

*P. O. Drawer AR, Stony Brook, N.Y. 11790*

**NEWSLETTER**

Representing Nassau & Suffolk Counties  
Dr. John A. Strong, Editor

Vol. 18, No. 3  
Fall, 1992

**OFFICERS INSTALLED FOR 1992-1994**

The following slate of officers were elected at the June 24, 1992 meeting of the SCAA at Hoyt Farm Park:

President	Steven Czarniecki
V. President	Howard Hahn
V.P. Program	Dr. Annette Silver
V.P. Newsletter	Dr. John Strong
V.P. Membership	Eleanor Marx
Rec. Secretary	Douglas DeRenzo
Corres. Sec.	Suzan S. Habib
Treasurer	Dr. Gaynell Stone

**EXPERIMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT AT  
THE SOUTHAMPTON CAMPUS OF L.I.U.**



**SCHEDULED SCAA MEETINGS**

**Executive Committee**

November 18  
December 16

**Programs for the Public**

January 20  
February 17  
March 19  
June 16

All public meetings will be held at Blydenburg Park in Smithtown, at 8pm. For directions, call 929-8725.

*Dr. John Strong and Othmar Dickbauer prepare ground for  
Indian Barn*

During the fall of 1991, Othmar Dickbauer experimented with food storage techniques used by the prehistoric Native American Villagers. Othmar used corn, bean and squash which had been grown in the campus Native American Garden project. He used the techniques described by Buffalobird-Woman, a Hidatsa woman who described her procedures in 1916 to Anthropologist Gilbert Wilson from the University of Minnesota. Ethnographic reference to "Indian barns" in New England and on Long Island suggest that similar food storage techniques were practiced here.

# JOURNAL OF MY STORAGE PROJECT - FALL, 1991

BY OTHMAR DICKBAUER

Object: Storage of vegetables from the Native American garden after the description of Native American agriculture by Buffalobird-woman (from the Hidatsa group of Native American).

During the week of Sept. 16-20, I gathered the ripe pumpkins, acorn and butternut squash, sunflower and corn. The following week I prepared a place by the garden under the open shed roof to work with the corn and squash. The open shed was similar to the work area described by Buffalobird-Woman. During the last week of September, I gathered good, thick bark for the cache pit. We used bark because the grass which grows in wetland was not available. I left the bark and the grass in sunlight for a couple of days like the natives would do, in order to get it dry enough.

## 20th. of Oct. Squash Cutting:

I cut all the squash in 3mm thick slices for drying. Buffalobird-Woman said that the Hidatsa used willows as spits to put the slices on to dry. The slicing was easy and quickly done. I separated the ends but did not dry them on the floor like the women workers used to do after they brought them to their homes. At first I used two simple wood poles as a rack. At this time two squash had already spoiled. I am sure the Natives started earlier in fall to cut the squash.

On Oct. 31 I built up the rack for drying the squash. I made it after the picture in the Buffalobird Woman—description of Native American Agriculture. Four poles each with a fork end were placed in a square form. For each pole I dug a little hole. I laid two other sticks into the fork end so that they would carry the little spits with the squash. To make the rack firm enough, I tied the ends of the sticks and poles together with strings. Some of the squash I cut 10 days ago started to mold a little. I guess we had too much fog the last week and the sunshine was maybe not strong enough by the end of October. I saved 80% of the slices by putting them in a heated room.

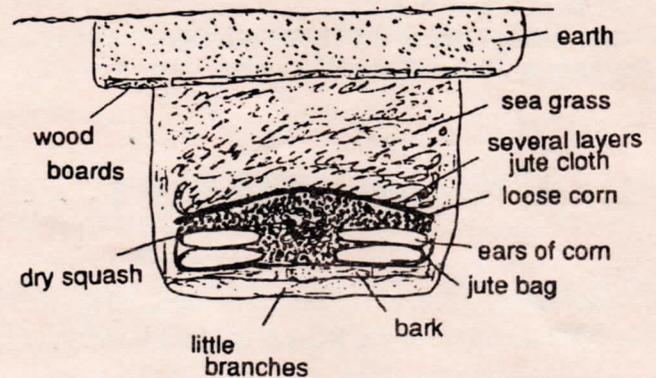
Professor Strong helped me dig the hole for the cache pit. I prepared a diagram for the storage pit. We dug a hole 60cm deep and 50cm in diameter. The soil was very rocky. Then I placed a platform of little branches on the bottom of the pit. The branches created a little air space between the soil and the bark. After that, I covered the bottom and the side with a layer of bark about 35cm high. To fix the bark on the side we used fresh willow branches and bent them circular inside. I covered the bark with a jute bag on the bottom as Buffalobird-Woman described.

