



ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

“I have not yet begun to search!”

The annual Workshop in Archeology will be held March 10 in Crownsville. The Maryland Historical Trust has put together a program consisting of 10 sessions on topics of interest to both terrestrial and underwater archeologists. The first session is being offered by itself at 9:45, while the other nine sessions are competing for your interest in three time periods.

The opening session revolves around one of the most famous naval battles in American history, when John Paul Jones' Bon Homme Richard fought the H.M.S. Serapis off the coast of England. Jones' ship won, but was so badly damaged that it sank two days later.

The question down through the years became: Where did it sink? Using a variety of aids, a search team has tried to locate the wreck. Bob Neyland, the head of the Underwater Archeology Branch of the Naval Historical Center, will tell what has been found.

The second time block features the first of a two-part CAT session offering a prehistoric overview of Maryland archeology. Charlie Hall will give the instruction. The second part will be held in the next time block, with Bob Wall making the presentation. CAT candidates have preference in seating for these sessions.

Another second-session program will describe the work being done by the Archeological Conservancy in purchasing and preserving sites. The program will be given by Andy Stout, the Conservancy's Eastern Regional director, and he will include sites he has been instrumental in acquiring, including several in Maryland.

The third program at this time period is especially for children. Susan Langley, the state's underwater archeologist, will depart from both Maryland and underwater matters to explain the Lakota winter count and give children a chance to create their own calendars.

The third time block, after lunch, offers two programs in addition to the second half of the CAT session. In one, Lisa Kraus, of Archaeology in Annapolis, will talk about the picture that is emerging on the relationship between slaves and slave holders. Her presentation will focus on the latest work done at Wye House and Frederick Douglass by the field school associated with the University of Maryland, College Park.

Also at 1:30, Mark Little, of the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society will explain the best ways to photograph artifacts. He will not only give tips on doing this, but will offer hands-on advice for people who bring their own cameras.

The final group of talks begins at 2:30. American University's Joe Dent will compare two Late Woodland sites where he led recent ASM field schools. Kate Dinnel, of Jefferson Patterson Park, will explain how JefPat is using a traveling teaching trunk for instructing a widespread audience about Maryland Indians. Steve Bilicki, who recently left the Trust, will be back to talk about some new maritime-related discoveries in Wicomico County. Registration begins at 9, the sessions at 9:45. Admission is \$10 for ASM members, \$15 for others. Lunch will be available in the cafeteria. The times and complete program are detailed in an insert with this newsletter.

Upcoming events

March 10: Annual archeology workshop. Crownsville.

March 15-18: MAAC meeting, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

April 21: Spring symposium. Crownsville.

October 13: Annual meeting of ASM. Millersville.

October 31-November 3: SEAC conference, Knoxville, Tennessee.

November 8-11: ESAF conference, Burlington, Vermont.

Volunteer opportunities

The following volunteer opportunities are open to CAT program participants and other ASM members:

Montgomery County lab, field work Wednesdays, 9:30 to 2:30. Call 301-840-5848 or contact james.sorensen@mncppc-mc.org or heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org. CAT opportunity.

ASM field session collection: Volunteers are needed to work on up-grading collections associated with previous field sessions. Currently, the collection from the Rosenstock Site, a key Late Woodland Montgomery Complex area, is being upgraded. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson lakerson1@verizon.net or Charlie Hall hall@mdp.state.md.us.

The Lost Towns Project of Anne Arundel County. 410-222-7441.

Mount Calvert. Lab work and field work. 301-627-1286.

Jefferson Patterson Park invites volunteers to take part in its various activities, including archeology, historical research and artifact conservation. This year's public archeology program runs until July 8, with digging on Fridays and Saturdays and lab work Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Contact Ed Chaney at 410-586-8554 or echaney@mdp.state.md.us

