

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

PANYC

NEWSLETTER

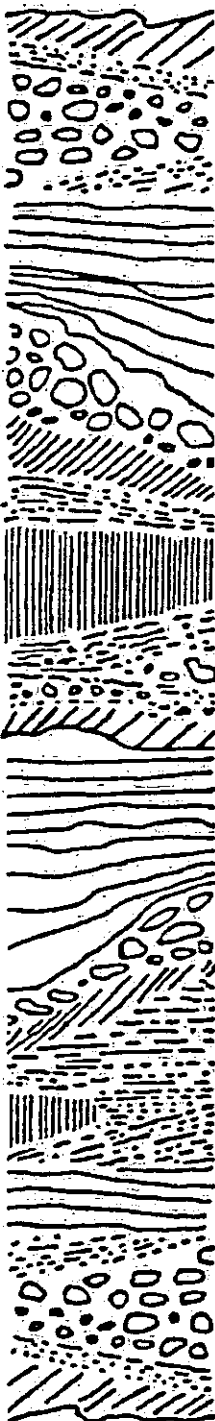
No. 124/125 May/September 2006

Contents

Minutes, General Meeting, March 2006	1-3
Minutes, General Meeting, May 2006	4-6
Correspondences	7-8
News articles	9-11
Upcoming Events	12-13

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Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC)
Minutes of the General Meeting, January 26, 2006
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 E.11th Street

Notice of Upcoming Meeting: Thursday, March 23, 2006, 6:30 P.M.
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 E.11th Street

Secretary's Report: The November Meeting minutes were approved after one correction stating that Eugene Bosch has *joined* not *re-joined* a reconvened NYAC Urban Standards Sub-Committee.

Treasurer's Report: Spritzer reports that there is \$2356 in the Treasury. The Newsletter cost \$80 to print and \$.87 per issue to mail, She suggested that it might be time to raise PANYC dues from \$15 to \$20/year. There are 43 members at Spritzer's count.

President's Report: The 106 Issue was shelved as Schuldenrein was not present to give an update.

The Energy Bill HR 3893 (nicknamed "Gas for American Security") was discussed again as undermining archaeology. At this moment the bill, which passed in the House and is now in the Senate, is not tabled but it has also not been put forth in committee. Individuals should write to their representatives in Congress and PANYC (i.e. Geismar) will again write to the Resources Committee. Geismar reports the Pombo is hopefully going to be up against Paul "Pete" McCloskey in the next election.

The Artifact Repository update – Dallal stated that the South Street Seaport Museum's Archaeological Collection is still at the Seaport. She believes that the New York State Museum has not yet completed it's inventory of the collection.

Geismar reported on her meeting with Susan Henshaw Jones, the Director of the Museum of the City of New York. The museum cannot take any artifacts into their collection even if they are funded for curation.

Dallal will send out an email to get the Research and Planning Committee together.

PS 261 Schoolyard Issue – There was an article in the *New York Sun* (11/22/05 – page 6 of Newsletter No.122, January 2006) about a dig being conducted at a public school by Erik Fortmeyer a neighbor of the school and "a frequent contributor to "Antique Bottle and Glass Collector Magazine" (*New York Sun* article). PANYC members expressed some worry about this excavation and Geismar reported that she had written to the Boerum Hill Association who had Fortmeyer himself call her (he is associated with the association in some way). She has not spoken to him personally yet but will. Arthur Bankoff, who attended the meeting, stated that he does not think the dig has started yet but probably will in the Spring.

Ralph Solecki has requested information from anyone present on sites with artifacts in historic

cemeteries. Geismar will ask for clarification.

Doug Mackey has asked if PANYC would like a link to a short paragraph about PANYC placed on the New York Archaeological Council's (NYAC) website. It would be a link to a short paragraph about PANYC, not the website specifically. This was approved by all present. Geismar will create a short paragraph and an email address for PANYC for this link.

Arthur Bankoff was present at this meeting as a representative of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Committee (LPC). The LPC would like PANYC's help in how to make CRM projects, especially those that deal with New York City agencies, easier on the contractor and on the city's regulatory agencies. Contractors don't like archaeologists and he sees archaeologists as being in a position to help this situation??.

