

## Future Events

July 13

9:00 - 2:00, London Town

**Public Dig Day**

The public is invited to help screen soil, take tours, and attend workshops and video screenings.

July 15

1:30-2:30, Riva Road

**Salvaging Benjamin DuVal's Pottery Manufactory**

John Kille will describe his work at this early 19th century site in Richmond, Virginia.

August 5

1:30-2:30, Riva Road

**What Do You Do With a Broken Pot?: A Look at Ceramic Re-Use at Swan Cove**

Dave Gadsby will discuss Swan Cove colonists' creative uses for discarded household artifacts.

August 10

9:00 - 2:00, London Town

**Public Dig Day**

The public is invited to help screen soil, take tours, and attend workshops and video screenings.

September 9

1:30-2:30, Riva Road

**Folklore in Colonial America**

Erin Piechowiak will discuss some of the colonists' rituals and beliefs as reflected in the archaeological record.

September 14

9:00-2:00, London Town

**Public Dig Day**

The public is invited to help screen soil, take tours, and attend workshops and video screenings.

# Letters from Lost Towns

## A Further Installment in the Saga of Homewood's Lot

Dave Gadsby

*The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men  
Gang aft agley,  
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,  
For promis'd joy!*

If there is a lesson to be learned by working with the *Lost Towns Project*, it may be that, as Burns mused at the end of the 18th century, planning is futile. No matter how meticulously crafted, no matter how foolproof you suspect your plans of being, inevitably some totally unforeseen contingency will rear its head, for good or ill, when you least expect it. Such is the case of Homewood's Lot, which faithful readers will remember from the Spring 1999 edition of *Letters from Lost Towns*. After months of struggle to protect Homewood's from the horrors of subdivision, *Lost Towns* staffers breathed a sigh of relief to learn that the site was sold to a sympathetic party who wished to see the invaluable resource protected



Section of a brick-lined drain revealed during Homewood's Lot excavations

forever. The fate of Homewood's seemed sealed in the best possible way.

So, it was with a certain spirit of innocence that we devised a plan for this year's field season. The scheme involved continuing excavations at Swan Cove in search of the tobacco-pipe kiln and on data recovery at the L.T. Willson property in South County. Not mentioned in these early planning sessions was Homewood's. Sarah Andrews just put the finishing touches on the catalog of artifacts from the 1999 excavations. It seemed that the hard work at Homewood's was complete. Indeed, it was not until early April that the words "Homewood's Lot" were again voiced in the Monday morning staff meeting. Homewood's had been sold and its fate once again cast into doubt. Within a week of receiving the news, we gathered an intrepid team of diggers and screeners and were excavating full force at the site on Whitehall Creek.

Volunteers from the 1999 excavations at Homewood's probably remember it as a wonderland of fascinating features and exciting artifacts situated in an idyllic setting on a pretty hillside above a lazy creek. They may remember that it was difficult to get through a bucket load of soil without exclaiming "Wow – look at this!" They may also recall that it was rare to dig



Fragment of a German Bellarmine stoneware jug depicting a face



*Overview of cellar and brick wall*

an excavation unit without finding a posthole or artifact-filled pit. As excavators began to travail at Homewood's, they anticipated more of the same.

At least Homewood's has lived up to (if not surpassed), expectations in that way. Since the beginning of the most recent archaeological explorations there, *Lost Towns* crew uncovered numerous features dating from the 1650's to the 1780's including: a vast 18th century cellar with brick walls; a ponderous, artifact-filled well with a brick-lined drain leading from it; and a mid-17th century pit filled with bones and early tobacco pipes that matches another pit excavated two years ago. At least four structures are represented at the site. As of this writing, the orgy of discovery has been so intense and the flow of artifacts so incessant that there has been little time to evaluate the precise meaning of Homewood's Lot. Every site has at least one message for excavators –it is now up to the volunteers and staff of the *Lost Towns Project* to decrypt the meaning of Homewood's Lot. New discoveries are happening at there every day- be a part of this fascinating process of discovery!



