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Vol. I, No. 1

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NEWS LETTER

of the

SUSSEX ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



April 1948 News Letter of Sussex Archaeological Association  
Vol. I, No. 1.

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What do you want to call your News Letters? Please submit names for this publication and a committee will be appointed to select an appropriate name. Your suggestion may be the title this publication will carry.

### History of our Association

In this, our first news letter, we feel it necessary to review the young life of such a growing "baby" as the Sussex Archaeological Association is proving to be. Born on the evening of January 7, 1948, with an initial membership of 15, it has developed to the present membership of 42. The first meeting was held at the Sequoia Tea Room, Lewes, Del., following an invitation sent out by Mr. Geiger Omwake, Supt. of the Lewes Special School District. The list of those answering this call was as follows:

Kenneth D. Givan  
 Mrs. Kenneth D. Givan  
 Anthony Higgins  
 Mrs. Robert Maedler  
 Miss Catharine C. Mauli  
 James A. Moore  
 Mrs. James A. Moore  
 H. Geiger Omwake  
 Mrs. H. Geiger Omwake  
 H. Geiger Omwake, Jr.  
 Harold W. T. Purnell  
 Charles C. Robertson  
 Raymond E. Steelman  
 W. Vernon Steen, Jr.  
 Roger E. Vandegrift

At this meeting the following officers were elected: President, K. D. Givan; Vice-Pres., James Moore; Sec. & Treasurer, Catharine Mauli.  
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A By-Laws Committee consisting of Mr. Omwake and Mr. Purnell was appointed. The present name of our Association was selected after an interesting discussion of various names. After the meeting was adjourned, an exhibit of restored pots, potsherds, and other interesting materials taken from the Townsend Site was shown.

At the next meeting, January 28, 1948, at the Sequoia, the Constitution and by-laws were submitted by the Committee and adopted. The dues were set at \$2.00 per year. Following this meeting, a bead, pendant, and bone tools excavated on the Townsend Site were shown.

On February 28, the Association held its third meeting at the Sequoia. At that time the Executive Committee was elected: Harold W. T. Purnell, Roger Vandegrift, and H. Geiger Omwake. The Secretary was requested to obtain copies of the "Soil Survey of Sussex County" and "An Economic Study of Land Utilization in Sussex County." A committee consisting of H. Purnell, G. Omwake, and K. Givan was appointed to contact Mr. Julian E. Townsend of Georgetown, Del., owner of the land on which the Townsend site is located, to see if he would omit the Site from tillage this year to permit the Association to carry on extensive excavation operations during the Spring, Summer, and Fall. Following the business meeting all present gathered around a long table and Mr. Harold Purnell displayed and passed around for inspection choice pieces from his fine collection of Sussex County Indian material. He also brought along some fine examples of Indian apparel with elaborate bead work. An informative as well as enjoyable.  
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able evening was spent, thanks to Mr. Purnell.

On Sunday, March 14th, at 1 P.M., a sizeable group of members of the Association and visitors visited the Townsend Site, most of them taking part in the dig.

The fourth meeting was held on March 31, 1948, at the Sequoia. After the business meeting, one of our members, Mr. Orville H. Peets of Millsboro, R. D., well known Delaware portrait artist, gave a talk on Indian Arrows and their construction. Mr. Peets exhibited examples of the arrows he has made and discussed how they were made. (We had hoped to include his paper on the above subject in this issue, but Mr. Peets requested permission to edit his paper before we include it in our News Letter. We promise to have it for the next issue.

Well, here we stand - four meetings under our belt, and ready to grow!

#### TOWNSEND SITE

The Townsend Site is located in Sussex County south west of Lewes along a branch of the headwaters of the old Lewes Creek, now a part of the Lewes and Rehoboth Canal. It is a part of the lands owned by Mr. Julian Townsend of Georgetown and is adjacent to the "Bookhammer Farm" located along Gills Neck Road.

This Site was first discovered, to our knowledge, by Raymond Steelman and Charles Robertson in April, 1946, while they were out "site hunting" in a jeep. These two smart gentlemen opened a pit and partly excavated it, retaining the potsherds before filling it in. They contacted Mr. K. D. Givan and showed him the quantity and size of the sherds. Mr. Givan asked them not to dig any more  
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until they could receive instruction in the proper methods of archaeological excavations.

