



ASM Ink

May 2009, Vol. 35, No. 5

Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

What's ahead at Port Tobacco field session

By April M. Beisaw

The Port Tobacco Archaeological Project is pleased to be hosting the 2009 ASM Tyler Bastian Field Session again. Our 2008 ASM field session was quite the success; twenty-three 5-by-5 foot units were excavated across the town site. These units provided us with new insights into the changing face of Port Tobacco. We now have clear evidence of late prehistoric to contact period Native American occupation, a Colonial cemetery and the foundation of the 19th Century jailhouse.

For the 2009 field session we will return to two of these areas, the Native American locus and the Colonial cemetery, and open one new one.

Our goal for the Native American area is to determine if the deposits are from a village site, specifically the village of Potopaco that Captain John Smith encountered in 1608. At the Colonial cemetery we want to expose and map grave shafts (we will not expose human remains) and the fenceline. We also will search for remains of the Anglican church that stood nearby.

The new area of excavation will be the Swann House, pending landowner approval. This residence is on our 1880s maps of the town but we know little about it. We believe this was the home of James Swann, a "free man of color" who appears in the Port Tobacco records around 1843 and lived out the rest of his life in the town, dying in 1871. Swann is most often referred to as a tavern keeper but it is unclear if his house and the tavern were one and the same.

As we explore the changing ethnic makeup of Port Tobacco, the Project is committed to involving descendant communities in our research. We have developed relationships with the the Piscataway Nation, the Piscataway Conoy Tribe of Maryland and the African American Heritage Society of Charles County.

Each of these groups has been invited to the field session and we hope they will provide our participants with some afternoon lectures on what Port Tobacco means to them. On the schedule so far is Gabrielle Tayac of the Piscataway Nation and the National Museum of the American Indian. Gabi will provide us with a talk during lunch on the 28th.

The regular crew will provide additional lecture and workshop opportunities throughout the field session. Scott Lawrence will demonstrate how to properly repair a grave marker, Peter Quantock will demonstrate how we create site maps, Jim Gibb and I will offer workshops on law and ethics and soil identification and analysis, and one of our summer interns from Heidelberg University, Allison Garbali, will give a talk on ceramics recovered from Johnson's Island, a Civil War prison in Ohio. The courthouse will serve as our auditorium for these lunchtime lectures, afternoon demonstrations and evening workshops.

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Upcoming events

May 2-3: Primitive technology weekend. Oregon Ridge park, Baltimore County.

May 18-22: National Park Service archeological workshop in Natchitoches, Louisiana, for those interested in forensic and cemetery investigations. \$475. For information, contact Steven L. DeVore 402- 437-5392, ext. 141 or steve_de_vore@nps.gov

May 22 - June 1: ASM field session, Port Tobacco.

May 28-9: Maryland's annual preservation and revitalization conference. Tremont Grand, Baltimore. Some events are free. Contact Jessica Feldt at 410-685-2886, ext 302 or jfeldt@preservationmaryland.org

May 30: ASM board meeting, at the Port Tobacco field school. All are welcome to attend.

June 13 - 21: Barton Site dig,

October 17: Annual ASM Meeting, Havre de Grace Maritime Museum.

Volunteer opportunities

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

Montgomery County is offering opportunities for lab and 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 being curated is the collection from the Rose Haven Site in Anne Arundel County, dating from the Archaic to early historic. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For information contact Louise Akerson lakerson1@verizon.net or Charlie Hall hall@mdp.state.md.us.

The Lost Towns Project of Anne Arundel County. 410-222-7440.

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 Ed Chaney at echaney@mdp.state.md.us or 410-586-8554.

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

Historic Ceramics Workshop, MAC Lab, Jefferson Patterson, May 16, 10-2. This session is designed to prepare field session participants for the materials they will encounter in the field and lab.

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

A website has been set up for candidates and graduates:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/MDcat/> . To join the group email MDcat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com Members can choose to get emails or just use the website to send messages. Courtesy of CAT candidate Tom Forhan.

