



The 2022 Cooke Scholarship Recipient Matthew Picarelli-Kombert, presents the results of his Master's research (see pages 6-9)

Member Newsletter

President's Letter

Greetings, fellow FOSA members!



Happy Fall!

It's finally here after a full summer of field work! FOSA volunteers have provided over 2000 hours of their time so far this year, which is pretty impressive. From the month of May into June, both FOSA and ASC volunteers worked at the Hollister site which was interesting and productive. My thanks go out to Sarah Sportman and Scott Brady, our Field Work Coordinator, who decided to move the dates from July to May. It was much more comfortable, and we dodged the unexpected "rainy season" that came in July.

We spent time at two Wrasslin' Cats in East Haddam, the Thomas Lee House in East Lyme and an 18th century homestead in Wethersfield. Another highlight was a week at the Templeton Paleo-Indian site in Washington, CT. I am proud that we were able to also provide mentoring to students who engaged in digs at Pitkin Glass Works in Manchester, at the Hollister site, and at Rose Farm in Bolton. In Bolton, we supported the "Digging Into History" program run by the Connecticut State Library, where students from France were here to participate in a dig at the site of a Rochambeau encampment. We at FOSA love to inspire and encourage future generations of archaeologists!

This is a good time to address the issue of volunteerism within FOSA. It has been very disappointing that requests for volunteers at Outreach activities have yielded only a handful of FOSA members and always the same people. I encourage all of you to please make an effort to volunteer at even just one of our programs each year. Kathy Walburn is in charge of our Outreach programs and will let you know what to do; no experience is required. You will meet other members and probably learn something while having fun! There are two upcoming specific volunteer opportunities on which I would like to focus. First will be a chance to help Sarah manage a huge backlog of projects that even include some of Brian's work. Basically, she needs help inventorying and analyzing data. Some of the smaller projects could conceivably be done from home.

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Look for more on this after the holidays. The second opportunity will be in October 2024 when Connecticut will be hosting the annual conference of Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology (CNEHA) in New Haven. This is a multi-day conference so we will need as many volunteers as we can get. Please give serious consideration to helping out with one or both of these events.

FOSA Vice President Tom Ford completed teaching the Lithics class that he developed in the Spring. It was taught via Zoom starting in March and was very well-received. It ended with an in-person “show and tell” in April where class participants were able to see and feel lithic materials as well as actual stone tools. The slides are available on our website at www.FOSA-CT.org (go to Resources->Research Aids->FOSA Continuing Education). Tom is working on another offering for this winter, so stay tuned for that announcement. We also welcome ideas and volunteers for additional learning opportunities in the future.

We look forward to helping Sarah and working in the lab throughout the Fall and Winter months. Join us to learn about lab activities and meet some fellow FOSA members!

Respectfully, Glenda Rose, FOSA President



News from the Office of State Archaeology

Greetings FOSA members:

. Happy Fall!

As always, we had a busy spring and summer field season! We started in May with excavations at the Hurlburt Dunham House in Wethersfield and the Two Wrasslin' Cats Site in East Haddam. Then, we spent five very productive weeks at the Hollister Site in South Glastonbury, where we worked with Dr. Kevin McBride and the UConn archaeological field school, and hosted volunteers and students from the Historical Society of Glastonbury, the Archaeological Society of Connecticut, and the Girl Scouts of Connecticut, among others. In July, we partnered with the State Library's Digging into History Program and the Town of Bolton to organize an archaeological project for high school students from France and Connecticut. With OSA and several FOSA volunteers, the students learned about archaeological excavation methods, as well as GPR and metal-detecting surveys at Bolton Heritage Farm, site of Camp #5 of General Rochambeau's march across Connecticut in 1781. In August, we conducted an adult field school on the UConn Storrs campus through the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and participated in the annual one-day dig at the Thomas Lee House in Old Lyme in August. Finally, we rounded off the summer field season with several days of salvage excavations at the demolition site of the ca. 1721 Riley-Adams House in Wethersfield in September.

While all of these projects were fun and exciting, our work at the Hollister Site was the highlight of the summer. The most important development this year was the confirmation that a linear feature we identified in 2021 is, in fact, part of the fortifications that John Hollister, Jr. constructed during King Philip's War (1675-76). The documentary record tells us that in October of 1675, in response to the growing threat of attacks on Connecticut from King Philip's (Metacom's) coalition, the Connecticut War Council ordered the towns of Windsor, Wethersfield, and Hartford to establish garrisons, gather their corn from both sides of the river, and secure it within the towns. Apparently unwilling to relocate his own family or food stores to the west side of the river, Hollister petitioned the General Court for permission to hire some men to help him fortify his house and secure his corn on the Hollister farm (Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, Vol.2:374-375).

Continued on page 3

What we didn't know, was exactly what was meant by *fortify*. There are a range of possibilities for hardening a property, with the most extreme being construction of a palisade wall to surround all or part of the lot. Our 2021 excavations around the South Cellar at the Hollister included 28m² excavated around the cellar hole to expose posts and other features that we hoped would help us better understand its construction and relationship to other structures on the site. We identified several interesting features that we've been exploring over the last couple of field seasons. One feature that really stood out in 2021 was a long, linear soil stain that appeared to extend out from two sides of the South Cellar (outlined in Photo 1). Our initial thoughts were that it might be a post-in-ground wall associated with the structure, but the alignment didn't seem quite right. In fact, it looked like it was actually built over the top of the South Cellar, suggesting that cellar was already abandoned and filled in when the wall was constructed. We ran out of time in 2021 and reburied it for future exploration.

rectly on top of the northern section of the double wall. That's why that section looks so straight and distinct in the photo.

