



ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

Up next: The Port Tobacco Field Session

By April M. Beisaw

Port Tobacco Director of Research

The Port Tobacco Archaeological Project is pleased to be hosting the second ASM Field Session this year. As our project is still in its infancy, the support that ASM and its members provide will help ensure its future.

The field session itself is an amazing program and I applaud the ASM and the MHT for their commitment to it. In return, we at Port Tobacco are committed to providing the ASM membership with an amazing field session. Our plan is to offer a mixture of field, lab, lecture and workshop opportunities throughout so that boredom and redundancy are never an issue – even for the diehard volunteer who shows up at the start of Day 1 and stays until the last piece of equipment is packed up on Day 11.

We will focus our excavations on three areas of the site; a prehistoric artifact cluster, an historic jailhouse and a historic house, store and hotel complex. Each area will be excavated with 5-by-5-foot units, dug stratigraphically. A field laboratory to wash artifacts will be set up under one of the magnolia trees that flank the reconstructed Port Tobacco courthouse. The courthouse will serve as our auditorium for lunchtime lectures and evening workshops.

A lecture or workshop will be held each day, either during the noon break or in the evening. Planned lectures include field conservation by Howard Wellman, an update on the search for the county courthouse that predates the one at Port Tobacco by Julie King and an overview of historic cemetery research and restoration by our own Scott Lawrence. Our own Peter Quantock will provide a demonstration of our mapping procedures, necessary to keep track of work at such a large site.

Three workshops, meeting the Certified Archeological Technician requirements, will be offered; Ethics and Ceramic Analysis by Jim Gibb and Faunal Analysis by me.

Three types of housing will be available for those coming from afar or just wishing to stay over. There will be camping space and also room for four people to stay in the on-site Burch House, where the project crew will be staying. There are no beds, so bring your own cot/air mattress. We will have some cooking facilities...hopefully a microwave, grill, coffee pot, ice chests, etc. First come, first served, It will be primitive, but reasonably comfortable. Campers will share kitchen and sanitary facilities with those occupying Burch House.

For people who enjoy modern comforts at the end of a field day, we will reserve a block of five rooms at the Sleep-In Motel. In the past it has offered us a government rate of \$85/night (seniors might do better with AARP discounts). It has a swimming pool and breakfast is included. The motel is on US 301 in La Plata, about

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Upcoming events

May 23 – June 2: ASM field school at Claggett Retreat site, Frederick County.

June 13 – 23: ASM field school at Port Tobacco, Charles County.

June 14 – 22: Barton field school, Allegany County.

October 18: ASM Annual Meeting, hosted by the Monocacy Chapter.

Volunteer opportunities

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

Connemara: The State Highway Administration is inviting field volunteers to the Connemara site in Cockeysville, 20 minutes north of Baltimore. Volunteers are needed daily May 27-June 6th to dig STPs/test units, screen for artifacts and complete paperwork. The site is a middle-class plantation with occupation dating from the late 1700s to the 1980s. Excavations will concentrate in the yard of the main house and a possible collapsed cellar. Volunteer lab opportunities will also be available after the field session. Contact Nichole Sorensen-Mutchie at 410-545-8793.

Montgomery County lab, 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 Locust Neck Late Woodland site, to be followed by the Late Archaic Baldwin site collection. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson lakerson1@verizon.net or Charlie Hall hall@mdp.state.md.us.

The Lost Towns Project of Anne Arundel County. 410-222-7441.

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 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

Carol Ebright will teach a Point Typology Workshop Saturday July 12, between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., at Mt. Ida in Ellicott City. There is space for 12 CAT Candidates. Email Maryl Harshey at jharshey@qis.net, to sign up for the workshop.

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

A website has been set up for CAT 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.

