



ASM Ink

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Session 1: The return to Claggett Retreat

By Richard J. Dent

Principal Investigator

As temperatures rise and daylight lengthens it is once again time to think about excavations at the Claggett Retreat site along the Monocacy River just outside of Frederick. Last year's ASM Tyler Bastian Field Session was held there and we return again this year. It goes without saying that these late prehistoric villages are substantial and even the most preliminary understanding is often a multiyear process.

Let me update you on what we learned last year and lay out this year's campaign.

Last year we managed to excavate 11 units (2x2m) and two long trenches (30 m) useful in defining the limits of the site. Calvin Swomley, who excavated from the site in the early 1960s, visited us and generously donated his rich artifact assemblage. We recovered a more modest artifact assemblage, but made great strides in beginning to understand site layout.

At the end of the field session we also began to encounter additional features. Charcoal from Feature 34 was sent off for radiocarbon dating and the results have just returned. That charcoal produced a date of 780 radiocarbon years plus/minus 40 years. Applying the various correction factors this resulted in a calendrical date of occupation circa AD 1260.

The dating of the Claggett Retreat occupation for the first time demonstrates that the site was occupied earlier than either the Winslow or Hughes sites (two other sites ASM excavated recently) and fits well with the few other Mason Island sites known for the Middle Potomac Valley. You will recall that Claggett is part of that larger cultural tradition, one of three that dominate the Potomac landscape at the end of prehistory.

Now there is the matter of this year. Before the field session begins we intend to once again stake out the exact position of the 28 features Swomley excavated at Claggett. We then will use mechanical equipment to remove the difficult to shovel and screen plow zone in two or three areas of concentration.

At the field session, we will concentrate our renewed efforts on cleaning up those newly exposed areas in what we hope will be a successful search for more features and post molds. It is hoped that the latter will lead to the identification of the first Mason Island structure and associated surrounding work areas. More charcoal will also be collected for additional radiocarbon dates.

Whatever the case, this season will be less taxing. So, forget the daily walk down the hill and the hard shoveling and screening of last year. And let us hope that uncovered 20th Century agricultural features are a thing of the past. With a new field strategy and much more knowledge of the site, great discoveries beckon us this year. And I also once again can promise clear skies and balmy temperatures for this year's fieldwork.

A second ASM field school will be held in June at Port Tobacco in Prince George's County. More on that in next month's newsletter.

Upcoming events

May 3 and 4: The annual Primitive Technology Weekend, the Oregon Ridge Nature Center. For information, see 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:

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 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 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

Human traces found to be pre-Clovis

From wire reports, April 4, 2008

Scientists have found and dated the oldest human remnants ever uncovered in the Americas -- a discovery that places people genetically similar to Native Americans in Oregon more than 14,000 years ago and 1,000 years earlier than previous estimates.

Using radiocarbon dating and DNA analysis, the latest discovery is likely to rekindle debate over how humans first arrived in the Americas. The age of the coprolites indicates that humans were here hundreds of years before the Clovis culture and before the ice-free corridor was formed, experts say.

The samples were discovered near a crude dart or spear tip chiseled from obsidian, as well as bones of horses and camels that were then common in the region. The researchers described their finding as a "smoking gun" in the long-running debate over when and where humans first inhabited the New World.

Evidence of prehistoric hearths, stone tools and carved bones that are nearly as old have been uncovered in caves and clearings throughout the Americas, including intensively studied sites in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

But the discovery in Oregon's Paisley caves was the first in which scientists were able to pinpoint a date using human DNA. The results were reported yesterday in the online edition of the journal *Science*.

Future efforts will focus on analysis of the samples to determine exactly what the natives ate.

"What's so exciting here is that we have cells from real people, their DNA, rather than samples of their work or technologies," said Dennis Jenkins of the University of Oregon, who oversaw the dig. "And we have them on the Oregon landscape 1,000 years before what used to be the earliest samples of human remains in the Americas."

The discovery is a blow to the widely held theory that the Clovis culture was the first human presence in North America.

Jenkins said that while the human DNA found in Oregon could be from ancestors of the Clovis culture, none of the distinctive Clovis technology has been found in the region.

