



Artifacts



September 1972

The Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

FROM 7 TO 400

IN SEVEN YEARS

"NEVER in their wildest dreams could the seven stalwart diggers who informally and infrequently met in the summer of 1966 to 'learn something about the local Indians' have envisioned what their part-time project has led to in six short years," SVAS President Edmund K. Swigart says.

From that rather minuscule and unpretentious beginning, the little band of hardy and dedicated pioneers has grown to a veritable army of interested persons. "Attempting to lead such an organization," Swigart says, "is like sitting on a box of fireworks that are going off in all directions at the same time, and somehow trying to keep some knowledge and control of every spectacular explosion."

Samples of the most recent explosions abound in the activities of SVAS's eleven working committees. The vigor and initiative of these groups has resulted in measurable progress on every front; explosive progress in some areas.

Read on!



Nearly 300 Now Dig at Seven Local Sites

DIGGING - to learn something about 10,000 years of unrecorded American history before plowing, bulldozing and housing wipes the knowledge away - is still a main Society goal. This year nearly 300 volunteer diggers are working at the Society's two major and five lesser excavations. A far cry from the seven starting stalwarts of 1966!

During the summers of 1970 and 1971, seven sites have been partially or completely dug: one in Bethel, three in New Milford (including a cave), two in Washington and one in Warren.

The Bethel Site, a small, single-civilization unit, was almost completely excavated by John Pawloski one jump ahead of bulldozers. (The site is now completely destroyed.) Bethel artifacts are mostly small-stemmed points, quartz tools, and shell heaps (middens). Not enough charcoal was discovered to C14 date the civilization, but the middens may establish its date. (C14 stands for "radioactive carbon," emissions from which calculate an artifact's age.)

The Housatonic River New Milford Site near the Indians' Great Falls is the largest and longest-occupied SVAS site. It was dug extensively in the summer and fall of 1971. However, it was almost totally destroyed last fall and winter by well-meaning but unscientific relic collectors. Here

SVAS diggers found evidence of many Indian civilizations having lived there:

(1) Colonial and recent pre-Colonial Indians, whose artifacts included some 12,000 pieces of pottery and small beautifully-made triangle points; (2) Several Transition Period (hunting to agricultural) Cultures appeared nine to fifteen inches below the Colonial and pre-Colonial level. The top one of these several Transition Period Cultures yielded fish-shaped projectile points (Orient), pieces of stone bowl, and a marvelous fire pit - which was C14 dated at 1115 B.C. The second, six inches below, yielded large spear points (Snook Kill and Perkiomen), more stone pottery, and a hearth dated at 1715 B.C. Then, below the 15-inch level were large spearpoints of the Vosberg style, dated in New York at 3500 B.C. and bifurcated points dated also in New York at 5000 B.C. Finally three feet below the surface were small fluted points in conjunction with a very large hearth which has not yet been C14 tested. It should, however, return a date of pre-5000 B.C.

The Shepaug River Site in Washington remains the Society's most scientifically valuable dig. It is being dug fruitfully this summer - after having been excavated two summers ago by 200 volunteers. It has already yielded much valuable his-

toric and scientific information, for example:

a. Intriguing early Colonial materials such as a 1690 clay pipe; two musket balls, one of which had been bitten during major surgery; early lead-glazed pottery, and handmade nails.

b. The first dwellings discovered in the Northwest for the 1000 B.C. Orient culture - two 16-foot by 10-foot duplexes.

c. The first dwellings discovered for a 1500 B.C. Culture, the shape of which could be either 12 feet by 8 feet or a circle with a nine-foot diameter. Along with these dwellings, was found the earliest known pottery - a Vignette 1 style with deep cord markings on the inside and outside surfaces.

d. A vast occupation level established as the earliest verified civilization by C14 analysis, in Connecticut, from 2515 B.C.; and two fire pits, one of which now is in the Gunn Memorial Museum.

On top of these many discoveries, new scientific contributions are being made every day by an increasing number of SVAS volunteers. Continued progress is being made in piecing together the gigantic jigsaw puzzle of Indian life through the ages. And the progress is pretty well keeping ahead of the destructive tides that are totally obliterating that history from the New England and Connecticut scene.

Public Relations

Activity Expanding

THE SOCIETY continues to receive excellent and ever-widening publicity. Frequent articles have appeared in the New Milford, Danbury, Waterbury and Newtown papers about Society activities. Many other publications in the state have carried occasional items of particular note.

Newspaper coverage will be broadened in the coming year. Plans are afoot to have articles and pictures of SVAS digging and other activities submitted to the New York Times, the National Geographic, the National Registry of Historic Places and other media of significance.

