



# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

[www.marylandarcheology.org](http://www.marylandarcheology.org)

## Field session returning to spring for 2005

Field school is moving back to the spring this year. That was one of the actions taken by the ASM board at its December meeting in Crownsville.

In 2005 the annual session was held in September. This change from the usual spring date was made to accommodate the needs of the Lost Towns Project, which oversaw the colonial era dig at Swan Cove in Anne Arundel County.

But no such schedule problems are foreseen for 2006, even though a site for the field school has yet to be chosen. The exact dates also are still to be determined, but the plan is to have the session in May and include Memorial Day weekend.

In another action, Annetta Schott was elected to fill an open seat on the board. She replaced Susan Buonocore, who resigned after moving out of state. Susan plans to continue her ASM membership from afar. In addition to her board duties, Susan was a regular participant in the Tuesday lab sessions in Crownsville processing artifacts from ASM digs.

New board trustee Annetta Schott is a member of the Northern Chesapeake chapter and represents ASM at meetings on the state's Native American affairs panel. Annetta also was the first person to complete ASM's Certified Archeology Technician program and has become active on the tutoring side of the program.



**Have you renewed your ASM membership for 2006 yet? There's a form inside.**

Her term expires this fall, as does the term of all ASM officers after election results are announced at the Annual Meeting. Incidentally, ASM always is looking for good candidates for its offices, so think about it and be ready to submit nominations when the announcement is made in the spring.

The board also received news that its contribution to the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington will be commemorated with a plaque on the museum's developing Wall of Honor.

# Upcoming events

**March 4:** ASM board meeting, Crownsville. 10 a.m. All are welcome.

**March 18:** Archeology workshop. Crownsville.

**April:** Archeology Month.

**April 1:** Spring Symposium. Crownsville.

## Volunteer opportunities

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

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

**ASM field session collection:** Volunteers are needed to work on up-grading collections associated with previous field sessions. Currently, the collection from the Rosenstock Site, a key Late Woodland Montgomery Complex area, is being upgraded. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson [rakerson@comcast.net](mailto:rakerson@comcast.net) or Charlie Hall [hall@dhcd.state.md.us](mailto: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/](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/) to get started. Remember to add the extra A in archaeology.

## CAT corner

Charlie Hall and Steve Israel will hold a mapping workshop Sunday, January 15, from 10 to 4. Location is to be determined. For information on what the workshop is about, and for updates and information on CAT activities check the ASM website.

**Special fieldwork opportunity:** Richard Ervin of SHA is working on the Broad Creek Cemetery, a 17<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:rervin@sha.state.md.us)

## MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM MIKE PETERS



# Striving to balance the past, future

By Tim Zink

*Condensed from The Bay Journal, July-August 2005*

Centuries ago, when Native Americans were the principal inhabitants of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, many bands favored riparian settlement sites, owing to their fertile soils, defensible positions and proximity to food sources and transportation routes. Albeit for different reasons, many of the watershed's contemporary inhabitants also favor waterfront dwellings.

At two such riverfront sites about 100 miles apart, one on the Susquehanna and another on the Potomac, modern development plans have landed atop remnants of Native American culture, challenging local leaders to strike a delicate balance between the past and future.

Populations of Native Americans thrived in the region before the Chesapeake Bay as we know it even existed. The earliest residents camped along the ancestral Susquehanna, which wound its way to an ocean with an edge farther east of its current coastline. Approximately 10,000 years ago, when the continental glaciers receded, they sent huge volumes of water downriver and eventually the Susquehanna Valley flooded with saltwater, forming today's bay.

In the millennia that followed, native peoples adapted to dramatic shifts in flora, fauna and water levels. They changed from pure hunters to fisherman and farmers, and from perpetual ramblers to semi-permanent village settlers.

Much of the stuff of Native Americans' lives, from spear points to tools to broken shards of pottery, can be found just beneath the surface of the soil. This drives treasure hunters of all stripes, from the hobbyists who regularly comb the watershed's freshly tilled fields to the professional archeologists who unearthed prehistoric stone tools when excavating for the White House swimming pool.

More remarkable is that municipal planning and zoning bodies in the watershed have recently begun to codify the need to establish strong protections for sites of prehistoric significance — and have in some cases even extended their definition of "prehistoric" to include not only Native American sites, but also those important to understanding the United States' early slave culture.

One of the most innovative sets of standards is under consideration by the Prince George's County Planning Board in Maryland, with guidance provided by its Historic Preservation Commission.

The commission has teamed its supervisor with hired archeological consultants to develop a clear, repeatable method for reviewing sites that may contain evidence of prehistoric habitation. The methodology was approved by the county planning board in May and next heads to the Prince George's County Council.

