

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

PANYC

NEWSLETTER

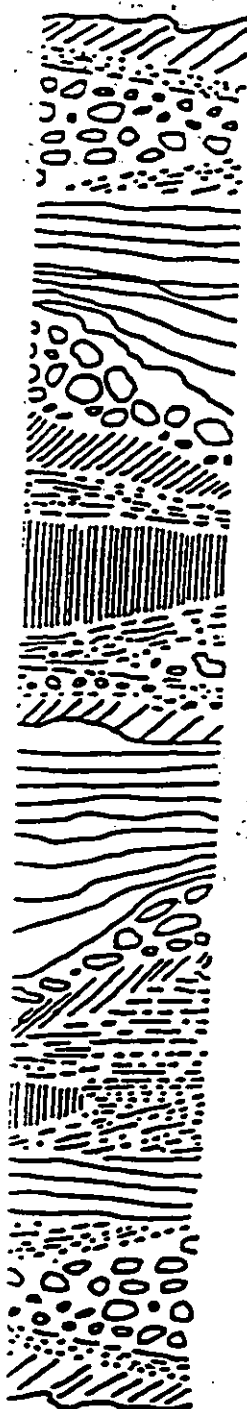
Number 113, January 2004

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Materials for the PANYC Newsletter may be sent to:

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John Milner Associates, Inc.
1216 Arch Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
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NOTICE OF UPCOMING MEETING: Thurs. Jan. 22nd, Hunter College Rm. 710

Minutes of the PANYC General Meeting: Tues., November 18, 2003

Stone calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm at Hunter College, Anthropology Dept. 7th Floor.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Minutes accepted.

General membership voted that PANYC minutes would be emailed.

Due to large amount of spam, when emailing the secretary, please use PANYC as message line so that email is not deleted. Gary McGowan's email is: cpr@att.net

TREASURER'S REPORT: Same amount of \$2,204.68 in bank. Decided that copy of Treasurer's Report should be kept in perpetuity.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Stone discussed how at last meeting, she spoke of meeting with Landmarks and how Commissioner Tierney suggested co-hosting symposium with PANYC. Several members of the Landmarks Committee, Stone, Rothschild, and Dallal, met w/ Arthur Bankoff and Amanda Sutphin of Landmarks Preservation Commission and came up with idea of Archaeology - Different Faces; including brief presentations by archaeologists, administrators, and agency professionals showing different aspects of an archaeological site to order to initiate dialog. However, Sutphin got back to Stone and said Landmarks no longer wants to co-host because Mark Silberman Counsel at LPC told Tierney that it would not be appropriate to do since PANYC is an Advocacy Group. PANYC wrote a letter and asked Tierney to reconsider.

Stone wrote a letter to Gifford Miller to foster allies on City Council. Haven't heard back from him. Stone had sent a letter to Ed Platt, NYI of Anthropology. She wrote asking where phase 1 reports are and he responded. Stone felt it was a curt response and he had copied his local councilman on it. The executive board suggested that a letter be sent to the councilman from Staten Island to introduce our mission and PANYC as an organization.

Organized group tour of Gov. Island – It was a great tour and participants got a behind the scenes look at Governors Island.

Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island is undergoing a new general management plan. Notice for public meetings went out. There is a comment period from the public; the management will be accepting comments for up to a year. However, the earlier the public gets comments in, the more it can affect the direction of the management plan. Comments can also be directed to the NPS archaeologist.

Committee Reports

African Burial Ground: Non-burial related artifacts being worked on at the Customs House.

Awards: Nomination for 2 awards. Information in Newsletter.

Event Committee: Report is in Newsletter.

Landmarks Committee: No new news since awaiting reply to email from Mark Silberman, Counsel for LPC.

Membership:

- Toni Silver dropping membership since no longer living in the area.
- Received applications from Mark Smith and Olivia Ng.

NYSAA Met chapter: Mike Cohen represented NYSAA Met Chapter. MET chapter membership has entered a phase of dormancy due to lack of membership. Mike Cohen expressed his opinions in regards to lack of membership. He felt avocational archaeologists were being pushed out of field by professional archaeologists. Lack of sufficient repositories in the NY area was making it impossible for private developers and avocational archaeologists to donate collections.