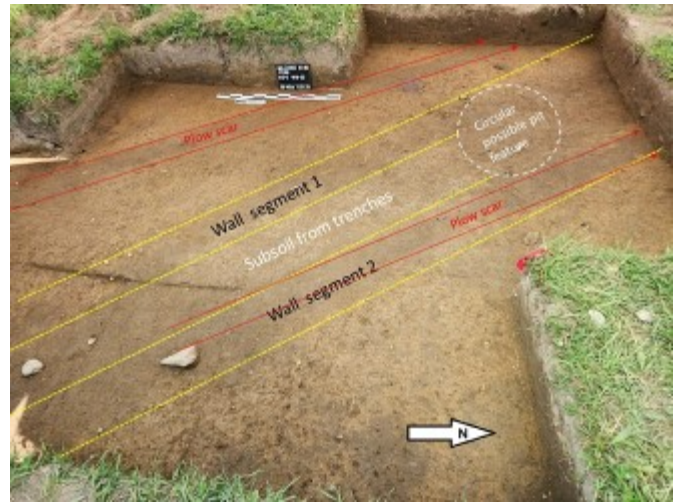
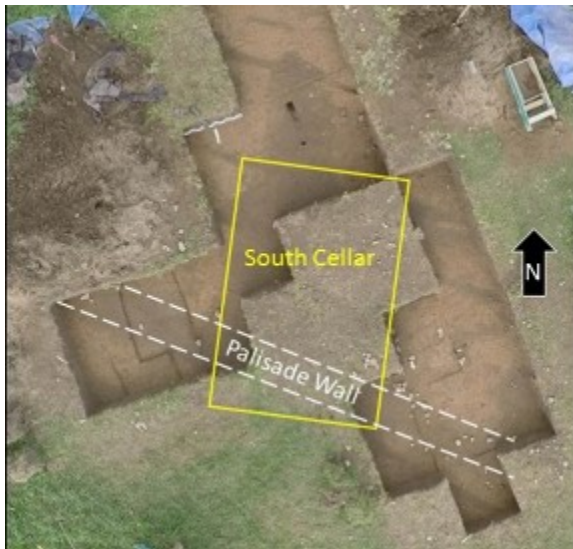


Photo 2: Double wall section of the palisade investigated in 2023, showing the wall segments, a possible pit feature associated with the walls, and the plow scars running over the feature.



Photograph 1: Drone view of the 2021 excavation block with outlines around the south cellar and linear feature (palisade wall).

It wasn't until this summer that we had a chance to go back, re-expose some of the feature from 2021, and extend those excavations to the west, to determine if it continued in that direction. We found that the initial linear feature extended to the northwest and turned into a double wall a few meters west of where we left off in 2021 (Photo 2). In between the two wall sections, we encountered mottled subsoil that we believe to be the soils dug out of the wall trench and possibly the circular feature (seen in the photo) when it was first built. Our identification and understanding of the feature was complicated by the fact that a very distinct plow scar was located di-



Photo 3: Bisection of linear section of palisade wall, showing center trench and smaller posts at the sides.

At that point we were pretty sure we had a palisade, but to be certain, we tested a section of it, first bisecting one wall section in a linear fashion (Photo 3, above).

What we found was that the walls were built of posts in a trench, but not large, uniform posts, and

not in a purely linear fashion. Posts of varying sizes look to have been set into the trench and were sometimes overlapping. This discovery at the Hollister Site verifies the historical record of fortification; it is a feature that dates to the fall of 1675. Additionally, it verifies our belief that the South Cellar was filled in the 1670s.

The fall is already shaping up to be a busy one. OSA and FOSA participated in the Connecticut Archaeology Fair at the Henry Whitfield Museum in Guilford in October, (see photo, bottom of next column) and OSA presented research from OSA/FOSA projects at two professional conferences. At the Conference for Northeast Historical Archaeology (CNEHA) in Montreal, Nick Bellantoni, Gary Aronsen, Scott Brady, and I presented updates on the ongoing analyses of the Ridgefield burials, which were unearthed in 2019, and I also presented about the women who lived at the Hollister Site in the 17th century. Then, at the Eastern States Archaeological Federation (ESAF) Meeting in Ocean City, Maryland, I presented the collaborative work Brianna Rae Zoto and I have been doing on the Grannis Island collection. Grannis Island is a large shell midden site located on the Quinnipiac River in New Haven. Diagnostics artifacts and radiocarbon dates indicate it was occupied by Native people from the Middle Archaic through the Contact period, although the shell midden seems to have developed primarily in the Middle and Late Woodland. FOSA has supported the collections-based project on this important site with funding for radiocarbon dates, as well as earlier funding for Brianna's work to organize, analyze, and re-package the collection in modern curatorial materials.

I was so pleased to see the turnout of Connecticut archaeologists at ESAF! Twenty-seven archaeologists attended and a full one-third of the papers and posters presented were on topics related to Connecticut archaeology! Students and young professionals were well-represented, which was very exciting to see. We still have at least one more field project planned – after Thanksgiving we'll do some shovel testing at another site in Hebron related to Cesar Peters. Now that November is here, we'll focus more on the lab and collections with FOSA volunteers. We have a new, small lab space we can expand into, plenty of washing and processing from our summer field projects, and we need to complete the move of the collections and associated files, maps, and paperwork to Building 1, to finally consolidate all of the collections. This winter, we're hoping to get some FOSA volunteers involved in research projects this year, working to inventory and analyze small collections or parts of collections to produce results we can share with the

archaeological community.

