



**NYAC Newsletter  
Fall 2012**

***From the President***

Dear NYAC Members,

NYAC held its fall meeting at Hope Lake Lodge near Cortland on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Several topics were discussed and decisions made on how to proceed. The minutes of the general meeting will provide greater detail. However, I want to summarize several of the main points. NYAC is considering raising its membership dues by \$5 for Full Members only. In part, this is to defer the cost of paying a professional to revamp our website and to maintain the site for us. Hope Luhman will be preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) on NYAC's behalf in the near future.

We considered solutions to the on-going problem of new members not signing up to the NYAC Listserv which resides currently with Yahoo Groups. When you become a member of NYAC you should receive an invitation from Doug Mackey to sign up. Many people either ignore the invitation or do not look carefully in their spam folders. The NYAC listserv and Yahoo Groups website are valuable sources of information. The listserv is an important means of disseminating information to NYAC members while the Yahoo website contains links to several documents, including the annual NYAC Abstracts. The NYAC Abstracts are extremely useful in evaluating previous archaeological investigations throughout New York State. They provide a short description of all Phase 2 and 3 projects: cultural and temporal affiliation, site type, location by county and township, and range of materials recovered.

Bill Engelbrecht was appointed Chair of the Awards Committee. He will be sending out a notice in the coming months to the membership asking for nominations for our Student Award (\$500) and the Founder's Award. Jon Lothrop was appointed Chair of the Elections Committee. Several positions are up this year, including president, secretary, and several board positions. He will be sending a call for nominations soon. Please consider running for a position. We discussed the overlap in our attempts to create a list of academic departments to send notification of our student award with efforts by the Beauchamp Chapter, NYSAA, and the Funk Foundation. An attempt will be made to share contact lists.

Lisa Anderson and Linda Stone have agreed to organize the program for the Spring 2013 meeting in Watertown. The program will be a discussion of the issues surrounding the Burial Bill, including current practices and future directions under existing and proposed legislation. If you have any ideas or concerns for them, please send them a note (Lisa Anderson LANDERS6@MAIL.NYSED.GOV, Linda Stone lindastone@juno.com).

Our Treasurer, Ann Morton, reminded everyone that dues are due. Please mail them to her at 1215 Macedon Center Road, Macedon NY 14502. You can also make the payment online through PayPal on our website.

The board wishes to thank Ellie McDowell-Loudan for arranging our meeting. It was a great venue.

Hope to see you in Watertown next April.

Sissie

## NEWS FROM CURTIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTING, INC.

### Data Recovery at the 708 Route 9 Precontact Sites, Town of Wilton, Saratoga County

708 Route 9 in the Town of Wilton is near the location of the 1693 Battle of Wilton (fought between pursuing New York and escaping French and Canadian Indian forces). The battle took place at the intersection of the east-west and north-south Great Trails that connected the Mohawk valley with the Saratoga region, Lake George, Lake Champlain, and Quebec. In the Spring 2012 NYAC Newsletter, I noted the following:

- Although no evidence of the battle has been found at 708 Route 9, the trails may have been old when the battle was fought, and the analysis of precontact period stone material diversity and other lithic attributes may reflect long-distance travel through this area;
- Very fragmentary Late Woodland period pottery had been recovered during the 2011 data recovery; and
- Radiocarbon dating could provide evidence of earlier occupation.

The completion of analyses and reporting of the 708 Route 9 archaeological data recovery project in September 2012 addresses these points. The data recovery was performed at 708 Route 9 Sites 1-4. All four archaeological sites formed in the sandy soil of a glacial outwash plain within the former Glacial Lake Albany basin. These sites are located near stream headwaters at the base of a limestone and dolomite-bearing escarpment following the McGregor Fault (associated with the famous springs of Saratoga). With respect to evidence of much more dense prehistoric settlement along Saratoga Lake, the Hudson River, and its large tributaries, these are small, dispersed, back-country sites. Nonetheless, these sites have provided a variety of important information. Curtin Archaeological's analyses have been assisted by radiocarbon dating performed by Beta-Analytic, Inc. (who also provided the radiocarbon date calibrations used here); and archaeobotanical analysis by Justine Woodard McKnight, Archaeobotanist. Also, Andrea Lain and Jon Lothrop of the New York State Museum provided access to and discussion of lithic samples housed in the NYSM Anthropology collection.

Site 1 was a small site with a low density of prehistoric artifacts occurring in the original topsoil and subsoil. Small numbers of nineteenth- to twentieth-century artifacts were mixed into the original topsoil, and the original stratigraphy was capped by fill derived from backdirt from the excavation of a nearby twentieth-century cellar hole and swimming pool. Predictably, the fill also contained a mixture of prehistoric and historic-modern artifacts. The data recovery field work involved the excavation of 17 1x1 m units plus the stripping of fill and old topsoil, and the documentation and sampling of features.

