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We welcome your letters, thoughts and comments. Please email them to either Bill or Sissie for inclusion in the winter newsletter. Thanks.

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# NYSAA Newsletter

## Fall 2008



### New Curator at State Museum

The New York State Museum welcomes a new curator, Jonathan C. Lothrop

I joined the New York State Museum (NYSM) as Curator of Archaeology in January 2008. After a long absence, I'm very happy to be back, residing in New York and again closely involved in the state's Native American archaeology.



As background, my early fieldwork up through graduate school included pre-historic sites in New York, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alaska, and the Scottish Hebrides. I completed graduate anthropology studies at Binghamton University (SUNY) in 1988. My Ph.D. dissertation was based on reinvestigation of the Potts site in Oswego County (first studied by William Ritchie in 1962). This research focused on organization of the site's Paleoindian stone technology, published in a co-edited volume, *Eastern Paleoindian Lithic Resource Use* (1989).

Between 1988 and 2008, I was employed in cultural resource management with two firms, most recently GAI Consultants, as both project manager and principal investigator. In the latter capacity, I directed survey, testing, and data recovery excavations at Paleoindian, Archaic and Woodland sites in the New England, mid-Atlantic, and Ohio Valley regions.

In addition to duties of curating the prehistoric archaeology collection and public education at the NYSM, I'll be researching Paleoindian sites and collections, initially in the Hudson and Susquehanna valleys, to help better understand this fascinating aspect of Native American prehistory. In this effort, I look forward to collaborating with the professional and avocational archaeological community, as well as other scientists on staff at the New York State Museum.

## **Replica Archaeology—1758 Bateau "Wreck" Sunk in Lake George, NY**

Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA (Underwater Archaeologist & Executive Director—Bateaux Below)

On June 20, Bateaux Below, a not-for-profit corporation that studies shipwrecks in Lake George, NY sank a replica "shipwreck" in the "Queen of American Lakes." The 30 ft. long, full-size replica 1758 bateau "wreck" was built over a six month period by Maple Ave. Middle School (Saratoga Springs, New York) students under the direction of Technology class teachers Jeff Sova, Preston Sweeney, and Karen Cavotta with advisory support from Bateaux Below. The replica was placed into shallow water, about 4 ft. deep, off the southwest corner of the lake near the Lake George Visitor Center.

Bateaux Below directed the replica archaeology and public history project. The replica shows what a 250-year-old bateau-class shipwreck would look like. The vessel's upper strakes (side boards) and some frames would have fallen off. Sinking rocks were placed inside the warship's skeletal remains.

Local and state government granted permission for the replica sinking. The replica will be in the lake for up to three years. It helps commemorate the 250th anniversary of "The Sunken Fleet of 1758" when British soldiers at Lake George deliberately sank over 260 bateaux and other warships to place them in "cold storage." Sunk in 15-40 ft. of water, this unusual 18th century military strategy protected the British vessels from French raiders over the winter of 1758-1759 when British forces retired from the lake area. Many of the submerged warships were retrieved by the British in 1759, possibly as many as 75-80%, and were then used in the 1759 campaign. For the past 21 years, Bateaux Below underwater archaeologists have been studying "The Sunken Fleet of 1758" and they have located over 40 sunken bateaux in the 32 mi. long lake.

The bateau, French for "boat," was the utilitarian watercraft of its time. Used by the Dutch, English (later known as British), and French, the flat-bottomed watercraft was pointed at bow and stern. It was generally rowed and was made of pine planks with hardwood frames, stem, and sternpost. Many historians believe the French & Indian War (1755-1763) was won not because of the might of British muskets, rather it was due to the British ability to build thousands of bateaux that moved troops and supplies along the "water highways" of the 13 colonies.

Most of the bateaux sunk in Lake George in the autumn of 1758 were built in bateau "factories" in Schenectady and Albany. They were then transported by water to Fort Edward and brought by wagon over a 14-mi. long wilderness road to Lake George.

