

PROFESSIONAL
ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF
NEW
YORK
CITY



Newsletter No. 49
May 1990

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NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: May 23, 1990
Hunter College, 69th St. and Park Ave., Rm. 710
General Membership 7:00 pm

Minutes of the PANYC General Membership
March 28, 1990 Hunter College Rm. 710
Henn called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm

SECRETARY'S REPORT: January 24th minutes accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: 1989-90 dues are due and should be sent to Winter. Account report will be presented at the next meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: 1) PANYC is now on Landmarks' mailing list for schedule of public hearings. Henn is willing to continue receiving and circulating the announcements. 2) Per Huey, Schermerhorn Row project will be funded at UDC. 3) Henn thanked the Board and officers, and will convey our thanks to Amorosi for arranging for the room.

Membership: No applications received; no report.

Action: No report

Archives: Marshall has received some return of the questionnaire on PANYC material and expects more. Will wait to contact to Historical Society.

Awards: Award winner is Andrew Thomas, studying at Columbia University. Title "Oysters and Arrowheads"; work done on two collections from upper Manhattan. Rubinson asked us to consider whether the paper could be added as a special publication.

City Agency Planning: Committee will discuss whether this committee might be folded in with another.

Curation: Donadeo reported that Baugher has had no response yet to repeated requests for information and publications.

Legislation: No report.

Museum: Geismar spoke to the new education coordinator at the M. of the City of NY. The museum is interested in another series of speakers for the Spring of '91 in addition to the public program.

Native American Affairs: 1) The AAA has reconsidered its position. NYAC will have a discussion on their statement on the treatment of the dead. Henn will also forward the SHA statement to PANYC. 2) New publication: Yearbook of Physical Anthropology, includes a review of the legislation in all states.

Newsletter: Orgel stepping down as editor. Wall and Cantwell will be the acting co-editors.

Nominations: Results of the elections were announced. The following were confirmed: Marshall as President, Rothschild as Vice President, Davis as Secretary, Spritzer as Treasurer; Board Members: Bridges, Cantwell, Donadeo, Geismar, J. Klein.

Parks: 1) We need to rethink the activities of the committee. 2) Should contact the new commissioner and should include some past letters; speak about some examples of good work done by/through them. We need more information on how they monitor archaeological consultants and projects. We need to see their policy statement (if any) and should consider if it is possible for PANYC to help set policy.

Public Program: All is arranged; flyers have gone out, and press releases have gone to the NY Times, NY Magazine, and several neighborhood publications. Student Prize recipient will receive the award as part of the opening statement.

Research and Planning: Geismar reported that she had spoken to Alice Hudson of the map division of the NY Public Library. Ms. Hudson and others from the library would like to speak to groups about their research resources. She brought up the possibility of the Research and Planning Committee coordinating a talk for PANYC and other interested groups. The committee will look into the possibilities.

Special Publications: No report.

Standards: NYAC standards/guidelines for mitigation will be distributed to the PANYC membership and will be discussed at a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Henn turned the Presidency over to Marshall who thanked Henn for her active and thoughtful leadership during her term as President. Marshall brought up the need to continue discussing the issue of PANYC's role and this may be a good time to reconsider our committee breakdowns and their functions. Committees might be strengthened by combining some which have similar or complimentary functions and then individual committee members could be more specialized in their areas of activity. Some committees were formed in response to particular needs or changes and should be dropped or folded into others, for instance, City Agency Policy and Curation. They can, of course, be formed again if new issues/needs arise. We need to continue finding new members, but must also get them actively involved. 2) Nurkin brought up the Acts outlined in the SAA newsletter and noted that we should look closely at them. He recommends we oppose them because the National Register does not offer the needed coverage for archaeological sites. Bridges disagreed and stated that individual responses would be helpful noting that the age element was previously carefully considered. 3) Re the current status of Mrs. Kazimiroff's collection (most of the material is from Hunters Is.). Can we insure that it is not out of reach for study if/when it is sold to collectors. Marshall will contact Solecki to see if he can call and check on plans for disposition of the collection.

Respectfully submitted, Anne Donadeo, Secretary 1989-90.

