New York Archaeological Council

NYAC Newsletter
2018

From the President, Doug Perrelli

The New York Archaeological Council (NYAC) held its spring 2018 meeting on Friday April 27th at the Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum, in conjunction with the 102nd New York State Archaeological Association (NYSAA) Annual Meeting at The Comfort Inn, Buckley Road, Syracuse. The April 27-29 weekend NYSAA conference was hosted by the Beauchamp Chapter and was well attended and well received.

Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum, 717 Lakeport Road Chittenango, NY 13037-9524.

NYAC Board and General Meetings resulted in one change to the Board and membership following our most recent election based on 29 ballots received. Greetings to our newest Board member Patrick Heaton of EDR in Syracuse. Board Members Nina Versaggi, Beth Selig, and David Staley were re-elected to serve another term. Thanks to Carol Weed and Mike Cinquino for serving on the elections committee.

Other issues discussed at the Board and General Membership meeting that continued to require action included final preparations for the *Soils, Sediments and Stratigraphy Workshop*, revisions to NYAC by-laws, and elections procedure. NYAC Officers and Board members are reminded to submit a NYAC Conflict of Interest Policy form annually.

The latest DRAFT Standards for the Collection, Management, and Culling of Archaeological Collections document has been handed off to Vivian James of SUNY Albany who deserves our thanks for her willingness to form a new committee and continue work on this important document. Revisions will be posted on the NYAC website in the future so we can track progress. The Board and membership will be asked to experiment with the revised document using a range of collections and report back with the results.

NYAC Awards Committee Chair Bill Engelbrecht presented the NYAC Founder's Award to Christina Reith for her lifetime of service to NYAC and the archaeological community of the Empire State at the NYSAA Business Meeting. The Founder's Award tab will soon appear on the NYAC website in celebration of all awardees and the founding of the New York Archaeological Council.

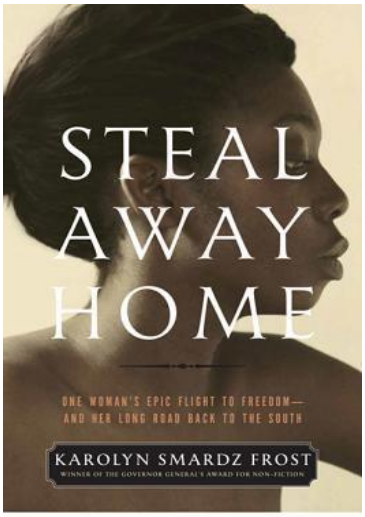
NYAC has a need for sponsorship and a concept for the **2019 Archaeology Season Poster.** Anyone interested in producing the 2019 Archaeology Season poster for New York State should contact a NYAC Board member to express interest, ideas, and intent to do the poster. Thanks again to the 2017 poster sponsors CINAQ, NYAC, and Birchwood Archaeological Services. Note that we are now alternating between Archaeology Season posters on odd years and Archaeology Video Festivals at the annual spring meeting on even years.

NYAC Afternoon Program Summary

An Introduction to the Public Outreach Potential of Archaeology in the Context of the Underground Railroad in New York, featuring case studies from Niagara Falls and the Capital Region of the Empire State.

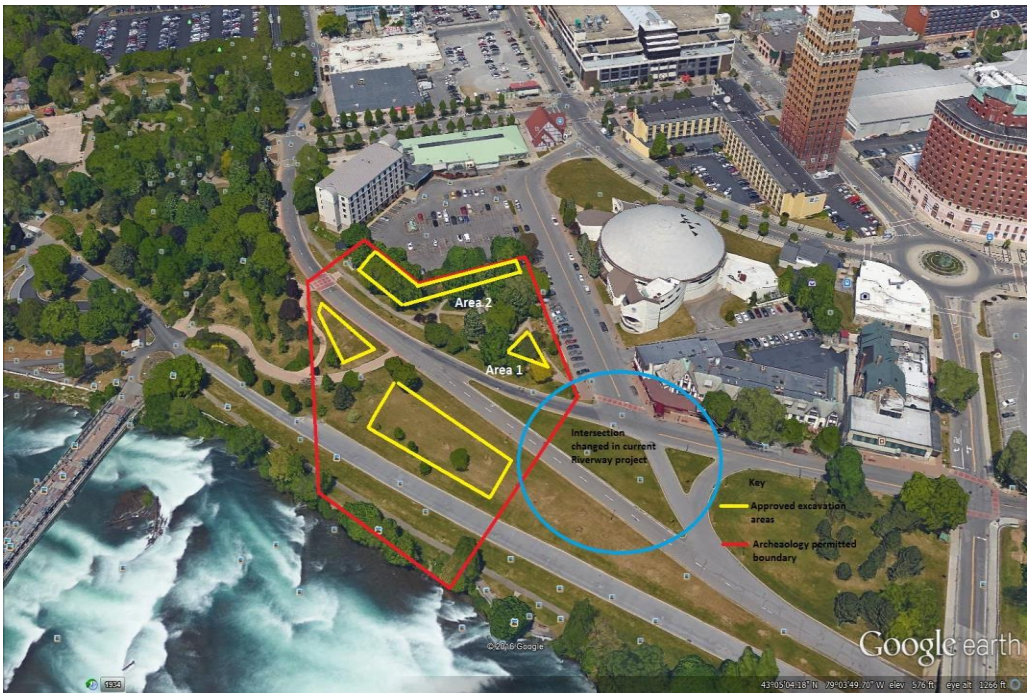
Bill Bradberry (President and Chairman of the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area Commission) introduced the program context and participants. Bill spoke eloquently about the Underground Railroad as an historic, cultural, and archaeological context worth study, and about the local impact of a recent project in Niagara Falls, NY at the former Cataract House hotel, a prominent stop on the Underground Railroad at the Canadian border.

