

# A.S.C. NEWS

Issue No. 252

Newsletter of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut

January 2020

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

January 10, 2020

Dear Members,

Unfortunately, as some of you may have heard, ASC president Cosimo Sgarlata has developed medical issues that preclude him from fulfilling his role as the lead officer for the Society. As a result, I have agreed to step back in on an interim basis until a new president can be elected at our upcoming spring meeting. Hopefully, Cos will be able to continue to provide his valued contributions and his expertise that we have all come to rely upon over the many years he served as treasurer and a board of directors member for the ASC. I know we all extend to Cos our best wishes and hopes for a full recovery and we look forward to seeing him in the field and at our meetings once again.

Also, we are sorry to report that Dan Cruson will be retiring from the Board of Directors due to health issues. Having served on the Board for decades and for 18 ½ years as president, there are few who have contributed more to the ASC. Thanks and best wishes, Dan!

ASC Board of Directors have been working on some new and old initiatives, including a revision of our by-laws, completion of David Thompson's Benet Site report, upgrading the web site, and the ASC Spring meeting. Website manager Jeff Zaino anticipates that electronic dues payments will be possible by February. Planning for the Spring meeting in western CT in early May is well under way but the exact date has not been pinned down as of this writing. Please check the April issue of ASC News for more details.

The board will continue to come up with new ideas and programs that will facilitate the growth of our organization. Should any of you wish to serve on the board, please do not hesitate to contact myself, or Lee West, our newsletter editor. We would welcome new voices and ideas and want the membership's continued participation. And, we hope to see you at the FOSA Annual Meeting in March (see information posted in this newsletter) and at our Annual Spring Meeting in May.

*Nick Bellantoni  
Interim President*

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## NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Skeletal Remains Discovered Beneath Ridgefield Home May Belong to Revolutionary Soldiers**

*Nick Bellantoni and Scott Brady*

Construction activities working to lower the dirt grade under a house basement dating to 1790 uncovered human skeletal remains in Ridgefield, CT. Local police were contacted and reported the discovery to the Office of the Chief State's Medical Examiner, whose forensic team identified the remains as being historic and not

part of a modern criminal investigation. In turn, the state archaeologist was then notified to assume the enquiry. In Connecticut, the state archaeologist has statutory responsibility for investigating human remains that are over 50 years old.

Subsequent excavations, assisted by FOSA and ASC members, as well as anthropology graduate students from UConn, have yielded five skeletons of young, robust adult males, four of which were hastily buried together in a



Ridgefield Burials #1 and #2, Drawing by Barbara Calogero

common shallow grave where the bodies are commingled with overlapping arms and legs.

The discovered burials are located in the area of the Revolutionary War Battle of

Ridgefield (April 27, 1777), which followed British General Tryon's raid on Danbury where his troops destroyed a Patriot arsenal and burned a number of houses. As Tryon's companies were marching back to rendezvous with their ships anchored off of Westport, they passed through the Town of Ridgefield, where American Generals Benedict Arnold and Gold Selleck Silliman erected a barricade at a pinch point along the northern part of Ridgefield village to intercept the British advancement. Meanwhile,

American General David Wooster's regiments were harassing the British rear guard when the general was shot and killed prior to the redcoats fighting with Arnold's and Silliman's forces.

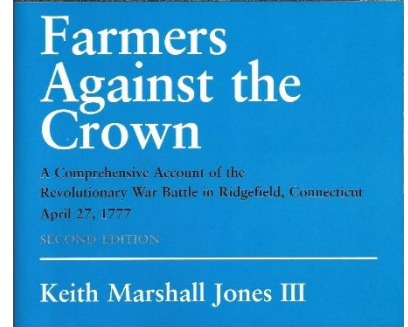
The British clashed with the Patriots at the barricade driving the defenders into withdrawal to regroup at the Saugatuck Bridge in Westport in order to mount a

new attack. Winning the day, the British encamped overnight in Ridgefield and buried their dead where they lay on the battlefield. Tryon's report listed 24 British killed and 28 missing. Historians recorded 16 British soldiers and eight Patriots were buried in a small field to the right of the American position on the

battlefield, though subsequent research offers varying estimates of the dead.

Our working hypothesis is that the burials found under the basement were victims of this historic battle. Material culture recovered from two individuals includes 38 brass and pewter buttons, which are in the process of being cleaned of corrosion to assist in determining insignias. The Office of State Archaeology will be assisted in the forensic and artifact identifications by in-state universities, including the University of Connecticut, Yale University, Quinnipiac University, as well as Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., and other laboratories around the country. Further information will be forthcoming as laboratory analyses continues.

*For further reading on the Revolutionary War battle of Ridgefield, the most complete account is in Farmers Against the Crown by Keith Marshall Jones III. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (2017) is available from the Ridgefield Historical Society*



## NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS



### FOSA NEWS

Greeting ASC Friends,

I hope you had a joyous holiday season and are off to a great start in the new year.

The selection committee for our new state archaeologist is close to offering the position to one of the two finalists. Having had the opportunity to hear both Dr. Sarah Sportsman and Dr. Heather Rockwell, I can only say the decision will be difficult as both delivered excellent presentations and have outstanding credentials.

Our FOSA volunteers have been hard at work processing the artifacts recovered during the 2019 field season. We hope to start cross-mending a selection of ceramics from the Hollister site in the coming weeks – a first for our FOSA volunteers. We meet most Mondays on the UConn Storrs Campus from 10-3. Anyone interested in participating can contact me at [foca.ct@gmail.com](mailto:foca.ct@gmail.com).

Last newsletter, I mentioned our iCRV internet streaming radio show, “Archaeology of Connecticut.” I would like to thank all of you have listened to the live show or one of the archived episodes. With your support the show had over 16,000 listens in November. If you are not currently listening, I hope you’ll give us a try.

Lastly, I am excited to announce that Gerald ‘Jerry’ Conlogue and Ronald G Beckett will be the presenters at the 2020 FOSA Annual Meeting, March 21<sup>st</sup>. Check out the details on the back page of this issue of the ASC Newsletter.

Enjoy the time off. Field season will be here before you know it.

*Scott Brady  
President-FOSA*

## Archaeology Club of Norwalk Community College



### Spring 2020 Meetings

All meetings will be in the Culinary Arts Dining Room on the West Campus (room W-121)

### February 13 – Dawn of Humanity

February is movie night at NCC. We will screen the award-winning documentary Dawn of Humanity, produced by NOVA and National Geographic. The film presents the astounding discovery of ancient fossil remains of human ancestors found very deep in a cave in South Africa. These remains help to fill in the evolutionary gap between ape-like australopithecines, such as the famous Lucy) and the earliest members of the human family. To get to the fossil-bearing portion of the cave, a team of specialists was assembled. Amongst their qualifications were the requirements that they be small, agile and definitely not

claustrophobic! Please join us in this exciting discovery!

