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www.marylandarcheology.org

Birth of agriculture meets DNA research

By Carl Zimmer

Condensed from the New York Times, October 18, 2016

Beneath a rocky slope in central Jordan lie the remains of a 10,000-year-old village called Ain Ghazal, one of the first farming villages to have emerged after the dawn of agriculture. Sites like Ain Ghazal provide a glimpse of one of the most important transitions in human history: the moment that people domesticated plants and animals, settled down and began to produce the kind of society in which most of us live today.

Some answers are now emerging from a surprising source: DNA extracted from skeletons at Ain Ghazal and other early settlements in the Near East. These findings have already challenged long-held ideas about how agriculture and domestication arose.

"It's a part of the story of civilization that we're just beginning to understand," said Iosif Lazaridis, a postdoctoral researcher at Harvard Medical School.

The agricultural revolution changed our species and our planet. As bands of hunter-gatherers began domesticating plants and animals, they quit the nomadic life, building villages and towns that endured for thousands of years. A stable food supply enabled their populations to explode and small egalitarian groups turned into kingdoms sprawling across hundreds of miles.

In the 1990s, archeologists largely concluded that farming began in the Fertile Crescent, specific Jordan and Israel, a region known as the Southern Levant. "The model was that everything started there, and then everything spread out from there," said Melinda A. Zeder, a senior research scientist at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

But in recent years, Zeder and other archeologists have overturned that consensus. Their research suggests that people were inventing farming at several sites in the Fertile Crescent at roughly the same time. In the Zagros Mountains of Iran, for example, Zeder and her colleagues have found evidence of the gradual domestication of wild goats over many centuries around 10,000 years ago.

People may have been cultivating plants earlier than believed, too.

In the late 1980s, Dani Nadel and his colleagues began excavating a 23,000-year-old site on the shores of the Sea of Galilee known as Ohalo II. It consisted of half a dozen brush huts. Last year, they reported that one of the huts contained 150,000 charred seeds and fruits, including many types, such as almonds, grapes and olives, that would later become crops. A stone blade found at Ohalo II seemed to have been used as a sickle to harvest cereals. A stone slab was used to grind the seeds. It seems clear the inhabitants were cultivating wild plants long before farming was thought to have begun.

"We got fixated on the very few things we just happened to see preserved in the archeological record and we got this false impression that this was an abrupt change," Zeder said. "Now we really understand there was this long period where they're playing around with resources."

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It's renewal time: A form is with this newsletter

Upcoming events

December 3: ASM board meeting, Heritage House, Ellicott City. 10 a.m. All members welcome.

January 4 – 8, 2017: Society for Historical Archaeology conference. Fort Worth. www.sha.org/conferences

March 16 – 19: Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, Virginia Beach. http://www.maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org/conferences.htm

Volunteer opportunities

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

ASM Tuesday Volunteer Lab: The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 3 and is now cataloging Mason Island II (18MO13) material. Anyone interested (especially CAT candidates) is welcome. Contact Louis Akerson at lakerson1@verizon.net or Charlie Hall at charles.hall@maryland.gov

A volunteer opportunity is available at a 17 Century site in Edgewater in Anne Arundel County, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, with Jim Gibb jamesggibb@verizon.net and Laura Cripps lcripps@howardcc.edu under the auspices of the Smithsonian. Contact either one to participate. There will be magnetometer training.

The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center seeks participants in its Citizen-Scientist Program in archeology and other environmental research programs in Edgewater. Field and lab work are conducted Wednesdays and on occasional Saturdays. Contact Jim Gibb at jamesggibb@verizon.net

Montgomery County is accepting applications from for lab and field work volunteers. Contact Heather Bouslag at 301 563 7530 or Heather.Bouslog@montgomeryparks.org

The Anne Arundel County Archaeology Program and the Lost Towns Project welcome volunteers in both field and lab at numerous sites throughout Anne Arundel County. Weekdays only. Email Jasmine Gollup at volunteers@losttownsproject.org or call the lab at 410 222 1318.