*Jordan and Erin all smiles at Dig Day in April*

## New Faces at the Lost Towns Project

*Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito*

Maybe you have seen them! We have two new faces at the *Lost Towns Project*: Erin Piechowiak and Jordan Swank. Erin is a local girl from Pasadena. She attended Chesapeake High School where she played lacrosse and field hockey. She attended Salisbury State University, where she did an archaeology internship at Furnace Town in Snow Hill on the Eastern Shore. Erin received her anthropology degree in 2000. Following graduation, she worked for a year in Germany at the University of Tuebingen. Her duties included fieldwork on Stone Age



*Sarah hard at work at the Homewood's site*

sites in caves and gluing together mammoth bones in their lab. Erin took over Paul's oyster shell project and helps Lisa with volunteers and education programs. She is an avid outdoors person and enjoys hiking and camping.

Jordan is also from Maryland. He attended Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda. For college, he attended St. Mary's College of Maryland and majored in anthropology. He completed a field school while at St. Mary's and then worked for Historic St. Mary's City for a year before coming to the *Lost Towns Project*. You will see Jordan both in the field and the lab. He currently analyzes the materials recovered from the postholes excavated at London Town. This "gentle jock" loves the outdoors and is great with kids. For many summers, Jordan worked as a camping and hiking guide in the Shenandoah Mountains at the Shioh Quaker Camp.

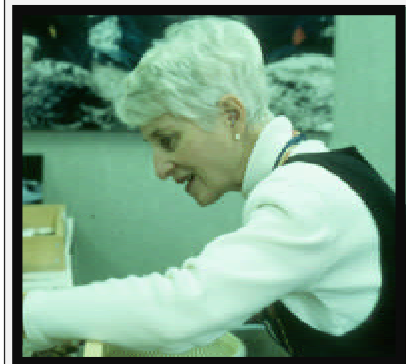
Lastly, keep an eye out for Sarah Andrews! She started as an intern last summer and worked part-time during the winter. Spending most of her time in the lab, she started working full-time this summer. Don't let her quietness fool you - she knows exactly what's going on around her and if you aren't careful, her dry sense of humor will catch you off guard!

Please welcome all of them to the *Lost Towns* family. We think they fit right in!

### Volunteer Spotlight: Joan Klick

Joan Klick is a dedicated and skilled lab stalwart. Every Monday Joan can be seen sitting demurely at her space on the right side of the worktable. Her words are few and she retains a calm exterior, but beneath that tranquil surface lies a churning maelstrom of artifact-labeling power! She's quicker with a pair of scissors and a paintbrush than anyone we've seen here at the Project. Joan, a denizen of Annapolis, somehow finds time to regularly volunteer at the *Lost Towns Project* despite her busy volunteering schedule at the hospital and the SPCA. She's been doing so since 1999 and has logged over 450 hours since that time! Our undying thanks goes to Joan for her elegance, hard work, and continued support of the *Lost Towns Project*.

*-Dave Gadsby*



*Joan diligently washing in the Lost Towns Lab*





Crew shot at the Willson Property

## New Excavations in South County

Shawn Sharpe

The *Lost Towns Project* has become involved in yet another excavation site! During a routine archaeological survey, an independent contractor discovered artifacts dating from the early eighteenth century in a field in South County. The property owner, L.J. Willson, offered to move his proposed house and the site is now protected by a plat note. Over the span of almost a year, Willson's interest in the history lying in his backyard continued to grow and he requested the *Lost Towns Project* to do additional research. Because few early eighteenth-century sites have been excavated in this area of Anne Arundel County, the Project decided to investigate.

The crew conducted magnetometer (basically a highly sophisticated metal detector that is so sensitive it finds more than metal) and ground penetrating radar ("sees" into the ground by sending radar pulses into the ground, timing the response similar to a bat) surveys of the area in hopes of discovering more information about the site.

