

### **Gardiner Conference at Stony Brook University**

Friday and Saturday, March 20 and 21, the SBU History Department and the McNeil Center for Early American Studies are sponsoring a conference, **The Worlds of Lion Gardiner, c.1599-1663**. Topics examined include - "Crossing Cultures: Inhabiting the Dutch World," "Mapping Boundaries and Borders," "Cultural Mediators and Boundary Crossers," "Fighting Wars: Arms and Alliances," "Writing Wars: Perspectives on Gardiner's Narrative."

Dr. John Strong will speak on "Cultural Brokers on the Long Island Frontier," and Mac Griswold on "Nathaniel Sylvester of Amsterdam and Shelter Island." Mac's book on the Sylvester Manor Project will be published in 2009. Dr. Steve Mrozowski's seven years of excavation at Sylvester Manor was published in 2008 in the Council of North East Historical Archaeology Association's Journal as a topical issue.

S.C.A.A.'s documentary film of the excavations and interviews with over 20 international scholars forms the two 50-minute segments of *The Sugar Connection: Holland, Barbados, Shelter Island*, an overview of the Manor's purpose of provisioning the family's sugar plantations on Barbados, and the family's English and Dutch roots. The other manors of Long Island are covered in the third segment of the trilogy - *The Manors of Long Island*. The history of Gardiner's Island is one of the other manors to be shown. The life of Gardiner's Dutch wife, Mariechen Duerkant's, family in Woerden, Holland has been filmed for the segment.

### **Golden Trowel Award to Tracey Bellone**

Deputy Commissioner of the Suffolk County Parks Department Tracey Bellone was recently honored with S.C.A.A.'s Golden Trowel award. The award is given to those who have made contributions to Long Island's culture history. Tracey was instrumental in the Parks Department's support of S.C.A.A.'s education program, Colonial Life & Technology, at Blydenburgh County Park, by having structural problems in the Blydenburgh building corrected, so the program - enjoyed by over 3,000 students and over 400 teachers and parents yearly - could continue.



### **First S.C.A.A. President Benjamin F. Werner Dies**

A decorated Korean War veteran, Ben Werner died at his home in Shelburne, N.H. on October 29 after a brief illness. He is survived by wife Betty, son Tim, and daughters Wendy, Rebecca and Marta, and grandchildren.

Born in Brooklyn in 1931, his family moved to Setauket, where he completed high school. Graduating from the University of Georgia in 1956, he returned to Setauket and became a math and science teacher in the Three Village School District, receiving a graduate degree from Adelphi in 1962.

As a student he participated in N.Y. State Archaeologist William Ritchie's excavations at Aunt Amy's and West Meadow Creeks in Stony Brook. Later he salvage excavated a Native American habitation site on Strongs Neck that was uncovered by a bulldozer. That report, "The Strongs Neck Site," was published in S.C.A.A.'s Vol. V, *The Second Coastal Archaeology Reader: 1900 to the Present*, James Truex, editor.

As was seen in the story of S.C.A.A.'s 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the last issue of this Newsletter, Ben became the first president of the group, which was composed of graduate students and faculty of the Anthropology Department of Stony Brook University, other colleges, and interested local people. They had been exercised by the continuing destruction of archaeological sites on L.I., and the lack of action by local government to protect them. S.C.A.A. became the "squeaky

wheel” to inform government and the people of the value of their cultural resources and the need for preservation.

Ben played a major role in the development and evolution of this preservation and education-oriented group. He also encouraged educational programs and outreach to the public, which resulted in conferences for many years of Long Island archaeologist's reports on their work, thus building a body of information not otherwise obtainable.



He was missed when he and Betty retired to their farm in New Hampshire in 1984, where they ran an antique shop and raised sheep. They were extensive world travelers. They were also ardent conservationists, donating a conservation easement of their farm and 300 acres around it, leveraging more contributions to a regional preservation project.

### **The Brick Archive at Fordham University**

Allan S. Gilbert, Ph.D.