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

Jefferson Patterson Park invites volunteers to take part in its activities, including archeology, historical research and conservation. Contact Ed Chaney at ed.chaney@maryland.gov 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.

CAT corner:

For the latest information on CAT activities see the ASM website or contact her

IMPORTANT NOTICE: To make sure they don't miss announcements and opportunities, all CAT candidates are asked to update their contact information by sending their current address, email and phone numbers to Belinda Urquiza at burquiza@comcast.net

Online course being offered on ship architecture

The Centre for Maritime Archaeology of Britain's University of Southampton is offering a free online course on ship architecture starting in January. Those who got a taste of the subject with Susan Langley's two-day course this year, and those who wish they had, will be able to sign up for this lecture series, entitled Shipwrecks and Submerged Worlds: Maritime Archaeology. For more information, and to sign up, visit http://www.futurelearn.com/courses/shipwrecks

African-Christian link found on E. Shore

By John Noble Wilford

Condensed from the New York Times, November 7, 2016

African-Americans have long been among the country's most fervent Christians, from the choir to the pulpit to the affirming voices from every "amen corner." Just when and how their ancestors broke with traditional African spirit practices and adopted Christianity has never been fully resolved. Now archaeologists in Maryland have announced the discovery of an intact set of objects that they interpret as religious symbols — traditional ones from Africa, mixed with what they believe to be a biblical image: a representation of Ezekiel's Wheel.

No one had found this combination of religious artifacts before, said Mark P. Leone, a University of Maryland archeologist who led the discovery team. "Christianity had not erased traditional African spirit practices," he concluded. "It had merged with them to form a potent blend that still thrives today."

Two of Leone's graduate students, Benjamin A. Skolnik and Elizabeth Pruitt, made the discovery and excavated the artifacts, which were just below the surface where a tenant farmer's house once stood on land of a former plantation near Easton, Md. That was four years ago. Leone and others familiar with the religious history of African-Americans then sought to interpret what they had found.

In the late 18th Century, Methodist Episcopal and later African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) preachers carried the Christian message to the plantations on Maryland's Eastern Shore. They seemed to have been successful converting slaves, in part by giving new meaning to traditional symbols. For example, a powerful symbol from the BaKongo belief system in West Central Africa, where many of the slaves came from, was the cosmogram, a circle with an X inside.

African-Americans repurposed these materials because they had symbolic value as well in the form of Ezekiel's blazing chariot wheel, Pruitt said. The wheel imagery is described in the Book of Ezekiel 10:9-10.

The wheel-like image in the Book of Ezekiel and the cosmogram, Pruitt suggested, "represented the universe and the path we travel through this world and the afterlife" and "it stands for the enduring connections between this world and the next, the power from above and below."

For the first time, the two circle images had been found together virtually side by side. It seems that the Christian preachers had discovered the powerful resonance the wheel image held for African-Americans. One of the most popular spirituals among people in A.M.E. churches and camp meetings on the Eastern Shore is "'Zekiel Saw the Wheel."

The artifacts gathered by Leone's team are on display at a new exhibition at the University of Maryland's Hornbake Library. "Frederick Douglass & Wye House: Archaeology and African American Culture in Maryland" runs through July 2017, Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Older ruins found at Harford tavern site

By David Anderson

Condensed from the Baltimore Sun, November 24, 2016

Bush Tavern in Abingdon is a storied site: The 18th-Century building has been a tavern, a home, a courthouse and a stagecoach stop on the Post Road connecting Baltimore and Philadelphia. These days, it's a doctor's office.

But a new archeological survey conducted for the State Highway Administration has uncovered remnants of a structure that may predate the tavern building in Harford County.

The survey and dig have been under way since September as the SHA prepares safety improvements at the nearby intersection of Routes 7 and 136 in a project expected to cost between $1.2 million and $1.4 million.

