



# Letters from Lost Towns

Spring 2007

## The Wall-Raising of the Carpenter's Shop at London Town

~ Lauren Schiszik

### Future Events

#### 2007 Dig Days!

**May 12, July 14, Sept. 8, 2007  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m., London Town**

*Lost Towns* archaeologists invite the public to help screen soil looking for artifacts, take tours, and attend workshops. Call London Town at (410) 222-1919 to reserve your spot!

#### Monday Lecture Series

Come to the Anne Arundel County Heritage Center to learn about topics in archaeology and history presented by the *Lost Towns* staff and colleagues in related fields. Lectures are held from 1-2 pm in the Chesapeake Room on the 2nd floor of Building 2664. Please call Erin Cullen for directions at (410) 222-7441.

**May 21** - Rod Cofield "*Interactive, Edible Arithmetic: A Lecture on Historical Mathematics*"

**June 25** - Lauren Schiszik "*Dissidents, Pacifists, and 'Vagabonds': The West River Quakers*"

**July 30** - Lee Preston "*12,000 Years of Native American History: How the Past Has Shaped 21<sup>st</sup>-century Attitudes*"

**August 27** - Al Luckenbach "*The Algonquian Migration*"

As it must have been in the colonial period, the wall-raising was a community effort. Dozens of people heaved and strained with all their strength to lift the massive, 28-foot long wooden wall frame into its postholes without it overcompensating and crashing back to the ground. This is the first raised wall of the Carpenter's Shop, an historically-accurate reconstruction of a building that stood in the exact same footprint over 300 years ago.

Historic London Town and Gardens hosted a ceremony on Saturday, April 21, marking the completion of the Lord Mayor's Tenement and the initiation of construction of the Carpenter's Shop. Both are architecturally accurate reconstructions of buildings that once stood in London Town in the early-18<sup>th</sup> century. The archaeological remains of these buildings were discovered by the *Lost Towns Project*. The earthfast reconstructions are integral to the interpretation of London Town, allowing visitors a tangible experience of the architecture, lifeways and landscape of the colonial town.

Many people attended the event on the beautiful warm spring day, including County Executive John Leopold and County Councilman Ed Reilly. In his speech at the event, Mr. Leopold stressed the importance of the day's ceremony for the county's heritage, and stated

*Continued on page 2*



Russ Steele, Master Carpenter (foremost), guides the posts of the first wall of the Carpenter's Shop into place as many others raise the wall.

*Continued from page 1*

that the historic buildings at London Town are being brought back to life for future generations to learn from and enjoy. He also assured ~~his assistance to London Town and the~~ *Lost Towns Project* in efforts to gain occupancy in the new museum and lab at London Town. Occupancy has been projected for early May.

The Lord Mayor's Tenement, a reconstruction of a 20 by 20-foot wooden earthfast structure, was completed in 2006. It is interpreted as a typical home for most European inhabitants of the Chesapeake region. Lord Mayor's Tenement has been furnished with historically and socially accurate items and docents use the building to teach the lifeways and foodways of the early-18<sup>th</sup> century.

The Carpenter's Shop will be utilized to tell the story of the maritime carpentry industry that was in place at London Town, which was a significant port in the colonial period. The Carpenter's Shop will also tell the story of the African and African-American slaves that lived in London Town. As many of our readers may remember, a child burial was discovered during the excavation of the Carpenter's Shop. The child had been buried under the floorboards, a tradition common in the Caribbean and West Africa. Previously, no archaeological evidence of African Americans had been uncovered at London Town. At the ceremony on Saturday, historian Janice Hayes-Williams honored the child, who is reinterred, as well as all of the African Americans at London Town whose histories are not known. Flowers were placed on the child's grave.

These reconstructions would not have been possible without generous support from many public institutions and private donors, as well as the efforts of numerous volunteers.



*John Leopold greets several of the docents at Lord Mayor's Tenement.*

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## ***Lost Towns Wins National Award***

~Al Luckenbach



*The reconstructed Lord Mayor's Tenement.*

The Vernacular Architecture Forum, a national organization of individuals who conduct fieldwork on historic standing structures, presented London Town and the *Lost Towns Project* with one of their major awards at their annual meeting held in Savannah, Georgia in March. The Paul E. Buchanan Award is given annually "for excellence in fieldwork, interpretation, and public service." The 2007 award was presented by Rebecca Ginsberg, VAF President for the project entitled "The Lord Mayor's Tenement Reconstruction: Rediscovering, Reconstructing, and Reinterpreting a Chesapeake Earthfast Structure."

