



Special Points of Interest:

Fall 2022

- 1: This is first issue with Glenda Rose serving as FOSA President and Tom Ford as the newly elected Vice President. In addition, Tom has two articles in this issue.
- 2: It is worth noting that "Caribou and Coffee" and "Hurd's Iron Mountain" are about investigations that arose only after members of the public brought them to the attention of archaeologists. It is hard to stress enough just how valuable this collaboration between alert individuals and professional archaeologists is to the advancement of our knowledge.

Jerry Tolchin, FOSA Newsletter Editor

FRIENDS OF THE OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY, INC.

Member Newsletter



President's Letter

Greetings, fellow FOSA members! The first thing I want to say is THANK YOU to all the volunteers from both FOSA and ASC who came out to participate in field work this past season, especially those who spent time at the Hollister site during the blistering heat of July and August! The work was made more tolerable by our tents, coolers of water and Gatorade, and the rented Port-O-Let. Special thanks to Scott Brady and Lori Kessel for managing the dig at Hollister and keeping us organized. We also participated in work at the Templeton site along with ASC members, for another interesting season. Both Templeton and Hollister are sites that continue to produce exciting results and will most likely continue to be visited. We also participated in several other digs and Outreach events, so it was a VERY busy season.

I would also like to announce our newly designed website, www.fosa-ct.org. Jim Hall and Jen Glaubius spent a good deal of time developing and implementing the new design. All the same features are there but the look is updated and more inviting. If you have not seen it yet, I encourage you to have a look. A big THANK YOU goes to Jim and Jen, and, to Jen, a warm welcome to the FOSA web team!



You can make a difference if you shop on Amazon.com. FOSA is a registered charity with Amazon's foundation, Amazon Smile.

For qualified purchases, a portion of your purchase (.5%) will be donated to the Friends of the Office of State Archaeology, CT. You may register for this program at www.smile.amazon.com

Inside this issue:

President's Letter	1-2
News From the Office of State Archaeology	2-3
Karl Stofko Honored	4
Hurd's Iron Mountain	5-7
FOSA Membership Update	7
FOSA Officers, Board & Committee Members	8
Caribou and Coffee	9-11
FOSA Website Update	12
Photo Gallery: Outreach and 25th Anniversary Gathering	13
Travels With Tom: Eastern Tennessee	14-15
Membership Application and Renewal	16

Over the summer, we awarded the Cooke Scholarship to Matthew Picarelli-Kombert. He is a master's candidate at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The focus of his work is the seven shellfish middens found at the Pequot Village in Mystic, CT. You can read more about him and his research on our website under "Cooke Scholarship".

Another highlight was our 25th Anniversary picnic, that was held at Hubbard Park in Meriden. The event was held in September which seems to be the busiest month of the year, so we only had about 35 attendees. However, guests included five Presidents, seven original members and two State Archaeologists (Sarah and Nick). The day was beautiful, there was an abundance of food, and the camaraderie was great! There are still plenty of anniversary ballcaps left (\$25 each) so if you want one, send me an email at fosa.ct@gmail.com and I can arrange to get one to you. Follow this link to see pictures taken at the 25th Anniversary Picnic: https://www.fosa-ct.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA_25th_picnic.html

Lastly, our iCRV radio program, The Archaeology of Connecticut, continues to be popular. The latest show featured three guest Archaeologists along with Sarah, Scott and me, who all recounted "superlatives" of their careers: most interesting find, scariest moment, etc. If you can't listen to the show live (first Tuesday of every month at 5pm at www.icrvradio.com), you can go to our website to listen to past shows.

Have a wonderful holiday season and look for the announcement of our annual meeting, which will be held tentatively at the end of March.

Respectfully,

Glenda M. Rose



News from the Office of State Archaeology

Greetings FOSA members:

Happy Holidays!

It is hard to believe that it is almost winter – both summer and fall flew by! OSA had a busy field season this year and there is a lot to report. At the Peters House in Hebron (the early 19th century home of Cesar and Sim Peters), with the help of FOSA, we ran one day digs in May and September for middle school students and Girl Scouts. The students, who attend RHAM School in Hebron, were researching the incredible story of the Peters family in the classroom as part of a Witness Stones project and it was great to get them out into the field to also participate in the archaeology.

Their hard work was showcased twice in June: on June 3rd there was a ceremony to place Witness Stone monuments to Cesar Peters and Pomp Mundo in Hebron, and then later in the month at Hebron's Juneteenth celebration, the students presented the results of their research and their projects to the public and to Peters family descendants. OSA and FOSA also had a table at the Juneteenth event to share the results of the archaeological and historical research we've carried out on the Peters Site.

The rest of the summer was equally busy. In June we helped out with the ASC field school at the Templeton Site, and in July and August we spent four weeks at the Hollister Site in South Glastonbury, where we hosted the Archaeological Society of Connecticut, the Historical Society of Glastonbury, SCSU field school students, and others. We had three main goals this summer: to expose more of the area around the South Cellar to look for features, to investigate two of the features we identified in 2021, and to excavate a couple more excavation units in the Middle Cellar (initially excavated in 2016) to increase our assemblage of Indigenous pottery.

One highlight from the field season at Hollister was the discovery of daub in a pit adjacent to the South Cellar (Feature 70). Daub is a sticky material made from clay, sand, straw and/or other additives. It was used in an ancient construction technique that was still employed in the early colonial period Chesapeake and New England. Walls woven from a lattice of wooden strips or twigs (wattle) would be covered with daub.

