ARTIFACTS
Vol. III No. 1 September 1974
The Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

SVAS Breaks Ground for American Indian Institute; Research Facility to be Completed by Spring 1975

Double Ceremony, Speeches, Big Turnout Highlight Event

A major milestone in the history of the SVAS was reached on June 29 as more than 250 SVAS members and guests gathered together at the Gunnery School’s Browne Memorial Hall to attend groundbreaking ceremonies for the American Indian Institute.

Since the weather threatened rain and a soggy ceremony at the actual forest site of recently cleared trees, Edmund K. Swigart, president of the SVAS and acting director of the institute, opted for his rain plan at the Gunnery and a symbolic ground breaking using boxes of dirt brought from the site the night before. But after brief speeches and a buffet picnic lunch, the day turned bright and sunny, and so members and guests were able to go the two miles to the site to see the wooded surroundings and witness a second ground breaking.

During ceremonies at the Gunnery, presided over by Tate Brown, vice president and a director of the SVAS, members learned from Mr. Brown that the SVAS had just received a gift in stock of approximately $25,000 towards the next goal of $100,000 to be raised this year for the institute.

Dr. Michael D. Coe, curator of anthropology at Yale University’s Peabody Museum and a director of the SVAS, was one of the speakers honoring the groundbreaking. Dr. Coe, who is also director of undergraduate studies and a professor of anthropology at Yale, described how archaeology gives one a sense of time scale and an overview of how man has reacted with his environment. He said that we have learned, for instance, that the Indians were not in total harmony with their environment and pointed to evidence that the extinction of Ice Age fauna does not appear to be due to

Indian Prehistory: The Archaic Period

This is the second installment of an abbreviated narrative for the layman derived from The Prehistory of the Indians of Western Connecticut, Part 1, 9000 B.C.-1000 B.C., a major research document written by Edmund K. Swigart and being published by the SVAS this fall. The first installment appeared in the June issue and covered the retreat of the glacier and the arrival and departure of the earliest (Paleo) Indian people known to have lived in the 200-square-mile area on which this report is based.

This installment covers the beginning of the Archaic period (± 6000 to ± 2500 B.C.). This period was one of environmental changes that contributed to a growing population that during the last 1,000 years of the period appears to have evolved in place in western Connecticut.

The evidence found in Connecticut of man’s existence in the early Archaic period is an occasional bifurcate projectile point used sometime between 6000 and 5000 B.C. and made of exotic flint coming from as far away as West Virginia. Based on the relative number of projectile points recorded from the twenty-five major and many minor sites in the SVAS study area, the population appears to have been about double that of Paleo-Indian times; but it is still quite low.

The reasons for this continued low population were undoubtedly still largely continued on page 5

continued on page 3
After Hours

This is the beginning of our fourth year, and it will surely be an exhilarating and rewarding one.

First, we will be moving into our new home, the American Indian Institute, with all the added responsibilities that this will entail in terms of expanded programs, staff, and maintenance. At this writing, the target date for our occupation of the new building is the spring of 1975. Our dedication ceremony and open house is currently planned for the late spring or early summer.

Second, we will participate in an innovative and, as far as I know, unique program with the Gunnery and Wykeham Rise schools. The boards of trustees of these two schools have formed a consortium to offer jointly a precollege program in archaeology. They have appointed your president as the first director. This program recently gained national recognition as the recipient of one of 19 National Humanities Faculty grants for the entire United States. Both the area schools and the SVAS-sponsored institute have tremendous opportunities to offer one another, and by working closely together both cannot help but benefit immensely.

Third, we look forward to another tremendous year of growth in all the many expanding areas of our activities— in publications, research, and education.

The very magnitude of our growth does, however, present some happy but serious problems for you, board, as you can well imagine. At the present time we are trying to project our capital and operating needs over the next three years in line with sound financial planning procedures. In 1972-73 our operating budget for research, publications, and education was $8,500. This was more than covered by dues totalling $3.748.50. The balance was used for C-14 dates and a major research publication. Last year, 1973-74, with added programs, a small office, and the hiring of a part-time secretary (who works full time) and a part-time director (who currently is trying to invent a 48-hour day), our operating budget has ballooned to $12,200. Once again careful financial planning will allow us to balance our budget without dipping into our precious building or endowment funds.

