

Archaeotext

The Newsletter of the Norwalk Community College
Archaeology Club and
The Archaeology As An Avocation Program



Wetmore Collection, Norwalk Coast

Club Meetings – Fall Academic Semester

Save These Dates! -

Sept 11 - Thurs 7:30 pm -
“What We Dug This Summer”
Topper, New Canaan Nature
Center, Honduras Maya

Oct 9 - Thurs 7:30 pm -
“The Looting of
the Iraq Museum”

Nov 13 - Thurs 7:30 pm -
Child Sacrifice of
the Inca in Peru

Dec 11 - Thurs 6:30 pm -
Thera (Santorini) Eruption Date
- New Data from Egypt



October 9 - Thursday 7:30 pm
Pepsico Theatre – East Campus
**Thieves of Baghdad – The Looting of
the Iraq National Museum**
Col. Matthew Bogdanos

The NCC Archaeology Club presents a spectacular speaking event featuring Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, USMC, author of the critically-acclaimed book “Thieves of Baghdad: One Marine’s Passion to Recover the World’s Greatest Stolen Treasures. In his book, Colonel Bogdanos explores the April 2003 theft and looting of the Iraq National Museum. He will describe his team’s recovery of thousands of these priceless objects and how he exposed the black market in stolen antiquities that funded the insurgency in Iraq. His talk illustrates the impact of museum collections upon the cultural identity of a nation and the world.

Versatile and accomplished, Matthew Bogdanos, an assistant district attorney in Manhattan, where New York tabloids call him “pit bull” for his relentless prosecution of criminals, is a colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves, middleweight boxer, and native New Yorker. He holds a degree in classics from Bucknell

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NCC's Tom Pankosky mapping Clovis artifacts

September 11 - Thursday 7:30 pm
Culinary Arts Dining Room - West Campus
Promoting Public Archaeology
NCC Team Assists the Topper Excavation
South Carolina

*This famous Paleo-Indian site has
Pre-Clovis levels and may be the oldest
site currently under excavation in
either North or South America*

For the second time in three years, representatives from the NCC Archaeology Club have excavated at the much publicized Topper Site on the Savannah River in South Carolina. This May four archaeology students and club members spent a week in the remote backwoods of South Carolina in support of the ongoing excavations at one of the largest Paleo-Indian (13,200 ybp) sites in the Eastern US, under the aegis of the Southeastern Paleo-American Survey (SEPAS), which oversees the study of early man throughout the southeast.

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NCC Team Assists at the Topper Site in SC: Promoting Public Archaeology



Tom Pankosky, Neal Konstantin, Dr. Al Goodyear (USC)
Holly Cuzzone and Linda Fallon



Clovis Hand Axe uncovered by the NCC Team

parting of the ice sheets and travel via the Bering Land Bridge. This theory has now been disproven, particularly in light of the 14,300 ybp coprolites (excrement) containing human DNA recently found in an eastern Oregon cave.

Topper is led by Dr. Al Goodyear, a professor at USC, with close support from Tom Pertierra who manages the dig as Dr. Goodyear's second in command. The staff is made up of graduate students from around the country who are taking the opportunity to perform career-forming research at a site that may be the oldest formal archaeological site under excavation in either North or South America.

One unique aspect of the dig was the presence of the new SEPAS Mobile Laboratory, housed in a trailer, which allows data entry, microscopic viewing and photography to be done at the site, in real time, in an air-conditioned lab space. A second unit will be built and both will be made available to excavations in the southeast on the condition that they promote and encourage public archaeology.

Our September meeting features a presentation on Topper, as well as a talk on the Pre-Columbian Maya of Guatemala by Jim Charton. For more about SEPAS or volunteering at Topper in May of 2009, email sepas@sc.edu. - Neal Konstantin



Linda Fallon mapping artifacts in the Clovis units.

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NCC participants were Linda Fallon, Tom Pankosky, Neal Konstantin, and Holly Cuzzone, a former NCC student and recent graduate from Yale University in Archaeology.

