



# **ASM Ink**

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**Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.**

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

## **Symposium to focus on Colonial towns**

On April 12, ASM members and scholars will gather in Annapolis to talk about archeological findings at Colonial town sites throughout Maryland, including St. Mary's City, Annapolis, Port Tobacco (Charles County), Charles Town (Prince George's County), Providence and London (both Anne Arundel County).

The first of the six talks will be given by Al Luckenbach, director of the Anne Arundel County Lost Towns Project. Based on the findings that his years of work have produced, he will describe the differences between some of the towns that he has been instrumental in rediscovering.

Julia King, who recently moved from Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum to St. Mary's College, has spent much of her career investigating Colonial sites in her native southern Maryland. In the Richard E. Stearns Memorial Lecture, she will talk about her recent work in Charles and Calvert counties.

Returning for another ASM lecture is Henry Miller, the chief archeologist at Historic St. Mary's City. Giving the Iris McGillivray Memorial Lecture, he will tell about some of the work and findings involving Maryland's first capital.

Setting the stage for lunchtime tours, Mark Leone will tell about a new archeological exhibit at the nearby Banneker-Douglas Museum relating to archeology and slavery in Annapolis, Leone, a professor of archeology at the University of Maryland, College Park, is guest curator of the exhibit.

Mike Lukas, of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, is most familiar to ASM members through his work at Mount Pleasant. He will talk about Charles Town, which became the seat of government in newly established Prince George's County in 1696.

The day's final presentation will be by April Beisaw, who is one of the directors of the developing excavations at Port Tobacco, site of an ASM field school this spring. The once-flourishing town was a seat of government and a leading port in Colonial times.

The meeting will be held in downtown Annapolis at the First Presbyterian Church, 165 Duke of Gloucester Street. It begins at 9:30 and should be over by about 3:15. There is a \$5 registration fee for ASM members, \$7 for nonmembers. A wide variety of restaurants are available nearby for lunch.

The Noah Hillman parking garage is almost directly across the street from the church. If that entrance is not open, continue down Duke of Gloucester Street (which is one way) and make the next left onto Green Street. At the end of that street, turn left onto Main Street and go one block. Look for the garage entrance on your left. There is on-street parking in the neighborhood behind the church, but it is at a premium. The two-hour limit except for residents does not apply on weekends.

## Upcoming events

**APRIL IS MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY MONTH: FOR A LISTING OF EVENTS BEING HELD THROUGHOUT THE STATE, CHECK [www.marylandarcheology.org/Arch\\_Month/Index.htm](http://www.marylandarcheology.org/Arch_Month/Index.htm)**

**April 11:** Lecture, "Spirited Encounters: American Indians protest museum policies and practices." Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum. 7 p.m.

**April 12:** Spring Symposium. First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis, across from City Hall and a parking garage, and readily accessible to a plethora of eateries.

**May 3 and 4:** The annual Primitive Technology Weekend, the Oregon Ridge Nature Center. For information, see [www.oregonridge.org](http://www.oregonridge.org)

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

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

**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 being curated is the collection from the Conowingo Dam field school site. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson [lakerson1@verizon.net](mailto:lakerson1@verizon.net) or Charlie Hall [hall@mdp.state.md.us](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/) to get started. Remember to add the extra A in archaeological.

## CAT corner

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](mailto: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 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. 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](mailto:rervin@sha.state.md.us)

# ASM to hold two field sessions in '08

By Charlie Hall

*State Terrestrial Archeologist*

A very unusual situation has presented itself this year. While many years we are scrambling to find a site and willing principal investigator for a field session, this year we have been presented with two excellent candidate sites.

After last year's field session at Claggett Retreat in Frederick County, Joe Dent approached the field session committee with an offer to serve as the principal investigator for a second year. The first year's effort demonstrated that the Claggett site is a single component Mason Island site, the only such site known in Maryland. Single component sites are highly valuable because the materials and features all represent one moment in time, they are not intermixed with other time periods.