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*. Our last several shows featured Plants and People in First Period Colonial Connecticut (June), Digging into History: On the Road with Rochambeau (August), Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School (September), Archaeology, Myths, and Folklore (October). On November 7, we'll discuss the discovery of the remains of a Terminal Archaic period house structure in Cheshire, in light of past archaeological research on pre-colonial Indigenous architecture. If you missed a past show and want to catch up they are all archived on the FOSA website at:

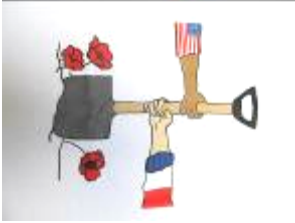
https://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV_Slideshow_1.htm.

*Best, Sarah Sportman
Connecticut State Archaeologist*



Kathy Walburn at FOSA Outreach table at the Henry Whitfield Museum in Guilford in October,





Rochambeau Encampment #5

Digging into History: On the Road with Rochambeau. A Foreign Exchange Project with French and American High School Students.

In 2019 a Foreign Exchange program was initiated, sending a group of American high school students to France to excavate World War I trenches in the Seicheprey region of France. Among those who spearheaded this program was the late Dr. Brian Jones, CT State Archaeologist and sponsored by the Museum of CT History located in the CT State Library.



Unfortunately, due to the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic the project was put on hold.

Fast Forward to July of this year, 2023. Under the direction of CT State Archaeologist Dr. Sarah Sportman and the CT Commission of Culture & Tourism, sixteen Connecticut high school students were joined by thirteen students from France to excavate a section of the Bolton Heritage Farm/Park which is where the Revolutionary War Rochambeau Encampment #5 is located. This archaeological site is one of the 54 sites tracing the journey of Rochambeau's Army's 120-mile route to Washington. Assisting with this project were members of the Bolton Heritage Park and FOSA volunteers working with CT State Archaeologist emeritus Dr. Nick Bellantoni and Dr. Kevin McBride.

Prior to the excavation of the site, metal detectors were used to determine potential locations where they had "hits" of possible metal artifacts. With torrential rains ushering in the start of this year's program, the soil was soggy, making it difficult to excavate. However, with the exuberance and youthful determination that the students brought with them, they managed to unearth several interesting artifacts.

Included in their finds were French regimental buttons from the 41st and the 85th regiments. Musket balls of two sizes and coins were also excavated and studied in the laboratory to determine size and denomination.

For those of you wondering, Yes, some of us were learning French and others were learning English. It was Fun and a Great experience.



*Submitted by Ken and Bonnie Beatrice
Photos by Ken Beatrice*



Editor's Notes: 1. Matthew Picarelli-Kombert (see below) was the 2022 Cooke Scholarship Recipient. Though a brief mention of the award appeared in the Fall 2022 FOSA Newsletter, the full details regarding his award were not published at the time. To help us correct this oversight, please follow this link (to our website) for a copy of that announcement:

https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_CookeScholarships_Index.html.

2. The 2023 Cooke Scholarship winner is Brianna Zotto. A full article introducing her and her research will appear in the next newsletter.

An Analysis of Seven Shell Middens at the Calluna Hill Site (59-73)

Matthew Picarelli-Kombert

Burned on May 26, 1637, during the Pequot War, the Pequot site of Calluna Hill in Mystic, Connecticut was once known only from an entry in the diary of Captain John Mason. The site was not relocated until 2012 by a team of tribal members and archaeologists from the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center and the University of Connecticut during a battlefield survey of the Battle of English Withdrawal (May 1637). At the time, only two shell middens (refuse piles where shellfish dominate the assemblage) were discovered, and they were labeled Feature 1 and Feature 2. The site has consistently been surveyed and studied since the initial survey. What makes these deposits of great interest to tribal members and archaeologists is related to the kinds of information they provide. Apart from the remains of shellfish, shell middens frequently contain non-shell artifacts, such as bones, seeds, and other organic remains. These remains usually decompose quickly when buried in the acidic soils of the Northeast. When shells are breaking down, they release calcium carbonates which counteracts the acidity of soils and increases the preservability of organics not usually recovered from sites across the region. Thus, these shell middens provide critical information regarding the foodways of past peoples.

My Master's research began in the Fall of 2020 at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Due to restrictions related to COVID-19, the entire first year of the program occurred online, limiting access to archaeological collections available for research. Remaining in Connecticut during this time allowed me to participate in excavations on Calluna Hill, the majority of which were completed during University of Connecticut's 2021 Contact Period Native Domestic Sites & Battlefield Archaeology Field School. These excavations located five new shell middens (Features 37A, 37B, 38, 41, and 43) which became the focus for my Master's research. I spent the next three years analyzing the archaeological materials recovered from these middens in order to answer questions about the variability of the species as they related to shellfish gathering practices and to midden formation. My analyses suggest that shellfish were used primarily as a form of sustenance at Calluna Hill. However, these middens also contain evidence of wampum shell bead production. Looking at the range of size and variability between the middens, this project also addressed Pequot shellfish utilization and deposition during the early seventeenth century, a period of cultural change and conflict in Southern New England. It also provides a glimpse into the lives a unified Pequot people before the war divided them into the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation.

