



ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

Working to expand archeology's circle

By Paul Raber

Condensed from The Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Spring 2005

Sometimes the world of archeology is just a little too comfortable. How many outsiders (the rest of the world) would understand any part of what we are saying to each other? Even the most basic terms, words we often use without thinking -- points, stratigraphy, debitage -- are often unintelligible to someone without the years of experience and shared understanding.

There is certainly nothing wrong with having a common technical language and a closed body of

shared understanding and meaning. It's probably essential in any discipline, whether archeology or rocket science. But the danger is that we continue to operate in our familiar and safe little world until we are forced to pay attention to something outside it, something like the questions I hear more and more recently: Who cares about a bunch of old rocks? Why is your work holding up progress? Why should we pay for your hobby?

The impression I have -- one that is reinforced on a regular basis -- is that we (archeologists) just haven't done a very good job of explaining what we do and why it matters. There is no sense in pointing fingers and assigning blame. There is enough blame to go around. My concern here is to suggest that the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, as a statewide organization with a broad membership, has an important role to play in addressing this problem. The organization has already identified education as a primary goal and responsibility. We need to continue to act on that resolution.

I see two areas where we, as members of this organization and as individuals, could make a difference. One effort is standing up for archeology whenever (and by whomever) it is challenged. This means responding to those who deny or demean the value of what we do, and to those who present a distorted or debased version

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What is especially unusual about this concretion? See inside. Page 7

Upcoming events

May 8-9: Primitive Technology Weekend. Oregon Ridge, Baltimore County. ornc@bcpl.net or 410-887-1816.

May 16-20: National Park Service workshop on archeological prospection techniques, Hopewell National Historical Park in Chillicothe, Ohio. \$475. Application forms at www.cr.nps.gov/mwac/ For information, contact Steven L. DeVore, 402-437-5392, ext. 141, or steve_de_vore@nps.gov

May 17 to June 30: Jefferson Patterson park public archeology.

May 21: Council for West Virginia Archeology spring workshop, on paleobotanical and faunal remains. Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia.

May 31 to July 8: University of Maryland/Archaeology in Annapolis field school. Wye River. 310-405-1429.

June 18-26: Barton field school. Barton site. Contact Ed Hanna at wmdasm@yahoo.com

September 9-11: Annual conference, Society for the Preservation of Old Mills, Westminster. Includes Mason-Dixon tour. For information, contact Bob or Jane Sewell at 410-833-2313 or see www.spoom.org

September 16-25: ASM field school. Swan Cove, Anne Arundel County.

October 15: ASM Annual Meeting, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Cumberland. Theme: French and Indian War.

November 9-13: ESAF meeting, Williamsburg, Virginia. www.esaf-archeology.org

Volunteer opportunities

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

Montgomery County lab and field work. 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. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson akerson@comcast.net or Charlie Hall hall@dhcd.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. Contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 410-586-8501.

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 archaeology.

CAT corner

For updates and for information on other CAT activities check the ASM website or contact your mentor or Chris. He can be reached at 301-845-8092 or dig4funds@aol.com

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

Pros, amateurs working together

Condensed from the Oklahoma Anthropological Society Newsletter, November/December 1998

Late in the fall of 1994, Jim Chase, an avocational archeologist, searched an unlikely area of steeply eroded gullies in northern Colorado and found what every archeologist dreams of, an untouched Folsom site, complete with projectile points, preforms and channel flakes. Jim sensed that he had discovered a site of considerable importance and began a relentless campaign to have professional archeologists examine it.

He contacted George Frison, a Paleo-Indian specialist from the University of Wyoming, who agreed to do a walk-over of the area that would become known as the Barger Gulch site. Quickly overcoming his initial doubts that the site, located north of Kremmling, Colorado, could have anything of temporal or cultural significance, Frison became enthusiastic about the worth of the initial site and several others related to it in the area.

Chase's efforts were supported by Frank Rupp, district archeologist for the Bureau of Land Management, who helped promote the area's scientific investigation. In April 1995, Jim Chase again led Dr. Frison to Paleo sites near the Barger Gulch Site.