This highly significant site can fill a huge gap in our knowledge of this Late Woodland culture, including examination of what are thought to be individual family habitation areas from the Late Woodland period.

Also, during the course of the year Jim Gibb presented a proposal to hold the field session at the Port Tobacco, the Charles County site of a 17<sup>th</sup> Century port that has a long, rich history.

Jim organized a very successful weekend testing project last fall, which attracted a large number of volunteers. To date MHT has supported this exciting archeological project with survey and testing funds, staff support in the field, field equipment and laboratory space for artifact processing and temporary artifact storage.

An attempt has been made, based on the expressed desire of the field session committee, to try to mount both worthy field projects this year, a position that MHT has fully supported. The ideal solution would have been to run one project in the spring, the other in the fall. Unfortunately scheduling constraints have made that impossible, so both field efforts will occur during the late spring/early summer. The schedule that has been worked out will provide an exceptional opportunity for ASM members to get out in the field—no excuses!

The Claggett site project will start May 23 and run through June 2. The Port Tobacco project will begin on Friday June 13 and run through the 23. Both projects will be supported by MHT staff and equipment and field session funds provided in an MHT noncapital grant to ASM.

We hope that the membership will support both of these worthy projects to the utmost. As an incentive, the field session committee has agreed to cap the registration cost for the combined projects at the same level as last year (\$30 for members, and \$45 for nonmembers). Two field experiences for the price of one!

We hope you will encourage new members to attend so that turnout can be the best ever. With projects in two different parts of the state, prehistoric and historic sites, there is a chance for the membership to have a great field experience this spring.

Registration forms for both sessions are included in this newsletter. Figure out which days you can attend, make you plans and send the forms in now.

## Your chance to help guide ASM's agenda

It's hard to tell, but the presidency of the United States isn't the only important office voters have to decide on this year. ASM members have to choose a new slate of officers too. This means president, vice president, secretary, membership secretary, treasurer and six at-large members of the board of trustees.

Not only is your vote important, but you can take a more active part in ASM activities by running for office. No months of campaigning are required, no massive amounts of fundraising, no negative ads. All that is needed is your willingness to devote a few hours to help ASM plan and carry out its programs over the next two years.

If you would like to be a part of directing the society, it is easy to get onto the ballot. Just send your name and the position you'd like to run for to the nominating committee. Nominations will be presented to

the board at its May 24 meeting and offered to the voting membership in the July newsletter. Ballots are counted and the winners announced at the October 18 annual meeting.

Submit all nominations to: Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, Maryland 20782.

## Tyler Bastian gets high MAAC award

*At its March meeting in Ocean City, the Middle Atlantic Archeological Conference presented Tyler Bastian with its Lifetime Achievement Award. Here is the citation, as submitted by Dennis C. Curry and Robert D. Wall.*

Tyler Johnson Bastian developed an early interest in archeology while growing up in Stockton, Illinois. Encouraged by his parents, Tyler attended Beloit College in Wisconsin in the mid- to late-1950s. While there, the undergraduate anthropology major led an excavation of one of the two dozen Middle Woodland conical and effigy mounds located on the campus. Summers were spent working in New York at a variety of sites with William Ritchie, including Lamoka Lake, and at least one field school in Mexico which yielded a souvenir tapeworm.

While in graduate school (initially at the University of Michigan under James B. Griffin and finishing at the University of Utah under Jesse D. Jennings), Tyler spent several seasons excavating the copper mines on Isle Royale in Michigan. His 1963 master's thesis on this work remains a seminal reference in prehistoric copper studies.

Following completion of his graduate studies, Tyler went on to undertake a number of archeological projects — at Wichita, Caddoan and other sites — in Oklahoma and Kansas while affiliated with such programs as the Smithsonian Institution's Missouri River Basin Surveys (under Waldo Wedel), the Museum of the Great Plains and the University of Oklahoma Research Institute (with Robert Bell and Don Wyckoff, a fellow bluegrass music aficionado).

