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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

www.marylandarcheology.org

Workshop coming up on March 13

The chronological calendar may change when January begins, but the archeological year doesn't really start until ASM's spring programs kick up. This year the new year begins Saturday, March 13 with the annual Archeological Workshop in Crownsville.

Co-sponsored by the Maryland Historical Trust and ASM, the all-day meeting at MHT headquarters offers things of interest to both maritime and terrestrial archeologists, to those interested in the prehistoric and those interested in the historic.

Beginning at 9:30, the day is divided into four time blocks, each offering a choice of three sessions. The exception is the first block, a joint meeting with Tim Horsley presenting the keynote address on "New Remote Sensing Techniques in Archeology."

Horsley, an archeological geophysicist from the University of Michigan, will focus on what he found last fall during an intensive magnetometer survey of the Barton Site in Allegany County, including previously unknown features. He also will talk about trowel-free discoveries he has made in sites around the world.

The first of the three options for the second period is a talk by SHA archeologist Julie Schablitsky on a 19th Century African-American homestead that her crew discovered while surveying the area for the Intercounty Connector being built just north of the Washington DC beltway. The effort not only uncovered a site but also a family's history.

Meanwhile, in the cafeteria Dan Coates of the Northern Chesapeake chapter will be explaining the uses of soapstone by Native Americans. He will talk about quarrying and shaping, with many artifacts on display.

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Field school set for JefPat site in May

ASM is going to the Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum for this year's field school. The session will be held at the MAC Lab from May 14 to the 24th.

There will be a change from usual field schools: In addition to the digging part, there will be extensive opportunities for conservation training. The MAC Lab staff plans to make some of the lab's large collection available for ASM members to work with.

The emphasis of the excavation portion of the session will be at the Smith's St. Leonard site, the location of a 1711 dwelling. See http://www.jefpat.org/IntroWeb/Smith-St.Leonard.htm Prehistoric artifacts also have been found at the site.

More information on the field school and on accommodations will appear in a future newsletter.

Upcoming events

March 13: Archeology Workshop. Crownsville

March 18 – 21: Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, Ocean City. www.maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org

April 10: Spring Symposium, Derwood.

April 14 – 18: Society for American Archeology annual meeting, St. Louis.

April 17: Discovering Archeology Day, Jefferson Patterson Park. Information at www.jefpat.org

May 14 – 24: ASM field school, Jefferson Patterson Park.

May 24 – 28: National Park Service is sponsoring archeological workshop at the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site near Stanton, North Dakota. The workshop is open to all archeologists and students interested in forensic and cemetery investigations. $475. Application forms on the Midwest Archeological Center's web page at www.nps.gov/history/mwac/ For further information, contact Steven L. DeVore at 402-437-5392, ext. 141 or steve_de_vore@nps.gov

June 12 – 20: Barton field session.

Volunteer opportunities

The following volunteer opportunities are open to CAT program 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. CAT opportunity.

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

The Lost Towns Project of Anne Arundel County. 410-222-7440.

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 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

A prehistoric overview presentation will be part of the Archeology Workshop in Crownsville March 13.

For updates and information on other CAT activities check the ASM website.

A website is available to candidates and graduates: http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/MDcat/ . To join the group email MDcat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

New Tut studies reveal more data

From news reports

Egypt's famed King Tutankhamun had a cleft palate and a club foot, which probably forced him to walk with canes, and died from complications from a broken leg exacerbated by malaria, according to the most extensive study ever of his more than 3,300-year-old mummy.

The findings are based on two years of DNA testing and CT (computed tomography) scans on 16 mummies, including those of Tutankhamun and his family, said the team that carried out the study. An article on the findings was published February 17 in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The study establishes the clearest family tree for Tut, indicating for the first time that he was the child of a brother-sister union.

The study said Tut's father was probably Akhenaten, a pharaoh who tried to revolutionize ancient Egyptian religion and force his people to worship one god. The mummy shown by DNA to be that of Tut's mother turned out to be a sister of Akhenaten's, although she has not been identified.

Tut, who became pharaoh at age 10 in 1333 B.C., ruled for nine years at a pivotal time in Egypt's history. Although he was a comparatively minor king, the 1922 discovery of his tomb, which was filled with stunning artifacts, including the famed golden funeral mask, made him known the world over.

