

NYSAA NEWSLETTER



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Spanish Hill: The Search for Answers

BY Deb Twigg, Susquehanna River Archaeological Center

Spanish Hill is a large glacial mound located in South Waverly, PA. It is just 1/4 mile east of the Chemung River (the western branch of the Susquehanna above Tioga Point), and just south of Waverly, NY and the New York state border.

Spanish Hill's shape has been referred to over the years as the shape of a sugarloaf - in that it rises some 230 feet to its summit, with steep sides and a flat top of about ten acres. Note that the Chemung River is to the west of the hill, and joins the Susquehanna only three or so miles south from this point. The Susquehanna then runs south to the Chesapeake Bay. Local historian and author, Louise Welles Murray may

have said it best as she described the hill nearly 100 years ago:



Spanish Hill

"Of many points of historic interest in our valley, perhaps none has attracted more attention or roused more speculation, from the earliest times to the present, than the mound called

Spanish Hill. This prominence is due not only to its unusual position (isolated from the hill ranges and regions), but also to its odd outline, the remains of fortifications on the top, and its present name." - ~Louise Welles Murray - "History of Old Tioga Point and Early Athens" - 1908

Now covered with "No Trespassing" signs, a large home and several out buildings, the site was once a favorite place for locals to take the steep climb to the summit for a Sunday picnic. The earliest of these would have picnicked on a beautiful flat lawn surrounded by strange earthen walls with an interior ditch that would later be erased by

2010 NYSAA Member Study BY Mary Ann Niemczycki, Houghton Chapter

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NYSAA is committed to supporting the study of Archaeology in New York State. Toward this end NYSAA conducted a state-wide survey of members and others interested in New York State Archaeology

regarding what they want and expect from NYSAA and how NYSAA can do a better job of promoting Archaeology in our state. Surveys were collected from August 2010 through March 2011

online and via mail. 225 useable surveys were submitted. Key findings reported at the 2011 Annual Conference of the NYSAA are outlined below.

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FORT SLOCUM CONTINUED:



Early photo of Spanish Hill, provided by the
Tioga Point Museum.

the plow of an overzealous farmer.

Earthen Enclosure

Apparently, the destruction of these fortifications was quite well known by locals as in 1870 Mrs. Perkins wrote in her book "Early Times on the Susquehanna," "Many now living remember the beautiful flat lawn of several acres on top of the hill (Spanish Hill) and an enclosure of earth 7-8 feet high, which was within a quarter of a century been leveled by the plow and harrow." (Perkins, 1906:102)

But Perkins was not the only person to have recorded seeing these strange earthen walls – the earliest description known to date is that of Duke Rochefoucault de Liancourt, a French Traveler in 1795, who revealed that the name "Spanish Hill" was most likely derived from the fact that these fortifications existed. In route to Niagara, he saw the hill and thus wrote of it: "Near the confines of Pennsylvania a mountain rises from the bank of the river Tioga (Chemung) in the shape of a

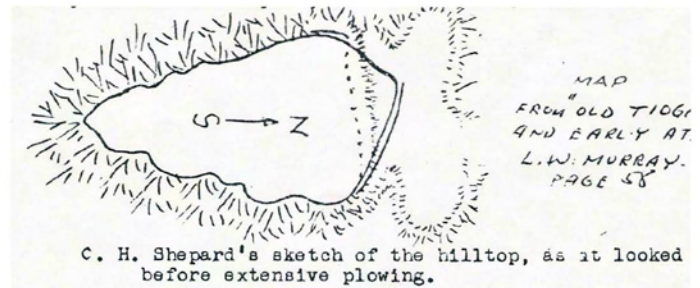
sugar loaf upon which are seen the remains of some entrenchments. These the inhabitants call the Spanish Ramparts, but I rather judge them to have been thrown up against the Indians in the time of M. de Nonville. One perpendicular breastwork is yet remaining which, though covered with grass and bushes, plainly indicates that a parapet and a ditch have been constructed here." (La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt 1795:76-7)

The next earliest account is that of Alexander Wilson, celebrated ornithologist from Philadelphia who wrote in 1804:

"Now to the left the ranging mountains bend,
And level plains before us wide extend;
Where rising lone, old Spanish Hill appears, The post of war in ancient unknown years.
It's steep and rounding sides with woods embrown'd,
It's level top with old en-
trenchments grown with



Above: Photo of Spanish Hill from the mid-1980's provided by SpanishHill.com. **Below:** Fortifications on Spanish Hill redrawn by Ellsworth Cowles from early sketch



