



# ASM Ink

May 2011, Vol. 37, No. 5

Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

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

## Letter from the President of ASM

Dear ASM Membership,

I am writing to tell you of changes coming to ASM concerning the traditional publication of our newsletter. This paper version will be the last mailed to all membership. We are not changing the general content of the newsletter, only its delivery method. Starting in June 2011 ASM Ink will be sent to the membership via email. This new format will provide numerous benefits. Primarily, it will save ASM a substantial amount of money. Currently, it cost over \$350 per month to print and mail the newsletter and we do not want to increase our basic membership dues of \$25 per year.

As I am sure you all are aware, funding support from the State of Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust has been drastically reduced, and we must cut our expenditures to assure the continuation of our yearly events: Workshop in Archeology, support of Maryland Archaeology Month, the Spring Symposium, Annual Meeting and the Field Session. A digital format will allow us to send live links to events and articles of interest and reduce the production time associated with the current format. We also hope to attract new members and appeal to young people interested in archeology, as they are the future of this organization.

I do understand that some of you do not have an email address and I do not intend to exclude any of our longtime members, but this change is important to the viability of the society's principal programs. Therefore, the newsletter will be available from the ASM website ([www.MarylandArcheology.org](http://www.MarylandArcheology.org)) where it can be printed by those who want a paper copy. In addition, this move to a digital format will have "green" side effect by reducing paper waste.

We will be using Constant Contact to deliver the newsletter and provide a place to maintain the membership email list. This list will not be shared with any outside parties. This service will reduce the monthly expenditure from \$350 per month to \$15 per month: a savings of over \$4000 per year.

I hope you will support and embrace this change as it offers the option to provide more timely information with less cost. Please be sure that ASM has your **current** and **correct** email address to assure your continued receipt of ASM Ink. Contact me at [ASMPres@hotmail.com](mailto:ASMPres@hotmail.com) and I will make sure you are added to our email distribution list.

**Mechelle Kerns**

**ALSO:** Latest on Barton Site field school, Page 2

Field conservation tips, 4-page pullout reprint: Page 5

## Upcoming events

**June 10-20:** Annual ASM Field Session, Barton Site, Allegany County.

**October 8:** ASM Annual Meeting, Robinson Nature Center, Columbia.

**October 27-30:** ESAF annual meeting, Mt. Laurel, New Jersey

## Volunteer opportunities

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

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

**ASM field session collection:** Volunteers have finished upgrading the ASM field school collection. They are working on the Rosenstock (Frederick County) material. The lab in Crownsville will be open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. Contact Louise Akerson at [lakerson1@verizon.net](mailto:lakerson1@verizon.net) or Charlie Hall [chall@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:chall@mdp.state.md.us).

**The Lost Towns Project** of Anne Arundel County welcomes volunteers for its prolific Pig Point prehistoric site. Fridays. Call Jessie Grow at 410-222-1318.

**Mount Calvert.** Lab work and field work. 301-627-1286.

**Jefferson Patterson Park** invites volunteers to take part in its activities, including archeology, historical research and conservation. Contact 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 details, updates and information on CAT activities check the ASM website.

## Coming in June: Barton field session

With the two spring meetings now history, the next event on the ASM calendar is the field school, which will take place at the prehistoric Barton Site in Allegany County June 10 - 20.

This year's return to Barton will again be under the direction of Bob Wall, the site's longtime interpreter. Recent ground-penetrating work has provided areas for this year's dig that look to be rich in artifacts and information on the peoples who lived there.

A wide range of archeological opportunities will be provided, including digging, screening and lab work. A list of speakers and their dates will be posted on the ASM website.

Lodging has been arranged for those wishing to stay overnight in the area, but participants will have to make their reservations directly.

For campers, room has been found about 25 miles away from the site at the home of Dave and Darlene Frederick, able to accommodate 10 to 12 small tents. There is no charge but contact John Fiveash [jsfiveash@comcast.net](mailto:jsfiveash@comcast.net) or Charlie Hall [chall@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:chall@mdp.state.md.us) to reserve a space. First come, first served.

There will be an outdoor shower and porta-pot as well as a grate for cooking or campfires.

For noncampers, rooms will be available at Cambridge Hall in nearby Frostburg State University. The nightly cost for a single room with linen is \$41, without linen \$35.50. For a double room, it is \$23.25 with linen and \$17.75 without. Taxes are additional. Payment will be at checkout.

