

ASM Ink

December 2025, Vol. 52, No. 12

Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



www.marylandarcheology.org

Upcoming Activities

Upcoming Events

March 11-15, 2026 - [Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference](#) - Gettysburg, PA

April 18, 2025 - Spring Symposium on Archeology - Crownsville, MD

Conferences:

April 29 - May 3, 20216 - [Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting](#) - San Francisco, CA

President's Note

Today, I am thinking about how much I value our mission, our members, and our board. ASM provides us the opportunity to meet wonderful diverse people and learn about so many forgotten parts of our history. I treasure each of you and the projects we work on. If you haven't had a chance yet, dive into our new issue of our Journal, Maryland Archeology. It is available online and open publicly, so feel free to share with friends outside of ASM.

Wishing all of you a peaceful holiday season.

THE PATRICIA SEITZ MEMORIAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2025

I am very pleased to announce that Sarah Mason and Julia Berg were awarded the 2025 Teacher of the Year Award! The Teacher of the Year Award includes a \$200 monetary award.

The Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc. presents the Teacher of the Year Award in memory of Mrs. Patricia Seitz, a former teacher in the Baltimore County Public Schools. The award is to be presented to a teacher who has achieved excellence in instruction by developing and/or incorporating archeological content, projects, and/or activities into his or her classroom curriculum during the school year.



Sarah and Julia received the award *'for tireless efforts bringing archaeology into K-12 education and bringing the expertise of educators to archaeologists.'*

The full nomination submitted by Kat Sternner is below:

Julia Berg and Sarah Mason have been K-12 educators for 15+ years. In the six years since they became involved in the Archeological Society of Maryland, they have been a model for involvement, advocacy, and service that many professional archaeologists would be hard put to match. Since 2019, they founded the Eastern Shore Chapter of ASM, have presented at the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference and the Conference on Public Archaeology, served as content writers for Archaeology in the Community, and have collaborated on two awarded grants to provide opportunities for K-12 teachers and students to engage in archaeology. Julia has completed her CAT certification and Sarah is working diligently on hers. Archaeology, archaeologists, and the general public in Maryland benefit greatly from their passion, tenacity, and humility as they bring communities together to share in the valuation of Maryland's history.

Congratulations, well deserved!!

PS – keep your eyes open during the next months as we establish a nomination process for additional ASM Teacher of the Year Awards.

–Valerie

Holiday Cookie Recipe from Pat Melville

Cinnamon Crinkle Cookies

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup softened butter
1 tsp vanilla
2 eggs
1 tsp cinnamon
1 package French vanilla cake mix,
sifted
Rolo candies, cut in half and placed on
cookies. (Can also use pecan halves,
mini peanut butter cups, or Dove eggs.)



Combine butter, vanilla, and eggs with a beater. Sift cake mix and cinnamon and blend in gradually. Spoon dough on cookie sheet. Place pecan or candy pieces (use both halves) on each cookie, pressing lightly. Bake at 375° for 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes.

The Piney Grove Archeological Site (18BA483)

Kim Malinowski

With Gratitude to Dr. Zachary Singer for technical edits and terminology

From November 3rd-7th, I returned to the Piney Grove Site (18BA483) on the quest to find chalcedony, which archaeologists sometimes describe as weathering amber chalcedony. I had been on the 2024 dig that involved Northeastern style Shovel Test Pits (STPs) that were 50cm x 50cm square instead of our usual Maryland round 35cm diameter STPs. Four “hot spots” were found and while nowhere near my STPs, I helped to label and catalog artifacts from them in the lab. Because I’m attached to the site by shovel, catalog sheets, and a few well-earned thorns, there was no way that I was going to miss the 2025 dig. And yes, UMD Archaeology grad certificate finals were the following week, but I made it to class and can still tell the tale.

I have learned to love weathering amber chalcedony a.k.a. W.A.C. (which I scream “whack!!!”). I admit that at first glance it’s nerve wracking because the Piney Grove site is rich in quartz that can become thousands of “fortuitous pseudomorphs” (credit to Zac’s terminology that I now recite) that we all keep because of the angular structure it naturally breaks with. Quartz fooled me A LOT last year and this year, even knowing better, it still did. Weathering amber chalcedony has a “patina” or looks like there is a frosty crust over a golden mineral and flakes look a lot like stained glass when held to sunlight. I would call it “clear” because the flakes have that transparent see through quality. When the dirt is cleaned off the artifacts and placed side-by-side to the naturally occurring quartz, the weathering amber chalcedony is easier to identify, but when we started the 2025 dig, I was back to beginner lithics, again.