Artist's rendition of Cataract House hotel opulence.



Karolyn Smardz Frost (Acadia and York University, Canada) and Judith Wellman (SUNY Oswego/Historical New York) introduced the topic in more detail and provided a background to the history of the Cataract House, the Underground Railroad, the Niagara Frontier Borderland, and Trans-Nationalism at various scales from continental to local. They are the primary researchers responsible for the excellent work happening with this project. Karolyn also briefly introduced the story of Cecelia Reynolds and a fascinating archaeological project in Toronto, drawing our attention to the fact that her story is being studied by extensive documentary research as well as archaeological digs on both sides of the international border. The two archaeological excavations shed light on two different aspects of the life of a woman who was enslaved at the Cataract House and a free person in Toronto - perhaps the only example of two far-removed excavations about the same relatively unknown freedom seeker, in the context of Trans-nationalism, Border Studies, and the Underground Railroad.

Doug Perrelli made a presentation about the 2017-18 Cataract House Archaeology Project sponsored by the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area Commission. This 20-day field project, supported by extensive historical research and input from numerous entities, agencies, and individuals from the local Niagara Falls community, is the first archaeological demonstration project of its kind in this location and context. One goal is to obtain additional funding and turn this pilot project into a 5-year program.



Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Archaeology project area.

Mary Liz Stewart (Co-Founder, Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region) did an amazing job of tying together the various contextual elements and educational outreach potential of such projects with a focus on her work at the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence, Albany, NY. This important and well-established project served to frame our discussion with the philosophy that underlies the work of her Underground Railroad History Project, where archaeology plays a significant role in the research and preservation of African American participation in the Underground Railroad movement. Integrating a dedication to community involvement with this history, many avenues have been created through which professionals, community members, youth, interns, and academics come together to unearth some great finds and bring these artifacts to life for education and edification, challenging commonly held stereotypes related to antebellum African Americans.

Stephen and Harriet Myers residence, Albany, NY.

The presentations were greatly enjoyed by attendees and followed by questions and open discussion of the projects and results, with the showing of posters, artifacts, images, and other information related to the projects. The program was well received and audience participation was great.

NYAC Archaeology Video Festival

Thanks largely to Sissie Pipes, the first ever NYAC/NYSAA Archaeology Video Festival was held Friday night at the NYSAA Conference Hotel after the spring business meeting. The goals of the festival are to promote archaeological achievements in New York, showcase innovative work being done by archaeologists, analysts and researchers, and introduce the public to the rich history and pre-history of the state. Organizers are seeking short (3-5 minute) videos on topics of general archaeological interest (excavation, artifact analysis, interviews, monuments, and historic place features) that are lively and fun to watch. Presentations ranged from a video short showing the 3-D modeling of a hypothetical archaeological site (Cole Gravel Pit) based on actual feature and artifact locations, to full-length documentary films commemorating heritage sites in New York state, like the Riverside Project, a detailed analysis of a transformed urban landscape with Joel Schuldenrein. The Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region was showcased here as well through a wonderful video featuring Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, and related contexts were further explored by two powerful videos pertaining to an African-American cemetery in Kinderhook by Barbara Reina Productions. Videos featuring the historic O'Donnell site in Dutchess County, and the Barbados/Holland Sugar Connection at Shelter Island were also presented. Portions only of the several long videos were shown.

THE NEW YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL
FALL MEETING 2018

The New York Archaeological Council 2018 Fall Meeting will take place on Saturday, October 27th at the SUNY New Paltz Campus. Meeting sponsors have responded and will be providing refreshments. The program topic remains to be determined. A tour of Huguenot Street will be offered as part of the program or afterwards.

NYAC would like to encourage the membership and guests to attend. Plans are being made for a Saturday evening dinner and mingle event, and attendees may be encouraged to stay over and tour some local sites and points of interest on Sunday.

Submitted by: Doug Perrelli

NEWS FROM
CURTIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTING, INC.

The Question of Late Archaic Villages

On Saturday, April 28, at the Annual Meeting of the New York State Archaeological Association I presented a paper titled "The Question of Late Archaic Villages." This was in a morning session titled "Native American Archaeology" in which, amazingly, all the papers were on the Archaic period. "The Question of Archaic Villages" examined possible evidence that several large Archaic period sites: Lamoka Lake, Cole Gravel Pit, McKelvey 2, Robinson, Oberlander No. 1, Vosburg, and Pipestave Hollow may have been villages based upon an examination of attributes including (1) faunal evidence of year-round occupation; (2) spatial distributions of features or artifacts suggesting the presence of communities organized as circular-plaza villages; and (3) societies divided into two unequal parts.