Each air-conditioned room has a small refrigerator and internet access (if an ethercord is brought). There also is a lounge that is wireless. Parking passes will be provided.

Those interested should reserve a room by contact Dave Treber at 301 687 4020 or [DTreber@frostburg.edu](mailto:DTreber@frostburg.edu)

A field school registration form is inside this newsletter.

# Synthesis project moving right along

By Dennis Curry

*Maryland Historical Trust*

The Maryland Historical Trust's Archeological Synthesis project has completed work in all counties except Anne Arundel and Calvert and Baltimore City. The project has collected and combined information from more than 760 Phase II and III reports, covering nearly 700 sites.

The program was developed in response to State Historic Preservation Officer J. Rodney Little's decades-long exhortation to synthesize the data garnered through cultural resources management (CRM) studies.

The reasons for Little's pleas to staff for synthesis were two-fold: after considerable public expense to undertake archeological work, the results should not be buried on a library shelf full of gray literature, and the only way to advance archeological research was to build upon past experience, but the data from past work needs to be readily available from both research and compliance perspectives.

Small-scale attempts to address Little's synthesis mantra have been attempted (Dennis Curry's "Feast of the Dead" study and book was one attempt to synthesize data from the MHT library and site files on a single topic—ossuaries in Maryland), but broad-reaching studies were lacking.

In late 2006, The Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees—acting in response to multiyear state budget constraints and hiring freezes—sought proposals from MHT staff for projects that would address core missions of the Trust that were then unfulfilled.

Funding for such projects would come from the board's private funds, thereby circumventing the state's budget strictures. With this offer from the board of trustees on the table, it was once again Little who suggested that staff prepare a proposal to deal with the "archeological synthesis problem."

Accordingly, staff developed a six-year plan to synthesize Maryland's archeological data. The project would involve culling through Phase II and III CRM reports from the past 30-40 years, extracting the most important information and organizing that data in a searchable database. Furthermore, scholars using this newly developed database would synthesize the data in two overview volumes, "The Prehistory of Maryland" and "The Archeology of Colonial Maryland."

In January 2007, a proposal requesting \$300,000 over six years was submitted to the board for its consideration. In February 2007, the board awarded a \$90,000 grant for a two-year pilot project to initiate the overall archeological synthesis project. In October 2007, a research archeologist (Matt McKnight) was hired, and work on the synthesis project began full-time in November 2007. (In 2010, the MHT board provided an additional \$45,000 for the project.)

Because the original six-year plan was only funded as a two-year pilot program, additional funding was sought from the Maryland State Highway Administration's Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). This grant proposal—using the Board of Trustees grant and permanent staff time as matching funds—was submitted in February 2008 and in August 2008 the Trust was awarded \$134,970 for the project. The three-year TEP grant allowed for the hiring of a second research archeologist (Tiffany Raszick) and provides funding for publication of the overview volumes. This aspect of the synthesis project began early in 2009.

The database for completed counties is available for use in the Trust library. It is also available on the desktops of the MHT and SHA archeology staffs. For more information on the project—including sample syntheses reports—see the MHT website at [http://mht.maryland.gov/archeology\\_synthesis.html](http://mht.maryland.gov/archeology_synthesis.html).

# Mt. Calvert shared in War of 1812 too

By Lara Lutz

*Condensed from the Bay Journal, April 2011*

When the first gunboats exploded on the Patuxent River, everyone at Mount Calvert heard the blast. It was an ominous sound.

The year was 1814, and the United States was once again at war with Britain. Thousands of British troops were marching through southern Maryland to attack Washington.

At the same time, British ships sailed up the Patuxent River, moving more troops inland while chasing a troublesome collection of U.S. gunboats. Led by the bold U.S. Commodore Joshua Barney, these gunboats had been the only naval force to challenge British invaders on the Chesapeake Bay.

Eventually, Barney's Flotilla reached the upper Patuxent River in Prince George's County, anchoring above the Mount Calvert plantation, just north of the modern-day nature preserves at Jug Bay.

On Aug. 22, a stifling summer day, British ships rounded the bend near the foot of Mount Calvert. Barney's boats came into view. "One by one, they blew up," said Ralph Eshelman, author of "The War of 1812 in the Chesapeake."