(continued on page 3)

The daub would dry and harden and often be covered with a whitewash to increase the lifespan of the walls. The daub we found looks to be tempered with crushed shell and was probably part of one of the 17th-century earth-fast structures at the site.

The biggest surprise this summer was the number of 17th-century indigenous artifacts we found mixed in with the English materials at the Hollister Site. You may recall that numerous large sherds of 17th-century Indigenous pottery were found at the base of the Middle Cellar during the 2016 excavations. This season, we excavated a 1m-x-2m area adjacent to the previous excavation and down into the cellar fill. We encountered the same layers of ash- and charcoal-rich soil and extraordinary preservation of artifacts that excavators found in 2016. While we didn't recover much pottery this year, we found numerous wampum beads and likely evidence of wampum manufacture on site, as well as stone tools knapped from European flint. In other areas we also recovered a drilled, polished stone pendant, and scrap brass. This material adds to the already substantial evidence for an Indigenous presence at the site while it was an English farm in the 17th century. We're looking forward to cleaning and processing this year's artifacts and working to get a better handle on the complex social and economic relationships reflected in the artifacts and documentary record of the site.

OSA was involved in several public events this fall, including our very successful 2022 Connecticut Archaeology Fair at Old New-Gate Prison on October 8th. Follow this link for pictures taken at this event.

https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_AAM_2022_Gallery_0.html. The fair was a big hit, with over 300 visitors throughout the day. We had a number of exhibitors and a series of excellent lectures by both well-established and up-and-coming young archaeologists, including Ken Feder, Nick Bellantoni, Stephanie Scialo, and Elizabeth Reed. We also featured several short presentations on local archaeological field schools at UCONN, Southern Connecticut State University, and the Mohegan Tribe.

In addition to the Archaeology Fair, I gave several presentations including a talk in October on 40 years of Archaeology at the Prudence Crandall House Museum for the Museum and the Last Green Valley. Then, on November 2, Nick Bellantoni and I gave a talk on the Revolutionary War-era Ridgefield Burials at the State Armory in Hartford and the next week, I presented on the Indigenous connections to the Hollister Site at the Conference for Northeast Historical Archaeology in Plymouth, MA. Two other researchers also presented at the conference on data from the Hollister Site. Dr. David Leslie spoke about research he's been conducting on the gunflints from the site, and UCONN graduate Student Elic Weitzel, presented on his dissertation research which incorporates data from the deer bones at Hollister.

In the lab this fall, we've made good progress washing the materials we excavated this summer. Our new Graduate Research Assistant, Stephanie Scialo, has been working to finish inventorying the Hollister materials from 2021 and Dr. Kevin McBride and the students in his Lab Methods in Archaeology class are also working on artifacts and soil samples from Hollister. This winter we have a metal detector survey planned at Hollister on December 2, and we are working with Dr. Raquel Fleskes to conduct a DNA study on pipe stems from the site.

In addition to lab work, Scott Brady and other FOSA volunteers have begun to build our new shelving for the State's archaeological collections. Over the next couple of years, we'll be working on re-organizing and re-packaging the collections to improve their curation conditions and maximize collections space. This long term project will involve a lot of work washing and sorting artifacts and compiling paperwork from old collections that are still in their field bags, as well as floating unprocessed soil samples from a number of old excavations. I believe we will not only dramatically improve the collections situation, but also discover a wealth of new information about Connecticut archaeology!

Finally, with the support of FOSA and iCRV Radio, Scott Brady, Glenda Rose, and I have continued to host our monthly radio show on the *Archaeology of Connecticut* (now almost four years old!). Our recent episodes covered a range of topics including archaeology around Lake Waramaug, video games and archaeology, and a round table discussion with several member of the Connecticut archaeological community on their experiences working in the field. Our December 2022 show will feature the Mohegan Archaeological Field School. If you missed a past show and want to catch up they are all archived on the FOSA website at https://www.fosa-ct.org/ICRV_slideshow_1.html

I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season! I hope to see you in person at the annual meeting this spring!

Best,
Sarah Sportman, Connecticut State Archaeologist

Congratulations to FOSA Member Dr. Karl Stofko

FOSA member Dr. Karl Stofko received Connecticut's prestigious award: The 2022 Award of Merit for Individual Achievement from the Connecticut League of History Organizations. Dr. Stofko was presented this award for recognition of his dedication in bringing to light the life story of Venture Smith, a black free-man.

Venture Smith, circa 1728-1805, was a New England slave who was sold as a boy in Africa, the son of a king, and brought to this country as a slave. He became a free man in Connecticut and established himself in East Haddam and Haddam Neck. The homestead was located on the East side of the Connecticut River, 70 acres in all, abutting Salmon River Cove on Haddam Neck.

The Venture Smith Homestead project was an archaeological investigation beginning in the summer of 2001 and was a multi-year task. It is now a candidate for the National Register of Historic Places.

