

September
2026

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Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.



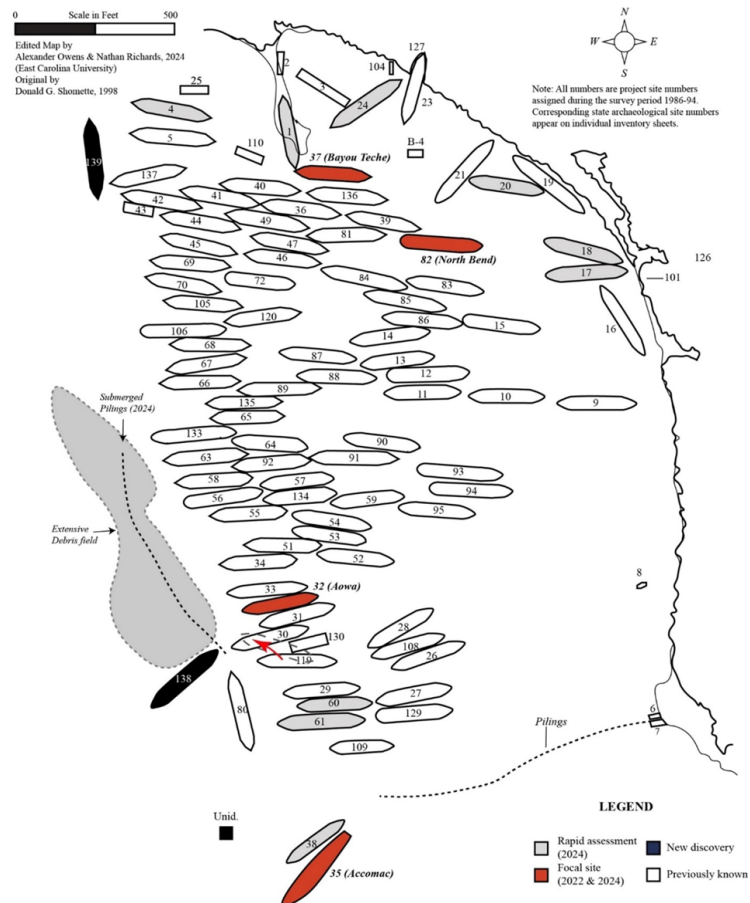
Shipwrecks Rediscovered in Mallows Bay

Dr Nathan Richards (Program in Maritime Studies, East Carolina University)

Dr Susan Langley (Maryland Historical Trust, retired)

Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary has the distinction of being the largest wooden ship graveyard in the Western Hemisphere, as the remains of over 100 vessels sit in the bottom sediments of the bay. Most of these ships, referred to as the “Ghost Fleet,” were built for the U.S. Emergency Fleet between 1917-1919 as part of America's engagement in World War I. Their construction at 189 shipyards in 26 states reflected a massive wartime effort that drove the expansion and economic development of communities and related maritime services.

Although nearly 300 ships were built, the war ended before the fleet was complete. Some of them carried cargo to Hawaii and elsewhere, but none made it to the theater of war. To date, over 100 vessels have been archaeologically identified, and new wrecks are being discovered regularly as more surveys are undertaken (Figure 1). In 2014, MHT designated the area the Mallows Bay-Widewater Historic and Archaeological District, and in April 2015, the National Park Service recognized the area's national significance by listing it on the National Register. The U.S. Shipping Board Emergency Fleet made important historic contributions: it led to the

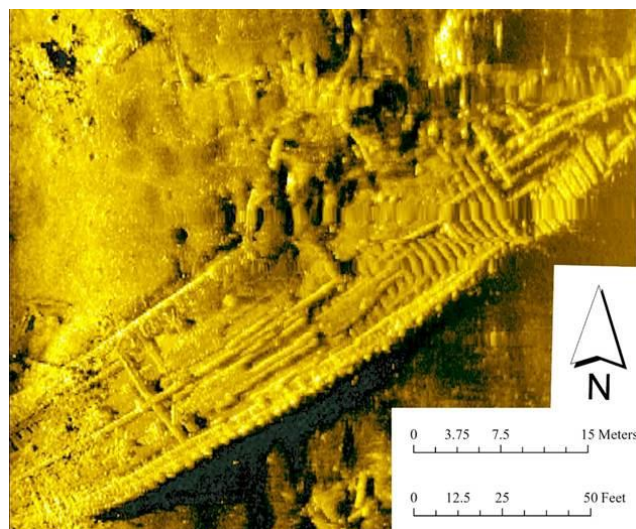


formalization of the American Merchant Marine; it resulted in the development of the infrastructure that pushed America to the forefront of shipbuilding for the 20th century, and with the breaking of the fleet, it made a significant contribution to the livelihoods of residents during the Great Depression. In addition to this, the fleet is still making important contributions to our understanding of its history and of its present environment. The work of East Carolina University exemplifies the role the Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary plays as a research laboratory.

