

4-26-2012

UNH Students Discover 'Lost UNH Campus' Public Invited to Community Archaeology Day Saturday, April 28

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Recommended Citation

Wright, Lori, "UNH Students Discover 'Lost UNH Campus' Public Invited to Community Archaeology Day Saturday, April 28" (2012). *UNH Today*. 3918.
<https://scholars.unh.edu/news/3918>

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Media Relations

UNH Students Discover 'Lost UNH Campus'

Public Invited To Community Archaeology Day Saturday, April 28

April 26, 2012



DURHAM, N.H. – To most passersby, the small, grassy lot catty-corner from the University of New Hampshire's Stoke Hall looks like nothing special, but UNH students in Anthropology 444 know that it holds clues to UNH's past – and they've been working to uncover them this spring by conducting an archeological dig at the now-vacant site that once was home to the late Charles Holmes Pettee, a longtime UNH professor and dean.

The students will share what they've learned this Saturday, April 28, 2012, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., when the public is invited to visit the dig across from the intersection of Garrison Avenue and Brook Way. Children are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult.

UNH students in Anthropology 444, "The Lost Campus: The Archeology of UNH," conduct an archeological dig at the now-vacant site that once was home to the late Charles Holmes Pettee, a longtime UNH professor and dean.
Credit: Mike Ross/UNH Photographic Services

Students enrolled in course "The Lost Campus: The Archeology of UNH," taught by Meghan Howey, an assistant professor of anthropology, have been working on the dig during the spring semester. The course marks the first time anyone has conducted an excavation on the UNH campus and gives the students – most of

whom have no experience in the field – a taste of what it's like to be an archeologist.

"We have found a lot of materials from the house construction itself – bricks, mortar, nails, and siding. We can see different layers of paint on the siding as well so you get a sense of the life history of the house," Howey says. "Also the variation in the nails from historic square head nails to more recent round nails shows the house was repaired, again giving a sense of the life history of the house."

Students also found a variety of historic glassware, including bottle pieces with maker's marks on them and pearlware ceramics.

The fieldwork is teaching the students about campus life during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when most faculty members – including Pettee – lived on campus. A professor, dean, and three-time interim president, the Manchester native served the college from 1876 until his death in 1938. His home, which later became the UNH Department of Housing, was demolished in 2007.

Howey noted there are other locations of interest on campus, including the site of the barracks built in 1918 when UNH was turned into a training camp for WWI, which later became East and West Hall dorms. Students have found the foundation from the barracks, which is located next to the MUB.

Honors student and course teaching assistant Jillian Price has earned a Hamel Center SURF award to excavate the site this summer and to expand archival research on the transformation of UNH into a training camp during WWI.

"As soon as buildings are gone, people seem to forget them," says Price, a junior anthropology and history major. "Digging gives you an idea of how students, faculty and staff have shaped their surroundings."

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.


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UNH students in Anthropology 444, "The Lost Campus: The Archeology of UNH," conduct an archeological dig at the now-vacant site that once was home to the late Charles Holmes Pettee, a longtime UNH professor and dean.

Credit: Mike Ross/UNH Photographic Services

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/dig2.jpg>

UNH students in Anthropology 444, "The Lost Campus: The Archeology of UNH," sift through fragments found at an archeological dig at the now-vacant site that once was home to the late Charles Holmes Pettee, a longtime UNH professor and dean.

Credit: Mike Ross/UNH Photographic Services

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/charleshpettee.jpg>

Charles Holmes Pettee, longtime UNH professor and dean.

Credit: UNH

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