Sites 2-4 had very low artifact densities (3 to 7 flakes per site, combined Phase 1 and 2 results). The data recovery fieldwork at these sites involved the mechanical stripping of topsoil and the documentation and sampling of the only archaeological feature found among them, a shallow pit at Site 3.

*The Early Archaic Occupation*

Although no features were found at Sites 2 and 4, the information obtained from Site 3 was very valuable. The wood charcoal obtained from the Site 3 pit was pine and it was radiocarbon dated  $8760 \pm B.P.$  (Cal B.C. 7950-7610), placing the age of occupation during the poorly understood Early Archaic period (Photo 1). Pine was a forest-dominant in early forests in eastern New York (Lewis and Funk 1993). No subsistence items were found in the pit. In addition to pine and unidentified coniferous wood charcoal, two heat-reddened cobbles and numerous bits of gravel (many also heat-reddened) were recovered. Given the continuous range in the size of the gravel particles, the gravel and cobbles are considered to be naturally-occurring. If they were intentionally placed in the feature, their purpose would have been heat retention. The feature appears to have been a shallow earth oven. The artifact assemblage associated with Site 3 consists of four relatively large chert flakes, two of which were utilized. The functional interpretation of this assemblage is that it was created to serve expedient cutting or scraping activities. The similarly small assemblages from Sites 2 and 4 are dominated by smaller flakes with less incidence of utilization. This suggests differences in the degree of logistical organization, with Sites 2 and 4 more reliant upon curated tool assemblages that were repaired or sharpened in these locations. There is no implication that Sites 2 and 4 also date to the Early Archaic period; their ages remain unknown. With respect to the Early Archaic period, however, 708 Route 9 Site 3 provides an important insight concerning the organization of land use at this time. What archaeologists have generally understood about Early Archaic sites has been determined almost exclusively from sites that contain highly-crafted, typically curated, projectile points and other formal tools. The unexpected identification of Site 3 as an Early Archaic site demonstrates (1) how ephemeral evidence of the Early Archaic is, and (2) small sites with sparse, expedient flake tool industries form part of the Early Archaic land use pattern. The challenge is now to understand how typical this site type is.



Photo 1: Excavation of the Early Archaic feature at 708 Route 9 Site 3.

*The Late Woodland Occupations*

Evidence of Late Woodland occupation was obtained from both the old topsoil and subsoil components. The old topsoil yielded a small group of hard, thin ceramic sherds. Two of these had incised decorations characteristic of the later part of the Late Woodland period, after about A.D. 1400 (Photo 2). This ware continued to be made into the 1600s. All of the ceramics have attributes consistent with manufacture and decoration during this period, and the limited decoration observed suggests association with Ritchie's (1958) Chance horizon (approximately A.D. 1400-1500).

In addition to the ceramics in the original topsoil, a hearth several centimeters below the old topsoil-subsoil interface yielded a radiocarbon date of  $770 \pm 30$  B.P. (Cal A.D. 1260-1290). No subsistence remains were found with this hearth. The identified fuelwood was maple, common by

this period in mature forests in northern New York. In addition to the radiocarbon-dated hearth, there was an accumulation of rocks and broken anvilstone fragments nearby in the subsoil, and a badly disturbed pit appearing to originate at the old topsoil-subsoil interface. No Native American ceramics were found in the subsoil or features.

The lithics were examined in ways to evaluate the relative degree of portability-mobility likely associated with the old topsoil and subsoil assemblages; and to observe the extent to which the lithics were obtained locally or originated in other regions. These analyses have a bearing on understanding whether Site 1 (in particular) was used by people during long-distance travel. Also, since two components of different age were represented in the subsoil and old topsoil contexts, it is possible to observe whether this situation changed over time. Almost all of the lithics were flakes and shatter, with only a few cores, chunks, bifaces, or formal tools.

The lithic analyses provide some important insights. First, the assemblages from old topsoil and subsoil contexts are both rather strongly dominated by small flakes (in both assemblages, 66-67% of flakes were smaller than the 1.5 cm size grade). This suggests that the chipped stone assemblages brought to the site during both periods often had been manufactured for transportability, rather than imported as relatively early or raw forms for manufacturing on site (however, as in most assemblages, there appears to have been a mix of manufacturing and finishing stages). Since few bifaces or finished tools were found, it is apparent that the items refined, finished, or repaired at 708 Route 9 Site 1 had been carried away to other sites.



Photo 2: Incised pottery from 708 Route 9 Site 1.



Photo 3: Chalcedony flakes from 708 Route 9 Site 1.



Second, there was substantial variety among chipped stone materials from different sources. The Hudson valley's Normanskill chert was found in both components, but was strongly dominant only in the subsoil assemblage. In the old topsoil assemblage, Normanskill chert was only one of several relatively abundant stone types. In total, at least 17 different types of stone were recovered at Site 1, not including different color or shade varieties of quartzite, untyped chert, gray chalcedony, and slate (Photo 3). This variation increased over time, as only six raw material types occurred in the subsoil assemblage, while 12 occurred in the old topsoil (some types, such as Cheshire quartzite, were recovered from the fill but were not found in either the old topsoil or the subsoil).

