NEWSLETTER
Representing Nassau & Suffolk Counties

S.C.A.A. ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, June 24th
Blydenburgh County Park
New Mill Road
Smithtown, N.Y.
6:00 PM Colonial Feast
(Bring appropriate dishes; Dessert & beverages provided by SCAA)
8:00 PM Brief business meeting
Speaker: Dr. John Strong
"Cataneros: Long Island's Pocahontas?"

All members and their guests are welcome to bring a dish, enjoy a lovely setting and meal, participate in a brief annual meeting, and hear a fascinating talk.

REGIONAL 'DIG' INFORMATION

UMass-Boston excavations at Sylvester Manor, Shelter Island, continue in June under the direction of Dr. Steve Mrozowski. Some of this season’s goals are extensive testing of an area said by family lore to be the site of the original house, further investigation of the inter-twined Native and colonial remains, and the lifting of a soil block to later excavate horizontally in their lab. This summer there is also an intensive laboratory scientific techniques introduction to the field school, funded by the National Science Foundation.

The Davis House excavation, led for the past few years by Dr. Linda Barber of S.C. Community College and Dr. Toni Silver of Dowling College, is in hiatus this year as they analyze the many artifacts unearthed for a State report.

Stony Brook University Summer School is sponsoring an underwater archaeological excava­tion off Staten Island, led by Anthropology Department doctoral candidate Daria Merwin. Students must have SCUBA certification to attend. Info: 631-632-7620.

The N.Y. Institute of Anthropology, headquartered on Staten Island, is reviewing 40 known archaeological sites on Staten Island and 3 in Queens County to determine priority of study. Field schools for highschool and college students will be held in July and August. Shoreline studies along the Kill van Kull and Arthur Kill will be held jointly with Hydronautics - Diving for Science and Adventure (see their site, www.hydronautics.org), NYIA newsletter Winter 2003.

The Mohegan-E. Connecticut State University field school, directed by Dr. Jeff Bendremer, has completed 8 years of excavation at the Mohegan Reservation, Uncasville, CT. Last year the field school examined the 18th century Fort Hill Farm, site of an 1827 school for Mohegan children which led to establishment of the 1831 Mohegan Church. It was related to the Mohegan Reverend Samson Occom, whose Diary and life story was covered extensively in SCAA's 8th volume, The History & Archaeology of the Montauk. Students, who include many Mohegan tribal members, also experienced prehistoric excavation at a Late Woodland site on another of the tribe’s properties. For information, call Dr. Bendremer at 860-862-6394.

The Eastern Pequot Field School, under the direction of Dr. Stephen Stillman, UMass-Boston Anthropology Dept., will conduct an intensive survey of tribal lands, with primary attention to historical archaeology sites. Info: 617-287-6854.

African Diaspora Archaeology at New Salem, CT is not a formal field school this summer, but volunteers will be excavating on several weeks throughout the summer. For information contact Prof. Jerry Sawyer, Central Connecticut State University, at 860-832-2610. Connecticut archaeological information from the Arch.Society of Conn. NEWS, March 2003

Adelphi University students, directed by the Adelphi Environmental Studies Program Director and physical anthropologist Dr. Anagnostis Agelarakis, participated in
the beads from the site by Karlis Karklins, material formerly the MAI:Heye Foundation, which sponsored the excavation of the Abdera site in Greece, studying human skeletal remains they unearthed. They gathered information on 7th to 14th century living conditions, working conditions for men and women, diet, dental hygiene, disease, and mortality rates, also the colonists ideas, struggles, and environment. (Dig Magazine, May/June 2003). Dr. Agelarakis has also analyzed photos of skeletal material taken from the Fort Massapeag site, Massapequa, which is in the forthcoming SCAA 9th volume, Native Forts in the Long Island Sound Area.