This work could be seen as a model of cooperation and mutual respect between professional and avocational archeologists. How did this come about? On the avocational side, Jim Chase's initial curiosity led him to investigate an unpromising area like Barger Gulch, which had been overlooked by others. His awareness of the site's importance and his unselfish willingness to share his discovery led him to contact professional archeologists. His persistence was necessary to penetrate the veil of resistance and indifference, which often discourages amateurs from trying to convey information to members of the professional archeological community. Also implicit in his actions was a belief that his efforts would be treated with a degree of respect and that he would not automatically be dismissed as just another "cultural resource robbing amateur."

On the professional side, archeologists were receptive to the findings and observations of the amateurs. The ongoing attitude of respect, acknowledging the value of contributions of amateurs in the Middle Park partnership, was vital to avoid the impression sometimes given, described as "now the professionals are on the scene why don't you amateurs get lost." There was also a willingness to share and explain the significance of findings, drawing avocational investigators into the "inner circle" and helping them learn the value of protecting prehistoric cultural resources. If the scientists had come to Middle Park with the haughty arrogance sometimes displayed by degreed-pedigreed-credentialed archeologists, the prospects would have been dramatically diminished for developing the inventory of over 40 Paleo-Indian sites. Rupp said: "I'll admit, there were some initial barriers between amateurs and professionals that had to come down before the cooperative effort in Middle Park could progress as it has." Finally, the worth of avocational archeologists in Middle Park has been affirmed by their continued inclusion in the project and the recognition and acknowledgment afforded them in professional publications.

Perhaps the cooperation can serve as a model for future efforts across the country. The key elements, as illustrated by the Northern Colorado Plateau Paleo-Indian Project could best be described as follows:

Avocationalists

1. Need to have the curiosity to locate sites, sometimes in unpromising areas.
2. Should have the knowledge and awareness to recognize and protect archeological evidence.
3. Must demonstrate persistence in presenting their observations and findings to the scientific community, especially when they encounter hostility and indifference.
4. Trust that they will be treated with some measure of respect, as valued partners.

Professional archeologists

1. Should be willing to examine findings of amateurs.
2. Provide opportunities for amateur involvement in site surveys and excavation.
3. Share information and findings, when appropriate, allowing the avocationalists a place in the inner circle of "those in the know."
4. Continue to affirm the worth of avocational contributions.
5. Take every opportunity to educate or heighten awareness of avocationalists about the significance of finds.
6. Actively cultivate a sense of a professional/avocational partnership.
7. Share recognition in publications, by including names of amateurs.

Old casket found, vandalized in D.C.

By **Serge F. Kovalski**

Condensed from the Washington Post, April 7, 2005

Construction workers digging outside a Northwest Washington apartment building have unearthed a cast-iron casket that experts believe probably dates to the late 19th Century.

The discovery was made Friday afternoon by a construction crew working at 1465 Columbia Rd. NW in the Columbia Heights neighborhood. The workers covered the casket with a tarp and over the weekend left it in place in a seven-foot ditch behind secured gates, project manager Randy Boyd said.

On Monday evening, after word of the archeological find spread through the neighborhood and crowds of onlookers had gathered throughout the day, workers locked the casket in the empty building for safekeeping.

But that night, vandals went to work. According to Boyd, they bashed in the building's back door, cracked the casket's iron faceplate and broke the sheet of glass beneath it.

"When I saw the damage the next day, I was shocked that someone would be so stupid, so animal-like that they would do this to something so historic and to someone's tomb," Boyd said. "It was like these people were grave robbers or something."

He said that some neighbors told him they had observed several youngsters breaking into the building about 8 p.m. but did not call police.

Because of the damage, Boyd could partially see the contents of the casket: a head with strands of blond hair, leathery skin and a scarf wrapped around it. He said he could not tell whether the remains were those of a man or woman.

Boyd said that the workers subsequently taped the casket and moved it to another building.

Randall Kremer, spokesman for the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, said that one of the organization's forensic anthropologists plans to examine the casket. "We will look at it next week to see whether we want to take it and add it to the national collection," Kremer said.

