

**MARYLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARCHAEOLOGY  
(MACA)  
March 12, 2025**

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Ethan Bean, Stephen Brighton, Marian Creveling, Jane Cox, Don Housley, Bob Wall

**Staff in Attendance:**

Dixie Henry, Elizabeth Hughes, Susan Langley, Matthew McKnight, Anne Raines, Zachary Singer, Stephanie Soder, Scott Strickland

**The meeting called to order at 1:02 p.m.**

**Review of the December 11, 2024, MACA meeting minutes:**

The December 11, 2024, minutes were reviewed and accepted in a motion made by Jane Cox and seconded by Marian Creveling; the motion was passed unanimously.

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**Report from the Director — Anne Raines/Elizabeth Hughes**

Anne Raines noted that Elizabeth Hughes was caught up in another meeting and would be joining shortly.

Anne Raines provided an update from NCSHPO, and offered guidance on ways to document issues being caused by the withholding of HPF and federal grant funding.

Elizabeth Hughes joined the meeting and reported that MDP's operating and capital budget hearings have concluded, but noted that MHT will not know the result of the FY26 budget until the end of the legislative session on April 7, or possibly later if budget decisions are delayed until a Special Session of the General Assembly.

Elizabeth also relayed that there are multiple cemetery bills that have been introduced this session due to advocacy by the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites. MDP is not taking a position on these bills but has been asked to provide information to the Department of Legislative Services on the fiscal impacts on MHT operations in some cases. Bills include:

*HB509/SB354 – Maryland Inventory of Historic Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup – Establishment*  
This bill would create a fourteen member "Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites

Workgroup” which is to be staffed by MHT and include the Director of MHT as one of its members. Elizabeth provided an overview of the workgroup’s proposed responsibilities and noted that they would need to submit a report to the Governor on their activities and outcomes by 12/1/2025.

*HB724/SB631 – Commission on Abandoned and Neglected Cemeteries – Establishment*

This bill creates a Commission on Abandoned and Neglected Maryland Cemeteries within the Office of Cemetery Oversight consisting of 15 individuals. Duties of the Commission include, among other things, developing and establishing a statewide inventory of cemeteries and burials in the state with a searchable database, developing and implementing policy recommendations relating to historical cemeteries with a concentration on abandoned or neglected cemeteries, and creating cemetery management and maintenance training materials and certificate programs for incarcerated individuals.

*HB1003/SB624 – Relocation of Human Remains - Authorization Process*

This bill would require a person seeking to relocate human remains from a burial site to apply for approval for relocation with the Office of Cemetery Oversight before seeking authorization from the State’s Attorney. The person is responsible for prominently posting notice of the request at the burial site in a form approved by the OCO, public notice of the proposed relocation which contains information about the reason for relocation and the location of the existing burial site, etc. MHT offered an amendment to the bill that would allow the OCO to issue exemptions to the publication requirements for archaeological study. This amendment is needed to protect sensitive archaeological sites and ensure that the locations of burial sites where looting could be a concern are not publicized.

In addition to these bills, MHT provided testimony in support of *HB794 – Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs – Indian Heritage and Culture Grant Program and Fund*. This bill establishes the Indian Heritage Culture Grant Program and Fund and authorizes the governor to annually appropriate up to \$500,000 in support of capital projects that will support grantees in carrying out Indian tribal and cultural activities, the provision of services to Indian tribal communities, and the preservation of buildings, communities and sites of historic and cultural importance to the Indian experience in the State. The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) will partner with the Maryland Department of Planning in the development and administration of the Program.

Ms. Hughes also reports that MHT is closely monitoring the federal appropriations process, potential threats to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and how reductions in force at the federal level may directly or indirectly impact MHT operations over time.

## **Chief Archaeologist Report — Matt McKnight**

Dr. McKnight reported that all of the FY2025 Historic Preservation Non-Capital grant agreements for archaeological work have gone out for final signature and approval. Currently MHT has fully executed agreements for 2 of the 4, and is expecting the others to be completed soon. Matt also reported that MHT will be transitioning to a new version of grant management software, which may present challenges for the FY26 grant round.

Matt reported that the Office of Archaeology staff have completed a draft *Standards and Guidelines* revision document that is being reviewed internally. It should hopefully go out to MEDUSA users and other external reviewers for comment in the next few months.

Matt reports that MHT anticipates completing consultation with the Delaware Nation regarding the Wye Ossuary remains in early May with reburial in a newly designated APR at that time.

Throughout February and March, archaeology staff have been working to upgrade and import all GIS data to ArcGIS Pro (cloud-based), from ArcMap (desktop). The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) will be shutting down ArcMap access in July on all state government computers.

Matt reports that MHT received 12 applications for the Summer Internship in Archaeology by the deadline of February 10. Staff met on Feb 25 and selected their top 5 candidates for interviews, which are scheduled throughout the end of March and beginning of April.

On December 18, Zac Singer, Stephanie Soder, Troy Nowak and Matt McKnight sailed to Heater's Island and attempted to re-locate the datums from the 1970 fieldwork. Ivor Gross' field notes suggest that there was a "plan" to replace wooden hubs with rebar or iron spikes. That appears not to have happened, but staff did locate a very rotted wooden stake lying on the ground near where Dennis Curry's reconstructions place the main datum. Based on the presence of an eroded gully, Matt reports that he's pretty confident MHT has recorded the correct location of the fort, but UMD test unit locations will only ever be approximate.

