



# New York Archaeological Council

## NYAC Newsletter 2024

News from the President, Carol Weed

Again, and as always, Thank You to Laurie Miroff for bringing us this newsletter. Newsletter assembly, composition, and issuing are never easy tasks and Laurie continues to do them with patience and care.

The first half of the year saw finalization to some of our efforts but new ones have been introduced.

The Spring meeting was held in Oswego at the Fort Ontario State Park in Oswego on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. The Fort personnel put in great effort to provide a working internet connection, the venue was appropriately historic, and those who Zoomed in exhibited the patience of Job. Despite some hiccups, we managed to complete an aggressive schedule and highlights are briefly summarized below. Kate Whalen hosted a Saturday afternoon session during NYSAA's program that was well received by NYSAA members and also by visiting students. The program focused on career opportunities for archaeologists and it involved Allison McGovern, David Witt, and Daria Merwin in addition to Kate.

We welcomed newly re-elected Board members (Allison McGovern, Kristy Primeau, Beth Selig, Kate Whalen). Jordon Loucks, Beth Peyser, and Sarah Salem-Russell joined as new members. Nina Versaggi announced Joe Diamond was this year's Founders Award recipient and Jon Lothrop provided this year's Funk Foundation report. Dan Mazeau and Ann Morton provided the minutes that were accepted. And, I announced that I would not be running for re-election next year when my term is up. So, what happened with existing initiatives?

- 1) The FHWA Programmatic Agreement was finalized and it has been enacted.
- 2) The Papscanee Island Historic District is now State-listed and it has been determined eligible to the NRHP by the NPS.
- 3) NAGPRA Revisions have been passed. Doug Perrelli, Beth Selig, and Lisa Anderson are preparing a summary of the revisions.
- 4) Nomenclature guidelines have been well received and we continue to urge all to take the guidance seriously as the Nations/Tribes were involved in the preparation of the document and word lists.
- 5) Culling MSS sheets have been requested for bulk objects including window pane glass, mortar, cement, nails, and architectural elements in general. Vivian is working with Joe Diamond and others to continue to advance this work.
- 6) The Burial Review Committee (BRC) defined in New York State Executive Law 171 (Discovery and Disposition of Human Remains and Funerary Objects) is finalizing its by-laws with the definition of member roles, has an established budget, and periodically is called upon to deal with unmarked burial sites. NYAC participates in the BRC by law.

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## President's Message continued

The Board has approved professional insurance that will cover Board/Officer members. At the same time we discussed a sliding scale for dues and ways that NYAC can conduct fundraisers to cover expenses, scholarships, travel reimbursement, and other items. This discussion was pursued under New Business.

The New Business section of the morning and afternoon meetings.

1) As Dan Mazeau has noted, the Fall NYAC meeting will be hosted by Joe Diamond at SUNY-New Paltz on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Further announcements about the afternoon sessions will be forthcoming.

2) Kate Whalen introduced A.I. and the use of same in report preparation and writing. Kate and others are now gathering background on the topic and how others have considered the ethics of such media.

3) We continue to hold discussions on how to appropriately request background information from the Nations/Tribes when lead agencies have not introduced proposed projects to them yet. To this end, we would like to continue conversation about this topic but only if members believe that we can develop best practice guidance to everyone's satisfaction. What say you?

4) Beth Selig introduced the idea of NYAC purchasing media equipment that would facilitate virtual meetings but also allow us to be less dependent on venue supplied IT support. We will continue this discussion once cost estimates have been developed.

5) Fundraisers like Health and Safety classes, Monitoring classes, and object specific recordation and documentation were introduced. We are going to assemble a list of possible class synopses that will detail the class course description, teacher(s), cost, and schedule starting this summer to roll out classes in 2025.

6) There was discussion about SAA's Council of Allied Societies (COAS) and the Council of Councils (CoC). The decision at the Spring meeting was to pursue the COAS connection and Kristy and David attended that meeting at the SAA's in New Orleans. Kristy and David then supplied a summary memo and it, in conjunction with follow-up discussions, resulted in pullback on our part as it was determined: 1) that NYSAA was a member of COAS and we could not join independent of NYSAA, and 2) NYAC membership is not open to the public. We withdrew our application.

This week Ira Beckerman, who is president of the Pennsylvania Archaeological Council, sent me and members of other archaeological councils around the country the following note:

By way of introduction, I am the current president of the Pennsylvania Archaeological Council, which is distinct from the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology. SPA has been around over 90 years and represents both professional and avocational interests in the Commonwealth. PAC has been around almost 40 years and we are composed of professionals. Both organizations overlap in many but not all archaeological interests within Pennsylvania. I presume this situation is the same in most if not all of your states.

I am writing you to report on recent developments within the Society for American Archaeology related to the Council of Councils. I have been president of PAC since 2019. In 2019, 2022, and most recently in New Orleans I was able to attend the SAA Annual Meetings and in each I felt it important to attend the Council of Councils Committee meeting. It is an opportunity to converse with sister organizations and discuss common issues and

learn that we are not alone in our own organizational challenges. This last C of C meeting, there were 3 of us, plus Kim Redman who is the liaison with SAA. Indicative of the low attendance was a lack of planning or coordination with the SAA, which apparently has persisted for several meetings. As a consequence, SAA has disbanded the Council of Councils as an SAA committee.

My impetus for reaching out to you is two-fold. Acting as a messenger, SAA wants to know if we want a room in next year's meeting in Denver. They are willing to provide one for us to meet, if we respond this Summer. If there is enough interest, I am willing to aggregate that interest into a response back to SAA.

The second reason is to ask all of you whether it makes sense to have a Council of Councils represented at SAA? After our meeting, it was suggested that the C of C could fold in under the Council of Allied Societies, which represents the avocational groups. For example, the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology is represented in the CofAS. As a long-time SAA member, I happen to believe there is a unique and useful role for a Council of Councils within SAA and would like to see it reconstituted. In our neighboring state of New York and here in Pennsylvania, we are starting to grapple with nomenclature issues in consultation with Federally Recognized Tribes. New York has issued a draft white paper. The current question over the future provisioning of professional archaeologists is something we are taking seriously as well as diversifying our professional membership. I believe these are issues that are more in our "lane" than for the CofAS. Our Council is a mix of academic, governmental, and business professionals. Having a working group within SAA could help all of us share information and I believe offer a perspective to SAA that other Committees could not. Just as one example, the current workshops to update Airlie House Report from 1977.

In order to reach out, I needed to compile a list of active state Councils. Currently, I am able to count a total of 23 states. Attached is my spreadsheet with as many of the contacts I was able to locate. This e-mail forms the crudest of list-serves.

If you are willing to reply, I am willing to compile these responses and report back to SAA. If the e-mail contact I have located isn't the president, please forward this message to the president and/or Board.

Specifically, are you willing or able to attend or send someone to attend a Council of Councils meeting in Denver next year? More importantly, do you think having a Council of Councils within SAA is a worthwhile enterprise? Also, if you have a better e-mail contact for your state's organization, please let me know. And of course, if you are aware of any omissions, please share those. Please let me know by the end of June.

I posed Ira's questions to the Board and there is consensus that participating in a resurrected Council of Councils would be advantageous. I am asking if you, the general membership, also believe that having "a Council of Councils within SAA is a worthwhile enterprise." Please let me and Dan know by May 31<sup>st</sup>.

I think this is it for now. If you have questions do not hesitate to give me a call or write. Thanks to all who continue to actively participate in NYAC and its programs and initiatives.

Have GREAT Summer and Fall Seasons! See you in September.

Carol

## The NAGPRA Process — cultural items

### Background:

The [Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act](#) (NAGPRA) was signed into law on November 16, 1990. NAGPRA addresses the repatriation and disposition of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations.

**A brief history of the legislation is available on the National Park Service website:** <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/nagpra.htm>

### Interior Department Announces Final Rule for Implementation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The Department of the Interior (12/6/2023) announced a [final rule](#) to revise regulations that implement the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). These regulations provide systematic processes for returning Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs). The revised regulations streamline requirements for museums and federal agencies to inventory and identify Native American human remains and cultural items in their collections. It became final January 12, 2024.

