

CONNECTICUT  
**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
INVESTING IN PRESERVATION SINCE 1955

Volume 4, Issue 9

## 40 Years of Action! Upcoming Event



*The Preservation Community's Unified Voice at the State Capitol since 1980*

Connecticut Preservation Action is celebrating 40 years of advocating for historic preservation in the state. Share in the celebration of the organization's history and hear how the current pandemic could shape the future of historic preservation.

**When:** October 20, 2020 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Where:** a virtual celebration

The event will recognize and honor CPA's founders – **Jack Shannahan and Helen Higgins.**

With a special presentation by **Jim Lindberg, Vice President of Research and Policy at the National Trust for Historic Preservation.** Jim's talk, *The Resilience of Older Neighborhoods*, will address how historic preservationists and urbanists have pointed with pride to the connection between older buildings and urban vitality, as well as to the “hidden density” of older neighborhoods. The Coronavirus pandemic has raised red flags as to whether population density in older urban centers could influence transmission rates. Some believe that the real or perceived threats of the pandemic in these urban neighborhoods will result in a new wave of moves to the suburbs leaving behind empty buildings and disinvestment. What can we learn from the urban places that have survived and thrived through past disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and economic busts? What makes these places so resilient?

For tickets go to: [celebratecpa40.eventbrite.com](https://celebratecpa40.eventbrite.com)

For information email: [ctpreservationaction@gmail.com](mailto:ctpreservationaction@gmail.com)

## Archaeology Awareness Month

October is Archaeology Awareness month across the United States and Connecticut usually celebrates with a number of talks, lectures, and activities.

Needless to say, this year is different. Below are two summaries of recently completed fieldwork, as well as information about upcoming virtual events.



### **Webb Deane Stevens Courtyard Archaeology**

This summer the Public Archaeology Survey Team (PAST) conducted excavations in the courtyard of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield. The excavations uncovered a deeply buried construction staging area from when the house was built in 1751-2. This revealed large quantities of broken and discarded brick, window glass, limestone mortar, and broken tools. Above the construction debris were household refuse deposits that contained artifacts like fine Chinese porcelain tea sets, glass stemware, and other artifacts demonstrating why the Webb House was referred to as "Hospitality Hall." Pictured above is a fragment of an English delftware tile depicting a woman wearing a mask, a remarkably ironic artifact for 2020!

### **Broteer Furro (Venture Smith) Property**

The Stonington Historical Society (SHS) received a *Good to Great* grant from the Department of Economic and Community Development to examine a 27 acre parcel purchased by Broteer Furro, also known as Venture Smith, in 1770. After being taken captive at seven years old, Smith traveled the Middle Passage first to Barbados and eventually enslaved in Stonington where he was allowed to take odd jobs and earn money that eventually bought his freedom, as well as the freedom of his wife and children. Archaeological deposits identified in the examined parcel, now part of the Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, included bottle glass, ceramics (redware, creamware, and stoneware), hand wrought nails, and faunal remains (clam and oyster shells). One of the most interesting finds was the recovery of Rhenish blue and gray stoneware, which was not manufactured after 1775 and provided strong evidence that the artifact assemblage is almost certainly tied to the use of the property by Venture Smith. The archaeology will be used for interpretive purposes by SHS for the understanding the life of an



extraordinary man who not only coped with the rigors of enslavement but overcame that system of repression to secure his freedom and economic potential and that of his family.

### Archaeology Lectures and Discussions

The Archaeology Society of Connecticut has a number of virtual lectures planned. The first lecture, about the Jones Site in Avon, is scheduled for this Thursday. More information and registration can be found here:

<https://www.ctarchaeology.org/upcoming-events>

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Native American-Archaeology Round Table, hosted by the Institute for American Indian Studies, is titled *Martians, Atlanteans, and Judeans: Pseudo-archaeology and Its Impact on Native American Studies*. A collection of virtual lectures and discussions on Pseudo-Archaeology, which will run October 30 and 31. More information and registration can be found here:

<https://www.iaismuseum.org/>

## News from the Museums



### Henry Whitfield State Museum

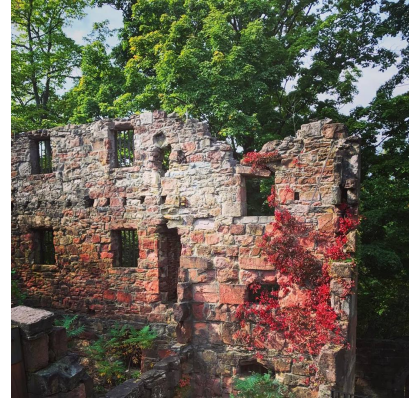
Museum staff have developed a collection of **free digital jigsaw puzzles** featuring images of the Whitfield House and items in the museum collection. Complete the puzzles at your leisure, or for an extra challenge, use the timer to score yourself and compete against family and friends. New puzzles are added weekly. [Click here](#)

[to start playing!](#) For a listing of all of the

museum's digital resources, visit the museum's webpage [here](#).

### Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine

The Old New-Gate team has had a great time welcoming visitors back to the site this fall for tours. The changing leaves, beautiful weather, and appreciative visitors were well worth the effort of re-opening. We are preparing to once again close for the season, but if you are still interested in visiting, check out the tour times [here](#).



## Eric Sloane Museum

Here at the Eric Sloane Museum, the staff has been hard at work, adding the finishing touches to our exhibits and displays. Work is coming to a close on the Noah Blake Cabin reconstruction this month. We are very excited to begin setting up the interactive exhibit, allowing visitors to step inside an early 19th century New England family home as depicted by Sloane in, *Diary*

*of An Early American Boy, Noah Blake 1905*. Planning continues for a grand reopening in the spring of 2021. Follow the links to [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to stay up to date with everything going on!

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**The Department of Economic and Community Development, including the State Historic Preservation Office continues to work remotely. We will be sure to inform our constituents when we plan to return to the office. In the meantime, staff contact information can be found [here](#).**

Department of Economic and  
Community Development  
State Historic Preservation Office

