



Letters from Lost Towns

Summer 2008

News & Future Events

Final 2008 Public Dig Day!
Saturday, September 6, 2008
9 a.m. - 2 p.m., London Town
Lost Towns archaeologists invite the public to help screen soil and find artifacts, take tours, and attend workshops. Call London Town at 410-222-1919 to reserve your spot.

Upcoming Conference

Council for Northeastern
Historical Archaeology
St. Mary's College of Maryland,
St. Mary's City, MD
October 24-26, 2008

The theme of this year's conference is *Archaeology of the Atlantic World*. Our own Stephanie Sperling will present a paper entitled "A Site by Any Other Name: Current Research at Site 18AN339", where she will discuss the exciting finds and interpretations from the 2008 field season at Sparrows Rest/Java.
<http://www.smcm.edu/soan/cneha/>

INSIDE: Impact of recent County budget cuts...and how you can help. See page 2

Waist Deep in Cellar Trash

~ John Kille



A stunning piece of Chinese porcelain, depicting a fish in green, gold, and orange overglaze.

As promised, we are pleased to provide an update on excavations at the circa 1690 Samuel Chew house in Fairhaven. If you remember from our Fall 2007 newsletter, Al Luckenbach provided an overview on the significance of the discovery of the 66' x 56' brick mansion that belonged to several generations of this accomplished and influential family.

This spring, the *Lost Towns Project* returned to the site to delineate both the footprint and interior dimensions of this enormous building. In July, the excavation of a 5' x 5' bulkhead cellar entrance at the rear of the mansion yielded impor-

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Now we know Dick Cheney's Politics!

~ Al Luckenbach

The excavations at the 1658 Chaney/Cheney's Hills site (it's spelled both ways in contemporary documents) begun in 1998, continued in force this spring and early summer. As reported in our Winter 2008 newsletter, the most important recent discoveries have involved the size of the principal structure—currently at an amazing 85' x 17' and possibly growing.

The first Richard Chaney/Cheney was the ancestor not only of the prominent local Chaney family, but also of our Vice President. We know that he arrived in Maryland in 1658 from London. Starting with the 100-acre parcel Cheney's Hills, Richard's holdings grew until, by the time of his death in

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A small piece of ceramic holds great political sentiment.

The Lost Towns Project Thanks our Partners and Supporters



Serious Budget Woes... and How You Can Help!

~ John Kille

As you have probably heard, the *Lost Towns Project* was hit hard by across-the-board County budget cuts. Our archaeology and historic preservation program was cut by \$130,000—resulting in a 60% reduction in operating expenses for its archaeologists, historians, and lab specialists. Many of our ‘regulars’ have had their hours cut to one or two days a week.

The *Project* is in dire need of contributions to offset this enormous cut. Please consider making a donation to help us continue our organized programs for visiting school children, popular Dig Day events for families, internships for college students, and adult education opportunities. Become a sustaining member of the *Project*, an easy-to-use form is located on the last page of this newsletter.

Corporate Sponsorships Available

The *Project* is seeking mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses in our community. If you have a business or know of someone who does, please consider becoming a corporate sponsor of the *Lost Towns Project*. For a tax-deductible contribution of just \$500, the *Lost Towns Project* will actively promote your business in our regular newsletter, as well as at events such as Saturday Dig Days, held at Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater. For more information, or to suggest a business that might be interested in partnering with the *Lost Towns Project*, please contact John Kille at 410-222-7440. Since the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation (ACT) is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit, all contributions made on behalf of the *Lost Towns Project* are tax deductible. We appreciate your support!

A Big “Thank You” to Our Members!