CONFLICTING CLAIMS TO CULTURAL PROPERTY:
PUBLIC OR PRIVATE DOMAIN?
For Further Reading

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1990 Interim Report, AAA Commission on Native American Remains.
Anthropology Newsletter, 31: 4.
- American Committee for the Preservation of Archaeological Collections.
1986 ACPAC Newsletter, November 1986. Garden Grove, California.
- Armelagos, Goodman, Thomas and Swedlund
1988 Biocultural Perspectives on Stress in Prehistoric, Historical
and Contemporary Population Research. In Yearbook of Physical
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1981 A specialist in ancient cemetery studies looks at the reburial
issue. Early Man, 3(3): 26-7.
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1973 God Is Red. New York, Delta Books.
- Ewing, T.
1990 Emphasis on "Aborigine Rights". Nature, 344:19 (April).
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1990 A Perspective on Reburial and Repatriation. Society for
American Archaeology, 8:2. April.
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1989 Conflict in the Archaeology of Living Traditions. Boston:
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1990 How Far Will It Go? A Look At S. 1980 and Other Repatriation
Legislation. Society for American Archaeology, 8:2. April.
- Meighan, C.
1985 Archaeology and Anthropological Ethics. Anthropology
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1989 The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture?
Whose Property? New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press.
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1985 Philosophical problems in the conflict over sacred sites and
objects. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American
Anthropological Association, Washington D.C.

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1989 Grave Robbing? America's Notorious Pastime. Turtle Quarterly, 3: 2.
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1990 Who Owns History? American Bar Association: Barrister, 17: 1.
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1989 Human Skeletal Remains: Preservation or Reburial? Yearbook of Physical Anthropology, 32: 249-287.
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1981 Another view by one of the Crow Creek researchers. Early Man, 3(3): 26.
- Zimmerman, L.
1982 Indians, archaeologists, and bones: cooperation and compromise in South Dakota. Paper presented to the Executive Committee of the Society for American Archaeology, Minnesota.
- 1986a Redwing. The Anthropologist and Humanism Quarterly, 11(1): 19-20.
- 1986b A perspective on reburial from South Dakota. In Proceedings: Conference on Reburial, P. McW. Quick (ed.), Appendix Document 2. Washington, D.C.: Society for American Archaeology and Society for Professional Archaeologists.

Commercial Property: State Street Penitent

A Taste of the Past to Emend a Builder's Blunder

An Archeological Exhibit Atones For Jumping Gun

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

FORGET the ground up — indeed, from beneath the ground up — 17 State Street has proved at almost every turn to be troubled. But there are no signs of life at the largely empty 42-story tower overlooking the Battery, which will soon be distinguished by one of the more unusual examples of a developer's "penance" for running afoul of New York City land use procedure.

The unusual amenity is a permanent archaeological exhibit called "New York Unearthed," which is to be operated by the South Street Seaport Museum. It is scheduled to open to the public this summer and admission will be free.

The penitent in this case is the William Kaufman Organization of Manhattan. In 1986, it began excavating at State and Pearl Streets, before the Landmarks Preservation Commission was given a chance to study the site and gauge its potential archeological significance. A portion of the site was occupied in the early 18th century by Abraham Leacock. Commission officials believed that the lot had been relatively undisturbed in the intervening centuries and might have yielded artifacts that would have cast an extraordinary new light on the domestic customs of Jewish families during the Colonial period.

Why Maile Miner, counsel to the landmarks commission, said, "At the very beginning of the review process, landmarks flagged the archeology and said it appeared to have great significance, that there should be documentary research to determine whether there was a need for testing." The review process turned to other matters, she said, and the next thing that landmarks officials knew, there were bulldozers on the site.

But Donald H. Elliott of Webster & Sheffield, a lawyer for the Kaufman Organization, said, "There wasn't any response from landmarks until after we'd dug up a section at the back of the building." Moreover, he said, "Everybody thought that the site had been disturbed and that there wasn't anything there. I'm absolutely certain that no archeological material was lost."

At the time the 17 State Street project was before the Board of Standards and Appeals, whose chairwoman at the time Sylvia Deutsch. As Ms. Miner recalled, Ms. Deutsch "made it clear that she didn't want to get into whether anybody was to blame, but she did want us to identify what could be done to

mitigate" the archeological loss.

The problem, Mr. Elliott said, was that "as a logical matter, it's hard to mitigate something that can't be reversed."

"We were punished, so to speak," said the developer Melvyn Kaufman. "The city made all kinds of terrible threats. I said: 'What do you want us to do? I can't put it back. You want to shoot me? Shoot me!'"

