



The Spring FOSA Newsletter is now our third since the onset of the pandemic. As you no doubt realize, opportunities for fieldwork have been limited but FOSA and the Office of State Archaeology have nonetheless accomplished a remarkable amount during the intervening months, as we think you will find reflected in this issue. *Jerry Tolchin, FOSA Newsletter Editor.*

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Member Newsletter



President's Letter

Greetings,

I am pleased that the worst of the Covid pandemic appears to be behind us. I am happy to report that the 2021 field season is already underway. FOSA volunteers have been in the field assisting Dr. Sarah Sportman at multiple ground penetrating radar (GPR) surveys as well as excavating at a Native American site in East Haddam and an historic site in Hebron. FOSA volunteers also assisted in reestablishing the grid at the Lt. John Hollister site in Glastonbury. At this time, we expect there will be continued field opportunities throughout the summer and at least two weeks of excavations at the Hollister site. Email notifications will be sent to interested members as the details are confirmed. If you are not receiving field work notifications currently, send a request to be added to the distribution list to: fosa.ct@gamil.com.

Our collaboration with the Archaeological Society of Connecticut (ASC) has resulted in twelve virtual presentations focusing on a diverse set of topics directly related to Connecticut archeology. The feedback on these presentations has been very positive and FOSA and ASC hope to continue this series in the future in addition to returning to an in person presentation at the FOSA 2022 annual meeting. The fall 2020 presentations are currently available online at www.ctarchaeology.org/fall-2020 and we hope to have the balance posted soon. (See page 9 for more information)

Lastly, I would like to thank all of our members for their support during the past year.

Scott Brady, FOSA President



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The 2018 Rocky Hill Site Tells Personal Story

by Scott Brady

While most artifacts recovered from archeological sites have spent some time in the possession of a single individual, the stories that can be coaxed from them predominantly speak to a group or community rather than that specific individual. So when a site and its artifacts tells a more personal story, it is all the more interesting and exciting for me.

One of those stories came about during a 2018 rescue excavation at a Rocky Hill development. State Archeologist Dr. Brian D. Jones felt that some additional exploration of the site was warranted based on several small flakes of high quality Normanskill chert that had previously been recovered.

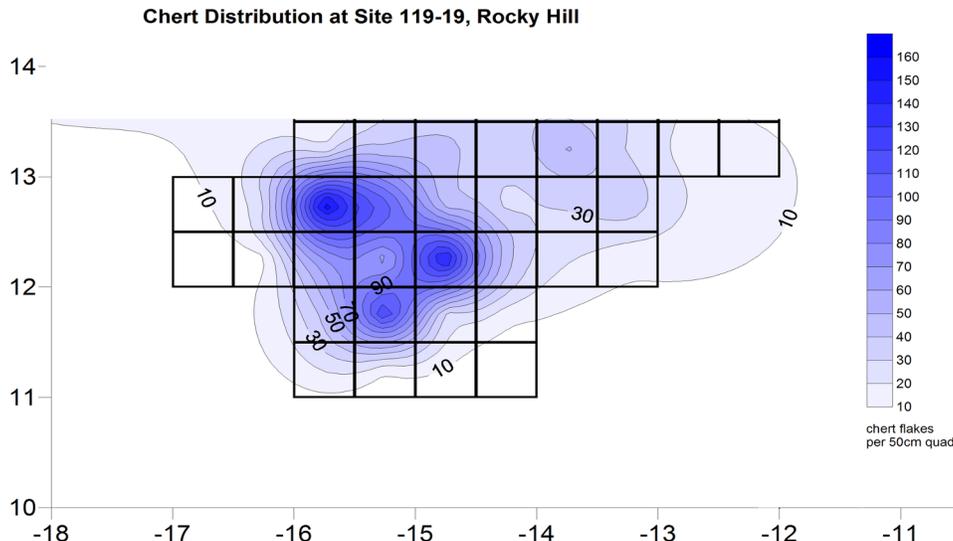
Brian and a crew of FOSA volunteers, as well as members of the UConn field school, worked at the site excavating about 35 meters across two loci. One locus, predominantly featured a small scattering of quartz debitage. An interesting but fairly unremarkable assemblage was recovered over approximately five meters.