Education Project

Expansion Planned

EDUCATION, together with research, is the heart and soul of SVAS activity. Six special education projects were carried out last year, in addition to the monthly programs of speakers and topics. (See p.4 for 1972-1973 monthly program.)

For the 1972-1973 year, all six of last year's special education programs will be continued and three more, it is hoped, can be added. Last year's six programs were:

1. Lectures on the Indian history of Connecticut were given to over 25 grade, high school and adult groups during the past year by John Pawloski, Edmund K. Swigart and Ronald Whittle.
2. Field trips were conducted by society volunteers for a dozen different school and adult organizations by the same three members.
3. The Society acted as a host, together with the Gunnery School and the Gunn Memorial Museum, for the annual meeting of the Archaeology Society of the State of Connecticut this past spring. A record attendance was set.
4. Exhibits were furnished by the Society for 32 meetings of various youth and adult organizations.
5. Two courses were offered by Society officers, Edmund Swigart and Ronald Whittle at the Gunnery and Wykeham Rise Schools. A fall course on Indian and Colonial Archaeology was followed by a spring course on the American Indian. Several adult members of the Society took these thrice-weekly meetings. Member participation is welcomed by the schools.
6. Work sessions were held at the Gunn Memorial Museum to train adult volunteers in museum techniques such as cataloging, exhibit preparation and other related tasks.

The three new programs projected for next year are:

*To train volunteers to lead school groups on a regular schedule through the Indian Section of the Gunn Memorial Museum.

*To take more programs to the area schools.

*To develop a slide library and several taped talks for group use.

New Projects Basis For

250 Member Goal

MEMBERSHIP in SVAS continues to grow. Word of its efforts has spread throughout Connecticut and into neighboring states. From 90 members in the first year of SVAS operation, the total leaped to 133 in the second year - nearly a 50% increase.

Now, a goal of at least 250 members (a 90% increase) has been set for the third year of operation. Two new ingredients have been added which make this goal seem readily achievable:

First, the advent of "ARTIFACTS," and plans for a slide library, taped talks, educational instruction sheets and school visitations combine to provide a member substantially more for his membership dollar. Especially will these activities improve service for those families which live far from the Washington area, and for those who, for a variety of reasons, cannot attend the Thursday evening programs or the summer excavations.

Second, the funding of the American Indian Institute is under way. The historic, scientific and educational implications of this facility will bring new stature to membership in the Society. The Institute and its programs will be attractive to both resident and nonresident members. It will be a permanent home and base of operations for the Society.

Publications Spread

Research Results

SOCIETY Members Charles Baum, John Pawloski, Edmund Swigart and David Thompson are writing five major research papers dealing with work at the sites the Society has excavated. These will be published in the State Archaeological Bulletin during the next year.

A monumental monograph by Kenneth Howell on the Colonial History of one SVAS excavation site was the Society's first "official" publication.

Five Gunnery, Wykeham Rise and Marvelwood students have worked on major Indian research projects for the Gunn Museum during the past year.

Soon, the Society plans to make available single page work sheets on topics of vital interest to members. Sample topics: "How to Conduct an Archaeological Dig" and "How to Recognize Various Colonial and Indian Artifacts."

"ARTIFACTS," the first issue of which you are now reading, will be published quarterly to keep members abreast of all the activities of the Society.



"AFTER HOURS ..."

with SVAS President
Ned Swigart

"OUR DREAM shall become a reality"

IN thinking back over the short but tumultuous history of the Society, I see, with constant wonder and gratitude, what many hands - your hands - the hands of more than 400 volunteers - have built in such an incredibly short time. The record of progress by our committees is mute testimony to the great distance we have traveled together - and the great distance we must yet traverse.

How best can I summarize my feelings about this dream that we share together ... the dream of turning back the pages of history, of piecing together the story of our ancient heritage?

I can best summarize, I think, through a play, *THE MAN FROM LA MANCHA*, and through a haunting tune, *THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM*.

Six years ago, the vision of seven stalwart diggers was no more than a dream. But like Don Quixote, we persevered, and, joined by the ever-growing ranks of those who now share our dream, we shall find our Dulcinea - our Dream shall become a reality.

Artifacts

Published quarterly,
by the Shepaug Valley
Archaeological Society
Washington, Connecticut

Editors:
Norman Shidle
Ruth Glantz

SVAS Officers:
Edmund K. Swigart, *President*
Ronald Whittle, *Vice President*
Tate Brown, *Vice President*
Mrs. John Sheehy, *Secretary*
Kenneth T. Howell, *Treasurer*



The AMERICAN INDIAN INSTITUTE

... of Connecticut, a major goal of SVAS, has been fully designed and the process of funding has been started. It will provide, when completed, a suitable home for the Society's outstanding and growing collection of artifacts; also it will be base for implementing and developing all of the Society's other activities, such as research, education, and publication. This unique education and research center will consist of a 9000-square-foot building divided into three multiple use areas: a research, storage and library wing; a lecture-classroom wing; and an ecological exhibit wing, designed by the Northeastern Woodland Indians themselves.

