FOSA members and friends,

The summer is rapidly drawing to a close and I hope that yours was enjoyable despite the heat! The Adult Field School began the week that I’m writing this, and will be completed by the end of the week. We’re now gearing up for volunteer cataloging and library work at Horsebarn Hill this fall. We’re there on Mondays and would love to have your help! Please contact either Ken Beatrice, bkbeatrice@att.net, or me, c.redman26@comcast.net, if you are interested!

October is Connecticut Archaeology Month and Mandy Ranslow, a FOSA Board member, is coordinator for the activities. She is looking for ideas that will attract the public’s attention and appreciation for archaeology. She would love to hear of your ideas at mmr03@yahoo.com.

Be sure to mark Saturday, January 28, 2012, on your calendars! Zach Zorich, senior editor of Archaeology magazine, will be the speaker at FOSA’s 15th Annual Meeting. He conducted an interview with Werner Herzog, director of the movie Cave of Forgotten Dreams, which is featured in the April/May 2011 issue of the magazine. The movie takes the viewer into the Cave of Chauvet-Pont-d’Arc located in southeastern France. The cave, discovered in 1994, contains paintings dating to at least 32,000 years ago. If you saw the movie this summer, you are aware of the magnificence of the ancient art.

We appreciate your continued help and support and look forward to seeing you at some of the archaeology events this fall.

Cynthia Redman
President

An old adage states that you never know what will happen when the phone rings. I suppose that in today’s parlance that can be said of cell phones, texting, email, etc. As most of you know I am being dragged kicking into the 21st Century!

However, when the phone rang in July, it was the New Haven Police Department alerting me that skeletal remains had been recovered from construction activity at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Upon our arrival at the hospital, we encountered the skeletal remains of two individuals eroding out of a sandy soil horizon under a cement bridge. The cement barrier had been constructed in the 1970s when the hospital was originally built. Unwittingly, they poured the cement immediately over the historic burials and hence protected them from damage and preserved them until this summer.

Assisted by UConn mentorship students and Yale University, we began excavations wearing hard hats in the middle of construction activity around us. The burials were laid out on their backs, in an (Continued on page 2)
Volunteer Profile: Peter Bass

Peter Bass has been an active member as a FOSA field volunteer since the Gershom Bulkeley Tomb Project, conducted in 2002.

A long time resident of Colchester, Peter became interested in archaeology through the Colchester Historical Society. The Society was preparing the Bulkeley Project and looking for individuals who would be interested in assisting the State Archaeologist at Colchester’s Old Burying Grounds. From that time until now, Peter has contributed his time at most of the Native American and historical excavations. His favorite was the Rogers Site in Scotland.

Peter was very proud to serve in the Navy as a “Seabee” assigned to several ports including Iceland, Cuba, Puerto Rico and several installations on the U. S. East Coast.

After returning to Colchester from the service, he worked at and retired from Pratt and Whitney as a machinist. Peter has eight children and ten grandchildren.

A member of the Church of Hope in Hebron, he is also a trustee for the Church. He also supports the church as a volunteer for the Red Barn, a place for display and sale of items donated to the church, a “bargain basement” in a red barn.

Just for FUN and another interest, Peter loves contra dancing and is out and about several nights a week kicking up his heels.

Thank you, Peter, for your volunteering spirit.

Ken Beatrice

News from the Office of State Archaeology

(Continued from page 1)

The burying ground had been lost. That is, until the skeletal remains were uncovered in July.

With recognition of a Catholic cemetery, we began to work with representatives of the Catholic Church who came to the site, blessed the remains in place, and purified the area. We will continue to work with the Church hierarchy for an appropriate reburial at a future date.

Meanwhile, we are continuing historic research, including New Haven Vital Records, early city maps, and church documents. Yale University is conducting the forensic investigation of the remains. We are hoping to identify these individuals based on burial and church records and forensic testing, including DNA. In particular, we are interested in determining if the three stacked individuals are of the same family, or unrelated to each other. Unfortunately, due to the police investigation and construction site security, we were unable to notify FOSA membership for assistance and had to keep the field crew to a minimum. However, we will keep you posted as the research continues into this most interesting case.

Nicholas Bellantoni, PhD
State Archaeologist
Connecticut State Museum of Natural History  
Kids Are Scientists Too 2011 Archaeology Field School for Kids

For its 8th summer, the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and the University of Connecticut’s Kids Are Scientists Too program offered an Archaeology Field School for Kids at the Farwell House (78-184) located on the UConn campus in Storrs, CT. The Farwell House was built in the mid 18th-century and was occupied by the Farwell family until 1908. UConn acquired the house in 1911 and approved its burning as part of a fire training exercise in 1976. Public outrage at the house’s destruction led to an initiative to preserve the house foundation for future archaeological research.

