

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! -

Nov 13 - Thurs 7:30 pm -

**A Child Sacrifice from
 the Inca Heartland
 Cuzco Peru**

Dec 11 - Thurs 6:30 pm -

**Thera (Santorini)
 Eruption Date -
 New Data from Egypt**



View of Fira, Santorini's main town on the caldera rim

**November 13 - Thursday 7:30 pm
 Culinary Arts Dining Room - West Campus
 Investigating a Child Sacrifice from the
 Inca Heartland of Cuzco, Peru
 Valerie Andrushko,
 Southern Connecticut State University**

**December 11 - Thursday, Lecture - 8:00 pm
 Pot Luck Hors d'ouvres - 7:00 pm
 GenRe Forum - East Campus
 Thera Eruption Insights from Egypt
 Karen Foster—Yale University**

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Child sacrifice known as *capacocha*, was practiced during the Inca Empire (AD 1400 – 1532). During the *capacocha* ritual, beautiful children were chosen from throughout the empire and brought to the capital city of Cuzco, where they were dressed and adorned, treated to ceremonial rites—and then redistributed throughout the Inca realm for sacrifice at major shrines. Miniature objects buried with the children, as symbolic gifts from the Inca ruler, established a connection between the community supplying the sacrifice and the divine monarchy of the Inca. These rituals were performed in response to natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, droughts, and volcanic eruptions, and historic events in the life of the emperor, such as succession to the throne.

Since several *capacocha* discoveries have been found in very high-altitude contexts in recent years, many researchers have assumed that *capacochas* were only performed on Andean mountain peaks. However, detailed

Our annual Holiday meeting will feature a talk on the great mid-second millennium BC eruption of the Thera (modern day Santorini) volcano in the Aegean Sea that has been the subject of intense popular and scholarly interest for over a century.

The effects of the eruption have been linked with the destruction of the Minoan palace civilization of Crete, the legend of Atlantis and even the events described in the Biblical account of the Exodus. Scientists have studied the remains of the volcano, traced eruption products across the east Mediterranean, and sought evidence for a climatic impact in ice-cores and tree-rings. At Akrotiri, archaeologists have unearthed a major pre-historic town which was buried by the eruption, finding multi-storey houses decorated with wonderful frescoes, and full of

Thera Eruption—New Data from Egypt: Karen Foster



Thera caldera venting in 1950



Famous Thera frescoes



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ceramics and other finds linking this site with the contemporary civilizations of Crete, Greece, Anatolia, Cyprus, the Levant and Egypt

The eruption of Thera represents a special, clearly defined, moment in Aegean and east Mediterranean prehistory. If the eruption could be precisely dated, it would offer a linchpin for the study and synchronization of the history and cultures of the region in the mid-second millennium BC. Further, it would provide a key test for the historical chronology of ancient Egypt (as determined by two centuries of scholarship) and the derived archaeological chronologies currently employed in the Aegean and east Mediterranean. But the date of the Thera eruption is the one question which has remained stubbornly unresolved: the subject of intense controversy for a generation in both archaeological and scientific publications. Dates differ in current scholarship by over 100 years.

We are pleased to feature at our annual club holiday meeting, Dr Karen Foster (A.B. Mount Holyoke College; M.A., M.Phil. Ph.D. 1976, Yale University), who will guide us through issues surrounding the controversy and present recent evidence from Egypt that will shed further light on the date of the eruption. Dr Foster is a Lecturer in the Departments of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and History of Art at Yale University, where she teaches art and archaeology of the Near East, Aegean and Classical worlds, specializing in the art and archaeology of the Bronze Age Aegean, with particular interests in interconnections with Egypt and the ancient Near East.

Karen is the author of over thirty articles on various aspects of Bronze Age art and iconography,

including several studies of the wall painting programs from Thera. She has completed a trilogy of articles dealing with volcanic imagery in art and literature, beginning with the Thera eruption and concluding with the Villa of the Mysteries at Pompeii. A special interest in the chronology of the Thera eruption has resulted in several collaborative analyses of pumice from Egyptian graves. In addition, she has written over thirty book reviews and participates regularly in scholarly conferences, symposia and panel discussions here and abroad. Recently with Benja-



Excavation at Akrotiri on Santorini

min R. Foster and Patty Gerstenblith, she wrote *Iraq Beyond the Headlines: History, Archaeology, and War* (2005) and *Civilizations of Ancient Iraq* (2008) with Benjamin R. Foster

The talk will begin at 8:00 p.m., with our Holiday Potluck beginning at 7:00 p.m.