The final rule makes a number of changes, including:

- Strengthening the authority and role of Tribes and NHOs in the repatriation process by requiring deference to the Indigenous Knowledge of lineal descendants, Tribes and NHOs.
- Requiring museums and federal agencies to obtain free, prior and informed consent from lineal descendants, Tribes or NHOs before allowing any exhibition of, access to, or research on human remains or cultural items.
- Eliminating the category “culturally unidentifiable human remains” and resetting the requirements for cultural affiliation to better align the regulations with congressional intent.

Increasing transparency and reporting of holdings or collections and shedding light on collections currently unreported under the existing regulation.

Requiring museums and federal agencies to consult and update inventories of human remains and associated funerary objects within five years of this final rule.

A brief helpful guide is available on the NPS website: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/index.htm>

### Need for Updated Regulations:

#### UC Berkeley Holds Thousands of Native Remains Despite Repatriation Requests

Despite decades of opposition, the university still holds over 9,000 Native remains - a source of grief for tribes. ProPublica & NBC News released a report highlighting how a top UC Berkeley anthropology professor, Tim White, taught with a collection of human remains that may have included dozens of Native American remains. Despite a long battle by Native groups and organizations to repatriate the remains back to Native land, the University has dragged its feet in the process. <https://yr.media/news/native-remains-at-uc-berkeley/#:~:text=ProPublica%20%26%20NBC%20News%20released%20a,dozens%20of%20Native%20American%20remains.>

**When San Jose State anthropology professor Elizabeth Weiss tweeted a picture to celebrate returning to campus in September 2021, it caught the attention of [Assemblymember James Ramos](#), a Democrat from San Bernardino and the Legislature’s first and only Native American member. “So happy to be back with some old friends,” read the caption of Weiss’ tweet, which included a photo of her holding the skull of a Native ancestor in front of boxes of other remains.**

<https://www.capradio.org/articles/2023/12/27/california-is-pressing-universities-to-repatriate-thousands-of-native-american-remains-and-artifacts-how-two-campuses-are-succeeding/>

## Descendants Call for Immediate Return of Human Remains in Harvard Museum Collections, Criticize University Report

Last week's report urged Harvard to accelerate the return of approximately 6,500 Native American human remains at Harvard. Some Native American scholars and advocates called for the immediate return of Native American human remains and voiced concerns about the language used to describe Native American ancestors. <https://preview.thecrimson.com/article/2022/9/26/call-for-return-human-remains/>

## Following decades of Indigenous activism and the 2023 publication of ProPublica's "Repatriation Project," federal officials have seen more activity leading to the return of ancestral remains to tribal nations than any other year since 1990.

The increase follows a ProPublica investigation that revealed how institutions have for decades failed to fully comply with NAGPRA, in some cases exploiting a loophole that allowed them to keep the remains by denying their connections to present-day Indigenous communities. And some institutions, [including Harvard University](#), pursued destructive scientific studies on those remains without the informed consent of descendants.

<https://www.propublica.org/article/repatriation-progress-in-2023>



### Ten institutions hold about half of the reported Native American remains that have not been made available for return to tribes.



Data from Nov. 29, 2023

<https://projects.propublica.org/repatriation-nagpra-database/>

## Definitions: Who Must Comply

**Museum:** Any institution or State or local government agency (including any institution of higher learning) that has possession or control of human remains or cultural items and receives Federal funds.

**Receives Federal Funds:** an institution or State or local government agency (including an institution of higher learning) that directly or indirectly receives Federal financial assistance after November 16, 1990, including any grant; cooperative agreement; loan; contract; use of Federal facilities, property, or services; or other arrangement involving the transfer of anything of value for a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States Government. This term includes Federal financial assistance provided for any purpose that is received by a larger entity of which the institution or agency is a part. For example, if an institution or agency is a part of a State or local government or a private university, and the State or local government or private university receives Federal financial assistance for any purpose, then the institution or agency receives Federal funds for the purpose of these regulations.

## Process Overview:

### Repatriation by museums and Federal agencies

To facilitate repatriation, each museum and Federal agency must complete an [inventory](#) of Native American human remains and associated funerary objects and a [summary](#) of other cultural items. A museum or Federal agency must ensure that these requirements are met for any Native American human remains or cultural item under its control regardless of where the holding or collection is physically located. Each museum and Federal agency must identify one or more representatives who are responsible for carrying out these requirements.

### What else must be done?

Museums and Federal agencies must:

- [Consult](#) with lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations,
- Evaluate [requests for repatriation](#) or [claims](#)

[for disposition](#) of human remains or cultural items, and

- [Give public notice](#) prior to disposition or repatriation.

## Repatriation of Cultural Items: Steps

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/repatriation-of-cultural-items.htm>

Each museum and Federal agency that may have Native American unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony must follow certain steps for repatriation. The purpose of this process is to provide general information, through Steps 1 to 3, about a holding or collection. In Steps 4 to 7, lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations may request, and receive repatriation of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

### What must be done for unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony?

Museums and Federal agencies must complete the following steps for repatriation. Each step is described briefly below and in detail in the regulations at [43 CFR 10.9](#).

**Step 1 - Compile a summary of a holding or collection.** Describe any holding or collection that may contain unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony and ensure the summary is comprehensive and covers all relevant holdings or collections.

**Step 2 - Initiate consultation.** No later than 30 days after Step 1, identify consulting parties based on information available and invite the parties to consult.

**Step 3 - Consult on cultural items.** Respond to any consulting party, consult on identifications, and prepare a record of consultation that describes the concurrence, disagreement, or nonresponse of the consulting parties to the identifications.

**Step 4 - Receive and consider requests for repatriation.** At any time after compiling a summary, any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization may submit a request for repatriation of cultural items.

**Step 5 - Respond to a request for repatriation.** No later than 90 days after Step 4, send a written response to the requestor and any other consulting party.

**Step 6 - Submit a notice of intended repatriation.** No later than 30 days after Step 5, submit a notice of intended repatriation to all requestors, any consulting parties, and to [nagpra\\_info@nps.gov](mailto:nagpra_info@nps.gov) for publication in the Federal Register.

**Step 7 - Repatriation of cultural items.** No later than 90 days after publication of a notice, send a written repatriation statement to the requestor and a copy to [nagpra\\_info@nps.gov](mailto:nagpra_info@nps.gov).

## Deadlines:

### What are the deadlines for compiling a summary?

After January 12, 2024, museums or Federal agencies must complete Step 1 by the following deadlines:

If a museum or Federal agency...	An inventory must be submitted...
Acquires possession or control of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (including transfer of a holding or collection previously included in an inventory)	6 months after acquisition
Locates previously lost or unknown unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony	6 months after locating
Receives Federal funds for the first time	3 years after receiving

### What if I can't meet a deadline for Step 1?

The Act does not provide for extensions of the deadline to complete a summary. Summaries must be completed by the deadlines above.

## STEPS 1-3: Detailed Description

**Step 1—Compile a summary of a holding or collection.** Based on the information available, a museum or Federal agency must compile a summary describing any holding or collection that may contain unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Depending on the scope of the holding or collection, a museum or Federal agency may organize its summary into sections based on geographical area, accession or catalog name or number, or other defining attributes. A museum or Federal agency must ensure the summary is comprehensive and covers any holding or collection relevant to this section.

(1) A summary must include:

- (i) The estimated number and a general description of the holding or collection, including any potential cultural items;
- (ii) The geographical location (provenience) by county or State of the potential cultural items;
- (iii) The acquisition history (provenance) of the potential cultural items;

(iv) Other information relevant for identifying:

(A) A lineal descendant or an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization with cultural affiliation, and

(B) Any object as an unassociated funerary object, sacred object, or object of cultural patrimony; and

(v) The presence of any potentially hazardous substances used to treat any of the unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, if known.

(2) After January 12, 2024, a museum or Federal agency must submit a summary to the Manager, National NAGPRA Program, by the deadline in Table 1 of this [paragraph \(a\)\(2\)](#).

Table 1 to [§ 10.9\(a\)\(2\)](#)—Deadlines for Compiling a Summary

**Step 2—Initiate consultation.** No later than 30 days after compiling a summary, a museum or Federal agency must identify consulting parties based on information available and invite the parties to consult.