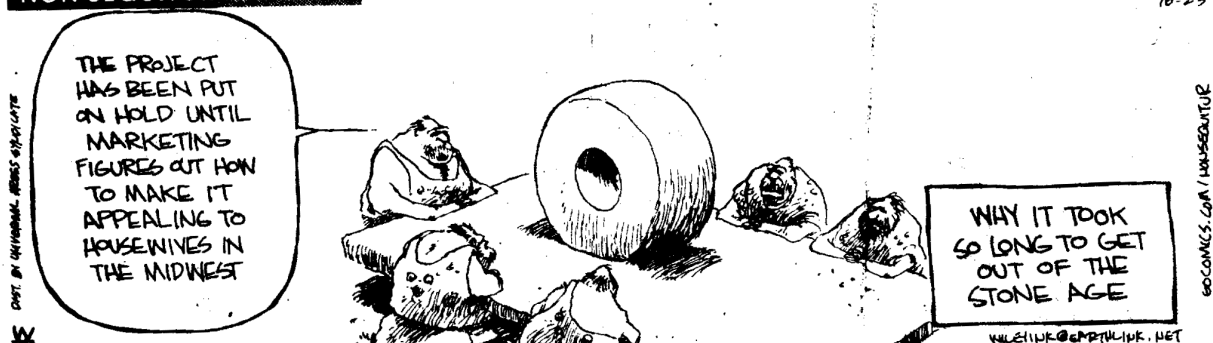
The Archaeological Institute of America provides an online listing of fieldwork opportunities worldwide, Call up www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/ to get started. Remember to add the extra A in archaeological.

CAT corner

For updates and information on CAT activities check the ASM website.

Special fieldwork opportunity: Richard Ervin of SHA is working on the Broad Creek Cemetery, a 17th through 19th Century cemetery on Kent Island. On occasion and on very short notice, it is necessary for him to conduct emergency excavations in preparation for new interments. Contact him at 410-545-2878 (days), 410-643-7128 (evenings) or by email at rervin@sha.state.md.us

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ASM co-founder Spencer Geasey dies at 81

From the Frederick News-Post, January 31, 2007.

Spencer O. Geasey, 81, of Myersville, died Sunday, January 28, 2007, at the Frederick Memorial Hospital. He was the husband of Nancy Carlile Geasey, his wife of 27 years.

Born October 22, 1925, in Great Neck, Long Island, N.Y., he was the son of Spencer O. and Anna Mary Lewis Geasey.

Geasey served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II with the 304th Infantry, 76th Division. He was wounded in action in Luxembourg, which resulted in the loss of his leg during a volunteer mission. He received a purple heart, a campaign ribbon with two bronze stars, American Theatre ribbon, Combat Infantry ribbon and a Good Conduct medal.

Geasey retired from Fort Detrick as housing manager, after 30 years of service. Later he worked as an archeological field assistant for the Maryland State Highway Administration. In 1993, he was the first archeologist to receive the Calvert Prize, the highest award for preservation in the state of Maryland, for his extensive work in archeology and for the 41,000 artifacts from Frederick County, donated to the state. He had spoken to numerous organizations and schools, published many articles about local archeology, and there have been many articles published about him. He was a founding member of the Archeological Society of Maryland, receiving the William B. Marye Award, the society's highest award, and was also a member of the Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and New York archeological societies.



Geasey was a member of the Holy Family Catholic Community, Middletown; DAV Washington and Lee

Chapter 5, where he served as commander, chaplain and treasurer for many years; VFW Post 5021; American Legion Post 11; Amvets Post 2; a former member of the New Market Fire Company; a life member of the Junior Fire Company 2; AARP, and NRA. He was an avid sportsman, especially hunting and fishing.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by four children, Lynn Harris and husband Ken of Raleigh, N.C., Deborah L. Baumgardner, Gina Leiby and husband Larry and Scott O. Geasey and wife Mary, all of Frederick; four grandchildren, Lindsey Leiby, Corporal Kyle Harris, USMC, Travis Leiby and Seth O. Geasey; and a sister, Grace A. Sheffield of Frederick. Also surviving are three nieces, several great-nieces and nephews and his first wife, Gloria Wickers of Waynesboro, Pa.

Funeral services were held at Holy Family Catholic Community. Interment is at Mount Prospect Cemetery in Lewistown.

Contributions may be expressed to the Holy Family Catholic Community Building Fund at 7321 Burkittsville Road, Middletown, the DAV Chapter 5, c/o AMVETS, Post 2, 702 E. South St., Frederick, MD 21701, or the Archeology Society of Maryland, 300 Barclay Court, Abingdon, Maryland 21009.

Recollections of Spencer Geasey begin on the next page .