The method begins with a thorough review by the planning board's staff of historical documents, including maps, county surveys and correspondence. It also takes into consideration different natural features that were known to be favored by early inhabitants when determining where to settle.

Once the planning board's staff reviews the first round of information on a site, it will decide if there is a likelihood of discovering artifacts that are significant to the county's history. If there is a moderate to high chance of such findings, the board will direct the developer to conduct "Phase One" studies of the site. These developer-funded studies require digging 6 inches to a foot into the subsoil in a search for artifacts.

Depending on the "Phase One" findings, the board may order a "Phase Two" inquiry. This could include the use of innovative, non-invasive techniques like ground-penetrating radar to locate graves or structures.

If these studies turn up significant findings, the board will order a "Phase Three" study. This will lead to what is essentially a full-scale archeological excavation, usually with the goal of reducing development's effects on archeological resources or removing artifacts before any construction is allowed to begin.

"Mitigation-removal is the most widely practiced way of dealing with artifacts," says David Turner, chairman of the Historic Preservation Commission. "But we think there are indeed times when any development on certain sites will completely destroy a historic resource, and we are working with the planning board to find suitable solutions to these scenarios."

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The commission's new methodology is receiving an immediate real-world field test on a 23.5-acre parcel of land along the Potomac in Fort Washington, where developer Leo Bruso has been seeking the necessary permissions since 2001 to build more than 20 homes, each of which would cost more than \$1 million.

Bruso's development proposal is extremely contentious, not only because the tract of land is located in close proximity to other large tracts that have received permanent protection as Chesapeake Bay critical habitat, but because of uncertainty over the property's historical significance.

Many residents contend that the tract is Tent Landing, the site of a Revolutionary War skirmish where a local militia repelled the redcoats. This fact had shielded the property from development for decades, but after a heated debate over whether the skirmish actually took place on this property or at a nearby site, the Historic Preservation Commission in 2001 dropped the property from the county's list of historic resources.

Archeologists and residents had reported finding scores of Native American artifacts on the property—the landscape has been cited in archeological surveys dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century—and earlier surveys unearthed evidence of Native American occupation at the site dating back more than 5,000 years. The site even qualified for listing on the National Register of Historic Places based on its archeological significance.

The Historic Preservation Commission, though, had up to this point not characteristically protected sites on archeological grounds, even though the statute that formed and empowered the commission directed it to focus on preserving "any individual historic resource that is significant and contributes to the historical, architectural, archeological or cultural values ... in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation."

In February 2003, a hearing examiner recommended that the Prince George's County District Council should review the commission's decision, and in a first-of-its-kind action, the District Council returned the entire property to the inventory of historic resources.

Bruso appealed to the county planning board, asking the board to approve plans to build an eight-home subdivision on a 10-acre portion of the property. The planning board delayed its decision for a year while the guidelines for an archeological study using ground-penetrating radar were forged.

Ultimately, Bruso commissioned a ground-penetrating radar study on his own that revealed several "hotspots" requiring additional study, and after test pits were dug and no major artifacts found, the planning board voted unanimously to approve the development plan. "We have to end this some place," one board member said.

Residents immediately filed an appeal in an attempt to again block the development. That appeal is pending.

Those residents would have preferred to see the county block the development altogether, or at least negotiate a purchase of the land from Bruso, with the intent of turning the property into a park. And if Bruso had been unwilling to deal, they would have liked to see the county use its power of eminent domain.

Such a step could not take place without extreme controversy. While many localities technically consider the creation of parkland or open space as a legal and acceptable basis for the use of eminent domain, it is usually regarded as a heavy-handed tactic.

Commissioners in York County, Pennsylvania, met this exact response when they voted a year ago to condemn, with the intention of seizing as eminent domain, an archeologically and ecologically valuable property along the Susquehanna on which a local developer had intended to erect a subdivision.

The county officials, joined by state leaders including Gov. Ed Rendell, are hopeful the Lauxmont Farms and Highpoint properties will form the spine of a riverfront park that preserves the archeological and ecological integrity of the landscape.

While local officials and the owner cannot agree on if and how the property should be transitioned into a park, both sides agree that the portions considered sacred to Native Americans must forever be protected.

This historical awareness has not been common in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, especially during a time of rapid growth in population and development experienced by recent generations of residents.

Untold numbers of artifacts that could have offered great insight into civilizations past—and contemporary cultural identities—have already been lost as society charged forward. But a growing awareness of the need to protect the remaining vestiges of prehistoric times will ensure that the future residents of the Chesapeake Bay watershed understand the story of the soil.