Non Profit Guidelines -- Research ongoing on whether to funnel money to Non-profit organizations. Information is in the Newsletter. Working on Guidelines at this time.

A lot in Brooklyn where a crypt was located that held the bones of Revolutionary War Prisoners from 1808 until 1873 is about to be privately developed. Although the bones were removed in 1873, the status of the crypt remained a question. Landmarks got permission to test from the owner and, Geismar, working with Landmarks to expedite the matter, volunteered to work on the site. Money for a backhoe was provided by the J. M. Kaplan Fund. Since the Kaplan Fund does not make grants to individuals, funds had to be channeled through a non-profit organization. Since PANYC hadn't worked out non-profit guidelines, it could not consider serving as a conduit. The Landmarks Foundation kindly agreed to provide the umbrella for the funding.

Stone reported that she still needed to write a letter to Professor Feinman from Manhattanville College. They are working with Bureau of Land Management to develop an archaeological curriculum for New York State. There was information in the SHA Spring Newsletter that explained it all and was very helpful.

The Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs has republished a report on Gethsemane Cemetery, a 19th-century African American burial ground in Little Ferry, New Jersey; it is available through that agency.

Stone suggested that we develop a Governor's Island Committee to follow developments on Governor's Island. Membership was in agreement but no vote or committee membership was decided.

Future Dates of Meetings:

March., Wed., March 24th

May., Tues. May 18th

The meeting was adjourned and Governor's Island Program commenced.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary McGowan, PANYC Secretary

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

November 12, 2003

South Ferry Terminal Project
MTA NYC Transit
Government and Community Relations
130 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to request that the Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) be included on your South Ferry Terminal Project mailing list for project related materials, updates and announcements. As I am sure your project team is aware, the southern tip of Manhattan is very sensitive for Native American and early historic period archaeological sites and our membership is very concerned that the proper consideration is given to such resources.

We look forward to receiving information and to participating in the project as the environmental review process proceeds.

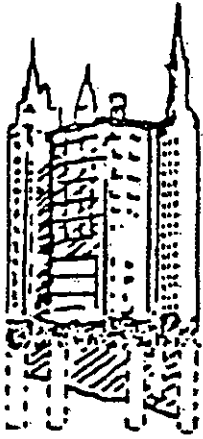
Sincerely,



Lynn Rakos
Chair, PANYC Transportation Committee
230 6th Avenue, Apt. 4
Brooklyn, NY 11215

CC:

Ms. Amanda Sutphin, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

November 25, 2003

PANYC

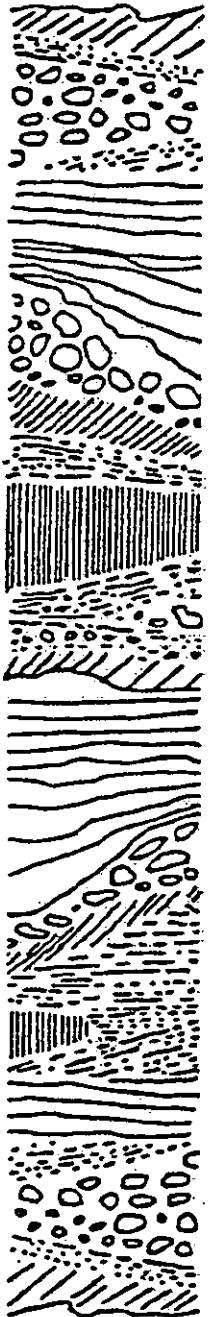
The Honorable Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
The City of New York
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

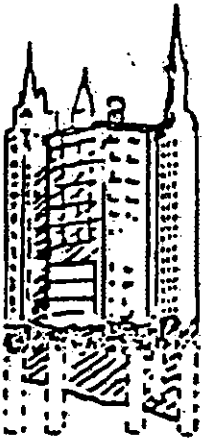
Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) is pleased to present you with the enclosed copy of *Unearthing Gotham*, signed by the authors. PANYC was founded 25 years ago with the mission to educate the public and advise agencies on matters relating to the archaeology of New York City. It is in this spirit we encourage you to enjoy one of the seminal works on our city's little known past, spanning 11,000 years, written by two of our founding members. Not only is this prize-winning book informative, it is also an excellent page-turner.