November 13 - Thursday 7:30 pm
Child Sacrifice in Inca Peru
Valerie Andrushko

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ethnohistoric accounts from the time of Spanish conquest indicate that children were also sacrificed at locations around Cuzco. During the 2004 excavations in the Cuzco-region site of Chokepukio, seven children were discovered buried together with an elaborate assemblage of luxury artifacts similar to those from recent *capacocha* archaeological finds. Our November speaker, Dr. Valerie Andrushko, will discuss the osteological, archaeological, and isotopic evidence that indicate a *capacocha* event occurred at Chokepukio, representing the only lower-elevation *capacocha* ever found in the Cuzco region.

For nine years, Dr. Andrushko has led an innovative research program on human burials from Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Inca Empire. By studying human bones and teeth for evidence of disease, malnutrition, violent conflict, and hard physical labor, she has documented how Inca imperial policies — such as labor taxes and forced migration — profoundly changed the lives of Cuzco inhabitants. This research, which involved over 850 burials from Inca and pre-Inca times, culminated in a 2007 dissertation, three peer-reviewed articles accepted for publication, several conference presentations and

lectures, and additional article manuscripts in preparation.

Dr. Valerie Andrushko is a bioarchaeologist who specializes in the study of ancient skeletal remains and their mortuary contexts. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara. After receiving her doctorate in June 2007, she joined the Southern Connecticut State U. faculty where she is an Assistant Professor in Anthropology. Along with her long-standing research program in Cuzco, Dr. Andrushko has excavated at sites in California, Belize, Israel, and the northern coast of Peru.



REPORT FROM THE FIELD:
GALLOW'S HILL,
NEW CANAAN NATURE CENTER

Despite the delay in opening the **Gallow's Hill** site for the fall semester (day 1 was a wash-out due to rain!), work began in early October and will continue through mid-November. Two new excavation units were opened and have yielded both historic and prehistoric artifacts. The historic items include several redware sherds and hand-wrought nails, while the prehistoric materials include a broken Wading River point, a biface and lithic debitage.

We are completing our main east-west section of the "depression", a circular area containing a small structure dating to the second half of the 18th c. In addition, three more units will be dug on the southern extension of the block excavation of this area in hopes of finding the still-elusive evidence of foundation walls. Upon completion, the main block will be backfilled so that the dig may proceed to other portions of the site next year.

In addition to Gallows Hill, Archaeology Club members Dawn Brown, Isabelle Bullen, Anna May Jersavage, and Jim Orser, along with Club Advisor Ernie Wiegand, worked with Connecticut State Archaeologist Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni at the **New Canaan Nature Center** this past summer. At the request of the NCNC, a series of shovel test pits was excavated to determine if there was any evidence of prehistoric Native American use of the Center's property, which had been farmed through the 18th to early 20th century before it was turned into a country estate. While only a small section of the property was inspected, a small prehistoric site was discovered. Recovered artifacts included two projectile points, a biface and lithic debitage. The points consist of a Wading River point and an untyped stemmed point probably contemporary with the Wading River point. These indicate that the site was probably occupied during the Late Archaic period, though such points have been found in Woodland sites elsewhere in Connecticut.

Joining the group were four high school students who were interning with Nick over several weeks. They worked side-by-side with our club members and made several exciting finds, including not only the prehistoric artifacts but the base of a mid-19th century wine bottle found in what appears to have been a small trash midden left from farming days.

While work has halted, it will resume next year when one of the Introduction to Archaeology classes will be held at the New Canaan Nature Center (see Spring Course offerings article on page 4).

Silent Souls Speak - Pine Island Cemetery: Holly Cuzzone

Pine Island Cemetery is approximately 2.8 acres of public land owned by the City of Norwalk in the central part of the city at 6 Crescent Street. The cemetery borders on the north and western sides the Lockwood Mathews Mansion (designated National Historic Landmark in 1971), and Matthews Park. The eastern side of the cemetery borders on Crescent Street and is enclosed by Interstate 95 on its southern side.

The term burying ground was used until 1733 to describe land transactions of adjacent property. In 1733, the land records show that the name changed to Pine Island Cemetery. Pine Island most likely received its name from a small island, called Pine Island, that was present on 19th century maps. This island no longer exists, but it extended from the west bank of the Norwalk River just south of the old burying ground. The cemetery may also have received its name from its location on Pine Island Road, the former name of Crescent Street.

