



# Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

**FOSA**

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## MEMBER NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2002

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

One of the nice things about serving on the FOSA board is that there is usually lots of backup support from other board members and State Archaeologist Nick Bellantoni. I need not spend much time here telling you about our successful and promising winter, since Nick and VP Ken Beatrice have done most of it for me in their articles elsewhere in this newsletter. Read their accounts of our exciting annual meeting, and of the possibility — if we keep our fingers crossed — that OSA will actually get an archaeology wing under Governor Rowland's proposed extension of the UCONN 2000 initiative.

If the initiative passes, FOSA will be able to make a stronger case for the use of building permit fees to staff OSA on a full-time professional basis. The argument is simply: what's the good of a nice new archaeology wing if there's no staff to run it? Working with board member Chris Noble and our legislative supporter Rep. Larry Cafero (R-Norwalk), we hope to have a bill ready for the next legislative session which will earmark a very small percentage addition to building permit fees to fund the OSA office. Later this year, we expect to be urging you to pester your legislators about this great way of finally funding the office without a state budget adjustment.

We are also beginning to plan an early Fall event which may become an annual mainstay of the FOSA calendar: a Volunteers Recognition Day including a picnic and hopefully a visit to one or more Connecticut archaeological sites. This event will let the entire membership praise our stalwart field and office volunteers, meet each other, and maybe see an unfamiliar but interesting site. Details will appear before the end of summer.

*Mike Raber*

### NEWS FROM THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST

We would like tell you about some exciting news! As you may have heard, on February 13, Governor Rowland announced 21<sup>st</sup> Century UConn, an initiative to extend and

expand the UConn 2000 program. He has proposed an eleven-year program that adds \$1.3 billion to continue the infrastructure improvements at the University of Connecticut's main campus at Storrs, the five regional campuses, and the School of Law along with support for medical and dental programs at the Health Center in Farmington.

The exciting news is that the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and the Office of State Archaeology are included in this initiative along with many other worthy projects. Should legislation be passed this session for 21<sup>st</sup> Century UConn, this bonding proposal allots \$4.9 million toward renovations for the museum and a new archaeology wing. The archaeology wing will provide for state-of-the-art curation space for the anthropological collections, as well as laboratory and office space for OSA.

With your support, our future looks very bright.

As many of you know from attending South Carolina State Archaeologist Jon Leader's presentation on the CSS Hunley project at FOSA/ASC joint meeting, our office will be working closely with Jon in attempting to resolve the mystery of Ezra Chamberlin's identification tag found on-board the Confederate submarine. What is intriguing about the ID tag, is that Ezra was with the 7<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Regiment, Company K, and, he lived in Killingly, CT. It is very exciting to have this surprising Connecticut connection with an important national Civil War story. We will keep FOSA members posted as the project develops.

Although they keep reminding us that we are in an economic recession, OSA has reviewed a record number of development projects within the last year. Fortunately, through the efforts of **State Representative Larry Cafero** (R-Norwalk), OSA received \$15,000 for operating expenses for this fiscal year. While short of being able to hire full-time staff, these funds are important in obtaining equipment and student assistance with the office. We are grateful to all of you that support OSA efforts.

*Nicholas Bellantoni*

## ANNUAL MEETING REPORT 2002

The FOSA Annual Meeting was held on January 27, 2002 at the High School in Glastonbury, Connecticut. The meeting was conducted in two parts, the Board of Directors meeting and the annual guest speaker. The speaker was Dr. Jonathan Leader, State Archaeologist of South Carolina. The presentation was entitled "C.S.S. H.L. Hunley: Discovery, Recovery, and Conservation of a Confederate Submarine."

### BOARD MEETING

President Mike Raber called the meeting to order at 1:00PM and gave a brief history of FOSA. He emphasized our main focus this coming year was to obtain a budget for Nick's office. OSA has received a small amount of funding from UCONN for a second year with thanks to Representative Larry Cafero. At present, a committee is working on a direct approach for funding through permit fees through the Connecticut State Legislature.

