



Chronicles from the County:

Preservation, History, and Archaeology News in Anne Arundel County, MD

Issue 1, Winter 2014

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FROM THE COUNTY'S CULTURAL RESOURCES & PRESERVATION DESK.... *Preserving the Past - Planning for our Future*

In November 2014, after three decades with the County, Dr. Al Luckenbach retired from the County. His legacy includes establishing the County's preservation program, the discovery of Providence, building a museum at Londontown, the discovery of the Pig Point Ceremonial complex--well...we could go on! In retirement, he will finally get serious about his archaeology career and focus on the Pig Point site, amongst other things.



Dr. Al Luckenbach contemplates an Archaeological Feature

Jane Cox has been promoted to the head of the Cultural Resources Division, and, along with Darian Beverungen, and a team of talented consultants, will continue in the same traditions. CRD will continue the important work of protecting historic and archaeological sites across the County during the development process, partnering with and supporting non-profits engaged in preservation work, while promoting stewardship and appreciation of the County's historic resources through public outreach and education.



Jane and Al excavate a Turtle Shell at Pig Point

CRD provides support and technical guidance for owners of

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**Anne Arundel County's Cultural Resources Division welcomes submissions to our quarterly newsletter from professionals, non-profits, and avocationalists alike!
*See the back page for more information...***

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historic resources across the County. Have a question about artifacts you've discovered? Need advice on preserving or rehabilitating an historic building? Give us a call and we'll try to help! **In this issue, we offer a short, helpful "how-to" article on winterizing historic homes, titled "Is Your Historic House Ready for Winter?"**

CRD archaeologists began an epic relocation of more than 600 boxes of artifacts from more than 200 sites to a new-to-us County storage facility back in September. Previously, the County's vast archaeological collections was tucked away in multiple storage locations, in less than 'ideal' curation environments. The transition of our primary storage facility to the space in Glen Burnie will ensure that we can comply with curation standards for archaeological collections as required by State and Federal guidelines. This transfer will also allow the County Archaeological Laboratory to better use its limited storage space at Historic Lontontown for researchers and volunteers in processing, curating, and studying artifacts from active projects.

A major initiative of the CRD in 2015 is to revisit and gather documentation on historic resources across the County, including the resurvey of several historic districts that were first listed on the County inventory in the mid-1980s. A fresh look at these resources will ensure that our program can effectively work with

citizens to protect the County's collective heritage based on accurate and up to date information.

In 2015, the CRD will also continue its groundbreaking work in partnership with the State Highway Administration as we discover, inventory, and document the rich heritage of the Generals Highway Corridor. This 8-mile stretch of road appears to have it all! Along the route of the Highway and historic railroad bed we've found Native American campsites, 18th-century plantations and homesteads, a 250-year old mill site and millers house, a Civil War camp, a 20th-century hospital complex, historic homes aplenty, and the "Scott's Plantation Slave Barracks." And that's just in the first year! Stay tuned for the schedule as we look forward to having volunteers assist us on testing several of these sites in 2015. **(An overview of the historic Annapolis & Elkridge railroad that paralleled Generals Hwy. can be found on page 4!)**

Throughout the rest of this newsletter, you will find updates about important work being undertaken by organizations across the County to preserve and celebrate our heritage through archaeological and historic sites. We invite submissions for future newsletters that share the latest in historic preservation and archaeology in Anne Arundel County. **Email your submissions or ideas to pzpoul44@aacounty.org.**

Read the wonderful article in the *Capital Gazette* about Al Luckenbach's retirement from the County! Use the QR code (right) or visit the url below!

http://www.capitalgazette.com/opinion/our_say/cg-our-say-archaeologists-tell-us-more-about-our-home-20141125,0,296016.story



2 Cedar Park, c. late 17th century (AA-141)

Is Your Historic House Ready for Winter?

~Caitlin Merritt, Architectural Historian & Preservation Consultant

Old houses are notorious for being drafty and cold in the winter months. But they do not have to be! Following are a few simple and cost-effective ways to weatherize your historic house without compromising its integrity, while helping to keep you warm all winter, and to keep your energy costs down.