For one week this summer students excavated three 1 x 1 meter units in what was the front yard of the house. Students were instructed in archaeological methods and were the primary excavators on the site. Many artifacts were uncovered, including nails, window glass, ceramic sherds, brick, and burned pieces of wood. Most of the artifacts appear to date to the burning of the house; however, some of the ceramic sherds and kaolin pipe fragments date to the house’s occupation.

Currently analysis of the artifacts is underway, and a report will be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office. Past years’ reports are on file with the SHPO. The field school students created an exhibit describing their excavation, which can be seen on the 2nd floor of the CSMNH, and a short article about this year’s dig can be found at www.dayofarchaeology.com/digging-with-kids-historic-archaeology-education-and-fun.

The Farwell house site has the potential to yield a great deal of archaeological information, and continues to be a venue to teach and inspire future archaeologists. I want to say a special thank you to my assistant, Katie Lynch, and the FOSA volunteers Mike, Will, Jim, and Ken who all contributed to making this year’s program a great success!

Mandy Ranslow

Welcome New Members (since April 1, 2011)

Dan DeLuca, Meriden  
Edward S. Goodrich, Glastonbury  
Corinne Huschle, Tolland  
William C. Leary, Windsor Locks  
Colleen McCallister, Monroe

Ann McCarty, Salem  
Aryion Petrelle, Woodbridge  
Bill Pizzuto, Enfield  
Keera Swan, Guilford  
Douglas Taggart, East Hartford

It’s almost time to renew your membership! Memberships are renewable annually in January. Single $25.00, Family $35.00. Make your check payable to Friends of the Office of State Archaeology, Inc., P.O. Box 380845, East Hartford, CT 06138-0845. Thank you for your support!
Below Ground

We have completed an interesting and varied Spring/Summer dig season. Due to vacations and availability issues, we are taking a break until early October 2011.

Several Phase I surveys recently conducted have produced few results, including a farm in Suffield, the Zagrav property in Colchester, and the Mukluk property in Sprague. By far the biggest focus this season was the Leatherman project in Ossining, New York. By the time we finished, more than 38 cubic yards of material were removed/rearranged. The results have been characterized by many as disappointing.

Several GPR projects were more productive. Surveys at the Lighthouse Museum in Stonington identified the probable location of an earlier lighthouse at the Point. In addition, surveys at the museum in Essex have tentatively pinpointed a wharf that currently lies beneath the museum parking lot.

Salvage archaeology was, once again, part of our activities. For example, a construction project at the Yale New Haven Hospital was interrupted so that skeletal remains could be removed from a trench that inadvertently penetrated a cemetery. An investigation of historical documents revealed a 19th century Catholic burial ground that had been forgotten and paved over. The project took four days and additional analysis is now being completed at Yale.

The CSMNH Archaeology Field School was held during August at the Ira Root homestead in Columbia, Connecticut. By any measure, the project was a huge success. Artifacts were recovered in such great quantities and numerous locations that it was difficult to keep track! All the recovered material needs to be examined and catalogued as we try to figure out what activities occurred at this complex house foundation/outbuilding site. Plans are being formulated to return to this site in October.

Archaeology Day was once again held at the Ward-Welles-Shipman House on July 15. Very few artifacts were found but the participants were pleased to learn excavation and recording techniques from the numerous volunteers on hand.

Finally, the annual Field Day with the Glastonbury Middle School children is scheduled for October 17 at the Horton Farm in South Glastonbury. Volunteers for this event, as in past years, would be greatly appreciated.

As in the past, I will be announcing future plans as early as I can via email. If you would like to be notified, I can be reached at BGreen316@aol.com. In addition, my phones are 860-721-0053 or 860-748-2749 (cell).

Bruce Greene

A view of the past: FOSA volunteers at work in 2008 (last published in our Fall 2008 newsletter).
Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center: Update

2011 Summer Archaeology Field Schools

This summer two University of Connecticut Archaeology Field Schools, Battlefield and Prehistoric, were hosted at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

The Battlefield Archaeology Field School students, taught by Kevin McBride, Jacqueline Veninger, and David Naumec, researched and excavated several King Philip’s War (1675-1676) battlefield sites. The students excavated at the Denison Homestead in Mystic, CT, the possible site of a stockade and military encampment of Connecticut forces led by Captain George Denison during the war. (Learn more about the dig at http://denisonhomestead.org/venture-smith-and-the-denison-connection/archaeological-dig-for-the-palisades.)