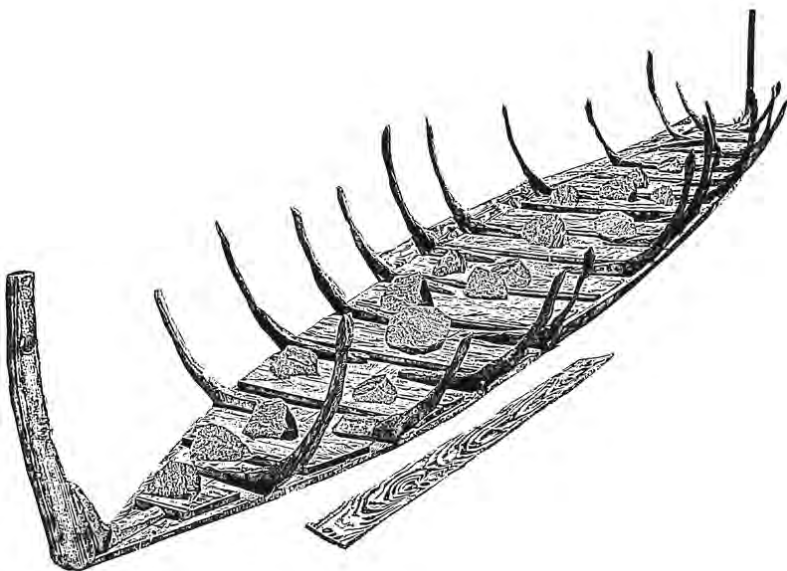
The replica "shipwreck" is best observed when the lake is calm. It lies about 10 ft. off the walkway near the visitor center. The "wreck" is not for diving or snorkeling, rather it is for pedestrian viewing. The Village of Lake George erected an informational sign near the "wreck." A brochure on the replica written by Bateaux Below has been printed by the NYS Office of General Services and is available at the visitor center. A 4 min. long mini-documentary on the public education outreach project, being made by Pepe Productions and Bateaux Below, will be shown in the visitor center.

The materials to construct the replica were paid for by Bateaux Below. The lead government entities supporting the project were the Village of Lake George, the NYS Office of General Services, and the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation. The replica archaeology project was an after-school enrichment class that helped students learn about colonial history, underwater archaeology, and museum exhibits.

## Replica Archaeology, continued ...



A 30 ft. long full-size replica 1758 bateau "wreck" lies on a walkway just before it was sunk into the shallows of Lake George on June 20. The replica looks like a 250 year old shipwreck and was for pedestrian viewing. It was built by 7th and 8th grade students from Maple Ave. Middle School (Saratoga Springs, NY) with help from Bateaux Below. (credit: Bob Benway/Bateaux Below)



This computer-generated graphic created from a photograph shows the replica 1758 bateau "wreck" that was sunk in Lake George on June 20. The 30 ft. long "shipwreck, a replica archaeology project, was built by local middle school students with advisory support from Bateaux Below. (credit: J.R. Whitesel/Bateaux Below)

## The Erie Canal: A 19<sup>th</sup> Century Transportation Innovation

Denis Foley and Andrew Wolfe, SUNY-IT,Utica

The Erie Canal opened officially on October 26, 1825. It was the greatest public works project in America and propelled New York State commerce and industry. Albany was both the eastern terminus and portal to the west for the 363-mile Erie Canal. The canal connected the Great Lakes with the Hudson River and the Atlantic Ocean. The Port of New York, long behind Boston and Philadelphia in commerce, soon became the nation's premier port. Albany became a major transportation center for the canal, with the Great Basin in the Hudson River used for steamer traffic, and a train station at the corner of Broadway and Colonie Street, adjacent to the Little Basin. Albany's population grew from five thousand residents in 1800 to sixty-two thousand on the eve of the Civil War. Lumber from the Adirondacks transformed Stephen Van Rensselaer's pastoral land into an industrial area and North Albany's lumber district, with Van Rensselaer having his own private slip adjacent to the weigh station.

Troy now had access to raw materials, both coal and iron ore, via sidecuts in the canal south of the Watervliet Arsenal and south of the West Troy Weigh Lock (at Twenty-Third Street in Watervliet). In South Troy the Burden Iron Works manufactured several million horseshoes. The Industrial Revolution had come to upstate New York and America. Locks 53 through 38, from Albany to Cohoes on the original Erie Canal, were part of the original Tech Valley corridor in the early 19th century. Stone locks, waterproof cement, aqueducts, massive double locks, and Whipple truss bridges were the 19th century's routers and modems.

Many remnants of these historic advances are still to be found in the area. The lagoon area of interstate highway 787 in the city of Albany to the west represents the eastern section of the Great Basin authorized on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1823, for the purpose of uniting the Erie and the Champlain Canals. The Basin itself extended 4,300 feet from Lawrence St. to today's Hamilton St. None of the Basin's original features appear intact. Phillip Lord did, however, unearth sections of the inside wall in 1979 in the Riverfront Park Lagoon excavation by the New York State Museum. The pier itself was 80 feet wide. It rose at a distance of approximately 250 feet from shore and enclosed a basin of 32 acres. The Basin could provide moorings for up to 1,000 canal boats and 50 steamer boats. The pier had 8 acres of storage as well as dry dock facilities.

The original canal, a ditch 4 feet deep, 40 feet wide at the surface and 28 feet wide at the bottom, initially had 83 single locks accommodating a water level rise of 568 feet between the two terminals of Buffalo and Albany (Phelan and Carroll, 2001). The eastern terminus, Albany, had both a big basin in the Hudson River and a little basin adjacent to the upstream end of Lock 53 of the original canal. Along with Lock 53, this area also contained Lock 52, Locks 1 and 2 of the enlarged canal, collector's houses and weigh locks for the original and enlarged canal as well as bridge abutments, private slips and the stone-lined canal trough. In the 1950's this area was in-filled so that today many of these structures are between 4 and 21 feet underground.

