



Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

Member Newsletter
Spring 2004

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

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It seems that we just turned over the calendar for the year 2004, and here we are at the opening days of March. Either the pace of time has speeded up or my own pace has drastically slowed. Either way, time marches on. The year opened with our annual meeting held at the Glastonbury High School on January 24th, as reported by vice president Mike Raber elsewhere in this newsletter.

Progress continues on our highest priority issue, the legislative proposal designed to establish a financial source for funding various positions and associated costs within the Office of State Archaeology. Following some sage advice from Leanne Harty, Interim Director of the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History at UConn, we made contact with the Comptroller's Office at the State Capitol. While presently occupied with issues associated with the current legislative session, the Comptroller's Office has reviewed our proposal and will be offering direction to our committee on how funds may be transferred between existing town and state entities. We hope to have all of the pieces in place by mid-summer so that a full-blown effort can be made to have this funding proposal enacted during the 2005 legislative session.

The project to computerize the archaeological site files located at the OSA is moving forward aided with the computer purchased by FOSA. Development of a digital database in a Geographic Information System (GIS) environment will allow for ready access to the information along with the ability to manipulate the information. More information on this important project will be forthcoming once the computer has been set up, the necessary software has been obtained, and the long-term strategy for data input has been finalized.

The warmer days coming with the upcoming months also spell out the opportunity for Dave Cooke and his crew of volunteers to once again establish their "dig" schedule. See his "Below Ground" in this newsletter for more details. A number of dates have already been scheduled for March and April. In addition, school class groups are scheduled to be at the Pitkin Glass Works in Manchester on May 6th and 12th. Those interested in volunteering on any of these "digs" should contact Dave Cooke for the specific location and time. New volunteers are always welcome at these "digs." In addition to the equipment that Dave recommends bringing, the only other requirement is the need to bring your own lunch. There is no better way to pass a pleasant spring or summer day than being involved in a "dig," having a relaxing lunch, and listening to Dave Cooke's stories of days gone by. Until next time,

Roger J. Thompson

NICK'S NEWS

Leanne Harty and the entire staff are working very hard in the transition toward the new Connecticut Archaeology Center. We have met with facilities management and the consulting architects and are moving forward on the building renovations. This will include three plans developed to give us options for the renovations, and a final design approved to start actual construction in six months. Obviously, these are exciting and very busy times.

Our demands to attend meetings and conduct field reviews in every corner of the state are increasing. I am struggling to keep my schedule flexible to provide necessary time to be on campus to meet with Leanne and UCONN administration, as we get closer to the new facility. As a result, I may not be in the field as frequently as I have in the past. My plans are to remain in the Horsebarn Hill office until construction activities begin. At that time I will transfer to the Hillside building, with the rest of our operation following upon completion of the building.

On another exciting note, we have been able to obtain a new state vehicle through the university. As many of you know, the old Ford Escort was failing after 186,000 miles! Leanne worked hard to make the necessary arrangements and by the time you read this announcement, we will already be traveling about the state in a new vehicle!

Again, we thank all of you for your support. As these important changes continue, we recognize more and more that the backing you give us, and the hard work of all the volunteers, truly makes a great difference.

*Nicholas Bellantoni, PhD
State Archaeologist*

VOLUNTEER!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tracy Capello, West Stafford
Anne & Gabe Choquette, Middletown
Gertrude Dorous, Enfield
William & Helen Ewald, Cromwell
Bob Fitzgerald, South Windsor
Gretchen & Roswell Hall, Storrs
Audrey McClure, North Haven
Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Nadeau, Meriden
Elizabeth Scannell & family, Griswold
David & Mary Smutnick, Pomfret Center

2004 ANNUAL MEETING

FOSA's seventh annual meeting on January 24, 2004 was held at the Glastonbury High School, which was again made available to us gratis along with audiovisual assistance courtesy of the Glastonbury Board of Education. Approximately 110 people attended.

The business meeting was preceded and followed by a Powerpoint show of FOSA volunteers at work in 2003, a production of our leading photographer, John Spaulding. In addition to a summary of 2003 FOSA highlights, this meeting had a special presentation by Nick Bellantoni and Leanne Harty on the new Connecticut Archaeology Center and some surprise presentations of appreciation.

