



# Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology NEWSLETTER

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Our journal, *Northeast Historical Archaeology* seeks manuscripts dealing with historical archaeology in the Northeast region, including field reports, artifact studies, and analytical presentations (e.g., physical anthropology, palynology, faunal analysis, etc.). We also welcome commentary and opinion pieces. To submit a manuscript or request preparation of manuscript guidelines, write to Maria O'Donovan, Editor, *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, c/o Public Archaeology Facility, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000. E-mail: odonovan@binghamton.edu

### CNEHA Facebook Page

CNEHA has a Facebook page! Log onto Facebook and then search for Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology to see announcements about conferences and other updates.



You can join us on Twitter now too! @CNEHA\_org

## CNEHA ANNUAL MEETING 2018 Technology in Archaeology Halifax, Nova Scotia October 18-21, 2018



Our conference logo features an Ordnance Survey benchmark as a tribute to survey technology. Examples of these markings may still be seen today in and around Halifax.

We are thrilled to invite you to join us for the Annual Meeting of CNEHA this October in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

We are planning an exceptional event starting with the conference venue, the historic Lord Nelson Hotel. Located in downtown Halifax and within a short walking distance to museums and parks, galleries, universities and libraries, the Lord Nelson has recently undergone renovations that will make your conference experience comfortable and enjoyable. Its location is ideal if you plan to explore the city and enjoy local Maritime fare and music. The hotel pub, The Arms Public House, offers a cozy and convenient setting for post-talk conference gatherings. We encourage you to stay at the centrally located conference venue to get the most out of the Annual Meeting.

CNEHA 2018 gets underway for all on Friday, October 19, with workshops centered on the conference theme of technology in archaeology, including a geophysics session in the neighbouring Victorian-era Public Gardens, walking tours of Halifax, an industrial archaeology tour to the Albion Mines Foundry in the community of Stellarton, Pictou County, and the opening reception. An evening walk across "The Commons" to a local pub, complemented with a tour of the historical landscape, will be a great opportunity to see friends and get energized for the sessions ahead.

Saturday and Sunday will be filled with presentations and posters, the bookroom and raffle. There are two poster events this year: the Public Education Poster Session Competition on Collaborative Science and the poster session connected to the conference theme of technology in archaeology or historical archaeology in the Northeast in general. We hope everyone will join us for the untraditional conference dinner

## Connecticut

Reported by: Cece Saunders

### CTDOT Archaeological Investigations at the Jackson Street “Dog’s Nest” Site

[Submitted by Leonard Bianchi and Jean Howson, NV5-Connecticut, LLC]

The Connecticut Department of Transportation recently completed archaeological investigations at the site of a forgotten residential neighborhood between the Pan Am railyards and the Naugatuck River south of the I-84/Route 8 “Mixmaster” in the City of Waterbury. While this area today appears as a set of desolate and non-descript abandoned industrial pads tucked away in a difficult to access corner of the City, from the middle of the 19th to the early 20th Century it was a vibrant neighborhood of first and second generation Irish and Italian immigrants. Closed in between Waterbury’s coal-fired gasification plant, the New York and New England Railroad, and the Brown & Brothers Brass Rolling Mill, and with the industrial waste water coursing directly through their backyards in what was called the Manhan Canal, Jackson Street was not exactly prime real estate.

The Jackson Street community had a reputation for alcoholism and violence recognized as far away as Bridgeport, where the Bridgeport Herald in 1898 referred to it disparagingly as the “Dog’s Nest” and called it “one of the worst [neighborhoods] to be found anywhere”. Nevertheless, census records and other documents inform us that these people contributed to the 19th Century growth and prosperity of Waterbury and the State of Connecticut as a whole by

working at the local brass mills and as laborers at various other factories in the City. They became citizens, and in many cases landlords, proprietors and entrepreneurs in their own right, sometimes working out of their own homes. Within their community they often maintained the language of their country of origin, retaining and passing on key elements of their homeland lifeways that were eventually incorporated into what we consider to be “American” culture today. Despite marginalization, ill-treatment and bigotry, and being left to live in unhealthy and even dangerous conditions, they survived and passed on their legacy. When the railroad and gas works expanded further into the neighborhood after 1904, however, the inhabitants of the Jackson Street “Dog’s Nest” were increasingly driven out. By 1917 insurance maps show no homes remaining in this area. The residents presumably dispersed into the burgeoning suburbs and many may well have descendants residing in various parts of the City to this day.