Membership monies of almost $4,000 plus the interest from capital funds of over $8,000 has kept us in an advantageous financial position.

Projected increases due to the American Indian Institute, added staff, and the research, publication, and education programs will force our 1974-75 budget to approximately $22,000 and our 1975-76 budget to $35,000. While we will do everything in our power to increase our endowment and endowment income to somewhat blunt our budget increases, (HELP), we cannot count on this. Therefore the brunt of our fiscal planning must center on a continued geometric membership growth in line with our growth of 450 per cent over the last three years. To have a realistic chance to balance this year’s budget we must have a minimum of 1200 members.

If each of our current 660 members would take it upon himself or herself to spread the word of our Quest and to get just one new member during the year, we will be able to continue our sound financial status. Again, being realistic, not all of us will be able to do this, so I hope that each of you can will make an extra effort to help me to accomplish our goal. We will be only too happy to furnish you with newsletters and membership envelopes if you will write or call (866-7003) our office. We also plan to have an informative brochure available soon.

Another idea that I hope you will consider is a Christmas gift subscription. You will all be receiving more information on this later in the fall, but please keep it in mind. Remember that each issue of Artifacts will publish another installment of the 9,000 years of Indian history that your society is helping to piece together here in southern New England. This will form a very valuable reference library.

Everything our society has accomplished has been through your efforts. Let us continue to meet the challenges of our Quest together with faith, enthusiasm, and renewed dedication.

Edmund K. Swigart
President
Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

Gunnery, Wykeham Announce Unique Archaeology Major

The Gunnery and Wykeham Rise schools have announced an innovative precollege program in archaeology, to start this fall. It has been accepted for affiliation with the National Humanities Faculty.

The NHF is administered under the auspices of Phi Beta Kappa, the American Council on Education, and the American Council of Learned Societies, and it provides an approved project with the consultant services of a faculty that numbers over 800 eminent scholars, writers, and artists.

Edmund K. Swigart, president of the SVAS, acting director of the American Indian Institute, and a member of the Gunnery faculty, has been named director of the program.

Students in the two- or three-year program will take regular and advanced courses in archaeology and related electives in history (Indian-white relations), English (the American Indian in film and literature), and mathematics (computers and statistics). They will also be offered a trilogy of geology, botany, and zoology in which they will learn to identify rocks, plants, and other materials that Indians used.

The program will emphasize excavation experience on some of the 25 Indian sites being researched by the SVAS, and it will allow students to pursue independent study with any organized archaeological group on sites in other parts of this country or anywhere in the world. In addition, students may participate in research projects under professional archaeologists associated with museums and universities.

The introductory archaeology courses have a limited number of openings for SVAS members. A one-term course will meet three mornings a week, five hours a week, from mid-September to Thanksgiving. Another introductory course will be offered concurrently during the first term and will continue for the entire three-term year. Mr. Swigart will teach both courses. He advises members who are interested to call Michael Eanes at the Gunnery School for further information concerning tuition and registration.
Indian History Enhanced

The culture of the American Indian will have a better chance of permanent preservation as the result of the development of the $300,000 American Indian Institute, for which ground was recently broken in Washington, Conn.

The project planned by the Shepaug Valley Archeological Society involves the collection of Indian artifacts and researching Indian history and culture. There will be an exhibit area, but primarily for researchers and students of Indian history rather than for tourists.

Without a permanent place to house the many archeological finds of Indian tools and other possessions, many of these valuable artifacts would eventually be lost and compilations of Indian history would be further hindered.

This is a valuable historical preservation project. Shepaug Valley is particularly abundant in Indian archeological discoveries. The town of Washington is a suitable site for this newly planned center on Indian history.

— Waterbury Republican, July 3, 1974

Meeting Program

Meetings of the Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society are held in Bryan Memorial Hall in Washington Depot on the first Thursday of the month, October through May, at 8 p.m. The programs for this fall’s meetings are as follows:

October 3: Film, Fort Raleigh
A chronicle of the events leading to the original settlement at Fort Raleigh presented through the works of John White, an artist who accompanied the settlers. These works provide an understanding of the settlers’ life.

