



# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

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

## Field school May 18-28 near Frederick

It took a lot of negotiating but the field school committee finally got the site and the dates it wanted for this year's field session. Unfortunately, little time is left for members to sign up. So quick action is required.

The Claggett Retreat Site (18FR25) is located along the Monocacy River near I-270 south of Frederick on Episcopal Church property. The site was reported to Tyler Bastian in 1970 by Spencer Geasey, who identified it as a small Late Woodland village of the Mason Island complex (Page ceramics).

The site has never been investigated by professional archeologists, but there was limited exploration in the mid-1960s by a Buckeystown resident, Calvin Swomley, who excavated 28 trash pits. They formed half of an oval pattern measuring 75 meters in length and 45 meters in width. Swomley's artifact collection from the site was examined by state archeologists in 1978 and consisted of nearly 150 fragments of prehistoric pottery, three small triangular stone projectile points and a few pieces of animal bone. The Smithsonian Institution reportedly also has a handful of prehistoric pottery fragments and one infant human skull from the site, presumably donated by Swomley.

"The result of these investigations is a tantalizing picture of a unique site type about which we know very little," says Maryland's Terrestrial Archeologist Charlie Hall. "As a Mason Island Phase, we know it to be a representative of one of three Late Woodland cultural subdivisions known in the Monocacy River area; Mason Island Phase sites (also referred to as Page Phase) are better known in western Maryland, where they are more numerous. No purely Mason Island Phase sites have been investigated east of Allegany County.

"Investigations of the other two Late Woodland phases, Keyser Phase and Montgomery Phase, have occurred in Frederick County. What we don't know about the Page Phase is quite more remarkable than what we do know. For example, how does the Mason Island Phase relate to the other two Late Woodland phases? Do Mason Island villages look different than those of the other two Late Woodland phases? Did the houses in Mason Island villages look different from the other two phases? Are there other differences we can identify?

"What about similarities? Did the three phases represent change within a single cultural tradition, or do these they represent different peoples? If they are different peoples, did they co-exist in the area or did they replace one another? If the Mason Island phase represents an intrusive culture in the area, where did it come from?"

Joe Dent of American University, who led ASM field schools at the Hughes and Winslow sites, will be in charge of the Claggett Retreat dig.

Because the field school will be taking place while the Retreat Center is being used for other purposes, special conditions are in effect for this field school. For one, preregistration is required. For another, participants can only be admitted to the site from 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. or 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.

A registration form is included with this newsletter.

## Upcoming events

**June 2:** ASM board meeting, Crownsville. 10 a.m. All ASM members welcome to attend.

**October 13:** Annual meeting of ASM. Millersville.

**October 31-November 3:** SEAC conference, Knoxville, Tennessee.

**November 8-11:** ESAF conference, Burlington, Vermont.

### Volunteer opportunities

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

**Central Chapter** will be conducting testing at the Rockdale rockshelter on weekends throughout April.

Contact Stephen Israel at 410-945-5514 or [ssisrael@verizon.net](mailto:ssisrael@verizon.net)

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

**ASM field session collection:** Volunteers are needed to work on up-grading collections associated with previous field sessions. Currently, the collection from the Rosenstock Site, a key Late Woodland Montgomery Complex area, is being upgraded. The lab in Crownsville is open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. For additional information contact Louise Akerson [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. This year's public archeology program runs until July 8, with digging on Fridays and Saturdays and lab work Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Contact Ed Chaney at 410-586-8554 or [echaney@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:echaney@mdp.state.md.us)

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.

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

## SHA looking for volunteers for multi-era site near Baltimore

The State Highway Administration will be conducting an excavation on Connemara, an 18th and 19th century plantation site 20 miles north of Baltimore, June 20-27. The site contains the ruins of an alleged slave quarters, bank barn, cemetery and spring house.

The goal is to locate unknown features associated with the plantation, discover prehistoric activity areas and better understand the lives of early Marylanders.

The SHA has openings for five volunteers to participate in the project. Volunteers may come for one day or all eight. Opportunities for laboratory work may be available this fall and winter.

For more information, call Julie Schablitsky at (410) 545-8870 or e-mail [jschablitsky@sha.state.md.us](mailto:jschablitsky@sha.state.md.us)

# Iraq's antiquities, sites still endangered

By James Janega

*From the Chicago Tribune, April 1, 2007*

BAGHDAD -- Four years after the looting of the Iraqi National Museum during the fall of Baghdad, frustrated antiquities experts say untold thousands of Mesopotamian artifacts have been stolen from other vulnerable historical sites across the nation.