In the Fall of 1947, Mr. Geiger Omwake, Mr. H. Geiger Omwake, Jr., Mr. K. D. Givan, and Mr. Archibald Crozier of Kennett Square were out looking for sites, and, following the suggestion of Mr. Crozier, they went to the site where "the boys" found the large pieces of pottery. At that time Pit #1 was opened and excavated. Also a portion of the site was probed with the result that several other pits were located. Later, in starting one of them, several bodies were uncovered by the Omwakes. These skeletons were only about six inches below the surface and had been disturbed by plowing. The excavation of this pit was halted and assistance was requested from Dr. Carlson, President of the University of Delaware. Dr. Carlson stated that the University had no one qualified to assist in archaeological excavations. Following this contact, assistance was requested from Dr. Stewart of the United States National Museum. Dr. Stewart was unable to come to the site at that time and advised that the dig continue, with the request that the skeletal material be forwarded for study.

Mr. Julian Townsend, owner of the land, was contacted relative to permitting the members of the Sussex Archaeological Association to excavate the pits. He granted us permission to excavate the site under the direction of Mr. Stewart. We appreciate the cooperation Mr. Townsend is giving in this effort.

#### MEETING NOTICE

Our next meeting will be held in Georgetown at the home of Mr. H. W. T. Purnell. This is a very important meeting. Will you P L E A S E plan to attend.  
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## Meeting Notice (Continued)

It will be held on Wednesday, May 5th at 8 o'clock.

At this meeting final plans will be made for the visit of Dr. Dale Stewart, Curator of Physical Anthropology, United States National Museum. We need a full attendance. Don't forget. Place: Residence of Mr. Harold W. T. Purnell, 212 East Market Street, Georgetown, Delaware. Date: Wednesday, May 5, 1948. Time: 8 P.M. (We need you)

### Dr. T. Dale Stewart

On March 31, Mr. K. D. Givan visited Dr. T. Dale Stewart, Curator of the Division of Physical Anthropology, United States National Museum, Washington, D. C., to show him a cross section of the material found at the Townsend Site. Dr. Stewart was very much interested, stating that the samples of material shown "bear witness to the richness of the site". He stated also that it was quite unusual here in the East to find such large portions of pots. When asked if he would assist our Association in the proper planning for the completion of the archaeological investigation of the Townsend Site, he stated he would be glad to do what he could, though the time he could devote to this project was limited.

On April 15th, Mr. Geiger Omwake and Mr. James Moore visited Dr. Stewart, taking with them considerable skeletal material. Dr. Stewart has advised that he has cleaned and practically completed the restoration of the material Omwake and Moore took him, and it is sufficiently well preserved to enable him to make a worth while study of it.

The following program has been worked out with Dr. Stewart that should bring to our young  
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Association not only the prestige of having as our guest one of the world's great authorities on Physical Anthropology, but should take us out of the "puttering" stage and give us a scientific approach to the almost untapped field of archaeology in Sussex County.

The Program is as follows:

Friday, May 14th.

8 o'clock - Dr. Stewart will give an illustrated lecture in the Auditorium of the Lewes High School. His subject will be "A Study of Local History by Archaeological Methods."

Saturday, May 15th.

8 o'clock - Dr. Stewart will meet with the members of the Association to discuss the technical methods that should be followed in archaeological investigation. Dr. Stewart will bring with him from the United States National Museum examples of decorated shell, worked turtle shell, shell beads, and samples of other articles that may be found in our excavations in Sussex County. The meeting will be held at the Henlopen Grange Hall. (This Hall is the 3rd building on the right after leaving Wescoat's Corner going toward Lewes. It is near the Sequoia Tea Room on the opposite side of the road.)

Sunday, May 16th.

Dr. Stewart will visit the Townsend Site with members of the Association to assist the group in actual excavation operations.

The final details will be worked out at the May 5th meeting in Georgetown. Let's all help to make this a success.



Those of you who were unable to attend the "Sussex Archaeological Association Evening" on April 8, certainly missed a treat. The Museum, not ordinarily opened evenings, was opened to the members of the Sussex Archaeological Association through the courtesy of our Secretary and Treasurer, Miss Catharine C. Maull. Miss Maull is Curator of the Museum.