The Battlefield students also worked with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, the Blackstone Valley Historical Society of Lincoln, RI, and the Narragansett Indian Tribe to complete initial testing at a Rhode Island King Philip’s War battlefield site. On the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation, the students helped survey the peripheral area of Monhantic Fort, a known King Philip’s War-era site.

The Prehistoric Field School was taught by Zac Singer, a 2nd year graduate student at the University of Connecticut, with the help of assistants Michelle Pope and John Kelly. The students had the opportunity to excavate on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation at site 72-269, where they recovered traces of a possible Terminal Archaic site. The students also spent time excavating site 72-52A, furthering the search for Paleo-Indian activity where previous surveys uncovered a chert endscrapers and spurred graver. Students also learned from guest lecturers Brian Jones, a flintknapping Tim Ives, and Dan Forrest.

Both Field Schools spent two beautiful days of excavations on Block Island, assisting with surveys near the site of Fort Island.

Battlefields of the Pequot War Project News

The Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center continues its endeavors in the Battlefields of the Pequot War project, as they were recently awarded funding from the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program for the education and preservation of the Battle of Mystic Fort, and to begin surveys at the Retreat from Mystic Fort beginning at the conclusion of 2011 and continuing through 2012. (Visit the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program at http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/grants/battlefieldgrants/2011grantawards.htm to read more about the program and other interesting national battlefield projects underway.)

Currently, the staff is completing the documentation of Saybrook Fort, once located in present day Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Meetings with landholders in the Saybrook Point area will commence this fall to request permissions for field work in the projected area. Field work results have also been completed from the Battle of Mystic Fort, where artifacts and information gleaned from the primary sources of the battle yielded surprising revelations and further detail than ever known before. (Visit http://pequotwar.org/archaeology/overviewbattle-of-mystic-fort for detailed information, images, and in upcoming weeks, a final technical report of the Battle of Mystic Fort.)

Many thanks to the Yankee Territory Coinshooters metal detecting club. Without their help, the Battlefields of the Pequot War excavations would not have been successful.

Laurie Pasteryak
Native American Travel

The Indians of Southern New England had only two modes of travel: by foot across land or by boat across water. They used these modes to maintain contact with other Indian groups or for seasonal movement. This is very nicely summed up in the following passage by an early observer. “They also frequently have villages near the water sides, at fishing places, where they plant some vegetables; but they leave those places every year on the approach of winter, and retire to their strong places, or into the thick woods, where fuel is plenty, and where there is game and venison” (Van Der Donck 1655: 81). We see here that they moved three times a year for reasons to hunt, fish or plant. For these reasons the Southern New England Indians are anthropologically classed as “restricted wanderers,” which is defined as the movement of a band within a defined territory, either erratic or following a seasonal round.

Travel by Land

Here in Connecticut, some of the state’s roads are successors to former trails that Indians used for centuries. The accompanying map was devised by Mathias Spiess and shows trails the Indians used throughout the state. This map depicts the supposed trails in 1625 through the deduction that the white men followed the same routes and villages of the Natives. To anyone who knows the major highway routes in Connecticut, these trails overlay or come close to overlaying many of our present state highways. For example, the Connecticut Path corresponds to eastern I-84, the Northwest Path is western Rt. 44, the Berkshire Path is Rt. 7, the Shore Path is the I-95/Rt. 1 corridor, the Mohegan Path is I-395, and the Quinnipiac-Suckiaug Path is the southern half of the I-91 corridor.

For use in cold weather, the Indians had footwear made chiefly of animal hide, called moccasins. This footwear is described by early writers: “... and for the Winter they have boots, or a kind of laced tawed-leather stockings” (Lechford 1642: 103). “They wear shoes likewise of their own making, cut out of a moose’s hide” (Wood 1634: 84). “Pumps too they have, made of tough skins without soles” (Josselyn 1675: 297). Also noted was another material used to make shoes, corn husks: “They also make shoes out of corn husks, which are not durable” (Van Der Donck 1655: 78).

In the winter snowshoes were used in the deep snow, but it is doubtful that they were used to any extent in Southern New England because of the relatively low amount of snow for the area. “In the winter when the snow will bear them, they fasten to their feet their snow shoes which are made like a large Racket we play at Tennis with, lacing them with Deers-guts and the like” (Josselyn 1675: 297).