Though the museum is now safe - its doors bricked shut and collections entombed behind welded cellar doors - the country's 12,000 archeological sites are mostly unprotected and the Iraqi government is hard put to stop their plunder.

The longtime former director of the state board of antiquities fled to the United States last August after receiving a death threat. Car bombings and other violence mean that the guards who would look after remote sites are often unable to get there.

Concerned and unable to get into the country, scholars from around the world have been forced to rely on satellite images that show the cratered landscape left by thieves at sites in southern Iraq where important cities once stood nearly 2,000 years ago.

The images show holes as small as a few feet in diameter spreading across sites throughout the autumn of 2003, a pattern that continued in some places through 2005. The destruction appeared to slow in the last satellite photos available in early 2006, but the impact of the damage is clear.

"We're losing an enormous amount," said anthropologist Elizabeth Stone of the State University of New York-Stony Brook, who has studied the satellite imagery. "We look at the sites and say there have to be thousands of objects taken. Perhaps tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of objects."

So far, the loot hasn't appeared in art galleries or on the black market in anything like the volume in which it appears to have been taken - leaving open the question of where the stolen antiquities have gone.

"Most agree that the bulk of it is in storage somewhere, for whatever reasons," Stone said. "But that it's been taken is pretty clear. Somewhere there are a lot of warehouses bulging at the seams."

The physical extent of Iraq's archeological history is enormous, encompassing artifacts at thousands of sites. Evidence going back 11,000 years traces mankind's earliest farming villages here through the evolution of cities, the invention of the wheel, creation of writing and codes of law.

The sites are so rich that one of Stone's research teams uncovered 20,000 ceramic objects at one site in just a few months before the war. In clay pots stuffed like safety deposit boxes, they found wills, lists of who lived in houses, their friends, business dealings - almost everything to do with daily Mesopotamian society.

"When you go anyplace and put your finger in the soil, you will find one of two seas," said former Iraq Minister of Culture Mufeed Mohammed Jawad al-Jaza'iri. "A sea of oil or a sea of antiquities. Sometimes you can find them together."

Soon after the invasion, it required the equivalent of a military expedition to cross the few blocks from the Green Zone to the Iraqi National Museum, said Minneapolis Institute of Arts curator Corine Wegener, an Army reservist assigned by the U.S. military with recovering looted artifacts in Baghdad in 2003.

"I used to drive there in a two-vehicle convoy with a 9 mm [pistol] in my pocket," she said. "You can't do that anymore. It just kind of steadily got worse."

For many in the West, the last window into the daily realities of Iraq's antiquities sector closed in June, when the former director of the Iraqi Museum, Donny George Youkhanna, received a message from al-Qaida in Iraq calling him an American collaborator and threatening his family. It came in an envelope with a bullet.

Western colleagues viewed George as a partner. He was an expert archeologist and political survivor who could ensure the welcome of international scholarship and major excavations even at the height of the Iran-Iraq war and just after the U.S.-led invasion.

George earned plaudits for recovering about half of the 15,000 pieces looted from the museum and other sites as Baghdad fell. He was working to establish a 1,400-member national security force to guard historical sites in June 2006, when camouflaged cars full of uniformed Iraqis pulled up to a bus station near the museum. Uniformed gunmen kidnapped nearly 50 people.

Continued on next page

George called a meeting of the museum's senior staff. "I asked them one question: 'If these people come to the museum and want to go into our storerooms, can we stop them?'"

The answer was no. Within two days, they pulled everything off display, boxed the items in the museum's cellar and welded iron gates over the doors. He had workers brick up the entrances. George left the country last August when Iraq's current ministers of culture and tourism cut his authority to undertake new projects, leading him to question the interest of Iraq's religious Shiite officials in the country's non-Islamic past. He now teaches at SUNY-Stony Brook.

His replacement at the state board of antiquities, Abbas al-Husseiny, declined to comment. Other experts say al-Husseiny is ambitious, cooperative and knowledgeable about Iraq's past, but that his hands are tied by the security situation and the relative newcomers in the ministries above him.