Areas of the present-day sanctuary were documented in the late 1990s by Donald G. Shomette, whose account demonstrated that at least 137 maritime archaeological sites lie in the vicinity of Mallows Bay. Shomette's inventory was critical in the establishment of the Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary in 2019 (a collaboration between NOAA, MHT, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Charles County, Maryland), which now protects and interprets the remnants of World War I-era wooden steamships as well as other nationally significant maritime history and Indigenous heritage dating back nearly 12,000 years to the Piscataway peoples.

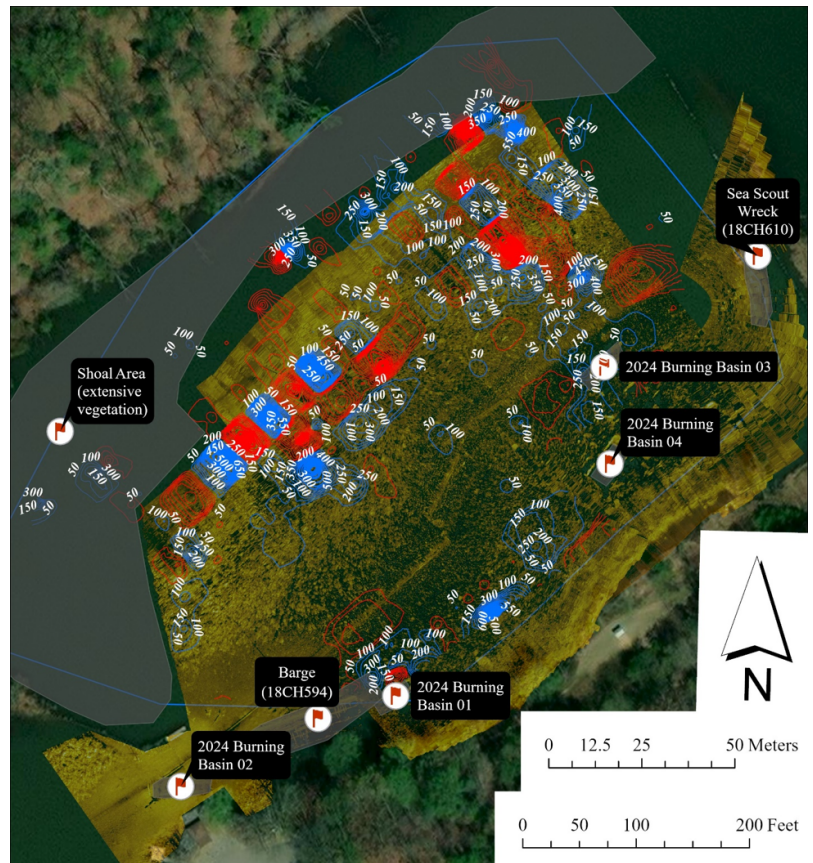
In the fall of 2024, an East Carolina University (ECU)-led field school supported by NOAA's Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary (MPNMS) and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) rediscovered several shipwrecks within Mallows Bay. The shipwrecks were located by faculty, staff, and graduate students, who focused on recording the ships *Aowa* and *North Bend* and inspecting nine additional Emergency Fleet Corporation (EFC)-era (First World War) shipwrecks. The rediscovery of sites occurred while using high-resolution side-scan sonar (to show seabed structures) and a marine magnetic survey (using a magnetometer, which records disturbances caused by buried iron) during instructional activities.

The archaeological remote sensing activities uncovered two areas with undocumented shipwreck sites. Most prominent of these are two previously unrecorded Emergency Fleet ships abandoned in waters outside of the presently defined western extent of the large assemblage of approximately 88 WWI-era hulks. The new sites (each approaching 300 feet long) are largely intact and sit closer to the main channel of the Potomac River. The names of the new ships are currently unknown (Figure 2).



