

# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



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

## Coming live in April: The ASM symposium

Have you marked April 16 on your calendar yet?

That's the day ASM goes live again (we hope!) and offers for your viewing and listening pleasure the 2022 version of the annual Spring Symposium, a collection of talks designed to be of interest to ASM members and their guests.

Doors open at 8:30 with coffee and accompaniments to help you settle before the talks begin around 9.

One of the talks will be on Barwick's Ordinary on the Eastern Shore to tell you about this year's field session, which begins in late May. Julie Markin of Washington College will provide the briefing on this historical dig.

Another academic is Randolph Daniel Jr. The East Carolina University faculty member will speak on "Time, Typology and Point Traditions in North Carolina Archeology." Caillete Rose, an undergraduate at Towson University, will give this year's Student Spotlight. She will focus on refining interpretations of the Conowingo Site by the Susquehanna River.

Craig Lukezic of the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command will bring you up to date on recent research in New Netherland archeology. Scott Strickland of the MAC Lab will discuss Anglo-Native interactions in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Maryland.

Among the other speakers is one focusing on maritime archeology. Brendan Burke of the Virginia Department of Natural Resources will explain his department's underwater program, "Preservation and Education."

The cafeteria will be closed so bring your own lunch. Admission is \$5 for active ASM members, \$7 for all others, except students who can attend for free.

Also, the silent auction will return. See below.

In case you are wondering, you did not miss the Workshop in Archeology. Henceforth it will be held in the fall.

### Do you have something to contribute to silent auction?

ASM is seeking donations for a silent auction at the Spring Symposium which will benefit the Analysis Fund. Ideal donations include archeology-related items, handmade items, gift cards, gift baskets, and other interesting objects. Unauctioned books will be donated to the ASM book sales or to a local library.

An auction donation form is included with this newsletter, as is a donation request form that can be used in getting businesses or attractions to offer special deals.

Contact Elaine at ([elaine.frances.hall@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.frances.hall@gmail.com)) for additional information. Items may be mailed to her or brought on the day of the Symposium, but please let her know what to expect, and when.

## Upcoming events

**March 5:** ASM board meeting. Probably via Zoom.

**April:** Archeology Month. Keep checking <https://www.marylandarcheologymonth.org> for events updates.

**April 16:** Spring Symposium.

**May 20-30:** Tyler Bastian Field Session at the Barwick's Ordinary Site near Denton

**NOTE:** The annual Workshop in Archeology will now take place in the fall.

## Volunteer opportunities (non-covid)

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

**ASM Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays:** The lab in Crownsville. Contact Zachary Singer at [Zachary.Singer@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.Singer@maryland.gov) It is currently working on the Maiden's Choice collection, which is a late 18th to early 19th Century dwelling in Washington County

**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)

**The Charles County chapter** will process artifacts recovered from STP excavations at Dielman Inn in New Windsor (Carroll County). The lab will be at Burch House in Port Tobacco on Mondays November 1, 8 and 15. For more information, contact Carol Cowherd at [ccasm2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccasm2010@gmail.com).

**The Anne Arundel County** Archaeology Program and the Lost Towns Project welcome volunteers in both field and lab at numerous sites. For diggers, the Linniston site on Gibson Island Fridays from 8 to 3. The lab will be open some weekdays at the Anne Arundel collection facility at 7409 Baltimore-Annapolis Blvd. in Glen Burnie. For more information email Drew Webster at [volunteers@losttownsproject.org](mailto:volunteers@losttownsproject.org) or call 410 222 1318.

**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.

**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)

**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 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.

## CAT corner:

For information on the CAT program contact Tom McLaughlin [mclaugh01@verizon.net](mailto:mclaugh01@verizon.net)

### Artifacts in 3D

If you like looking at pictures of artifacts, imagine looking at them in 3D. For an idea of the results, here are some 3Ds supplied by Jim Gibb, part of a collection he is working on. The images were produced by Bernard Means of the Virginia Commonwealth University.

<https://sketchfab.com/virtualcurationlab/collections/smithsonian-environmental-research-center>

# A winter visit to Colonial Williamsburg

By Kevin Ambrose

*Condensed from the Washington Post, February 26, 2022*

January was a cold and snowy month in Colonial Williamsburg, but the wintry weather didn't prevent archeologists from digging in the colonial capital. Three archeological digs are ongoing, at Custis Square, First Baptist Church and the Magazine.

On Feb. 11, I met with Jack Gary, Colonial Williamsburg's director of archeology, to discuss his excavations, discoveries and how various types of weather affect digging. Gary's team has been working in Williamsburg for three years, so they've dealt with all kinds of weather.

