

NEWSLETTER

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TWO SHELL PITS EXPOSED BY THE L.I. RAILROAD CUT AT JAMESPORT, LI

Ralph S. Solecki, Ph.D.

From the train I had noted evidence of truncated shell pits in a bank cut by the L.I. Railroad a half mile west of the Jamesport station, which spurred me to investigate them. The fleeting glimpse I had of the pits from the train window became actuality when I visited the site on April 14, 1941 (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1

I did not know how to obtain permission from the railroad to explore the area; since I expected to make only a cursory examination for the record, I decided not to make a formal request.

Equipped with my tools and notebook, I located the site. There were two features, one on the north side of the tracks and one on the south side. Both were refuse pits, which I called Pit 1 and Pit 2 (Fig. 2,3).

Pit 1, the north pit, was situated on the gentle slope of a hill cut into by the railroad trench. It was 8.5' in diameter and 50" deep, with a bowl-shaped profile. There was a top lens of black earth with a maximum depth of 18 inches, which appears to have filled in the pit depression. Below this, the character of the earth changed in texture and color to a distinct brown layer.

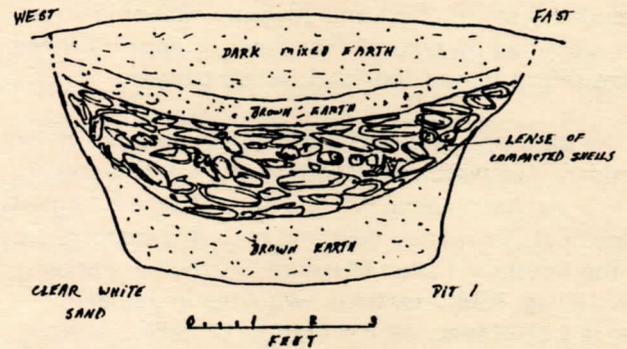


Fig. 2

At a depth of between about 22" and 39" from the surface was a lens of marine shells. This ca. 17" bed, tapering in thickness toward the sides, contained predominantly oyster shells, along with

hard and soft clam shells. There was an 11" thickness of brown earth under the shell layer continuing down to the base of the pit, which was rather flat and measured about 58" wide. Clean sterile white sand was found below the pit. I made an exploratory cut about one foot deep into the pit profile, and estimated that there was about 4' to 5' of this feature left in the bank. No artifacts were recovered from this pit. Aside from the shellfish remains, there were bits of charcoal and several unidentified animal bones.

Pit 2 on the south side was smaller than Pit 1. It measured 3' in diameter and was 30" deep from the surface to the base. Below the first 10" horizon of mixed soil, probably representing the plow line, occurred a lens of scattered marine shells and mixed light and dark earth. Above the base was a layer of dark earth containing compacted shells. The base of the pit was cup-shaped. Sterile yellow loamy sand lay below this.

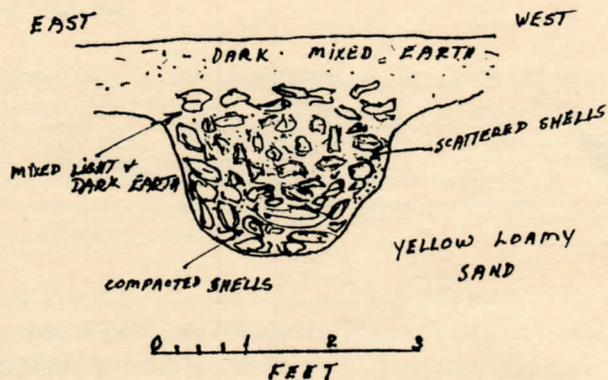


Fig.3

I explored about half of this pit exposed in the bank. Its contents included marine shells such as oyster, hard clam and periwinkle shells in that proportion. There were also some unidentified faunal remains and flecks of charcoal. Native American artifacts included 9 stone chips and several small potsherds, not identified by type at that time. It appears these were refuse pits of the local Native people.

In the past, this site was probably known by Charles Goddard and Nathaniel Booth of the L.I. Chapter, N.Y.S. Archaeological Association, of which I am also a member; there may be some records regarding this at the Southold Indian Museum. Arthur C. Parker (Part 2, pg. 698) mentions two sites in Jamesport; one is a shell heap on the Fred B. Conklin property, the other a shell heap on the Wallace Seaman property. I do not know the location of either of these properties. William A. Ritchie (1965, pg. 165) excavated an Orient-phase burial feature in Jamesport which is in another part of the town.

REFERENCES:

- Parker, Arthur C.
1922 "The Archaeological History of New York," *New York State Museum Bulletin*, Nos. 235, 236, Parts 1 & 2, Albany, N.Y.
- Ritchie, William A.
1965 *The Archaeology of New York State*. Natural History Press. Garden City, N.Y.
- Department of Anthropology
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Women In and Through Urban Archaeology conference, March 2, 1-3 PM, Museum of the City of New York, co-sponsored by Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC).