Garvies Point Museum, Nassau County Parks Dept., hosted a reception for the acquisition and exhibition of a new collection, "Rediscovered, a Long Island Legacy: The Collection of John Gilbert Peterkin" on April 19th. This features Long Island Native artifacts collected by Peterkin’s grandfather, Dr. Henry Lewis O’Brien (1874-1920) from Brooklyn to eastern Long Island. Many of these come from the Foster Saville 1917 excavation at the Pantigo site, near Amagansett in East Hampton Town, which he helped excavate. Most of the artifacts are in the National Museum of the American Indian, formerly the MAI:Heye Foundation, which sponsored the excavation. Originally published in their Indian Notes & Monographs, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1920, it is reprinted in SCAA’s History & Archaeology of the Montauk, 1993:617-628, followed by a contemporary analysis of the beads from the site by Karlis Karklins, material culture curator emeritus of Parks Canada.

(A photo of part of the collection at study at Garvies Point, courtesy Mr.Peterkin)

Dr Phil C. Weigand, formerly a professor of archaeology and chair of the Anthropology Department at Stony Brook University, enjoyed researching Long Island’s archaeological and cultural resources, although his major field was the archaeology of western Mexico. The following paper is being published in Spanish in Mexico, since it is a new perspective on the Native demographics of the Island, we should know about it. Since it is lengthy, portions will be printed in three consecutive newsletters.

The Great Frontier on Long Island, N.Y.: Verrazzano and Early Epidemic Diseases
Phil C. Weigand, Ph.D., Centro de Estudios Arqueologicas, El Colegio de Michoacan

to Ed Johannemann and Gaynell Stone, colleagues and friends

Introduction
When the first Homo sapiens entered the New World, during the span 20,000 to 12,000 years ago, by crossing from Siberia to Alaska, they traveled in small numbers through Arctic and sub-Arctic landscapes that probably sanitized them of most the diseases that they were carrying. Generally and originally, human diseases depended upon three factors to reside successfully within their hosts:

1) Temperate and/or tropical climatic regimes;
2) Groups biologically large enough to sustain the diseases, i.e. a critical mass; and,
3) Close association with the appropriate animals which were co-infected with many of the diseases, and served therefore as their reservoirs (McNeill 1998).

While there is uncertainty concerning the dates, and even the origins of the first migrants (cf. Dillehay and Meltzer 1991, Meltzer 1993, Bonnichsen and Turmire 1999, Dillehay 1997, Chatters 2001), those controversies do not affect the aforementioned three points: the New World migrants formed largely disease-free human communities, at least when cross-compared with their temperate and tropical brethren after the experiments with animal domestication began in the early and middle Holocene. This is not to say that the New World was a disease-free paradise, for it most certainly was not. The above statement conveys only this meaning: the diseases which ravaged the New World were not present, and their absence can be explained by a lack of a shared disease community with domesticated animals (Weigand 2000).

In other words, when the long and gradual series of migrations that had brought the New World its first humans were concluded, the lack of appropriate intervening climates, the lack of a biological mass, and the lack of co-infected animals had rendered them free of most of the Old World disease syndrome. In addition, it is extremely likely that most of the most potent members of that syndrome had not yet entered into an epidemic relationship with humans even in the Old World. For example, McNeill (1998), among others, makes a very convincing case for the late contagion of the plague among humans. Even the earliest experiments of animal domestication in the Old World post-date the major migrations into the New. Since the New World experiments in animal domestication were decidedly minor in comparison with those of the Old World, co-infections, or the symbiotic development of disease communities, were accordingly less (Weigand 2000).

Hence, in the New World, for at least 10-20,000 years, humans lived without encountering these diseases, and therefore either lost or never had the antibodies that could have offered them some protection. The Old World disease community encompassed almost all of Europe, Africa and Asia (Ewald 1994; Twigg 1984). Only the New World, Australia (including Tasmania and New Zealand), and Oceania existed outside of this disease community. The last migrations into the New World, by the Paleo-Siberian groups, usually subsumed under the title "Eskimo," did not introduce the Old World disease community either. Nor did the Nordic migrants from Iceland with their aborted colonial effort around 1000 AD in...
In contrast with the Eskimo, this latter group certainly had been exposed to at least some of the Old World disease community, as frequent contacts between Iceland and other parts of Europe existed. However, the Newfoundland colony apparently had so few systematic contacts with Native Americans that opportunities to transmit diseases were minimalized. Even if some diseases were indeed introduced among the Native Americans at the time of the Newfoundland colony, their demographic configuration was so light and dispersed in nature that a wider contagion either never occurred or was unlikely in the first place.