November 7: Film, Indian Pottery of San Ildefonso
Shows how the Indians make the black pottery of San Ildefonso; the spreading of sacred corn before the clay is gathered, the outdoor firing, and the removal of the pottery from the fire mound. Also shown are the mixing of clay, construction of pottery, hand decorating of the pieces, and the building of the fire mound.

December 5: Film, Hammerman in Williamsburg
A description of the relationship of a blacksmith in colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, to his community, showing that the blacksmith was the most important craftsman in a colonial community. Shows in detail the making of an axe, a sign, and nails; the repair of a chain, a worm for a cannon, and a fireplace crane.

Ground Breaking
continued from page 1

climactic change. In approximately 10,000 B.C. the American Indians “destroyed the very animals on which they were subsisting.”

Dr. Coe also mentioned that archaeology has its limitations. Except for written documents, we cannot get even a fraction of the full story about cultures that are likely to have been more complicated and sophisticated than they are generally given credit for. As for why archaeologists dig, Dr. Coe’s simple but entertaining answer was “because they like it; it’s fun!”

Dr. Michael Kan, acting director and curator of primitive art at the Brooklyn Museum and a consultant to the American Indian Institute, spoke on the role of the museum today. He noted that the public is not always aware of the necessity for behind-the-scenes concerns of museum administration such as a clean atmosphere and controlled humidity, two items essential for this institute. Proper maintenance assures that the collections will be intact and accessible to future scholars as well as to present ones.

Dr. Kan emphasized that institutions such as this one greatly enrich the cultural life of their communities and should be supported. He said that people gain interest in subjects such as the American Indian through museums and it is this type of knowledge that should become part of the cultural mainstream.

Following Dr. Kan, Harlan H. Griswold, chairman of the Connecticut Historical
Commission and a director of the SVAS, enlightened the audience with a revealing list of the many Indian names that live on with us through the names given to places, rivers, lakes, and even states, such as Connecticut. Within the state he had discovered at least 70 Indian names. Taking the line "... their name is on your waters, ye may not wash it out" from Lydia Huntley Sigourney's poem "Indian Names" as the title of his talk, Mr. Griswold asked why we should honor Indian names and dishonor their culture. He noted that we have erred in thinking that Indians were crude or uncivilized.

"The American Indians have so much to teach us. That is what this museum is all about. It exists to teach and it teaches best by housing the few artifacts that we have left from a civilization thousands upon thousands of years old."

At this point in the proceedings, Mr. Swigart called upon Adelphena Logan, a member of the Onondaga Tribe, assistant director of the Oswego Restored Indian Village and Museum in Auburn, New York, and a director of the SVAS, and Irving Harris, president-chief of the Schaghticoke Indians of Kent, Connecticut, and chairman of the Connecticut Indian Affairs Council, to perform the symbolic ground breaking. Miss Logan first led the group in a prayer that she had written, and then she and Mr. Harris held their shovels poised while the many photographeřs from the area media captured the event.

Mr. Swigart reviewed the short history of the SVAS—its having started in 1968 with seven people and no money, and now having over 600 members and a recently raised $300,000 to build and partially endow the American Indian Institute, a major objective in the society's constitution. Mr. Swigart went on to say that the society has funded 20 C-14 dates at $140 per date to help identify at least twelve distinct cultures that lived in western Connecticut at one time or another during the past 9,000 years, and that its research collection has grown from several hundred to over 500,000 Indian artifacts of known provenience.

In dedicating the site of the institute to "our American Indian brothers," Mr. Swigart said that "we must re dedicate our strength to get at the mysteries of the past so that we may learn from our past for the future. Let this institute become a beacon of light from the past into the future, a bridge of human understanding forever."

Other events of the day included the viewing of artifacts collected by the SVAS and currently housed in the Gunn Memorial Museum, and a slide presentation on the prehistory of the Connecticut Indian. Each member and guest also received a quartz or flint arrowhead donated by Truman Richmond, an SVAS member who has been collecting artifacts for many years. Since no one knows exactly where these artifacts were found, they are of no scientific value but serve as keepsakes of the Indian presence in Connecticut.