On hand to accept this prestigious honor were Donna Ware, London Town's Executive Director, Al Luckenbach, Director of the *Lost Towns Project*, Willie Graham of Colonial Williamsburg and Russ Steele, Master Carpenter. *The Lost Towns Project* discovered the archaeological evidence of the building, Willie Graham designed the building reconstruction, and Russ Steele built the structure. Lord Mayor's Tenement is the first of a number of planned reconstructions at Historic London Town. Of course, in each instance these accomplishments could not have been made without the assistance of our numerous, hardworking volunteers - so congratulations to all!

# The Latest Discoveries on the Rhode River

~ Jane Cox

The *Lost Towns* team just completed year two of the MHT supported Rhode River Survey and Assessment project. As you may recall, the first year focused upon a broad survey, where more than two dozen sites were discovered, adding greatly to our understanding of the region. In the second

year, the team focused its efforts upon five sites; three prehistoric sites and two historic sites, where more intensive excavations allowed us to gain a better understanding of the historic and



*Selby Bay knives recovered in the survey.*

prehistoric past in this region.

The three prehistoric sites represent a continuum of Late Archaic (3500 B.C. – 1000 B.C.) to Late Woodland (circa 1600 A.D.) occupation. 18AN282, located on the shores of the Rhode River, near Contee's Wharf Road, offers some of the earliest prehistoric occupation in the area based upon the surface collection by avocational archae-



*The ruins of the Java Plantation house on a misty day.*

ologist Dick Johnson, who recovered numerous Archaic point from the site. In contrast to this early site, located up in the protected headwaters of the Rhode River, the Beverly Triton Beach site, 18AN1281, was a relatively small single component Late Woodland site and was located directly on the Bay in a relatively exposed area. 18AN1285, found on Camp Lett's, represented a oyster procurement and short term base camp, occupied intermittently throughout the later Middle Woodland through to the Late Woodland period.

The two historic sites selected for additional investigation also offered a variation in site type and occupation. The Water's Family occupied 18AN424 (Camp Lett's) from the late-18<sup>th</sup> through

the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The house site and the associated landing area on the shores of Sellman Creek offer the opportunity to study the physical world of a broad range of late colonial and Federal-era materials and space. Not only will the house site lend insight in the domestic sphere of this middling class family, but the related landing area may offer a look

at the commercial activities and economic development of the time period.

18AN339, variously known as Sparrow's Rest, Contees Farm, or the Java Site, is one of the most exciting and promising archaeological sites in Maryland, and the property promises to yield copious historic and cultural data. The limited Phase II work has only begun to scratch the surface of this large, varied, and rich site. The Java site is a microcosm of Maryland's history and the archaeological resources at this site

*Continued on page 4*



*STP excavation under the shadow of Java mansion.*

Continued from page 3

tell an all-inclusive story for all eras of our historic past. Settlers, colonial elites, plantation managers, slaves, and tenant farmers occupied the site over the centuries. Archival research suggests that the property owners have had connections with prominent Maryland citizens from across the State. With archaeological deposits from the late-17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and even 20<sup>th</sup> century, this property is perhaps one of the most rich and intact archaeological resources found in Maryland.

The *Lost Towns Project* has one more year of funding to complete our look at the Rhode River Region, and we will be focusing our efforts on the Java site on Contee's Wharf Road. Beginning in July, we will begin intensive excavations at this site. In the shadows of the magnificent mansion ruins, we will explore more than 350 years of occupation on this site. We are especially excited by the indications of a possible late 17<sup>th</sup>-century house site on the hilltop and we'll need your help as we search for evidence of this early house—one that predates the 1747 mansion ruins we see today. So pack a lunch and join us out at the site on Fridays! We also look forward to forging a new partnership with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) this season as we finalize plans to work with their public education program. Groups from SERC will pay a visit several times this summer and join us as we explore the area's history through archaeology.

## Making a Transatlantic Ship Seaworthy

~John Kille



3D depiction of the hull of the *Rumney and Long*, a 300-ton transatlantic sailing vessel.

I am pleased to report that the *Lost Towns Project* is making great progress on the 3D reconstruction of the circa 1747 *Rumney and Long*, a 300-ton transatlantic sailing ship built on Dorsey Creek in Annapolis. This historic vessel is being brought back to life thanks to the expertise of naval architect and maritime historian John Wing, underwater archaeologist Bruce Thompson, and UMBC animator Tim Wang.

While the rendering of the *Rumney and Long* is still a work-in-progress, even a partial depiction of its hull (above) provides a dramatic glimpse of what was undoubtedly an impressive vessel in its day. Tim will eventually add detailed surface textures, lighting, and shadowing to the basic 3D model shown here, which will ensure a heightened sense of historical accuracy and realism.

The ship's re-creation is based a wide range of resources, including historical records, architectural drawings, and specialized books on 18<sup>th</sup>-century ships. The team also spent a day at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History meeting with Curator of Maritime History Paul Johnston, who generously shared his research files and made it possible to photograph an enormous 11-foot model of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Virginia tobacco ship named *Brilliant*.