Everyone met at St. John's Church Western Run Parish and Dr. Zachary Singer led the way to the site after both a safety explanation and a quick lithics lesson about W.A.C. He explained the site plan and the grid that we would be using. The grid was mapped over three locations where a sidescraper and flakes were found in 2024. The hope was to narrow down where a reduction activity area or tool using area of the site was located. The units were laid out into blocks. Each unit was 1m x 1m and was excavated as part of larger 2x2 meter block excavations.

On Monday, the air was crisp and pumpkins still decorated the church property and cemetery. It was a beautiful fall day as we lugged our equipment to the nearby site. The road that we crossed from the church to the Piney Grove site is both our greatest hazard and the reason why we know that the site exists.

In the early 2000s, the road was shifted for vehicular safety and cultural research management archeologists found the site before the construction took place. They listed that the site contained a unique stone that they named St. John's Quartzite (now better known as Weathering Amber Chalcedony) and a significant amount of artifacts were recovered from the site. Zac studied their research and has built on their findings. Some of the site was impacted during the construction of the road but there is great hope to find data suggesting that there were different tool making areas and that a pattern could emerge to help find more Clovis or Paleoindian sites associated with the procurement of the chalcedony.



Weathering amber chalcedony was favored by the Clovis point makers in Maryland around 13,000 YBP. Because fluted points, channel flakes, and overshot flakes have been found made from weathering amber chalcedony, it was theorized that we would be unearthing some of the oldest artifacts found in Maryland.

We began by clearing the area of brush and debris. I took my revenge on the foliage from the prior year and lopped thorn bushes and briars with gusto. I was stationed at what I called "unit 4"—yes, I had coordinates, but when sweating, I found it a lot easier to go by the digit that was different from the unit beside me. I was at the same unit the entire week, so my play-by-play is slower than most of the other volunteers' experiences. Many archeologists and volunteers worked at several units.

We dug in 10cm levels to collect vertical data on artifact distributions. The first 20 centimeters consisted of mostly artifact free plowzone and topsoil. Then, we divided our units into 50cm quadrants, making sure that artifacts were kept in separate bags so that we could narrow down the horizontal location of any knapping or chipping location. It's amazing how difficult northeast and southwest are—even when one knows the direction of north. Next time, I need signs. The soil was compact silty loam, and I admit that I had an extremely hard time digging my quadrants and certainly keeping my walls from sloping.



Once we reached the gray stratigraphic layer, about 30-40cm deep, we began finding weathering amber chalcedony artifacts. My unit also brought an unexpected discovery. A Late Archaic, rhyolite, Lehigh Koens/Crispin knife or broadspear. It faced north, and the tip was broken off, but it brings with it a much younger presence than 13,000 YBP. Almost immediately after the projectile point was found, weathering amber chalcedony flakes began appearing. I admit, I had almost given up because I was slower than the other units. It took quite a bit of time to get to those flakes, but they were beautiful, even covered in soil.



Our screeners worked diligently and had to maneuver bags and buckets of soil tagged with unit, level, and quadrant. Each quadrant was important because we were searching for precise locations. Zac had to explain several times but if there was a cluster within one quadrant, it might correspond with either another of our unit's quadrants or another unit or block. If our chipping debris was mapped, the overall structure of the site would become clear or, at least, clearer. We would be able to reasonably assume which areas had chipping debris and which didn't—at the best, being able to tell where an individual knapper sat making tools and if there were units that had larger debitage versus smaller tool finishing flakes.



After the gray soil layer, the weathering amber chalcedony stopped appearing. This was true from what we know so far, site wide. Data and lab work are still to be conducted, and it is still very early in the process to make any conclusions. Nine 1x1m units were excavated. At each level we drew a planview on our paperwork. After each unit was excavated, we mapped its profile.

Thursday, I hit the final layer of my unit where gravel was encountered. I can be very, very literal and to my credit Zac did say that I could stop when I hit my max depth and subsoil. Or what I was meant to hear—you can stop AFTER the other three quadrants are done. Oops and sigh. My heart was broken because of how long that quadrant had taken me. My teammates and I managed though and we left mapping for Friday.



