

# ASM Ink

March 2019, Vol. 46, No. 3



Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

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

## Story of the Indianapolis starts off Workshop

The first ASM mass gathering of the year takes place Saturday, March 30 at the Maryland Historical Trust office in Crownsville, 100 Community Place, Registration and refreshment begin at 9, followed by welcoming remarks at 9:30 from MHT director Elizabeth Hughes, and ASM vice president Valerie Hall.

The program itself is set to start at 9:45 when keynote speaker Captain William Toti (USN, ret.) recounts the grueling story of "The Loss and Recovery of the USS Indianapolis (CA35)." In the last days of World War II in the Pacific, the ship was sunk by a Japanese submarine. Survivors found themselves in shark-infested waters. Of the crew of almost 1,200 men, only about 317 survived the sinking, the sharks and the four days it took for help to arrive.

The wreck of the ship was found 72 years later at the bottom of the Philippine Sea. Captain Charles B. McVay III was long accused of responsibility for the loss, but efforts persisted to exonerate him.

After the keynote participants will then have their choice of which of several competing presentations to attend during various time slots

Lisa Kraus and Jason Shellenhamer will be discussing their excavation at the Eutaw Manor House site in Baltimore City's Herring Run Park, and the stories they reveal pertaining to the subversive potential of 19th-Century children's china, a mysterious photograph and the invention of the potato chip.

Recently retired Maryland chief terrestrial archeologist Dennis Curry will return to talk about the archeology of the last permanent village of the Piscataway (Conoy) Indians in Maryland on Heater's Island, occupied from 1699 to at least 1712, and what it reveals about Piscataway-colonist interactions prior to the tribe's departure from Maryland to Pennsylvania and parts north.

The MACLab's Sara Rivers Cofield will explore artifacts from Maryland's collections used for magical purposes such as healing the sick, protecting buildings and counteracting curses.

Matt McKnight of the trust will explain the magnetic susceptibility survey technique and how it was used to investigate the Billingsley site, last home of the Patuxent Indians, and the site of the upcoming 2019 ASM Field Session.

Underwater archeologist Susan Langley is scheduled to speak about the Curtis Bay shipwrecks, which include a variety of watercraft from mid-19th Century schooners to the last passenger steamers operating as late as 1963.

Certified Archeological Technician candidates can participate in Silas Hurry and Kate Dinnel's Historic Overview, a required workshop in the CAT program.

Admission - payable at the door - is \$5 for ASM members, and \$7 for non-members, Book sales and exhibits will be ongoing throughout the day. Free parking at the door. NOTE: The cafeteria will not be open. People are advised to brown-bag it.

**Reminder:** Have you remembered to renew your ASM membership? This is the final notice

## Upcoming events

**March 2:** ASM quarterly board meeting, Heritage House, Ellicott City, 9-1. All welcome

**March 21-4:** Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference meeting, Ocean City.  
[www.maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org/conferences.htm](http://www.maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org/conferences.htm)

**March 30:** Workshop in Archeology. Crownsville. All day.

**April 27:** ASM Spring Symposium. Crownsville. All day.

**October 5:** ASM Annual Meeting, Veterans Park, Charles County. All day.

## Volunteer opportunities

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

**ASM Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays:** The lab in Crownsville. Contact Charlie Hall at [charles.hall@maryland.gov](mailto:charles.hall@maryland.gov) or Louise Akerson at [lakerson1@verizon.net](mailto:lakerson1@verizon.net) Currently the lab is dealing with artifacts from Fells Point in Baltimore.

**The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center** seeks participants in its Citizen-Scientist Program in archeology and other environmental research programs in Edgewater. Field and lab work are conducted Wednesdays and on occasional Saturdays. Contact Jim Gibb at [jamesggibb@verizon.net](mailto:jamesggibb@verizon.net)

**Montgomery County** for lab and field work volunteers, contact Heather Bouslog at 301 563 7530 or [Heather.Bouslog@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:Heather.Bouslog@montgomeryparks.org)

**The Anne Arundel County** Archaeology Program and the Lost Towns Project welcome volunteers in both field and lab at numerous sites. Weekdays only. Email [volunteers@losttownsproject.org](mailto:volunteers@losttownsproject.org) or call 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 [ed.chaney@maryland.gov](mailto:ed.chaney@maryland.gov) or 410 586 8554.