Due to the length of this movie, we will start at 7:30 p.m. rather than our usual 8:00 p.m. time. As always, we will have coffee and refreshments, which will start at 7 p.m.

### March 12 – Battlefield Archaeology in CT

Our March meeting will feature Dr. Kevin McBride, who will discuss the Battlefield Archaeology of King Phillip’s War (1675-1676). This major event in the history of New England has only recently been examined using current archaeological methods of fieldwork and laboratory analysis.

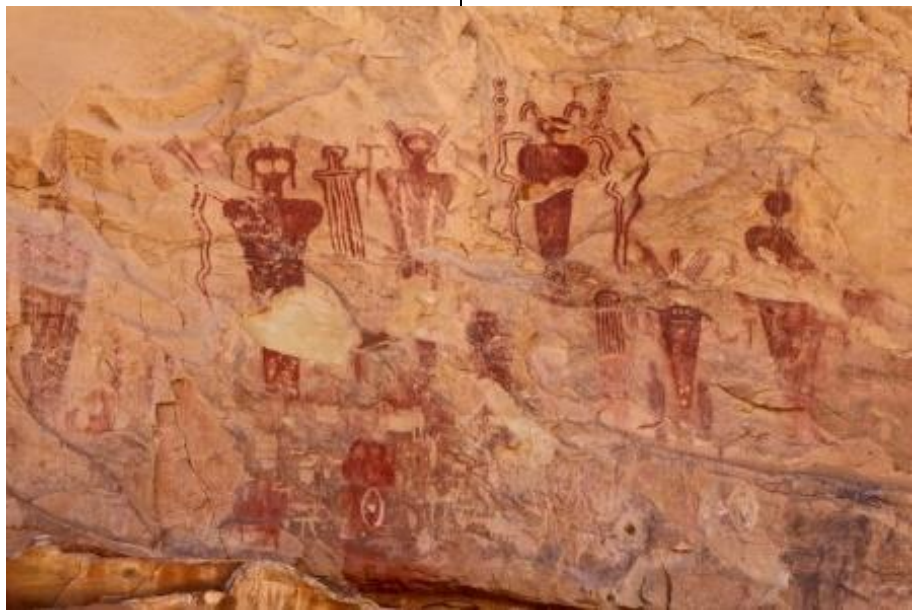
Dr. McBride will also bring us up-to-date on the recent discovery of three skeletons found under a house in Ridgefield. Currently, the remains are thought to have belonged to casualties of the Battle of Ridgefield, one of the major events in the history of the Revolutionary War in Connecticut. Excavated by acting State Archaeologist Nick Bellantoni and Yale’s Gary Aronsen, along with a group of volunteers from FOSA (Friends of the Office of State Archaeology), the Archaeological Society of Connecticut, the NCC Archaeology Club and a number of graduate students in archaeology and biological anthropology, the remains have begun to be analyzed by a team of experts from Yale and Quinnipiac University who will try to shed light on the identities of the skeletons.

## April 9 – Archaeological Oddities

Dr. Ken Feder will return to NCC to present his latest research into “Archaeological Oddities”, which is also the title of his latest book.



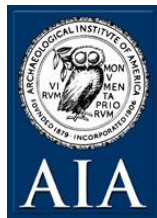
Does evidence show that Native Americans residing in Utah a thousand years ago lived among dinosaurs, depicting those creatures in their rock art? Did some of those same ancient Americans also encounter visitors from other planets, painting images of space-suited aliens on canyon walls? Have archaeologists discovered evidence that members of the Lost Tribes of Israel visited ancient America, leaving their mark by engraving the Ten Commandments on rocks in New Mexico? And Ohio? Is there archaeological evidence of ancient Celtic visitors to the new World in the form of messages etched in stone, megalithic monuments and even the remains of the villages in which they



lived? Finally, have archaeologists discovered the far western outpost of an ancient Egyptian pharaoh, not in Egypt of even Africa, but in all places, California?

Those questions and more will be answered by Dr. Feder both in his book, *Archaeological Oddities: A Field Guide to Forty Claims of Lost Civilizations, Ancient Visitors and Other Strange Sites in North America* (the equivalent of “fake news” about America’s ancient past.

As with Kenny’s last book (*Fifty Archaeological Sites to Visit in North America*), these sites are interesting places to visit! Come and hear his amusing take on these examples of spectacular claims about America’s past!



**American  
Institute of  
Archaeology**

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860-297-2543.

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020**  
7:00pm – Rittenberg Lounge –  
Mather Hall, Trinity College,  
Hartford, CT  
Steven Tuck, Miami University  
*Where Did the Pompeians Go?*  
*Searching for Refugees from the*  
*Eruption of Vesuvius AD 79*

New Haven Society Contact  
Carolyn M. Laferrière  
[carolyn.laferriere@yale.edu](mailto:carolyn.laferriere@yale.edu)

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020**  
5:30pm – Phelps Hall, Room  
207, 344 College Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
Matt Simonton, Arizona State U.  
*The Perikles Cup: New*  
*Archaeological Evidence for*  
*Athens’ Most Famous*  
*Politician?*



THE INSTITUTE FOR  
**AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES**  
*museum & research center*

**Artifact I.D. Day**

**February 9 @ 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

Join the conversation as **Director of Research and Collections, Lucianne Lavin, Ph. D.** identifies and provides interesting commentary about your local stone objects and Northeastern Native American cultural items. While we can't appraise or speculate about the value of an object, we can certainly talk about the who, what, when, where, and how of your mystery items! *Please limit 12 artifacts per person.*

Included in the Price of Admission: **IAIS Members Free; \$10 Adults, \$8 Seniors, \$6 Children.**

**Etuaptmumk: Two-Eyed Seeing**

**February 22 @ 1:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

*Etuaptmumk* is a Mi'kmaw saying that translates to "Two - Eyed Seeing." This concept refers to learning how to see from one eye the strengths of Indigenous knowledge, and from the other eye the strengths of Western knowledge. Two-Eyed Seeing can lead to powerful collaborative work between Native and Non-Native people with the goal of leaving the world a better place for future generations. Join **IAIS Education Coordinator and Traditional Storyteller Darlene Kascak**, Schaghticoke Tribal Nation along with **IAIS Educator and Ecologist Susan Scherf** for an interactive presentation and discussion that examines how people can include this "Two-Eyed Seeing" concept in their daily lives. We invite you to join the conversation.

Included in the Price of Admission: **Members Free; \$10 Adults, \$8 Seniors, \$6 Children.**

**The Institute for American Indian Studies (IAIS)**

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Washington, Connecticut 06793  
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## CURRENT RESEARCH

### **The Brian D. Jones Site (4-10B): A Multicomponent Paleoindian Site in Avon, Connecticut**

Sarah P. Sportman and David E. Leslie, AHS, Inc.