In 2017 Curtin Archaeological Consulting completed Phase 2 excavations and analysis of a large survey area in the Town of Catskill, Greene County. I mentioned this project in last year's NYAC Newsletter while the Phase 2 fieldwork was ongoing. The project setting is in the ridge and valley terrain of the Hudson Valley thrust-fold belt overlooking Catskill Creek (in the general vicinity of Austin Glen). Chert occurs abundantly within the study area while other sources, including Normanskill chert, occur in nearby exposures such as at West Athens Hill. Helderberg cherts in the Kalkberg and New Scotland formations underlay portions of the project site, while Onondaga chert occurs in glacial erratics concentrated on the ridges and upper slopes of the western part of the project site (see Majerczyk 2011 for a similar occurrence to the north in Coxsackie). The bedrock geology of this region has been mapped in considerable detail, assisting research for this project (Marshak and Engelder 1987; Marshak et al. 2009).

Kalkberg chert exposure adjacent to a lithic workshop, Catskill.

Analysis of the Phase 2 data show different site functions and differential use of the varied chert sources. Briefly, larger campsites tend to be associated with small streams in a relatively broad valley head in the eastern part of the project area. Although Helderberg and Onondaga cherts predominate here and elsewhere in the survey area's archaeological sites, raw materials were more varied at these campsites than elsewhere. For example, Normanskill chert was a significant minority type, and Esopus chert also was used. No temporally diagnostic artifacts were recovered from these campsites. However, quartz crystal debitage was found in abundance in one of the campsites, suggesting the presence of a quartz crystal workshop. A quartz crystal quarry source was identified by Hartgen Archeological Associates in another survey area nearby (Sanders 2005). As the geological provenance of this stone resource is well understood, it is most likely that the quartz crystal came from the Hartgen-identified or similarly situated exposures not far to the east.

In addition to the campsites in the eastern valley, two types of quarry-workshop sites occur in the ridges and valleys to the west. The first type is associated with bedrock sources of Kalkberg and New Scotland chert. Kalkberg chert was quarried from exposures on one of the higher ridges, and the associated workshop contained dense concentrations of debitage in a small area. Variation among recovered bifaces indicates that multi-stage bifacial reduction occurred, although cores and core fragments were much more abundant than bifaces, suggesting that biface manufacture may have been a minority lithic reduction strategy at this site (this is also indicated by the predominance of large flakes and the recovery of bipolar cores). Utilized flakes and core fragments as well as gravers, scrapers and spokeshaves indicate that varied camp activities occurred at this site. A large, fractured slab of rock associated with the debitage concentration may have been an anvilstone.

Another workshop, this one associated with New Scotland chert, occurred on a valley floor to the southeast. There are no exposed chert outcrops here, but the presence of buried, large chert chunks indicate that raw material could be obtained by excavating just below surface to obtain New Scotland chert detached or recoverable from underlying bedrock. This site yielded a fragmentary Lamoka point suggesting a Late Archaic period association. This site had core fragments, bipolar cores, block flakes, and chunks, but few reduction or thinning flakes, and few utilized artifacts, suggesting that it may have been a short-term, early reduction stage workshop.

Onondaga chert in glacial erratic, Catskill.

The second site type includes workshops that for the most part exploited chert nodules occurring in beds within Onondaga limestone glacial erratics. The workshops are in close proximity to the erratics, but are positioned to overlook slopes and trails. These sites are composed of tested nodules, early stage debitage, and occasional expedient tools. They perhaps were used by the types of work groups envisioned by Versaggi et al. (2001) in reference to upland terrain to the north and northwest in Albany and Schoharie Counties. In terms of travel time, this landscape is easily accessible for day-length or other short trips into the uplands from the Catskill Creek floodplain and village locations, such as the nearby Leeds Flats site (Hanny 1998; Parker 1922).

Fitch site in the Town of Saratoga

Since May 2017, Curtin Archaeological has conducted numerous surveys that have identified potentially significant precontact period archaeological sites. In all of these cases, additional fieldwork has been performed to facilitate design changes so that impacts to the precontact period sites can be avoided. The most notable of these surveys involves the Fitch site in the Town of Saratoga, both because of the extraordinary importance of the archaeological site, and because of the extended redesign process employed to achieve archaeological site avoidance.

Ritchie (1944) identified the Fitch site on Fish Creek, Saratoga County as one of a small number of sites of considered the type-sites of the "Vosburg Focus" (another being the Vosburg site on Normanskill Creek, Albany County). A 20th-century collector named Louis Follett subsequently collected here and shared his information with Funk (1976). Follett and Funk referred to the Fitch site and another site on an adjoining farm as the Stafford's Bridge site. The project developers were unaware of all this before the archaeological background research was conducted, but their engineering firm had a county highway map with a location marked "midden" at the north end of a long ridge. Given this information, and knowing that the Fish Creek area has a high density of archaeological sites, the area that was marked "midden" was avoided by plans for new home construction prior to requesting an archaeological survey.

The Fitch site (wooded area) viewed from across Fish Creek.

Our investigation included Phase 1 archaeological background research and fieldwork, and eventually some supplementary Phase 1 survey to fully facilitate archaeological site avoidance. The background research included site file and documentary research that helped us understand the basis for earlier reports of finds made on or near this property, including the occurrence of Snake Hill chert quarries in the immediate vicinity, and a fish weir downstream from this large Archaic site. We also were aware of the Follett collection of precontact period artifacts and maps at Skidmore College, and obtained permission to review the artifacts and records through the courtesy of Dr. Heather Hurst. Our examination of artifacts in the Follett collection confirmed Ritchie's earlier report of a major Archaic period occupation. However, the variety of projectile points in the collection indicates that the Fitch farm-Stafford's Bridge locale was used over a long period both during and after the Vosburg phase.