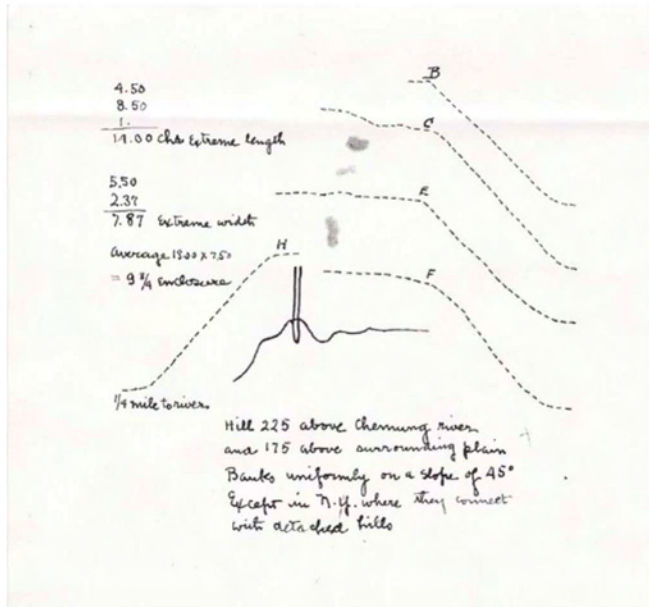
Five hundred paces thrice we measured o'er,
Now overgrown with woods alone it stands,
And looks abroad o'er open fertile lands.
(Murray 1908:53)

In 1878 Spanish Hill landowner, Mr. I.P. Shepard of Waverly, NY presented a paper for the Tioga Point Historical Society in Athens, PA. In that paper, he created the following illustration with the help of Charles Henry Shepard, whose residence throughout a long life of eighty-seven years, was close to the hill

and who remembered "distinctly" the "Spanish Ramparts" before the plow of a farmer nearly leveled them to the ground.

"Mr. C.H. Shepard described these fortifications as consisting of an embankment with a trench, giving a height of four or five feet inside. When he was a boy and first visited them, about 1820 or 1825, large trees were growing in the trenches, showing that a long time had elapsed since they were used.

FORT SLOCUM CONTINUED:



The double lines in the diagram indicate portions still clearly defined, and were evidently made much higher to protect those portions of the hill that were easily assailable...The dotted line inside this angle, Mr. Shepard thinks indicated a palisade for greater security..." (Murray 1908:58)

Later the infamous 20th century archeologist Warren K. Moorehead, whose experience with earthen embankments included those discovered at Fort Ancient, Ohio made reference to these fortifications at Spanish Hill. In the "Susquehanna River Expedition" he recorded that a site further south of Spanish Hill, (Sugar Creek) showed, "...traces of a fortified hilltop, there being distinct traces of embankments. This being smaller than Spanish Hill, but it resembled same." (Moorehead 1936:70).

But most significant to the research of the site and the earthen walls was yet another witness to the embankments, General John S. Clark later in 1878. Unlike the other observers, Clark was a seasoned surveyor and mapmaker from Civil War times, and as a result drew the most significant evidence relative to the earthen walls that exists today. The nearly 150 year old survey depicts the enclosure above and to the lower right.

The information provided by Clark in the first portion of the survey (above) illustrates the cross section of the enclosure wall with the interior ditch clearly defined. The second portion of the survey (right) illustrates the massive size of ten acres that was enclosed running the entire edge of the summit. Why Clark placed posts in

the embankment remains a mystery however, because no post molds were ever recorded to support this idea.

Unfortunately, after the enclosure walls (as reported by early witnesses) were erased from the summit by annual plowing and cultivation, some researchers began to question whether they ever really existed at all. Furthermore, the researchers that did accept that the enclosure did exist would consistently deduce that they were indicative of an ancient hilltop/palisaded village site.

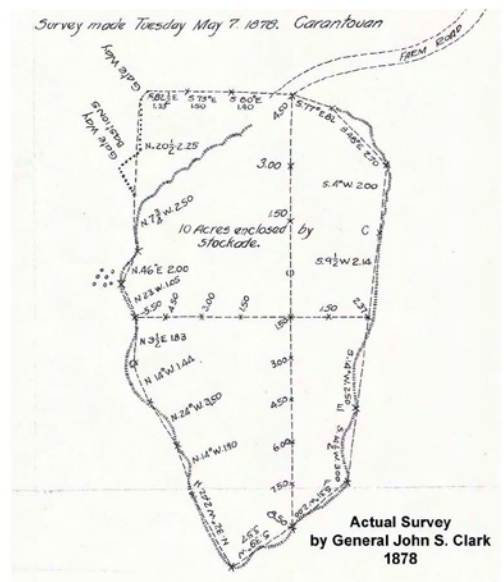
In fact, it wasn't until the past decade when fresh eyes again reviewed these reports that any new discussions about the Spanish Hill site occurred. Specifically, the strange construction of the walls with the ditch on the inside of the wall became a point of interest, and when it was discovered in "Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley," that author and ancient mound specialist E. G. Squier wrote, "the circumstances of the ditch being *within* the vallum (wall) is a distinguishing mark between religious and military works" things began to point in a totally new direction to explain what Spanish Hill actually was. Like Fort

—some believe today that the enclosure on top of Spanish Hill had been mistaken to be a hilltop fort, and was actually a ceremonial space.

