

# ASM Ink

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



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

## A rewarding visit across Chesapeake Bay

By Zachary L.F. Singer

*State Terrestrial Archeologist - MHT*

The 2022 Annual Tyler Bastian Field Session in Maryland Archeology investigations confirmed that a Caroline County site (18CA261) contained well-preserved, artifact rich, mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> Century archeological features related to Barwick's Ordinary and the Melville's Landing complex.

A 1779 deed and a 1783 patent both place the tavern and home of James Barwick at the precise spot of 18CA261. The tavern was part of a small complex known as "Melville's Landing" that served as the first county seat for Caroline County



from its founding in 1774 until its relocation to Denton, or "Edenton," in 1790 (except for some short-lived removals to the Greensboro area).

Melville's Landing appears to have consisted of a large tobacco-prizing warehouse (which served as the courthouse), a storehouse that was converted to the county jail, a landing, a ferry across the Choptank, the ordinary and likely some outbuildings.

Field Session excavations focused on sampling archeological features at 18CA261, which had been found over the course of two summers in 2019 and

2020 by MHT archeologists who carried out an extensive remote sensing survey at the site.

Magnetic susceptibility and fluxgate gradiometry suggested prior human modification and subsurface deposits filled with metals. Ground Penetrating Radar revealed the presence of a square cellar, a large rectangular cellar, and other structural features suggestive of a substantial architectural complex.

Excavations primarily focused on sampling the square cellar "Feature 3" and the large rectangular cellar "Feature 5". Interesting artifacts found in these features include large sherds of a feather-edged creamware plate that were recovered from Feature 3 and a large fragment of a Whieldonware plate with dot, diaper, and basket weave design that was found in Feature 5.

Artifacts from more Colonial occupations at 18CA261 and the surrounding landform were also discovered. Diagnostic artifacts included Late Woodland triangular projectile) and ceramics. A drilled megalodon tooth was an exciting and unanticipated find.

The Field Session took place from May 20-30, first held on the Eastern Shore in 20 years. Julie Markin of Washington College directed the excavation team, which included nearly 50 ASM members, Washington College's summer archeology field school, MHT archeologists and many local volunteers.

Overall, the field session was a great success. ASM members contributed greatly to the archeological investigations. Markin and her archaeology crew will continue studying the artifacts and features investigated to learn more about the Colonial-era seat of Caroline County.

## Time to cast your ballot in this year's ASM election

Get your ASM voting out of the way so you can concentrate on the U.S. midterm election. The ballot appears only with this copy of the newsletter. It will not be repeated. Don't lose it. Read it. Examine it. Space is provided for write-ins. Then mail the ballot to:

Myron Beckenstein  
3126 Gracefield Rd., Apt 106  
Silver Spring, MD 20905.

Be sure to mark the envelope **ASM** so it will be recognized as a ballot and not just another credit card offer.

To be counted, ballots must be postmarked by Labor Day. But, why wait? Take care of it now and have more time to worry about something else.

## Upcoming events

**August 27:** Workshop in Archeology, Crownsville

**September 10:** Board meeting.

**October 1:** ASM annual meeting. Marshy Point, Baltimore County

**Nov. 4-6:** ESAF annual meeting, Shippensburg, Pa.

## Volunteer opportunities (non-covid)

The following volunteer opportunities are open to CAT participants and other ASM members:

**ASM Volunteer Lab, most Tuesdays:** The lab in Crownsville. Contact Zachary Singer at [Zachary.Singer@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.Singer@maryland.gov) It is currently working on the Maiden's Choice collection, which is a late 18th to early 19th Century dwelling in Washington County

**The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center** seeks participants in its Citizen-Scientist Program in archeology and other environmental research programs in Edgewater. Field and lab work are conducted Wednesdays and on occasional Saturdays. Contact Jim Gibb at [jamesggibb@verizon.net](mailto:jamesggibb@verizon.net)

**Charles County for lab and field work** volunteers, contact Esther Read at [ReadE@charlescountymd.gov](mailto:ReadE@charlescountymd.gov)  
For more information, contact Carol Cowherd at [ccasm2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccasm2010@gmail.com).

**The Anne Arundel County** Archaeology Program and the Lost Towns Project welcome volunteers in both field and lab at numerous sites. For diggers, the Linniston site on Gibson Island Fridays from 8 to 3. The lab will be open some weekdays at the Anne Arundel collection facility at 7409 Baltimore-Annapolis Blvd. in Glen Burnie. For more information email Drew Webster at [volunteers@losttownsproject.org](mailto:volunteers@losttownsproject.org) or call 410 222 1318.

