

**Town of Southampton Approves Graves Protection Act
and Shinnecock Hills Building Moratorium**

Scott Ferrara

In the Spring of 1991, the Suffolk County Archaeological Association Newsletter (Vol. 17, No. 1) opened with an article highlighting the preservation issues of Native American sacred land on Long Island. Today, nearly 30 years later, the fight continues for the Shinnecock Nation and their allies in the effort to prevent further desecration of ancestral burials and the development of sacred lands. Recently on September 8, 2020, the Southampton Town Council voted unanimously to approve the Graves Protection Act and Shinnecock Hills Building Moratorium (Southampton Town Code Chapter 330 section 333 - Resolution 2020-759). The Graves Protection Act or "Protection of Unmarked Graves" is a long fought for amendment to local law that will attempt to protect Native American burials from further destruction and unceremonious disturbance. However, this marks only the most recent victory in a movement that continues to gain momentum for Shinnecock repatriation.

The Graves Protection Act states that the intentional destruction, defacement, or removal of human remains and funerary objects will be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of \$10,000+, or a period of up to 15 days in prison, while those who have intent to sell such remains or items may face a \$50,000+ fine or 30 days in prison. Additionally, the new town resolution will create the post of "Town Archaeologist" who will respond to events in which burials are discovered and are determined to be archaeological, which in the state of New York are cultural materials and remains older than 50 years. This new town position will consult with the Southampton Town and Shinnecock Indian Nation Joint Cultural Heritage Protection Committee and the Southampton Historic Burying Ground Committee for guidance and assistance. Consultation will be key to this undertaking as tribal members rightfully deserve stewardship during this process and are also well acquainted with the detailed archaeological method.

Following consultation with the aforementioned committees, the Town Archaeologist will conduct a speedy investigation of re-discovered burials to determine the boundaries of the burial site, cultural lineage and affiliation of the human remains, and to develop a plan for the disposition and removal of the remains. Further, the resolution states that, upon request from the landowner, the Town of Southampton will "make a referral to the Town's Community Preservation Fund for eligibility determination for preservation".

In addition, the Southampton Town Council also passed the Shinnecock Hills Building Moratorium, a six-month moratorium for the Shinnecock Indian Contact Period Village Fort area and the Sugar Loaf Hill Shinnecock Indian Burial Ground. After this temporary six-month moratorium, archaeological testing will be required in order for any further development to continue in the aforementioned areas of the Shinnecock Hills. This creates an increased demand for archaeological and tribal consultation on Long Island.

While this resolution is another step towards increased communication and partnership between local government and Long Island's Indigenous communities, it is clear that this new act favors the further development of Southampton. However, this action represents a change in the political climate that acknowledges the demand for the repatriation of Native American sacred lands and cultural heritage. New York is one of four states that does not have protection laws for Native American burials. Currently, there is a proposed bill (S4422) in the New York State Senate that, if passed, would provide state-wide protection for Native American burial sites and funerary objects. In 1990, the United States government passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), which provides federal protection for Native American ancestral remains, funerary items, sacred objects, and other cultural materials. NAGPRA also requires the repatriation of human remains and sacred cultural items from museums back to their affiliated descendant tribes and communities. However, NAGPRA only provides protection for Native American sites, remains, and cultural items that are located on federal property or involved in projects using federal funding, leaving state and private lands out of the jurisdiction of this act. Therefore, it is up to state and local governments to create policies that protect Native American sacred sites from further desecration.

As stakeholders, supporters, and enthusiasts of Long Island archaeology, it is critical that we not only listen to the voices of the descendant communities of whose past we study but also become allies in their movements and remember that Native Long Islanders are still here. The activism of Long Island's Indigenous community and their allies have demonstrated progress towards Native repatriation, sovereignty, and underscores how the east end of Long Island has always, and continues to be, a site of Native American survivance.

The Soulagnet Site, Dix Hills, N.Y.

Scott F. Kostiw

The Soulagnet site is located in central Long Island. Many of the archaeological sites in the central areas of Long Island have not been documented. Sites located on the north shore have received far more attention.

The site was located on Soulagnet Farm, in Dix Hills. Homes along Soulagnet Court now occupy the location of the site, which is about a mile south of exit 50 of the Long Island Expressway. The area is located along the Ronkonkoma moraine on an ancient outwash plain known geologically as a kame delta. The area had been formerly heavily forested and also contained many small ponds. A freshwater pond was located at the end of the court, where a recharge basin is now located. This may have been the source of fresh water to the Native Americans that resided in the area. The area is also known for its numerous, well rounded quartz rocks and boulders.

