

NYSAA NEWSLETTER

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The NYSAA Website is

<https://nysarchaeology.org/nysaa/about-nysaa/>

The editor and the NYSAA Executive Board encourage any NYSAA member who would like to submit an article, letter, editorial or news items to submit it electronically to Ethan Dickerman at the address listed above.

Call for Papers and Registration

New York State Archaeological Association

107th Annual Meeting - April 17-19, 2026

ROCHESTER AIRPORT MARRIOTT
1890 West Ridge Rd, Rochester, NY, 14615



1816 Farmington Quaker Meetinghouse, Farmington, NY

The 2026 NYSAA conference will be held in Rochester, NY, April 17-19. Anyone interested in presenting a paper or poster session pertaining to the archaeology of New York and adjoining regions, including the Niagara region of Ontario, is welcome to submit a paper as well as a themed session.

Because of the rich abolitionist history of Rochester, one session will be offered on African American archaeology in upstate New York. Other suggested themes include papers on the Erie Canal (200th anniversary), the Revolutionary War (225th anniversary), and the Haudenosaunee. Presentations should be 20 minutes in length. Easels will be provided for posters, which can be any size up to 48" x 60".

The lead presenter of either a paper or a poster must be a member of the NYSAA. To join a chapter near you, visit <https://nysarchaeology.org/nysaa/join-nysaa/>. If you do not live near a chapter, you may join as an At-Large member (Individual = \$20, Student = \$10). Individuals are limited to one paper or poster, although individuals may co-author multiple papers. Please send your title, abstract (under 150 words), and session if themed, affiliation (chapter and/or institution), and contact information to Sherene Baugher, Program Chair at sbb8@cornell.edu. Conference details will be provided in the January call for papers.



The late Charles (Chuck) Vandrei, Jr. receives 2025 NYS Historic Preservation Award

The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has announced the recipients of the 2025 New York State Historic Preservation Awards. Long time preservation advocate Charles Vandrei received a posthumous Special Recognition Award for his many years of service to New York State Archaeology.

A description accompanying the announcements reads as follows:

Charles “Chuck” Vandrei, Jr. was an outstanding historic preservation colleague and a lifelong advocate of shared cultural history. He spent most of his career as an archaeologist with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), served as DEC’s Agency Preservation Officer, and was a representative on the State Board for Historic Preservation.

Through his leadership and mentorship, Vandrei’s career exemplified his passion for collaboration, his respect for people, his fascination with history, his thirst for knowledge





A Time Machine Through New York Prehistory.

By Gail Merian, Chenango Chapter NYSAA

Photo 1. *Members of the Chenango Chapter speaking with second grade students at the Chenango County Historical Society Museum in Norwich,*

Our chapter partners with the Chenango County Historical Society to present information and stories about prehistory and indigenous people to second graders from Oxford, Norwich, Greene and Sherburne-Earlville Central Schools. The adventure starts with the students buckling their seat belts in a “time machine” to venture 4 billion years in the past to the Precambrian period to see petrified stromatolites. We came forward to 400 million years ago to the Devonian period, which covered Chenango County and talk about fossils found in this period. Next, we proceed to 200 million years ago to the Jurassic Age, where we get to see a raptors egg and genuine, petrified dinosaur poop! We then buckle up to go forward to 2.6 million years ago, where we saw ice one mile deep over our heads. Again, our time machine goes forward to 10,000 years ago, to find the weather has warmed up, vegetation growing and mammoths and mastodons are roaming. The students identify the difference between the two from pictures, see a genuine sample of mammoth hair and the difference between a mammoth tooth (think of a cow) and a Mastodon tooth (think of a goat). Then we talk about man appearing on the scene with atlatls and spears, hunting ice Age animals.

We travel again to the end of the ice age when the Haudenosaunee people consisting of Five Nations, later Six Nations appeared. The Oneida nation lived in Chenango County. We discuss transportation methods used by native people before horses, cars, planes or trains. We discuss that people got around by walking and on waterways with dugout canoes (showing a picture of the 1725 canoe at the Chenango County Historical Society Museum) as well as bark canoes. The native people, to get a more stable food source, learned how to grow crops such as corn, beans and squash and children were taught about the three sisters. At this time there was no television, radio, books or computers, so children were told stories to entertain and teach them, such as the stories about the no-faced doll, how the chipmunk got its stripes and how the bear lost its tail- stories still told today. When discussions end, we collectively buckle up in our time machines and return to the present time, better informed about our shared natural, evolutionary, and cultural histories.

Dig'n the News – Spring 2025

**SUNY Schenectady
Community
Archaeology Program (CAP)**



In this issue

Welcome back

New editors
Donna McClure
Claire Pugliese

Spotlights

Graduate
Instructor

Recent events

Williamsburg
Stockade Walkabout

Unearthed

What's it like to be an
archaeologist?
Spring classes, etc

We are back!

February 24, 2025

Due to assorted disruptions over the past few years, the newsletter had been put on the back burner. Like an unearthed artifact, it has come back to share stories. There will be stories of upcoming classes, future in person and online events, as well as highlights about students' activities and faculty bios. The newsletter release is expected to coincide with upcoming semester offerings throughout the year.