To date, researchers have uncovered the weigh lock and collector's house for the enlarged Erie Canal, both located below John Treffiletti's Warehouse parking lot adjacent to Erie Boulevard above Lawrence Street, and Lock 1 at the site of Modern Press building. Lock 2 is buried at the northern end of Erie Boulevard.

The Erie Canal, continued ...

In 2003 an archaeological team from Union College identified the remnants of Locks 37 and 38 of the Original Erie Canal within a power canal under the pump house and picking house of the Harmony Mills Cohoes complex as well as the Watervliet Arsenal side-cut.

In the spring of 2007 and fall of 2008 archaeological excavations were done as part of a field school with Union College, SUNY IT, and the College of Saint Rose to excavate Lock 53 of the original Erie Canal. In the fall of 2007, canal blocks were located in late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century fill which may or may not have been related to Lock 53 or the Little Basin.

*References:*

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## Announcements

### **The Bulletin**

The Table of Contents of past issues of our journal, The Bulletin are now on-line. Look on the Publications page of our website, <http://nysaa.bfn.org/>. Thanks go to Gian Carlo Cervone, Sissie Pipes, and our webmaster Hugh Jarvis for their assistance.

### **New Version of Chenango Chapter CD**

The Chenango Chapter has issued an Adobe formatted CD of its Bulletins, vols. 1-28 (1958-2001). This is a more user friendly version than its predecessor. These are available for \$25 plus \$3 shipping and handling. To order, please make out a check to "Chenango Chapter, NYSAA" and mail to Dr. Gerald Hayes, PO Box 21, Earlville, NY 13332. Someone wishing to replace the earlier CD may do so for \$5 before Dec. 31, 2008.

### **Eastern States Archaeological Federation Meetings**

The 75th annual meeting will be held Nov. 6-9 at the Holiday Inn (\$79) in Lockport, NY (716) 434-6151. Dr. Richard Laub (Buffalo Museum of Science) will speak on the Hiscock site at the Saturday evening banquet (\$28). There will be a day long session on Saturday on lithics in honor of Jack Holland, NYSAA Fellow. Nina Versaggi and Laurie Miroff will chair a session on the Late Archaic on Friday morning. Further details and a registration form are available at <http://esaf-archeology.org/>.

### **Ontario Archaeological Society**

The annual meeting of the OAS will take place Oct. 17-19 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Vaughan, and the Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto. See [www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca](http://www.ontarioarchaeology.on.ca).

### **Joint Archaeological and Historical Conference**

The Inc. Orange County Chapter, NYSAA, The Archaeological Society of New Jersey, and the North Jersey Highlands Historical Society are sponsoring a conference at the Lautenburg Visitor Center, Sterling Forest State Park, 115 Old Forge Rd., Tuxedo, NY on Saturday, Oct. 25. There will be 9:30 A.M. guided hike followed by papers in the afternoon. Contact Information: 116 Old Forge Rd., Tuxedo, NY 10987 (845) 351-5907.

### **Council for on Northeast Historic Archaeology**

The 2008 annual meeting of the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology will be held Oct. 24-26 in St. Mary's City, MD. The conference hotel is the Hampton Inn. For more information, go to: <http://www.smcm.edu/soan/cneha/cneha08.htm>.

### **New York State Archaeological Association, 93rd Annual Meeting, April 17-19th 2009, Hosted by the Lewis Henry Morgan Chapter**

The Morgan Chapter is pleased to announce plans for the 2009 NYSAA Annual Meeting. It will be held on April 17-19th at the Woodcliff Hotel and Spa, located high up in the hills near Victor, with spectacular views of the Rochester skyline and the surrounding countryside. Dean Snow will be the banquet speaker. We envision this as a very special "destination" meeting at competitive prices, thanks to our off-season dates. Wonderful food, luxurious accommodations, and ample meeting space are the highlights! Woodcliff also has a wealth of appealing options for those free moments—indoor heated pool, regulation 9-hole golf course, three walking trails (including one to the Erie Canal), spa, health and fitness center, live music in the cocktail lounge on Friday and Saturday evenings, extensive shopping opportunities minutes away at Eastview Mall, Casa Larga Vineyard and Ganandogan close by, and high speed in-room internet access. And did I mention—the most magnificent views in the Rochester area? Go to [www.woodcliffhotelspa.com](http://www.woodcliffhotelspa.com). Ann Morton and Doug Pippin are the co-chairs for the 2009 conference. The first call for papers will be coming out soon. Start thinking about giving a paper or doing a poster presentation.