Barney's Flotilla was destroyed by its own men rather than falling to enemy hands.

Nearly 200 years later, Mount Calvert and its spectacular view of the Patuxent River have remained much the same.

Mount Calvert itself is now the Mount Calvert Historical and Archaeological Park, operated by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. It is also a member of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network.

As the War of 1812 approaches its bicentennial, Mount Calvert is drawing renewed attention for its part in the conflict and for the preservation of a setting that so strongly evokes the past.

But the archeologists who study Mount Calvert say the heightened drama of that distant August day is just one small part of its appeal. Mount Calvert marks one of the most significant historical and archeological places in Prince George's County for reasons that stretch far beyond the War of 1812.

"We have 10,000 years of human history here, on just one site," said Don Creveling of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Creveling's team has recovered thousands of artifacts at Mount Calvert since excavations began in 1996. Each year, volunteers aid the effort on specially scheduled public archeology days.

Most of the artifacts discovered at Mount Calvert originated with American Indians, a reminder that human history along the Patuxent belongs largely to them. The American Indian presence began with seasonal hunting camps and grew to include permanent settlements and farms along the river's edge. The artifacts - including spear points, pottery, smoking pipes and remains of stone hearths - date from as recently as the early 1600s to the oldest reach of the Archaic Period more than 9,000 years ago.

Certainly, the site was a good one for settlement. In Colonial times, Maryland had hoped to make it a major town.

"The General Assembly created towns to encourage settlement," said archeologist Michael Lucas, also with the M-NCPPC. "It picked Mount Calvert for a town site in 1684."

When Prince George's County was established 12 years later, Mount Calvert was renamed Charles Town and became the county seat. None of the Charles Town buildings stand today, but Lucas has been exploring five building sites along the waterfront, quite close to the plantation house. So far, none of the artifacts dates past the 1720s.

Today, an interpretive trail and exhibits in the plantation house tell the story of three cultures -- American Indian, African-American and English colonists -- that have shaped Mount Calvert's past.

The War of 1812 is noted, too, and the exhibits describing those events will be expanded for the war's bicentennial.

Creveling said that approximately 3,000 people visit the park each year and half of them arrive by water. Most paddle in from a downstream launch site at the Jug Bay Natural Area. But these guests are more likely to picnic than to march on Washington, DC.

# A guide to better field conservation

By Howard Wellman

The duties of a conservator on archeological projects can be very wide-ranging, from basic artifact conservation and stabilization, to more specialized tasks like analysis and identification, "lifting" fragile or complicated objects or preparing the site for in-situ preservation.

This article focuses on the basic issues of stabilizing and handling artifacts in the field prior to their transportation to a conservation laboratory. I'm not going to try to cover every topic where archeology and conservation collide. What I'd like to do is help you understand some of the thinking and skills that go into field conservation, so that you can make educated decisions about how to best care for your discoveries.

This represents only the first stage in a long process -- discovery and excavation necessitates stabilization, interpretation, curation and then recurring cycles of use and re-stabilization. What happens in the early stages is critical to the long-term survival of the object. All objects deteriorate over time and the rate of deterioration is affected by the changes in the environment. Radical changes like excavation increase the rate of deterioration and must be compensated.

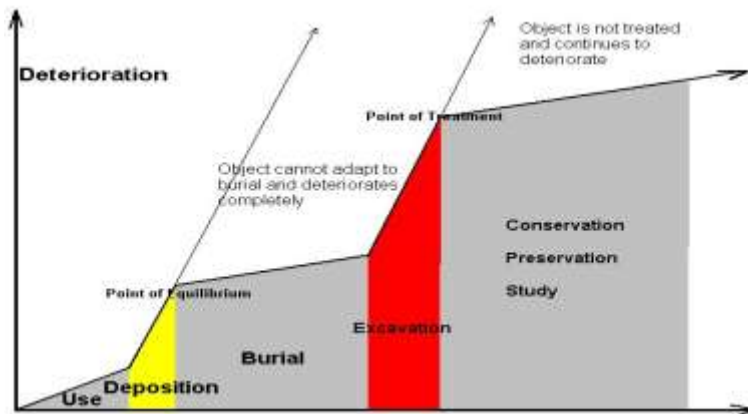


Figure 1: Deterioration of Artifacts

Artifacts deteriorate while being used, until they reach the point when they are discarded. Once they are buried, they continue to deteriorate (generally faster) until they reach some sort of equilibrium with their environment. Some people disagree with the term "equilibrium" since decay never really stops, but some artifacts will definitely reach a point where their deterioration has slowed considerably. When the environment is radically changed (in this case by excavation), the artifacts will begin to deteriorate again until a new equilibrium is reached, they disappear completely or they are treated to force a new equilibrium point of the conservator's choosing.