Please feel free to share **feedback** and suggestions for future content! Use **Dig'n** in the subject line to basala@sunysccc.edu or call 518-381-1263.

Graduate Spotlight - Lucas Weinman



What is your profession?

I am a field archaeologist who surveys and excavates archaeological sites across New York State. In the past, I have worked with the New York State Museum and various private companies.

How do you use what you learned in CAP?

I use what I learned in the historical archaeology and Native American archaeology classes pretty regularly. It's helped me identify what we find in the ground and understand why we find artifacts in certain places and not others. Most importantly, it taught me the theory behind each phase of an excavation. You're not digging random holes; each phase has a different purpose where you're looking for different things.

What was your favorite part of CAP?

My favorite part of CAP was the independent project. At the time, I was an undergrad at SUNY Albany and did an independent project for credit toward my anthropology degree. I created an artifact display at the SCCC Begley Library, giving me hands-on experience designing exhibits. That experience stuck with me when I went back to school to earn a master's degree in museum studies.

**SUNY
Schenectady
Community
Archaeology
Program
(CAP):**

**Dig'n the
News –
Spring and
Summer 2025**

**Letters and
Summer 2025
Courses**

Dig'n the News – Summer 2025 – Book Spotlight

Matthew A. Zembo associate professor of history and military history at Hudson Valley Community College and instructor of American history at Bard Early College.



Travis M. Bowman
head of museum collections for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Bureau of Historic Sites.

Q: How did you come to be inspired to write your new book "Clearing Iroquoia: New York's Land Grab in the 1779 Campaigns of the American Revolution"? My original doctoral

dissertation was going to be about the British Army and how they adapted to fighting on the frontier in the American Revolution. A research trip to the Clements Library at the University of Michigan was crucial to changing the focus of my research. I was there to read in the paperwork of General Thomas Gage, who was the British commander in chief just prior to and at the beginning of the American Revolution. I was going through all his papers on the frontier and there was tons and tons of great stuff. But one of the things that I discovered while I was doing that research—because when you're doing research and you find new information, you must change the way you think about a topic. One of the things that became apparent to me was that the American Revolution was about the frontier, and it was not so much about people's freedom as much as we like to brag about that. I noticed that as far as the British army was concerned, and what Gage had to deal with, the frontier was where everything was happening that was causing all the other trouble. In 1774, a year before Lexington and Concord, Lord Dunmore's War against the Shawnee had broken out due to the chaos on the frontier with the breakdown of Crown Authority.

When I went into the Thomas Gage papers, I started noticing a lot of correspondence between British commanders and Thomas Gage that were pointing to the fact that the American Revolution was really about the frontier. There was a lot of talk about colonists going westwards, creating chaos, ignoring the royal proclamation of 1763 which separated Native Americans from colonists. It really started to change what I wanted to write my dissertation about. I started to focus on more than just the British army, but at the political situation on the frontier and what it was creating.

And then I happened to be in a group that invited people to speak on the Revolution. We had somebody who was speaking about the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, and they wanted to talk about the logistics of it. An alumnus of the college where this program was to take place wrote that she was an Oneida woman and was interested in what a program on the Sullivan-Clinton campaign would be, because she said that at least some of the Haudenosaunee saw it as genocide. The committee that I was on started arguing about whether this was genocide or not. My mind had been open to the idea that the war was about the frontier and land. As these people were arguing back and forth, I wanted to answer the question of whether it was genocide and what really happened. But then I just started looking at the Sullivan-Clinton campaign as a campaign for land. What a lot of the founding fathers were out for was land on the frontier and one of those guys was George Washington.

The whole point of the 1779 Sullivan-Clinton campaign was to get rid of the native people, the Haudenosaunee. And then I also noticed that campaigns before that: Lord Dunmore's War was about eliminating the Shawnee, the Cherokee war was about eliminating the Cherokee. So, by 1780 the three major Native Nations who stood in the way of our westward expansion were out of the way. I started looking at it and talking to Travis about it. He didn't at first think it was genocide. But he was interested in pursuing that question. We wanted that answered with definitive proof. I think that that's what we did in the book, it was about extirpation. And extirpation in the 18th century meant removal. They talked about the extirpation of the Haudenosaunee, the Shawnee, and the Cherokee. It was a major focus of American effort in the Revolution.

The founding fathers and the causes of the revolution are much more complex. It's not so black and white. There's a lot of gray. Again, with my research when I was working on my dissertation, I was trying to just have a general look at this army adapting to this environment to fight and standard military history. But when I dug into it, my dissertation changed to the American Revolution was about the frontier. In the correspondence engaged before the war, that's a lot of what Gage is talking about is what's going on in the frontier. I found a letter by him in which a month before Lexington and Concord, he actually is in discussion with the commander at Fort Niagara during Dunmore's War. This commander, Colonel Caldwell, keeps writing to him saying the Native Americans, though he doesn't use that language, the native peoples are coming to him constantly. They're asking what's going on with Dunmore's War. Is the Crown going to protect them from the Americans. The situation in North America was so complicated that Gage, the commander in chief in North America, when asked what was Governor Dunmore of Virginia doing? His response was essentially, I don't know, but I hope somebody from London tells him to stop, because Dunmore was only creating more chaos.