#### **Introduction**

A new Paleoindian site, the Brian D. Jones Site (Site 4-10B), was recently identified five feet below the present-day ground surface on the west bank of the Farmington River in Avon, Connecticut (Figure 1; Leslie and Sportman 2019; Leslie et al. in press). The site was occupied at least 12,500 years ago, making it the oldest known site in the state and one of the oldest documented human occupations in the Northeast.

Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. (AHS), under contract to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), found and excavated the site between January and April of 2019, as part of studies associated with a bridge replacement project. The excavations totaled 206 m<sup>2</sup> and comprised 100% of the site within the project area. The archaeological investigations at the Jones Site provide important new information about Paleoindian lifeways in Southern New England. The site's location on the bank of the river is also significant, as most documented New England Paleoindian sites have been found in upland areas and on the edges of glacial wetlands.

### **Site Discovery**

AHS, in consultation with CTDOT and the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (CTSHPO), named the site for the late Connecticut State Archaeologist Brian Jones, who played an instrumental role in the site's discovery and was a staunch advocate for its thorough investigation. Archaeological survey work for the bridge replacement project began in 2014, when Brian was working as Senior Archaeologist at AHS. A known Woodland Period Site (4-10) was previously identified and excavated in the project area by Ken Feder and Fred Warner (Warner 1996). Those excavations extended to a depth of about one meter below the present-day ground surface. Brian supervised the initial (2014) archaeological work for AHS that included a shovel test pit survey of the proposed CTDOT bridge-construction project. The archaeologists found no evidence of the Woodland site, which was apparently completely excavated by Feder and Warner in the 1980s and 1990s. Brian, however, recognized that the shovel test pits, which contained multiple layers of river-deposited soils, indicated the potential for deeply-buried archaeological deposits that could not be reached with traditional hand-excavation methods (Jones 2014).

Based on Brian's work, a Memorandum of Understanding was developed for the project, which outlined additional, deeper, archaeological testing of the project area to match the depths of project-related impacts. AHS worked with CTDOT to machine-strip the top five feet of soil from the project area. AHS archaeologists monitored the backhoe work, and halted the stripping when an artifact was uncovered. We then dug another round of test pits in the project area and conducted a ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey. The second round of testing quickly produced numerous lithic artifacts including chipping debris, primarily of Normanskill chert (Hudson Valley), as well as a Hardyston jasper (eastern Pennsylvania) channel flake from a fluted point.

### **Geomorphology and Site Formation Processes**

While the archaeological testing confirmed the presence of likely Paleoindian cultural materials, additional investigations, including the GPR survey, a review of LiDAR imagery, and a soil coring program conducted with UCONN Geosciences, shed light on how and why the site was preserved in this location. The geophysical and geomorphological work revealed the presence of a deeply buried ancient landform, known as a levee, along the banks of the river. Levees are natural ridges of sediment that are deposited adjacent to a river by overflowing water. In the Paleoindian period, the levee was situated between the river and resource-rich wetland. The landform would have been an attractive camp location that was high and dry and provided access to both the river and the abundant plant and animal resources of the wetland.

The unique geology of this section of the Farmington River Valley facilitated the preservation of the buried landform and associated archaeological site. Fortunately, a recent UCONN Geosciences graduate, Amber Nicoulin, conducted her Master's thesis research on the post-glacial Farmington River Valley (Nicoulin 2014). She determined that after Glacial Lake Farmington dam was breached about 16,000 years ago, the glacial moraine located about three miles south of the Jones Site, forced a change in the course of the previously south-flowing Farmington River (Stone et al. 2005). The block channeled the river course to the north, adjacent to the Talcott basalt ridge. About nine miles north of the site, the river flows through an existing notch in the ridge, which creates a knickpoint or part of a channel where there is a dramatic change in the slope. As a result, the river was effectively locked in its channel and the course of the Farmington

River in the site vicinity has not changed in 16,000 years. Since the river stayed in its channel, it did not wash the site away. Instead, the levee alongside the river was gently, repeatedly covered by fine-grained overbank and low-energy floods, which protected the levee from erosion and preserved the archaeological deposits.

### **Archaeological Investigation**

The archaeological investigations in the project area revealed six soil layers (HALV and ALV0-ALV4), three of which (ALV0, ALV1 and ALV2) contained Paleoindian artifacts (Figure 2). The archaeological investigations resulted in the recovery of over 100 stone tools, thousands of pieces of stone-tool-making debris, a drilled stone pendant fragment, grinding stones, and fragments of ochre. The grinding stones may have been used to process wild plant foods like nuts, as well as tubers from the nearby wetland. Twenty-seven cultural features that included hearths and posts were also identified. The features, which were found in the ALV1 and ALV2 soil layers, are especially significant, as only a handful of Paleoindian-period features have been found to-date in New England. Several of the hearths contained charred plant remains including cattail, waterlily, pondweed, pin cherry, strawberry, sumac, and acorn. One hearth (Feature 9) also contained a small assemblage of calcined bones from a small animal, possibly a bird or a reptile. A charred sample of pine wood from one of the hearths was radiocarbon-dated and returned a date of  $10,520 \pm 30$   $^{14}\text{C}$  yr. BP (approximately 12,500 years ago). Additional samples will soon be submitted for dating to get a fuller picture of the dates of occupation.

The lithic artifacts from the Jones Site are made from a variety of materials that originate across the region. These toolstones, which include Normanskill and Indian River chert from the Hudson Valley of New York, Hardyston jasper from eastern Pennsylvania, Jefferson/Mount Jasper rhyolite from northern New Hampshire, and possibly Munsungun chert from northern Maine, are commonly found on Paleoindian sites in the Northeast (Ellis and Lothrop 1989; Burke 2006; Lothrop et al. 2016; Singer 2017b). While the people who occupied the Jones Site seem to have preferred using such high-quality exotic materials, they also made tools out of materials that are found locally, including chalcedony, siltstone, and quartz. The tools, which include a fluted point base, preforms, channel flakes, *pièces esquillées* (wedges), endscrapers, sidescrapers, bifaces, utilized flakes, and graters, reflect the expected Paleoindian toolkit (Figure 3). The fluted point base fragment is made from Jefferson/Mount Jasper rhyolite and resembles Bull Brook/West Athens Hill point forms (Byers 1955; Robinson et al. 2009; Lothrop et al. 2016; Ellis and Lothrop 2019). Together, the radiocarbon date ( $10,520 \pm 30$   $^{14}\text{C}$  yr. BP) and the point type suggest at least one occupation of Site 4-10B dates to the Early Paleoindian period.

While artifact distributions across the site have not yet been completed, it was clear during the archaeological work that discrete activity loci were notably concentrated around features and the recovered tools suggest a variety of activities at the site. No complete spear points were recovered, but the artifact assemblage contained numerous channel flakes, which are a byproduct of spear point production, so we know that people were making the points on-site. While broken spear points are clearly indicative of hunting, the other recovered tools suggest a wide range of plant and animal processing activities, such as butchering animals, grinding plant foods, making wood and bone tools, and processing animal skins to make clothing and tents. The drilled stone pendant fragment provides the earliest known evidence for personal expression in Connecticut and the chunks of ochre, a natural red pigment, may have been used for personal ornamentation, artistic expression, or more functionally, as a binding agent for hafting stone tools (Wadley 2005).