Construction of the institute, designed by Leslie Searle of the firm of Henry T. Moeckel, A.I.A., of Naugatuck and being built by Arthur Deacon and Sons of Litchfield, is under way and scheduled for completion in the spring of 1975. In keeping with Indian tradition, the building is in the round. It will consist of 1,500 square feet for a research and classroom area, 1,100 square feet for an exhibit hall, and 600 square feet for office, storage, utility, and foyer space.
Indian Prehistory

continued from page 1

environmental. The spruce-pine and later the pine forests of this period are thought to have supported low numbers of game species.

The bifurcate points, characterized by a triangular notch in the base, were present not only on two major river sites and Lake Waramaug, as the Paleo-Indian points were, but also on four small stream sites. All were made of flint, some of which has been verified as coming from West Virginia, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and New York.

As yet no adequate stratigraphic evidence or firepit samples have been uncovered to describe the cultural life or to date the period when these people lived in the study area. In speculating about the food resources of these people, it is assumed that they were part of the Archaic tradition of hunter-gatherers who collected nuts, berries, and other plant products. Since the large Pleistocene mammals hunted by the Paleo-Indians were now extinct, the mammals of an oak-pine forest, many of them smaller in size, must have become the hunted species. Thus, the possible emphasis on the gathering of plant products for food together with a more moderate climate would account for a larger and more stable human population than that of Paleo-Indian man.

During the time the bifurcate people lived in western Connecticut, the environment continued to change, as evidenced from pollen samples taken from Rogers Lake in Lyme, Connecticut. During the next 1,000 years of an even warmer and drier climate, the oak-pine forest in turn gave way to an oak-beech-hemlock forest. Many trees were replaced by grasses, and the prairie country extended far to the east. This was the beginning of over 4,000 years of weather that was warmer than today’s.

According to research done by Dr. Robert Funk, archaeologist for the state of New York, from 3200 B.C. to perhaps as early as 4000 B.C. New York State and parts of northern New England were occupied by people using the Otter Creek style of projectile point and belonging to the Vergennes (early) phase of the Laurentian tradition. The classic Otter Creek projectile point (see illustration), however, is very rare in Connecticut. This prompts one to ask whether western Connecticut had a second period when very few Indians lived here or whether a group of people resided here who were not perhaps as well known, or common to a large area of New England.

The SVAS’s research so far would tend to corroborate the findings of Dr. Dena Dineauze, working in New Hampshire, that the latter was true; in the study area bifurcate points are followed by Neville-like points which are in turn replaced by a mid-to-late Laurentian tradition of modified Otter Creek, Voseberg, and Brewerton points. Forty-five Neville-like points, made largely of flint from New York State, occurred at five of the sites. Thirty-five of the 45 were on one high terrace site on the Housatonic River which is situated on a hill overlooking the Great Falls at New Milford. This would probably indicate a major occupation at that site. The Neville projectile points are thought to have been used in western New England sometime between 5000 and 3000 B.C., but as yet no C-14 sample has been excavated in the SVAS study area to confirm this.

The time span represented by the Laurentian tradition in New York and New England is between 3300 and 2000 B.C. according to Dr. William A. Ritchie, former archaeologist for the State of New York. A C-14 date of 2390 B.C. ± 120 years has been recorded by David Thompson, an SVAS member, for a hearth on the Vosberg level of the Binette cave in Naugatuck. This date is particularly interesting because it places the last several hundred years of the Laurentian tradition in Connecticut at a time when another very different tradition was consolidating itself in the same area. This was the small-stem side-notch tradition, which will be described later.

The 159 projectile points of the Laurentian tradition found by the SVAS represent 5.4 per cent of the total artifact sample from the study area and over three times as many projectile points found on three times as many sites as any previous type of projectile point. Moreover, expressed as 13.3 projectile points per 100 years, they represent a potential relative population in this area during the 3300 to 2000 B.C. period of five times that of any previous period in Connecticut history.

The Laurentian people were still essentially a hunting and gathering, seminomadic people, as were their predecessors within the Archaic period. No evidence of agriculture, a possible cause for a population to grow so quickly, currently exists. Therefore, the reason this population increased so dramatically in such a relatively short time is probably that by approximately 3000 B.C. the continuing warm weather had given rise to a temperate, deciduous woodland inhabited by whitetail deer and turkey, both of which were heavily used by the Indians.

