This fall, the SVAS will publish The Prehistory of the Indians of Western Connecticut: Part I, 9000 B.C. – 1000 B.C. This work is the SVAS' major research publication of the year. It is based on the evaluation of artifacts from twenty-five major and many minor sites located in a 200-square-mile area of the Housatonic watershed in western Connecticut and was written by Edmund K. Swigart. Part II, which will cover 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1735, will be published next year.

This is the first major work to be published in the state about Connecticut Indian prehistory. It will be available free to SVAS members. Due to the expected big demand, members are advised to reserve their copies in advance.

In this and forthcoming issues, Artifacts presents an abbreviated narrative for the layman which is derived from the larger, footnoted research documents.

Who were the first residents of the area of New England that is now called Connecticut? Where did they come from? When did they arrive? Modern man may never be privileged to know fully the answers to these questions, but some basic assumptions can be drawn from existing research.

In approximately 17,000 B.C., the last glacier, known as the Wisconsin glacier, reached Long Island, its farthest point to the south. At this time, it is known that the ice at Bear Mountain was at least 1,650 feet deep, the height of that hill. Calculating by mathematical formula, researchers have determined that the ice was possibly 1,800 feet thick over the site of New Haven and 2,500 feet thick over the site of Hartford. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that early man, whoever he might have been, set foot in Connecticut until after this great Wisconsin ice sheet had largely disappeared.

The minimum date of the last glaciation in southern Connecticut is taken from a C-14 date from Rogers Lake in Lyme: vegetation had begun to reappear in that area by approximately 12,290 B.C.

Pollen samples from Rogers Lake indicate that between 12,350 and 10,200 B.C. the area was a vast tundra such as is found in the Arctic today. While it is known that certain animals such as mastodon and mammoth inhabited this bleak landscape in approximately 10,000 B.C., glacial debris and ice-blocked melt water had dammed many streams and rivers and formed large numbers of temporary ponds and lakes. Two sizeable glacially dammed lakes are of special note. One, Glacial Lake Woodbury, covered much of Woodbury and Southbury and filled the Pomperaug River valley. The other, Glacial Lake Danbury, covered most of the Housatonic River valley south of New Milford to its confluence with the Still River valley. It also included most of the Still River valley.

While the debris and ice dams were rather quickly either eroded or melted away, at least some, such as Glacial Lake Hitchcock on the Connecticut River, were still present when early man first came into the region sometime before 8635 B.C.

The SVAS has found scattered Paleo-Indian material that corroborates a hypothesis based on other evidence found in New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut that highly mobile bands of Paleo-Indian hunters wandered north and east from central Pennsylvania through New York and into Connecticut sometime before 8600 B.C. in pursuit primarily of migratory game animals. The routes they appear to have followed were along major waterways such as the Hudson River and the large, expanded coastal plain of Connecticut. Since sea level was several hundred feet lower at that time, the shoreline was well out on the continental shelf (some 100 kilometers), and Long Island was part of the mainland. Thus the Housatonic and the Connecticut river valleys, like the Hudson River valley in New York, would have become broad highways leading north and west from this coastal plain to central Connecticut and the western highlands.

Three of the SVAS' twenty-five major sites and one single-artifact site contained Paleo-Indian materials. Two were on well-elevated locations overlooking the Still and Housatonic river valleys and may therefore have been on the shoreline of continued on page 4
After Hours

As our third year of operation under the name of the Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society draws toward a close, I think it is time to slow our hectic pace just long enough to look around us. It is good, I think, periodically to look back along the trail one has cleared and then to look ahead: one gets a new and perhaps more accurate bearing on how to continue to clear this trail of understanding so that others can follow. For an organization that is growing so quickly and is going through such a proliferation of new activities, I feel that the pause is, in fact, essential.