Architecture must be the lonely widow of historical archaeology finds. While they are still standing and inhabited, houses are usually displayed with pride, kept serviceable often at considerable expense, and when they reach old age, assigned venerable names as preservationists lovingly repair their dilapidated elements and lobby for their protection. Once in ruins, however, houses yield rubble that most historical archaeologists consign to the dump. Building outlines are noted and constituent materials acknowledged, and sometimes reconstructions are attempted, but greater interest is generally lavished on the other finds, including pottery, glass, metal, and bones. The richness of architectural history does not elicit the same fascination, and so mortars, stones, and bricks are more often than not benignly neglected.

This neglect has not been universal, especially in recent decades with the rise of technical analyses in archaeology, but architecture still lags somewhat behind the other classes of finds in terms of interest and investigative effort. In the mid to late 1980s, I began, in my own way, to balance the scales by taking on a serious long-term project to archive and study bricks. The focus evolved over time, and it currently seeks to accumulate specimens of all historic periods from the states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Greater breadth of coverage than that would require more storage space and more personal research commitment than I have available, but even this narrow target range has not proven to be so narrow after all. This contribution will describe the origins of the project and some of its accomplishments.

The project began quite accidentally, having initially not been directed toward architecture at all. In the early 1980s, I

shared that bias for the more traditional artifacts. One especially irksome problem in the colonial archaeology of the northeast was the origins of lead-glazed redwares, utilitarian pottery that was ubiquitous within domestic sites. Redwares were very difficult to identify as locally-produced or imported, so, in an attempt to determine their sources, I embarked on program that used their constituent chemistry as a fingerprint for their locus of manufacture. Archaeologists in the Mediterranean area and in Mesoamerica had been employing this method since the 1960s to compare pottery wares compositionally and, in so doing, discern their source regions and illuminate their patterns of distribution.

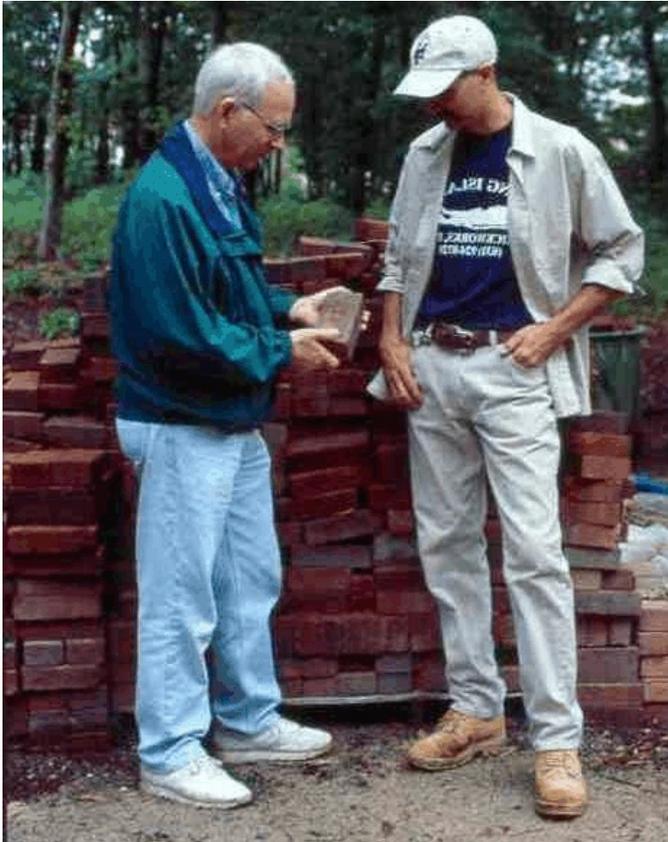
I started applying the procedure to redwares, hoping to find chemical profiles typical of the Netherlands and England that could be contrasted with others characteristic of the various manufacturing localities in the New World colonies. Since few kiln sites are known, direct comparisons of site finds to potting wasters was not an effective option. As a result, I first began comparing pottery to clays recovered from New York metropolitan area deposits. When clays lay too deep underground to sample with ease, such as within the Hudson valley, I shifted my sampling focus to bricks that were produced from these clays when yards were active within the claylands.

In the end, however, these tactics turned out to be less useful than anticipated; pottery rarely compared favorably to either clays or bricks, even when historical information suggested they were related. The fact that pottery and bricks contain tempering materials, added to reduce shrinkage and provide strength, tended to skew the chemical profile in different ways, making the artifacts look quite different from the raw clays from which they were made. But the exercise opened the door to working with bricks on their own, a research direction that had not previously been tried anywhere else. Because historical archaeology frequently involved excavations of architectural foundations, the idea of developing a compositional archive for bricks made sense.