Special fieldwork opportunity: Richard Ervin of SHA is working on the Broad Creek Cemetery, a 17th through 19th Century cemetery on Kent Island. On occasion and on very short notice, it is necessary for him to conduct emergency excavations in preparation for new interments. Work is expected in October. Contact him at 410-545-2878 (days), 410-643-7128 (evenings) or by email at rervin@sha.state.md.us

Annapolis log road may date to 1600s

From news reports, April 24, 26, 2008

Standing over one of the Colonial brick sidewalks that help define Annapolis, the archeologists began digging with trowels and shovels.

The team from the University of Maryland carved a 4-foot-long trench along a sidewalk at Fleet and Cornhill streets - two of the oldest in the historic district. Bagging and tagging artifacts along the way, they scraped through the powdered remains of a red brick sidewalk from 1820 and a black layer of wood chips from 1740.

Then they found something far more significant than the shards of pearlware, animal bones and the King George III penny that they uncovered in the layers above: a log street that archeologists called the oldest remnant yet discovered of the Annapolis settlement.

Preserved in briny muck were several logs laying side-by-side perpendicular to the curb. They were flattened on the top and sides, but the curve and bark of the log remained on the bottom.

Researchers initially thought the road dated to the early 18th Century, based on plates, ceramics and other artifacts at the site. However, local historians Tony Lindauer and Jane McWilliams soon linked the logs to the 17th-Century survey that suggested a road might have been built in the neighborhood.

The find is unique because log roads, while common during Colonial times, rotted long ago, said Mark Leone, a University of Maryland archeologist who started the Archaeology in Annapolis project in 1981. But these logs are in saltwater and covered in silt and clay - an anaerobic environment perfect for preservation.

"The major impact of this discovery is to alert everybody that the archeology of (Fleet and Cornhill) roads is intact," Leone said. "There's a lot more we can expect."

The 3-foot section of log road remained buried for so long because archeologists get to dig only when a major construction project is about to begin, he said. The city Department of Public Works is paying for the excavation ahead of a \$5 million project to lay underground utility cables and upgrade sewer and water pipes.

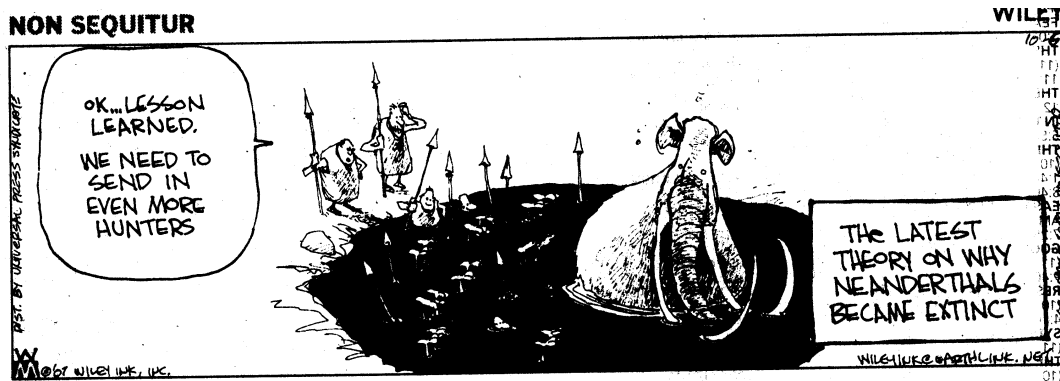
"This confirms some of the early beginnings of the city," Mayor Ellen O. Moyer said. "It wasn't long before that it was basically woodland."

"We were expecting sidewalks," said Matthew Cochran, project director for the University of Maryland team. "We didn't expect a road."

After they had pumped away water into buckets and wiped away the mud, the team, over the weekend, uncovered six logs about an inch and a half apart, leading Leone to believe it was a "corduroy" road - nicknamed for its bumpy nature - used by colonists to cart wagons of goods over the marshy waterfront to market in the early 1700s. He thinks there could be hundreds more logs and he hopes to find out how far the road stretches.