Considering all contexts, some of the stones occurring in small amounts are identified as, or compare favorably to, Fort Ann chert and Cheshire quartzite (with sources to the northeast in northern Washington County and Vermont, respectively), and Kalkberg and Eastern Onondaga chert (with sources south of the Mohawk valley). Slate may have come from eastern Washington County near the Vermont border. Yellow jasper, often assumed to originate in Pennsylvania, alternatively may have come from the Canadian Shield via southeastern Ontario (Funk and Kuhn 2003:78). One biface was made of stone that compares favorably to Esopus chert from south of the Mohawk valley.

In addition to stones that could be identified as to likely sources due to familiar attributes, several stone varieties were unfamiliar. These include gray chalcedony and translucent chert of several shades, as well as untyped gray chert. While the sources have not been identified, it is possible that there are local sources for these stones, or sources that were on the way to this site from other locations. For example, only 10 cores and chunks were found, but these were made of either untyped gray chert of unknown source, gray quartzite (which is assumed to be relatively local due to occurrence of quartzites in Hudson valley till deposits), or, in one case, light gray chalcedony. It is a general assumption that these early reduction stage lithics were not moved a great distance (although this may not always be the case). During the course of investigation of the lithic material sources, it was learned that a gray chert called Gailor chert occurs several miles west-southwest of the 708 Route 9 sites ([http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/Geolex/NewRefsmry/smry\\_12966.html](http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/Geolex/NewRefsmry/smry_12966.html)) in locations that could be visited by parties traveling northeast from the Mohawk valley. While it is not known currently whether the untyped gray chert from 708 Route 9 is Gailor chert, this is an intriguing possibility. Moreover, while a source of Gailor chert has been reported in the Lester Park area several miles west of 708 Route 9, it is possible that this chert outcrops along the nearby escarpment much closer to the 708 Route 9 sites (such as in the vicinity of the historic-era Gailor stone quarry).

While the origin of the gray chert is yet to be identified with any certainty, the pattern of change in stone type frequency from the subsoil component to the old topsoil (post-A.D. 1290) component is clear. Although Normanskill chert continued in use, showing a long-term connection with the Hudson valley and presumably local Mohican communities, over time the intensity of Normanskill chert use decreased while the use of untyped gray chert, chalcedony, and quartzite increased dramatically. Moreover, stone types that were not used in the earlier period of occupation -- such as slate and several exotic looking cherts -- appeared for the first time in the old topsoil assemblage. The old topsoil to subsoil flake ratios for some of these stone types include:

Normanskill chert	54:80
Untyped gray chert	49:15
Gray chalcedony	40:1
Quartzite	14:2
Gray translucent chert	11:4
Fort Ann chert	4:1

The increased variety and seemingly exotic character of the later assemblage seems indeed to indicate an increase in the use of the northern and western trails. While some of the stone source material is unknown, changes in the occurrence of some of the minority lithic types, such as Fort Ann chert, other exotic cherts, and slate, indicate this. Local Mohican communities with Normanskill chert stone assemblages may have continued to use the site for food or other resource foraging, and probably journeyed along the trails, perhaps stopping at 708 Route 9 Site 1 before traveling farther. At the same time, these trails likely were used as Mohawks began to establish historic practices of coming to the Saratoga region to hunt and fish, or to venture farther to the Lake Champlain basin or St. Lawrence valley.

The late prehistoric to protohistoric period in eastern North America is generally associated with change, reorganization, interaction, population movement, community aggregation, trade, and warfare (Brose et al. 2001), and these patterns are thought to include Iroquoian groups among others (cf. Bradley 1987; Fitzgerald 2001; Snow 1994). The 708 Route 9 archaeological data recovery at Site 1 may provide a small glimpse of events unfolding in the larger Northeastern historical process.

Related *Fieldnotes* Posts

Curtin Archaeological has posted short pieces on the Battle of Wilton and the 708 Route 9 Early Archaic component in its blog, *Fieldnotes* (on February 17, 2012 and September 5, 2012). *Fieldnotes* can be found at [www.curtinarchaeology.com/blog](http://www.curtinarchaeology.com/blog). There will be at least one more *Fieldnotes* piece on this data recovery project, oriented to a general audience.

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1994 *The Iroquois*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Submitted by: Ed Curtin

## NEWS FROM LANDMARK ARCHAEOLOGY, INC.

Archaeological investigations were conducted in 2011 and 2012 by Landmark Archaeology, Inc. for the City of Saratoga Springs. The proposed project included development of a 3.5-acre park located on the western shoreline and uplands at the Fish Creek outlet at the northern end of Saratoga Lake. Landmark identified and mitigated a multi-component prehistoric site on the parcel that yielded a rich inventory of material objects and features primarily associated with Archaic and Woodland period occupations (ca. 8000 B.C.-A.D. 1000). The site, A09140.001517, is located along the escarpment edge of a high terrace overlooking the lake's narrow outlet on land used historically as a recreation area by campers and vacationers (Photo 1). The parcel's benign land use preserved shallow archaeological deposits that typically do not exceed 50 cm below the modern ground surface.