Native Americans, thus, grew and prospered in an isolated disease environment. However, when the inevitable renewed migrations from the Old World again transpired, these populations were naturally at high risk. The 'Columbian Exchange' introduced a disease community into an inexperienced population; what resulted was a 'virgin soil pandemic' (Crosby 1972 and 1976). The mortality that occurred upon the Euro-African contact varied from region to region, but some areas suffered 90% death rates, especially in the tropical and sub-tropical zones (Cook and Borah 1971-73; May 1961; McNeill 1982 and 1998). In the composite, the first centuries after renewed Old World contacts witnessed the world's most extreme examples of demographic collapse on record. The demographic and social effects of pandemics and epidemics upon populations in the Old World are fairly well documented in most places because historiographical traditions were firmly in place, in particular within the European sphere (examples: Horrax 1994; Gottfried 1983; Herlihy 1997; Platt 1997; Cantor 2002; Bowsky 1981; Cohn 1992, among many others). The types of historical observations possible concerning, for example, European epidemics were not always possible in the New World. In this area, for the most part, only the European reaction to the effects of the diseases was recorded; the Native American reactions are largely absent. The 1670 diary of Daniel Denton mentions a most interesting observation for Long Island. He states that "...since my time, where there were six towns, they are reduced to two small villages..." (Denton 1670).

Similar to the technological disparity between the first Euro-Africans and the Native Americans, the former's epidemiological adaptation was vastly superior in the New/Old World encounter. In the long run, it was this adaptation that was definitive and decisive. The inexperienced Native American populations "...proved vulnerable to wholesale destruction on first encountering these infections" (McNeill 1982:16). Aside from depopulation in the New World, other consequences are common for virgin soil epidemics:

1) The restructuring of social groups as composite societies;
2) Demoralization and receptiveness to new ideologies;
3) Interruption of traditional seasonal cycles and with ensuing malnutrition; and,
4) A cycle of increased disease susceptibility which results from the first three points. An interplay between biological and cultural factors thus transpired, and the feed-back between the two processes made, the situation all the more critical.

The concept 'Great Frontier,' as defined by McNeill (1982), includes an aspect that requires close study by historians and ethnographers when defining ethnographic base-lines. In New World studies, an 'ethnographic base-line' is usually defined as the ethnography of a sociocultural group or area during their last moments of existence prior to contact by Europeans. This is not to be confused with a 'pristine' ethnographic situation, for few of these actually existed in world history. Most all New World populations existed within systematic networks of demographic, social, and cultural contacts with their neighbors, and hence few if any were pristine in this sense.

But the contacts with Euro-African populations, beginning in the 15th and 16th centuries were of a completely different nature. Concerning the introduction of the Old World disease community, only in some cases did a face-to-face situation for contagion prevail. Examples of these are Columbus's contacts with the Arawak and Carib communities, Cortez's expedition into Central Mexico, and De Soto's expedition into the southeastern United States. In most cases, however, the disease frontier advanced faster and further than the face-to-face contact situation between Native Americans and Euro-Africans. Therefore, contagion proceeded actual contact. Such was the case for the Occidente of Mesoamerica (Weigand 1993), very probably for the southwestern United States (Upahm 1982), and the southeastern United States (Swanton 1985).

Thus, an investigation which wishes to establish an ethnographic base-line, in order to represent the character of Native American society prior to Euro-African contact in a particular locality, first has to establish whether or not the area was affected by a disease frontier before actual contact. It must also contextualize the changed socioeconomic situation of such an environment as to whether or not the disease frontier was a variable.

