



Special points of interest:

- Annual meeting lecture attracts 350
- Connecticut Archaeology Center plans move forward
- Volunteer opportunities abound in 2005
- Write for the newsletter!

Spring 2005

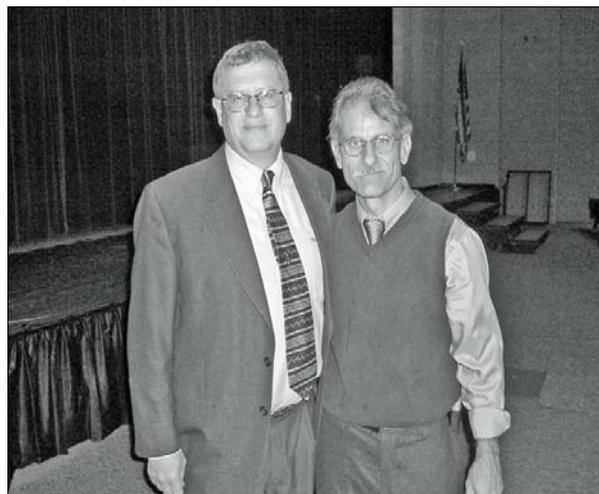
FRIENDS OF THE OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY, INC.

Member Newsletter

President's Letter

Seems that we just flipped over the calendar for 2005 and already we are a good part of the way through it. This means that spring will soon be here and we can again be thinking about a new year for field work and related activities.

Many of you had the opportunity to attend the FOSA annual meeting in late January and were treated to an excellent presentation by Dr. Douglas Owsley, the forensic anthropologist and curator of physical anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. Dr. Owsley spoke on the recovery and identification of the bodies excavated from the CSS H. L. Hunley, a Civil War submarine raised from the waters of Charleston Harbor. His presentation described the work involved in recovering the bodies and the forensic work used in establishing the physical characteristics so that the individuals who died in the vessel might be properly identified.



Dr. Douglas Owsley and Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni at the FOSA Annual Meeting, January 2005.

Our thanks go to the Connecticut Museum of Natural History and Connecticut Archaeology Center for co-sponsoring this excellent event. It was estimated that 350 people attended the lecture which represents a fine turn-out.

During the business portion of the annual meeting, John Spaulding, our resident photographer, narrated a slide show describing the
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Nick's News

The new Connecticut Archaeology Center within the Museum of Natural History at UConn is still moving forward! We continue to have meetings with the facilities management office on campus and with consulting architects. Plans are to renovate the Hillside Road building beginning this summer and to open the

doors in the late fall/early winter of 2006. We have had the support of some wonderful donors that are making the new Center an important place of public destination on campus to learn about the state's archaeology.

We hope you have had an opportunity to see our
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2004 FOSA Activities In Review

This past year was a busy and productive year for FOSA. Along with the ongoing field work, FOSA had the opportunity to help further enhance archaeology awareness through events presented to the public.

In April, CPTV sponsored a Family Science Exposition at the Connecticut Expo Center in Hartford. FOSA presented a “hands-on” exhibit of historic and prehistoric artifacts. In addition, there were “flora” specimens provided by the Connecticut Archaeology Center for people to examine and identify.

The Connecticut Graveyard Network held a Symposium at the Wapping Community Church in South Windsor. There, FOSA had a display about Samuel Huntington and the restoration work done on his tomb at the Norwichtown cemetery, along with a photographic exhibit by John Spaulding of work done by

OSA and FOSA. Among the four speakers were FOSA members John Spaulding (topic: “Connecticut Cemetery Archaeology”) and Ruth Shapleigh-Brown (topic: “Lost Burial Grounds in Connecticut”).

October brought us the 1st Annual Archaeology Awareness Expo. This event was sponsored by the new Connecticut Archaeology Center in cooperation with the Office of State Archaeology and the State Historic Preservation Office. Three speakers and 30 organizations, FOSA being one

of them, with their respective exhibits, made it a suc-

cessful first time event.

On several occasions last year FOSA members offered lectures and demonstrations. To name a few, Paul Scannell gave a talk at the Old Newgate Prison about the successful efforts in locating its associated cemetery. Gary Nolf presented an Atlatl demonstration to the Nipmuc tribe in Thompson, CT. And Ken Beatrice gave two “on site” lectures about William Gillette’s House Boat, the “Aunt Polly,” in East Haddam, CT.