The work uncovered a stone foundation that experts believe may be separate from the historic tavern.

"We found out that not only do we have one stone foundation, we had two stone foundations," said Julie Schablitsky, chief archeologist for the SHA's Cultural Resources Section. "They are delineating two separate buildings during two separate time periods."

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The "big question," Schablitsky said, is whether the stone foundations are older than the Bush Tavern.

The exact age of the Bush Tavern is unknown, but it was standing in 1781 during the Revolutionary War when French troops supporting the Continental Army camped in the area.

The tavern was part of the Bush settlement, also known as Harford Town, that was founded in 1774. Harford Town was the county seat until 1791, when the seat was moved to Bel Air.

During the Colonial period, Henry Ozman ran the popular tavern with his wife. An African-American family lived at the building during the 1860s; one of its members, David Norton, served with the Union's U.S. Colored Troops during the Civil War.

Dr. Peter Holt, current owner of the Bush Tavern, whose office is decked out with tavern artifacts, said he believes the uncovered foundations could be another tavern or possibly a "kitchen house."

One section of the newly uncovered foundation includes a square cellar and a rounded portion that indicates a well. Researchers are using dendrochronology — the study of tree rings — to determine the age of wooden beams on the site.

Artifacts "related to every aspect of daily life" have been found, said Aaron Levinthal, an SHA archeologist and lab director. They include food bones, tableware, cookware, construction items, wine bottles, thimbles, buttons, pieces of tobacco pipes and even slate pencils. Items date from the late 1700s to the present, he said.

"Here and there, we're finding pieces that were [made] earlier and are wondering when they're from," he said. "We're wondering if there is an earlier tavern in this area."

Holly Baldwin, an SHA archeologist, said ceramics are particularly helpful, because they can be traced to a specific period based on style and how they were manufactured.

"They're really easily datable," she said.

Signs of 1620 Plymouth settlement found

Condensed from Cape Cod Today, November 22, 2016

Three hundred and ninety-five years after Pilgrims celebrated the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth, Massachusetts, researchers from UMass Boston's Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archaeological Research can say they have definitively discovered evidence of the original 1620 Plymouth settlement. Part of the proof involves a calf that UMass Boston students have named Constance.

For the fourth summer, David Landon, associate director of the Fiske Center, led students in a field school in Plymouth. They spent five weeks on Burial Hill looking for the site of the original Pilgrim settlement.

Because the original structures weren't built with bricks, the research team couldn't look for foundations. Rather, they had to look for "post and ground construction" – basically holes for wood, and dirt.

But then Landon's team did start finding 17th Century artifacts: 17th Century pottery, tins, trade beads and musket balls. Landon says the students and researchers were at this point cautiously optimistic that they had found a location inside the settlement walls. And then they found "Constance" – a calf buried whole in the bottom-most pit. Native people didn't have domestic cattle, Landon says.

Kathryn Ness is the curator of collections at Plimoth Plantation, UMass Boston's partner in this project. She says this discovery is huge.

"Finding evidence of colonial activity inside the original 1620 Plymouth settlement is an incredibly exciting discovery that has the potential to change dramatically our understanding of early European colonization in New England. For the first time, we have proof of where the settlement was located and what kinds of items the Pilgrims owned and used," Ness said.

"At Plimoth Plantation, the team's findings will help us further refine our exhibits, as we use archeological evidence and historical documents as the basis for our portrayal of the past and to ensure that our buildings, activities and reproduction objects are as accurate as possible. We are looking forward to learning more about their discoveries and seeing what they find next season."

And Landon and more students and researchers will be back next summer. For now, researchers and students are cleaning, labeling and researching what was found this past summer. They're also going to be trying to figure out how Constance died and why she was buried, rather than eaten.

