



County Archaeology Collections Exhibit (CACE) Project Grant Funded by Preserve America

On September 27, 2010, The Maryland Archaeological Conservation (MAC) Lab at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (JPPM) and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) received a \$27,623 grant from the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS) through the Preserve America grant program, for a project entitled the County Archaeology Collections Exhibit (CACE) Project. The CACE project will create two public exhibitions, scheduled to open in 2011, that will bring archaeological objects held at the MAC Lab back home to their “County” of origin. Project partners include the St. Mary’s County Public Libraries and the Washington County Historical Society.

As part of this project, objects excavated in St. Mary’s and Washington Counties will be brought out of storage at the MAC Lab into public view along with interpretive materials and programs that will aid the public in understanding the rich messages of archaeological materials. In some instances, this will be the first time that the public will have an opportunity to see and understand this archaeological evidence.

“These exhibits provide us with a wonderful opportunity to showcase some of the state’s most important archaeological sites,” stated Patricia Samford, Director of the MAC Lab. “The lab holds more than eight million objects in trust for the citizens of Maryland. Here is an instance where the Lab, the Trust and county representatives are working together to assist the public in appreciating the importance of these historical resources.”

The first of the two CACE exhibits opened at the St. Mary’s County’s Lexington Park Library in February 2011, with the Washington County exhibit opening later in the year on June 15th, as a key element of the Washington County Historical Society’s centennial celebration. Public programs were created around these exhibitions with the assistance of the MAC Lab staff and representatives of the Archeological Society of Maryland and the Council for Maryland Archaeology.



Washington County’s Historical Society Exhibit opened on June 15, 2011.

What is **Archaeology?**

Ever wonder what life was like 100...
1,000... or even 10,000 years ago?

Ask an archaeologist!

Archaeologists uncover stories buried
by time, even when no written record
exists. Archaeologists learn about
the past by studying the things people
left behind – from the smallest nail
to the grandest palace.



Why are Artifacts **Important?**



Have you ever lost a penny or a button?
Coins, letters, drawings, and even house
foundations can be important pieces
of the puzzle that tells us about the past.
In the future, the object you lose today
might be used by an archaeologist to help
understand life in 21st-century Maryland.



How Do Archaeologists **Know Where to Dig?**



Any place people live or work, they leave behind traces of their lives. Before ever picking up a shovel, an archaeologist searches books, maps, and other kinds of documents for likely places to dig. They then head outside to hunt for clues at ground level, perhaps finding an old house foundation or fence line suggesting archaeology underfoot!

Why Do Archaeologists **Dig So Slowly?**

Excavating a site is more than just digging. Archaeologists excavate slowly, soil layer by soil layer, noting, photographing and measuring the location of each artifact they uncover. Discovering an arrowhead is interesting – knowing the arrowhead was lying next to deer bones and a cooking hearth tells us even more about what happened at the site. Recording the exact location and context of an artifact is as important as finding the artifact itself.



Pottery and oyster shells in an 18th-century trash pit.



DISCOVER THE PAST



DISCOVER THE PAST



People have lived in Maryland and Washington County for thousands of years. One way to learn about the people who used to live here is by studying the objects they left behind...



Washed



Labeled



Catalogued/Stored

During an archaeological excavation, thousands of artifacts may be found, each one offering a small window into the past. The challenge lies in understanding the stories they hold. Long after the digging is done, the work continues in the laboratory as archaeologists analyze and interpret the artifacts they found. Although some artifacts are beautiful or interesting in their own right, the goal of archaeology is to understand the people who made and used the objects. Artifacts help us understand when people lived at a site, what they ate, who they traded with and much, much more.



What happens to Artifacts Once the Digging is Done?

Museums and other institutions care for and store archaeological artifacts so they will be available for future generations to study and see them in exhibits like this one. In Maryland, the primary repository for archaeological artifacts is the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory (MAC Lab) at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum in Calvert County. All the artifacts on display in this exhibit are from the MAC Lab collections. Interested in seeing more artifacts? The MAC Lab encourages the public to schedule a tour of the facility and collections.



WASHINGTON COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY....

COME INSIDE AND DISCOVER
THE BURIED
HISTORY OF OUR COMMUNITY



You can learn a lot about life in Washington County from archaeological sites and artifacts. Investigate the sites, artifacts, and stories described here by opening the drawers below...

Trash or Treasure

The Reiff Site

One man's trash is another man's treasure. This is certainly true for an archaeologist. Open the **top drawer** in the case below and explore how these pieces of discarded broken pottery helped archaeologists better understand the shopping habits and ethnicity of the tenants living at the Reiff site during the first half of the 1800s.