Unfortunately, the new information just didn't jive with the current understandings of the region's archaeological past and the idea that a ceremonial hilltop enclosure existed so far away from the Ohio Valley and what is believed by many as its counterpart, Fort Ancient in Ohio, is still unthinkable to many professionals even today. However, more and more evidence seems to be mounting that might someday overturn the current beliefs...

What We Know About the Fort Ancient Culture

Fort Ancient is a name for a Native American people that flourished from 1000-1600 AD who predominantly inhabited land in the region of Ohio



and Kentucky. The Fort Ancient culture was once thought to be an expansion of the Hopewell and or Mississippian cultures, but it is now accepted as an independently developed culture of its own.

The name of the culture originates from the Fort Ancient, Ohio site. Fort Ancient itself is now thought to have been built by the Hopewell and later occupied by the Fort Ancient culture. The fort is located on a hill above the Little Miami River, close to Lebanon, Ohio. Fort Ancient has earthen walls that are over 3 miles (5 km) long and up to 23 feet (7.5 m) high. The hilltop enclosure surrounds a plot of 100 acres (0.4 km). However, recently it was discovered that the southern "fort" was separately constructed much earlier than the much larger northern area of the site. Despite its name, most archaeologists do not believe that Fort Ancient was used primarily as a fortress by either the Hopewell or the Fort Ancient -- rather, it is becoming commonplace to accept that it was a ceremonial location again due to the construction of the ditches on the interior side of the enclosure walls.

Early historical records also indicate that only high ranking leaders or shamans actually used these spaces and that the other Native Americans would not climb to the summit of a ceremonial enclosure. Captain John Smith when exploring the Susquehanna River noted his experience at a ceremonial site, "This place they account so holy that none but priests or kings dare into it, nor savages dare go up in the boats by it..." and E. G. Squier stated in his "Aboriginal Monuments of the State of NY, Concerning Sacred Enclosures of North America," "This sacred place, according to our authority, could not be approached by any but the magi or priests." Coincidentally, Spanish Hill historian Louise Welles Murray also noted this strange behavior in her book "Old

Tioga Point and Early Athens," (1908) "Early in the last century, Alpheus Harris settled at the foot of the hill. An old Indian was a frequent visitor, but when asked to ascend the hill he always refused, saying a Great Spirit lived there who would kill him."

The Fort Ancient people are also given credit for the largest effigy mound in the United States, Serpent Mound, in Ohio, and are believed to be responsible for hundreds of effigy burial mounds in the shape of birds, animals, and even "horned men effigies" found in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa.

Until recently, it has not been commonly accepted that the Fort Ancients would have populated the regions of Pennsylvania but more and more evidence is mounting along the Susquehanna River that seems to be irrefutable.

Disappearance of Earthworks/ Evidence

Sadly over the past two hundred years – the majority of the earthworks recorded by 19th century researchers like Squier and others have been demolished. Many in fact would be amazed to see the 1881 map of "Ancient Earthworks East of the Mississippi" created by Cyrus Thomas on behalf of the Smithsonian Institute to record the sites that even then were disappearing at an alarming rate. Dots pepper not only the Mississippi River Valley but also New York and Pennsylvania. In fact, Spanish Hill was included in the 1881 map and was recorded as an enclosure.

Sadly, without the archaeological evidence of the enclosure atop Spanish Hill to accompany the historical records that remain, professional's interest in the site has diminished, and as a result it is now

private property with no access allowed for any research to continued.

Yet even with the demise of the ancient earthworks over the last century and less and less hard evidence to support their existence, some researchers



**Man Mound, Sauk County,
Wisconsin
Length – 214 ft
Width at Shoulders – 48 ft**

have found new hope in yet another type of evidence. Ancient rock art has been found which many believe irrefutably reinstates the belief that the Fort Ancients had a presence along the Susquehanna River.

Safe Harbor Petroglyphs

Huge rocks in the Susquehanna River in Safe Harbor, PA show a striking resemblance to the Fort Ancient effigy mounds found hundreds of miles away throughout Ohio, Iowa, and Wisconsin. One of the most significant clusters of this rock art could be seen on the Big and Little "Indian Rocks" located at Safe Harbor, and were recorded by Donald Cadzow in 1934. Like the ancient earthworks, many petroglyphs have been lost. Fortunately, enough petroglyphs still remain to show that the same people or culture must have been responsible; for both the effigy mounds of the Midwest clearly have matching counterparts in the petroglyphs at Safe Harbor, PA.