With so many maritime archaeological sites already known in Mallows Bay, ECU teaching staff expected to use the field school opportunity to teach students how to use technology to define areas of debris around known shipwrecks. The rediscovery of complete WW1-era shipwrecks mere feet away from known sites tells us that Mallows Bay still has many secrets to reveal.

The second area surveyed is known as the “Burning Basin;” an area carved out at the mouth of Marlow Creek by Bethlehem Steel for shipbreaking purposes in 1942-1943. The survey demonstrated that a large collection of co-mingled burned ships now lies along a transect of the basin, with a significant amount of iron present. At least 11 EFC vessels were sent to the area in the 1940s for “complete demolition,” with new magnetometer-derived maps showing significant disturbance to the background magnetic field. These magnetic disparities occur in areas correlating with aerial photos of shipbreaking in 1943. New data demonstrates that salvage activities left significant amounts of metal behind (Figure 3).



These discoveries only occurred due to the ability of the ECU archaeologists to deploy sophisticated remote sensing technology not available to Shomette three decades ago. Most of the previously examined sites in Mallows Bay emerge from water at times of low water, with the new sites always submerged (they cannot be detected in historic aerial photos). In addition to the discovery of these new ships, newly imaged barges, unidentified riverbed sites, debris fields, and submerged infrastructure evidence (e.g., lines of submerged pilings), were recorded. Nature has transformed these shipwrecks into an ecosystem that supports a variety of plants and animals and captivates visitors. The sanctuary’s mission is to protect this diverse collection of historically significant shipwrecks and Indigenous heritage and act as a living laboratory for people of all ages to learn about its resources and connected ecosystem. The sanctuary embodies

a synergy of history, culture, and nature, providing a truly unique experience. There is something for everyone, whether you prefer to walk the shore, view wildlife, fish, or paddle the waters. Additionally, the sanctuary helps protect these fragile historical resources while promoting recreation and tourism, economic development, and education and research partnerships.

Further Reading:

Langley, Susan B.M.

2025 *Managing the Mallows Bay WWI Emergency Fleet*, in, Jennifer Jones, Calvin Mires, and Daniel Zwick (eds.), pps. 259-280, *The Intertidal Shipwreck: Management of a Historic Resource in an Unmanageable Environment*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

Maryland Historical Trust

2013 *Maryland Submerged Archaeological Historic Property Act* (Annotated Code of Maryland: State Finance and Procurement Article), §§5A-301, 5A-339, 5A-340, and 5A-341.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

2019 *Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary Designation: Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final Management Plan*. NOAA: Washington, DC.
2025 15 CFR 922, Title 15, Subtitle B, Chapter IX, Subchapter B, Part 922, Subpart S, Appendix A.

Richards, Nathan, Allyson Ropp, Erin K. Field, Maggie O. Shostak, Meredith Cox, Ian Shoemaker, & Taylor Picard

2025 *Interdisciplinary Shipwreck Studies at Mallows Bay: A Synopsis of East Carolina University's Research on the Potomac River (2019-2024)*, *Maryland Archaeology* 58(1&2):8-30.

Shomette, Donald G.

1994 *The Shipwrecks of Mallows Bay: An Historic Overview – Mallows Bay, Maryland Submerged Cultural Resources Survey*. Prepared for the Maryland Historical Trust. Prepared by The St. Clements Island-Potomac River Museum, Colton Point, MD.
1996 *Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay: And Other Tales of the Lost Chesapeake*. Tidewater Publishers, Centreville, MD.
1998 *The Shipwrecks of Mallows Bay: Inventory and Assessment – Mallows Bay, Maryland Submerged Cultural Resources Survey*. Prepared for the Maryland Historical Trust. Prepared by The St. Clements Island-Potomac River Museum, Colton Point, MD.
2013 *The United States Shipping Board Fleet at Mallows Bay, Maryland: Inventory and Assessment*. In *The Archaeology of Watercraft Abandonment*, Nathan Richards and Sami Kay Seeb, editors, pp. 99-118. Springer Press, New York, NY.