The "Clovis first" theory has been challenged by almost a decade of discoveries from Canada to the southern tip of South America that indicate that humans were present before the time of the Clovis civilization, generally dated at about 13,000 years ago. But yesterday's report is the first to involve datable human DNA.

The discovery, however, is not without its critics. The cave has been excavated in the past, leading some to wonder whether the newly found samples were contaminated and mixed with other material. In addition, some of the fossilized feces contain canine DNA.

"I don't think we know for sure whether these are dog coprolites or human," said Gary Haynes, an anthropologist at the University of Nevada. "We know that Native Americans have used these sites for centuries and so their DNA could have gotten into the older dog feces through urination."

The team rejects this possibility, saying there is too much human protein in the oldest coprolites to be explained by later activities. The team also says the presence of human hair in the coprolites makes it almost irrelevant whether they came from humans or dogs, because the two appeared to be living together.

"They were real careful about contamination issues and handling the DNA, which is typical in this kind of work," said Robert Wall, a Towson University archeologist not involved in the project.

What was disappointing: the absence of stone tools and other artifacts, Wall said.

If the discovery is ultimately confirmed and accepted by anthropologists, it will also challenge the prevailing theory about how humans spread across the Americas.

Most experts agree that the first American inhabitants came from Siberia, traveling over what was then a land and ice bridge across the Bering Strait to what is now Alaska, probably before 15,000 years ago. Much of Canada was then covered by an ice sheet that would have made it impossible to migrate southward.

Using geological and climate information, researchers have concluded that a corridor of ice-free land opened in inland Canada between 13,000 and 12,000 years ago and that the earliest inhabitants could have made their way to the high plains of the United States by that path. Humans are believed to have then spread

Continued on next page

quickly across North America and then South America -- doing so in hundreds, rather than thousands, of years.

But if very early humans lived in Oregon, that suggests they either came directly from Asia by boat or traveled down the Pacific coastline after crossing the land bridge.

While the origin of the newly discovered human DNA is an inevitable source of jokes, researchers say coprolites are an important reservoir of historical genetic information that can be mined with increasing sophistication.

Fourteen samples of the feces were sent to the University of Copenhagen for DNA analysis and six were found to have human DNA. Using coprolites also avoids the sensitive issue of whether Native American skeletal remains should be exhumed and studied.

According to DNA specialist Eske Willerslev, an author of the paper, the newfound DNA was of a distinct Native American grouping -- similar to some early people from Central Asia, but different in some important ways.

He said that because the DNA samples were broken and as a result hard to read, the researchers could not be more specific about the genetic makeup of the people. He said he sent samples to DNA labs in Sweden and Germany that came back with the same results.

The fossilized waste was found in 2002 and 2003 in one of eight caves and covered ledges along a ridge near Paisley in south-central Oregon. (It is considered fossilized not because it is petrified but because it is ancient and was found underground.) The site was first studied in the 1930s as a home to early humans, but at the time researchers' ability to analyze their finds was far more limited than it is today.

Jenkins said the feces were easy to identify. In the thin, fine dirt, he said, the fossilized coprolites were unmistakable. "Basically, it looks like what it is: poop," he said. "Dried up like that, it maintains its shape and is very different from the surrounding soil."

Using more-controlled excavation methods, Jenkins and his team have dug up other samples that will also undergo radiocarbon dating and DNA analysis.

Spanish jawbone may push Europe back

By Lynda Hurst

Condensed from the Toronto Star, April 6, 2008

A lower jawbone with a haggard of teeth.

That's all there was.

But its discovery in a limestone cave in northern Spain could be the holy grail long sought by anthropologists. The fossil is by far the oldest skeletal evidence of a human presence in Europe. Dated at 1.3 million years, the find is not only exceptional in itself, but for the light it will shed on a question that's long been controversial: When did the earliest humans reach Europe?

Though our ancestors began their trek out of Africa and into the world some 2 million years ago, until recently there was no solid evidence that they were anywhere near western Europe before 500,000 years ago.

But human remains found 10 years ago in the same Spanish region, and by the same team that found the jawbone, suggested the date was further back, to about 800,000 years ago. It prompted them to name them as a new and distinct species, *Homo antecessor*, or "Pioneer Man" - a move criticized by many at the time as premature.