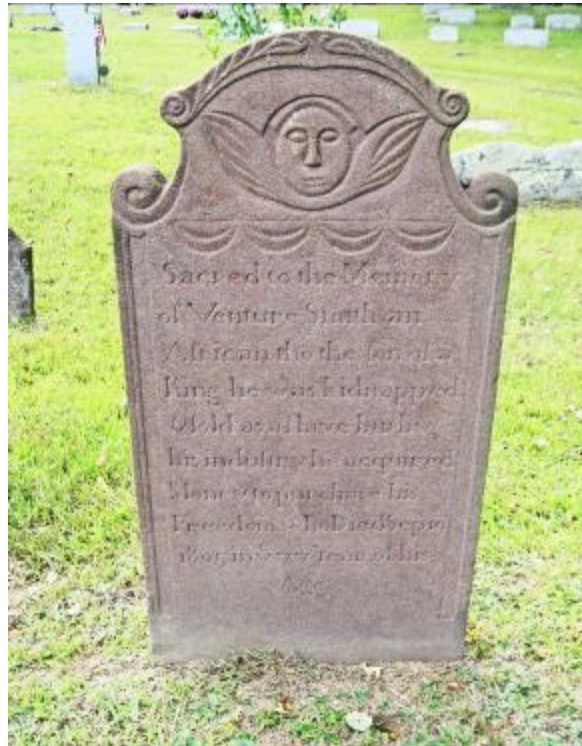
In 2006, at the family's request, Dr. Karl oversaw the excavation of Venture Smith's burial site for a DNA study. Among others who were instrumental in this project were Dr. Nick Bellantoni and several FOSA volunteers. At the time no remains were found for DNA however, another attempt will be made using a new, more recently developed procedure.

For those who may be interested in Black History, Dr. Karl organizes "Venture Smith Day" held annually in September. This event celebrates Venture Smith at the First Church in East Haddam. Many of Venture's descendants attend along with others interested in Venture's activities in East Haddam where Venture Smith and his family are buried. It is a day with several talks given by historians, authors and researchers of the African American contributions to our Country. During this event Venture Smith's genealogy and artifacts from the homesteads are also on display.

Hope to see you All at next years "Venture Smith Day."



Dr. Paul Stofko



Venture Smith Headstone

Submitted by: Ken and Bonnie Beatrice

Hurd's Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring Site Walk / Investigation

Chatham Historical Society's Don Burr questioned the purpose of stone structural remains located in East Hampton CT (Figure 1). Coordinating with Burr, Glenda Rose arranged a site walk this past July. Participants, pictured from left to right (Figure 2), included Historical Society members Don Burr and Carol Morris, with FOSA members Nick Bellantoni, Glenda Rose, and Jack Morris.



Left: Figure 1. View of cut stone structure, looking east with Pocotopaug Creek in distance.
Right: Figure 2. FOSA Site Walk party.



Left: Figure 3. View southwest, of Field Stone Wall "D" and leveled Area "F" in background.
Right: Figure 4. View northwest, of Cut Stone Area "B," fieldstone retaining wall Area "G" and, center right, possible stone footings "J" and "H".

The ruins are located approximately 120 feet west of the Pocotopaug Creek, at the foot of a low ridge. An abandoned unimproved road, trending northeast along the west edge of the creek valley, may have been originally cut to access the site. As pictured above (Figure 1) and in the site sketch plan and profile (Figures 5 & 6), the dominant features are a twenty by twenty-three foot cut stone wall structure with a 4.8' x 5.1' stone "well-like" structure inside it. Extending forty feet east towards the creek from this cut stone structure is a rectangular fieldstone enclosed area.

Fieldstone walls, extending thirty-nine feet south and thirty-two feet north from the cut stone wall, decrease in height as they extend away from the central cut stone area (Figures 4, 5 & 6). These walls appear to have been constructed as retaining walls. Another set of field stone retaining walls run parallel with, but forty feet east of the first one described (Figures 3, 5 & 6).

The site function is intriguing. Given the industrial history of East Hampton and Pocotopaug Creek, we surveyed the site with the preconception that it was a mill or foundry. These thoughts diminished during the site walk when no evidence of a dam, mill race or slag was found. A subsequent document search identified the location as “Hurd’s Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring” dating to the early 1870s.

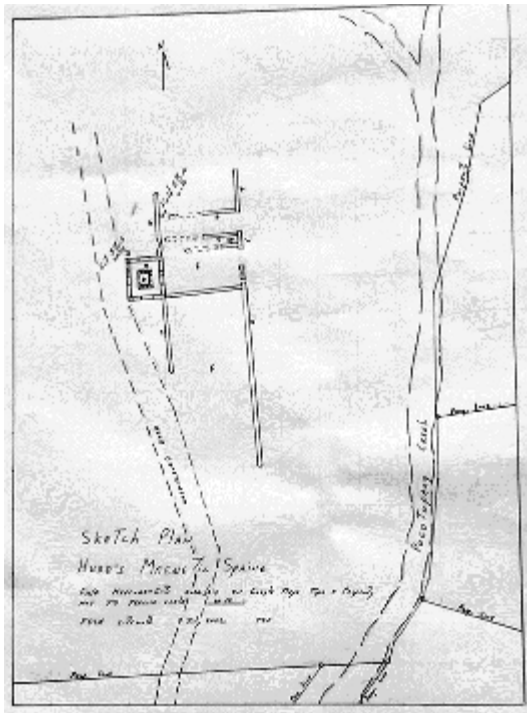


Figure 5. Plan Sketch of Site, indicating relationships to (i) unimproved road; (ii) Pocotopaug Creek; (iii) Property Lines. Area A - well like structure; Area B-Cut Stone Feature; Areas C & G – Field Stone retaining walls; Areas D, K & L – Easternmost field stone retaining walls; Area E-possible “pool;” Area F-levelled ground area south of pool; Areas H & J – possibly footings for

