the river, you would probably find our [old] canoes buried there," said George Deck, a Leni-Lenape descendant who was visiting the Leni-Lenape Museum in Allentown, Pa., on Thursday. "We are a river people."

Deck said that Leni-Lenape tribes had lodges for winter, summer, and fall, and would sink their canoes with rocks and bury them

in the mud. They would dig them up when they returned. Deck said the name Leni-Lenape means "First People."

Deck said that although the weir was an efficient way to capture a lot of fish at one time, none were ever wasted. "Native people take only what they need," he said.

DeCondo has been studying the the weir since 1993. He recently teamed up with an archaeologist, Allen Lutins, a former Fair Lawn resident now living in Johnson City, N.Y. Their findings will appear in an article in the journal of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.

Lutins said it is impossible to determine when the stone weir was built. But another kind of weir, a fence-like structure made of brush and straw and found under Boylston Street in Boston, dates to between 1,000 and 4,000 years before the birth of Christ. Lutins said.

Lutins said a 1913 survey shows there were 13 weirs along the Passaic River, which suggests that there once were a lot of fish running upstream.

Remnants of one exist near the Dundee Dam in Garfield. But the Fair Lawn-Paterson weir is in much better shape, he said. The reason is that the river is too shallow even for boat traffic at the

point, generally running on about 4 feet deep.

Lutins said the real value of the Fair Lawn-Paterson weir has less to do with archaeology and more to do with culture. He said it is the best example of Native American construction in the Northeast.

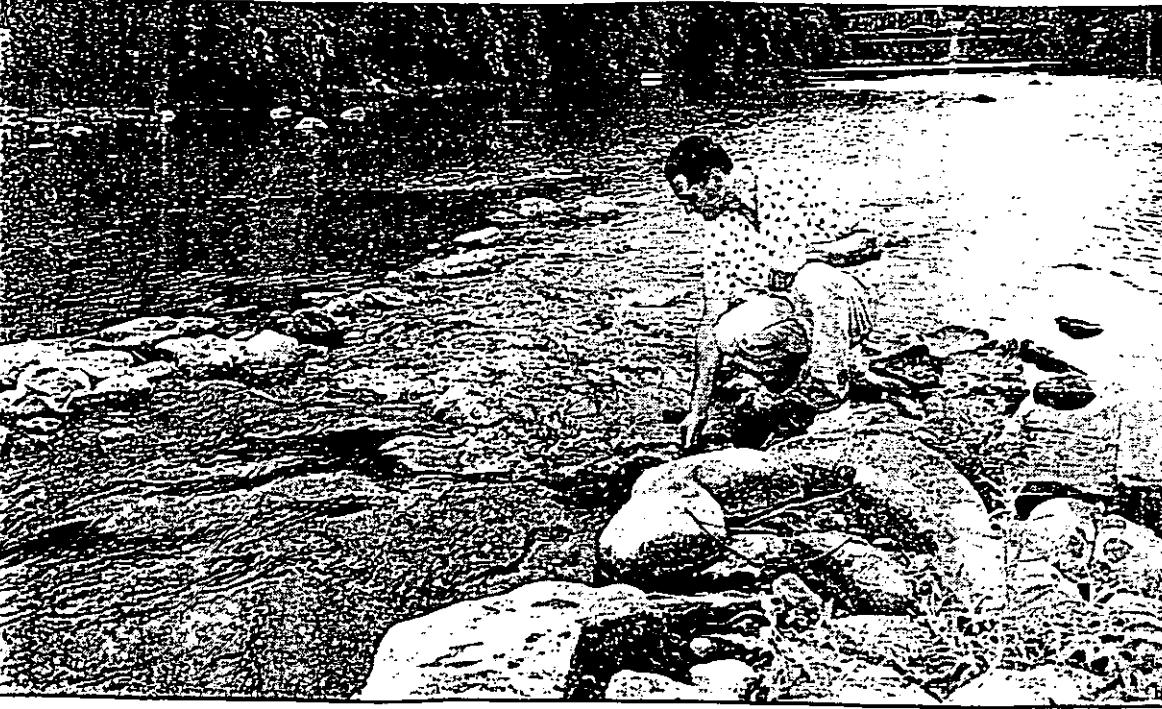
"In the Midwest you have buri-

mounds, and out West you ha-
the pueblos," Lutins said. "But t-
the remnants in the Northea-
have been wiped out. This is t-
best example of stone fishwe-
that I've seen."