Dig'n the News – Summer 2025

SUNY Schenectady
Community
Archaeology Program (CAP)



In this issue

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Matt Zembo
Chris Leonard

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Paul Supley

Places to go

Book Spotlight

Editors –
Donna McClure
Claire Pugliese

PLEASE NOTE: This newsletter is available electronically. Please use diginfo@sunysccc.edu in the subject line to bscala@sunysccc.edu or call 518-381-1263 to request electronic delivery, share feedback and suggestions for future content.

Workforce Development Archaeology
<https://tinyurl.com/34xw4ctf>

Calling Archaeology enthusiasts of all ages!

NEW Teens Camp has been added to our popular Summer Kids Camp!



Fun, educational hands-on experiences tailored to each age group will be offered during a weeklong summer excavation at a site in Schenectady's historic Stockade area. Come see what it feels like to be a real Indiana Jones! Share your discoveries with your families at the Friday ice cream social!



Instructor - Jamie Meisen

More details at: <https://www.facebook.com/share/h/2980gphb1/>

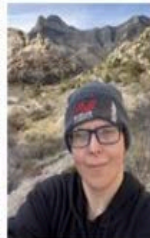
Instructor Spotlight - Jamie Meisen

What are the highlights of your career in the field of Archaeology?

After receiving my MA in Anthropology from the University at Albany, I had the opportunity to work on two Phase III projects with Landmark Archaeology, Inc. One of these projects was the Legoland Amusement Park in Goshen, New York. I met some really great people at Landmark and the fieldwork proved to be a wonderful introduction to CRM in New York State. Later on, I was working as a field technician with Hudson Valley Cultural Resource Consultants, and I located a 1775 British coin. I always considered this the most interesting artifact that I've found so far. Through my most recent work with POWER Engineers, I've been able to travel to Louisiana, Nevada, Texas, and various other places. I really enjoy traveling as part of my career.

What is your favorite thing about teaching at SCCC CAP?

My favorite thing about teaching at SCCC CAP is the process of collecting resources for my classes. It has been great revisiting the books and articles that I found useful in the past and then sharing them with my students. I've also tried to gather new materials for my students, and this gives me the opportunity to explore new books, journal articles, podcasts, and YouTube videos.



2025 Summer Semester

SUNY-SCCC, COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM

Archaeology for Kids and Teens

Hands-on Archaeology for Kids

CRN# 60189 CFP 314-01

July 7 – July 11 Mon-Fri 9 AM- 3 PM Fee: \$225



Young archaeologists, ages 8-11, will have the opportunity to participate in an actual excavation at a site in the Schenectady area. They will learn the methods and skills used by archaeologists, with an emphasis on observation and deductive reasoning. Activities include survey, excavation, data and artifact recording, artifact identification, outdoor games, art projects, and fun interactive history lessons. Family and friends will be invited on Friday for student presentations.

Students must wear closed-toed shoes with socks and bring a bagged lunch and water bottle. Students should also wear sunscreen

Hands-on Archaeology for Teens

CRN# 60381 CFP 314-02

July 14 – July 18 Mon – Fri 9 AM-3 PM Fee: \$225

Young archaeologists, ages 12-15, will have the opportunity to participate in an actual excavation at a site in the Schenectady area. Archaeology is an engaging subject that combines knowledge of natural sciences with the study of art and history. Archaeology activities include research goals, survey, excavation, data recording, artifact identification and analysis, and presenting results. Other fun activities in art, technology, mathematics, and history will provide a full STEAM education experience. Family and friends will be invited on Friday for student presentations.

Students must wear closed-toed shoes with socks and bring a bagged lunch and water bottle. Students should also wear sunscreen



Register at Schenectady County Community College website [Course Registration](#) or call Maria Kotary, 518-595-1101, ext 4. Please note CRN number for the registration form.



2025 New York State Archaeological Association 106th Annual Meeting

By Susan E. Maguire, Ph.D

Left: Martha Vandrei presenting a tribute to her father Chuck Vandrei

The 2025 Annual Meeting was a exciting and informative event held at the Crowne Plaza-Riverside in Niagara Falls, NY. This dynamic affair was noted for sharing of new research in archaeology, generating new

collaborations, reconnecting old colleagues and friends, and great views of the mighty Niagara River. Over 170 people attended the conference, with a large contingent of students. In support of our future generation of archaeologists, all student presenters received free registration. The student energy was a great addition to the conference. Thanks to all the mentors who helped the students with their research and presentation skills. We are grateful to David L. George-Shongo of the Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Ganönyok which opened the conference with a sense of gratitude and openness to the knowledge. The program included 28 papers presented as well as 18 posters presentations. Of special note was the session "Archaeologist, Historian, Friend, and Ally: Papers in Honor of Charles Vandrei, Jr".

Right: Jim Fisher conducts a great flint knapping demonstration.