At first, I didn't think to collect the bricks. Sampling was undertaken within the collections of others, most notably that of Daniel deNoyelles (1904–1991), the Rockland County historian and scion of a long-lived brickmaking family that began production in Haverstraw, NY, in the 1700s. Then in his early eighties, Mr. deNoyelles permitted his bricks to be drilled in unobtrusive places in order to extract the earthenware powder that would be sent away for chemical assay. Thus, I came home with many tiny bottles, and no bulk storage or curation to worry about. Later, deNoyelles decided it was time to allocate his historical collections to institutions that would care for them after his passing. Documentary papers went to local historical archives, and the bricks he offered to me. As we were working on a joint article describing the chemical sourcing project (Gilbert et al. 1993), deNoyelles passed away at the age of 87. By then, most of his bricks had been transported to Fordham University in the Bronx, where I have taught since 1983.

It turns out that possessing the bricks and not just the sample powders was a crucial and necessary change in strategy for the project. Any unusual result from one or several of the samples would invariably have necessitated a re-examination

of the brick from which the samples were taken. If left in private hands, there would have been no guarantee that said bricks could ever be relocated for followup analysis. Thus, the operation had to become self-contained, and a collection of bricks became inevitable. The Fordham archive (called NNNY after New Netherland/New York) grew subsequently with donations from other collectors, some large and some small. Among the important additions was that of the late Elaine Vadnais of Castleton, NY, who amassed a sizable number of bricks during canoe trips with her husband along the Hudson River shores where the large brick works of the 19th and early 20th century supplied the burgeoning urban expansion in New York City.



Dr. Allan Gilbert (L) Doug DeRenzo examine bricks.

Doug DeRenzo, president of the SCAA, has and continues to be an energetic supporter of the project, supplying unusual and rare bricks acquired in the course of his own masonry contracting business. William Asadorian, a librarian at the Queens Borough Public Library, has provided hundreds of samples of colonial bricks retrieved from construction and utility excavations in Lower Manhattan, thus extending the archive at Fordham into pre-Revolutionary times. Fordham students have also taken a hand in the process, some by collecting on their own when an old (and unattached) brick caught their eye, and some by alerting me to a demolition site where negotiation with the contracting corporation might yield the requisite permission to collect. Over the years since archiving began in the late 1980s, well over 2500 bricks have been catalogued. The uncatalogued backlog will probably push the total over 3000.

An extensive discussion of the methods involved in the project has already appeared in a lengthy article in the journal *Historical Archaeology* (Gilbert et al., 1993). Repeating those details here seems unnecessary. Interested readers can consult that paper for greater depth, but for the present narrative, a summary statement of techniques and a short review of some accomplishments will be appropriate.

From the early 1850s onward, many manufactured bricks in the New York metropolitan area were impressed with brands as a trademark to catch the eye of purchasing building contractors. Rising commercial competition probably encouraged this practice, which raised the cost of production slightly because of the steady supply of new replacement molds or bottom panels that had to be inscribed with the brickmaker's name, company acronym, or logo. The advantage to the NNNY project was that many of the brands are recognizable and assignable to makers whose locus of manufacture is known. Thus, a compositional profile obtained for bricks with a particular impressed brand—for example, DENOYELLES—can be assigned with confidence to the location along the Hudson River waterfront in south Haverstraw where the company operated. In this way, branded bricks, when assayed for their elemental composition, could yield a “fingerprint”-like proxy for the combination of clays, tempers, and manufacturing recipes used by the company in question.

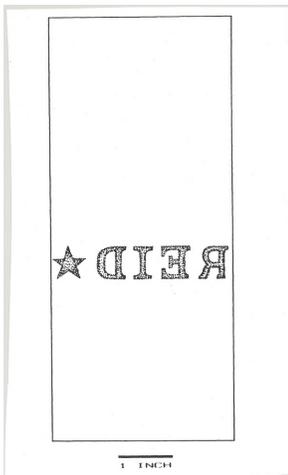
If materials and recipes did not vary exceedingly through time, then it is reasonable to assume that older, unbranded bricks made in the same location by previous brickmakers would likely reveal a similar chemical signature. The brands are the key in this endeavor, because they fix the location of production. Findspot details, or the places from which used bricks are retrieved, give information about end use, and combining the two pieces of information, one obtains both source and distribution evidence, ultimately enabling the reconstruction of an entire commercial network showing the movement of building materials. Using the branded bricks to establish a data base of geographically-known compositional profiles can therefore help us learn where bricks were made and where they were distributed during pre-brand times, even back in the colonial era.