Respectfully,

Linda Stone
PANYC President, 2003/04
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130





Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

December 4, 2003

Mr. Robert Pirani
Director Environmental Programs
Regional Plan Association
4 Irving Place, 7th Floor
New York, New York 10003

Dear Rob,

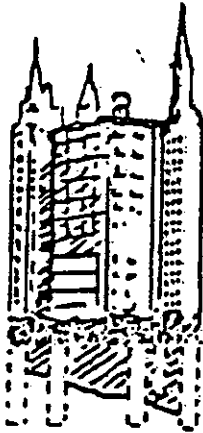
I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) to thank you for the inspiring presentation on Governors Island. As a result of your presentation, the board has decided that PANYC should become a member of the Governors Island Alliance. We look forward to a continuing relationship with you and your organization.

Thank you again.

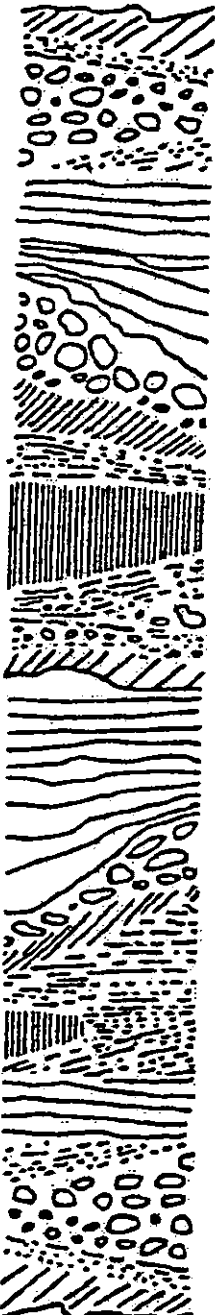
Sincerely,

Linda Stone
PANYC President, 2003/04
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130

cc: Tom Wright
Bob Yaro



PANYC



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

December 4, 2003

William A. Griswold, Ph.D.
National Park Service
Northeast Region Archeology Program
4th Floor, Boott Cotton Mills Museum
400 Foot of John St.
Lowell, MA 01852

Dear Bill,

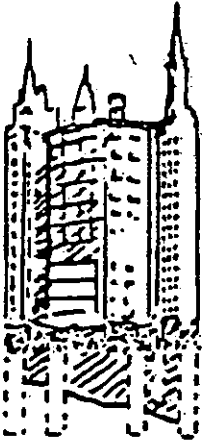
I am writing on behalf of PANYC to thank you for your informative slide presentation on Governors Island at our recent business meeting. As a result of the program, our board has decided we will join the Governors Island Alliance. We were also grateful for your clarification of some of the issues relating to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island GMP.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Linda Stone
PANYC President, 2003/04
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130

cc: Linda Neal, NPS
Allen Cooper, NPS



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

December 15, 2003

Michael E. McMahon
New York City Council
130 Stuyvesant Place, 6th Floor
Staten Island, New York 10301

PANYC

Dear Council Member McMahon,

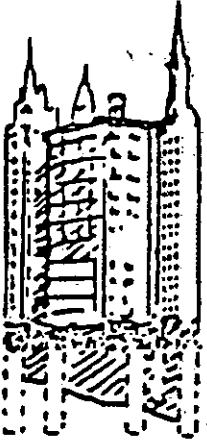
I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) to introduce our organization to you because we understand you have an interest in Staten Island history and archaeology. PANYC is a group of professional archaeologists with a particular interest and experience in New York City archaeology. For over twenty years, our main mission has been to educate the public and advise agencies on matters relating to the archaeology of New York City. To this end, we would like to develop a working relationship with you based on our mutual concerns regarding Staten Island's historic and archaeological resources. As you know, these resources are dwindling, not only because of development, but also because of unauthorized excavations done by non-professionals. While we appreciate their enthusiasm we mourn the loss of information when the sites are not excavated properly or reported. We are hoping you will be willing to meet with our representatives to discuss how we may work together to protect Staten Island's rich history. Perhaps you would also like to include your council colleagues James Oddo and Andrew Lanza and Borough President Molinaro should you feel they would be interested. Please feel free to contact me so we may arrange a convenient time for a meeting.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Linda Stone
PANYC President, 2003/04
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130

cc: G. Miller, City Council



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

December 18, 2003

Professor Peter Feinman
Manhattanville College
2900 Purchase Street
Purchase, New York 10577

Dear Professor Feinman,

PANYC

I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) to introduce our organization to you. PANYC is a group of professionals with a particular interest and experience in New York City archaeology. Our main mission, for almost 25 years, has been to educate the public and advise public agencies on matters relating to the archaeology of New York City. Among our membership are academics, consulting archaeologists, museum curators, and agency archaeologists.