<b>If a museum or Federal agency . . .</b>	<b>. . . a summary must be submitted . . .</b>
acquires possession or control of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony	6 months after acquiring possession or control of the unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural
locates previously lost or unknown unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural	6 months after locating the unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects
receives Federal funds for the first time after January 12, 2024, and has possession or control of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony	3 years after receiving Federal funds for the first time after January 12, 2024.

(1) Consulting parties are any lineal descendant and any Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization with potential cultural affiliation.

(2) An invitation to consult must be in writing and must include:

(i) The summary described in [paragraph \(a\)\(1\)](#) of this section;

(ii) The names of all consulting parties; and

(iii) A proposed method for consultation.

(3) When a museum or Federal agency identifies a new consulting party under [paragraph \(b\)\(1\)](#) of this section, the museum or Federal agency must invite the party to consult. An invitation to consult under [paragraph \(b\)\(2\)](#) of this section must be sent:

(i) No later than 30 days after identifying a new consulting party based on new information; or

(ii) No later than six months after the addition of a Tribal entity to the list of federally recognized Indian Tribes published in the Federal Register pursuant to the Act of November 2, 1994 ([25 U.S.C. 5131](#)).

**Step 3—Consult on cultural items.** A museum or Federal agency must respond to any consulting party, regardless of whether the party has received an invitation to consult. Consultation on an unassociated funerary object, sacred object, or object of cultural patrimony may continue until the museum or Federal agency sends a repatriation statement for that object to a requestor under [paragraph \(g\)](#) of this section.

(1) In response to a consulting party, a museum or Federal agency must ask for the following information, if not already provided:

(i) Preferences on the proposed timeline and method for consultation; and

(ii) The name, phone number, email address, or mailing address for any authorized representative, traditional religious leader, and known lineal descendant who may participate in consultation.

(2) Consultation must address identification of:

(i) Lineal descendants;

(ii) Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations with cultural affiliation;

(iii) The types of objects that might be unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony; and

(iv) The duty of care under [§ 10.1\(d\)](#) for unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

(3) The museum or Federal agency must prepare a record of consultation that describes the concurrence, disagreement, or nonresponse of the consulting parties to the identifications in [paragraph \(c\)\(2\)](#) of this section.

(4) At any time before a museum or Federal agency sends a repatriation statement for an unassociated funerary object, sacred object, or object of cultural patrimony to a requestor under [paragraph \(g\)](#) of this section, the museum or Federal agency may receive a request from a consulting party for access to records, catalogues, relevant studies, or other pertinent data related to the holding or collection. A museum or Federal agency must provide access to the additional information in a reasonable manner and for the limited purpose of determining cultural affiliation, including the geographical location or acquisition history, of the unassociated funerary object, sacred object, or object of cultural patrimony.

### Penalties For Failure To Comply

Any museum that fails to comply with the requirements of NAGPRA or the implementing regulations may be assessed a civil penalty by the Department of the Interior. Each instance of failure to comply constitutes a separate violation.

Any person may file an allegation of failure to comply by sending a written allegation to [nagpra\\_info@nps.gov](mailto:nagpra_info@nps.gov). Some of the ways a museum might fail to comply include, but are not limited to,

1. Transferring human remains or cultural items to an individual or institution that is not required to comply with the Act and the regulations.

2. Not compiling a [summary](#) by the required deadline.

3. Not completing or updating an [inventory](#) by the required deadline.

4. Not submitting a [notice of inventory completion or notice of intended repatriation](#) by the required deadline.

5. Not sending a [repatriation statement](#) for human remains or cultural items by the required deadline.

6. Sending a repatriation statement for human remains or cultural items before publishing a Federal Register notice.

7. Not consulting with lineal descendants, Indian Tribe officials, or traditional religious leaders who request to consult.

8. Not informing the requestors of any presently known treatment of the cultural items with pesticides, preservatives, or other substances that represent a potential hazard to the objects or to persons handling the objects.

**Calculate the penalty amount.** If the Assistant Secretary determines under [paragraph \(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) of this section that a civil penalty is an appropriate remedy for a substantiated failure to comply, the Assistant Secretary must calculate the amount of the penalty in accordance with this paragraph. The penalty for each separate violation must be calculated as follows:

(1) The base penalty amount is \$7,475, subject to annual adjustments based on inflation under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 ([Pub. L. 114-74](#)).

NAGPRA CFR: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-43/subtitle-A/part-10?toc=1>

NPS Guidance: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/getting-started.htm>

Compiled by: Ann Morton; Submitted by: Doug Perrelli

## News from the New York State Museum, Cultural Resource Survey Program

### Campsites, Quarries, and Chicken Inspectors: CRSP in Westchester

During the Spring and Summer of 2023, the Cultural Resource Survey Program (CRSP) at the New York State Museum (NYSM) conducted a reconnaissance survey for the DOT in Westchester County near the outlet of Annsville Creek into Peekskill Bay and the Hudson River. The project area covered both low-lying areas adjacent to the river and Roa Hook and parcels elevated some 40 m (130 ft) above the Hudson.

Notable for its long precontact occupation, this area was densely settled by Algonquian-speaking groups prior to and following the arrival of Europeans. During the Revolutionary War it was littered with camp sites, field defenses, look-out posts, and a few forts including the nearby Fort Independence on Roa Hook. As can be imagined, the sensitivities for both precontact and post-contact cultural resources were quite high.

Four archaeological sites were documented during the reconnaissance survey and recommended for Phase II site examinations. River View 1 is a small camp site with a lithic assemblage suggesting an emphasis on late-stage tool production and rejuvenation. An intact occupation level (buried A horizon) is present and may yield samples useful in carbon dating. River View 2 is a low-density lithic scatter elevated high above the Hudson.

A quartzite quarry site was documented at River View 3. Here, nodules and chunks were extracted directly from an exposed quartzite vein within a vertical cliff face. Surveyed with short interval shovel tests, a fan of quartzite debris radiated out from the cliff face. Initial reduction, perhaps with the intent to assess the economic suitability of extracted quartzite (a notoriously difficult-to-work chipped stone resource), occurred at the site.



*Fieldwork at the River View 3 site.*

Finally, the Putnam Creek Historic Site is a late nineteenth century foundation and cellar hole with associated artifacts that reflect a tight occupation span from the late 1800s to the early twentieth century. While the inhabitants of the structure are unknown, historic maps suggest a relationship to old mining activities in the area. A lack of post-occupation impacts and debris are indicative of the excellent integrity the site retains.

One artifact of note from the Putnam Creek Historic Site was a badge with the inscription of "Chicken/23/Inspector" (Figure 2). One might deduce involvement in poultry farming with a casual look at this object. In actuality it had a more risqué meaning and lewdly refers to the act of inspecting "chicks," an interpretation corroborated by post-cards and novelties from the 1910s (Figure 3) and highlighting the importance of archival research in archaeological interpretation. As a side note, the "23" refers to the early twentieth century slang "23 skidoo," meaning to "get going" or "move along." Interestingly, this artifact both supports the early twentieth century interpretation of the site and archaeologically preserves a linguistic fad that came and went within a few short decades.



*Chicken Inspector badge.*

Site examinations have been recommended for all four sites, as each may contribute to our understanding of both the Indigenous and late nineteenth/early twentieth century occupations of the area.

Of particular interest is the lithic economy of quartzite and its extraction, reduction, and use in the lower Hudson River Valley. Notably, most of the chipped stone material encountered at River View 1 and 2 was produced from chert, not quartzite. This perhaps suggests a discontinuity in the occupation between the lithic sites and the quarry site. Hopefully future work will better illuminate this incongruity.



*Novelty postcard.*

Submitted by: Daniel E. Mazeau

## News from the Public Archaeology Facility

The Public Archaeology Facility (PAF) completed the Phase 3 data recovery report for a portion of the Ayers 1 Precontact site. The site is located on a terrace and floodplain of the Susquehanna River in Nichols. At least 38 sites have been documented for the Owego-Nichols area, dating from the Early Archaic through Late Woodland.



*Projectile points from the Ayers 1 Precontact site.*

Diagnostic cultural material indicates that people lived at the Ayers 1 site ca. 1800-700 BC (Transitional) and again from ca. AD 900-1550 (Late Woodland). Radiometric dates from stacked horizons on the floodplain both returned dates falling within the early Late Woodland, approximately 200 years apart. The Transitional component was limited to the terrace based on the identification of a Susquehanna Broad projectile point, while Late Woodland cultural materials (pottery and projectile points) were recovered from both the floodplain and the terrace.