The Archaeology of Women's Roles in 19th Century New York, talk by Dr. Diana Wall, Tuesday, March 19, noon, at New York Unearthed, 17 State St. near Battery Park.

National Preservation Institute seminars available are- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act: Review and Update**, March 12, Fort Worth, TX., and **Cultural Resource Management Plans: Preparation and Implementation**, March 14-15, Seattle, WA. Information: Frances Lumbard, 202-393-0038.

A Conference on Long Island Women, sponsored by the L.I. Studies Institute and Hofstra Cultural Center, Hofstra University, March 22 and 23, 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM. SCAA Museum Director Dr. Gaynell Stone will present a paper, "Women Who Made a Difference," reporting on the series of posters on notable L.I. women through time that SCAA is developing.

"**Banias (Caesarea Philippi): the Ancient City of Pan**," talk by Dr. John F. Wilson, March 24, 8PM, Saddle Rock Elementary School, sponsored by Long Island Society, Archeological Institute of America. Information: 877-1273.

"**It's Alive! Pest Identification & Management in Your Museum**," March 25, Mid-Atlantic Assn. of Museums, Washington Crossing Historic Park, Washington Crossing, PA. Info: 302-731-1424.

North Eastern Anthropological Assn. meetings, March 27-30, Plymouth State College, Plymouth, NH. Info: 603-535-2502.

Society for American Archaeology, 61st Annual Meeting, April 10-14, New Orleans, LA. Information: 1-202-789-8200.

History and Prehistory of Ceramic Kilns Symposium, April 15, Indianapolis, IN. Info: W.D. Kingery, MSE-338E Mines Bldg. No.12, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721.

Long Island Sounds conference on oral history method, Saturday, April 20, 9 - 4, Pt. Washington Library; information: 883-4400.

New York State Archaeological Assn. Annual Meeting, April 26-28, Eddy Farm Resort Hotel, Sparrowbush, NY. Program information: 201-492-8525.

American Association of Museums, 91st Annual Meeting, May 4-8, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn. Information: 1-202-289-9113.

"Low Altitude Large Scale Aerial Reconnaissance for Cultural Resource Managers," National Park Service courses May 14-23 and July 30-Aug.8 at San Juan College, Farmington, NM. Information: Dr. Rick Watson, 505-599-0373; Steven DeVore, NPS, 303-969-2882.

3RD Eastern States Rock Art Conference, May 24-26, U. of Maine- Machias. Mark Hedden, Main Hist. Pres. Commission, 55 Capitol St., Augusta, ME 04333.

NATIVE TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP

Sunday, May 5, 1-4 PM, Hoyt Farm Park, New Highway, Commack. Primal technology specialists will demonstrate stone-knapping, basket-making, and other Native skills. If inclement weather, will be held in the L.I. Culture History Museum at the site.

BERKELEY HONORS FOR DR. KENT LIGHTFOOT

Kent Lightfoot, who was formerly in the SUNY-Stony Brook Anthropology Dept. and an SCAA Board Member, is now Professor of Anthropology at U of C-Berkeley. In May 1995 he was awarded one of three Distinguished Teaching Awards in the Social Sciences Division, particularly for his "sustained excellence in the teaching of large lecture classes." Those who knew him at SUSB are not surprised, as he demonstrated that excellence here also. Kent has most recently been directing the on-going Fort Ross Archaeological Project, a Russian fur trade colony (1812-1841) on the Sonoma County coast of northern California.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOLS

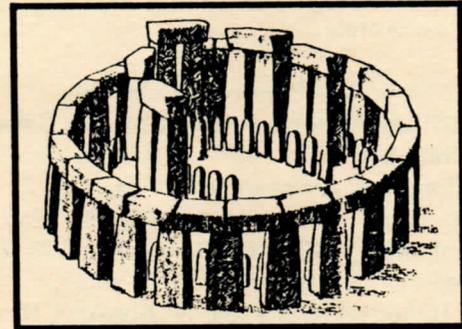
S.C. Community College, Dr. Linda Barber, and Dowling College, Dr. Toni Silver, will conduct the second field school at the historic Ketcham Inn, Center Moriches, June 3 - 20. Information: Dr. Barber at 451 - 4336.

The Institute for Long Island Archaeology, Anthropology Dept., SUNY-Stony Brook, will hold a 5-week field school at a prehistoric site from July 8th - August 9th. For Information call: Dr. David Bernstein at 632 - 7615

UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY PARK PROPOSED

The Town of East Hampton and Suffolk County are developing L.I.'s first underwater park, to be located at the site of the 1781 wreck of HMS Culloden, 2

miles off Culloden Point, first discovered by Dr. Henry Moeller in 1971. Plans are for further archaeological excavation, underwater 'trails' for viewing the wreck, and establishing a conservation and exhibit site on shore.