A unique aspect of this University of South Carolina project is that unlike other digs of this stature which would typically limit work to graduate students or professional archaeologists, the Topper (SEPAS) project actively promotes public volunteerism, including for actual excavation. Avocationalists and amateurs, who log in thousands of hours, also help fund the annual six week program through donations of \$415 per person per week. This covers overhead costs as well as camping, and lunch and dinner every day. Those not trained in excavation techniques are put to work transcribing data or assisting with other tasks.

The Topper site is controversial in that evidence of human habitation there extends back into the Pleistocene, with the oldest C14 dates coming in at 50,000 ybp. Dates as old as 15,000 ybp have been confirmed, helping debunk the "Clovis First" settlement theory of the Americas, which had no human presence here prior to the



Holly Cuzzone mapping Clovis artifacts with the laser Super Station.



Long-time Maine volunteer, Joan Plummer entering data in "real time" in the air conditioned SEPAS mobile lab at the dig site.

Save the Date! Archaeological Society of Connecticut Meeting
On Saturday, October 18, the Archaeological Society of Connecticut will meet at the Fairfield Museum and History Center in Fairfield. The theme for the meeting is "Coastal Archaeology" and will feature a number of interesting speakers. Further information and a program will be available by late September.



Neal Konstantin in the "deep hole", the Pre-paleo Pleistocene terrace

Photo Credit:
Meg Gaillard/
Southeastern
Paleoamerican Survey

October 9 - Thursday 7:30 pm
Thieves of Baghdad – The Looting of
the Iraq National Museum
Col. Matthew Bogdanos

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University, a law degree and Master's degree in classical studies from Columbia University, and a Master's degree in military strategy from the Army War College. Following his release from active duty in the Marines, Col. Bogdanos was appointed a special assistant U.S. attorney and rose to senior homicide trial counsel in the New York County DA's Office.

Recalled to active duty after losing his apartment near the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, Bogdanos led a multi-agency task force in Afghanistan and received a Bronze Star, obtaining intelligence on 11 of the "Top 25" Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders. Appointed deputy director, he led the task force into Iraq in March 2003 to search for evidence of terrorist cells, UN Security Council Resolution violations, and terrorist financing. In April 2003, Colonel Bogdanos began the investigation into the looting of Baghdad's Iraq Museum, resulting in the recovery of over 6,000 antiquities in eight countries.

Exposing the link between the trafficking in stolen antiquities and terrorist financing, he has delivered speeches in more than 125 cities in a dozen countries throughout the world in venues ranging from universities and museums to law-enforcement agencies, [Interpol](#), and members of both houses of the [British Parliament](#). He urges a more active role for international organizations, private foundations, governments, and the art community in combating what he calls the global criminal enterprise that is pillaging the world's cultural heritage.

A Pre-Columbian Site in Costa Rica - By Joanna Velez

The boat ride from Golfito in the south Pacific region of Costa Rica is smooth as we are on our way to see a shell midden on one of the smaller islands that lies off the coast; the day is warm and sunny. Costa Rica's southern zone is an area of rugged beauty with vast expanses of virgin lowland rainforest and few cities or settlements. Lushly forested mountains tumble into the sea, streams run clear and clean, scarlet macaws squawk raucously in the treetops and dolphins frolic in the azure waters of the near east South Pacific. Golfito is a major sport fishing center and a popular gateway to a small community of nature lodges spread along its quiet waters, isolated bays, and lush rainforests of the Golfo Dulce or "Sweet Gulf". Golfito is set on the north side of the Golfo Dulce, at the foot of lush green mountains. Magnificent Frigate birds fly gracefully overhead in the puff-clouded sky at latitude 8 degrees. As we approach the shoreline aqua blue water gives way to a dense mangrove, tall coconut palms, harvest ready banana trees, and exotic tropical flowers. The sound of songbirds and parrots rise up from the shoreline as we draw closer, the small open boat with the outboard motor at idle glides up to the shell midden. Our friend and host, Captain Rick Rozen tells me that at high tide the site is completely under water.