In conjunction with some strong magnetometer "hits," the radar showed a large anomaly in one corner of the field. Accordingly, spades and trowels appeared and excavation commenced. Soon, a large concentration of bricks was uncovered, suggesting a possible chimney fall. While interesting, this paled in comparison to the discovery of an intact brick foundation found in an adjacent unit. Using probes, crew followed the line of the foundation, which hinted at a 12 x 16-foot structure. This brick foundation denotes a building that is more substantial than the earthfast structures that we frequently find. The artifacts recovered, such as Westerwald stoneware, polychrome tin-glazed earthenware, white clay tobacco pipes, and olive bottle glass, suggest that the site was occupied in the first half of the eighteenth century. Subsequently, shovel test pits were dug throughout the field to determine the extent of the site. Sure enough, along with artifacts such as widow leads, a kettle leg, and masses of bones, two new features were uncovered that appear to date to the same period as the brick structure. The first seems to be a trash-filled midden, whereas the other remains a mystery for now. Give Erin a call if you are interested in this rare opportunity to volunteer in the field in South County!



Distance shot of the site's landscape

## What's happening at the *Lost Town's Lab*?

As the field season cranks into full gear, we find the lab less populated than during the winter months. Artifacts pile up on the shelves, waiting for eager volunteers to come and process them. As always, we valiantly pursue our quixotic search for more storage space. It seems that there is something or other packed into every nook and cranny in the lab.

Two new additions to the lab staff - the youthful and energetic Erin and Jordan can be seen working on their respective tasks. Jordan is tirelessly sorting and cataloging water-screened material from features at London Town while Erin works on the oyster shell dating project.

Between vacations, Carolyn is cataloging the artifacts from the London Town Almshouse excavations. When she completes this work, she will be authoring a paper about the large number of buttons recovered from that site.

Recent visitors to the lab have probably seen Shawn poring over some small pile of ceramic sherds, and periodically exclaiming something excitedly about the pile. No, he's not crazy - he's writing a paper about his ongoing analysis of the huge ceramic assemblage from Burle's Town Land. He's also spending a lot of his time in the field helping Jane run the Willson Property site, so don't expect his Burle opus for some months.

Dave has spent more time out of the lab than in lately - he's been leading crew at the Homewood's Lot site! Look for his article on Swan Cove ceramics in *Maryland Archaeology* in the near future. He's also preparing a presentation on the subject for a volunteer lecture next month.

As always, the lab needs volunteers! Call us at (410) 222-7328 if you are interested. We will always work with your schedule to make it possible for you to join us.



*Excavations on the Flood Property*

## Looking for London Town Outside the Park: The Flood Property

*Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito*

The name John Flood should ring some bells for those who live in Annapolis. He is a local environmentalist, also known as the “Oyster Man,” who works to preserve our local waterways and the Chesapeake by replenishing habitat for oysters. John comes from an old family that has lived in the London Town area for over 100 years.

John tells of a summer boarding house located on the Savage Property (two doors down from London Town) where his great-grandparents, Matilda A. O’Hara and Thomas Fleet, courted in the 1890s. After they married, the Fleets purchased London Town Farm (about 70 acres) abutting the Almshouse property. When Thomas died, the property went to A. Gordon Fleet (John’s grandfather) and the Widow Fleet. She used to own part the property that makes up the London Town Park as well as acreage on the other side of London Town Road. Matilda sold pieces of the property to her siblings and was forced to sell other portions during the Great Depression.

The Fleets and the Larrimores owned most of the London Town peninsula during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1947, John’s grandfather, A. Gordon Fleet, established the

ten-lot subdivision of London Town Hills. However, by the time John Flood was of age, most of the family’s London Town property had been sold off. So, he began to buy back what he could of his great-grandparent’s home. One such property, part of London Town Hills, is located on Widows Mite Road and it has never been developed. John has been working with us to add to our knowledge on London Town by allowing us to study his property. So far, we have only performed preliminary excavations around John’s garden. He called the Project because he wanted to make sure he did not destroy anything with his tiller. We excavated four 5x5-foot units around the proposed garden area and found bits and pieces of London Town - tin glazed earthenware, tobacco pipe, glass, and brick. The sandy soil was repeatedly plowed over the years of occupation, thereby breaking the artifacts into small pieces. No cultural features (like postholes or brick foundations) were discovered. We plan to do a more complete excavation on the site after harvest time in the fall.

