

Archaeological Field School Returns to Street: A Summer of Discoveries

By Joseph E. Diamond, Ph. D., Assistant Professor of Anthropology, SUNY New Paltz

The Archaeological Field School at the State University of New York at New Paltz (SUNY) concluded its eleventh season at Historic Huguenot Street in August. When the project began in 1998 the objective was to find evidence of the range and distribution of Native American pre-Contact cultures that once occupied the street; subsistence practices and changes in Native American foodways prior to European Contact; and to locate the houses that the Huguenots lived in prior to building the existing stone houses.

In 2005 and 2006 we found evidence of a palisade or stockade running parallel to Huguenot Street in the lawn between the Bevier-Elting and Deyo Houses. In 2008, to the east of the palisade, we opened up several squares that showed a pattern of postholes indicating a 17th century post-in-ground or earthfast house. Further evidence of this house was uncovered this summer – structural elements such as the hearth and probably an oven. Additional postholes were uncovered, as was an east/west oriented trench that might have held a sill and functioned as an internal partition wall.

Other artifacts that relate to the house include hand wrought nails and spikes, a hand wrought gutter spike (similar to those currently featured at the Bevier-Elting House), small red Hudson Valley bricks and numerous fragments, red earthenware hearth tiles and lead casing and glass from casement windows. Remnants of the oven include a semi-



Left: Iron dutch oven door, likely dating to the late 17th century, found intact during this summer's archaeological dig in the lawn between the Deyo and Bevier-Elting Houses. Right: A vivid blue and white pottery chard dating to the late 17th or early 18th century.

circular row of large stones set next to the chimney base, the iron header to support the opening in the oven, and most importantly, the oven door. The oven door, a substantial iron trapezoid with heavy attached iron handle, was found handle down in the oven. Why it was not scavenged with the rest of the building materials is a mystery.

Artifacts relating to 17th century Huguenot foodways and life found around this house include two-tined forks, delftware plates and bowls, majolica chargers or platters, Westerwald/



Raren mugs and tankards, Frechen stoneware (commonly called "tigerware" or "Bellarmine" jugs) and smoking pipes. A number of the pipes are marked with "EB" on the base, while others have "HG" or the same marking with a crown over it. Edward Bird was active in Amsterdam from c. 1630 to his death in 1665. In 1668 his widow married Hendrick Gerdes, another pipemaker, who continued to produce pipes until his death in 1685, with his wife continuing to produce until c. 1688.

Personal and clothing related items unearthed include pocket knives, beads, buttons, belt buckles and clothing fasteners. Arms-

related items include musket balls, lead sprue from making musket balls, a butt plate, a lock mechanism for a musket, numerous French and English gunflints, lead shot, bar lead, and a "gun worm" to clean a pistol barrel.

In the future, we hope to further define the size of the earthfast house, determine the size of the Huguenot palisade, and eventually find out how many houses the palisade encloses.



Executive Director Meets French Ambassador

Ambassador Pierre Vimont visited the Hudson Valley in July. The Hon. Vimont was a guest of Congressman Maurice Hinchey. The day was a celebration of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary War Route National Historic Trail. A reception was held at the Jonathan Hasbrouck House in Newburgh, which served as Washington's Headquarters in the closing days of the Revolution. Among the invited guests was HHS executive director Eric Roth, pictured with the Ambassador, and development director RonDeena Ross.



New Programs for School Groups Under Development

Over the summer, Shari Osborn, Education and Programs Coordinator, and Susan Stessin-Cohn, Archives Specialist, have been working together to develop new programs for visiting school groups. The objective of their project is to develop multiple offerings that touch on different aspects of Huguenot and local history and that will allow Historic Huguenot Street to attract school groups of varying ages.

The goal is to develop four new curriculums: Early America, Slavery, the Civil War and Immigration. Each of these topics is a significant component of required history curriculum for elementary and junior high school students in New York State.

In developing these curriculums, Osborn and Stessin-Cohn are retaining some of what has worked well for HHS in the past – hands-on activities that allow children to touch and feel reproduction "artifacts" as a way of learning more about individuals in the past – with new features such as first-person accounts and living history.