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2014: A Year in the Life of ACT, Inc.

~Anastasia Poulos, Chair



This past year was an eventful one for the *Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc. (ACT, Inc.)*. First, we continued to co-sponsor an annual lecture series on historic preservation-related topics at St. John's College --this past year's series on the *Civil War* and the *War of 1812* was a well-received success. Then, in the spring, we provided support to the archaeological excavations on Gibson Island, which

yielded evidence of a previously undiscovered 19th-century stone foundation! During the summer, our grant program was able to assist with improvements on the early 19th-century Friendship Parsonage by enabling its owner to replace damaged siding with historically sensitive materials.

In the fall, we recognized the contributions of several noteworthy individuals in archaeology, research, and preservation at the annual ACT Awards ceremony, which took place at historic Belvoir Manor in Crownsville. **Dr. Robert Worden** won the *Marjorie Murray Bridgman Award*, Rockbridge Academy accepted the *Orlando Ridout Prize* on behalf of historic **Belvoir (Scott's Plantation)** in Crownsville. **Carol Sanner**, retired Asst. Planning and Zoning Officer of Anne Arundel County, was recognized with a *Special Achievement Award*. **Francis** and **Susanne Talbott** received a *Special Contributions in Archaeology Award* and **Tom O'Connor** received an *Archaeology Volunteer Award*.



19th c. foundation on Gibson Island



2014 ACT Award Recipients



Belvoir Manor at Scott's Plantation

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The Lost Towns Project: A Legacy Reborn



About twenty-five years ago, Al Luckenbach, the County archaeologist, had a crazy idea. He began inviting regular citizens in the County to participate in *real* archaeological excavations, to save sites threatened by development. With Al's guidance, this quickly grew into an exciting collaborative research project that brought together thousands of citizens, students, professional archaeologists and historians to study, research and preserve 'Lost Towns' across Anne Arundel County. The project was so popular that the County began providing its support. Soon, sponsorship and grant support from the State, private foundations, and local non-profits expanded the mission and the program grew.

This informal and unincorporated affiliation of citizens, students, and professional archaeologists working to pro-

tect and study archaeological sites became known as "Anne Arundel County's Lost Towns Project." To date, the program has been a key partner in the excavation of more than 100 significant sites across the County. But it was in many ways a name without a home. Operating with support from various corners, *Lost Towns* became an umbrella reference for the innovative research of independent consultants, academic professionals and students working on and helping to preserve sites throughout the County.

Recognizing the legacy (and future potential) of this 25-year old academic and public archaeology program, the *Lost Towns Project* incorporated as its own certified 501-C3 non-profit organization in July of 2014. Several members of the team who participated in research projects under the *Lost Towns Project* rubric over the years joined together to make the most of an organization that has become a recognized

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The Fish Otoliths of Pig Point

~Cathy Lundmark, Volunteer

Pig Point's faunal remains are abundant in the Lower Block midden assemblage, revealing important information about what they ate and the time of year the feasting occurred, leading us to a richer understanding of those who feasted there from 600 to 2000 years ago.

As we cataloged artifacts from the Lower Block last winter, I became curious about the different types of fish present. Fish vertebrae, spines, and skull bones are easy to distinguish from other animal groups, but fish species are not immediately easy to tell apart--unless you have their otoliths. These paired, stone-like structures, located between the gills and the brain, are deposited gradually as fish grow, helping them navigate their underwater terrain while leaving a record of their comings and goings. You can tell how old a fish is and what month it was caught by slicing thin sections of its otoliths and examining the rings under a microscope.

The site catalog revealed hundreds of fish otoliths. The most common type belongs to the white perch (*Morone americana*, which is actually a bass). The counted otoliths indicated at least 130 white perch from the midden.

Fish scales were also preserved in the middens, and I expected to see otoliths from other fish species, such as yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*). I did not find a single yellow perch otolith. Six partial otoliths from unknown fish species, however, raised my interest, so I began combing the literature to identify which fish species they represented.