Cultural features (n=145) included hearths, storage pits, small pits, charcoal concentrations, post molds, and a pottery concentration. With the exception of charcoal concentrations (limited to the terrace), small pits (not associated with the lower floodplain component), and the pottery concentration (found in the upper horizon of floodplain) all feature types were found across the site contexts. Two parallel lines of posts associated with the upper floodplain component may have represented a wall, either freestanding or part of a larger structure. In comparison to the assemblages from the terrace and the upper floodplain component, cultural features associated with the earlier floodplain occupation tended to be smaller and shallower. The feature assemblage is made up almost entirely of hearths, and the physical characteristics may reflect smaller, shorter burning episodes. Site occupation may have been short-term, and related to a seasonal resource procurement cycle.

Organized by type, the site assemblage is composed of 891 pieces of lithic debitage (flakes, chunks, and shatter), 19 bifacial tools, 6 projectile points (1 Susquehanna Broad point, 3 Levanna points, 1 unclassified contracting-stemmed point, and 1 unclassified triangular point; none found in the lower floodplain component), 2 cores, and 1 concave scraper (upper floodplain component). Onondaga chert dominates the raw material types present at the site, but small amounts of non-local materials are present. These include jasper, quartz (upper floodplain component), rhyolite (terrace and upper floodplain component), and chalcedony and argillite (both only found in upper floodplain component).

The rough/ground stone assemblage illustrates a variety of site activities: stone tool production, fishing, nut and grain processing, and hammering/chopping. While there is evidence for some subsistence activities occurring on the terrace, this portion of the site appears to have been much less intensively used than the floodplain. The bulk of the activity (flintknapping, fishing, food processing, and wood chopping) occurred on the floodplain, particularly in the areas closest to the river. Most rough/ground stone from the floodplain were found in the upper horizon.

Of the 13 identified pottery vessels, 10 were found in the upper floodplain horizon and only three were associated with the lower component. All vessels are uncollared and cord-impressed.

While the Ayers 1 Precontact site provides valuable information on how people occupied these landforms over time, we look forward to comparing the site to the adjacent Ayers 2 Precontact site to provide a fuller picture of life in this portion of the valley.



*Pottery from the Ayers 1 Precontact site.*

Submitted by: John Ferri



## News from University at Buffalo Archaeological Survey

### Michigan Street Baptist Church Archaeology Project – 2024 Field Season

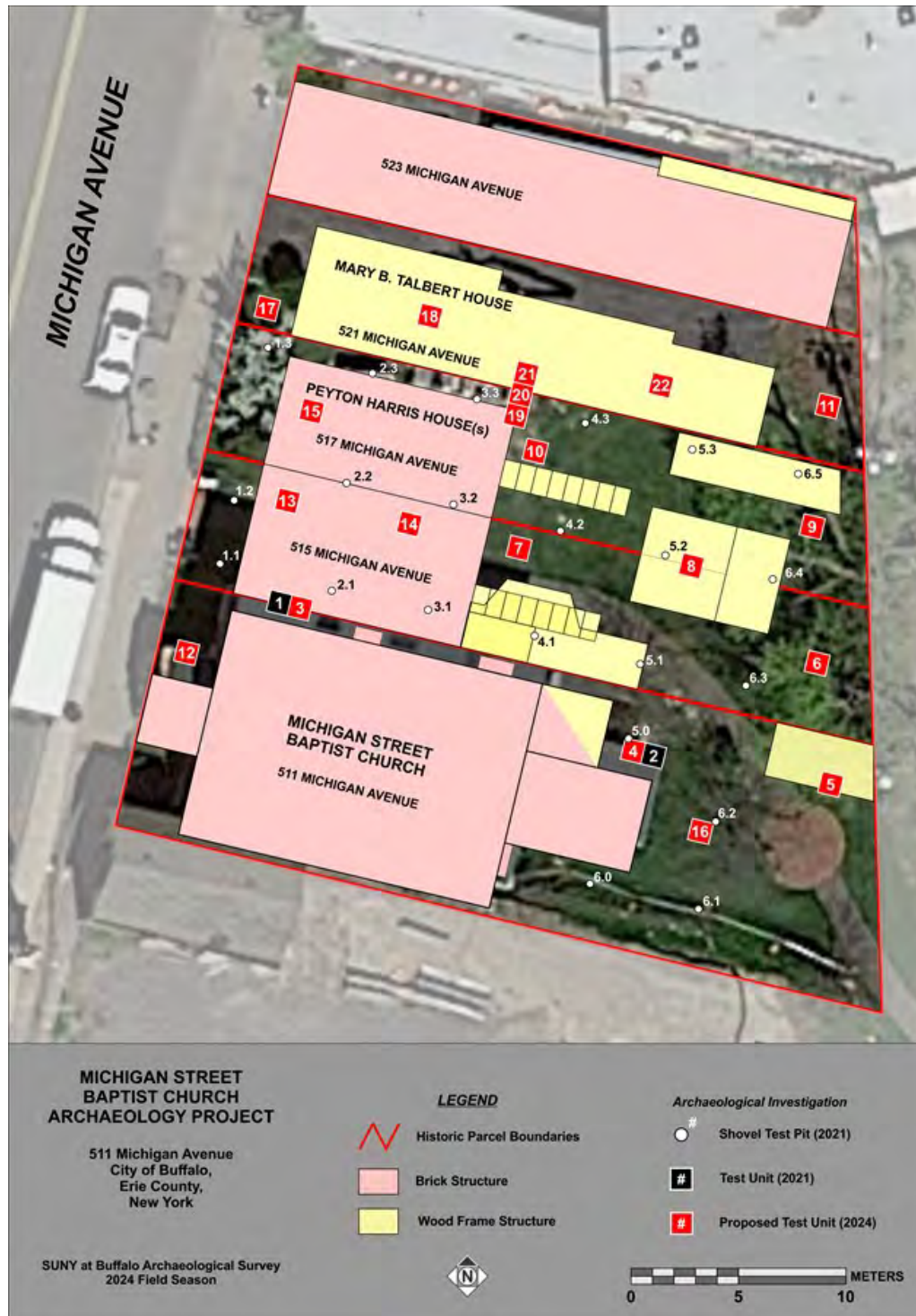
The University at Buffalo Archaeological Survey, in partnership with the Michigan Street Baptist Church (MSBC), the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor, and the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo announces the start of the 2024 Michigan Street Baptist Church site archaeological field season. The investigations will be conducted by the University at Buffalo field crew and UB Anthropology's Summer 2024 field school students.

The Michigan Street Baptist Church site is located at 511 Michigan Avenue, in the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. The site's southern end contains the standing c. 1849 Michigan Street Baptist Church, the longest continuously operated African-American place of worship in the City of Buffalo, while its northern end contains an open, grassy lawn and a paved asphalt parking lot. (see next page) Four map documented structures have been identified in this open space that were owned and occupied by two of the most prominent members of the historic Michigan Street Baptist Church. Peyton Harris and Mary B. Talbert both made significant contributions to the church's developmental and social history, and significantly contributed to a wide variety of statewide and national abolitionist, suffrage, and civil rights movements during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Historic Context.** The brick row-house formerly located at 515 and 517 Michigan Avenue was owned and occupied by Peyton Harris, the church's primary benefactor, from its inception in c. 1836, to his death in 1882. Harris was born as an enslaved person in 1792 in Powhatan County, Virginia. At age 21, Harris joined Capt. Heath's Company of the Virginia Militia and worked to build fortifications during the War of 1812. Although promised freedom in return for his service, his manumission was ultimately denied. After at least one failed attempt, he managed to escape captivity and eventually made his way north.