1: Saratoga Springs Waterfront Park



2: Phase II Recovered Bifaces

The Phase I and subsequent Phase II investigations, both conducted in 2011, found concentrated cultural deposits at the A/B interface in silty sand soils at depths ranging from approximately 25-35 cm below surface. Two prehistoric features (FCR concentration and hearth), 884 FCR, and 982 artifacts were found during Phase I/II investigations which included the excavation of 56 STPs and 8 1x1m test units. The artifact assemblage is dominated by lithics, including a large number of formal tools (n=15), flake tools (n=25), debitage (n=845), and cobble tools (n=4). A small amount of ceramics (n=38) and bone (n=46) also were found. Diagnostic bifaces recovered from Phase I/II investigations include Lamoka and Jack's Reef Corner Notched points (Photo 2). Temporally diagnostic bifaces recovered from the Phase I and II indicated occupations associated with the Late Archaic, Middle Woodland, and Late Woodland periods.



3: Block Excavation

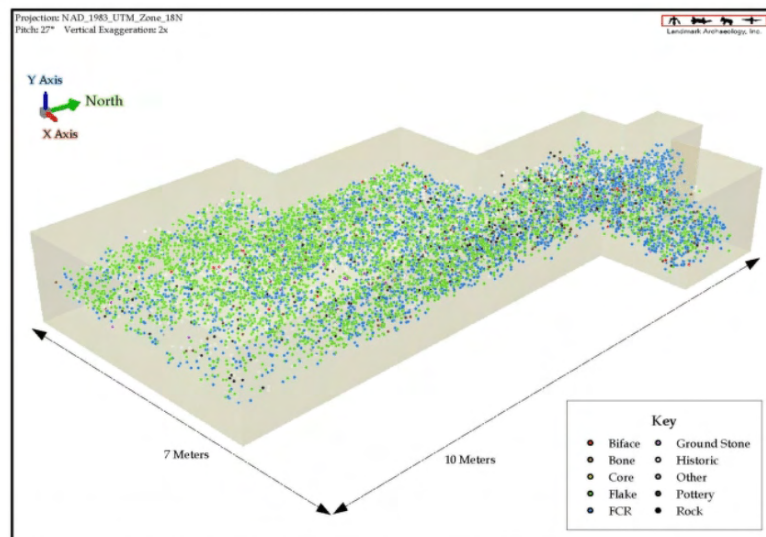


4: Total Station Artifact Mapping

Landmark recommended the site eligible under Criterion D of the NRHP based on the results of the Phase I and II investigations. Unplowed and well preserved cultural deposits coupled with a large number of diagnostics and a varied tool assemblage were the primary basis for recommending site significant. A data recovery project was conducted at the site in the summer of 2012. As of this writing, data analysis is in progress.

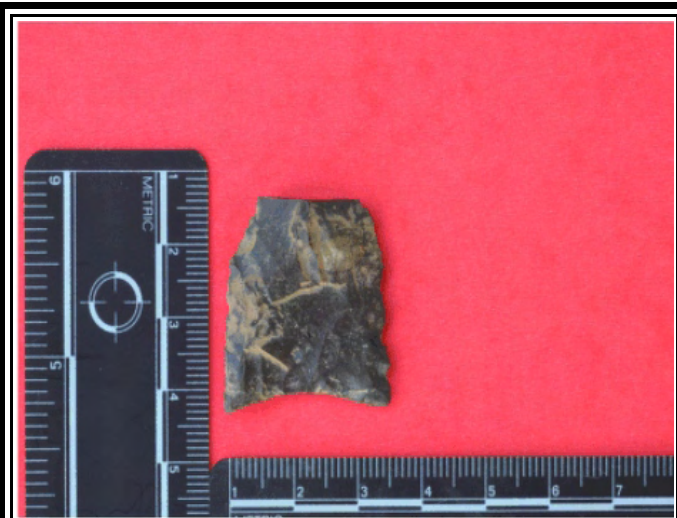
Phase III field methods included shovel skimming of large block excavations (Photo 3). The location of each artifact ( $n=10,000^+$ ) encountered in the blocks was recorded using a *Topcon* 235 total station (Photo 4). The data were then imported into GIS. *ESRI's ARC Scene* software is being used to analyze and understand the site's occupational history by examining the artifacts, features, and data from a three-dimensional perspective (Photo 5).

While the Phase III data recovery encountered a large sample of artifact types and features represented from cultural/temporal associations identified during the Phase I and II investigations, the site also yielded several unanticipated findings. These finds include the base of a Paleoindian-like biface (Photo 6), Early and Middle Archaic bifaces, a well preserved prehistoric living surface and house floor (Photo 7), and a musket ball.