SHA offering quarterly newsletter on archeology

The State Highway Administration has started distributing a quarterly online newsletter, the CRaB (Cultural Resources Bulletin), which has items of interest to archeologists and a list of upcoming events. You can get on the email list by contacting Nichole Sorensen-Mutchie at nsorensenmutchie@sha.state.md.us



Pictured (from left to right) Battiferro, Marshalltown and WHS Trowels.

Consumer report: The handy trowel

By Joe Dent

American University

What would archeology be without the trowel? Most of our discoveries, both small and great, first appear at its edge. And archeologists have been known to develop a special affinity with their cherished trowel. During the cold winter months I decided to collect a few notable examples of the best of trowels now available to us all.

But first, I'll start with a little history of the handy implement. Trowels, no doubt, have been around as long as bricks. Our word for trowel in the English language, however, appears to be a result of the Norman Conquest in AD 1066. It is a French loan word – originally *truelle* from the vulgar or Late Latin *truella*.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it first appeared in English writing in AD 1344 on an inventory of the Plantagenet King Edward III. Through the ages it has variously been spelled trowelle, truel, trowille, trewel, trewell, trowell, truell, trolle and trouel. My students could add additional spellings.

Most of us today pack that American icon, the Marshalltown. It is made in the USA, right in Iowa. Other popular brands used by archeologists worldwide include the British WHS and the Italian Battiferro di Maniago.

The Marshalltown really needs no description and is best purchased in its 4½ inch incarnation. It's a great implement and will give anyone years of hard service – doing everything from excavating to opening bottles with little complaint. I have my first Marshalltown, circa 1970, and it's still serviceable. Its hallmark is the one piece forged blade and shank mounted in a sturdy wood handle. I have never seen one fail in over three decades of doing archeology.

On the other hand, our friends across the pond swear by the WHS, made by Spear and Jackson of legendary Sheffield steel (likewise forged in one piece). The current version for archeologists has a smaller but thicker blade (4 in long x 2 in wide) and a shank that is massive. It's noticeably heavier, but if you're going to pry a large stone sarcophagus cover off a chamber tomb this is your beast.

I will say that it may feel too heavy for some and the significantly smaller blade will more quickly disappear with constant re-sharpening. Of course, not all archeologists sharpen trowels like we do. I got strange looks when I began to sharpen mine in the Southwest. I was quickly informed, "We don't sharpen trowels in New Mexico."

The Italian Battiferro comes pre-sharpened and is comparable in size (4 ½ in long x 2 ¼ in wide) to our Marshalltown and about the same weight. It too is forged in one piece and has a flashy orange wooden handle to make it easier to find in the backdirt. I found that handle particularly ergonomic in my hand. I do remain curious as to their trademark – a somewhat sinister hand boldly displayed on the blade.

I would be remiss if I didn't point out that historical archeologists often avoid the pointed trowel in favor of the so-called rectangular version. That brings you back to Marshalltown, along with another American icon, the Goldblatt. The latter is made in Kansas City, and they also still offer a pointed version of slightly larger dimension than the three brands discussed above.

If you'd like to go international next field season, the good folks at Past Horizons (www.pasthorizons.com) can have a WHS or a Battiferro in your mailbox within a week. Marshalltowns, both pointed and rectangular, are easily obtainable from Forestry Suppliers (www.forestry-suppliers.com) and at many other locations.

Let me know of any other brands you feel worthy of attention. I remain a traditionalist, however, and don't care about cheap welded blades or rubber handles. My advice is just say no to those. Happy troweling.

Robert Hines named 'Teacher of the Year'

Montgomery County high school teacher Robert Hines was named ASM Teacher of the Year at the spring symposium in St. Mary's City. Hines, who developed archeology programs for Richard Montgomery and Col. Zadac Magruder high schools, presented a slide show after accepting the award, showing the accomplishments of his students.

A teacher in the Montgomery County system since 1969, since 1984 he has been working with middle and high school age students on archeology projects throughout the Middle Potomac area. He set up a program where his students worked alongside professional archeologists from the National Park Service and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission during excavations and to help train these students in proper laboratory procedures.

Several of his students have gone on to major in archeology in college and one has become an assistant professor of archeology at the University of Virginia.