Even prior to his arrival in Buffalo in 1835, Harris was an active entrepreneur, involved in the business of overland cargo shipping. In Buffalo, he established multiple businesses and is listed in various 19<sup>th</sup> century city directories as a tailor, dyer, cleaner, and lumber dealer; at one point, he even owned and operated several canal boats, and had purchased 600 acres of farmland on Grand Island, located just north of the City of Buffalo. Both Harris and his son-in-law, William Qualls, were members of the African-American Second Baptist Society of Buffalo, and in 1844 were elected as church trustees, also serving the congregation as deacons. That same year Harris and Qualls helped the congregation acquire a city sub-lot on Michigan Street to build a new church. Harris provided most of the brick and timber used in the church's construction, while other members of the congregation provided the labor.

In addition to the church lot, Harris also acquired two parcels of land immediately to the north. He had his own house built on the southernmost of these, immediately adjacent to the church's northern façade. This structure was built as a raised, two-story brick row house containing two dwellings, with separate basements, exterior staircases, and wooden framed shed-type outbuildings. During 1850s, the northern dwelling at 517 Michigan Avenue was likely occupied by Peyton Harris and his family, while the southern dwelling at 515 Michigan Avenue was likely occupied by family of William Qualls. During later decades, although both Harris and Qualls would move away, the row house at 515, 517 Michigan Avenue continued to be occupied by African-American members of the Baptist Church congregation. Following the church's construction, Peyton Harris continued to be actively involved in the church and Buffalo's African-American community, representing them in local and statewide Church-related organizations and at 'Colored' peoples conventions. Harris also frequently organized and led local public meetings regarding the abolitionist movement, particularly during the aftermath of the Fugitive Slave Act's passage in 1850. As a proud veteran, in 1861 he attempted to organize a volunteer 'colored regiment' for service in the Union Army. After the war, Harris organized for black male suffrage, and eventually for universal suffrage, and publicly advocated for the desegregation of Buffalo schools.



*Michigan Street Baptist Church archaeological project area map, showing historic parcel boundaries, standing and non-standing map documented structures, 2021 excavations and proposed 2024 excavations as shown on a May 2022 orthographic satellite image (Airbus / Google Earth 2024).*

Similar to Peyton Harris's double row house, two structures were built on the associated parcel immediately to its north. The southernmost of these structures was a 1 1/2 story wooden framed dwelling at 521 Michigan Avenue, while the northernmost structure was a three-story brick dwelling at 523 Michigan Avenue that was later converted to a mixed commercial/residential structure in the 1890s. At present, 523 Michigan Avenue does not appear to be directly contextually associated with the Michigan Street Baptist Church's period of primary significance.



*Street-view of 515 Michigan Avenue and the southern part of 517 Michigan Avenue, owned by Peyton Harris (foreground-left), and the Michigan Street Baptist Church at 511 Michigan Avenue (foreground at right). This undated photograph was likely taken between c. 1898-1908. Courtesy of Buffalo Historical Museum.*

It appears that Harris eventually sold this northern parcel to another of his sons-in-law, Robert Talbert. Talbert was born in Nashville, Tennessee about 1829. Talbert left the south at the age of 15 as a cabin boy of a trading ship. He arrived in Buffalo around 1850, and in 1852 married Peyton Harris's daughter Anna. However, the Talberts soon left to seek their fortune in the gold fields of California, along with a number of the Michigan Street Baptist Church's congregants, including William Qualls and his wife, Adelaide Harris Qualls, who had left Buffalo by 1860. Robert Talbert soon amassed a fortune from gold hunting and real estate speculation, staying until the late 1860s, as their son William was born in California in January 1865. Upon their return to Buffalo, Talbert went into the cattle trading business, and continued to invest in real estate. Robert's son, William, would eventually become a bookkeeper and would speculate in real estate like his father.

In 1891, William Talbert married a young professional educator from Ohio named Mary Burnett, who would become nationally famous for her organizational work in civil rights and women's suffrage. Born on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1866 in Oberlin, Ohio, Mary Burnett Talbert graduated from Oberlin College in 1886. Immediately afterwards, she worked as a teacher at Bethel University in Little Rock, Ohio, and the following year became principal of the nearby Union High School. Following her marriage to William Talbert in 1891, she resided with her husband at 521 Michigan Avenue, and became an active member of the Michigan Street Baptist Church congregation.



*"Watercolor of Talbert House," Talbert Collection, Buffalo Historical Museum. The artist may have been Ida Fairbush (born c. 1880-90, d. 1945), a public school teacher in Buffalo. The Talbert house is foreground center. Portions of northern half of the Peyton Harris House at 517 Michigan Avenue can be seen at right, while the brick structure at 523 Michigan Avenue can be seen at left*

Amongst her many accomplishments, Mary B. Talbert helped establish the Phyllis Wheatly Club of Buffalo in 1899, a local African-American woman's club. She would also serve two terms as the president of the National Association of Colored Women. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1905, a meeting took place at the Talbert home at 521 Michigan Avenue at the invitation of W. E. B. DuBois, where 29 African-American men from 18 different states met to organize a movement to fight for political and social equality. This organization would come to be known as the Niagara Movement, which is considered to be the precursor to the modern-day National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Talbert co-founded Buffalo's first NAACP chapter, and was a board member and president of the NAACP between 1919 and her death in 1923. She also worked as the national director of the NAACP's anti-lynching campaign in 1921. Talbert advocated for African American woman's suffrage and the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, and served as a Red Cross nurse and YMCA secretary in France during the Great War, in addition to selling war bonds. Later in her life, in 1922, she organized the purchase and restoration of the Frederick Douglass home in Anacostia, Maryland.

In 1946, all four structures located in the two parcels immediately north of the Michigan Street Baptist Church were demolished, including Peyton Harris House(s) at 515, 517 Michigan Avenue, the Mary B. Talbert House at 521 Michigan Avenue, and the mixed residential/commercial structure at 523 Michigan Avenue. Afterwards, the parcel closest to the church was covered by a grass lawn, while the northernmost parcel was covered by a paved asphalt surface and was used as a parking lot.

Throughout most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, no significant structural alterations were made to the Michigan Street Baptist Church. However, at the start of Rev. J. Edward Nash's ministry in the early 1890s, a number of modifications were made, including the construction of a single-story, brick and wood-framed shed addition attached to the northern end of the church's eastern façade. In 1908, a two-story brick baptistery was attached to the church's eastern façade, along its central axis. However, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918 a fire broke out in the church's basement that caused damage to the structure as well as to furniture and interior decorations. During subsequent repairs, several modernizations were undertaken, including the installation of an electrical lighting system and a furnace. Two other fires are known to have occurred prior to 1950. A small fire was started in 1946 that was likely a result of the demolition of the Peyton Harris house at 515, 157 Michigan Avenue, while two years later, in 1948, a portion of the baptistery roof was set alight by flying embers during a large fire at the nearby Broadway Auditorium. The last major renovation made to the church took place in 1952, just prior to Reverend Nash's retirement, wherein the original exterior entryway and staircase were removed and replaced by an enclosed staircase contained within a new brick exonarthex centrally located on the church's western façade.

Following Rev. Nash's retirement and subsequent death in 1957, the Rev. Porter W. Phillips, Jr. became the Michigan Street Baptist Church's pastor. During his tenure, the Church's membership grew close to 600 members. By 1962, with the need for more physical space readily apparent, the congregation purchased the former Humbolt Parkway Methodist Church and soon moved to the new larger church building. Their old church structure was sold to the Macedonia Baptist Church, who owned and operated it until 1975. In 1974, the church building was nominated to and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, followed in 1980 by listing on the New York State Register of Historic Places (90NR01209; A02940.000033). Most of the other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood were demolished in the mid-1970s, following a massive population decline in the City of Buffalo, though significant efforts were made to preserve the church, in addition to preserving the Rev. J. Edward Nash's private residence.

In 1975, the church was sold to its current owner, the El Bethel Assembly – Light of the World Missions under the leadership of Bishop William K. Henderson. Under Henderson's leadership, many repairs were made to the building. He also envisioned the use of heritage tourism as a means to procure future funds that could help to maintain the church's structural fabric, and help to support the congregation. Efforts made to bring heritage tourism included historic research into the church's early history, in particular into the oral history of the church as a stop on the underground railroad. In the 1980s, when African-American heritage tours began to operate in the City of Buffalo, the Michigan Street Baptist Church was a frequent stop, during which Bishop Henderson would use his oratory skills to present the tourists with a plausible interpretation of how the church and its congregants participated in the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad.