The Pequot people have lived in what is now southeastern Connecticut for thousands of years, and several projectile points found around the area suggests occupation of the Calluna Hill site during several different time periods. To test whether people lived at Calluna Hill at different times, and to aid in our interpretation of the site's use history, a radiocarbon date was obtained in 2018 to date Feature 2. The sample from Feature 2, a piece of hickory (*Carya*.) charcoal, had a date placing the feature within the second quarter of the seventeenth century. The excavations conducted between 2020 and 2021 further examined one of the two previously identified middens, Feature 1, while Feature 2 was left untouched. After identifying the five new middens, excavation units were placed to sample the shellfish and observe their stratigraphy (Figures 2 and 3). All of the middens were relatively thin, never measuring more than 9 cm thick. Six of the seven were classified as single-strata middens, meaning they were only one level. Feature 41 was classified as a dual-strata midden. Site forms noted that "Strata 1, the deeper of the two, consists of a relatively thin layer of highly compacted and dense shell fragments. . This stratum also yielded a higher frequency of artifacts. A thin layer (0.5 cm) of highly sterile soil separates Strata 1 and 2. Stratum 2 is characterized by lower densities and frequencies of shell as well as other cultural material, (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Students excavating Feature 41 during the 2021 field school.

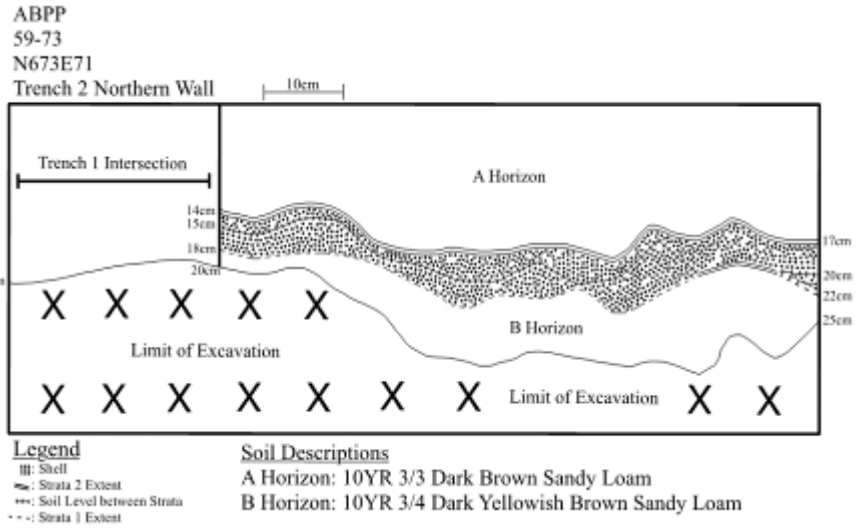


Figure 2: Northern wall profile of N673E71, sample of Feature 41.

