



# FRIENDS OF THE OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY, INC.

## Member Newsletter



### President's Letter

*Greetings, fellow FOSA members!*

Greetings Members,

This summer has been pretty much business as usual; FOSA supported the OSA at several digs and outreach events, work continued in the lab at UCONN and the iCRV radio show continued, although it will be taking a hiatus for the foreseeable future. The most devastating news has been the loss of two dedicated and beloved members. In August, we learned of the untimely passing of the heart of FOSA, Scott Brady. Most recently, in early November, Treasurer Jim Trocchi passed away unexpectedly while battling a brain tumor. I would like to devote the rest of my column to acknowledging these two wonderful individuals.

I will keep my comments short regarding Scott as there have been several wonderful memories of him on our website at:

[https://www.fosa-t.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA\\_ScottBradyThoughts.html](https://www.fosa-t.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA_ScottBradyThoughts.html).

I met Scott at Field School after, like him, I retired and joined FOSA in 2012. We worked on Jack Barclay's interesting property in Ashford with then State Archaeologist, Nick Bellantoni, and the late, great Bruce Greene. The experience sparked my interest but lit a FIRE under Scott. He soaked up all he could learn about archaeology and thrived in the various roles he took on.

He became President of FOSA in 2018, then took on the role of Recording Secretary and, most importantly, evolved into our Lab and Dig Supervisor, supporting three state archaeologists. He had some wonderful new ideas that I believe energized the membership. His enthusiasm and energy seemed endless. He was continuously learning and loved to share his knowledge with all who were interested. He had a personality that just drew you in. At a dig, he could be bombarded with questions and people requiring his attention and he would get back to everyone without appearing overwhelmed. He would answer questions without making anyone feel inferior. Even when he told you that your discovery was "just a rock", he said it in a way that you didn't feel (too) stupid.

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It is extremely difficult to speak of him in the past tense because he was so loved and respected. Scott will be irreplaceable not only in our organization but, most of all, in our hearts.

Jim Trocchi was just as passionate and dedicated to Connecticut archaeology as Scott, but he seemed to prefer working quietly behind the scenes where he was very competent and effective. He also had a love of history and was a valued member of the Windsor Historical Society. In addition, he loved to hike and joined the Meshomasic Hiking Club in 2010 where he'd reached a hike count of over 250 hikes with the club. So, you can tell that he will be dearly missed by so many. Please see my full memory of Jim in a separate article that follows in this newsletter.

Both of these men are irreplaceable and FOSA will need help from all of you to even begin to fill their roles, so please contact me at [fosa.ct@gmail.com](mailto:fosa.ct@gmail.com) if you would like to help.

Respectfully,

Glenda M. Rose



**Scott Brady, Jim Trocchi and Glenda Rose working in the lab.**

## REMEMBRANCE OF JIM TROCCHI

*Contributed by Glenda M. Rose*



I retired from IBM in 2012 and the first thing I did was join the Meshomasic Hiking Club (MHC). A few weeks later, I joined the Friends of the Office of State Archaeology (FOSA). When I attended Field School in May, I thought I recognized another of the members but couldn't figure out how I knew him. Well, imagine my surprise when I found out that Jim Trocchi was also a member of the MHC! AND he worked for IBM, as well. So, right off the bat we had a lot in common and always had something to talk about on a hike or at a dig.

I got to know Jim over the past 13 years and always enjoyed his company. He was very even-tempered and kind; as many have said, he was a true gentleman. It was obvious that he was pas-

sionate about nature and history and wanted to share those passions. My favorite memory of him is from when we were on an MHC hike along the Farmington River in Avon, near the Brian Jones site. He talked to the group about the history of the Farmington Canal and pointed out the remains of the aqueduct over the Farmington River. My husband, Jack, was very interested and, a few days later, Jim thoughtfully gave him a 20-page copy he had made of a publication by the New Haven Colony Historical Society entitled "The Story of the Farmington Canal".

