



Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

Summer 1999 Newsletter

FOSA

FOSA Dues Reminder

Please send your 1999 dues to:
Post Office Box 230351
Hartford, Connecticut 06123-0351

Nick's News from the Office Of State Archaeology

Recent archaeological excavations in which FOSA members have assisted:

- ◆ Welch Property Sand and Gravel Mining, Scotland, CT: A special hats-off to Bill Schultz and members of the Arthur Basto Archaeological Society for their assistance in the field and laboratory!
- ◆ Bethany Bog Subdivision, Bethany, CT: Under the direction of David Thompson, three prehistoric Native American campsites are being recovered prior to house and road construction.
- ◆ The Old Brick, Clinton, CT: The Clinton Historical Society requested assistance in determining the archaeological significance of their property on Route 1. Thanks to the Society for their hospitality and the Yankee Territory Coinshooters for help conducting the metal-detecting survey.

Nick was presented with a "Connecticut Bloomer Award" by Northeast Magazine of The Hartford Courant on May 18, 1999. The award is given to individuals who have contributed to the quality of life in our state.

The OSA has reviewed a record number of proposed development projects in the state. An aspect of the improved economy is an increase in construction projects. Many towns and developers are asking our assistance in reviewing these projects for protection of archaeological and historical resources.

The OSA has conducted the second in a series of workshops for town officials on the local preservation of cultural resources. The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planners Association hosted the workshop at the "500 Blake Street" restaurant in New Haven on June 11th. Nick Bellantoni discussed the Office of State Archaeology, David Poirier spoke on the role of the Connecticut Historical Commission, William Haase (Director of Planning in Ledyard) presented a town planner's perspective of archaeological regulations, and attorney Michael Ziska of Murtha Cullina provided information on the legal aspects of preservation policy. The workshop was attended by over 40 town planners and was well received. A third workshop is planned in the fall and will be sponsored by the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Council of Governments.

The office has received more materials from the Lyent Russell collection, which include Lyent's stone drilling work kit, correspondence, Indian genealogy, lecture notes, and fliers. Our office already reposit Lyent's archaeology slide collection, field equipment, and research files. We are honored to maintain these materials in Lyent's memory and they are available for researchers in the state.

The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History has closed its exhibit room at the Wilbur Cross Building on the Storrs Campus. The closing was required due to renovation in the building. The museum will keep up its ambitious program schedule and will be providing

travelling exhibits around the state. The archaeology exhibit "Surrounded by the Past" is currently at the UConn Stamford Campus. We all look forward to the grand reopening of the exhibit space in the new museum building on central campus. Your support of the museum benefits the Office of State Archaeology.

The OSA received a wonderful donation of Leica camera equipment from Dr. John Plank, a former political science professor at UConn. The donation consists of 18 pieces including camera, leather case, 7 lens, 6 filters, a dedicated flash and manuals. The camera donation has been appraised at \$4,935.

Dr. Fred Warner, FOSA board member, has donated his collection of archaeology newsletters from around the country. These include hard-to-get society bulletins and journals from the Midwest. Dr. Warner's collection is available to researchers in the state through the OSA library.

OSA and Connecticut Historical Commission Efforts

The Connecticut Historical Commission is working with the African-American and historical communities to identify and evaluate Underground Railroad sites in Connecticut. The Commission will be establishing criteria for identifying houses, caves, and other features that may have been used as hiding places in transporting African captives to freedom in Canada. Remember, the Underground Railroad was not underground and not a railroad, but, places where captives could hide during their trip. Known routes came through Connecticut at various places along the coast and interior. If any FOSA members know of any houses, etc. in their community that should be considered for registry as an Underground Railroad site in the state, please contact Nick at the OSA.

The Connecticut Historical Commission transferred the following to the Special Collections Library of the University of Connecticut at Storrs: Archaeological Survey for IGTS Ground Bed Site in Sherman, Archaeological Management Plan for Mansfield Hollow Lake, Archaeological Assessment for Route 2/2A/32 of Ledyard/North Stonington/Preston, Archaeological Survey for Packerville Road Bridge in Plainfield, and Archaeological Survey for Blue Ridge Sewer of Berlin.