Your name was given to us by colleagues interested in the statewide archaeological curriculum you are developing as part of Project Archaeology. As you are undoubtedly aware by now, there are two professional archaeological organizations within New York State, PANYC and the New York Archaeological Council (NYAC). We sincerely hope you will reach out to both of them in developing your laudatory program. Several of PANYC's members have created innovative archaeology programs for school children using New York City and State learning standards. They also have conducted professional development workshops for teachers and, therefore, have an expertise in these matters that they would be delighted to share.

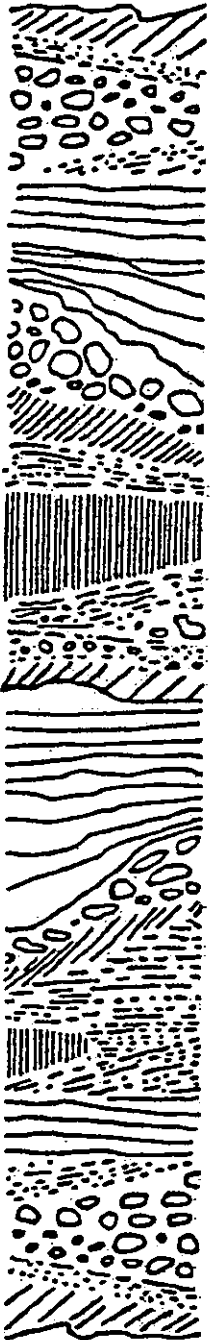
PANYC holds five business meetings each year and our sub-committees meet on an as needed basis. Our next general meeting is Thursday, January 22 at 6:30 PM at Hunter College. You would be most welcome should you care to attend and learn more about us as well as inform us about your progress with the statewide archaeology curriculum.

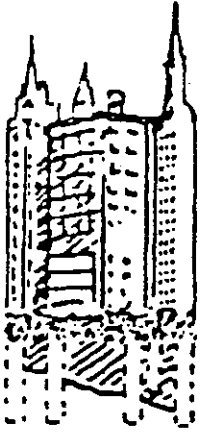
We look forward to hearing from you, and perhaps meeting you in January.

Sincerely,

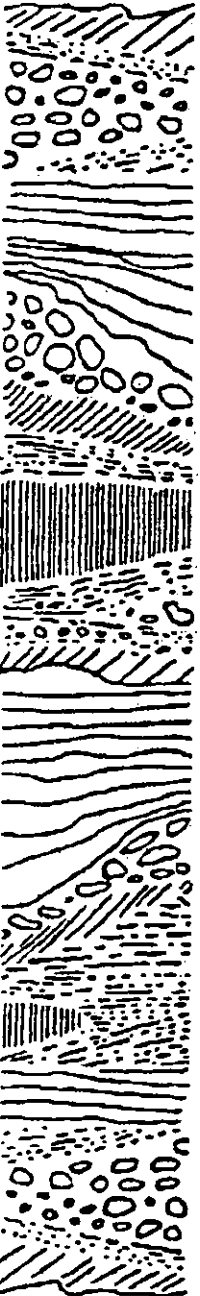
Linda Stone
PANYC President, 2003/04
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130

cc: D. Mackey, SHPO
A. Sutphin, NYCLPC
J. Moe, BLM
H. Luhman, NYAC





PANYC



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

January 20, 2004

Mr. Jim Lima, President
Governors Island Preservation and Education Corp.
110 William Street
New York, NY 10038