The second locus, which covered the remaining 30 meters, proved to be much more interesting. The site contained significant concentrations of high quality Normanskill chert throughout. Large core reduction type flakes were found throughout the assemblage. Eventually, the recovery of a Snook Kill projectile point and a broken drill as well as the quantity and quality of the chert at the site helped date the site to the Terminal Archaic period 3,600 years ago.

One of the questions Brian was trying to answer during the excavations was how intact was the site and its assemblage. The site is slightly downslope from a higher plateau and evidence of a water cut channel running through the site caused concern that the artifacts may have been carried down to the site from the plateau above.

Late in the excavations FOSA member Dick Hughes and I were working on adjacent units along with two students from the UConn field school when we began to expose tiny micro-flakes of chert across multiple adjunct quadrants. These flakes were identified as finishing flakes – the last flakes removed during the creation of a point, often by pressure flaking, to create the final finished edge. Directly under these micro-flakes were larger flakes indicative of the reduction of a bi-face and directly below these were larger, chunky flakes consistent with the reduction of an unshaped block of material removed from the quarry site.

It became clear that the chert flakes where telling us an incredible story. These flakes were layered exactly in the proper point production sequence, indicating that this locus was intact and the artifacts were exactly where they fell. For me this was an incredibly exciting find, but the real kicker came during site analysis when Brian created a distribution diagram for flake concentrations across the site. The diagram of the units where this sequence of artifacts were found revealed a horseshoe shaped distribution pattern. Our conclusion was that the center of that horseshoe was the exact spot where an individual flint knapper sat and created his or her tools approximately 3,600 years ago.



Photos on this page are all from the Rocky Hill site and were taken by Brian Jones





News from the Office of State Archaeology

Greetings FOSA members:

The summer field season is already off to a busy start and I anticipate a lot more fieldwork opportunities than last year. In late April, we returned for two days of fieldwork at the possible Paleoindian Two Wrasslin' Cats Site in East Haddam. Despite some issues with rain, we completed three one-meter excavation units and a grid of 50cm shovel test pits (STPs), placed at four meter intervals across the site. The test pits were excavated to help determine the site boundaries and clarify the locations of different loci of activity at the site. Analyses of the recovered artifacts are ongoing, but we continued to find evidence of lithic tool reduction and use, consistent with a Paleoindian/Early Archaic occupation. The majority of the artifacts are of Normanskill chert. To date we've recovered numerous flakes, including unifacial and bifacial reduction flakes, and utilized flakes, along with several endscrapers and three graters. Use-wear analysis on the graters, carried out by Logan Miller at Illinois State University, verified that these tools had been used to etch or score bone or antler. Finally, as fieldwork was winding down, we at last found a definitively Paleoindian artifact- a proximal fragment of a channel flake- in the last test pit. We look forward to returning to the site again this year, later in the summer or in the autumn to continue the fieldwork.

In April and May OSA and FOSA began fieldwork on the Cesar and Sym Peters Site in Hebron. We established a site datum with the total station back in April, and this month we returned to the site to first clear it of debris, then do some preliminary testing. Clearing the cellar hole was a truly Herculean effort and I'm so grateful to the FOSA volunteers who came out to help! We cleared all of the brush and vegetation and debris, but the cellar depression was filled with huge, sawn sections of tree trunk from a felled tree. We managed to get them all up and out of the cellar hole and away from the site.

Once the cellar was clear, we excavated three test pits and three excavation units in and around the site. Although we've only done a little bit of work so far, we've already learned a lot about the house. The cellar hole measures 24 feet by 16 feet, with a stone wall that divides the cellar into two equal parts, each measuring 12 feet by 16 feet. There is a clearly defined opening in the south wall of the foundation, suggesting a bulkhead or other entrance, and an excavation unit placed just south of the opening encountered a possible stone step. A large pile of rubble, including bricks, sits at the western end of the cellar depression and may mark the location of a chimney, although more work is required to be certain.

The archaeological work also identified an addition on the north side of the house that did not share the cellar hole. Our first test pit at the site, opened back in December 2020, encountered laid stone at about 12 cm below surface. In May we followed this line out and placed an excavation unit a few meters away to see if we could catch the suspected wall or footing from the test pit. We found a buried section of a dry-laid field stone wall that lines up with the cellar hole. Both the initial test pit and the excavation unit contained large quantities of burned nails and melted glass, indicating a fire in at least this part of the structure. We plan to return to the site with GPR in the near future to try and identify the size and configuration of the addition, as well as any other large, buried features around the house.