He was particularly concerned with lighting during nighttime monitoring. Geismar stated that she sees a problem with monitoring in areas of known potential sensitivity. It is too often the choice in archaeological sensitive areas that should be addressed with archaeological testing before monitoring begins. Otherwise, this becomes a difficult situation for everyone involved. Bankoff replied that unfortunately this is not often up to his agency – for example, monitoring was not suggested for the Battery Park project but the contractor and the SHPO said that's what was going to happen. Stone added that when the SHPO and the LPC are not in agreement it's a problem. She thinks they should work harder to work together. Bankoff agreed. But, he said, LPC often serves in an advisory capacity with the SHPO in charge. He sees professional archaeologists as having power in their position to refuse to do a job they feel will be harmful to the archaeological record. PANYC reached a general consensus that there will always be someone to take the job. Bankoff then suggested new protocols. Stone brought up the fact that there are guidelines from NYAC's Urban Standards Sub-Committee but that these guidelines are apparently now stalled in SHPO's legal department. It was determined that PANYC as an organization needs to pressure the SHPO and the LPC about those guidelines and to act consistently and in accordance with the approved guidelines. In addition, LPC and PANYC will try to work closer from now on. Stone added that, generally, journalists write so positively about the bigger, more noteworthy archaeological projects without knowing the specific archaeological concerns involved. If that could be changed perhaps their articles would also begin to put pressure on the agencies in question.

Committee Reports:

Awards:

Events: Britt has listed many events in the January 2006 newsletter.

Membership: Meredith Linn from Columbia University and Tim Lloyd from John Milner Associates were present and will apply to become new members.

Met Chapter, NYSAA: Spritzer reported that they are trying to reorganize the Met Chapter with Mike Cohn as president. She is going to get in touch with its old members to see if they will re-join. Stone stated that she will join. PANYC's membership list will be given to the Met Chapter.

Newsletter: Rakos and Pickman are editors of the next newsletter.

NYAC: An Urban Standards Sub-Committee meeting was to be held in an online chatroom on January 30, 2006 at 4:15 P.M. This was for the board only. A general meeting will be in the Spring in conjunction with NYSAA's meeting.

Parks: According to Bankoff, the position of Parks Archaeologist has not yet been filled. There were some interviews in September but no one has been called back for a second interview.

Public Program: Dallal said that the title of the PANYC Public Program is "Public Improvement Projects: Does Archaeology Delay Progress? The Real Story." It will be on April 23rd at the Museum of the City of New York from 1-3:30pm.

Research and Planning: Dallal will send out an email to the committee members for a meeting regarding a symposium about museum curation and preservation issues.

Repository: Governor's Island wants money-making enterprises only according to Geismar. They do have a mandate for educational programs as well though and it is possible that the artifact repository could get paired with another money-making endeavor that doesn't not have an educational component.

Website: Ricciardi needs updated information for the website.

New Business: PANYC was invited (following a request from Doug Mackey) to visit the South Ferry project. They will see the one wall that is still in the ground. The other two have already been removed and preserved.

Spritzer noted that a Nominating Committee needs to be organized for next year's PANYC officers. It will be made up of the Secretary (Martin), Treasurer (Spritzer), and President (Geismar).

Freeman asked for an update about the human remains that were found and removed from a site in the Bowery in Manhattan that may be related to the second African Burial Ground. Geismar stated that archaeologists excavated and removed the remains and they will be re-interred at Cypress Hill Cemetery where associated burials were re-interred years before.

Program: After the meeting Geismar gave a presentation about her interesting project at Coenties Slip and the early wooden water pipes uncovered there.

Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC)
Minutes of the General Meeting, March 23, 2006
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 E.11th Street

Notice of Upcoming Meeting: Thursday, May 25, 2006, 6:30 P.M.
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 E.11th Street

Secretary's Report: The January meeting's minutes were not approved as they were not sent out. They will be sent out for approval after the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The account totals \$2300.

Spritzer reminded members that dues (\$15) are due. She asks that each member include their complete contact information (telephone number, mailing address, and email address) in the envelope with their check. Dues and updated contact information should be mailed to:

Spritzer, Shelly
301 East 76th Street
Apartment 14
NY, NY 10021-2446

President's Report: Flyers for the Public Program are handed out.

Section 106 is an ongoing problem. There is a bias towards sites on the National Register and it has been discovered that Rep. Steve Pierce, Chair of the National Parks Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee, does not have archaeological knowledge. But, encouragingly, Rep. Mike Turner of the Historical Preservation Caucus sent out a letter signed by 67 other Reps., including New York City's Maloney, Rangel, and Weiner, in protest of these issues.