We were all moved by the poignant memories and the reminders of the tremendous contributions that Chuck made to the field. Especially inspiring was the talk "The past alive in the



present: re-enactment as philosophy and practice. A tribute to my father, Chuck Vandrei” presented by Chuck’s daughter, historian at University of Exeter, Martha Vandrei, Ph.D. in which she shared her father’s influence on her life and research. Thanks to Martha for travelling to the conference and contributing such a powerful review of Chuck’s commitment and dedication to history and archaeology. Thanks to everyone who worked to make this such a beautiful tribute to Chuck’s life. Additionally, the session “Archaeology and the Public” was open to the public and included talks about preserving important local places including Melissa Leonard’s talk “Seneca Indian Park: Recognizing a Sacred Burial Ground” and two talks about efforts to preserve the Turtle, or the Native American Center for the Living Arts, which is threatened with demolition.



Left: Adam Lucsner was presented the NYSAA Meritorious Service Award by Matt Kirk and Jon Lothrop

Right: Bill Engelbrecht introduces the banquet speaker Kelly Berliner of The Archaeological Conservancy





Left: Kelly Berliner presents at the 2025 Annual Banquet



Right: Bill Engelbrecht awaits the conference attendees at the registration table



Left: Attendees enjoying the Annual Banquet

The book room provided a lively place to meet and greet friends and to browse and purchase from the many vendors with a wide variety of choices from book publishers to Native American crafts. Thanks to Jim Fisher for a great flint knapping demonstration. The Annual Banquet was a fun-filled event enjoyed by over 100 attendees. Congratulations to Adam Lusier from Hartgen Archaeological Associates, Inc. on winning the NYSAA Meritorious Service Award; it is well deserved. We are grateful to Kelly Berliner from the Archaeological Conservancy for discussion of the work of the Conservancy "From Flint Mines to Forts: The Archaeological Conservancy's Preservation Efforts in New York" including their successes and the challenges they face in carrying out this important work. A big thanks go out to all the sponsors who supported the conference including: the Archaeological Institute of America, Westchester Society, Chronicle Heritage, the Iroquois Studies Association, Landmark Archaeology, Inc., Mary Pat Meaney and Joseph W. Zarzynski, Tetra Tech, and Buffalo State University, Department of Anthropology. Their generous contributions made the conference organizers lives much easier and, more importantly, provided the crucial support for our student presenters.

The Houghton Chapter contributed \$1000 to the New York State Archaeological Association to assist with the student support for the 2026 Annual Conference in Rochester. Finally, a big thanks to a great organizing committee. Don Smith did a great job managing the finances and was always ready with the checkbook. A note of gratitude goes to Bill Engelbrecht, Ph.D. for encouraging the Houghton Chapter to organize the 2025 Annual Conference and for his leadership and vision in developing such a strong program and supporting our future generation of archaeologists.

We look forward to seeing everyone next year in Rochester!

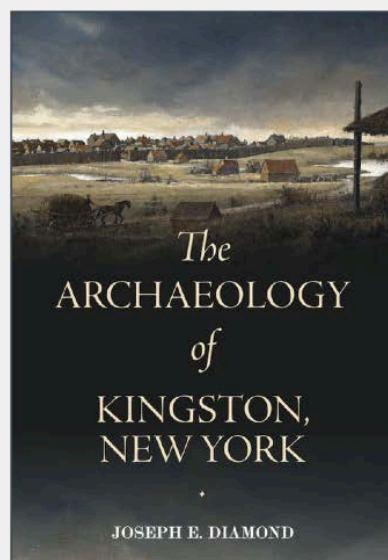


Left: Dave Moyer chats with Rob Hasenstab in the bookroom. **Right:** Alanna Ossa, SUNY Oswego, and her students enjoy the poster session in the book room.

Forthcoming from Excelsior Edition:

The Archaeology of Kingston, New York

By Joseph E.
Diamond



Forthcoming November 2025
384 pages

\$29.95 pb • ISBN 9798855803983
\$20.97 with code SNWF25
at www.sunypress.edu

Joseph E. Diamond is Associate Professor
of Anthropology at SUNY New Paltz.
He is Vice President of the
New York Archaeological Council.



FORTHCOMING from EXCELSIOR EDITIONS

The *Archaeology of Kingston, New York* covers Kingston (and New York State and the Hudson Valley to a lesser extent) from Paleo-Indian times circa twelve thousand years ago through twelve thousand years of Native American occupations. The book covers the archaeology of the Dutch colonial period and the British colonial period, as well as a number of sites around the city from the nineteenth century. The book brings together new information on eighty-two archaeological sites and six related sites that are slightly outside of the corporate boundary of the city of Kingston. These include precontact and Native American sites, such as Sailor's Cove and Cantine's Island; the founding of Wiltwyck in the early colonial period; key sites in the Stockade District; the Matthew Persen House; maritime archaeological sites; key cemeteries; and noteworthy sites related to African Americans in the region. Along with the archaeological discussion, the book includes information about local lithic geology, glacial geology, and flora and fauna that were important dietary components of precontact Native Americans. *The Archaeology of Kingston, New York* offers a complete introduction to the region for anyone interested in New York history and its study and recovery.