Our activities began in 1968 as a search by seven Washington residents and a small number of Gunning School students to discover what we could about Washington Indian prehistory. By the summer of 1970, the major discoveries made at the Kirby Brook Site, the growth of our volunteer force to 300, and the contacts our group was developing with state and regional archaeologists made us realize that the implications of what we were doing were of far greater scope than we had anticipated. Not only was there evidence of a much longer stretch of history than we had suspected - more than 9,000 years - but also our group and our area were potentially of inestimable value in solving the mysteries of Indian prehistory on a regional, and perhaps even on a national, basis.

To meet this challenge, the SVAS was incorporated in 1971 as a nonprofit organization whose purpose, as stated in its constitution, is "to engage in and encourage the scientific study of the peoples of the Northeast United States and the collection and preservation of information, relics and other material with respect to such peoples; to establish an American Indian Memorial Museum; to preserve as historical monuments, irreplaceable Colonial and Indian dwellings and dwelling areas; and to develop an education and research program for children and adults of the local communities."

The bright and shining hope that the SVAS constitution represents was only a dream written on a piece of paper. It could only be implemented through increasing numbers of volunteers doing increasing amounts of work, and through something that previously had not been needed: money. It would take money to build the proper home for the growing artifact collection; money to pay for the increasingly sophisticated research programs; money for the broadening scope of the publications and education programs.

In three short years our progress has been extraordinary and the dream has come closer to a reality. We have completed a fund drive that raised $300,000, making it possible for the memorial museum, the American Indian Institute, to be built. We have the beginnings of an endowment that will insure the continuity of at least the most fundamental areas of the research, publications, and educational programs, independent of the vagaries of annual giving and membership dues.

We have started a regular publications program consisting of a quarterly newsletter, Artifacts, and an annual monograph based on our research.

Edmund K. Swigart
President,
Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

Siftings

Stephen Post, a student at New England College, is pursuing his studies in archaeology in Arundel, Sussex, England, under a program of the college. After being Edmund K. Swigart's student assistant at the Gunning School in 1971-72, he took a semester's leave of absence from college in the spring of 1973 to help catalogue the SVAS collections. Mr. Post is a resident of Middlebury, Ct.

Edmund K. Swigart has received the Mr. and Mrs. Berne A. Russell and Mrs. Althea Russell Memorial Award as the person who has contributed the most to further Connecticut archaeology this year. The award was presented at the semiannual meeting of the Archeological Society of Connecticut which was held at Central Connecticut College on April 6.

Ground-breaking ceremonies to launch the construction of the American Indian Institute will be held in late June.

Valerie Hansen of Sherman, Ct., one of Edmund K. Swigart's assistants at last summer's Southbury dig, has been accepted to work on the Koster Site in the lower Illinois River valley this summer. Since 1968, students and professors from several universities have been exploring the ruins of twelve separate prehistoric Indian communities that flourished there as far back as 6000 B.C., all within an area only 120 by 66 feet. The director of the excavation is Stuart M. Struve, professor of anthropology at Northwestern University and president of the Foundation for Illinois Archeology.
SVAS Schedules
1974 Summer Digs

The SVAS will conduct digs at two sites this summer. Members and other volunteers are encouraged to dig whenever they can. The SVAS has welcomed diggers from 6 to 80 years of age; the only restriction is that those under 11 be accompanied by an adult.

Diggers are urged to be prompt and to wear old clothes. The necessary equipment will be furnished, but anyone who has a small pail and a trowel should take them.

Background reading on excavation techniques usually increases the enjoyment of digging; an example recommended by the SVAS is The Amateur Archaeologist's Handbook by Maurice Robbins (Crowell, 1965).

At the major excavation site, the dig will be directed by Edmund K. Swigart. Digs will be held from July 2 through August 6 except for July 4. Tuesdays through Saturdays from 8:45 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will assemble in front of the First Congregational Church, on the Green in Washington, just off Route 47, and they may attend any days at their convenience.

At the other site, a cave in New Milford, the dig will be directed by John Pawloski. Digs will be held from August 12 through 30, Mondays through Fridays in the morning. For details of the New Milford dig, phone Mr. Pawloski at 354-0296 in late July.