It was Tyler's arrival in Maryland in August of 1969, however, that marked his entrance to the Middle Atlantic archeological scene. Hired by the Maryland Geological Survey as Maryland's first state archeologist — a position he would hold for 31 years — Tyler was in charge of the newly created Division of Archeology, whose purpose was to investigate and preserve the archeology of Maryland.

Early on, Tyler decided two principal efforts would help accomplish these goals: (1) record the locations and characteristics of as many sites as possible and (2) excavate sites threatened with immediate destruction.

With respect to site recordation, Tyler tapped the vast knowledge of the avocational archeological community in Maryland. Much of his time was spent meeting with amateurs, examining their collections and recording information on the many sites known to them. (When Tyler first arrived in Maryland, there was an informal inventory of roughly 150 known sites; today, more than 12,000 sites are recorded.)

His respect for amateurs, his easy-going nature and his broad vision for Maryland archeology helped him lead two competing archeological societies to merge in 1968 into today's robust and active Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc. (ASM).

On the matter of excavating threatened sites, several early opportunities were presented to Tyler. Shortly after he arrived in Maryland, Tyler was alerted that proposed highway construction threatened the Friendsville site in Garrett County. In September of that year, using a local volunteer workforce, he undertook testing of the site and both determined the undisturbed nature of the site deposits and documented the amount of damage the proposed construction would inflict.

In October, he learned that a sewer interceptor threatened a portion of the Biggs Ford village site in Frederick County. Tyler secured meager funding and had the path of the interceptor stripped mechanically. Then, from October 1969 to July 1970, again using local amateurs and volunteers, a series of Montgomery and Luray phase features was carefully excavated at the site prior to the construction work.

Meanwhile, the problem in Friendsville had yet to be resolved. With local support, Tyler eventually reached an agreement with the State Highway Administration to undertake salvage excavations at the site. A series of excavation units and trenches was excavated in 1972-1973, exposing and recovering data from 94 features in this Monongahela Complex village.

These early excavations formed the nucleus of what would become the ASM's Annual Field Session in Maryland Archeology. Originally excavations undertaken over long weekends, this cooperative effort between professional and avocational archeologists has grown to today's annual 11-day field training program — including field and lab instruction, onsite lectures, and workshops.

To date, the 36 annual field sessions have investigated more than two dozen sites in 13 of Maryland's 23 counties. In 2001, ASM renamed the session the "Annual Tyler Bastian Field Session in Maryland Archeology."

The Division of Archeology, housed at the Maryland Geological Survey, originally consisted of



Tyler and a part-time archeological aide. Eventually, permanent staff would grow to include a full-time aide, another staff archeologist position (initially working mostly on Department of Natural Resources' lands), a collections manager and a secretary.

In support of the division's mission, Tyler built an extensive library on Maryland archeology, developed an archeological publications series, sought important archeological collections for state curation and formalized the Maryland

Archeological Site Survey (computerization of these site files eventually led to the extensive Geographic Information System now maintained by the Maryland Historical Trust).

To supplement the regular Division of Archeology personnel, Tyler developed a long-standing program with the Maryland State Highway Administration to undertake archeological survey and testing on highway projects and to assist SHA with oversight of other outside contractors. He also instigated several multi-year regional archeological surveys, most notably in Monocacy Valley and in the western Maryland coal region.

At its acme, the Division of Archeology employed nearly two dozen full- and part-time staff and maintained artifact collections from hundreds of sites in Maryland (those collections now form the core of the Maryland Archeological Conservation Lab at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum).

Tyler has a long record of public service. As mentioned earlier, he was instrumental in the formation of today's Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc. He is a past-president of that society and in 1989 was awarded ASM's highest honor, the William B. Marye award. For years, Tyler served on the Maryland Governor's Consulting Committee, assessing National Register eligibility of Maryland properties.