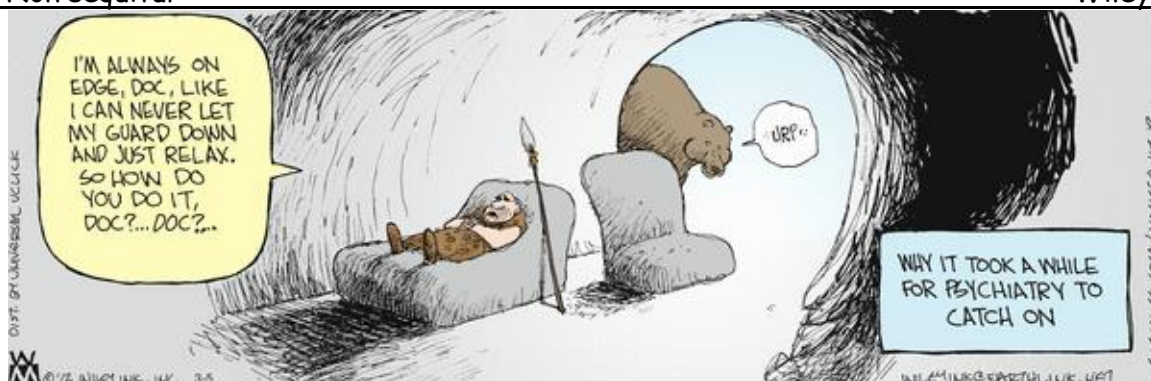
**The Archaeological Institute of America** provides an online listing of fieldwork opportunities worldwide. Call up [www.archaeological.org/fieldwork](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork) to get started.

**UPAG/Howard County Recs and Parks** invites volunteers interested in processing collections and conducting historical research to contact Kelly Palich at [Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov) or 410-313-0423.

**CAT corner:** For information on the CAT program, contact Sarah Grady at [sarahgrady11@gmail.com](mailto:sarahgrady11@gmail.com)

Non sequitur

Wiley



## '19 field school to probe last home of Patuxents

This year's field school will take place May 23 to June 4 in Prince George's County.

The Billingsley Site (18 PR9) dates to the prehistoric and contact periods. It is depicted on Augustine Herrman's 1670 map as a Native American village named Wighkamameck. It is also mentioned in the Proceedings of the Maryland Assembly on May 23, 1674, as the last known home of the Patuxent Indians.

The site was well known to mid-20th Century collectors as a prehistoric resource. A magnetic susceptibility survey conducted by MHT staff last fall identified a significant "hot spot" that likely represents numerous hearths and other features created by past human activity at what was likely the core of a prehistoric or contact period village or base camp.

More information on the site and accommodations will appear in future newsletters but block out the times now so you won't miss this.

## Tobacco use found in NW long before traders

*Condensed from Science News, October 29, 2018*

Washington State University researchers have determined that the Nez Perce grew and smoked tobacco at least 1,200 years ago, long before the arrival of traders and settlers from the eastern United States. Their finding upends a long-held view that indigenous people in this area of the interior Pacific Northwest smoked only kinnikinnick or bearberry before traders brought tobacco starting around 1790.

Shannon Tushingham, director of WSU's Museum of Anthropology, made the discovery after teaming up with David Gang, a professor in the Institute of Biological Chemistry, to analyze pipes and pipe fragments in the museum's collection.

"Usually in archeology we just find little pieces of artifacts, things that you might not think much of," she said. "But the information that we can extract from them on a molecular level is phenomenal."

Indeed, writing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the researchers say their dating of various materials reveals "the longest continuous biomolecular record of ancient tobacco smoking from a single region anywhere in the world."

Tushingham first became interested in the subject when, while excavating plank houses in far northern California for her dissertation, she came across two soapstone pipes.

"I just thought, 'Wouldn't it be interesting to know what people were smoking?'" she said. "Then I started looking at the different plants and it wasn't just tobacco. People smoked lots of different plants."

Indigenous tobacco is scarce in the cool climate of the northwest.

Meanwhile, the more potent dried trade tobacco was easy to transport in bundles, or "twists," and Hudson's Bay Company explorers, fur traders and the Lewis and Clark expedition found an eager audience for it as they came through the region in the 1700 and 1800s.

In the 1930s, anthropologist Alfred Kroeber oversaw a survey of more than 200 tribes and bands west of the Rocky Mountains. In one of the ensuing monographs, "Salt, Dogs, Tobacco," he reported that the smoking of non-tobacco products was "more universal," with planting confined to a "long irregular area" from the Oregon coast into south-central California. An accompanying map, however, shows three spots in the Columbia River basin where tobacco could have been mixed with kinnikinnick.

Working with Nez Perce tribal leaders, Tushingham and Gang analyzed a dozen pipes and fragments from three sites on the Snake River. Gang said he could use a solvent to get the substance from a pipe and analyze it using mass spectrometry. That left the pipes intact. Results were inconclusive.

The researchers did detect nicotine in pipes from both after and well before Euro-American contact. None appeared to contain arbutin, a compound associated with kinnikinnick.

Because tobacco in the interior northwest needed to be planted, Tushingham said their finding offers a new view of native interactions with the landscape. Indigenous people have often been thought of as "passive consumers of the environment," yet they managed camas and even grew clams on the coast, she said.

"I think it's a very reasonable proposition that people were cultivating tobacco," Tushingham said. "This is just another sign of the sophistication of cultures in this area and how they managed plants and animals."

# Live Revolutionary war grenades found in Va.

By Joanne Kimberlin

*Condensed from the Washington Post, February 22 2019*

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — In an uh-oh episode of historic proportions, hand grenades from the last major battle of the Revolutionary War recently and repeatedly scrambled bomb squads in Virginia's capital city.

Wait — they had hand grenades in the Revolutionary War? Indeed. Hollow iron balls, filled with black powder, outfitted with a fuse, then lit and thrown.

And more than two dozen have been sitting in cardboard boxes at the Department of Historic Resources, undetected for 30 years.

Encrusted and corroded, no one realized what the grenades were when they were excavated in the 1980s along with 5,000 other relics from *The Betsy*, a British ship sunk in the York River in 1781. Analysis that would normally have been conducted after such a find was shut down by state budget cuts.

So the grenades went on the shelves — labeled with the best guess of "shot" — alongside 6 million other artifacts housed in the state's repository.

The first grenade was noticed around Thanksgiving, thanks to a conservation grant that had staff sifting through boxes to see how relics were holding up. The last was rounded up just before New Years.

And yes, they were still live. More volatile than ever.

The repository at the Department of Historic Resources is full of ghosts. Sheltered in rented space alongside the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, it's a library of rolling shelves and 9,000 boxes holding countless artifact-filled plastic bags preserving the remnants from centuries of lives.

Live ordnance has shown up at the door before, brought by folks who didn't recognize what they'd dug up in their garden.

"But it's usually Civil War stuff," said Kate Ridgway, a conservator with the department. "You still get quite a bit of that around here."

Standard protocol: Call the police for disposal.

"We hate to see anything historic destroyed," Ridgway said, "but it's just too dangerous to keep."

Staff had no idea what they were holding onto themselves.

The first thorough inspection of *Betsy* artifacts began in the fall after the department landed a Maritime Heritage grant from the National Park Service.

"So there I was," said Chelsea Blake, a conservator hired to handle the project, "going through old records and boxes, trying to match things up. As I came across metal items — since that's not an organic — I'd set them aside in a box I'd marked 'Things for Kate' so she could take a look later."

On Nov. 28, Ridgway was working her way through that box in the lab when she pulled out a plastic bag labeled "shot." Inside: a gray-ish round clump not much bigger than a golf ball.

"I knew right away something wasn't right," Ridgway said. "It wasn't heavy enough to be lead shot. And it had these weird cracks in it. And what looked like crystals inside." When she opened the bag, she caught the scent of something ominous. A whiff of gunpowder crossed 237 years and drifted up.

In September 1781 the siege at Yorktown was under way. A British armada was on its way from New York. But French warships fended off his rescuers. Lord Charles Cornwallis, the British commander, made the desperate decision to sacrifice much of his own fleet, scuttling dozens of vessels to form a barrier of barely sunken wreckage in the river. *The Betsy* was one of them.

Cornwallis surrendered on Oct. 19, 1781. The French salvaged what they could from the crippled ships and locals picked through the remains. In time, the ships settled deeper. What was left was eventually covered in a protective blanket of silt. And the lost fleet of Yorktown slept, largely forgotten.

John Broadwater started probing the river bed in the 1970s. Hired as the state's first underwater archeologist, he led a team that found nine of the shipwrecks before efforts were focused on *The Betsy*, just 500 yards offshore in about 20 feet of water, the hull was intriguingly intact under five feet of silt.