Underwater coup found in Black Sea

By William J. Broad

Condensed from the New York Times, November 11, 2016

The medieval ship lay more than a half-mile down at the bottom of the Black Sea, its masts, timbers and planking undisturbed in the darkness for seven or eight centuries. Lack of oxygen in the icy depths had ruled out the usual riot of creatures that feast on sunken wood.

This fall, a team of explorers lowered a robot on a long tether, lit up the wreck with bright lights and took thousands of high-resolution photos. A computer then merged the images into a detailed portrait.

Archeologists date the discovery to the 13th or 14th Century, opening a new window on forerunners of the 15th- and 16th-Century sailing vessels that discovered the New World. This medieval ship probably served the Venetian empire, which had Black Sea outposts.

Never before had this type of ship been found in such complete form. The breakthrough was the quarterdeck, from which the captain would have directed a crew of perhaps 20 sailors.

"That's never been seen archeologically," said Rodrigo Pacheco-Ruiz, an expedition member at the Center for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Southampton, in Britain. "We couldn't believe our eyes."

Remarkably, the find is but one of more than 40 shipwrecks that the international team recently discovered and photographed off the Bulgarian coast in one of archeology's greatest coups.

In age, the vessels span a millennium, from the Byzantine to the Ottoman empires, from the 9th to the 19th Centuries. Generally, the ships are in such good repair that the images reveal intact coils of rope, rudders and elaborately carved decorations.

"They're astonishingly preserved," said Jon Adams, the leader of the Black Sea project and founding director of the maritime archeology center at the University of Southampton.

Kroum Batchvarov, a team member at the University of Connecticut who grew up in Bulgaria and has conducted other studies in its waters, said the recent discoveries "far surpassed my wildest expectations."

Independent experts said the annals of deepwater archeology hold few, if any, comparable sweeps of discovery in which shipwrecks have proved to be so plentiful, diverse and well- preserved.

Goods traded on the Black Sea included grains, furs, horses, oils, cloth, wine and people. The Tatars turned Christians into slaves who were shipped to places like Cairo. For Europeans, the sea provided access to a northern branch of the Silk Road and imports of silk, satin, musk, perfumes, spices and jewels.

Brendan P. Foley, an archeologist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod, Mass., said the good condition of the shipwrecks implied that many objects inside their hulls might also be intact.

"You might find books, parchment, written documents," he said in an interview. "Who knows how much of this stuff was being transported? But now we have the possibility of finding out. It's amazing."

Foley, who has explored a number of Black Sea wrecks, said the sea's overall expanse undoubtedly held tens of thousands of lost ships. "Everything that sinks out there is going to be preserved," he added.

For ages, the Black Sea was a busy waterway that served the Balkans, the Eurasian steppes, the Caucasus, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Greece. It long beckoned to archeologists because they knew its deep waters lacked oxygen, a rarity for large bodies of water.

Adams said the remarkable color images of the lost ships derived from a process known as photogrammetry. It combines photography with the careful measurement of distances between objects, letting a computer turn flat images into renderings that seem three-dimensional.

He said tethered robots shot the photographic images with video and still cameras. The distance information, he added, came from advanced sonars, which emit high-pitched sounds that echo through seawater. Their measurements, he said, can range down to less than a millimeter.

The team has said little publicly on whether it plans to excavate the ships — a topic on which nations, academics and treasure hunters have long clashed. Bulgaria is a signatory to the 2001 United Nations convention that outlaws commercial trade in underwater cultural heritage and sets out guidelines on such things as artifact recovery and public display.

Pacheco-Ruiz said the team had so far discovered and photographed 44 shipwrecks, and that more beckoned.

How to steal a sunken World War II fleet

By Travis M. Andrews

Condensed from the Washington Post, November 18, 2016

The HMS Exeter, a heavy cruiser in the Royal Navy, weighed nearly 10,000 imperial tons. The slightly smaller HMS Encounter and the destroyer HMS Electra flanked the great beast of a ship as on Feb. 27, 1942, they entered the Java Sea, which slices through the Indonesian islands of Java and Kalimantan. Along with them were Dutch ships HNLMS De Ruyter, HNLMS Java and HNLMS Kortenaer and many, many others.

