"... Only the archaeologists are telling the story of my people. Both archaeologists and Native Americans working together is how we get the whole picture.'

Edith Thomas, a member of the dig team and the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona



Students, tribe uncover past



A circa 1760-1790 key found on the **Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation reserva-**

Archaeologists dig on Eastern Pequot reservation land

> By BRIAN WALLHEIMER Norwich Bulletin

NORTH STONINGTON For more than 300 years, a few piles of rock have sat in a valley on the Eastern Pequot Tribe's reservation without getting much attention.

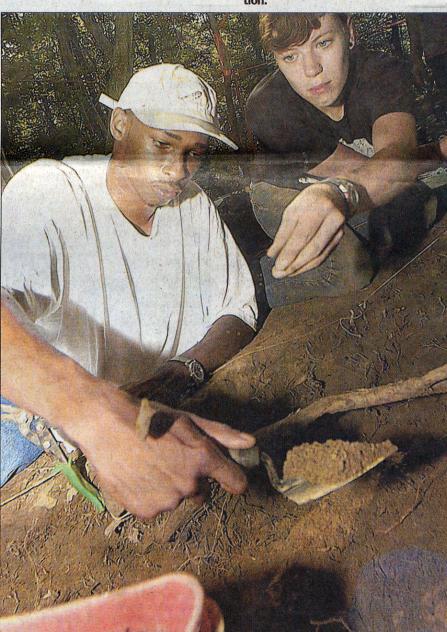
But for the last five weeks, students from the University of Massachusetts Boston, along with tribal members, have dug through and around those rocks to chart the tribal history that once stood all around them

"We had no idea the complexity of this site," said lead anthropologist Stephen Silliman, an assistant professor at UMass Boston. "A lot of things were going on here."

The dig is of historical significance to the tribe, which uses artifacts found to enhance the oral teachings to tribal youth.

"It makes it a more holistic education," Tribal Councilor and Historic Preservation Adviser Katherine Sebastian Dring said.

It's the second year the dozen students and Silliman have been at the site and the fifth year they've been excavating on the reservation. In addition to the artifacts that have been excavated, a somewhat unique friendship has formed.



Photos by John Shishmanian/Norwich Bulletin

Ralph Sebastian, 21, of Ledyard, an Eastern Pequot, and Kristina Larkin, 25, a UMass Boston anthropology student, work an archaeological dig Wednesday on the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation reservation.

See PEQUOT, A2

Pequot: Archaeologists, Eastern Pequots work to preserve tribe's culture, history

ecrated important Indian sites non-American Indians have desogists dig on their lands. She said ers, do not let outside anthropol-She said her tribe, and many ounty in Arizona, is on the dig team the Gila River Indian Communithroughout the years. there is a deep distrust because Edith Thomas, a member of

said. "But doing and saying are cans to work together," Thomas chaeologists and Native Ameri "There is a movement for ar

zona to spur her trk into open ern Pequot dig sit positive experience at the East ng up to the idea. Thomas hopes she can take a ick to Ari

of my people," Thomas said "Both archaeologists and Native chaeologists are telling the story how we get the whole picture. Americans working together is "In my community, only the ar

Level of distrust

at Fort Shantok about eight years did work for the Mohegan Tribe cal groups and tribes. His group of distrust between archaeologi Guilford, said he also sees a leve chaeology Consulting Services in Greg Walwer, director of Ar



or smudge, Wednesday before entering an archaeological dig the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation, performs a spiritual blessing Roy Two Hawks Cook, acting historic preservation officer for

on dig sites. He said tribes seem is the archaeological perspective find it too scientific and not re-Walwer said the main problem

underlying bad feelings these his idea that bones are just bones spective of the cultures. nem is great," Walwer said. "The nd whatever you can learn from Western culture, there's

days come from archaeologists

edge making interpretations who don't have spiritual knowl-

be with the dig team at all times hough they required an Indian tionship with the Mohegans, Walwer said he had a good re-

for Roy Two Hawks Cook, acting ologists has been an eye-opener ustoric preservation officer for The experience with archae-

Found 8/2/06, Long So- Queen Size Bedroom ciety Rd & Brickyard Set, 6 mths old, head-Rd. Mini Schnauzer gray board, dresser, mirror,

the Eastern Pequots.

archaeology," Cook said. "(Silli-They see what we're looking for hrough our ancestors." man) has our interest at heart a connection to our past "It changed my perspective or

'Connection to the land'

grass, sage and tobacco, to ceives a ceremonial smudge. cleanse their souls. made from the smoke of sweet Anyone who enters the site re

cover their roots. old about the traditions of the ribe and the importance of the igs to members seeking to un-Cook said all the workers are

specifically so she could dig at the ner class at UMass Boston State University, is taking a sumastern Pequot site. Erin Alden, 22, of Missouri

Alden said. "It would be a real dif "It's a really good feeling,"

> nection to the land." ng for a group that had no con erent experience if I were work

eral interesting artifacts. The work has uncovered sev

once a house with a cellar, a possi ble root cellar and a trash pit from 760 to 1790 there. Silliman believes there was

everyday lives of Indians. ropean colonists influenced were snarpening it to use a loo purposely chipped, as if someone piece of glass that has its edges le said it's an example of h One of his favorite finds is

ments we're interested in," Silli "It's these kinds of adjust

most fond of arrowheads and Sebastian Dring said she is

nuseum to see artifacts norma "I have to look in a case at

Because of the digs, the East

erns now have an expanding colection of artifacts

grown up near the dig site and anne Sebastian, 16, said she has the college students said the lescould be found there. their culture are invaluable. Shisons they have learned about lever suspected such treasures Youth members working with

you about how they lived." your ancestors," she said. "It tells "It really gets you in touch with

Ralph Sebastian, 21, said the

dig helps "paint a picture" for him his ancestors' lives. "I learn more about what they

eat, what they used to cook their

passing on what he learns to his uldren some day. He said he looks forward to

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