

**P**ROFESSIONAL  
**A**RCHAEOLOGISTS OF  
**N**EW  
**Y**ORK  
**C**ITY



NEWSLETTER NO. 48  
 MARCH, 1990

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*Call Margo -*

Material for the PANyc Newsletter may be sent to Celia Orgel, editor, 360 Cabrini Blvd., #3-G, New York, New York 10040. To ensure inclusion in the next issue, please submit material at least 10 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: March 28, 1990  
Hunter College, 69th St. and Park Ave. Rm. 710  
General Membership 7:00 pm

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Minutes of the PANYC and NYAC General Membership  
January 24, 1990 Hunter College Rm. 710  
Henn called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm

SECRETARY'S REPORT: 1) Museum should read "Geismar reported that contact was made with the Museum of the city of NY and they are interested in having another series of speakers in the future." 2) Under Parks, delete "Henn will send a written request to Comm. Todd.", change "RPFs" to RFPs, and add to end of last sentence "on part of the park."

TREASURER'S REPORT: Winter reports PANYC's bank holdings as of Feb. 1 at \$1,297.11, and our account earned \$98.99 interest in '89.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: 1) PANYC is now on Landmarks' mailing list for schedule of public hearings. Henn responded to two cases, Seaport Historic District and Fulton Ferry Historic District. Also wrote in support of Seaport District Community Board. Community Board 1 representative will present a case against development at 250 Water St. Property is not being valued for its archaeological potential. Action in future should include writing to community board leaders in support of their opposition to changes which will threaten or destroy archaeological material or potential. Local community boards are a good place to state our case, and our involvement makes us more visible. 2) Henn expressed condolences to Bud Wilson on behalf of PANYC. 3) UDC has made an arrangement to fund Schermerhorn Row report through Natural Heritage Trust. Henn will prepare a letter to the Mayor. 4) Announcement of NYAC meeting on January 28th at Skidmore. 5) There will also be a joint NYAC/NYSAA meetings on April 20, 21, 22; contact Bridges for details.

Membership: Application for membership from Anne Dowd was accepted.

Action: Henn for Silver. Duryea House in Brooklyn burned. Silver will call Michael Devonshire to find out who PANYC should contact. Since it is a historic structure, we must stop any bulldozing; it is an opportunity for testing. We should also check with Winter about an earlier report on the site.

Archives: Marshall did not yet hear from NY Historical Society. She does need to know how much material we will be archiving. INFORMATION IS URGENTLY REQUESTED - PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE ENCLOSED FORM.

Awards: Henn for Cantwell. Mailing on the Salwen Award did go out to universities with a Feb. 1st deadline for submissions.

City Agency Planning: No report.

Curation: No report.

Legislation: No report.

Museum: Geismar contacted the Museum of the City of NY and they are interested in a lecture series for 1991. New education director starts in mid-Feb; Geismar will discuss with the new Director.

Native American Affairs: SAA proposal/policy statement will be discussed at NYAC meeting. Cantwell will attend. SHA will also issue a draft policy statement at their meetings in Tuscon to be sent to their members.

Nominations: Henn reminded the membership to send in their nomination forms.

Parks: Elizabeth Gotbaum will take office as the new Parks Commissioner Feb.1. PANYC should send a letter. We need to make her aware of the past correspondence between Parks and PANYC, reiterate the issues, and request a meeting. We do need to convey a sense of urgency but we should be positive in our approach. An invitation to our public program should also be sent.

Public Program: Bridges has begun to put the final program together. Speakers will include Geismar, Huey on Old Slip, and Henn.

Research and Planning: Rubinson reported that the committee has been asked to consider organizing a symposium, possibly to be held at Landmarks. Please forward suggestions to Rubinson.

Shipwreck: Now that there is new legislation in place, at the discretion of the President and Executive Board, this committee is disbanded for the present.

Special Publications: No report.

Standards: Since we have closure, committee may begin to look into other areas for reporting.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: 1) Pagano reported that copies of reports done under the aegis of Landmarks are distributed to: Municipality Reference Center, borough repository for the borough in which the work was done, two in Landmarks office, one to City Planning. Asked if perhaps NY Historical society could be another repository. Geismar will check with the Society. 2) Yamin reported that Morven will not be used as a museum but for State Trooper housing. This may violate the contract of the gift. National Park Service work has been going on for the past 5 years; no analysis is yet done, no report written, and funding may be cut off. If the current plan for use goes through, probably no restoration will be done, just plastering. Letters needed from people about concern of the use and restoration of the property. It is also possible that if Park Service money is used, it may have to be returned. There must be at least an analysis and report and "judicious backfilling". We should write to Florio in Trenton, with cc's to Bill Bradley and state senators. Contact Yamin for addresses. Henn will write on behalf of PANyc.