Two examples of the use of brands to source specimens of unknown origin will suffice to illustrate how this is done. Though it was demolished in the early 20th century to make way for the Helen Hayes Hospital in West Haverstraw, NY, the white clapboarded house of Joshua Hett Smith still occupies a place of infamy in American Revolutionary history as the venue where Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold revealed the plans of West Point to British spy Maj. John Andre in September of 1780. Several bricks from the “Treason House” as it was called were acquired by Daniel deNoyelles, and they were incorporated within the collection at Fordham.

Given that the huge clay delta of Haverstraw was an early center of brickmaking in the 19th century, one might have guessed that the bricks from the Smith house would have been local products. It is not clear, however that they were, as at least one of them reveals a chemical profile matching bricks produced in Beacon, NY, a little less than 30 miles north along the Hudson River, and more importantly, on the

opposite northern side of the Hudson Highlands, a ridge of Appalachian folds cut through by the river which contains few clay resources for brickmaking. This finding may indicate that industrial exploitation of the enormous clay bed of Haverstraw had not yet begun and that the nearest source of bricks from yards in operation during late colonial times was in Dutchess County. It might also mean that whoever built the Smith house got a cheaper price from his more northerly neighbors than those working locally.

Between 1985 and 2002, I directed excavations at the Rose Hill manor, a historic site located on the Rose Hill campus of Fordham University in the Bronx. Students did most of the earthmoving, which uncovered parts of a house that was probably built in the 1760s and lasted, with additions and modifications, until demolition in 1896. A brick trough cistern was inserted beneath the eastern wing of the house in the mid-19th century, and many of the cistern bricks bore an early, and as yet unidentified brand. The inscription read: REID preceded by a five-pointed star, and like the very earliest brands, it was impressed backwards across the short dimension of the brick face (see figure 1). This configuration occurred because, for ease of carving the bottom of the mold compartment for each brick, the inscription was gouged legibly along the short dimension; clay poured into the mold took its impression in mirror-image. Later in the 1860s and 1870s, the inscriptions were carved in reverse, so that the final brand would be legible on the brick, and the orientation was changed so that the inscription ran along the brick's longer dimension.



We knew the Reid brand was early, but who was Reid, and where did he work? Drilled samples from a number of Reid bricks showed a marked chemical similarity to other bricks produced in Haverstraw, and so we searched the federal census records of 1850 looking for a clue. It turned out that only one person named Reid lived in Rockland County at the time. He was a 24-year-old Irish immigrant named Patrick Reid, who was listed as a brick laborer. Since he was not a landowner and unlikely to have

been in charge of a major brickmaking concern, we assume that he did in the early 1850s what many did later in the century: he may have leased idle brickmaking machines on his owner's yard, and supported by his own resources, output his own bricks using his own molds, and shipped them to the urban market downriver for personal profit. Many of Reid's bricks ended up in the Rose Hill manor cistern. Reid was not listed as a Haverstraw resident in the state census of 1855, indicating that he had moved away by then. The documentary records thereby enabled us to fix the construction of the cistern in the early or mid 1850s, a date that accords well with other developments in the history of the manor.

Occasionally, chemical profiles of colonial bricks do correspond closely to those of raw clays. This can occur because tempers were unevenly mixed into the clay in the days before brickmaking machines were invented in the early 19th century. Clay preparation procedures began with soak pits, which were large, deep "puddles" in which clay and tempering materials were combined, often by draft animals trudging through the muck on a circular turnstile. The 19th century addition of pug mills—vertically deployed tubes with rotating blades into which the clay mixtures were fed before being injected into brick molds—did a far better job of uniformly blending the paste ingredients. When sample powders are removed from colonial bricks, the drill bits sometimes do not encounter any temper, and the resulting compositional signature of the sample corresponds very closely to that of the original clay. Some of the colonial bricks removed from the chimney of the Rose Hill manor have been assayed, and a few bricks have revealed some similarity to clays obtained from Long Island.