Spencer: Memories that stay with us

Spencer Geasey was known to ASM members not only for his skill and knowledge as an archeologist, but also as a special companion. Here are some reminiscences of him:

Once Spencer called me to say he had gone turkey hunting and found only two projectile points -- a slow day for him.

Another time I vividly recall his expression of excitement at finding a rhyolite flake in a screen, the most recent of untold thousands of rhyolite flakes he had handled.

Bob Newbury

After you've dug enough shovel test pits with people, you start being able to identify the digger by the shape and location of their backdirt piles. Spencer's piles were always symmetrically placed to the side of the hole, never to the front or back. They were always compact, and situated so close that the cone of dirt extended to the lip of the hole but never fell in. There was always a bit of artistry about that.

Of course, the most important thing was that Spencer always found all the artifacts in a screen, including those rhyolite flakes that inexperienced screeners often miss. When surface collecting, Spencer regularly found the most artifacts, although he hated having to pick up fire-cracked rock. He wasn't above picking up the point in your transect if you didn't get to it fast enough.

Once on a site down near Tomakokin Creek, Spencer found a big Selby Bay point on a construction-disturbed site that at least 10 other archeologists had walked over for several days while trekking to the intact site area. Although we didn't hear what he said at home, Spencer always forgave us when our Maryland State Highway Administration archeological projects conflicted with hunting season.

Spencer might unbutton his collar on really hot days, but he never rolled up his sleeves. And somehow he still stayed remarkably clean. I was grateful that Spencer was buried in his plaid flannel shirt, buttoned up to the neck, because that's way I remember him. I'm figuring that when Spencer got to heaven, he probably walked up to God and fished his latest cool rhyolite artifact out of his pocket to tell God all about it. After all, Spencer had a collection from a site in the Myersville area called "Almost Heaven."

Carol A. Ebright

I had the privilege of working with Spencer on my first survey in Maryland in 1978 and on many other field projects over the following seven years. On surveys, he was always the first to spot an artifact, especially if it was made of rhyolite. I particularly loved to have Spencer on our crews doing test excavations for highway projects. When digging shovel test pits, Spencer would set a blistering pace that left the rest of the crew in the dust. He was also our resident expert on lithic materials and on point typologies, and his optimistic outlook and contagious enthusiasm for outdoor work energized the entire crew.

Spencer had many qualities that earned the respect of so many of his colleagues in the field. His expertise in Frederick area archeology was renowned. He was eager to share his knowledge with all, and whether he was recounting his adventures in a lecture to an audience or giving a personal tour of the rhyolite quarry sites, his sheer love for the study of prehistory shone through. His lasting legacy is not only his superbly documented collections, site records and publications, but his passion for the pursuit of those who lived here before us. It is these qualities that will endure in my memory.

Maureen Kavanagh

Spencer and I were first paired together in 1977 while doing reconnaissance surveys for State Highway Administration projects. Although officially he was my field assistant, I sometimes wondered who the actual assistant really was. Spencer had the knack of looking at an expansive field and walking right to the area containing a site. Even from a car window he could proclaim, "There's gotta be an Archaic site right there," and there often was.

We went on to conduct surveys together over the next dozen years, covering all corners of the state (actually we worked together in every county except Caroline and Worcester). That's a lot of walking (and, yes,

I had trouble keeping up with him at times) and a lot of shovel test pits. I remember our dismay while digging STPs on a ridgetop at what we would come to call the Higgins site. We kept digging deeper and deeper, and kept finding artifacts. Years later, excavations at Higgins directed by Carol Ebright revealed intact deposits spanning the Paleoindian through Early Woodland periods.

Later, when my job duties shifted away from highway projects, Spencer was an ardent volunteer on ASM Field Sessions directed by Maureen Kavanagh and me, especially during our three seasons at the Late Woodland Rosenstock village (a site he had brought to the State Archeologist Tyler Bastian's attention).