"*The Archaeology of Kingston New York* is a truly exhaustive summary of the archaeology that has taken place in the city and surrounding area to date. Through careful attention to detail and clarity of writing, Diamond analyses an enormous catalog of data from published and unpublished literature that will be useful to a wide range of audiences including professional archaeologists, historians, local planning officials, educators, and the curious public. Sources unavailable to non-archaeologists are presented in detail to interpret the material culture used by peoples of Indigenous, African, and European descent. The result is an expansive and substantive diachronic synthesis of life in the mid-Hudson Valley that will surely serve as a definitive archaeological reference for years to come."
— Michael T. Lucas, Curator of Historical Archaeology,
New York State Museum

"The evidence from archaeological excavations opens a new window into thousands of years of the history of Kingston. This previously unpublished study and analysis of physical artifacts and features provides an unprecedented view into the lives of people, and their slaves, who have lived at this location for many centuries. It is a record that will be of value to many future scholars. The artifacts from historic time periods are shown to be able to explain the meaning of many of the well-known historical documents in Kingston history."
— Paul R. Huey, retired director, State Historic Sites archaeology program of the Bureau of Historic Sites in the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

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VanEpps - Hartley Chapter (NYSAA)
Chapter Work Meetings:

The Bent Site Collection

By Gary Bernhardt (Chapter
Historian), July 2025

Left: View of the Bent site, behind foreground trees and brush photo taken by the author in 1974

Members of the VanEpps-Hartley Chapter have been involved in a long-term collections inventory project, which began back in 1994, when Dr. Dean Snow was the Chapter President. Since that time the Chapter Historian, Gary Bernhardt, has served as the project director.

Chapter work meetings are held at the Saint Kateri National Shrine and Historic Site on Friday evenings during the summer and early fall, based on a schedule planned and announced by Chapter Secretary Sarah Vidulich. The Kateri shrine had been the home of the Chapter for decades, officially beginning in 1952. Back then the Shrine was also the home of the Mohawk-Caughnawaga Museum, founded by Father Tom Grassmann with assistance from the Chapter.

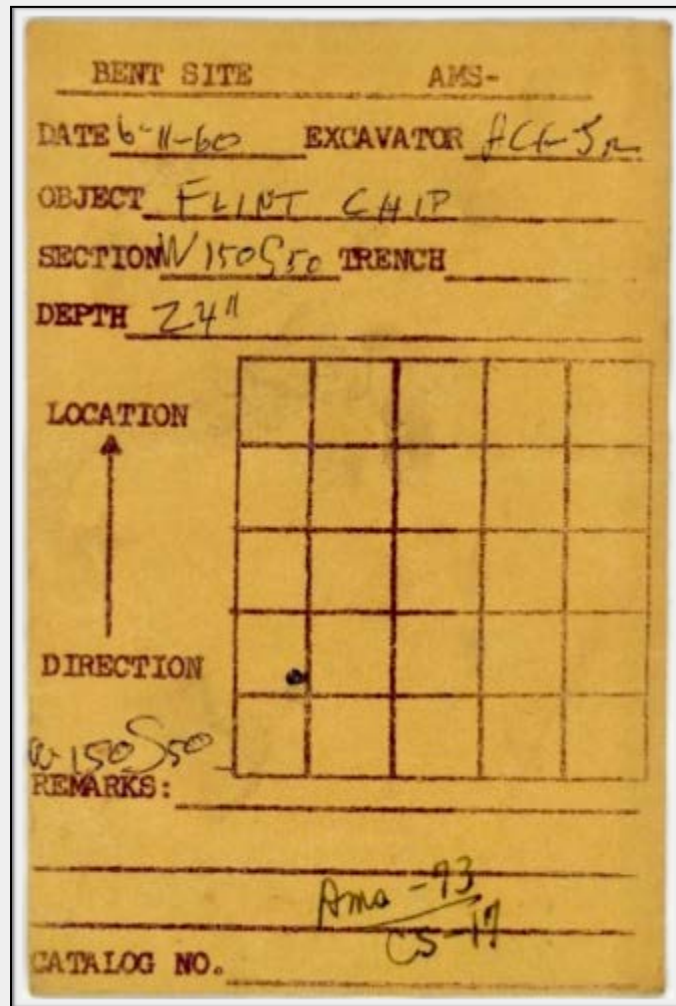
The primary goal for our chapter inventory project has been to create an accurate listing of our extensive artifact collections, and to construct a searchable computer database of those resources, many of which had heretofore been undocumented; not even in our own card catalogs. Over the last few decades, we have inventoried many of our collections, some of which involved quite interesting stories. For this report I will focus on the collections project that was recently completed.

The Bent site excavation collection

From 2018 through 2024 the main subject of our work meetings was the inventory of the Bent site collection. The Bent site (site AMS-73) was a late archaic village on the alluvial flats of the Mohawk river, in the Town of Glenville, Schenectady County, New York. (see **Photo 1**) Discovery of the site was attributed to Chapter member Art Glamm, Jr., who, sometime around 1959, noticed artifacts being unearthed by bulldozers during a topsoil removal project. Excavations under the direction of

Chapter President R. Arthur Johnson took place, primarily, between 1960 and 1962. The work was performed by a core group of chapter members, with occasional visits from Dr. Ritchie and Bob Funk, among others.