There was a brief report on FOSA's work with Glastonbury middle school students who have participated in supervised field and laboratory work for the past three years. Last fall the work was at Glastonbury's Academy School, with the previous two sessions held at the Morgan site in Rocky Hill. Archaeology is a part of the Glastonbury Social Studies Department's curriculum. To date, approximately 260 students have participated in the field and assisted in cataloging the artifacts found.

Vice President Ken Beatrice gave a summary of 2001 volunteer efforts for the OSA, including 1,067 person-hours spent at three Prehistoric and ten Historic sites throughout the State. At the Office, 838 person-hours were logged conducting laboratory work, cataloging artifacts, and maintaining and organizing the library. The total for the year 2001 was 1,905 person-hours. FOSA would like to thank all the members of historical, conservation, and school groups that gave assistance. The Arthur Basto Archaeological Society has given their support for Nick's field work and has always been recognized and appreciated.

The Treasurer's Report by Dreda Hendsey and the Secretary's Report by Mae Johnson were given and accepted by the Board of Directors.

An announcement was made by Bonnie Beatrice that the Society of Ethnobiology Conference would be held in March at the University of Connecticut. Volunteers were needed for various tasks and tour guides for the Mashantucket Museum, the Greenhouse and Herbarium on campus.

Election of officers was as follows: Mike Raber - President, Ken Beatrice - Vice President, June Cooke - Treasurer, and Bonnie Beatrice - Secretary. Welcome new Board members Roger Thompson, Paul Scannell and James Trocchi.

The Directors meeting was adjourned at 1:25 P.M.

## GUEST SPEAKER

Cosponsored by the Archaeological Society of Connecticut

Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Jonathan Leader, State Archaeologist of South Carolina. Dr. Leader presented a video and slide presentation detailing how the C.S.S. H.L. Hunley was located, recovered and preserved, in a remarkable combination of marine archaeology and engineering. The submarine sank in 1864 in Charleston, SC after torpedoing the U.S.S. Housatonic. Archaeologists and conservationists have excavated the Hunley's artifacts and human remains in a special-purpose conservation facility.

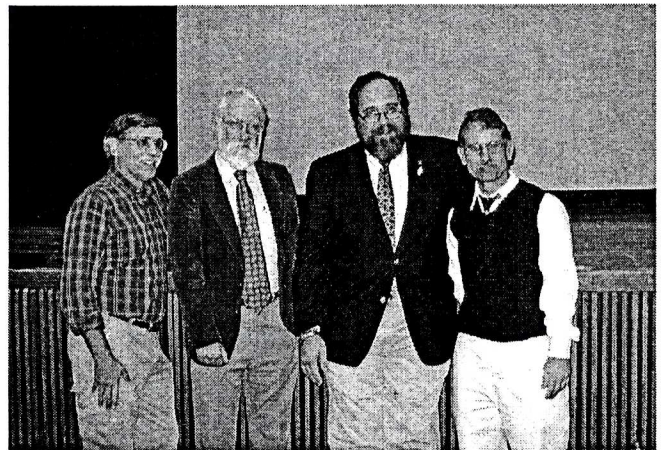
Among the many artifacts recovered was a gold coin dated 1860, carried by the Hunley captain, Lieutenant George Dixon. A keepsake from his fiancée, the coin was dented by a bullet during the battle of Shiloh, saving him from injury.

Another recovered artifact has created a lot of interest here in Connecticut, especially in the Killingly area: a Union soldier's identification tag belonging to Ezra Chamberlain, a Connecticut volunteer. The question is, "Why was a Union soldier's identification tag found aboard the Hunley?" Chamberlain's fate is now a mystery, but Drs. Bellantoni and Leader will collaborate on investigations to answer this puzzling question.

It was estimated that approximately 387 people were in attendance for this event. Nick Bellantoni said this was the largest attendance for any state archaeological gathering he had ever seen in Connecticut. A hard act to follow, but we're working on it.

FOSA thanks the Glastonbury School System and Dr. Jacqueline Jacoby for arranging the use of the High School for our meeting.

*Ken Beatrice*



*Mike Raber – FOSA President, Dan Cruson – ASC President, Jon Leader, Nick Bellantoni*