Spencer loved the outdoors, enjoyed a cold beer and relished a hearty meal (as I recall, the latter two often determined our choice of lodging — with Spencer making the choice). Spencer exuded a perpetual good mood, always jovial. Whether it was icy cold or steamy hot, ticks and briars or steep mountain slopes, Spencer never complained. In fact, I can only remember one occasion on which Spencer was frustrated. We had been sent out to Allegany County on a project the week before Christmas. It had already been very cold, we spent the night in a flea-bag motel that leaked cold air like a sieve (however, there was a restaurant that served beer and seafood) and our first morning there we awoke to light snow and raging winds. Undeterred, we went surveying north of Flintstone and, sure enough, Spencer started finding flakes in the bare patches of a field. What rankled him was a nice biface...totally welded into the frozen soil. Spencer worked and worked to free that biface, to no avail. It's probably still sitting in that field, and you can bet Spencer has his eye on it!

Dennis C. Curry

Spencer and I first met in 1985 shortly after I moved to Maryland. I worked for the Maryland Geological Survey, Division of Archaeology then. I was introduced to Spencer when we worked together on an archeological project and we made friends. And, from that point on, we remained close friends.

Spencer and I worked together at MGS, for NPW Consultants, Inc., and after I established my own business (ACS Consultants, Inc.), he worked for me as long as I was in business. In fact, Spencer and I worked on over 120 projects together. And I have lost track of how many fields we surface collected; shovel test pits we dug; buckets of soil we screened; test pits we excavated; artifacts we counted, photographed, described and categorized; fences we climbed; miles we walked and drove; maps we read; talks we gave; lunches and dinners we ate; meetings we attended, and sites we recorded.

Spencer and Nancy were more than friends to Bill and me. They were our family. Our relationship has been close and comfortable. We could see and talk to them every day or we could go for longer periods of time without talking and it was just as good. That is true friendship. I know Spencer's whole family and care deeply for them all. Nancy and I have spent all these years together gardening, traveling, getting involved in a cause, collecting wild flowers, researching, talking, shopping, etc. And Spencer and I could cut and load firewood together, walk fields together, write reports together or just eat crabs together. No matter what we were doing, I always felt comfortable. Bill and I shared Christmas dinner with Spencer and Nancy just recently and we were happy to spend that time with them both. We would have not wanted to be anywhere else.

Spencer was the kind of person whom we all would like to be around. He was dependable, honest, he loved and enjoyed so many things openly, had a good sense of humor and you could set your clock by him. If he said that he would do something, you could bet that he would do it. He adored his family. And he loved and enjoyed archeology. He, unlike me, kept going and never got tired.

I will miss Spencer. There will always be a big hole in my heart and life without him. But I'm grateful for the time I knew him.

Hettie Ballweber

My time with Spencer was a series of firsts for me. I saw my first rockshelter with him and my first wild turkey (the two footed variety); had my first real argument with someone about how and why the Indians used the rhyolites of Catoctin and South mountains, and why pottery was frequently found in the rockshelters of

Continued on next page

Memories of Spencer Geasey, continued

the Maryland Blue Ridge but was rare on the open sites. I saw the waterfall at Highland for the first time with Spencer when he and I were surveying the area for rhyolite quarries and related tool-making workshops. Passing through that area with his funeral caravan made me smile. Who could have guessed that he and his wife Nancy would one day own the property and make their home there -- an archeologist's dream with natural wonders, an historic cabin and prehistoric sites!

It still makes me laugh to remember that Spencer was the first person to get visibly nervous about the way that I drive. I was trying to pin down lithic sources in the Blue Ridge and Great Valley sections of Maryland and Spencer was leading me to what was left of the Indian jasper quarry at Point of Rocks. It was the first time that we met. My car only had four gears but I was getting the most out of them getting from his house to the site near the Potomac River. About the fourth time that he commented on how a person's sensation of speed seemed to be enhanced in a small car, I got the message. I'm lucky that he didn't whack me with the stick that he always carried to get over the rough spots in the woods and poke at potential artifacts in plowed fields.

I often wonder if I am as kind and helpful to the people who come to me for advice as Spencer was to me. I suppose that I may have taken for granted the time that he gave me, and the interest that he showed in what I was doing. After all, that's what archeologists do for each other, right? Now I look back and realize how significant his attention was, and how incredibly different my life would have been had I not met the man who picked up rhyolite artifacts faster than I could map them, and beat me up the steepest slope if there was a chance that a rockshelter was waiting to be discovered. I'm not sure what he got from me in exchange, something other than aggravation I hope.