It could be part of the Southeast Line, a throughway that ran through the southern and eastern parts of the city from Dorsey's Creek to City Dock. It is listed on a 1684 survey of the settlement. Historians don't know whether the log road dates from then or the early 1700s.

Scientific testing of the logs could help pinpoint when the road was built -- and perhaps reveal details about other matters, including weather patterns in the years before its construction. "You can discover when the tree was cut down, usually to the year," said Leone. "And with eight of these, we can discover if we have a pattern of changing rainfall or change in temperature, because tree rings measure both."



Adventures in your own backyard

Keeping up with the Indiana Joneses

By Jonathan Pitts

Condensed from the Baltimore Sun, May 17, 2008

He'll face down Soviet spies, penetrate jungles and wrangle giant ants in his quest for a skull possessed of strange magical powers.

Indiana Jones' exploits will quicken a few million more pulses than the day-to-day work of his brethren in the real world. But a lack of derring-do is no reason, professionals say, that Marylanders should miss out on the many opportunities they'll have to take part in archeological excavations this summer.

"In real life, we do carry more bug spray than we do bullwhips," says Al Luckenbach, an Anne Arundel County archeologist whose work has long drawn on the energy and talents of members of the public, young and old. "But on a different scale, we find our own amazing things. We reconstruct the past ... [and] we can't do it without volunteers."

Luckenbach and colleagues direct the Lost Towns Project, an enterprise that has been locating and exploring Colonial and period sites throughout Anne Arundel County since 1991. "We're digging at a number of different sites," he says, "some from the 1600s, some from the Colonial period. There's a variety of field opportunities."

Members of the public ages 16 and older can help the pros excavate around the county during the week and volunteers of all ages can help excavate London Town on any of three organized "Dig Days" held per year (children younger than 15 must be accompanied by an adult).

Two Dig Days remain this year, one on July 12 and a second on Sept. 6. Volunteers can listen to staff presentations, take organized tours of the site, learn the rudiments of archeological digging and sift for period artifacts, from shards of pottery to handmade nails to bits of pipe.

Lost Towns is only one of the many opportunities open to aspiring Indiana Joneses. The Archeological Society of Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust are hosting two 11-day field sessions this summer.

The first, at the Claggett Retreat in Frederick County, starts May 23 and runs through June 2. It's a prehistoric site. The second session - at Port Tobacco in Charles County - starts June 13 and runs through June 23. In a project that will long outlast the summer, archeologists are excavating Port Tobacco, a town that was founded in the early 1700s, became a bustling port community filled with shops and dwellings and warehouses, and ultimately succumbed when silt from the eroding land of neighboring farms enveloped it.

Opportunities await elsewhere in the state. For 20 years, Archaeology in Annapolis - a co-production of the anthropology department at the University of Maryland, College Park and the Historic Annapolis Foundation - has operated a field school in urban archeology, offering a select few volunteers a chance to help construct the historic narrative of the diverse peoples of Annapolis. Further afield, Calvert County offers the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, which hosts a public archeology program from May through July 5.

"This year we are digging on a site that dates from 1711 to around 1750" at the old Smith plantation at Jefferson Patterson, says Ed Chaney, deputy director of the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory at the museum. Volunteers will concentrate on an old slave quarter and a building that doesn't appear on maps

of the period.

Prince George's County offers the Mount Calvert Historical and Archeological Park, a site that features continuing historical and archeological research. The 1,000-acre plantation became a town that served as the county's first seat of government.

And the Needwood Plantation in Derwood, Montgomery County, offers four one-week sessions for children ages 10-15 and an adult field school in August. The children's program will focus on slave houses that once stood on the property, the adults' on the prehistoric Indian population of Montgomery County.

Heather Bouslog, an archeologist with the county, will likely never flee rolling boulders or lead death-defying expeditions to the rain forests of Peru, as Indiana Jones has done, but that makes her no less dedicated to the revealing science she and Jones have in common. "Those movies are a little more exotic than what we do in real life," she says. "But in this field, for young and older people alike, the sense of discovery is still amazing."