Common Fort Ancient Effigy Mounds

Below is a collection of effigy mound shapes, all found in just one county in Wisconsin. Below is a collection of petroglyphs found along the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania at Safe Harbor.

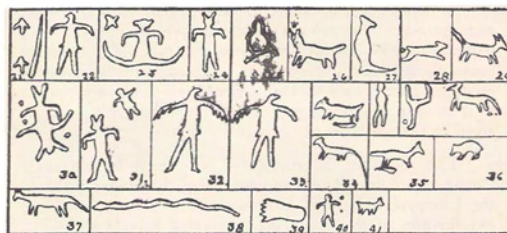
One of the most interesting and unique Fort Ancient mounds is the Man Mound in Sauk County, Wisconsin that measures 214 feet in length and 48 feet in width at the shoulders.

A unique character in the Fort Ancient belief system is referred to as the water spirit or water "panther." The Fort Ancients believed that water spirits controlled the underworld and especially the waters and that they were hunted by the thunderbirds of the upperworld. "Earthmaker created the Waterspirits and the Thunders first among the spirits, giv-



Above: Display at the Sauk County, Man Mound 100 Year Anniversary (of discovery). **Below:** Copies of the ancient petroglyphs on a gneissic rock named "Little Indian Rock" below the dam at Safe Harbor, Pennsylvania, drawn from plaster casts by Professor Porter in 1863 and 1864. **Far Below:**

Early photo of the Man Mound—provided by Sauk Cty Historical Socie-



ing the Thunders control over the waters of heaven and the Waterspirits control over those of the lower world." Foster, Foster's Indian Record, vol. 1, #2, p. 3, col. 2 Waterspirits were believed to be found in rivers, lakes and springs where they could make whirlpools and rough waters that could topple a canoe. For this reason, this particular petroglyph seems fittingly placed along a river that could be treacherous to navigate.

"Waterspirits can be very dangerous, creating whirlpools that have sucked under many a canoe. In the deep water off Governor's Island in Lake Mendota, there lay a den of Waterspirits who caused great disturbances in the water and overturned canoes. The Waterspirit of Green Lake created whirlpools by swirling her arms up. Those who did not make the proper offerings would be sucked under." Charles Edward Brown, Wisconsin Indian Place Legends (Madison: Works Progress Administration, Wisconsin, 1936) (Note that the Safe Harbor horned men found along the Susquehanna River are raising their arms up.)

There are some defining characteristics of a water spirit as opposed to a regular serpent or snake, (although you may find some used and some not at any given time.) Some of those characteristics include:

- a tail that is endless and usually represented as an unusually long or a spiral shaped tail
- horns or antlers on their head
- an almost human-like face

An interesting side note is that many believe that the humanoid effigy forms that also take on thunderbird or water spirit qualities (i.e. horned men or thunder birds with human legs) represent shaman who had great spiritual powers or connections to either form.

Sites other than Safe Harbor have also shown evidence of the Fort Ancient water panther and belief system in Pennsylvania.

The rockart/effigy shown (next page) was found near Clarion, PA along the Allegheny River, and is commonly accepted to be a water panther or water spirit of Fort Ancient origin.

Were the Fort Ancients in Pennsylvania and the Likely Creators of the Earthworks on Spanish Hill?

The truth is that even E.G. Squier noted that he had seen evidence that the Fort Ancients had travelled as far eastward as the Susquehanna River when he stated, "Some ancient works, probably belonging to the same system with those of the Mississippi Valley, and erected by the same people, occur upon the Susquehanna River, as far down as the Valley of Wyoming, in Pennsylvania. The mound builders seem to have skirted the southern border of Lake Erie, and spread themselves in diminished numbers, over the western part of New York State, along the shores of Lake Ontario to the St. Lawrence Riv-

er. They penetrated into the interior, eastward as far as the county of Onondaga where some slight vestiges of their works still exist. These seem to have been their limits at the north-east." (Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, E.G. Squier, page 1).

Archaeological Evidence at Spanish Hill

The archaeological evidence from this site has been collected hundreds of years. In fact, Warren K. Moorehead reported in the Pennsylvania Historical Commission's "Report of the work of the Susquehanna Archaeological Expedition Conducted during the summer of 1916" the following: "Within a radius of forty kilometers of this place (Spanish Hill) there are at least twenty-five collectors of specimens. These men have searched the hills and fields for many years. It is quite likely that most of the objects left by the Andaste have been picked up."

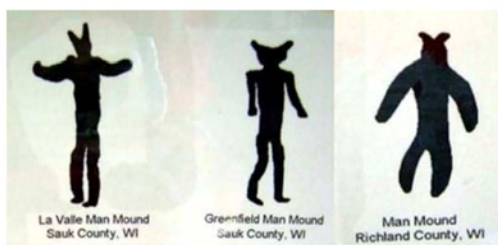
Indeed the artifacts preserved today are quite sparse compared to what was found in Moorehead's day, but there is ongoing efforts to preserve what can be located in order for more research to take place some day.