Pine Island Cemetery has 300 years of recorded history. The first burial recorded from an extant headstone is Elizabeth Haynes Bartlett, the daughter of one of Norwalk's founding fathers, who died in 1723. The last burial was Frederick Sammis

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who died in 2000. Sammis came from a long line of prominent Norwalk citizens whose family owned their home on the property of what is now the Lockwood Mathew's Estates. It was his last request that he was to be buried in his family plot at Pine Island.

There are over 1800 burials at Pine Island, many of them unmarked. Presently the Pine Island cemetery is in a state of neglect and ruin which has only occurred over the past 50 years or so. Today there are hundreds of headstones that have been destroyed, broken, lost or covered. Photographs of the cemetery from the 1900s and later from the 1950s show the cemetery well cared for with headstones in place, decorative enclosures around family plots intact and plantings well manicured. Today, along with the scores of headstones that are broken, crushed, and pushed off their bases, the railings surrounding family plots are



This Spring 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 details are available through the Records Office at 857-7035 or the Archaeology Office at 857-7377.

broken or non-existent and plantings have been replaced by invasive plants. Two events that contributed to the deterioration of the cemetery were the construction of the Turnpike (I-95) in the 1950s and the Route 7 Connector in the 1980s cutting the cemetery off from public view. The cemetery lying on the hillside overlooking the Norwalk River is now surrounded by the highway and the view of the river has been blocked by the city transfer station.

Despite the present condition of the cemetery, Pine Island contains the largest collection of the three basic colonial headstone motifs in the city. There are approximately 100 colonial headstones that have been inventoried to date. More are being recovered by excavation as our inventory continues and identification of the stone carvers is underway.

Despite the strong family values of some of these families who continued to bury their dead at Pine Island, the cemetery fell out of fashion when the newer cemeteries opened and many early 20th century burials were immigrants. Regrettably, the Pine Island Cemetery became known as a potter's field, a burying place for paupers. During the 18th century, those buried at Pine Island were second, third, fourth and fifth generations of Norwalk's founding fathers. Names such as Benedict, Keeler, Comstock, Nash, Kellogg, Bouton, Gregory, Raymond, Richards, and others are represented here.

Historic cemeteries like Pine Island are an invaluable resource serving as a window into Norwalk's past. Material culture like mortuary art (gravestones), the inscriptions, along with historical documentation are meaningful objects recording the lives of the individuals interred there and serves to document Norwalk's cultural heritage. In particular, Pine Island has the city's largest collection of colonial headstones.



The early slate headstones from Boston and Newport show that Norwalk was well connected to the larger colonies in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The demise of this cemetery is due in part by its lack of public visibility. However this will change with the new developments north and south of the cemetery. It should be the mission of this city to restore and bring to life the importance of this historic cemetery and to make this information public. Pine Island can be and will be a destination where open space can be appreciated and our history retold, but only if we take measures to restore it to its former beauty.

Anthropology and Archaeology Courses this Spring at NCC

Introduction to Archaeology (ANT 121), will be offered as two sections, one will be held on **Mondays and Wednesdays** from **1:00-2:20 pm**. This course, taught by Ernie Wiegand, provides an introduction to prehistoric archaeology and Northeastern prehistory, and will include weekend "digs" at a prehistoric Native American site. Recovered artifacts will be studied at class lab sessions, with students interpreting their finds in a written site report.

The second section of **Introduction to Archaeology** will be offered at the **New Canaan Nature Center** on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from **3:15-4:35 p.m.** This is an innovation that NCC is starting in cooperation with the New Canaan Nature Center. It will include archaeological fieldwork at the NCNC, which was started this past summer and which has already resulted in the discovery of a Late Archaic camp site.

Physical Geology (GLG 121), taught by Ernie Wiegand **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). Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. Two sections of the course are offered, both on **Mondays and Wednesdays**. Section 1 is **10:00-11:20 AM** and section 2 is from **1:00-2:20 PM**. Taught by Mary Frances Carmell, the course, part of the Archaeology as an Avocation curriculum, illuminates social systems and patterns of behavior the world over. From tribal societies to modern enclave communities, studied will be beliefs, values, customs, rituals, and material culture - all those social structures that provide identity and that inform and explain a people's world view.