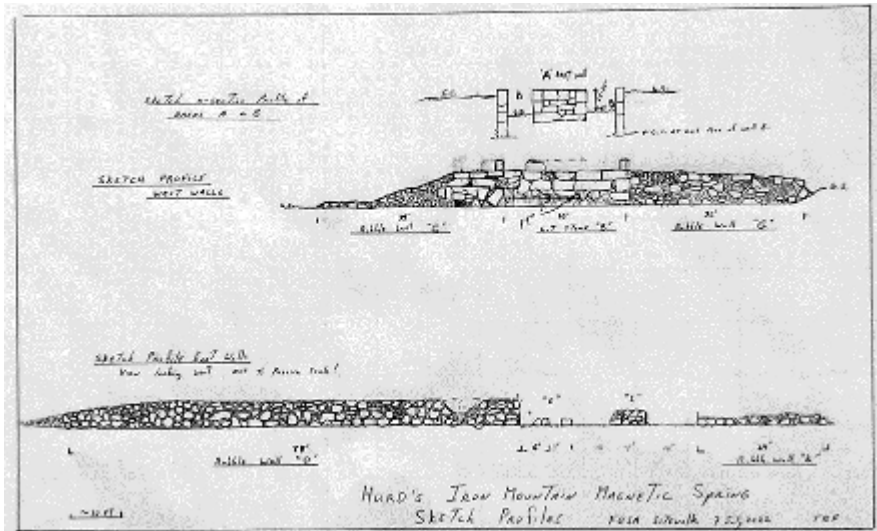


Figure 6. Profile Sketch of (Areas “A” & “B” cross-section); Cut Stone East Wall of Area “B” and Rubble Stone Walls “C” and “G;”

It is speculated that the square cut stone well-like feature enclosed the spring that issued from the foot of the ridge (Figure 1 and Figure 5 Area “A”). A note on a 1909 Connecticut spring water quality report states “*Hurd’s Iron Mountain Spring, dug and staved to a depth of 12 feet*”. The larger cut stone rectangular area (Figure 1 and Figure 5 Area “B”) was possibly floored and enabled individuals to access the well, as suggested by photographs of mineral springs salons in Saratoga Springs NY. The rectangular Area “E” is well situated to have been the “pool” (Figure 5 Area “E”). Pipes extend from the spring (Area “A”)

through the cut stone wall to discharge water into Area “E.” The remnant walls bordering and north of Area “E” may have been foundations for a wood frame pavilion or bath house structure. It is in this area that a limited number of fire brick were noted, suggesting the building was either heated or the spring water was being treated in some manner. This is further supported by the finding of a fragment of a cast iron stove with a patent date of the mid-1850s. The leveled ground surface (Figure 3 & Figure 5, Area “F”) may have also contained framed structures, such as cabanas or sheds, or was a yard for horses and carriages.

The Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring and Bath site is a tangible remnant of 19th century societal trends. Science and medicine correlated mineral properties of spring waters to the treatment of a variety of ailments. Concurrently, the privileged elite were beginning to believe they could play a part in their own health. They could leave the unhealthy summer city environs for the bucolic countryside, facilitated by the increasing efficiency of river, rail and carriage road travel. Physicians would prescribe “taking the waters” depending upon the ailment and mineral properties of a specific spring. As a result, springs and health baths were developed throughout the country and became popular destinations. Stafford Springs Connecticut is a notable Connecticut example. Saratoga New York and Hot Springs Arkansas are nationally known examples.



Undated broadside in the Connecticut Digital Archives, Connecticut

Hurd's entrepreneurial development of the Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring and Bathhouse tapped into the trends of the times. He expanded his boarding house and restaurant summer businesses by developing a bath or pool. His advertisements promoted the curative power of his magnetic spring waters over rheumatism, erysipelas, salt rheum, gravel, and kidney complaints. To promote his spring water, he had it independently analyzed (Figure 9) and he claimed to have testimonials supportive of the health benefits of his spring water.

The site walk and document research performed by members of the Chatham Historical Society and FOSA has identified the stone foundation remains as those of Hurd's Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring. This site is significant in that it is representative of 19th century mineral springs and baths that were then common to New England and yet are now poorly documented in the archaeological and historic architectural records. From our preliminary site walk data, the actual types of structures and functions can only be speculated. Future document research and archaeological investigations may help to address the following questions and refine our understanding of the physical site.

1. What was the ownership history of the property and how long was the Magnetic Springs and Bathhouse in commercial operation?
2. What were the structures and functional areas comprising the site?
3. Was the spring water being used fresh out of the ground or was it treated? For example, was some form of water softening effort being attempted, hence the "magnetic spring water" designation. Was Hurd heating the water as may be suggested by the firebrick and stove?
4. Architecturally was the Iron Mountain spring developed following a common 19th century mineral spring health plan / design or is it uniquely developed?

Finally, when the site walk was performed it was believed that the ruins were located on town property. Research since verified them to be on private property. The rights of the property owners are to be respected. Please do not visit the site without first obtaining owner permission.