It was one of many potato farms located in that section of Long Island during the 1930's through the 1950's. Long Island was, at one time, famous for its potatoes. In 1998 I interviewed Dorothy Soulagnet, one of the family members who was born and raised on the farm. I photographed the family collection of Native American artifacts at that time. She was still living in the area, although the farm had already been developed. I was told that one of their annual events was to look for Native American artifacts in the fall, after the fields were harvested and the soil was turned.



Figure 1



Figure 2

The artifacts are mainly stemmed, side-notched, and triangular points. They ranged from the Late Archaic through Late Woodland periods. The primary lithic material used was quartz. Among the collection were several fishtail points, a large knife, a drill, a small celt, two

blades of eastern Pennsylvania jasper, and an unusually large biface made of chert. One of the fishtail points was made of purple argillite.

There are other archaeological sites located in the area. The Half Hollow Hills site, located along Straight Path Road, contained a similar assemblage of quartz points, along with a bifurcate point and a three-quarter grooved axe (Saxon, 1976). Not far away, in Melville, is the Old East Neck Road site, which contained a similar assemblage of Late Archaic through Late Woodland quartz points (ibid). I have seen other collections of artifacts



Figure 3

in Dix Hills that contain stemmed and triangular quartz points.

The Soulagnet collection has been donated to the Huntington Historical Society. It is currently housed and is on display at their facility.

References

Saxon, Walter, 1976

The Half Hollow Hills Site

Manuscript on file at the Nassau County Museum, Garvies Point, New York

Captions:

Figure 1. Selection of quartz artifacts from the Soulagnet Site. There is a large side-notched quartz knife on the upper left. Note the drill in the center and the fishtail point on the lower right. Other points are stemmed, side-notched, and tapered stemmed.

Figure 2. Selection of artifacts from the Soulagnet site. Note the flaking along the edges of the exceptionally large biface on the left.

Figure 3. Selection of artifacts from the Soulagnet site. A-B – polished celt; C – tapered stemmed knife made of Pennsylvania jasper; D – fishtail point made of quartz; E – fishtail point made of purple argillite.

Authorities Recover 19,000 Artifacts in International Antiquities Trafficking Sting

By Theresa Machemer

Smithsonianmag.com

May 8, 2020

Items recovered include fossils, paintings, ancient coins, ceramics and jewelry.

A joint operation undertaken by Interpol, Europol, the World Customs Organization and local police forces has recovered 19,000 artifacts from 103 countries, the global policing organization announced this week. Objects recovered range from a pre-Hispanic gold mask to a trove of ancient coins and Roman figurines. Authorities arrested 101 people as part of the crackdown.

The undercover operations, dubbed Athena II and Pandora IV, took place last fall. Due to “operational reasons” cited in the statement, the missions’ results were withheld until now.

Pandora IV is the latest in a series of similarly titled stings. Per the *Art Newspaper*’s Kabir Jhala, previous Pandora operations led to the recovery of 62,500 artifacts between 2017 and 2019. Last November, Europol separately announced the recovery of 10,000 artifacts through Operation Achei.

“The hundreds of arrests and investigations launched—and thousands of objects seized—must be a wake-up call for those in government and in the art world,” Deborah Lehr, founder of the nonprofit Antiquities Coalition, tells *artnet News*’ Taylor Dafoe.

“This is a critical reminder, coming at an equally critical time, that when it comes to ancient art, buyers should beware.”

The joint operation targeted international networks of art and antiquities traffickers who loot objects from “war-stricken countries, . . . museums and archaeological sites,” according to the statement. In one instance, the Spanish National Police collaborated with the Colombian Police to recover ancient jewelry, gold figurines and a Tumaco gold mask in transit at the Madrid Barajas International Airport. Subsequent house searches in Bogota yielded 242 stolen pre-Hispanic objects.

As Sam Jones reports for the *Guardian*, police also found stolen ancient coins in Argentina and Latvia. In Kabul, meanwhile, Afghan customs officials intercepted almost 1,000 cultural artifacts headed for Istanbul. The list of recovered items includes fossils, paintings, ceramics, historical weapons, a Roman lion carved out of limestone, and a frieze (or carved, horizontal wall panel).

“The number of arrests and objects show the scale and global reach of the illicit trade in cultural artifacts, where every country with a rich heritage is a potential target,” says Interpol Secretary General Jürgen Stock in the statement. “If you then take the significant amounts of money involved and the secrecy of the transactions, this also presents opportunities for money laundering and fraud as well as financing organized crime networks.”

A major component of the operation was a “cyber patrol week” organized by Italy’s Carabinieri Department for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. These “culture commandos” combine the talents of “archaeologists, paleontologists, art historians and combat-trained shock troops,” wrote Frank Viviano for *National Geographic* in 2015. Targeting online sales, the initiative resulted in the recovery of 8,670 artifacts earmarked for the digital black market.