**Archaeological Project.** Archaeological investigations at the Michigan Street Baptist Church began under the direction of Heather Lackos, MA, RPA on the last two Fridays and Saturdays of September 2021, the opening date coinciding with the 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mary Talbert’s birth (September 17<sup>th</sup>). The main goals for this archaeological investigation were to examine the material aspects of the daily lives of African-Americans who resided in Buffalo during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and to use public archaeology as a medium through which community members could participate not only in hands-on archaeological excavations, but also participate in the interpretation of the site’s historic narrative.



*Community members (foreground) and archaeologist Heather Lackos (background) processing artifacts at the artifact washing station during the public Summer 2021 excavation.*

As part of the community dig, several activity stations were set up throughout the excavation area, including an artifact washing station and a comparative artifact display using materials collected from the Cataract House site, a famous hotel located in nearby Niagara Falls that was used by its staff as a stop on the Underground Railroad. This allowed members of the public and the UB Archaeological Survey crew to discuss the types of objects that were collected, who may have used them, why they ended up in the archaeological record, and why they might be significant to our understanding of African-American cultural heritage in western New York. Another station included a coloring activity and worksheets for children to record information about the excavation units

and the types of artifacts found. In addition, Buffalo and Erie County Public Library’s Bookmobile made an appearance during one of the exhibition days, allowing children and families who visited the site to browse or borrow books related to archaeology and African-American history.

The 2021 archaeological investigation included the excavation of 21 shovel test pits (STPs) in a 5 m (16 ft) grid across the entire site area. This was followed by the excavation of two 1x1 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft) test units (TUs). The first TU was positioned near the western end of the church building’s northern façade to locate a possible builder’s trench and/or to re-locate the southern foundation wall of the Peyton Harris house. The second TU was located at the church’s eastern end, in the area immediately north of the c. 1908 baptistery addition in an area where shovel testing had identified a particularly dense sheet-midden deposit containing a wide variety of domestic ceramic vessel fragments and cut animal bone. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, neither TU could be excavated to down to sterile subsoil; the TU were lined with plastic sheeting and backfilled.

The upcoming semi-public 2024 archaeological investigation will include the re-excavation and completion of the original two TUs, as well as the excavation of an additional 19 TUs. The new units will be placed throughout the site area, including coverage of all three historically significant structures and their rear-yard areas. In addition, test units will be excavated along the church’s frontage in the area formerly occupied by the pre-1952 external entry staircase, and in the Mary B. Talbert House’s road frontage. In conclusion, we encourage any NYAC member who is interested in the Michigan Street Baptist Church and/or the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century African-American archaeological contexts in western New York to contact the UB Archaeological Survey for more information.

Submitted by: Ryan Austin

## News from Curtin Archaeological Consulting, Inc.

Curtin Archaeological Consulting, Inc. has been involved in interesting Hudson, Mohawk, Susquehanna, and St. Lawrence drainage projects in 2023-2024. Here are some highlights of our work:

### The Meadow Street Precontact Site, Village of Otego, New York



*The Meadow Street Site (foreground), Otego, New York, on the Susquehanna River alluvial terraces. Looking west at sunset, December 14, 2023.*

The Meadow Street Precontact site in Otego, New York was investigated by Ed Curtin, Jenna Hendrick, and Kirsten Dymond in Phase 1 and 2 archaeological surveys conducted in October-December, 2023. A Phase 3 Data Recovery excavation will be conducted here during 2024. The Meadow Street site is located on alluvial terraces of the Susquehanna River in a geomorphic context similar to the Kuhr No. 1 and No. 2 sites that were excavated in this floodplain vicinity by former New York State Archaeologist Robert E. Funk. The extensive work in geomorphology and geoarchaeology conducted in the 1970s and 1980s by Funk and geologists Robert Dineen, James Kirkland, and Jay Fleisher provided a significant resource for understanding the floodplain context of the Meadow Street site and its geochronology. The Meadow Street site has a Late Woodland component and possibly an Early Woodland component. This site is not deeply stratified like the Kuhr No. 1 site but may include separate components in the A and B horizons. The data recovery project will examine this possibility.

The research context of this investigation also includes Funk's hypothesis that the small size and dispersed nature of Late Woodland residential sites in this area creates a form of invisibility that is responsible for the widely-recognized dearth of Late Woodland village sites in this part of the Susquehanna Valley.



*A Levanna point (left), and a contracting stem point from the Meadow Street site, Otego, New York, Strata 1 and 2, respectively. Both are made of Onondaga chert.*

### The Hill Road Site, Cedar Bluff, Town of Saratoga, New York

The Hill Road precontact site was excavated during spring 2023 and mentioned in last year's newsletter while the fieldwork was going on. We can provide another progress report here, while we write the final report. One important addition since the last report is that as excavation proceeded in one of the site loci, Locus 3, a workshop was identified where lobate to pointed base points similar to Adena, Rossville, and Fulton Turkey Tail points were made. Earlier stage bifaces were recovered here also, and spatial data may indicate the positions of different knappers, and even expert and novice positions within the workshop. This workshop is not far from where Landmark Archaeology, Inc. recovered undecorated pottery plausibly of the same age. It is also near two features that have been interpreted as small quarry pits, and the route to the ravine containing the site's water source, a small stream. The stream bed is bare rock and contains black shale with thin beds of black chert and greywacke. Other stones, including chert and quartzite, erode out of the glacial till into the stream and onto its slopes. At the Hill Road site, quartzite primarily was used for hammerstones. The chert in this area is identified as Snake Hill chert based on the original bedrock mapping published in 1912-1914, and field visits by archaeologist Charles Wray, published in 1948. Snake Hill shale is black siliceous shale that weathers white. Wray described it as "splintery" which may refer to its shaley lamination and warped appearance. We are examining evidence that at the Hill Road site its quality may have been improved by heat-treating. At the Hill Road site, Snake Hill chert can be recovered from the surface, the till (with shallow excavation), possibly from the bedrock (with slightly deeper excavation), and from the ravine. A mining pit excavated into the bedrock at Locus 3 may have recovered greywacke, which was used to make digging tools. As part of the research on this project, geologist David De Simone has modelled the train of available till chert carried in the path of glacial motion from identified chert sources. The Hill Road site is well within a path from the Snake Hill chert source near Fish Creek that may be the one that Wray visited.



*Fractured block of Snake Hill chert from the Hill Road Site surface. This "chert" is actually a knappable, siliceous shale.*



*This is the deepest Indigenous mine pit found at the Hill Road site. It extended through the till and into the fractured, upper bedrock. Shale debris, greywacke, and possibly chert were taken out of the bedrock during the precontact period.*

### ***The Bulletin Publication***

At the end of 2023, the article titled “The 1820s Hemphill Site African American Residence in Malta, New York” by Edward V. Curtin, Kerry L. Nelson, Kirsten Dymond, and Marie-Lorraine Pipes was published in *The Bulletin, Journal of the New York State Archaeological Association*, Volume 137, pages 43-59.

### **Presentations and Public Outreach**

In April, 2024 Ed Curtin and Jenna Hendrick presented papers at the annual meeting of the New York State Archaeological Association. Ed presented a paper titled “Some New Discoveries in Hudson Valley Archaeology, 2019-2023” coauthored with Kerry L. Nelson, Kirsten Dymond, and Jenna Hendrick. The intention of this paper was to present the results of data recovery excavations as presentations on this work were limited during the pandemic. This paper succinctly summarized the results of four CRM data recovery projects in terms of the major findings. In Greene County, Cat 21 Site 1 was a workshop site and living area in the valley below the Kalkberg chert- and crystal quartz-bearing REF Quarry site. It is associated in part with the REF Quarry and in part with Onondaga chert occurring in local glacial erratics. A workshop here contained evidence of unifacial blade manufacturing. In addition, set apart from this workshop, there were quartz crystal and crinoid stem workshops and a hide-scraping area and bedrock sources. The second site, Hill Road in Saratoga County, appears to be the only excavated Snake Hill chert quarry-workshop site. Curtin and Hendrick previously encountered Snake Hill chert cultural material at the Green Island Precontact Site, at the southern end of this chert’s bedrock sources. The Hill Road site is located on a ridge overlooking Saratoga Lake in the neighborhood of Cedar Bluff. The paper related chert procurement in and around the site to various local glacial till and bedrock sources. At the third site, the Hubbell-Smith historic site in Ballston, New York, ceramic and faunal data from 1813-1831 were recovered from a stratified deposit in which prior site disturbance and the redeposition of midden soil resulted in a significant, closed context associated with these two decades. These data are related to the rise and fall of the rural-industrialist Hubbell family. The fourth site was the Hemphill site in Malta, Saratoga County, where the earthfast house features and artifact assemblages from the Hemphill site have provided a fascinating glimpse into ca. 1820-1827 African American home life and traditional religious practices. The greatest emphasis in this paper was placed on the innovative knapped glass reduction process and tool technology.