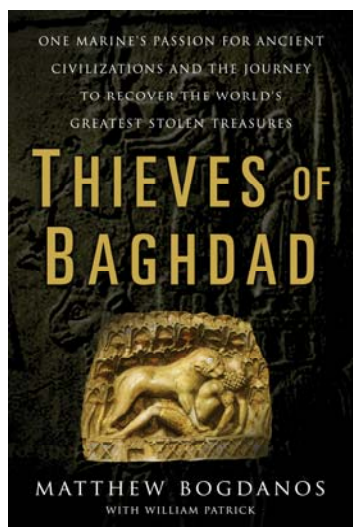
The small shells that make up the midden is of a local sea mollusk whose shell is off white. The size of the midden is approximately 40 feet across and 30 feet wide and the depth was undetermined. High above us the jungle looms, the vegetation thickens twenty meters inland. Capt. Rick ties off the anchor line and produces a machete from under the boat's wooden bench seat. We anchor in waist high water and wade through to the shore. The size of the midden becomes apparent; mangrove trees and other fauna that line the shore cover much of it.

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Colonel Bogdanos is the recipient of a 2005 National Humanities Medal from President George Bush for his work recovering Iraq's priceless treasures. Released back into the Reserves in October 2005, Colonel Bogdanos returned to the New York County District Attorney's Office and continues the hunt for Iraq's stolen antiquities. He has been published in legal, military, and classical journals and received the Hellenic Lawyers Association Public Service Award in 2004.

Colonel Bogdanos' book will be available for sale before the meeting and his talk will be followed by a book signing. All royalties earned from the sale of *Thieves of Baghdad* go directly to the Iraq National Museum.

This large cylindrical vessel made of alabaster displays cultic and daily life scenes. It was discovered in Warka (ancient Uruk) and dates to 3000 B.C. Stolen in April 2003 from the Iraqi National Museum, the vessel was recovered, in pieces, in June.



REPORT FROM THE FIELD: GALLOW'S HILL

The spring 2008 semester dig at the Gallows Hill site focused on examining the western edge of the depression which previous seasons had shown to have been the remains of an historic structure dating to the second half of the 18th century. It was hoped that some trace of the structure's foundation (if it indeed had one to begin with!) would be unearthed.

Despite the discovery of many rocks in the area where a wall would have been expected, these were found to constitute the usual weathered fragments of bedrock which lie a short distance below the surface of the site. After drawing and photographing these rocks, virtually nothing was found below them, unlike the central part of the structure, where historic ceramics and other artifacts were found under some rocks. At the area immediately east of this year's dig was the floor of the structure, it would appear that the edge of the structure was found, as none of this season's artifacts were found anywhere near the level of the floor. Based on the evidence at hand, it would appear that either the structure never had a stone foundation or that if it had, the stones may have been "robbed" for use in some other capacity.

In addition to a small amount of historic artifacts, including wrought nails, window glass and ceramics, a concentration of quartz debitage was found just outside the edge of the depression, as was a broken Wading River projectile point of the Late Archaic period Sylvan Lake complex, which dates to c. 1700-2500 B.C.

The fall semester will see a return to the site to continue to trace the edge of the structure to one of its corners. Club members are invited to participate in the fall dig, and to assist new students in the Introduction to Archaeology course, who will begin their weekend digs in late September. Call Ernie Wiegand at the Archaeology Office (857-7377) for further details.



*The Newsletter of the Norwalk Community College
Archaeology Club and
The Archaeology As An Avocation Program*

Norwalk Community College
188 Richards Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06854

Phone: 203-857-7377

Editorial Staff:

Ernie Wiegand - Faculty Advisor

Neal Konstantin Dawn Brown Bob Steele



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For a moment I am taken back in time. I am allowed glimpses as to what it must have looked like hundreds of years ago: lush tropical landscape, calm, serene and untouched by mankind. Howler monkeys call out high up in the canopy of the jungle. As we cut our way through the under brush the midden gives way to an eroded edge of the island. Thousands of red coarse ware potsherds are lying all over the ground like a giant jigsaw puzzle. These fragments are being washed out to sea with each turn of the tide as the water laps along the fragile earth. These red potsherds are the remains of a Pre-Columbian settlement that must have existed at one time on this small island.