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Board Notes:

Lynne Bulhack, ASM Trustee-At-Large

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) archaeological artifact processing laboratory is a busy place of discovery, a potpourri of research questions, and a place where archaeologists, lay volunteers, and students learn from one another. This past summer's MHT 2026 intern was Daniel Fellman who graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland in 2025. Daniel's student research paper, Understanding Chert, took top honors at the 2026 Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC). Moving on, he will pursue an M.A. in Applied Archaeology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

In the MHT lab this summer Daniel introduced us to another of his research interests, The Old Copper Culture. Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, Isle Royale and parts of Wisconsin have the worlds largest deposits of almost pure (95%-99%) elemental copper. It is unusually malleable. Utilitarian copper tools and mining pits spread across Wisconsin and Michigan have been known to geologists, explorers, and settlers since the mid 19thC. At that time, folks thought Vikings, European, or Eurasian people were the early metal workers of the Great Lakes. It was unthinkable that "primitive, savages" of North America could mine copper and manufacture beautiful, functional tools. The Old Copper Culture was formally recognized, named, and radiocarbon dated in the 1940's and 1950's. In 1954 Willard Libby, inventor of radiocarbon dating, tested carbon from burials containing Old Copper Culture grave goods and published two dates pushing the Old Copper Culture deep into the Archaic period; roughly 3,650 B.C. and 5,650 B.C.

Wisconsin is my home state. I recall visiting Copper Falls State Park in Northern Wisconsin where mosquitoes are the size of helicopters and large, rough copper boulders lie mute on the forest floor. Searching for more information about the Old Copper Culture I purchased David Pampeani's self-published book Great Water. David Pampeani grew up in Erie, Pa. holds a PhD in geology and environmental science and became interested in the ancient mining pits, copper tools recovered throughout the Great Lakes region and The Old Copper Culture timeline. He knew the earth's largest pure copper deposits were found around North America's Great Lakes. As a geologist, he was familiar with soil coring research that reconstructed ancient landscapes and wondered what sediment cores from lake beds in the area of ancient, abandoned mine pits would tell him.

In 2013 Pampeani published a paper in Environmental Science and Technology proving that sediment cores extracted from small lakes near Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula and Isle Royale detected lead and titanium pollution from ancient indigenous copper mining. A paper published in The Holocene, 2015 showed that copper mining on the Keweenaw Peninsula of Michigan and Isle Royale in Lake Superior began 9,500 years ago. So, it was not Vikings, visitors from the Middle East or Near East who mined copper and crafted utilitarian tools during the Archaic period in the upper Great Lakes. The Milwaukee Museum has more than 1,500 artifacts from the Old Copper Culture.

Upcoming Events

Third Annual Summit of Maryland Indigenous People and Archeologists

September 11, 2026 - 9am - 4pm
Hanover, MD

ASM Board Meeting

September 12, 2026 - Virtual

Workshop in Maryland Archeology

September 26, 2026 - 9:00 am, Maryland Historical Trust in Crownsville, MD
Dr. Julia King will deliver the keynote

ASM Annual Meeting

October 10, 2026 - Josiah Henson Museum and Park, Bethesda, MD

Paleoamerican Odyssey

Santa Fe, New Mexico

October 14-17, 2026

[Center For the Study of the First Americans](#)

American Indian Heritage Day

November 7, 2026 at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum

93rd Annual ESAF Meeting

November 11-15, 2026, Norwalk, CT

Two ASM Board Votes

The ASM Board voted to provide analysis funds of \$3,500 (and an additional \$2,000 from an anonymous donor) for Radiocarbon Dating of Middle Woodland Mockley sherds collected at the Bulhack Site 18ST729, Point Lookout State Park. This project is led by Danielle Knight. All project members were recused from voting

In addition, we approved an additional large donation to the Illuminating Ice Age Diets. With this \$14,000 contribution, Dr. Zac Singer will be able to further his work on this topic. Look forward to hearing more about the project and its results.



CAT Graduate!

Please plan to join us at the MHT Workshop in Archeology. Not only do they have a fabulous line up of presentations and Dr. Julia King will deliver the keynote, we will present another CAT Graduate at that meeting! See you there!

The Maritime Heritage Grant Program is now OPEN!

The Maritime Heritage Grant Program, administered by Preservation Maryland in collaboration with the [Maryland Department of Natural Resources](#) (DNR), provides direct assistance to promote the preservation of Maryland's irreplaceable maritime heritage. From fertile farmland to bountiful waters, Maryland's history is intrinsically linked to the Chesapeake Bay, and this unique and diverse maritime story deserves to be told in its entirety. A competitive grant open once a year, the Maritime Heritage Grant Program will provide much-needed support to serve the historic preservation needs of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The Maritime Heritage Grant Program is open to applications from non-profit organizations and instrumentalities of the state, counties, and municipalities engaged in maritime heritage preservation, interpretation, and conservation. Private property owners are not eligible for funding. This grant program is designed to support educational and preservation projects that promote Maryland's maritime heritage. Funded activities include capital and non-capital projects.

