

ASM Ink

April 2023, Vol. 50, No. 4

Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



www.marylandarcheology.org

Spring Symposium to offer seven speeches

For the 57th time, members of the Archeological Society of Maryland will meet for a Spring Symposium dealing with a variety of archeology-related topics.

The meeting will take place Saturday, April 22, at the MHT headquarters in Crownsville. Live. Doors open at 8:30 and the program starts at 9. Elgin Klugh, a cultural anthropologist at Coppin State University, will talk about his work at the former site of Baltimore's Laurel Cemetery. The story goes from archeological investigation to working to get the community involved in creating a memorial park.

Next, Tara L. Tetrault and Suzanne Johnson will tell of challenging the myths surrounding post-emancipation Black communities, such as Sugarland, Maryland and the role archeology is playing in bringing out their story.

Alexandra Jones, of Archeology in the Community, will discuss how archeology can change the way people feel about their cultural heritage and science. For one thing, it can promote social justice by beginning the process of setting right the wrongs cause by those in the past.

Davina Two Bears, a Diné (Navajo) archeologist, will tell the story of the now-infamous Indian boarding schools. Today the Old Leupp Boarding School in northern Arizona is a historical archeological site. She has analyzed archival records and conducted oral history interviews with Navajo elders who were forced to attend the school.

After a break for lunch, Professor Julia King of Saint Mary's College in Maryland will describe how, taken together, a variety of sources can reveal the Indigenous landscape and people of the 16th- and 17th-century Rappahannock River valley in Virginia and how these methods can be used to do the same in Maryland. These include oral history, archeology, documents, environmental data and occasionally even astronomical evidence.

A Saint Mary's student, Jade Burch, will give this year's Student Spotlight talk, looking at a 17th Century plantation known as St. Clement's Manor from an Indian perspective. From exchange to violence, what did colonialism and Lord Baltimore's vision of a manorial society look like in this time and place.

To end the session, Dennis Curry, a recently retired Maryland State Archeologist, will examine Canavest (also known as the Heater's Island site), the last permanent village of the Piscataway (Conoy) Indians in Maryland, occupied from 1699 to at least 1712. Despite their presumed removal then, Piscataways still reside in the state, largely in Southern Maryland, where they are experiencing a modern-day resurgence.

The building cafeteria will be open for seating but not for serving food. Because the lunch break is only an hour, members are urged to brown-bag it.

April is Maryland archeology month. The theme:
Where Did You Find that Artifact?: Context is Crucial in Maryland Archeology.
See ASM or MHT websites for a list of events, read informative booklet

Upcoming events

April 22: Spring Symposium. Crownsville.

May 19 - 29: Annual ASM field session. Chapel Branch West Site.

Volunteer opportunities

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

ASM Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays: The lab in Crownsville. Contact 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 Wednesdays and on occasional Saturdays. Contact Jim Gibb at jamesggibb@verizon.net
Charles County for lab and field work 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.

UPAG/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 volunteers, contact Heather Bouslog at 301 563 7530 or 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 to get started.

CAT corner:

For information on the CAT program contact Tom McLaughlin at mclaugh01@verizon.net

Town life in Maryland on the eve of the Revolution

On the Eve of the American Revolution, leaders gathered in each of the Colonies, debated the pros and cons of rebelling against King and Parliament, and planned resistance against British troops. Much of that gathering occurred in taverns in the larger towns. Archeological excavations in such Chesapeake town sites as Londontown, Port Tobacco and Joppa reveal what these towns were like and may begin to identify the allegiances of tavern patrons. Jim Gibb's talk will be at Harford Community College, Friday April 28. To find out if it will also be Zoomed, contact Jim at James.GGibb@verizon.net

Get your trowels ready, field session is nearing

This year's field session will be a bit earlier than usual, in part hoping to make crossing the Chesapeake Bay bridge easier. But the location will be familiar to those who participated in last year's dig: It is across the bridge (for most of us) in Caroline County right next to the Barwick's Ordinary site of 2022 fame. The object of our research has shifted; instead of looking mainly for historic artifacts, we will be seeking prehistoric.

The Chapel Branch West Site dig will take place from May 19th through the 29th.

During the 2022 Barwick session, a shovel test pit survey documented a presumed living surface yielding 3,000- to 1,000- year-old artifacts intact below the plow zone. This year's field session will investigate this buried living surface to document the American Indian occupations and hopefully reveal intact cultural features including house patterns, hearths, and storage pits.