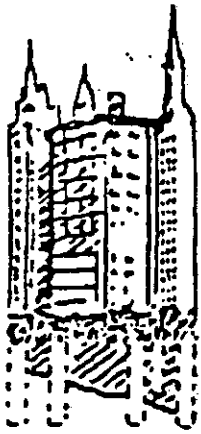
Mr. Peter Fleisher, Vice President
Governors Island Preservation and Education Corp.
123 William Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Misters Lima and Fleisher,

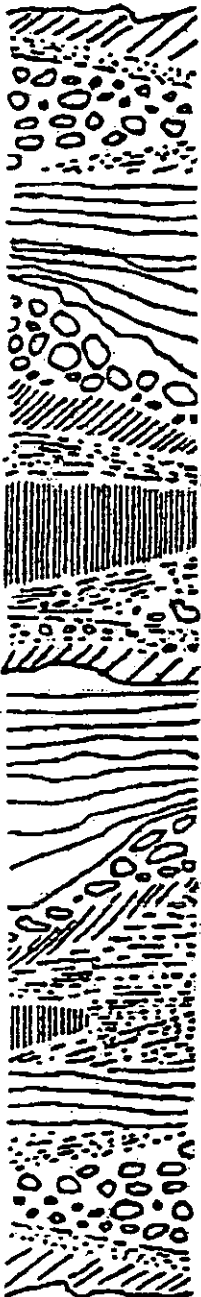
I am writing on behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) to express our support for your work on the Governors Island General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS). As a new member of the Governors Island Alliance, PANYC is just beginning to understand some of the complexities of the planning process. For example, we know that countless worthy potential uses for the Island have been put forward and we have happily discovered archaeology among them. To this end, we would like to provide some input in what may be involved in archaeological undertakings.

Excavation, not only for research purposes, but also for assessing the presence of archaeological materials during the course of upgrading and maintaining existing facilities and infrastructure, is the most obvious aspect of archaeology on Governors Island. Where below-ground work is planned, environmental regulations most definitely will come into play. Because both city and state agencies could potentially be involved, this may cause some confusion with regard to which agency would have responsibility for reviewing archaeological work, the State Historic Preservation Office or the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Would it depend on which part of the Island work was done? Or what the funding source is? Or could there be an agreement between the two agencies to create some cohesive procedures for all archaeological work on the Island?

In addition to excavation, the analysis, conservation and curation of artifacts must be considered. Not only appropriate space for artifact processing and analysis, but also for storage (temporary and permanent). The federal government provides guidelines on these matters with regard to temperature, humidity and ventilation. These specifications may be more stringent and expensive than retrofitting space for other uses, such as classroom space.



PANYC



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

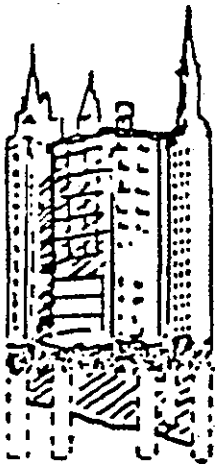
Can we assume space for archaeological uses and materials is not an issue on Governors Island? What constitutes sufficient space should be carefully planned to include current collections, past collections and future collections. Among the issues to be considered is whether to curate artifacts, not only from Governors Island, but also from other New York City sites. The city desperately needs an archaeological repository and a Governors Island facility would be ideal. This is an opportunity for some of the extraordinary finds from New York City sites to have a long sought after home and possible exhibition space.

These issues are among the most pressing that need to be addressed. As the process continues, please feel free to contact us with any archaeological questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Linda Stone
PANYC President
249 East 48 Street, #2B
New York, New York 10017
212-888-3130

cc: D. Doctoroff, Mayor's Office
S. Heyl, GIA
D. Klima, ACHP
R. Kuhn, SHPO
R. Lang, GIA
L. Neal, NPS
R. Pirani, RPA
R. Tierney, NYCLPC



Fated
12/5/03

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INVITES YOU TO HELP DECIDE THE FUTURE OF NEW YORK'S NEWEST NATIONAL PARK.