Submitted by: Tom Ford

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

NEW FOSA MEMBERS SINCE 04/27/22

Richard Coffey
 Jake Anthony Francis
 Meghan Geraghty
 Isabel K. Grzegorek
 Anni Heikkila
 Robert Laughlin
 Jill A. Leavenworth
 Joseph Maglio
 Sandra Malley
 Clifford Monges

Amy Pierpont &
 Cru Pierpont-Hackenberg
 Kari Plourde
 Abigail Rodriguez
 Richard Sheldon
 Hannah Lee Smith
 Devin Stilson
 Marianne Stepanik
 Ronald Todd
 Louise Wagner

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. An increasing number of members are using this service, including over 50% of those who renewed or joined since mid-October 2021. We have had an excellent membership renewal response, thanks in part to the on-line talks co-sponsored with the ASC, and to the revival of summer fieldwork. Since early December 2021, over 96 members have renewed.

Mike Raber, Membership Chair

FOSA Officers and Board

Glenda Rose - President
 Thomas Ford – Vice President
 Scott Brady - Recording Secretary
 Sandy DiStefano - Corresponding Secretary
 Jim Trocchi - Treasurer
 (*Assistant Treasurer - Open*)
 Mike Cahill - Board Member
 Dave Colberg - Board Member
 Dreda Hendsey - Board Member
 Richard Hughes - Board Member
 Patty Jubinska - Board Member
 Lori Kessel - Board Member
 Cindy McWeeney - Board Member
 Jeremy Pilver - Board Member
 Mike Raber - Board Member
 Deanna Rhodes - Board Member
 Kathy Walburn - Board Member
Ex Officio Members:
 Dr. Sarah Sportman, CT State
 Archaeologist (OSA)
 Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, *Emeritus*
 CT State Archaeologist
 Dr. Janine Caira, Director, CSMNH
 Lee West (ASC)


FOSA Committees and Committee Members

Archaeology Awareness Month: TBD (Chair), Jim Hall, Dick Hughes, Elliot Schawm, Kathy Walburn
Cooke Scholarship Committee: Jeremy Pilver (Chair), Scott Brady, Cindy McWeeney
Excavation Committee: Jeremy Pilver (Chair), Scott Brady, (Field Supervisor), Mike Cahill, Marlo Del Chiaro, Dick Hughes, Elizabeth Mark, Frederick Rivard, Jim Trocchi, Kathy Walburn
Membership: Mike Raber (Chair), Sandy DiStefano (Corresponding Secretary)
Newsletter: Jerry Tolchin (Chair), Jim Trocchi
Nominations: Deanna Rhodes
Outreach: Kathy Walburn (Chair), Bonnie Beatrice, Ken Beatrice
Volunteer Coordinator: TBD *Open*
Website Committee: Jim Hall (Chair), Jen Glaubius, Lindsay Kieseewetter

One day in May 2020, while settling on the porch of the Two Wrasslin' Cats coffee shop in East Haddam, Connecticut, archaeologist Mark Clymer glanced down and noticed something left behind by someone who had been at the same spot before him — around 12,000 years ago.

Clymer knew right away the small tool he spied was made of a type of sedimentary rock called Normanskill Chert, which could not have come from anywhere near where he sat but would have originated instead in the Hudson Valley region over 100 miles away.

Interested? See Story on Pages 9 -11



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Caribou and Coffee

How a chance discovery at a quirky coffee shop turned up one of Connecticut's most significant archaeological sites.

By Elaina Hancock

“I looked down and thought, That shouldn't be here.”

One day in May 2020, while settling on the porch of the Two Wrasslin' Cats coffee shop in East Haddam, Connecticut, archaeologist Mark Clymer glanced down and noticed something left behind by someone who had been at the same spot before him — around 12,000 years ago.

Clymer knew right away the small tool he spied was made of a type of sedimentary rock called Normanskill Chert, which could not have come from anywhere near where he sat but would have originated instead in the Hudson Valley region over 100 miles away.

Clymer, who's studied the past and had an eye out for artifacts since his childhood in New York State, told the shop's owner, Mark Thiede '86 Ph.D., that there was something interesting underfoot in the patio area and asked if he could dig a few exploratory test pits.

Thiede gave the green light, and Clymer started digging a 50-by-50-centimeter (roughly 20-by-20-inch) test pit. “I started finding more material, chips, and possible tools made of this Normanskill Chert. I knew there was something going on here.”

Clymer got in touch with archaeologists Sarah Sportman '11 Ph.D. and David Leslie '16 Ph.D. to tell them about the exciting find. “They came out to take a closer look at it, and the rest is history,” Clymer says.

In the two-plus years since then, the team has returned a handful of times, each visit yielding new and exciting finds pointing back to the Pleistocene epoch, which ended roughly 11,700 years ago. What started with pure - if well-informed - luck is now another site that is part of a growing list positioning Connecticut as a center of research about the region's earliest human inhabitants.

“We're more confident than ever that this is the real deal.”

At a dig on an overcast, late September day, the group works and chats while digging and sifting the soil and cataloging the finds.

Curious customers stop by while sipping their coffee. Some ask questions, while others insist they don't want to slow the work, and just watch the dig proceed.

With hand spades, a few team members carefully loosen the dirt, working around some large stones. The site is laid out in a grid pattern so the locations where artifacts are found can be recorded and cataloged. Loosened soil is loaded into buckets and brought up to sifting trays fitted with hardware cloth to separate out potentially exciting finds.