Special Contributor

Marvin Anderson
Charles and Pat Barland
Linda Boisseau
Ward Brockett
Rosemarie Callage
Robert and Sally Cheston
John Chew
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Chew
Ned and Betty Crandell
Betty DeKeyser
Susan Dodds
Jeremy Dover
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Jeffrey and Christine Savich

June Schizik
Ethel Stephan
Charles and Michele Welch

Individual

Frances Ablondi
Louise Akerson
David Balter
Nancy Briani
Jeanette Christman
Betty Doty
Edward Feicht
Mary Kay Ganning
Elizabeth C. Gay
Ruth Hazen
Linda Head
Alex Lavish
Margaret McRory
Mayor Ellen Moyer
James Parker
Michael Parker
Frances Petino
Michael Quinlan
Scott Shane
Kay Spruell
Ann Tiffany
Laura Tomitz

Student

David Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Allison Diviney
Sally Gordon
Cynthia Olsen
Christine Simmons

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1686, he had amassed properties totaling 1,400 acres. The geographic setting for this success - Anne Arundel County - had been founded by non-conformist Puritans in 1649. It would basically remain a hot bed of Parliamentarians, Quakers, and various other dissidents for most of the century. Lacking documentary evidence, it was assumed that Richard Cheney shared some of these fringe beliefs - until the discovery of a single artifact.

In June, while screening soil, staff member Carolyn Gryczkowski recovered a fragment from a white clay figurine. It was only the back of a head with curly hair, but it was enough to identify the original figure - King Charles. Such royal figurines have only been recovered at two other places in the New World, both in Maryland, and each time they have been interpreted as demonstrating clear "patriotic and political attachments" (see Grulich, 2008; Hurry and Grulich, in press).

Apparently, the first Dick Cheney was a royalist.

Mystery Artifact

~ Erin Cullen



Our mystery artifact for this edition comes from Sparrows Rest/Java (18AN339). It was found approximately 18 feet from the building's hearth. This heavy iron artifact looks similar to a plumb-bob, which is generally used for building and surveying. However, it seems a bit too large to be used as this type of tool. It measures 3.63" long and is 2.1" wide at its largest point. The object is conical at one end, and it weighs exactly 20 ounces. Hmmmm...might it be a weight of some kind?

If anyone has an idea of what this artifact might be or has seen something similar, please give us a ring and let us know. You can contact us at the lab, 410-222-1318. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank You Congressmen Hoyer and Culberson!

~ John Kille

The *Project* is very pleased to announce that the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation and *Lost Towns Project* recently received \$47,161 through the Institute of Museum and Library Services Congressionally Directed Grant Program. This major award was sponsored by House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer who represents Maryland's 5th Congressional District and also had the strong support of Congressman John Culberson from the 7th District of Texas.

A portion of this funding has been used to purchase and install a custom-made Spacesaver moveable storage shelving unit in our dedicated storage area at the new Visitor Center facility at London Town. This state-of-the-art unit will provide a

stable and secure environment for thousands of priceless archaeological artifacts excavated by the *Lost Towns Project*.



The beautiful new Spacesaver shelves installed!

The grant from IMLS will also fund the purchase of geology storage cabinets, air abrasion accessories, and photographic/reproduction equipment which will be used at our new Archaeology Lab. This specialized equipment will help to conserve, document, and organize important artifact collections recovered from the ca. 1683

tobacco port of London Town and surrounding historic sites in Anne Arundel County.

Many thanks to Congressmen Hoyer and Culberson for a job well done!

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tant finds, including a one-of-a-kind brick with special significance, as well as a large intact deposit of trash that harkens back to excavations at London Town's Rumney-West Tavern.

The brick was retrieved by archaeologist Lauren Schizik, shortly after she began the arduous task of removing rubble from the cellar entrance. Notable for its beveled edge, this brick from the building's water table is also incised "J.B.," likely the initials of the master brick mason who constructed the house. The find is amazing given the fact that most of the bricks from this structure were re-used centuries ago or are now broken into countless indiscriminant pieces.