For example, the conquest of Central Mexico, with an incipient pandemic developing there, represented for the Occidente of Mesoamerica a completely changed political and economic environment. The Occidente had been totally integrated in the long distance trade routes for status goods, such as metals, turquoise, and shell, as well as those routes for utilitarian rare resources, such as obsidian and cotton. These routes collapsed suddenly. In addition, parts of the Occidente had been subjected to military raids and confrontations: the Purepecha and the Cihua Mexica violently competed along much of their mutual frontier; the trans-Tarascan zone was subjected to systematic raiding (and possible conquest efforts) from Michoacan; etc. These military pressures suddenly ceased. Thus, in the sociopolitical and economic realm, the entire area was affected by the collapse of Central Mexico (Weigand 1993, Weigand and Garcia de Weigand 1996). Therefore, for the establishment of reliable ethnographic base-lines, the theme of the Great Frontier includes a systematic consideration of social perspectives as well as epidemiological ones.

The Case Study of Verrazzano and Long Island

In the eastern United States (f.n. #1), upon European contact, areas which had once had high populations, with large ceremonial and residential centers surrounded by great areas of cleared farm lands, reverted to grassy woodlands and small prairies with scattered inhabitants, living at "village" levels, within a few generations. The classic study on the southeastern area of the United states by Swanton (1985, first
describing the Native Americans on Long Island traditionally at Southold, Long Island, was established (Higgins 1976; Ceci has been that of the earliest European settlers. By 1640, colony, but the contacts with the Island's Native Americans reconnoitered for years prior to the establishment of this New England, including Connecticut, and in that year a colony settlement, it is probable that Old World epidemic diseases were successfully introduced; and, 8) The introduction of those diseases, and hence possibly the first phase of the pandemic in the northeastern United States, including New England, was inadvertently accomplished by the men of the Verrazzano (f.n. #4) expedition to the northern shore of Long Island Sound in 1524. Thus, the well-documented 1617-19 epidemic throughout New England was probably not the first. 9) The situation requires the recognition of a post-contact but pre-colonial time period of over one hundred years (1524-1640—f.n. #3), and thus a reconsideration of the ethnographic base-line for the area. The ethnohistorical and ethnographic base-line for describing the Native Americans on Long Island traditionally has been that of the earliest European settlers. By 1640, religious dissension was evident within the Puritan colonies of New England, including Connecticut, and in that year a colony at Southold, Long Island, was established (Higgins 1976; Ceci 1977 and 1990). Long Island's northern shore had been reconnoitered for years prior to the establishment of this colony, but the contacts with the Island's Native Americans had been few and eradicate, and extremely little documentation resulted. What documentation that does come from this period is largely geographical, and even much of that is of very poor quality. Thus, a century had transpired between the Verrazzano expedition and the ethnographic base-line, perceived to be 1640, for Long Island. That perceived base-line, by definition, ignores or completely underplays the possibility of more complex demographic and sociocultural configurations prior to that date. Aside from a lack of recognition of the post-contact/pre-colonial period of over a century, there is a logical incongruity implicit in the adoption of the mid-17th century base-line: if things were not complex when the Europeans first established their permanent presence, then they never could have been before (f.n. #5). The exceptionally well-researched and stimulating dissertation by Lynn Ceci (1977; later published in 1990, though not substantially revised) is the best example of the aforementioned approach for Long island: the situation documented by the middle 17th century colonists was chosen as the ethnographic base-line to develop a descriptive model of Native American demography and settlement for pre-European times. Her model makes no allowance for a post-contact/ pre-colonial period, and, hence, gives little credence to the archaeological arguments for denser populations and more sociocultural complexity. Ceci argues that sedentary life styles among the Native Americans were late and resulted from the stimulus of European trade and the development of large manufactories for wampum (shell beads used as a special purpose currency through the entire Northeast area). She maintains that soils were too poor for systematic agriculture, and what little that existed was unimportant. Therefore, Native life was largely based on seasonal gathering and this was reflected in the tiny demographic profile that the settlers encountered. Ceci made her case with some passion, especially after her work received a strong critique by Silver (1980-81). But it is a logical jump, unsupported by the evidence she cites, to conclude that this was the only period of sedentariness experienced by Native Americans on Long Island. The major points of Ceci's argument follow: 1) Native Americans were very few in number on Long Island (between 3-6,000 for the entire island); 2) They were living in a highly dispersed, seasonal and simple settlement system; 3) Their settlements showed no signs of intensification nor hierarchy, such as specialized structures; 4) Their social system showed no signs of intensification nor hierarchy; 5) Agriculture played an extremely limited role, if any at all, within the economic structure, and what little that did exist should best be described as horticulture (Ceci 1979 and 1990); and, 6) The early colonial documents give adequate, though sparse, evidence for the demographic context of the sociocultural systems that they report. The point being made here, though, is not that Ceci is incorrect in her description of the mid-17th century situation. Without doubt, her descriptions are accurate for that period. However, projecting these points uncritically into the pre-contact period is another matter. For that period, we have two lines of evidence: the Verrazzano narrative and the archaeological data-base. Both lines of evidence strongly suggest that Ceci's projections need to be dramatically and substantially modified. First, though, a contextualization of Long Island's pre-European archaeology is helpful. The standard brief
summaries of Long Island’s Native American communities, and their regional relationships during the archaeological pre-colonial and early historical periods, in the context of southern New England and Long Island Sound (see Figure #1), remain those published in the Smithsonian’s *Handbook of the North American Indians* (vol. 15, 1978: Salwen, pp. 160-176; Conkey, Boissevain and Goddard, pp. 177-189; and Simmons, pp. 190-197). Those archaeological descriptions are now quite dated, as a series of projects, mostly in Suffolk County (f.n. #6), and throughout southern New England, require that these interpretations be re-examined. A new series of monographs, published by the Suffolk County Archaeological Association (f.n. #7), and articles have presented enough data to suggest that revisions are in order. Only a very brief summary of some of the high-lights of this research can be presented here.