The Early America curriculum was the first to be developed. In doing this, Osborn and Stessin-Cohn drew heavily on the life of Roeliff Elting, a shopkeeper in New Paltz who was jailed



during the American Revolution. The archives at Historic Huguenot Street contain several documents that relate to Roeliff's life, including letters he wrote while jailed. His story highlights several key issues in early America – the Dutch culture of the area; selling property as the Beviers sold their home to the Eltings; involvement with the British during this time; and the use of different currencies (Roeliff's problems started when he refused to accept Continental currency in

his shop – a move that might have simply been pragmatic but which was interpreted as being loyal to the British crown). The Bevier-Elting House, the Jean Hasbrouck House and, after its reinterpretation, the Abraham Hasbrouck House, will each serve as backdrops in which to tell this story and educate students about early America in the Hudson Valley.

Early America will be launched this fall and the remaining three curriculums will be ready for Spring 2010. School groups may visit anytime between September and June. If you are a teacher and are interested in learning more, please contact Shari Osborn at (845) 255-1660 or shari@huguenotstreet.org.

Family Associations Hosting Historic 2010 Gathering

By Grace Elting Okesson, Gathering Chair

On the weekend of August 13-15, 2010 there will be a gathering of descendants of the founders of the New Paltz Patent and their families and friends that you will not want to miss!

Hosted by the Family Associations Collaboration Committee (FACC), the event will include annual meetings of some of the Family Associations as well as a multitude of special events focused around a central theme of "Family" with the Revolutionary War Era as the featured historical period.

There are ample opportunities for volunteers to become involved in the planning and production of this historic event. Please contact me with your suggestions, or to volunteer for one of the committees.

JoAnn Dourdis (Deyo Family Association); Gar Crispell (Crispell Family Association) and Family Associations Collaboration Committee Chair Mary Etta Schneider are serving

with me on the planning committee. Several others have agreed to chair sub-committees. We need help!

A complete list of activities, registration information and locally-available places to stay will be available before the end of 2009 in this HHS newsletter, in your family association newsletters and websites, in email messages, on a special blog, and by personal email if you send your address to me at: gecastle@cluesonline.com.

Please mark your calendar—and share the information with your relatives who may not yet be members of the HHS or a family association! Let's make this the most exciting event that has ever occurred on Historic Huguenot Street! If you've been to the Street you know how exciting this "Gathering" can be. If you haven't made it yet, THIS is the weekend just for you!

View from the Street

Mary Etta Schneider, President
Eric Roth, Executive Director

The mission of Historic Huguenot Street is to collect, preserve and share with the public an inspiring story of an American community as it evolved from the 17th century to the present day.

Mission: Public Outreach

In 2009 we sought to fulfill our mission by reaching out to the local community to develop new audiences and support. We have been successful – visitation is up 43% over last year, shop income is up 72%, and program income is up 20%. Our new FaceBook page has raised 460 fans in one month.

As a result, other great opportunities have materialized. We will host the Celebration of the Arts festival in October. We have teamed up the SUNY Dorsky Museum for "Six Sensational Evenings of Art," and HHS will be the honoree at the SUNY New Paltz Gala in November.

We also extended our reach internationally by hosting the Consul General of Belgium and by meeting the French Ambassador. HHS will also be featured in a new travel guide published by the Consul General of the Netherlands.

Mission: Preservation

Preservation is a constant and unending priority for us, yet the needs of the historic homes pay no heed to the ups and downs of the economy. The restoration team is busy investigating water damage at the Deyo House *port cochere*, repointing masonry across the site, and performing countless other tasks necessary for the upkeep of this National Historic Landmark District.

In August, restoration of the DuBois Fort roof and chimneys was completed. The standing seam roof will last 100 years, so this a great step forward for the future of the building. However, expected grant funding for this \$100,000 project did not materialize, resulting in a deep and unfortunate hit to our budget.

Finding the Balance

While we are pleased with our accomplishments, we remain deeply concerned about the impact of the recession on grant funding and our investments. In the spring we reduced spending and slowed down our work plan, but chose to maintain the momentum of our outreach programs. This has been a delicate balance to maintain, but we feel that it is the right course in these difficult times.

We are constantly reminded that it is only through the dedication and generosity of our loyal supporters that we are able to continue to preserve and share the wonders of this historic site.

With continued appreciation and thanks,

Mary Etta Schneider