*The Bay Journal is published by The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.*

## Archeology Month needs your ideas, and your contributions

**By Louise Akerson** *Maryland Archeology Month 2006 Coordinator*

The Maryland Archeology Month planning committee (representatives from ASM, the Council for Maryland Archeology, the Maryland Historical Trust, the State Highway Administration and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission) have begun planning the 2006 celebration scheduled for April. This year's theme, "The Past Is Speaking To Us; Let's Listen Together," plays on the idea that everyone can interpret the stories of the past by "listening" to the objects excavated from the ground.

As April approaches, look for an enhanced calendar of events on the ASM web page and for the Maryland Archeology Month bumper sticker, this year's poster and a booklet containing some selected events and information on where to get involved in Maryland archeology. We hope you will join in the fun and attend many of the activities.

But in order to continue the success of past years, we need your help. Chapter and individual participation is essential. We hope you will consider planning a new program and/or exhibit. In addition, because of limited state funding, your financial donation will be gratefully accepted, and acknowledged in the booklet.

Send your contribution, marked MAM or Maryland Archeology Month, to ASM's treasurer: Sean R. Sweeney, 300 Barclay Ct., Abingdon, MD 21009, or, contact me to list your event or exhibit: Louise. E. Akerson, 6601 Bellevue Drive, Columbia, MD 21046, [leakerson@comcast.net](mailto:leakerson@comcast.net).

## Old wall found in New York subway dig

**By Patrick McGeehan**

*Condensed from the New York Times, December 8, 2005*

Three weeks after the Metropolitan Transportation Authority started digging a subway tunnel under Battery Park, the project hit a wall. A really old wall. Possibly the oldest wall still standing in Manhattan.

It was a 45-foot-long section of a stone wall that archeologists believe is a remnant of the original battery that protected the Colonial settlement at the southern tip of the island. Depending on which archeologist you ask, it was built in the 1760s or as long ago as the late 17th Century.

Either way, it would be the oldest piece of a fortification known to exist in Manhattan and the only one to survive the Revolutionary War period, said Joan H. Geismar, president of the Professional Archaeologists of New York City.

Among the items found around the wall are a well-preserved halfpenny coin dated 1744 and shards of smoking pipes and Delft pottery, said Amanda Sutphin, director of archeology for the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission.

"It's one of the most important archeological discoveries in several decades in New York City," said Adrian Benepe, commissioner of the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. "Everybody knows that the Bronx is up and the Battery's down. But I don't think anybody anticipated that the Battery was 10 feet down."

Ms. Geismar and other archeologists said it was too soon to say exactly when the wall was built or by whom. Most likely, it is the base of a barrier at what was then the shoreline, built to protect soldiers as they fired guns and cannons at attacking ships, they said.

The authority's handling of the site has already rankled some preservationists.

When an excavation crew discovered the eight-foot-thick wall in early November, it was one continuous stretch of cut and mortared stones about 45 feet long, archeologists familiar with the project said. But pictures and drawings produced by the authority's employees show that the wall is now in two smaller pieces about 10 feet apart. The gap, the archeologists said, was created by the steel claw of a backhoe before they could halt work at the site.

For the past month, work on the tunnel there has been at a standstill while officials of the various city agencies involved have debated how to proceed with construction of the tunnel while preserving some or all of the wall.



# Golf club hides Indian observatory

By Christopher Maag

*Condensed from the New York Times, November 28, 2005*

NEWARK, Ohio - The Hopewell Indians used sharp sticks and clamshells here 2,000 years ago to sculpture seven million cubic feet of dirt into a sprawling lunar observatory on the spiritual center of their far-flung empire.

Today it is an easy Par 3 flanked by sand traps shaped like kidney beans.

But now there is an eagerness among many people to see moonrises from the mounds the way the Indians did, a desire that has caused a conflict with the golf club.

The Newark Earthworks, which make up the world's largest ancient mound site lingered in obscurity 30 miles east of Columbus until five years ago, when the country club announced plans for a new clubhouse. The design included a foundation that would have dug into the mounds.

Not only did the club not win permission for a new building, but its request led to an organized protest campaign, organized by local professors and American Indians. Some residents newly aware of the landmark in their backyards, began to question whether the country club should exist at all.

"Playing golf on a Native American spiritual site is a fundamental desecration," said Richard Shiels, a history professor at Ohio State University's Newark campus who is leading the fight to expand public access.

The earthworks range in height from 3 to 14 feet and once sprawled over four square miles. They include an octagon large enough to hold four Roman Colosseums; two parallel mounds connect it to a circle that encloses 20 acres. Their construction required decades of labor.

