



Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

Summer 1998 Newsletter

FOSA

Nick's News

In June, the Connecticut Office of State Archaeology's (OSA's) Anthropology Collections were packed and relocated to the Dodd Center on the UConn campus. Dr. Bellantoni's office was moved across the hall from his present location and the address is Wilbur Cross Building, Room 249 - with the same phone, fax, and email numbers.

◆ During an archaeological survey by the Public Archaeology Laboratory, a burial shaft was located adjacent to St. John's Cemetery. The shaft measured three feet by 17 inches and was believed to be an unmarked child's grave. Excavation revealed no human remains. The burial may date to the mid-19th century and the remains may have already decomposed. Blackened soils which may have been what is left of the organic remains of the child were reburied in the cemetery according to Catholic tradition.

◆ At the Society for Historical Archaeology's annual meeting, Dr. David Poirier and Dr. Nick Bellantoni participated in a symposium focusing on resolving public-related concerns surrounding archaeological investigation of historic cemeteries and burials.

◆ In April 1998, the staff of State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), OSA, and the Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. (PAST) participated in a field inspection of "Wolfpit Village," an 18th-century rural community abandoned in Waterford. The historic remains demonstrated a high degree of integrity. Local residents are concerned about long-term preservation as it lies in the proposed Route 11 corridor.

◆ OSA and SHPO met with the Native American Heritage Advisory Committee to develop a course of action in facilitating reburial of Native American osteological remains and associated funerary material from Crescent Beach, East Lyme.

◆ SHPO is looking into the identification and evaluation of early 20th-century torpedo boats buried in New London on the former New London Mills property.

◆ OSA and SHPO are drafting a "state policy" regarding identification and professional management of Connecticut's submerged cultural heritage with the

help of the state's Underwater Advisory Committee.

SHPO staff archaeologist Dr. David Poirier co-authored "Be Prepared: The Archaeology Merit Badge is Here" in the National Park Service publication *Common Ground* (3 (1): 38-43, 1998).

◆ SHPO has consulted with Northeast Utilities regarding the proposed re-licensing of its hydroelectric facilities along the Housatonic River and the protection of archaeological resources on the NU property. SHPO also carried out onsite analysis of proposed revegetation and slope stabilization efforts at Fort Griswold State Park in Groton and an onsite review of the archaeological survey of Schaghticoke Tribal National Reservation in Kent where numerous 18th-19th century Native American sites have been preliminarily identified. SHPO did an onsite review of archaeological studies by PAST at the Old Newgate Prison in East Granby. Also, technical assistance was provided to the Connecticut Department of Transportation concerning cultural resource investigations scheduled for July and August with respect to Routes 82/85/11 in East Lyme, Montville, Salem, and Waterford.

◆ The Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center is sponsoring an expedition to look for evidence of inland Indian settlements and artifacts swept down the Hudson River 12,000 years ago. The project will be undertaken by Robert Ballard, the undersea explorer who discovered the Titanic and the wreckage of the USS Yorktown.

Volunteer Opportunities and News

◆ Assistance in helping the Office of State Archaeology reorganize in their new facilities would be appreciated.

◆ Opportunities to volunteer are with the following:

- Greater New Haven Archaeological Society, Bethany Bog site; contact David Thompson at (203) 393-0075.
- Arthur Basto Archaeological Society; contact Bill Schultz or Nick Bellantoni at (860) 486-5248.
- Archaeology Club of Norwalk Community College; contact Ernie Wiegand at (203) 857-7377.

◆ FOSA President Gary Nolf, the Westbrook Historical Society, and Boy Scout Troop 38 will start an

archaeological dig in July in Westbrook. The Boy Scouts will be earning badges in archaeology under the direction of the State Archaeologist, FOSA, and the Westbrook Historical Society. The Society is a member of FOSA and will hold an exhibit from the dig.

Nolf has generated interest in Connecticut archaeology by giving talks to the local Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and the Westbrook Historical Society. He also gave a talk about archeology at Camp Tadma in Fitchville in the fall of 1997.

- ◆ The Florence Griswold Museum hosted an archaeological field school for Connecticut College and volunteers in June. Archaeological testing and excavations sought artifactual and landscape remains from the earliest occupation of the site through the mid-20th century. Volunteers also helped with laboratory analysis of artifacts. The field school was run by Dr. Harold Juli (of Connecticut College) and Dr. Stuart Reeve, principal investigator.

Notice of Meetings

Archaeological Society of Connecticut will hold the Fall meeting at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT, on October 17, 1998 in celebration of Connecticut Archaeology Awareness Week. Contact OSA for further information.

Norwalk Community College Archaeology Club will be hosting "Norwalk Archaeology Day" at the Norwalk Maritime Museum on October 11, 1998, also as part of Connecticut Archaeology Awareness Week.

OSA Wish List

- ◆ Office equipment, laboratory supplies, field supplies
- ◆ Volunteers for digs and salvage operations
- ◆ Archaeology Awareness Week assistance (coordinating, organizing, scheduling activities)

- ◆ General archaeological presentations to the public
- ◆ Setting up of presentations to Planning & Zoning Commissions
- ◆ Informational flyers to be sent to schools and libraries
- ◆ Outreach program
- ◆ Photographer volunteers
- ◆ Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to earn merit badges in archaeology
- ◆ Hometown archaeological partnerships
- ◆ General fund-raising for staff and Archaeology Awareness Week

If you can help with any of these items, please contact Dr. Nick Bellantoni at (860) 486-5248.

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