Nancy Kassner, an archeologist with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, said that she has yet to examine the casket but has concerns about the effects of the vandalism.

"Air has gotten into it and probably done damage. Air can facilitate disintegration," Kassner said. She said that her office eventually would like to see the body reinterred "somewhere suitable because that's what should be done out of respect for the dead."

Experts pointed out that cast-iron caskets were expensive at the time and that the individual buried in the one found in Columbia Heights might have been a person of note.

Frederick archeology plan suffers setback

Efforts to involve archeology in the Frederick City building process were put on hold when the city decided to postpone consideration of changes to the code for a year. Backers of the archeology plan may try to have it submitted as a separate measure for an earlier vote.

Lost Towns offering a series of lectures

The Lost Towns Project is presenting a series of hour-long lectures in the next few months. The talks will be held at 2664 Riva Road in Annapolis, on the second floor in the Chesapeake Room, beginning at 1 p.m. The schedule is:

May 23: John Kille on the design and creation of an interactive animated computer exhibit to be installed in the new museum facility at Historic London Town and Gardens.

June 27: Interested in historic weaponry? Shawn Sharpe will talk about arms from the 17th and 18th centuries.

July 25: Things are changing for the Lost Towns, specifically the laboratory. Cara Fama talks about the new location of the lab and what this means for the Lost Towns Project and its volunteers.

For further information, contact Erin Cullen at 410-222-7441.

Profiles in Maryland archeology

An interview with ... Carol Ebright

Carol Ebright, an archeologist with the State Highway Administration, is serving her second term as president of ASM and is an accomplished flintknapper.

Q. How did you get started in archeology, Carol?

A. I think I started when I was a real little kid. My mother tells me that I have always been looking down instead of up and I've always been interested in rocks and fossils and Native Americans since I was pretty small. One of my favorite books when I was a kid was a really neat National Geographic book on "Indians of the Americas" that came out in the 1950s. That book made me recognize the diversity in human cultures, in general, at a pretty early age and spurred a real interest in anthropology and archeology that just kept on growing. It's still one of my favorite books.

Q. And how did that focus on archeology rather than geology or oil exploration or something?

A. I've always kind of tried to combine the two. When I was six years old my parents took me and my two sisters on a vacation to the western United States and we went to see places that had lots of geological interest and we also went to Mesa Verde and Taos and Santa Clara and I've always been interested in both aspects of it.

Q. By both you mean ...

A. Geology and Native Americans, both.

Q. When did you come into Maryland archeology?

A. There's two answers to that. When I was in graduate school I got interested in flintknapping and I got interested in quarry sites, which led me to William Henry Holmes' studies in Rock Creek Park [in D.C.] and also in the Maryland and Virginia tidewater regions. So I started to develop an interest in Maryland archeology from that point.

Q. You were in school in New York at this time?

A. I was in school at Binghamton, and eventually I got a job at the National Register of Historic Places and I had a student appointment there for two years and then I went to Indiana. I came back to Maryland to work in 1986 at the Maryland Geological Survey, in the Division of Archeology.

Q. And you've been here ever since.

A. Yes.

Q. What interesting projects have you worked on?

A. Quite a few. I think one of the most pleasurable projects I worked on was the Blue Marsh dam project up in Pennsylvania, which started out being a phase two but eventually expanded into doing controlled surface collection over a large part of the area that was going to be flooded by the construction of the reservoir. We did a lot of surface collection on a lot of archaic period sites where there were lots of artifacts. Surface collecting is one of the things I really enjoy. And I've always been interested in Paleo-Indians and that time period and I spent one summer working at the Lubbock Lake site, which is a fairly well-known Paleo-Indian site in the Texas panhandle, where there were places where Native Americans ran bison off cliffs. There are bison kill sites and other large mammal kill sites. That was one of the first places where I done real dental pick and paintbrush archeology. I excavated a pregnant bison. There were bones of the fetal bison still in there. We excavated everything in three centimeter levels and water-screened all the dirt through a window screen. I'd have to add working at the Ephrata Cloister in Pennsylvania as a notable experience. I've always been interested in communal religious societies and colonial Middle Atlantic history, and I grew up in south central Pennsylvania relatively close to Ephrata. I learned a lot working with Steve Warfel of the Pennsylvania State Museum on this site. I spent a week's vacation time almost every summer that the PHMC [Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission] was working out there.