Please give us your comments by logging on to: www.governorsislandnationalmonument.org.
OR, fill out the form below and Fax it to 212-514-8392 or return it to:

Governors Island National Monument
Federal Hall
26 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005 Attn: GMP

COMMENTS

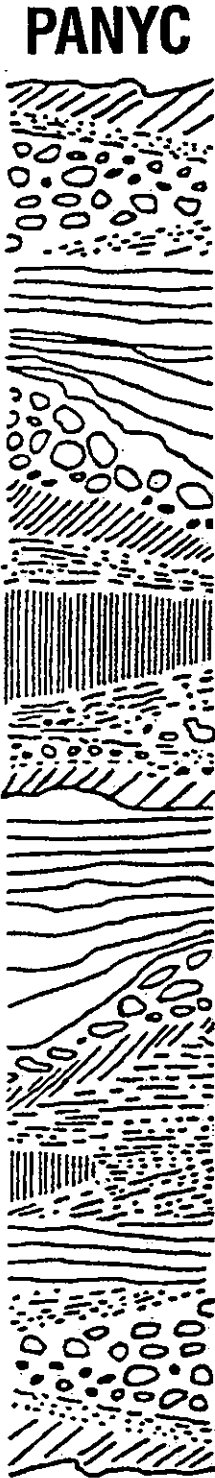
How should the National Park Service treat Castle Williams, Fort Jay, and the parade grounds?

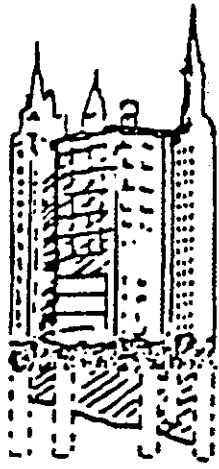
In general, we feel these questions are too broad and may be interpreted in numerous ways. We have limited our responses to aspects of the topics we are comfortable commenting on.

1. How should the NPS treat Castle Williams, Fort Jay, and the parade grounds?
Weren't sure if this question has to do with restoration or reuse? Regarding restoration, it's a tough question, for the forts particularly, because they have been reused during multiple time periods and each has had interesting impacts. Regarding reuse, we would like reuse to be considered for many of the buildings on Governors Island, not just the forts. High on our wish list would be an archaeological artifact repository for New York City collections. Currently, the two main repositories, the South Street Seaport Museum and the Museum of the City of New York are only selectively accessioning new archaeological collections due to space constraints, and in recent years have only taken collections from two city sites (a second was planned before 9/11 when the collection of the Five Points site was destroyed while in temporary storage at the WTC). While the forts may be too high profile for this use, one of the other buildings could be considered.

2. What activities or experiences would you like the NPS to provide for visitors to the National Monument and island?
Public archaeological excavations would be fabulous, with a large room set aside as an artifact processing lab/analysis space, a smaller room for equipment, and exhibit space in a heavily trafficked part of the monument.

Guided tours and historic interpretive exhibits, indoors and outdoors, on archaeological and geological site specific topics. Costumed re-enactors firing guns (no live ammo) and marching around and camping out on the grounds would be great. Overnight camps could also be used as educational opportunities for school groups. A wide variety of educational programs should obviously be considered, setting aside some rooms in the Fort(s) as classrooms and/or lecture spaces. All time periods of use, from Native American through Coast Guard should be considered, developing programs/tours/curriculum for each component (New Amsterdam, British colonial NY, the Forts; military housing, etc.) of the island that could be done separately or joined together in any number of ways. Maps and videos may make an interesting exhibit on the morphological changes to the Island





Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

and the landfilling processes. The island is also a perfect place to talk about ecological issues, marine biology, animals/birds/fish that inhabitant the island and its waters.

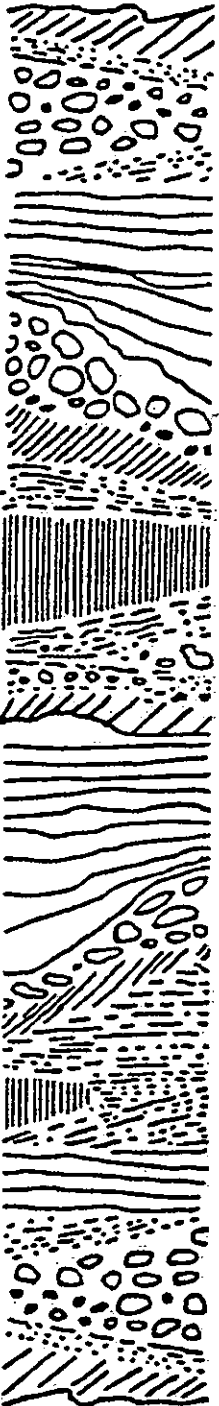
3. How should the National Monument's activities relate to the rest of GI, and to other attractions in the area?