Click [HERE](#) for more information or to register online for the field session. Contact ASM with registration questions or to register there.

Primitive camping will be offered for those interested. For details and to reserve a camping spot, contact MHT research archeologist Stephanie Soder at Stephanie.Soder@maryland.gov or 410-697-9552.

Several motels are available in the Denton area.

Some lunchtime talks are planned and watch the ASM website for information on the evening Spencer Geasey Memorial Lecture.

Five square miles of obsidian

By Jim Robbins

Condensed from the New York Times, March 20, 2023

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. — Near the north entrance, an imposing mountain of black glass rises against the blue sky.

Spanning more than five square miles, the dark, sometimes translucent mass was formed from a rhyolitic lava flow that oozed out of the magma chamber of Yellowstone Caldera beneath the park, and cooled rapidly in the bitter cold of a glacial maximum, about 180,000 years ago.

Known as Obsidian Cliff, the Yellowstone mountain is one of the country's highest quality deposits of "the sharpest natural substance on Earth," according to Douglas H. MacDonald, a professor of anthropology at the University of Montana and the author of "Before Yellowstone: Native American Archaeology in the National Park."

Obsidian is among the most prized tool stones in the world, and this particular deposit, nearly 100 feet thick, is exceptional because of its continual use by Indigenous people since the last ice age. Over the last 11,500 years or so, the stone has been fashioned into deadly knives, razor-sharp spear points, darts for atlatls, or spear-thrower and arrowheads.

The cliff is "nationally significant because we had Native American groups from all over the country visiting it and collecting the stone and trading for it," MacDonald said.

The application of X-ray technology to archeology arose in the 1960s "and changed everything," said M. Steven Shackley, director of the Geoarchaeological XRF laboratory in Albuquerque and author of "X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry (XRF) in Geoarchaeology." "Before that you had to infer. They either just guessed or didn't do it."

In recent decades, the technology has become easier to use, more portable and far less expensive. X-ray fluorescence can be done in the field with an instrument the size of a hand drill, reducing a process that used to take days or weeks to seconds.

All obsidian shares certain critical features that made it indispensable. It fractures conchoidally — into smooth, curved pieces. It was easy to knap, or to flake off, pieces into utilitarian shapes and didn't need to be tempered or treated with heat as some tool stones do. "You can pick it up off the ground and go right to work," said David Wescott, an editor of *The Bulletin of Primitive Technology* and a longtime knapper.

People still harvest the glassy stone to create obsidian tools or to hunt with atlatls and arrows with obsidian points. Knapping a 6-inch long, 2-inch wide spear point, Mr. Wescott said, "takes the better part of a day."

Williamsburg graves linked to Civil War

Michael E. Ruane

Condensed from the Washington Post, March 7, 2023

When archeologists at Colonial Williamsburg discovered human remains near the site's historical Powder Magazine last year, they soon realized that what they had found was not a single burial.

And as they probed, it became clear that the find had nothing to do with life in the old Colonial capital of Virginia. It was a mass grave they believe is associated with the Civil War's Battle of Williamsburg in 1862.

It's not yet known how many people were buried there, but Jack Gary, the head of archeology at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, said that the remains of "multiple individuals" were found and that they could be those of Union and Confederate soldiers who perished during or after the battle.

"We need to figure out who they are in order to figure out the best place to reinter these individuals, the most respectful place to do that," Gary said Monday.

Gary said the mass grave is near the old site of the Williamsburg Baptist Church — which was demolished in the mid-1900s — that was beside the Powder Magazine and served as a hospital during and after the battle.

The battle of Williamsburg, on May 5, 1862, was fought southeast of the town. Afterward, almost every building in the community flew a yellow hospital flag, the historian Stephen W. Sears wrote.

"Union soldiers, Confederate soldiers, even civilians were in these makeshift hospitals ... one of them being in the Baptist church right next to the Powder Magazine," Gary said. "There's quite a bit of documentary evidence right after the battle about there being mass graves dug for the casualties that are happening in the Baptist church hospital."

Pvt. John Wilson, of the Union's 38th New York Infantry Regiment, wrote in his diary, according to the American Battlefield Trust: "The rebels left about 1000 sick and wounded in Wm.burg. [I] was all over the battle field to day and it was an awful looking sight, at some places our men and the rebels laying side by side where [they] charged bayonets and killed each other."

The battle was inconclusive. The Confederates retreated. But the fighting killed and wounded an estimated total of 3,800 from both sides, according to the American Battlefield Trust.