The historical record also provides some important information about the house. Documentary research carried out by Hebron historian John Baron, indicates that in the early 19th century, the house was two-stories high and had two fireplaces. We know from recorded deeds that the house was standing in at least the late 18th-century, but our sense is that it is likely older. The majority of the archaeological materials recovered to date span the late 18th-19th centuries and include redware, creamware, pearlware, whiteware, window and bottle glass, hand-wrought and machine cut nails, kaolin pipe stems, and animal bone. Some of the artifacts, recovered from a unit placed inside the cellar, suggest an earlier occupation, as well. In that unit we recovered redware, sherds of English white salt glazed stoneware (ca. 1720-1770) and a copper coin dating to 1723.

News from the Office of State Archaeology *(Continued from page 4)*

We plan to get back out to the site a few more times this summer to do the GPR work around the cellar hole and expand some of the May excavations to learn more about the architecture of the house.

More information on volunteer opportunities and the dates of this work will be forthcoming. We look forward to continuing the research on this important site in collaboration with Mr. Baron and descendants of the Peters family. Plans are in the works for a site visit or dig day with the family later this summer or in the fall.

In terms of upcoming fieldwork, we have several projects planned. At the end of June we will be doing work in the rear yards of the Mary and Eliza Freeman Houses in Bridgeport. These structures, which were built in 1848 and are the last standing houses from what was once the thriving Little Liberia community. Renovation work on the houses is scheduled to begin soon and the Freeman Center wanted to get some archaeology done in the back yards before it starts. Nick Bellantoni and Deb Surabian did GPR work out at the site in 2008 and identified a few interesting anomalies in the rear yards, so our investigations will focus on those. It is unclear how long the work will take, but we're planning on about one week.

We will be back out at the Hollister Site in the last week of July and first week of August (7/26 – 8/6). We will be opening excavation units around some of the identified cellar features to get a better sense of how the identified cellars fit together, and hopefully some additional information about their relative chronology. We will also explore two of the features identified in 2019, to determine if they are contemporary with the historic period site, or if they date to an earlier Native American component.



FOSA volunteers hard at work clearing the Peters House cellar hole in May.



Buried wall section, likely related to an addition on the north side of the Peters House cellar hole.

We will also be out at the Stanton-Davis Site in Pawcatuck again this summer to do some testing in and around the cheese/milkroom at the house, which is slated for renovation. Finally, in October, we have testing and possible excavations planned in Ivoryton, where we carried out a GPR survey last year for the Essex Land Trust. The location was part of the large-scale ivory processing and manufacturing industry that gave Ivoryton its name.

We also have some important summer plans in the OSA lab and collections. First, Fiona Jones, a student at SUNY Buffalo, will be working with Dr. Jackie Veninger-Robert as a NAGPRA intern. Fiona will assist in Jackie's work to continue inventorying our NAGPRA-related collections, and learn about and participate in the NAGPRA process. Second, with the help of a UConn undergraduate student intern, we will organize, inventory, and re-box all of the non-Native American human remains in the OSA collections. The goals of this work are to complete an inventory of all of the human material in the collections to facilitate research and where possible, reburial of salvaged remains and to more efficiently use collections space.

Finally, UConn Anthropology student Brianna Rae will be continuing the inventorying and analysis of the Grannis Island Site, which she began this spring through her research assistantship with OSA. Her summer work is being jointly funded by FOSA and the Connecticut Museum of Natural History. Brianna will organize, inventory, and analyze the archaeological collection from Grannis Island, one of the most important and completely excavated pre-contact Native American sites in Connecticut. The excavations at the site were carried out over several decades, first by Howard Sargent when he has a student at Yale, and later by Dave Thompson and the Greater New Haven Archaeological Society (GNHAS). The site is multi-component and dates from the Late Archaic through the Late Woodland periods. Fortunately, OSA has the collection as well as all of the paperwork, maps, correspondence, and some manuscript drafts about the site written by members of GNHAS. We hope that Brianna can build on the work that was done at the site in the past and apply a new perspective, research questions, and analytical techniques to this important assemblage. The collection also includes a large and well-preserved assemblage of animal bones, which I am working on to complement Brianna's work on the larger assemblage. We hope to be able to share the results of this work with the larger archaeological community through public presentations and publications over the next several years.