Scorched-earth archeology vs. protocol

Indiana Jones strikes again, alas

By David Germain

Condensed from the Associated Press, May 17, 2008

Indiana Jones managed to retrieve the trinket he was after in the opening moments of "Raiders of the Lost Ark." He pretty much wrecked everything else in the ancient South American temple where the little gold idol had rested for millennia.

Though he preaches research and good science in the classroom, the world's most-famous archeologist often is an acquisitive tomb raider in the field with a scorched-earth policy about what he leaves behind. While actual archeologists enjoy the guy and his movies, they wouldn't necessarily want to work alongside him on a dig.

"There are codes of ethics in archeology and I don't think he would be a member. Not in good standing, anyway," said Mark Rose, online editorial director for the Archaeological Institute of America.

"It wouldn't be quite as much fun if you followed protocol, I think," said Karen Allen, who is reprising her Raiders role as Indy's old flame, Marion Ravenwood.

In a career spanning 27 years and three previous films, Indy has been both a blessing and curse for the musty world of archeology, fanning interest in the field beyond academic circles but doing a Hollywood number on how the job actually works.

In 1989's "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," nerdy Professor Henry Jones Jr. tells students that 70 percent of archeology is done in the library and advises them to "forget any ideas you've got about lost cities, exotic travel and digging up the world. We do not follow maps to buried treasure, and 'X' never, ever marks the spot."

Trading his classroom tweeds for his leather jacket and fedora hat, his alter-ego Indiana Jones then proceeds to smash through crypts, kill scores of Nazis and desecrate a grave by using a human leg bone as a torch. And, in one scene, "X" literally does mark the spot.

The reality of archeological field work is not a lone hero dashing into hidden chambers with a bullwhip and a pistol and coming away with a priceless relic. It's large groups of academics and students painstakingly sifting through grids to retrieve artifacts as mundane as pottery fragments.

"It is rather adventurous in a way, because for the most part, you're going to some exotic country and delving into their past. But it's not an adventure with a whip and chasing bad guys and looking for treasure," said Bryant Wood, an archeologist with Associates for Biblical Research.

"You're working at one site tediously, probably for many, many years and spending more time processing the finds and writing reports than you do actually digging at the site. But that wouldn't make for a very good story, spending 70 percent of the time in a library."

The most exciting thing that happens to many archeologists in the field might be battling dysentery or coping with a lemon of a Land Rover.

"To be honest, it's a lot of drudge work. You can end up producing a 600-page Ph.D. dissertation, and it's important and useful, and it's good that someone has done it. But it's not going to be made into a major motion picture anytime soon," said Rose of the Archaeological Institute, whose trustees include Harrison Ford.

Paul Zimansky, an archeology professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, once had an adventure reminiscent of Indy's fear of snakes. Zimansky had to drive at breakneck speed to get a colleague to a doctor after he was bitten by a viper in Iran.

On a dig in Iraq, one student dressed like Indy, minus the whip, and whenever the team made a notable find, it would play the Indiana Jones fanfare, Zimansky said.

Indy's main value in the academic world has been as an inspiration to aspiring archeologists, said Zimansky, who noticed a spike in new students in the early 1990s while teaching at Boston University. "If you asked these people why they were becoming archeologists, it always starts off with Indiana Jones," he said. "... But I don't think anybody ever bought the ethos of Indiana Jones as a real career track."

Other than Indy's brief classroom scenes, the closest thing to authentic archeology in the Indiana Jones

Continued on next page

flicks is done by the bad guys, whose elaborate, systematic digs in Raiders resemble actual excavations.

Jaime Awe, director of the Institute of Archeology in Belize, is a big fan of the Indiana Jones movies but shows them to students as "examples of what not to do," he said.