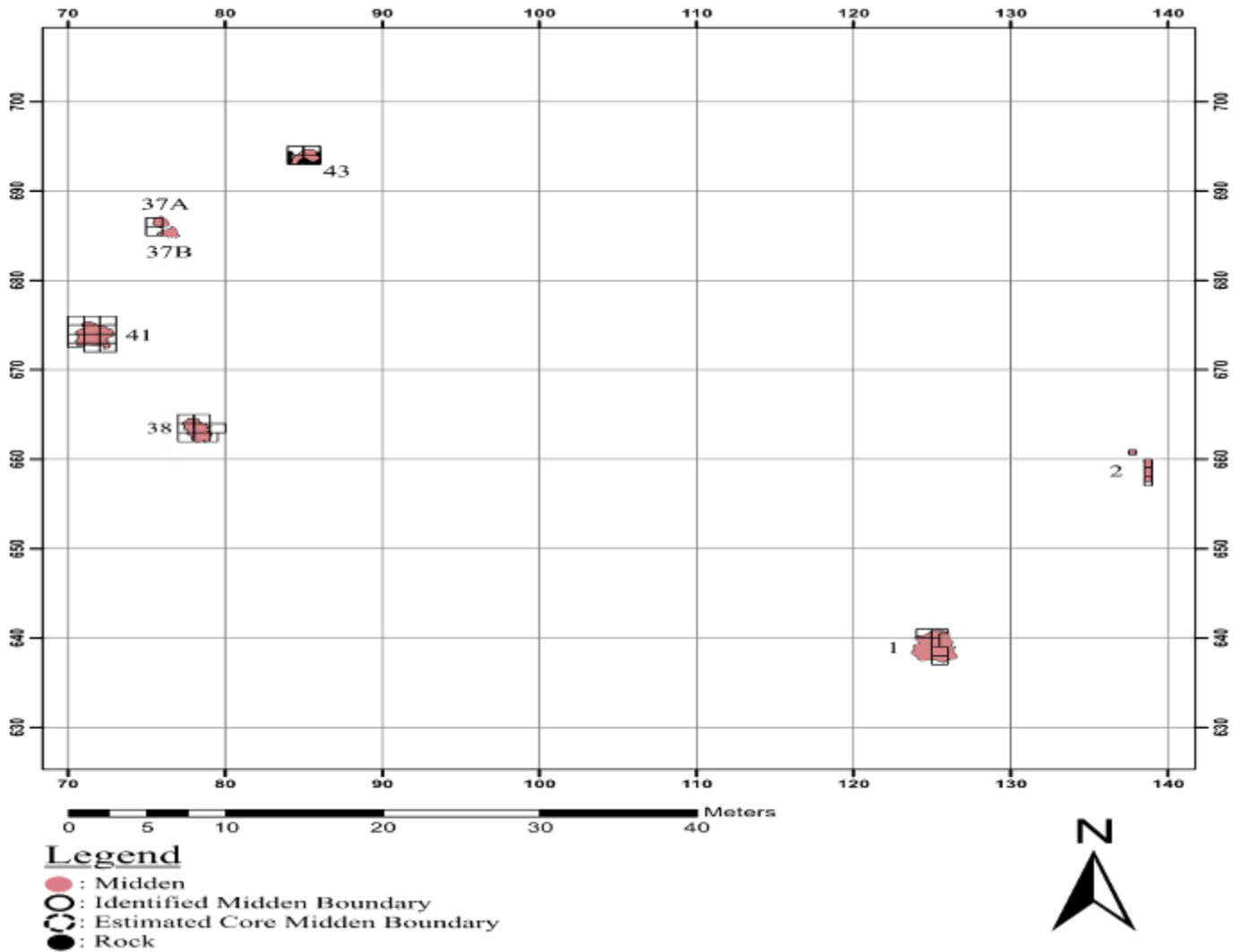


Figure 3: Map of the Calluna Hill shell middens and excavation units.

In 2022, I was granted the June and Dave Cooke Scholarship from FOSA to assist me in obtaining five new radiocarbon dates from the site. They would provide better temporal contexts, not only for the site itself, but also for the archaeological features and materials I analyzed for my Master's research. With funding for five new radiocarbon dates, I targeted four separate Features from both the 2018 and 2020 field seasons. I obtained one new date each from Features 1, 37B, and 38. The materials dated from these contexts included a fragment of charcoal from the *Salicaceae* family, a corn kernel (*Zea mays*), and an unidentified charred seed, respectively. Two samples were selected from Feature 41, one from each of the archaeological strata present in the feature to test if they represented a single site occupation, or reuse during two distinct occupations. The samples were a corn kernel (*Zea mays*) from Stratum 1 and a piece of charcoal identified as red oak (*Quercus Erythrobalanus* Group) from Stratum 2. Both samples fell within the same time range, showing that they represent one occupation. Collectively, all the dates suggest these features represent a site occupation within the seventeenth century around the time of the Pequot War.

The radiocarbon dates given for the six total samples discussed here point towards the possibility that the site dates after the end of the Pequot War. Post-war re-occupation was unlikely due to the eventual resettlement by the English (a colonial foundation sits nearby and one of the rock walls cuts through Feature 43). Additionally, no records from the seventeenth century note tribal presence in the area after the war ended. The material culture found within the middens argues against these slightly later dates as well. Similarly, other evidence also suggests the village not only existed during the war period, but those living there were actively engaged in the war. Cut brass and ferrous refuse likely correspond to the cut brass and ferrous projectile points found along the battlefield. Artifacts including projectile points, weapon hardware, and musketballs serve as evidence that the battle cut directly through the village. Site reports from initial surveys of the Battle of the English Withdrawal also indicate the battle ran directly through the village based on evidence of fighting around the middens. More radiocarbon dates in the future may help firmly place the site directly within the war period, matching with the material evidence already considered.



Figure 4: Red and blue striped glass seed bead recovered from Feature 1.



Figure 5: Brass signet ring from Feature 43.



Figure 6: A selection of wampum beads collected around the site.



Figure 7: European flint gun-flint from Feature 37A.

Calluna Hill's shell middens are all composed of species collected in Long Island Sound. The nearby Fish-town Brook leads directly into the Sound 3 km away in an area buffeted by five different waterways: Palmer Cove, Beebe Cove, Mumford Cove, Baker Cove, and West Cove. All five coves are the likely places where the Pequots collected the shellfish found at the site, although further research could shed more light on the harvesting practices themselves. Different family units may have formed the middens, but the species likely came from these shared environments.

Soft-shell clams are the dominant species present across all seven shell concentrations, pointing to the likelihood that it was preferred over other species in the waterways from which the Pequots gathered. Their collection links to preference over availability, as concentrations of eastern oysters were also found within features. Eastern oysters were found in some frequency, but are most abundant in Feature 41. Defined clusters of oysters in the midden were noted as potential basket dumps. Evidence of individual oyster dumps could suggest oysters were purposefully collected separately from soft-shell clams. Feature 1, in comparison, contains little oyster remains. This near absence of oysters in Feature 1 as compared to Feature 41 could suggest numerous processes including difference in seasonal harvesting practices, differences in household access to or preference for oyster resources, or different locations of harvest such as between the nearby coves.

Irrespective of when all the middens were formed, the dates I analyzed for my Master's research suggest Calluna Hill was made up of several households depositing their refuse in independent household middens. My analysis of the shellfish species within these middens demonstrates Pequots were utilizing the nearby coves and inlets to collect species. Despite the different scales of deposition, the features are all very similar to each other. The similarity shows dominance of soft-shell clam harvesting at the village-wide scale. It also shows that oyster was intermittently consumed across the site; other species were found in limited quantities, likely representative of opportunistic collection. This variation in species not only provides information on what the Pequots' diets were composed of, but also how they interacted with and utilized their local environment. After the war, the Pequots were forcibly divided by the English and reorganized over the next few decades. Future comparisons of pre- and post-split Pequot sites can be directed towards better understanding the impacts on the tribe after the war ended.

