

ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

NOTICE TO ALL ASM MEMBERS

The Covid-19 coronavirus also has played havoc with ASM and its schedule of spring events.

It is hoped that everyone got the message that the March 28 Workshop in Archeology had to be cancelled. The Trust hopes it might be possible to hold it sometime in October.

The April 18 Spring Symposium also has been cancelled. Based on the uncertainty of the virus reappearing in the fall and that trying to reschedule speakers should begin now, the ASM board doesn't think it is possible or prudent to begin rescheduling at this time.

Another difficulty is that time slots are limited and the Annual Meeting already is scheduled for November 7. A venue also needs to be available for any postponed meetings.

Still undecided at this time is the fate of the 2020 field session. Planned is a return to last year's location, the Billingsley Site in Prince George's County from May 22 to June 1. Watch the ASM website for later information.

Upcoming events

November 7: Annual meeting of ASM. We hope.

Volunteer opportunities (non-Covid)

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

ASM Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays: The lab in Crownsville. Contact Charlie Hall at charles.hall@maryland.gov or Louise Akerson at lakerson1@verizon.net. It is currently working on cataloging artifacts from the Levering Coffee House Site, Baltimore (a mostly late 18th/early 19th Century site).

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 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. For diggers, the Linniston site on Gibson Island shows signs of occupation from the 17th through 19th centuries. Digging is on Fridays from 8 to 3. The lab will be open some weekdays at the Anne Arundel collection facility at 7409 Baltimore-Annapolis Blvd. in Glen Burnie. For more information and to sign up email Drew Webster at volunteers@losttownsproject.org or call 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 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.

UPAG/Howard County Recs and Parks invites volunteers interested in processing collections and conducting historical research to contact Kelly Palich at Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-0423.

CAT corner: For information on the CAT program, contact chair Kelly Palich at Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-0423.

Frank & Ernest

by Thaves



Tiny stones tell a big story of Coney Island

By Katy Read,

(Minneapolis) Star Tribune, March 26, 2020

Larry Macht, a volunteer at the Carver County Historical Society, scrubbed what looked to be pebbles with a toothbrush. Archeologist Lindsey Reiners slipped each of the stones into its own little plastic bag, carefully labeled with the location it was found.

What appear to the untrained eye to be plain old rocks, unearthed from an island in Lake Waconia, are actually valuable ancient artifacts.

"People are going to be disappointed when they see how little they are," said Wendy Petersen Biorn, executive director of the historical society in Waconia, storehouse for thousands of artifacts collected from Coney Island of the West.

Nevertheless, the little pieces of stone, along with small shards of pottery and bones, are fragments of history — clues to the lives of people who occupied the island 1,500 years ago.

"A lot of these artifacts don't look like something you would display in a museum, but they hold a lot of information," said David Mather, an archeologist at the State Historic Preservation Office who has been involved in the research.

Last fall, the county began a long-planned project to develop land on Lake Waconia, including the island, into a 135-acre park, part of the metro area's 55,000-acre regional park system. But before building paths and picnic areas, the county is required to hire archeologists to prevent destruction of valuable artifacts.

So archeologists from Blondo Consulting, a Kettle River, Minn.-based firm, began digging holes in 2016 throughout the woody site in search of objects that hold evidence of the island's history. They worked with the county to steer paths away from areas where artifacts were concentrated and which offered opportunities for more study.

"The more you look at these different types of materials, the more features you find, the more you recognize them," said Kelly Wolf, a Blondo archeologist. "We see tiny pieces that you wouldn't necessarily see in a shovel full of dirt.

They knew they'd find recognizable items remaining from the days in the early 1900s when Coney Island was a tourist resort with a hotel and cabins. The island is listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of the decaying structures. In one place, the archeologists discovered yellow Chaska brick laid out as a sidewalk, "our very own yellow brick road on the island," Wolf said.

As the dig continued, they spotted the tiny fragments that told of life on the island long before vacationers arrived: a decorated fragment of pottery, hearths used to cook food, specimens of Knife River flint from North Dakota that point to either migration or trade. They found a bone from a nonnative fish and microscopic traces of corn from early agriculture, both likely carried to the island from elsewhere.

"We think the island was just used for seasonal stays," Reiners said.

They also have found numerous arrowheads, whose smaller size indicates a transition from spears to bows and arrows thousands of years ago.

"The style of [arrowheads] evolved over time just like every other technology evolves over time," Wolf said.

If these fragments hold so much information, why don't they just dig up the entire island to see what else is there? Because in recent decades archeologists have tried when possible to leave artifacts in place. In fact, state law makes it illegal for citizens to remove artifacts at all.