Speculation had long swirled over why the boy king died so young, at about 19. A hole in his skull fueled speculation that he was murdered, until a 2005 CT scan ruled that out, finding that the hole probably resulted from the mummification process. The scan also uncovered the broken leg.

In contrast to the golden splendor that Tut was buried with, he is revealed in the newest scans and DNA tests to have been a sickly teen, weakened by congenital illnesses and done in by complications from the broken leg aggravated by severe brain malaria.

The team said it isolated DNA of the malaria parasite in several of the family's mummies, including Tut's -- the oldest such discovery.

"A sudden leg fracture possibly introduced by a fall might have resulted in a life threatening condition when a malaria infection occurred," the JAMA article said. "Tutankhamun had multiple disorders. . . . He might be envisioned as a young but frail king who needed canes to walk."

Like his father, Tutankhamun had a cleft palate. He also had a club foot and Kohler's disease, in which lack of blood flow was slowly destroying the bones of his left foot -- an often painful condition, the study says. It said that 130 walking sticks and canes were found in Tut's tomb, some with traces of wear.

Another study has shown that the distinctive thick black eye makeup portrayed on Tut's death mask, and worn by Egyptian men and women during the time of the pharaohs, was not just for beauty. According to researchers with the Louvre and the Pierre and Marie Curie University in Paris, the makeup contained lead-based substances that very probably protected the wearers against common eye ailments.

Ancient Egyptians apparently believed that if a person wore the eye makeup, he or she "could be directly protected by [the gods] Horus and Ra against several illnesses," the researchers wrote in a paper published in January in Analytical Chemistry, the journal of the American Chemical Society. That belief, they said, turned out to be based on more than myth.

After analyzing 52 samples from ancient Egyptian makeup pots preserved at the Louvre, the researchers said, they found four lead-based substances that, when cultured with human cells, boosted the cells' production of nitric oxide. Nitric oxide stimulates the immune system to help it fight the bacterial infections common in tropical marshy areas such as the Nile during its massive annual floods, the researchers wrote.

They said the lead salts in the makeup were not those found naturally in and around Egypt, but had to have been laboriously synthesized by ancient Egyptians over a period of weeks.

DNA hints Siberia transit route

By Nicholas Wade

Condensed from the New York Times, February 11, 2010

The genome of a man who lived on the western coast of Greenland some 4,000 years ago has been decoded, thanks to the surprisingly good preservation of DNA in a swatch of his hair so thick it was originally thought to be from a bear.

This is the first time the whole genome of an ancient human has been analyzed and it joins the list of just eight whole genomes of living people that been have been decoded so far. It also sheds new light on the settlement of North America by showing there was a unsuspected migration of people across the continent, from Siberia to Greenland, some 5,500 years ago.

The Greenlander belonged to a Paleo-Eskimo culture called the Saqqaq by archeologists. On the basis of his genome, the Saqqaq man's closest living relatives are the Chukchis, people who live at the easternmost tip of Siberia. His ancestors split apart from Chukchis some 5,500 years ago, according to genetic calculations, implying the Saqqaq people's ancestors must have traveled across the northern edges of North America until they reached Greenland.

A team led by Morten Rasmussen and Eske Willerslev of the University of Copenhagen decoded the genome from four tufts of hair dug out of the permafrost at Qeqertasussuk on the west coast of Greenland. The hair was excavated in 1986 and kept in a plastic bag in the National Museum of Denmark. It was found with other waste and the scientists speculate that it was the result of a haircut. There it moldered, unfrozen, until discovered by Willerslev, an expert on ancient DNA.

No traces of the Saqqaq people have been found in North America, said Michael H. Crawford, an expert on circumpolar populations at the University of Kansas and a co-author of the report. Because the land bridge that once connected Siberia and Alaska had long since foundered, the Saqqaq people might have crossed to Alaska on the winter ice or could have used the boats on which they hunted fish and seals.

They evidently kept to arctic latitudes, perhaps because more southerly regions were already occupied by the Inuit or because they were better adapted to life in the arctic, Rasmussen said.

The Saqqaq man's genome is so complete that the Danish researchers have been able to reconstruct his probable appearance and susceptibility to disease from the genetic information in his genome.