There these six ships — along with those of other Allied Forces — engaged in a long and grueling battle with a Japanese fleet. According to the Guardian, it was one of the "costliest sea skirmishes for the allies" and was the catalyst for the Japanese gaining occupation of the Dutch East Indies.

Those six ships sank to the bottom of the sea, along with some 2,200 people, Dutch News reported.

In 2002, a group of amateur divers discovered the wreckage resting peacefully at the bottom of the sea 230 feet deep. The area was declared a sacred war grave, Time reported.

With the battle's 75th anniversary quickly approaching, a new expedition of divers set out to film the missing ships for a commemoration of the historic day.

When they reached the spot, though, researchers were shocked at what they found. Rather, they were shocked at what they *didn't* find. The ships were almost entirely gone. Poof.

The HMS Exeter and the HMS Encounter were nearly completely gone.

According to the Guardian, researchers used underwater sonar equipment to create a 3D map of the sea floor, where the wreckage had been. Where the debris "was once located, there is a large 'hole' in the seabed."

A "sizable section" of the HMS Electra remained, but it too was mostly missing. Also disappeared was a 300-foot-long American submarine named Perch. Dutch defense minister Jeanine Hennis told MPs that two of its three ships had also vanished and the third was mostly missing.

All of which raises the question, how do several ships simply disappear?

The most agreed upon answer, in this case, appears to be scavengers with hopes of selling the metal from the shipwrecks. In total, the Guardian reported, the metal could be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. The propellers alone, many of which are made from phosphor bronze, are priced at almost $2,500 a ton.

If scavengers did indeed steal the wreckage, they would have broken international law, Andy Brockman, an archeologist and researcher in maritime crime, told the newspaper. The ships are the legal property of the country to which they originally belonged.

But, as the BBC stated, "salvaging the wrecks would have been a huge operation."

The ships were about 230 feet underwater and about 60 miles offshore.

"It is almost impossible to salvage this," Paul Koole of the salvage specialists Mammoet told Algemeen Dagblad. "It is far too deep."

But it's become increasingly common around Indonesia, where hundreds of ships sank during World War II.

"It's like a cottage industry, apart from the fact the illicit salvage boats are dealing with substantial wrecks. Basically they use explosives and grabs to rip things apart," Brockman told the Guardian. "You get basis steel. In a single engine room you have a lot of nonferrous metals, copper and brass, which have a premium on the scrap metal market."

The explosions would be small and mostly undetectable, especially that far offshore, one expert said.

"It is not like a huge explosion like you see on TV. It's basically fairly contained but enough to break apart the vessel and if you do it a few times, you can just fish out the pieces," Bas Wiebe, commercial manager of salvage company Resolve's Asia operations, told the BBC.

Given that, some experts told the BBC that scavengers could have "nibbled away" at the ships for years, going mostly unnoticed.

"The desecration of a war grave is a serious offence," the British Ministry of Defense said in a statement obtained by the BBC. "Many lives were lost during this battle and we would expect that these sites are respected and left undisturbed without the express consent of the United Kingdom."

The Indonesian navy claimed it wasn't aware of any scavenging that might have occurred.

Birth of agriculture meets DNA research

Continued from Page 1

Zeder argues, agriculture came about as climatic changes shifted the ranges of some wild species of plants and animals into the Near East. Many different groups began experimenting with ways of producing extra food, which eventually enabled them to start a new way of life: settling down in more stable social groups.

Enter the geneticists, who have long wondered if they could help solve the riddle of agriculture's origins with DNA from human remains discovered in places like Ain Ghazal. Ancient genetic material can survive in skeletons for sometimes even hundreds of thousands of years. Scientists have been able to reconstruct entire genomes of ancient humans and extinct relatives like Neanderthals.