The great shock during excavation comes from exposing the artifact to a new and hostile environment, which usually involves much higher levels of oxygen, light and a change of moisture levels (either wetter or dryer). Field conservation acts to minimize the effects of these changes in the short term, while laboratory conservation tries to achieve long-term stability in the environment to which they will have to become adjusted (usually a dry, temperate storage room).

The important thing is to characterize the environment from which the artifact is being taken then identify the dangers of its new environment and act accordingly. When comparing the before and after, consider the following classes of hazards inherent in any environment:

- Physical agents
  - Shock and handling: the greatest dangers are from the archeologists and conservators.
    - Many degraded materials are much weaker than they appear.
  - Changes in moisture level
    - drying causes shrinkage, cracking
    - wetting promotes biological activity
- Chemical agents

- Oxygen: accelerates corrosion, biological activity
- Salts and pollutants: accelerates corrosion, causes cracking
- Water: changes in moisture may accelerate other chemical reactions.
- Biological agents
  - Bacteria, fungi, mold: microscopic damage & staining
  - Vermin, pests: macroscopic damage
- Light (which affects the other three)
  - Provides energy for biological growth, chemical reactions, organic breakdown and fading, and drying.

The way that different materials survive these hazards under different burial environments determines what kind of conservation problems will be faced during excavation. A simple chart such as found in Watkinson and Neal (Tables 1A and B) can help the excavator anticipate what kinds of material may be found on site and plan their preservation needs accordingly.

The other side of the coin, of course, is understanding what will have been lost already, which could be useful in site interpretation. For these reasons, conservation and conservators should ideally be part of an excavation's pre-planning.

Once excavated, changes to the hazards noted above will take effect. Watkinson and Neal (1998, Table 2) help predict the sorts of damage that will occur to the artifacts. The conservator can plan their field supplies and activities accordingly. One question that comes up frequently is: How critical is the timing of this anyway? Because deterioration begins to accelerate almost immediately, timing is crucial and depends on the material involved. For instance:

- Cast iron from marine contexts will break up in a matter of hours after drying, while wrought iron or copper alloy can take months. The damage done is irreversible.
- Marine concretions (accumulations of deposited calcium carbonate, metal corrosion and other environmental materials) will harden appreciably on drying, as well as shrink and crack, causing damage to enclosed objects.
- Waterlogged wood will begin to shrink and crack immediately on drying; this is irreversible damage.
- Micro-biological decay in organic or contaminated inorganic materials begins immediately, but may not be visible for days or weeks. This is irreversible damage.
- The different materials in composite objects may accelerate each other's decay in unpredictable ways.

What happens next determines how well the artifacts will survive their transition to the conservation laboratory and archeological study. Proper handling and understanding of what can and cannot be done in a field setting is crucial to the preservation of archeological artifacts. The following is a brief summary of simple steps that can be taken to minimize the effects of common conditions:

- Physical deterioration
  - Use proper packing materials and ample padding
    - Use archival materials that will not degrade and add to the problem or introduce other contaminants (ie, cigarette cartons, old t-shirts, straw will all decay or affect the artifacts)
  - Provide ample structural support
    - External protection from blows.
    - Rigid support of fragile materials.
    - Avoid frequent transfers -- can it be stored and transported in its lifting support?
    - Nest rather than wrap, when you can (unwrapping for inspection involves a lot of handling).
- Chemical
  - Prevent active metal corrosion:
    - store wet metals in solutions with pH >8 (e.g., 5% solution of baking soda)

- store dry metals in desiccated microenvironment (a sealed container desiccated with silica gel).
- Minimize oxygen content to slow corrosion.
- Remove from saline or polluted environments
- Buffer pH to best preservative conditions.
- Protect from exposure to light.
- Biological
  - Avoid packing materials that add to the problem
    - old t-shirts, saw dust, cotton wool, paper towels are food to microbiology.
  - Avoid biocides -- they are hazardous and toxic to humans.
  - Chilled conditions will slow biological growth in moist materials.
  - Avoid sunlight to restrict algae growth
  - Stir and oxygenate solutions to prevent anaerobic bacterial staining
  - Reduce moisture if possible

A common question is how wet or dry to keep freshly excavated materials. As noted above, moisture is a catalyst in many of the listed hazards. In general, if it's wet, keep it wet. If it's dry, keep it dry.