Since NPS may be the only tour provider, it would be helpful if their tours could include information on the rest of the island (such as the morphological exhibit and something on the enormity of erosion and early 20th century land filling operations as well as prehistoric and historic uses of the rest of the Island).

4. Do you have any comments or questions about the NPS's planning process?

Please provide more advance notice of public meetings.

PANYC



Linda Stone
PANYC President 2003/04
249 E. 48 Street, #2B
New York, NY 10017
212-888-3130

The New York Times

What Remains of the Day

In Vinegar Hill, a Last Look at a Revolutionary War Grave Site



Photographs by James Estrin/The New York Times

Preservationists digging in Brooklyn on Nov. 12, above, for remains of Revolutionary War soldiers and remnants of the Tomb of Martyrs, illustrated below right. Joan Geismar, an archaeologist, below, waited years to examine the site.

By JIM O'GRADY

Maybe the bones were still there. Through the years, the historians and preservationists would come to the triangular lot on the corner of Hudson Avenue and Front Street in Vinegar Hill, Brooklyn. They would press their noses to the lot's chain-link fence and stare down at the dirt. They were almost certain that there, just below the surface, lay the forgotten bones of martyrs from the American Revolution. But they could not get at them.

"It was enormously tantalizing," said Otis Pearsall, a retired litigation lawyer who was one of the petitioners asking since 1996 that the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission allow an archaeological dig at the site, which was privately owned.

The historians and preservationists, who had formed an ad-hoc group, were convinced that they would uncover remnants of the Tomb of the Martyrs, an 1808 monument that included an underground crypt. In its cool womb, the crypt held 13 coffins containing the bones of hundreds of patriots from the Revolutionary War who had died on British prison ships in nearby Wallabout Bay.

The coffins were moved with great ceremony in 1873 to a new spot in Fort Greene Park that was later topped by a monumental column designed by McKim, Mead & White. But preservationists like Mr. Pearsall and Joan Geismar, an archaeologist, thought it likely that some human remains had been left behind, as is often the case when burial grounds are disturbed.

"Historically, classically, typically," she explained with rising emphasis, "when bones are removed, something is left behind."

The commission refused permission to dig until October, not long after a developer applied for city permits to build a three-family house on the site. Moving quickly, commission chairman Robert B. Tierney persuaded the developer, Sau Cheung of the Vinegar Hill Group, to delay his building long enough to allow the preservationists to dig for artifacts. At the same time, the preservationists obtained an emergency grant of \$2,500 from the J. M. Kaplan Fund, hired a backhoe and began their long-awaited excavation on the morning of Nov. 12.

A dozen people watched as the backhoe's bucket clawed a trench eight feet deep, piling beside it a hillock of sandy soil pocked with bricks, old bottles and

Continued on Page B4



THE TOMB OF THE MARTYRS.

What Remains of the Day: Signs of a Brooklyn Grave Site

Continued From Page B1

other debris. Ms. Geismar was battling a cold and described herself as "hopped up on Sudafed," but she had waited for years for the chance to jump into the trench, which she did at each pause in the digging, to sift through the dirt with her hands.

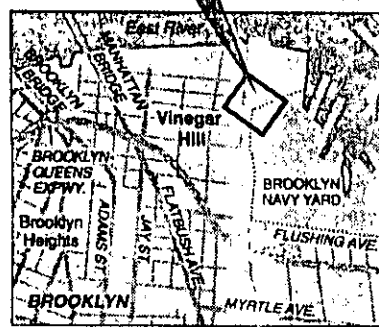
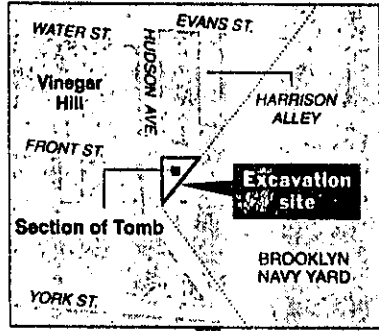
At one point, she wrenched a large bone from the soil. Sophia Perdikaris, a professor of archaeology from Brooklyn College with a specialty in bone identification, was called over. There was hushed suspense as she squinted at the blackened object. Then she rendered her verdict.