DeCondo said he has tried to get the site on the National Register of Historic Places, but it was rejected because the age of the

weir could not be proven. DeCondo has his own way to honor the river. He likes to go down to the weir around 4:30 in the morning, just before the cars begin zooming by on Route 20 and the noise of the day takes over.

"At that time of the morning it's just you and the river," he said.



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Steven Ryan of Prospect Park looking at the channel where fish concentrate to go through the weir. The drought has made the ancient fish trap accessible to scholars and anyone interested in the Passaic River.

Inches Underground, Secrets of Northern Slave Life .

By JOHN NOBLE WILFORD

SHELTER ISLAND, N.Y., July 22 — Alice Fiske, grande dame of Sylvester Manor on this coastal island, emerged from the stately Georgian house, steadyng herself with a walking stick, to inspect the defacement of her handsome front lawn. She couldn't have been more pleased about the big hole there, the mark of archeologists at work.

"You know, we have so much history here," Mrs. Fiske said, nodding toward the dig, then the house and the water beyond, where ships of commerce once tied up and a society of cultural diversity took some of its first steps in the New World.

Archeologists are not only digging into the past of her late husband's family, going back to the middle of the 17th century, but are also discovering material remains of an aspect of American colonial history little known and rarely investigated: the existence of Northern plantations worked by African slaves.

"People generally assume all the plantations with slaves were in the South," said Dr. Stephen Mrozowski, an archeologist at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and co-leader of the excavation. "No one has really looked at the archeology of a Northern plantation in a systematic way."

As the second summer of excavations drew to a close, Dr. Mrozowski said the new findings, combined with study of old wills, deeds and other documents, were beginning to reveal patterns of life and work on the Sylvester plantation, which at one time compassed virtually all of Shelter Island.

Starting around 1650, this was a major enterprise with a long economic reach. Unlike Southern plantations, which concentrated on large cash crops like tobacco and cotton, it was one of several "provisioning plantations" founded at the time in the North. Its main function was to supply food and timber for the Sylvester family's sugar plantation on Barbados in the West Indies. Ships regularly sailed to Barbados bearing dried meat, grain, barrel staves and lumber and returned with molasses for making rum.

"We're seeing the beginning of the modern world," Dr. Mrozowski observed. "These people were already linking of commerce on a global scale, labor from Africa, a plantation one place supporting another far away and the products being traded on two continents. And you see all these cultures coming together, English, Dutch, Native American and African."

At both plantations, much of the labor fell to African slaves. According to inventories in the 1680's, more than 20 slaves worked at Sylvester Manor, more than 200 on Barbados. The slaves are listed on lines just above the inventory for livestock.

Only a generation or so after the settlement of Jamestown in Virginia, in 1607, and the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, Mass., in 1620, plantation culture had spread to a few places on the Northeast coast, where Africans were brought in as slave workers. By the early 1800's, every state above Maryland had abolished slavery. Excavations on Shelter Island, the archeologist said, could reveal whether there were differences in the lives of Africans on Northern plantations compared with those in the South, perhaps reflecting differences between a provisioning plantation and those based on large crops requiring intensive field work.

Dr. Mark P. Leone, an anthropologist at the University of Maryland at College Park, said the excavations should turn up "interesting and important results" about the role of

Africans in early American culture, particularly in the North.

Until about two decades ago, African-Americans were a neglected element in archaeology. Excavations at plantations usually focused on the architecture of the big houses of the white masters and were confined to the South. As an example of the changing emphasis, Dr. Leone has been investigating the slave quarters of historic houses in Annapolis, Md., to learn how the slaves maintained their African identity.