Whatever its classification, the new discovery pushes the date for human occupation of Europe back further still. Noted Spanish anthropologist Eudald Carbonell, whose team unearthed the jaw last June, has no doubt of its significance.

"This find is incredible," he said after details of the discovery were published last month in the science journal *Nature*. "It's forceful evidence for a continual occupation in Europe from at least 1.3 million years ago."

Perhaps even before that. Primitive stone tools dating 300,000 years older still have been uncovered in Spain, as well as Italy and France, though as yet no human remains.

The Spanish team has provisionally assigned the new find to the Pioneer Man species, which they think is the last common ancestor of both Neanderthals and modern humans, *Homo sapiens* - us.

What is not known, however, is whether the species migrated to western Europe from Asia or directly from Africa. The discovery raises the intriguing - and heretofore dismissed - possibility that a wave of early humans found their way through northern Africa into Europe.

"The find is exciting, a pretty big deal on a number of levels," says Michael Chazan, an archeologist in University of Toronto's anthropology department. It means that man's earliest forerunners spread out of Africa more rapidly than was thought.

"But how did they get to western Europe?" he wonders. "Did they cross the water from North Africa? I think that's unlikely. But perhaps there were low sea levels."

The mountainous Atapuerca region in northwestern Spain is a world heritage site and anthropological treasure trove. Systematically worked on since 1977, it is the most accurately dated location of its kind, a fossil-hunter's paradise. The small, 6-centimetre jawbone was found there in a complex of ancient caves known as Sima del Elefante.

Also buried in the sediment were crude stone tools and rock flakes. Numerous animal bones bearing butchery marks show the cave dwellers were enthusiastic carnivores with a diet that included rats, foxes, ferrets, bison, bears and big cats. In one instance, a cow's jaw had been hacked at to retrieve the tender marrow inside.

Because of its size, the human jaw is thought to belong to a female aged between 30 and 40 years old. The cave dwellers were likely about 5-foot-7 tall, say the researchers, with relatively small brains, three-quarters the size of modern humans.

The lush, warm Atapuerca valley would have been a safe place to live, according to the research team's co-director, paleoanthropologist Jose Bermudez de Castro. "There was a river nearby, and it was high up, so it was a good vantage point for hunters. The cave shelters there provided them with refuge."

Three different tests, rather than the usual two, were used to establish the age of the fossil: radioactive decay, a new form of radiometric dating, and paleomagnetism, a technique in which changes in Earth's magnetic field leave a weak signal in the soil, providing a timetable of the past.

"Before this method," says Toronto's Chazan, who has used it in his own field work in South Africa, "we were just guessing in this time period. Now we can date with relative precision."

If the Spanish discovery confirms that western Europe began to be colonized not long after our earliest predecessors walked out of Africa and into the world, who were the first settlers and where did they originate? The find could begin to answer those questions as well.

The current consensus theory holds that roughly 2 million years ago, *Homo erectus* headed up through the Middle East, wandered east through southern Asia and reached Java and China 1.5 million years ago. Some argue there was a second wave of migration that reached western Asia before one branch essentially doubled back, veering further west to Europe, while the other continued east.

The oldest human remains found outside Africa are a pair of *Homo erectus* skulls, discovered in 1983 at Dmanisi in the Caucasus mountains of Georgia, dating back about 1.7 million years. The jawbone shares some anatomical attributes with them but also has more "modern" aspects: It is lightly built on the inside, an advanced feature found in later humans.

The Spanish team thinks it could belong to Dmanisi's evolutionary descendant. If so, it would fill in a major gap in our knowledge of human lineage.

But the link is still tentative. The 500,000 years between the two sets of fossils is a problem, paleoanthropologist Tim White at the University of California, Berkeley, told *Nature*: "There's a lot of time and distance between the Dmanisi collection and this one mandible in western Europe."

U of T's Chazan suspects the Spanish-site people were likely a variant of *Homo erectus*, not a new species. But given the recent find and the ongoing excavations at Atapuerca -- which he hopes one day to join -- that view could change at any time. As it is, he laughs, he already has to tell his students, "I was wrong last September when I said humans entered Europe 800,000 years ago."