Respectfully submitted, Anne Donadeo, Secretary 1989-90.

# PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

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Roselle Henn, President  
Professional Archaeologists of New York City  
129 West 89 Street  
Apt. 33  
New York, New York 10024

March 15, 1990

Thomas Amorosi  
6 Compton Street  
East Rockaway, New York 11518

Dear Tom:

On behalf of PANYC's Executive Board and our entire membership, I would like to extend our appreciation for your assistance in arranging for our meeting room in Hunter College this past year. We were all grateful for having such a convenient and pleasant location. I hope you will also convey our thanks to the Anthropology Department for their continued support and assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Roselle

# The Hole Story

by Dr. Allan S. Gilbert  
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

There is a new "openness" at Fordham's archaeological excavation. All the windows are broken. This is not surprising for a house that was torn down 94 years ago. Demolition can be hard on windows. But the unusual part is that all the pieces are there. The site has thus yielded up many potentially restorable panes, making it possible to launch a detailed investigation of 19th century window glass technology as well as an inquiry into the glazing methods used on the manor in its final years. The astute will also recognize that the discovery bestows upon the dig team one of the world's greatest challenges: the colorless jigsaw puzzle.

Excavations at the manor site have been ongoing since 1985 under the auspices of the Departments of Sociology/Anthropology and History with support from the University and the Bronx County Historical Society. The blue tarpaulins located immediately east of Collins Hall cover the exposures made to date: one over the rear wall of the east wing that was built in 1844-45, and another over the front facade at the joint between the wing and the central hall, which was probably built just after the Revolution but possibly even earlier. Previously a colonial farmhouse and, after American independence, a gentleman's country estate, the old house served various purposes but was best known as an infirmary during its use by St. John's College, Fordham's name prior to its 1906 charter as a university. Age and structural instability may have forced Fr. Joseph Campbell, the 16th (previously also the 13th) college president to raze the building in 1896.

## We Never Did Windows, Until Now

Shards of shattered window glass are common in excavations of historical sites. The material is brittle to be sure, but it is usually resistant to the hostilities of burial, which include temperature fluctuations, moisture, and chemical changes. Although glass shards are common, they normally represent only a partial assemblage of scattered fragments from hundreds of breakages occurring over dozens of years or decades during the life of a building. Because most pieces are missing, the panes tend to be minimally restorable, and the small sections that are preserved tell relatively little about the

original shapes of the windows and their production techniques.

The Rose Hill manor has also yielded loose shards, but in the fall of 1988, team members working near the corner between the wing and center hall uncovered a thick glass deposit. At least three inches of highly fragmented pieces lay on a brick surface together with a few wood frame remnants. Covering the glass were some two dozen sheet metal roofing shingles, which were in turn held down by a 2X3 foot section of brick chimney. The end of the semester and the approach of winter forced a speedy removal of the glass in buckets. Nothing was left behind except for pieces extending eastward beyond the trench into as yet undug portions of the site.

Our current explanation for the presence of the glass within the site presumes that sashes were removed from the manor's double hung windows prior to demolition. Disposal of the sashes was finally accomplished by stacking them within the ruins where they were subsequently covered by landfill. They were laid inside a brick-paved drywell about two and a half feet wide and 18 inches deep that ran along the front of the wing. Over nearly a century of burial, the wood frames rotted and the pressure from above slowly crushed the panes against the brick paving.

In the summer of 1989, a second, thinner accumulation of glass was uncovered, nestled within a crawlspace of the east wing. Unencumbered by heavy overlying masonry, these shards were large enough to label, photograph, and remove in orderly layers to make restoration easier. Contiguous pieces were often observed resting next to one another, making it apparent that intact panes or sashes had originally been placed in the ground.

A semester of washing, sorting, measuring, reassembling, and consulting with other historical archaeologists has made a small dent in the work but has provided much information about the problems and potential methods of analysis and study. Not much is known about archaeological window glass. Although the broad outlines of development in the window industry are known through general sources on industrial history, much remains unconfirmed by primary documents — including archaeological finds. If the manor windows can be put back into virtually complete panes, then we may be

CONTINUED

## THE HOLE STORY

able to produce important information relevant to industrial history while we test the most promising avenues of glass analysis for use by other digs.