Analyses are ongoing, but the Jones Site has incredible potential to shed light on the lives of the earliest inhabitants of Connecticut. The distribution of artifacts, fire pits, and posts across the site suggests that several individual houses and discrete areas of activity are preserved. The rare preservation of burned plant and animal remains provides new information about Paleoindian diets and will help us to better understand

local environmental conditions in this time period. Because of the excellent preservation, the site offers the potential to test many of theories archaeologists have about the daily lives of Paleoindian people in our region. Going forward, we will continue the analysis of the lithic artifacts, plant and animal remains, and spatial organization of the site to better understand site activities. We also plan to conduct specialized scientific analyses to glean as much information as possible from the Jones Site assemblage. These include additional radiocarbon dates, chemical analysis of animal and plant residues that may be present on stone tools, microscopic analysis of the wear patterns on tools and plant microfossils that may have adhered to tools or be present in fire pits, as well as analyses of the chemical and isotopic components of site soils.

## Conclusions

The Jones Site provides a tremendous opportunity to shed light on the lives of Paleoindian people in Connecticut. Preservation at the site is unprecedented and the presence of numerous cultural features, charred food remains, and discrete activity areas will help us understand site organization, dwellings, diet, and a range of activities. While analyses of site materials are ongoing, multiple occupations, including an Early Paleoindian component, are evident from our excavations. How the occupations of Site 4-10B fit into the overall Paleoindian period in the Northeast is a major emphasis of our ongoing research. We are continuing to analyze the soils, cultural features, artifacts, ecofacts, and spatial patterns from the site; these analyses will significantly contribute to our knowledge of this time period, as well as our ability to model other site locations.

In addition to its information potential as an individual archaeological site, the Jones Site is now the second deeply buried Paleoindian site in Connecticut discovered adjacent to a river. The Templeton Site in Washington, which was discovered by archaeologist Roger Moeller in the 1970s and is currently being investigated by Zachary Singer, is one of the only other known sites in New England that is located on river below several feet of flood-deposited soils. These two sites suggest that we need to revisit the models predicting Paleoindian site location. To date, many archaeologists assumed that in the period following the last Ice Age, river systems were too unstable to preserve archaeological sites. That no longer seems to hold and other deeply buried Paleoindian sites in the Northeast likely await discovery.

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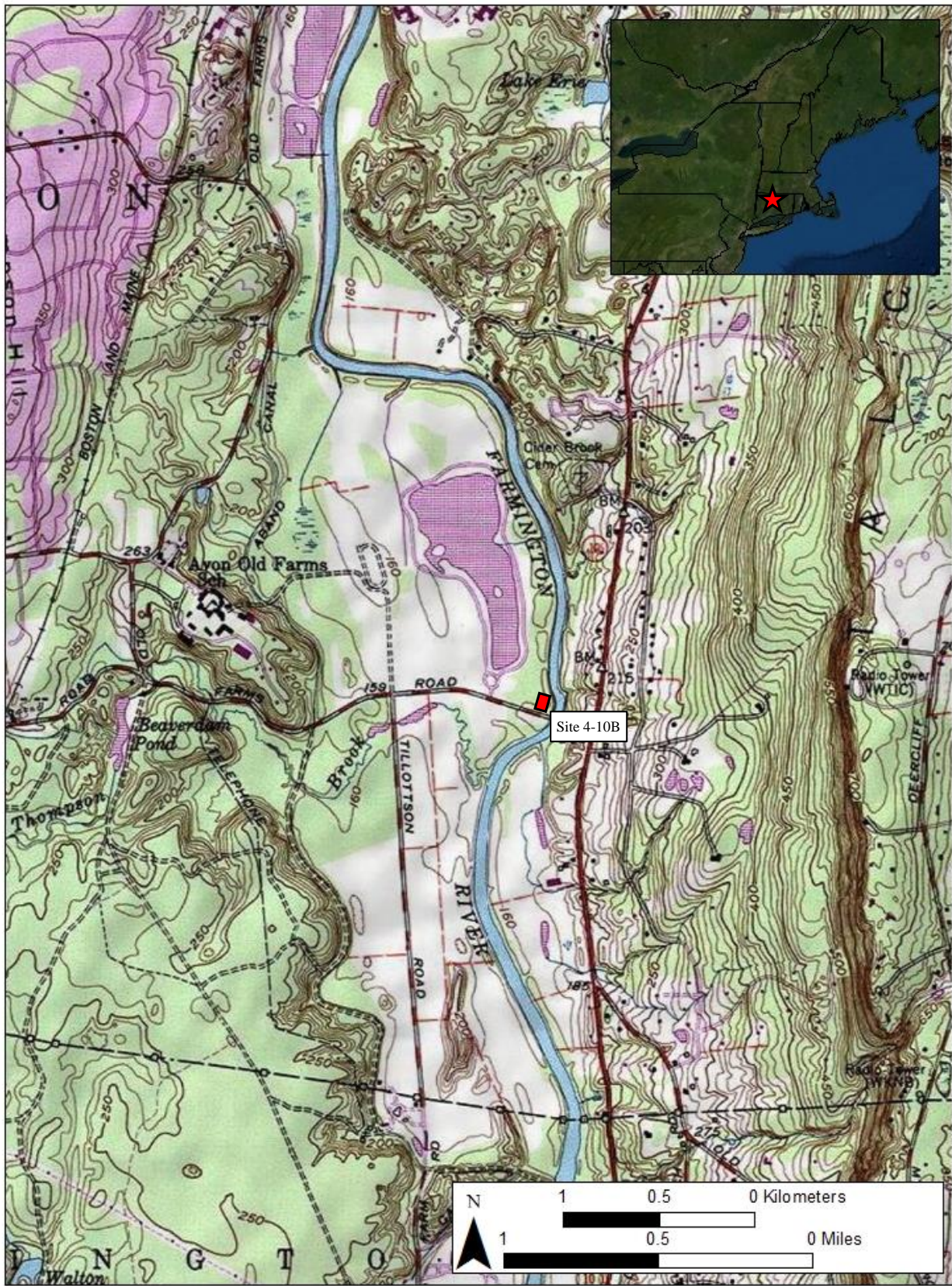


Figure 1: U.S. topographic map showing the location of the Jones Site (4-10B)