Science fiction author Ray Bradbury once said, "We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled. The trick is, knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the beautiful stuff out." It was a trick that Spencer knew well.

Michael Stewart, Temple University

The first time I saw Spencer, we were helping Maureen Kavanagh at a Monocacy site. What made him stand out from all the other people new to me was that he was working while carrying his baby, Scott, in a pack on his back.

Myron Beckenstein

JefPat offering Native American perspectives

Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum is presenting a monthly set of speeches as part of its Patuxent Encounters series, focusing on "Native American Perspectives: Past and Present."

The schedule and location for the remaining programs is:

-- "Being part of harmony and nature: Forum on Native American Spirituality." March 19, 7 pm. Baltimore American Indian Center, 113 South Broadway, Baltimore.

-- "Native American Dance Workshop." April 15, noon. Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard. Coordinated by the Cedarville Band of Piscataway Indians, Inc. and Maurice Proctor.

-- "Indian Education: Then and Now." June 7, 7 pm. Jefferson Patterson Park, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard.

-- "A Collision of Worlds: The Indians and the English As They Were in 1607." July 7, 7 pm, Jefferson Patterson Park, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard. The speaker will be Dr. Helen C. Rountree.

In addition, a special Patuxent Encounters program on the Patuxent Indians and Captain John Smith will be held August 4 and 5, from 10am to 6 pm at the park.

Is 17th Century Virginia site really a site?

By Susan E. White

From Virginian-Pilot articles

VIRGINIA BEACH - Rewriting history takes time.

And according to a group of Virginia historians and an Army archeologist, more research is needed before anyone can definitively say that an early 17th Century settlement known as Henrytowne ever existed.

The conclusion, reached during an informal meeting February 12 in Williamsburg, was announced four days later by a spokeswoman from Fort Eustis.

Randy Amici, the Army's lead archeologist for Fort Eustis on the Peninsula and Fort Story in Virginia Beach, has been at the center of the possible Henrytowne discovery and will continue to participate in that research, said Cindy Your, a public affairs officer for Fort Eustis.

"When I asked how long would it take, I was told years and maybe decades," she said. "So not anytime soon. Well, you know, it's history."

And a controversial story at that. Amici says the settlement was established as early as 1610 -- three years after Jamestown -- at or near Baylake Pines, a neighborhood off Shore Drive near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel in Virginia Beach. He also thinks Virginia historians and archeologists have for years overlooked the town as well as the existence of a Colonial fort at what is now Fort Story.

Ivor Noel Hume, former chief archeologist for Colonial Williamsburg, remains unconvinced but agreed that the historical documents "need to be looked at a lot more carefully."

"One can't say there's a piece of evidence that might turn up," Hume said. "But in my view, it hasn't yet, so you could go on searching until hell freezes over."

If Henrytowne was established, it could be the third-earliest-known settlement in Virginia, behind Jamestown and an abandoned site started by John Smith in 1609 in Surry County.

Amici knew his claims on Henrytowne -- he has appropriated that spelling for consistency with spellings of Historic Jamestowne -- would be controversial.

His evidence is based on references he says he has found in at least eight historical records, including a letter dated 1610 from English naval commander Sir George Somers. Amici said Somers mentioned coming to Cape Henry, where the captain of the fort there spoke of the Jamestown famine of 1609.

The centerpiece of his argument has been a 1613 letter in which Lt. Gov. Samuel Argall described an outpost near Cape Henry as "Henries Towne." Argall, who had returned to Jamestown, wrote of ordering a ship to fish off the coast of Cape Charles on Virginia's Eastern Shore, then taking the catch to "Henries Towne for the reliefe of such men as were there."

Other archeologists and historians are dubious.

"It is something that nobody who has studied the period has come across before, which is surprising," said Nicholas Luccketti, principal archeologist for the James River Institute for Archaeology.

He and others suspect that Amici's claims may be partly based on a settlement near Richmond known as Henricus.

A 1950s excavation by Norfolk archeologist Floyd Painter may hold some key evidence.

Hume said that further searches for Henrytowne should include a more in-depth examination of Painter's artifacts, which were discovered at the Baylake Pines site.