- Keep it wet:
  - concretions and concreted objects from marine sites
  - soft organic materials from damp or wet contexts
  - metal from marine contexts
  - low-fired ceramics from damp contexts (wet soil or submerged sites)
  - weathered (iridescent) glass
- Can be dried if desalinated:
  - robust ceramics
  - unweathered glass
  - very robust bone
  - shell
  - metal from dry sites
- Better off dry:
  - Metal from dry or slightly damp sites will react strongly to moisture and oxygen, so they are better off in desiccated storage.

Packaging is a critical part of all of these steps, as it is the first defense against loss and damage. Standardized packing helps in planning and collections management and it reduces excess handling.

Conservators will always emphasize the use of quality materials and archival supplies. These materials may cost more, but the quality means introducing fewer foreign contaminants into the system, and they tend to be more reusable in the future. Spending money up front saves money in the long run, since it reduces the amount of conservation work that has to be done later.

Whatever you do, do it in a timely fashion and don't let anything stay in temporary storage for too long. When even the best packing gets ignored things dry out, packaging decays, objects get stuck together and mold runs rampant. It is important to transport, process and unpack finds promptly. Objects left in even the best transport containers will get ignored, lost and forgotten. Stabilizing for transport is not the same as treatment and must be monitored constantly.

When packing, consider what you are trying to achieve and create your environments accordingly. For short term storage and transport, wet does not have to mean immersion. Wrapping the object in damp water-retaining foam and sealing in a closed bag or rigid container will prevent evaporation. Longer storage means more monitoring and frequent re-moistening.

Wherever possible, make it possible to see the artifacts through the packaging, this will reduce handling during inspections. Unless you are creating a sealed environment, create ventilation holes to allow environmental equilibrium. Watkinson and Neal (Chapter 3) summarize basic packaging for more types of artifacts. The steps of handling and packing listed above are fundamental first steps towards stabilizing the artifact and in some cases are even the first steps in long-term treatment.



One other aspect of field conservation involves preliminary cleaning, which is often required on site to aid in identifying and cataloging artifacts. There are no simple rules on to clean or not to clean, because some information has to be collected while you're still in the field. So you have to know all the pros and cons and weigh the risks and benefits:

- Cleaning is good because:
  - reduces weight of soil and concretion
  - reveals areas of weakness
  - removes biological material that may decay
  - allows for on-site analysis that could aid site interpretation.
- Cleaning is bad because:
  - removes supporting concretion and soil
  - exposes fragile surfaces
  - exposes more areas to decay and corrosion
  - disassociates composite objects
  - may remove surface details trapped in soil or concretion
  - may remove mineral preserved organics and pseudomorphs (impressions of objects in contact with the metal).

In general, cleaning objects should only be done by people with the proper tools and experience. Because field conditions do not allow for constant monitoring, field cleaning should only involve mechanical cleaning, such as with scalpels and picks. Chemical or electrolytic processes, in addition to being potentially hazardous, require constant attention and far more resources than usually can be packed into the field.

- Common cleaning errors
  - Aggressive scrubbing of ceramics, removing delicate glazes, slips, tool marks
  - Rapid drying of porous materials after wetting may cause cracking and breakage -- always dry such materials in the shade
  - Use of dirty water which contains abrasive dirt particles.
  - Over-cleaning of metal corrosion, removing surface details, organic traces and pseudomorphs preserved in the corrosion layers.

Conservators do not need to be a constant presence on every field project, but the wide range of skills and information they can bring to bear can be of vital importance. Consider having a conservator on board during the design of your field season to help plan for the materials needed to stabilize and pack out your finds, laying out the space and tools needed to preserve your artifacts and being available for those special unanticipated discoveries.