Some "mystery" otoliths had ruffled edges while others did not. The otolith atlas I used (by Stevan Campana) showed different characteristics on otoliths from the same fish species of different sizes. From this research, I determined that striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) otoliths have ruffly edges when they are small, and smooth edges once they reach a certain size. Fisheries ecologist and otolith expert David Secor (Center for



A Fish Otolith from Pig Point.

Env. Sci., UMD), confirmed they were in fact all from striped bass. This discovery adds another small piece of knowledge to the Pig Point puzzle. The discovery suggests that the Pig Point residents utilized both young and older fish as part of their diet.

Otoliths are both figuratively and literally a "small piece of the puzzle, and many more faunal remains await identification. (It's never too late to volunteer!) While certain aspects of what people were doing at Pig Point may always remain a mystery, the variety of animal remains preserved in the dark midden soil tell us of the diversity of foods available, and may explain why they kept returning to the site for thousands of years.

Funding for excavations and special studies at the Pig Point Complex are provided by a grant from the State of Maryland, which is being administered by the Lost Towns Project. Anne Arundel County Government also provides support for this project.



An Exruciatingly Brief History of the Annapolis & Elkridge Railroad

~ Brett Arnold

The path traced by Generals Highway (MD 178) has been a major land transportation corridor since the Colonial Period. For 150 years was one of the best-traveled thoroughfares between Philadelphia and Annapolis. The County is partnered with the State Highway Administration to study this route in a three-year effort to explore and document the history of the Generals Highway Corridor.

In the early 19th century, the rise of Washington, D.C. opened new economic possibilities for Annapolis, but without a direct route between the two cities these possibilities went unrealized. In 1838, Annapolis businessmen and politicians began construction



Dressed Stone Culvert, likely Part of the Original 1838-1840 Construction

of a technological marvel that lay roughly parallel to part of the old Generals Highway. This marvel was called the Annapolis & Elkridge Railroad (A&E).

The A&E Railroad was a pioneering endeavor, setting a precedent for employing up-to-date innovations that continued until the rail connection from Annapolis to Washington was eventually shut down. One of the earliest railroads constructed in the country, it was only the second to be built in the State. The civil engineer who designed it employed the latest breakthroughs in rail and track-laying design. The A&E Railroad began its passenger operations on Christmas Day, 1840. The A&E also changed the landscape and settlement patterns of the transportation corridor as businesses, homes, and even small villages were established at stations along the line to take advantage of the ease of access offered by rail travel.

The railroad's antebellum years were fraught with fi-

nanacial difficulty, and profits from passenger and freight transportation were never more than modest. The Civil War took its toll on the railroad, leaving its locomotives and cars in a state of disrepair from which the railroad company never truly recovered. Their slide into bankruptcy was slow, but by 1885 the A&E Railroad Company was sold to one of its competitors. The line would continue to operate under the name Annapolis, Washington & Baltimore until 1905, when a second major wave of innovation transformed the line irrevocably.

This innovation was high-speed inter-urban rail travel propelled by a promising new source of power: electricity. In 1905, the former A&E line was bought by the newly created Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis (WB&A) Electric Railroad Company, which immediately set to work making it part of an experimental electrical propulsion system that would allow trains to accelerate quicker and maintain higher speeds. The higher speeds

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Religion Etched in Stone

~ John Kille

Last spring, professional archaeologists and volunteers made a surprising discovery at Romany Road (18AN1406), a historic site located on Gibson Island: an ironstone foundation measuring 26' x 12' was discovered. Artifacts initially indicated a dwelling dating from the late 18th to mid-19th century but, as excavations continued, an intriguing artifact surfaced that has raised questions about whether this building may have served an additional function: a piece of thin slate, emblazoned with an etched cross symbol. Other pieces of the slate mended into a sizeable section, measuring 5" x 3.75" x 1/8" thick. Finding such artifacts in an archaeological context is highly unusual, but historical research can provide a context for the slate pieces, and perhaps the structure where they were found.