Friday proved that next time I will either need to make signs or write the directions on my hands in Sharpie and remember to face the correct direction. Most of the final morning was mapping and hastily finishing open units. We backfilled and I am forever grateful for the two wheelbarrows. We made quick but good work and managed to finish on time.

We are grateful to St. John's Church Western Run Parish and to all the volunteers that helped. Many volunteers were from the community and there was a huge public outreach as passersby stopped to ask questions. Each day brought first time volunteers and sometimes their children. A lot of knowledge and experience was passed around, and it was an honor to meet and work with everyone. Everyone is welcome at the MHT Crownsville Lab, and more data will be presented later in the process.



I am including several links including WMAR news's new YouTube video by journalist Kristi Harper. I also have the previous video she made about the Pine Grove Site 2024 dig listed.

[Archaeologists uncover 13,000-year-old mystery at dig site - WTOP News](#)

[Maryland archaeologists find Stone Age tools](#)

For more on Weathering Amber Chalcedony:

[MHT - Ice Age Chalcedony Stone Tools in Maryland](#)

Previous News Articles on the Piney Grove Site:

[News - 13,000-Year-Old Clovis Stone Tool Found Beneath Maryland Churchyard - Archaeology Magazine](#)

[Archeologists prepare to dig up 13,000-year-old Native American quarry - The Baltimore Banner](#)

Manufactured Thanksgiving Fun:

We celebrated a day of gratitude at the MHT Crownsville Lab. Most of us ate. Milfred, however, only had artifacts on his tray.



C.A.T. Corner

The updated CAT Program Guide has been emailed to current CAT Candidates and is available for download from the CAT webpage. Please delete the old one. For more information the CAT Committee Chair can be reached at CAT@marylandarcheology.org

MHT Crownsville Lab

We've been having fun working most Tuesdays and Thursdays at the MHT Crownsville Lab. We can always use more company! It would be lovely to see everyone on Thursdays especially! No experience is required.



Lost Towns Project

Fieldwork at London Town with EAC/A



[EAC/Archaeology Inc.](#) is looking for adult volunteers to assist in their current excavation at [Historic London Town & Gardens](#)! This project aims to document the historic landscape along the bank of the South River in the shadow of the William Brown House. The focus of this volunteer crew will be on artifact recovery at our standing mesh screens. EAC/Archaeology can accommodate up to three volunteers in each session. Please sign up for a single time slot (morning or afternoon) on a single day so that we may accommodate as many interested volunteers as possible over the course of this program.

For more information or to sign up, [click here](#).

Conferences:

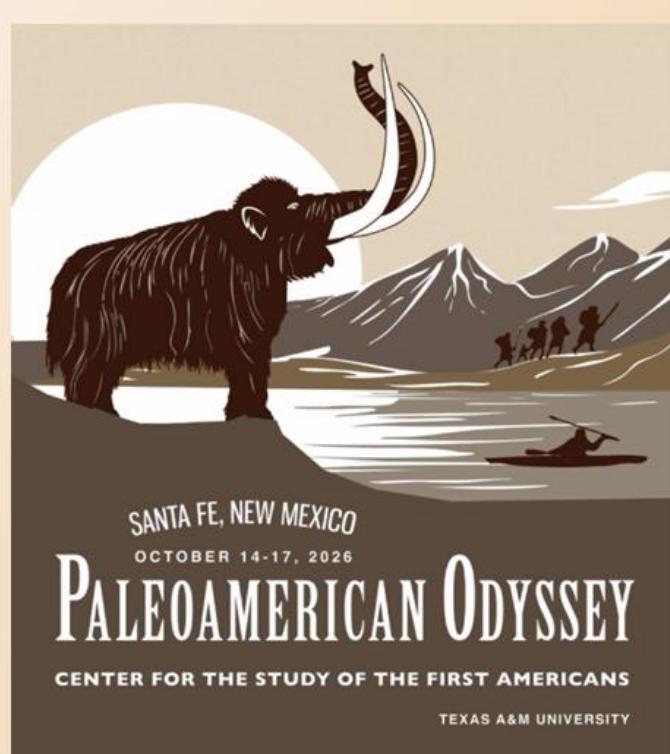
We are starting a new section for conferences and lectures. Send in your information!
Stay tuned for more information!