Conservators can also help to train your field staff in performing basic procedures to mitigate the hazards discussed here. As more and more curatorial facilities set higher standards for the care of the collections handed to them, it makes economic sense to begin that standard of care at the point of excavation.

## References and Recommended Reading

They have lots of common sense suggestions, good diagrams.

First Aid for Finds, David Watkinson and Virginia Neal, 3rd ed. 1998, UKIC, London.

First Aid for Underwater Finds, Wendy Robinson, 1998, Archetype Publications, London.

A Conservation Manual for the Field Archaeologist, 3rd ed., Catherine Sease, 1994, Institute of Archaeology, UCLA.

Retrieval of Objects from Archaeological Sites, ed. Robert Payton, 1992, Archetype Publications, London.



# Texas find bolsters pre-Clovis idea

By David Brown

*Condensed from the Washington Post, March 24, 2011*

The discovery of 56 stone tools four feet underground in the Texas Hill Country makes certain what most archeologists have suspected for a while — that human beings were in the Americas at least 15,000 years ago.

That date is about 2,000 years before the appearance of the "Clovis culture" whose distinctive fluted and notched arrowheads are the earliest widely found human artifacts in North America.

Evidence for "pre-Clovis" human activity has been accumulating for decades as archeologists have found a few unusually old sites in places as far apart as coastal Chile and central Pennsylvania. But there were always problems — a jumbling of deposits, uncertainties of dating — that made some archeologists doubt the age of those discoveries.

The Texas finds, reported Thursday in the journal *Science*, are likely to persuade nearly everyone. The undisturbed condition of the site, a distinct layer of artifact-containing sediment below the Clovis deposits and dating that consistently puts that layer at 13,200 to 15,500 years old is what makes this discovery especially convincing.

"It pretty much closes it for me," David G. Anderson, an anthropologist at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, said of the debate about whether there were people in the Americas before the Clovis period, which began about 13,000 years ago and lasted less than 2,000 years.

"This is almost like a baseball bat to the side of the head of the archeological community to say, 'Wake up, there were pre-Clovis people here,'" said Michael R. Waters, the anthropologist at Texas A&M University who led the excavation.

Gary Haynes, an archeologist at the University of Nevada at Reno and a skeptic of previous pre-Clovis claims, said: "This one comes closer than any of the others. I think it's a half-step from finishing off the argument."

The newly unearthed objects come from a site northwest of Austin along a waterway known as Buttermilk Creek. They consist of relatively crude scrapers, knife blades, broken and half-repaired spear points and more than 15,000 flakes and chips testifying to human workmanship. They bear some similarity to Clovis tools, although not a clear one.

Whether the people who made them were related to the people who made the Clovis tools is uncertain. However, no bones or other DNA-containing materials were found, so the question can't be answered.

"Cultural history and biological history do not have to go hand in hand. So there's no way you can say they were related to each other," said Eske Willerslev, director of the Center for GeoGenetics at the University of Copenhagen.

Willerslev said there are three main possibilities for the relationship between the pre-Clovis and Clovis people.

They could have both been direct descendants from the same migrant group, with their tools evolving from the crude implements at the Texas site into the fine and highly consistent style known as Clovis.

Alternatively, the Clovis people could have come from Asia in a migration entirely separate from the earlier one. Once here, they could have made improvements on the tool-making of the pre-Clovis immigrants or they might have brought an already more advanced technology.

The third and less likely possibility is that the pre-Clovis people were of a different ethnic origin, such as European. However, Willerslev said that "as things stand at the moment, I don't think there's much evidence that it's non-Asians" who made the pre-Clovis tools.

Because there were no charcoal, seeds, skin or other materials derived from plants or animals at the Texas site, radioactive carbon dating couldn't be used to determine the deposit's age. Instead, the 13-member research team used "optically stimulated luminescence" dating, a technique developed in the 1980s that measures how long certain kinds of rock (typically quartz) have been out of the sunlight.

## JefPat program returning to field school site

The 2011 Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum public archeology program will again be at the Smith's St. Leonard Site, the location of the 2010 ASM field session. If you were there last year, this is an opportunity to come back and see what has been found lately.

The site was the core of a large 18<sup>th</sup>-Century plantation. The Smith residence, a stable, slave quarters and a detached kitchen are among the buildings located so far. Excavations this season will focus on the quarters and kitchen.