**UPAG/Howard County Recs and Parks** invites volunteers interested in processing collections and conducting historical research to contact Kelly Palich at [Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:Kpalich@howardcountymd.gov) or 410-313-0423.

**Montgomery County** for lab and field work volunteers, contact Heather Bouslog at 301 563 7530 or [Heather.Bouslog@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:Heather.Bouslog@montgomeryparks.org)

**Mount Calvert.** Lab work and field work. 301 627 1286.

**Jefferson Patterson Park** invites volunteers to take part in its activities, including archeology, historical research and conservation. Contact 410 586 8554.

**The Archaeological Institute of America** provides an online listing of fieldwork opportunities worldwide. Call up [www.archaeological.org/fieldwork](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork) to get started.

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

# Indian Head highway name change - maybe

By Dana Hedgpeth and Ovetta Wiggins

*Condensed from the Washington Post, June 9, 2022*

Gabrielle Tayac, a Native American scholar and historian, still remembers as a girl hearing from her father the oral history passed down in his family for over 100 years: How the town of Indian Head and the highway through it got named.

"He said, 'They killed our people and put their heads on spikes.'"

For Tayac, an associate professor at George Mason University, and others of the two Piscataway tribes in Southern Maryland, the name of Indian Head Highway — a 20-mile stretch of road that runs from Southern Maryland to the edge of the District — has long conjured up horrific images of a violent time for the Native Americans who once dominated the area.

So in this age of social justice and racial reckoning, it seemed like the right time to propose changing the name of the more than 80-year-old route — to Piscataway Highway to honor the Piscataway Conoy Tribe and the Piscataway Indian Nation, about 4,500 members and trace their roots in the area back centuries.

Tayac supported the effort by a fellow Piscataway, who got a veteran Maryland legislator to sponsor a bill that lawmakers passed unanimously and Gov. Larry Hogan (R) signed into law this spring.

But what seemed an easy win turned out to be riddled with troubles: The bill did not have the widespread support of Piscataway tribal leaders and members, and many supporters are now realizing that the wording of the legislation was faulty — so faulty that it was not really a win at all.

"This was meant as a good thing," said Lucille Walker, executive director of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area, which covers areas that are home to the Piscataways. "I think people in the government wanted to recognize the First People. The problem was the process."

For starters, Jesse Swann — an enrolled member of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe who identifies himself as chief and who mustered support for the name change — did not have the backing of some tribal leaders. Swann and a group of supporters got nearly 5,000 signatures in an online petition. He said he had tried for seven years to change the offensive name.

"A lot of people just thought the name was wrong," Swann said. "It's just bad for our tribe."

The bill had support — including from the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs — but Piscataways were split on the renaming.

Francis Gray, who identifies himself as the tribal chair of the Piscataway Conoy council, told The Washington Post the council did not support the way the bill was introduced and passed because he felt it was "fast tracked" and no one reached out to him or the tribal council leaders until the last minute.

Plus, he said, the "renaming of this highway has mixed support amongst our membership." Some were offended by the term "Indian Head," he wrote, while others were "concerned that the name change will erase references to 'Indian Headlands,' a term which was used in historical records to identify the Southern Maryland region where our people resided."

To further complicate matters, historians and tribal members say there are different versions of how the area came to be named "Indian Head."

Some Piscataways and historians cite the bloody past, while others point to the region's geography — a promontory jutting into the Potomac River.

The area was once the main territory of the Algonquian Indians, which includes the Piscataway tribe. The name Piscataway in the Algonquian language means "where the waters merge" and is a reference to the area where the Piscataway Creek and the Potomac River converge, according to Tayac.

In the early 1600s, the Piscataways numbered around 12,000 and included several interconnected tribes, whose land stretched from Point of Rocks, Md., along the Potomac River and around the Chesapeake Bay.

Owen Lourie, historian for the Maryland State Archives, said, "They're using the word 'head' in the name as a synonym for a coastal feature," Lourie said. Another map from the late 18th Century calls the area where Piscataways lived "Indian Land."

**Continued on next page**

In the 1890s, people moved to the town during the post-Civil War depression to work at the newly established Naval Proving Ground. The town of Indian Head was incorporated in 1920, and the first parts of Indian Head Highway were built in the 1940s.