World Trade Center (WTC): The historical preservation of the Bathtub has been raised as an issue now that construction is about to begin at the site. Victims' families are upset that, as of now, the design will hide the Bathtub. The question becomes – is this a preservation issue? Will this process create a precedent and undermine future preservation in the city? How are they complying with Section 106? Joel Klein has been involved in this issue and he will be asked for more information regarding these concerns. The general consensus is that we do not want the process undermined.

MAS is concerned about what has been happening to the CEQR review process, including the effect that its "watering down" is having on archaeological issues. It was suggested that MAS sponsor a charette regarding the issue of CEQR review and what can

be done about it. To begin with, the thought was that MAS should have a panel discussion about the issue.

PS 261 Schoolyard Issue: The school has approved an excavation by Eric Fortmeyer, meteorologist and antiques dealer. He appears interested in guidance from professional archaeologists although, of course, PANYC members expressed concern over the fact that an amateur archaeologist is in charge of this excavation. Rothschild will contact Amanda Sutphin at LPC as well as the New York City School Construction Authority. Latest word has construction set to begin in early summer.

New Committees: An Outreach Committee for new membership has been formed, chaired by Freeman and joined by Martin, while Geismar will chair a Government Affairs Committee with Schuldenrien.

Committee Reports:

Awards: No awards.

Elections: President: Nan Rothschild, Vice-President: Lynn Rakos, Treasurer: Shelly Spritzer, Secretary: Lizzie Martin. Executive Board: Anne-Marie Cantwell, Patrick Heaton, Linda Stone, Joe Schuldenrien, Diana Wall.

Out-going officers and Executive Board members are thanked for their hard work and thoughtful commitment to PANYC in 2004-2005.

Wall raised a question of election protocol – as of now the Secretary receives the election ballots but perhaps this is not ideal. The possibility was raised that perhaps the out-going President, the only officer who cannot run two consecutive years, should receive the ballots instead?

Events Committee: Upcoming events are listed in the Newsletter thanks to Kelly Britt.

Membership Committee: Meredith Linn from Columbia University was unanimously approved.

Met Chapter, NYSAA: Cantwell reported that she received an email from Bill Engelbrecht (President of NYSAA), stating that he will contact PANYC about reviving the Met Chapter. Mike Cohen is organizing a newsletter.

Newsletter: Based on last year's schedule, it is believed that Chris Ricciardi and Alyssa Loorya are in charge of the next newsletter but this needs to be verified.

Doug Mackey is thanked for helping to organize the very informative visit to the historic wall uncovered during the South Ferry construction project.

NYAC: Stone reported that there was an Urban Standards Board Meeting online. The Urban Standards Sub-committee members are: Stone, Versaggi, Geismar, Pickman, Boesch, Basa, and Kirk. They are working on two issues right now: alternative field methods and defining "urban".

Parks: There has been no decision made about the Parks Department job.

Public Program: The flyer will be sent out.

There was some concern expressed that the program has content that doesn't not relate directly to New York City archaeology. Questions then broadened to the public program in general and whether the programs have consistently related to NYC only? Archives need to be consulted. It is brought to the meeting's attention that perhaps the archives need to be physically moved as well, so that they are all in one location.

Research and Planning: No report.

Repository/Governor's Island: There were conflicting reports as to whether or not the PANYC proposal had been read. It appears, though, to have been read, and well-received. The repository proposal may be paired with a so-called "Big Ticket" item in need of an educational interest. Further information is forthcoming but it is agreed that the proposal may need to be edited.

Website: There is now a link to an informational paragraph about PANYC on the NYAC website. There is also a new email address listed. The president will be in charge of checking this email address occasionally to answer any queries.

New Business: Meeting dates for the 2006-2007 year were chosen. Meetings are scheduled on Wednesdays this coming year due to scheduling conflicts. The dates are:

September 27, 2006, 6:30pm
November 15, 2006, 6:30pm
January 24, 2007, 6:30pm
March 21, 2007, 6:30pm
May 23, 2007, 6:30pm

PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF NEW YORK CITY

15 June 2006

Dr. Richard Pettigrew, President
The Archaeology Channel
4147 East Amazon Drive
Eugene, OR 97405

Dear Dr. Pettigrew,

At its recent Board meeting PANYC discussed your request for funding to help support the Archaeology Channel and reluctantly concluded that we could not offer you financial support. Our own funding comes from membership and is limited, but more significantly, supporting other organizations does not fall within our mission statement or by-laws. We wish you great good luck in what is clearly a very worthwhile enterprise.