The excavations at Sylvester Manor are directed by Dr. Mrozowski and Dr. Marley Brown, director of archaeology at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. The two had worked together on a dig at Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in what is now the United States. A third partner is the Shelter Island Historical Society.

Stepping down into the excavation on the front lawn, Dr. Mrozowski said, "The beauty of archaeology here is, we only have to go down inches to get to the 17th century."

Here the archeologists were looking for traces of the original plantation house, built in 1651; the present manor house dates to 1735. They found some Dutch-made yellow

bricks and red roof tiles that belonged to the old house.

"We know the present house was always painted yellow, probably because the original one was built of yellow brick," Mrs. Fiske said.

So far, the foundations of the original house have eluded archeologists, perhaps because it stood on the site of the present house. But they think they may be able to learn even more about plantation life from the artifacts coming out of the lawn and other dig sites. Where he stood, Dr. Mrozowski said, he and his graduate students uncovered a deposit of 17th century trash. This must have been outside the kitchen, most likely a free-standing structure in those days and a place occupied by the slaves.

Indeed, excavation also exposed the wood stains from decayed posts, coral-based mortar and other traces of a building. Dr. Mrozowski said he was not sure, but the arrangement of the post holes and trenches reminded him of construction patterns of some slave houses made of clay or mud mixed with branches or straw — wattle and daub — on South Carolina plantations. These the slaves had built themselves along the lines of dwellings where they or their ancestors had come from in West Africa.

Among animal bones, remains of plantation meals, archeologists here found broken pottery they considered even more distinctive evidence of an African presence. The pieces, gray to brown and unglazed, were from earthenware cooking pots in a style known to archeologists as colono ware. For a long time, such artifacts were thought to be Indian pottery. Now, archeologists have noted similarities to pottery in Nigeria and Ghana and agree that Africans, not Indians, were its primary if not exclusive makers in the New World.

Some Indian artifacts, primarily wampum shells, have been uncovered on a peninsula near the manor house, but it is not yet clear what role Indians had in plantation life. The shells could be from a pre-plantation encampment. But Indians lived on the island after the Europeans' arrival. The island's first census, in 1771, counted "140 persons white, 27 slaves, 5 free negroes, 23 Indians."

Nathaniel Sylvester, founder of the plantation, emigrated from England, probably by way of Holland, and, with some partners, acquired the land from the Montauk Indians. (Mrs. Fiske's husband, Andrew Fiske, was a descendant of the Sylvesters.)

From the evidence in the trash

deposit — or midden, in archeological parlance — the Sylvesters were a cosmopolitan family and their plantation prospered from the start. "It's the most upscale midden I've ever excavated," Dr. Mrozowski said.

Two student archeologists, Ann Hancock and Lee Priddy, arranged a sampling of their artifact haul on a table inside the manor house. There were English, French and Irish coins; fine German ceramics along with humbler colono ware; silver buckles and a stick pin, and pieces of Dutch clay pipes and a copper pipe tamper.

Behind the manor house, on a lawn sloping to Gardiner's Creek, the archeologists have uncovered traces of 17th-century outbuildings that appear to run down to the water. They suspect that these were places where workers made the barrel staves and stored the goods to be transported on the next ship to Barbados. Further excavations are planned here.

Of all the artifacts, the one most prized by Mrs. Fiske is a rusted latch key, four inches long. Because it was found in the 17th-century midden, archeologists told her it was most likely the key to the original manor house, and one more key to the past of a Northern slave plantation.

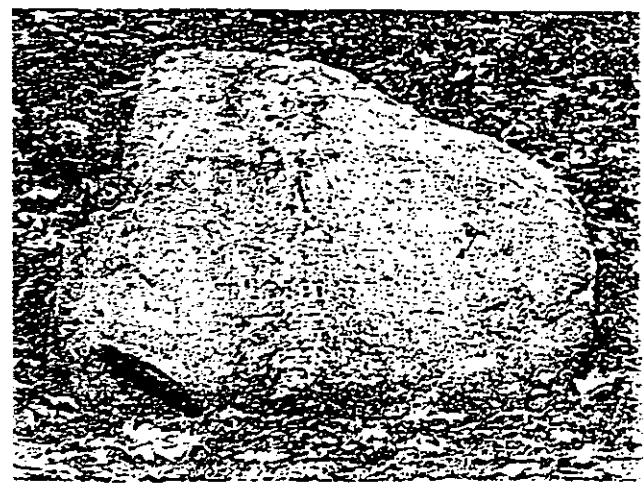


Photographs by Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

Stephen Mrozowski, an archeologist, at the dig site at Sylvester Manor on Shelter Island, N.Y., in a search for clues to Northern plantation life



