



Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

**Member Newsletter
Spring 2003**

FOSA
P. O. Box 380845
East Hartford, CT 06138-0845
<http://www.keegans.com/FOSA>

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

FOSA members have been hard at work all winter on OSA projects, as you can read elsewhere in this newsletter. They continue the momentum of a stupendous effort in 2003, when almost 4000 hours of field and laboratory time were contributed, an increase of more than 100% over 2002 volunteer hours. These efforts were enhanced by a growing number of FOSA members; we now have over 110 active members, including the newest listed below.

Our biggest event this winter was the annual meeting, held again at the Glastonbury High School on February 1 and once more co-sponsored by the Archaeological Society of Connecticut. Uncertain weather, and the loss of the space shuttle that morning, probably diminished the turnout, but we still had over 100 people from FOSA, the ASC, and the general public. The business meeting outlined 2002 accomplishments, including over \$1000 spent on OSA supplies and office expenses and provision of liability insurance covering all volunteers working on OSA projects. John Spaulding's elegant Powerpoint presentation of photographs of volunteer projects graced the business meeting, at which we also re-elected directors Dreda Hendsey, Paul Scannell, and Jim Trocchi to two-year terms. As I have said many times, FOSA could not function without the remarkable work of our volunteer board, who bring us a really wide range of skills and experience.

The main attraction at the annual meeting was archaeologist Eric Deetz from the Jamestown (Virginia) Rediscovery Project. Eric wisely did not attempt to convince a room full of New Englanders that Jamestown trumps Plymouth in historical significance, but his slide-illustrated talk clearly demonstrated that Jamestown Rediscovery has found the richest, most extensive archaeological evidence of early 17th-century English settlement in this hemisphere. FOSA and the ASC are very grateful that Eric took the time to visit us that weekend.

On the OSA funding front, FOSA's committee on tapping into municipal building permit fees has drafted several versions of proposed changes in legislation needed to provide OSA office staff and equipment. We will be working with the Museum of Natural History's board of directors and with OSA-friendly legislators to present the most politically viable version of this plan, and hopefully have the funding in place by the time the OSA wing of the museum is completed under the UConn 21st Century initiative. When it comes time to roust out more legislative support, you will all be asked to become involved.

- Mike Raber

NICK'S NEWS

The obvious big news this winter has been the Governor's proposed budget cutbacks affecting historical preservation in the state. Fortunately, OSA is under the UConn umbrella and is probably small enough to fly under the radar. However, our sister agency in historic preservation, the Connecticut Historical Commission, is being cut drastically in funding and the Governor has recommended merging it into a new super-agency which will consolidate the state Tourism Office, the Film Commission and the Commission on the Arts! Cost savings, we are told, though no actual savings plans have been presented. Also, no funding is being provided for the four museums (Prudence Crandall House in Canterbury, Henry Whitfield House in Guilford, Newgate Prison in East Granby, Sloan Museum in Kent), so that personnel and museums will close indefinitely.

With the encouragement of many legislators, the Commission is involved in developing a counter-proposal under which the present organization would retain its professional independence through a re-organization of many public and quasi-public agencies involved in cultural heritage. Details are still emerging, but in the meantime we are asking everyone to make legislative leaders and members of the rank and file aware of the importance and impact of our work. Emails, letters, etc. to your legislators encouraging support of the Historical Commission's work, and noting the losses the State will suffer were the present historic programs eliminated, would be most helpful. Please feel free to contact me at OSA for assistance and contact information if you are not sure what to say or whom to notify.

OSA had a very busy winter season - not in the field, but in the laboratory. Our volunteers and students have been working on a series of sites from last year, including the analysis of the Bulkeley family tomb, as well as the cataloguing of new archaeological collections for the CT State Museum of Natural History.

On the museum front, we are disheartened to inform you that our director, Ellen Censky, has accepted a new job as director of the Noble Museum of Natural History at the University of Oklahoma. We hate to lose her, but this is a major career step for her. We hope that her hard work to obtain a new, renovated museum and a new archaeology wing will see fulfillment in the next few years. Anyhow, though Ellen leaves UConn in May, we miss her already.