With OSA, CHC offered guidance to concerned neighbors in the Town of Glasgow over the 18th/19th-century cemetery. They also provided the Town of Voluntown assistance regarding a 18th-century cemetery, where the town will look into supporting a cleanup program.

With OSA, CHC conducted an onsite review of the "Indian Burying Ground" associated with an 18th-century cemetery in Southbury. Field observations tentatively confirm that one section of the cemetery may have been reserved for Native American burials.

With OSA and the Archaeological Conservancy (national nonprofit organization), CHC field-inspected Revolutionary War encampments in West Hartford and Redding, the Venture Smith Homestead in Haddam, and the General Rochambeau campsite in Bolton. Long-term protection was the focus of these reviews.

CHC consulted with Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company in Haddam regarding documentation of this early nuclear facility prior to Nuclear Regulatory Commission-approved dismantling. Permanent archiving of records and photographs was done by Connecticut Yankee and the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center of UConn. There was a field review of the homestead located on Connecticut Yankee property that belonged to Venture Smith (1729-1805), a former slave. There is high archaeological sensitivity and National Register of Historic Places significance for the site.

CHC provided guidance to the Iroquois Gas Transmission System (IGTS) regarding the 19th-century Northrop Cemetery in Brookfield. It will be reestablished and protected by IGTS in consultation with Connecticut Gravestone Network.

FOSA News

FOSA's Annual Meeting was held in February at Nick's office in Storrs. Gary Nolf, President of FOSA, presided at the meeting. Three directors retired from the FOSA Board – they are David Cooke, Kristen Keegan, and Roy Manstan. They were replaced by Kenneth Beatrice, Pamela Silvestri, and Fred Warner, who will serve two-year terms on FOSA's Board of Directors. Nick Bellantoni introduced the main speaker, Dr. Ellen Censky, the new Director of the Museum of Natural History, at the meeting. A transcript of Dr. Censky's speech may be viewed on-line at www.keegans.com/fosa/censky.htm. FOSA members may request a copy of the transcript from FOSA's secretary, Mae Johnson, 574 King Street, South Windsor, CT 06074.

FOSA members Kris Keegan and husband Bill Keegan became the proud parents of a baby boy, Nicholas Ryan, born on June 26th. Congratulations, Bill and Kris!

Other Archaeological News

There has been a committee formed to erect a granite monument in Fort Wooster Park of New Haven, to be dedicated to the Quinnipiacs and also to their chroniclers: Capt. C.H. Townshend, Lyent W. Russell, and John Menta. It will be called the Quinnipiac Memorial Monument. Anyone interested in assisting the fund-raising or making donations, please write to P.O. Box 120507, East Haven CT 06512 or call the Townshend family at (203) 467-1409 or (203) 488-4411.

Volunteer Opportunities: Field & Lab

Through the summer, OSA will be processing artifacts and other materials from archaeological excavations conducted in 1998. Anyone wishing to work on these materials may contact the OSA for scheduling. In addition, there are laboratory opportunities available to assess the conservation needs of the Anthropological Collections. OSA anticipates field opportunities throughout the year, so please contact Barbara Ann Kipfer at (860) 767-1551 or bkipfer@earthlink.net if you would like to do fieldwork. Volunteer assistance is also needed in the office, processing review requests for archaeological sensitivity, and with the organization of the OSA Library.

OSA Wish List

- ◆ Setting up of presentations to Planning & Zoning Commissions by contacting town officials to create interest in establishing policies for surveys of building sites for OSA.
- ◆ General fund-raising for staff and Archaeology Awareness Week
- ◆ Printer
- ◆ Secretary for the OSA office!

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FOSA Web page:

<http://www.Keegans.com/FOSA>
Members may send articles for the Web page to P.O. Box 230351, Hartford CT 06123-0351.

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For additional information: call (860) 529-7139 or e-mail to: dhendsey@brfg.com

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