The small mollusks were and are still a staple food source for the people who live in this area. The pre-Columbian Indians who made their home in this region of Central America never developed the large cities or advanced culture that existed farther north in what would become Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico. However, ancient artifacts indicating a strong sense of aesthetics have been unearthed from scattered excavations around the country. Beautiful gold and jade jewelry, intricately carved grinding stones, the large round stone balls that can be found throughout most of the jungle of Costa Rica and artistically painted terra-cotta objects point to a small but highly skilled population. The earliest record of human inhabitants in Costa Rica was circa 13,000 B.C.

As I walk along, the amount of pottery fragments is overwhelming; there are pieces with incised decorations and some have black slip painted designs on them. Then some thing catches my eye, a piece of chert honey in color. It is a scraper. The percussion marks are visible, this is a tool; its size is 1 and 3/4 inch in length and 1 inch across. The color of this scraper the same as the Chert I saw when I went up to Po`as Volcano, one of the three the active volcano's that can be found here in Costa Rica. In fact, during our stay in Golfito my husband and I awoke to our bed being tossed about by a small 4.7 Richter scaled earthquake. In his usual very calm, the devil may care way he went back to bed after I ran out of our waterfront room to the perceived safety of the concrete and steel main house.

The area around the shell midden is a site that needs to be excavated; so much is being washed out to sea. Our time here is short, the tide has started to turn and the water is starting to rise. We have to leave, but for a moment though, I was taken back in time to an ancient tropical landscape, to a place I never thought I would see. Thanks to my husband Andre for all he did to arrange and finance this adventure vacation, and Captain Rick Rozen for being a gracious host and friend. Costa Rica has many hidden unexplored archeological sites that need to be excavated and properly documented. Pothunters and the natural elements are slowly making much of these sites disappear forever.

Along with the disappearance of the ancient artifacts is the life ways of the native people who live, hunted and died along this ancient volcanic coastline.



Anthropology and Archaeology Courses this Fall at NCC

This Fall semester at NCC offers three classes, including a course in specific archaeological skills. Courses can be applied towards the "Archaeology as an Avocation" certificate program. They are described at the right, and registration is through August 28th, with classes starting September 3rd. Get information by calling the Records Office at 857-7035 or the Archaeology Office at 857-7377.

Introduction to Archaeology (ANT 121), will be held on **Mondays and Wednesdays** from **5:30-6:50 pm**. This course, taught by Ernie Wiegand, provides an introduction to prehistoric archaeology and Northeastern prehistory, and will include weekend "dig" sessions at a prehistoric Native American site dating to over 4,000 years ago. Recovered artifacts will be studied at class lab sessions, with students interpreting their finds in a written site report.

Basic Concepts in Geology (GLG 1213), will be taught by Ernie Wiegand on **Mondays and Wednesdays** from **9:00-11:50 AM**. The course offers an introduction to physical geology, and examines the composition of the earth, and the forces, both external (glaciers, rivers, oceans, wind and gravity) and internal (plate tectonics, volcanism, earthquakes), that shape our world.

Cultural Anthropology (ANT 105). This is an introduction to Cultural Anthropology. Two sections of the course are offered, both on **Mondays and Wednesdays**. Section 1 is from 10:00-11:20 AM and section 2 is from 1:00-2:20 PM. Taught by Mary Frances Carmell, the course illuminates social systems and patterns of behavior the world over. From tribal societies to enclave communities in our current times, under examination will be those beliefs, values, customs, rituals, laws and material culture - all those social structures that provide identity and that inform and explain a people's world view.