Sincerely yours,

Nan A. Rothschild

Nan A. Rothschild, President
Professor of Anthropology

PANYC
(Professional Archaeologists of New York City)

21 June 2006

Steven Englebright
New York State Assembly
Chair, Committee on Aging
824 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Re: Professional Archaeologists of New York City in support of the Burial Bill (2272-A)

Dear Assemblyman Englebright,

I am writing to express PANYC's admiration for your efforts to obtain legislation to protect unmarked burial sites in New York State; we strongly support quick passage of this bill. We are also appreciative of your efforts to revise earlier drafts of this bill, based on input from NYAC's Human Remains Committee, the New York State Museum, and other professional archaeological parties.

The recent events associated with the intentional exposure of the Rogers Island graves which are associated with the French and Indian War and the birthplace of the U.S. Army Rangers makes the need for this legislation especially apparent. The opening of these graves by untrained and ill-informed individuals is tantamount to outright looting; the burials were certainly desecrated in an area that many would consider hallowed ground. This is an example of the disregard for the sanctity of human remains that occurs all too often.

New York State is one of only a few states that do not yet have a strong bill that protects burials from such predations by imposing serious penalties on those whose behavior requires them. Laws should establish procedures for unintentional discovery and disturbance as well as intentional ones. Citizens of New York State need to know that grave sites from all groups and all periods are not to be disturbed, that we respect these places, and that those who do not will be sanctioned.

Sincerely,

Nan A. Rothschild

Nan A. Rothschild, PANYC President
Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College

The New York Times:
August 6, 2006
Bensonhurst

The Ghost Ships of Coney Island Creek
By JONAH OWEN LAMB

BEHIND the tall grass and trees of Calvert Vaux Park in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, hidden from the soccer players on Sundays, is a nautical graveyard. Burned and rotting hulks of abandoned vessels jut from the dirty beach into the silted, sluggish water of Coney Island Creek. The ribs of other ships emerge from the shallows like bones.

No one is sure when the two dozen wrecks arrived at this little waterway at Bensonhurst's southern tip. No one even knows their names.

The Army Corps of Engineers recently completed an extensive study of the wrecks strewn about New York's harbor. But the agency investigated only economically viable waterways, and Coney Island Creek — once crowded with commercial shipping and still officially a federal waterway — received no such scrutiny.

"If no one is interested, they are going to deteriorate and we won't know what was there," Lynn Rakos, an archaeologist for the Corps of Engineers, said of the ghostly flotilla.

Residents can recall fishing and swimming off boats beached in the stream as far back as the 1950's. "I remember when they were all floating," said Charles Denson, 52, the author of "Coney Island Lost and Found," who was born and raised in the area. "We used to play on them."

John Andresen, a longtime member of the Excelsior Yacht Club, which is just north of the creek, also grew up in the neighborhood and spent much of his life along the waterfront. As a child, he swam off the barges that were tied to piers.

Back then, pretty much everything the neighborhood lost or tossed away ended up in the creek. Children even used to fish out unopened packages of C rations, from World War II, which Mr. Andresen said probably washed up from Navy vessels that sank off the coast. "Cookies, cigarettes and crackers," he said. "And they were still good."

Inside the Excelsior clubhouse, Mr. Andresen pulled out an aerial photo of the yacht club from the 1930's. The black-and-white image showed a string of shipyards with barges and tankers tied up to their piers.

Before roads and subway lines were built across the creek, it was connected to Sheepshead Bay by a meandering marshland and shallow streams, making Coney Island truly an island. Back then the creek was actually an unnavigable strait that connected Gravesend Bay and Sheepshead Bay, which both fed into the Atlantic. It was that little ribbon of water that made Coney Island an island rather than the peninsula it is today. But by 1929, according to Mr. Denson, that

connection was broken as the streams and marshes were filled in and the Sheepshead Bay end was closed.

As for the wrecks in the creek, Mr. Andresen, 56, recalls older people in the area telling him that some of them were whaling ships.

One of the yacht club's veteran members, Armando Gargiulo, 87, said he remembered when the creek was a wild place, a rumrunner's haven and a dumping ground for everything from bodies to old cars. Even then, the water was so polluted that he used to take his boat to the mud flats, where the chemicals in the corrosive sludge there could be used to wash off the bottoms of vessels.

Mr. Gargiulo also said there was the time a Chinese junk sailed into the creek. The vessel arrived at high tide, and when the tidal flats emptied, the crew rocked it back and forth to fill its leaky seams with mud. Then it sailed away with the tide.