*Snake Hill chert cultural material from the Hill Road Site. Top row: Stage 2 bifaces. Bottom row, from right: two lobate base point fragments and a lobate base, reworked end scraper. Far right: dorsal side of a unifacial quarry blank.*

Jenna Hendrick presented a more detailed paper on the Hill Road site in the Cedar Bluff locale overlooking Saratoga Lake. It was titled “Show Not Tell: Indigenous Lives at Cedar Bluff.” The presentation included the innovative analysis and interpretation of the Hill Road site using the technique of vignettes. Vignettes incorporate the archaeological data into scenes that include the people of the archaeological site engaged in activities that must have occurred there. They are empirical research written as short fictional literature. In this paper, the vignette explored time perspective at the generational and multigenerational scale. It did this by relating the human life span to attachment to place as well as the ecological dimension of food resource recovery time of the use and reuse of the site. At the temporal scale of a single occupation, the various adult and child activities (including play) that would have occurred at this quarry and workshop site, and its nearby water source, are invoked. The sense of being there evoked in this vignette includes the elder or expert and novice roles in relation to chert knapping by closely following the spatial distribution of bifaces and point fragments in different reduction stages where Adena- and Rossville-like, lobate based points were manufactured. This scene conveys the interconnected nature of place within sociocultural processes, and how they work together to maintain group traditions and identity via the bestowal of traditional knowledge.

Elsewhere, Ed Curtin made additional presentations on the Hemphill African American house site and cultural material assemblage. These were made to the Beauchamp Chapter, NYSAA in May 2023, the Van Epps-Hartley Chapter of NYSAA in November 2023, and Dr. Christopher Lindner’s class in African American Archaeology at Bard College in April 2024.

### **The Collections Management Project**

In 2023, we started a collections management project with the goal of furthering the curation of archaeological collections. Kirsten Dymond took the lead on this project as Collections Manager. Collections have been identified in terms of the repositories that would be most suitable based upon various idiosyncratic factors, including information from data recovery plans or Section 233 permits, as well as THPO concerns, client concerns, regional origin, or other factors. Short documents called Collections Management Initial Summaries were developed as narrative summaries of pertinent information needed for the collections management project as well as prospective repositories. About the same time, initial discussions were held to further the possibility of curating various collections at identified repositories. To date, the collection from the Hubbell-Smith site in the Town of Ballston has been curated at the New York State Museum, pursuant to the preference identified in the Data Recovery Plan.



*Collections Manager Kirsten Dymond restoring order after the repacking effort.*

The current Collections Management project began in July, 2023 and will continue for several years. It began with two collections management principles already recognized and long in use here. One of these involves storage: fundamental to the principle of protecting the collections in storage, the cultural material has been packaged in sealed, zip-lock plastic bags and the provenience information and field specimen (FS) numbers have been written on the bags with indelible ink. The bags have been stored in sturdy, stackable archival boxes with appropriate survey or site information and box inventory numbers written on the outside. The boxes have been stacked on pallets to elevate them off the floor. The elevation is a precaution should the floor flood. The other principle is to maintain an Information Storage and Retrieval System (ISRS), which is a database that allows quick access to storage location.

We have two of these that we refer to as Finding Guides. One Finding Guide is for cultural material collections and the other is for field records and other documents.

In November 2023, our project dealt with a collections management challenge that others also have experienced in other times and places. This is what happened to us as renters in an office complex: Plumbers working for the occupant in the room above our collections storage area broke a pipe, had trouble turning the water off, and allowed water to flow through our ceiling. We were notified after about 15 minutes of this. Although we store boxes on pallets as an anti-flood precaution, the water that came from above soaked many boxes. The pallets, as intended, protected the boxes from water that spread along the floor, but the boxes that were soaked from above weakened and collapsed downward, sometimes tipping over a column of boxes (the lids tended to stay on). It was immediately all hands on deck, moving the storage boxes to dry areas outside the room. Although there was damage to a large number of archival boxes containing cultural material, because the cultural material is stored in plastic zip-lock bags with indelible ink labelling there was no loss of cultural material or provenience information. Our restoration response required that we purchase new boxes, re-box the cultural material bags in the new boxes, and label and re-store the new boxes. Fortunately, our ISRS allowed us to move boxes around and re-store them easily, without *ad hoc* attempts to record where they came from during an on-the-fly inventory. We did not access the ISRS during the emergency. We simply were cognizant of its value in this operation and could employ it when we repacked and returned the boxes to storage. We could use the ISRS to our advantage, quickly moving boxes while avoiding a disorganized response. We used the ISRS to: (1) re-store boxes with the rest of their collection (when the other boxes were undamaged and still in place), (2) put other boxes back in storage quickly in general without needing to re-inventory storage locations, and (3) avoid concern if a few boxes ended up in new places in the storage room, because the location inventory was mostly intact, and a comprehensive new inventory would not be needed. We simply edited the ISRS to account for the location changes as the repacked boxes went into storage. Although we have truthfully used terms such as “easily” and “quickly” here, our response still took a few days to complete. Nonetheless, we saved time and maintained organization by having an ISRS already in place.

Submitted by: Ed Curtin and Jenna Hendrick

## Albany Mayor Proclaims "Dr. Paul Huey Day"



On May 5, 2024, at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Albany History Fair held this year at Historic Cherry Hill and co-sponsored by Crailo State Historic Site, Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan presented Dr. Huey with a proclamation declaring that day to be "Dr. Paul Huey Day" in Albany. Also presented were a proclamation and a citation each complete with large gold seals from the State Senate and Assembly signed by local legislators. These recognized Huey's accom-

plishments and "his commitment to raising awareness of the region's Dutch history and its significance."

All three documents described Dr. Huey's contributions to the understanding of life in early Albany through his excavations at the Fort Orange site and the study and preservation of more than 36 State Historic Sites ranging from Sackets Harbor Battlefield near Watertown, NY to the Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site near Huntington, Long Island.

Huey was speechless at the surprise, but soon recovered to thank everyone for these honors. Afterward, he said that all this truly was a recognition of the importance of archaeology to local communities, and he was very grateful for that.



*Dr. Huey receiving proclamation from Mayor*

<https://www.historiccherryhill.org>  
<https://parks.ny.gov/historic-sites/>

Submitted by: Lois Huey

### Inside Story Headline

Dr. Paul Huey Day proclaimed

## News from the NYAC Awards Committee

### Founders Award: Dr. Joseph Diamond

Nominated by Dr. Tisa N. Loewen

At NYAC's annual meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>, the Awards Committee presented the NYAC Founders Award to Dr. Joseph Diamond. This award is based on the nomination by Dr. Tisa N. Loewen, Visiting Instructor at SUNY Cortland and former student of Dr. Diamond's.

Dr. Diamond is currently Professor in the Anthropology Department at SUNY New Paltz. He received his PhD from SUNY Albany in 1999, completing a dissertation that addressed the terminal Late Woodland/Contact period in the Mid-Hudson Valley. For many years, he conducted CRM projects in the Hudson Valley, and taught numerous undergraduate field schools, such as at the Huguenot Street site. In recent years, his interests have focused on a forgotten African-American Burial Ground on Pine Street in Kingston, NY.

In 2012, Dr. Diamond published, *Owned in Life, Owned in Death: The Pine Street African and African-American Burial Ground in Kingston, New York*. This publication addresses the social, historical, and ethical issues associated with how the burials were handled, and the nonexistent care or documentation of the disturbed remains. He was recognized by the current caretakers of the cemetery during recent ceremonies honoring the ancestors.