"I tell them the only difference between Indiana Jones and myself is he always gets the goodies and gets the beautiful women and gets paid a lot of money, and I don't get any of that," Awe said.

"But I have a hell of a lot of fun just like he does, and it's just as much an adventure. Most of us do archeology because we love the opportunity to explore, to discover, to search for clues," said Awe.

Indiana Jones and other such productions flicks benefit archeology by getting general audiences thinking and talking about the ancient world, said Bob Murowchick, associate professor of archeology at Boston University.

But the movies emphasize the tomb-raiding aspect, leaving the impression that artifacts are there for the taking by whoever stumbles on them first, he said.

"The one thing we do worry quite a bit about is the looting aspect, because archeological looting is really a serious issue," Murowchick said. "This kind of glorifying of breaking into a tomb and snagging a crystal this or golden that feeds into the notion that these are valuable objects, and we should all get it while we can."

Black homestead uncovered by SHA crew

By Mary Otto

Condensed from the Washington Post, April 24, 2008

In a few weeks, big machines will move into this patch of woods. The trees will be felled and the earth will be leveled for the intercounty connector, an 18.8-mile toll road that will link Interstate 270 in Montgomery County and the Interstate 95/Route 1 corridor in Prince George's County.

But for a few final hours yesterday, under the trees off U.S. Route 29 in Silver Spring, researchers with gentle, knowing hands swept and screened the fragile remnants of lives lived more than a century ago. They gleaned what was left to gather from a 19th-Century African-American homestead that has been called one of the most intact archeological sites in Maryland.

Descendants of Melinda Jackson, a freed slave, pondered the stone foundation of the home the family matriarch made for herself and her five children soon after the Civil War.

The site of the home, which burned about 1917, remained untouched until a team of archeologists working for the Maryland State Highway Administration located it during a 2003 study for the proposed highway.

"It's a rare opportunity for an archeologist to work on a site that has not been pilfered, plowed or developed," said Julie Schablitsky, chief of cultural resources for the highway administration.

The researchers, who have been digging and sifting for two months, said they have recovered more than 100,000 artifacts, including bits of tableware, scissors, a thimble, eyeglass frames, a hook for buttoning shoes, an 1860 political badge depicting Abraham Lincoln, a religious medal and children's toys such as a jack and fragile pieces of the china head of an African-American baby doll.

The property has also yielded a cache of ritual objects associated with African spirituality, including a large crystal that appears to have been placed in the foundation of the structure in keeping with a tradition intended to protect the home.

Schablitsky described the experience of touching the household items as "very, very magical."

"It's a way to time-travel," she said. But the most profound experience, she said, was meeting the descendants, "to be able to look into the eyes of the great-great-grandchildren of the people you are studying."

Officials say it would not be feasible to save what is left of the Jackson homestead site after the researchers finish their work. The U.S. Route 29 interchange for the highway is due to be constructed on the property.

This is not the only archeological site that lies in the path of the six-lane road. In November, researchers conducted a tour of an area off Georgia Avenue where Native Americans gathered quartz and made tools 5,000 years ago.

DNA links frozen body to 17 living people

By Murray Langdon

Condensed from the (Toronto) Globe and Mail, April 28, 2008

Scientists have found a direct link between the frozen remains of a man found in a glacier in northern B.C. and 17 people living in British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska.

The news came at a symposium in Victoria this past weekend, focusing on Kwaday Dan Ts'inchí, a young aboriginal man whose remains were found in 1999 by hunters in Tatshenshini-Alsek Park, which is in the traditional territory of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

"The connection to the people," said Al Mackie, an archeologist on the project, "how they know his clan, how they know who his relatives are, that's amazing. You just don't get that in archeology. It never happens."

Kwaday Dan Ts'inchí means Long Ago Person Found and he's believed to have died some time between the years 1670 and 1850. His remains were revealed after a glacier started to recede.