The Susquehanna River Archaeological Center (SRAC)

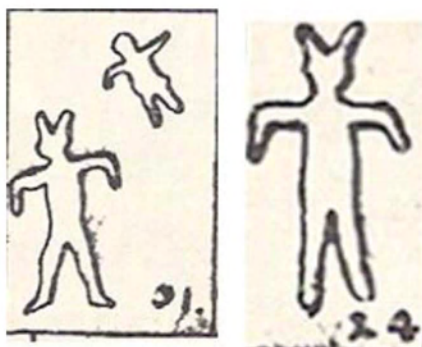
This research has been an ongoing passion. I began chronicling the research on Spanish-Hill.com in 2003, which lead to an article being published in the PA Archaeologist

Journal in 2005. In doing the initial research on Spanish Hill for that article, it became evident that just as with the earthworks, the artifacts are slowly disappearing because of constant artifact collecting in the region by private collectors.

In 2004, the search for archaeological evidence, located two of the largest known collections of private Native American artifact collections from Spanish Hill and the surrounding region that still existed in private hands. These collections (Keir and Cowles) were to be the foundation of a new nonprofit organization dedicated to the education, preservation and research of the Native American artifacts—the Susquehanna River Archaeological Center (SRAC).



Above: Other "Horned Man" Effigy Mounds in Wisconsin. **Below:** "Horned Man" Petroglyphs at Safe Harbor



Man-Mound shape in Petroglyphs on Susquehanna River (Safe Harbor)



Parkers Landing Petroglyphs—Located on the east shore of the Allegheny River approx. 1.6 miles downstream from Parker City in Clarion Cty., PA—provided by Kris Wenning, SRAC member

Teaming up with Ted Keir and Richard Cowles also brought together the knowledge of the region's leading avocational archaeologists, along with a huge reference library that SRAC continues to build. This along with adding other private collectors to the SRAC board and membership allows the Center to have the most knowledgeable staff concerning local sites available, and the hope of keeping those important collections in the region. SRAC also has a list of professional archaeologists and anthropologists from NY state and surrounding universities act as professional advisors allowing SRAC to continuously remain up-to-date about new finds, excavations, and research. SRAC is committed to maintaining a line of open communication between professionals and avocationalists by sharing important information openly between the two. (The ongoing differences between professionals and collectors often make communication difficult.) As a result of these efforts, SRAC has been able to save artifacts that were found at Spanish Hill over a century ago, like the deep grooved ax shown here ([above right](#)) which was found by a private collector in 1897, and the blue slate amulet seen here, ([below right](#)) found in 1908.

To date SRAC houses thousands of local artifacts from sixteen different private collections with many artifacts originating from Spanish Hill; in fact, one whole case is dedicated to that site and it's the most popular part of the exhibit area. The Center is a 501c3 with over 300 members and is open five days a week while being manned 100% by volunteers, many of which are collectors and students of the regional Native American past and archaeology.



The next step for the Center is to facilitate research with professionals and amateurs working together to start answering many of the questions surrounding Spanish Hill. The questions concerning the earthworks that once enclosed ten acres at its top, and the people who made them still need definitive answers. It is crucial that ongoing research continue in order to establish that the petroglyphs described here are of the same cultural origin as those earthworks recognized by Squier. In doing so, many answers to the questions of early Pennsylvania and New York and possibly Iroquoian prehistory may be uncovered. Researchers with backgrounds in Fort Ancient work are invited to join the ongoing investigation.

For more information concerning Spanish Hill, visit www.SpanishHill.com.

Please note: Spanish Hill is currently private property and trespassing is not advised.

SRAC is located at 345 Broad Street in Waverly, New York. To learn more about this article and SRAC, visit www.SRACenter.org or contact Deb Twigg at dtwigg@SpanishHill.com.



ARTHUR PARKER AND THE DISASTROUS FIRE OF MARCH 29, 1911

"A Grim Mark on the Cultural Calendar of Albany"

By Ed Curtin, Curtin Archaeological Consulting, Inc. and Van Epps-Hartley Chapter

2011 has marked the 100th anniversary of the inferno that destroyed the interior of the New York State Capitol building, including most of the holdings of the New York State Library, and much of the large archaeological and ethnological collections that were on display on the building's fourth floor. In William Fenton's words (1968:43), "March 29, 1911, was a grim mark on the cultural calendar of Albany." The Capitol building, constructed to be fire-proof, contained a conflagration that couldn't be put out without fire-fighters entering the massive structure and pumping water corridor by corridor, room by room, floor by floor. The fire was fueled by the State Library documents, wooden shelving and furniture, and it accelerated and spread by drafts through the building's interior courtyards and stairwells.