He supported FOSA in so many ways; as a Board member, Treasurer, participant in field work, helping with our newsletter, printing programs and signs for our annual meetings, and just being always available to help. It came to my attention that he was reluctant to take over for Dreda Hendsey as Treasurer, but once he did, his work was outstanding and he was instrumental in incorporating our online payment system. He was also a contributor of archeological articles in our Newsletter. If you go to the Reprints section of the FOSA website you'll find that he authored 20 articles, ranging from backyard excavations to a history of the Connecticut River, native American tribes and the iron industry in the state. All well-researched and well-written.

Many people were surprised to learn of his age because he was strong and vibrant, setting up canopies, working with a shovel and crouching down in a unit to trowel at our digs, as well as wrestling with shelving that he helped build in Building 1 at Horsebarn Hill. He was quiet and sometimes overlooked, but he was very effective at whatever task he took on. His contributions were recognized by the Board with a Certificate of Appreciation in 2023, which you can find at:

[https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA\\_CertifApp\\_RecipientsList.html#2023](https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_CertifApp_RecipientsList.html#2023)

In closing, I have to say that Jim was loved and respected and will be deeply missed by all of us at FOSA.







## News from the Office of State Archaeology

### Greetings FOSA members:

Dear FOSA Members,

Happy Holidays! I hope you are all finding the time to enjoy the winter season despite the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations.

A lot has happened since the last newsletter. I wanted to start by acknowledging the recent loss of our friends and FOSA Board members Scott Brady and Jim Trocchi. Scott and Jim were two of our most dedicated volunteers, spending hours each week working in the field, lab, or collections. In the nearly six years that I have been at OSA, they were a regular presence in all our activities, helping with our regular archaeological work as well as public outreach and school programs. Both Jim and Scott were passionate about archaeology and about discovering and sharing Connecticut's history, and they shared a tremendous ability to connect with people. The loss of these kind, intelligent, and dedicated men leaves a hole in the hearts of their many friends in the archaeological community. We miss them terribly.

The summer 2025 field season focused on the Hollister Site, as well as the ongoing mitigation work at the multi-component, pre-contact Native American Site 4-16 in Avon. Several FOSA members also worked with Joan Hill on the excavations at the Hop River Mill Site in Columbia. Our fieldwork at the Hollister Site included volunteers from FOSA, ASC, Historical Society of Glastonbury, and students from Southern Connecticut State University, as well as students from the UConn and the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History (CSMNH) field schools. This summer, we uncovered a portion of one of the 17<sup>th</sup> century houses on the site, and we exposed a chimney base that appears to have been set on an outside wall of the structure associated with what we call the "North Cellar." Based on past work, we believed that this structure most likely dated to the second half (post-1675) of the site's occupation. While the materials from this year's fieldwork have not yet been completely processed and analyzed, the date we recovered appears to support that hypothesis. This year's excavations recovered a larger sample of material culture from the North Cellar, including some very interesting domestic artifacts. One of the highlights was the recovery of two fragments of a Dutch Roemer type drinking glass (*see photo below*).



Late 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch Roemer-like glass fragments from the North Cellar: a) "raspberry" prunt; b) base fragment. The image of the complete glass is from the Metropolitan Museum of Art: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/688381>.

Overall, the artifacts in this area suggest that the north cellar was filled near the end of the Hollister Site's occupation, probably in the early 18th century. We hope to have new updates on the North Cellar and other aspects of the site in the near future, as we continue to process, inventory, and analyze the recovered materials.