- Nick Bellantoni, Ph.D.
State Archaeologist

FOSA VOLUNTEERS IN THE OFFICE

There continues to be a range of volunteer activity at Nick's office during the winter season. Despite the hardships of "old man winter," work continued on the evaluation and cataloging of artifacts from the Bulkeley Crypt. Most of this work was done by graduate students, but there was some help given by FOSA volunteers in organizing and storage of the material. Work also continued in cataloging materials from the Wadsworth site as well as prehistoric artifacts donated by two private collectors.

On December 14th a training session was provided by Luci Fernandez and Paul Scannell to six FOSA members regarding the scope of activities at Nick's office, with a particular emphasis on the processing and storage of historic and prehistoric artifacts. The session was well received and may be repeated in the fall of this year.

Dave Cooke, Roger Thompson, Paul Scannell and Ken Beatrice, under the spirited supervision of "the boss," installed a number of new metal shelves in Building One. The space crunch is ongoing and is a challenge to our CEO.

-Paul Scannell

NEW MEMBERS

- Deborah J. Adam - Groton Long Point
- Peter Bass - Colchester
- Martha Davidson - Manchester
- Bette D. Glickman - Glastonbury
- Victoria Hart - East Hartford
- Joan McCarthy - South Glastonbury
- Mark Mishriky - Glastonbury
- Cris Peck - Manchester
- Renee Petruzelli - Bristol
- Jeff Pudlinski - Litchfield
- Ernie Wiegand - Wilton
- Marlene Wilhelm & Family - Windsor

GERSHOM BULKELEY TOMB

This past winter the cataloging and analysis of the skeletal human remains from the Gershom Bulkeley Tomb has been ongoing under Renee Petruzelli, a graduate student from the University of Alaska, Mark Macaуда, a Ph.D. graduate student at the University of Connecticut, Anthropology Department, and FOSA's Anita Sherman. Anita has her Degree in Nursing and as a Dental Assistant, and has contributed her knowledge on several OSA projects. All three specialize in osteology and have several years of experience in conducting this type of investigation.

To date, they have identified 8 children and 21 adults with more study to be done. The analysis of the skeletal remains has shown signs of diseases such as tuberculosis, and several types of arthritic conditions. Dental examinations have shown two

different techniques of repairs and the use of gold for fillings and early examples of partial bridge work.

One of the many mysteries we hope to resolve is the positive identification of Gershom Bulkeley. Several of the coffin lids presented abbreviations and dates with brass tacks, but only a few coffin plates were found. Unfortunately, none showed Gershom Bulkeley or his initials.

It is hoped that at the completion of this project all of the skeletal remains can be identified. Once the laboratory work has been completed, a reinterment will be scheduled at the Bulkeley family crypt in Colchester.

Two other FOSA members who should be recognized for their professional talents are Dave Cooke for his leadership and John Spaulding for his photographic recording during the excavation of the crypt.

*-Ken Beatrice
Vice President*

MEMBERS' APPRECIATION PICNIC

The first Members' Appreciation Picnic was held on Sunday October 6, 2002 at the recently refurbished Gillette Castle State Park in East Haddam. Thanks to the work done by Ken Beatrice, FOSA members had their own picnic space at the new "Grand Central Pavilion," which offered a wonderful view over the Connecticut River.

The Sunday turned out to be a lovely day for a fall picnic with comfortable temperatures. FOSA supplied the basic picnic ingredients including the hamburgers, hot dogs and the drinks. Members contributed fruit platters, salads, potato dishes, bean dishes, etc. Members also brought cakes and cookies with the highlight being a cake decorated by Bonnie Beatrice. The icing was styled to show a number of "dig" sites with the message "Thank You Members and Volunteers." If anyone left the picnic hungry, it was not for lack of a sufficient amount and wide variety of foods.

The main purpose of the picnic was to recognize the volunteers who had assisted at either the office or at work sites during the year. Nick began the proceedings by furnishing an

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VOLUNTEER!

Members can help with:

- Office work
- Artifact cataloguing
- Staffing events
- Field excavations

Contact OSA at Storrs (860) 486-5248 or e-mail

nbell@uconnvm.uconn.edu