Mark the date on your calendar!

The Center for the Study of the First Americans invites you to participate in a three-day examination of the first people to explore and settle the Americas at the end of the last Ice Age. This conference is for everyone—archaeologists, avocational archaeologists, Quaternary scientists, students, and anyone interested in archaeology.

Much new information generated about the peopling of the Americas since the 2013 Paleoamerican Odyssey conference is changing how we view the First Americans. The archaeological genetic revolution took place after 2013, with genomic analysis of human individuals and their dogs creating a biological outline of the ancestry of the First Americans and estimates for their arrival south of the Ice Sheets. New information generated about the coastal and inland corridors more clearly defines the timing of their opening and viability. The Western Stemmed Tradition of the Intermountain West now appears to be coeval with Clovis. Many new archaeological sites excavated in the Americas place the arrival of humans between 23,000 and 16,000 years ago. New dating and other studies tell us much about the timing and cause of the extinction of megafauna at the end of the Pleistocene and the role of humans in this event.

Hear 35 lectures given by preeminent scholars on all aspects of the study of the First Americans. Examine 400 poster presentations on a variety of topics and view artifact casts from important sites. Enjoy the opportunity to ask questions, meet, and discuss the First Americans with the speakers, poster presenters, and others throughout the day and during our evening meet-and-greet sessions.



Visit the CSFA website (www.centerfirstamericans.com) for more information on Paleoamerican Odyssey 2026!

We'll see you there!



91st Annual Meeting

The 91st Annual Meeting will be held April 29–May 3, 2026, in San Francisco, California.

The program is composed of general sessions, symposia, forums, lightning rounds, posters, and workshops. The SAA Annual Meeting is the largest gathering of archaeologists of the Americas, and it offers unparalleled networking opportunities in its exhibit hall, excursions, and receptions and career-development opportunities.

The meeting has a wide audience that ranges from anyone who has interest in archaeology to experts in the field. Attendees come from all over the United States and from over 45 countries! With a wide variety of presentations and events, attendees are able to learn something new, meet new contacts, and reconnect with old friends.

[Annual Meeting](#)

Member Suggestions

Music:

If the Dead Arise It Wasn't Us - An Archaeology Song

News Articles:

<https://newatlas.com/history/ancient-maya-monument-discovery/>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/archaeologists-excavating-roman-fort-britain-discovered-rare-red-gemstone-engraved-with-surprising-design-180987674/>

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/archaeology/a69278400/church-tunnel-crypt/>

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/archaeologists-discover-1-500-year-old-reindeer-trap-and-other-artifacts-melting-out-of-the-ice-in-norways-mountains>

<https://www.foxnews.com/travel/archaeologists-uncover-vast-roman-road-network-far-longer-than-ever-imagined>

Kim's Note:

I want to thank everyone for their support during the last few months. I finished my first quarter in the University of Maryland's Cultural Heritage and Resource Management Certificate Program. I did NOT fail out of GIS and because of your constant support and advice, I earned an A- in it. In my Introduction to CRHM I earned an A+. I was also able to earn a certificate through the Society for American Archaeology "A Path toward Understanding: Pictograph and Petroglyph Documentation and Data Collection Instructed by Amanda Castañeda and Carolyn Boyd." I highly recommend the SAA's events and classes. Pictographs and Petroglyphs have been a constant passion long before I was a member of ASM, so I admit that it might be the only time I've been excited that the lab was closed.

I applied for the UMD CHRM Master Program AGAIN and *fingers crossed* I hope to continue my studies after I earn my certificate next quarter with my cohorts.

December 1, I start Advanced Methods in CRM and Collections, Data Management, and Cultural Materials Preservation! I'm sure you will all hear me crying about them and maybe peppering stories with tidbits about them.

Thank you again for everything! It has been an honor meeting and reuniting with everyone on the digs and at the lab. Please have a wonderful and safe holiday season!