The Flood Property could yield some important details about London Town. John’s property appears to have been part of lot 30 once owned by merchant Samuel Peele. Samuel was active in London Town from 1715-1733 and had a large warehouse in the tobacco port. It would be great to find Peele’s warehouse and some associated artifacts! We also hope to look for old roads and a wharf on the adjacent lots. Our thanks to Mr. Flood for allowing us to look for London Town outside the boundaries of the park.

### *How do I get involved?*

Anne Arundel County’s *Lost Towns Project* is a team of professional archaeologists and historians assisted by volunteers and interns.

Field, lab, and archival opportunities are available.

Field days vary depending on the weather and particular project. Call Erin at (410) 222-7441 for information.

The lab is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 through 4:00. Call the lab phone, (410) 222-7328, for information. The lab is located at 2666 Riva Road in the Heritage Government Center.

Those interested in archival research opportunities should contact Mechelle at (410) 222-7441.

Tax-deductible donations can be made to the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation (ACT), P.O.

Box 1573, Annapolis, MD, 21404. Please note “*Lost Towns Project*” in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest and support!

**The Lost Towns Project’s  
“The Clay Tobacco-  
Pipe In Anne Arundel  
County, Maryland  
(1650-1730)”**

**is hot off the press!**

**Included in the volume are articles authored by Lost Town’s staff. They describe pipes found on Anne Arundel County sites such as Burle, Homewoods, London Town, and of course, the extraordinary Swan Cove.**

**Stop by the office or lab to take a look or to get your own copy!**



# Current Events: New Activity at London Town

Jordan Swank

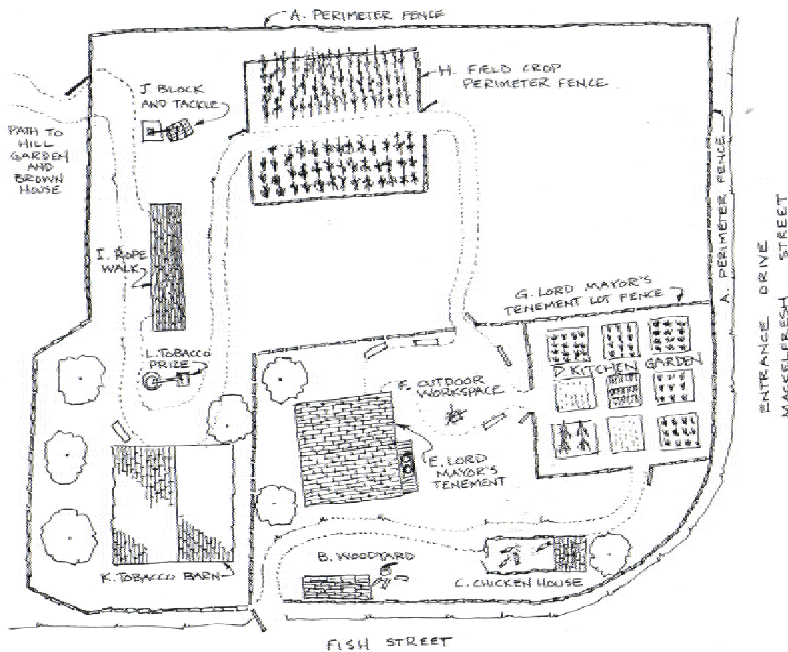
Stroll by London Town and even the most unobservant person will notice some major changes. Wood shavings and locust logs are strewn about and auger-dug postholes dot the landscape. It is the beginning of what will be a “new” look for London Town. Volunteers and staff are erecting fence lines to separate different activity areas around the site, including the Mayor’s Lot, kitchen garden, and on-going research areas. In addition, a tobacco prize, block and tackle, and ropewalk will be built. Over 140 postholes will be dug by the time the project is finished and volunteers are hard at work stripping the bark off the logs and readying them for their futures as fence posts and support structures. Archaeologists are monitoring each hole before the new posts are erected. They look through the backdirt for artifacts and check for cultural intrusions (or features) in the postholes themselves.