“We have an interesting and very early site here, and the location is perfect,” says Clymer, pointing past the patio toward a brook behind the coffee shop. “It gets marshy back there, and you can just imagine the migratory caribou herds coming through here, and these people were likely following and hunting. This spot is just ideal.”

Leslie mentions the site's closeness to the creek is also likely a reason why the team does not need to dig down too far: some pits are only about 11 inches deep, some 20. Even after thousands of years, the way soil has been deposited and removed in flooding events means the amount covering the artifacts is not as deep as one might expect.

Excavating what is left behind, layer by layer, gives glimpses into life across millennia.

And each dig has uncovered more supporting evidence to indicate that the oldest artifacts were left by the first people of Connecticut, referred to by archaeologists as “Paleoindians.” These people were hunter-gatherers, moving seasonally across the landscape at the end of the last Ice Age, between 10,000 and 13,000 years ago. “Sites dating from this time period are rare,” says Sportman, the Connecticut State Archaeologist and a UConn Extension professor.

“A lot of activity occurred here over the last couple centuries,” she says. “We’re finding ceramics, we found a half penny from the 19th century last year. We have found old glass, coal; there is all sorts of evidence from other time periods. It really showcases how the landscape has been used by people over the past 10,000 years, layers upon one another.”

Leslie says that near the cafe’s fountain, the team found tools that would have been used to scrape animal hides to remove fat or sinew so they could be turned into clothing or shelter, not unlike the canopies that now shield the dig from the rain. They also found projectile points that are considered very indicative of the Paleoindian period. “They are big spear points that have a groove through the middle, called a flute, that’s worked into the point,” Sportman explains. “What we found was the flake of stone that’s taken out to make the groove. We’re more confident than ever that this is the real deal.”

A case in point: the September 2021 dig turned up another fluted projectile-point fragment.

The creators of the artifacts — the Paleoindians — likely followed herds of caribou over long distances, possibly throughout the year. They were purveyors of fine-quality stone, choosing only the best raw materials possible for making their tools as they traveled.

The stone they preferred, though, is not found in Connecticut, which is why it stood out to Clymer. And it didn’t take long to unearth the site’s broader significance.

“We found the chip, the first real channel flakes ... within the first half an hour of digging,” Leslie says. “It was exciting because it doesn’t always work like that.”

“I really think about how random it is that something like this occurs.”

The coffee shop on the site, Two Wrasslin’ Cats, is eclectic and cozy, the kind of place that’s full of stories, so it’s hardly a surprise to find something as unusual as an active archeological site in the backyard.

“This place here was built in 1784, and I bought it with the plan to turn it into a coffee shop in 2012, sort of an ‘in-between retirement,’” says Thiede, the owner, who earned his Ph.D. in molecular biology at UConn in 1986 and went on to a 26-year career in pharmaceutical research. He says he was inspired by the hip coffee-house scene in Seattle in the late 1990s to try opening his own shop in Connecticut.

“I was a scientist and I thought I’d try to run a business. I had no idea what I was doing when I started, but I bought this beautiful property and named it after my cats.”

The two wrasslin’ cats were Bruno and Larry, named for professional wrestlers Bruno Sammartino and Larry Zbyszko because they loved to tussle. The shop is adorned with all manner of cat-themed memorabilia, which Thiede says were almost entirely contributed by members of the community. The oddities are everywhere you turn; among the more typical cat figurines and classic art deco Kit-Cat Clock are such oddities as framed hairballs, Bruno and Larry’s ashes on the fireplace mantel, bread art, and needle-felted replicas of Bruno and Larry made for Thiede by a student from Maine.

Community connection is vital to the excavation project, too. From the volunteer involvement in the dig to children sifting soil as a hands-on archaeology lesson, the atmosphere is supportive and productive. The work would be too much for one person, and Sportman notes that without the help of the nonprofit Friends of the Office of the State Archaeologist (FOSA) and the community, Connecticut would be missing out on this important glimpse of the past.

During the September dig, one regular customer brought artifacts she had found over the years to ask the archaeologists about. Leslie and Sportman, taking their break for lunch, were happy to describe the significance of the finds.

In her roles as State Archaeologist and an Extension educator, Sportman fulfills part of UConn’s mission as a land-grant university, serving as a resource on her discipline, engaging and sharing knowledge with the public. The Wrasslin’ Cats site is the perfect opportunity for laypeople to interact with the experts, ask questions, and experience the research process as it happens.

Thiede hopes to host an event at the shop for the team to present its findings. “I really think about how random it is that something like this occurs,” he says.

Random, too, that someone like Thiede owns this property. The team is grateful for the opportunity to conduct research they realize can be disruptive, especially at the height of the pandemic when outdoor seating for coffee shops was at a premium.

“Lots of times you have property owners like Mark who are just excited to be part of the process and learning about the site,” says Sportman. “Then other times there are people who don’t want anybody to know that they’re there, because they just don’t want the attention on their property. On private land or state or federal land, it’s different. This is a purely research-driven project. There’s no reason to do it, other than the fact that everybody’s really interested.”

“Though I didn’t uncover the artifact, I’m a facilitator,” says Thiede, who is as fascinated by the artifacts as the archaeologists are. “They got more and more excited as they moved along. I found out that they designated the archaeological site as the Two Wrasslin’ Cats Site, and that was really cool. I’m just very humbled by their enthusiasm and what they’ve done over the past couple of years, getting the science done.”