In the mid-1980s at the start of archiving, clays were being actively collected under the assumption that they would match the pottery profiles that were the initial targets of analysis. One collecting locality was the open clay pit in Melville, NY, located north of Bethpage-Spagnoli Road and east of the Old Bethpage Village Restoration. Operated by Custom Clay & Soil, Inc., the tract contains numerous clay lenses left by glacial outwash and lake sedimentation, and the closeness in composition between some of these clays and a few of the Rose Hill colonial bricks suggests that there might be a connection. The colonial manor was built most likely by Benjamin Corsa, perhaps a decade prior to the Revolution. If further testing confirms this link between Rose Hill and Long Island, then conceivably bricks from Suffolk County made their way by sloop up the navigable part of the Bronx River to West Farms, then overland by cart to the Corsa farm.

The current assemblage of bricks in the lab at Fordham is a large sampling of colonial specimens from Lower Manhattan. Small, yellow bricks make up about 13% of the total; they are known to have come from the Netherlands, probably as ballast in the holds of Dutch West India Company ships. The rest of the assemblage comprises larger red bricks that are presumed to be mostly locally-made from the periods of both Dutch and English control. Little information is available about where colonial New Yorkers (and Nieuw Amsterdammers) obtained their bricks, and therefore, this collection holds great promise for new knowledge about the practical matters of architectural materials procurement in the earliest years of New York City.

Gilbert, A.S., Garman Harbottle, & Daniel deNoyelles  
1993 A ceramic chemistry archive for New  
Netherland/New York. *Historical Archaeology*  
27(3):17–56.

Caption for Figure 1: Drawing of the REID brand from cistern bricks of the Rose Hill manor.

**Addendum:** S.C.A.A. has long been involved in the "life of bricks," having collected a number of specimens from the older houses of L.I. They were housed at Blydenburgh County Park as a comparative data base for architects and

other scholars wishing to date or source bricks. They have been included in the Fordham archive. S.C.A.A. also ran a "Brick Conference" at S.C. Community College in the 1980s. Possessors of rare bricks showed them: a signed Caleb Smith of Smithtown brick; a brick from the original 1600s Capt. Jones house in Massapequa, later reused in building Tryon Hall; Gary Hammond and others brought scores of marked bricks from the Westbury, Huntington, etc. brickyards.

### Hofstra University Field School, Joseph Lloyd Manor

Jenna Wallace Coplin, Center for Public Archaeology at Hofstra, announces the 2009 field school examining the probable slave quarters at the 1767 Joseph Lloyd Manor, in partnership with SPLIA. If space permits, volunteers are welcomed. Info: [anthlab@hofstra.edu](mailto:anthlab@hofstra.edu).

### Meetings

March 15, 2009 - **L.I. A.I.A.** meeting, Room 105, Breslin Hall, Hofstra U. 2:00 PM. Dr. Andrea Berlin on "New Light on the Period of the Maccabees: Excavations at Tel Kadesh," the largest tell in Gaza, Israel..

April 17-19 - **N.Y.S. Archaeological Assn.**, Woodcliff Resort & Spa, Victor, N.Y. Dr. Dean Snow featured speaker; guided tour to Ganondagan State Historic Site. Info: Jennifer Teremy, PO Box 77172, Rochester, NY 14617.

April 22-26 – **Society for American Archaeology**, Atlanta, GA.

May 28-31 - **Society for Industrial Archaeology**, Pittsburgh, PA.

June 4-6 – **Conference on New York State History** SUNY Plattsburgh. Info: [conferencechair@nysha.org](mailto:conferencechair@nysha.org)

### New S.C.A.A. Website

Go to [www.scaa-ny.org](http://www.scaa-ny.org) to get an overview of the many facets of S.C.A.A.'s operation – publications, films, Native and Colonial life educational programs, and more. Education program reservations must still be made by telephone to the scheduler, Diane Fish, at 631-864-0804.

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**Suffolk County Archaeological Association  
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**Suffolk County Archaeological Association** is a non-profit organization which promotes education, publications, curriculum materials and film to further the understanding of Long Island History and Archaeology, both historic and prehistoric.