The Spanish researchers say they fully expect to uncover more ancient remains, even up to 1.8 million years old, in other parts of Europe. "This has to be the next discovery," said Eudald Carbonell.

Chazan agrees. "There are older finds waiting to be made, absolutely. There is so much left to find out."

Trust undertakes two major projects

The following information is based on remarks made by J. Rodney Little of the Maryland Historical Trust at the 17th Annual Workshop in Archeology March 8 in Crownsville.

The Maryland Historical Trust has begun a project to bring together the state's archeological data from the various places where it now is found.

Since the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 came into force, archeological resource management studies have proliferated in Maryland. Consideration and treatment of archeological resources have become increasingly sophisticated and voluminous data on the archeological record has been amassed.

But this data is often inaccessible and not widely disseminated, buried instead in grey literature.

The MHT board of trustees has authorized \$90,000 to launch the synthezation program. Research work already is under way. The project will examine Phase II and Phase III investigations made over the past 40 years, cull out the most important findings and organize the archeological data in searchable databases.

Also planned in this program are overview volumes aimed toward the general public, including the "Prehistory of Maryland" and the "Archeology of Colonial Maryland."

Information on the project is posted on the MHT website.

The Trust also has provided \$12,000 to test National Register sites. Since many of the registered sites were listed decades ago, the documentation in some cases is minimal. Some of the sites never have been looked at by a professional.

The lack of documentation on the sites, including current conditions and research potential, is a glaring deficiency that has become clear as these sites come under increasing threat. This testing money will jump-start a field testing program coordinated by Charlie Hall of the Trust.

The Trust has awarded the Archeological Conservancy a noncapital grant to identify, assess and prioritized preservation needs for registry-listed archeological sites in the state.

Here are two examples of how this type of project can lead to protecting sites:

-- The Barton Site in Allegany County was mismapped in MHT site files. ASM field sessions and other testing helped pinpoint the site's location. Testing also revealed the significance and intact nature of the site. As a result of this new documentation, a portion of the site has been acquired by the Archeological Conservancy and another part is under an MHT easement.

-- The Rosenstock Site in Frederick County also was mismapped in MHT's files. ASM field schools helped determine the true location. Testing revealed the integrity of the site and provided data on chronology and function. The Rosenstock Site is now protected by an MHT preservation easement.

The Trust also wants to announce that the library catalogues for both the MHT and Jefferson Patterson are now available online through its website.

ASNC crosses into Pa. to look for cottages

By Lori Badders

Condensed from the York, Pa., Daily Record/Sunday News, March 31, 2008

Tucked away in the southeastern corner of York Count, Peach Bottom Township is home to the Coulsontown Cottages, four two-story structures built from slate and stone by the area's early Welsh settlers.

Since the Old Line Museum of Delta bought two of the cottages 18 months ago, much work has gone into restoring these 150-year-old quarrymen's quarters. The latest activity took place this weekend when the Archeological Society of the Northern Chesapeake opened a dig site on the Green Road properties.

"We're trying to help (The Friends of the Welsh Cottages) understand in an organized and controlled way how to get the data that answers their questions about the Welsh people who lived here," said William McIntyre, former president of the archeological society.

Preparation for the dig began months ago through conversations McIntyre had with Donald Robinson, the Delta resident who was instrumental in the purchase of the cottages, and Dan Coates, current president of the archeological society.

McIntyre and other society members did a property site survey, then mapped the perimeter and plotted its location on a grid. Friday, a group of anthropology students from Harford County Community College spent a few hours at the site assisting with test holes.

By Sunday morning, the archeologists had found two points interesting enough to warrant further pursuit. One was along the foundation of one of the homes, and the other was at the rear of the property.

The highlight was the discovery of two large rocks in a test hole at the rear of the property that appear to have been placed there with purpose. The archeologists wonder if they are part of a long-forgotten foundation, a garden wall or some other structure. The answer must await further excavation.

"Many times we will end with more questions than we started with," McIntyre said. "Archeology is a science, but it's also an art."