Pottery



Aerial view of Fort Frederick

Artifacts from
Fort Frederick

Life Behind the Walls

Fort Frederick

Life in the military is not always battles and bombardments. Sometimes it is replacing a lost button or sitting down for a cup of tea. Explore what life was really like inside the walls of Fort Frederick during the French and Indian War by opening the **middle drawer**.

Story Written in Stone

The Mt. Aetna Site

Stone tools such as arrowheads are the most common artifacts found at Native American sites. We often think of stone tools as unsophisticated, but it actually takes a skilled craftsman to form a tool from rock. Open the **bottom drawer** to learn the role the Mt. Aetna site played in the manufacture and trade of stone tools in western Maryland.

Stone Tools

Life Behind the Walls at Fort Frederick

Built to protect the frontier during the French and Indian War, Fort Frederick served as an important staging area and supply post, especially during the 1758 campaign to capture Fort Duquesne in what is now Pittsburgh. Although no battle was fought at the fort, artifacts such as musket balls and gunflints carry the echo of war and speak to the conflict raging elsewhere. Still, these artifacts make up only a small portion of the objects found at the site. Pieces of broken china, buttons, and other everyday objects help archaeologists understand the daily lives of the soldiers and officers stationed on the Maryland frontier.



A view of Fort Frederick's imposing stone walls.



Ceramics

Artifacts at Fort Frederick also reflect the divided class structure found in 18th-century British military life. Taking formal tea was an important part of being a British officer, but was a ritual in which enlisted men did not participate. As a result, only a few broken teacups and saucers were found at the fort. Most of the pottery discovered at the site was everyday tableware used by the fort's larger population of enlisted men.

- 1. Tin-glazed earthenware plate
- 2. Locally-made slipped redware plate
- 3. English stoneware saucer
- 4. English stoneware teapot lid
- 5. German stoneware tankard
- 6. Chinese porcelain teacups



Bone Buttons

These bone buttons were carved from animal bone and were likely covered with cloth or string to make them easier to attach to clothing, as well as more fashionable. Soldiers or other individuals at the fort may have been making them to replace lost or broken buttons.



Personal Artifacts

- 7. Compass case & lid
- 8. Jaw harp
- 9. Buckles
- 10. Coins
- 11. Cufflinks
- 12. Fork
- 13. Scissors
- 14. Metal buttons

Reenactor Artifacts

Fort Frederick was purchased by the state in 1922 and turned into a park. During the summer, living history presentations featuring reenactors portraying French and Indian War-era soldiers offer visitors a taste of life on the 1750s frontier. These two buttons and lead-sleeved gunflint were lost at the site by reenactors.

- 15. Modern gunflint
- 16. Modern buttons



Barracks

In the British colonial army, enlisted men and officers had very different standards of living. Barracks at Fort Frederick were built to house 200 enlisted men, but could accommodate up to 400 soldiers at one time. The enlisted men's barracks were constructed in an open-bay style, leaving the soldiers very little privacy. By contrast, officers serving at Fort Frederick lived in luxurious conditions. In the officer's barracks, commanding officers were afforded private rooms.

Top Photo: Enlisted men's barracks
The east enlisted men's barracks at Fort Frederick.



Bottom Photo: Officer's barracks
Outline of where the officer's barracks at Fort Frederick once stood.

Military Artifacts

Although the fort never saw combat, the soldiers needed to be prepared with appropriate weapons and ammunition.

- 17. Bullet mold
- 18. Musket balls
- 19. Bullet mold
- 20. Gunflints
- 21. Lead shot
- 22. Ramrod thimble
- 23. Bayonet fragments

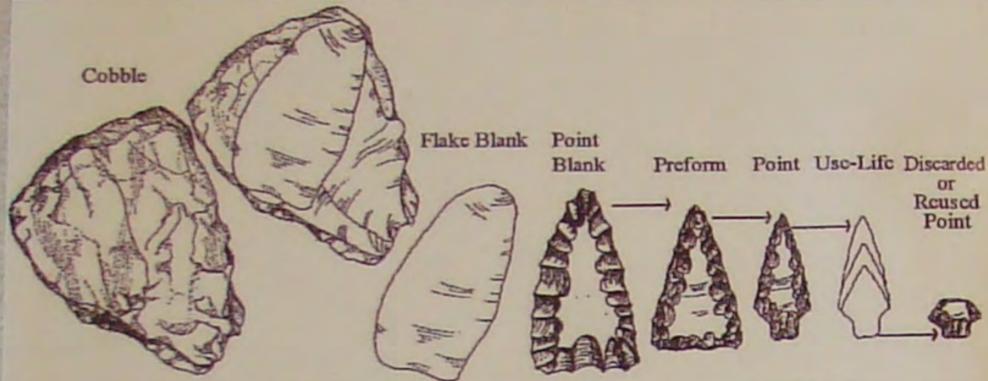


Story Written in Stone at the Mt. Aetna Site

We use tools every day without thinking much about where they come from or how they are made. Before the arrival of Europeans and commercially-produced tools, Native Americans made tools out of materials naturally occurring in the environment. Located at the base of South Mountain, the 2000-year old Mt. Aetna site was likely used as a seasonal camp by people traveling to collect a type of stone -- rhyolite -- at quarries located at higher elevations.

