

**NEWSLETTER**

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**A History of Long Island Archaeology**  
Gaynell Stone, Ph.D.

(Continuing)

**Later Historic Period**

The Institute for Long Island Archaeology at Stony Brook University excavated many NYS DOT sites on the Island when road work changes were made. One project was testing the length of Route 112 from Coram Pond to Port Jefferson. One of the most unique sites discovered was the turn of the century Venetian 'resort' on the Coram Pond, complete with gondoliers, restaurants, etc. – early Disneyland on eastern Long Island. The pond site was obliterated by several highway revampings, and is now just a multiple cross-roads. The report, with intriguing pictures, is now presumably at the New York State Museum.

Some of the most recent archaeology has been at sites inhabited by African Americans, such as the work of Dr. Chris Matthews, as noted above. Due to DOT regulations, archaeological testing was done on a road-side site in the Miller Place-Wading River area, Brookhaven



Town by **Mark LoRusso** of the N.Y.S. Cultural Resource Survey Program ("A Cultural Resource Survey Report for Data Recovery Investigations of the Betsey Prince Site and the Prince-Miller Site," New York State Museum; also published in John P. Hart and Charles Fisher, *Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*

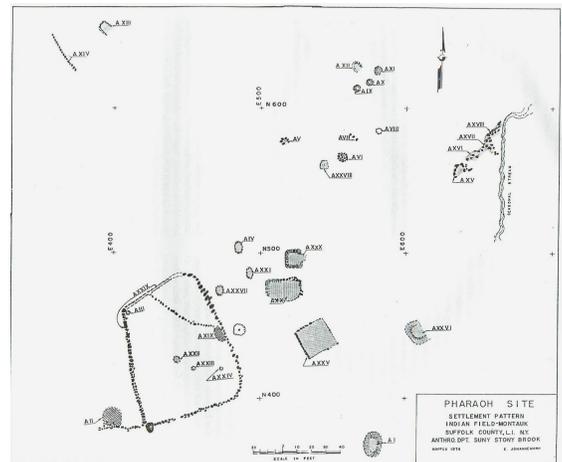
*Domestic Site Archaeology in New York State*, N.Y.S. Museum Bulletin 495, Albany. Unexpectedly, the Betsey Prince site was discovered in 1993 by a proposed road widening of Rt. 25A in Rocky Point. Jonah Miller, possibly the first occupant, was exceptional among freedmen as a taxed landowner in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Betsey Prince and others occupied the site in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The material culture indicated a modest lifestyle; there was a weak archaeological association, although documentary evidence showed the site was inhabited by freed blacks.

This was a rare and unique site that has not been found before on Long Island. Archaeologist Dr. **Allison Manfra McGovern** has analyzed the artifacts to reveal a family making a modest living from farming, the nearby cordwood industry, etc. She utilized the data for her M.A. at Syracuse University, (*Race and Ethnicity in Early America Reflected*

Through Evidence from the Betsey Prince Archaeological Site in Long Island, New York,) which indicated the presumed occupations of these early freed Africans. She has also led excavations at the Ketcham Inn in East Moriches, the East Hampton Farm Museum, and the Pyrrhus Concer site in Southampton. Pyrrhus was an exceptional freed slave who became a whaler, whose ship rescued shipwrecked Japanese sailors. When they were taken captive in Yokohama Harbor returning the sailors, he was taken before the Emperor of Japan, who had never seen a black person. He later operated the ferry on Lake Agawam from downtown Southampton to the Atlantic beaches for many years.



**Dr. McGovern** has utilized the survey, excavation, artifacts, and mapping of the Indian Fields site by Edward Johannemann (*The History & Archaeology of the Montauk*, 1983: 643-662) to analyze for her dissertation, (*Disrupting the Narrative: Labor and Survivance for the Montaukett of Eastern Long Island*, CUNY Graduate Center, 2015). She focused on the lifeways of two families – the Fowlers and the Pharaohs – both of whose Montauk homes were moved to Freetown, an enclave of freed slaves and Native people north of East Hampton village. This is a reminder that the findings of excavation are useful many years later. The remaining Montaukett houses at Indian Fields, and their records, were burned by developer Egbert Benson. East Hampton Town has been allowing the George Fowler house – the rarest architectural site on the Island – to disintegrate, while spending millions on preserving houses of artists. Restoration has just begun after the Town board recently learned Montaukett history from SCAA's Vol. III, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.



**Dr. Bradley Phillippi** of Hofstra University has continued unearthing aspects of African American life in his recent excavations at the historic Thompson house in Stony Brook. (From *Coercion to Compensation: Labor Systems and Spatial Practice on a Plural Farmstead, Long Island, Northwestern University, 2016*). He posits that the evidence of garbage thrown out the back door was an act of resistance by the enslaved workers, since the artifacts found indicate this continued to occur after the Thompsons were trying to create the backyard as a newly manicured landscape.



Other historic structures on eastern Long Island which have had archaeological attention are the Davis house in Coram by Dr. Linda Barber; the Stony Brook Grist Mill by Dr. Toni Silver, as well as the Suydam House in Centerport; The Arsenal in Huntington by Cammisa's Tracker Archaeology most recently; Center Moriches' Ketcham Inn by Drs. Silver, Barber, and McGovern; and the Blydenburgh house by years of SCAA student field schools.

One of the most unique archaeological studies on the Island, possibly not done anywhere else in the U.S., was the Cultural Resources Survey at Brookhaven National Laboratory of the vestiges of WWI trench warfare. The original Camp Upton site provided basic training for many men from New York City and the Northeast. An early tank was brought from England to provide that aspect of war training. This training ground, which was still in evidence, was to be reused for the Lab's latest accelerator and would be wiped out without record if the Survey was not done.

The ecological background of the site revealed a historic forest so dense that when cut down, men could walk from tree stump to tree stump without touching the ground -- "Historic Cultural Resources Inventory, Camp Upton: Part I and Part II, Johannemann (Truex, ed., Vol. V, 1985:244-279). A second study of related areas was later done by the Institute for Long Island Archaeology of Stony Brook University (now at the New York State Museum). ILIA artifacts from East Hampton and Southampton Towns are now stored at the Eastville Community Historical Society in Sag Harbor under Dr. McGovern's supervision.

#### **Phil Weigand, Explorer**

Dr. Phil Weigand (1937-2011) was the chair of the Anthropology Department, Stony Brook University, in the 1980s and spent years supervising extensive excavations at a major unknown archaeological site in western Mexico, Guachimontones. Film makers of Explora Mesico of El Colegio de Michoacan recorded this unique story in a bilingual DVD ([www.sandibooks.com](http://www.sandibooks.com)).

Another portion of the film details Phil's support of archaeological research on Long Island. He developed the Long Island Archaeology Project within the department, which produced scores of archaeological reports of endangered sites. A number of his students have contributed to the archaeology of Long Island, such as Dr. Gaynell Stone, who photographed and analyzed over 4,200 Colonial gravestones on the Island. The photographs are

now at the Suffolk County Historical Society, where a digitization program is being established to record these and other historic images in a more permanent format.

**Dr. Gaynell Stone Retires** – after 36 years of developing and running S.C.A.A.'s education programs for over 150,000 students – Native Life & Archaeology at Hoyt Farm Park and Colonial Life & Technology at Blydenburgh County Park – Dr. Stone is retiring to produce, with a group of colleagues, the story *behind* Long Island's 'history' – the Cultural Geography of Long Island.



Governor Hugh Carey presenting Dr. Stone with New York State Certificate of Achievement in Historic Preservation, 1980.

She was an adjunct professor at Suffolk County Community College, Dowling College, SCOPE, and at Stony Brook University. She developed courses in Long Island Native Americans, Anthropology, Archaeology, and Long Island Multi-cultural History.

Dr. Stone has edited 7 volumes for S.C.A.A. on *Early Papers in Long Island Archaeology*, *The Coastal Archaeology Reader*, *The History & Archaeology of the Montauk Indians*, *Languages & Lore of the Long Island Indians*, *The Shinnecock Indians: A Culture History*, *The Historical Archaeology of Long Island: The Sites*, with Donna Kianka, and *Native Forts of the Long Island Sound Area*.

Awards received are:

- Certificate of Achievement, SCAA, 1975
- Founders Award, Suffolk Early Childhood Ed., 1977
- Suffolk County Heritage Award, 1979
- NYS Certificate of Achievement in Historic Preservation, 1980
- National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant, 1983
- Certificate of Services to the Social Studies Profession, Long Island Council for the Social Studies 1992
- Distinguished Publication of Archival Materials, Long Island Archives conference, 1992

She has produced a large number of curriculum materials and posters on Long Island Native Americans for SCAA's museum education programs. She created permanent or temporary exhibits on Native Americans and gravestone scholarship for the Parrish Art Museum, Sag Harbor Whaling Museum, King Manor Museum, Ward Melville Heritage Organization, Westhampton Public Library, King Manor Museum, Guild Hall, Suffolk County Historical Society Museum, Ridgewood Historical Society, SUNY University Museum of Anthropology,.

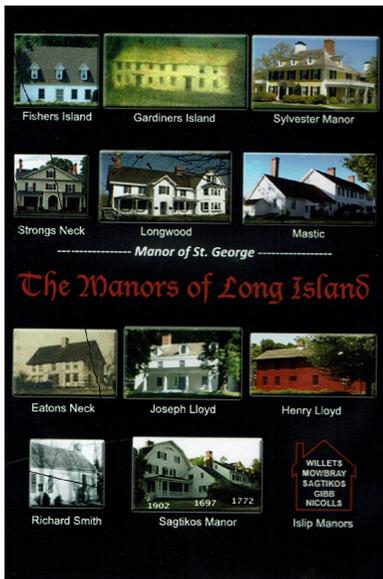
Dr. Stone contributed to Newsday's **Long Island: People and Places, Past and Present**, to "Material Evidence of Ideological and Ethnic Choice in Long Island, NY. Gravestones, 1680-1800", in **Sacred Landscapes**, SHA

Monograph Series; to **Past Meets Present: Partnerships in the Public Interpretation of Archaeology**, Baugher and Jameson, Springer; "Material Evidence of Ideological and Ethnic Choice in Long Island Gravestones, 1680-1800" for **Religion, Popular Culture and Material Life in the Middle Colonies and Upper South**; "Long Island Before the Europeans," in **Between Ocean and Empire: An Illustrated History of Long Island**; "Long Island as America: A New Look at the First Inhabitants," Long Island Historical Journal, Vol. 1, No. 2, Spring.

She has received awards from the Long Island Archives Conference, the Long Island Council for Social Studies, National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research, New York State Certificate of Achievement in Historic Preservation, Suffolk County Heritage Award, Timothy Field Beard Memorial Award for Excellence in Historical Research on Colonial North American Manors, Founders Award, Suffolk Early Childhood Education Council, Certificate of Achievement, S.C. Archaeological Association.

### The Manors of Long Island

Long Island had more Colonial period – 17<sup>th</sup> century – manors than any other area of the New World. More than the Dutch manors of the upper Hudson River, as many as the Colonial manor-founded state of Maryland. This unique



story has been shown in SCAA's series of 6 DVDs which tell the unknown story of the early Manors of the island – Fishers Island, Gardiners Island, Sylvester Manor, the Strongs Neck, Longwood, and Mastic Manors of St. George, Eatons Neck Manor, Joseph Lloyd and Henry Lloyd Manors, Richard Smith Manor, Sagtikos Manor, and the five manors of Islip – Willets, Mowbray, Sagtikos, Gibb, and Nicolls.

Most of the manor houses still exist and many can be visited – a rare historic treasure trove still available to the public. The more complete story is also available through the 6 DVDs produced by the S.C. Archaeological Assn., **The Manors of Long Island**, available at local libraries for viewing and from the Suffolk County Archaeological Association for purchase.

### New Research

Dr. Lucinda Hemmick, director of the Southold Indian Museum, has led new research, in conjunction with scientists at Brookhaven National Laboratory, on an unusual type of smooth gray stone that is coated with a

brown shiny film. The unique stones have been found at several sites on the Island. Geologist Steve Englebright feels they date from the early period of the movement of the continents. Contact Dr. Hemmick (1-516-446-5745, [indianmuseum@optonline.net](mailto:indianmuseum@optonline.net)) to find out the outcome of the scientific testing, which is not available to the public at this point.



### Excavation by Dredging

Sag Harbor exhibit designer Jean Held was walking her dog on the Havens Beach in November 2017 when she noticed artifacts among the seaweed and debris, which had been deposited by the dredging of the Sag Harbor Long Wharf's west side. She started collecting the visible artifacts, as did many locals also walking the beach – objects from the late 1700s to mid 1800s – building materials, coal and ash, wharf building material, coins, corroded metal, pottery, leather shoe soles, ancient iridescent sea glass, Sag Harbor Kiss pottery of 1910-1921 sherds, etc.

Chris Pickerel of the Cornell Extension identified some jug sherds as the work of Thomas Commeraw, a free black man working in lower Manhattan in the late 1700s to early 1800s; Google 'Commeraw' for more information. Archaeologists Suzan Smyth, JoAnn McLean, local potters, and historian Dorothy Zaykowski are among the many who have worked on this project; the exhibit is still on display at the Sag Harbor Historical Society.



In summary, development on Long Island will continue, and archaeological sites will continue to be destroyed, though hopefully not in such great numbers as in the past. The story so far has been very varied and unique. We can hope that collections of artifacts will not disappear as much as they have in the past. Presumably, future professional archaeological excavations will continue to unearth new unknown aspects – the invisible part -- of the Long Island story.

Thanks to archaeologists Alfred Cammisa, Mike Lenardi, Dan Maseau, and Mark LoRusso of the New York State Museum, and Dr. Lucinda Hemmick of the Southold Indian Museum, Lisa Nordstrom and Donna Kianka of the Garvies Point Museum, and David Thompson of SCAA for their much appreciated assistance with this project.

Gaynell Stone, Ph.D.

**New Director** – Douglas DeRenzo is now the Director of the Suffolk County Archaeological Association. As the owner of the Long Island Brick



Works, he has worked on many historic sites. His scientific training at Stony Brook University sensitized him to the value of the historic materials at these sites. He has collected hundreds of historic bricks, which he has shared with the noted brick ‘historian’ Dr. Allan Gilbert of Fordham University, who maintains a huge brick archive of the Hudson Valley, and now also of Long Island.



**NATIVE PEOPLE OF THE EASTERN WOODLANDS  
Art and Artifacts -**

Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead, New York.

The Eastern Woodlands is a cultural area of the indigenous people of North America, consisting of tribes inhabiting the United States and Canada, east of the Mississippi. Though their region was vast, the people of Eastern Woodland tribes lived in similar ways, and their art and artifacts reflect their deep-rooted culture, still evident through their descendants. This exhibit showcases modern Native artists exploring historic themes and identities alongside earlier works. Art, artifacts, carvings, portraits, and tribal dress combine in this celebration of the Eastern Woodlands people. Exhibit curated by Jamie Reason. Open until the end of Feb. 2020.

**Publications of the Suffolk County Archaeological Association**

*Readings in Long Island Archaeology & Ethnohistory*

All volumes are \$30. + \$5. Shipping, except Vol. III, 2d ed., which is \$50. + \$8. Shipping, both plus sales tax in N.Y. State for individuals. Vol. I is out of print (soon to be e-book).

- I *Early Papers in Long Island Archaeology*
- II *The Coastal Archaeology Reader*
- III *History & Archaeology of the Montauk, 2d ed.*
- IV *Languages & Lore of the Long Island Indians, 2d ed.*
- V *The Second Coastal Archaeology Reader*
- VI *The Shinnecock Indians: A Culture History*
- VII *The Historical Archaeology of L.I.: Part 1 - The Sites*
- VIII *The Native Forts of L.I. Sound*
- DVD - *The Sugar Connection: Sylvester Manor, Gardiners Island Manor, Fishers Island Manor, Manor of St. George, Smithtown Manor, Lloyd Manor, Manors of Islip Town* - \$250. Per set, incl. tax and shipping; single DVD \$60 inc. tax & shipping.

**Student Series (Including shipping)**

- Booklet: *A Way of Life: Prehistoric Natives of L.I.* \$10.
- Study Pictures: *Coastal Native Americans* \$10.
- Wall Chart: *Native Technology (26x39"-3 colors)* \$14.
- Map: *Native Long Island (11x17"-2 colors)* \$ 5.

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