FOSA now has about 130 active members, many of whom provided the more than 4,100 hours in volunteer field and laboratory time logged on fourteen projects last year. The organization also provided its by-now annual financial support in the form of liability insurance for volunteers, Nick Bellantoni's cell phone costs, parking passes at the OSA hut, plus the new computer for site file work mentioned in the president's letter of this issue. The president presented Leanne with a special Certificate of Appreciation (designed by FOSA member Collin Harty) for her contributions towards getting the Center started and securing critical UCONN support for the idea.

Following the secretary and treasurer reports, the president whipped out another special Certificate of Appreciation for June Cooke, who retired from the board and her post as treasurer at this meeting. June was honored for her role as a key founding member of FOSA, and her considerable contributions as a board member and newsletter editor. In recognition of her work, she and husband Dave Cooke - FOSA's man Below Ground - were also awarded a lifetime membership.

The business meeting concluded with our annual elections, an interesting amalgam of progressive term limits for officers and candidate selection procedures. The outgoing president thanked the board for their support during his four years in office, assisted by the outgoing vice president. The slate of officers presented by the board included Roger Thompson for president, Mike Raber for vice president, Bonnie Beatrice for a final two-year term in her current tenure as corresponding secretary, and Dreda Hendsey returning as treasurer. Other director candidates included Ken Beatrice for re-election, and new directors George Kinsella and Cynthia Redman. All were elected by voice vote, and the meeting adjourned for a Powerpoint interlude.

The re-convened meeting began with greetings from our guest, ASC president Dan Cruson, and an introduction by Nick Bellantoni of our speaker, Prof. Douglas Charles from Wesleyan University. Dr. Charles' talk was entitled "Myster-

ies of the Mounds: Symbolic Representations of Hopewell as Unearthed in West Central Illinois." Well illustrated with maps, schematic cross sections, and photographs from over thirty years of work along the lower Illinois River, his hour-long talk provided an overview of Hopewell culture and focused on the numerous small burial mounds found on the edges of the floodplain. After another half hour of questions from the audience, the meeting ended.

Mike Raber

BELOW GROUND

Field work for the 2004 season is already shaping up to be an interesting variety of projects. Some of these we worked on last year, while some are completely new.

Work will continue at the Bates Tavern site in East Granby and at the Pitkin Glass Works in Manchester. Also we will return to the Nursery site in Clinton and to the prehistoric site on Tanner Marsh Road in Guilford. A new project in Madison on Neck Road contains an 18th century cellar hole and also the potential of prehistoric aboriginal material.

At Bates Tavern we will focus on dump areas towards the rear of the house. Hopefully, we will uncover material that dates to the early tavern days of the dwelling. Dates for the work there have not yet been set.

At Pitkin Glass Works we will continue excavations within the walls. There will be two school groups working at the site. The first class will be on May 6th at 9:00 am and the second class will be on May 12th at 9:00 am. Further digs here will be scheduled later.

A date of April 14th has been set for the initial dig at Madison. The address is 100 Neck Road which is off Route 1.

At the Nursery site in Clinton the initial dig will be on April 28th at 9:00 am, while at the Tanner Marsh Road site the first dig will be April 29th at 9:00 am. Later dates at these sites are in the works.

A special note to those who wish to participate in field work. Please provide yourselves with the following minimum equipment: trowel, six-foot rule or tape, hand root clippers, clipboard, pencil, dust pan, gloves and a short-handled spade or shovel. A five gallon plastic bucket is handy to carry this equipment in and is also useful at the site. Mark your equipment with paint, tape or whatever so you can identify it.

It is early in the dig season and from now on Nick will surely have many more new projects for 2004.

Dave Cooke
(860) 529-7139

RADIOCARBON DATING

FOSA recently established a separate fund to enable us to send out samples from specific sites excavated by FOSA for OSA for carbon dating. This process will date specific features at a site in terms of years before the present, which can be converted to conventional dates B.C. or A.D. with range of most likely statistical variation before or after the date. For typical charred wood samples, dating accuracy and cost depends in part on the size of the sample. We have had \$440.00 donated to date; the average cost for a radiocarbon date is \$350.00.

The first sample, from the "Little River Site" in South Woodstock, is going out this month. This prehistoric site held an unusual stone lined feature. Information from this dating will be reported in a future FOSA newsletter.

June Cooke

VOLUNTEER NEWS

This winter's cataloging of artifacts was very successful, with many dedicated volunteers and students.