The archaeological and ethnological artifacts had been collected by the early American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan; another great 19th century authority on the Iroquois, Harriet Maxwell Converse; and more recently, the State Museum's young archaeologist, Arthur C. Parker. Parker's relatives, an important Seneca Indian family, had assisted Mor-



Lewis Henry Morgan

gan with the collection of artifacts to form the original New York State anthropology collection, circa 1850. Years later, while making archaeological surveys in western New York and conducting excavations at the Ripley and Silverheels sites, Parker renewed significant Iroquois ethnological research, including the collection of objects, oral history, information about customs and practices, religion, and folklore (such as published in his book, *Seneca Myths and Folk Tales*, 1923, and William Fenton's compilation of Parker's monographs, *Parker on the Iroquois*, 1968).

Much of what we know about the destruction of the anthropological collections (along with vivid descriptions of the fire itself) comes from Parker's pen in contemporaneous reports on the tragedy. These writings include Parker's letter to his father and a report he issued in *American Anthropologist*. The letter is quoted in Joy Porter's 2001 biography of Parker, while the *American Anthropologist* report is excerpted in Elizabeth Tooker's 1994 book, *Lewis H. Morgan on Iroquois Material Culture*. After "the great roar of flame" had passed, Parker and his assistant rushed in to save what they could through clouds of smoke, with cases burning and weakened walls crashing. Parker wielded a museum specimen of great personal and cultural significance, the Cornplanter Tomahawk (once owned by an illustrious ancestor) as a fire ax to assist the rescue. In the *American Anthropologist* report, Parker tells us that the "continual dropping of masses of cracked rock from the walls made work of rescuing valuable objects most hazardous." He also relates how "long sheets of flame... burst through the large corridor windows" and "The archaeological cases suffered most from breakage brought about by the crumbling of the sandstone ceilings... The falling of the ceilings in great blocks broke the shelves that had so far resisted the fire and spilled the specimens into the water and debris."

Porter quotes the report in an Albany newspaper that Parker was shocked and made ill by the loss, "sick abed for several days afterward." Fenton (1968:43) also mentions the depression that overtook Parker, quoting his words to a friend in a May, 1911 letter: "It was an awful experience, I assure you, to see the fruits of one's labors and the results of 60 years by others shrivel up in the merciless flame... the most discouraging feature of it all is that most of this material can never be replaced."



Arthur C. Parker

ARTHUR PARKER AND THE DISASTROUS FIRE OF MARCH 29, 1911, continued:

Much was lost, but some was saved intact and other artifacts, although fire or water damaged, could be recovered and potentially restored. Parker's remark that "... despite the choking smoke, the sudden bursts of heat, and the falling walls the majority of the more valuable objects... were carried to safety" must be understood with due consideration of what was indeed lost. Significant Iroquois textiles collected by Morgan were destroyed. Morgan's mid-19th century color illustrations of Indian models dressed in traditional garb (actually Parker's own relatives) presented iconic images of Indian ethnicity. The loss of the textiles poses a loss to the understanding of authenticity, as well as the appreciation of the cultural objects, which many people who would never see them could have enjoyed and learned from. Regarding the extent of damage to the Morgan collection (and sounding optimistic) Tooker (1994:84) has stated "Fortunately, Morgan's descriptions are... as valuable in their own way as the objects themselves." They are ever more valuable to the extent that the actual objects have been destroyed.

In terms of the actual numbers of objects affected, much of the damage occurred to the archaeological collection due to the crashing of the ceiling and walls. Some of the stone, ceramic, and bone archaeological specimens, and some durable ethnological artifacts could be recovered, although, as Parker notes, many had paper labels that were destroyed. With the loss of the paper labels (typically pasted onto the artifacts), the keys to artifact provenience and the circumstances of collecting were lost. Echoing Tooker's observation noted earlier, in its own way this information was as important as the artifacts themselves, at least to anthropologists and museum professionals. Hopefully, objects and descriptions could be reunited in some cases to re-access lost provenience and cultural context information (cf. Tooker 1994:xvi). In retrospect, Parker could advise that the most durable labels were made in waterproof ink applied directly to the surface of the artifact. These labels had much greater survivability. Still, Parker reported that 10,000 artifacts

had been on display, but only 512 could be identified by labels containing their catalog numbers.

Thus it seems that destruction or damage appears to have been greatest to the most flammable objects themselves, and to the labels of many of the more durable artifacts. Items spared include 50 artifacts from the Morgan collection that Parker earlier had removed to his office for study, plus the portions of the collection that Parker and his assistant were able to carry to safety during the fire: most notably the Converse silver collection, the wampum belts, the archaeological collection from the Ripley site, and the medicine masks. Fenton (1968) notes that Parker had also withdrawn half of his manuscripts (only two weeks earlier) from the State Library to work on in his office down the street. This included the Seth Newhouse manuscript on the Constitution of the Five Nations.