He has the East Asian version of a gene known as EDAR, which endows people with hair that is thicker than that of most Europeans and Africans. Another gene suggests he would have had dry earwax, as do Asians and Native Americans, not the wet earwax of other ethnic groups.

Biologists used to think that DNA would be found only in the cells at the roots of the hair, not in the keratin of which the hair shaft is made. But it now seems that the cells get incorporated into the growing shaft and their DNA is sealed in by the keratin, protecting it from bacteria and fungi.

The Danish researchers, using an advanced DNA sequencing technology developed by Illumina of San Diego, reported that they were able to decode 80 percent of the ancient Greenlander's genome to a high degree of accuracy. Their findings appear in the journal Nature.

An ever-present danger in analyzing ancient human DNA is contamination, particularly from modern human DNA from all the archeologists and curators who have touched the samples. The Danish researchers said they took precautions to exclude this and other contaminants.

Deciphering the genomes of people who lived long ago, as the Danish researchers have done, will open windows into reconstructing the biology of our ancestors, said Edward M. Rubin, director of the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute. "We won't go back there and see what color hair they had," he said. "But their genomes will give us that information."

Workshop coming up on March 13

Continued from Page One

Members of the audience can try their hand at working the steatite themselves.

The third session is the first of two offering an overview of historical archeology by southern Maryland archeologists Silas Hurry and Kate Dinnel. Designed as a CAT workshop, the bifurcated talk will review Maryland history since the early 17th Century and also the history of archeology in Maryland. Specific sites will be discussed as will a look at the future. The second session takes place after lunch. The sessions are not restricted to CAT candidates. During lunch, there will be an orientation for potential candidates.

In one of the other two postprandial talks Bill Schindler will deal with prehistoric ceramics, a technology that began in this area about 3,000 years ago and covered a variety of techniques and results. The Washington College professor will delve into the problems facing the prehistoric potter, from getting the materials together to firing.

John Dowdle , a member of the Institute for Maritime History, will tell about volunteer opportunities for underwater archeologists. He also will summarize what an MHT project in the Potomac came up with last year and what activities are planned for this year.

A second underwater session takes place in the final time block. James Smailes will talk about MAHS, the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society, which deals with historic shipwrecks and other submerged cultural material. Smailes will describe some of his group's current efforts.

The prehistoric session in that time slot involves Anne Arundel County's Al Luckenbach detailing the prolific Pig Point site, which contained seven feet of stratified deposits, stretching from fertile Woodland middens back to the Early Archaic.

The historic talk by Ed Chaney, of Jefferson Patterson, should have a special interest for ASM members. The early 18th Century plantation site he will discuss is the Smiths' St. Leonard site, location of this year's ASM field school. Situated on JefPat land, the site already had provided a rich variety of finds.

This year the Crownsville cafeteria will be open for lunch, for those who don't want to brown-bag. Admission to the meeting is $5 for ASM members and students, $7 for others. A flier, detailing the talks and the program, as well as directions for getting to Crownsville, is inside this newsletter.

Next on ASM's meetings program is the Spring Symposium, to be held Saturday, April 10 in Derwood in Montgomery County.

Funding archeology: a way to save moneycc

The following is an excerpt from a 1994 article in the Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences *by noted scholar Jared M. Diamond.*

Archeology is often viewed as a socially irrelevant academic discipline that becomes a prime target for budget cuts whenever money gets tight. In fact, archeological research is one of the best bargains available to government planners.

All over the world, we're launching developments that have great potential for doing irreversible damage, and that are really just more powerful versions of ideas put into operation by past societies. We can't afford the experiment of developing five counties in five different ways and seeing which four counties get ruined. Instead, it will cost us much less in the long run if we hire archeologists to find out what happened the last time than if we go making the same mistakes again.

Here's just one example. The American Southwest has over 100,000 square miles of pinyon-juniper woodland that we are exploiting more and more for firewood. Unfortunately, the U.S. Forest Service has little data to help it calculate sustainable yields and recovery rates in that woodland. Yet the Anasazi already tried the experiment and miscalculated, with the result that the woodland still hasn't recovered in Chaco Canyon after over 800 years.

Paying some archeologists to reconstruct Anasazi firewood consumption would be cheaper than committing the same mistake and ruining 100,000 square miles of the United States, as we may now be doing.