In the realm of public education FOSA volunteers were busy helping Manchester school students during the dig at Pitkin Glass Works and at the Morgan Site in Rocky Hill with students from Glastonbury. Two fund raising events for the Connecticut Archaeology Center (one at the Asher Wright House in Coventry and the other at the Cove River Site in West Haven) gave novice “diggers” an enjoyable learning experience.

Working with adults and students alike is not only fun but rewarding. It is wonderful to see the excitement in their eyes when they find their first artifact. It is like rediscovering my own feelings back 45 years ago when I found my first “arrow head.” At all these venues, there are members of FOSA at the ready to *attempt* to answer questions and help identify objects. Not only are we helping to educate, we ourselves are gaining knowledge as we exchange information with such a diverse group of people who participate in these public events.

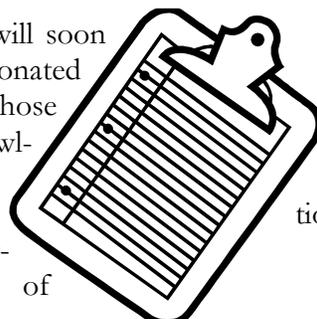
Watch your FOSA newsletters and Connecticut Archaeology Center’s program mailings for upcoming lectures, activities and events.

Bonnie Beatrice

“Working with adults and students alike is not only fun but rewarding.”

Looking for Catalogers

Even though spring and the dig season will soon be here, Nick’s lab has several sites and donated collections that require cataloging. For those volunteers who have wished for more knowledge of what they find in the field, cataloging is a great way to learn. No experience is necessary! To assist us we have several reference books, comparative artifacts and, of



course, Nick.

We have been meeting each Monday at Building #5 at UCONN, Horsebarn Hill Road, Storrs. We do have a coffee pot, but bring your lunch. For more information, email k.beat@att.net. Hope to see you.

Ken Beatrice

President's Letter

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various work projects carried on during 2004. These photographs provide an excellent record of the work being done by the many volunteers. John's photographs also serve as documentation for the reports compiled by Dr. Bellantoni.

At the same meeting, John Spaulding and Dave Cooke were recognized for their extensive contributions of time and talent to the ongoing work of the organization. Both have contributed countless hours—John with his photography and Dave with his boundless energy and enthusiasm in organizing and directing the digs for many years. The contribution of both John and Dave is deeply appreciated.

The FOSA newsletter serves as one vehicle for the exchange of information among those with an interest in archaeology. I would invite members to submit articles or stories that they find of local interest to share with others in future editions of the newsletter. The only request is that the articles or stories be limited to no more than 1,000 words. Articles or stories can be sent either to my attention at the FOSA PO Box or emailed to Mae Johnson at mpjohnson@snet.net.

Thanks to all of you for your continuing support for FOSA. This is important work as we assist in whatever way we can, the preserving and recording of our Connecticut heritage.

Roger J. Thompson

Nick's News

(Continued from page 1)

new webpage for the Museum/Center. The address is: www.cac.uconn.edu. The Museum/Center web page has a lot of information on our work and proposed projects. In addition, there are links and information on all the archaeological societies in Connecticut, and archaeology throughout the world. Also, of interest is the "In the News" feature that will highlight newspaper, radio and television features concerning archaeology in the state and elsewhere. The webpage is a work in progress, so let us know what you think and how we can make it even better!

**Visit the
Connecticut
Archaeology
Center Web
Page**

We are putting together our field season for the spring/summer 2005. Last year we conducted over 300 reviews of economic development projects, and performed 235 field reviews and meetings in Connecticut municipalities. We already have a number of projects throughout Connecticut, including the eastern region.

The Museum of Natural History and Archaeology Center will be sponsoring a number of workshops, lectures and activities on archaeology for the spring and summer season. Please contact Sue at 860-486-4460 to get specific information.

Meanwhile, we wish all of you a safe and healthy 2005 and hope we get to see you soon.

*Nicholas Bellantoni, PhD
State Archaeologist*

Welcome New Members

Jeremy Becker – Storrs
Robert M. Bedard, M.D. – West Hartford
Jamie L. Birchall & family – Vernon
Samantha Cox – New Jersey
Tucker Dolge – Tolland
Mark Falade – Hebron
Bill & Alison Guinness – East Haddam
Rita Horan – Riverside
Bernie & Irma Miller – East Haddam

Karin Peterson – West Hartford
David Prindiville - Manchester
Marian Rettmeyer & family –
Mansfield
Alan Spier – Glastonbury
Gregory Wyche – Storrs



Below Ground

Field work for 2005 is slated for the following Connecticut cities and towns: Preston, Salem, Ellington, Hartford, Coventry, West Haven, Woodbury, Madison, Windsor, Rocky Hill and Windsor Locks.