The Lenape, Lenopi and 'Lenni Lenape'

By Dr. Marshall Joseph Becker

The University of Pennsylvania

Roy Brown's article ("By their enemies we shall know them," ASM Ink, March) reminded us that many of the names used by immigrant Americans for native peoples derive from negative terms that were used by their neighbors and enemies.

There are two points that I'd like to make about my people, the Lenape, and the various peoples in the region of the Delaware Valley. "Lenape" called themselves "Lenape" (Le-NAH-peh). As with many of the names Brown pointed out, it means "the people."

With the recent passing of the last of the native speakers in Oklahoma the language spoken 100 years ago in eastern Oklahoma no longer survives. Many of the native people living in the Bartlesville, Oklahoma, area may actually have been descended from the Lenopi (Len-OH-pee) from southern new Jersey. The name "Lenopi" has the same meaning as Lenape.

Both the Lenape and the Lenopi must have been the same group during the Middle Woodland period. Technological developments ca. 1000 CE, such as the development of the bow and arrow, led to more specific foraging strategies throughout the region. The Lenape focused on anadromous fish spawning in the Delaware drainage, while the Lenopi focused on marine resources. These separate lifestyles led to two distinct cultural traditions and to linguistic differences. The similarities in the names led to the Lenape being identified consistently by the English as the "Jerseys."

Efforts to trace the genealogies of these two separate groups have been a focus for research for more than 30 years and should ultimately provide an answer to the question of descent for each of the two groups of "Delaware" who settled in different parts of Oklahoma.

"Lenni Lenape" is a usage found largely among historians that can be traced to the 19th Century. It was not and is not in common use by the Lenape or their descendants. It appears to have derived from a letter from the Ohio frontier that included a call to the "real Lenape" who remained behind in various parts of Pennsylvania to join their kin in the west. The alliterative qualities of this designation appear to be the principal reason that nonnative speakers seem to like it.

A related problem is the common fiction that "Lenape" and "Delaware" are synonymous. Three major native groups have at one time or another been glossed as "Delaware": the Lenape, the Lenopi and the Munsee. All three were collectively called the "River Indians" in the 17th Century. All three did use the Delaware River as one part of their boundaries. All three also were foragers, but with three very different foraging strategies. Even the Sekonese (Ciconicin) chiefdom, the northernmost true chiefdom in the Middle Atlantic region, has commonly been called "Delaware" by amateur historians and now are commonly called "Lenape" by some claimants to native descent from them.

More interesting is the Lenape term "Minquas" or "Minquasy" (not Minqua) to describe the neighboring Susquesahannock, the peoples of the Susquehanna River region. Saying that "Minquas" means "treacherous" or "stealthy" is a bowdlerization. I'll gladly provide the translation that Nora Thompson Dean offered to me many years ago, one that has since been confirmed by Algonquian language scholars. While I would provide this in a journal article, a newsletter is too family oriented for ethnic epithets.

Something for everyone at JefPat

By Lara Lutz

Condensed from the Bay Journal, April 2008

Archeology educator Kathy Concannon sees at least two stories in the fragmented rocks at her feet.

The rough gray chunks are etched with the lines of human effort -- Native American petroglyphs. For thousands of years, these carvings were among those that adorned the rock face high above the Susquehanna River as it approaches the Chesapeake Bay.

The first story Concannon sees in the rocks is one that remains to be told, about the meaning behind the designs and the people who made them. The second is about lost opportunity.

"These petroglyphs were dynamited during work on the Conowingo Dam," Concannon said. "So we've lost the context they existed in."

Context is a priceless feature for archeologists as they interpret vestiges of the past. Today, the broken petroglyphs rest at a laboratory in Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, a member of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network. Concannon uses them as a teaching tool to explain the process of archeology to the increasing number of public visitors who tour the lab.

Treasures from Maryland soil have been quietly accumulating at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, near the mouth of the Patuxent River, for a decade. The park is home to the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory, where archeologists and volunteers have preserved, catalogued and archived more than 7 million state and federally owned artifacts from all areas of Maryland.

Over time, the park has become a setting where everyone -- not just professionals -- can explore archeology and its outcomes.

Executive director Michael Smolek said that visitors are curious about artifacts that have been found at the park and brought here for storage. But the expanding range of exhibits and events show that digging for artifacts isn't the sole aim of archeology. The real goal is to unearth stories about people, land and the way they have interacted through time.