The initial archaeological survey excavated 621 shovel test pits (STPs) and frequently encountered evidence of precontact period occupation. The artifact finds were concentrated near the north end of the ridge and on the slope above the creek, and were distributed much more sparsely on the southern end of the ridge. While most of the artifacts are chert flakes, projectile point fragments, a Vosburg-type point, bifaces, gravers, a short pestle, spokeshaves, and scrapers also were recovered. In addition, we found a small amount of Vinette 2 series pottery. Ritchie (1944) also had noted pottery at this site, as well as at other Laurentian Archaic sites such as Robinson and Oberlander No. 1. He thought this indicated the period when pottery was introduced at the end of the Late Archaic. Based on current knowledge of the age of Vinette 2 pottery, it now seems that this is an unlikely hypothesis. It is more likely that occupation continued into the Woodland period.

Looking north and up slope along the ridge, Fitch site.

Based upon the initial findings of our survey, the number of building lots was reduced, a canoe/kayak launch was eliminated, and the concept of building envelopes limiting clearing within lots was applied to minimize the grading limits of the project. The building envelopes were allocated to areas near, but without artifact finds in the southern part of the ridge. Additional Phase 1 survey was used to verify that buffer areas were sufficient; test whether isolated, artifact-bearing STPs were actually isolated finds; and examine a new building lot added to the edge of the project to compensate for the lots lost in reconfiguring the project. The additional Phase 1 survey provided supplementary information that could then be used to finalize the grading limits of the project. These grading limits were eventually incorporated into the project's archaeological site avoidance plan, allowing approval of the project without additional archaeological site evaluation or data recovery. The strategy the developers followed was motivated in part by the desire to avoid conflict in the review process, in deference to the importance of the archaeological site, and in recognition of the positive value of protecting it. The avoidance plan includes the requirement of deed restriction to protect the Fitch site long-term. This seems to be a good outcome as this site, long thought to be important by archaeologists (but which was for sale for development in 2016-2017), will now be protected long into the future.

Fieldnotes

Several new articles have been posted in our company blog *Fieldnotes* and others are planned for the near future. Posts in the last year include articles on archaeology and sea-level rise; my remembrance of learning about the Archaic period; a re-telling of the so-called Jerry Rescue in Syracuse (1851), in defiance of the Fugitive Slave Act; and archaeology/anthropology-oriented reviews of *The Alienist* and *The Lost City of Z*. Curtin Archaeology's blog is at www.curtinarch.com/blog.

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Submitted by: Ed Curtin

NEWS FROM THE PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY FACILITY

The Stratton Mill Creek Site, Town of Kirkwood, New York

From 2007-2008 archaeologists from the Public Archaeology Facility conducted a data recovery investigation of the Stratton Mill Creek site (SUBi-2530, NYSM #11652). The site is located to the south of NY11 and the Erie Lackawanna Railroad in the Town of Kirkwood, Broome County, New York. The site lies on the floodplain and a primary and a secondary terrace of the Susquehanna River at its confluence with Stratton Mill Creek. Data recovery investigations covered approximately 8,130 m^2 (87,510.59 ft^2), or 0.81 ha (2.01 acres).

At the Stratton Mill Creek site, PAF archaeologists identified a plow zone and up to four artifact-bearing subplow A horizons (Ab1-Ab4), depending on topographic location – terrace or floodplain. The site represents a series of seasonally reoccupied camps with the main periods of use during the Late Archaic (1950-1860 B.C. and 1850-1770 B.C.; 3650-3520 B.C.; 3260-3250 B.C. and 3100-2910 B.C.), Transitional (1500-1400 B.C.; 1773 - 1627 B.C. and 1865 - 1849 B.C.), and Early Woodland (174-19 B.C. and 13-0 B.C.). The site was also used during the Middle Archaic (6262-6087 B.C. and 6345-6312 B.C.) and historic (A.D. 1660-1890 and A.D. 1910-1950) periods. Site chronology was based on stratigraphy, diagnostic artifacts (points and steatite), radiometric dates, and dendrochronology.

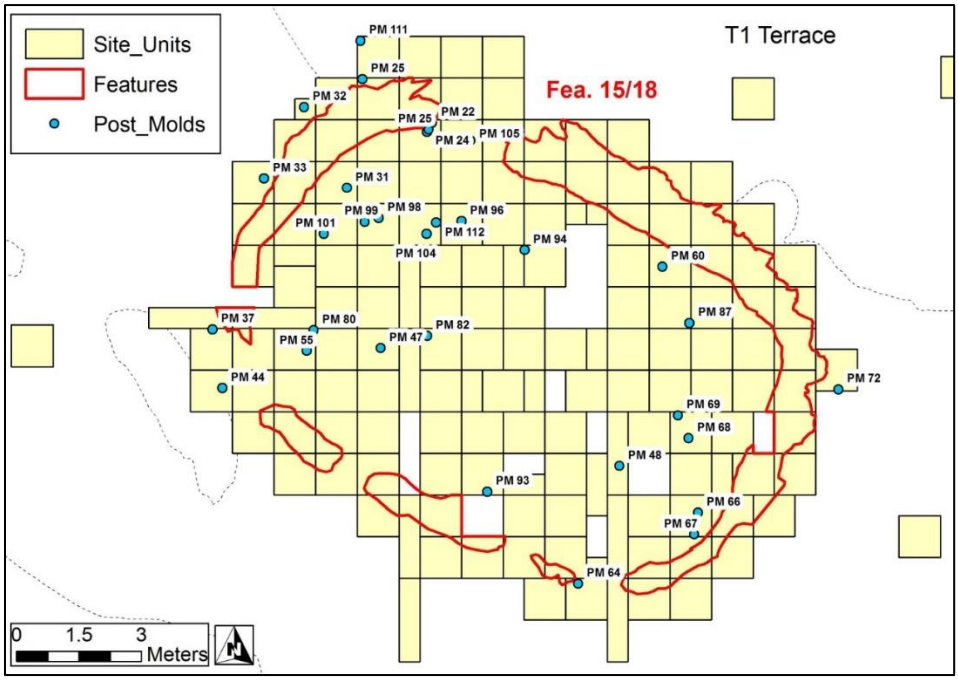
Point fragments from the Stratton Mill Creek site.