Early writings tell us that the Colonists followed the paths previously made by the Indian inhabitants when traveling about as seen in the following excerpt:

... with two more of my associates bending our course to New Plymouth lost our way, being deluded by a misleading path which we still followed, being as we thought too broad for an Indian path (which seldom is broader than a cart’s rut) but that the daily course of Indians from the Narragansets who traded for shoes, wearing them homewards, had made this Indian tract like an English walk and had reared up great sticks against the trees and
Native American Travel

(Continued from page 6)

marked the rest with hatchets in the English fashion, which begat in us security of our wrong way to be right when indeed there was nothing less

(Wood 1634: 90). The above passage enlightens us also to the fact that this well-used blazed Indian trail unintentionally mislead the English to believing it was made by their own people, resulting in them getting lost.

Travel by Water

The Indians traveled on the water by dugout or birch bark canoe. They each had their particular advantages.

“Dugout canoes were made from hollowed out pine, dugout with clam, oyster shells and stone axes” (Wood 1634: 109). Their dugout canoes had large capacity but were very heavy and not made to portage. They could carry twenty people and were forty to fifty feet in length. “For their water passage, travels, and fishing, they made boats or canoes, either of great trees, pine or chestnut, made hollow and artificially; which they do by burning them; and after with tools, scraping, smoothing, shaping them” (Gookin 1674: 12). Williams’ description shows how an Indian would bring all his necessities with him, retreat from their community and live in the field until he completed the boat.

Mishoon an Indian boat or Canoe made of a pine or oak, or chestnut-tree: I have seen a Native go into the woods with his hatchet, carrying only a basket of corn with him and stones to strike fire when he had felled his tree (being a chestnut) he made him a little house or shed of the bark of it, he puts fire and follows the burning of it with fire in the midst in many places: his corn he boils and has the brook by him, sometimes angles a little fish; but so he continues burning and hewing until he has within ten or twelve days (lying there at his work’s alone) finished, and (getting hands) launched his Boat; with which afterward he ventures out to fish in the ocean

(Williams 1643: 107). Williams also goes on to say canoes vary in capacity from three or four to twenty, thirty, and forty people.

By comparison, birch bark canoes were small in capacity but light in weight. “...they run with their light canoes, (which are a kind of boats made of Birch Rindes, and sowed together with the rootes of white Cedar-Trees) from place to place” (Johnson 1654: 39). “Their Canoes are made without any iron, of the bark of a birch tree, strengthened within with ribs and hoops of wood, in so good fashion, with such excellent ingeniuous art, as they are able to bear seven or eight persons, far exceeding any of the Indies” (Rosier 1605: 12). “Thus, the canoe had a frame shaped with tree saplings, covered with birch bark sown to the saplings with cedar roots. Tree pitch and rosins were used to seal any leaks” (Josselyn 1675: 307-308).

Being lighter, Native American birch bark canoes were faster than the heavier dugouts even though they had less manpower to move them. “This we noted as we went along, they in their canoes with three oars, would at their will go ahead of us and about us, when we rowed with eight oars strong; such was their swiftness, by reason of the lightness

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Native American Travel

(Continued from page 7)

and artificial composition of their canoes and oars” (Rosier 1605: 20). Thus, we see a comparison of the speed of only three oars in a canoe overtaking an English crew in their boat with eight oars.

The birch bark canoes also had a great advantage over the bigger dugouts when there was a need to portage at falls on the streams or necks of land separating bodies of water.

Ships they have none, but do prettily imitate ours in their birchen-pinnaces, their canoes are made of Birch, they shape them with flat ribs of white cedar, and cover them with large sheets of birch-bark, sowing them through with strong threads of spruce-roots or white cedar, and pitch them with a mixture of turpentine and the hard rosen that is dried with the air on the outside of the bark of fir trees. These will carry half a dozen or three or four men and a considerable freight, in these they swim to sea twenty, or forty miles, keeping from the shore a league or two, sometimes to shorten their voyage when they are to double a cape they will put to shore, and two of them taking up the canoe carry it cross the cape or neck of land to the other side, and to sea again; they will indure an incredible great sea, mounting upon the working billows (waves) like a piece of cork; but they require skillful hands to guide them in rough weather, none but the Indians scarce dare to undertake it, such like vessels the Ancient Britians used, as Lucan relates (Josselyn 1675: 308). We see that Indians were very skilled in the roughest of waters with the less stable canoe. “They were more delicate and not as stable” (Gookin 1674: 152). From Josselyn’s observations above, one can appreciate the skill and bravery of the Indian in handling a small vessel such as this in Long Island Sound and the open sea when caught in an unexpected storm.