Their greatest weather-related challenge this winter was removing ice from the tarps, which cover the dig site at night and during days when it rains or snows. "Ice slabs on tarps are heavy," remarked Cheyenne Johnson, an archeology field technician.

But staying warm while digging in winter is also a challenge.

So far, low temperatures haven't slowed down excavations this winter, because the ground hasn't frozen beyond a thin surface crust. It takes severe cold to freeze the ground in a dig site more than an inch or two. As a result, the excavations have continued without delays from frozen soil.

Rain and snow will stop the digging, however. During storms, the archeologists move indoors to catch up on paperwork and clean artifacts. But, if the rain is heavy, water seeps through the ground, under the tarps, and can create a muddy mess in the dig site.

The first archeological site I visited on Feb. 11 was Custis Square. The weather was sunny and mild, with temperatures approaching 60 degrees. It was perfect digging weather, and Gary's team of archaeology field technicians was busy scraping dirt to expose ground features and artifacts. Their excavation is focused on an early 18th-Century garden site that Virginia plantation owner and statesman that John Custis IV planted.

Custis, who owned an estate in Williamsburg during the early-to-mid-1700s, stated that his garden was second to none in Virginia. He worked with Peter Collinson of London on a trans-Atlantic plant exchange for their gardens. Custis sent eastern Virginia plants to London and received European garden plants from Collinson.

The archeological dig at Custis Square aims to map the garden perimeter, locate the garden-related postholes and discover walkways. Gary said current gardens in Colonial Williamsburg are interpretations of what gardens are thought to have resembled in colonial times but may be based more on later-era gardens. He hopes his effort will reveal the design and organization of an early 18th-Century garden in Williamsburg.

Gary mentioned there was drought in the 1730s and that enslaved men would draw water from wells during the day and water the plants in the Custis garden at night. At the time, gardeners thought plants needed cool water, not sun-heated water. Thus, the enslaved men worked long hours, day and night, to maintain the garden throughout the dry summer months.

Many of the excavated postholes within the Custis Square dig site are filled with water. Gary said pumps are used to remove the water from postholes, but often water returns, seeping back from groundwater. Above the postholes, archeologists use spray bottles of water to moisten dry soil since moist soil shows ground features much better than dry soil.

Digging will continue at the site for an additional two years, thanks to funding by the Jacqueline B. Mars Charitable Trust.

From the Custis Square site, Gary and I walked to the dig site at the First Baptist Church, the location of one of the earliest African American churches in the colonies, organized by free and enslaved worshipers in 1776. Gary's excavation focuses on locating the foundations of two church buildings from 1818 and 1856.

Gary mentioned his team excavated an 1817 one-cent coin, which confirms they've located the first church foundation constructed in 1818. The coin was found beneath a section of brick near the foundation.

The church that was built in 1818 was destroyed by a tornado in 1834 but was later rebuilt in 1856. The 1856 church was more expansive than the first church, and its foundation is visible in the dig site, outlined by

**Continued on next page**

## Winter visit to Colonial Williamsburg (continued)

brick and soil features.

The second church stood until 1955 but was torn down and later covered by a parking lot, which was recently removed.

Williamsburg's Magazine, in the heart of Colonial Williamsburg, was a short walk from the church site.

Gary escorted me inside the walls of the magazine, where I could view the digging. Gary mentioned that only a few cannonballs and musket balls had been excavated on the site, surprising because the octagonal building was constructed in 1715 to store gunpowder and arms for military purposes.

Most of the excavated artifacts are from a civilian occupation and are not military-related. However, one of the more exciting discoveries was clay roof tiles. Initially, the building was thought to have wooden shingles, like many other colonial dwellings. But the excavation proves that nonflammable clay tiles were used on the roof of the magazine.

Two other discoveries are of interest. First, postholes excavated near the magazine had been dug at an angle, indicating there may have been a wooden building surrounding the Magazine, perhaps like a lean-to structure.

In addition, the excavated foundation of the original brick wall that surrounded the magazine was not buried deep into the ground, indicating the wall may not have been as high as the existing wall, which was built in the 1930s. Gary said the first wall may have been only about six feet tall.

Gary hopes the results of his excavation will prove how the magazine was built and utilized, spanning the years from 1715 to the present day.

Our last stop was the archeology lab in Colonial Williamsburg. Lab work, such as cleaning and documenting artifacts, is time-consuming but essential for archeology. And when it rains or snows, field archeologists report to the lab to help with the tedious work.

The lab also stores and displays artifacts dug in the Williamsburg area since the 1930s. The most remarkable artifact is a well-preserved English helmet from the early 1600s that was excavated in the Martin's Hundred, an early 17th-Century plantation on the north shore of the James River.