But "genetically the Near East was terra incognita," said David Reich, of Harvard Medical School.

It in two recent studies, geneticists including Reich used new methods to fish out enough DNA from the bones of the first farmers to figure out their relationship to other people. A team of researchers based at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany, reconstructed the genomes of four early farmers from the Zagros Mountains whose bones date back as much as 10,000 years.

Reich and his colleagues — including Lazaridis of Harvard — recovered genetic material from 44 sets of remains around the Near East. Their haul included DNA from early farmers in Iran, as well as from bones from another site in the Southern Levant like Ain Ghazal. Reich's group discovered even older genetic material from hunter-gatherers in the region, from as far back as 14,000 years ago.

The new results all point to the same conclusion: The first farmers in each region were the descendants of the earlier hunter-gatherers. What's more, each population had its own distinct ancestry, going back tens of thousands of years.

They were as different from one another genetically as the Europeans and Chinese. And these groups remained distinct through the agricultural revolution as they changed from hunter-gatherers to full-blown farmers. "It was quite surprising to see how different these groups were from each other," Lazaridis said. "It was more extreme than anything you could have imagined was going on."

Reich and others argue that the findings show that people around the Fertile Crescent became farmers independently. "It's not like you had one Near Eastern population that developed farming that expands and overruns all the others," he said.

Archeologists have welcomed the new results from the geneticists. But for now, they are interpreting the data in different ways.

Zeder said that ancient DNA supports a scenario where farmers across the Fertile Crescent independently invented agriculture, perhaps repeatedly. But Ofer Bar-Yosef of Harvard says he thinks full-blown agriculture evolved only once, and then quickly spread from one group to another.

He points to the increasingly precise dating of archeological sites in the Fertile Crescent. Instead of the Southern Levant, the oldest sites with evidence of full-blown agriculture are in northern Syria and southern Turkey. That's where Bar-Yosef thinks agriculture began.

In other parts of the Fertile Crescent, he argues, people were just toying with farming. Only when they came in contact with the combination of crops and livestock, and the technology to manage them — what scientists call the Neolithic package — did they permanently adopt the practices.

"You just map the dates" of the sites at which the evidence for farming is found, he said, "and you see it's always later as you get away from the core area." The new genetic results simply show that this farming technology spread through the Fertile Crescent, but that the populations sharing it did not interbreed.

The new research also shows that even after agriculture was established across the Fertile Crescent, people remained genetically isolated for thousands of years. But about 8,000 years ago, the barriers between peoples fell away and genes began to flow across the entire region. The Near East became one homogeneous mix of people.

Why? Reich speculated that growing populations of farmers began linking to one another via trade networks. Genes did not just flow across the Fertile Crescent — they also rippled outward. The scientists have detected DNA from the first farmers in living people on three continents.

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Early farmers in Turkey moved across the western part of the country, crossed the Bosporus and traveled into Europe about 8,000 years ago. They encountered no farmers there. Europe had been home to groups of hunter-gatherers for more than 30,000 years. The farmers seized much of their territory and converted it to farmland, without interbreeding with them.

The hunter-gatherers clung to existence for centuries and were eventually absorbed by bigger farming communities. Europeans today can trace much of their ancestry to both groups.

The early farmers in what is now Iran expanded eastward. Eventually, their descendants ended up in present-day India and their DNA makes up a substantial portion of the genomes of Indians.

And the people of Ain Ghazal? Their population expanded into East Africa, bringing crops and animals with them. In Somalia, a third of people's DNA comes from the southern Levant.

Reich hopes to learn more about the early farmers by obtaining samples more systematically from across the Fertile Crescent. But he is pessimistic about filling in some of the most glaring gaps in the genetic map. No one has yet recovered DNA from the people who lived in the oldest known farming settlements. And it's unlikely they'll be trying again soon. To do so, they would have to venture into the heart of Syria's civil war.