The research by Tveskov (1997), Bernstein (1993), Benison (1997), and McManamon (1984), emphasizing the southern New England littoral (of the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), including the offshore islands (Martha's Vineyard, Block Island, Nantucket, and the Elizabeth Islands), is most conclusive: for those regions sedentary life-styles began as long ago as 1,000 BC, if not before. As Tveskov notes: "...the coast was occupied by relatively large groups...throughout the year, often without the benefit of maize horticulture." (1997:343.)

The variable in settlement density for a marine environment, as examined in detail by many researchers, is not so much the presence of agriculture but rather the expectable presence of patterns for systematic exploitation of maritime resources, such as shellfish, fish, and seaweeds. Augmented with agriculture, even in slight amounts, it offers a maximizing productive profile which, in the overall area, led to even denser demographic profiles. Thus, it was not so much agriculture per se but maritime resources that established the first opportunity for population and sociocultural intensification, a point completely missed by Ceci in her analysis. Some of the shell mounds reported in the historic literature for the area were truly massive. Christenson describes one of the largest at Damariscotta, and calculates that it had, before its destruction, about 1,270,000 cubic meters of shell debris, though it was clearly deposited over a long period of time (1985:234). Historic lime production has reduced most of the region's shell mounds to just shadows of their former size, though it considerably damaging their potential for archaeological research. However, even small quantities of maize (and other cultigens) within this context offered even more potential for intensification.

While maize cultivation was a relatively late arrival in the general New England zone (ca. 1000 AD is the date supported by C-14), and while it did not everywhere have the same impact, it did affect the social organization of the entire region. As Benison notes for southern New England in general: "A gradually increasing commitment to economic systems which included maize and other seed-bearing plants led to increased levels of complexity in labor organization and land-use practices." (1997:1). This observation should be extended to Long Island. The first and greatest changes, even with a small commitment to agriculture, are reflected in competition for suitable lands for cultivation both within a social group and between them. The trend toward social ranking and/or incipient stratification, thus, received a major stimulus. These changes are clearly seen in the archaeological record at late Woodland period sites such as those along the lower Connecticut River valley, as well as within other areas (cf. Benidrner and Dewar 1992). The Indian Neck Ossuary reflects the increased level of complexity in burial ceremonials seen in the area, in addition (McManamon et al 1984). Maize, bean, and squash cultivation did not replace earlier systematized seed utilization (chenopodium, hickory nuts, hazel nuts, sumac, and acorns), but rather added to these already productive nutritional profiles. There is also evidence of wide-spread forest clearing after 1,000 AD, first documented by Day (1953), which obviously reflects the clearing of land for agricultural purposes. For New England, Hasenstab (1999) notes the presence of stone hoes and granary pits as artifacts and features, that, along with charred maize, strongly supports the contention that agriculture was present before European contact.