Virginia gives tribe its recognition

By Chelyen Davis

Condensed from Fredricksburg.com February 17, 2010

RICHMOND, Va. – Stafford's Patawomeck Indian tribe is now an officially state-recognized tribe.

The state Senate yesterday passed a resolution to grant state tribal recognition to the Patawomecks, or Potomacs. The resolution was already passed by the House and takes effect immediately.

The Senate also passed similar resolutions for two Nottoway tribes. The resolutions state that the tribes are state-recognized and will have a seat with the Virginia Council on Indians, the body that has been in charge of granting state recognition to tribes for more than 20 years.

The tribr applied for state status through the council, but weren't able to meet the stringent requirements, which proving that the group has existed as a distinct community through the years.

Patawomeck Chief Robert Green has said it's difficult for tribes to prove that, because Virginia's racist policies meant that for years Indians could not identify themselves as such on vital records, like birth certificates--the state required them to declare themselves white or "colored."

The Patawomecks turned to the General Assembly for recognition, Green said, because they were frustrated by the VCI process.

Members of the VCI protested the resolutions during a Senate committee hearing. Chickahominy Chief Stephen Adkins and Upper Mattaponi Chief Ken Adams both told senators that the state needs to maintain a rigorous vetting process for tribes seeking recognition.

But lawmakers seem frustrated by the council not approving new tribes over the years and no one voted against the resolutions in the Senate.

The Patawomeck resolution is sponsored by House Speaker Bill Howell, R-Stafford, and drew tribe member and Las Vegas entertainer Wayne Newton to testify on it when it was before the House.

Howell said he has talked to Adkins about working together to develop changes to the structure of the council and the way tribes are recognized.

Chapter notes

Anne Arundel

Meeting five times a year in February, April, June, September and November, the chapter meets at the Severna Park Branch of the Anne Arundel County Public Library, 45 McKinsey Road. 7:30 p.m. Contact Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito at AAChapASM@hotmail.com or visit the chapter website www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php

April 20: Stephen Israel will discuss the Rockdale Road rockshelter.

September 10: London Town's Rod Cofield will talk on ways by which women, as patrons and laborers, participated in colonial-era public houses.

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

Charles County

Meetings are held 7:30 on the second Tuesday (September–May). Contact President Paula Martino at paulamartino@hotmail.com or 301-752-2852.

March 9: Stephanie Sperling of Lost Towns on the Pig Point Woodland/Archaic site. At the La Plata train station.

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Agricultural History Farm Park Activity Center in Derwood. Dinner at a local restaurant is at 6. Contact heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org, or call 301-840-5848 or Don Housley at donhou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: www.asmmidpotomac.wordpress.com and www.facebook.com/pages/Mid-Potomac-Archaeology/182856471768

March 18: Bob Sonderman from the National Park Service will conduct a glass and bottle identification workshop from 6 to 10 p.m. Pizza and salad will be provided for $5, or bring your own food. RSVP.

Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Contact Jeremy Lazelle at 301-845-9855 orjlazelle@msn.com or Nancy Geasey at 301-378-0212.

March 10: Frederick resident Mary Bowman-Kruhm will speak on "Human History Carved in Bone," her recent biography of the Leakey family. Postponed from cancelled February meeting.

Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Members and guests assemble at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Ann Persson at 410-272-3425 or aspst20@yahoo.com Website: http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake

March 10: John Seidel with an Eastern Shore prehistoric survey, at the Perryville Library.

April 16: Tim Riordan on the St. Mary's City chapel and cemetery, at Harford Community College.

Upper Patuxent

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

March 8: Laura Cripps, "Report on Bibracte, a Romano-Celtic Temple Site in France " (excavated in 2009).

May 17: The 3rd Annual J. Alfred Prufrock History/Archaeology Team Competition Game."

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 Website: http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm

March 26: Marilyn Moors on "People of the Longhouse: Settlement Patterns, Lifestyles and Social Structure, Then and Now."

April 23: George Evans on "Volunteering at the Jamestown Excavation."

May 28: Robert Wall on "The Barton Site 2009 and 2010."

June 12-20: Barton field session.

Archeological Society of Maryland
ASM Ink
P.O. Box 1331
Huntingtown, MD 20639-1331

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TIME SENSITIVE: DELIVER BY MARCH 1

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