A few more feet down, Dr. Al was amply rewarded for his own strenuous digging in the cellar. He found a mother lode of domestic trash probably deposited prior to the 1772 fire that destroyed the house. These items from the cellar have not only added a new-found sense of excitement to our efforts, but have also confirmed the high status of one of the wealthiest families in the Maryland Colony.

The cellar entrance was also



A few artifacts from the Chew Site. Top row: Small mammal jaw bone, wine bottle base, wine bottle neck, pewter spoon, wine bottle neck. Second row: Pocket knife, Chinese porcelain with hand-painted fish motif. Bottom row: Piece of polished marble, elk jaw bone, English Brown stoneware jug.

filled with food items such as large oyster shells and bones from a variety of animals, including rabbit, deer, and fish, as well as a huge elk jaw bone, and, curiously, a small skull that possibly belonged to a cat. Many different types of cutlery were recovered, as well as an oversized pocket-knife encased in a bone handle. Lab volunteers are happily washing and counting vessels which included large portions of wine bottles and ceramic bowl, jugs, plates, tea cups and saucers.

Among the vessels were many shards from a large English brown stoneware jug, a portion of a white salt-glazed stoneware plate with a "dot, diaper and basket" pattern, and

several types of beautifully decorated Chinese porcelain. The most impressive design is that of a beautiful orange, green, and gold hand-painted fish found on a delicate Chinese porcelain teacup.

These recent excavations were made possible thanks to much-appreciated financial help from Preservation Maryland and generous contributions from the Robert Chew family as well as long-time friends from our local community. Please consider making a gift that will enable the *Lost Towns Project* to continue these important excavations. If you are interested in helping us excavate the Chew site, give Jessie Grow a call at 410-222-7440.

Summer Interns!

~ Lauren Schizik

Summer, as you all know, is our busiest season in the field. It is all the more busy thanks to the many volunteers and interns who brave the summer heat and lend us a hand! This summer, the *Lost Towns Project* is lucky to have 11 stellar interns working on a variety of projects.

We have several interns who are completing the field and lab internship, and they are: Margaret Boynton, a

junior majoring in Art History at Goucher College. Brooke Opel is a junior at University of Maryland, College Park, where she is double-majoring in Anthropology and Psychology. Pablo Clemente and Billy Johnson are both majoring in Ancient Studies at UMBC, where they are a senior and sophomore, respectively. Cynthia Olsen is a high school intern.

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Cynthia attends Northeast High School in Anne Arundel County, where she will be a senior this fall. Cynthia began volunteering with us last summer, and we are glad to have her with us in a more formal role this summer!

Vicki Heath is a junior at UMBC, where she is majoring in Ancient Studies. Along with doing general lab and field work, Vicki has also become involved in artifact conservation. She will complete a conservation internship with us in the fall.

Katie Kosack is a recent graduate of Mary Washington University, where she double-majored in American Studies and Historic Preservation. This fall, she will pursue her Masters degree in Historical Archaeology at University of Massachusetts, Boston. Katie is devoting a lot of time with us at *Lost Towns* both in the field and lab, and her pet project is recataloguing the Burle site.

Marc Browne is a recent graduate from the University of Maryland, College Park, where he majored in Anthropology. This summer, he is assisting Stephanie Sperling on various aspects of her research into the Middle Woodland sites of Anne Arundel County, ranging from literature review to GIS and field work.



Intern Pablo Clemente (l) assists with our public outreach at Sparrow's Rest/Java.

Some readers may remember intern Tim Wang from articles in our Winter and Spring 2007 newsletters. Tim, a veteran intern, has been continuing his CGI project. He is digitally reconstructing the sailing vessel named *Rumney and Long*. He is still hard at work, and the ship is looking beautiful.

Two interns undertook a transcription project this summer. Amanda Scheffer, a junior majoring in history at James Madison University, and Josh Wilson, a junior double-major in Anthropology and History at Beloit College, each began transcribing Maryland Quaker Meeting Minutes from 17th century. The Meeting Minutes are rich with information about Anne Arundel County Quakers. The project will be ongoing and when complete, the transcriptions will be available to the public. We are actively seeking interns for this project. Please contact Lauren Schiszik at 410-222-7440 if interested.