As the Otter Creek style of projectile point appears to have evolved in western Connecticut into the later Brewerton-Vosberg style, so the Brewerton-Vosberg style seems to have evolved into the small quartz triangles identified by Dr. Ritchie as the Squabocket and Beekman types. The large flint side-notched and eared points gave way to smaller and smaller triangles on which the side notching and ears became less and less pronounced. Finally, for all intents and purposes, they disappeared. As this progression occurred, a similar change in preference for material from foreign flint to locally available quartz also took place. This evidence is wholly compatible with the idea of a population evolving locally and making greater and greater use of the natural resources of the area.

C-14 dates obtained by the SVAS for Brewerton-Vosberg and small quartz triangle components would indicate that this final stage of the Laurentian in situ evolution, if indeed it did take place, could not have taken more than several hundred years.
**The American Indian Institute**

**Funds and Assets Available**

- Contributions and pledges $346,700

**Funds Required to Begin Phase I**

1. Building: research, library, exhibit, and storage areas $115,000
2. Basic furnishings $10,000
3. Land: 15.2 acres $40,000
4. Basic grading and landscaping the building site and parking lot $20,000
5. Architect, engineering, and planning fees $15,000
6. Endowment: to insure the continuation of the institute $100,000

**Total** $300,000

**Funds Required to Complete Phase I and Begin Phase II**

1. Building $13,000
2. Furnishings: exhibits, storage, equipment, and visual aids $12,000
3. Grading and landscaping $10,000
4. Nature trail and Indian dwellings - labor to be furnished by local volunteers $5,000
5. Endowment $60,000

**Total** $100,000

---

**Fund Raising**

**Yields $46,700**

**For Institute**

Despite inflation and stock market uncertainties, enthusiastic and determined support for the American Indian Institute has already yielded $46,700 in pledges and gifts toward the goal of $100,000 for 1974.

The first test of this year's fund raising was a challenge grant of $7,000 from the Reader's Digest Association, which was successfully met by the SVAS in raising $5,000 by the June 15 deadline. The association has expressed a continuing interest in teenage people and in involving them in responsible educational and community activities such as those in which the SVAS is engaged.

Just prior to breaking ground for the institute, the SVAS received a $25,000 gift in stock and since then has received two grants for building construction. One is for $3,000 from the Eva Gebhardt-Gourgaud Foundation and the other for $5,000 from the Anne S. Richardson Fund.

The contract for building, grading, and landscaping the institute has been signed for $158,000. This figure includes the option of installing an emergency generator to assure temperature and humidity control at all times.

The accompanying table details how funds now in hand and those being sought will be used.

---

**ARTIFACTS**

Editors: Mary A. H. Sachs, Arthur G. Sachs
Contribution Editor: Norman G. Shadle
The Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

Board of Directors
Edmund K. Swigart, President; Tate Brown, Vice President; Mrs. John M. Shellby, Secretary; Elmer T. Browne, Treasurer; Mrs. Albert Atwood; Michael D. Cox; Mrs. J. H. Deutschmann; Kenyon W. Greene; Harlan H. Griswold; Sidney A. Heisel; Rutherford F. Libby; Adelphena Logan; Leavenworth P. Sperry; Lloyd C. Young

Committee Chairmen
Edmund K. Swigart, Dig; John A. Pawlowski, Education; Tate Brown, Fund-Raising; Mrs. Edwin L. Kincaid, Library; Mrs. Jared N. Symmesveldt, Membership; Mrs. J. H. Deutschmann, Museum Exhibit; Mrs. Newell Whitby, Gunn Memorial Museum; Natalie H. Dyer, Photography; Ronald G. Whittle, Programs; Norman G. Shadle, Publications; Mrs. Albert Atwood, John J. Macketstadt, Publicity; David Polkynwa, Site Survey; Mrs. Howard H. Lape, Volunteers.

A quarterly newsletter of the Shepaug Valley Archaeological Society

Washington, Ct. 06793

Printed by Shiver Mountain Press