The field season has extended into the fall, with on-going work in Avon, which we plan to wrap up this month, as well as site visits and monitoring at the Morgan Site in Rocky Hill, the Mary and Eliza Freeman Houses in Bridgeport, and the Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum in Stonington. In addition to fieldwork, in July, OSA took part in the Comte de Rochambeau's 300th birthday celebration at the American Revolution Institute in Washington, DC with our colleagues from the Museum of Connecticut History. The celebration, which commemorated the life and career of General Rochambeau, provided the opportunity to showcase the 2023 Digging into History program and the OSA/FOSA research at the 1781 Revolutionary War Rochambeau Camp #5, in Bolton, Connecticut. OSA also participated in the CSMNH's Mega Mammal Day event at UConn, which showcased a range of fascinating mammal specimens from the collections, including rarely displayed bones from the Farmington Mastodon.



**Farmington Mastodon Bones on Display at Mega Mammal Day at UConn, July 2025.**

This fall, OSA participated in the Connecticut Archaeology Fair at the Eli Whitney Museum on October 4<sup>th</sup>, where I presented the archaeological evidence for 17<sup>th</sup>-century Wangunk metalworking at the Hollister Site. FOSA members Joan Hill and Guy Wanegar also presented their ongoing archaeological work at the Hop River Mill Site in Columbia. At the end of October, I took part in a symposium dedicated to Wangunk Indian history, archaeology, and persistence at Wesleyan University, presenting additional information about the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Wangunk presence at the Hollister Site. Then, in November, OSA joined other archaeologists from Connecticut, including Dr. Kevin McBride and the staff of Heritage Consultants, LLC, for a session on the 1777 Battle of Ridgefield at the Eastern States Archaeological Federation annual conference in Lake George, New York. In the lab, we have already completed washing the artifacts from this summer's fieldwork.

This fall we started a new lab project – organizing and cataloguing artifacts and field records from the General Joseph Spencer Site in East Haddam. General Spencer was an experienced military leader who served in the French and Indian and Revolutionary wars and was elected to the Continental Congress. This collection, which was excavated by avocational archaeologists with some guidance from OSA in the 1990s and early 2000s, includes thousands of 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century artifacts from the Spencer house site. The Spencer Site collection has been at UConn for many years, and as we approach the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it seemed like a great project for 2025 and 2026.

Finally, we wanted to let you know that the OSA/FOSA radio show on iCRV, is on hiatus. We hope it is temporary, and that we'll be able to restart the program at some point in the future. If you are interested in any of the past episodes you may have missed, they are all archived on the FOSA website at: [https://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV\\_Slideshow\\_1.htm](https://www.fosa-ct.org/iCRV_Slideshow_1.htm).

Best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday season,

Sarah Sportman, Connecticut State Archaeologist

## THE SHOOTING STAR THAT WAS SCOTT BRADY

Scott Brady radiated into our lives like a sparkling shooting star  
discharged across the Connecticut archaeological skies.

For 13 years, he inspired, motivated, led by example.  
He learned, applied what he learned  
and mentored volunteers and students.

Dedication, commitment, humor, and energy  
gushed from him with contagious enthusiasm.

He was Pied Piper enticing all to join on his archaeological journey,  
drawing us in with his magnetism,  
pulling us toward him like the tide.

We stood in awe at what he accomplished  
in far too short a time.  
His physical and mental strength overwhelmed.  
He was our Hercules in the field, our Socrates in the lab.

Sarah, Brian and I had the titles  
But he made us better, made us look good, made us do more,  
simply because he was there.  
Dependable, loyal, ready to step in no matter the need, going above and beyond.  
Scott was always by our side.  
We stand forever indebted.

We see him in the field still –  
knees stained with dirt, shirt saturated in perspiration,  
hands covered with brown, soiled gloves, sweat lining his frayed ball cap.  
He is turning an artifact over in his hands, examining, wondering, imagining.

It is so hard to comprehend that he is gone.

They say heaven has been around for a long time  
And if that is the case, well, there should be archaeological sites.  
And, if that is so,  
Scott Brady and Brian Jones are together again.  
directing, teaching, and, of course, excavating,  
united like the old days.

I would be honored just to screen their back dirt.

Now whenever we go into the field, trowels and brushes in hand,  
we will gaze to the skies in hopes of catching  
a glimpse of inspiration from Scott's shooting star.