“There could be sites like this all over, you just have to know what to look for.”

The Wrasslin’ Cats Site story is a great example of why it’s important for budding and professional archaeologists to look out for artifacts in the ground.

“Yeah, you get a lot of sunburns on the back of your neck,” Leslie quips.

The most recent major Paleoindian discovery in Connecticut was in 2019 in Avon. Though most sites, like Wrasslin’ Cats, are found by chance, the site in Avon was a compliance dig, meaning the site had to be carefully excavated prior to construction, since it used federal funding.

The site provides the oldest evidence to date of human occupation in the state and, along with the work of Zachary Singer ’17 Ph.D. at the Templeton Paleoindian Site in the Litchfield County town of Washington, provides important new information about Paleoindian ways of life. The newly discovered sites have called into question old models for locating Paleoindian sites, says Sportman, and provided opportunities to apply new technologies to uncover more about what the Pleistocene landscape was like.

The people who left the tools at the Wrasslin’ Cats Site were likely not there for long, says Sportman, noting the lack of more permanent structures like hearths or post holes. What the team has found so far shows a group of hunters and skilled artisans stopping for a time to make and repair tools, and perhaps process hides. Further digs and research, the archaeologists hope, will reveal more about the Paleoindians.

“We’re just getting started,” Sportman says. “There’s a lot of potential here for adding to the database of information about this period because we really just don’t know that much about it yet.”

Sites like Two Wrasslin’ Cats are important because they will help fill the knowledge gap about our earliest predecessors, and hopefully change the way history is taught.

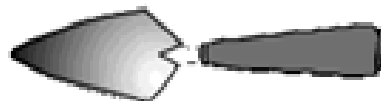
“I remember learning history starting when the Pilgrims arrived,” FOSA member Scott Brady says. “We were taught that there were Native people here, but nothing about the 10,000 years before that. I think these sites can teach all of us a lot about what really was happening here for a long, long time. The signs of that are everywhere. It’s just not as obvious. There could be sites like this all over, you just have to know what to look for.”

Thiede marvels at how close the project came to never getting started.

“If Mark hadn’t shown up, this research wouldn’t be happening,” he says. “Somebody would likely have picked that stone up and just thrown it in the brook.”

Editor’s note:

The original article may be found at: <https://magazine.uconn.edu/2022/10/18/caribou-and-coffee/>



What's New on the FOSA Website?

1. The most obvious change to the website is that the website has been significantly enhanced, particularly in look-and-feel and navigation; though most of the content is still there if (hopefully) easier to access. While we're pleased with the new look, this nevertheless remains something of a work in progress: As needed, pages are being updated. At present, we are converting many of the pages with picture groups to new carousel displays (reference the 25th Anniversary Picnic and the 2022 Archaeology Fair pictures for the 2 slightly different types), links to these can be found in Glenda's article on Page 2. Finally, we have changed how files are stored to smooth maintenance work, by removing the new "Jen" folder, which turned to be unnecessary. Thus we (Jen Glaubius and I) will be making changes throughout the coming months to streamline things there.

That said, we're pleased with how things have turned out. And, as always, we do look forward to having your suggestions on how to make things even better (reference item #6 below).

2. We've continued to record the "Archaeology of Connecticut" interviews given at iCRV radio, and to incorporate them website with brief overviews of the subjects, into the website, at https://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV_slideshow_1.html. At this writing 45 shows have been identified thru November 1.

3. As with the 2021 Annual Meeting, there was no full "normal" 2022 Annual Meeting due to Covid-19; so instead we had another ZOOM meeting. This year's Guest Speaker was Maisa L. Tisdale, President and CEO of the Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community. Detail information about the meeting is available in the Annual Meetings section, at https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_ann_meetings.html.

4. In September there was a FOSA 25th Anniversary Picnic. You can access an overview and images at https://www.fosa-ct.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA_25th_picnic.html.

5. In October an Archaeology Fair was held at the Old New-Gate Prison in East Granby. To access the info and pictures, click https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_AAM_Home.html

6. SUGGESTIONS REQUESTED: To reiterate from above and from previous "What's New..." articles, we continually look for input from users: What things can be added? Removed? Revised? Please email me at jamesh52@comcast.net or Jen Glaubius (glaubius@gmail.com) with your suggestions.

Jim Hall

FOSA MEMBERS: HELP WANTED

- **FOSA Event Photographer(s)** - Provide photographic documentation of FOSA events (i.e., workshops, outreach efforts, annual meeting, etc.).
- **FOSA Field Photographer(s)** - Provide photographic documentation of FOSA excavations and other field activities. Responsibilities include photographing the site, excavation units, features and artifacts. No experience required as we will assist in training volunteers.
- **FOSA Field Assistant(s)** - Provide organizational and administrative support of FOSA excavations and other field activities. Responsibilities include ensuring proper documentation of the site, units, and features, organizing collected artifacts and additional documentation and organizational tasks as required. No experience needed as we will assist in training volunteers. This position will be less physically demanding than most fieldwork and does not require extended kneeling or standing.

