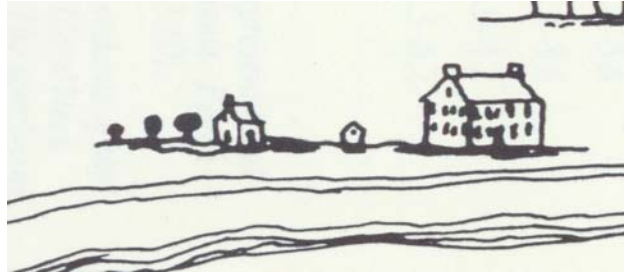


Joseph Lloyd Manor

The Archaeology of Community



On July 10, 2008 a special partnership was cemented between ERASE Racism and the Center for Public Archaeology (CfPA) at Hofstra University. “Slave Life on Long Island” at the Joseph Lloyd Manor House linked a historic, under-documented aspect of the story of Long Island with the place our communities are today and current racial structures.

A tour of the house, family records and bits and pieces of artifacts offered clues to how ‘human property’ kept life going on Lloyd Neck. Countless enslaved Africans, including poet Jupiter Hammon, were bought and sold, lived and worked the 3,000 acres of land that is part of the larger community of Huntington. Brown University student, Olivia Ildefonso commented, “this event not only challenged my preconception of racism’s roots on Long Island, but it also made me feel empowered to talk to other Long Islanders who are working to challenge all forms of racial inequity.

The event, part of ERASE Racism’s Race and Racism Dialogues, brought together approximately 50 members of the Partnership for Racial Equity to enjoy dinner, tour the house and connect with each other in a ‘Talking Circle’ to share an understanding about race and the power of race to shape the landscape, physical structures and how people live. Marguerite Smith, Esq., a member of the Shinnecock Indian Nation and an ERASE Racism Partner led the Talking Circle, a Native American tradition. These dialogues have the power to inspire partners from different occupations and lifestyles to act to change the policies that support racist institutions.

Partners also participated in separate field “digs” to get hands-on experience and apply the techniques of archaeological excavation to interpret material objects. Archaeologist Jenna Coplin, understood and brought to life, the connection between the past and how it informs the work we do today. Participants appreciated the relevance of history in tearing down the current manifestations of structural racism in our society. As the Associate Director of S.T.R.O.N.G. Youth stated, “my perception was affected during the Talking Circle. I noticed how all were affected by racism and slavery regardless of race or economic background. It came to me that in order for us to continue to make progress and ensure the success of our youth, it is our responsibility to make sure we educate and help them understand the struggles of their ancestors.”

ERASE Racism seeks new and exciting ways and to engage members of the Partnership for Racial Equity in dialogue and community change efforts together. We believe that education is key to this effort. We invite Partners to suggest topics for future Race and Racism Dialogues.