Flintknapping

We often think of stone tools as unsophisticated, but it actually takes a lot of skill to create a tool from a rock. Flintknapping is the process of removing stone flakes to make a rock into a tool, like a projectile point, knife, or axe. Reducing a rock from a cobble to a tool takes time and patience.



Artifacts found at the site suggest rock quarried in the hills was quickly formed into rough tool-like shapes for transport off the mountain. The Mt. Aetna site served as a midway point where the tools were refined before transport to settlements farther away.

1. Rhyolite sample from South Mountain
2. Biface formed from quarried rhyolite
3. Rhyolite projectile point formed from biface
4. Rhyolite flakes



You may notice that the stone tools in this drawer still have some soil on their surface. These tools were purposefully left unwashed in order to conduct the different scientific analyses mentioned below.

Neutron Activation Analysis

Several projectile points were broken by scientists to remove samples for neutron activation analysis, a technique used to determine where a rock was quarried. As science and technology advance, archaeologists continue to add new research methods to their own toolkit that offer endless possibilities for examining evidence invisible to the naked eye.



Blood Residue Analysis

Analysis of residues remaining on some of the stone tools revealed they were used to hunt or process deer and rabbit. Another tool came into contact with a cat (bobcat, lynx, or mountain lion); however, it is unclear if the animal was used for food or for its hide.

- A. Rhyolite projectile, point positive for cat
- B. Rhyolite biface, positive for rabbit
- C. Rhyolite projectile point, positive for deer



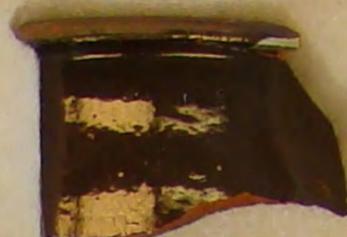
The Mt. Aetna site was excavated by archaeologists working for a cultural resource management company. The firm was hired to excavate the site in advance of road construction that would destroy it. Although a roundabout now sits at the location of Mt. Aetna, the view of South Mountain in the distance still shows the relation of the site to the quarries located on the mountain.

Trash or Treasure at the Reiff Site

What we throw out can say a lot about us. Broken pottery left behind by tenants living at the Reiff site, located near Cearfoss in Washington County, helped archaeologists not only understand rural shopping habits in the early 1800s, it also pointed to the Pennsylvania-German heritage of the residents. A combination of imported and locally manufactured pottery found during the dig suggests residents purchased specific types of pottery for different household purposes. Residents at the site preferred to use more fashionable imported whiteware at the table during meals. In contrast, vessels made of locally-produced plain redware were used for food preparation and storage. Slip-decorated redware may have been used as decoration or for special meals.



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Redware Sherds

Despite the availability of imported whiteware, residents at the Reiff site continued to purchase local redware for preparing and storing food. The preference for locally-made storage vessels may have helped the local pottery industry remain successful longer in the Hagerstown area than in other regions in the northeastern United States, where imported goods quickly pushed out local manufacturers.



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Whiteware Sherds

Most whiteware was produced commercially in Great Britain and imported to the United States. Although imported whiteware was sold in everything from teapots to chamberpots, residents at the Reiff site chose only to purchase tablewares, such as plates, bowls and tea cups.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Dipt ware jug | 5. Blue edged ware plate |
| 2. Dipt ware bowl | 6. Green edged ware saucer |
| 3. Red printed ware plate | 7. Painted ware teacup and saucer |
| 4. Red printed ware teacup | 8. Blue printed ware saucer |



1



2



3



4



8



7



Applying Slip: Slip is clay mixed with enough water to give it the consistency of heavy cream. It is poured from a small cup fitted with a turkey quill to create decorative designs on a vessel's surface. It could be combined with metallic oxides to make different colors.

Slip-Decorated Redware Sherds

A small number of slip-decorated redware vessels suggest at least one of the tenant households at the site was of Pennsylvania-German heritage. Many of the master potters in the region were of Pennsylvania-German descent and adopted new decorating techniques as the popularity of art pottery grew in the 19th century. Archaeologists believe the slip-decorated pottery may have held special value for the tenants and acted as a way to tie the residents to a cultural tradition. These vessels may have been used only as decoration or during special meals.