Volunteer Opportunities

ASM Volunteers Needed:

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

MHT Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays and Thursdays. The lab in Crownsville. Contact Zachary Singer at Zachary.Singer@maryland.gov

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 on Wednesdays and on occasional Saturdays. Contact Jim Gibb at jamesggibb@verizon.net

Charles County for Lab and Field Work welcomes volunteers. Contact Esther Read at ReadE@charlescountymd.gov For more information, contact Carol Cowherd at ccasm2010@gmail.com

The Anne Arundel County Archeology Lab in Edgewater, in conjunction with **The Lost Towns Project**, accepts volunteers for lab work. No experience needed. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. The lab is generally open 2-3 weekdays each week from 9:00-3:00. Volunteers must sign up in advance. There are occasional opportunities for fieldwork as well. For more information, the current lab or field schedule, or to sign up, email Drew Webster at volunteers@losttownsproject.org

Howard County Recs and Parks invites volunteers interested in processing collections and conducting historical research to contact Kelly Palich at Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-0423.

Montgomery County for Lab and Field Work welcomes volunteers. Contact link: <https://montgomeryparks.org/activities/history-in-the-parks/archaeology/>

Mount Calvert for Lab and Field Work: call 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. Click on <https://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork> to get started.

Chapter News

Central Chapter

Central Chapter meetings are by Zoom only. Katharine Fernstrom sends the link to the email group. Stay tuned for more details. For more information and to be added to the Zoom list contact Katharine Fernstrom at katharine.fernstrom@marylandarcheology.org

Charles County

Meets in person September through April at the Community Room of the LaPlata Police Department in LaPlata, MD on the third Thursday of the month. Email ccasm2010@gmail.com for more information.

Eastern Shore

Dates and events are on chapter's website [ASM Eastern Shore \(google.com\)](#) Facebook page Eastern Shore Maryland Archaeology and Instagram (@esmdarch). For more information, email esarcheology@gmail.com or jmrkin2@washcoll.edu

Calendar is here: bit.ly/ASM-ES and events are open to members and nonmembers. To be added to our social media updates, email esarcheology@gmail.com.

All events are open to anyone who wants to attend!

Open lab at Washington College:

Contact Julie Markin at jmarkin2@washcoll.edu.

As always, check out our

website: <https://sites.google.com/view/asmeasternshore/home> and social media (Facebook: Eastern Shore Maryland Archaeology; Instagram: @esmdarch) to stay up to date on all our events!

We hope to see you this fall!



Eastern Shore Archaeological Society

a chapter of The Archaeological Society of Maryland

✉ esarcheology@gmail.com

⌚ Eastern Shore Maryland Archaeology

Ⓜ @esmdarch

🌐 bit.ly/ASM-ES

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month from September through June. In-person meetings begin at 7p.m. for the business meeting followed by a presentation at around 7:30. Since the beginning of 2025, the location of the chapter meetings has changed. The new location is at the ADU Showroom, 8501 Grovemont Circle, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. Please contact Don Housley for directions, if necessary.

Pizza will be available before the in-person meeting starting at 6:30pm for \$5 per person. If virtual meetings are necessary, they will be via Zoom with the business meeting also starting at 7 p.m. and the presentation around 7:30.

For up-to-date information concerning meetings, please contact Don Housley at donthou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526 or check the chapter website: www.asmmidpotomac.org, or send an email to: asmmidpotomac@gmail.com

Friday, December 19, 2025: Holiday Party

Thursday, January 15, 2026: Zac Singer, MHT's Terrestrial Archaeologist, will speak on Paleodigging projects.

Thursday, February 19, 2026: Danielle Knight, chapter member and ASM At-Large, will speak on attending a Field Session in Belize.

Monocacy

For information contact: monocacyarcheology@gmail.com (mailbox monitored intermittently) or call Jeremy Lazelle at 301-471-8433.

Northern Chesapeake

A business meeting at 7pm and is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Locations vary.
Contact Dan Coates at 410-808-2398 or dancoates@comcast.net

Western Maryland

Programs are held the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 pm at the **History Discovery Center at Blue Spring at 400 N. Mechanic Street, Cumberland, MD.** Unless noted. Chapter email: wmdasm@yahoo.com

Meeting announcements are sent also to CTN; WFWM, and the Oakland Republican.

December

No meetings—enjoy the holiday season. Merry Christmas!

January–April

Regular meetings resume. Topics to be announced.

Contact Us:

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, ethan.bean@marylandarcheology.org, for membership rates.

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