The artifact collection resulting from the excavations, for the most part, had been washed and inked with catalogue numbers, using the old Rough Stone (RS), Polished Stone (PS), Chipped Stone (CS), etc. classification and numbering system. Many of the artifacts were found still in their original manila excavation envelopes. (see **Photo 2**) Art Glamm, Jr. had assembled the resulting data into a binder, using mimeographed sheets for artifact tabulation. He included excavation maps, notes, and diagrams. The resulting listing, however, did not identify each artifact with a unique collection number; something which is a necessity for a computerized inventory. For this reason, the entire collection inventory required an update to align it with today's standards.



BENT SITE AMS-
DATE 6-11-60 EXCAVATOR AG-Jr
OBJECT FLINT CHIP
SECTION W150S50 TRENCH
DEPTH 24"
LOCATION
DIRECTION
REMARKS:
Catalog No. CS-17

Right, Photo 2: typical Bent site small artifact collection envelope for CS-17, a flint chip found 24 inches deep, in unit W150-S50 excavated by Art Glamm, Jr. on June 11, 1960

In 2024-chapter members, after six years of work, completed the new Bent site collection inventory – that year alone, 55 Bent site entries were added to the inventory. Although most of those entries were for single artifacts, those 55 entries accounted for a total of 409 artifacts. This numerical disparity was caused by item VEH 14786, a single collection entry that accounted for 355 small chert flakes. Records indicated that those chert flakes had been excavated by Chapter President R. Arthur Johnson on June 18, 1960, from unit West 110 - South 50, (W110S50). According to Art's notes, the flakes were all found grouped together in a cluster about eight inches in diameter and one inch thick, at a depth of seventeen inches. It should be noted that unit W110-S50 was, like the other excavation units at the Bent site, a ten-by-ten foot square unit, which was fairly close to the geographic center of the excavation.



Above, Photo 3: Lloyd Brinkman at home, with musket and false face masks from the Schenectady Gazette newspaper, November 12, 1974

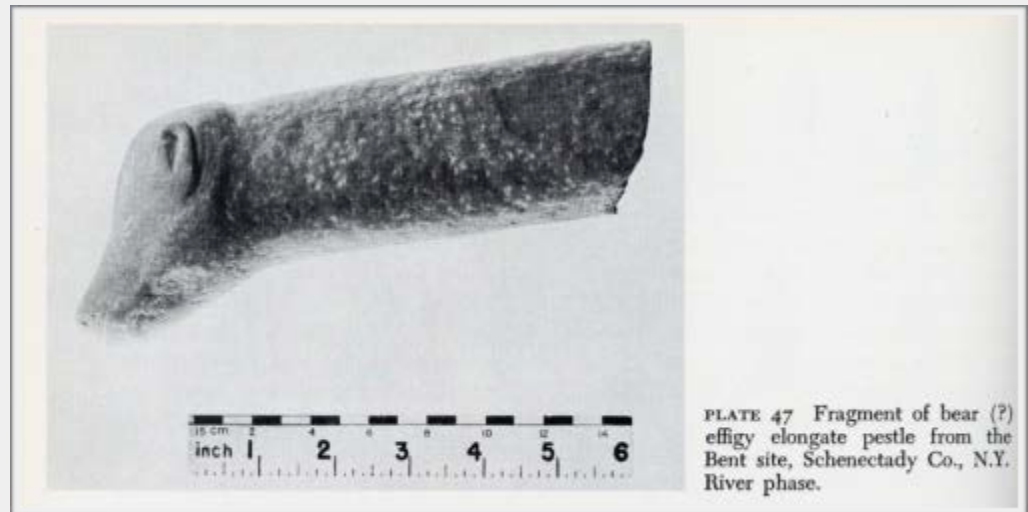
Excavation records also revealed that on the very next day, well-known chapter member Lloyd Brinkman assisted with the excavation of W110-S50. (see **Photo 3**) On that day Lloyd uncovered the famous bear's head effigy pestle, (or half of a bear's head pestle), at almost the same depth as the pile of flint chips. You might be familiar with the pestle...it is the same one that Dr. William A. Ritchie included a photo of in his seminal work, The Archaeology of New York State (see **Photo 4**). The pestle can still be seen on display at the Saint Kateri National Shrine and Historic Site. It is in Case 4 - the Narrow Point Tradition. The pestle was designated as AMS-73/RS-150.

What most people don't know is that Lloyd Brinkman, upon discovering the pestle, had given the artifact a name. In the excavation records he called it "River Otto." Lloyd had even written that name on the paper collection bag that the pestle was placed in after discovery. Did he think that the effigy was an otter, or was there some other reason for the name? Could it be that the effigy is an otter, and not a bear? Lloyd, unfortunately, is no longer with us to explain the name, and/or his hypothesis, so the answer may remain a mystery.

Chapter members inventoried many other artifacts recovered from unit W110-S50 in June of 1960. Among the artifacts recovered were bannerstone fragments, netsinkers, abraders, anvilstones, chert and quartzite hammerstones, bone fragments, and, of course, those 355 chert flakes. All of these artifacts were from a late archaic village site, which Dr. Ritchie eventually assigned a carbon-14 date of 1930 BC, plus or minus 200 years.