Through the CTDOT archaeological efforts, carried out by NV5 cultural resource consultants under the Section 106 Federal mandate to identify and evaluate impacts to historic properties, investigators aimed to learn even more about how Waterbury’s 19th Century immigrants survived in the face of adversity. Excavations revealed no fewer than eight building foundations still intact beneath an area that will soon become a temporary freeway bypass during renovations to the Route 8/I-84 interchange. The building foundations were constructed of varying quality, as expected, but all had cellars. The homes were of substantial size and probably contained multiple families. Several had running water and septic drainage systems. Artifacts remains so far have revealed



Figure 1. Exposed house foundation at former number 23 Jackson Street, Waterbury. Photograph by Jason Nargiz.



Figure 2. *Excavation on interior of foundation at former 23 Jackson Street. Photograph by Jason Nargiz*

the presence of horses for transportation, widespread use of medicinals, indications of tobacco and alcohol use, work boots and industrial implements, and occasional luxuries such as molded glass. Ceramic holy water fonts also attest to the neighborhood's Catholic heritage. Somewhat to the disappointment of the investigators, only one vertical shaft feature was discovered, possibly representing a 'dry well' placed for drainage purposes. Though the area has now been backfilled in preparation for the upcoming construction, NV5 filmed a short documentary summarizing excavations at the site that should become available on the internet for public viewing in the near future.

### New Jersey

Reported by: Lynn Rakos

#### **Searching for an Elusive Revolutionary War Fort: Monmouth University's Summer 2017 Field School** [Submitted by Richard Veit, Adam Heinrich, and Sean McHugh]

Monmouth University's summer 2017 field school was a cooperative project between Monmouth University's Department of History and Anthropology, Rutgers University Newark's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, and the National Park Service. It was directed by Richard

Veit Ph.D., Adam Heinrich Ph.D., and Sean McHugh M.A., all of Monmouth University. We were working in conjunction with Jim Harmon of the National Park Service, and Lee Slater Ph.D. of Rutgers Newark. Lee was assisted by Pantelis Soupsis of the Technical Educational Institute of Crete. Monmouth University staff for the field school included photogrammetry expert Jennifer Swerida, and crew chiefs: Safa Akhtar, Stephanie Codling, Casey Hannah, Eric Lauenstein, Evan Mydlowski, and Kristen Norbut. Ten Monmouth University undergraduate students and eight graduate students participated in the project. We were assisted by numerous ASNJ volunteers including Steve Santucci, Sevirie Corson, Darryl Daum, Chris and Rebecca Brown, Jason Wickersty and others. Fieldwork occurred in May and June of 2017.

The project focused on Fort Hill and associated camps in the Jockey Hollow area of Morristown National Historical Park and was designed to determine the extent and integrity of the archaeological deposits on Fort Hill, while testing the value of remote sensing techniques, most notably induced polarization, a form of resistivity.

Fort Hill is the site of a relatively unknown Revolutionary War fortification constructed in 1780 on the orders of General Anthony Wayne. It has been described as "the least known and least visited historic site in Morristown National Historical Park" (Olsen nd). The winter of 1780 saw a portion of the Continental Army encamped at Morristown. These troops included the Pennsylvania Line, including Hand's Brigade, which huddled on Fort Hill and included two Pennsylvanian and two Canadian regiments. In December 1780, Wayne described his plans for the site as follows, "I traced out a kind of Citadel consisting of three small redoubts—the whole joined by a stockade" (Olsen nd). Shortly thereafter construction began, with approximately 100 men assigned to

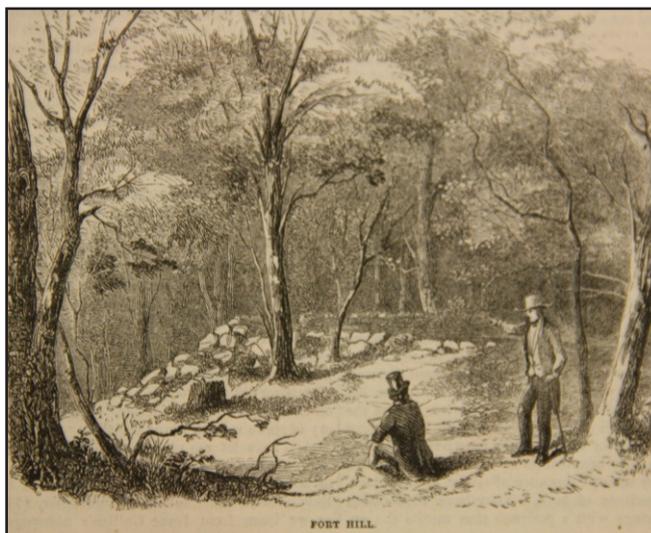


Figure 1. *An illustration of Fort Hill from the 1850s. Note the similarity between this image and Figure 2 showing the cleared site today (Courtesy of Morristown National Historical Park).*