The public archeology program runs May 10 through July 2, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, weather permitting. Tuesdays and Thursdays are spent in the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory, washing, labeling and cataloging the artifacts.

CAT program participants will find this a good opportunity to work on their certification. If you are interested in joining in, contact Ed Chaney at 410-586-8554 or [echaney@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:echaney@mdp.state.md.us).

## Chapter notes

### Anne Arundel

Meets five times a year in February, April, June, September and November at the Severna Park Branch of the County Public Library, 45 McKinsey Road. 7:30 p.m. Contact Mechelle Kerns at [AAChapASM@hotmail.com](mailto:AAChapASM@hotmail.com) or the chapter website [www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php](http://www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php)

**June 21:** TBA

**September 20:** TBA

### Central

Central Chapter has no formal meetings planned, but it does engage in field work and related activities. Contact chapter President Stephen Israel, 410-945-5514 or [ssisrael@verizon.net](mailto:ssisrael@verizon.net)

### Charles County

Meetings are held 7 on the first Wednesday (September-May) at Historic LaPlata Train Station. Contact President Carol Cowherd at [cowherdcl@gmail.com](mailto:cowherdcl@gmail.com) or 301-375-9489.

**May 4:** Annual business meeting and a workshop of bottle identification with Alyssa Marizan.

### Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at a local restaurant at 5:45 p.m. Contact [heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org) or call 301-8405848 or Don Housley at [donhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:donhou704@earthlink.net) or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: [www.asmmidpotomac.wordpress.com](http://www.asmmidpotomac.wordpress.com)  
Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mid-Potomac-Archaeology/182856471768>  
Email: [asmmidpotomac@gmail.com](mailto:asmmidpotomac@gmail.com)

**May 14:** The chapter will co-host with the Montgomery County Parks Department, a Public Dig Day at Needwood Mansion from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities include supervised excavation of a slave building site, tours of the mansion, crafts and games, and more. A small fee is charged.

**May 19:** Meeting at Needwood. Tom Forhan on "Cultural Landscapes and Wilderness: Historic Archeology of the Riley Tract Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC."

**June 16:** Chapter meeting and picnic at Needwood from 6-9 p.m.

## Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick on the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. Contact Jeremy Lazelle at 301-845-9855 or [jlazelle@msn.com](mailto:jlazelle@msn.com) or Nancy Geasey at 301-378-0212.

## Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Members and guests assemble at 6:30 for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Dan Coates at 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake>

**May 15:** Member and guest picnic, and tour of the exhibit: "Prehistoric Culture of the Northern Chesapeake," Liriodendron Mansion.

## Upper Patuxent

Programs are the second Monday of every other month at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Ida in Ellicott City. Potluck suppers are held at 6:15 in September and March. Otherwise, dinner is available at the Diamondback restaurant in Ellicott City at 6 p.m. Contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or [leeprestonjr@comcast.net](mailto:leeprestonjr@comcast.net)

**May 9:** Lee Preston, "Made in China: Silk, Porcelain and Terra Cotta Soldiers."

## Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. in the LaVale Library, unless noted. Contact Roy Brown, 301-724-7769. Chapter email: [wmdasm@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm>

**June 3:** Bob Wall, Towson University, "The Barton Site 2010-2011," a report on the findings of last year's field session and a discussion of what he plans to investigate this year.

## Even back then, creditors kept score

*From The Local, April 14, 2011*

Archeologists in the town of Wittenberg, Saxony-Anhalt, have unearthed a 453-year-old wooden "tally stick" used to keep track of debts.

"It's something of a rare find in Europe" said archeologist Andreas Hille from the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle, Saxony-Anhalt.

The antiquated debt counter measures 30 centimeters in length and displays 23 notches, with both a name and the date 1558 visible.

Archeologists made the exciting find during excavations in the small easterly university town of Wittenberg, made famous by the Protestant theologian Martin Luther.

The well-preserved tally stick was used in the Middle Ages to count the debts owed by the holder in a time when most people were unable to read or write.

"Debts would have been carved into the stick in the form of small notches. Then the stick would have been split lengthways, with the creditor and the borrower each keeping a half," explained Hille.

The two halves would then be put together again on the day repayment was due in order to compare them, with both sides hoping that they matched.

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ASM 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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