My Master's thesis worked to describe the shell-fishing traditions of the Pequots living at Calluna Hill prior to the outbreak of the Pequot War in 1636. Even during the war, they continued to rely on similar sets of resources. While Calluna Hill may not have been occupied after the Battle of the English Withdrawal on May 26, 1637, the question of when the Pequots first settled the village is not yet confirmed. Research at the Calluna Hill site, and on its materials, is ongoing and will continue to reveal more about the lives of the Pequots during the seventeenth century. Ongoing work will continue to provide the Mashantucket and Eastern Pequot Tribal Nations with information on their shared past.

FOSA Continuing Ed. Program

“Pre-Clovis – A Critical Assessment”

FOSA is offering an intensive four-week program, consisting of one evening zoom class per week. Through readings, PPT presentations, guest lecture and class discussions, we will consider current evidence and theories of the late Pleistocene peopling of North America. Classes are targeted to begin on Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

The Clovis archaeological horizon has been viewed as a marker of the first, relatively quick human dispersal throughout North America beginning approximately 13,600 cal. years BP. This “Clovis-first” theory is challenged by tantalizing reports of earlier human occupation. However, as Juliet E. Morrow (2016) informs, following an SAA's consortium on this issue, critical assessment of the evidence “...suggests the presumptive archaeological record of this pre-clovis population...is actually sparse.”

We will focus on recent reports of Pre-Clovis archaeological data. Three articles will be assigned readings in advance of each class. Through this study we will gain an appreciation of current theories and the supportive data on the peopling of the western hemisphere, while sharpening our critical thought skills. Dr. Stuart Fiedel will be a guest speaker for one session.

The Continuing Ed Program is open to members of FOSA, ASC and MAS.

Please Email Tom Ford at Fordtb72@gmail.com to express interest and register.

About four weeks in advance of the start of sessions, finalized details and syllabus will be posted to the FOSA website: <https://www.fosa-ct.org/>.

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- Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, *Emeritus* CT State Archaeologist
- Dr. Janine Caira, Director, CSMNH
- Lee West (ASC)
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- Outreach:** Kathy Walburn (Chair), Bonnie Beatrice, Ken Beatrice
- Volunteer Coordinator:** TBD *Open*
- Website Committee:** Jim Hall (Chair), Jen Glaubius, Lindsay Kiewetter


UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sarah Sportman Virtual Presentation: "The First People of Connecticut"

When: Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 2:00 PM
Where: Glastonbury Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles St, Glastonbury.
To Register: Info: Hosted by the Bloomfield Public Library. Free and open to the public. Contact the Bloomfield Public Library to sign up.

Sarah Sportman Speaking Engagement: "The Indigenous History and Archaeology of Connecticut: The View from Glastonbury."

When: Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 7:00 PM
Where: Glastonbury Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles St, Glastonbury.
Info: Hosted by the Land Heritage Trust of Glastonbury. Free and open to the public.



The FOSA Members Newsletter is published by The Friends of the Office of State Archaeology, Inc.
 Printing by The Print Hub
 97B Pierson Lane
 Windsor CT 06095 (860 580-7907)

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If You See Something, Say Something

It's fair to say we're all familiar with this phrase, borne of the events of the 9/11 attack. The crux of it is that the attacks were preceded by out-of-the-ordinary events that many people may have seen, which were out of the ordinary, but which were ignored. And as a result....

Archaeology isn't, of course, in the same category. But the same rule of thumb applies. Something that is out of the ordinary, which could be important to our understanding of where and how we live if looked into, could be lost if we think, "Meh. Someone will report this, so I won't bother. Besides, I'm busy now and it's probably nothing anyway." I expect we've all done that at one time or another. Heck, I know I have.

But not everyone. Our newsletter is testament to what can happen when people *don't* take the easy way out and ignore oddities. Following are a few examples.

1. Excavation at Two Wrasslin' Cats.

If you click [Case-1](#) you'll find out how the excavation came about. The first sentence, though, says it all: "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."

This is admittedly an extreme example: Mark Clymer, who spotted the tool, knew from his past experience that it could only have come from a spot 100 miles away. Mark spoke to the owner of the coffee shop, did a small excavation, found enough artifacts that he then contacted Sarah Sportman and David Leslie, who commenced a series of formalized digs at the site.

The last couple of sentences at the end of the article summarize the event: "[The owner] marvels at how close the project came to never getting started. If Mark hadn't shown up, this research wouldn't be happening. Somebody [else] would likely have picked that stone up and just thrown it in the brook."

2. Hurd's Iron Mountain Magnetic Spring Site

Back in June, 2022, I noticed an article in our local newspaper, the *Rivereast News Bulletin*, about some odd-looking stonework that a member of the Chatham Historical Society encountered during a walk in East Hampton. The structural remains were unusual, hence his article – including a picture – in the newspaper, asking if anyone knew anything about them. I forwarded the article to Glenda Rose, who arranged a Site Walk, including 3 FOSA members, Nick Bellantoni, the author of the newspaper item, and 1 other resident. You can read the details of the Walk and what the results were, by accessing the Fall 2022 FOSA Newsletter, by clicking [Case-2](#) and **scrolling to page 5**. The whole episode is remarkable ... and enlightening.

The point of all this, however, is not what was found, but the fact that the Field Walk and subsequent research were initiated by a single question from a non-archaeologist. Who saw something he didn't understand and said something about it.

3. The Vampire Skull and the Kennewick Man

Back in 1990, Nick Bellantoni became involved with the unearthing of skulls, and later whole skeletons of people, during excavation of a gravel pit in Griswold, CT. Actually, the skulls were found by three 10 year-old boys sliding down the gravel pit. When one of the boys reported the find to his mother, she basically said "Meh, yeah, sure; now go away and play, I'm busy." They went back to the pit and dug a skull out and brought it to her; that got her attention. Nick Bellantoni got involved and uncovered evidence of an undocumented cemetery and apparent vampire-defense desecration of some of the remains. The specifics of all this can be found in the FOSA website by clicking [Case-3a](#).