For FY25, the Maritime Heritage Grant Program will have \$200,000 in funding available, supported by the Waterway Improvement Fund. Grants range from the minimum award of \$10,000 to the maximum award of \$50,000. As this is a competitive grant program, submitted applications do not guarantee approval for full or partial funding.

For more information, visit: www.PreservationMaryland.org/MarylandMaritime.

There you'll find a copy of the Program Guidelines, Criteria & Scoring Rubric, and the application. The [application](#) deadline is Friday, October 3, 2025.

Want to learn more? Join us for one of our virtual sessions to get more information about this grant opportunity:

[Wednesday, August 19, 2026 @ 6 PM](#) - Virtual Info Session

This will be a webinar presentation providing an overview of the program, followed by a Q&A.

[Friday, September 4, 2026 @ 12 PM](#) - Virtual Office Hours 1

[Tuesday, September 15, 2025 @ 12 PM](#) - Virtual Office Hours 2

These will be unstructured, drop-in discussions and Q&A where attendees can ask specific questions about program eligibility and completing the application.

Questions? Contact Christiana Limniatis 410-685-2886 x302 or CLimniatis@presmd.org

ASM's FY 2027 Budget

Each spring the ASM Treasurer develops an annual budget which is presented to Board of Trustees for the upcoming calendar year. Upon approval of the budget the Treasurer is authorized to meet those obligations. Below is the approved budget for fiscal year 2027 which runs from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Thank you to Cathy for all her work on this and the board for approving.

**ASM Budget
Maryland Fiscal Year 2027
July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027**

Estimated INCOME SOURCES:

Membership Dues	\$5,175
Donations Received	\$15,000
Field Session	\$7,009
MD Archeology Month Donations	\$7,210
2024 Field Session Grant (Preservation MD – Cresaps)	\$10,000
2025 Field Session Grant (Preservation MD – Teague's)	\$10,000
2025 Workshop	\$247
2026 Symposium Revenue	\$250
T-Shirts	\$480
Interest	\$779

Estimated Total Revenue	\$56,150
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Estimated EXPENSES:

Insurance	\$1,003
Donations Made	\$2,007
New Project Grants	\$20,000
Analysis Fund Grants	\$6,000
Non-Employee Compensation	\$9,435
Awards	\$509
Field Session	\$5,783
Hospitality	\$1,423
Membership Dues Paid	\$35
Grant	\$900
Subscription	\$1,070
Symposium	\$1,300
MD Archeology Month Printing	\$3,477
Sanitation	\$195
T-Shirts	\$526
Postage, Supplies, Tablecloth	\$222

Total Expenses:	\$53,885
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Total Revenue over Expense:	\$2,265
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Maryland Archeology Past Portraits

Henry Chandlee Forman

(1904-1991)

“Henry Chandlee Forman’s involvement with Maryland archeology spanned over 50 years. Dr. Forman pioneered excavations at St. Mary’s City beginning in 1936, investigated other historic archeological sites in Maryland, served on the first Maryland Advisory Committee on Archeology, and was an Honorary Member of the Archaeological Society of Maryland, Inc. Society members will remember him at Society functions for his sincere, outgoing manner and interest in each individual’s activities.

He frequently attended the monthly meetings of the Mid-Shore Chapter, and he visited Annual Field Sessions and other Society archeological projects on the Eastern Shore. Although he is perhaps best known in Maryland today for his books on early homes, his professional career was that of an educator and architect. Born in New York City in 1904, he received degrees from Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania before moving to Easton to establish private practice in architecture specializing in residences, churches, and historic restorations. He left Easton in 1935 to serve successfully as chief architect for the Jamestown (VA) Archeological Project, first editor of the Historic American Building Survey, and a career as art teacher culminating as professor and head of the art department at Agnes Scott College in Georgia.

While teaching in 1942, he received the first Doctor of Fine Arts degree awarded by the University of Pennsylvania. He studied there under noted anthropologist Frank Speck, an experience which included field work among the Pamunkey Indians in Virginia. Dr. Forman was a Carnegie Foundation fellow in creative painting in 1947, and his artwork has been widely exhibited at major institutions. He also wrote poetry.



Dr. Forman traveled widely, studied folk art in Mexico and fine arts in Europe, and lectured for the State Department throughout the world on American Indian contributions to art.