Patrick Popescu of Glastonbury High School is a member of the Advanced Research Mentorship Program. He has selected the Office of State Archaeology, with Dr. Nick Bellantoni, for his mentorship. In the photo below, Patrick is working here with Jack Rajotte on artifacts excavated from the "Bates Tavern Site." He has also worked with several other volunteers cataloging both historic and prehistoric artifacts from various sites. Here, he is studying historic ceramic shards for their materials, style and designs. Patrick says: "I didn't know that there was so much to know. How do you remember all this stuff?"

Jack has several years of experience as an avocational archaeologist. He has taken it upon himself to understand the



"So, is it Whiteware or is it Creamware?"

processes of manufacturing, identifying and dating historic ceramics. Jack is also a member of FOSA, the Arthur Basto Archaeology Society, the Gungywamp Society, and has been a dedicated volunteer at the General Spencer Homestead.

This year's dig season is now upon us and still we have "stuff" from the '03 dig season to catalog. Anyone wishing to "HELP" should make contact with Dr. Nick.

We, all the volunteers, wish Patrick the best and good luck to you in your future.

Ken Beatrice

"DAR'S GOLD IN DEM DAR BANKS"

Conducting the historical research for the Lemuel Bates property in East Granby led to an interesting legend concerning the time when the Bates house also functioned as a tavern. The tale involves a lost shipment of gold associated with the property. The story begins late one evening in 1779 when a caravan of thirteen wagons, each pulled by a team of four horses, pulled up in front of the Bates Tavern. The tavern, which served meals and spirits and rented rooms, was located on the road frequented by many who traveled between Philadelphia and Boston.

The caravan had departed Boston several days earlier and was headed for Philadelphia. When the driver of the caravan climbed down from his wagon and went inside to speak with Lemuel Bates regarding room and food arrangements, several of the local townsfolk gathered around the parked wagons and examined them. As the townsfolk gathered around the wagons, men dressed in Continental Army uniforms brandished their weapons and warned them away.

The wagons were filled with trunks and chests, many containing supplies and ammunition. However, several chests were filled with gold coins, specially minted in France and bearing the likeness of George Washington. These coins represented a loan from the French government for the struggling Continental Congress. Those who have studied the event have concluded that the amount of coins approximated \$2.5 million - a fairly significant cache of coins for that time.

After the driver had negotiated meals and lodging with Lemuel Bates, the wagons were drawn around to the rear of the tavern and guards posted to watch over the wagons and their contents. During that evening, word of the wagon train and its contents spread throughout the area. In a short time, a group of Tories British sympathizers gathered in secret and made plans to steal the gold. Later that night, this group of Tories surrounded the wagons and on a signal, attacked the guards, killing them all. After hitching up horses to the wagons, the Tories drove off toward the west and into the night.

Please see "Dar's Gold," Page 4

"Dar's Gold" - continued from Page 3

When the other soldiers awoke the following morning and found their comrades dead and the gold missing, they immediately initiated a search. About two hours later, the wagons and teams were discovered in a farmer's pasture, a short distance from the Bates Tavern. From the condition of the horses, it was apparent that they had been driven a long distance and returned. There was no sign of the chests containing the Washington dollars. Subsequent searches of neighboring houses and farms turned up no evidence of the gold.

Following the end of the Revolutionary War, a number of futile attempts were made to discover the location of the buried treasure. The story of the hidden gold remained virtually undisturbed until the 1880s when Richard H. Phelps, a resident of Hartford County, wrote a book on the history of East Granby. Richard Phelps was a descendant of the Phelps family who were among the original settlers of Turkey Hill, which over time came to be East Granby. Timothy Phelps had been the original owner of the property subsequently purchased by Lemuel Bates and where the Bates Tavern was located.

In his book, Richard Bates briefly describes the theft of the Washington Dollars from the Bates Tavern. Phelps goes on to relate the story of Henry Wooster, an East Granby resident who was often in trouble with the law and was also a Tory. Several months following the theft of the Washington Dollars, Wooster was caught and convicted of stealing a neighbor's cow. He was sentenced to a term in Newgate Prison but managed to escape after six months.

Wooster fled to England and later wrote to his mother admitting his role in the theft and stating that the entire wagon train had been driven to the east fork of Salmon Brook. Here, the coins were buried with the understanding that the group would come back later, recover the gold, and use the treasure to fund the British war effort. After several weeks, the Tories agreed to meet at a remote location in the woods and decide the fate of the coins. While they were meeting, they were attacked by Indians and everyone but Wooster was killed. Wooster never managed to return from England, and in his letters, he was never able to provide complete details regarding the location of the buried treasure.