Archaeologists recovered cultural material in stratified deposits on the floodplain dating to the Late Archaic, Transitional, and Early Woodland periods. The following material is associated with the Late Archaic component, A4 horizon: 2 features, 61 flakes, 4 chunk/shatter, 2 rough stone tools, and 187 fire-cracked rock (FCR). Associated with the Late Archaic component, A3 horizon are: 1 feature, 66 flakes, 1 chunk/shatter, 1 rough stone tool, 1 ground stone tool, and 67 FCR. Within the Transitional component, Ab2 horizon are: 2 features, 1 Perkiomen point, 3 bifacial tools, 168 flakes, 3 chunk/shatter, 5 rough stone tools, and 294 FCR. In the Early Woodland component, Ab1 horizon are: 2 features, 1 bifacial tool, 103 flakes, 2 chunk/shatter, 3 rough stone tools, 2 ground stone tools, and 606 fire-cracked rock (FCR). Additional floodplain materials could not be associated with one of the above site components. The plow zone on the terrace contained cultural material, features, and post molds dating to the Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, Transitional, and historic periods.

Pitted stones from the Stratton Mill Creek site.

The Stratton Mill Creek feature assemblage includes a variety of feature types: post molds, hearths (Late Archaic, Transitional, Early Woodland), a roasting platform (Early Woodland), an FCR concentration (Transitional), and a possible smudge pit (Late Archaic). The most unusual feature identified at the site is a ring-shaped infilled ditch on the terrace. Archaeologists first identified the feature at the base of the plow zone during the Phase 2 site examination. During Phase 3 investigations, archaeologists followed the path of the feature and ultimately uncovered the entire ring. In addition to flakes, FCR, and rough stone tools (hammerstone; worked/flaked stone) recovered from the feature matrix, of note are three pieces of baked clay, possible daub (one with possible wattle impressions), and a piece of hematite (although other pieces were found in the Ap horizon of the terrace). The ditch measured minimally 14 m (46 ft) by 9 m (30 ft). No diagnostic artifacts were recovered from the feature itself, but three points (Brewerton, Orient, and Vestal) were identified in the large block excavation, in or adjacent to the ditch-shaped feature. At this time, the feature cannot be temporally situated. The ritual significance of the feature is suggested by the hematite as well as its unusual size and configuration. Some objects with possible ritual significance (hematite/red ochre and polished slate) are present, but so are common domestic artifacts used for hunting, butchering, and plant processing by hunter-gatherers. No thermal features are present within the enclosure and no fired soil is present there. There is also no Late Woodland component on the site, which removes the earthen enclosures noted during this period from consideration for the interpretation of this features. The discovery of this structural ring/ditch feature provides the potential for researchers to further analyze its characteristics, share the information with other regional researchers, and continue to try to understand the chronology and function of this unusual feature.

Hematite/red ochre.



Ring-shaped ditch feature located on terrace.

Segment of ring-shaped ditch feature, plan view.

Segment of ring-shaped ditch feature, profile view (Feature 15/18).

Archaeologists identified a total of 21 post molds and 26 possible post molds at Stratton Mill Creek. Most are temporally unaffiliated, but six are associated with the Early Woodland component. Post molds on the terrace are affiliated with the ring-shaped feature, some of which hug the interior and exterior margins of the ditch. Interior posts may have supported a superstructure, such as a roof, or could represent platforms.

Evidence suggests that the Stratton Mill Creek site was used repeatedly over time for small camp settlements during specific parts of the year and seasonally abandoned. Although bifacial tools were produced at the site, they were probably prepared for future logistical tasks that required high mobility and multi-functional tools, and not necessarily used for daily camp tasks. During each major period of site use (Late Archaic, Transitional, Early Woodland), what people did at Stratton Mill Creek and their organization of space differed to some extent. One hearth feature was associated with every major period of use identified at the site. During the Late Archaic period, we have evidence for multiple periods of site use indicated by the stratified deposits. Repeated uses during each of these temporal periods are evidenced by the multiple activity clusters. During the earliest period of Late Archaic site use (Ab4 horizon), activities engaged in by occupants included plant processing, hunting/butchering, and biface production, although the main technology was expedient. A possible smudge pit suggests hide work. The site was used similarly during the later Late Archaic period of site use (Ab3 horizon). Activities included plant processing and biface production and lithic technology focused on an expedient flake/core technology. During the Transitional period, people also repeatedly occupied the site, based on the two radiometric dates obtained. Occupants practiced a mixed bifacial technology and site activities included biface production, plant processing, hunting/butchering, and fishing. During the Early Woodland, site use was minimal as evidenced by the single activity cluster and, as with earlier periods, there was a focus on expedient tool production. Site activities included plant processing, bifacial tool production, hunting/butchering, and fishing. Clearly, this portion of the valley was valued for millennia.

Research continues on the data from the site. PAF welcomes information on similar ring/ditch features in the Northeast that predate the Late Woodland.

Submitted by: Laurie Miroff

NEWS FROM THE CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY PROGRAM, NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

O'Donnell Historic Site, Town of East Fishkill, Dutchess County

The fieldwork for the Phase III data recovery at the National Register eligible O'Donnell site (SHPO 02705.000286) was conducted from May to August 2017 with teams from the Cultural Resource Survey Program (CRSP) and the Public Archaeology Facility led by Heather Clark, Project Director at CRSP. The work was undertaken in advance of road construction on New York State Route 376 and entailed the excavation of 76 square meters in the area slated for impact by the addition of a new turning lane. Laboratory analysis of recovered materials is currently ongoing, with the report expected in 2019.

The O'Donnell site contains the buried remnants of a farmhouse that was possibly one of the earliest buildings in the area. It was occupied during the 19th century by the locally-prominent Van Wyck family, but may also be associated earlier with the Verplank family who built a farm and operated a mill along nearby Sprout Creek in 1768. First identified through historic map documentation, archaeological testing during a 2011-12 reconnaissance survey verified the site location. The farmhouse and associated outbuildings stood at this location from at least as early as the late 18th century through the late 20th century.

Conducting the magnetic susceptibility survey (left to right: Susan Winchell Sweeney of NYSM Research and Collections, Joel Ross, and Heather Clark of CRSP).

Remote sensing surveys using magnetic susceptibility and ground penetrating radar equipment were conducted to locate possible subsurface features. Excavation units were initially placed every ten meters along a grid that followed the orientation of NY 376. Additional units were placed according to high artifact densities in a sheet midden identified during the Phase I survey, within the approximate location of the house footprint, and over targets identified by the remote sensing work. Excavated units were sometimes combined into trenches to help maximize the exposure of the soil strata to gain a better understanding of the stratigraphy across the site, and to follow subsurface architectural features. In addition to the previously identified sheet midden, several subsurface features were explored during the data recovery work, including the house foundation and builder's trench (Feature 6), the footing for a bay window (Feature 8), a well (Feature 4), two small rectangular stone structures (Features 5 and 7), two modern dry wells (Features 1 and 2), and four possible post molds (Features 13, 16, 17, and 18).

As during the Phase I survey, a substantial amount of material culture was recovered during Phase III excavations. The artifact assemblage is representative of an early historic domestic site. A wide variety of 18th-century ceramic types was found, including Staffordshire slipware, white salt-glazed stoneware, delftware (including fragments of delft tiles), and Jackfield-type pottery. Creamware, pearlware, slip-decorated redware, transitional whiteware, and blue hand-painted whiteware represent the late 18th- into early 19th- century occupation. The presence of hand-made brick and hand wrought nails corroborate that the O'Donnell site has an early historic component.

Well (Feature 4).

Delft tile fragment found at the O'Donnell site.

I. G. Graham Historic Site, Town of Mount Pleasant, Westchester County

Staff from the CRSP led by Project Director Barry Dale conducted a Phase I archaeological survey along the Saw Mill River Parkway near Pleasantville, Westchester County in the summer of 2017. The survey was undertaken for the NYS Department of Transportation as part of a flood mitigation project along the parkway. A portion of the I. G. Graham historic site (SHPO 11908.000408) was documented during the survey, and Phase II site evaluation fieldwork is slated for June 2018.

Dr. Isaac Gilbert Graham was a Surgeon's Mate in the Continental Army, Massachusetts 7th Regiment, and served on George Washington's personal staff. After the Revolutionary War, Graham was awarded a portion of the former Philipsburg Manor, a tract that is now Graham Hills County Park abutting the Saw Mill River Parkway. While Graham's house formerly stood near the center of what is now the park, well beyond the current project limits, outbuilding foundations and artifact deposits associated with the estate were identified within and adjacent to the project area. Artifacts recovered from 24 shovel test pits dug for the reconnaissance survey include a range of domestic and architectural debris typical of 19th-century sites (e.g., pearlware, whiteware, redware, stoneware, porcelain tableware, ball clay smoking pipe fragments, square cut and hand wrought nails, brick).

Outbuilding foundation at the I. G. Graham site.

Owl Kill Prehistoric Site, Town of White Creek, Washington County

Staff from the CRSP led by Project Director Joshua Dubuque conducted Phase I archaeological survey and Phase II site evaluation near Eagle Bridge, Washington County in 2017. The survey was undertaken for the NYS Department of Transportation in advance of proposed bridge replacement on New York State Route 67 over the Owl Kill. The initial survey identified a small prehistoric site characterized by chert flakes and a hammer stone, the Owl Kill site (SHPO 11516.000239). An interview with a local resident revealed that several projectile points had been found during construction of a nearby garage, suggesting that the site extends well beyond the highway project limits.

The Phase II site examination was undertaken to delineate the Owl Kill site's vertical and horizontal boundaries, search for features, and assess the site's eligibility for listing on the State and National Registers. Together, both phases of archaeological investigation entailed the excavation of 23 shovel test pits and eight 1 x 1 meter square units, yielding a total of 376 lithic artifacts (mostly unmodified flakes, but also four projectile points, five bifacially worked tools, one unifacial tool, the hammer stone, and nine pieces of fire-cracked rock). The lithic assemblage is dominated by cherts that resemble Onondaga and Normanskill types and based on the projectile point forms it appears to date to the Late Archaic through Early Woodland periods. No features were encountered, though a substantial portion of the site retains good subsurface integrity. It was determined that the intact portion of the Owl Kill site could be avoided under the proposed highway work scope, so no further archaeological work is planned at this time.