Also included in the plans are an ecological nature trail, showing how Indians lived at one with their environment. In addition there will be reconstructions of Indian dwellings excavated by the Society.

Eight acres of land have been given provisionally as the site of the projected Museum. The Society has an option to buy an adjacent 15-acre piece of land.

The building design provides expandable space and will reflect the flexibility and multimedia requirements of contemporary museum technology. This flexibility of space (physical and visual) in a building is the opposite of the rigid, formal and traditional symmetry. It lends itself to many subtle variations. Within the building, a new concept in museums of a central control area will offer maximum security with minimum expense. From this control area one individual may monitor all parts of the building and grounds.

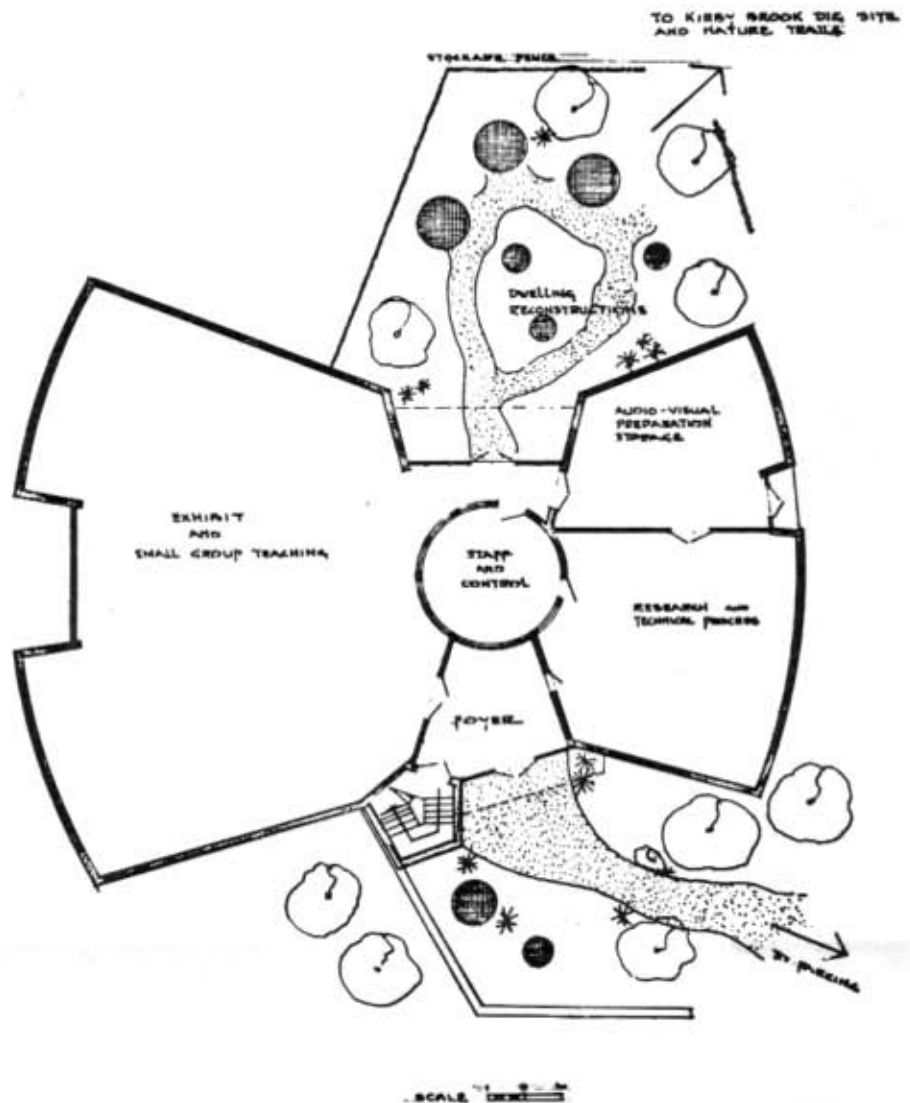
SPECIAL WINGS

The education wing of the Museum will contain all the modern visual and acoustical techniques for use in connection with school and adult classes,

Committee Chairmen:

Dig, Edmund Swigart
Education, John Pawloski
Fund Raising, Tate Brown
Membership, Mrs. Randolph Johnson
Museum Exhibit, Mrs. J. H. Deutschmann
Gunn Museum, Mrs. Newell Withey
Private Donation, Elmer Browne
Program, Ronald Whittle
Publications, Norman Shidle
Publicity, John J. Muckstadt
Volunteer, Mrs. Howard Lape

Printed by
 Shiver Mountain Press
 Art by
 Jonathan Battle



Upper level plan for the American Indian Institute; the lower level will house the education wing.

workshop, lectures, seminars and conferences.