Their physical location provides information that future archeologists may have the technology to analyze without digging.

"If you start taking pieces out of it and putting them in boxes, you can't put that whole puzzle back together again," Wolf said.

Though publicly owned property must go through this archeological research before being developed, private property owners are under no such obligation. Throughout the state, countless pieces of history lie under parking lots, highways, housing developments.

"We lose a lot all the time — it's a reality of the world, and it's unfortunate," Mather said.

"That's why places like this where the archeology is significant but also well preserved are so important. There aren't many places that have both of those things going for them."

Nonsequitor

by Wiley



Speed Bump

by Dave Coverly



This trove is beerly recognizable

By Eliot Routh

Condensed from VinePair, March 25, 2020

Buried treasure isn't always the stereotypical chest of gold coins: In the case of a recent British archeological dig, it turned out to be an enormous stash of beer.

Last month, while digging on the site of the former Tetley's Brewery, in the northern English city of Leeds, archeologists from the West Yorkshire Archaeological Services discovered a neatly stacked stash of over 600 bottles — many of which were still full, The Drinks Business reports.

While the archeologists initially thought the bottles contained ginger beer, a lab analysis has since shown that the liquid inside contained 3 percent ABV, equivalent to a typical (but mild) English Session Ale.

The beers date from perhaps the 1880s. Though many of the bottles were still full, don't expect them to be popped any time soon. Testing showed that the beer contained a dangerously high amount of lead. The archeologists suspect the lead content is likely due to lead pipes in old breweries.

Even if the bottles aren't potable, they are still educational. When work on the Tetley's site is finished, Vastint, the company overseeing the development, intends to put them on display as artifacts from daily life in the Victorian era.

Check with chapter to see if the event is still on

Chapter News

In addition to the listed chapters, ASM has chapters at Hood College and the Community College of Baltimore County and a club at Huntingtown High School in Calvert County, run by Jeff Cunningham; visit its website, <http://hhsarchaeology.weebly.com/>

Anne Arundel

Anne Arundel Chapter will be meeting at the Schmidt Center at SERC, the second Tuesday of each month, 7 to 9 p.m. Parking in front of the venue. For information, contact Jim Gibb at JamesGGibb@verizon.net

Central Chapter

Central Chapter holds bimonthly meetings at MICA's Bunting Center, 1401 W. Mt Royal Ave, Baltimore. For information contact Katharine Fernstrom at kwfappraising@gmail.com. New Facebook page is "Central Chapter of the ASM."

Charles County

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday (September–May) at the LaPlata Police Department. Contact President Carol Cowherd at ccasm2010@gmail.com. Website ccarchsoc.blogspot.com and Facebook [@ccasm2010](https://www.facebook.com/ccasm2010)

April 9: Patricia Samford with a Post-Colonial refined earthenware workshop.

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 Don Housley at donhou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: <http://www.asmmidpotomac.org> Email: asmmidpotomac@gmail.com Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Mid-Potomac-Archaeology/182856471768

April 16: Don Barron, docent at the MOOseum in Germantown, will speak on the history of dairy farming in Montgomery County and the Museum's history and collections.

May 21: Bob Hines will give an update on and plans for 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 7 p.m. For more information, visit the chapter's web page at digfrederick.com or call 301-378-0212.

Northern Chesapeake

Members assemble at 6:30 for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 with the talk at 7:30. Contact Dan Coates at 410- 273-9619 or dancoates@comcast.net Website: sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake

Friday, April: Date & subject TBA. Edgewood Hall, Harford Community College, Bel Air.

May (Exact date TBA) Annual Picnic Meeting. St. Patrick's Irish Catholic Church, Conowingo

St. Mary's County

Meetings are the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Joseph D. Carter State Office Building in the Russell Conference Room, Leonardtown. For information contact Chris Coogan at Ccoogan@smcm.edu

Upper Patuxent

Meetings the second Saturday or Sunday of the month, at the Heritage Program Office, 9944 Route 108, Ellicott City, unless otherwise noted. www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358 or www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com or call Kelly Palich, 410 313 0423.

April 18: The Elkridge site by Robert Wall.

May 9: Steve Curtis and Kelly Palich on the Mill Town of Tridelphia.

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>

April 24: The Susquehannock occupation in western Maryland during the 1600s by Robert Wall.

May: No meeting scheduled.

June 26: TBA

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 Ethan Bean, 609 N. Paca Street, Apt. 3, Baltimore, MD 21201 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, 3126 Gracefield Rd., Apt. 106, Silver Spring MD 20905
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