Examples of projectile points (top) and bifacial tools (bottom) from the Owl Kill site.

Submitted by: Daria Merwin

NEWS FROM THE ROBERT E. FUNK MEMORIAL ARCHAEOLOGY FOUNDATION, INC.

Guidelines for grant applications generally are posted on the Funk Foundation website in March or April of the year the grant is awarded, and grant awards typically are made in mid-late June. The Funk Foundation currently is reviewing proposals for 2018 grants. We have received five proposals and will complete review of these by June 22, 2018. The proposals are for various applications of radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analysis, and lithic analysis.

In 2017, the Funk Foundation awarded grants to (1) Tim Abel for radiocarbon dating of four Iroquoian sites in northern New York to determine the sequence of population movements in the upper St. Lawrence region; (2) Amy Fox for a geometric, morphometric analysis of Susquehanna Tradition broadspear bifacial points oriented to understanding information sharing in the terminal Archaic period; and (3) Jessica Vavrasek to support investigation of St. Lawrence Iroquois ceramic pot collar decoration and isotopic analysis of domesticated dog remains. Vavrasek's study aims to assess St. Lawrence Iroquois migration assuming that dogs were travelling with people to Jefferson County (dog remains being the proxy for human remains).

The Funk Foundation has completed review of the report from 2016 grantee Albert Fulton on the radiocarbon dating of a diachronic environmental reconstruction in the Genesee Valley region. This report makes a very strong contribution and its results are included in Mr. Fulton's Michigan State University Ph.D. dissertation on prehistoric human-environment interactions. We are nearing completion of review of reports by Ammie Mitchell on Vinette 1 and Vinette 2 ceramic analysis, and Joshua Kwoka on analysis of lithics from the Niagara Frontier Iroquois Simmons site. Dr. Mitchell's results have been included in her Buffalo University Ph. D. dissertation. We also will soon complete review of Tim Abel's report on his 2017 grant research.

The Funk Foundation's funds were $29,664.63 at the time of its board meeting in April 2018. During this meeting the Funk Foundation Board of Directors decided to explore investing some of this money in order to earn some interest (although the interest earned will not be self-sustaining). We plan to invest about a third in short-term bonds and about a third in a mix of low-risk equity index funds, while maintaining about a third in our checking account. Thanks to NYAC and to individual NYAC members for your generous contributions and extra contributions to the Funk Foundation.

Submitted by: Ed Curtin

NYC LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION (LPC) ARCHAEOLOGY GUIDELINES 2018 REVISIONS

The LPC is completing a comprehensive revision of their archaeology guidelines. The draft of the 2018 revisions will be distributed to NYAC, PANYC, professional archaeologists working in NYC, various city, state, and federal agencies, Indian Nations, and other parties by June 11 for comment. The review period extends from June 11 to July 9, 2018. The document will then be finalized and likely issued in the late summer. The scope of the revisions will be discussed at two public workshops that will be held on September 13 and 26, 2018. The workshop agendas will be distributed later in the summer as well.

The guideline revisions are focused on standardizing documentary research, and field, laboratory, and reporting standards. Highlights in these sections include specifications for work plans, research designs, permanent datums, unanticipated discovery plans, use of end-of-field letters, project record curation, and public outreach protocols. The guidelines also will provide updated information on reconciling procedures when multiple agencies are involved, updated source and contact lists, and standards for archaeological principal investigators and other archaeological team members and subconsultants.

Submitted by: Carol Weed

NYAC SOIL WORKSHOP: ATTENDEES RATE WORKSHOP AS "EXCELLENT" AND "AMAZING"

NYAC held its *Soils, Sediments, and Landscapes in Archaeology Workshop* on May 11th and 12th at the Van Schaick Mansion in Cohoes, N.Y. Dr. John Wah masterfully presented the vast and complex world of geoarchaeology in morning indoor and afternoon outdoor sessions. Twenty workshop attendees came from around the Northeast including Maryland, New Jersey, Vermont, Long Island, Buffalo, Binghamton, Syracuse, Hudson Valley, and the Capital District. Friday's session was particularly popular and was sold out. Based on preliminary evaluation of attendee exit polls and on behavior (many remained on-site well after the session officially concluded), the workshop was a tremendous success. Exit poll analysis will identify avenues for expanding and improving this workshop and additional subject areas for future workshops. Many thanks are offered to Joanna Shogan of the Van Schaick Mansion for providing this historic site for classroom space and giving lunchtime tours, Mike Lucas of the New York State Museum for access to excavation units at the Van Schaick site, Kristin O'Connell and Andrea Lain of NYSM for logistical assistance, and the workshop organizing committee of Doug Perrelli, Beth Selig, and David Staley.

Dr. John Wah guides the group through soil descriptions at Van Schaick site.

Dr. Wah demonstrates separation of coarse fragments from a soil sample.