3: Artifact Distribution, 3D Perspective





6: Paleoindian-like Biface



7: Possible "House" Feature



8: Hearth Feature

The site, which yielded several feature types (e.g., hearths, large roasting pits (Photo 8), evidence of a possible dwelling, and many tools to make tools, is interpreted to reflect a series of semi-permanent occupations that occurred episodically for an estimated 9,000<sup>+</sup> years. Positioned at the lake's narrow Fish Creek outlet, the setting was an optimal location for staging activities related to the exploitation of seasonally available aquatic resources in and around this large fresh water lake, concentrated and more easily exploited in the constricted outlet channel. While data analysis is not yet complete, based on the recovered diagnostic bifaces, the site is interpreted to have been most extensively occupied during the Late Archaic and Woodland periods.

Submitted by: Dirk Marcucci

## NEWS FROM HARTGEN ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES, INC.

### City Station East

Hartgen completed a combined archaeological site evaluation (Phase II) and data retrieval (Phase III) for the City Station East Historical site ( nineteenth-century building lots between Congress and Ferry Streets) in Troy, Rensselaer County, New York. We identified 50 distinct structural features at the site, including 27 foundation walls or wall segments, 12 drains, and 2 brick floor surfaces. Most of the features were associated with 166 Congress Street and 5 Seventh Avenue, although features from 160, 164, and 168 Congress, and from 3 Seventh Avenue, were also identified. In all, the stripped area was approximately 5,900 ft<sup>2</sup> in extent (548 m<sup>2</sup>), or 0.14 acres. Despite stripping locations in the backyards of 164 Congress, 166 Congress, 3 Seventh Avenue, and 5 Seventh Avenue, and identifying structural remains from outbuildings, no shaft features such as privies or cisterns were found. Relatively shallow bedrock, consisting of shale on varying bedding planes, was found throughout. Artifact assemblages below former floors and from a backyard midden were sampled.

Submitted by: Matthew Lesniak

### Dutch Spirits

Recent archaeological investigations conducted at the Dutch Spirits site located in the Town of Pine Plains, Dutchess County, revealed evidence of a clandestine bootleg-era distillery. The archaeological investigations were conducted prior to construction of the New Dutch Spirits Distillery. The facility consists of a compartmentalized underground bunker and several outbuildings (bunkhouse, barn, and outbuilding), all connected to each other by a series of tunnels. The client plans to preserve and possibly incorporate the bootleg-era features into the business plan.

The distillery was located on Harvest Farm, owned by Patrick Ryan, a fingerprint expert in the New York City Police Department. It operated for less than six months before being raided on October 6, 1931 by Department of Justice officers working out of the New York City Office of Prohibition. The archaeological investigations were able to document the locations of several underground escape tunnels as well as an elaborate ventilation system connecting the bunker complex to an adjacent bunkhouse.

The underground bunker is an L-shaped structure, constructed of reinforced-concrete, 150 ft long and 45 ft wide. It was constructed into a hillside and buried by the surrounding sand and gravel deposits. It has three entrances that provide access to several wings and compartments. Interior structural elements include several ventilation pipes in the ceilings and walls and electrical lines. One of the rooms has an opening in the floor that apparently leads to a tunnel. In the corner of another room are the remnants of a mortared brick chimney.

The tunnel system was constructed from concrete and was no more than 4 feet in height and width. The section exposed during the field investigation connected the bunkhouse to a barn foundation and to a small outbuilding. The section connecting the bunkhouse to the barn was approximately 50 ft long, while the one connecting the bunkhouse to the outbuilding was approximately 180 ft in length. The two known exit points were located in the barn foundation and in the basement of the outbuilding.

One of the unique features encountered is an underground ventilation system constructed of clay tile. The ventilation system was used to carry the exhaust generated during the distillation process conducted within the bunker complex to chimneys located at an adjacent bunkhouse. The system was apparently designed to disguise the source of the exhaust.

The investigations conducted at the Dutch Spirits site provided a unique opportunity to investigate and document the remains of a bootleg-era clandestine distillery operation. To date, there is very little in the archaeological record regarding bootleg-era sites and documentary research on such sites has proven difficult other than the occasional newspaper article or local folklore. The uniqueness of the site should provide added incentive for others in the field to recognize and investigate other possible bootleg-era sites in the Lower Hudson Valley.

Submitted by: Andre Krievs

## NEWS FROM UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

### Erie County Poorhouse Cemetery

From March through August this year, the Archaeological Survey conducted the recovery of the remains of approximately 350 individuals from the former Erie County Poorhouse Cemetery. They were assisted by a group of physical anthropology graduate students under the direction of Dr. Joyce Sirianni. Their removal was necessitated by major infrastructure improvements along Michael and Clement Roads on the University at Buffalo's Main Street Campus. Burials include individuals from every age group, including infants and children. Most were found at depths of about 0.8-1.2 m below the ground surface. These relatively shallow depths are attributable to the very hard packed clay soil found here.