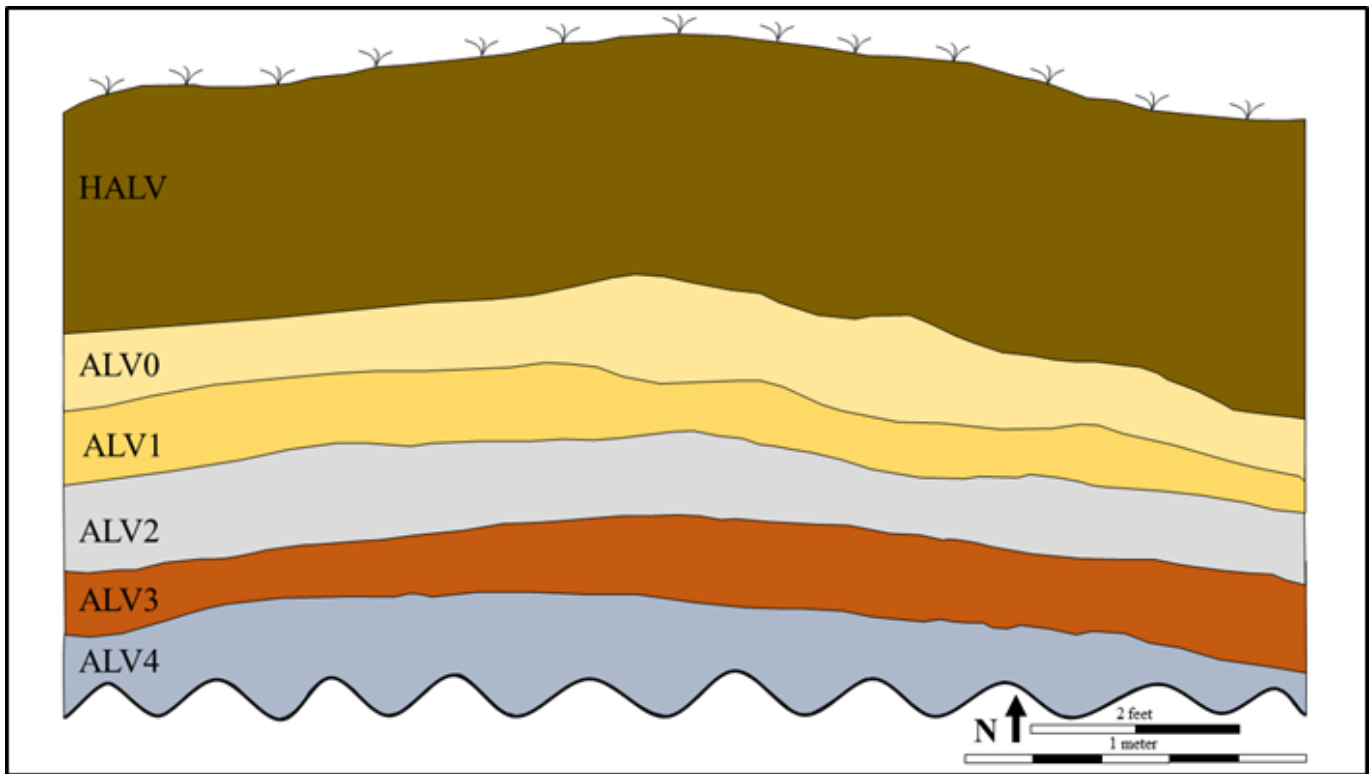


Figure 2: Composite stratigraphic profile of Site 4-10B (a version of this diagram also appears in Leslie et al. in press)

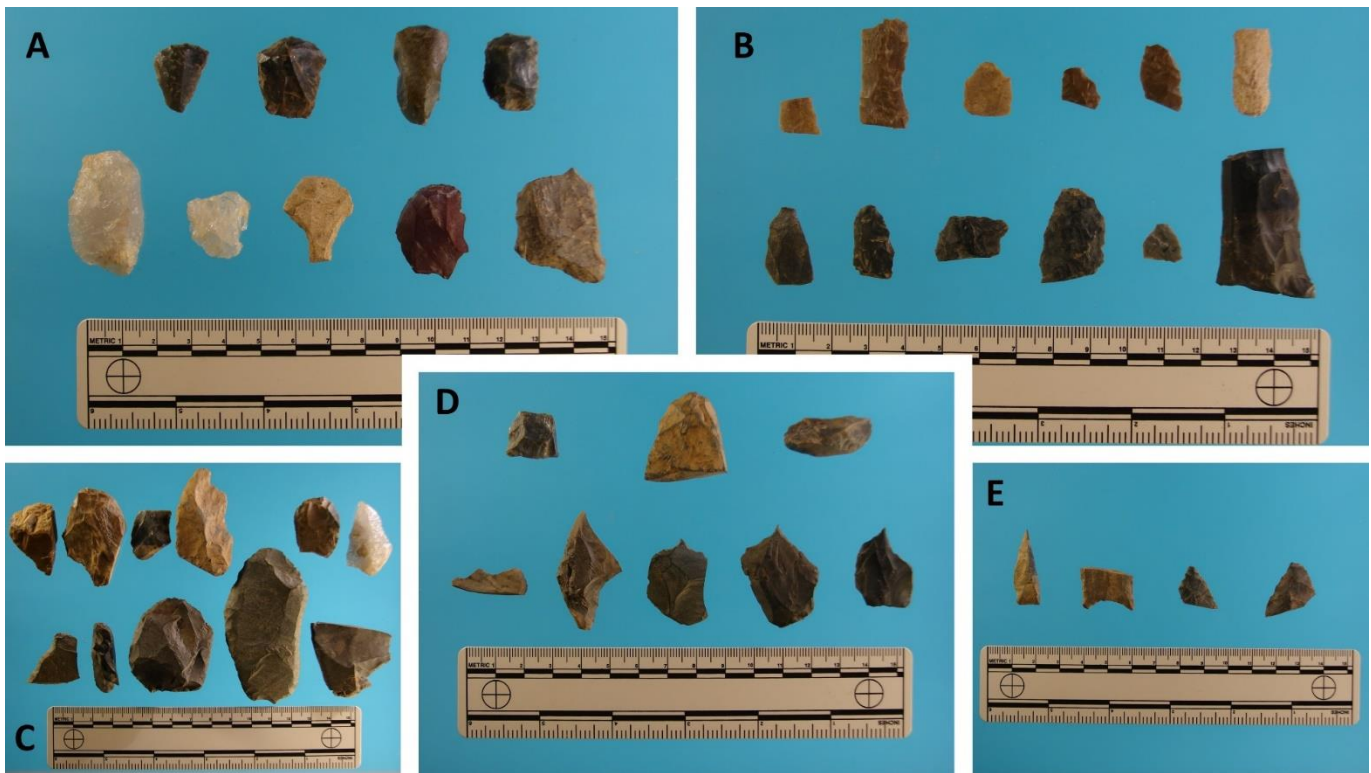


Figure 3: A selection of formal tools from the Jones Site: A) endscrapers; B) channel flake fragments (bottom right is an end thinning flake); C) side scrapers (second from bottom right also displays graver nipple); D) *pièces esquillées* (top), spokeshaves (bottom left two), and graters (bottom right three); E) point fragments (center left is Bull Brook/West Athens Hill type)

## Hopewell in Connecticut?

April 23, 2019 an unusual style lithic point was found in East Haddam, Connecticut by a local couple while preparing to plant an apple tree. “I placed my shovel right here, made two or three attempts into the hard ground and I saw it fall from my shovel”. The property owners both looked at their finding in disbelief. They have unearthed small arrow points made of quartz before but nothing like this in size or material.