Until as recently as the early 1960's, the creek was a busy place. But the advent of containerized shipping, which required large ships and sizable, mechanized ports to handle them, spelled the end of small ports across New York Harbor. In 1962, much of the mouth of Coney Island Creek was filled with dredging spoils from the construction of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, for what would become Calvert Vaux Park.

It was around that time, according to Mr. Denson and the Corps of Engineers, that many of the wrecks in the creek and New York Harbor started to appear. Old vessels were stripped of hardware and scuttled, a practice that was outlawed in the 1970's.

"You just went to a quiet little spot like Arthur Kill and dumped them," said Ms. Rakos, the archaeologist. Some were left in shallows to rot; others were burned to their waterlines. The state's Department of Environmental Conservation has no plans to remove the wrecks in Coney Island Creek, fearing that to do so might release whatever toxins are buried in the mud around them.

So the ship graveyard will most likely abide, an anonymous, mysterious reminder of the city's forgotten harbor life, slowly disappearing from sight and from memory.

PANYC EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT JANUARY 2006

TITLE/SPEAKER	EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	CONTACT	FEE
Monarchs of the Sea: Celebrating the Ocean Liner Era	Exhibit	Perm. Exhibit		South Street Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton Street, New York	212.748.8766 or www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org	\$5 adults Free children under 12 members-member card
Brooklyn Works: 400 Years of Making a Living in Brooklyn	Exhibit	Exhibit		Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, New York	www.brooklynhistory.org or 718.222.4111	\$6.00 Adults \$4.00 Students/ Seniors
Tolerance and Identity: Jews and Early New York	Exhibit	May 10, 2005-October 2, 2006		Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Avenue, New York	http://www.mcny.org/visit/	Suggested Donation
Born of Clay: Ceramics from the National Museum of the American Indian	Exhibit	November 5, 2005-April 30, 2007		George Gustav Heye Center, New York	http://www.nmai.si.edu/subpage.cfm?subpage=exhibitions&second=ny	Free
Digging for History	September 26-October 17 th	Tuesdays	?	?	Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	\$50/\$60
Excavations at Bethsaida Bus Trip to the University of Hartford	Trip	Tuesday October 10, 2006	?	Leaving from Chappaqua Library	Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	?
Richard Freund, University of Hartford "Treasures of the Temple: Have Artifacts from the Jerusalem Temple Been Discovered?"	Lecture	Monday October 16, 2006	?	?	Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	?

PANYC EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT JANUARY 2006

TITLE/SPEAKER	EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	CONTACT	FEE	
Archaeology and the Biblical Text		October 24- November 14	Tuesdays	7:00 pm.		Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	\$60/\$75
Marcello Canuto, Yale University "The Classic Kingdoms of the Maya: New Discoveries, Novel Ideas"	Lecture	Friday October 27, 2006	6:30 PM	Columbia University in the City of New York, West 116 th Street, New York, Schemerhorn Hall Room 612	Rita.wright@nyu.edu	Free	
Peter Feinman, Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education "Cosmic Geography: The Impact of Assyria's Attack on Jerusalem"	Lecture	Monday November 13, 2006	?	?	Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	?	
Kathryn Gleason, Cornell University "Herod's Jerusalem"	Lecture	Monday December 4, 2006	?	?	Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of history, Archaeology, and Education, Purchase, NY 10577 feinman@ihare.org	?	
Rowan Flad, Harvard University "The Origins of Sanxingdui-An Early Complex Society in Sichuan"	Lecture	Tuesday February 20, 2007	6:30 PM	Columbia University in the City of New York, West 116 th Street, New York, Schemerhorn Hall Room 612	Rita.wright@nyu.edu	Free	
Andrea Berlin, University of Minnesota (Haupt Lecture) "The Phoenicians and the Maccabees: Excavations at Tel Kedesh, Israel"	Lecture	Tuesday March 27, 2007	7:00 PM	Jewish Community Center in Manhattan, 334 Amsterdam Avenue at 76 th Street	Rita.wright@nyu.edu	Free	
Conferences and Meetings:							
NYAC-Annual Meeting	Annual Meeting	September 30, 2006		Binghamton, NY	Linda Stone- lindastone@juno.com	?	
105th AAA Annual Meeting	Annual Meeting	November 15- 19, 2006		San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, CA	http://www.aaanet.org/	Various	

Members have events that they would like listed, please contact Kelly Britt at 717.393.3289 or email at kb239@columbia.edu
 224 Euclid Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17603 (as of 10/1/06)