I hope everyone is enjoying the (mostly!) beautiful spring weather we've had and I hope to see many of you in person this summer!

Sarah

Sarah P. Sportman, PhD
Connecticut State Archaeologist
Office of State Archaeology



FOSA Membership Update

New Members

(As of 9/25/2020)

- Georgine Burke
- Heather C. Cruz
- Apama Devershetty
- Mike Edwards
- Evan Honeyman
- Lindsay Kiesewetter
- Will Luchon
- Allison Malloy
- John McDonald
- Polly Newman
- Asher Perlman
- Dale Rio
- Samuel P. Urban
- Dave Wnuck

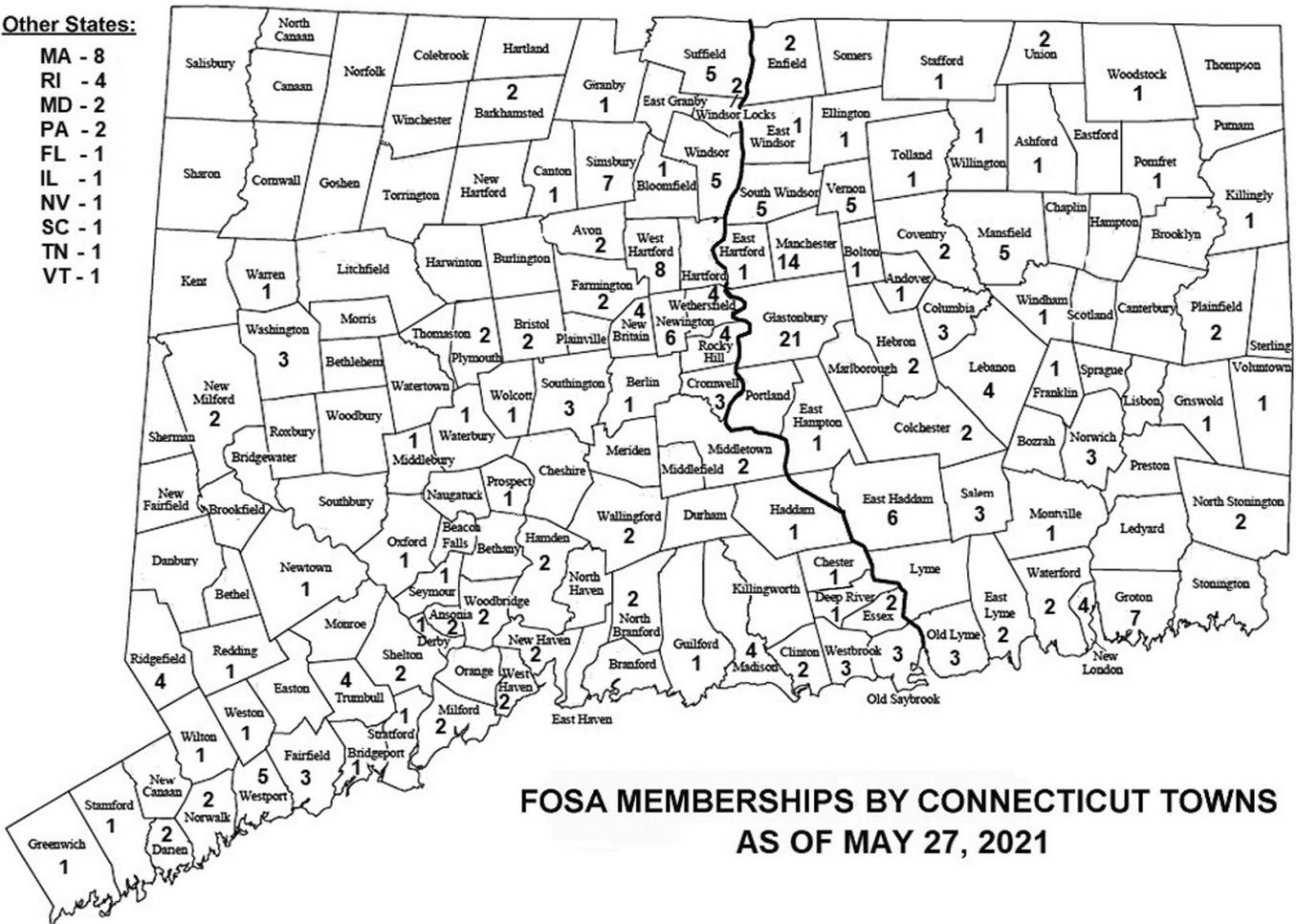
Beginning in late March 2020, we have introduced and fine-tuned electronic membership services on the FOSA website. This allows new and renewing members to enter their membership information and volunteer activity preferences, and to pay via PayPal if desired. Since the introduction of this service, approximately 40% of renewals and new memberships have come through the website. We expect a higher percentage of members to use this service going forward. New members are listed on the left.