And so the story of the lost treasure remained except for a number of isolated instances that bear consideration. After several days of heavy rain in 1944, a man hiking along the east fork of Salmon Brook happened to catch a glimpse of something shiny in the waters of the swollen brook. Wading into the waters, he retrieved the object, which turned out to be a Washington Dollar. Following news of this find, others searched the area for days, but nothing more in the way of gold coins was found.

Again in 1958, two boys were playing near Salmon Brook and found three coins. After waiting several days, they re-

ported their find to one of the fathers. They said that they found the coins on the east fork of the Salmon Brook. These coins turned out to be Washington Dollars. In a return trip to the brook with the father, the boys were unable to identify the exact location where the three coins were first found.

And finally, in 1987, a woman driving west on Highway 20 had a flat tire just as she reached the bridge spanning the east fork of Salmon Brook. After changing the tire, she went to the brook to wash her hands. While kneeling at the bank, she spotted a round, shiny object lying among the stream gravel. After retrieving the object, she discovered it to be a coin, later identified as a Washington Dollar.

The three separate and recent findings of Washington Dollars along Salmon Brook seem to give credence to a legend otherwise easily dismissed. The east fork of Salmon Brook is a little more than three miles from the Bates Tavern as the crow flies. While there are hills between the two locations, persons familiar with the region would likely have been able to traverse the distance within a couple of hours.

Anyone up for a hike along the banks of the East Salmon Brook on one of the next nice weekends?

Source: The primary source for this article was the book entitled Buried Treasures of New England, authored by W. C. Jameson and published in 1998.

Roger Thompson

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (1732-1796)

Thanks to the generosity of the Norwich Historical Society and other individuals in the community, the tomb of Samuel and Martha Huntington in the Norwichtown burying ground has been rebuilt. On October 20, 2003, State Archaeologist Dr. Nick Bellantoni was permitted to open the crypt so that their remains could be removed while the renovation took place. The following biography of Mr. Huntington is adapted from Rev. Charles A. Goodrich, *Lives of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence* (New York: William Reed & Co., 1856, pages 169-174).

Samuel Huntington was born in Windham, Connecticut, in what is now the town of Scotland, on the second of July 1732. His father was a plain but worthy farmer. His mother was a pious and discreet woman. It was a large family and several of his brothers devoted themselves to the gospel ministry, and attained to a higher respectable standing in their profession. One of his brothers, Dr. Joseph Huntington, was well known as the author of a posthumous work, on universal salvation.

Please see "Samuel Huntington," Page 5

Samuel Huntington - from Page 4

Unlike several of his brothers, Samuel Huntington did not have the benefit of a public education. As the eldest son, his father needed his assistance on the farm. Samuel, however, possessed a vigorous understanding, and, when released from the toils of the field, he devoted himself with great energy to reading and study. Thus, the lack of the common school was overcome through his own personal effort. He became possessed of an extensive well of information on various subjects, and by the time he was twenty-one, he probably was on a level with those who had received a college education, except in some particular areas. His knowledge was less scientific, but more practical and useful.

Although not averse to farming, Samuel demonstrated an early interest for legal pursuits, and at the age of twenty-two, he relinquished the labors of the field for the more agreeable study of the law. Financial circumstances prevented his availing himself of legal tuition in the office of a lawyer. But he was content to explore the maze of the profession unaided, except by his own judgment. The library of a respectable lawyer in a neighboring town furnished him with the necessary books. His diligence and perseverance accomplished the rest.

Mr. Huntington obtained sufficient knowledge of the principles of law to commence his own practice. He opened an office in Windham but in 1760, he moved to Norwich, where greater opportunity presented itself. Here, he soon became eminent in his profession. He was distinguished by a strict integrity and punctuality. These traits of character, combined with a strong element of common sense, ensured him the respect of the community. In 1764, he represented the town of Norwich in the general assembly, and in 1765 was appointed king's attorney. He was appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court in 1774. The following year he was made a member of the governor's council.

Mr. Huntington was among those who early and strongly set themselves in opposition to the claims and oppressions of the British parliament. His talents and patriotism were well received by the general public, and in October 1775, he was appointed by the general assembly of Connecticut to represent that colony in the Continental Congress. The following January, in conjunction with his distinguished colleagues, he took his seat in that venerable body and subsequently voted for and signed the Declaration of Independence.