is 17th-century coin of Charles I is
one of the artifacts found at the estate.
which was a "provisioning plantation."



A key, left, believed to be from the original manor house,
and a rock on the estate, with the inscription, "Burial
ground for the colored people for the manor since 1651."

Town's ancient legacy gets new home

Pequannock relics are 4,000 years old

By LEONOR AYALA

Staff Writer

PEQUANNOCK — In the palm of his hand, Deputy Mayor Ed Engelbart displayed a tiny arrowhead — evidence that Native Americans hunted game and made tools on the mountains of northern Pequannock Township more than 4,000 years ago.

The arrowhead is one of more than 1,400 relics recently acquired by the township's Historical Commission, a nine-member board that advises officials before major development projects are approved.

The artifacts were unearthed more than 10 years ago from state-owned land that later was excavated for the construction of Route 287. By the fall, officials are hoping to put them on display in the Pequannock Township Library's Harry Worden History Room.

"We couldn't get the artifacts until we had a safe repository for them," said Engelbart, noting there is no local museum in which to display them.

The safe repository came in the form of a \$2,300 custom-made, mahogany cabinet donated by the City Council earlier this year.

"Now that we have a place to put [the artifacts], we can show them," said Phil Dickinson, the Historical Commission's chairman.

All of the items that were excavated — most of them fragments as small as half an inch — were discovered by Wayne archaeologist Ed Lenik during an excavation at Mountainside Park beginning in April 1987. The construction of Route 287 the next year prompted Lenik and a team of 17 volunteers from the research lab at the Van Riper-Hopper House Museum in Wayne to begin the study. Lenik held on to the artifacts for the past decade and donated them once the mahogany cabinet was provided.

"We dug the site because it was going to be destroyed by Interstate Route 287," said Lenik, an archaeologist for more than 30 years.

Before digging, archaeologists familiar with Native American life already had a general idea of the type of material and the size and shape of objects they might find.

*The Record
8/13/11*

For example, Native Americans often struck stones together to break them and form them into tools. Most of the evidence discovered at such sites consists of flakes of stone which fell off during the toolmaking process.

Archaeologists also looked for evidence of campfires and studied soil samples for different types of seeds, which told them whether the tribes ate and cooked in the area.

Based on the evidence found at Mountainside Park, Lenik believes the Native American tribes were hunter-gatherers who roamed the

Continued on next page

NEW JERSEY

NY Times 8/17/11

Thousands More Bodies May Be in Old Cemetery

NEWARK — A potter's field that became a garbage dump contains more than twice as many bodies than the 18,000 originally thought to be buried there, a study says.

Although Newark officials have not found burial records for the old cemetery on 5.2 acres of land in an industrial area west of Newark International Airport, an environmental engineering firm says there could be tens of thousands of human remains buried four to eight feet underneath the garbage.

Malcolm Pirnie, a White Plains, N.Y., firm, was commissioned by the city to do the study as part of a court-ordered restoration of City Cemetery, where people without money to pay for a funeral were buried between 1869 and 1954.

Sometime after the last burial, the city began using the cemetery as an industrial storage yard, then as a public dump. Its condition was publicized last year when an 85-year-old Hackensack woman sued the city after learning that her father was buried there in 1921 but that his remains could not be located.

Eugene Boesch, the archeologist who conducted the initial study, recommended that ground-penetrating radar be used this fall to locate the graves. Mr. Boesch also suggested that the city plant grass and shrubbery, erect a monument in memory of the dead and produce a booklet on the cemetery's history. The restoration is expected to cost more than \$1 million.