"When you go there and stand by it, all you see is a mound of earth curving off into the distance," said Brad Lepper, an Ohio Historical Society archeologist. "Only when you see aerial photos of it do you realize how complicated it is."

The mounds' purpose remained a mystery until 1982, when professors from Earlham College in Richmond, Ind., discovered that they aligned perfectly with part of the lunar cycle. Once every 18.6 years, the moon rises at the northernmost point in its orbit. Pregnant and huge, its light framed by rounded earth, the moon hovers within one-half of a degree of the octagon's exact center. This makes the Newark Earthworks twice as precise as the lunar observatory at Stonehenge. (Stonehenge could fit inside the mounds' aligning circle, one of the small geometric shapers at the Newark site.)

The discovery prompted Chris Scarre, a Cambridge University archeologist, to name the Newark mounds among the 70 wonders of the ancient world, one of only three such sites in the United States.

The historical society owns the site and has leased it to the golf club since 1933, on the condition that club leaders allow the public onto the mounds.

"We have a lease, and we have rights," said Ralph Burpee, the club's general manager.

Mr. Burpee said: "Everyone would love to portray us as rich fat cats. Well, this is Newark, Ohio, which pretty much precludes rich fat cats."

## Chapter notes

### Anne Arundel

The chapter will meet bimonthly. The next meeting will be in February. Details to be announced by new leader, Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito. For information on this chapter, contact [AACHapASM@hotmail.com](mailto:AACHapASM@hotmail.com)

### Central

Central Chapter has no formal meetings planned. But if someone has a site they want investigated, contact the Maryland Historical Trust or Central Chapter President Stephen Israel at 410-945-5514 or [ssisrael@abs.net](mailto:ssisrael@abs.net)

## Mid-Potomac

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

## 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. Contact Bill Cep at 410-822-5027 or [ccep@crosslink.net](mailto:ccep@crosslink.net)

## Monocacy

The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on 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](mailto:hurst_joy@hotmail.com). Chapter website: [www.digfrederick.bravehost.com](http://www.digfrederick.bravehost.com)

**January 11:** Allan Powell on the French and Indian War.

**February 15:** Ronald Marvin, Jr., Roger Brook Taney House Site Manager and former National Park Service archeologist.

## Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Contact Dan Coates at [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net)

**January 11:** Early iron making. Meeting at Principio Furnace at 7.

**February 8:** Richard Sherrill on "Susquehanna - Maryland Canal." Havre de Grace. 7.

**April 8:** The Paul Cresthull Memorial Lecture. Harford Community College.

## Southern

Contact Kate Dinnel for information at [katesilas@chesapeake.net](mailto: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. Contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or [roseannlee@earthlink.com](mailto:roseannlee@earthlink.com)

**January 9:** Videotape: "The Mystery of the Lost Red Paint People."

**February 13:** Robert Wall on "The Barton Site."

**March 13:** Cherry Koontz on "Two Weeks Around the Horn."

**April 10:** Charlie and Helen Koontz on "Egypt: Pyramids, Temples and Sculptures."

**May 8:** Jim Gibb on "Stalking Early Colonial Tidewater Sites."

## 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](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: [www.geocities.com/wmdasm](http://www.geocities.com/wmdasm)

**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](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net).

**Submissions welcome.** Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782, 301-864-5289 or [myronbeck@aol.com](mailto:myronbeck@aol.com)

**President**

Carol A. Ebright  
[caebright@aol.com](mailto:caebright@aol.com)

**Vice President**

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410-548-4502  
[earagan@salisbury.edu](mailto:earagan@salisbury.edu)

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[herbalkat5@hotmail.com](mailto:herbalkat5@hotmail.com)

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Belinda Urquiza  
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Huntingtown, MD  
20639  
410-535-2586  
[burquiza@comcast.net](mailto:burquiza@comcast.net)

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301-953-1947  
[clauderbowen@thomson.com](mailto:clauderbowen@thomson.com)

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443-618-0494  
[jsfiveash@comcast.net](mailto:jsfiveash@comcast.net)

Jim Gibb  
410-263-1102  
[JamesGGibb@comcast.net](mailto:JamesGGibb@comcast.net)

John Newton  
410-558-0011  
[jnewton@mtamaryland.com](mailto:jnewton@mtamaryland.com)

Annetta Schott  
410-877-7000  
[annettaschott@comcast.net](mailto:annettaschott@comcast.net)

Jim Sorensen  
301-434-8316  
[james.sorensen@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:james.sorensen@mncppc-mc.org)

**Archeological Society of Maryland**

**ASM Ink**

**P.O. Box 1331**

**Huntingtown, MD 21639-1331**

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