What we can report for now is that there are some tricks to doing the jigsaw puzzle.

We first tried sorting by thickness, figuring that thick shards would not be in the same pane as thin ones. Wrong. Early glassmaking techniques produced panes of very variable thickness. Further, because glass is a supercooled liquid, a pane mounted in a window over a long period of time tends to flow downward with the force of gravity. Its bottom can end up being thicker than its top. In the lab, the thickness of each piece is measured in thousandths of an inch, and depending upon where the measurement is taken, the results can vary by up to three hundredths of an inch.

So we switched to sorting by color instead. Although the glass is basically clear and transparent, it displays various shades of green and turquoise when viewed on edge. Panes had to be cut from a single sheet of glass that had usually been formed from a uniform melt. Panes therefore tend to show uniform properties, including color and chemical composition.

We also grouped pieces according to the degree of glass disease. Glass containing certain fluxing ingredients, notably sodium, calcium, and potassium, tends to be chemically unstable; its surface layers absorb moisture, crystallize, and flake off in thin scales that give the glass a pearly iridescence. The disease is not contagious, but it is "congenitally" related to the chemistry of the original melt. The condition thus serves well as a sorting criterion to help reassemble the panes.

Another clue to the puzzle is the air bubbles. Early glass can contain numerous tiny bubbles, most nearly microscopic but some large enough to be seen without optical aid. Depending upon how the primary glass sheet is formed — whether twirled into a disk (in the crown glass process) or swung into a cylinder (in the broad glass process) the spinning or swaying motion that forms sheets out of blown glass also draws out the bubbles into characteristic shapes and configurations. Most bubbles in the Rose Hill glass are lentoid in shape and parallel in alignment, suggesting the lengthwise flow patterns typical of broad glass technique. The pendular motion of the rod gradually elongates the cylinders until they are of sufficient size to slit and open out.

In mending a pane of broad glass, all bubbles must be oriented similarly, since they were all pointing in the same direction in the original sheet. By laying the shards out with their bubbles arranged the same way, the breakage lines become properly positioned to match edge

curvatures and make joins. (We have discovered that judgment of curvature is critical. Although glass does occasionally break along straight lines, straight breaks are nearly impossible to join with confidence due to the lack of a clean fit to confirm the attachment.)

### What We Found When We Raised the Roof

That the sashes stacked in the drywell were covered by roofing shingles and weighted down by a piece of chimney is

another stroke of luck. We haven't much to say yet about the chimney; all 150 or so lbs. of it were wedged up onto a wooden tray, set on a handtruck, and wheeled to the dig shed, where it has been drying out. The shingles, however, tell quite a story.

If they hadn't been used to cover the windows, they probably would have been sold for scrap. They might even have been reused, for as we have learned, they were nearly brand new when the manor was wrecked. The shingles are Walter's Standard Metallic Shingles, patented April 4, 1882, and produced and distributed by the National Sheet Metal Roofing Company of New York City. We suspect that they are made of zinc galvanized iron plate, but the rust-resistant coating may be tin or terne (tin plus lead). Metal roof

shingles and tiles were introduced into the American roofing industry from Europe in the late 1800s as a light-weight and fireproof alternative to slate and wood shingles. Their embossed "Y" patterns and edge folds were designed to overlap and lock the 13X20 inch pieces together. Since the patent date of 1882 was embossed onto the shingles as well, the manor must have received its new roof in 1882 or later.

Archaeology student Patricia Fiorenza was able to put a terminal date on the roof replacement. Within the large and valued collection of trade catalogues archived at the Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University, she located one catalogue published in 1890 by the National Sheet **continued**



# Mansion Dig

continued from page ten

Metal Roofing Company entitled *Practical Hints to Builders*. In it, the company extolled the virtues of their new product, and provided a description of its applications, installation instructions, and testimonials from satisfied customers. Among the satisfied customers, Patricia found a number of Jesuit officials of academic institutions such as the College of Holy Cross. In addition, the company mentioned that roofing was sold to St. John's College in Tremont, New York. Tremont was the postal address for the Fordham area one hundred years ago. From this, we know that the refurbishment of the manor must have occurred between 1882, the patent date for the product, and 1890, the date of the catalogue.

Archival data from Fordham illuminates the matter somewhat. Fr. Patrick Dealy, the 12th college president, pursued major capital improvements during his years in office (1882-1885). He began construction on a new Science Building (now Thebaud Hall) and initiated renovations on a number of older buildings, including St. John's Hall and the old manor.