I laid the ears of corn inside so that the thick ends pointed to the side and the thin ones pointed to the center. After the second and last layer of corn, I placed the loose corn in the center, exactly as Buffalobird-Woman described. After I placed half of all the loose corn in, I laid the dried squash in the center with the loose corn. The rest of the loose corn was placed covering the squash and ears of corn. The layer of goods came out to about 9-10cm thick. I covered all the goods with a big jute cloth which was folded over. The natives used a circular piece of Buffalo skin. I hope that the jute will work as well because there are not too many buffalo here on Long Island. Buffalobird-Woman said that they used a thick layer of long grass (as described above) covering the jute, or buffalo skin. In this case, I used dry sea weed and pressed it together by

stepping on it. For puncheons I used wood boards. I had to dig out enough space around the pit (10-15cm deep) so that the boards would cover the hole which was to be buried a bit under the surface. At the end I packed a layer of earth on top until it was even with the ground.

## DIAGRAM OF CATCH PIT

Made by Othmar Dickbauer



On Tuesday the 17th. Dec. 91, Prof. Strong and I opened the cache pit to see how much of the goods spoiled and how well the different layers in the pit worked. The months of November and December had been very wet. I dug out the dirt so that I could raise the middle boards. As I raised the first board, we saw that the upper layer of seaweed was very wet. But as I took out the underlying layers of seaweed, I saw they were totally dry. The layers of jute didn't help at all, they were fairly wet. The upper layer of squash slices were mostly spoiled. But everything else, the loose corn, the four kinds of ears of corn and the squash slices which were surrounded by the loose corn, were in perfect condition.

We discovered why the Natives put all their squash slices in the center of the loose corn. The squash was preserved much better because the loose corn allowed enough air around the slices.

The cedar bark remained dry and had no mold. We closed the cache pit in the same order as I opened it.

*Editors Note: We reopened the pit in late March and found only a small degree of spoilage. The corn was ground and baked into corn bread cakes. We concluded that the underground storage was very effective. The Native Americans could rely on these storage techniques to protect their food supplies all through the winter months. The experiment helped the students to appreciate the life styles of the Native Americans and demonstrated the pattern of food storage. This data will be useful to archaeologists when they excavate such features.*

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Articles for the Newsletter should be sent to the Newsletter.  
Editor: Dr. John Strong  
54 Hawthorne Rd.  
Southampton, NY 11968  
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## OLD DIGS REVISITED

In an effort to preserve a historical record of Long Island excavations over the years, we will print photos from our files in our newsletters. Too often this material gets stored away and is eventually lost. This way we can be sure it remains in the public record. If you recognize any of the people or sites and have more information for our files please send it to us.

### THE FISCHETTI OLD FIELD SITE (1976?)



*Directed by: Edward Johannemann, Laurie Biladello & Gaynell Stone, Sponsored by Cont. Ed. Dept. at the SUNY at Stony Brook*

### MT. SINAI HARBOR MARSH/CRYSTAL BROOK HOLLOW (1974)



*Edward Johanneman working below the high tide line on a shell fish cache.*

Photographs by Gaynell Stone



*James Truex & John Hanawalt, directors, Livingston Pond site, Lloyd Harbor (1975), Friends World College and SCOPE sponsors.*



## BOOKS AND JOURNALS OF INTEREST

Archaeology of Eastern North America  
Subscription Rate: \$23.00  
Eastern States Archaeological Foundation  
P.O. Box 386, Bethlehem, CT 06751