He also developed the Montgomery College New Directions Program for Gifted and Talented Students, "Exploring Archeology in Maryland." For 14 years this program has provided opportunities for middle- and high-school students to get summer field experience.

At the present time, he also is the sponsor of archeology clubs at the two high schools. In addition, he has written about incorporating archaeology into the high school curriculum.

Somehow a series of sites is saved

By Gayle Early

Condensed from San Diego City Beat, March 17, 2009

During the past year, archeologists have been digging like mad to preserve one of the last remaining ancient Indian village sites in coastal Southern California, racing to get the work done before the federal government erases in one year what had managed to survive for millennia. And they did it in almost complete secrecy.

By April 2008, then-Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff had waived 36 environmental and cultural laws that could otherwise block completion of a triple border fence. Congress granted him this authority in 2005. In the interest of national security, the feds claimed eminent domain over state, county and private lands along the 2,000-mile border with Mexico.

Defenders of Wildlife, Sierra Club, Save Our Heritage Organization and other groups sued the federal government, arguing that the move was unconstitutional—and lost, meaning that the Army Corps of Engineers could have obliterated known and unknown archeological sites eligible. But it didn't.

So, how did archeologists snag a \$3 million contract with an otherwise implacable post-9-11 defense machine? Quietly. Behind the scenes. In secret. With the helpful hand of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other key players, none of whom was required to care.

Chertoff did say he wanted to honor the spirit of the laws he waived. And that's the chink in the wall where Therese Muranaka, associate archeologist for California State Parks, struck her wedge.

A coalition of environmentalists, Native Americans and government agencies huddled together—it's unclear exactly when, perhaps around March 2006—knowing they could not stop the fence.

At first, said Clint Linton, of the Santa Ysabel Band of Diegueño India, the archeological reviewer with the Army Corps "shut the door on us, wouldn't talk, just said, 'It's waived—you guys can't do anything about it.'"

"From my perspective," said Mark Becker, of ASM Affiliates, "there are sites all over the place, when you get a rich environment like the estuary."

One bluff yielded occupation dates around 7,600 years ago, another 5,000 years ago.

"Any driving will destroy it," said State Parks' Historian Victor Walsh, at the Archeology Society meeting in Rancho Penasquitos. "The archeology is ephemeral, close to the surface."

Muranaka nearly gushed about negotiations and cooperation among federal and state agencies, as well as Native Americans, to protect three major sites the fence would hit.

By October 2007, Nancy Parrish stepped in as archeological reviewer at the Army Corps headquarters in Texas. She apologized to the tribes. By May 2008, she awarded an archeological contract for excavation of 174 archeological test units, a massive dig by usual standards. Muranaka was ready with State Parks' permits.

By summer, contract archeologists had dug more than 100 so-called test units on the three bluffs leading to the beach. They were under the gun to work quickly. Extra hands had to be hired. Kiewit Corp., fence builders for the San Diego sector, told them which hill they needed their trucks on and by what day. Kiewit would start on county lands and work west, giving the archeologists just enough time to get things done.

A federal spokesman in Washington said Homeland Security spent \$40 million on "under the radar" environmental mitigation, including, she noted, a complete archeological survey of the border. Homeland Security / Customs and Border Protection also granted the Department of the Interior an additional \$50 million to mitigate "adverse effects on natural and cultural resources."

"This is a win," Muranaka exulted. ". . . All the players came together and they were all committed to saving something."

Who was responsible?

"So to stick to those bullet points," she said. "It was a lucky break. It was a cooperative venture. We did what we were supposed to do. We got, basically, 98 to 100 percent of all the sites—a definite win."

Why did the Army Corps do what it didn't have to do?

"That's the question," Muranaka said. "Isn't that an interesting question?"