"It's from a pig," she said. "Probably the thigh."

No human bones would be found this time or on another dig on Wednesday. But the group did uncover a 14-foot-long, 20-inch-wide remnant of what they believe to be the monument's original crypt wall. They also found the post holes for a decorative fence that once flanked a wooden antechamber built above the tomb in 1839. Although these are tangible and enticing links to the past, they are almost certainly not enough to preserve the site as a city landmark, Mr. Tierney said.

"That," he said, "is not in the parameters of our agreement with the owner."

But the preservationists still held out hope. Perhaps, at a time when the United States is again at war, there would be great public sensitivity to recognizing and honoring the casualties of battle, and perhaps a public groundswell might even save the site



The New York Times

A monument and crypt were built on the site in 1808. Soldiers' remains were later moved.

from development.

But their case seems to have rested on finding human remains.

This did not happen, as Ms. Geismar will note in a report she expects to submit to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the J.M. Kaplan Fund.

At least, Mr. Pearsall said, the preservationists' questions are answered. "I feel a lot of disappointment," he said. "But I also feel relief. Now we don't need to be concerned

with the destruction of something that might have been there."

He is not the only one feeling relief. Mr. Cheung's lawyer, Harry Fong, said his client took a calculated risk in agreeing to allow the dig at all. "We were concerned at the beginning because we didn't know the effect on us," he said. "But, ah, thank God we got this issue out of the way." He added that Mr. Cheung expected to begin construction within weeks.

Still, some residents say that building should not be permitted on land originally dedicated, as the monument's cornerstone once read, "to the spirits of the departed free; sacred to that portion of American seamen, soldiers and citizens who perished on board the prison ships of the British."

Nicholas Evans-Cato, an artist with a studio a few doors down from the site on Hudson Avenue, certainly feels that way. "It's a shame that construction is going to be allowed at all," he said. He would rather see the city buy the land and turn it into a memorial park for the martyrs. After all, he said, the past is not as distant as it may seem.

For proof, he referred a reporter to Kenneth Rush Jr., his former high school teacher at Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn Heights. Reading from a genealogy published in 1943, Mr. Rush recounted that a forebear on his mother's side named John Randall left his home in Connecticut in 1776 at age 18, enlisted in the Continental Army, was captured at the Battle of Brooklyn and imprisoned on a British ship in Wallabout Bay.

"Two of his companions died on

A pig bone and part of a crypt — but no traces of soldiers.

board, and two others died shortly after their release," he said. "It was a real horror. They basically were put on those ships and left to rot."

Standard histories of the war record that most of the 8,000 to 11,000 people who died on the prison ships, often of starvation and disease, were tossed overboard by the British or buried in shallow graves along the shore at what became the Brooklyn Navy Yard. These were the remains that were collected and interred in the crypt at Vinegar Hill in 1808.

Such facts are of more than passing consequence to Mr. Rush: "Had John Randall ended up in that crypt, I wouldn't be talking to you."

Mr. Tierney said that once a building goes up at the site, he will consider marking it with a plaque that tells of the prison ships and the crypt that once held their victims. That will not be enough for Mr. Evans-Cato, but he will grudgingly support any measure that would raise Brooklyn's buried history above ground.

"Geographically speaking, we're a dead-end neighborhood in New York," he said of Vinegar Hill. "You don't go through it to get anywhere else. It ends at the Con Ed plant, the Navy Yard and the river. But the triangle and the monument make us look at it in a different way. It's not a dead end anymore. It's meaningful."

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:

Gary McGowan, PANYC Secretary
c/o Cultural Preservation and Restoration
262 Spring Street, Newton, NJ 07860

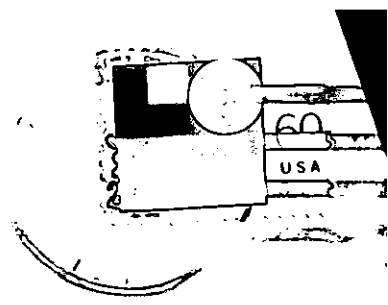
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