

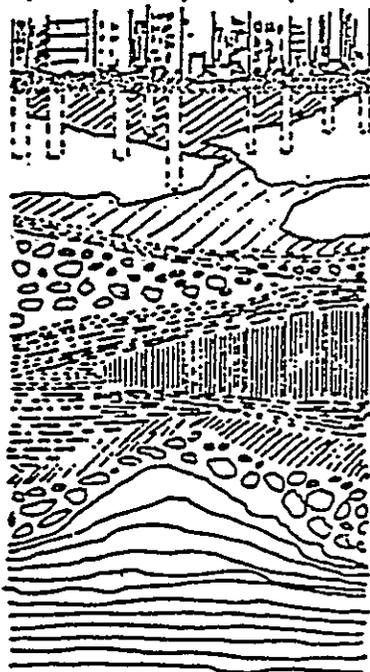


Symposium on the

ARCHAEOLOGY of NEW YORK CITY

11th PANYC
SYMPOSIUM

open to the general public



ELEVENTH ANNUAL PANYC SYMPOSIUM...
Presented by the Professional Archeologists of
New York City and The Museum of the City of
New York

NEIGHBORHOOD ARCHEOLOGY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Saturday, May 4, 1991
The Museum of the City of New York
103rd Street and Fifth Avenue

1:00 - 2:30

1. Welcome by PANYC

Award of Salwen Prize

2. "How Can We Recognize a Neighborhood in
the Past?"

Organizer: Nan A. Rothschild
Columbia University

3. "The Northern End of Central Park:
A Neighborhood-free Zone"

Speaker: Richard Hunter
Hunter Research, Inc.

One of the few sections of Manhattan that can claim never to have been part of an urban or suburban neighborhood is the northern end of central Park. Home to a scatter of farmsteads and taverns in the colonial and federal period, this portion of Manhattan contained the island's main line of defense against land attacks from the north during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. These defenses focused on controlling McGown's Pass, through which the Kingsbridge Road penetrated the east-west line of bluffs that crosses the island around present-day 106th Street. By the 1850s and the 1860s this portion of Manhattan lay at the northernmost fringe of New York's urban Expansion and was only lightly settled by squatters when Central Park was created. As a result, no true neighborhood ever evolved in this area. This paper will discuss the results of a preliminary historical and archeological assessment of the northern end of Central Park (between 97th and 110th Streets) carried out for the Central Park Conservancy in 1990.

4. "Plantation Life on the Fringes of New York City:
Van Cortlandt Manor"

Speaker: Frederick A. Winter
Brooklyn College, Dept. of Classics

A report based on the June, 1990 excavations by the Brooklyn College Summer Archeological Field School at the Van Cortlandt Manor in the Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. The excavations were sponsored by the NYC Department of Parks and The National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York. The currently-standing Van Cortlandt mansion is a restored, mid-eighteenth century, Federal style manor house that was originally constructed to serve as the central building in a colonial era plantation. The mansion was built adjacent to a Late Woodland period Native American settlement and on a mid-seventeenth century European colonial farmstead. Excavations in 1990 revealed the foundations of the mansion's seventeenth century predecessor, uncovered details of the construction history of the standing mansion building and its now-demolished kitchen wing, and uncovered a nineteenth century ice house or root cellar that was associated with the manor. Comparison of the findings from the mansion with those from the excavations at the roughly contemporaneous Christian Duryea farm house in Brooklyn suggest criteria for distinguishing between family farm and mansion in the decades following the American Revolution.

5. "Weeksville, a Nineteenth-Century Brooklyn Neighborhood"

Speaker: Roselle Henn
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

From the 1840's to the Civil War, Weeksville was a rural, Afro-American community located in what is now the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the area became increasingly developed and ethnically diverse. However, even at the end of the century, Weeksville's social networks and institutions constituted a neighborhood within the growing city. This presentation will discuss Weeksville's transition from a rural community to an urban neighborhood.

15 minute break

2:45 - 3:45

6. "Guns in My Backyard: The Evolution of a Military Neighborhood in Staten Island"

Speaker: Joseph Schuldenrein
Geoarcheology Research Associates

In 1988 the Dept. of the Navy initiated a Stabilization/Management Plan to preserve a series

of late 19th century military defensive structures at Fort Wadsworth on the East coast of Staten Island. These structures were unique strategic fortifications to deter incursions on American soil at the turn of the century. Subsequently the base has sustained a variety of military structures and support facilities that document the evolution of a military compound over the course of the twentieth century. Repercussions of changing military needs are reflected in all aspects of neighborhood life. The work undertaken focuses on historic architecture, structural and landscape systems associated with the fortifications and socio-economic aspects of the military neighborhood.

7. "Archeology in Greenwich Village - An Early New York Suburb"

Speaker: Diana Wall
South St. Seaport Museum

In the 1820s and 1830s, Greenwich Village became one of the city's first suburbs for its emerging middle class. Recent archeological excavations show what home life was like in this early residential area at mid-century. This presentation compares the quality of home life in two neighborhoods in the village - the more affluent area around Washington Square and the poorer middle-class district to the west of Sixth Avenue.

8. "Family Life in Late Nineteenth-Century Downtown Brooklyn"

Speaker: William I. Roberts IV
Greenhouse Consultants, Inc.

This paper will portray aspects of lives of several middle class families who lived in downtown Brooklyn during the last half of the nineteenth century. Explanations will be offered regarding how they collected rain water for drinking, cooking and washing; and how they disposed of their sewage and later some of their household refuse. Examples of objects used by these families and later disposed of in their yards will also be shown.

Once again we wish to thank all those who made this year's PANYC Symposium possible. This includes many staff members of the Museum of the City of New York, especially Cheryl Barthelow of the Department of Education and Sherene Thomas of the Public Affairs department. Without their unflinching interest and support the meeting could not have taken place. We also want to thank PANYC members Joan Geismar and Sarah Bridges as well as all those who took part in the program and all those who attended.