The excavation produced, among other things, iron tools and pipe fragments. The items were dated between 1610 and 1660 and, according to Amici, suggest the possible presence of an outpost and trading between colonists and American Indians, an activity that would have been considered illegal.

Last week, Amici stood steps away from where a replica of Henrytowne is being built at Fort Story, to coincide with a celebration of the landing of English colonists at Cape Henry. When the construction is complete, it will include watchtowers, a church and demonstration areas for a blacksmith and a trading post.

Volunteers sought for S.C. pre-Clovis site

By Peter Frost, Condensed from *The (Columbia, S.C.) State*

It was on the banks of the Savannah River in Allendale County where Al Goodyear in 2004 found the clues of an ancient civilization that could rewrite the history books.

The University of South Carolina archeologist and a group of volunteers unearthed artifacts estimated to be 50,000 years old, implying humans lived on this continent far earlier than previously believed.

They uncovered what appeared to be cutting tools and stone chisels used by humans who existed an estimated 37,000 years before the earliest-known inhabitants, known as the Clovis culture. It was a discovery that rocked the archeological community and generated international media attention.

To date, it's the oldest radiocarbon-dated site in North America, Goodyear said.

"The entire Western Hemisphere is coming under closer scrutiny," Goodyear said. "Everything that I

was taught as a student is breaking down rapidly."

For decades, the Clovis culture has been recognized as the oldest in the New World. Goodyear discovered evidence of the Clovis at what's called the Topper site more than 20 years ago, when he and a researcher found a fluted spear point, the signature tool of the culture.

Then, in 1998, Goodyear decided to dig deeper. He and a rotating group of scientists and volunteers uncovered evidence of a pre-Clovis culture well below the level at which the Clovis artifacts were found.

In 2004, they uncovered artifacts about 12 feet underground — about 7 feet below the Clovis finds.

Goodyear and his group will be back in May for five weeks, offering volunteers the opportunity to work alongside archeologists and researchers in their quest to debunk the long-held theory that man arrived in North America around 13,000 years ago.

Hilton Head Island resident Jean Guilleux, 64, has assisted Goodyear and his crews for the past five years and plans to volunteer for the May dig.

"After I retired, I became fascinated with archeology and decided to go and get my hands dirty," he said. "After the first dig, I was hooked."

Guilleux, who also is president of the Hilton Head chapter of the Archaeological Association of South Carolina, said he's "done it all" at the digs. He has specialized on the pre-Clovis digs for the past three years, digging soil, sifting for artifacts and watching scientists test their finds in the lab.

"It's absolutely fantastic," he said.

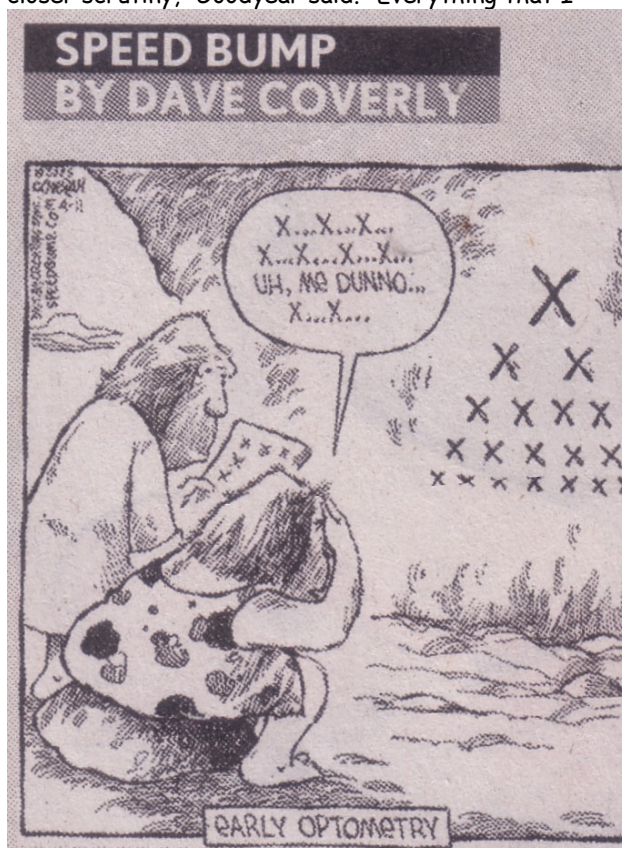
TO VOLUNTEER

What it is: The Allendale Paleoamerican Expedition, a volunteer field program allowing the public to spend a week or more helping to excavate an archeological site in Allendale County. The Topper site is about 95 miles northwest of Hilton Head Island.