Without directly mentioning actual miracles, Parker seems to be reporting one in the *American Anthropologist* article: "One of the odd features of the calamity was that hardly a single object connected with the ceremonies of the Iroquois totemic cults or the religious rites was injured." The hair of the medicine masks was "not even singed."

What we have to remind us of cultural roots- of who came before us- is extremely fragile, and may be so even when well-cared for, as we have seen in the present-day looting of museums in Iraq and Egypt. In this 100th anniversary year of the New York State Capitol fire, it is important to commemorate the courage of Parker and his assistant to rescue as much as they could of the anthropology collection, and also realize that many others, including fire-fighters and librarians, did what they could to save the building and the State Library on that sad day.

The photo of Parker provided here was taken when he was in his 30s, and published just a few years after the fire. This year a book, *The New York State Capitol and the Great Fire of 1911*

(Mercer and Weiss 2011) has been published to tell the story of the State Capitol fire largely from the perspective of the State Library, while the State Museum provides extensive visual documentation with a small but significant focus on the anthropology collection, at <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/capitolfire/index.html>.

An exhibit on the fire will remain in the lobby of the State Museum until October 22, 2011. The present article is expanded from the March 29, 2011 post in *Fieldnotes* titled "A Calamitous Day for New York State Archaeology." *Fieldnotes* can be found at www.curtinarchaeology.com/blog.

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2010 NYSAA Member Study BY Mary Ann Niemczycki, Houghton Chapter**Continued:****Respondents**

Survey respondents include professional archaeologists (49%), avocational archaeologists (30%), students (6%), and historians (3%), and others interested in history/archaeology (12%).

Respondents range in age from 15 to 92 years of age, with an average age of 56 years. 59% of respondents are male.

Survey respondents are most likely to say they learned about NYSAA from friends & family, or college teachers. 1 in 10 came to their first NYSAA meeting as an assignment or suggestion of their teacher or professor (12%).

Others most often cite a personal interest/Interest in Archaeology (18%), interesting lecture /topic (10.5%), professional/academic Interest (9%), or being invited by a friend/colleague (6%) as the reason they attended their first NYSAA meeting.

At least 2 in 5 are aware that NYSAA has a Facebook website. 18% of respondents say they have visited or joined the NYSAA Facebook website.

2 in 5 have been involved with excavations with their local chapter, and 1 in 3 has been involved with laboratory work on artifacts with their local chapter.

Respondents say they are most interested in archaeology lecture programs on the Northeast, Colonial America, the 19th Century, Military site, Meso-america, and Europe in that order.

NYSAA Members

Nine out of ten respondents are currently members of NYSAA. 4 out of 5 have individual (66%) or life (14%) memberships. Length of membership ranges from <1 year to 75 years with an average length of 17 years.

At least 1 in 3 say their primary reasons for becoming a member of NYSAA include all the reasons listed: monthly lectures, meeting others, opportunity to participate in field work, and opportunity to work with/learn about artifacts.

1 in 4 say the primary reason for becoming a member of NYSAA was the opportunity to meet others with similar interests. At least 1 in 4 began as student members.

75% agree that NYSAA and/or their chapter should communicate more via e-mail.

4 out of 5 receive the NYSAA newsletter regularly or sometimes, but 1 in 5 does not receive it or are not sure that they do. Most members (86%) would be interested in receiving the newsletter electronically.

1 in 4 is aware that NYSAA has a List-Serve on Yahoo. Half of these or 13% of members use the List-Serve. 4 out of 5 who use the List-Serve say it is easy to use.

One-third has used NYSAA CDs for reading articles from older journals. Virtually all users say the CDs are useful and find them very/fairly easy to navigate.

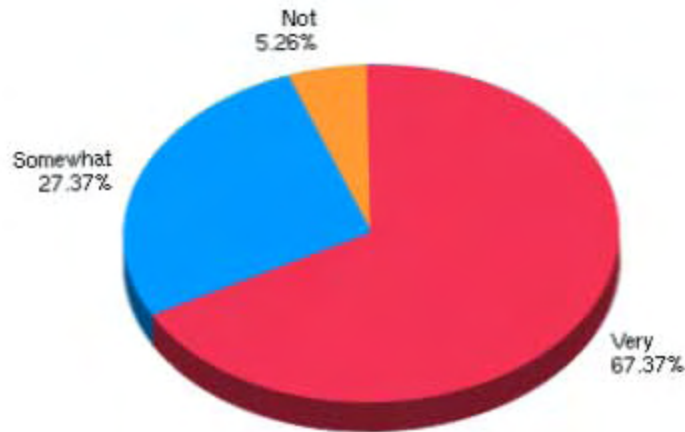
Virtually everyone (96%) feels The Bulletin is important as a membership benefit, and two-thirds say it is very important.