Joe Diamond has dedicated his life to learning, teaching, and sharing a passion for New York archaeology. For these reasons, the Awards Committee presented him with a NYAC Founders Award.

Submitted by: Nina Versaggi

## Inside Story Headline

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Dr. Joseph Diamond  
awarded the Founders  
Award.

# News from the Robert E. Funk Memorial Archaeology Foundation, Inc

## Board Meetings

During the past annual cycle, the Funk Foundation board has met three times, on April 30 and September 30, 2023, and on April 7, 2024.

## Status of Current Grants

1. Albert Fulton, *Calibrating High-Resolution Paleocological Records for Archaeological Applications: Identifying Signatures of Climate Cyclicality and the "Paleoanthropocene" in Western New York State*. This project involved radiocarbon dating of sediment core samples used to track changing Holocene environmental conditions in western New York State, while assessing evidence of human interactions with the environment. In this research, he offers a perspective on the relationship between climatic and anthropogenic forest stressors in western New York that he refers to as the "Paleoanthropocene." The Funk Foundation has reviewed and accepted Fulton's grant report without revision and this research has been published with his colleague Dr. Catherine Yansa in *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*.

2. Ammie M. Chittim, *The Micromorphology of Glacial Sediment in Early Pottery*. Chittim has collected clay samples from a variety of locations across upstate New York to create a comparative sample that could assist ceramic clay sourcing. The research focus is on the micromorphology of glacially-derived sediments through petrographic analysis. She presented a summary of her research at the 2023 NYSAA meeting, and the board is currently reviewing her report.

3. John Garbellano, *Using AMS Dating to Refine the Chronology of Shellfish Exploitation in the Hudson River Estuary*. Garbellano's grant has paid for high precision AMS dates to assist the analysis of the Holocene chronology of the Dogan Point shell midden site on the Hudson River estuary in Westchester County. Five Funk Foundation-supported dates have been augmented by other AMS dates that have been funded by the New York State Museum. Garbellano is revising the report based on Board review comments.

4. Michele Troutman, *Memories Knapped in Stone: Lithic Technological Analysis and Chronological Study of the Johnsen #3 and Haviland Sites*. Michelle Troutman's grant has supported radiocarbon dating and lithic analysis of the Early Archaic Haviland Site near Cobleskill. This grant research has been part of her larger Binghamton University dissertation project, which compares the Haviland site to Bob Funk's Johnsen No. 3 site near Oneonta, in terms of chronology and potentially different regional flint knapping communities of practice associated with the Bifurcated Base Point and Kirk Traditions. Troutman has revised her report based on Board comments and this document is currently under review.

5. Douglas Riethmuller, *Trade or Homemade: Neutron Activation Analysis of Shenks Ferry and Kelso Pottery from the Thomas/Luckey Site, Chemung County, New York*. Riethmuller's grant supported neutron activation analysis of ceramic wares from the Late Woodland Thomas/Luckey site. This grant report is in revision.

## Finances

The Funk Foundation maintains a dedicated bank account through Trustco that is used solely for disbursing funds to grant awardees and for website costs. Based on donations and expenditures since April of 2023, the current balance of this account is \$21,811.06. Treasurer Al Funk is currently looking into short-term six and 12-month investment opportunities for portions of the account assets that are not anticipated to be used in the next year.

**Foundation Website**

The Funk Foundation website is now two decades old, and the Board has discussed developing a new website to more effectively (1) solicit grant applications, (2) disseminate research grant results, and (3) encourage donations. Kerry Nelson, a well-qualified outside consultant, submitted a proposal to redesign and rebuild the Foundation's website and the Board accepted her proposal in early 2024. The initial cost is \$500 to construct the Web site, and maintenance will cost \$250 per year, plus \$75 per hour for more than five hours of site maintenance/updating per year. Hosting on Wix.com using the TechSoup non-profit discount will cost \$115.20 annually. The new website is under development and is expected to launch in preliminary format in late April.

**Grant Cycle**

The Funk Foundation will be seeking grant proposals on or before October 15, 2024, for grant research to be reported in November, 2025. The grant awards will be determined by November 15. Application information will be available on the Funk Foundation website at [www.funkfoundation.org](http://www.funkfoundation.org). Acknowledging the 2023 NAGPRA regulations on Duty-of-Care requirements, future grant applications to study Indigenous archaeological collections held in museums or other repositories will require good faith consultation with appropriate Nations.

**Board Membership**

The Bylaws of the Funk Foundation require that the Board of Directors consists of a minimum of five and a maximum of nine members. In its September 30, 2023, meeting, the Board determined that new members should be added to help diversify the board in terms of gender, geography, and age. Any person in the New York archaeological community with a graduate degree who is interested in serving beginning in the fall of 2024 is invited to contact us.

Submitted by: Jon Lothrop



## NYAC Dues

**REMINDER!** Your 2024 dues are due. Annual dues are \$25.00 for members and \$15 for associate members (What a great deal!).

You can also make a contribution to our funds (Archaeology Month, Legal Defense, Education Outreach) and to our 50th Anniversary fund. We can also take donations for the Funk Foundation.

You can pay your dues by check (made out to NYAC) and mail them to me at the address below or by PayPal (use the email [amorton@fisherassoc.com](mailto:amorton@fisherassoc.com)). If you are not sure when you paid last, send me an email at [aewmorton96@gmail.com](mailto:aewmorton96@gmail.com) and I will check for you.

Ann Morton  
Morton Archaeological Research Services  
1215 Macedon Center Road  
Macedon, NY 14502  
[aewmorton96@gmail.com](mailto:aewmorton96@gmail.com)  
(585) 301-0965

## New York Archaeological Council Dues Notice 2024

New York Archaeological Council 2024 dues are now due. Please remember that any NYAC member who falls more than two years behind in dues payments will be removed from the member list. In order to return to membership, the current and previous year's dues must be paid.

The Archaeology Month, NYAC 50th Anniversary Fund, Educational Outreach, and Robert E. Funk Memorial Foundation and the Legal Defense funds need support. Please feel free to use this opportunity to make an additional tax-deductible contribution to one or more of these funds. We are also seeking funds to celebrate NYAC's 50th anniversary year.

Please note that NYAC now uses electronic communication for meeting notices, the annual newsletter, and other announcements. If you have not already done so, please be sure to sign up for communications by submitting your email address in the lower left corner of our main webpage (<https://nysarchaeology.org/nyac/>). Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this notice.

Please check here if you are a NYAC Founder's Award recipient (awardees receive lifetime membership) \_\_\_\_\_

NYAC Member	\$25.00	\$_____
Graduate Associate	\$15.00	\$_____
Associate Member	\$15.00	\$_____

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If you are behind in your dues, that amount is included here:

\$\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make an additional contribution to:

Archaeology Month \$\_\_\_\_\_

Legal Defense Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_

Educational Outreach \$\_\_\_\_\_

Robert E. Funk Memorial Foundation \$\_\_\_\_\_

NYAC 50th Anniversary Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$\_\_\_\_\_

### Member Information

Please check here if any information has changed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to **NYAC** and mail to: Ann E. W. Morton, NYAC Treasurer, 1215 Macedon Center Road, Macedon, NY 14502 (dues may also be paid using PayPal by sending funds to Ann at [amorton@fisherassoc.com](mailto:amorton@fisherassoc.com); please be sure to include a note for any funds donated beyond annual dues).



## **NYAC Fall Meeting 2024**

The NYAC fall meeting will take place September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at the Honors Center in College Hall at SUNY New Paltz. The Board meeting will be at 10:00 am and the general meeting at 1:00 pm. Look for an email from the secretary for details and parking directions as the meeting approaches. Hope to see you there!

### **NYAC Newsletter**

*For the 2025 newsletter, please submit by **May 15**.*

*Submit news in Word to Laurie Miroff by email at  
[lmiroff@binghamton.edu](mailto:lmiroff@binghamton.edu).*

*Note: please submit photos as .jpg files.*

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## New York Archaeological Council

### Executive Officers

President: Carol Weed

Vice-president: Joe Diamond

Secretary: Dan Mazeau

Treasurer: Ann Morton

### Board Members:

Lisa Anderson

Allison McGovern

Daria Merwin

Doug Perrelli

Kris Primeau

Beth Selig

Kate Whalen

David Witt



<https://nysarchaeology.org/nyac/>