North American Archaeologist  
Subscription \$36.00 per year  
Baywood Publishing Company  
26 Austin Ave., P.O. Box 337, Amityville, NY 11701

Historical Archaeology: A Guide to Substantive and Theoretical Contributions. Edited by Robert L. Schuyler  
Baywood Publishing Company  
26 Austin Ave., P.O. Box 337, Amityville, NY 11701  
\$24.94 + 2.50 for postage  
800-638-7819

Society of Primitive Technology Bulletin  
This journal features articles on ethnobotany, flint knapping, pottery making, weaving, primitive technology workshops and environmental concerns.

SPT Bulletin  
P.O. Box 3226, Flagstaff, AZ 86003

### National Trust for Historic Preservation Publications

#### Archaeology and Preservation

by Rex Wilson. This issue covers basic archaeological procedures and terms and includes a resource directory and summary of federal laws and regulations relating to archaeology.

Preservation Education: Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade by Ellen G. Kotz. This comprehensive list of educational programs covers a variety of disciplines relating to historic preservation than can be used to develop different skills or teach different concepts.

Cost: \$5.00 each plus 3.00 postage

Call (202) 673-4296 or Send prepaid orders to:

Information Series National Trust for Historic Preservation.  
1785 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

#### Akwe:kon Press

Akwe:kon (*A'gwaygo'hn*) a Mohawk word meaning "all of us" is a new Native American press (formerly the *Northeast Indian Quarterly*) housed at Cornell University. They publish a quarterly journal, curriculum guides and teaching materials, paperback books and special-edition magazines.

#### Akwe:kon Journal

Subscription \$15.00 per year

#### Akwe:kon Press

400 Caldwell Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853

## CONFERENCES

Jan. 6-10 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology Kansas City, MO. Theme: Transportation, Industrialism and the 19th. Century West

Jan. 15 Abstract deadline 1993 Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference call for papers.

Historical Archaeology (202) 986-9714  
Prehistoric Archaeology (202) 885-1839  
Session Proposals (202) 363-0010

April 3-5 1993 Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference. Sheraton Fountainbleau Inn, Ocean City, Maryland

## ARCHAEOLOGY/PEOPLE/ANTHROPOLOGY

Gerard Smith has been named Director of the Shinnecock Nation Museum. A new museum board has been established to supervise the planing stages of the proposed museum and learning center.

#### The new board includes:

Edwin Garrett, President  
Rebecca Williams, Treasurer  
Keith Philips  
Betty Cromwell, Vice-President  
Elizabeth Haile, Secretary

#### Staff Members:

Gerrod Smith, Director  
Carla Shepard, Secretary  
Donna M. Collins,  
Collections/Records Manager

Provost of the eastern campus of Suffolk Community College, Steven Kenny, has been elected chairman of the Southampton Planning Board.

## PUBLICATIONS OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Readings in LI Archaeology & Ethnohistory: All volumes are \$35.  
Vol. I is out of print.

Early Papers in Long Island Archaeology  
The Coastal Archaeology Reader  
The History & Archaeology of the Montauk  
Languages & Lore of the Long Island Indians  
The Second Coastal Archaeology Reader  
The Shinnecock Indians: A Culture History  
The Historical Archaeology of Long Island: Part 1: The Sites

#### Student Series:

Booklet: A Way of Life: Prehistoric Natives of Long Island \$5.00  
Study Pictures: Coastal Native Americans \$7.00  
Wall Chart: Native Technology (26x39" poster, 3 colors) \$13.00  
Map: Native Long Island (26x39" 3 colors) \$13.00  
Exhibit catalog: The Montauk: Native Americans of Eastern Long Island \$3.00  
Women's Work Native & African Americans of LI \$3.00

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in SCAA includes 3 Newsletters per year and a 20% reduction in workshop and publication costs. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Student (to age 18) \$10      Individual \$20      Family \$30  
Sustaining \$50      Contributing \$100      Patron \$200      Life \$400

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Willing to volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Send check to: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, P.O. Drawer AR, Stony Brook, NY 11790