We have had an excellent membership renewal response, thanks in large part to the on-line talks co-sponsored with the ASC. Since early December 2020, about 95 members have renewed. For a current map of where our members live (reproduced below), you can find it on our website at https://www.fosa-ct.org/Photos/FOSA_Members_20210527_Pict.jpg

Mike Raber, Membership Chair

Other States:

- MA - 8
- RI - 4
- MD - 2
- PA - 2
- FL - 1
- IL - 1
- NV - 1
- SC - 1
- TN - 1
- VT - 1



What's New on the FOSA Website?

1. We've continued to record the "Archaeology of Connecticut" interviews given at iCRV radio, and to incorporate them into the website with brief overviews of the subjects, at http://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV_Slideshow_1.htm. At this writing (mid May), 27 shows have been identified thru April, 2021 (one show had to be rescheduled due to power failures associated with Tropical Storm Isaias).
2. As with the 2020 Annual Meeting, there was no full "normal" 2021 Annual Meeting this year, due to Covid-19. However, this year a guest speaker ZOOM presentation, by Dr. Zachary Singer, was given as a prelude to the business portion, also as a ZOOM presentation. Recordings of the both Dr. Singer's presentation and the business meeting can be accessed at https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_AnnMeetings.htm, which is the "Annual Meetings" page of the FOSA website.
3. The "Webinars" page, at https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_YouTube.htm#webinars, has been expanded to include recordings by the Archaeological Society of CT (ASC), New Canaan Library, Avon Free Public Library, the NH Archaeological Society and the Trinity Classical Studies department, as well as any stand-alone webinars which come to my attention for inclusion. Recordings of the originals are accessible from there as well.
4. The latest brochure (2020-03) has been added to the website, and can be accessed from the Home page, just above the "Did You Know" revolving daily display.
5. Early this year, Nick Bellantoni's latest book, "And So the Tomb Remained", was published. A part of that book was to be a series of skeletal diagrams, where the major bones were identified (since Nick makes heavy use of their names in the book, and which may be meaningless to many readers). However, in the end they were not included. So, they've been placed into the FOSA website, at <https://www.fosa-ct.org/tombs.htm>, (accessible under "Research Aids") instead.
6. I added the ASC Newsletter's obituary of Dan Cruson into the FOSA "Remembrances pages" (https://www.fosa-ct.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA_Remembrances_Index.htm). I felt it would be appropriate to also include this because Dan was both well-known and highly thought of by many members of FOSA; and as noted in the article, he was a strong and guiding force for archaeology in Connecticut since before FOSA itself was founded. He will be missed by all in the Connecticut archaeological community.
7. SUGGESTIONS REQUESTED: To reiterate from above and from previous "What's New..." articles: While the web site has many things on it, it's very possible that there are dozens of other things which haven't crossed either my mind or that of the Board which might be included. SO: If you have ideas or suggestions for layout changes, or new features, or changes to existing ones, or things we should drop, please let me know! Please email me at jamesh52@comcast.net with your suggestions.

Jim Hall

The iCRV Radio Interviews: The Archaeology of Connecticut by Jim Hall

Beginning in March, 2019 internet radio station iCRV (internet Connecticut River Valley) began hosting a series of monthly radio shows highlighting the archaeological heritage of Connecticut and efforts to preserve it. Recordings of all show are stored in the FOSA website. The full list of shows as of late May, 2021 is below (iCRV archives only go back about 4 months). In addition to the dialogs, many of the website displays also have links to other sites relevant to their discussion. To access the website displays, click https://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV_Slideshow_1.htm.