Ms. Miner agreed that the damage was "unmitigable." But after repeated requests for resolution, she said, the landmarks commission determined that "to have a museum telling the story of lower Manhattan and using resources from other digs was at least linked" to the archeological issue.

Mr. Kaufman also took credit: "We said, 'Our penance is, we'll give you a museum!'"

"New York Unearthed" will be a modest enterprise, its creators say, not a reason itself to make a trip to lower Manhattan but a worthwhile addition to a Battery-South Street itinerary. At first, it will be open only weekdays, with mornings probably reserved for school groups. "The whole thing is children-oriented," Mr. Kaufman said, "trying to get children involved in their own history."

The exhibition, designed by Milton Glaser of Manhattan, will be entered through a small plaza behind the building. There will be an archeological conservation laboratory in operation at most hours. Visitors will be able to watch Delft tiles, bottles, and other ceramic and glass objects being repaired or stabilized. There will be a video show that simulates the experience of a subterranean dig and a permanent display of archeological finds made in New York City.

THIS center provides us with an opportunity to display and care for parts of our archeological collection and to do programming related to the early history of the area," said Sally Yerkovich, director of museum programs at the Seaport. "It gives us a chance to bring the kind of work done behind the scenes out to the public."

"I don't want to overstate it," Mr. Elliott said. "It's not one of the great educational experiences of all time. But it will have an interesting flair. It goes considerably beyond the minimum of what we were required to do and I think it's a kind of happy ending."

What is happening upstairs at the tower is as intriguing as the goings-on below ground.

After three years of leasing that verged on the comatose, the 550,000 square foot building was bought in January by the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of Manhattan. The pension fund canceled the mortgage it held on the property and made an additional cash payment to the Kaufman Organization. It will not disclose the amount of the mortgage or payment.

At the time of the purchase, the building was about 17 percent leased, according to John A. Somers, senior vice president for



Curved facade of 17 State Street rises over the Battery. The building, about 20 percent leased, is site of "New York Unearthed," a new exhibit.

mortgages and real estate at the association. It is now about 20 percent leased. "The prospect list has doubled since the end of last year," Mr. Somers said. "Prospects aren't tenants, but we are encouraged. We're seeing a lot of foreign interest in the space because it overlooks the gateway to New York." Prospective occupants, he said, are industrial companies, trading companies, banks and other financial service concerns.

"In the times we're witnessing downtown," Mr. Somers said, "it's very important for people who are looking for space to be satisfied that the owner has the capital strength to complete his promises. The T.I.A.A. can offer that image and that should further accelerate the leasing program."

"We're committed to lower Manhattan," he said. "We're going to see this thing through."

BECAUSE of its relatively small floors (none larger than 13,700 square feet) and its exceptional location, 17 State Street positioned itself as a high-priced, boutique-type office tower, an unusual strategy in lower Manhattan.

"I expected it to be fully rented six months before I opened it," Mr. Kaufman said. By December 1988, however, as it neared completion, only four floors were leased.

Matters did not improve much in following months. "It became apparent," Mr. Somers said, "that in order to maintain a long-term strategy, to keep it at the highest end of the marketplace, it would take a lot more money than the Kaufmans were willing to spend. We decided to become a 100 percent owner and commit the kind of capital necessary to lease up and finish that property."

Asked last month whether he believed that the unusual marketing strategy had been at all to blame for the problems at 17 State Street, Mr. Kaufman answered, "October 1987 is what was at fault. Drexel Burnham was at fault. Michael Milken was at fault. The world fell apart, didn't it?"

And does he still believe that the strategy was sound? "The soundest," Mr. Kaufman said. "The occupants there are the wise ones. They're small firms but they're computerized. You don't need giant, 40,000 square foot floors. Our belief is that the computer would take over the trading floor. We were right. We are right. Our timing was wrong."

Mr. Somers had no second guessing. "We worked with the Kaufman Organization as they were designing the building," he said, "so we fully subscribed to the design and the niche that the building was trying to fit into."

Both Mr. Somers and Mr. Kaufman emphasized the amicable nature of the transfer, which leaves the Kaufman Organization deeply involved in developing the project.

"We're building the job for them," Mr. Kaufman said. "We're operating it. We're overseeing it. We are unafraid of it." ■

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 Barbara F. Davis, PANYC Secretary, 138A Dean Street, Brooklyn, New York 11217.

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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.

Amount of additional donation to PANYC _____