



S.C.A.A. Annual Meeting

Monday, June 20 - Hoyt Farm Park, Commack

6:00 PM – Pot Luck Dinner

7:30 PM – Business Meeting

**8:00 PM - Speaker –Daniel Mazeau, Archaeologist
NYS Dept. Of Transportation
The “ Naima Site” - Prehistoric and
Ebenezer Smith Homesite, Hauppauge**

**Setauket Thompson House Archaeology
Conversation Continued...**

Readers' comments on the excavations at the Thompson House in Setauket on Long Island, New York, were insightful and I extend my gratitude to Laurie Billadello (Museum Education Coordinator Manager, SCAA) and Gary Hammond (former Curator, Nassau County Museum) for their in-depth and thought-provoking critiques. Here I expand upon some of my initial statements outlined in the respondents' comments, but I forego an overview of the research for the sake of space. For readers who need additional context, I direct them to the essay "Excavations at the Thompson House Site in Setauket, New York" printed in the SCAA's 2015 winter newsletter (Vol. 41 no. 1). Additionally, Billadello's and Hammond's comments are printed in the 2015 spring newsletter (Vol. 41 no. 2)

Billadello's skepticism regarding the date the external kitchen was built is not without precedent. Dating methods in historical archaeology can lack a certain sort of precision and accuracy, but they are robust tools of interpretation nonetheless. To clarify, the external kitchen's proposed date of construction is calculated using diagnostic ceramic sherds (n=657) from the deepest layer of the stratified midden associated with the structure. After adjusting the mean ceramic date to account for time lag between ceramic production and deposition (14-20 years; Adams 2003), data recovered from the external kitchen midden indicates the structure was initially built around 1817 (± 3 years).

The proposed date of construction of the external kitchen also happens to fit well within a regional pattern in architectural development associated with progressive farming, or agricultural improvement, which increased demarcation of space into areas designated for specific

types of labor to improve efficiency and showcase the household's moral integrity.

Additionally, Billadello asserts that the external kitchen may have in fact been a seasonal or "summer kitchen." My conclusion that kitchen-related activities were removed from the service wing of the Thompson's saltbox house to the external kitchen is based on the absence of any refuse from contemporaneous contexts near the service wing entrance and windows. If laborers continued to cook in the service wing and occupied the external kitchen seasonally, then we would expect similar signs of refuse disposal near the entrances of both structures. Additionally, the very idea of a seasonal or "summer kitchen" has increasingly fallen under serious scrutiny from archaeologists and historians of vernacular architecture (e.g., Stewart-Abernathy 2004). The "natural," physical factors of "summer kitchens"—excessive heat, risk of conflagration, noxious odors, unwelcome insects, etc.—collapse under any critical examination. We must account for social factors, particularly the perceived need to isolate laborers (and perhaps their families), when considering possible intentions behind building such spaces as well as the implications for those who occupied them.

Billadello provides an alternative and certainly plausible interpretation of the quartz stone tools recovered from contexts post-dating the construction of the external kitchen. She notes the tools likely made their way to the site inadvertently, perhaps the consequence of mining Native coastal shell middens, and were not directly produced by the Thompsons' laborers.



Certainly possible, but this interpretation overlooks the quartz flakes recovered away from shell deposits. Moreover, similar quartz stone tools and evidence of stone tool production have been recovered from late nineteenth-century mixed African and Native American heritage domestic sites in Setauket and Old Field (Christopher Matthews, pers. comm.). I argue that these artifacts were much more than functional tools, and operated as material expressions of their cultural heritage and objects of inclusion into their local community. Indeed, the quartz stone tools link the three seemingly disparate sites in a way that other materials cannot, perhaps articulating the relations between the different families of laborers who once lived in or labored on them.



I agree with Billadello that housing enslaved workers in the main dwelling could have been a matter of convenience. Indeed, it would have been economically absurd and simply unnecessary for the average slave-holding

family on Long Island to erect a separate living space or cabin for their one, two, or three enslaved workers. However, irrespective of their reasons, housing enslaved workers in a cellar, garret, lean-to, or pantry garnered the family a degree of surveillance and control that separate quarters minimized, an assertion shared by both archaeologists and historians (e.g., Fitts 1996; Garman 1998). I also agree with Billadello that the systems of Northern and Southern bondage were very different institutions, but I stop short of proclaiming Northern slavery was a “softer” or “kinder” form of coerced labor. (In regards to William Sydney Mount’s “view of master and slave locally,” it is important to recall that his popular scenes of everyday life postdate 1827, the year New York abolished slavery.) Laws granted New York slave owners virtually unrestrained authority over their captive laborers, an authority that often went unchecked by various colonial and governmental agencies. Horrific stories of burnings, brandings, scoldings, beatings, and floggings, along with cases of forced starvation and dehydration, and outright murder, can be found printed in newspapers, correspondence, journals, and court minutes (e.g., Court of Special Sessions of the Peace, New York 1809). Even Dr. Samuel Thompson recorded in his farm journal instances when his neighbors flogged their enslaved servants.

Finally, Hammond submits an alternative interpretation of the practice that created the refuse midden adjacent to the detached kitchen, noting “it most definitely is an act of convenience” and “not any act of protest.” To be sure, refuse middens similar to the one exposed at the Thompson House are ubiquitous features on colonial and early-American sites and elsewhere. Moreover, archaeologists would certainly agree that the habitual practice of conveniently tossing household refuse out an open door or window produced many of the middens they excavate. Even still, we should avoid applying such arguments uncritically, as doing so disregards important contextual differences within and between archaeological

sites. To repeat Hammond’s apt point, “we must eliminate all preconceived notions or expectations.” Instead, we should “place ourselves into the lives of those living in the time period,” and we can attempt to do so by contextualizing *practices* of refuse disposal using archaeological, architectural, and historical data. In other words, our interpretations should not begin with our expectation that middens were produced by simple means of convenience.

At the Thompson House, contextualizing the midden and incorporating additional lines of data provides a more meaningful reading of the refuse pile, one that ranges from outright protest to subtle discontent. Recall that archaeological evidence suggests the Thompsons attempted to implement emerging principles of cleanliness and order that epitomized discourse of agricultural improvement, namely by erecting new spaces of labor and by removing any signs of agriculture that dominated the houseyard in earlier periods. By the time New York abolished slavery, the Thompsons utilitarian yard had become a more manicured, ordered landscape. Furthermore, abolition brought freedom, not equality, and the unequal relations that marginalized people of color under slavery persisted in freedom. For example, legacies of slavery and the new system of wage labor severely impeded most nonwhite families from acquiring private property and establishing independent households, which is why many continued to reside with white farmers. Nonwhite workers living with and laboring for the Thompsons as waged workers were certainly cognizant of not only their marginalized status, but also the Thompsons’ attempt to transform their house and farm in ways that better aligned with emerging ideals.



With this information in mind, even the seemingly simple, non-malicious act of conveniently throwing garbage out a door into the newly manicured landscape takes on a political dimension. By “placing ourselves into the lives of those living in the time period” (i.e., building context), it is easy to imagine that agents bound in a system of relations, and perhaps discontent with their inability to acquire private property and establish independent households, tossed their trash out the door in protest of the Thompsons’ ability to “improve” their landscape at their expense.



I extend my gratitude to Gaynell Stone and others at the SCAA for inviting me to respond to readers' comments. Engaging community members, enthusiasts, academics, and others with my research is a personal source of enjoyment and one of the reasons why I continue to do archaeology. With that, I reiterate my appreciation for Laurie Billadello and Gary Hammond and their stimulating comments. They pushed me to reconsider and refine some of my earlier statements. More importantly, it gave me another opportunity to showcase the importance of an archaeology that prioritizes marginalized communities that are typically absent or muted in the documentary record, thereby providing a more holistic representation of the contributors to local history.

References

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2003 Dating Historical Sites: The Importance of Understanding Time Lag in the Acquisition, Curation, Use, and Disposal of Artifacts. *Historical Archaeology* 37(2):38-64.

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2004 Separate Kitchens and Intimate Archaeology: Constructing Urban Slavery on the Antebellum Cotton Frontier in Washington, Arkansas. In *Household Chores and Household Choices: Theorizing the Domestic Sphere in Historical Archaeology*, Kerri S. Barile and Jamie C. Brandon, editors, pp. 50-74. The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, AL.

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Long Island's Most Extensively Investigated Sites

Until Dr. Steve Mrozowski and his U-Mass team excavated Sylvester Manor from 1999-2008+, no archaeological site on Long Island had received that much attention except the Lloyd site on Lloyds Neck, now known as Caumsett State Park. Dr. Paul Huey, former director of the N.Y.S. Historic

Sites Bureau, shares this outline of the extensive investigation there. Both sites were among the early manors of Long Island, mostly left out of the Island's history.

1976 Donna Ottusch,
Technology and Stone Tools of the Lloyd Harbor Site.
Department of Anthropology, New York University, New York, N.Y. May. 15pp

The site was probably a seasonal hunting and gathering site from Middle Archaic to Middle Woodland times. There is a noteworthy absence of artifacts pertaining to fishing, so food must have consisted of shellfish and small game. There are knives, scrapers, and an abundance of projectile points.

1984 Lynn Ceci and Roselle Henn
Report: The Henry Lloyd House Salvage Archaeology Project, Spring 1982. Flushing, N.Y. September. 37pp.

The Lloyd house stands on the location of an Indian shell midden as well as perhaps a 17th century farm house site. Archeological resources were investigated in 1981 prior to the installation of a new furnace in the house. Soil deposits from beneath the floor had already been disturbed and removed when the archeological investigations were begun. Moreover, there was evidence of recent relic collecting by amateurs. Artifacts were nevertheless collected from the piles of disturbed soil. The relative absence of material later than the 18th century suggests that the floor boards had remained undisturbed and covered over the space for long periods. The South formula Mean Ceramic Date is 1783.3. Other artifacts included glass beads, buttons, musket balls, window glass, container glass, nails, newspapers of 1920 and 1921, faunal remains (ox or cow, horse, deer, sheep, pig, chicken, fish), and floral remains.

1984 Lynn Ceci
"Shell Midden Deposits as Coastal Resources."
World Archaeology. Volume 16, Number 1, June.
13pp. [62-74].

An archeological survey in April 1982 included an area of the orchard shown on a 1722 map located northwest of the Henry Lloyd house of 1711. Around an old apple tree was found a deposit of dark soil, crushed shell, and a quartz chip. A similar deposit, but also containing a pottery sherd and a flint chip, appeared around the next tree, a black walnut. Deposits were also found around other trees, but they were absent in the intervening areas between the trees. Documents in the Lloyd family papers show that in 1809 each apple tree in the young orchard was to be fertilized with two bushels of shells and that as early as 1788 "shells from 1788 the old Indian settlements" were recommended to a Lloyd landowner to improve his soils.

"Salvage Archaeology at the 1711 Henry Lloyd House House." *The Historical Archaeology of Long Island, Part 1: The Sites* edited by Gaynell Stone and Donna Ottusch-Kianka. Published by the Suffolk County Archaeological Association, Stony Brook, N.Y. 14pp. [306-319J.

In the fall of 1980 Queens College initiated a survey to identify archeological resources in Caumsett State Park. However, the following March, new furnace installation in the cellar of the Henry Lloyd house required the removal of soils that had been piled there after having already been removed from the crawl space under the west side of the house. These soils, plus additional soil removed from the front crawl space in order to install new pipes, were screened. From the soil 2,555 artifacts were collected. Such a collection, salvaged under poor conditions and non-representative because of previous uncontrolled relic collecting, may still yield interesting clues to past lifeways. The original report on this work, submitted by the writer and Roselle Henn, was completed in 1984. Prehistoric occupation before 1654 (when Indians sold the land called "Caumsett" to the English) is represented by pottery sherds and flint chips. Nothing was found that could be associated with the earliest tenant farmers between 1654 and 1711. Evidence of occupation by the Lloyd family between 1711 and ca. 1782 includes nails, window glass, and small numbers of clay pipe and ceramic fragments. The mean pipe stem bore date is 1740.6. The mean ceramic date is 1782.2. The ceramics include porcelain but relatively few utilitarian red earthenware or stoneware sherds. From the ca. 1782 to 1900 period the number of sherds of imported tablewares declines sharply. Buttons, beads, and straight pins that fell through the floor into the crawl space represent activities in the room above. From the ca. 1900 to 1981 period there is almost no household material.

1984 Edward J Johannemann and Laurie Schroeder
Progress Report on Henry Lloyd House Archaeological Investigation. Stony Brook, N.Y. January. 11pp.
Excavations have been commenced to mitigate the adverse impact of grading to alleviate drainage problems along the rear (north) side of the Lloyd house. A base line and grid system was established utilizing the south side of the Lloyd house, and a topographic survey was completed. The excavation of five test units north of the house already has shown that the depths of recent disturbances in the area vary from 1 foot to as much as 2.5 feet. Nevertheless, the considerable amount of cultural material found in the recently disturbed contexts should be of value in studying both the colonial and prehistoric Indian occupants of this site. Additional work is anticipated in relation to the deepening of a fuel line, from the vicinity of which shell and bone fragments and quartz flakes have previously been recovered.

1984 Annette Silver
The Henry Lloyd Manor Site, Lloyd's Neck, New York: Interim Report. New York, N.Y. September. 29pp.
Excavations were conducted during 1975 and 1976 adjacent to the west wall of the Lloyd house, in the cellar along the north wall, and in the area south and east of the house. The excavations revealed a builder's trench, early 18th century artifacts, and possible Niantic ceramic sherds in an underlying shell midden stratum. The midden produced East River Cordmarked sherds and a single Rice Diagonal-like rim sherd. Evidence suggests that midden integrity is preserved in specific areas of the site, with two

separate areas of midden occupation. Projectile points included Late Woodland Levanna and Middle Woodland Jack's Reef Pentagonal points. (To be continued)

More on Charles Sumner Bunn Decoys

As part of the far reaching research on the origins of "the best shorebird decoys," by Jannsen and Reason, the group below met at the Long Island Museum to review the decoys gifted to the Museum by the Newbold Herrick family. From left to right they are –



Photograph by Joseph Jannsen

Joshua Ruff, Curator of the Museum, lawyers Donal O'Brien and Orson Munn, Jr., and researcher Jamie Reason. Orson and Jamie are holding Bunn decoys branded 'Ives' from the Charles Ives rig. The Ives family lived at the Art Village and hunted with Orson Munn Sr. and Jr. and Charles Sumner Bunn.

Orson D. Munn, Sr. (1883-1958) was Bunn's client and friend, as well as his lawyer who drew up his Last Will and Testament. His son, Orson Desaix Munn, Jr. of 341 Gin Lane "The Arches" (1925-2011) identified the Long Island Museum decoys as made by Charles Sumner Bunn; he had also purchased decoys from Bunn in the 1940s. When Munn Jr. put Bunn decoys for sale at Julia & Guyette, September 20-21, 1986, lots 260-261, the company ignored his attribution to Bunn and labeled them Bowmans, even after he called and tried to get the false attribution changed..

Charles Ives, Orson Munn Sr. and Jr. and Newbold L. Herrick were all friends who hunted together and with Bunn. Newbold Herrick donated the collection of Bunn decoys – possibly gotten from the Munns -- to the Long Island Museum saying they were made by Bowman – for whom there is no actual evidence.

News from the New Netherland Institute

Slavery in New Netherland/New York changed over more than 200 years. The lives of New Netherland's enslaved population looked nothing like those of the people who would be traded at the Wall Street slave market a century later. Dr. Andrea Mosterman's new exhibit, "Slavery in New Netherland," explores this forgotten history.

www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/history-and-heritage/digital-exhibitions/slavery-exhibit/

Hosted by best-selling author Russell Shorto – author of *The Island at the Center of the World* and *Amsterdam: A History of the World's Most Liberal City* – New Netherland Praatjes is a series of chats with historians, archaeologists, and other experts on New Netherland and the world of the 17th century Dutch. Listen via iTunes to 1) Janny Venema's discovery of early Dutch history of New York, working with the documents of early New Netherland, and her books on early Albany and Kiliaen van Rensselaer, and 2) Paul Huey's four decades of experience excavating New York sites, including Fort Orange, the Van Curler house, Schuyler Flatts. He has also excavated at the Walt Whitman house in Huntington.

The **New Netherland/Dutch New York** issue of *New York History* is now available. See www.nysha.org/nysha 3. Digital subscriptions are also available.

The New Netherland Institute's 39th Annual Conference will be held September 22-24 at the New Brunswick Theological Seminar in New Brunswick, NJ. For information, contact – Stephen.McErleane@NYSED.GOV.

A Critical Era for the Slave Trade: Salem, Massachusetts and Bristol, Rhode Island, 1781-1808, Sean Kelly.. Rhode Island was the first state to bar its residents from engaging in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1787, and Massachusetts did the same in 1788. Despite this, over the next 20 years, almost 40,000 Africans arrived in the New World aboard ships from the two states. The palatial homes of Bristol Quaker ship masters attest to this, while Salem, MA soon abandoned slave trading. This book is a unique window into the complex world of post-Revolution slave trading until abolition in 1808.

Sarah T. Bridges and Steve Englebright are discussing an artifact at an early S.C.A.A. meeting in Setauket in the 1980s. Listening are on the left Walt Saxon, archaeologist of the Garvies Point Preserve Museum, who has written the only article on Paleo points found on Long Island, printed in S.C.A.A.'s Vol. II, *The Coastal Archaeology Reader*.



Photo by Tom Gwynne

Sarah's obituary appeared in the last, the Winter 2016, issue of the SCAA Newsletter. While working for the N.Y.S. Bureau of Historic Sites, she came to Long Island to meet with the Stony Brook University Anthropology Department's graduate students and local citizens concerned about the rampant destruction of archaeological sites. Local governments took no action to preserve sites, did not know where they were, and did not know there was a N.Y.S. SEQRA law offering some protection. S.C.A.A. was founded to educate governments about these issues and the public about Long Island's pre- history as well as its better known history.

Steve was a new geology professor in the University's **Earth and Space Sciences** Department, and as a scientist was interested in Long Island's glacial to cultural history. It turned out that his house site in Setauket was a Native American archaeological site – perfectly sited facing water with a rising hill behind to protect against cold North winter winds. Anthropology Department grad students Gretchen Gwynne and others excavated the site. Steve has been very supportive of Long Island's archaeology for many years, and is a major supporter of the S.C.A.A. documentary series, *The Manors of Long Island*, six DVDs covering thirteen manors. The manors vied with the Towns for land and political control, which ended only with the American Revolution. Their story has not been part of regional history until this documentary series. The *Manor of St. George* film will be shown this summer in the Three Village area; it was 40% of what became Brookhaven Town, the largest township on Long Island.



N.Y.S. Assemblyman Steve Englebright receiving the S.C.A.A. Golden Trowel Award from Director Dr. Gaynell Stone for his ongoing support of Long Island's archaeological resources and history.

The complete run of **Northeast Historical Archaeology**, beginning with Volume 1 in 1971 has been digitized and is available on <http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/neha/>. Downloads are averaging about 5,000 per month. The goal of the project is to make articles published in the CNEHA journal more readily available to archaeologists, scholars, students and the broader community. CNEHA is exploring the possibility of a limited access portion of the digital commons site which would provide members with password-protected access to digital content for the most recent volumes. Soon this should be listed on archaeology listserves related social media sites and library research databases.

Queens College Summer Field Methods in Archaeology – July 5 - 28, 2016, East Hampton, NY



East Hampton Farm Museum

You will learn all the basics of archaeological field methods in exploring the Town Commons in the 18th and 19th centuries. The team will seek the wind powered sawmill once on this site of the East Hampton Historical Farm Museum. For info – contact Professor Allison McGovern at amanfra@qc.cuny.edu.



Publications of the Suffolk County Archaeological Association.

Readings in Long Island Archaeology & Ethnohistory
All volumes are \$40. + \$5. Shipping, except Vol. III, 2d ed., which is \$75. + \$8. Shipping, both plus 8.625% sales tax in N.Y. State for individuals. Vol. I and Vol. IV. are out of print.

- I *Early Paper in Long Island Archaeology*
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Membership in SCAA includes 3 Newsletters per year and a 10% reduction in workshop and publication costs. All contributions are tax deductible.

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Programs of the S.C. Archaeological Association are funded in part by public monies from the New York State Council on the Arts - Decentralization, the Suffolk County Office of Cultural Affairs, The Phillips Foundation, The Gerry Charitable Trust, JP Morgan Chase, RDL Gardiner Foundation, Virginia Barath, Harriet Gamper, Stanley Wisniewski, and County and State Legislators, especially Steve Englebright.

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