What's ahead at Port Tobacco field session

Continued from Page one

For those who like alternatives to digging, a field laboratory will provide opportunities to wash artifacts in the shade. For those not able to make the field session, and for those who simply want more, we expect to process the field session finds at Port Tobacco throughout July and August. For those who can't volunteer but are interested in our research, we will be blogging throughout the field session, as we have since the project began. You can find our daily research blog at

<http://porttobacco.blogspot.com>

If you have any questions about the field session or about the Port Tobacco Archaeological Project in general, feel free to contact me at abeisaw@yahoo.com

Schedule of field school special events

A full slate of workshops and lectures are planned for the field school, with something happening every day, either during lunch or in the evening, sometimes both.

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|---------------------------|--|
| Saturday, May 23: | Noon, Scott Lawrence demonstrating monument repair
Evening, reception, 7-9 p.m. |
| Sunday, May 24: | Noon, workshop on soil description
Evening, workshop on ethics, 6-8 p.m. |
| Monday, May 25: | Noon, a Peter Quantock demonstration on creating digital site maps |
| Tuesday, May 26: | Evening, movie and pizza night, 6-9 p.m. |
| Wednesday, May 27: | Noon, Allison Garbali talk on Johnson Island military prison (Ohio) ceramics |
| Thursday, May 28: | Noon, talk by Gabrielle Tayac on Native American culture and history |
| Friday, May 29: | Noon, talk on Port Tobacco archeology
Evening, workshop on archeology and the law, 6-8 p.m. |
| Saturday, May 30: | Noon, talk on Civil War sites
Evening, movie and pizza night, 6-9 p.m. |
| Sunday, May 31: | After-session BBQ, 5-8 p.m. |

JefPat offering more public archeology for '09

The Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum's public archeology program will be continuing in 2009. This summer's investigations again will be at the Smith's St. Leonard Site, the core of a large 18th-Century plantation in Calvert County. The Smith residence, a slave quarter and a detached kitchen are among the buildings located so far. Excavations this season will focus on the slave quarter in an effort to reveal more about its appearance.

The program will run May 12 through July 4. Excavations will be conducted between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, weather permitting. Tuesdays and Thursdays will be spent in the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory, washing, labeling and cataloging the recovered artifacts.

Participants in the ASM CAT program may find this a good opportunity to work on their certification. If you are interested in participating, contact Ed Chaney at 410-586-8554 or echaney@mdp.state.md.us.

Sweet are the uses of adversity

Although they were catastrophic, the Mesa Verde fires revealed 676 previously unknown archeological sites. After the 1996 fire, archeologists discovered a string of about 100 check dams and long walls used to capture water, indicating that agricultural techniques were more advanced than previously thought.

Paula Neely in American Archeology, Spring 2009

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

Central

Central Chapter has no formal meetings planned, but it does engage in field work and related activities. Contact chapter President Stephen Israel, 410-945-5514 or ssisrael@verizon.net

Charles County

Meetings are held 7:30 on the second Tuesday (September-May) at the Port Tobacco Court House. Contact President Paula Martino at paulamartino@hotmail.com or 301-752-2852.

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Agricultural History Farm Park Activity Center in Derwood. Dinner at a local restaurant is at 6. Monthly lab nights are the first Thursday of the month. Contact heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org, or call 301-840-5848 or Don Housley at donhou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: www.mid-potomacarchaeology.org

Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick, on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Contact Jeremy Lazelle at 301-845-9855 or jlazelle@msn.com or Nancy Geasey at 301-378-0212.

May 13: Michael J. Miller on "Geofact or Artifact? How stone artifacts are identified and typed."

Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month. Members and guests assemble at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Ann Persson at 410-272-3425 or aspst20@yahoo.com Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake>

Upper Patuxent

Programs are the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Ida, near the courthouse in Ellicott City. Potluck suppers are held at 6:15 in September and March. Otherwise, dinner is available at an Ellicott City restaurant. For information, contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or leeprestonjr@comcast.net

May 11: Kathie Fernstron, "Pueblo, Mound-builders, Frogs and the White City."

Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. in the LaVale Library, unless noted. Contact Roy Brown, 301-724-7769. Chapter email: wmdasm@yahoo.com Website: www.geocities.com/wmdasm

May 22: Bob Wall speaks on what was found at the Barton Site in 2008 and on plans for 2009 excavations.

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.

Submissions welcome. Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782, 301-864-5289 or myronbeck@verizon.net

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