In 2012, two groups of Piscataways — the Piscataway Indian Nation and the Piscataway Conoy Tribe — received recognition from the state of Maryland as official tribes.

Weeks after the legislation's passage, Swann and his supporters were surprised to learn the highway, Maryland Route 210, was not being renamed after all.

The bill did not call for a name change but instead said officials should "designate Maryland Route 210, as the Piscataway Highway," the Maryland Department of Transportation wrote in a March 11 letter to the House Environment and Transportation Committee, adding that the legislation did not "clarify the exact meaning of 'designate.'"

In other words, the road will still be called Indian Head Highway, although it will get two signs along part of it with the additional name of Piscataway Highway.

Jay Walker, the bill's sponsor, was disappointed with the outcome. "I don't think anybody expected it to be that way," he said. "The will of the legislative body was to rename Indian Head Highway to Piscataway Highway and that has not changed."

Changing the name of the road and the signs on it would have been a cumbersome, drawn-out and costly process, MDOT said, warning that it would involve replacing signs, reprinting maps and changing mailing addresses. A name change would also make it hard for emergency rescuers to find the road and would cause "confusion and potential costs with legal or real estate documents that reference a road name that no longer exists." MDOT said there was no estimate for the cost to rename the *road* because no one had asked for it.

In a letter to Maryland legislators, Swann said he and his supporters felt "bamboozled and defeated" that the name was not being changed. He vowed to push state officials to "get this hiccup taken care of."

## In Alabama's '19th Unnamed Cave,' art

**By Christine Hauser**

*Condensed from the New York Times, May 7, 2022*

The cave meanders for two miles under northern Alabama, with passages that veer into mysterious so-called dark zones, sediment deposits, a waterfall and deep pools. Ancient footprints are embedded in its remotest passage. The names of Union soldiers from the Civil War remain scrawled on a wall.

Stooped over because the ceiling was so low, Alan Cressler unclipped a light from his helmet on July 30, 1998, and raked the beam across the surface above him. The artwork of a fellow human being who lived many centuries ago came into view: possibly a bird, with a rounded head.

"Once I saw that, I am like, 'OK,'" Cressler, who now works for the United States Geological Survey, said in this week. "It gives me chills today to talk about it. I just recognized the immediate importance of it."

With an archeologist, an expert in 3-D photography and others, Cressler further explored the cave, known as the 19th Unnamed Cave, and its art over the years. This week, they published their findings in the journal *Antiquity*. The study highlighted the role of 3-D technology in uncovering art that was not initially visible to Cressler over 20 years ago, when he was pressed so close to the ceiling that he could not see the full array that radiated in all directions above him.

Jan Simek, an archeologist with the University of Tennessee and a co-author of the paper, said the cave art was among the largest found in North America, deep in a dark zone where natural light could not reach.

Using radiocarbon dating and analysis of pottery shards, the researchers estimate that the art dates to the Middle and Late Woodland periods, or between 500 A.D. and 1000 A.D., when farming, hunting and gathering gave way to food production and sedentary life in the region.

There are figures with human features, a coiled snake with a tail rattle and forked tongue and a 10-foot-long serpent winding its way across the expanse. Some incorporate the features of the ceiling into their design, such as the serpent that appears to emerge from a natural fissure.

"It is highly detailed," Simek said. "It covers an acre of surface area on the ceiling. The glyphs are in a single chamber, but the cave goes on."

Since cave art was first documented in North America in 1979, Simek and Cressler have been studying what is known as dark-zone cave art, which involves exploring passageways unreachable by natural light.

The cave documented in 1979 in Tennessee, contained mud drawings, 750 to 800 years old, depicting pre-Columbian Native American religious themes, the Antiquity study said. Since then, it said, 89 other pre-Columbian cave-art sites have been identified in southeastern North America. The earliest is nearly 7,000 years old, but most of them date from 800 A.D. to 1600 A.D.

Some are on private property, and those findings are kept secret to keep the area free of vandals. Others are on public lands, including in Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. Some can be reached only by boat because rivers have risen to entrances that were once accessible by land.

The use of 3-D modeling in Alabama's 19th Unnamed Cave "promises a new era of discovery of ancient cave art" because it reveals images that could not be perceived otherwise, the researchers said in their study. The technique has been used elsewhere, such as to create a replica of the art in the Lascaux caves in France, but not as much in searching, as Simek said, "to see if there are things we can't see."