A couple of pre-teen boys found the skulls. It took a bit, but they were believed. And the resulting analysis is fascinating. Had the boys ignored them (as the mother doubtless hoped they would), much of what eventually transpired could well not have happened. Including a better understanding of where our New England vampire legends come from and who the alleged vampire was.

The Kennewick Man is similar, in that it was a skeleton embedded in a river bank of the Columbia River near Kennewick, Washington. There was no doubt that the canoeists who found the skeleton had indeed found it; though there was considerable doubt over who he was. While it was uncertain if the skeleton belonged to a Native American, that was the conclusion drawn; and among the results was the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Information on the Kennewick Man can be found in several places in the FOSA website, though pictures and info from the 2015 Annual Meeting are perhaps of primary interest. You can access the Kennewick Man pictures by clicking [Case-3b](#).

As with the 3 boys above, none of the canoeists was an archaeologist; but they knew right away what the right thing to do was when they saw that skeleton.

4. The Odd-Looking Jug

In October 2019, I received an email from a young man who had found an odd-looking jug of some sort that he and his uncle had found in his very old home in Derby, CT. He included a picture of the jug, and asked if we could help find some information on it. I forwarded his email and the picture to Nick Bellantoni; who replied to him that it was most likely a piece of modern folk art (19th or 20th century), as it bore no resemblance to Native American or European heritage that he was aware of.

This is another example of someone who did the right thing when they found this piece of pottery: They went and asked someone presumably knowledgeable about it (me). And they got an answer from perhaps the best person in CT to answer it (Nick); and who forwarded it to his colleagues in the event he was mistaken. A win all around!

(OK: So why did he send his request to me instead of, say, Nick in the first place? Because at the time I had my name and email address showing on the website. I've learned *my* lesson!)

Anyway...

A basic tenet of archaeology is that much can be learned from what has been thrown away. The obvious precondition is that the stuff thrown away has to be found in the first place. And the best resource for that could well be the masses of people out there who aren't archaeologists but who are curious enough to say, "Hmm, that's odd" and pursue it, rather than shrug "Meh" and forget about it.

If this doesn't happen, that portion of our knowledge of who we are and why we're like that will be gone. More slowly than the Twin Towers, but just as completely.

So..... In order to help people determine if something they saw is of archaeological interest, a small change is being made to the FOSA website, whereby folks can send an email about it to members of the Board, (to fosa.ct@gmail.com), with a Subject reading "Found Something Unusual" or some such, so recipients will know the message's purpose. The email would then be forwarded to Sarah Sportman, Nick Bellantoni, perhaps one of the participants in our iCRV discussions, or even perhaps the police if it's felt appropriate.

Note: The phrase "If You See SOMETHING, Say Something" has been trademarked by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NYMTA), so we can't (or at least shouldn't) use it here. So we'll use our own:

Find Something Unusual? Ask An Archaeologist!

Probably preaching to the choir here, but there you are.

- Jim Hall

Why “AGNES”? Who is Agnes?

For those who work on archaeological digs, you might have questioned why “AGNES” is stamped on the rectangular metal scoop that is being used. I met Agnes, years ago during the 1990’s, at an Arthur Basto Archaeological Society (ABAS) meeting. At the time I was the ABAS Secretary and Agnes handed me a couple of her rectangular metal, three sided scoops. She mentioned that she had been on an archaeological dig in New Hampshire, and later that she had created this new tool. I accepted them for the group and passed them on to our of ABAS President. None of us recognized their potential at the time and they were put into storage on some back shelf.

One day in July of 2001, my work as a surveyor took me to a property on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation where I met up with Dr. Brian Jones, a staff archaeologist for the Mashantucket Pequot Museum. He mentioned how they needed someone who knew surveying and archaeology. An opportunity to do both! Soon I became an independent contractor working for the Mashantucket Pequots, surveying, and doing archaeology. We excavated a lot of one-meter units, using our flat shovels, trowels, dustpans. So where do the scoops come in?

Well, Dr. Brian Jones talked a lot about this dig, that happened annually in New Hampshire, SCRAP (State Cultural Rescue Archaeology Program) led by Dr. Richard Boisvert. After working for a couple years for the Pequots and listening to Brian Jones, a crew of us ventured to New Hampshire to help excavate with SCRAP. What do we see, they are using Scoops, the Agnes Scoop!

When I got back to Connecticut I contacted Agnes. She still made the scoops, and we started using them on the digs at the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation, Dr Kevin McBride had his UCONN Archaeology Field School students help with excavations. The students who were most interested in archaeology wanted these scoops. So, I would call Agnes to order some more and to meet with her. We began to call them “Agnes Scoops” remarking how the dimensions were not only just right for excavating, but also could be used to hold water to clean artifacts. Eventually, Agnes turned the procurement of the scoops over to me. She didn’t want to deal with the hassle of sales and business. She introduced me to her local metal guy, mentioning not to change any of design. I still get orders for scoops, from the State Archaeologist, FOSA, and graduate students running archaeological field schools.

On July 25, 2023, I met up with her again to get her story. She was 93 years old, born in 1930, and resided in an assisted living facility in Norwich Ct. She was with her three grown daughters along with a great grandson, Larkin, aged 11 and her youngest daughter’s husband.

She told me that when she was in seventh grade, she had suffered an abscess on the brain. Her father was on his way to Canada on a train for a funeral and had to turn around to come back to the hospital where Agnes was in a tub of ice before her surgery. Afterwards, she needed to relearn how to read, write and speak. She was very proud of her 8th grade education.

As a grownup she worked as an Inspector for the USDA. She took up bird carving. She designed and constructed a large labyrinth on her property constructed with rebar and capped with wood.

As I sat there interviewing her for this article, two women who were workers at the assisted living home were present, mesmerized by her story. And yes, we talked about the “Agnes Scoops”. Back in 1991, she had gone with a friend to a summer field school in New Hampshire with SCRAP. She was most proud of working with a “Doctor” (Richard Boisvert, Ph.D.) who explained to Agnes how she needed to dig, though he thought she had been digging for years, because she caught on quickly. Returning home from her two weeks with SCRAP, her mind calculating, she decided something better was needed to excavate with. That winter, she came up with the idea, drew it out on a piece of 8”1/2 x 11” paper, had her son in law draft the design, brought it to a local sheet metal man in Norwich CT. and had them made. The following year she returned to SCRAP in New Hampshire and passed them out to the crew. And the rest is history.



Sadly Agnes passed away after a brief illness, not two and a half weeks from the interview on August 12, 2023. She was most excited that I had found her and proud to be interviewed. At the time of the interview, I was grateful to get a photo of her and photos of her digging at SCRAP.

Submitted by: Kathleen Boushee

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES
 NEW FOSA MEMBERS SINCE 11/26/22

Marc Banks
 Michael Bradshaw
 Matthew Breier
 Peter and Shelley Cudiner
 Kevin Doyle
 Beatrice Evans
 Paul Everton II
 William Farley
 Anthony Gambardella
 Mandy Gaumont

Dale Geslien
 Harry Gold
 Emma Grimmer-Solem
 Sophie Haxhi
 Sydney Henry
 Zarah Hillman
 Thomas Hogan
 Michael & Carole Kruz
 Michael Lawrence
 Emily LeMaster

Andrea Lattanzi Lotreck
 Chris Palazzolo
 Cathy Ruggiero
 Andrew Salchert
 Kim Sandak
 Janis Stahlhut
 Daniel Thiery
 Maureen Walther
 James Wicks

The previous newsletter omitted an entry on new members from late November 2022 to March 2023. We have had 29 new members from November 2022 through October 2023. Beginning in late March 2020, we 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. Since early December 2022, we have had 82 renewals, most made before early June 2023. The renewal response for several years prior to June was excellent, thanks in part to the on-line talks co-sponsored with the ASC during the worst of the pandemic and to the revival of summer fieldwork. More recently, there has been a significant drop in renewals by members who had not paid in over 2 years. We believe much of this is simply forgetfulness. If you are not sure when you last renewed, please contact us at fosa.ct@gmail.com

Mike Raber, Membership Chair

FOSA OUTREACH



Field Supervisor Scott Brady overseeing activities at an excavation unit as part of the Rocky Hill Historical Society's Archaeology Day activities.



Engrossed visitors to the FOSA Outreach table.

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 https://www.fosa-ct.org/ICRV_slideshow_1.html. At this writing 56 shows are available.
2. We activated the Spring 2023 Newsletter. Note that we've been asked to wait 2-3 months after a newsletter comes out before activating it in the website.
3. Following an August, 2023 Microsoft update, we found that Microsoft users were unable to send emails using the "mailto:" code which allows you to click an email address and automatically bring up an email session to create and send a message. It would instead bring up a Microsoft Mail session (which not every Microsoft user uses); problems also occurred in the message sending process.
Ultimately we determined that the best fix would be to change the "Send us an email" code on our website pages, to instruct the user to copy the email address into a separate email session and send the message that way. Thus we revised all of our HTML code to use this method, even though only Microsoft users were the ones impacted by the Microsoft change, in order to ensure continuity for all users.
4. We've completed recording Tom Ford's "Lithics Analysis" course and incorporating it into the website. This, and any future such offerings, are accessible via the "FOSA Continuing Education (with the mortarboard icon) link in the "Research Aids" group under "Resources."
The next class has been tentatively scheduled for February 6, 2024, a 4-week Zoom class titled "Pre Clovis – A Critical Review, with guest speaker Stuart Fiedel.
5. Nick Bellantoni's "Remembrance" article for William "Bill" Schultz has been incorporated into our "Remembrances" item under the "About Us" dropdown.
6. Updated the "Archaeology Fairs" page, at https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_AAM_Home.html, to include the 2023 Fair Flyer and pictures of exhibitors, guests, and the groups they're with.
7. We've added a new article in the "Reprints" section, titled "**If You See Something, Say Something!**" derived from an article in the Fall 2023 Newsletter. The article encourages people who spot things that might seem unusual and of archaeological interest, to notify FOSA about it so it can be evaluated by archaeologists (Sarah Sportman, Nick Bellantoni, others) to see if indeed they're worth pursuing, requesting descriptions of the item and its provenance. Supports to do this are being added to the website, accessible under "Resources."
8. SUGGESTIONS REQUESTED: To reiterate from above and from previous "What's New..." articles, we continually look for input from users about the web site: What things can be added? Removed? Revised? Please email me at jamesh52@comcast.net and Jen Glaubius (glaubius@gmail.com) with your suggestions.

Thank you!

Jim Hall / Jen Glaubius