Q. Do you have a favorite site or discovery?

A. That would have to be the Higgins site. For one thing it got me down to the Paleo-Indian time period and I've always wanted to find my own paleo site. But I also liked that site because it had a really large Otter Creek component. Otter Creek points are my favorite projectile point type.



The Otter Creek Point

Q. What is the Higgins site?

A. The Higgins site is a prehistoric site that's located near the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and it was excavated by the State Highway Administration for the State Railroad Administration.

Q. When was this?

A. In 1987 and 1988. We actually went back there to another section of the site in the very early 1990s.

Q. How has archeology changed while you have been in the field?

A. I think methodologies have changed a little bit in that there's a lot more high-tech methods employed, mostly in remote sensing. I think that archeologists have gained a lot more sensitivity since I started in the field to relating the things that they find to modern cultures and the descendants of Native Americans in particular. And I think that we have become a lot more sensitive to how we deal with human remains and also just trying to make sure that we interact with the public and with the descendants of people whose sites we're digging up in a responsible way.

Q. Do you think all of this is for the good?

A. Yes, I think the more perspectives that you can get when you are interpreting a site the better off you are.

Q. What do you think the future holds for Maryland archeology?

A. I think the future is pretty bright. I think that there's a lot of public interest in archeology. I think that even though budget times are tight that there's enough public interest that it will continue to be funded and there's also state and federal legislation that require archeological investigations to be undertaken in a lot of instances where construction is going to be taking place.

Q. What advice do you have for somebody who is interested in going into archeology, either professionally or avocationally?

A. I think you need to get as diverse an education as you can and you need to have a pretty good grounding in the natural sciences as well. Read everything you can get your hands on.

Q. Is Maryland archeology different from archeology elsewhere?

A. I think that the methods that are employed are related to the kinds of sites that you find in particular regions. I think that how archeology is done in the Southwest is a little bit different than the way it is done in the Eastern Woodlands just because of the nature of the soil, the nature of the geology. We have a lot more buried sites, there's a lot less stuff exposed on the surface and the soils are really different.

Q. You had mentioned earlier flintknapping. You are quite an accomplished flintknapper. What got you interested in flintknapping and how did you develop this skill?

A. I like rocks. Flintknapping is a good way to play with rocks. It's a challenge to be able to make a stone tool. It's an interesting skill to learn. It's a good way to get out your frustration, whacking rocks. But mostly I got interested in it because I was interested in what things that I found in sites meant. You don't really find that many diagnostic stone projectile points in archeological sites, but you find tons and tons of debitage and I wanted to know what that debitage meant. So I basically learned how to flintknap to be better able to interpret stuff that I found on sites. At Lubbock Lake I took a month off and went to a flintknapping field school at Washington State University and we basically spent a month just flintknapping, eight hours a day. You really need to be able to have a lot of material that you can destroy and not be worried about it in order to get enough practice to really become good at flintknapping. It was extremely useful. You learn that are a lot of ways to skin a cat, a lot of ways to get to the same end result by using different manufacturing strategies, and that's real important for interpreting what you find in archeological sites too.

Q. What's your favorite flintknapping material?

A.. Georgetown flint, if you can get it. That's what most flintknappers like to flintknap the best. It's from Texas. It's really high quality. Obsidian doesn't take as much strength, but you also have a smaller margin of error.

Q. Regarding ASM, what do you think the major challenges facing it now are, opportunities and problems?

A. It's hard to deal with just ASM and Maryland. I think we have to deal with larger, cooperative efforts with other archeological organizations. I think that we have to develop closer ties with the Council for Maryland Archeology. I think we have to keep our excellent working relationship with the Maryland Historical Trust. I would like to see us have closer relationships with other institutions in Maryland that do archeology, like St. Mary's City, Lost Towns, Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. We have done some cooperative events with many of those institutions, but we could have a lot closer working relationship that would benefit everybody.