Annual Meeting
ELECTS OFFICERS

The SVAS held its 1974 annual meeting on May 2 and elected the following directors and officers: directors for three years, Mrs. Albert Atwood of Litchfield, Ct., Michael Coe of New Haven, Ct., Adelphena Logan of Syracuse, N.Y., Leavenworth P. Sperry of Middlebury, Ct., and Sidney A. Hessel and Edmund K. Swigart, both of Washington; director for one year, Rutherford P. Lilley of Southbury, Ct.; officers for one year, Edmund K. Swigart, president, Tate Brown, vice president, Mrs. John M. Sheehy, secretary, and Elmer T. Browne, treasurer.
New $100,000 Sought to Aid Institute Use

Unexpected opportunities for exhibits and increasing enthusiasm from universities and schools to make extensive use of the American Indian Institute have caused an immediate need to raise $100,000 of Phase II funds.

Phase I funds will go, as planned, to the construction, land, and first third of the endowment. The new funds, to be raised before the building is completed, will more fully equip the building and will go largely to provide the level of endowment immediately necessary to support the minimum professional staff now needed for the creative use and maintenance of the facility.

Among those expressing interest in the immediate use of the institute is the Northwestern Archeological Research Foundation, based at the University of Wisconsin, which has offered not only to assist the SVAS in its work, but also to donate all materials they excavate in the Connecticut River valley. In addition, Dr. Frederick Warner of the University of Connecticut and his students will assist in the SVAS' summer dig program and will donate their materials.

Wykeham Rise and the Gunnery, having already offered their facilities for use by the institute, are making plans to use the institute extensively during the school year. They are the first eastern secondary schools to establish a precollege program in archaeology. They and the Shepaug Valley Regional High School are looking forward to making use of the institute as a research and educational center.

Efforts to raise this additional $100,000 already are going forward at an energetic pace. The SVAS has $4,000 in hand, and the Reader's Digest Association has made a challenge grant of $7,000 which provides that the SVAS raise another $5,000 by June 15.

Paleo-Indians
continued from page 1

Glacial Lake Danbury. The third and the single-artifact site were terraces ten feet above the current Lake Waramaug waterline. From geologic and archaeological evidence, however, it would appear that these two terraces represented the original lake's shoreline during much of early human history.

Evidence of Paleo-Indian occupation is mainly from lost spear points. Those that have been found are of the Clovis style used by these early hunters over almost the entire United States during this period. These points are characterized by fluted bases and appear to be of essentially two rather distinct sizes. Since four of the seven artifacts found by the SVAS were from the shores of Lake Waramaug, they could indicate more than a casual visitation by Paleo-Indian peoples. However, the evidence of Paleo-Indian man in western Connecticut indicates that a relatively low population camped on and hunted the major waterways. No evidence of small waterway or upland use by these people has been discovered.

According to the studies made of pollen at Rogers Lake, the time during which Paleo-Indian people occupied Connecticut was one of constant environmental change. While the initial vegetation was essentially a tundra, by 9750 B.C. a deciduous change had taken place. Herbaceous species of plants (grasses and sedges) typical of the tundra had given way to an advancing tree line of woody species. It can be surmised that migratory grazing animals dependent on grass found an increasingly hostile environment and probably either dwindled in population or began to move northward. At sometime around 8000 B.C., southern Connecticut's vegetation was becoming a forest dominated by spruce, fir, and larch, and the grasses were largely gone.

As the grasses vanished, so did the large Pleistocene herbivores and the early human inhabitants. During the next 2,000 years, it would appear that very little if any human occupation occurred. However, environmental conditions continued to change so that by approximately 6000 B.C. a radical temperature change was taking place. There was a drying and warming trend that was accompanied by swift vegetation changes that produced a mixed deciduous-conifer forest consisting of oak, hemlock, and beech by around 5000 B.C.

It was sometime during this period that man is thought to have appeared once again in western Connecticut. This time he was here to stay.