Chapter notes

In addition to the listed chapters, ASM has a chapter at the Community College of Baltimore County, led by Nina Brown, and a club at Huntingtown High School in Calvert County, run by Jeff Cunningham.

Anne Arundel

For information, contact Jim Gibb at http://JamesGGibb@verizon.net

Central Chapter

For information contact centralchapterasm @yahoo.com or stephenisrael2701@comcast.net or 410-945-5514. Or on Facebook, www.facebook.com/asmcentralchapter or http://asmcentralchapter.weebly.com/

Charles County

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday (September–May) in the community room of the LaPlata Police Department. Contact President Carol Cowherd at ccasm2010@gmail.com. Chapter website is charlescoasm.org and its blog is ccarchsoc.blogspot.com

December 8: Artifacts of Religion and Magic, Sara Rivers Cofield

January 12, 2017: A Jim Gibb workshop, "Bones for Beginners."

February 9: Josiah Henson Property, by Julie King and Rebecca Webster

March 9: Kate Dinnel on "Elusive Artifacts-Archaeological Textiles & Native Plants."

April 13: Esther Doyle Read on tbd

May 11: tbd

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Needwood Mansion in Derwood. Dinner at a local restaurant at 5:30 p.m. Contact heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org or 301-563-7530 or Don Housley at donhou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: http://www.asmmidpotomac.org Email: asmmidpotomac@gmail.com Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mid-Potomac-Archaeology/182856471768

Friday, December 16: Chapter Holiday Party at the Agricultural History Activity Center in Derwood, 6 to 10.

January 19: Heather Bouslog, Montgomery County Parks archeologist, will speak on understanding Oakley Cabin landscapes.

February 16: Carole Fontenrose, chapter member, will speak on the archeology of the City of London, part II.

March 16: Bob Hines, chapter members and sponsor of Volunteers in Archaeology, will speak on the last year's excavation at the Riggs House in Brookeville.

Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. For more information, visit the chapter's web page at digfrederick.com or call 301-378-0212.

Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are usually the second Wednesday of the month. Members and guests assemble at 6:30 for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Dan Coates at 410-273-9619 or dancoates@comcast.net Website: http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake

Friday December 9: Diana Fridberg will speak of Mayan archeology in Guatemala. Annual Dinner Meeting and Election of Officers. I.O.O.F. Hall, Aberdeen.

January 11: Dianne Klair and Dave Peters on the history and archeological preparations of the Burns Property. Havre de Grace City Hall.

February 8: Edgar Hardesty on "Encounters Between Israel and the Philistines Based on Geography and Archeology." Harford Jewish Center, Havre de Grace.

Thursday March 9: TBA. Historical Society of Cecil County, Elkton.

Friday, April 7: Becca Peixotto will talk about "The Discovery of Fossil Man in South Africa." Harford Community College, Bel Air.

May/June. Annual Picnic Meeting, at an historic site in Harford or Cecil County.

St. Mary's County

Meetings are the third Monday of the month at St. Francis Xavier Church in Newtown or at St. Mary's College. For information contact Chris Coogan at Clcoogan@smcm.edu

Upper Patuxent

Meets the second Monday at 7 p.m. at 9944 Route 108 in Ellicott City. Labs are the second and fourth Saturdays. On Facebook, www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358 or try UPArchaeologygroup@yahoo.com or http://uparchaeologygroup.weebly.com/

Thursday, December 15: Holiday party, Bare Bones, Ellicott City. Note change in date.

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. Email: wmdasm@yahoo.com Website: http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm

December: No chapter meeting due to the holiday.

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

ASM members receive the monthly newsletter, ASM Ink; the biannual journal, MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10 percent discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Rachael Holmes at 875 Boyd Street, Floor 3, Baltimore, MD 21223 for membership rates. For publication sales, not including newsletter or Journal, 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. Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD. 20782, 301-864-5289 or myronbeck@verizon.net