The county poorhouse was established at this location in 1850 and operated until about 1909 when acquired by the university. The cemetery's use appears to span this entire period. Its limits were estimated using a 1929 aerial photo that depicts a parcel whose boundaries correspond with the locations where human remains have been found. Individuals interred here included the occupants of the poorhouse, the adjacent county infirmary, and indigent members of the community. Despite exhaustive efforts to locate them, few records associated with the cemetery have been identified. Those that are available suggest that although relatives and friends often reclaimed individuals for burial elsewhere, as many as 1400-3500 persons may have been interred here.



Except for a few cases, all the remains were recovered from simple wooden coffins made of what appear to be hemlock boards. Documentary evidence indicates these were manufactured at the poorhouse/infirmary. A small number of coffins were commercially made using hardwoods; these date from the latter of what appear to be two phases of use. The earlier phase is characterized by coffins oriented in an east-west direction with irregularly spaced rows and coffins occurring in groups of up to six individuals. Many graves yielded white glass buttons that seem to have been part of the institutional garb worn by the occupants of the poorhouse/cemetery. Records indicate this clothing was made at the county facility as well. Few personal items were found, only several rings, glass beads, some of which might be rosaries, and crucifixes. The most unusual finds in this part of the cemetery were several burials that contained sawn logs, but no human remains. It is presumed that the lack of remains may be associated with the medical school as several individuals were encountered with anatomically sawn bones, including craniotomies. Burials associated with the latter phase of use have evenly spaced graves in rows oriented slightly to the southwest-northeast, perpendicular to the edge of the parcel shown on the 1929 aerial photo. A few burials from the latter phase had remnants of clothing and shoes. Two yielded newspaper fragments, perhaps from the lining of the coffin, dated 1901 and 1903. The remains are currently being processed to gather basic information such as sex, age, and pathologies before their eventual reburial.

Submitted by: James Hartner



### Canalside Archaeology: Digging for the Story of Buffalo, New York

During the summer of 2012 the University at Buffalo's Archaeological Survey conducted a demonstration archaeological project at Canalside in downtown Buffalo, New York. The project was entitled *Canalside Archaeology: Digging for the Story of Buffalo*. Canalside was at the center of the national economy in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was situated between the Buffalo harbor and the western terminus of the Erie Canal. Ships from all Great Lakes brought products from the west to Canalside to be loaded onto canal boats for points east. Tens of thousands of immigrants made their way through Canalside to populate the west.



A 1 x 3 meter trench was opened in the block between Main Street and Hanover Street. Building foundations were reached after removing about one meter of bricks, mortar, and other building materials. Other artifacts included tableware, glass, toys, buttons, pipe stems, and nails. The assemblage will help tell the stories of the people who worked and lived on Buffalo's waterfront in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including sailors, canal boat operators, grain industry workers, store and hotel owners, and families.

The project received excellent media coverage, largely due to the effective outreach by the University at Buffalo's News Center. Two local TV stations produced segments about the dig, and the project manager was interviewed on a local interest television program -- AM Buffalo. Several features were included in the *Buffalo News* and other newspapers. Stories also ran on internet blogs and other websites.





The eight-week program was very successful in meeting the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation's goal of enhancing visitor experiences at Canalside, the epicenter of efforts to revitalize Buffalo's waterfront. The response from visitors was overwhelmingly positive. A large number of people returned week after week to observe our progress. Many people expressed an interest in seeing the project return in the future, and many of the visitors expressed an interest in getting more involved with the excavation and local history.



We hope to return to Canalside in the summer of 2013 to open a larger-scale excavation in the same location. An expanded excavation area will allow for new and exciting experiences for visitors who return again and again. Archaeological Survey is currently seeking sponsors and partnerships for the summer 2013 season.