Full-on excavation, which didn't start until the 1980s, was a big deal. There was no mention of grenades. When they'd been found — waterlogged and heavy with a type of corrosion archeologists call "concretion" — it was assumed they were shot for a small cannon that had also been recovered.

A budget ax fell hard in 1989, slashing funding for the department and pulling the plug on the shipwreck project.

Grenades typically need a hard outer shell to produce the kind of explosion that sends shrapnel flying. But this one's shell had broken down, leaving "bits of metal and rust inside the powder which makes it even more sensitive," said Mark Castillo, the Richmond bomb squad commander, "more unstable as time goes by."

The core was nestled inside a bomb truck, driven to a range, wired with explosives and detonated. When the whole thing blew, the core sent up its own plume of white smoke — the signature of burning black powder.

Two days later, the staff found three more. Repeat bomb squad scene. Three days later, another one turned up. Repeat bomb squad scene.

"At that point," Blake said, "we realized we needed to check all 140 boxes of Betsy artifacts at one time so we didn't have to keep calling the bomb squad every day. I mean, what if we had a fire in the building? These things had to go."

On Saturday, Dec. 29, they combed through every single box. And found 20 more grenades. One was still wearing its iron jacket.

As for the lost fleet of Yorktown, archeologists fear it vanishes more by the day. Storms and currents sweep tirelessly, drawing skeletons toward the river's 80-foot channel, where they slide beyond reach.

## Revolutionary era bodies found in upstate New York

By Chris Carola

*Condensed from the Washington Post, February 12, 2029*

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Skeletal remains of as many as 11 people believed to have died during the Revolutionary War have been uncovered at a construction site in upstate New York, a lawyer for the couple who owns the property told The Associated Press Tuesday.

Michael Borgos said bones from as many as 11 unmarked graves have been found so far in an empty lot in the Adirondack village of Lake George, 55 miles north of Albany.

Two uniform buttons found at the site indicate that at least one of the graves may have been that of a Pennsylvania soldier, Borgos said. Human bones were initially found last Thursday as a construction crew used a backhoe to excavate a basement for a future apartment house. The bones included a skull, jawbone, pelvis and leg bones, according to David Starbuck, a local archeologist called in by police to examine the remains.

Discovering human remains and artifacts dating to that era isn't uncommon in Lake George. A popular summertime tourist destination since the late 19th Century, the area saw heavy military activity a century earlier during the French and Indian War and American Revolution, including battles, sieges and ambushes.

## UPAG to offer two special programs

In reach-out archeology efforts, UPAG has scheduled two public programs for the coming months.

The first, on Saturday, April 13, will be a primitive technologies workshop where participants can see if they have the skills that were all the rage 2,000 years ago. Participants will explore ancient tool manufacture by flintknapping stone tools, practice with the spear and atlatl, construct a debris hut, construct and fire pottery using ancient techniques and learn how to identify and forage wild edibles.

For participants aged 10 and above. The cost is \$30 a person. Registration opens March 7. For information contact Kelly Palich at 410-313-0423 or [kpalich@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:kpalich@howardcountymd.gov).

On Saturday June 8 archeologist and culinary historian Henry Ward will offer a program on culinary adventures in history. The time chef will let your taste buds travel through time to explore the foodways of the Native Americans of the Chesapeake. Discussed will be traditional dishes like berry wojap, a sweet and tart blend of native berries; parched corn, which are crunchy fried corn kernels flavored with smoked salt; and Tochwaugh Tea, made of peppermint leaves, juniper berries, clover leaves and other herbs.

The program runs from 1 to 3 p.m. Admission is \$25 a person. For more information contact Kelly Palich at 410-313-0423 or [kpalich@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:kpalich@howardcountymd.gov). Both programs are at the Howard County Living Farm Heritage Museum, 12895 Frederick Road, West Friendship.



## Have you renewed your ASM membership yet?

If you haven't, now is the perfect time to do it. See the membership form on the ASM website.