Gary said the human remains were discovered last year during archeological excavation around the Powder Magazine. In January, the team received a permit to exhume the remains in the grave, and the work resumed last month.

Dutch citizen scientist project yields big results

By **Leman Altuntas**

Condensed from Arkeonews, 29 January 2023

A Dutch archeological project in which thousands of amateur sleuths combed specialized maps and high resolution photographs resulted in the discovery of 1,200 additional potential bronze age burial mounds in the Utrecht and Veluwe region.

In addition, the citizen science project run by the University of Leiden and regional cultural heritage organizations has helped to identify nearly 15 square miles of prehistoric agricultural fields and 900 potential charcoal production sites.

Heritage Quest, a fruitful collaboration between Leiden University and Gelderland Heritage is the first large-scale citizen-science project in Dutch archeology.

In total, over 6,500 people worked on the project and identified thousands of potential archeological objects, such as burial mounds (c. 2,800-500 BC), Celtic fields (prehistoric field complexes dating from 1,100 to 200 BC), charcoal kilns and cart tracks.

"This research wouldn't have been possible without the tremendous efforts of the volunteers. And without their help it may have taken us archeologists 10 years to arrive at the same results," says Eva Kaptijn, an archeologist from Gelderland Heritage.

The team project started in April 2020 and the findings are shedding new light on the history of the Netherlands in drier parts of the country, said Kaptijn. 'The Veluwe and Utrechtse Heuvelrug are now nature reserves where you walk through the heather fields and woods, but in the Iron Age, 1,000 BC, it was one enormous agricultural area. So you look at the landscape in a completely different way.'

Once the online detective work had been completed, volunteers, archaeologists and archeology students from Leiden University went out into the field to verify a sample of the remains that had been found. Fieldwork was then carried out at 300 of the potential grave sites and 80 were found to be the real thing.

"We can now calculate that if seven different volunteers have identified the same spot as a possible burial mound then it is very likely to be so," she said. 'If we look at the rest of the area, then we can say there are potentially 949 new burials mounds and that would be double the figure we are currently aware of."

"Having so many volunteers participate has produced an unprecedented amount of new data and radically changed our view of prehistory. The Veluwe and Utrechtse Heuvelrug prove to have been much more intensively inhabited than we thought," says Quentin Bourgeois, an assistant professor at Leiden University.

Wine heralded as a driver of civilization

By Joel Achenbach

Condensed from the Washington Post, March 4, 2023

When the last Ice Age ended and the glaciers retreated, roughly 11,000 years ago, something appears to have changed among the wild grapevines of Asia. They became domesticated. The first farmers on Earth began cultivating the best vines with the biggest, juiciest grapes.

Wine, and civilization, soon followed.

That's the implication of a major research study, published Thursday in the journal *Science*, from a sprawling collaboration of scientists from 17 nations. The team looked at genomes from thousands of grapevines gathered from across the Eurasian land mass to trace the plant's long and winding journey from the Stone Age to your neighborhood wine bar.

"The grapevine was probably the first fruit crop domesticated by humans," senior author Wei Chen, an evolutionary biologist at Yunnan Agricultural University, said in a media briefing Thursday.

Chen persuaded colleagues from across Europe and Asia to collaborate, creating a genomic database from vines across a vast region, from the Iberian Peninsula to Japan.

"We care about this grape so much we gave each variety a specific name," Chen said. "We don't do it for, like, wheat or barley."

Research into grape domestication has long been dominated by archaeologists, who tell the story of that era through seeds and traces of wine in broken pottery. The people of prehistory had not yet invented writing, so the wine drinkers of 10 millennia ago did not leave behind vintage ratings or recommendations for which wine would pair nicely with roasted goat.

The analysis can't answer the question of when people started fermenting grapes routinely to create wine, Nick said. But starting about 11,000 years ago, he said, "people deliberately were growing vines, and not just collecting the berries in the forest."

Archaeological evidence places the earliest-known winemaking about 8,000 years ago in what is now Georgia, in the Caucasus. And grapevine varieties were clearly carried great distances.

"It was one of the first globally traded goods. It's justified to say that the domestication of grapevines was really one of the driving forces of civilization," said Peter Nick, a co-author of the new study and a plant biologist at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany.

Wooden schooner found sitting upright in lake

By Michael Levenson

Condensed from New York Times, March 1, 2023

When a 772-ton wooden schooner barge named *Iron-ton* collided with a wooden freighter loaded with 1,000 tons of grain and sank in Lake Huron on Sept. 26, 1894, its seven-man crew tried to escape on a lifeboat. But

no one untied the rope that secured the lifeboat to Ironton. Five crew members died.