IN MEMORIAM...

Red Thunder Cloud/Carlos Westez/Ashby West died January 8, 1996 in Worcester, Massachusetts. Red Thunder Cloud had come to East Hampton in 1942 to collect Montauk artifacts for George Heye of the Museum of the American Indian. The collections are now part of the National Museum of the American Indian, and Heye never paid him for them, according to Red Thunder Cloud.

Westez was a singer, dancer, producer of herbal teas, and briefly publisher of "The Indian War Drum." For several years he participated in the annual East Hampton Memorial Day parade, then led a group to Indian Fields for a Native American ceremony.

In the 1940s, Westez worked with Dr. Frank Speck of the Anthropology Dept., University of Pennsylvania, on the Catawba language and use of herbs. In 1965 he is supposed to have recorded what he knew of the Catawba language with linguists at M.I.T. and to have recorded Catawba songs for the Smithsonian Institution. He said he wrote journals in Catawba and spoke it to remember it as he walked in the East End woods .

Westez also collected photographs from Montauk, Shinnecock, and other Native families of the Island, and sold sets of them to libraries. Some of them appeared in SCAA's volume on the Shinnecock, and many of them in the recent **History & Archaeology of the Montauk**. Native families have complained that he took their pictures without permission. However, without his collecting and identifying materials, they might well not be available today for their descendants.

West's marriage to Pretty Pony, a Blackfoot, ended in divorce, but he is survived by a sister and possibly a daughter.

Brian - Re-do

RESOURCES

Archaeology in the Classroom: A Resource Guide for Teachers and Parents, compiled by Wendy O'Brien & Tracey Cullen, Archaeological Institute of America, Boston and New York, 1995. \$10.50. SCAA's programs and publications are listed, but not completely accurately.

From Prehistory to the Present: Studies in Northeastern Archaeology in Honor of Bert Salwen, Nan Rothschild & D. Wall, eds. A special issue of **Northeast Historical Archaeology**, Vols. 21-22, 1992/1993, 1994. \$22. from M. Beaudry, Editor, Dept. of Archaeology, Boston University, 675 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.

Pioneers in Historical Archaeology: Breaking New Ground, Stanley South, ed. \$45., Plenum Publishing, 212-620-8000.

Society of Primitive Technology, journal, newsletter. \$20./yr. PO Box 905, Rexburg, ID 83440. Information: 208-359-2400.

Exploring Ancient Native America, David Hurst Thomas, 1995, provides a synthesis of North American archaeology with a listing of places where regional archaeology can be seen. Information: American Museum of Natural History, 212-769-5100.

"Legislation and College Curriculum" by George S. Smith, Susan Bender and Bennie Keel evaluates what college-level archaeology students really learn about the Federal laws which will shape their careers. The answer, not much. The Public Education Committee of the Society for American Archaeology is developing a general curriculum in public/applied archaeology that will be available to all academic institutions. Smith and Keel co-instruct such a course at Florida State University and their course outline is available from George Smith, 904-561-9106.

Archaeology and Public Education, a newsletter sponsored by the Public Education Committee of the Society for American Archaeology, is a valuable source of information for teachers and the public, and is available free upon request. Information: 202-789-8200.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Readings in LI Archaeology & Ethnohistory: All volumes are \$35 + \$5 postage, except Vol. III which is \$75 + tax and shipping. *Vol.s I & VI are out of print.*

- I. Early Papers in Long Island Archaeology
- II. The Coastal Archaeology Reader
- III. The History & Archaeology of the Montauk, 2nd Edition
- 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 Long Island: Part I: The Sites

Student Series:

Booklet: A Way of Life: Prehistoric Natives of LI	\$5.50
Study Pictures: Coastal Native Americans	\$7.50
Wall Chart: Native Technology (26X39" 3 colors)	\$13.00
Map: Native Long Island (26X39" 3 colors)	\$13.00

Exhibit Catalogs:

The Montauk: Native Americans of Eastern LI	\$3.50
Women's Work: Native & African Americans of LI	\$3.50

10%

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in SCAA includes 3 Newsletters per year and a 10% 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: _____

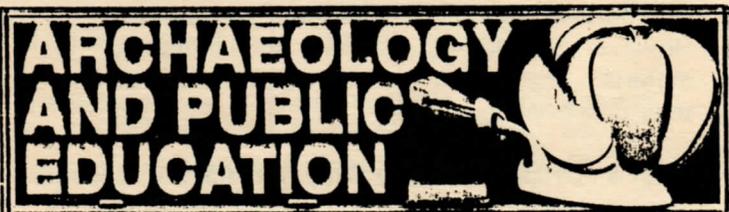
Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone No: _____ Willing to Volunteer? ____

Occupation: _____

Send Check to: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, P.O. Drawer 1542, Stony Brook, NY 11790



Box