"It's not what you find. It's what you find out," Smolek said.

Jefferson Patterson Park is an excellent place to convey this message. The 560-acre park stretches along two and a half miles of the Patuxent River at the mouth of St. Leonard Creek. The abundance of river life, combined with good soil and easy travel on the waterways, has drawn humans to these shores for at least 9,000 years -- and evidence of their experiences has been left remarkably intact.

The park grounds encompass more than 70 high-quality archeological sites that document Native American communities, colonial farming and the experience of enslaved African-Americans. Both land and water have yielded artifacts from the Battle of St. Leonard Creek, which took place in 1814 between British and U.S. forces. The battle was the largest naval engagement in Maryland's history.

From mid-May through early July, the public archeology program welcomes day-trippers and regular volunteers for hands-on experiences in the field or in the lab, under the supervision of professional archeologists.

"It's not simulated. It's real," Smolek said.

People who prefer to observe can attend open houses at the lab or take walking tours of work sites.

A new exhibit on archeology is expected to debut at the visitors center later this summer.

"People ask all the time, 'how do you know where to dig?' and 'what's the best thing you've found?'" Smolek said. "This exhibit will target all of those frequently asked questions and give people a great introduction to archeology."

At Jefferson Patterson Park, Native American sites have produced the oldest artifacts -- stone spear tips and axes more than 7,000 years old. Approximately 40 Native American sites have been identified, although most have yet to be explored.

Many of the findings come from two extremely rich sites which date to the Woodland period, between 400 and 3,000 years ago. One of the native communities noted by Captain John Smith in 1608 may also be located within the park's grounds.

An Eastern Woodland Indian village has been recreated along the shores of the river to bring the findings of archeology to life. Visitors can step inside the dwellings to explore detailed examples of native building techniques, as well as gardening, cooking and tool-making.

Colonial sites date to the period when Richard Smith and his descendants (no relation to John Smith) owned the land, which was known as St. Leonard. Smith was the first attorney general of Maryland and drew the General Assembly and Provincial Council to his property on several occasions.

The Smith house and outbuildings have been an exciting hub for the public archeology program.

Cannonballs, musket shot and other military artifacts echo the events of June 1814. The Battle of St. Leonard Creek makes Jefferson Patterson Park a favorite spot for living history events focused on the war. The North American Grand Tactical -- a large international gathering of re-enactors for the War of 1812 -- will come to the park for the first time in September. The event will draw approximately 1,000 "troops," including some from Britain, along with tall ships on the river.

The land is also rich with African-American heritage. Volunteers have been critical in reconstructing the history of Sukeek, an enslaved woman, and her family. Sukeek's descendants shared family stories that helped to identify the remains of her cabin and piece together the family's life on the farm. They and other volunteers are also helping to excavate and document the cabin site.

Jefferson Patterson Park is also a stop on the Maryland Underground Railroad Network.

With so many layers of activity existing in one place, Smolek finds it impossible to frame the park within in any one theme or time frame. And that's consistent with at least one truth that archeology confirms: The exchange between humans and the landscape overlap and echo through time.

"There's certainly something here for everyone," Smolek said.

Public archeology days set for JefPat

Jefferson Patterson's public archeology program will run this year from May 13 to July 5. This summer's dig will be at the Smith's St. Leonard Site, the core of a large 18th Century plantation in Calvert County.

The Smith residence, a slave quarter, and a detached kitchen are among the buildings that have been found there so far. Excavations this season will focus on the slave quarter, trying to find out more about its appearance.

Dig days are Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, weather permitting, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays will be spent in the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory, washing, labeling and cataloging the artifacts.

"Participants in the ASM CAT program may find this a good opportunity to work on their certification," said Ed Chaney of JefPat.

If you are interested in participating, contact Ed Chaney at 410-586-8554 or echaney@mdp.state.md.us.

Petroglyphs on display in Havre de Grace

By Mary Gail Hare

Condensed from the Baltimore Sun, April 6, 2008

Ann S. Persson ran her hand gently across a primitive sunburst design carved into rock thousands of years ago. She traced lines radiating from the center to the rock's edge.