Since the discovery, scientists have been studying all facets of the man, including his clothes, tools, migratory patterns, even the contents of his stomach. But it's the DNA link to living people that has created the biggest stir.

"It's just thrilling," said Pearl Callaghan, a member of the Teslin-Tlingit First Nation. "The knowledge is so new to us; we're still in a state of amazement."

Chief Diane Strand of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations said it proves that there is not only a link between people, but also between cultures as well. Long Ago Person Found is believed to have spent time both in the interior and on the coast.

"The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations have a huge number of people that live in Alaska ... and this discovery has made those ties even stronger," she said.

"We never stuck to our villages," said Art Johns, of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. Johns, a DNA-linked descendant, said it was common for aboriginal people to be nomadic.

Chief Strand applauded the news of the DNA link, but she expressed some frustration over the scientific community's attitude toward cultural issues. Chief Strand said that for years, she and others have tried to contribute to the investigative process by telling ancestral stories, but they were discounted or not taken seriously. She said the discovery lends greater credibility to First Nations' traditions.

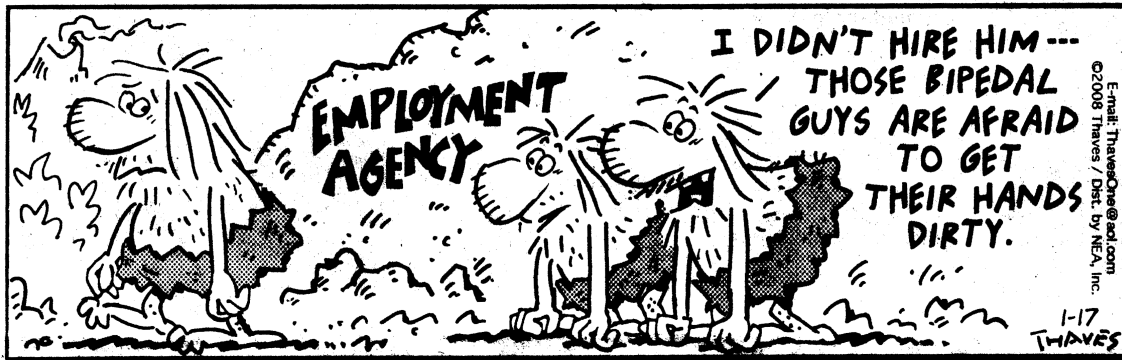
"This reaffirms the integrity of our oral history," Chief Strand said. "Our oral history needs to have a place in your scientific world."

Of the 17 people linked through DNA, 15 self-identify with the Wolf Clan, meaning the young man was most likely Wolf as well.

"We needed to know who he is so we can treat him properly," said Chief Strand, "with the respect and dignity he deserves."

FRANK AND ERNEST

BOB THAVES



Geasey library donated to Frederick

Condensed from the Associated Press, May 4, 2008

FREDERICK, Md. - The writings of an 81-year-old man who died in February may someday help future archeologists. Spencer Geasey, who spent much of his life digging for artifacts of early local inhabitants and writing about his findings, amassed a large library of those writings and other rare archeology books.

His wife, Nancy, donated her husband's collection of about 300 books and documents to the Maryland Room of Frederick's C. Burr Artz Public Library in April. The publications occupy several shelves and will soon be catalogued, according to Mary Mannix, manager of the Maryland Room.

Geasey grew up on Long Island, N.Y., but had family in Frederick County and settled here after serving in World War II.

He worked in Fort Detrick's housing office for most of his career there, but when he retired in 1975, he got a part-time job as a field assistant with the State Highway Administration, at last getting paid for what he loved to do. Archeological digs -- which precede most highway projects -- included Geasey in the digs and in preparing reports on them.

Geasey was a self-taught archeologist, his wife said. He never graduated from high school. In the 1990s, he earned his general equivalency diploma. Much of his knowledge came from his books and his experience.