“The operational success of Customs and its law enforcement partners offers tangible proof that international trafficking of cultural objects is thriving and touches upon all continents,” says Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the World Customs Organization, in the statement. “In particular, we keep receiving evidence that online illicit markets are one of the major vehicles for this crime. However, online transactions always leave a trace and Customs, Police and other partners have established effective mechanisms to work together to prevent cross border illicit trade.”

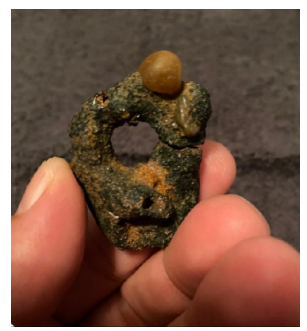
Artifact trafficking is an ongoing problem in the international community. As the *Art Newspaper’s* Emily Sharpe reported last month, the Antiquities Trafficking and Heritage Anthropology Research Project - an investigative task force dedicated to “digging into the digital underworld of transnational trafficking, terrorism financing, and organized crime,” according to its website- noted an increase in online antiquities trafficking as many regions enacted stay-at-home measures amid the novel coronavirus pandemic. Illicit groups are now trafficking not only coins, ceramics and other artifacts, but also personal protective equipment and hand sanitizer, according to the researchers.

“Any nation with a past worth protecting must also remain vigilant that its history is not stolen and sold to the highest bidder,” Lehr tells *artnet News*.

Discovery from a Local “Archaeologist”

Six year old Lena Gromer of Sayville, NY found this metal ring artifact on the shore in Sayville while walking on the beach with her dad. Excited to find out more about this interesting find her dad contacted SCAA to help identify the object.

Staff Archaeologist Laurie Billidello identified it as a link of chain of undetermined but most probably recent origin. According to Professor Ken Ettlinger, geologist stated that as metal oxidizer in sea water and wet environment, metals can look older than they are. We hope Lena continues in her discovery of the world around her.



What were they drinking? Native American Wine?

Newswise

New chemical analysis of residues left behind in pottery from archaeological site in Texas have found suggested evidence of grape wine and caffeinated beverages.

Dr. Crystel Doier archaeologist with Wichita State University, who is researching pottery sherds from sites that come from the Toyah phase with probable ancestors of the Lipan Apache. “The caffeine probably came from either chocolate/cacao drinkers or, more likely, from the regional “black drink” a tea made from the yaupon hollyplant.

Dr. Dozier has read accounts from Spanish explorers of “wild” grapes grown in pre-conquest America.

Evidence of tartaric acid and succinic acids both found in grapes but not usually found together in other fruits at those concentrations. Research and analysis continues.

What are they smoking?
UChicago News

New developments in the use of metabolites to identify plants used by Native Americans for smoking and medicinal use are being used by researchers at the University of Chicago and Washington State University.

Metabolomics - using data to study the small molecules called metabolites have identified around 100 different plants species, according to researcher Korey Brownstein of University of Chicago.

In one study, Brownstein looked at one clay pipe from pre-contact - 1,334 - 1,524 years old, and one from post-contact, end of the 18th century. Evidence of nicotine was found in both - indicating tobacco use.

Also found in the pre-contact pipe, was R. Glabra, a species of sumac - possibility added from medical properties or taste. This is the first scientific proof of a non tobacco plant in an archaeological pipe.

Wells Homestead farm to be preserved by County

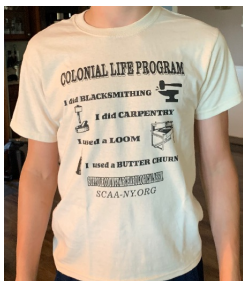
By Denise Civiletti
 Sep 9, 2020

Lyle Wells, was an 11th generation Riverhead farmer. Suffolk County will acquire development rights on an 11.2-acre Wells Homestead site in Northville for \$661,000.

The county legislature voted unanimously today to acquire the development rights from the Estate of Lyle Wells, using the county's quarter-percent drinking water protection program funds. The acreage being preserved is part of a 16-acre site. The property has been in the same farming family since the 1661, North Fork Legislator Al Krupski said. It is one of the oldest family farms in New York State.

Lyle Wells, 62, died in an accident on his farm in January 2018. The farm is now being run by his children. Wells was an outspoken advocate for Riverhead's agricultural community for more than 30 years. He was passionate about preserving and enhancing local agriculture. Wells served on the farmland and open space select committee and the agricultural advisory committee, both of which he served as chairman. He also served on the town's TDR task force.

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