

58th Annual Spring Symposium on Archeology

Presented by the

Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.,

Saturday, April 20, 2024

At

The Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville, MD 21032-2023

8:30-9 am Registration, Coffee

9:00-9:15 am Welcome

9:15-9:50 “13,000 Year Old Artifacts in 50 Year Old Cigar Boxes: New Insights from the Maryland Fluted Point Survey”

Presented by: Zachary Singer

Abstract: Avocational archaeologists have discovered the vast majority of fluted point sites in Maryland. Recent studies of collections generated by avocational archaeologists have brought to light many fluted point sites from across Maryland. This presentation provides an overview of the newly recorded Paleoindian sites documented by the Maryland Fluted Point Survey.

9:55-10:30 “Florida Paleoindians: Why much of what we know is preserved underwater”

Presented by: David Thulman

Abstract: Because of its unique hydrogeology, climate, and significantly lower sea levels at the end of the Pleistocene, most of the evidence for Paleoindians in Florida is found in underwater contexts. In this talk, I’ll discuss several underwater archaeology projects that have uncovered Paleoindian interactions with extinct fauna and rare organic artifacts that typically do not survive in land sites, including an unambiguous pre-Clovis site. Using some cutting-edge technologies, several ongoing and proposed projects are designed to push our understanding of early human occupation in Florida further offshore and into the past.

Coffee Break until 10:50

10:50-11:50

The 2024 Richard E. Stearns Memorial Lecture

The Richard E. Stearns Memorial Lecture is named in honor of Richard E Stearns (1902-1969), curator of the Department of Archeology at the Natural History Society of Maryland for more than 30 years. Mr. Stearns located numerous archeological sites in the Chesapeake area, and carefully documented his surface and excavated finds. He published numerous archeological articles and several monographs, and donated his collection to the Smithsonian Institution. A commercial artist by profession, he was nonetheless a pioneer in Maryland archeology, instrumental in recording much of Maryland prehistory.

Presented Remotely via Google Teams

Paleoindian Use of Normanskill Chert across the Northeast

by: Jonathan Lothrop

Abstract: Across northeastern North America, the archaeological literature routinely reports Paleoindian artifacts at fluted points sites made of toolstone from distant geologic outcrops sources. This suggests that between circa 13,000 and 11,600 years ago, Paleoindian peoples across the Northeast routinely engaged in extensive seasonal mobility as one aspect of their hunter-gatherer lifeway. Likewise, available evidence for eastern New York suggests that Paleoindian fluted point groups heavily exploited Ordovician Normanskill chert outcrops in the Hudson Valley. To more rigorously evaluate evidence for Paleoindian seasonal mobility involving a single source, we conducted a geologic sourcing study of fluted point sites where artifacts of Normanskill chert were reported. Using X-ray Fluorescence, we compared archaeological specimens to geologic samples of Normanskill chert, tentatively linking artifacts of this toolstone at 15 fluted point sites across the Northeast to the West Athens Hill source outcrop in the Hudson Valley. This research confirms the extensive transport of this tool stone across the Northeast, for example, moving as much as 350 km to the Higgins site in Maryland. We followed this sourcing research with a GIS terrain analysis to model the potential pathways that Paleoindian groups may have followed in transporting this chert from West Athens Hill to destination sites. Taken together, this geologic sourcing and GIS research supports notions of extensive Paleoindian mobility in the Northeast and provides insights into how these early peoples traversed the Ice Age landscapes of the region.

Lunch 12:00-1:00

1:00-1:40 “History in the Marsh: How One Headstone in the Woods Led to the Discovery of a Domestic Site.”

Presented by: Daniel Dean

Abstract: Marshy Point Nature Center and Park is located in Chase, Maryland. Positioned in the Upper Bay along the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, the land has a rich and diverse history. The presentation and discussion will go over the acquisition of the park land, the initial knowledge obtained by the county, and the development of the research about a late 18th century headstone located on the land. The focus of the presentation entails the life of the woman who was nearly forgotten. She was brought to light due to the mystery behind the spelling of “Cassandor” which created dead ends to those who attempted to discover the individual. Once it was revealed that “Cassandra” was the person interred, the puzzle pieces fell into place along with her importance to the property itself. Within the research, certain clues began emerging into the historical footprint Cassandra’s family has left on the State of Maryland. We will discuss the substantial status of her family’s namesake, Bond, and economic decline into the early 19th century as the property went to other well-known members of Baltimore County. We will see how the area transitioned from a homestead to a recreational hunting ground, and back to the home of many. We will view the progression of an archaeological site found close to the cemetery aptly named, “Cassandor Hamilton” 18BA623.

Student Spotlight

1:45-2:20 “3D Osteological Type Collection Website”

presented by: Kaydee Anderson

Abstract: There is a gap in archaeology regarding the availability of accessible type collections and reference guides for identifying osteological specimens. Current reference guides are limited by being two-dimensional representations of three-dimensional objects and lack precise scale. To address this, we are creating a website hosting a database of three-dimensional specimens for comparison and identification. We are currently in the process of scanning mammal and bird bones from the Middle Atlantic region, which are then uploaded to the website. Users will have the ability to digitally rotate and dimension individual specimens. The website will be open-access, user-friendly, and aimed at enabling archaeologists to conduct their research more efficiently. This project is ongoing as we are continually expanding our database and updating the website.

Kaydee is a first year Graduate Student in the M.A program at George Washington University.

Coffee Break Until 2:45

2:45-3:45

The 2024 Iris McGillivray Memorial Lecture

Iris McGillivray was a founding member of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc., ably serving the Society for over thirty years as Secretary, President, Newsletter Editor, Field Session Registrar, and Membership Secretary. She is perhaps best known, loved, and respected for her organization of the annual Spring Symposium, first held in 1965, arranging all aspects of the day-long program. In 1991 Iris was presented with the Society's William B. Marye Award to honor her services to archeology in Maryland.

“Jasper Ridge’s (44WR506) Potential Contributions to Paleo-American Studies: A History of the Interpretations”

Presented by: Mike Johnson

Abstract: In the 1970s Bill Gardner (Catholic U.) and Charlie McNett (American U.), did extensive and intensive research at Flint Run Complex (Thunderbird) in Virginia and Shawnee Minisink site at the Delaware Water Gap in Eastern Pennsylvania, respectively. They launched many former students as gainfully employed archaeologists across the Middle Atlantic. Many specialized in the Paleo period. This presentation covers one of their student’s cognitive model-building trajectory relevant to interpreting the Jasper Ridge Paleo site and beyond. It will cover the beginning with Bill Gardner and Thunderbird; through more than 33 years as Fairfax County’s Senior Archaeologist; the McCary Fluted Point Survey; successful excavations at the Cactus Hill Pre-Clovis age site and resulting successful predictive model (dissertation). It will follow with Smith Mountain and Thoroughfare gaps, and Jasper Ridge. It will end with thoughts on two related Clovis and Pre-Clovis age models targeting Maryland’s Eastern Shore.