- 03/05/2019 [What Everyone Should Know About the Archaeology of Connecticut](#)
- 04/02/2019 [The Templeton Site and Paleoindians of Connecticut](#)
- 05/07/2019 [The Early Archaic Period and Life After the Ice Age in Connecticut](#)
- 06/04/2019 [The \[Middle\] Archaic Period in Connecticut](#)
- 07/02/2019 [The Terminal Archaic and Soapstone Quarries in Connecticut](#)

- 08/06/2019 [The Morgan Site, a Late Woodland Village in Rocky Hill](#)
- 09/03/2019 [THPOs and Native American Perspectives on Archaeology in Connecticut](#)
- 10/01/2019 [Early 17th Century Archaeology in Connecticut](#)
- 11/05/2019 [Rural Life Before the American Revolution](#)
- 12/03/2019 [The Office of State Archaeology and FOSA](#)

- 01/14/2020 [Looking at Connecticut Archaeology Through the Eyes of our Neighbors](#)
- 02./04/2020 [The Future of the Office of State Archaeology and of CT Archaeology](#)
- 03/03/2020 [The State Historic Preservation Office \(SHPO\)](#)
- 04/07/2020 [Plants in Archaeology](#)
- 05/05/2020 [Technology in Archaeology](#)

- 06/02/2020 [Archaeology and World War II Airplane Crash Sites](#)
- 07/07/2020 [Battlefield Archaeology and Metal Detecting](#)
- 08/04/2020 (discussion postponed until 11/03/2020 – TS Isaias power shortage)
- 09/01/2020 [Underwater Archaeology](#)
- 10/06/2020 [Vampires, Crypts and Tombs](#)

- 11/03/2020 [Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and Archaeology](#)
- 12/01/2020 [Henry Whitfield House and State Museum](#)
- 01/05/2021 [Forensic Analyses: New Haven's First Catholic Cemetery](#)
- 02/02/2021 [The Work and Lessons from the Prudence Crandall Museum](#)
- 03/02/2021 [Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine in East Granby, CT](#)

- 04/06/2021 [European Colonization and Ecological Change in Southern New England](#)
- 05/04/2021 [17th Century Arabic Coins in Southern New England](#)

Josiah Hollister, Born 1754 in Sharon, Connecticut

FOSA member Ryan Hollister informed me that he has put together a You Tube video of one of his ancestors, Josiah Hollister, who fought in the American Revolution. I feel that many of you who have been working at the Hollister Site in Glastonbury can appreciate what Ryan has produced.

Josiah descends from the Hollisters in Glastonbury where FOSA members, headed by State Archaeologist Dr. Sarah Sportman and FOSA President Scott Brady, are doing field research. I followed Josiah's roots back six generations on Ancestry.Com and was amazed at the amount of info on them. Josiah was born in Sharon on March 19, 1754 and died July 4, 1832. As you listen to Ryan's video, you'll appreciate and learn more about him and his interesting family.

Josiah's father, Samual, was born in Glastonbury on November 7, 1723 and died in Sharon on February 8, 1771. Samual's father, also named Josiah was born in Glastonbury in 1696 and died on January 3, 1749 in Glastonbury. Continuing the lineage, Josiah's father was Thomas Hollister who was born January 14, 1672 and died October 12, 1741. Thomas's father was John Hollister Jr., born 1642 and died 1711. He is listed as being born in a part of Wethersfield that is now Glastonbury. Finally, John Hollister Jr's father is John Hollister, born in Glastonbury, Somersetshire, England in 1612. He arrived in Massachusetts in 1635. He died on April 3, 1665. I assume his roots in England had a role in naming the town.

Interestingly, Josiah after his service in the Revolution emigrated to New York, settling first in Franklinville, NY in 1811, followed by Great Valley, NY in 1816 and finally Mansfield, NY in 1821, until his passing.

After viewing all of Ryan's chapters, bookmark the site and check it occasionally for the addition of new chapters to a beautifully done and interesting work. As an avocational archaeologist working at the Hollister Site in Glastonbury, I can appreciate Ryan's work.

Jim Trocchi

Click on the link below to open Journal of Josiah Hollister:

[The Journal of Josiah Hollister - YouTube](#)



The Journal of Josiah Hollister



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