He was especially consumed with rhyolite stone, a material used to make tools in the Archaic period, from about 8,000 years ago to about 4,000 years ago. When he and Nancy, also an archeology buff, married 27 years ago, they bought a house on Crow Rock Road, south of Wolfsville, near a rhyolite quarry. On their property is a rhyolite outcropping known as Shelter Rock.

Geasey wrote extensively about rhyolite tools. The material was in such demand that American Indians would travel several hundred miles to get it. They would make the tools while camping at Shelter Rock and carry them back home.

Geasey collected and wrote for archeological journals in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. His collection also includes textbooks of the pre-European cultures living in what is now considered the Mid-Atlantic area.

Geasey continued to take part in digs and write about his findings until shortly before his death from a stroke. "He could outwalk all of them," Nancy said, despite wearing a 15-pound wooden leg.

Geasey is a founding member of the Archeological Society of Maryland and of the Monocacy Archeological Society. He turned over 41,000 artifacts he collected to the Maryland Historical Trust in 1992. The next year, the trust awarded him the Calvert Prize, the state's top honor for historic preservation. He collected another 14,000 artifacts in the remainder of his lifetime. They will someday be turned over to the trust.

Mannix estimated that his book collection is the largest in Maryland outside that of the Maryland Historical Trust and the research library of the Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Geasey collection actually was donated to the Monocacy Archeology Society which in turn donated it to the library as part of Archeology Month.

In addition, Nancy Geasey donated Spencer's map collection to the State Highway Administration's Cultural Resources Library. Of the more than 50 maps, all but one are out-of-print. Most of the collection focuses on Frederick County where Spencer recorded most of his sites, but there are a few maps from Washington County, Allegany County and the Eastern Shore. The collection includes many first edition 7.5 minute topographic quads from the 1950s and a series of unique 1940s 1:25,000 scale maps of the central Maryland area. Various area maps include a 1953 Washington County map, a 1938 geologic map, a 1949 topographic map of Frederick County and a map of the Potomac River showing early land holdings, cemeteries, mills, fish traps, historic locations, etc.



No port, no tobacco, but a good day's digging is promised nonetheless.

Up next: The Port Tobacco Field Session

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three miles east of the site. There are a number of restaurants and fast food places in La Plata.

For those who may not be able to make the field session, and for those who simply want even more, we expect to process the field session finds at the MHT lab in Crownsville throughout July and August, at the least. Based on our shovel test pit survey of Port Tobacco, we expect to recover a significant amount of artifactual material from every one of the 25 excavation units we have planned.

Finally, 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 us at <http://porttobacco.blogspot.com>

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

Here is the tentative lecture-workshop schedule:

- Friday 13th - Scott Lawrence on cemetery delineation and restoration (12:30-1)
- Saturday 14th - Howard Wellman on artifact conservation (12:30-1:30)
- Sunday 15th - Ethics workshop (4-6 or 7-9)
- Monday 16th - Mapping demonstration (4-6 or 7-9)
- Tuesday 17th - Ceramics workshop (4-6)
- Wednesday 18th - Movie Night: selection to be announced
- Thursday 19th - Mapping demonstration (4-6 or 7-9)
- Friday 20th - Faunal workshop (4-6 or 7-9)
- Saturday 21st - Julie King on the search for Charles County's first courthouse (12:30-1:30)
- Sunday 22d - Wrap-up party

Smithsonian plans Anne Arundel research site

By Tom Pelton

Condensed from the Baltimore Sun, May 8, 2008

The Smithsonian Institution announced yesterday that it has purchased 575 acres of farmland in Anne Arundel County, including the ruins of a historic tobacco plantation, that will be turned into an archeology research site the public can visit.

The roughly 300-year-old Contee Farm off Route 468 on the Rhode River will become part of the adjacent Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, which has been conducting studies into Chesapeake Bay ecology and other subjects for 43 years, officials said.

Anson Hines, director of the Smithsonian center, said the land is in a rapidly developing area south of Annapolis and will be preserved with a conservation easement.

"This is a fabulous resource and a great opportunity for us," Hines said. "We will continue to operate it as a farm and allow the public to see active farming and forestry done in a way to improve the bay watershed."

The institution bought the land -- which its scientists have long used for research -- for \$6.2 million on Friday from the Kirpatrick-Howat family. The farm was named after John Contee, who bought the plantation about 1818. But the farm is about a century older than that. And in addition to the ruins of the old plantation house, researchers have found several other archeological sites on the property, including campsites of Piscataway Indians.

With the purchase, the amount of land owned by the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center will grow from about 1,925 acres to about 2,500 acres. The center will build new paths and water trails to allow the public to hike and canoe around the land. And the ruins of the plantation house will be turned into an exhibit that people can visit to learn about 18th and 19th Century American farms.

PBS doing a series on early American sites

By Catherine Kozak

Condensed from the Virginian-Pilot, May 15, 2008

In the sun-dappled woods of Fort Raleigh National Historic Site Wednesday, there was an unusual amount of activity for the sedate park. Men with big video cameras on their shoulders pointed lenses into dirt pits and at the faces of archeologists. Nearby, beeping ground-penetrating radar flashed murky images on a small screen.

The first episode of a new public television series, "Time Team America," is focused on the ongoing search for evidence of the Lost Colony on Roanoke Island. As an excavation unearthed a kernel-size piece of lead-glazed earthenware from a layer of dirt, veteran archeologist Nick Luccketti was summoned and quickly surrounded, a microphone hovering nearby.

Lucchetti is a founding member of the First Colony Foundation, a nonprofit group that has renewed the archeological exploration of the park after numerous fruitless investigations since the 1930s.

Another member of the foundation, Eric Deetz, also belongs to the TV production's archeological team. Deetz had alerted series producer Graham Dixon to the foundation's work.

The colony of 117 men, women and children who had sailed from England in 1587 vanished without a clue sometime after August of that year. As the oldest abiding American mystery, any artifact that could help decipher their fate would be akin to the Holy Grail of U.S. archeology.

Dixon said that the foundation's work fit the criteria for the program, which is based on the popular British series, "Time Team," that Dixon first produced in 1992.

First, the Lost Colony story is attention-getting. Also, the production could look over the shoulders of the foundation team, which had already planned this latest two-week project.

The show, co-produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting and Videotext Communications, is committed to featuring four more sites after Roanoke Island, including the Topper site in South Carolina, where the first evidence of humans living in North America was discovered; and New Philadelphia, Ill., believed to be the first incorporated U.S. town founded by a freed slave.

The shows are anticipated to run in 2009 or 2010.

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 if someone has a site he wants investigated, contact the Maryland Historical Trust or Central Chapter President Stephen Israel at 410-945-5514 or 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 or heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org, or call 301-840-5848. Chapter website: www.mid-potomacarchaeology.org

Monocacy

The chapter meets in the Community Room of the C. Burr Artz Library, 110 East Patrick Street, 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.

June 11: Dr. Erika Martin Seibert, of Walkersville, archeologist for the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Landmarks of the National Park Service, will talk about the most exciting sites under these programs.

Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month. Contact Dan Coates at dancoates@comcast.net or 410-273-9619(h) and 410-808-2398(c)

Southern

Contact Kate Dinnel for information at katesilas@chesapeake.net or 410-586-8538.

Upper Patuxent

Programs are the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Ida, near the court house in Ellicott City. 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

Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. in the LaVale Library, unless noted. Contact Ed Hanna, 301-777-1380. Chapter email: wmdasm@yahoo.com Website: www.geocities.com/wmdasm

Keeping track: ASM Membership Secretary Belinda Urquiza requests that you notify her of changes in address, telephone or email. An up-to-date list is our best way of getting in touch with you and keeping your publications flowing. Her address is on the next page.

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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