In the exhibit wing, exhibits will be planned from an ecological point of view. They will be designed by the Society's Indian consultants. With the help of professional museum people the exhibits will tell the story of the Indian's relationship to nature.

The research wing will be an ultra modern facility. All artifact cards will be put on a computer for ready accessibility. All artifacts will be stored in glass-enclosed, lighted cases. Plentiful counter space, excellent lighting and good laboratory facilities, including sinks, chemicals, microscopes and other technical equipment will be provided. An extensive research library will be part of this facility.

FINEST COLLECTION

The Society already has the finest collection of Indian pottery and bone in the State. Recently it has acquired the largest private collection of Indian

artifacts in Connecticut - some 50,000 pieces from the nationally famous Edward H. Rogers collection. In addition, it has received six other smaller collections, totalling about 2,000 pieces. The Society's own volunteers have already unearthed 15,000 pieces. All these collections will be the basis of the first exhibits in the Institute.

LAND ACQUIRED

The land acquired by the SVAS as a setting for the Institute overlooks the Shepaug River (named by the Pootatuck Indians and meaning Rocky River) and the site of the 2515 B.C., 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C. civilizations. The acreage pledged to the Society also adjoins the Steep Rock reservation, a relatively untouched natural forest of some 1500 acres in size. The view from this site down to the Shepaug River banks is very much as it was when the Indians lived there.

Funds are in process of being raised to build and equip the Institute.

Full Program of

Meetings Continues

THE full program of meetings for 1972-1973 is expected to raise the average attendance per meeting above the 70 mark set last year.

The largest attendance last year was 200. This overwhelming crowd turned out to hear Onandaga Indian Miss Del Logan of Syracuse, N.Y. Miss Logan is a member of the SVAS Board of Directors.

As always, the 1972-1973 meetings will be held on the first Thursday of each month at the Town Hall in Washington Depot at 8 p.m. Again, these regular meetings will be held from October through May.

THE SHEPAUG ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Program 1972-73



Books

for archaeological readers

Amateur Archaeologists Handbook

by Maurice Robbins. Thomas Y. Crowell Press, 1965.

THIS is a well written, practical guide for the amateur who wishes to do serious scientific digging. While known Indian history is introduced, the emphasis of the text is on why, where, and how to dig. This type of book is a must for the reading list of all serious archaeologists.

American Dawn

by Louis A. Brennan, Macmillan Co., 1970.

THIS book is one of the most recent efforts of current professional students of world-wide Indian history to piece together the story of The American Indian according to the most up-to-date information available. How and when the Indians may have migrated to this continent and what took place after their arrival are the major goals of this work.

This book will give the reader recent and valuable background information on the entire sweep of Indian history as it is currently theorized.

History of the Indians of Connecticut

by John DeForest, Archon Press, 1964.

THE title of this book is misleading. The history it treats is really the history of Indian-White contact and a few legends of various Connecticut tribes directly preceding the White contact. But it must be remembered that the Indians had no written or recorded history. This, therefore, is a monumental compendium of what was known and recorded of the Indians of Connecticut at a time shortly after they faded from the Connecticut scene. Certain biases of the early writers are obvious. If, however, the reader keeps this and the limited time span that the book covers well in mind, it is well worth reading as a documental account of Indian history during colonial times. As such this is an invaluable addition to any beginning Indian library.

October 5, 1972

Mr. Fred Warner of Collinsville, President of the Connecticut Archaeological Society, will present a program dealing with the types of food used by local Indians.

November 2, 1972

An illustrated slide-lecture on various types of tools employed by 18th and 19th century Americans.

December 7, 1972

A film entitled *How We Learn From the Past*. This film presents a detailed examination of an archaeological dig in the southwestern United States. Its main emphasis is on techniques of excavation.

January 4, 1973

Mr. Edmund K. Swigart, President of the Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society, will report on digs conducted by the Society during summer of 1972. He will display artifacts uncovered during that period and will comment on their significance.

February 1, 1973

A film entitled *Isht in Two Worlds*. This outstanding film about the last survivor of the Yahi Indians of California illustrates many tool making and hunting techniques.

March 1, 1973

The Cooper's Craft—a film produced by Colonial Williamsburg which dramatically details the skills of a nearly extinct trade.

April 5, 1973

A program conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Hart of New Milford devoted to authentic reconstruction of Indian crafts and tools.

May 3, 1973

A slide-lecture devoted to early American pottery and porcelain—especially designed for up-coming summer digs.

Non Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 16
W. D. 06794