Tyler was a founding member of the Middle Atlantic Archeological Conference and chaired and hosted the 1974 MAAC meetings in Baltimore. He also brought the Eastern States Archeological Federation annual meeting to Maryland in 1984 (Annapolis) and 2000 (Solomons Island). Tyler was a founding member of the Council for Maryland Archeology and later served a term as its president. Even in retirement, Tyler is still influencing Maryland archeology as a member of the Frederick County Historic Preservation Commission.

Today, Maryland archeology has come a long way from Tyler's one-man operation. The Division of Archeology no longer exists, its staff being split between the Maryland Historical Trust and the State Highway Administration in 1990. Despite concerns at the time, archeology was not eliminated from state programs or made subservient to architectural historians — Maryland's archeological programs remain among the strongest in the country.

And it is Tyler's legacy in large part that this is true. The firm foundation he built for Maryland archeology, the strong archeological community he nurtured and the cast of next-generation

archeologists he guided through their early careers are all reasons that Maryland has such successful archeological programs today.

## Annapolis findings go on display ...

By Cassandra A. Fortin

*Condensed from the Baltimore Sun, March 5, 2008*

A buried cache showing centuries-old African religious practices. A Colonial printer's mark protesting the Stamp Act. Fragments of dolls, dishes and buttons from as far back as the 1600s.

Hundreds of items from downtown Annapolis' past have been brought together -- some for the first time -- in an exhibit that opened yesterday at the Banneker-Douglass Museum.

"Seeking Liberty, Annapolis: An Imagined Community," part of the city's commemoration of the signing of its royal charter 300 years ago, depicts the search for liberty by African-Americans, immigrants from Britain and women.

"These artifacts are not free-standing," said Mark Leone, the guest curator. An anthropology professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, he has led the Archaeology in Annapolis excavations at more than 40 sites during 26 years. "They can be used to interpret the heritage of the people of Annapolis, whether it's the patriots or the African-Americans. This exhibit is not an art museum where the artifacts speak. It's an exhibit where we speak, where the public speaks."

The exhibit culls from thousands of items dating from the 1680s through the 1980s to show Annapolis' role as a hub of pre-Revolutionary War activity as well as the African side of Annapolis history -- the city was a bustling port for slave ships and many freed blacks settled in the state capital.

"The treasure of our findings is the presence of African spirit practices," he said. "We found that African religious traditions were widespread in Annapolis and that most of the below-ground history is still there."

Under Reynolds Tavern, built in the 1750s on Church Circle, archeologists found bundles of items, including the remains of a root, glass vessels, one whole decanter, a small bottle with red powder, pink quartz crystal, red sea coral and red slate.

The burial places of the caches -- called mojos, fixin's, hands or bundles by the Africans -- were part of Hoodoo, the ritual of burying a carefully arrayed group of items near the stairs, fireplace hearths or northeast corner of a room, to control the spirits of the dead.

The bundles included three elements: something personal to identify the person to be protected, something to deal with the thing that is desired and then something to hold the spirit, Leone said.

Several bundles were found at the Brice House at 42 East St. Amelia Harris, museum coordinator at Banneker-Douglass, created a cosmogram, an oval-shaped replica depicting their arrangement and location, in the house built by James Brice. He served as mayor in 1782 and 1787 and acting governor in 1792.

The Maynard-Burgess House at 163 Duke of Gloucester St., built in 1840 by John Maynard, a free black man, turned up other everyday items.

"This house is significant because it was owned by the only two free African-Americans who owned property in Annapolis," Harris said. "It helps us tell a tale that has never been told before."

The rarest item -- the centerpiece of the exhibit -- was excavated at the Jonas Green House, 124 Charles St. One of the oldest residences in Annapolis, it dates back to the 1690s. The house was the home of the printer who published the Maryland Gazette, and his wife, Anne Catherine.

Among the more than 11,000 pieces that were unearthed was the death's head, a print type of a skull and crossbones that Green used to protest the Stamp Act of 1765.

"When the Stamp Act was passed, the king's stamp was to be placed on the newspaper," Brown said. "But Jonas put the death's head where the king's stamp was supposed to go. He also used the death's head for obituaries."

The exhibit, which received funding from the First Lady's Office Preserve America Program, ARINC Corp and the City of Annapolis, will be open through Nov. 29 at the Banneker-Douglass Museum, 84 Franklin St.

"This will be an exciting year with lots of opportunities to celebrate the past," Mayor Ellen O. Moyer said, "but this exhibit has unique power to bring all the diverse strands of our history into focus."

## ... Unexpected messages in the exhibit

By Michael O'Sullivan

*A review from the Washington Post, March 14, 2008*

Some of the biggest ideas in "Seeking Liberty: Annapolis, An Imagined Community" come in the tiniest, and least likely, packages.

Take the three hamsas, or "hands of Fatima," on view in the exhibition of archeological artifacts from late 17<sup>th</sup> Century to early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Annapolis at the Banneker-Douglass Museum. Based on an Islamic symbol and used by African slaves to ward off the evil eye, these tiny amulets, if melted together, would produce less metal than a dime. Yet their presence in this show has a weighty -- if not entirely convincing -- symbolism.

Let me explain. Like any archeological display, "Seeking Liberty" features lots of dusty old stuff dug up from the ground. Typically, those artifacts tell us something about the way people lived long ago. But this show is less about a long-dead culture than it is about the enduring vitality of a single idea: freedom.

Now it may seem strange discussing freedom in the context of slavery. It certainly did to me. But that's just the point that "Seeking Liberty" tries to drive home: that the hamsas, belonging to uprooted Africans but found in the home of white slave owners, are also evidence that in early Annapolis Muslims and Christians lived under the same roof (if not exactly in harmony). Freedom? Maybe not. But the show would argue that these tiny charms, buried within the soil of slavery, are seeds of something that would grow and flourish.

That's just one of the unexpected messages delivered by this collection of artifacts unearthed over the past 26 years at five sites in historic downtown Annapolis by the Archaeology in Annapolis program, a partnership of the University of Maryland's department of anthropology and the Historic Annapolis Foundation.

There's another message, courtesy of a small, cobalt blue bottle. One of several glass vessels found at the Maynard-Burgess House -- a residence notable for being owned and occupied by two interrelated African-American families from 1840 until the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century -- it probably once contained Bromo-Seltzer. But its former contents are less remarkable than its symbolic role in the fight against racism.

That's right. Being a national brand, the antacid would have had a fixed price. That would have made it more desirable than some locally made goods, whose prices were often jacked up for black customers. Its very presence in this household, in other words, strikes a blow for equality.

Among the material collected from the same site are 12 naval uniform buttons (out of a total of 285 buttons found here). In their own way, they, too, speak of inequity, reminding us that the house's earliest residents were washerwomen. Their clients? Most likely students from the nearby U.S. Naval Academy.

"Seeking Liberty" is part of a year-long citywide celebration of the 1708 signing of the royal charter granting Annapolitans the right to citizen-elected representation (that's white Annapolitans, mind you). Yet, as its title suggests, it's more about the pursuit of a dream than its realization.

The exhibition bends over backward to show us the Africans and African-Americans who lived with the European-Americans for whom the city is best known. Maybe not side by side -- upstairs-downstairs is more like it or, later, in segregated neighborhoods -- but at least together. We see the fragments of their lives: long-buried caches of talismans used in the practice of hoodoo religious rituals, broken household objects, faded scraps and tatters that stand in for people, not things.

"Annapolis is almost as African as it is European," the exhibition's wall text tells us. "We show that here, too."

That's a tall claim. But walk half a block down the street from the museum to the Reynolds Tavern, an 18<sup>th</sup>



Century site still operating as a restaurant (and one of the show's dig sites) and you may just feel something stirring beneath your feet besides the dining room's sagging floorboards.

*NOTE: Tours of the exhibit will be available during the April 12 ASM Spring Symposium in Annapolis.*

## How did Port Tobacco respond to disaster?

**By Jim Gibb**

*Condensed from Baynet.com*

What does a community do when disaster looms on the horizon? For the town in question, the threat did not come from global warming, dwindling petroleum reserves or rapidly expanding populations. In this case, it came from the source of the town's prosperity. The soil that grew the tobacco was both the reason for Port Tobacco's success and its eventual decline.

The rise and fall of Port Tobacco has fascinated local historians and university-based scholars for decades. The Port Tobacco Archaeological Project formed in 2007 to determine what archeology might contribute to the effort. Last fall, archeologists came to the Colonial port town to learn about what residents did (or didn't do) to keep eroding soil out of the Port Tobacco River. This erosion closed the town's maritime highway to the world's commerce and the world's wealth.

The long-time Charles County seat (1727-1895) now consists of open fields and lawns, a handful of modern houses, three houses from the 1700s and a 1970 reproduction of the 1819 courthouse. The study covered about nine acres of the former 60-acre town, virtually all of which is privately owned.

Below the lawns and meadows are the remains of more than 100 dwellings, shops and offices. Most buildings disappeared from the landscape before 1900, soon after the county seat moved to La Plata.

Under the direction of Jim Gibb of Annapolis and April Beisaw of Binghamton University, the field crew found a wealth of artifacts and information. The crew discovered several 500- to 1,000-year-old Indian sites and the ruins of as many as 20 buildings occupied during the 1700s and 1800s. At the Maryland Historical Trust laboratory, Peter Quantock and his laboratory crew processed and catalogued 25,000 artifacts, several thousand of which predate the American Revolution.

Early results from archeological survey identified high ground to the east of town as the source of much of the sediment that choked the river and blanketed the town. Other sediments likely came from upstream.

"Successive seasons of tobacco harvests drained these fields of fertility and, after a season or two of maize cropping, farmers cleared new ground. The extensive loss of vegetation left large areas of soil exposed to wind and rain erosion," points out research director Beisaw. "The results were catastrophic. Many fields were rendered unusable for generations and sediment filled the waterways, including the head of the Port Tobacco River, the location of the town and its wharf."

Some of those deposits within the town are a foot or more deep and preserve earlier material in the underlying soils. Sediments in the river most likely preserve the remains of wharves, piers, and derelict boats.

This spring — with support from the Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco, Charles County, the Archeological Society of Maryland, the residents and property owners of the town, and scores of local volunteers — that archeological team will continue mapping and excavating the town site. Workers will expand the investigation area. The focus, however, will be on meticulous excavation of layers of soil and the recovery of artifacts that will allow the team to determine when major floods and mudslides occurred.

Researchers know that the river between Port Tobacco and Warehouse Point, about one mile south, was little more than a stream at the time of the Civil War. But when significant sedimentation began and at what date ships could no longer make the trip into town from the Potomac River remains to be determined.

Some of that information may lie within the sediments accumulated in the cellars of the houses and shops that once comprised the town. The basement of the recently restored Burch House, on the south edge of town adjacent to Chapel Point Road, is filled with silt. At one time, however, this space stored household goods



and, possibly, goods awaiting either transport on an arriving ship or sale to the area. When did the cellar fill with soil and why didn't the occupants dig it out again? How did their neighbors deal with the wash of sediments that covered the town on the way to the riverbed?

The project has engrossed residents and visitors.

"It's great," says team member Peter Quantock. "We know the stuff is there, but then to actually find it in the ground, that's rewarding. To ask questions, and then find not only answers but new questions, that's fun."

The Port Tobacco Archeological Project maintains a daily blog, <http://porttobacco.blogspot.com>.

## More artifacts now displayed on MAC site

By Sara Rivers Cofield

*MAC Lab*

One of the most successful projects undertaken since the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory (MAC Lab) opened its doors in 1998 has been the Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland webpage. With funding from the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, the MAC Lab launched a series of web pages in 2002 that describe prehistoric and colonial ceramic types in detail, with photos of examples and lists of reference materials.