The new roof was likely put on the manor by Fr. Dealy. But he may have been responsible for other modifications that have come to light through excavation. An underground retaining wall, restuccoing of the front foundations, and the drywell itself appear to have come into existence at very nearly the same time.

The soil of the front yard was prevented from falling into the drywell by the stone retaining wall, which appears to run along the front and around to the side of the wing where a similar wall, still built below grade, has been uncovered. If the two underground walls are continuous, then the front section kept the drywell open, while the side section buttressed the end wall of the east wing against settling.

There is good reason to suspect that at least part of the manor was unstable. The area between Collins Hall and the north wing of the Administration Building is a slightly saddle-shaped conduit for ground water flowing southward off the topographically higher area occupied now by the gym, McGinley Center, and playing fields. The stream passes next to the manor site on its way down to the wet depression at the Third Avenue gate. With heavy precipitation, the soil swells with this runoff, and the sides of our excavation tend to crumble from the trickle of water into the dig site. The end wall of the manor's east wing rested upon broad footing stones set on a layer of small pebbles, and such support may not have been adequate to prevent sinking into wet ground. We had already noted more than a year ago that, at some point late in the manor's life, a trench was dug into the ground 3-4 feet beyond the wing foundations and the retaining wall set into it to prevent land slippage. The 3-4 foot intervening space was filled with stones to

improve drainage, and a brick-bordered flower bed with crushed marble path was laid out on the surface. If this wall runs around to the front of the wing as we suspect, the intervening space here was left open as a drywell paved with common red brick.

Below the clapboarding of the manor's superstructure, the front foundations of both the wing and center hall were covered by a smooth, one-half to three-quarter inch coat of gray stucco. The stucco is presently better preserved on the wing, where it protrudes slightly over the pavement bricks, suggesting that it was probably applied after the drywell was built. Under the gray stucco, the foundations were originally painted maroon perhaps to honor the illustrious baseball team, the Maroons, which played its first game in 1859.

This latest layer of stucco is visible in the extant archival photos of the manor taken ca. 1890. The drywell cannot be seen, but crawlspace openings underneath the east wing that the well might have kept dry are quite clear. The roof is obscured on one of the photos by strong sunlight reflectance, which might indicate the presence of the Walter's Standard Metallic Shingles.

In sum, the spiffy appearance of the manor at the time of its demolition in 1896 might have been the result of Fr. Dealy's efforts sometime between 1882 and 1885. Prior to this facelift, the house was probably charmingly decrepit with a slowly sinking east end and garish maroon foundations. Eleven years after Fr. Dealy left office, Fr. Campbell found it necessary to condemn the building, possibly because, spiffiness notwithstanding, it was still unstable on its shallow foundations.

# PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in PANYC is open to any professional archaeologist who subscribes to the purpose of the organization and who meets the following criteria for education, training and professional activity.

- a. Applicants must have been awarded an advanced degree such as an M.A., M.S., M.Phil., Ph.D., D.Sc., or official A.B.D., from an accredited institution in archaeology, anthropology, history, classics or other germane discipline with a specialization in archaeology.
- b. Applicants must have had at least six weeks of professionally supervised archaeological field training and at least four weeks of supervised laboratory analysis and/or curation experience. Requirements for both field and laboratory analysis will be considered to have been met by attendance at an archaeological field school which meets the guidelines set forth by the Society for Professional Archaeologists.
- c. Applicants must demonstrate professional experience in one or more areas of archaeological activity, such as: field research and excavation, research on archaeological collections, archival research, administration of units within public or private agencies oriented toward archaeological research, conduct of cultural resource management studies for public agencies, or teaching with an emphasis on archaeological topics. Applicants meeting the education and training criteria and having other professional interests related to archaeology will be considered on a case by case basis.
- d. All prospective applicants must be approved by a majority of members present at a regularly scheduled meeting of the general membership. All members receive the Newsletter and other PANYC publications.

We invite anyone interested in New York City archaeology to subscribe to our Newsletter and to attend our general membership meetings and annual Public Symposium.

If you are interested in joining PANYC or if you would like to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter, please complete the form below and return it to Anne E. Donadeo, PANYC Secretary, 820 West End Avenue, #11E, New York, New York, 10025.

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NAME

BUSINESS

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Please indicate preferred mailing address and check below as appropriate.

I wish to apply for membership to PANYC \_\_\_\_\_  
(Enclose documentation for a-c above.)

I wish to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues are \$15 and Newsletter Subscriptions are \$10.  
Additional donations are welcome and would be greatly appreciated.

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