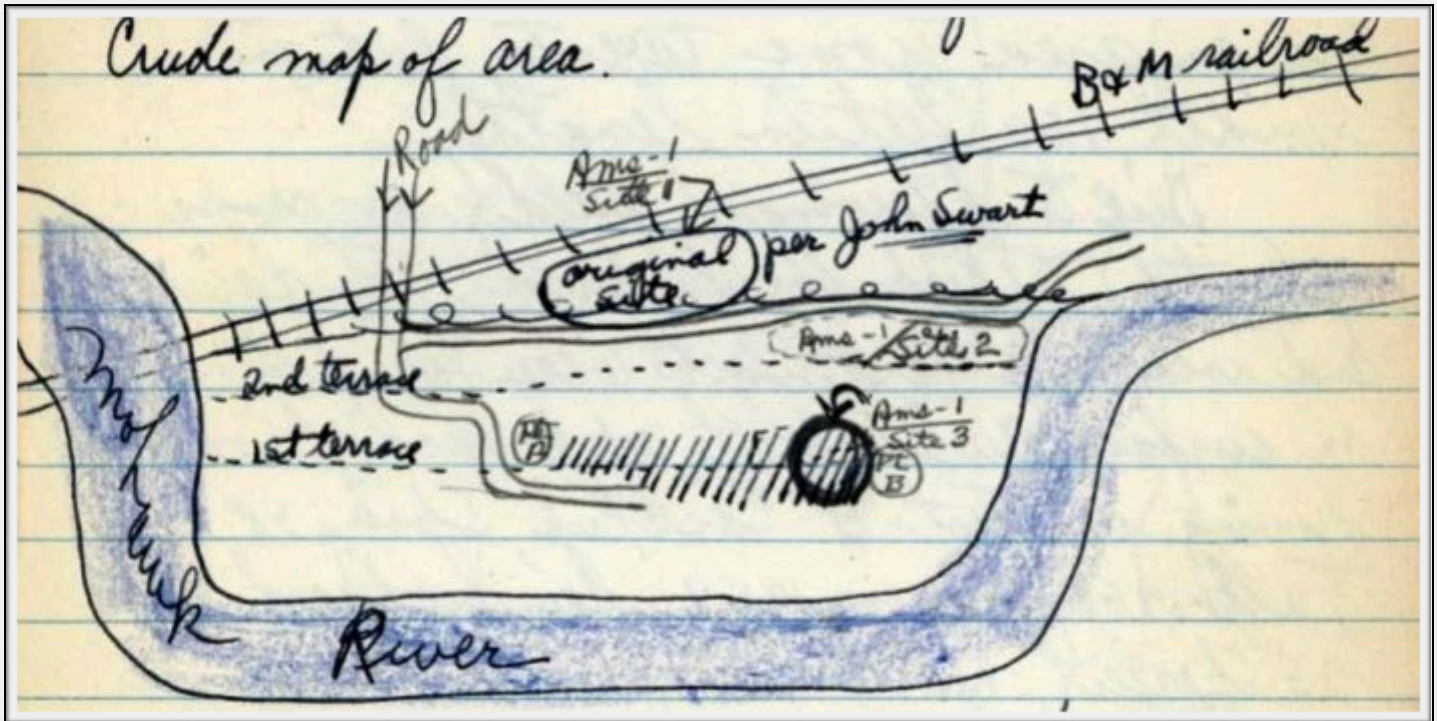
Our work meeting unearthed yet another mystery that needed to be solved. Just what was the story behind "River Otto"? Perhaps this reveals an important part of our inventory project. Because, really, what would archaeology be without uncovering a few good mysteries?

Right, Photo 4: The Bent site effigy pestle from William A. Ritchie's *The Archaeology of New York State*



It is with great pleasure that our chapter has reached the end of the inventorying of the important Bent site collection. I'll be the first to admit that we might still find a few un-inventoried Bent site artifacts in our collections storeroom. But by-and-large, as far as we know, the greater portion of the Bent site collection resulting from the chapter's excavations has been inventoried. Unfortunately, records indicate that some artifacts are missing, including most of the lithics from W110-S50. At this time, we have no idea where those items went or how to locate them. But I would prefer to focus on the good news, which is that the Bent site collection is now represented by 734 new entries in our database. And along the way we discovered some very interesting artifacts, plus a few good stories as well.

There is one last piece of information for the Bent site puzzle. Art Glamm, Jr. kept a field notebook; his Field Book #1 was filled with over three hundred pages, detailing discoveries and archaeological investigations with his father from 1953 through 1963. Over time they amassed quite a collection of artifacts. Years later, after Art and his wife Lois had passed away, their archaeological collections were sold off to a private collector and antiques dealer from Schenectady. Unfortunately, that collector died shortly thereafter, and I was informed that the Glamm collection had been sold to an "unknown buyer." I would love to find out who has that collection. Glamm had some artifacts that I wanted to examine and photograph. But for now, the whereabouts of the collection remain unknown.