FOSA Outreach Photos



Hammonasset Day Oct 3, 2022. Gary Nolf (seated) supervising an Atlatl Hunt. *Photo: courtesy of Bonnie Beatrice*



Hammonasset Day Oct 3, 2022. Jerry Tolchin at the FOSA Outreach Table. *Photo courtesy of Bonnie Beatrice*

FOSA celebrated it's 25th anniversary with a picnic at Hubbard Park in Meriden on Sunday, September 18, 2022. It was a sunny afternoon with about 35 people in attendance, there to reconnect and reminisce.



Original FOSA members (left to right): Dick LaRose, Bonnie Beatrice, Ken Beatrice, Mike Raber, Gary Nolf, Nick Bellantoni, Roy Manstan. *Photo By Jack D. Morris*



FOSA presidents (left to right): Scott Brady (March 2018 - March 2022), Mike Raber (Jan 2000 - Jan 2004), Glenda Rose (March 2022 - present), Mandy Ranslow (Jan 2014 - March 2018), Gary Nolf (July 1997 - Jan 2000)
Photo By Jack D. Morris

Travels with Tom Ford

Editor's Note: This is the third in a series of articles written by Thomas Ford summarizing his visits to various important archeological sites.

The McClung Museum and Deeply Buried, Stratified Archaic Sites of Eastern Tennessee

The McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture is a general museum located on the campus of the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Its collections include regional archaeological materials, many recovered from Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) dam impoundment salvage operations conducted between the 1930s and the early 1980s. Research continues using the extensive archaeological, paleoethnobotany and malacology (freshwater mussel) collections housed in McClung. The exhibit floor includes a wonderful presentation of the archaeological cultural chronology of eastern Tennessee.

Noteworthy and particularly impressive is an exhibited stratigraphic column with buried cultural horizons. Each distinct horizon is separated by sterile alluvial silts, permitting the definition of dated artifact assemblages significant to Early and Middle Archaic research. The McClung exhibit, pictured below, clearly illustrates the change in Archaic projectile point styles over 2,300 years

We always are considering how to focus field investigations to recover relevant data at the least effort/cost. This exhibit and related archaeological reports suggest deep site sampling strategies that may be pertinent in other regions, including Connecticut.



Photograph by author, of permanent exhibit at McClung Museum

Archeological investigations conducted by UT and McClung Museum under contract with TVA in the Little Tennessee River Valley provided evidence of deeply buried stratified Archaic sites on the first (most recent) terraces of the alluvial valley. However, a rational sampling strategy was necessary because of the depth of sediment deposits, the inconsistency of alluvial deposition (deposits in some areas and erosional scouring in others), and the expanse of the river valley.

Sampling efforts by backhoe slit trench enabled exposure of depths of upwards of 13 feet. Locations with a high probability for preserved deeply buried sites were based on a topographic and depositional model founded on the following assumptions: (a) Buried sites located below constrictions in the river channel - constrictions in the river flood plains would cause eddies to form during flood events below the constrictions,

Continued on page 15

causing rapid deposition that would quickly bury sites; (b) Buried sites upstream from constrictions - back-water effect during flooding, upstream from the constriction, would reduce load capacity thereby burying sites; (c) Silt deposit at the lower ends of islands rapidly bury sites; and (d) Silt deposits along the inside of river bends (in contrast to the erosional cutting actions on the opposite bank) resulting in point bar built up.

The Icehouse Bottom site, located immediately downstream of a valley constriction formed by high ridges, aligned with assumption (a) of the depositional model. Backhoe cuts enabled viewing of the dark organic rich occupation horizons in the sidewall of the trench. Further delineation of a site horizon was achieved by successively closer placement of additional trenches. Hand excavation enabled controlled removal of distinct cultural horizons spanning between the spaced trench cuts. In this manner, distinct, stratified, dated artifact assemblages were recovered. The deepest components were dated to ~9,500 BP with the Lower Kirk component exemplified by a deeply cornered notch type projectile point with a ground base (see the photograph on preceding page). Prepared clay hearths also revealed textile and basketry impressions – the earliest documented evidence of textiles and basketry in eastern North America. Upper Kirk components dating to around 8,900 BP presents a greater variety of corner notched type bifaces. St. Albans and LeCroy Bifurcate base points prevailed between 8,700-8,000 B.P. Distinct clusters of Middle Archaic period Stanley and Morrow Mountain components, with respective radiocarbon dates of ~7,600 B.P. and ~7,000 B.P. were possible again due to the stratigraphic separation.

Directions:

If you are driving through Eastern Tennessee, I recommend highly that you take an hour or so to stop and peruse this wonderful museum – unless it is a football weekend!

To get there: The McClung Museum is located on the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus. By car, from the Middle Atlantic States, Knoxville is reached by I-81 south, or I-40 West from North Carolina.

Further recommended reading:

Thomas Lewis and Madeline Kneberg Lewis, “*Eva, an Archaic Site*,” University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville 1961

Jefferson Chapman, "Tellico Archaeology: 12,000 Years of Native American History," Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville 1985

Jefferson Chapman, with contributions by Patricia Cridlebaugh, Lucy Foley and Larry Kimball, “Archaic period Research in the Lower Little Tennessee River Valley,” University of Tennessee, Department of Anthropology, Report No. 18, Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville 1977

E. E. Pritchard and T. M. Ahlman, eds, “*TVA Archaeology: Seventy-Five years of Prehistoric Site Research*,” University of Tennessee Press,

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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 the Editor: Jerry Tolchin, at jerrytolchin@sbcglobal.net

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