*Nick Bellantoni, Connecticut State Archaeologist, Emeritus*





## Remembering Scott

Upper Left: Scott Brady at the Templeton site, June 2016,  
 Upper Middle and Upper Right at the Creed site, July 2019.  
 Middle Left: Mandy Ranslow passing of the gavel as Scott  
 Brady Becomes the new FOA President at the 2018 Annual  
 Meeting.  
 Middle Right: Scott, Sarah and Crew at the Two Wraslin'  
 Cats site, 2022.

## FOSA Officers and Board

Glenda Rose - President  
 Thomas Ford – Vice President  
*Open* - Recording Secretary  
 Sandy DiStefano - Corresponding Secretary  
*Open* -Treasurer  
 (Assistant Treasurer - *Open*)

Dawn Brown - Board Member  
 Mike Cahill - Board Member  
 Richard Hughes - Board Member  
 Lori Kessel - Board Member  
 Cindy McWeeney - Board Member  
 Jeremy Pilver - Board Member  
 Mike Raber - 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)

## Membership Information

### Member Level:

- ☐ Individual \$25      ☐ Corporate/Institution \$100  
☐ Family \$35      ☐ Patron/Benefactor \$150  
☐ Student \$5      ☐ Douglas Jordan Dating and  
☐ Classroom \$50 Conservation Donation \$\_\_\_\_  
☐ General Fund \$\_\_\_\_  
☐ OSA Library Fund \$\_\_\_\_

### Please Make Your Check Payable to:

Friends of the Office of State Archaeology, Inc.  
 PO Box 380845

East Hartford, CT 06148-0815

*Also Note: You can also renew your membership on line at the FOSA website.*

Have you any comments or questions about the newsletter? Please send your inquiries to [jerrytolchin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jerrytolchin@sbcglobal.net), FOSA Newsletter Editor

## FOSA Committees and Committee Members

**Archaeology Awareness Month:** TBD (Chair), Jim Hall, Dick Hughes, Elliot Schawm, Kathy Walburn

**Cooke Scholarship Committee:** Jeremy Pilver (Chair), Cindy McWeeney

**Excavation Committee:** Jeremy Pilver (Chair), Mike Cahill, Marlo Del Chiaro, Dick Hughes, Elizabeth Mark, Frederick Rivard, Kathy Walburn,

**Membership:** Mike Raber (Chair), Glenda Rose, Sandy DiStefano (Corresponding Secretary)

**Newsletter:** Jerry Tolchin (Chair), Lindsay Kiesewetter

**Nominations:** *Open*

**Outreach:** Kathy Walburn (Chair), Bonnie Beatrice, Ken Beatrice

**Volunteer Coordinator:** TBD (Chair), Glenda Rose

**Website:** Jim Hall (Chair), Jen Glaubius, Lindsay Kiesewetter

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

NEW FOSA MEMBERS SINCE 5/03/2025

SAMUEL BARNES	SARAH O'REILLY
MATT BELDEN	ADAM PERLSTEIN
CLARE BARNETT	CARLOS ORTEZ
MARY F. CARROLL	SHEILA POWERS
MARYANN COLEMAN	JENNIFER RITCHIE
JAKI CORSO	EVANGELINA ST PIERRE
JOHN ELWELL	The STORMS FAMILY,
CATHERINE JOSEPH	JUSTIN TALARSKI
ELLEN KANEHL	KIM THACKER-HARRIS
GRETCHEN KAUFFMAN	CAMISHA VILME
LINDA LUM	MICHAEL WESTERFIELD
WENDI MURRAY	JOSEPH A. YONKERS

We have had 24 new members from early May 2025 to November 19, 2025. 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 all but 2 of the new members and about 55%% of those who renewed since early May 2025. During this period, we have had 18 renewals.

