



Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

P.O. Box 230351, Hartford, CT 06123-0351
Introductory Newsletter

FOSA

What is the Office of State Archaeology?

Originally established to create state-funded archaeological salvages, research projects, and manage museum collections, the Office of State Archaeology (OSA) has diversified into federal, state, and local legislative efforts to protect archaeological sites. In addition, the OSA often serves as intermediary between the archaeological and Native American communities and has responsibilities for dealing with the discovery of unmarked human burials.

In addition, the OSA maintains comprehensive site files and maps, acts as a clearinghouse of information on archaeological activity, provides technical assistance to municipal officials who review economic development projects that are privately funded and do not require compliance with federal or state preservation legislation. One of the most important responsibilities of the state archaeologist is to create public awareness and support for archaeological preservation through public education.

Besides the administration of the state archaeology office, the state archaeologist is responsible for the curation of anthropological collections. The University of Connecticut's Anthropological Collections are the single largest repository of indigenous Native American, colonial, and industrial artifacts in existence. The materials housed there document over 10,000 years of Connecticut's past and represent every town of the State. The Office of State Archaeology is charged with both the conservation of these collections, to insure their continued physical preservation, and their curation, to make sure the information they contain is systematically organized and readily usable.

Office of the State Archaeologist

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Who are the Friends of the Office of State Archaeology / FOSA?

A volunteer nonprofit organization called Friends of the Office of State Archaeology has been formed to respond to concerns about the lack of State financial support for archaeological responsibilities within Connecticut.

FOSA's mission is to enhance the efforts of the Office of State Archaeology and facilitate the accomplishment of State-mandated responsibilities. Some of the responsibilities of the State Archaeologist include administration of the OSA, curation of anthropological collections, coordination of the salvage of archaeological sites, public education in the field of archaeology, and preservation of unmarked burials.

FOSA helps the State Archaeologist, Nicholas Bellantoni, Ph.D., to fulfill these responsibilities through volunteer support and activities, membership drives, corporate sponsorships, obtaining general funding and grants, and securing donations of office equipment, laboratory supplies, and field supplies. FOSA volunteers help provide educational information to schools and libraries

and present archaeological information to the public.

Archaeology Awareness Week, which takes place in mid-October each year, is one of the projects that FOSA helps the State Archaeologist to coordinate and implement. FOSA encourages partnerships between OSA, scientific research initiatives, and local communities. The group also encourages the earning of archaeology merit badges in scouting through volunteer activities. FOSA aids in encouraging volunteers for office activities, assists with presentations to Planning & Zoning Commissions, and develops outreach programs.

The FOSA officers are: Gary R. Nolf, President; Michael S. Raber, Vice President; Dreda A. Hendsey, Treasurer; Mae P. Johnson, Secretary. Directors are: June Cooke, Christopher C. Noble, David Cooke, Bruce Greene, Kristen N. Keegan, and Roy Manstan.

For additional information: call (860) 529-7139 or e-mail to: dhendsey@brfg.com

Nick's News

This marks the 10th anniversary of the OSA at UConn. Our first decade consisted of a learning process on how our office fits into the state's existing preservation mechanism. We also developed a wide network of constituencies to interact with, including the archaeological and Native American communities, historical societies, town planners, regional planning agencies, state agencies, teachers, and concerned citizens. As a result, the record has been one of increased growth in responsibilities and utilization of our office by the people of this state.

Over 1,000 new archaeological sites have been added to our state inventory, including the recent computerization of the site files on a GIS database. New local regulations and state legislation have provided more protection for archaeological sites, especially unmarked burials. Connecticut Archaeology Awareness Week has become a tremendous success throughout the state.

Anthropological Collections have grown 600% and the joint OSA/CT Historical Commission Archaeology Library was established and now has over 6,000 entries that are available to the general public. The OSA has reviewed over 1,500 development projects in the state and has rescued over 50 sites through the efforts of the state's archaeological and historical societies, volunteers, and students. We have reached thousands of elementary and secondary school children with an understanding of our archaeological heritage.

These achievements are only possible because of the energy and concerns of people like yourself and the Friends of the Office of State Archaeology. The Office of State Archaeology cannot be an effective preservation force without your support and efforts. Unfortunately, the growth of the office's responsibilities has not been consistent with the growth of staff and operating funds. As most of you know, last year's budget crisis almost eliminated the Museum of Natural History and the OSA. This threat initiated the development of the Friends

group. The above accomplishments have happened because of state legislative support, but, mostly through your efforts.

Legislative News

This list is a reference guide to legislation concerning the Office of State Archaeology. Each item includes a Connecticut General Statute citation and a brief description of the law.

State Archaeologist

C.G.S. Sec. 10a-112: Establishes the Office of State Archaeology at the University of Connecticut's Museum of Natural History to identify, protect and preserve the state's archaeological heritage, in coordination with the Connecticut Historical Commission.

Archaeological Artifacts

C.G.S. Sec. 10-383: Designates the Office of State Archaeology and the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History as state repository for all artifacts found on state lands.

Archaeological Investigations on State Lands

C.G.S. Sec. 10-386: Authorizes permit process for archaeological investigation on state lands; applications are reviewed by the Connecticut Historical Commission in coordination with Office of State Archaeology.

Native American Burials

C.G.S. Sec. 10-388 et seq.: Provides for in situ preservation or archaeological excavation and reburial of human remains encountered during construction, agricultural, archaeological or other ground disturbance. Defines roles and responsibilities of the Medical Examiner, State Archaeologist, and Connecticut Historical Commission.

→ Underwater Archaeological Sites

The Office of State Archaeology and the Connecticut Historical Commission are currently chairing a steering committee to propose and sponsor legislation to preserve and protect underwater shipwrecks and other archaeological resources along our coastal and riverine waters. The committee consists of state officials from the Attorney General's Office, Department of Environmental Protection, Connecticut Historical Commission and the OSA, as well as Mystic Seaport, Norwalk Maritime Museum and scuba diving clubs around the state.

Series of K-12 Lesson Plans in Heritage & Archaeological Education

Grants are being sought for the development of a series of K-12 lesson plans in heritage and archaeological education by consultant Charles E. Blanchard. The lesson plans will be devised to enable teachers and students to become active partners in preserving the State's diverse cultural heritage.

Lesson plans will be Connecticut-specific, classroom-tested, teacher/student-friendly, and multidisciplinary in nature. Member participation in the Archaeological Heritage Lesson Plans will be on a first-come-first-served basis.

Interested teachers, administrators, or curriculum directors should contact: Charles Blanchard, Educational Coordinator, 399 Main Street, Coventry, CT 06238. Phone: 860/742-5013

Volunteer Opportunities: Field & Lab

Through the winter season, OSA will be processing artifacts and other materials from archaeological excavations conducted in 1998. Anyone wishing to work on these materials can contact the OSA for scheduling. In addition, there are laboratory opportunities available to

assess the conservation needs of the Anthropological Collections.

The OSA anticipates a busy season and we may have field opportunities once the spring arrives. We also need volunteer assistance in the office processing review requests for archaeological sensitivity and with the organization of the OSA Library.

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For possible fieldwork and laboratory work opportunities, contact: Dr. Harold Juli, Connecticut College Archaeology Laboratory, Box 5492, Connecticut College New London, Connecticut 06320
Phone: (860) 439-2228, email: hdjul@conncoll.edu

Connecticut Archaeology Library (OSA/SHPO)

The OSA Archaeology Library holds over 6,000 items including newsletters, bulletins, books, site reports, government publications, etc. The library is currently being computerized for access over the Internet. For now, contact the OSA for information if you are searching for a specific item.

Additions to Special Collections Library, UCONN

The UConn Special Collections Library is at the Dodd Research Center and can be accessed there. A copy of archaeological contract reports housed there can be searched on the Internet through ArchNet at <http://spirit.lib.uconn.edu/archaeology.html>.

- Archival Documentation (HABS: CT-460) for Haley - Farm State Park, Groton
- Archival Documentation for Veeder-Root Inc., 28 Sargeant Street, Hartford
- Archival Documentation for New York and New England Railroad Stone Arch Bridge, Middlebury
- Archaeological Assessment for Diamond Hill Road Bridge, Redding
- Archaeological Reconnaissance for Selleck Road Bridge, Salisbury
- Archaeological Reconnaissance for Route 42, Beacon Falls
- Archaeological Reconnaissance for Mystic Seaport Museum, Stonington
- Archaeological Reconnaissance for Route 6 and Merritt Valley Road, Ansonia
- Archaeological Data Recovery Report for "Old Coe Place", Ansonia
- Archaeological Data Recovery Report for Sewer System, Newtown

OSA Wish List

- ◆ Office equipment, laboratory supplies, field supplies
- ◆ Volunteers for digs and salvage operations
- ◆ Archaeology Awareness Week assistance (coordinating, organizing, scheduling activities)
- ◆ General archaeological presentations to the public
- ◆ Setting up of presentations to Planning & Zoning Commissions
- ◆ Informational flyers to be sent to schools and libraries
- ◆ Outreach program
- ◆ Photographer volunteers
- ◆ Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to earn merit badges in archaeology
- ◆ Hometown archaeological partnerships
- ◆ Fund-raising - general, for staff, for Archaeology Awareness Week

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