The MAC lab has received a great deal of positive feedback from the project. Archeologists use the site for cataloging and the public has been using the site to date ceramics they find.

Six years later, the MAC Lab has decided to add new categories of artifacts. A new page on "Small Finds" recently was launched, beginning with the category of Leather Ornaments. Historical archeologists often use the phrase "Small Finds" to discuss miscellaneous objects that are not found on excavations in large quantities, the way ceramics, glass, architectural debris and faunal remains often are.

Small finds can be problematic to use in archeological analyses because they vary greatly and it is often difficult to find publications that provide information about them. The small finds section of the Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland website's goal is to help fill that void by providing details about the chronology, function, manufacture, etc., of small finds recovered in Maryland.

"Leather Ornaments" illustrates decorative metal pieces commonly used on leather accessories or horse tack. This section is quite different from the ceramics pages because every leather ornament at the MAC Lab is pictured instead of a select few. There are trends in styles of ornaments, but there are not enough ornaments to define date ranges for those styles yet, so the website provides site and context summaries that users can turn to for chronological information. In future, we hope to add leather ornaments from other curatorial facilities to help the sample size grow and refine probable dates of certain styles.

The MAC Lab plans to add more categories of artifacts found on historic and prehistoric sites as staff time permits. Projectile points, for example, are being photographed in anticipation of their addition to the web. Plans are also underway to add 19<sup>th</sup> Century ceramics. With the help of a Maryland Historical Trust Board Grant, George L. Miller, an expert in the identification of 19<sup>th</sup> Century ceramics and bottles, will be hired to consult on the project. The MAC Lab hopes to launch this addition by mid- to late summer.

To see the changes we are making, go to: <http://www.jefpat.org/diagnostic/index.htm>

## JefPat looking to fill a pair of jobs

Two jobs are available at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum in Calvert County.

The Maryland Historical Trust is seeking an experienced head conservator of archeological materials.

Applicants must have a degree in the conservation of objects from a recognized conservation degree program, plus three additional post-graduate years of practical experience in the conservation of archeological objects. Equivalent work-experience of three additional years practical conservation of archaeological materials may be accepted in lieu of a conservation degree. The salary is \$37,837 to \$47,968, plus benefits.

Interested persons should send a resume and cover letter by April 18 to Norma Burke, Attention: Head Conservator Position, Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard, Maryland 20685.

Also, the MAC Lab is looking for a half-time collections assistant to help deal with various collections functions, including assisting in creating type collections and artifacts displays for a new archeological exhibit at the JefPat visitor's center.

A bachelor's degree in a related field and some computer skills are required. The salary is \$12.55 an hour and there are no paid benefits.

Interested persons should send a resume and cover letter by April 4 to Norma Burke, Attention: Collections Assistant Position, Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard, Maryland 20685.

## Getting closer to 1st Charles Courthouse

By **Megan Greenwell**

*Condensed from the Washington Post, March 13, 2008*

About the time of Maryland's 300th anniversary in 1934, someone launched a search for the original Charles County courthouse, which stood from 1674 to 1727, but failed to find it. On the county's 300th anniversary 24 years later, someone tried again, with no better results.

Finally, as the county prepares to celebrate its 350th birthday this summer, a group of surveyors, archeologists and genealogists thinks it has been found -- almost.

Officially, the first Charles courthouse remains the only one in Maryland whose exact location is unknown. For years, the Maryland State Archives has carried a note on its Web site stating that finding the precise site of the building was impossible. In an acknowledgment that local officials have given up the search, the county's tourism information web site says the first courthouse was built in 1727, not 1674, a declaration that will change if the location is found.

"Everybody just figured it was lost," said Michael Sullivan, a developer and an amateur historian in the region. "They said it was impossible to find, which felt like a challenge."

