

# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



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

## MHT 2021-in-review: Hey, at least wasn't 2020

2021 was the year life was supposed to start getting back to normal. And in some ways it did...well, sorta. We got back into the office anyway. But in all seriousness, at least as far as archeology is concerned, here at MHT I feel we were reasonably successful at having some semblance of a normal year. Our staff got a lot done and made some important research contributions to the history of our state.

- Over the course of 2020, MHT added 117 terrestrial archeological sites and nine maritime archeological sites, along with 65 terrestrial site updates, to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP). A total of 207 archeological survey reports were accessioned into the MHT Library, covering over 3,040 acres.

- Staff assisted four state agencies by issuing seven terrestrial archeology permits for investigations on lands they administer. One FY19 permit was extended due to covid delays. Investigations on land held by the Department of Natural Resources included work associated with the Old Bohemia Manor in Cecil County (work that was conducted under one of our non-capital grants - see below) and research archeology at the ElkrIDGE site in Patapsco Valley State Park and at "The Mounds" at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary.

Historic St. Mary's City submitted a permit application for emergency mitigation efforts arising from routine maintenance projects, and another for the demolition of the 20th Century Parker House. St. Mary's College of Maryland extended their FY19 permit associated with the Anne Arundel Hall replacement project.

The Maryland Transportation Authority received permits to conduct an archeological survey associated with the development of the Raphael Road/Rutkowski property and to evaluate an identified archeological site. An archeological survey of portions of the Baltimore-Washington SCMagLEV Project also received a permit.

- In 2021, the Historic Preservation Non-Capital Grant Program provided \$104,000 to archeological research and survey projects. That amount is up a little from the previous year (\$98,000). Though the public wouldn't learn about it until March when the Washington Post broke the story, MHT had known for several months about the discovery of the 1634 fort at St. Mary's City. You see...in 2018 we had funded the remote sensing research that led to the fort's discovery.

As St. Mary's City geared up to interpret this new and exciting find, they realized that a lot of infrastructure (parking, bathrooms, accessible paths, etc.) would be required in the site area. They requested funds in 2021 to conduct additional remote sensing in the 12 acres surrounding the site in order to utilize the results in their planning efforts and avoid damaging important resources. MHT was happy to provide \$18,000 in non-capital funds to support this effort.

In addition, \$64,000 was provided to the Catholic University of America to examine archeological evidence

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## 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:

Silas Hurry and Kate Dinnel will present the Historic Overview workshop via Zoom on Saturday, February 19 at 10 a.m. Kibbitzers are welcome. Contact Tom for details at [mclaugh01@verizon.net](mailto:mclaugh01@verizon.net).

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

## Another way to look at ASM dues

In 1957, ASM's charge for dues was only \$5. Sound good? But that \$5 is the equivalent of \$50 today. Seems as if ASM is not doing a good job of keeping up with inflation, doesn't it. So pay your dues now before people on the ASM board wake up. (See the ASM webpage [www.marylandarcheology.org](http://www.marylandarcheology.org)).

Back then, in 1957, ASM was three years old and membership had spurted that year by 30 percent to a total of 91 members, including some from Delaware and Ontario.

## Another St. Mary's mystery: A Spanish cross

By Michael E. Ruane

*Condensed from the Washington Post, January 23, 2022*

The tiny, dirt-encrusted cross showed up in the sifting screen at the Maryland dig site, and when archeologist Stephanie Stevens spotted it she said she gasped, "Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!"

It was a strange object, with two cross bars instead of one, and unusual flared ends on the vertical and horizontal pieces. Stevens, the crew chief at the newly discovered colonial fort at St. Mary's, didn't know exactly what she had, but she knew it was important.

What she had found was a rare 370-year-old Spanish cross that had probably been made in the pilgrimage city of Caravaca, Spain, around 1650 and had made its way 4,000 miles to a meadow in Southern Maryland.

"It's a ... fascinating object," said archeologist Travis Parno, director of research for Historic St. Mary's City. "We've grown accustomed to finding Catholic artifacts ... just because there was such a powerful Catholic and particular Jesuit presence."

The object was found on Oct. 25 during excavation of the historic fort at St. Mary's, the first permanent English settlement in Maryland and one of the earliest in what would become the United States.

Last March, Historic St. Mary's City announced that the outlines of the palisaded fort, erected by White settlers in 1634, had finally been discovered. Archeologists had been looking for it since the 1930s.

Maryland's original 150 colonists, including many English Catholics fleeing Protestant persecution, arrived at St. Mary's on two ships, the Ark and the Dove, in late March 1634.

The fort soon began giving up secrets to the archeologists. Pieces of pottery, pins, hundreds of musket balls and bird shot, arrowheads and a trigger guard for a musket turned up. Then, in April, Parno revealed that a 380-year-old English shilling, made of silver in the royal mint in the Tower of London, had been found — also by crew chief Stevens.

Now, here was another one, excavated from what appears to be the cellar of a large building inside the fort.

The crosses stem from a 700-year-old legend about angels miraculously delivering a cross, said to hold a fragment of Christ's cross, to an imprisoned priest who was about to say Mass before a Muslim king in Caravaca.

The artifact is tiny and fits easily in the palm of a hand. It's made of a copper alloy, Parno said. It has a broken hole at the top of the vertical piece, perhaps for a necklace or rosary.

But how did it get to Maryland?

Perhaps the best scenario is that the cross was acquired in trade with local Native Americans, Parno said.

"We know that Spanish material culture, particularly religious material culture, was ... traded in ... networks up and down the East Coast," he said. There were then Spanish outposts in Florida and South Carolina.

"Every day we're going out there, we've got new mysteries that we're shaking our heads at," he said. "Every time we think we've figured something out, three more questions emerge."

## And in Virginia, more early colonial history

By Em Holter

*Condensed from the Virginia Gazette, January 28, 2022*

JAMESTOWN — When the Jamestown Rediscovery archeology team began excavating a pit on the north side of the church tower, the goal was to discover what it had been used for at the time.

But what they hadn't anticipated finding were native artifacts dating back to the early years of the Jamestown colony, furthering the team's understanding of the intricate interactions between the First Peoples and colonists.

"So, that's something that we had never expected to find and something that wasn't in the historic documents and underscores the importance of archeology," director of archeology Dave Givens said.

To the surprise of senior staff archeologists Mary Anna Hartley and Sean Romo, the spot was relatively intact with historic surfaces dating back to the 1680s and the 1640s surviving just below the modern ground.

As they dug deeper, the team discovered bricks and pieces of plaster that could have been salvaged from the nearby church after it burned in Bacon's Rebellion. Further down, the team uncovered the boundaries of the original churchyard, marked out by a large ditch.

"That's the kind of interesting thing, the main point was to focus on uncovering the pit and then, along the way in the journey, we've uncovered a piece of the original churchyard that we hadn't quite understood before," Hartley said. "It's a nice bonus."

Often, pits were once small cellars within a building. While Jamestown's earliest residents might have viewed these pits as trash dumps, they serve as a sort of time capsule for archeologists.

A find located just outside of the 1607 fort wall sheds light on how these features relate to the original fortifications and how they changed through time.

"Every time we dig we figure out something new that paints something we found in the past in a different light," Romo said. "The complexity of the space was surprising to us."

## 22,500 U.K. sites threatened by climate change

By Zoe Tidman

*Condensed from the Independent, January 25, 2022*

Around 22,500 archeological sites in the UK are threatened by the climate crisis, which risks destroying artifacts under the ground, experts have said.

As warmer weather dries out waterlogged soil, this reduces its ability to preserve organic materials such as wood, leather and textiles. Experts are concerned over how the climate crisis and its impact on peatlands - which cover 10 per cent of the UK's surface - could have on artifacts underneath.

These areas of land have previously been estimated to contain up to 22,500 archeological sites.

Historic England says their waterlogged conditions result in the "exceptional preservation of natural and cultural organic remains."

However when the soil is warmer, this increases the rate of organic material decay.

Andrew Birley, the chief archeologist at Magna along Hadrian's Wall, told the BBC the land had sunk by around a meter over the past decade, which was evidence of the peatland drying out. Only a small part of the site had been excavated so far, which left "a historical time capsule" at risk, he said.

Rosie Everett from Northumbria University told the BBC: "The loss of peatlands would have big implications for the understanding of the country's history but also for our climatic history and our environmental history."

But as well as being useful terrain for preserving artifacts, peatlands are also considered key to helping the UK tackle the climate crisis due to their ability to store vast amounts of carbon when healthy. While this type of land covers just three per cent of the world's surface, it stores one third of its soil carbon.

Last year, a report said it was "vital" to restore peatlands, as well as forests and grasslands. Christian Dunn, one of the researchers involved, said: "If the UK is serious about cutting its carbon emissions, it must get serious about peatlands."

# This just in: King Tut was not murdered. But...

*Condensed from the Egypt Independent, January 11, 2022*

Scholars have concluded that King Tutankhamun was not murdered, after a lengthy investigation that seemed to refute popular theory.

The death of King Tut has been the subject of great debate and major studies among academia. The ancient Egyptian pharaoh took the throne when he was eight or nine years old and ruled Egypt for about a decade until his death in approximately 1324 BC. British archeologist Howard Carter discovered Tut's intact tomb in 1922.

The tomb contained more than 5,000 artifacts. It took Carter 10 years to record all the items. But the only thing he couldn't find was any record of how Tutankhamun died as there were no surviving records of its circumstances.

Murder was speculated as a possible cause after an X-ray in 1968 showed two bone fragments inside the skull.

As Carter and other archeologists removed the body, it was damaged because King Tut was attached to his coffin with the resins used in the mummification process.

In the process of removing the body from the coffin, much of the mummy was dismembered - it was difficult to distinguish some of the damage from the embalming process and the damage from Tut's life. However, further analysis of 1968 X-rays, as well as CT scans, put the murder theories to the fore.

The bone fragments in King Tut's cranial cavity perfectly match two pieces of bone missing from his first vertebra, located in the neck. The fragments were loose and were not covered in embalming resin, which allowed scientists to conclude that it was the result of the modern unwrapping of the mummy.

Addressing the murder theory, radiologist Ashraf Selim said: "I think it is the end of the investigation... We can now close this file."

Selin's team shifted their focus to King Tut's left leg, suggesting that a femur fracture may have played an important role in his death.

A thin layer of embalming resin can be seen on the CT scan around the fracture area.

"We could not find any signs of healing of the bone."

Since there have been no antibiotics for 3,000 years, it is very likely that severe infections were caused by the fracture.

"It's probably what killed him," Selin said.

Radiologist John Benson told *National Geographic* in 2006 that a broken leg was likely the cause of King Tut's death, but that there would be "always" speculation.

"There are a number of possible causes of death for which there would be no residual evidence. "Tut could have had pneumonia, or he could have died from a communicable disease.

"Maybe his immune system was a little impaired because he was trying to heal the fracture and he caught some kind of other disease that we wouldn't really be able to prove one way or the other," Benson said.

Meanwhile, a team of German archeologists said Tut was killed by the inherited sickle cell disease. Christian Timmann and Christian Meyer noted that sickle cell anemia is the most common cause of bone damage such as King Tut's.

People with sickle cell disease can still carry the malaria parasite in their blood.

Senior Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass described their theory as "interesting and plausible", while archeologists suggested that malaria was the fatal blow after weakness disorders and a broken leg.

"When we arrived we found the hole that led to the badger's nest and the ground around it full of coins," Fanjul told CNN on Monday, adding that more than 90 coins had been dug up by the badger. The team then performed an archeological excavation that recovered a total of 209 coins dating from 200 AD to 400 AD.

This corresponds with the Late Roman period, when barbarians such as the Suebi arrived in the Iberian peninsula. Fanjul believes the coins were hidden by refugees sheltering in the area.

"We've taken out the first deposit, but we think there is a lot more to take out," he said, adding that it's already the largest Roman hoard recovered from inside a cave in Spain.

# Stashed Roman hoard uncovered by a badger

By Jack Guy

*Condensed from CNN, January 10, 2022*

A badger has led archeologists to a hoard of more than 200 Roman coins that had been hidden in a cave in Spain for centuries. The animal had burrowed into a crack in the rock inside the La Cuesta cave in the Asturias region of northwest Spain and dug out coins that were later discovered by a local man, Roberto García, according to a [paper](#) on the find published in December.

García called in archeologists, including dig director Alfonso Fanjul.

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**Continued from front page**

of the built landscapes on former Jesuit plantations on both the Eastern Shore and in southern Maryland. A combination of geophysical survey, surface survey, shovel testing and test unit excavation is being used to examine the interrelationship between free and enslaved landscapes, resulting in a detailed summary report and new MIHP data.

And we were also able to provide \$22,000 in funding for our first underwater project in a while. The Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group is conducting archival research and documentation on the U-1105 German U-boat sunk in the Potomac at the end of WWII. They are using direct measurements and imagery to produce a report, update records and disseminate results to the public. U-1105 is believed to be the only German submarine of that era equipped with a suite of experimental innovations developed near the end of the war that would be incorporated into submarine design.

- For the last few years MHT archeologists have provided oversight and managed funding from the National Park Service's Maritime Heritage Grant Program. In 2021, staff completed oversight of the final two grants, including funds distributed to the Annapolis Maritime Museum (\$37,000) and Living Classrooms' U.S. Coast Guard cutter, once known as the Taney, a National Historic Landmark (\$149,670).

Our maritime program also continues to be involved in planning and interpretation for the Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary and led tours for the Council for Maryland Archeology and representatives of NASA Globe, among others.

Maritime archeologist Susan Langley was featured on the YouTube channel Chesapeake Explorers for a special episode featuring women involved with the archeology and history of the Chesapeake Bay. Maritime archeology staff also presented regularly on maritime heritage and climate change throughout 2021 via a number of virtual venues.

- As always, April was Maryland Archeology Month (MAM). The theme for MAM 2021 was "The Archeology of Healing and Medicine," appropriately relevant for the second year of the covid-19 pandemic. Despite restrictions on in-person gatherings, many organizations and agencies offered virtual educational activities around the state, and the annual MAM booklet included articles on health and mortality in early Maryland, health and wellbeing in Native American communities prior to colonization, medical artifacts from St. Mary's City, surgical instruments found on the *U.S.S. Scorpion*, mid-19th century free neighborhood clinics in Maryland, and more. MHT participation in online MAM events included co-sponsoring a webinar (available at <https://youtu.be/vz8Jfh6M3Fc>) on the Archeology Month theme with the Council for Maryland Archeology (CfMA), and participation in a Preservation Maryland webinar entitled "Can Archaeologists and Relic Hunters



*Work Together?*" (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybkblCdeAWA>). MHT also worked with CfMA to record a series of short interviews with each of the featured authors in the MAM booklet. Those interviews were made available on the MHT Youtube Channel. And finally, this year a revamped and refreshed website was launched, where you can celebrate Maryland Archeology Month year-round at <https://www.marylandarcheologymonth.org/>

- May and June saw the return of the annual Tyler Bastian Field Session...hooray! While it was touch and go at times, we were able to pull it off, despite the event being timed to coincide with the 17-year Brood X cicada eruption. (It's OK. We put them on the T-shirt.) The 2021 field session was held at the Billingsley Site, operated by Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation.

A late 17th Century settlement of Mattapany and Patuxent Indians on the property has guided the research interest of two field sessions. While we did not uncover anything in 2019 conclusive related to the settlement (we found tons of Late Archaic and Early Woodland artifacts), the 2021 excavations identified a concentration of artifacts consistent with a late 17th Century occupation by Native Americans. Several wrought nails and colonial bottle glass, a "running deer" tobacco pipe, thin and well-fired Potomac Creek ceramics, a re-worked French flint fragment, and -- especially -- cut brass are suggestive of a 17th Century Native American presence on the landscape.

However, a small oyster roasting pit that contained a tiny charred nutshell which produced a latter Late Woodland-early 17th Century AMS date in the same cluster of test units where the finds were made suggests we found the right spot. A highlight of the field session was when a crew from Maryland Public Television's *Outdoors Maryland* showed up to film our work. Watch for the episode after the season returns in February.

- We were able to once again host the Annual Workshop in Archeology at its new spot in the calendar in September. In last year's Year-In-Review article I said this change fits much better with MHT's annual workplan. With a renewed focus on hand-on activities, attendees were treated to workshops on 3D photogrammetry, soils analysis and coring, identification of historic ceramics, open-source GIS software, use of the atlatl, and the Certified Archeological Technician (CAT) Prehistoric Overview Session. Our keynote speaker was Richard J. (Joe) Dent who provided an overview of his decades of research in the Potomac River Valley.

- MHT continued its efforts to survey lands owned or controlled by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies to identify the full range of archeological sites located on them. In addition to hosting the 2021 Field Session at Billingsley, MHT archeologists worked with-NCPPC archeologists and members of the Maryland Free State Treasure Club (a local metal detecting group) to carry out a controlled metal detecting survey of the agricultural field where the field session would be held.

Each metal detector "hit" was mapped precisely with an Emlid high-precision GPS system before recovery occurred. The recovery of brass scrap led to the placement of the five test units that produced the other artifacts suggestive of a contact-era Native American presence. MHT archaeologists also carried out a magnetic susceptibility survey on a roughly 10-acre portion of Old Bohemia Wildlife Management Area.

This work was carried out to assist researchers at the Catholic University of America in identifying cultural resources that may be associated with quarters for the enslaved and other plantation infrastructure on this former Jesuit property. Multiple anomalies of interest were identified.

During the summer of 2020, MHT archeologists carried out a shovel test pit survey east of Fort Frederick. The goal of the survey was to identify artifact deposits that might be related to a village of approximately 18 small cabins that is mentioned in 18th Century descriptions of the fort. In the summer of 2021 we returned to Fort Frederick with our intern, Catt Gagnon, to conduct additional shovel testing to the north.

Though no evidence of the village was identified during either survey, we did find a small prehistoric site northeast of the fort. We hope to return again in 2022. In July, Catt also assisted us with a GPR survey in the Howard Family cemetery in Patuxent River State Park. After some assistance from DNR personnel and some local high school volunteers in clearing vegetation from this historic African-American cemetery, we were able to map the grave shafts and the boundaries of the cemetery to help DNR to better manage the site.

- In addition to conducting survey and documentation activities on state lands, MHT archeologists also worked on numerous projects on privately owned properties, in some cases partnering with local municipalities

or sister state agencies. Staff assisted University of Maryland archeologists with a remote sensing survey (ground-penetrating radar) at Joppatowne, the early-18th Century seat of government for Baltimore County.

An anomaly identified during the survey was thought to represent the Colonial courthouse and jail shown on a 1725 plat map. Follow-up excavations by UMD this summer did identify 18<sup>th</sup>-Century artifact deposits under many layers of deep fill. Research at Joppa is ongoing.

MHT archeologists also conducted a ground-penetrating radar survey at Historic Sotterley (St. Mary's County) in an effort to map multiple areas rumored to be burial grounds. The resulting data suggested that an anomaly consistent with a burial vault and grave shaft is present in an area purported to be the burying place of Governor George Plater (1791-1792). At least two nearby anomalies are also consistent with burial shafts and may represent the graves of close family members.

In Late October and early November we carried out ground-truthing excavations at a site near Clear Spring in Washington County. Over the years, the property owners have identified Colonial artifacts in their farm fields from time to time, and a remote sensing survey identified a 10 X 20 foot foundation with a central chimney support.

While hopes were high that these anomalies might represent a mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century fort and blockhouse located in the area, the excavations (conducted with the assistance of the Western Maryland Chapter of ASM) proved that the site was a tad more recent. It turned out to be a late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> Century domestic site instead. Subsequent remote sensing identified anomalies further up the hill that look like a buried cellar and possibly a well. And our field research at the Barwick's Ordinary site near Denton continued. More later...

- MHT staff archeologists also assisted with investigations and advised on projects at the Indiantown Farm Site (Queen Anne's County), a historic cemetery area at Marshy Point Nature Center (Baltimore County), a shoreline development that could have impacted a Native American ossuary (Wicomico County) and two sites at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (Calvert County) that were threatened by park improvements.

- And finally, on a sad note. We had to say goodbye to our long-time State Terrestrial Archeologist, Charlie Hall. Charlie retired effective January 1. We of course, wish him nothing but the best in retirement.

These are but the highlights of our many activities for 2021. Despite the difficult circumstances of a second year working amidst a global pandemic, we've managed to make some good things happen for Maryland archeology. I think we can make more happen in 2022.

- We again have non-capital research funds available for 2022. While we received over \$1.1 million in requests, there is only \$300,000 available from the Maryland Heritage Areas Fund for non-capital projects. For 2022 we were able to provide \$117,000 for archeological projects.

Funding went to St. Mary's College of Maryland (\$60,000) for a project to study 17<sup>th</sup>-Century sites of Piscataway settlement and interaction with the English; the Lost Towns Project (\$40,000) for an examination of sites in Anne Arundel County associated with slavery, resistance and emancipation; and to the ASM (\$17,000) for the annual field session. MHT archeology staff will take the lead role in managing these grants.

-This year we are also looking forward to our first field session on Maryland's Eastern Shore in 20 years. This year MHT and ASM, in partnership with the Washington College Department of Anthropology, will hold the field session from May 20-30 at the Barwick's Ordinary Site near Denton. You can learn more about this important Colonial tavern by watching the video lecture available at <https://youtu.be/CS16Fq5iTMg>.

- With Charlie's departure we obviously have some hiring to do. Hopefully we will be able to fill the position quickly with someone capable and willing to fill those big shoes he left behind.

And as always, we look forward to another year of amazing collaborations with the Archeological Society of Maryland. Your assistance and support is always critical in helping us do what we do. Be sure to get out and get your boosters. I hope to see you all in the field in 2022.

## Early notice

The plan is for there to be a field school this year and it will take place on the Eastern Shore near Denton between May 20 and 30. More details as they dribble in. But mark the dates.



# Vandals 'irreparably' damage ancient rock art

By Amanda Holpuch

*Condensed from the New York Times, January 9, 2022*

Abstract geometric designs at Big Bend National Park in Texas that had survived for thousands of years were "irreparably damaged" by vandals who scratched names and dates into the prehistoric designs, the National Park Service said.

The Park Service said on its website that the ancient rock art was damaged on December 26 in the Indian Head area of the park. Since 2015, archeologists at the park have documented more than 50 instances of vandalism, the Park Service said. Damaging park resources is against federal law.

Tom Alex, a retired park archeologist, said the damaged abstract petroglyphs had been pecked into the rock panel.

"There's wavy lines, curvilinear lines, geometric patterns, squiggles and things that just kind of meander across the rock surface," Alex said.

Alex said it was difficult to determine precisely how old the art was, but, based on the weathering, the petroglyphs were most likely made somewhere between 3,000 and 8,000 years ago. He said these types of designs represented some of the oldest rock art in North America. In the more recent time period, rock art included more representations of people and animals.

The abstract pecked art is common across the southwestern United States.

It was also not known who damaged the rock art, though the person, or people, responsible left some clues. Four names were scrawled on the art: Adrian, Ariel, Isaac and Norma, according to photos shared by the Park Service. The year 2021 and the date "12-26-21" were also scratched on the rock.

Park staff members tried to repair the damage, but much of it was permanent, the post said.

Alex said some of the scratches on the panel were superficial and possible to clean up so they would be less obvious, but others had penetrated the prehistoric designs. "Those scratches are going to be there forever," he said.

Stewards of public lands have complained about an increase in vandalism and graffiti in recent years.

## Chapter News: Check with your local chapter to see what and how activities will take place.

### 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

## 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.

**February 17:** Beth Bollwerk, archeologist at Monticello, will give a talk on the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery and the Flowerdew Hundred Plantation (Virginia) legacy artifact collection.

**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 (please 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 [Ccoogan@smcm.edu](mailto:Ccoogan@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>

**February 25:** Roy Brown will report on the October excavation in search of Capt. Shelby's French & Indian era fort at the Maiden's Choice site near Clear Spring in Washington County.

**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)

Submissions: Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 3126 Gracefield Rd., Apt 106, Silver Spring, MD. 20904 or 240-867-3662 or [myronbeck@verizon.net](mailto:myronbeck@verizon.net)

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