More than 120 years later, when researchers discovered Ironton, magnificently preserved in the cold water at the bottom of Lake Huron, hundreds of feet below the surface, they also found that lifeboat, still lashed to Ironton's stern.

Ironton was located in 2019, but the discovery was not revealed until Wednesday to allow researchers time to study the wreck, said Jeff Gray, the superintendent of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, which, along with a group of partners, discovered Ironton.

"That lifeboat is the most chilling part of it," Gray said in an interview on Wednesday.

Built in 1873, Ironton was typical of the floating workhorses that plied the waters of the Great Lakes, transporting the corn, wheat, coal, lumber and iron ore that helped build the Midwest. The 191-foot vessel, capable of carrying more than 48,500 bushels of grain or 1,250 tons of coal, traveled steadily for two decades between ports such as Buffalo and Cleveland.

It sank after it collided with a 203-foot wooden freighter named Ohio that was heavily loaded with grain. Ohio, with a 12-foot hole in its hull, sank quickly. But all 16 of its crew members escaped on lifeboats and were rescued by nearby ships.

Ironton, with a hole in its bow, drifted for more than an hour in the darkness, out of sight of the responding vessels, before slipping beneath the waves.

One of the two surviving crew members, William W. Parry of East China, Mich., said in an interview printed in The Duluth News Tribune on Sept. 27, 1894, that he had survived by grabbing on to a sailor's bag and that another crewman, William Wooley of Cleveland, had held on to a floating box. Both men were rescued by a passing steamer.

The wreck of Ohio was discovered in 2017, in about 300 feet of water.

In 2019, researchers from the sanctuary set out on a mapping expedition in Lake Huron with Ocean Exploration Trust, a group founded by the explorer Robert Ballard, best known for having discovered the Titanic in 1985.

Sonar images from the expedition revealed that a vessel resting on the lake bed appeared to be Ironton. Researchers returned in late 2019 and captured underwater video that confirmed that it was Ironton, with its rigging still attached, its three masts still upright and an anchor resting on its stern.

The sanctuary, which is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and oversees about 100 wrecks in Lake Huron, is exploring whether to mark the wreck of Ironton with a buoy, Gray said. That would allow divers to explore the sunken vessel and would protect it from damage from dropped anchors.

"It is hard to call it a shipwreck," Gray said. "It's a ship, sitting on the bottom, fully intact, and the lifeboat there literally, is a moment frozen in time."

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

Charles County

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

Eastern Shore

Meeting dates and events are on chapter's website (<https://sites.google.com/view/asmeasternshore/home>), Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/people/Eastern-Shore-Maryland-Archaeology/100087459772378>) and Instagram (@esmdarch). For more information, email esarcheology@gmail.com or jmarkin2@washcoll.edu.

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month. In-person meetings begin at 7p.m. at Needwood Mansion for the business meeting followed by a presentation at 7:30. Pizza will be available before the in-person meeting starting at 6:30 p.m. for \$5 per person. Virtual meetings will be via Zoom with the business meeting also starting at 7 and the presentation at 7. For up-to-date information concerning meetings, please contact Don Housley at donhou704@earthlink.net or 301-424-8526 or check the chapter website: <http://www.asmmidpotomac.org>, or send an email to: asmmidpotomac@gmail.com

April 20: (In-person) Tara Tetrault, anthropology professor at Montgomery College, and Suzanne Johnson, president of the Sugarland Ethno-History Project, will speak on the history and archeology at the Sugarland site near Poolesville, Md.

May 11: (In-person) Ralph Buglass, chapter member and local historian, will talk on "The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal: History and Nature." (Please note the change in date to the second Thursday of the month due to the start of the ASM Field Session.)

Monocacy

Meetings are at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday, at the C. Burr Artz Library, 110 East Patrick Street, Frederick. For more information call 301-378-0212.

Northern Chesapeake

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

St. Mary's County

Meetings are at the Leonardtown Library in Leonard every second Tuesday night of the month at 6:30. For information contact Craig Lukezic at crlukezic@gmail.com

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 or www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com or call Kelly Palich, at 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

April 28: Jonathan Burns of Juniata College will discuss the work of his students investigating the French & Indian War era Fort Halifax located in central Pennsylvania along the Susquehanna River.

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 for membership rates.

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