(AP)

LEGACY

From Page L-1

mountains on a seasonal basis.

Native American remains predating Western Europe's recorded history are commonly found on properties in Passaic and Morris counties. But as parcels of land are cleared for development, such proof of the region's first human inhabitants is rapidly disappearing, Lenik said.

"This area is being developed so fast that sites are being destroyed left and right," he said.

Another area that may contain evidence of early life is the proposed construction site of Cedar Crest Village, formerly called Senior Campus Living, off Route 23. Lenik says this area near Cotluss Road once was called the Cotluss Plantation, a tract of land that belonged to a Lenape chief.

But according to Township Manager Kevin Boyle, a report issued about two years ago by the developers of that project stated no evidence was found on the site.

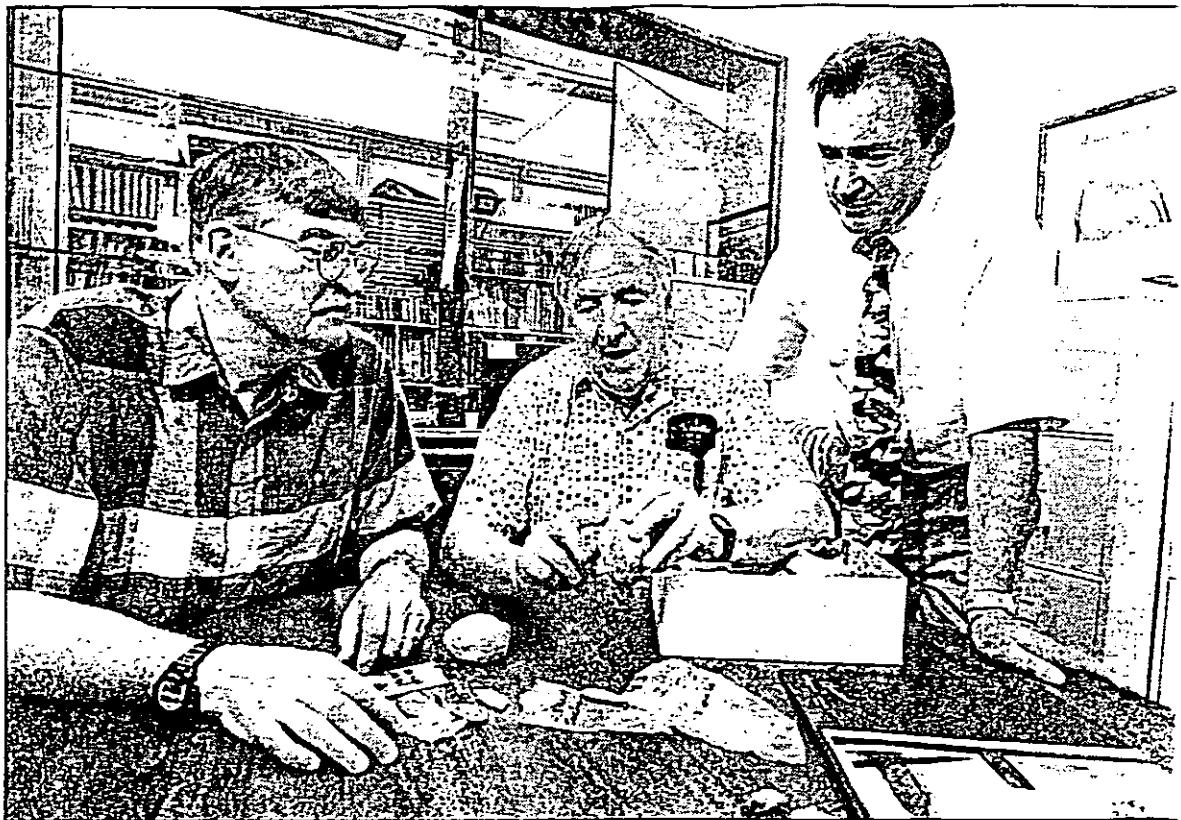
"At our request, [the developers] conducted a study of the site and as far they could tell there was nothing of significant value to the township," Boyle added.