Dozens of dug wine bottles, and some marked with the John Custis seal, are also stored in the lab. In addition, the lab has a Madeira wine decanter dug at Wetherburn's Tavern in Colonial Williamsburg. Madeira wine, produced on the Portuguese Madeira Islands, was a favorite in the colonies.

The most unusual artifact is a large sea turtle shell dug at Martin's Hundred. Why was a sea turtle in a 17th-Century plantation? According to Gary, "we can assume it was food."

"Many of the artifacts currently curated in the lab will be displayed in the new Campbell Archaeology Center, a new facility that will house our labs, collections space, and public programming space," wrote Gary in an email after my visit

Gary said they will also have a dedicated gallery to the archeological materials in the Art Museum. The first exhibit, which they expect to open in 2023, will look at the global footprint of 18th-Century life in Williamsburg, highlighting the origins of many of the artifacts.



## Book Review: What John Smith saw, or could have

**John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages, 1607-1609**, by Helen C. Rountree, Wayne E. Clark, and Kent Mountford  
University of Virginia Press, 2008; 402 pages. \$21.95 softcover from <https://www.upress.virginia.edu/title/51>;  
hardcover available from used-book stores at higher price.

A collaborative effort that involved Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, the U.S. National Park Service, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Maryland Historical Trust, "John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages, 1607-1609," was published to coincide with the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Smith's first exploratory expedition.

However, don't judge this attractively bound book by its title. Smith's voyages are not its primary focus, but rather a frame for a description of the people, places, events and natural conditions representing the whole Chesapeake Bay in Smith's time. Emphasis is given to the region's aboriginal inhabitants along all of the bay's major waterways.

Archeology plays a critical role in telling the story. The authors assert, "The 17th-Century records of the English...do not begin to yield what archeology can tell us about housing, diet and the degree of interaction between Chesapeake and world economies...Thus, archeology has become one of the few remaining bridges to understanding more fully a world and its inhabitants of four hundred years ago."

Native communities that Smith was unaware of are also included, based upon later English accounts and archeological evidence. Sidebar topics and color photographs of artifacts and archeological sites complement or, in some cases, supplement the main text.

Chapter one describes the world in which Native Americans lived and addresses climate, geography, flora and fauna. A long chapter is then devoted to "native ways of life" of the Algonquian-speaking peoples in Maryland and Virginia, followed by a slightly shorter section about the English and their colonization effort. The fourth and fifth chapters detail the daily itinerary of John Smith's two voyages up the Chesapeake.

The second half of the book is comprised of chapters dedicated to the major river basins: Powhatan/James, Pamunkey/York, Lower Eastern Shore, Middle Eastern Shore, Head of the Bay (discusses Iroquoian speakers), Patuxent, Potomac and Rappahannock (also covers Piedmont peoples).

Each river basin is analyzed in some depth according to similarly formatted sections. The reader is first introduced to natural resources that were available to native inhabitants and how those resources have changed after four centuries of human activity and climate change.

Next, every native village mentioned by Smith — as well as several unknown to him — is briefly described. Also mentioned are archeological investigations completed as of 2007 (the work's first printing). An accompanying map of the water basin shows the known or likely location of each village (permanent and seasonal, named and unnamed); however, geographic and modern manmade landmarks mentioned in the text are not labeled on the map.

The "interplay" between native peoples and the environment is then considered. A final section explains the impact of the English upon the river basin.

Although published nearly 15 years ago, "John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages" remains an essential quick reference about the peoples who called Chesapeake Bay their home in the early 1600s. ASM members in particular should find several topics or tidbits of interest, such as the Cumberland palisaded village on the Patuxent (probably the village of *Oppanient*), the Tockwogh (Algonquian)-Susquehannock (Iroquoian) alliance against the feared Massowomecks (Siouan?), the Patowomeck group's control of the coveted *matchqueon* (a glittering ore used in face paint), or the story of how an Indian youth made Powhatan laugh.

"Chesapeake Voyages" should prove a frequently consulted resource if it finds its way into your personal library. One minor criticism: the maps were apparently designed for a volume of larger dimensions, because you may need a magnifying glass to read some of the place names.

-- Aaron O. Jarvis

Have you renewed yet? See form on webpage



# World War 2 POW camp found in England

*Condensed from Heritage Daily, February 9, 2022*

Archeologists from Wessex Archaeology, working on behalf of Shropshire Council have uncovered evidence of a Prisoner of War (POW) camp used to house 2,000 German prisoners during WWII.

Excavations uncovered a variety of structural evidence in Mile End, Oswestry, England, revealing a spacious camp made up of scattered barracks on a vast sports field surrounded by agricultural land. Dating of the associated artefacts and documentary evidence suggests that the camp was in use between 1940 until 1948 - several years after the cessation of hostilities in 1945.