The researchers used a technique called photogrammetry, in which a camera inches along a track, taking overlapping images that are then stitched together using software. It creates a seamless representation that highlights even the finest engravings in the mud, said Stephen Alvarez, a founder of the Ancient Art Archive and a co-author of the study. He was responsible for the 3-D work in the 19th Unnamed Cave.

More than 16,000 overlapping photographs produced the map of the cave's known art.

The method is useful because the uneven features of a cave ceiling can throw shadows that obscure delicate lines in the art. Cressler said those features complicated his early attempts to document the work with a camera.

Ancient artists had no technology, or opportunity, to see the big picture. Unlike with rock art, which is out in the open, artists inside the chamber could not step back and ponder their work-in-progress from a distance.

"The makers of these images couldn't see them in their totality except in their mind," he said. "That means they had an idea of what they had to draw and to move around while they did it."

Simek said the project's work with Native American collaborators helped interpret the cave's possible relation to the supernatural.

Dustin Mater, a Chickasaw citizen and artist who works with Alvarez's archive, said themes and images from the cave art were similar to those he had learned about in tales from tribal elders, such as cave portals to the underworld and a winged humanlike figure armed with a war mace.

## Deepest shipwreck found 4 miles deep

By Adela Suliman

*Condensed from the Washington Post, June 26, 2022*

The long-sought wreckage of the USS Samuel B. Roberts, a World War II U.S. Navy destroyer escort that sank nearly 78 years ago, has been found off the Philippines, explorers have announced.

The vessel, now broken in two, lies at a depth of around four miles, the deepest shipwreck yet discovered. That's deeper than Mount Kilimanjaro is tall, or 18 times the height of the Empire State Building.

The wreckage was identified and surveyed by American explorer Victor Vescovo, founder and sub pilot of Dallas-based Caladan Oceanic Expeditions, alongside Britain-based EYOS Expeditions.

"Resting at 6,895 meters (22,621 feet), it is now the deepest shipwreck ever located and surveyed," Vescovo later tweeted. The Caladan Oceanic and EYOS group conducted six dives over eight days searching for shipwrecks. The group is now on its way to Guam to begin further expeditions in the Western Pacific.

## For your summer reading, Agatha Christie

*Condensed from Agatha Christie.com*

Agatha Christie met husband Max Mallowan on an archeological dig in 1929. Their partnership would lead to plenty of incredible trips, as well as a huge dose of inspiration for the bestselling author. In this reading list

we explore how the topic of archeology, and the time Christie spent on dig sites with Mallowan influenced her fictional and autobiographical works.

*From the first she took a full part in every one of Max's excavations in Syria and Iraq, enduring discomforts and finding comedy in all such disasters as an archeologist is heir to.*

-- **Jacquetta Hawkes, Introduction to *Come, Tell Me How You Live***

*Murder in Mesopotamia* 1936

Our first book is perhaps most directly influenced by her experiences, the narrative is set on a dig site and the victim is the wife of an archeologist. This is a Poirot story, but our narrator is one Nurse Amy Leatheran, who is at the site to watch over Dr. Leidner's fearful wife, Louise. Whilst her fellow camp dwellers believe she is imagining the threat to her life, Amy is disposed to learn the root cause of her patient's paranoia. But she doesn't have long to get to know 'Lovely Louise' who is found dead in her room. Fortunately, Hercule Poirot is returning from a case in Syria.

*Death on the Nile* 1937

This favorite travel mystery was inspired by a trip Christie took to Egypt, where she gathered historical and geographical details which she would use to bring the story to life. By the time we board the steamer, Linette and Simon who are honeymooning together, with the discarded Jackie in hot pursuit. Even the stunning historical backdrop to the trip cannot distract the new Mrs. Doyle from the imminent threat, and it won't be too long before Poirot and Colonel Race will have a murder to solve.

*Appointment with Death* 1938

The book begins with undoubtedly one of Christie's best opening lines: "*You do see, don't you, that she's got to be killed?*" Overheard by Poirot, this pronouncement kicks off this tense family mystery. The story starts in Jerusalem, where the Boynton family's sightseeing is limited to the capabilities of their elderly, demanding step-mother, Mrs. Boynton. In Petra when tragedy strikes, fellow travellers are left with plenty of reasons why the old woman might have been killed, but it is up to Poirot to solve this difficult case.