Today, about a two-mile stretch of Route 287 cuts through the middle of Mountainside Park in north-central Pompton Plains, and the artifacts found on that site have become a significant part of the township's story.

"[The artifacts] tell the history of the people that met our ancestors ... [and] these are our link to the distant past," Dickinson said.

Pequannock's name is derived from its original Lenni-Lenape name, Paquettahhnuake, which means "cleared land ready for cultivation."

Prior to receiving the artifacts, the oldest item belonging to the township was a 1736 land deed — proof that Dutch settlers purchased the land from the Lenni-



KLAUS-PETER STEITZ/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Pequannock Deputy Mayor Ed Engelbart, left, archaeologist Ed Lenik, center, and Historical Commission Chairman Phil Dickinson looking Wednesday at excavated artifacts. Below, a projectile point from the cache.

Lenape tribe. Most of the collection has consisted of school documents and genealogical and church records, stored in a few steel cabinets in the library.

Community members in recent years have been donating items of more recent historical significance. Among the dozens of items in the township's historical collection are a brick from the original Mandeville Inn, a "hardtack" Army ration cracker dating from the Civil War, and a tarnished, Colonial-era spoon.

But the Native American artifacts are physical evidence that different tribes of Delaware Indians "were the first people here, not the white man," Lenik said. "We need to know how they lived and what were their ways."



50 more bodies uncovered near City Hall

By JOSH ROGERS

Archeologists at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington are now studying the remains of at least 50 humans found at the east end of City Hall Park as officials hope to be able to reopen the park the first week in October.

The remains, which were sent in a van to Washington about two weeks ago, are believed to have been originally buried in a cemetery built in the mid-18th Century for residents of the city's first alms house, and were disturbed when the Tweed Courthouse was built.

As has been previously reported, the remains of about 23 other individuals have been found intact and have been left as they are. The discovery of the secondary remains, which means they have been moved from the original burial site, has not been reported.

"It's very significant," said an archeologist who is studying the park, and insisted on anonymity. "It's very surprising to find that burial ground so close to the surface, and the size of it, the number of remains discovered, was quite surprising....It is hypothesized when they built Tweed in the 19th Century, they disturbed the burial ground and removed the bones."

Doug Owsley at the Smithsonian is doing what's called baseline analysis, which involves taking an inventory, measurements and creating a database. The expectation is he will be able to determine the age, ancestry, and gender from this analysis as well as any diseases and the type of diet of the people being studied. Once completed, perhaps within a year, scientists will decide whether further tests such as DNA analysis should be done. Eventually the remains would be re-interred with the 23 already discovered. No more discoveries are expected to be made.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 1
in the park since construction is getting close to completion.

The archeologist said early analysis shows that the remains of at least 50 individuals are now in Washington, but further study could show that the number is much higher. Another archeologist, who has previously studied the park and also requested anonymity, said because the park's area is on such a high plateau, it's not surprising remains were found so close to the surface.

Diane Dallal, president of the Professional Architects of New York City, had heard about the Smithsonian study and was curious to find out who these people were. She said although it is most likely the remains are from the alms house, they also could be remains of British soldiers since the area had a barracks, American P.O.W.'s from the Revolutionary War, or blacks buried in the African Burial Ground.

Dallal, director of New York Unearthed, which is part of the South St. Seaport Museum, has not studied the park recently, but has followed developments closely.

At the end of June, she sent a letter to Landmarks Chairperson Jennifer Raab, asking her to make sure the area where the remains were discovered — near the Lexington Ave.

subway entrance — not be paved over, and that the remains be studied. Dallal said she was pleased Raab agreed to her request. The park is a landmark, is part of a landmark district, and has two landmark buildings, Tweed Courthouse and City Hall.

Officials across agencies have been reluctant to say anything about the project since it involves two highly-sensitive political subjects — City Hall Park and the nearby African Burial Ground. Past proposals to improve the park have been thwarted because it was criticized as a plan for politicians to spend money to improve their own work environment. Reducing the number of politicians parking in the park, part of the current plan, has also been a thorny issue in the past.