To be continued..............................

**RESOURCES**

**Common Ground**, the National Park Service magazine, is now sub-titled “Preserving our Nation’s Heritage” instead of “Archaeology and Ethnography in the Public Interest. To keep your FREE subscription coming you must re-subscribe by mail (National Center for Cultural Resources, 1849 C St. N.W. (2251), Washington, DC 20240-0001), by fax (202-371-5102), or online (www.cr.nps.gov/CommonGround). Also available is the sister publication, CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship; see [www.cr.nps.gov/CRM](http://www.cr.nps.gov/CRM) Journal for information.

**Prehistoric America: A Journey Through the Ice Age and Beyond**, Miles Barton et al (Yale U. Press, 2003) is being made into a six-part BBC series, “Prehistoric America,” to be shown on the Discovery Channel in July, both to be used by teachers throughout the country. Hopefully it will be more accurate than the channel’s February series on early man and the peopling of the Americas. (Oregon Archaeological Society Newsletter, April 2003).

To see many ancient Greek sites, visit [www.culture.gr](http://www.culture.gr). 360 degree panoramas of many of the sites can be found at [www.stoa.orq/metis/sites/olympia.html](http://www.stoa.orq/metis/sites/olympia.html). For the Agate excavations, log on to [www.agathe.gr](http://www.agathe.gr).


American Indian, journal of the National Museum of the American Indian, celebrates Native traditions and communities, and is available with membership in the NMAI at $20 and up. This issue focuses on the original inhabitants of Cuba, the Taino, whose extinction is a myth.

American Indian Healing Arts: Herbs, Rituals, and Remedies for Every Season of Life, by Barrie Kavasch and Karen Barr is ‘a book of charm and substance: a literal teach-yourself volume on American Indian healing art," says Thomas E. Lovejoy, Counselor to the Secretary for Biodiversity & Environmental Affairs, Smithsonian Institution. The cover is an arresting array of the foods, plants, herbs, etc. which constitute the healing arts. Bantam Books, New York, NY 1999, $18.95. A portion of the royalties support the American Indian College Fund.

The Medicine Wheel Garden: Creating Sacred Space for Healing, Celebration, and Tranquility by Barrie Kavasch, Bantam Books, 2002, $18.95. Herbalist and ethnobotanist Kavasch has created planting guides, an encyclopedia of 50 key healing herbs, herbal recipes, crafts and ceremonial objects, seasonal rituals, and more. A prolific author, Kavasch has written 11 books on Native foods (Native Harvests: American Indian Wild Foods is a classic), 4 books for young adults, and 7 books for children, all practical, beautiful, and inspiring.

In Search of This and That: Tales from an Archaeologist's Quest, Selected Essays from the Colonial Williamsburg Journal, Ivor Noel Hume, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1998, $14.95. A witty sprint through Hume's many archaeological adventures and mysteries.

Archaeoastronomy: the Journal of Astronomy in Culture reports the latest research into the astrological practices and world view of all ancient and indigenous cultures—in the 2001 issue from Italy, Malta, Spain, Mesoamerica, and Greece. $40/year. Information: John Carlson, ed., PO Box X, College Park, MD 20741-3022; 301-864-6637.

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. + $6. Shipping, both plus 8.50% sales tax in N.Y. State for individuals. Vol. I is out of print; a few copies of Cols. 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 (in press).

Student Series (Including shipping)
Study Pictures: Coastal Native Americans 8.
Wall Chart: Native Technology (26x39"-3 colors) 14.
Map: Native Long Island (26x39"-3 colors) 14.

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Send check to: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, P.O. Box 1542, Stony Brook, NY 11790-1542 Tel: 631-929-8725

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