*Death Comes as the End* 1945

Set in Thebes in 2000BC, this is Christie's only novel that isn't set in contemporary society. Her interest in the historical period was a result of husband archeological work, but it was the notable Egyptologist Stephen Glanville who challenged her to write a book set in this time. Christie readers will be familiar with the set-up of this mystery, even if the context is different.

*Come, Tell Me How You Live* 1946

Christie's archeological reminiscences. Travel with Agatha and Max through five varied seasons of their digs from the 1930s. Christie reveals with her charming sense of humor, both the excitement and the everyday life she experienced. From the Khabur River to the settlement mound of Chagar Bazar, the ancient Tell Brak to the city of Raqqa, the narrative takes us through Syria (Mesopotamia) and the incidents and acquaintances of their time there.

*They Came to Baghdad* 1951

Espionage, secrets and undercover dealings abound in this pacy adventure story. As the book begins we are following Richard Baker, a man more interested in artifacts than people, and Victoria Jones, a bored typist with a thirst for adventure. Baghdad is the location of a top-secret meeting between the countries concerned about a new weapon. The only British agent with concrete information about the weapon turns up dead in Victoria's hotel room. What has she become mixed up in, what will she do next?

*Destination Unknown* 1954

Another fantastic espionage story with an engaging heroine at the helm, this book took inspiration from Christie's own experiences of travelling the world (as well as the assemblage of people she met on her trips). A missing scientist is being hunted by his wife, and a cousin by marriage. Thomas Betterton can't have simply disappeared, can he?

*An Autobiography* 1977

Always an insightful read, Agatha Christie's Autobiography offers plenty of information about the trips which led to her meeting Max, as well as their life together.

## Chapter news

### Central Chapter

All Meetings will be held on Zoom the third Tuesday of every second month. For more information and to be added to the Zoom list contact: Katharine Fernstrom at [kwfappraising@gmail.com](mailto:kwfappraising@gmail.com)

### Charles County

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday (September-May). The next few will be virtual. Contact President Carol Cowherd at [ccasm2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccasm2010@gmail.com) for Zoom access information. Website [ccarchsoc.blogspot.com](http://ccarchsoc.blogspot.com) and Facebook [@ccasm2010](https://www.facebook.com/ccasm2010)

### Mid-Potomac

Until further notice, all meetings will be by Zoom starting at 7p.m., with the presentation at 7:30. For up-to-date information, including links to Zoom meetings, check our Chapter website at [www.asmmidpotomac.org](http://www.asmmidpotomac.org) or contact Don Housley at [atdonhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:atdonhou704@earthlink.net) or 301-424-8526.

### Monocacy

Meetings are at 7 p.m. Community Room of the C. Burr Artz Library, 110 East Patrick Street, Frederick . For more information, visit the chapter's web page [masarcheology.org](http://masarcheology.org) or call 301-378-0212. No meetings in July or August.

### Northern Chesapeake

A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Dan Coates at 410- 273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake>

### St. Mary's County

Meetings are the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Joseph D. Carter State Office Building in the Russell Conference Room, Leonardtown. For information contact Chris Coogan at [Ccoogan@smcm.edu](mailto:Ccoogan@smcm.edu)

TUESDAY, July 12: ASM president Claude Bowen will talk about the changing role of the avocational archeologist. Public is invited. Note day change.

### Upper Patuxent

Meetings the second Saturday or Sunday of the month, virtual or at the Heritage Program Office, 9944 Route 108, Ellicott City, unless otherwise noted. [www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Upper-Patuxent-Archaeology-Group/464236446964358) or [www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com](http://www.upperpatuxentarchaeology.com) or call Kelly Palich, 410 313 0423.

### Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Fellowship Hall, 211 S. Lee Street in Cumberland, unless noted. Contact Roy Brown, 301-724-7769. Email: [wmdasm@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com)  
Website: <http://tinyurl.com/wmdasm>



**The Archeological Society of Maryland Inc. is a statewide nonprofit organization devoted to the study and conservation of Maryland archeology.**

ASM members receive the monthly newsletter, ASM Ink, the biannual journal, MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10-percent discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Ethan Bean, 765-716-5282 or [beans32@comcast.net](mailto:beans32@comcast.net) for membership rates. For publication sales, not including newsletter or journal, contact Dan Coates at ASM publications, 716 Country Club Rd., Havre de Grace MD 20178-2104 or 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net)

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