When: May 1-June 2.

Cost: \$416 per week (\$350 is tax-deductible). Includes two meals a day. Lodging not included.

Sign up: www.allendale-expedition.net, (803) 777-8170.



Nearby site offers Stonehenge hints

By Thomas H. Maugh II

Condensed from the Los Angeles Times, January 31, 2007

Archeologists working near Stonehenge in England have discovered what appears to be an ancient religious complex containing a treasure trove of artifacts that might finally illuminate the lives and religious practices of the people who built the mysterious monument 4,600 years ago, British archeologists said yesterday.

The circle of massive stone blocks on England's Salisbury Plain southwest of London is one of the best known archeological sites in the world, but researchers know surprisingly little about the people who built it and lived in the region.

The new finds, reported at a teleconference organized by the National Geographic Society, vastly increase the knowledge of these early Britons, said archeologist Mary Ann Owoc of Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa., who was not involved in the research.

"To see the everyday lives of these people, to see people living in their houses, is filling in really important gaps in the record," she said. "We had some evidence, but this is so much richer."

The discoveries also are destined to change archeologists' views of how the ancient people used the site. Stonehenge is typically thought of as a cemetery and an astronomical observatory that was the site of pagan celebrations at the summer solstice.

The new finds at Durrington Walls, two miles northeast of the stone circle, indicate that the entire region was a religious center where the early Britons gathered in midwinter for raucous feasts and solemn ceremonies before sending their deceased on a voyage to the afterlife.

While Stonehenge was a monument to the dead, the complex at Durrington Walls was "very much a place of the living," said archeologist Mike Parker Pearson of Sheffield University, who led the team along with archeologist Julian Thomas of Manchester University.

Archeologists already knew there was a henge -- a circular banked enclosure with an internal ditch -- at Durrington Walls, but the wide excavations carried out last year place it in a new light.

The henge, about 1,400 feet in diameter, enclosed a series of concentric rings of huge timber posts. The team now knows that the posts mimicked Stonehenge in all particulars save one -- its orientation. Stonehenge is aligned with sunrise at the summer solstice and sunset at the winter solstice. The henge at Durrington Walls is the exact opposite, aligned with sunrise at the winter solstice and sunset at the summer solstice.

Artifacts found in the houses indicate that there was a major midwinter celebration marking the solstice to complement the summer celebration at Stonehenge.

The team excavated eight houses at the site and magnetic anomalies indicate there are at least 25 more nearby, Pearson said. "My guess is that there are many more than that," he said. In fact, the entire valley appears to have been densely populated, he said.

The relatively flimsy wattle-and-daub walls of the houses are long gone. What remains are the densely packed clay floors. "These are the first ones we have found with intact clay floors from this period," Pearson said.

"The houses are virtually square, no bigger than the average sitting room -- about 14 feet by 14 feet," he said. They feature a central fireplace, an oval hearth sunk into the floor. Slight indentations around the walls mark the location of timber fittings for boxbeds and a dresser that stood opposite the door.

Durrington Walls "is either the richest site or the filthiest that we have ever found for this period," Pearson said. "It's absolutely stuffed full of trash or rubbish: broken pots, chips, flints, burned stones used for cooking and animal bones. Many were thrown away half eaten, a sign of conspicuous consumption. This is an enormous feasting assemblage. People were here to have a really good time."

Owoc noted that people during this period tended to move from place to place as the seasons changed. It was not until the period 1700 B.C. to 1200 B.C. that they began to settle down in walled towns.

Neolithic skeletons found in embrace

By the Associated Press, February 7, 2007

ROME -- It could be humanity's oldest story of doomed love.

Archeologists have unearthed two skeletons from the Neolithic period locked in a tender embrace and buried outside Mantua, 25 miles south of Verona, the city where Shakespeare set the star-crossed tale of "Romeo and Juliet."

Buried between 5,000 and 6,000 years ago, the prehistoric pair is believed to have been a man and a woman and are thought to have died young, as



their teeth were found intact, said Elena Menotti, the archeologist who led the dig.