The next few months will be devoted to completing the design of the *Rumney and Long*'s hull, with special attention to its internal steering, rudder, and anchor mechanisms, galley (kitchen area) and rigging of sails. Additional funding is being sought to equip and furnish the ship's deck areas in 3D and integrate layers of historical interpretation, allowing viewers to virtually walk around the ship. This interactive program will eventually be accessible on a touch screen display within the new museum at Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater.

# Endangered Species: The Maryland Tobacco Barn

~ Jenna Solomon

One can't help but notice the red barns that dot the rolling landscape of Southern Anne Arundel County, with their "barn red" exteriors, silver roofs that glisten in the sun and their immense double doors that allow trucks to enter the heart of these tobacco barns. Perhaps, however, you have never entered inside this world of utilitarian perfection.



*A tobacco barn stands idyllically in a wheat field in Southern Anne Arundel County.*

Maryland's barns have always been designed to slowly air-cure the tobacco, rather than quickly curing the tobacco leaves with intense heat provided by a furnace or flue, as is done in other tobacco growing regions like Virginia and North Carolina. Therefore, unlike tobacco barns in those other states, Southern Maryland's tobacco barns purposefully have been built to *not* be airtight. The barns have spaces between the vertical plank siding or the planks themselves are hinged in order to open and close like shutters. These openings provide cross-ventilation that air-cures the tobacco.

On both ends of the barn are large double doors, usually 8 feet wide, which create a center passageway in or-

der to drive straight through the barn. Farmers would bring their wagons, carts, or later tractors or trucks, into the barn itself to unload their crop in preparation for hanging. Each barn is also divided into "rooms" or "bents" that hang the tobacco to be cured.

The size of these bents are and have always been dictated by the width of the poles on which the tobacco is hung, as well as the height of the tobacco plant itself. Early bents were about 5 feet long, as this was the width of the poles used in the early days of tobacco cultivation. More recently, the width of the poles has changed to 4 feet long, and one can tell a more recently built tobacco barn by the smaller size of the bents.

The inside frame of the tobacco barns are built using stripped saplings, hand-sawn lumber, and most recently, dimensional lumber. Depending on the type of wood, the frame would be joined with mortise and tenon joints, notched into the vertical supports (also called toe-nailed). The frame of the structure, divided into bents, not only provides the armature from

which the tobacco hangs, but is also integral to the structure of the barn itself. When empty, tobacco barns can be blown down by a strong wind. When filled with tobacco, the barns are most secure due to the added weight of the tobacco.

The Tobacco Barns of Southern Maryland are an extremely vulnerable Architectural and Cul-

*Continued on page 6*



*Forgotten tobacco still curing inside a barn.*

Continued from page 5

tural Resource, and three major factors threaten the future of these barns. The first factor is the tobacco buyout, which has rendered these buildings obsolete. Therefore, many barns sit empty and unused, and are being demolished over time by nature and neglect. Secondly, the very things that make these barns a “Tobacco Barn”: the heavily divided interiors, which are integrated into the structure itself and help to support the building, their lack of air and water tightness, and the dirt floors, do not lend these barns to adaptive reuse. Lastly, development pressures from the rapidly growing Baltimore-Washington Metro Region have pushed people further out into formerly rural land. These farms are swiftly being converted into housing developments where tobacco barns no longer have a place. In spite of these unyielding pressures and the difficult odds against the preservation of this unique resource, it is the responsibility of those interested in Historic Preservation to see that these barns are protected, and the people and culture that created them are remembered.



*The pewter tobacco pipe found at 18AN1084.*

## Pewter Tobacco Pipe at Cheney’s Hills

~ Kelly Cooper

In 2005, the *Lost Towns* crew discovered two fragile fragments of a pewter tobacco pipe, believed to be Native American in origin, at the site of Cheney’s Hills (18AN1084). Due to their fragile makeup, pewter pipes are rarely recovered in archaeological contexts. They typically occur on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-century sites, and are primarily associated with Native American burials.

In 1643, Rhode Island colonist Roger Williams commented upon the pewter pipe manufacture of the neighboring Narragansett tribe. Williams stated, “They have an excellent art to cast our pewter and brass into neat and artificial pipes” (Veit and Bello 2004:185). Ethnographic research and several primary and secondary sources suggest that pipes made of base metals (lead, pewter, iron) were fashioned and employed by Native American groups of the Northeast. Burial sites of the Seneca of upstate New York and the Susquehannock of south central Pennsylvania yield the largest number of pewter pipes on the eastern seaboard. The pewter pipe found by the *Lost Towns Project* is one of the few examples recovered in the Chesapeake region.