The latest word on King Tut

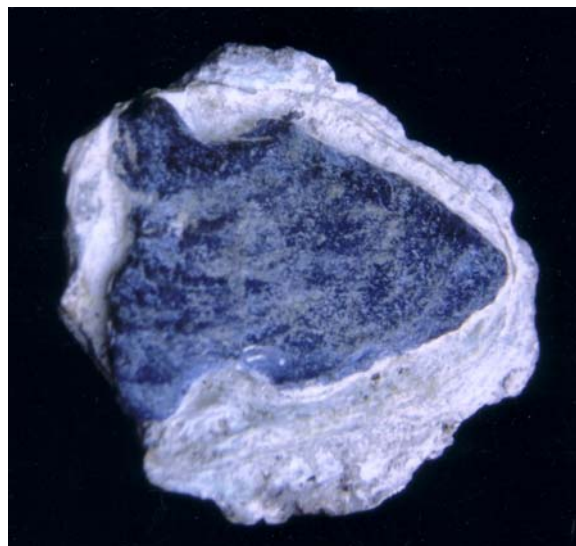
From the Baltimore Sun, March 9, 2005

CAIRO, Egypt -- King Tut wasn't killed by a blow to the head, nor was his chest crushed in an accident. But after ruling out those longtime theories, the most revealing tests ever performed on the boy pharaoh's mummy didn't solve the mystery of how he died.

The results of the high-tech CT scan released yesterday raised a new possibility.

They suggested that days before his death, Tut might have badly broken his left thigh, puncturing the skin -- an injury that could have caused a dangerous infection.

Tutankhamen was a healthy, yet slightly build 19-year-old, standing 5 feet 6 inches tall, at the time of his death, the study suggested.



Concealed weapon

Inside this concretion (probably limestone and clay) was a side-notched rhyolite point. Frank W. Mentzer of Boonsboro found it while surface collecting near Antietam Creek in Washington County. Spencer Geasey passed the photo on and wondered if anyone has seen anything similar.

Working to expand archeology's circle

Continued from Page 1

of archeology. In responding to the first group, we need to keep in mind that they may have other pressing concerns that make archeology seem trivial by comparison. They may be well-intentioned and genuinely unaware of the value of archeology; again, that's largely our fault. We need to present a cogent argument for the value of archeology in language that anyone can understand. Our argument should stress that good archeology and other community and individual concerns are not necessarily antagonistic, but that they can be compatible, or at least that they represent equally legitimate values and public concerns.

In responding to the second group, the purveyors of "fantastic archeology" and their audiences, we can take a two-pronged approach, criticizing the bad while holding up as a counter-example the good archeology that gets done all the time. And there is a lot of the latter: good archeology that just doesn't get the exposure and attention it deserves. We all know about it, but too often nobody else does. As individuals, we can talk about it to others and explain why it's good. As an organization, we can make sure that it gets a prominent place in our efforts at publicity and education. The journal, the archeology month poster, the web site -- these are all worthwhile efforts in this regard, but there are other approaches. Some of the society's efforts in the coming years should be directed to discovering those approaches and speaking to a larger audience about what we do and why it matters.

I suggest that one of the main targets of our efforts should be schools and young people, and that we try to explain to these future citizens (archeologists, politicians, developers, taxpayers) what constitutes good scientific archeology and why it is important. There are dozens (at least) of excellent examples of work that reflects solid methods and interesting results, work that has taught us something worth knowing about the past and illuminated its relation to our lives. It shouldn't be a secret among the friends in our circle.

It is always a pleasure to have a conversation with friends on something we care about. I expect and hope that these conversations will continue. But if we don't start to pay attention to those currently outside the conversation, we may end up talking to a smaller and smaller group about something that seems increasingly esoteric to most of the population. We -- I, you, the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, the archeological community -- need to open that conversation to others, involve them and let them participate to whatever degree they wish. We will help ourselves and our goals and might even make a few new friends.