In Preston we will work on the John Avery House site. John Avery was an early Connecticut silversmith and his four sons were also silversmiths. (See Roger Thompson's article in this newsletter.)

In Salem work will be on a prehistoric site adjacent to Gardner's Lake. Many Indian artifacts were collected in the past in this area.

The Pinney House (1760-70) in Ellington is slated to be moved across the street from its present location and hopefully we will be able to conduct a dig prior to the removal operation.

The earliest known house in Hartford (circa 1750) is scheduled to be removed and a short archaeological investigation will be conducted around its perimeter.

Asher Wright Day is taking place on June 11, 2005 at the site of his house located on South Street in Coventry. It will be sponsored by the local historical society. FOSA began work at the site last year and the society would like to have us set up an exhibit for this day.

In West Haven work will continue at the prehistoric Cove River Site. This site appears to possibly date to the early archaic period.

We may possibly do some excavations at the Glebe House in Woodbury. Near the main house there was a small silversmith's shop of which some evidence has been found. An expansion of this may take place.

Hammonasset State Park in Madison will be the site of Native American Day on October 8, 2005. FOSA will set up an exhibit and dig at this location. Hopefully we will find a bona fide prehistoric site.

In Windsor we will continue exploration for the "tunnel" near the Congregational Church. Perhaps Ground Penetrating Radar will be used.

At Rocky Hill another dig will be held at the Butler & Sugden Shear Factory Site (1854-1865) located in the Dividend section of town. This will be sponsored by the Connecticut Museum of Natural History on April 9th from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

In Windsor Locks we will search for the crash site of Lt. Bradley's aircraft. The New England Air Museum wants the exact location of the crash to be pinpointed so that a memorial monument can be placed there. Bradley Field is named in honor of Lt. Bradley.

The 17th century Native American Cemetery located on Mason's Island in Mystic has been purchased by the Mashantucket Pequot tribe. The archaeological recovery of human skeletal remains and funerary objects will resume in early April. FOSA members are welcome to assist in this operation. Please report to Kevin McBride or his crew chief and identify yourself as a FOSA member. Keep track of your time and be sure to supply your own tools.

**Asher Wright
Day, June 11,
Coventry**

**Native
American Day:
October 8,
Hammonasset
State Park**

Robert Avery's Spoons

The story is told of six spoons made by Robert Avery. One day "Granny Treat" Brewster, so-called because her maiden name was Treat, brought to the shop six Spanish silver dollars to be made into spoons for her granddaughters. She had the spoons marked "D. B." (Dorothy Brewster) and gave two spoons to each of her three granddaughters. Robert made the spoons under his father's direction, and when they were finished he placed them in his



hatband and rode off on horseback to deliver them. In the course of time, Robert married one of the granddaughters and so two spoons came back. Upon the death of his first wife, he married another of the granddaughters, and two more spoons came back. At the old-fashioned supper of bread and milk, if any other spoon was handed to Robert, he would say, "Oh, I want one of my own spoons!"

Roger Thompson

The Avery Homestead, Preston, CT

Traveling east on Route 2 and looking north shortly before the Ledyard town line, one can see where a house and other buildings formerly stood. Many of these buildings have been removed in preparation for the future construction of a hotel in this area. The buildings and adjoining property, which at one time consisted of more than 100 acres, was owned by a number of generations of the Avery family.

Early Preston land records indicate that the property, along with “buidings, fruit trees and fencing thereon,” was sold by Joshua Parke to Captain John Avery in 1755. When Captain Avery died in the late 1780s, the

property was inherited by his eldest son, John Jr., who had been living there since his marriage to Mary Parke in 1752.

“... the farm had been in the Avery family a total of 139 years (1755-1894).”