John Winfer, project manager at Wessex Archaeology who oversaw excavations, said: "What we have revealed is surprising evidence of some (relatively speaking) comfortable conditions for the inmates. We know from our documentary research that the Red Cross, which visited many POW camps across Europe during the Second World War, came to assess conditions at the Mile End camp. The visit report highlights the range of facilities and activities on offer to the prisoners, which is supported by the archeological evidence we uncovered."

"Inmates benefited from sports pitches, musical performances, electricity to power lights and heating, enough toilets available for everyone at the camp, and several hot and cold showers and wash basins, with each prisoner taking two hot baths a week. Many of the prisoners would have been employed in carpentry workshops, with younger inmates given time off to study at the camp's school. Those overseeing the camp enjoyed more spacious accommodation, and our work uncovered military issue ceramic tableware accompanied by beer glasses. This all paints a civilized and rather unexpected picture of a POW camp," added Winfer

Despite this, archeological evidence and documentary research also points to some minor unrest - and possibly some violence - in the camp. It was said to have been subject to 'frequent breakouts', and boundary ditches and fragments of barbed wire hint at the increased security.

A spent .303 cartridge reveals that a rifle was discharged at some point. The presence of a loaded German pistol - thought to be a Sauer 38H pistol, a German Second World War pistol commonly issued within the Wehrmacht - found close to one of the buildings adds further intrigue.

Artefacts have also offered more personal insights into the lives and stories of those living at the camp: A lead alloy toy camel and a make-up tin reveal a glimpse of domestic life, while containers recovered such as Brylcreem and San Izal disinfectant evidence self-care and cleanliness. One item in particular - an aluminium metal identification tag from a German soldier - has excited archeologists, who hope to use its serial number to trace the individual and his story.

"This is an intriguing find with so much potential," continued Winfer. "These were standard issue German army items, very similar to ones the Allies used. In the event of death during the war, the tag would have been snapped, with one half buried with the body for later identification and the other given to unit administrators for recording.

## Chapter news

### Central Chapter

All Meetings will be held on Zoom the third Tuesday of every second month. For more information and to be added to the Zoom list contact: Katharine Fernstrom at [kwfappraising@gmail.com](mailto:kwfappraising@gmail.com)

**March 15:** Dana Kollman will talk about the fine line where archeology, biological anthropology, history and the forensic sciences intersect.

**March 19-20:** First dig, weather and ground conditions permitting, at Marshy Point.

**May 17:** TBD

## Charles County

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday (September-May). The next few will be virtual. Contact President Carol Cowherd at [ccasm2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccasm2010@gmail.com) for Zoom access information. Website [ccarchsoc.blogspot.com](http://ccarchsoc.blogspot.com) and Facebook [@ccasm2010](https://www.facebook.com/ccasm2010)

## Mid-Potomac

Until further notice, all meetings will be by Zoom starting at 7p.m., with the presentation at 7:30. For up-to-date information, including links to Zoom meetings, check our Chapter website at [www.asmmidpotomac.org](http://www.asmmidpotomac.org) or contact Don Housley at [donhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:donhou704@earthlink.net) or 301-424-8526.

**March 17:** Vivian Eicke, chapter member, will present on her participation in a metal-detecting survey at Montpelier, the Virginia home of James Madison.

**April 21:** Ralph Buglass, chapter member and local historian, will talk on Post-Civil War race relations in Montgomery County.

**May 16 (note day change to Monday):** Lew Toulmin, chapter member and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, will speak on: "Montpelier Expedition: Digging into the Mysterious 'Burn Site' and into Eleven Generations of Black History."

## Monocacy

Because the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick is closed for meetings, the chapter will not meet until further notice. For more information, visit the chapter's web page at [digfrederick.com](http://digfrederick.com) or call 301-378-0212.

## Northern Chesapeake

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>

## 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 [Cicoogan@smcm.edu](mailto:Cicoogan@smcm.edu)

## Upper Patuxent

Meetings the second Saturday or Sunday of the month, virtual or at the Heritage Program Office, 9944 Route 108, Ellicott City, unless otherwise noted. [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 call Kelly Palich, 410 313 0423.

## Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Fellowship Hall, 211 S. Lee Street in Cumberland, unless noted. Contact Roy Brown, 301-724-7769. Email: [wmdasm@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm>

**March 25:** The Bucket List Adventurers, Darlene and David Frederick, will share some of the interesting sites they visited on their five- month, 20,000-mile tour of the American west in 2021.

**April 22:** Robert Wall will give a presentation on the Susquehannock occupation during the 1600s.

**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, 765-716-5282 or [beans32@comcast.net](mailto:beans32@comcast.net) 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 20178-2104 or 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net)

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