

# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

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

## A Rosetta Stone for Jamestown?

A slate tablet found in a well at Jamestown may be a storehouse of information on the early days of the colony, archeologists at the site of the first permanent English settlement say.

William Kelso said the tablet's extensive and overlapping inscriptions have been isolated with the help of enhanced imagery, according to the National Geographic. The 5-by-8 inch artifact was found last summer in a well in the middle of James Fort.

"Just like finding the Rosetta Stone led to a better understanding of the Egyptians, this tablet is beginning to add significantly to our understanding of the earliest years at Jamestown," he said. This is because it conveys unique graphic messages about literacy, art, symbols and signs used by the colonists.

Because the markings are the same color as the rest of the tablet, they are hard to see with the naked eye. But Smithsonian scientists are using reflectance transformation imaging to bring them out. The process involves creating hundreds of high-resolution digital images by using lights set at varying angles to make the markings stand out.

This has revealed words, symbols, numbers and drawings on both sides of the tablet. The drawings are of people, plants and birds.

The scientists speculate that the colonists wrote on the tablet with a pencil, then wiped off their marks. However, the sharp point of the pencil left an impression that wasn't totally erased, leaving the multiple layers of inscription that researchers are trying to separate and decipher.

Some of the scratches appear to be in a 16<sup>th</sup> Century writing style.

"Many of the letter forms are different from the forms used today," said Heather Wolfe, an expert in Elizabethan script at Washington's Folger Shakespeare Library.

Two other markings could be characters used in a phonetic Algonquian alphabet. Thomas Hariot devised the alphabet in 1585 to help colonists at the short-lived Roanoke colony in North Carolina.

"The probability that the European explorers likely showed up at Jamestown with bilingual dictionaries, ready to communicate with the Indians, made perfect sense," Kelso said.

Kelso suspects that tablet may have belonged to William Strachey, the first secretary of the colony at Jamestown. With his legal training, Strachey would have been familiar with the cursive "secretary hand" that seems to have been uncovered.

Strachey also spent time in Bermuda when the ship taking him to Jamestown was wrecked near the island by a storm. One of the drawings on the slate seems to be of a cahow, a seabird that nests only in Bermuda.

The examination of the slate is continuing.

"We have only begun to bleed the secrets out of this extraordinary object," Kelso said.

# Upcoming events

**March 13:** Archeology Workshop. Crownsville

**April 10:** Spring Symposium.

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

**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/](http://www.nps.gov/history/mwac/). For further information, contact Steven L. DeVore at 402-437-5392, ext. 141 or [steve.de.vore@nps.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:lakerson1@verizon.net) or Charlie Hall [chall@mdp.state.md.us](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/) to get started. Remember to add the extra A in archaeological.

## CAT corner

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](mailto:MDcat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

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# Profiles in Maryland archeology

## An interview with ... George Reynolds

*George Reynolds of northeastern Maryland talks about his long association with ASM, and about how ASM came into being.*

**Q: How did you get started in archeology?**

A. Well, to begin with I was a sailor in World War II. I went into Hiroshima about six weeks after they dropped the A-bomb and I saw the great devastation and I realized maybe we could destroy the whole earth - we could get a reaction started and couldn't get it stopped. It got me thinking really hard. So when I got out of the Navy I started building a house and starting worrying about supporting my family, paying for the kids. I had a big garden. And one morning I was out there cultivating and I looked down and I saw something interesting, big and white. It was an arrowhead. And I got to thinking, "How in the world did those Indians survive? What did they do, they had no refrigeration, no jars to put food in?" So when the garden season was over I went down to the county library and I asked the librarian, "Do you have any books on the local Indians?" "Oh, we've got a beautiful book, it'll tell you all about it, George Johnson's history of Cecil County." Page 4. Johnson says there were Indians in Cecil County. We know this because we find arrowheads up in Rising Sun. This didn't help.

One day in the fall of 1954 the Archaeological Society of Maryland, which was a section of the Maryland Academy of Sciences, advertised in the paper that they wanted to reorganize the unit. They had closed

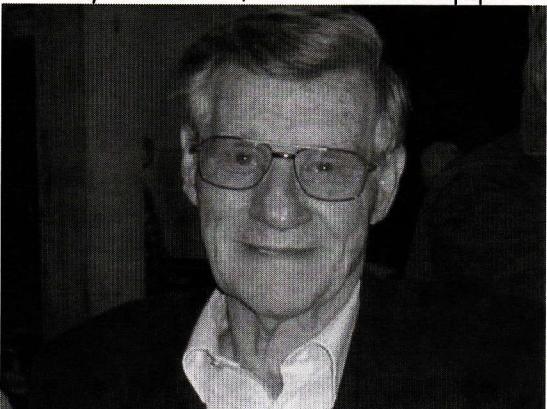
down that section during World War II. Their first meeting was at the Maryland Academy of Sciences and John Whitoff, state archeologist of Pennsylvania, was speaking on the eastern U.S. Paleo Indians. I went to the meeting. John had both coat pockets full of Clovis points. He started pulling them out, holding them up and talking about Paleo Indians in the Susquehanna basin. I really got fired up and started searching my area for Indian artifacts and reading all I could find on local Indian culture.

At that meeting Lattimore Ford was elected

president of the section. Lattimore was on the board of the Maryland Academy of Sciences.

I was going to the University of Delaware and in English and had to write 10 themes, one theme of your own choice. I wrote about my feelings when I found my first arrowhead and the teacher of the class, he thought it was remarkable, he loved it. He said, "Can I read this as an illustration for the class?" I said certainly. He was a member of the Archaeological Society of Delaware and later became the president. When the class was over he said to me, "George," he said, "we are having a big meeting on Saturday night at the YMCA in Philadelphia. Dr. Alfred Kidder and Dr. John Alden Mason and going to be the speakers and if you come to Newark to my house, I'll take you up." I went to the meeting and found it interesting, educational and inspiring. After the meeting several of us gathered under a streetlight and they looked at my cigar box of arrowheads, explained some of the artifacts to me. I was thrilled and joined the Archaeological Society of Delaware.

In 1954 when the ASM of the Maryland Academy of Sciences organized I became a member and eventually vice president. I was a little bit concerned because we had no chapters at that time in the state and I wanted a chapter. I was holding monthly meetings, getting 50-60 people out to a monthly meeting at Elkton, in the county library. We published a monthly newsletter. So I decided I wanted to have a chapter. I told the directors at the Maryland Academy of Sciences. They said, "You can't have a chapter." So I said, "I'll give you an option, we'll have a chapter or we're going to have an Eastern Shore Archaeological Society. We are going to have one or the other, because I am not going to come down here and ask you when we need money for postage stamps, or whatever the problem is." So they said, "OK, you can have a chapter." So I



started the first chapter in the state and stayed president for many years, got Paul Cresthull to relieve me every once in a while. Then we went on till 1962. This is when things started happening for the beginning of the Archeological Society of Maryland. In 1962 I had to go to MIT in Cambridge, Mass., to summer school. In Cecil County the state of Maryland was building the expressway, I-95.

**Q: What were they doing?**

A. They were bulldozing a strip 300 feet wide by 17 miles long from the Delaware state line to the Susquehanna River. There were no plans to do any archeology on this large tract of land. So I sat down and wrote a letter to the governor of the State of Maryland. I said I'd raised \$500 in private money - I didn't know about all this federal money, I'd had no experience in it - and I said if I had \$500 in state money I could hire a professional archeologist to lead our amateur group. I have about 60 people and we will look at every foot of this property and hope we find remnants of a small Indian village or something on it that they haven't destroyed. Well, the governor asked the University of Maryland their opinion, they agreed, so I got the \$500 and I had \$500 so I hired Dan Crozier, he was a graduate student in archeology at Temple University. Dan came down and took over the group and they walked every inch of the expressway.

Here's where something really interesting happened. It was the same time, in 1961, they had the problem in Berlin, when Russia cut the Allies off from supplying Berlin and we had to fly everything in. I asked for an editor to come up from the Baltimore Sun to cover some of our work. The editor came up, this guy had just got back from Germany, from covering the German problem. I took him on the exit at Northeast, but it was all mud from just constructing it. And he walked out and found a Bare Island point, about 6000 BC, 5000 BC, and he was elated and he said, "Whenever you find something you want covered in the Sunpapers, let me know and I'll write it up." It hit the Baltimore papers and right away I got a call from the Maryland Academy of Sciences: "Listen, we want to start a fight for a state archeologist. We will handle all publicity, don't you talk to the newspaper people. We'll take care of that." We had so many arguments over this.

Elmer Jones, my running partner over in Cecil County, one of the first presidents of ASM Inc. -- I was also a past president of ASM Inc. Elmer and I contacted attorney Skip Fowler. We incorporated the Archeological Society of Maryland. In 1964. So we withdrew out of the Maryland Academy. They said they were going to sue us. So I said, "Wait a minute, everything you've got in the Maryland Academy of Sciences, says this: The Archaeological Society of Maryland, a section of the Maryland Academy of Sciences.' We're not that, we're an independent, autonomous group, we're going to start a fight for a state archeologist." So they didn't bother us. We became an independent group. We went to Annapolis, to Sen. William S. James of Havre de Grace. I said we were a mixing pot of Indian cultures who lived in and migrated through our area and absolutely nothing is being done to investigate and preserve any of the artifacts or prehistory. We need a state archeologist and staff. I also made it clear the archeologist should be autonomous, not tied down to teach or whatever at a university. Sen. James enlisted the help of legislator James Clark from Howard County to introduce the bill into legislation. It took two years to complete the task. The first year finances could not be found. We started monthly business meetings in Annapolis. I can't remember the names of all the people who worked with us, but we had about a dozen or so hard workers and we kept rolling. We designed the journal and the emblems on the journal and stationary and we started publishing and holding annual meetings and then we started getting field projects. So that's how I got started. That was the beginning of the whole thing.

**Q. What good sites have you worked on over the years?**

A. When I was president of ASM Inc. in 1982 I got the society to do their field school at the mouth of the Octorara Creek and the Susquehanna. We dug there for two summers. In Cecil County, the county bought 13 acres to enlarge our county jail. This was one of my most prolific Indian artifact hunting areas. Tyler Bastian, who had become the state archeologist, helped put through the request for state and federal monies. I had to work with local government to get the one-quarter matching funds. Ron Thomas, Mid-Atlantic Archeological Research, got the contract. We dug test pits all over the 13 acres, recovered many artifacts, post molds, etc. We were about to run out of money. I got Lloyd Everett, who had hunted the site for years, to bring in his bulldozer. We were cutting a path along the bank of the Big Elk Creek.



Dick Brock finds the road to some sites are harder on the car than others

When we started finding thick red Indian pottery, we moved over 10 feet and dug down on an Indian grave. Ron Thomas covered it with plaster of Paris and burlap and shipped it off to the Smithsonian museum. It turned out to be an Indian woman buried about 1400 AD. Using this information I went back to the local commissioners and got a second grant. We found five more bodies and left them in their graves. So that was the jail site.

The first important site that I ever dug was in 1957. We called it the Frantsi rock shelter. I don't think it's ever been properly published. Some good archeology was discovered here. Margaret Dilks saw the article in a local paper about the rock shelter excavation and visited us. She was not only a collector but associated with the Pennsylvania archeological museum. I told her I needed professional help. She called and brought on the site as consultant Dr. John Alden Mason, a world-leading authority on the Yucatan, and Dr. Mary Butler, who had excavated a large rock shelter in Pennsylvania. People started visiting us. Elmer Jones and his wife, Virginia, came and we bonded right off. So we started the Northeastern Chapter of the academy's archeology society. This was in the fall of 1957. When I first visited the rock shelter on the banks of the Big Elk Creek I took my 16-year-old nephew, Steven Bristow. We found a large rock in front of a cave-like entrance, moved the rock, dug down two to three feet and found thick flat-bottomed pottery. We filled in the hole, moved the big rock back on top, then waited until I got professional guidance on how to excavate this small site and gain the maximum information.

**Q: What do you think of the job Tyler Bastian (the first state archeologist) did?**

A: I have a lot of respect for Tyler and what he has accomplished here in Maryland. He came here from Oklahoma. His experience was in western U.S. archeology. He organized the notes and work done by others here in the state, built up a staff to assist in archeological research, set up field training schools to help educate the amateur archeologists and conducted archeological investigations. I think we all owe a vote of thanks to Tyler for his work.

**Q. How has archeology changed in Maryland since you've been involved in it?**

A. The people have changed. The old-timers that I knew, most of them are gone. I may be the only survivor of that original group. The technology has changed. We've got Carbon 14 dating. We've got a lot more publications. We've got computers that tie it all together. By exchanging all this knowledge between peoples on computers and publications and stuff we're learning more about what happened here and there and we're seeing similarity between Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland, New Jersey, Mid-Atlantic, tying it all together.