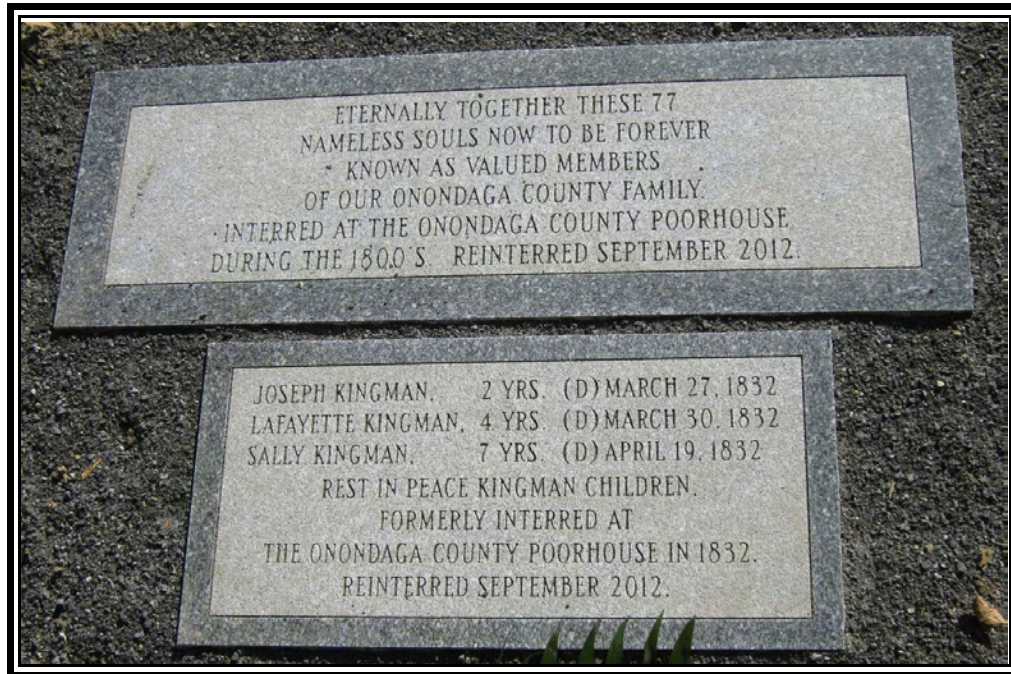
Submitted by: Nathan Montague

## NEWS FROM THE PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY FACILITY

### Onondaga County Poorhouse

This October the Public Archaeology Facility, led by project director Daniel Seib, assisted in the reburial of 80+ individuals uncovered at the site of the old Onondaga County Poorhouse from 2010-2011. This effort is the culmination of a two-year project that began with the discovery of human remains during archaeological monitoring for improvements to renovate the last remaining poorhouse structure (the H-1 Building) on the campus of the Onondaga County Community College. The project continued with analysis by bioarchaeologists from Binghamton University's Anthropology department and the official transfer of control back to Onondaga County Community College. These burials were some of the first residents of the poorhouse, which was built in 1827 to care for the poor and chronically ill in the county. The poorhouse grew in size and mission over time, acting also as the county hospital and insane asylum before it officially ceased these functions in 1979. Data suggest that this was the first cemetery used by the poorhouse, and contained graves dating from 1827 to approximately 1840. Historic references suggest that these graves were unmarked, and no maps of the graveyard's location have been found. Historic intrusions into the graveyard included building foundations laid on top of, and through, burials, and numerous drain pipes that partially or completely disturbed burials. These disturbances suggest that the location of the cemetery was forgotten time and again. Investigations throughout the facility identified 19 other features aside from the cemetery, including a well, a cistern, a stone path, a quarry, a rerouted subterranean creek, and portions of foundations for several buildings.





The investigation of the cemetery yielded valuable information on spatial distributions within a historic unmarked cemetery. Burials were arranged with their feet to the east and heads to the west, and were ordered in rows running south to north. Children and adolescents were often buried between the rows. Clustering in one area appeared to correspond to a period of high juvenile mortality in early 1832. Collaboration with the Town of Onondaga Historical Society and a local genealogist yielded valuable data from historical references and some of the earliest ledgers of the poorhouse. This information, combined with forensic and archaeological data, positively identified three of the children in this part of the cemetery. Sally (7), Lafayette (4), and Joseph (2) Kingman died within a month of each other from March to April of 1832. Research and collaboration between PAF and the community is continuing in an effort to find the names of the remaining 77 burials.

Submitted by: Daniel Seib

### **Siege of Fort Stanwix and Battle of Oriskany**

The Public Archaeology Facility along with the staffs of the Fort Stanwix National Monument and the Oriskany Battlefield State Park are aiding the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce in a battlefield delineation of the American Revolution's Siege of Fort Stanwix and Battle of Oriskany. Both events were part of the British Brigadier General Barry St. Leger's expedition into the Mohawk Valley in the summer of 1777. His expedition was part of General Burgoyne's campaign into New York. St. Leger's inability to conquer Fort Stanwix led to the defeat of his expedition and the ultimate defeat of Burgoyne's expedition. The Battle of Oriskany was one of the bloodiest battles of the American Revolution and decimated the Tryon County Militia leaving American settlements along the Mohawk Valley vulnerable to raids and attacks for the rest of the war. This project's goal is to use historical research and spatial analysis to redefine the boundaries of the Siege of Fort Stanwix and the Battle of Oriskany noting their shared history as part of St. Leger's expedition. The project will also update the boundaries of the siege and the battle using a military terrain analytical technic supported by National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program. The project included participation in the annual commemoration of Oriskany and collaboration with descendants and Native American representatives.

Submitted by: Michael Jacobson

## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE**

### **Cohoes Mill Archaeology**

The Public Archaeology Facility (Binghamton University) conducted excavations in the city of Cohoes, north of Albany. The project involved a bridge replacement and examination of the nineteenth-century mill race. Using walkovers, mapping of surface features, shovel tests, and backhoe trenches, the work established the way the raceway was constructed and its route under the street and by a parking lot.