Using several reference materials on Native American projectile points of New England, it was determined that the style is a Hopewell from the Hopewell Culture of Ohio and is a very rare find in our State. It was then taken to the Connecticut State Archaeologist Dr. Brian Jones to verify that it is a Hopewell point and to determine its material. During his inspection he pointed out an unusual feature, a “Fuzzy spot” in the stem approximately 3 mm in diameter, possibly a fossil or an inclusion in the material of the point.

Correspondence was made with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office with photographs and dimensions of the point. The Ohio Curator of Archaeology and the Senior Curator both agreed that the point is Hopewell from the Hopewell Culture and is commonly found in the Ohio Valley. (Late Archaic period 3000 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) They also suggested that the Hopewell point could have been possibly knapped as a point or a pre-form from the Ohio Flint Ridge but an in-hand inspection would be needed to confirm.

While researching this point, the “Templeton Site” was being excavated in Washington Depot, Connecticut by Dr. Zachary Singer who expressed an interest in seeing the Hopewell. He asked that we bring it with us to the site on the days we were scheduled to volunteer our support.

During Dr. Singer’s inspection of this Hopewell point, he identified the material as Normanskill Chert from the eastern quarries of New York Hudson Valley region. He had seen this material before while studying the upper state and eastern New York quarries, specifically pointing out the microfossils stating, “these are radiolaria and are commonly found in Ordovician Normanskill chert”.



*Dr. Zac Singer looking at point with Ken Beatrice*

Radiolaria are microscopic fossils that are the remains of silica-based organic debris, such as the shells of single-celled animals. On close inspection of the point, two other radiolaria fossils can be seen on its face. Another chert from the New York Hudson Valley used for lithic tools by New England Native Americans is Coxackie Chert, which is also found to have a moderate amount of radiolaria.

The question of the blade's usage is not obvious but because of its length (approximately 100 mm) and weight, it would normally not be used as an arrow point however, possibly used as a handheld spear. It also could have been hafted as a knife and used for butchering deer, elk, or caribou that were of abundance during that time period. On inspection and being considered as a knife both edges are serrated, one edge being straight while the other is convex. Both cutting surfaces could be used as a knife or a scraper during the task of tanning hides. Because of these physical characteristics the artifact is categorized as a spearhead/knife.

Hopewell in Connecticut ? Not really, but the Adena Culture, (Early Woodland period 1000 B.C. to 100 B.C.), was in Connecticut and also in some of our neighboring New England states.

As of this research, the Office of State Archaeology, Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni - interim CT State Archaeologist has no record of Hopewell habitation or burial sites in Connecticut. Furthermore, to add to the rarity of this Hopewell found in East Haddam, the Connecticut Museum of Natural History collections include no similar style spearhead/knife nor have any been recorded in the Connecticut town reports.

An Adena site with a cremation has been excavated in Connecticut, possibly that of a hunting party. Several lithic artifacts were unearthed from that site and the charcoal found radiocarbon dated the site at 3,400 and 4,000 years ago.

Artifacts of Adena have also been found in New Jersey, New York and Delaware. Vinette style pottery vessels have been excavated in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Adena people were primarily hunter-gathers and their funerary practices and other spiritual customs were similar to those of the Hopewell Culture.

Of the many archaeologists who have studied the Adena Culture some claim they were a precursor to the traditions of the Hopewell Culture of Ohio. The Hopewell people developed methods of crafting and utilizing pottery, wooden spoons, copper effigies and finely carved tobacco pipes. The Hopewell, of course, are also well known for their unique burial mounds in the Ohio Valley.

In conclusion, next time you are toiling in your gardens or planting a tree, keep your eyes open to what you might uncover. One never knows what may be hiding beneath the soil.

We would like to thank the late Dr. Jones, Dr. Bellantoni, Dr. Singer and Scott Brady for their expertise and sharing their knowledge with this continuing research project. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office for their input and confirmation of this rare Connecticut find.

*Ken & Bonnie Beatrice*

## **Out of the Fire & Into the Record: The 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Ephraim Sprague House**

Katharine Reinhart  
Archaeological & Historical Services, Inc.

The Ephraim Sprague House Site (1-12) is an 18<sup>th</sup>-century homestead located in Andover, Connecticut. The house itself was occupied by the Sprague family from about 1705 until it burned down in the 1750s. After it burned, the Spragues followed the common 18<sup>th</sup>-century practice of abandoning the house, pushing the remains into the cellar, filling it with soil, and allowing it to become part of agricultural fields (Harper and Harper 2007). While the fire would have most certainly been a tragedy for the family that once occupied this house, it also resulted in Site 1-12 becoming one of the best preserved historic domestic sites in New England. The remains of the Sprague House were left undisturbed until 2000, when Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. (AHS) completed Phase III excavations at the site. The initial Phase I testing was conducted in the spring of 1997 as part of a road extension project for the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), but until Phase II excavations and research were conducted in 1998, it was not clear that there was a well-preserved 18<sup>th</sup> century house in the project area. Phase III excavations confirmed the presence of two cellar features outlining a house structure, as well as two hearth features.

The macrobotanical specimens recovered from the Sprague House site reflect amazing preservation, but due to time and budgetary constraints only a small sample was analyzed by Nancy Asch Sidell in 2003. The originally analyzed sample included a cache of potatoes, a cache of oat grains, two masses of maize kernels, and a husked pignut hickory shell (Harper and Harper 2007). These specimens were specifically chosen for their provenience in storage pits, known in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century as “sauce pits,” that had been dug into the cellar floor. While this site was thoroughly excavated, and a majority of the artifact assemblage recovered from 1-12 has been analyzed and interpreted, a richer analysis of the macrobotanical assemblage was one piece of the puzzle that remained to flesh out the story of the daily lives of Ephraim Sprague and his family. Analysis of macrobotanical assemblages can inform archaeologists about when a site was occupied, as well as the dietary and medicinal practices of the site’s occupants (Pearsall 2015). In the case of Site 1-12, the analyzed sample of plant remains bolstered the interpretation that the house burned down sometime in the fall, winter, or spring (Harper and Harper 2007).

While the samples chosen for this preliminary analysis provided answers to how and when foods may have been stored at the time of the fire, there were still questions left unanswered. In 2017, I was able to conduct additional macrobotanical analysis of soil samples recovered from this site. The work was funded through a Lyent Russell

Grant from the Archaeological Society of Connecticut (ASC) and matched funding from AHS. I chose the central hearth feature (Feature 19; Figure 1) as the focus of this investigation due to its traditional importance in the home during this period. The goal of the new analysis was to expand upon our understanding of the range of species represented in the assemblage, the importance of those species, and to understand which foods were prepared for family meals.



Figure 1. Photograph of plan and profile view of Feature 19 from the Phase III Report

During the analysis of Feature 19, it quickly became apparent that the specimens recovered reflected the same incredible level of preservation as the rest of the site. Complete kernels of maize, as well as peas, elderberry, an apple seed, ground cherry seed, wheat, rye and oats were identified from the Feature 19 soil samples (Figures 2-4). The acidic soils of New England rarely preserve complete seeds or plant parts, but the thick ash from the hearth and rapid burning and filling of the overall site resulted in extraordinary preservation of botanical remains. Of the 920 specimens identified during this analysis, the most prevalent species included maize (72%), peas (5%), and beans (4%). Species that were found in lower density, but worth noting included bayberry (2%), hazelnut (4%), wheat (2%), rye (1%), barley (1%), oat (1%), raspberry (<1%), apple (<1%), squash (<1%), and groundnut (<1%). Such a varied assemblage speaks volumes to both the affluence of the Sprague family as well as the food choices that were being made by the site's occupants.



Figure 2. A pea specimen recovered from Feature 19

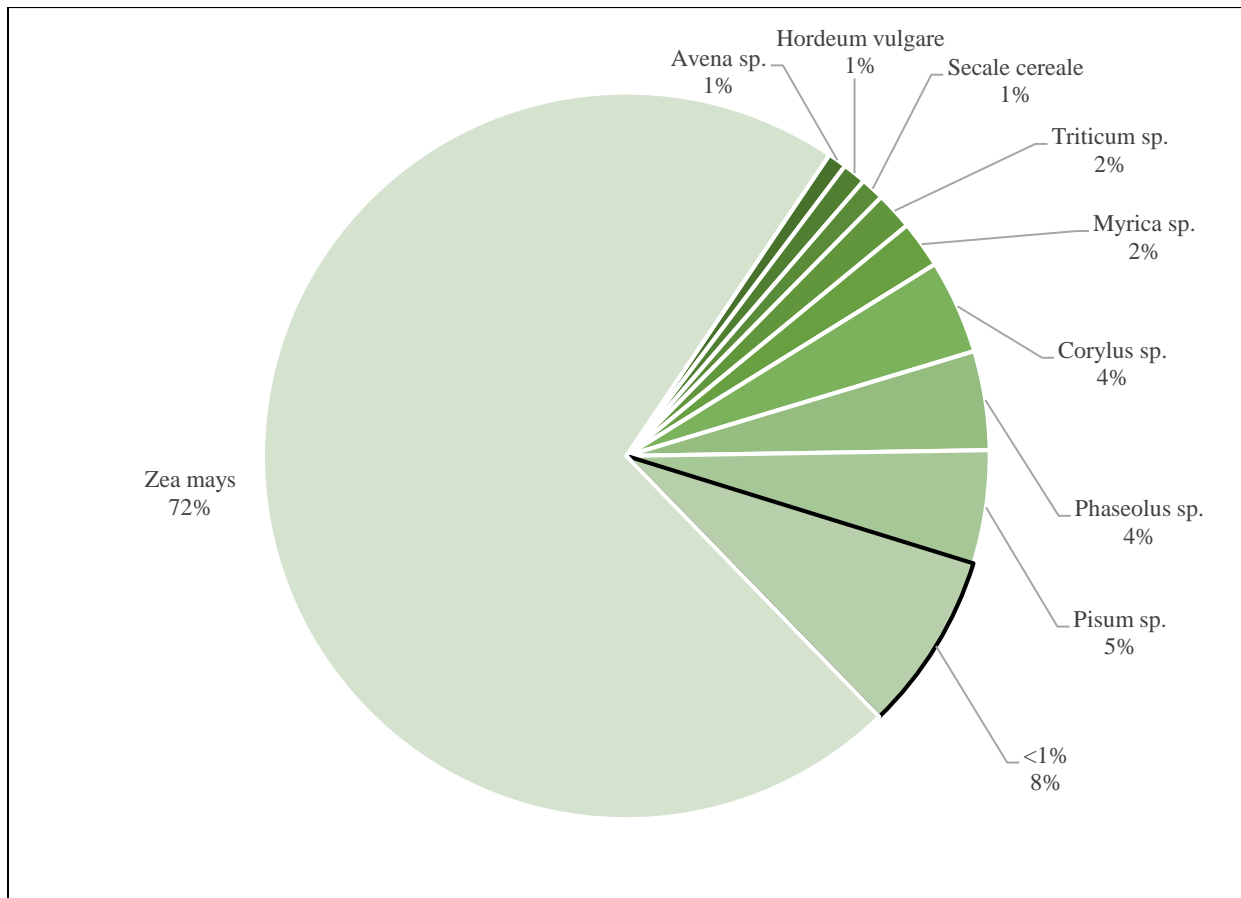


Figure 3. Several bean fragments recovered from Feature 19



Figure 4. Two maize kernels recovered from Feature 19

Ephraim Sprague began as a “middling-sort” of farmer and was able to raise his family’s status through his service as a militia captain, deacon, selectman, and town representative in Lebanon (now Andover) (Harper and Harper 2007). The overall artifact assemblage of 1-12 reflects a household utilizing high quality materials and a table graced with expensive place settings. The artifacts reflect a higher economic status than would have been common among households on the New England frontier, and the story becomes more complex with the added analysis of the macrobotanical assemblage from the central hearth feature. A heavy reliance on domesticates that likely were cultivated by the Spragues or purchased from neighbors is certainly reflected in the high density of maize, peas, beans, and cereal grains recovered. Despite access to foods that were considered staples of the colonial New England diet, at least 15% of the species identified were non-domesticated species that could have been harvested from the surrounding environment. Represented within this small, yet significant part of the assemblage are hickory, walnut, hazelnut, strawberry, goosefoot, and raspberry. Figure 5 provides percentages of species identified.





Scientific Name	Common Name	Count
<i>Avena sp.</i>	Oat	4
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>	Barley	5
<i>Secale cereale</i>	Rye	5
<i>Triticum sp.</i>	Wheat	8
<i>Myrica sp.</i>	Bayberry	10
<i>Corylus sp.</i>	Hazelnut	20
<i>Phaseolus sp.</i>	Bean	21
<i>Pisum sp.</i>	Pea	24
<1%	Groundnut, Milkweed, Birch, Squash, Strawberry, Huckleberry, Apple, Groundcherry, Peach, Grape, Hickory, Walnut, Cherry, Raspberry, Goosefoot, Butternut, Elderberry	38
<i>Zea mays</i>	Maize	342

Figure 5. Identified species in Feature 19.

## CONCLUSIONS

Site 1-12 greatly enhances our understanding of 18<sup>th</sup> century lifeways in New England. The ability to add new facets to the story of the Sprague family is crucial to appreciating the details of their daily lives (in addition to the daily lives of other New Englanders from the time). The foodstuffs identified during this analysis add to the picture painted by contemporary documentary records such as Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*, 1796 (1984) and allow us to see more clearly into these 18<sup>th</sup>-century kitchens. The heavy reliance on maize reflected in the assemblage is no surprise considering this had become a crucial colonial crop, and Ephraim Sprague began his farming venture with the cultivation of the grain (Harper and Harper 2007). The consumption of non-domesticated species in tandem with domesticated species reflects both the agency of the site's occupants in their food choices, as well as the availability of various plant foods on the Connecticut frontier. I plan to expand upon the results of this in future publications.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### RAMAPOUGH LENAPE HERITAGE



ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY &  
CULTURE: 10,500 B.C. to the Present



EDWARD J. LENIK

### **Ramapough Lenape Heritage: Archaeology, History & Culture: 10,500 B. C. to the present**

**By Edward J. Lenik**

With the publication of his fourth book on the Ramapough Lenape people of northern New Jersey and southeastern New York, archaeologist **Edward J. Lenik** celebrates a half century of research and investigation. *Ramapough Lenape Heritage* focuses on the archaeological evidence of continuous indigenous occupation Lenik and others have uncovered from early 20<sup>th</sup> century explorations by amateur archaeologists to the careful, scientific excavations and analyses of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century professionals like himself. Much of the material in this book can be found only in cultural resource studies filed in New York and New Jersey state repositories.

The Stag Run Village site, the Trading Post site, the Sheffield Farm House site, the Indian Field Village site, Mountainside Farm

and numerous open air campsites, workshops, lithic scatter and quarry sites are discussed. The mysterious Prehistoric Walls site in Sloatsburg, NY is presented in detail with new insights. Halifax or Green Mountain Valley in Mahwah, NJ is examined both archaeologically and historically using census data to identify some of its former occupants.

The 280-page book, printed in color, features 13 tables and 128 illustrations including photographs, maps, field sketches and drawings.

**Ramapough Lenape Heritage** can be purchased for \$20 from the North Jersey Highlands Historical Society Bookshop at Ringwood Manor State Park or can be ordered by sending a check for \$20 plus \$4 shipping and handling to North Jersey Highland Historical Society (NJHHS) at P.O. Box 248, Ringwood, NJ 07456.

## CALENDAR

To help members plan their calendars, we post the dates of meetings of interest in Connecticut and neighboring states, not mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. Please contact the editor with any meetings you are aware of which you feel would be of interest to the membership.

**January 8-11, 2020** Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Boston, MA

**March 19-22, 2020**, Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC), Ocean City, MD

**March 28, 2020**, Conference on New England Archaeology, Durham, NH

**April 3-5, 2020**, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology Annual Meeting, Ligonier, PA

**April 22-26, 2020**, Society for American Archaeology, Austin, TX

**April 24-26, 2020**, New York State Archaeological Association Conference, Suffern, NY

**January 6-9, 2021**, Society for Historical Archaeology, Lisbon, Portugal

## ASC ON-LINE RESOURCES

### ASC Website

<https://www.ctarchaeology.org/>

### ASC Bulletins & Newsletters

CT Digital Archive, UConn

[https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/islandora/object/20002%3A\\_ArchSocCT](https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/islandora/object/20002%3A_ArchSocCT)

### Bulletin Back Issues Available

Many old issues are still available in hard copy, and before 2017 are only \$3 plus postage. Contact Lee West for details

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## 2020 DUES NOW PAYABLE

It's time to renew your membership for 2020. A separate renewal form is also included with this mailing. Check your mailing label if you are unsure if you are current. (The label may not reflect payments received in the last month.) If it reads 19 or earlier, please fill out the form and mail it back with your check. Thanks!

I want to apply/renew membership in the Archaeological Society of Connecticut (ASC) to promote archaeological research, conservation and service. Enclosed are my dues for the membership category: (circle one)

<i>Individual</i>	\$25.00
<i>Student*</i>	\$10.00
<i>Institutional</i>	\$40.00
<i>Life</i>	\$300.00

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(for students)

The newsletter will be sent to you electronically unless you indicate otherwise below:

I wish to receive ASC News by mail instead of electronic delivery

\*Student Membership includes electronic newsletters, hard copy bulletins, and for each new member one back issue of the bulletin of your choice subject to availability.

Send payment to Lee West, ASC Membership Chair, 366 Main St., Wethersfield, CT 06109 or online at [ASC website](#) (after February). **Starting in 2020, membership cards will no longer be issued.**

# Mummy Adventures Since the Road Show

Presented by: Friends of the Office of State Archaeology

Saturday, March 21, 2020 at 3:00pm

(Snow Date: Sunday, March 22, 2019)

2:00 p.m. FOSA Annual Meeting



**Farmington High School Auditorium**  
10 Monteith Drive, Farmington, CT

## Guest Speakers:

**Dr. Ronald G. Beckett (at left)**  
Professor Emeritus  
Department of Biomedical Sciences  
Quinnipiac University

**Dr. Gerald Conlogue (at right)**  
Professor Emeritus  
Department of Diagnostic Imaging  
Quinnipiac University

*This presentation considers several grant-supported research projects Drs. Beckett and Conlogue have conducted on mummies from around the world since their 2010 talk to FOSA, including: a paleoimaging and bioarchaeological analysis of 60 mummies from the burial chambers of the mother church of Saint Nicholas of Bari, Gangi, Sicily, many of which presented with over-modeling of the face with partial or complete wax masks; analysis of 40 pre-Inca mummies of the Maranga Culture in Quito, Ecuador; and a special presentation of the Scientific Study of the Smoked Body Mummification Method and Ritual of Papua New Guinea's Anga Mummies – a struggle to keep the mummification tradition alive.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Directions to Farmington High School**

#### **From I-84 East or West:**

- 1) Take Exit 39, proceed west on Route 4/Farmington Avenue for 3.9 miles, crossing Route 10 at about 1.5 miles.
- 2) Approximately 2.4 miles past Route 10, turn right on Monteith Drive.
- 3) Drive past Town Hall at right, to Farmington High School at top of hill. Follow signs to parking and auditorium.

#### **From Route 4 East**

Drive 1.25 miles east of Route 177, turn left on Monteith Drive.  
Follow step 3 directions above.

\*\*\*\*\*

**General Admission - \$10.00**

**Non-Farmington Students with ID - \$5.00**

**FOSA, ASC, CSMNH, Farmington students & faculty admitted free with ID**

**Co-Sponsored by:** *Archaeological Society of CT & CT State Museum of Natural History & CT Archaeology Center*

**In the event of inclement weather, please check for updates after 10.30 a.m. at <http://www.fosa-ct.org/> or on Facebook at Office of State Archaeology, Connecticut**