Pewter and other base metal pipes are believed to have gained popularity among Native American groups after European colonists introduced such resources. Several sources classify pewter pipes specifically as “trade pipes”, suggesting that these pewter pipes held symbolic, social, and political significance, unlike the utilitarian pipes made of clay or terra cotta.

The pewter pipe fragments at Cheney’s Hills were found in association with several 17<sup>th</sup>-century diagnostic artifacts, including North Devon Gravel Earthenware, Tin Glazed Earthenware, and clay tobacco fragments. Since the pipe was not found in association with a Native American burial, one can best surmise that this was an item of trade, possibly obtained by Richard Cheney, who occupied the property between 1658-1686.

This pewter pipe is a material example of the social networking and relationships between contact period Native American groups and European colonists in the Tidewater region. This a topic of great interest to historians and archaeologists, and hopefully more light will be shed on the relationships of these two groups with further research and finds such as this one.

Veit, Richard and Charles A. Bello

2004 “‘Neat and Artificial Pipes’: Base Metal Trade Pipes of the Northeastern Indians”, in *The Culture of Smoking: Recent Developments in the Archaeology of Smoking Pipes*. Sean M. Rafferty and Rob Mann, eds., pp. 185-206. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

## Calling All Volunteers:

### Let the *Lost Towns Project* be Your Fitness Plan this Summer!

~ Lauren Schiszik

It is that time of year, folks: prime digging season. And the *Lost Towns Project* is cordially inviting any and all volunteers to come join us. Not only do we find cool stuff, we also get fit doing it! And you can too. When you come out and volunteer, you'll get your workout in the field, no need to go to the gym afterwards.

We have come up with an Archaeology Calorie-Counter© to make your physical efforts with us measurable. All numbers given are based on 30 minutes of exertion by a 150-lb. person. Obviously, the calories you burn vary depending upon your weight, height, gender, and level of effort.



*SOOOOO much more fun than the gym!*

The exertions of field excavation are renowned, and now, you can calculate exactly just how much you deserve a cold, calorie-rich beverage at the end of the day. The most calories are burned by carrying buckets (252 calories for a 150-lb. person), and shoveling dirt (225 calories). Troweling takes care of 180 calories, and walking to the site at a stroll (2 mph), covers another 94 calories. And your post-excavation nap burns 40 calories!

Indoor activities can also take care of calories, so don't shy away from opportunities to volunteer in the lab or conduct archival research! Washing artifacts, cataloging, and labeling artifacts burns 90 calories, talking while you do so adds more! While you research and

read in the Archives, you use up 45 calories while discovering and unraveling the probate records and deeds of Maryland's early settlers. Office work such as writing site reports, articles and grant proposals takes care of 125 calories. In fact, I've already burned 87 calories writing this.

A special opportunity is arising soon: We will be moving into our new lab in early May. You know what that means...shlepping boxes from our current lab in the county office complex on Riva Road to our gorgeous new digs at Historic London Town and Gardens. You too can take this opportunity to tone and shape your biceps! You can burn 252 calories carrying boxes, and unpacking them takes care of another 131 calories. If you're on the volunteer e-mail list, don't worry, we'll let you know when the move will take place. If you would like to make the *Lost Towns Project* your workout regime this spring and summer (not to mention an intellectual odyssey), let us know! We'd love to have you join us! If you're interested in volunteering, call our volunteer coordinator, Erin Cullen, at (410) 222-7441.



*Last summer's interns in the lab, happily washing artifacts.*

**These numbers are based on projections provided by the Fitness Partner Connection Jumpsite exercise calorie counter. You can visit it at <http://www.primusweb.com/cgi-bin/fpc/actcalc.pl>**

### 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 always available.

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

The lab (located at 2666 Riva Road, 2nd floor) is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Call the lab phone, (410)222-7328 for more information.

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.

*Letters from Lost Towns* is published three times a year 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 Erin Cullen, Office of Planning and Zoning, 2664 Riva Road, MS 6402, 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.

Newsletter edited by  
Lauren Schiszik

### Who makes up the Lost Towns Project?

**Al Luckenbach.....Director/County Archaeologist**

**Jane Cox.....Cultural Resources Planner**

**John Kille .....Assistant Director**

**Kelly Cooper.....Lab Director**

**Jenna Solomon.....Assistant Cultural Resource Planner**

**Shawn Sharpe .....Field Director/Conservation Specialist**

**Tony Lindauer.....Historian/Equipment Manager**

**Erin Cullen.....Archaeologist/Education and Volunteer Coordinator**

**Lauren Schiszik .....Archaeologist/Intern Coordinator**

**Carolyn Gryczkowski.....Lab Specialist**

Lost Towns Project



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