2010 NYSAA Member Study BY Mary Ann Niemczycki, Houghton Chapter

Continued:

4 out of 5 say that NYSAA should offer both an electronic and paper version of The Bulletin. Nearly all feel members should be able to choose which version to receive but, if they had to choose one, the majority would choose to receive a paper version.

If only an electronic version was available, nearly 3 out of 4 would prefer to receive



The Bulletin via e-mail/electronic file vs. a CD.

54% of members would be willing to pay a little extra to receive a paper version of The Bulletin. Over half of these are willing to pay at least \$5; nearly all would pay at least \$2.

Half favor offering a cheaper adult membership category that does not include The Bulletin, but only 1 in 10 say they would select this membership category.

2 in 5 would use PayPal to pay their dues. Canadian members tend to favor use of PayPal.

Approximately 100 respondents offered suggestions for improving NYSAA. These include:

- Better communication with members, better notification of meetings
- Transition to a paperless/electronic format
- Update website and keep it current, make lectures available on site
- Improve The Bulletin, timeliness of publication
- Improve interaction between professional and avocational
- Get involved with public, publicize, educate public
- More opportunity for field work, investigation of local endangered sites
- Engage students and their professors/teachers, encourage student participation

For a full list of suggestions or a copy of the full report contact your Chapter Secretary or Mary Ann Niemczycki at man2055@earthlink.net



First Call for Papers
96th Annual Meeting
New York State Archaeological Association
April 27-29th, 2012



The Incorporated Orange County Chapter, NYSAA, announces the First Call for papers for the 96th Annual Meeting of the New York State Archaeological Association.

The deadline for submissions is **March 1, 2012.**

Keynote Speaker: David Johnson, President—Orange County Chapter NYSAA
“Analyzing Archaeology in New York State based on Peruvian and Southwestern United States Surveys”

The meeting will be held in the beautiful lower Hudson Valley, at
The Clarion Hotel & Conference Center in Poughkeepsie, NY

For further information about the conference location click:
http://www.clarionhotel.com/hotel-poughkeepsie-new_york-NY533

The program will be co-chaired by Barry D. Kass, Prof. Emeritus of Anthropology, SUNY Orange, and Dr. Cory Harris, Chair, Behavioral Sciences Dept, SUNY Orange

Paper proposal abstracts of approx. 250 words should be e-mailed as Microsoft Word attachments. Indicate any audiovisual requirements. Poster presentations are acceptable and encouraged, especially by students. Any topic related directly or indirectly to NYS prehistory/history will be considered.

Submit proposals to Barry Kass at: barry.kass@sunyorange.edu
call with questions: 845 733-1830.

For information, registration forms, and accommodation details contact:
David Johnson, President, OCC- NYSAA .
globaldj@optonline.net
Phone: 845 454-1860



NEW YORK State Museum

New York State Museum Exhibit “From the Collections”

July 15, 2011 through April 1, 2012

The New York State Museum traces its origins to an 1836 survey the state’s geology, plants, and animals. To celebrate 175 years of adding to the scientific and historical knowledge of New York, the State Museum presents an exhibition that showcases many of its important collections in anthropology, history, and natural science. The exhibition highlights some of the people who, through their work, built these invaluable collections, and presents examples of continuing research based on the collections. Collections generated by notable New York archaeologists including William Beauchamp, Arthur Parker, William Ritchie, Robert Funk and Dean Snow are presented. The Swart and Rumrill Collections, along with collections generated by Dean Snow, showcase the archaeology of the Mohawk Valley. Material from the South Street Seaport Collection and NYS Museum’s Cultural Resource Survey Program provide a glimpse into historic archaeology at the museum. Ethnographic materials generated by Lewis Henry Morgan and Harriet Maxwell Converse are also on display. Together, the stories of the collector’s, the artifacts and specimens in the collections, and the continuing research illuminate the history of the oldest and largest state museum in the nation.

Submitted by C. Rieth

Tammy Tarbell-Boehning
Mohawk, Turtle Clan
Whimsey, 1999

Image from: [NYSM](#)



NEW YORK STATE ARCHAEOLOGY POSTER 2013 CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS/PARTICIPANTS

In 2013, NYSAA is solely responsible for the creation of the New York State Archaeology Poster. A working committee is in the process of forming to complete the design and execution of the poster as well as a bookmark, a calendar, and a “History of the NYSAA” booklet.

Each NYSAA chapter is encouraged to select a liaison to the committee and to contribute a chapter history and photographs for inclusion in the booklet and/or in the calendar or poster. This is a great opportunity to highlight the work of avocational archaeologists that otherwise might not be recognized.

Submissions are needed by January 30, 2012 (an extended deadline) and may be forwarded to:

Lisa Marie Anselmi, Ph.D., R.P.A.

Associate Professor & Chair

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Buffalo, NY 14150

anselmilm@buffalostate.edu