Some advocates for the Burial Ground, which is being preserved a block away, have criticized the city for removing remains without public discussion. Part of the Burial Ground is believed to include what is now City Hall Park, so it is possible the remains at the Smithsonian are of African descent.

The archeologist now studying the park said in addition to the large number of remains, long wooden porthole structures, with holes about eight inches in diameter, have also been uncovered.

"It could have been a fenceline," said the archeologist. "It could have been used for gallows."

Meanwhile, park construction is almost complete. Judy Duffy, assistant district manager of Community Board 1, said George Vellonakis, the Parks Dept. architect, said it should be open by Oct. 1. Two other sources said a large ribbon-cutting ceremony is being planned for the first two weeks of October, coinciding with Duffy's account since ceremonies of this type are often scheduled after the actual opening.

The park plan included traffic improvements near the Brooklyn Bridge entrance and the south end of the park, to make the City Hall Park area safer and more accessible to pedestrians. This aspect of the plan, administered by the Dept. of Transportation, has lagged far behind park construction.

The archeologist said: "The Parks Dept. has put a lot of pressure on the contractors: City D.O.T. has been moving a lot slower. I don't know why."

Mark Patterson, a D.O.T. spokesperson, said he did not know why the traffic changes have been delayed, but a meeting was scheduled for Aug. 24 to discuss the matter.

NEWS

COVER-UP AT CITY HALL?

It's been a hot summer, but that's not why archaeology insiders in Lower Manhattan are stewing. Here, just outside the mayor's office in City Hall Park, an excavation is under way tied to the restoration of the park to its former "setting of grandeur" and "historic significance." Archaeology, however, has turned up not proud monuments of nineteenth-century glory, but modest burials in a corner of the park.

City officials say the 11 bodies (there may be more) belong to an eighteenth-century alms house, although it seems equally likely to one local archaeologist not associated with the dig that they could be related to a French-Indian War barracks, or a contemporary prison that occupied the site, or even a neighboring medical school. But there's another possible explanation for the bodies, one that strikes fear in the hearts of city officials: that they belong to the African Burial Ground (see *ARCHAEOLOGY*, March/April 1993, pp. 28-38), which appears on historic maps to stop north of the park but whose bounds have never been determined archaeologically. The burial ground, which spanned six acres, was a political hot potato five years ago when the black community demanded that they have a say in the fate of the +20 skeletons unearthed on the site of a planned federal building.

Further investigation would seem a logical next step, but it's unclear whether that will happen, and archaeologists aren't talking. Sources tell *ARCHAEOLOGY* that city contracts forbid speaking about the project, and that the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the city agency directly overseeing the

excavation, has threatened to silence loose lips with a \$1,000 fine. Archaeologists associated with the project refused comment for this article.

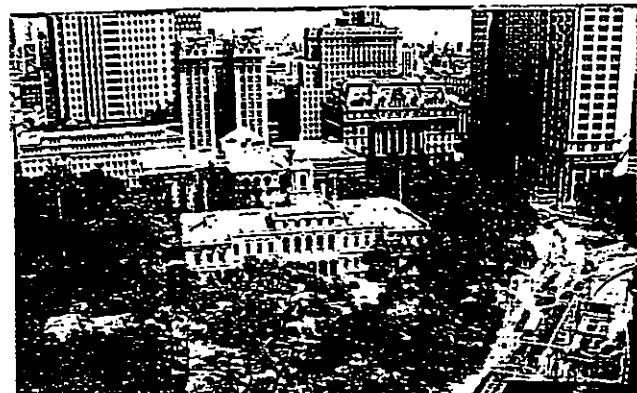
Green plastic tarps on a fence surrounding the site obstruct any view of it. The *New York Times* called the tarps a step "to preserve the dignity of the dead," but Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's press office has been so unresponsive to *ARCHAEOLOGY*'s questions about the project (insisting that all requests for interviews be channeled through it and then failing to return multiple phone calls) that the tarps seem rather a step to shield the site from public scrutiny.

"These are public moneys," says Ayo Harrington, community activist and chair of Friends of the African Burial Ground, referring to the City Hall Park

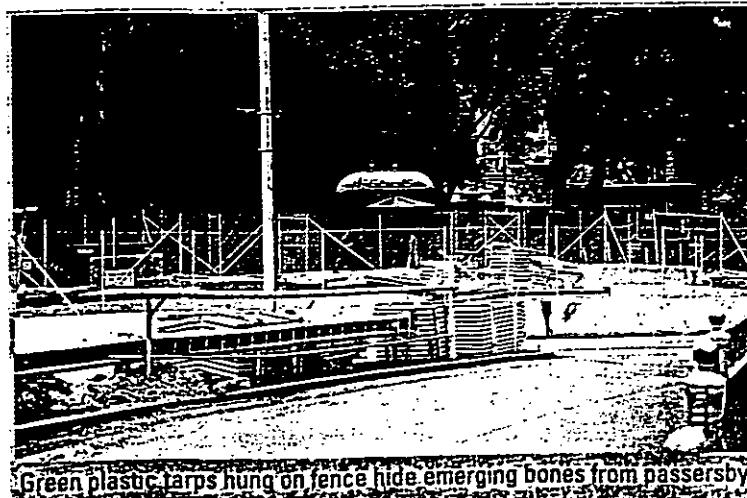
restoration's \$20-plus million pricetag. "That requires public input every step of the way. There's no reason historical preservation should be political, but with this administration, that's wishful thinking."

The skeletons have lain exposed to the elements for at least two months as bureaucrats have debated whether to rebury them in situ or remove them for study; whether the skeletons can support the weight of a path planned to run over them, and if not, whether to rebury them elsewhere (with or without pomp and circumstance) or to redesign the path. Reburial in situ, in keeping with the city's protocol on primary burials according to *ARCHAEOLOGY*'s sources, is now the favored option. That would leave unanswered questions that a physical anthropologist could resolve given a week with the bones.

But forgoing the chance to document these lives may not be the only squandered legacy of City Hall Park. "What a superb opportunity missed to reach out to the children of New York," said Diane Dallal of New York Uncarved, New York City's archaeology museum. "Here was an educational opportunity right at the tip of Manhattan; instead, history may be covered over." -EJH



Burials found to the right of City Hall are shrouded in secrecy.



Green plastic tarps hung on fence hide emerging bones from passersby.

PANYC EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT - September 29 - November 30, 1999

EVENT	SPEAKER	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PHONE #	Fee
Rediscovering Machu Picchu: Recent Research on the "Lost" City of the Incas	Richard L. Burger	Thurs. 10/14	8 PM	Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT	203-611-4654	\$5
Hike the Endangered Rock Shelters	Ed Lenik	Sun. 10/3	10 AM - 2 PM	With Met. Chapter	212-748-8628	free
Archaeology Day		Sat. 10/16	12-4 PM	South Street Seaport Museum, Children's Center, 165 John St.	212-748-8753	admission
Abandoned Vessels in New York Harbor	Nancy Brighton	10/20	6:30 PM	South Street Seaport Museum, Whitman Gallery, 209 Water Street	212-748-8628	free to members
CNEHA Annual Meeting	conference	10/22-24		St. Mary's City, MD	301-862-0974	\$25/35
The Astor Place Riot: Looking Back 150 Years	exhibit	thru 10/24		Museum of the City of New York	212-534-1672	admission
Discovering the Secrets of Soft-Paste Porcelain at the Saint-Cloud Manufactory	exhibit	thru 10/24		Bard Graduate Center, 18 W. 86 St.	212-501-3000	\$2
New Research on Horace's Villa: Digging in the Archives, Excavating the Site	Bernard Frischer	Wed. 11/17		Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT	203-611-4654	\$5
A New Waterfront for a New Century	exhibit	thru 12/31/99		South Street Seaport Museum, Melville Gallery	212-748-8786	admission

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

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

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Please indicate preferred mailing address and check below as appropriate.

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