In 1793, John Gibson acquired a 711-acre tract, known as "Seven Mountains," from the trustees of William Worthington, the lands where the foundation and cellar were found. Gibson's correspondence indicates that he was living on the Island toward the end of his life, and a brick-lined burial vault approximately 150 feet from the ironstone cellar could be his final resting place. Gibson had an important connection to Catholicism through his business associates of the Cape Sable Company,

including noted Catholics Charles Carroll of Carrollton and Carroll's son-in-law Richard Caton. Jesuit priest John Henry Van Vechel, who celebrated mass and sacraments in chapels in Annapolis and other stations, also corresponded with Gibson regarding his upcoming visit to "Seven Mountains." And most revealing, a 1921 newspaper article reports that, "in years gone by a devout Catholic [probably Gibson] owned the Island and built his chapel there, parts of which still remain."

Was this etched slate an architectural element, or was it a ritual object in some way connected to a Catholic chapel located on the island, one perhaps owned by John Gibson? Historic Catholicism expert Dr. Robert Worden believes a Catholic chapel during this period would have been part of a private dwelling, and has suggested that this slate could have been part of an altar stone. Perhaps with further study, we may someday definitively know what this intriguing section of slate with an etched cross represents.



Etched Slate Fragment from Gibson Island

Archaeological investigations and historic studies at the Romany Road Site (18AN1406) have been generously funded by the Gibson Island Historical Society and the Society for Colonial Wars, supported in part by Anne Arundel County and administered by the Lost Towns Project, Inc.



1. **Insulation:** A simple solution to prevent an old house from being too drafty is proper insulation. Houses built before 1950 were often not insulated. Insulate basements, crawl spaces and attics by using materials with good thermal properties that allow for the evaporation of moisture. Spray foam insulation is NOT recommended because it hinders air flow and can lead to the rotting of timber framing members. Natural materials, like wood, plant fibers, or wool are recommended because they are breathable. Cellulose or fiberglass-based products are also acceptable because they also allow for air flow.
2. **Windows:** Windows are the most visible and character-defining element of an historic home, yet are commonly under-appreciated and home owners are quick to replace their original windows. New windows marketers may suggest that replacement will save on energy costs. Studies have shown however that other historic-friendly options are often just as effective in energy-efficiency and in the long run much more cost effective than replacement. Consider the cost of weather stripping and sealing your original windows, reapplying window glazing putty, and adding interior and/or storm windows to outright replacement of a new window. Not only that- but it's much more "green" to repair what you have as opposed to disposing of it in a landfill.
3. **Maintain watertight roofing and siding.**
4. **Make sure that water is properly draining away from your house.**
5. **Seal cracks, holes, and gaps, especially in foundations, and around doors and windows.**
6. **Check for proper ventilation in spaces that you aren't heating or cooling to protect from the effects of moisture.**
7. **Reduce Drafts:** Close curtains, blinds, shades, or shutters at night, use draft "snakes" (or even a rolled towel!) at doors and close your fireplace damper when not in use.

For more information about weatherizing your historic home, use the qr code (right) or check out the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website at: <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/weatherization/>.



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Finally, archaeologists wrapped up the year-long historic, cartographic, and archaeological study of War of 1812 sites in Tracys Landing and Shady Side (supported by a grant obtained by ACT, Inc. through Star Spangled 200, Inc. and the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission).

On October 27-31, 1814, the British destroyed a tobacco warehouse and several other structures in Tracys Landing, before moving up the coast to Shady Side, where the British landed and exchanged fire with local militia and the U.S. Dragoons. Archaeologists, contracted by ACT, Inc., investigated several sites that had great potential for archaeological evidence from the War of 1812 skirmishes in the area. The investigation into these 1812 sites yielded one site in Tracys Landing with tremendous information potential for the 18th-19th centuries in Anne Arundel County. Furthermore, the cartographic and historic study fleshed out the cultural landscape of the area and brought the realities of the War of 1812 in Anne Arundel County to light. Digital interactive maps and further information on these events is available at:

<http://annearundeltrust.org/TracysLndg/intro.html>

This past October, at the Tracys Landing Bicentennial Celebration of the War of 1812, we displayed artifacts of the late 18th-



1812 Archaeology Exhibit at the Tracys Landing Bicentennial

early 19th c. discovered during the archaeological investigation of the Tracys Landing tobacco warehouse (destroyed by the British during the War). On Nov. 2, 2014, our results were presented at the War of 1812 Symposium at the Kuethe Library. On Nov. 21, the US Naval Academy's Phi Sigma XII Alumni Chapter in Annapolis invited us to present our findings. Finally, this December, we presented the computer mapping applications of this project and its interactive web map at the ESRI Mid-Atlantic GIS User Conference in Baltimore, MD.

Overall, this year was another memorable success in the history of the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation! For more information on our activities and on how to support our endeavors, visit www.annearundeltrust.org!

leader in archaeological investigations and public outreach in Maryland.

The mission and purpose of the newly-minted **LOST TOWNS PROJECT INC. (LTP)** is to promote, facilitate, and enable the preservation, discovery, academic study, appreciation, and stewardship of public and privately-owned cultural resources, historic structures, and archaeological sites in Anne Arundel County, the State of Maryland and the Mid-Atlantic region by supporting the technical, scholarly, and intellectual work of academics, professionals, and students. *Lost Towns Project Inc.* is administered by a volunteer three-person Executive Board (including President Sherri Marsh Johns, Treasurer C. Jane Cox and Secretary Janis Markusic). Since its formation just 6 months ago, the new LTP organization has hit the ground running!

- LTP helped the Gibson Island Historical Society in an exciting archaeological project on Romany Rd.
- LTP assisted the AACo Public Schools with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming, which uses the science of archaeology to engage students-- this included hosting more than 300 seventh-graders at the Wilson Farmstead archaeological site in October!
- LTP will support the Galesville Community Center in 2015 as it hosts an exhibit called "Hometown Teams: How Sports Shaped America." This cooperative project brings together the *Smithsonian 'Museums on Main Street'* program, the *Maryland Humanities Council*, the *County Recreation and Parks Department*, Students from South River High school, the *Four*



Dr. Al Luckenbach peers eagerly down a shovel test pit at Pig Point

Rivers Heritage Area, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and the Citizens of Galesville as they celebrate and explore the legacy of the "Galesville Hot Sox", an African-American sandlot ball team that began playing at the Wilson Field in 1926.

- LTP began administering a 2-yr long State-supported project in November that will continue the research on the Pig Point Complex. Additional excavations and special studies will be undertaken, LTP will host a professional conference, and ultimately LTP will assist in the publication of a book on one of the most important prehistoric sites on the East Coast.

The Lost Towns Project, Inc. welcomes your project ideas on how we can continue the legacy begun more than 20 years ago! Drop us a line at projects@losttownsproject.org.

of the electric railroad service proved to be problematic on one of the earliest continuously operated tracks in the country, however. Two fatal accidents in the first three months of its operation gave the former A&E line the dubious honor of having the first automatic electric signaling system ever designed and installed.

The WB&A Electric Railroad Co. went bankrupt during the Great Depression, and the railroad was shut down and sold for scrap in 1935. Since then, the railroad has been all but forgotten except by a few dedicated historians and railroad enthusiasts. Institutional interest in the railroad has been rekindled due to the Generals Highway Corridor Project, and reveals surprisingly little physical evidence to suggest that trains thundered through the corridor for almost 100 years.



Crownsville Station, at the intersection of Crownsville Road (back left) and Fairfield Loop Road (back right) as it appeared in the late 1950s; the Episcopal church in the background still stands (Photograph Courtesy of Anne Arundel County Government).

CALL FOR ARTICLES!



This newsletter from Anne Arundel County's Cultural Resources Division welcomes submissions from professionals, non-profits, and avocationalists alike!

Subject material can range from simple announcements about local preservation/archaeology events to a report on your research in local history, architectural history, cultural landscapes, cemeteries, or archaeology.

Submit articles to pzpoul44@aacounty.org



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