Chapter notes

Anne Arundel

The chapter meets on the third Wednesday of the month from 7:30-9 p.m. in the Chesapeake Room, Heritage Center, 2664 Riva Road, Annapolis. Contact Jim Gibb at 410-263-1102 or jamesggibb@comcast.net

Central

Central Chapter does not have monthly meetings, but tries to stay active with field projects. Currently it plans to explore rockshelters reported in the North Branch of the Patapsco River. The chapter will continue to survey and identify potential archeological sites for future exploration and will begin finalizing the 10-year Big Gunpowder Rockshelter Survey Project. Contact Stephen Israel at 410-945-5514 or ssisrael@abs.net

Mid-Potomac

Contact james.sorensen@mncppc-mc.org or heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org, or call 301-840-5848. Chapter website: www.mid-potomacarchaeology.org

May 14: French and Indian War Public Dig Day at Dowden's Ordinary in Clarksburg; 10 am - 3 pm. \$8 individual/\$15 family/\$5 for ASM members.

August 22-26: Mini-field school, working on a rockshelter in Montgomery County. On August 23, primitive technologist Tim Thoman will be giving a workshop on prehistoric methods of fire-making and flintknapping.

Mid Shore

The Mid Shore Group meets at 7:30 on the fourth Friday of the month at the SunTrust Bank on Goldsboro Street in Easton, from January through September. However, the April meeting is held at the Talbot County Historical Society Auditorium. Contact Bill Cep at 410-822-5027 or email ccep@crosslink.net

Monocacy

The chapter meets the Wednesday closest to the 15th of each month at the Walkersville Middle School. Contact Joy Hurst at 301-663-6706 or hurst_joy@hotmail.com. Chapter website: www.digfrederick.bravehost.com

Northern Chesapeake

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

May: Annual picnic. Rock Run Mill. Details TBA.

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. Most are preceded by dinner at 6 at the Tiber River Café in Ellicott City. Contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or roseannlee@earthlink.com

May 9: Pot luck supper at 6:30. Charlie Hall will talk on "Howard County Prehistory: Digging in the Maryland Historic Trust Files."

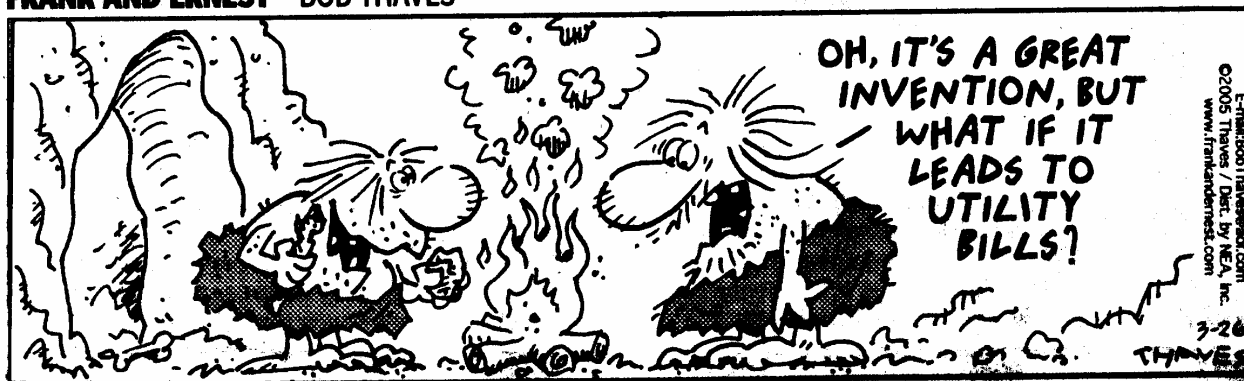
Western Maryland

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.

May 27: Bob Wall, Barton site overview and field session plans.

June 18-26: Barton field session.

FRANK AND ERNEST BOB THAVES



The Archeological Society of Maryland Inc. is a statewide nonprofit organization devoted to the study and conservation of Maryland archeology.

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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