"It's like touching history, our connection from the past to the present," said Persson, curator of the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum, which today opens an exhibit of ancient rock art, known as petroglyphs.

"You are touching deep, deep history, the core of humanity," said Charlie Hall, the state's terrestrial archeologist. "These drawings were a means of communication that still communicate to us today. They shout 'Look at me!' and completely draw you in."

The carvings help tell the story of life along the Susquehanna River, when Native Americans fished, hunted and camped along its shores. "The Susquehanna was then like I-95 is today," Persson said. "The river was a

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major thoroughfare, a way to get to and from different resources."

The petroglyphs, which date back 4,000 years, provide insights into the culture of the era. They may have served as trail markers denoting good fishing grounds or dangerous waters, archeologists said.

"Who knows what the images are trying to tell us?" Persson said. "Maybe they were recording the climate or telling a creation story."

Images of fish, the sun and the water, as well as some early doodling -- concentric circles and squiggly lines -- once attracted 20th Century explorers to a rock island in the river near the Harford-Cecil county line.

Before construction of the Conowingo Dam inundated that island more than 80 years ago, area residents insisted on preserving the Bald Friar rocks, named for the area where they were discovered.

"The rocks were saved and that's a testament to the citizens of the area," Hall said, adding that more than 30 petroglyphs are now protected state property that will be shared with the public.

"We don't know exactly when or who, but most probably these were drawn by ancestors of tribes in the area during the 1600s," Persson said.

The Bald Friar collection varies significantly from later petroglyphs, dating to about 1600 and found at Safe Harbor, along the river in Pennsylvania, he said. With more specific images of recognizable animals -- wild turkeys, antlered deer and birds -- those drawings are not so enigmatic and open to interpretation, he said. Three petroglyphs arrived at the Havre de Grace museum last week and will remain on loan for two years.

Army shift opens Aberdeen for exploring

By **Matthew Santoni**

From The Examiner, March 25, 2008

ABERDEEN - A backhoe bit into a building last week at Aberdeen Proving Ground that had stood since World War II, clearing the way for construction projects that will reshape the look and mission of the base over the next few years.

As the Army at APG undertakes its biggest expansion since that war as the result of the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, engineers have cautioned that moving roads, tearing down old buildings and creating new ones could disrupt artifacts and archeological sites ranging back to the earliest European settlement of northern Maryland.

But some historians argue the area's history is safer in the hands of the military.

"I can be fairly critical when archeological sites are threatened, but I'm never worried about Aberdeen," said Sara Rivers-Cofield, curator of federal collections at the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory.

According to the "environmental impact statement" released by the Army in preparation for the BRAC construction, construction areas around the base have a "high potential for archeological sites" ranging from prehistoric camps of native hunters to the buried remains of Cold War munitions tests.

If a suspected historical site is found during construction, work stops for an evaluation and, if possible, recovery of any artifacts begins — a job that often falls to garrison historian Mark Gallihue.

"It's not always the simplest matter to just stick a shovel in the ground," Gallihue said.

The first Baltimore settlement and county seat was established in 1661 along the Bush River but was abandoned after a few decades when accumulating silt made the river impractical for shipping, according to the Historical Society of Harford County. An excavation in 1999 found the remains of a tavern there that once belonged to a wealthy merchant — and also found a few surprises.

"The whole [Old Baltimore] site was once downrange of a live firing range. They even found a couple of unexploded 500-pound rounds there," Gallihue said. "Sometimes you can move it, other times you just have to leave it there and move to another area."

Ordinarily, waterfront property such as the Old Baltimore site would have been developed over the years and its buried history lost, Rivers-Cofield said. But even though the Army took over the land 90 years ago and used it as an artillery testing range, the site remained undisturbed beneath the surface.

"I know it's going to be preserved because people can't get to it," Rivers-Cofield said. "It's not going to be looted; it's not going to be developed."

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.

May 8: Charles Hall, the state terrestrial archeologist, will speak about the upcoming Claggett Retreat field session. Please note the change in date from our normal meeting schedule on the second Wednesday of the month.

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

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 Website: 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.

Submissions welcome. Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782, 301-864-5289 or myronbeck@verizon.net

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