Thanks to all of our interns, they have done an excellent job this summer. Don't be surprised if you see their faces on the cover of *American Archeology* in the coming decade!

SERC and the *Lost Towns Project* Embark Upon an Exciting New Partnership

~ Jane Cox

You may have recently heard the news that the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) has acquired a site that we have been working on for several years. The Sparrows Rest/Java site (18AN339) located on Contees Wharf Road in Edgewater was, until this spring, privately owned by the Kirkpatrick-Howat family. SERC acquired the nearly 600 acre farm, adding it to their massive land holdings on the Rhode River. They have extended their management to the property, on which several highly significant archaeological sites and standing structures reside.

High on the SERC list of priorities is the stabilization of the mansion ruins, a task that architectural historians and structural engineers are actively working on this summer and fall. The *Lost Towns Project* will establish a Memorandum of Understanding with SERC in the coming months to facilitate our continuing research and investigations on the site. That agreement is an extension of the work we have undertaken for the past several years, and promises to be an exciting partnership that brings together cultural and natural resource studies for public benefit. All parties realize that continuing excavations and public access in the coming years will cost money. Thus, as plans for the management of the site mature, we will be raising funds to support the ongoing work at this exciting site.

A formal announcement and celebration of the acquisition will occur in September 2008. In the meantime, if you have not been out to Java or to the adjacent SERC property, take a few hours to come for a visit. It is a truly exceptional tract of land. As always, we will be out there on Fridays and we welcome volunteers, new and old, to join us as we continue to uncover the 1671 house site of Thomas Sparrow. Give Jessie Grow a call at 410-222-7440 or check your volunteer emails for more info!

“Paddle Through History” Kayak Tours!

~ Jessie Grow

Two wonderful things that abound in Anne Arundel County are archaeology sites and waterways. A recently launched program designed by the *Lost Towns* team shows that this is no coincidence. Native Americans and colonists alike depended on their waterways as their main method of transportation. It goes without saying, then, that one would seek out a home site near a river or creek.

The *Lost Towns Project* thought that sharing this land-and-sea relationship from the viewpoint of the water would be an exciting new way to share our local history. Jane Cox and I developed two kayak paddling tours; one focused on Back and Spa Creek, and one on the Rhode River. The “Paddle through History” kayaking tours are sponsored by our partners, the Four Rivers Heritage Area and the Annapolis Maritime Museum. We thank them for their support!

The paddling tours focus not only on historic sites, but also on how human activity can have a profound impact on the environment. Everything from clearing land and farming tobacco to the wakes of

modern power boats, harvesting oysters, and the construction of new homes all create significant changes to the landscape. The paddling tours cover prehistoric sites and oyster middens, 17th century tobacco plantations, 18th century military forts, the history of the steamboat industry, environmental issues, and much more!

The Back and Spa Creek tours were given on July 10th and 11th, and

were a great success! The Rhode River tours will run on July 31st and August 1st, and will launch from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.

While we are already completely booked for the remaining scheduled tours, we hope to offer these tours again in the near future. Give Jessie Grow a call at 410-222-7440 if you are interested in taking a “Paddle Through History”!



Photo Credit: Jeff Holland

An inaugural paddling tour offered in July stops near the Naval Academy in Annapolis, as the schooner *Woodwind* passes by.

Quaker National Register Nomination Accepted by the State

~Lauren Schizik

This past May, the Maryland Governor’s Consulting Committee approved a National Register nomination submitted by the *Lost Towns Project*, titled “Quaker Sites in the West River Meeting, a Quaker Community in Southern Anne Arundel County, Maryland; c.1650-1785.” This multiple-property submission (MPS) details the significance of the Quaker influence in the colonial development of this region, and justifies why archaeological sites associated with Quakers are significant. The MPS nominated two archaeological sites associated with Quakers of the West River Meeting: Skipworth’s Addition and the Willson Site. Many other Quaker sites are located in the region, and we look forward to adding additional resources to the nomination very soon. The nomination should be accepted at the Federal level by the end of 2008.