Armed with the courthouse's records, almost all of which have survived, and plenty of historical maps, Sullivan decided to try one more time. After months of work, the team he assembled has concluded that the location is on a 150-acre tract on Springhill Newtown Road in southern La Plata. By this summer, the team hopes to find the exact parcel, which took up three acres, according to surveyor's markings on a 1697 plat drawing.

"I usually try not to get excited about potential finds, but I'm really optimistic," said Julia King, an archeology and anthropology professor at St. Mary's College of Maryland. "I believe we're on the verge of finding the courthouse."

When Sullivan first set out to find the courthouse, he enlisted the help of a local genealogist, who combed through records to match names with property sales in the county. Eventually, the team found a land patent showing a 150-acre tract that had been combined with several other properties after a man willed it to his daughter and son-in-law in 1737.

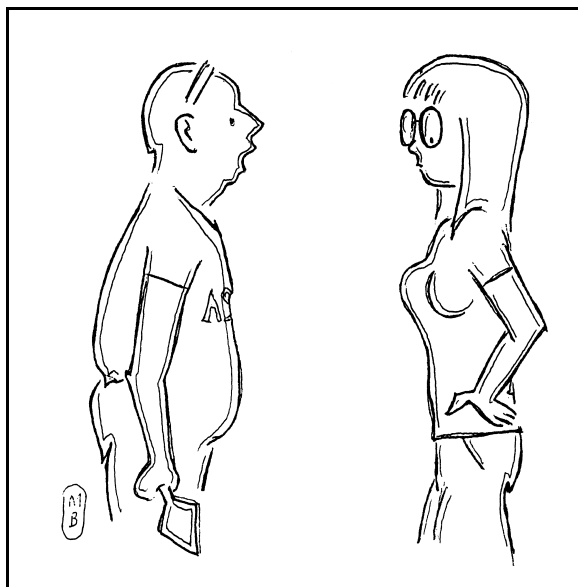
Using private funds raised through St. Mary's College and other donors, the group hired Kevin Norris, a surveyor from Lorenzi, Dobbs & Gunnill, a Waldorf engineering and architecture firm. By lining up historical roads with known family names and existing landmarks, he concluded that Moore's Lodge, a large plot of land that housed the courthouse, sits along the modern-day Springhill Newtown Road.

The land belongs to the descendants of Patrick A. Murphy, who bought it in 1872. Barbara Howell, Murphy's great-great-granddaughter, was surprised to learn that the area held historic value and was more than willing to allow the team to explore the land.

"It's very exciting," said Megan Donnick, Howell's niece, who is planning to build a house on the land. "It's neat to be part of history."

The next step will be to begin a full archeological dig on the 150-acre parcel, which leaders estimated would run from May through midsummer. King will lead St. Mary's College students in a 50-foot interval shovel test search.

"The site was occupied for over 50 years, so we expect the concentration to be fairly dense," she said. "They can tell us about the life of the people who were here."



*"Do you have a site that's a little closer to the parking lot?"*

## 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](mailto:AAChapASM@hotmail.com) or visit the chapter website [www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php](http://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](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)

### 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](mailto:jlazelle@msn.com) or Nancy Geasey at 301-293-2708.

**April 9:** Colby Child of R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates will speak about compliance archeology and the 13-mile long water line project from the Potomac to Frederick.

### Northern Chesapeake

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

### 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. 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](mailto:leeprestonjr@comcast.net)

**May 12:** Howard Wellman, MAC Lab, "Archeological Conservation and Artifact Handling in the Field."

## 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)

### Can you count to 11 with your shoes still on?

Now's a good chance to combine an interest in archeology with an interest in bookkeeping. ASM is looking for someone to help treasurer Sean Sweeney handle ASM's financial records. Millions of dollars are not at stake, but it is important to keeping ASM up and running. If you have knowledge of the basic skills needed and would like to lend a hand, contact Sean at 410-569-8715 or [seansweeney1224@comcast.net](mailto:seansweeney1224@comcast.net)

**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@verizon.net](mailto:myronbeck@verizon.net)

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