"As far as we know, it's unique," Menotti said by telephone from Milan. "Double burials from the Neolithic are unheard of, and these are even hugging."

The burial site was located Monday during construction work for a factory building in the outskirts of Mantua. Alongside the couple, archeologists found flint tools, including arrowheads and a knife, Menotti said.

Luca Bondioli, an anthropologist at Rome's National Prehistoric and Ethnographic Museum, said double prehistoric burials are rare -- especially in such a pose -- but some have been found holding hands or having other contact.

The find has "more of an emotional than a scientific value." But it does highlight how the relationship people have with each other and with death has not changed much from the period in which humanity first settled in villages and learning to farm and tame animals, he said.

"The Neolithic is a very formative period for our society," he said. "It was when the roots of our religious sentiment were formed."

The two bodies, which cuddle closely while facing each other on their sides, were probably buried at the same time, possibly an indication of sudden and tragic death, Bondioli said.

"It's rare for two young people to die at the same time, and that makes us want to know why and who they were, but it will be very difficult to find out."

He said DNA testing could determine whether the two were related, "but that still leaves other hypotheses. The 'Romeo and Juliet' possibility is just one of many."

Chapter notes

Anne Arundel

The Chapter meets five times a year in February, April, June, September, and November at the All Hallows Parish Brick Church at the Parish Hall near London Town, at 7 p.m. Contact Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito at AACHapASM@hotmail.com or visit the chapter website www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php

Dig Days at London Town for 2007: May 12, July 14, September 15.

Central

Central Chapter has no formal meetings planned. But if someone has a site he wants investigated, contact the Maryland Historical Trust or Central Chapter President Stephen Israel at 410-945-5514 or ssisrael@abs.net

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Needwood Mansion. Dinner at a local restaurant is at 6. Monthly lab nights are the first Thursday of the month, from 7 to 9 at Needwood Mansion. Contact james.sorensen@mncppc-mc.org or heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org, or call 301-840-5848. Chapter website: www.mid-potomacarchaeology.org

Monocacy

The chapter meets in the Community Room of the C. Burr Artz Library, 110 East Patrick Street, Frederick on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Contact Jeremy Lazelle at 301-845-9855 or jlazelle@msn.com. Chapter website: www.digfrederick.bravehost.com.

March 14: Rescheduled meeting in honor of Spencer Geasey. We will be showing part of the film "Monocacy: The Prehistory of Frederick County."

April 11: George Evans of the the Monocacy Chapter will share his experiences as a volunteer excavator at Jamestown.

Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Contact Dan Coates at dancoates@comcast.net

March 14: Perryville Town Meeting Room, next to the library, in the Town Hall. Joseph Hopkins and Ann Persson will discuss the Rodgers Tavern project.

Southern

Contact Kate Dinnel for information at katesilas@chesapeake.net or 410-586-8538.

Upper Patuxent

Programs are the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Ida, near the court house in Ellicott City. Some months, potluck suppers are held at 6:30. Otherwise, dinner is available at the Tiber River Tavern in Ellicott City. For information, contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or roseannlee@earthlink.com

March 12: Michael Olmert, University of Maryland, "Outbuildings: Architecture and Culture in the 18th Century Anglo-Tidewater Backyard." (Pot Luck Supper)

April 9: Bob O'Brien, "A Travelogue of Hawaii."

May 14: Program to be announced. (Pot Luck Supper)

Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. in the LaVale Library, unless noted. Contact Ed Hanna, 301-777-1380. Chapter email: wmdasm@yahoo.com Website: www.geocities.com/wmdasm

March 23: Barton Site update, plans for the 2007 field session. Bob Wall.

April: To be announced.

May 25: "Never Suck a Dead Man's Hand: Curious Adventures of a CSI," lecture and book signing by Dana Kollman.

June: Barton field session. Dates to be announced.

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ASM. Inc members receive the monthly newsletter ASM Ink, the biannual journal MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10% discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Belinda Urquiza for membership rates. For publication sales, contact Dan Coates at ASM Publications, 716 Country Club Rd., Havre de Grace, MD 21078-2104 or 410-273-9619 or dancoates@comcast.net.

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