The Museum has been completely redecorated and with the exception of the Indian Artifacts, the exhibits have been rearranged by Mr. Leon deValinger, State Archivist, and Miss Maull. May we suggest that you and your friends plan to visit the Museum. It is open from 12 noon until 4 p.m. daily including Sunday. The Museum is closed all day Mondays.

#### HARRINGTON FAIR

We are proud to announce that the Association has been allotted a space at the Harrington Fair to exhibit Indian Artifacts. Details have not been worked out yet as to what will be exhibited. A committee will be appointed at the May 5th meeting to plan the exhibit. Please bring to this meeting a list of artifacts you have that will be available for showing. Let us make our first exhibit something we can be proud of. The exhibit will be opened from 9 o'clock a.m. to 5 o'clock p.m. We will want several members on hand at the exhibit throughout the entire Fair Week. Please plan to help your committee.

Many thanks to Mr. Harold Lang of Wilmington! Why? Well, friend Harold, after seeing some of us "digging" and sympathizing with those of us who sit on the edge of the pit rather than squat, got his brain cells working and came up with a cushion. Taking some large pieces of heavy carpet, he folded them, nap side in, and sewed them around the edges. Presto! a Cushion! Many thanks from those of us who were fortunate enough to receive a most valuable addition to our archaeological excavation equipment.



MEMBERSHIP LIST - 1948

1.	Benjamin S. Alberson, Jr.	Third St.	Lewes; Del.
2.	Alton Brittingham	Quakertown	Lewes; Del.
3.	Adele T. Chambers	Kings Highway	Lewes; Del.
4.	Mrs. Virginia Cullen		Rehoboth, Del.
5.	Kenneth D. Givan	Quakertown	Lewes; Del.
6.	Mrs. Kenneth D. Givan	Quakertown	Lewes; Del.
7.	Anthony Higgins	44 Park Avenue	Rehoboth, Del.
8.	Henry Hutchinson		Bethel, Del.
9.	William S. Ingram, Sr.	Kings Highway	Lewes; Del.
10.	William S. Ingram, Jr.	Kings Highway	Lewes; Del.
11.	Mrs. William S. Ingram	Kings Highway	Lewes; Del.
12.	Ralph Karl	Market St.	Lewes; Del.
13.	Mrs. Ralph Karl	Market St.	Lewes; Del.
14.	Irving Kehs	Savannah Road	Lewes; Del.
15.	Philip H. Kugelman	13 - 4th St.	Rehoboth, Del.
16.	Harold V. Lang	814 N. Adams St.	Wilmington, Del.
17.	Mrs. Harold V. Lang	814 N. Adams St.	Wilmington, Del.
18.	Mrs. Robert Maedler	Pilot Town Rd.	Lewes; Del.
19.	Catharine C. Maull	Shipcarpenter St.	Lewes; Del.
20.	Ernest Megee		Rehoboth, Del.
21.	James A. Moore	311 Market St.	Lewes; Del.
22.	Mrs. James A. Moore	311 Market St.	Lewes; Del.
23.	H. Geiger Omwake, Sr.	Savannah Rd.	Lewes; Del.
24.	H. Geiger Omwake, Jr.	Savannah Rd.	Lewes; Del.
25.	Mrs. H. Geiger Omwake	Savannah Rd.	Lewes; Del.
26.	James Parsons	14 Elizabeth St.	Delmar, Del.
27.	Orville H. Peets	R.F.D.	Millsboro, Del.
28.	Harold W. T. Purnell		Georgetown, Del.
29.	Lewis M. Purnell		Georgetown, Del.
30.	Charles Robertson	Madison Avenue	Lewes; Del.
31.	Warren Schneller	Sequoia Tearoom	Lewes; Del.
32.	William Sloan	Post Office Bldg.	Georgetown, Del.
33.	H. D. Smith	113 Norfolk St.	Rehoboth, Del.
34.	Edward A. Steelman		Lewes; Del.
35.	Raymond E. Steelman		Lewes; Del.
36.	W. Vernon Steen, Jr.		Dagsboro; Del.
37.	Mrs. W. Vernon Steen		Dagsboro, Del.
38.	Mrs. Gladys Toms	Pilot Town Rd.	Lewes; Del.
39.	Gerald A. Timmons		Dagsboro, Del.
40.	William R. Tyson	Box 274	Seaford, Del.
41.	Roger E. Vandegrift		Millville, Del.
42.	Marjorie F. Virden	Pilot Town Rd.	Lewes; Del.