His life experience culminated in the reconstruction of a 1670 home, *The Ending of Controversie*, that he discovered on the Eastern Shore. This served as a studio and museum and was later moved to the grounds of the Historical Society of Talbot County.

His numerous books are noted for his photographs and drawings, many of which are the earliest record of important historical buildings. His most recent book, *Early Buildings and Historic Artifacts in Tidewater Maryland*, published last year, records many of his archeological finds. A more personal account of his archeological investigations in Virginia and Maryland was published in the September 1986 issue of *Maryland Archeology*.

Dr. Forman was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and the Explorer's Club. He was co-organizer and first curator of the Historical Society of Talbot County. Among his many awards is an honorary Doctor of Literature degree from St. Mary's College of Maryland, the Calvert Prize for historic preservation in Maryland, and the American Institute of Architects Presidential Award for Historic Resources for a lifetime of scholarship on art and architecture. His life and achievements are detailed in the Spring 1991 issue of the Historical Society of Talbot County Newsletter.

He was author and editor of at least 15 books, including *Tidewater Maryland Architecture and Gardens* in 1956 and *Maryland Architecture: A Short History from 1634 through the Civil War* in 1968 (Bastian 1980:4, 1991, ASMIInk, November 1981:4, In Memoriam, Bastian ASMIInk: May 1991: 7&8, Obituary, Easton Star-Democrat, March 21 1991, and Maryland Historical Magazine Spring 2015:4-5). Princeton Alumni Weekly. Princeton Class of 1926, NYT Obituary, March 23, 1991.

Past Portraits is a project to document the stories of people who have contributed to archeology in Maryland. This series highlights personalities that have contributed to archeology in Maryland over time. ASMIInk will publish excerpts from this series over time.

-- Stephen Israel (Archaeology of Eastern North America, Vol,48 (2020))

Chapter News

Central Chapter

Central Chapter meetings are by Zoom only. Katharine Fernstrom sends the link to the email group. Stay tuned for more details. For more information and to be added to the Zoom list contact Katharine Fernstrom at katharine.fernstrom@marylandarcheology.org

Charles County

Meets in person September through April at the Community Room of the LaPlata Police Department in LaPlata, MD on the third Thursday of the month. Email ccasm2010@gmail.com for more information.

Eastern Shore

Dates and events are on the chapter's website ([ASM Eastern Shore](#)), Facebook page ([Eastern Shore Maryland Archaeology](#)) and Instagram (@esmdarch). For more information, email esarcheology@gmail.com or jmrkin2@washcooll.edu

Calendar is here: bit.ly/ASM-ES and events are open to members and nonmembers. To be added to our social media updates, email esarcheology@gmail.com.

All events are open to anyone who wants to attend!

Open lab at Washington College: Contact Julie Markin at jmarkin2@washcoll.edu.

Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month from September through June. In-person meetings begin at 7p.m. for the business meeting followed by a presentation at around 7:30. The chapter meets at the ADU Showroom, 8501 Grovemont Circle, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. Please contact Don Housley for directions, if necessary.

Pizza will be available before the in-person meeting starting at 6:30pm for \$6 per person. If virtual meetings are necessary, they will be via Zoom with the business meeting also starting at 7 p.m. and the presentation around 7:30. Contact Don Housley to RSVP for pizza by 12 noon on the day of the meeting and for virtual Zoom meeting codes.

September 17, 2026: Zac Singer, MHT's Terrestrial Archeologist, will talk on the results of the Paleo Point blood protein analysis.

ASMIInk September 2026

October 15, 2026: Don Housley, chapter president, will speak on the 2026 Field Session at Teague's Point.

For up-to-date information concerning meetings, please contact [Don Housley](#), 301-424-8526, check the [Mid-Potomac Chapter Website](#) or send an email to: asmmidpotomac@gmail.com.

Monocacy

For information contact: monocacyarcheology@gmail.com (mailbox monitored intermittently) or call Jeremy Lazelle at 301-471-8433.

Northern Chesapeake

A business meeting at 7pm and is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Locations vary. Contact Dan Coates at 410-808-2398 or dancoates@comcast.net

Western Maryland

Programs are held the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 pm at the **History Discovery Center at Blue Spring at 400 N. Mechanic Street, Cumberland, MD**. Unless noted. Chapter email: wmdasm@yahoo.com

Meeting announcements are sent also to CTN; WFWM, and the Oakland Republican.

Contact Us

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, publication notice of 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, ethan.bean@marylandarcheology.org, for membership rates.

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