Submitted by: David Staley

ROAD HACKS

Most archaeologists are subjected to lengthy periods of motel living. Necessarily frugal, many of us have innovated or adopted creative solutions to immediate problems. These are not exclusive to our profession. No in-room fridge or cooler space? Fill the sink or one of the trash cans with ice - ah cold beverages. A garbage bag lined cardboard box doubles as a cooler. Forget empty baggies for lunch or small artifacts? Use the plastic covers on cups, shower caps, ice bags, or spare garbage bags. Free breakfasts at the motel? Plenty there for lunch too; pocket that muffin or bagel, grab that peanut butter, jelly, or cream cheese, fruit and yogurt. Speaking of yogurt, no spoon? Fold the foil lid and, Voila, a spoon. Boots wet? Stuff the crinkled up "the USA Today" in them to make the next morning a little more pleasant.

These are just a few examples of road hacks. Many of you know more. Perhaps this can be an ongoing conversation. Send your hacks to dpstaley@stny.rr.com.

Submitted by: Josh Dubuque and David Staley

NEWS FROM SHPO
SITE FILE CONSOLIDATION PROJECT

Members of the Archaeology Unit are working on an archaeological site file consolidation project. As many of you know, several institutions in NYS have built and maintained archaeological site files. The result for researchers is that there are several site file systems to consult. Some sites are recorded in only one institution's files, while other sites appear in the site files of two or more institutions. SHPO has undertaken the laborious and often confusing task of scanning other institutions' site files and incorporating the data into CRIS.

SHPO is currently absorbing the archaeological site files from the Rochester Museum and Science Center and the Southold Indian Museum. The process begins with a signed agreement between SHPO and the institution. SHPO then takes possession of the institution's hard copy site files, scans them, compares the data with the SHPO site files, and either creates new sites, or adds data to sites that already exist in CRIS. In the case of the Southold Indian Museum, in addition to original field notes, field maps, and artifact catalogs (much regarding sites that don't appear in any other site file system), SHPO has acquired manuscripts and correspondences from notable members of the Long Island Chapter of the NYSAA, such as Roy Latham and Charles Goddard. These documents contain a plethora of valuable archaeological information. Documents related to a single site will be uploaded to the site's record in CRIS. Documents addressing general archaeological matters and/or multiple sites will be uploaded into the CRIS Library.

SHPO has plans to acquire site files from other institutions and continue the process of site file consolidation. Researchers should keep in mind that the SHPO site file system is dynamic and that there are errors in any site file system. If you identify incorrectly mapped site locations, or have documents with additional site information that should be attached to a site record, please reach out to the appropriate member of the Archaeology Unit. We are always striving to improve our data and are happy for assistance from the archaeological community.

Submitted by: Tim Lloyd

NYAC ANNUAL AWARDS

New York Archaeological Council – 2018 Founders Award

Christina B. Rieth

It would be no overstatement to observe that, since the 1990s, few persons have played a more central role in New York archaeology than Dr. Christina Rieth. Unlike some of us who are transplants to New York, Chris is an entirely homegrown archaeologist of the Empire state. She grew up in Burnt Hills, New York, graduated from Hartwick College (*Cum Laude*), and went on to obtain her MA and PhD degrees from UAlbany in 1992 and 1997.

During her professional career, she has been front and center in cultural resource management activities in New York. She started out in 1996 as a principal investigator with the cultural resource survey program (CRSP) at the New York State Museum, directing CRM investigations for NYSDOT and other state agencies. Starting in 2000, she served as assistant director, and in 2004, became director of CRSP. In this role, she has supervised a large staff of permanent and seasonal archaeologists and archaeological consultants, performing Section 106 cultural resource surveys and investigations across the state. Since 2004, she has served as State Archaeologist, overseeing archaeological permitting for state owned lands.

Chris has also trained a legion of undergraduate and graduate student archaeologists. Beginning in 2004, she has collaborated on an annual basis with Sean Rafferty of UAlbany, directing an undergraduate field school with graduate student supervisors at the stratified, multicomponent Pethick site in Schoharie County. As if that weren't enough, since 2007 she has also served an adjunct assistant professor of anthropology at UAlbany, serving on 12 Masters and seven Doctoral student committees.

In addition to her day-to-day professional obligations, Chris has also conducted important archaeological research (separate from her section 106 work) and published important contributions on the prehistory of eastern New York. Beginning with her PhD dissertation, *Culture Contact during the Carpenter Brook Phase: A Tripartite Approach to Spatial and Temporal Movement of Early Iroquoian Groups Throughout the Upper Susquehanna River Valley*, Chris has had a long-standing fascination with the archaeology of the Schoharie and Susquehanna valleys and the indigenous populations who resided there, especially in the last three millennia. She is an acknowledged expert on Native American ceramics of eastern New York. In addition to her journal publications on these and other aspects of New York archaeology, Chris has organized symposia and edited or co-edited several important published volumes, including:

- *Northeast Subsistence and Settlement Change: A.D. 700-1300* (2002, co-edited with John Hart);
- *Current Approaches to the Analysis and Interpretation of Small Lithic Sites in the Northeast* (2008); and
- *Current Research in New York Archaeology, A.D. 700-1300* (2011, co-edited with John Hart).

For these and many other contributions to both the practice and understanding of the archaeology of New York, we are pleased to confer the NYAC Founders Award to Dr. Christina Rieth.

Submitted by: Bill Engelbrecht

NYAC NEWSLETTER

Please note, the NYAC Board voted to have one annual newsletter.
For the 2019 newsletter, please submit by ***May 15****.*

Submit news in either Word or WordPerfect to Laurie Miroff by email at 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.*