Mike Raber,

Membership Chair



## FOSA's Tour of the Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine Archaeological Preserve *Submitted by Tom Ford*

This past spring FOSA members were treated to a special tour of the Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine, thanks to the coordination of our Mike Cahill and Site Director Morgan Bengel. The site's history spans over three hundred years, encompassing incipient colonial copper mining efforts (c.1707–1755), colonial and State of Connecticut prison practices (c.1773-1827), renewed mining efforts (c.1830-37; 1855-57;1901), a commercial tourist attraction (20<sup>th</sup> century) and finally a State Park and Archaeological Preserve (1968-present). The remnant structural features reflect elements of each phase and function of the mine. The focus of our tour was primarily on the site's colonial mining and 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century prison remains (*Figure 1 below*).



Glenda Rose, Morgan Bengel, Jim Trocchi, Richard Hughes, Mike Cahill.

Descending a modern concrete stairway, the FOSA group entered a wide excavated chamber thirty-five feet below the ground surface. We entered a totally different sensory world. We were told that the initial mining for copper had begun in 1707 and continued sporadically until the 1750s. By hand hammer and chisel, the colonial miners excavated vertical shafts for access and ventilation. Then downward sloping horizontal tunnels were cut following the dip of the seams of copper ore. Mining progressed to a little over a depth of eighty feet where percolating ground water became an insurmountable barrier. The main ore bed is two feet thick and dips eastward generally at about 25 degrees. It is primarily Chalcopyrite characterized by brass-yellow, and iridescent tarnishes of green, blue, or purple (*Figure 2, right*).

Mining was a precarious, and generally unprofitable business. The colonial New Gate mine was worked by five or more succeeding business ventures for over forty plus years, with little evidence that any were profitable. The quality and extent of the ore deposits were limited, and the hand extraction methods were inefficient. (*Continued on next page*)



Colorful Copper Ore, In Situ

Water accumulation in the mines was a constant impediment to ore extraction. Further, English policy at the time dictated that ores could not be smelted in the colonies, but was to be shipped to England for refining. The cost inherent in ore recovery, shipment, and then refining generally exceeded the return. Interestingly, a number of ore crushing, washing and smelting sites in the region reflect the local colonial attempts to evade English law. Disregarding homeland Britain's commercial dictates, Dr. Samuel Higley used local copper to produce a 1737 3-Pence coin or token. One specimen is on display at the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History.

In 1773 the Connecticut Assembly acquired rights to the mines to use it as a public goal and workhouse. Within the mine, an area of about 180 sq feet was prepared to lodge prisoners. Wooden sleeping platforms may have been used to keep them off the cold, damp rock surface. Access was by vertical shaft and wooden ladder. Prisoners would have been confined to the mine, legs always shackled, for twelve or more hours a day. The sole sources of light were the vertical air shafts and the well (*Figure 3 below, left*). The first prisoner, John Hinson, was committed in December 1773 for the crime of burglary. He escaped within three weeks!

The number of prisoners confined at any one time is uncertain, however a list of prisoner names by year suggests 8 to 13 prisoners a year were typically held (years 1774 through 1782) although in 1781 an aberrant count of twenty-seven prisoners is given. This may reflect the incarceration of Loyalists or Tories, who opposed the succession of the colonies from the English.



View up the Well Shaft – only light source!



U.S. Bicentennial Painting of Prisoners in the New Gate mine

Once in the mine, the intrepid FOSA group tread upon the wet, uneven, slippery mine floor surface. For many of us, the headroom was limited, and occasional thumps occurred (*Figure 5, right*). Bent over, my walking was erratic and vision distorted due to dim lighting and my wearing progressive lenses! While underground, we felt damp and cold. Yet we could not come even close to fathoming the sensory ordeal that the prisoners confined here endured. We knew our time below ground was counted in minutes. Prisoners often had no prospects of surfacing for days or weeks. Little light, cold and damp, stink of unwashed bodies, dirty clothing and excrement would have been the norm for the prisoners. Add to this poor food, contaminated drinking water, and a social mix of young first-time prisoners with life-long hardened criminals and the conditions are simply unimaginable from today's perspective. No wonder there were so many escapes in the early years of prison history.