## Chapter News

In addition to the listed chapters, ASM has chapters at Hood College and the Community College of Baltimore County and a club at Huntingtown High School in Calvert County, run by Jeff Cunningham; visit its website, <http://hhsarchaeology.weebly.com/>

## Anne Arundel

Anne Arundel Chapter will be meeting at the Schmidt Center at SERC, the second Tuesday of each month, 7 to 9 p.m. Parking in front of the venue. For information, contact Jim Gibb at [JamesGGibb@verizon.net](mailto:JamesGGibb@verizon.net)

## Central Chapter

Meets the third Friday every other month at the Natural History Society of Maryland at 6908 Belair Road in Baltimore. Business meeting begins at 7, talk at 7:30. For information contact [centralchapterasm@yahoo.com](mailto:centralchapterasm@yahoo.com) or [stephenisrael2701@comcast.net](mailto:stephenisrael2701@comcast.net) or 410-945-5514. Or [www.facebook.com/asmcentralchapter](http://www.facebook.com/asmcentralchapter) or <http://asmcentralchapter.weebly.com> or Twitter [@asmcentral](https://twitter.com/asmcentral)

**March 15:** History of pottery, potters and firebrick makers of Baltimore, Harford, and Cecil Counties in Maryland researched by James R. Kotersk.

**May 17:** Armand Lione will talk on "The Anacostan Natives of Washington, DC - A Rich History That's Been Left Untold."

## Charles County

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday (September-May) in the community room of the LaPlata Police Department. Contact President Carol Cowherd at [ccasm2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccasm2010@gmail.com). Website [ccarchsoc.blogspot.com](http://ccarchsoc.blogspot.com) and Facebook [@ccasm2010](https://www.facebook.com/ccasm2010)

**March 14:** Patricia Samford on Colonial ceramics

**April 11:** Liza Gijanto,

## Mid-Potomac

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

**March 21:** Chapter members John and Dotty Foellmer, will speak about their visit to Josiah Henson's Dawn settlement in Canada

**April 18:** Tom McLaughlin, chapter member, will speak on the use of 3-D imaging for archeology. (Re-scheduled due to January meeting cancellation.)

**May 16:** Montgomery County Parks archeologist Cassandra Michaud will give an update on the archeology and progress of the museum construction at the Josiah Henson Park.

## Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. For more information, visit the chapter's web page at [digfrederick.com](http://digfrederick.com) or call 301-378-0212. The chapter does not meet in July or August. If Frederick County schools close early or are closed all day because of inclement weather, the presentation will be rescheduled.

**March 13:** Cassandra Michaud, co-lead of the Archaeology Program at M-NCPPC of Montgomery Parks, will present "Archaeological Investigations at the Josiah Henson Park and Museum."

## Northern Chesapeake

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>

**Wednesday, March 13:** Jay Custer, "New Research at the Iron Hill Jasper Quarry." Historical Society of Cecil County, Elkton.

**Friday, April 26:** Jim Gibb, "Discovering Colonial Chesapeake Diets," Edgewood Hall, Harford Community College, Bel Air.

**Sunday, May 19:** Annual Picnic Meeting. Eden Mill Nature Center, Pylesville.

## St. Mary's County

Meetings are the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Joseph D. Carter State Office Building in the Russell Conference Room, Leonardtown. For information contact Chris Coogan at [Ccoogan@smcm.edu](mailto:Ccoogan@smcm.edu)

## Upper Patuxent

Meets the second Monday at 7 p.m. at 9944 Route 108 in Ellicott City. Labs are the second and fourth Saturdays. On Facebook, [www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358) or [www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com](http://www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com) or try [uparchaeologygroup@gmail.com](mailto:uparchaeologygroup@gmail.com)

**March 11:** The Archeology of Civil War, Kelly Palich, Heritage Program Office.

**April 8:** Maryland's Cinderella: Archeology of the Belvoir Slave Quarter, by Julie Shablitsky.

**May 13:** Photogrammetry to document archeological sites, Brian Crane.

**June 10:** The Search for Camp Johnson (Civil War Encampment. B&O Ellicott City Station Museum.

## 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. Email: [wmdasm@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm>

**March 22:** Jonathan Flood of Frostburg State on excavations in the coal company town of Kempton.

**April 26:** Dana Kollmann will speak on her experiences in the South Pacific in search of WWII military remains.

**May 11:** Re-scheduled field trip to the French & Indian War era Ashby's Fort in West Virginia.

**June 28:** Artifact Analysis Workshop conducted by Suzanne Trussell.

**The Archeological Society of Maryland Inc. is a statewide nonprofit organization devoted to the study and conservation of Maryland archeology.**

ASM members receive the monthly newsletter, ASM Ink; the biannual journal, MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10-percent discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Ethan Bean, 609 N. Paca Street, Apt. 3, Baltimore, MD 21201 for membership rates. For publication sales, not including newsletter or Journal, 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)

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