John Avery, Jr. was a farmer and goldsmith, having taken up the latter trade at a comparatively late period in life due to the partial failure of his health. He possessed a great deal of mechanical ingenuity as demonstrated by the fact that he developed the entire process of making a brass-wheeled clock without ever having learned the trade. From his account book covering the years 1762 to the time of his death in 1794, it is apparent that he was a “jack of all trades.” Besides clocks, he made silver spoons, buckles, rings, buttons, hair combs, silver and gold necklaces, engraved a seal for the Town, made hinges, saddles, gun trimmings and many other small items. Mention is also made of his repair of watches, guns, scales, swords, spectacles, warming pans, brass kettles, tea pots and the like. It is also noted that John was a tailor and shoemaker, as charges for making shirts, trousers, suits, coats, stockings, shoes and boots frequently appear.

Four of John Avery, Jr.’s sons worked with their father to learn the trade of silversmith and clock maker. One of the sons, Samuel, learned the trade of silversmith, but

turned his attention to other things and was the inventor of a nail-cutting machine. Probably all of the articles made in the father’s shop bore the father’s trademark, though perhaps made by one of the sons.



Photo from *The Preston Pipeline*, Vol. 11 Iss. 8 (March 2004).

Robert Avery, the eldest son of John Avery Jr. by his second wife, was raised and died in the house where he was born. Following his father’s death in 1794, Robert gave up the silversmith business and devoted himself to farming. He became a successful breeder of blooded stock and had a large flock of sheep. He was captain of the militia company, justice of the peace, and is said to have been

the first man in the town to use a cast iron plow and to own a wagon.

Robert died in 1846 and the Avery property was divided among his children and his widow – Nancy Avery. When Nancy passed away in 1861, her portion of the property was divided among the surviving children and various nieces and nephews. Eventually, all of the property was acquired by Robert’s second son, Ulysses Avery. Ulysses farmed the homestead until the time of his death in 1884. His widow, Lucy Anne Avery, remained on the farm and sold the property to Appleton Main in 1894.

To the point when Lucy Anne Avery sold the farm, the farm had been in the Avery family a total of 139 years (1755 – 1894). Ownership of the property was transferred a number of times before the Preston Historical Society acquired the house lot itself in August 2003. The house was subsequently disassembled and preserved for the purpose of being rebuilt in Litchfield County.

Roger Thompson

Sources: *A Modern History of New London County, Connecticut*, by Benjamin Marshall, published by Lewis Historical Publishing Company (1922).

“Preston in Review” Sponsored by Preston Historical Society, Inc. (1971).

**Friends of the Office of
State Archaeology, Inc.**

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Newsletter Committee: June Cooke,
Mae Johnson, and Kristen Keegan



The Avery Homestead, Preston, CT. Photo from 1938 WPA Catalog of Old Houses in Connecticut. **See story at page 5.**

Meetings

Saturday, April 23, 2005 - 9 am to 3 pm: **Connecticut Gravestone Network 2005 Symposium.** Middlefield Senior Center, Middlefield, CT. Located at the junction of Rt. 157 & Jackson Hill Rd. (behind the Firehouse). Entrance is across from The Congregational Church & Cemetery. Displays and exhibits from various historic groups, and vendors with books and cemetery novelties items. Talks on subjects of “Mourning Quilts,” “Portland Quarry,” a “Colonial Carver,” “An Introduction to Middlefield History and Their Old North Burying Ground.” Lunch-snacks & beverages will be available. Admission: \$10 to public, \$5 for CGN members, payable at the door. Contact: email shapbrown@cox.net or write Ruth Shapleigh-Brown, CGN, 135 Wells St., Manchester, CT 06040-6127 – phone: 860-643-5652. For more details check events listings and times on CGN web site www.ctgravestones.com.

Saturday, April 30, 2005 – 9 am to 4 pm: **Archaeological Society Annual Meeting.** Institute for American Indian Studies, Washington, Connecticut. The ASC Spring Meeting will focus on Western Connecticut archaeology. New England archaeologists will give presentations of their work throughout Connecticut and New England. The meeting will provide a rare opportunity to meet archaeologists and learn about their work. Open to the Public – Admission \$5. For a schedule of events or further information, call the Museum at 860-486-4460.



Radiocarbon Dating

No radiocarbon samples have been sent out yet due to the confusion involved with Nick’s move to his new office. Within the next several weeks we will establish an account for Nick’s office with Beta Analytical in Florida. We have two charcoal samples ready to go as soon as

this account is finalized.

We currently have \$955.75 in the radiocarbon dating fund. We encourage you to continue supporting this important fund.

Dave Cooke