Exciting Revelations about the Camp Letts Prehistoric Site

~ Stephanie T. Sperling

Lost Towns Project archaeologists spent a few weeks last fall excavating on a small peninsula on the Rhode River at YMCA Camp Letts in Edgewater. This prehistoric camp site, which dates to the Middle and Late Woodland periods (about A.D. 200 through A.D. 1600), was originally discovered in 2005. We were finally able to return in 2007 and learn more about the Native Americans who lived in Anne Arundel County in the centuries before contact with Europeans.

In the field, we concentrated part of our excavation on a large oyster shell midden - essentially a prehistoric trash heap - and came up with a very curious collection of ceramic sherds. After a consultation with prehistoric ceramic experts at Temple University, it appears that we have uncovered evidence that the native peoples were making pottery here perhaps thousands of years ago! This is very exciting for us and for the archaeological community at large, because it is rare to find a site

that has evidence of pottery manufacture.

These crumbly, brittle, pebble-sized sherds were tempered with oyster shell, and looked like someone had tried and failed to make a vessel. It appears that at least one pot had not been successfully fired, and was tossed out with the trash into the shell midden. One of the sherds shows that they had tried to construct a vessel by stacking rolled clay coils on top of one another, a typical method used by the Native Americans in this region. Three of these coils are still plainly visible adhered to an oyster shell from the midden!

There's still plenty to learn about the lives of the native residents of the region that is now Anne Arundel County, and our excavations at Camp Letts have added an exciting new piece to the puzzle!



Note the three coils impressed on this oyster shell. They are evidence of the coiling method used by the potter to build the pot.



This is a collection of the friable ceramics recovered at the site. Oyster shell was used as a temper in some of these sherds.

Lost Towns Project Team

Al Luckenbach.....Director/County Archaeologist

John Kille.....Assistant Director

Jane Cox.....Cultural Resources Planner

Erin Cullen.....Lab Director

Darian Schwab.....Historic Preservation Planner

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

Jessie Grow.....Archaeologist/

Education and Volunteer Coordinator

Lauren Schiszik.....Archaeologist/

Intern Coordinator/Newsletter Editor

Stephanie Sperling.....Archaeologist

Part-Time

Tony Lindauer.....Historian/Equipment Manager

Carolyn Gryczkowski.....Lab Specialist

Maria Valverde...Archaeologist/Lab Specialist

Steve Tourville...Archaeologist/Lab Specialist

Lost Towns Project



of Anne Arundel County

Become a Sustaining Member of the *Lost Towns Project!*

If you are not yet a sustaining member of the *Lost Towns Project*, please consider becoming one, or give the gift of membership to a friend or loved one. Your tax-deductible contribution supports our public outreach and education programs, such as our Public Dig Days, our high-quality newsletter publication, and helps us fulfill our mission to discover, interpret, and educate citizens and students about the history of Anne Arundel County. We greatly appreciate your support!

Member Benefits:

- 3 newsletters per year
- 20% off *Lost Towns* gear and publications
- Free admission to our lecture series
- Invitations to special events and trips

Levels of Membership:

- \$50 or more Special Contributor
- \$10 Student (send copy of valid student i.d.)
- \$30 Family
- \$20 Individual
- Give as a gift!*

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**Send this form and checks payable to “ACT/ Lost Towns Membership” to:
Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation (ACT) / P.O. Box 1573 / Annapolis, MD 21404**

Lost Towns Project



of Anne Arundel County

Office of Planning and Zoning
2664 Riva Road, MS 6402
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410)222-7440