For information on SCAA's Education Programs -- **Native Life & Archaeology** and **Colonial Life & Technology**, refer to *Education Programs*.

To see the nine volumes published by SCAA since 1975 see *Publications*.

For educational materials see *Curriculum Materials*.

To view SCAA's documentary films -- **The Sugar Connection: Holland, Barbados, Shelter Island** and **The Manors of Long Island** -- see *Films*

**Past Meets Present**  
Archaeologists Partnering with Museum Curators, Teachers, and Community Groups  
John H. Jameson, Jr.  
Sherene Baugher  
Editors  
Springer

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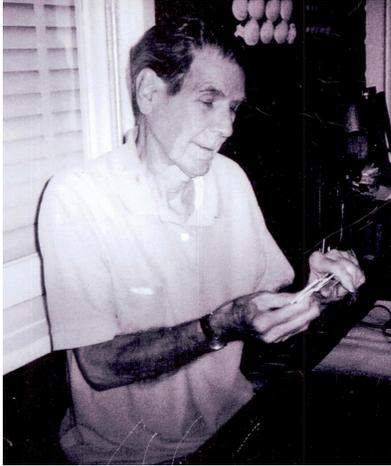
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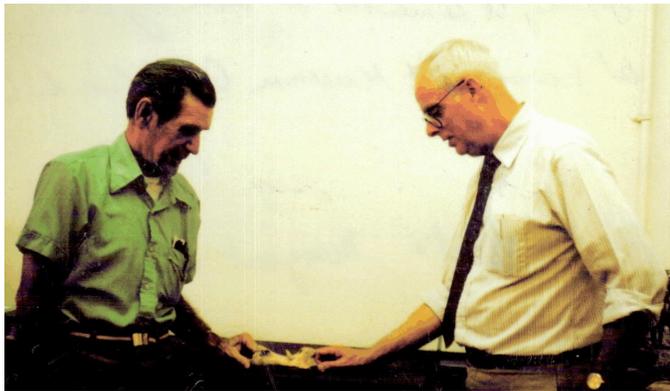
### A View from the Past: Early Archaeologists of Coastal New York.

L to R: Dr. Lorraine Williams, Dr. Jerry Jacobson, Dr. Nan Rothschild, Dr. Herb Craft at New York State Archaeological Assn. meeting, 1978.

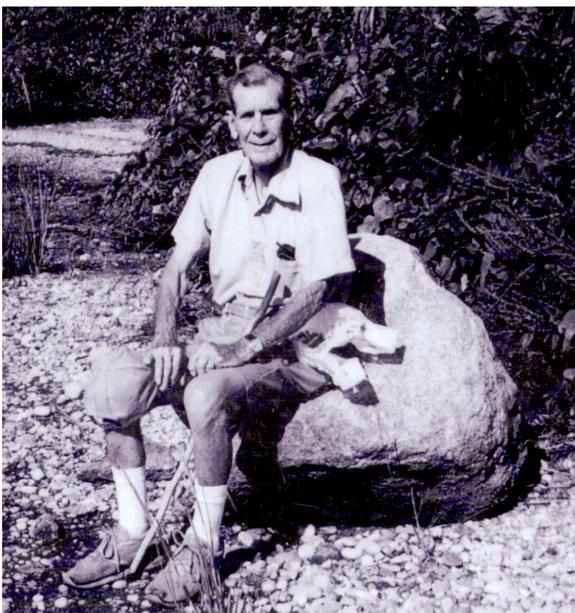
Photo Ralph Solecki



Stan at work on his collection, Miller Place, c. 2000.



Stan Wisniewski (L) and Ronald Wyatt (retired), long time director of Garvies Point Museum, Glen Cove examining an artifact c. 1990.



Stan on survey at Mt. Sinai Harbor, c. 2000.

**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 8.50% sales tax in N.Y. State for individuals. Vol. I is out of print; a few copies of Vols. IV and VI remain.

- I *Early Paper 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*
- 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*

**Student Series (Including shipping)**

Booklet: <i>A Way of Life: Prehistoric Natives of L.I.</i>	\$6.
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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.

Student (to 18)	\$10.	Individual	\$20.
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Send check to: Suffolk County Archaeological Association,  
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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, Stanley Wisniewski, Harriet Gamper, and County and State Legislators.

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