# U.S. settles over misused trust funds

*AN EDITORIAL, Condensed from the Washington Post, January 5, 2010*

It took nearly 14 years of litigation, three administrations and two contempt citations against Cabinet secretaries, but Native Americans are finally poised to receive some measure of restitution from the U.S. government for its gross mismanagement of Indian trusts.

Elouise Cobell filed a class-action suit in 1996 on behalf of herself and the hundreds of thousands of other Native Americans who own land kept in trust by the U.S. government. The government collected oil and gas royalties from private companies that leased the property and was supposed to disperse the funds to the individual Indians with an ownership stake. But billions of dollars appear to have been unaccounted for since the government began the program more than 120 years ago.

While the government's lapses in managing the accounts were disturbing, its stonewalling during the Bush administration and its apparent destruction of information and noncooperation during the Clinton years were infuriating, unnecessary and cruel and served only to compound already great injustices.

President Obama made good on his campaign promise to resolve the matter and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, as well as a host of other Interior and Justice Department officials, negotiated in good faith. Last month, the administration announced a settlement worth \$3.4 billion, with roughly \$1.4 billion going to individuals and the remainder set aside for the government to buy plots of land that will be turned over to the pertinent Indian tribe.

The deal also includes establishment of a \$60 million scholarship fund for Native American children and the government has agreed to set up a commission to study the trust program to ensure that such lapses do not happen again. Congress has until Feb. 28 to sign off on the agreement, which must also be approved by a D.C. federal judge before funds are dispersed.

The payout to most individuals will probably be small. The 300,000 or so class-action suit members are guaranteed \$1,000. Many will get a few thousand dollars more, depending on the oil or gas deposits on their properties. A dozen or so with the largest and richest parcels could receive \$1 million or more.

"Did we get all the money that was due us? Probably not," said Ms. Cobell. But she agreed to the settlement because she saw it as the best deal that was likely to be achieved.

## Chapter notes

### Anne Arundel

Meeting five times a year in February, April, June, September and November, the chapter has a new meeting location: 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](mailto:AAChapASM@hotmail.com) or visit the chapter website [www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php](http://www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php)

**Feb. 16:** Mechelle Kerns will discuss the Legg's Dependence excavations from November on Kent Island .

### 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](mailto:ssisrael@verizon.net)

### Charles County

Meetings are held 7:30 on the second Tuesday (September-May) at the Port Tobacco Court House. Contact President Paula Martino at [paulamartino@hotmail.com](mailto:paulamartino@hotmail.com) or 301-752-2852.

**Feb. 9:** Jim Gibb on the archaic peoples of Southern Maryland. Contact Elsie Picyk at 301 934 3153.

**March 9:** Stephanie Sperling of Lost Towns on the Pig Point Woodland/Archaic site.

## 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](mailto:heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org), or call 301-840-5848 or Don Housley at [donhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:donhou704@earthlink.net) or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: [www.asmmpotomac.wordpress.com](http://www.asmmpotomac.wordpress.com)

**Feb. 18:** Nichole Sorensen-Mutchie, from the SHA, on a War of 1812 battlefield site in Bladensburg.

**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 dinner.

## 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 or [jlazelle@msn.com](mailto:jlazelle@msn.com) or Nancy Geasey at 301-378-0212.

**Feb. 10:** Frederick resident Mary Bowman-Kruhm will speak on "Human History Carved in Bone," her recent biography on the Leakey family.

## 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](mailto:aspst20@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake>

**Feb. 10:** Speaker TBA, subject biblical archeology, at the Jewish Center in Havre de Grace.

**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](mailto:leeprestonjr@comcast.net)

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

**May 17:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm>

**Feb. 26:** James Hoey on "Early Settlers and History of the North Branch Potomac River."

**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.

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ASM. Inc members receive the monthly newsletter ASM Ink, the biannual journal MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10% discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Belinda Urquiza for membership rates. For publication sales, contact Dan Coates at ASM Publications, 716 Country Club Rd., Havre de Grace, MD 21078-2104 or 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net).

**Submissions welcome.** Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782, 301-864-5289 or [myronbeck@verizon.net](mailto:myronbeck@verizon.net)

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