A few strides from the well shaft is a hollowed out dead end chamber that was used for prisoner solitary confinement. Skirting the deep puddles of water, we encountered a small stone ledge with embedded iron pintles by which prisoner's wrist and ankle shackles were anchored. By flashlight we observed initials carved by a prisoner restrained in solitary (*See Figures 6 & 7, next page*).



Close Quarters for FOSA Members Touring the Mine





Iron Eye Pin for securing Prisoners in Solitary Confinement



Initials Carved by a Prisoner Confined in Solitary

The Connecticut Assembly struggled with the financing and the running of a state prison. And, issues about the appropriate confinement of convicted felons, of their living conditions, punishment and rehabilitation were certainly being discussed during the Federal Period. The stone walls were constructed about 1802/4 as well as above ground cell blocks, small work areas such as a smithy and a human powered grinding mill. And yet the balance of appropriate facilities and living conditions against the appropriation of funds was always an issue. Ultimately the prison was closed and inmates were moved to a new prison in Weathersfield CT.

The Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine Archaeological Preserve is a wonderful place to explore and learn. Facilities are upgraded and archaeological investigations are being planned. It is worth a visit, or a revisit for those of you who may have walked the premises as schoolchildren. If you are interested in becoming more active or a volunteer, reach out to the Site Director Morgan Bengel or the Friends of New Gate. Recommended Reading: Domonell, William G., 2023. *"Newgate from Copper Mine to State Prison,"* The Simsbury Historical Society Inc., Simsbury CT.



FOSA Members in the Mine



## 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, along with brief overviews of the subjects, into the website. These can be accessed at [https://www.fosa-ct.org/ICRV\\_slideshow\\_1.html](https://www.fosa-ct.org/ICRV_slideshow_1.html). At this writing 72 shows are listed. Note that the radio station has lost its contract for use of the studio so the frequency of new discussions may not be as regular as it was in past years. However, even if new discussions are not forthcoming in the future, you will still have access to all of the recordings of the previous discussions on our website.

2. We've continued to make minor changes to the Join/Donate process to make it easier to use. The Fillout method has increased usability; hopefully we're done here.

3.a. As discussed in Glenda's commentary at the beginning of this Newsletter, we experienced a pair of unexpected and significant losses this past year, with the passing of **Scott Brady** and **Jim Trocchi**. Rather than repeating much of what has been written about them, I would urge readers to go to the "Remembrances" index, at

[https://www.fosa-ct.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA\\_Remembrances\\_Index.html](https://www.fosa-ct.org/SpecialFeatures/FOSA_Remembrances_Index.html) and review them both. They were both very special people, and the remembrance articles show why they're so missed.

3b. On a more personal level, **Jen Glaubius** – who had been working as my backup, has had to drop out of FOSA activity due to family issues back in Nebraska. As an example of how effective she was, I once told her, "Jen, I admit I'm not competent to come up with a new, better design for our Home Page. See what you can come up with." A couple of days later she came up with what is essentially the Home Page we have today. Indeed, she was taking over more and more of the day-to-day tasks associated with maintenance of our website when she had to leave. Losing a helper – and a friend – like that isn't easy. All in FOSA who knew her wish her and her family the best during trying times.

4. Added pictures and info about the 2025 Archaeology Fair, held at the Eli Whitney Museum and Workshop in Hamden.

5. Added pictures and info about the 2025 Annual Meeting, which can be found at [https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA\\_2025\\_meetingphoto\\_1.html](https://www.fosa-ct.org/FOSA_2025_meetingphoto_1.html)

6. **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 send us an email, at [fosa.ct@gmail.com](mailto:fosa.ct@gmail.com), with your suggestions. Use "FOSA website" in the subject line.

**Thank you!**

*Jim Hall and Jen Glaubius*