Whether the Indians were traveling by land or water they are said to be good swimmers in order to ford a stream or in the event of their boat tipping over in the water.

We see that Indians traveled by simple means and didn’t have the use of the wheel or beast of burden to aid them. Further, these first people of Southern New England traveled basically the same corridors we travel today in our automobiles and they skillfully and bravely plied the same streams, lakes and seas we do today in our recreational vessels.

Jim Trochi

Bibliography


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Meredith Vasta, Salem

KAST students excavate at the Farwell House (see p. 3). Photo by Mandy Ranslow.
Call for Articles

FOSA Members,

Interested in contributing to FOSA’s newsletters? You do not need to be an expert or even an archaeologist. Have you visited an archaeological site while on vacation? Have you visited a museum in Connecticut that features an archaeology exhibit? Would you like to share your experience of digging with Nick, FOSA, or while on any kind of excavation? Write a short article about it to share with your fellow FOSA members! We will incorporate it into the next FOSA newsletter.

E-mail Mae Johnson at mjohnson@snet.net for more details.

Meetings and Announcements

Saturday, October 15, 2011 – 9:30am registration: Archaeology Society of Connecticut Fall Meeting. Squire’s Tavern, Barkhamsted, CT. The meeting will include a field trip to the Barkhamsted Lighthouse site led by Ken Feder. Contact Lee West by email at lwest@sbcglobal.net for further details.


Thursday, October 20, 7:30-8:30pm: Talk by Nick Bellantoni, State Archaeologist (topic to be announced). Guilford Free Library 67 Park Street Guilford, CT. See www.guilfordfreelibrary.org for more information.

Saturday, October 22, 10am-12pm: Atlatl and darts. Gary Nolf and Cheri Collins will instruct participants in the history and construction of atlatls and darts, including practice at using participants’ own constructions. Adults and children ages 10 and above. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Westmoor Park, 119 Flagg Road West Hartford, CT. Program #: 522705B. Fee: $30 resident, $35 non-resident. Register online (westmoorpark@westhartford.org), by fax, or mail to Westmoor Park, (860) 561-8260.

Sunday, October 23, 2011 – 1pm – 5pm: 6th Annual Native American-Archaeology Roundtable: Baubles, Bangles, Bright Shiny Beads: Wampum in Native American Societies. The Institute for American Indian Studies, 38 Curtis Road, Washington, CT 06793, 860-868-0518, www.birdstone.org. Scheduled speakers: Dr. Marshall Becker (University of Pennsylvania Anthropology), Trudie Richmond (Schaghticoke), Allen Hazard (Narragansett), and Dr. Ralph Solecki (Columbia University Anthropology). Presentations will be followed by a lively panel discussion. Other scheduled panelists include Faith Davison (Mohegan), Richard Manack (New Netherland Nauticals), and Dr. Kevin McBride (Mashantucket Museum and Research Center).


Tuesday, October 25, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Bridgeport Community Historical Society Meeting - “Early and Strange Manufacturers of Bridgeport.” North Branch Library, 3455 Madison Avenue, Bridgeport. Archaeologist Ceci Saunders lectures on Bridgeport’s remarkable history of manufacturing vitality and ingenuity. For more info contact Audrey: (203) 371-6397.

Wednesday, October 26, 9am-12pm: “Follow The Moon” Native American exhibit and program. Kellogg Science Center, Osborndale State Park, 555 Roosevelt Drive Derby, CT 06418. State Archaeologist Nick Bellantoni will lead a tour of students and adults through the exhibit. Contact: Susan Quincy, Susan.Quincy@ct.gov for information. Also see http://www.stateparks.com/osborndale.html.


Saturday, October 29, 10am-12pm: Traditional Tools of Food Preparation. Some of our everyday kitchen tools have been in use since prehistory! Use reproduction tools to prepare foods, then you can make your own “kitchen” tool to take home. Instructor: Cheri Collins. Adults and children ages 10 and above. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Westmoor Park, 119 Flagg Road West Hartford, CT. Program #: 522705B. Fee: $30/resident, $35/non-resident. Register online, by fax, or mail to Westmoor Park, (860) 561-8260, westmoorpark@westhartford.org.

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- Writing Site Forms & Reports
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**We would like to hear from YOU!** Please send your comments and ideas related to FOSA or the FOSA Newsletter to Mae Johnson at mpjohnson@snet.net.