On September 28, 1779, Samuel Huntington was elected president of the Continental Congress. He was the seventh man to hold that position, succeeding John Jay in that office. He continued to serve in that position until July of 1781, when ill health forced him to relinquish the arduous service in which he had been engaged for several years. Mr. Huntington filled the honorable station of president with great dignity and distinguished ability. Congress, soon after his retirement, accorded to him the expression of their public thanks.

Relieved from the toils which his high office in Congress imposed upon him, Mr. Huntington was soon able to resume his judicial functions in the superior court of Connecticut. However, the public was unwilling to dispense with his services in the great national assembly. Accordingly, in 1782, he was re-elected a delegate to the Continental Congress; but either feeble health, or his duties as a judge, prevented his attendance for that year. He was re-appointed the following year to the same office, and in July resumed his seat. There he continued as a conspicuous and influential member until November of that year, when he finally retired from the national assembly. Soon after his return to his native state, he was placed at the head of the superior court, and the following year, 1785, was elected lieutenant governor of the state. The next year he succeeded Governor Griswold in the office of chief magistrate of the state. This latter office he held through successive annual re-elections until his death on January 5, 1796 at the age of 64.

To strangers, Samuel Huntington often appeared as formal. He possessed a dignity and a natural reserve that repressed the advances of all except his intimate friends. However, few men ever possessed a greater share of mildness and equanimity of temper. Sentiments of anger seem to have found no place in his breast; nor was he ever known to utter a word that could wound the feelings of another or speak against the good name of an absent person.

When he was 30 years old, Mr. Huntington married Martha Devotion, the daughter of Reverend Ebenezer Devotion, the worthy minister of the town of Windham. Having no children, the Huntingtons adopted two of the children of Samuel's brother, the Reverend Joseph Huntington. One of their adopted children later became governor of Ohio; and the other the wife of the Reverend Doctor Griffin, president of Williams College, in Massachusetts. Mrs. Huntington preceded her husband in death by about two years.

It is not necessary to enlarge upon the public character or the public service of Governor Samuel Huntington. However, it is well to recognize the progress of such a man; from the humble occupation of a ploughboy, to the deep and learned investigations of the judge, and to the wise and sagacious position of the statesman. What was true of Mr. Huntington, in this respect, was also true of a great proportion of that group of patriots who, during the days of our revolutionary struggle, opposed with success the British oppressions. They came from humble life and rose by the force of their native genius.

The remains of Samuel and Martha Huntington were returned to the tomb on November 24, 2003, with all of the pomp and ceremony befitting a president. The honor guard and pallbearers were from the Governor's Foot Guard who also provided a 21-gun salute. The remains of the Hunting-

Please see "Samuel Huntington," Page 6

Samuel Huntington - from Page 5

tons were re-entombed in authentic coffins furnished by the Church and Allen Funeral Home. After being polished, the original silver-plated coffin plates were reattached to the new coffins.

Roger Thompson and John Spaulding



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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INTEREST INVENTORY

Please check areas of interest for volunteering:

- Work with OSA Art Work
- Committee and Board of Directors Work
- Computers Education
- Exhibit Planning Fund Raising
- Grant Writing Newsletter
- Office / Field Work Photography
- Typing/Word Processing Writing

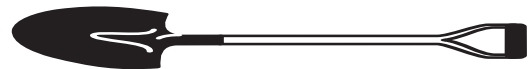


Dr. Bellantoni examining the new coffins for Samuel and Martha Huntington. Photo by John Spaulding.

MEETINGS

Connecticut Gravestone Network - "Gravestone & Cemetery Symposium 2004," **April 17**, 9am - 3pm. Wapping Community Church, South Windsor, CT (located at the jct. of Rt. 30 & 194). Presentations: The Bartlett Family Carving Dynasty ~ Lost Burial Grounds in Connecticut - why? ~ Small-pox and Cemeteries: What each tells the other ~ Connecticut Cemetery Archaeology: 18th Century Tombs. Also, information and displays by various cemetery organizations from around the state books and other items for sale. Lunch will be available for a nominal charge. Admission: \$5 for CGN members and \$10 for others. For inquiries please contact Ruth Shapleigh-Brown 860-643-5652 or shapbrown@cox.net or www.ctgravestones.com.

Archaeology Society of Connecticut ~ Annual Meeting, Saturday, **May 1**, 8:30am - 4:30pm. Biological Sciences and Physics Bldg, Room 130. Open to the Public Admission \$5.



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