## Conflict wraps farthest west Clovis site

By Melonie Magruder

From The Malibu Times, April 17, 2007

The discovery of a Clovis spearhead, believed to be thousands of years old, at a local home construction site has the homeowner and an archeologist at odds on what should be done with the site. The property owner wants to finish her home and move in, the archeologist wants to preserve the site, called Farpoint, and be allowed to conduct further research.

In September of 2005, Gary Stickel was the archeologist of record at the Farpoint site, then being developed by the private homeowner, and hired to oversee excavation at what was known as an "architecturally sensitive site."

"Other objects, scrapers and micro-tools, had been found on the property," Stickel said. "So we knew it was a culturally sensitive site. Then we found the spear point."

The approximately 8-inch long, stone spear point is a tool produced by the Clovis people, believed to be the first human inhabitants of the Americas.

Not only does that date the piece to more than 11,000 years ago, the site of its location is the farthest point west in North America that the Clovis tribes can be traced, thus the designation "Farpoint."

Dennis Stanford, director of the Paleoindian/Paleoecology Program at the Smithsonian Institute, in a written affidavit that authenticated the spearhead, said "... until the discovery of the Clovis occupation level at the Farpoint site, no "in situ" Clovis age sites are known along the West Coast of the Americas."

The property owner, who is not identified to protect her privacy and the integrity of the archeologically sensitive site, has been cooperative

through the last few years of research, but is



ready to occupy her new house. And, Stickel said, she has shut down any further excavation.

Under current state regulation, the property owner is responsible for the cost of archeological testing of sites before building can begin.

The Farpoint landowner said, "I have spent all I was required to spend and 10 times more to have this property surveyed."

Raneika Brooks-McClain, the city's planning staff liaison for the Native American Resource Advisory

Committee, said, "If culturally significant artifacts are indicated when property is being developed, work stops and an architect is hired to investigate and make mitigation recommendations for further excavation to the homeowner. As per the California Environmental Quality Act, the state is responsible for preserving state resources and, usually, there is a Native American monitor on site to preserve the integrity of any possible human remains."

In this case, the Native American monitor was Edgar Perez, who actually found the spear point.

"Though we didn't find any human remains at this site, we had found several nice pieces," Perez said. "But when I found the spear point, we knew we had something big."

While any historical artifacts found are the property of the landowner, items are usually donated to local museums or cultural centers. The Clovis spearhead now resides at the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum.

"There might be evidence of an entire Clovis occupation on this property," Stickel said, who has excavated at Machu Picchu in Peru and Achilles' birthplace in Greece. "I am ready to oversee excavation for free and I can get a team of students to work for free. But the landowner isn't interested in any further research on her property."

The landowner said, "There is still controversy about the authenticity of the piece. You can't carbon date stone. And, anyway, you can buy Clovis spear points on e-Bay."

And, according to The London Times, which profiled the story recently, the landowner said, "I have followed all of the guidelines. I have worked to preserve the integrity of the site ... Now, I want to move into my house."

Though the spearhead was found nearly 18 months ago, home construction continued on the property.

Brooks-McClain said, "The architect [archeologist] of record failed to follow protocol and notify us of the significance of the find. Work would have stopped immediately and the grounds would have been tested further. As it is, excavation was completed, the house is finished and nothing further is required of the property owner."

Stickel disputes that claim.

"I called the city immediately," he said. "I submitted 11 different mitigation

recommendations to preserve the integrity of the site. I'm not about invading the privacy of this property owner. But this site contained evidence of historically unprecedented significance."

Brooks-McClain said the landowner is following protocol for finishing the property's development.

"She is capping her driveway to preserve any archeological remains beneath it."

"I am disturbed to hear that the site is not being properly preserved for testing," Smithsonian's Stanford said. "In Europe, the state is very keen about preserving cultural heritage. But in America, the rights of the property owner still take precedence over the interests of the state."

Also, for the landowner, further excavation is also a question of liability and so has refused any further digging.

Stickel said the significance of the find is the American equivalent to that of finding the sealed door to King Tutankhamen's tomb.

"This site is unique on the North American continent," he said. "Every hole dug to plant another tree there will compromise the investigation into several cubic meters of history. You have to ask if our past is worth saving."

**SPEED BUMP** DAVE COVERLY

# Archeology keeps the past alive

By Bradley T. Lepper

*From the Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch, April 10, 2007*

What is the value of archeology? Why should anyone care about the broken bits and pieces of past lives scattered across the landscape?