### **Albany Seventeenth-Century Finds**

Louis Berger Group conducted both mechanical and hand excavations in the middle of the city of Albany. They uncovered pitch-pine posts, a hand-wrought awl, brick, and a wood drain capped with flagstones as well as a more modern cement and brick drain. Dendrochronological analysis showed the wooden posts dated to the late seventeenth century. Each post was completely removed and the locations recorded. Monitoring followed.

### **More City Work: Binghamton, NY**

The Public Archaeology Facility excavated an entire urban block that contained industrial and residential properties dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Under the asphalt, features were found: portions of house foundations, outbuildings, cisterns, a well, and a privy, as well as many artifacts dating to the two centuries.

### **Orange County Prehistoric Site**

Tracker Archaeology excavated an area in Wawayanda, Orange County for a new subdivision. Finds included a hearth with carbonized material, pits, and fire-cracked rocks scattered across the site. Radiocarbon dates from the hearth feature yielded A.D. 1420-1480 dates. Sylvan Stemmed points found elsewhere suggests a 2500-2000 B.C. occupation there. Conclusions: procurement/processing camps from Late Archaic through Late Woodland periods likely focused on hunting resources of the Black Dirt ecosystem.

### **Prehistoric Site in Dutchess County**

Strata Cultural Resource Management group excavated the Ridgecrest Amenia Mine site with shovel tests, units, and machine-dug exploratory trenches. Finds included Orient Fishtail, Otter Creek, Snook Kill, Steubenville, and reworked Brewerton Eared-Notched points. A notched disk of argillite or siltstone could have been a netsinker, but placement of notches off-set from the middle suggests a type of hoe. Lithic material was almost all Normanskill, brought in from 25 miles to the west in the Hudson Valley.

Submitted by: Lois Huey



## **NEWS FROM THE FUNK FOUNDATION**

After careful consideration, and in response to administrative changes at the New York State Museum, the Robert E. Funk Memorial Archaeology Foundation has decided to incorporate on its own as a not-for-profit with 501(c)3 status. The incorporation will occur over the next approximately two months. The Funk Foundation is looking forward to this as a great opportunity. For example, this will allow the Funk Foundation to keep funds in interest-bearing accounts. This issue has been on the minds of some NYAC members, since it had not been possible to earn interest with an account residing in the State Museum.

With this change underway, I will provide information regarding the making of contributions to the Funk Foundation in the next NYAC Newsletter. In the meantime, NYAC members may donate through NYAC. An opportune time for this is when you pay your NYAC dues. Simply indicate that an additional amount of your choice is for the Funk Foundation. I recently paid my NYAC dues and made a donation to the Funk Foundation at the same time.

I also want to thank those who made donations to the Funk Foundation at the recent NYAC meeting at Hope Lake Lodge. These are hard times and your generosity is greatly appreciated.

For your information (and as an update if needed) in addition to me, the current Funk Foundation Governing Council includes Alfred Funk, Patterson Schackne, Jonathan Lothrop, and Paul Huey.

Finally, I want to remind you that the Funk Foundation has lifted its moratorium on granting and currently is in a cycle of grant proposal review. Two grant proposals have been received in time for this cycle's October 15, 2012 deadline. The Funk Foundation may need to extend the announced review period somewhat while we incorporate. For more information on the grant application requirements, please check the Funk Foundation website at [www.funkfoundation.org](http://www.funkfoundation.org).

Submitted by: Ed Curtin



**Student Paper/Poster 2013 Competition:** NYAC offers two student prize awards of \$250 each, one for the best student paper and the other for the best student poster. The competition is open to any undergraduate or graduate student performing research on a topic related to New York State Archaeology.

**NYAC Founders Award:** This prize recognizes individuals who have assisted with preservation and research efforts in New York State Archaeology.

**Submission:** For the student prizes, three copies of the paper or poster. For the Founders Award, three copies of the nominations letter and supporting documents. Submit to: William Engelbrecht, Prof. Emeritus, Dept. of Anthropology, Buffalo State College, 1300 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222.

**Deadline:** March 1 with winners announced at the Spring NYAC meeting, April 26.

**For More Information:** Please check the NYAC website or e-mail questions to William Engelbrecht, [engelbwe@gmail.com](mailto:engelbwe@gmail.com).

Submitted by: Bill Engelbrecht

## NYAC NEWSLETTER

*For the Spring2012 newsletter, please submit by April 15.*

*Submit news in either Word or WordPerfect to Laurie Miroff by email at [lmiroff@binghamton.edu](mailto:lmiroff@binghamton.edu). Note: please submit photos as .jpg files.*

**NOTE:** *If you change your email address or would like the newsletter sent to another email address, please forward the address to me. Also, if you currently receive the letter as a hard copy and would like to begin receiving it by email, please forward your address.*