Another major change in the landscape of London Town will be the rebuilding of Lord Mayor’s Tenement. Most of the area excavated has been filled in preparation for

construction. The Tenement will be rebuilt on the original postholes discovered and excavated by archaeologists. A newly-installed time-lapse camera will allow us to view the exciting process over time.

In addition to planning and building new structures in London Town, analysis of the historic structures continues in the archaeology lab. All postholes and molds discovered along Scott Street and the Mayor’s Lot have been waterscreened and brought back to the lab for analysis. Waterscreening is a process in which the soil from a feature is forced through fine window screen mesh with a high powered hose. This allows the archaeologist to find even the smallest artifacts. When the artifacts are brought back to the lab they are put through three gauges of screens and then sorted under a large magnifying glass. Once sorted, the artifacts are counted, weighed, recorded, and entered into a database. By using the diagnostic artifacts found in the waterscreen samples (such as coal used in the Almshouse after 1860) and maps indicating the location of excavated postholes, we will be able to distinguish which posts supported and therefore comprised which buildings.

All are welcome to come by London Town to observe and assist with the exciting new changes as they happen. Everyone is also encouraged to join us for the next Public Dig Day there on Sat. July 13!



Early reconstruction plan of Historic London Town



Jason Moser, *The Lost Towns Project's* field director, is leaving us in the beginning of July! He is off to Florida to pursue his doctorate in Underwater Archaeology. The crew would like to take this opportunity to thank this Project old-timer for his dedication and friendship over the past five and a half years. We wish you good luck on the exciting new life that's ahead of him!

**The Lost Towns Project's sweatshirts, polo shirts, T-shirts and baseball caps are now available!**

Decorated with the Lost Town's logo, sweatshirts are navy, polo shirts are cornflower blue, T-shirts are khaki, and hats are tan with blue bills. They are available for a donation of \$25 or more for the sweatshirts and polo shirts and \$15 or more for the T-shirts and hats. Checks should be made out to ACT, Inc.

All proceeds go to the Lost Town's Internship Program.



## Who makes up the Lost Towns Project?

Al Luckenbach.....Director/County Archaeologist  
Jane Cox.....Assistant County Archaeologist/Assistant Director, Technology  
David Gadsby.....Lab Director  
John Kille.....Assistant Director, Operations/Grant Administration  
Donna Ware.....Architectural Historian  
  
Sarah Andrews.....Lab Specialist  
Carl Gehrman.....3-D Specialist  
Carolyn Gryczkowski.....Lab Specialist/Curator  
Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito.....Historian/Archaeologist  
Tony Lindauer.....Historian/Archaeologist  
Sherri Marsh.....Assistant Architectural Historian  
Erin Piechowiak.....Archaeologist/Lab Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator  
Lisa Plumley.....Field Director/Education Coordinator  
Shawn Sharpe.....Archaeologist/Conservation Specialist  
Jordan Swank.....Archaeologist/Lab Specialist

*Letters from Lost Towns* is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November by Anne Arundel County's *Lost Towns Project*. Contributors consist of *Lost Towns* staff and volunteers. To be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact Lisa Plumley, Planning and Zoning, 2664 Riva Road, MS 6401, Annapolis, MD, 21401 or call (410) 222-7441. Anne Arundel County's *Lost Towns Project* is supported by the Anne Arundel County government, in cooperation with the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc. and the London Town Foundation, Inc.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED