



Symposium on the

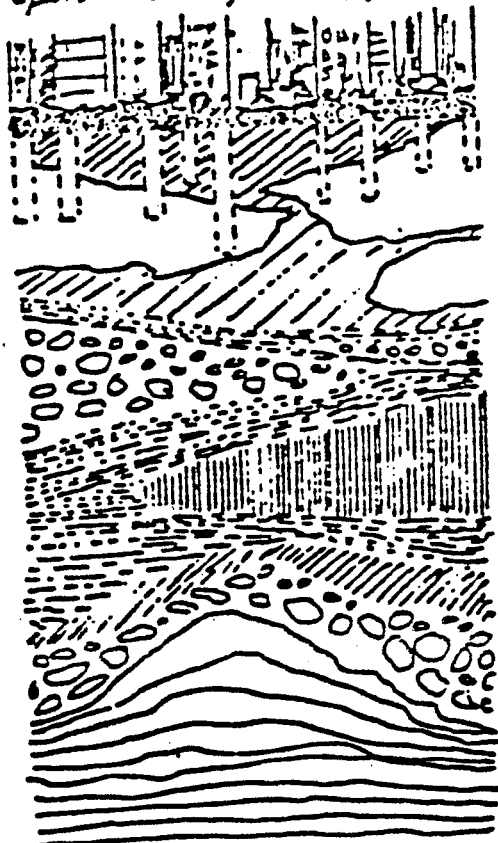
ARCHAEOLOGY of NEW YORK CITY

SIXTH ANNUAL PANYC SIMPOSIUM

Presented by the Professional Archaeologists
of New York City
The Museum of the City of New York
103rd Street and Fifth Avenue

Saturday, 3 May 1986

open to the general public



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A. DIGGING NEW YORK: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE CITY

1. Planning an Excavation

Betsy Kearns
Historical Perspectives

Archaeological projects in New York City are done by scholars funded by institutions or by researchers performing legally mandated work. But no matter who is doing the digging, two basic questions must be answered before excavation can begin: 1) Is there a site? and if so, 2) What is its perimeter? Methods and techniques have been developed to answer both these questions and to cope with the unique problems likely to arise in urban situations.

2. The Excavation of Archaeological Sites

Arnold Pickman
New York University

The techniques used by archaeologists in site excavation are discussed with examples taken from New York City sites. The topics include the location of excavation units, tools used, types of deposits encountered, separation of stratigraphic units, treatment of archaeological features, record keeping, and drawing of profiles.

3. Stone Tools: New York City's Prehistoric Resource

Annette Silver
New York University

This is a discussion of what archaeologists have learned of prehistoric life in New York City from the study of the major prehistoric artifact category — stone tools and manufacturing waste. They have learned about culture chronology, tool function, prehistoric food gathering, and regional trade contacts from the study of these artifacts. Information on the Native American occupants of sites and their attitudes towards craftsmanship, technical innovation, and conservatism can be learned as well.

4. From Dutch Pipkins to Chinese Teawares: Ceramics in New York City

Meta Janowitz
Louis Berger and Associates and the City University of
New York

This paper describes the ceramics from several New York City sites using a historical framework. In the 17th century, people used stonewares from Europe and porcelains from the Orient alongside locally made and imported earthenwares. By the 19th century, wares from England dominated the market but American manufactures were starting to develop. Examples from both of these time periods illustrate the changes which occurred in New Yorkers' use of ceramics and the types of information that can be obtained from sherds and vessels.

Ten Minute Break

5. Smoking Pipes and the Archaeologist: What Can Be Learned from the Study of Clay Tobacco Pipes

Diane Dallal
Grossman and Associates Inc.

Clay tobacco pipes are useful temporal indicators of site occupation periods. They were easily broken, which made their period of use short. Changes in bowl morphology as well as the fact that pipemakers identified their products with distinctive marks allow archaeologists to use them as dating tools. Pipes can be examined in a number of ways to determine their relative date of deposit, place of origin, and the name of their manufacturer.

6. The Wharves of Early New York: An Archaeological Perspective on the Dockbuilding Trades

Roselle E. Henn
The City University of New York and
Diana diZerega Wall
New York University

The development of early New York City was closely tied to the growth of its waterfront. While there has been much discussion about maritime commerce and the port itself, little is known about the wharves and piers which make up its physical structure or the people who built them. Archaeologists have uncovered portions of 17th, 18th, and 19th century wharves. Recent work at the Assay Site has provided a rare opportunity to examine these wharves, learn about how they were built, and begin to understand their builders.

3. Excavations at Fifty-Third at Third

Frederick A. Winter
Key Perspectives

Archaeological test excavations were conducted at the Fifty-Third at Third site in Manhattan during April 1984. The work was sponsored by Gerald D. Hines Interests, Inc. Excavations in the backyards of three late 19th century brick "brownstone" tenements revealed the remains of ceramics, coins, and other materials, including evidence that the site had been extensively altered prior to development, with earth fills deposited on the site to depths of more than three meters.

B. EXCAVATION UPDATE

1. New York's Harbor Islands

Joan H. Geismar
Archaeological Consultant

Recently, during preparation for the Statue of Liberty's upcoming centennial, Native American shell middens were uncovered on Liberty and Ellis Islands. With PANYC's encouragement, these unexpected finds were explored and documented by the National Park Service. Slides are used to illustrate these explorations and selected aspects of the development of these two historic harbor islands.

2. Archaeological Excavation at Snug Harbor, Staten Island

Sherene Baugher
Archaeology Program
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

In August 1985 almost 3,000 household artifacts were uncovered in an archaeological excavation at Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's "dig" on city-owned property unearthed material discarded by 19th century staff members of Sailors' Snug Harbor, the first institution in the U.S. for retired and disabled seamen (1833-1976). The archaeological study revealed information about the 19th century social stratification within the closed community of Sailors' Snug Harbor.

We wish to thank all those who helped make this year's PANYC Symposium possible. We are particularly grateful to the Museum of the City of New York, and especially to Margaret Van Buskirk and other members of the Museum's Public Relations Department, as well as to those who participated in the program and all those who attended.

The 1986 PANYC Symposium Committee
Diana diZerega Wall, Chair
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