Paul Minnis, an archeologist at the University of Oklahoma, asked several colleagues this question. Their answers were published in the Society for American Archaeology's November newsletter.

One of the best answers was provided by Barbara Little, who edited a recent book on the public benefits of archeology. She wrote: "Our history is an anchor, a vantage point and a library. Archeology is the tool for expanding that history."

William Faulkner once said, "The past isn't dead. It isn't even past." This speaks to the enduring power of the past for informing and enriching our lives.

Yet, as Little also observed, the power of the past can be abused as a weapon.

In Afghanistan, for example, the Taliban destroyed ancient Buddhist statues and other relics in acts of archeological terrorism. In a story broadcast last month on National Public Radio, Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson reported that Afghanistan's National Museum in Kabul was hit by rockets and pillaged by looters. Much of what was left was smashed by the Taliban.

Now, however, museum staff members are working hard to rebuild this national treasure. They cut an inscription into a marble post in front of the building to express their faith in the sustaining power of their past: "A nation stays alive when its culture stays alive."

Rory Stewart, who directs a nonprofit group working with the museum, told Sarhaddi Nelson that the key to success was getting ordinary Afghans to reconnect with their heritage.

In Ohio, during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, European-American settlers destroyed many of the monuments erected by ancient American Indian cultures. The farmers and town-builders of that era simply didn't acknowledge the earthen mounds and enclosures as part of a heritage they had any obligation to preserve or understand.

Since then, several decades of archeological investigation have added the achievements of indigenous cultures to our expanded view of Ohio's history. Archeological parks preserve many important sites, and museums display the artifacts made and used by hundreds of generations of Ohioans.

These special places allow us to reconnect with our heritage, which did not begin in 1803, 1776 or even 1492. It began with the original discovery of Ohio by the first Americans more than 14,000 years ago.

*Bradley T. Lepper is curator of archeology at the Ohio Historical Society.*

## 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)

**Dig Days at London Town** for 2007: May 12, July 14, September 15.

**June 12:** Andy Stout, Eastern Regional Director for The Archaeological Conservancy, will discuss the goals, work and achievements of this national preservation organization.

### 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). Chapter website: [www.digfrederick.bravehost.com](http://www.digfrederick.bravehost.com).

**May 9:** Wayne Clark will speak on John Smith's Chesapeake travels through the Algonquian-speaking Indian's world.

**June 13:** Monocacy Chapter President Jeremy Lazelle will outline his experiences as an archeologist with FEMA after Hurricane Katrina.

## Northern Chesapeake

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

**May 20:** ASNC picnic meeting at the Susquehanna Lock House Museum in Havre de Grace. Beginning at 3 p.m.

## 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. Some months, potluck suppers are held at 6:30. Otherwise, dinner is available at the Tiber River Tavern in Ellicott City. For information, contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or [roseannlee@earthlink.com](mailto:roseannlee@earthlink.com)

**May 14:** Kirsti Unila speaking on "Confessions of an Archeocrat." (Pot Luck Supper)

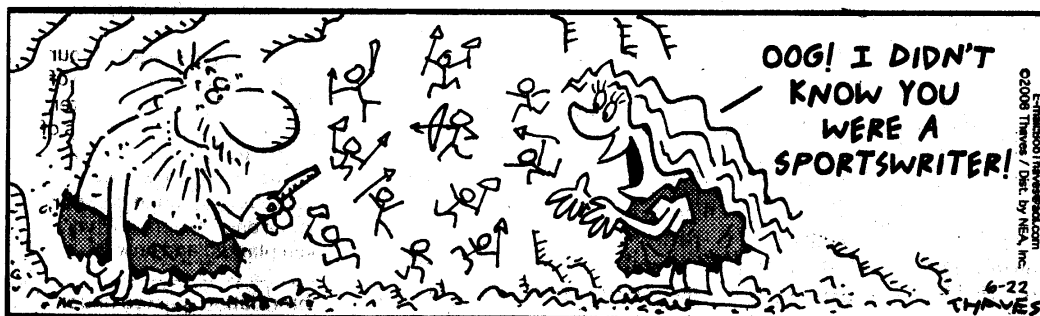
## Western Maryland

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)

**May 25:** "Never Suck a Dead Man's Hand: Curious Adventures of a CSI," lecture and book signing by Dana Kollman.

**June 16 - 24:** Barton field session.

**FRANK AND ERNEST** BOB THAVES





**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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