Left, Photo 5: Art Glamm, Jr.'s 1959 map showing the Bent site area from page 253 of his Field Book #1

In 2021, by a stroke of good luck, Glamm's Field book #1 was re-discovered. This was great news because, among other things, his Field Book #1 described the initial discovery of the Bent site, with hand drawn maps and records of the Glamm's excavations. (see **Photo 5**) The book also contained a wealth of information on other Mohawk valley sites.

And just who, you might ask, was the fortunate person who found Art Glamm, Jr.'s Field Book #1? This great resource of information was purchased from an Owego auctioneer by none other than our own NYSAA Vice President Dave Moyer, who then donated it to the VanEpps-Hartley Chapter. Heartfelt thanks go out to Dave, from myself as well as the rest of the VanEpps-Hartley Chapter members, for recognizing the significance of this book and, without any hesitation, handing over this priceless resource!



A New Exhibit on African American Archaeology in Ithaca, NY

By Sherene Baugher

Left, Fig. 1: Entrance Case to the St James Community-Engaged Archaeology exhibit (Photo: Sherene Baugher).

Right, Fig. 2: Exhibit case with a quilt made by members of the congregation and numerous artifacts displayed on the shelves (Photo: Sherene Baugher).

Sacred Ground: Excavating Black History at Ithaca's Freedom Church is an exhibit now on view in the lobby of The History Center in Tompkins County. The exhibit opened on June 19, 2025, and will remain on display until December 31, 2025. It showcases a diverse range of artifacts recovered during four seasons of excavations at Ithaca's St. James AME Zion Church, organized by the Cornell Institute of Archaeology and Material Studies (CIAMS). The excavation was a community-engaged project involving Cornell students, faculty, and members of the St. James congregation. This September, the exhibit won a preservation award from Historic Ithaca for its contribution to local archaeology and community history.

St. James was built between 1833 and 1836, and its congregation and pastors were involved in the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass visited the church. The archaeological project at St. James was part of Cornell Professor Gerard Aching's Underground Railroad Project. A 2024 NYSAA Summer Newsletter article by Ethan Dickerman (Cornell MA 2023 and now our NYSAA Newsletter editor) highlighted the contributions of Cornell students to ongoing

research on the Underground Railroad. This information is available at <https://undergroundrailroadhub.net/>.

The community-engaged archaeological work at St. James AME Zion Church began in Fall 2021, directed by Cornell Professors Lori Khatchadourian and Adam T. Smith. The goal of the project, as envisioned by Rev. Terrance King, the pastor of St. James Church, and Professors Khatchadourian, Smith, and Aching, was to use archaeology to help the church and community members reveal empowering stories about St. James and its enduring legacy as an Ithaca institution. The church's long history of advancing civil rights is not restricted to participation in the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, twenty-six men from the congregation served as soldiers in the 26th Regiment, United States Colored Infantry, fighting to end slavery and preserve the Union. After the war, the church became the hub of a growing African American community and has remained a vital part of Ithaca's southside to this day.

The initial Saturday archaeological excavations consisted of CIAMS students and faculty volunteers working side by side with members of the community, including St. James congregation members. Community kids ages 7-17 joined the excavations as volunteers, learning the history of the church and the techniques of archaeological research from dendrochronology to zooarchaeology. The first year was so successful that the project was embedded in a fall semester Cornell course on community-engaged archaeology, directed by postdoctoral researcher Dr. Samantha Sanft (NYSAA member and former secretary of the Finger Lakes chapter). In fall 2022, 2023, and 2024, Sanft directed the excavations, involving Cornell students and community members. The project continued to involve the active participation of Professor Khatchadourian and Smith, along with other CIAMS faculty volunteers. Prof. Larry Brown undertook Ground Penetrating Radar in the church's garden and Prof. Sturt Manning performed dendrochronology on timbers inside the church. Prof. Nerissa Russell (NYSAA Finger Lakes Chapter member) identified the faunal material and was a frequent field supervisor during the four years of the project. Post-doc Maia Dedrick analyzed the floral material and also regularly assisted with the Saturday fieldwork. Dr. Fred Gleach helped with artifact identification, especially 20th-century architectural items, and Prof. Sherene Baugher identified and dated historic artifacts.

The museum exhibit highlights the four years of community-engaged excavations, showcasing the diverse artifacts that were uncovered and highlighting almost two hundred years of the church's history and the many meals enjoyed by the congregation. The artifacts range from architectural materials to ceramics, glass, children's toys, and personal items, including clay smoking pipes. (Figures 3 and 4). Many historical documents are also on display.

For readers who are unable to visit the exhibit, extensive information is available online. The CIAMS website features numerous articles on the St. James project, including research papers by students that analyze specific artifacts

<https://archaeology.cornell.edu/st-james-ame-zion-community-excavations>. There is also an online tour of the church available that includes voices from the congregation and Cornell researchers: <https://cyark.org/projects/st-james-church/overview>



Left, Fig. 3: Ceramics and glassware from the excavation. Notice the blue shell-edged whiteware plate from the second quarter of the 19th century (Photo: Sherene Baugher).

Left, Fig.4: Artifacts of play, leisure, and healthcare. Notice in the background the names of the community members who created the quilt (Photo: Sherene Baugher).