On January 17, Matt gave a presentation to Historic Kent Island, the Queen Anne's County Planning and Tourism departments, and the Kent Island Heritage Society on archaeology related to William Claiborne's 17<sup>th</sup>-century forts. There is now a project underway to look for Claiborne's forts as well as other early settlement sites on the island. MHT undertook a remote sensing survey at the Blue Heron golf course in the first week of March where some evidence of 17th/18th C. occupation was recorded in the MIHP in the 1990s. Matt has plans to survey a property to the north April 3-4, which may be associated with Crayford.

Matt reports that staff have been holding coordination meetings with Beau Lockhardt, Preservation Planner w/ Frederick County. Beau is attempting to revive the Monocacy chapter of ASM to help support the county's new regulations and mandate, and MHT is assisting by providing support for a fieldwork opportunity in June at Rose Hill Manor.

On Feb 27, Matt and Steph met with the ASM Field Session Committee at Maxwell Hall Equestrian Park, to discuss logistics for the 2025 Field Session. The Field Session will be held at the Teague's Point site (18CH1005) from May 23-June 2 and registration is already live on the ASM webpage.

Matt reports that currently, he is working on his Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC) presentation, and getting ready for next week's annual meeting. He'll be presenting on MHT's field research at the Cresap's Fort site in the Saturday morning session.

## **Underwater Activities Report —Susan Langley**

Dr. Langley relayed that Richard Brand, an Historic Preservation Officer at MHT from 1990 until 2009, passed away Sunday, March 2 and provided a link to his obituary for MACA members and staff who knew him.

Susan reports that MMAP submitted an application for the Maritime Heritage Grant Program to the National Park Service (NPS), but notes that given the present circumstances related to federal grant monies, an award would be surprising.

MMAP's annual submission to the Board of Public Works was passed without discussion.

In addition to the usual meetings, site visits and responses to citizen inquiries, MMAP participated in the response to the aircraft disaster on the Potomac and also sits on the USCG Executive Steering Committee for the Area Contingency Plan and the Geographical Response Subcommittee and the Exercise Planning Subcommittee. Susan noted that MMAP is the longest consistently serving agency on the Area Contingency Planning Committee.

MMAP staff are facilitating a small research project with the Institute for Maritime History on the Choptank River and for the archaeologists at Gettysburg to work with St. Mary's College to undertake an XRF study of lead bullets. Susan is working with Dr. Raymond Hayes to produce a publication of the flint/chert XRF study they undertook several years ago.

Susan stated that Troy Nowak made a presentation to the ASM Eastern Shore Chapter.

The Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group (BAREG) are undertaking the maintenance of the U-1105 buoy and will deploy it for MHT in April.

Susan will be teaching the Law & Ethics class for the annual Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society (MAHS) introductory course in Underwater Archaeology at the end of March.

Susan is scheduled to speak on a virtual panel for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in late May.

Susan sits on the Brewington Prize Subcommittee for the Maritime Committee of the Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) and the 2024 winner is *The Last Days of the Schooner Yacht America*, by David Gendell and Gary Jobson. This uses the history of the yacht that ended its days at a boatyard in Eastport as the vehicle to address the role this site played in WWII.

Susan reports that MMAP staff have field tested one boat for the season and are preparing to have some new equipment installed on the large survey boat including a winch for reeling in and hauling aboard the heavier survey equipment and having the new sub-bottom profiler installed on the vessel. This equipment will be field tested on the Chester River in an area where 7000-year-old artifacts have been recovered by watermen, with the goal of reconstructing the paleo-landscape and using it in assisting the assessment of the potential for the preservation of submerged and buried archaeological sites.

MMAP is hoping to undertake some photogrammetric studies of the Cox log canoe they have been documenting. Background research is being undertaken by a member of the ASV-Maritime Heritage Chapter. MMAP would also like to continue work at the Curtis Creek ghost fleet and to undertake site visits to fish weirs on the upper Potomac.

The co-managers of the Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary are NOAA, Charles County, the Dept. of Natural Resources, and MHT. This group is meeting tomorrow to learn more about the effects of recent federal actions with respect to NOAA, the NEPA work currently being undertaken, staffing and the Sanctuary Advisory Council as the latter's activities are currently "paused." East Carolina University has submitted its reports on the recent field school at Mallows, some of which was funded by

MHT. MMAP will continue to facilitate work being undertaken by two doctoral students (ECU and TAMU) and a master's student (ECU) in the sanctuary.

Susan is working to make more tags for the Shipwreck Tagging Archaeological Management Program (STAMP) and hopes to offer trainings in late March and/or April.

### **Terrestrial Activities — Zac Singer**

Between December and March, Dr. Singer reviewed two applications for Terrestrial Archaeology permits.

Zac reported that the MHT Volunteer Archaeology Lab has been regularly meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9AM-3PM. Lab days have regularly attracted 5 to 10 volunteers. The lab is processing the artifacts from the 2024 Field Session and preparing them for permanent curation at the MRCE. The lab is also working on processing the artifacts recovered from the Barton Deep Testing (PaleoDigger) excavations.

The Maryland Archeology Month (MAM) Planning kickoff meeting occurred on December 19th. It was decided that MAM 2025 should highlight Maryland's Indigenous ceramics. Topics discussed during Archeology Month will include ceramic cultural traditions across Maryland, pottery manufacturing techniques, replication experiments, and sourcing and residue analyses. The Theme tagline for MAM 2025 is *Clay, Temper, Fire: Exploring Maryland's Indigenous Ceramics*.

On January 17th, Zac visited the Ednor Soapstone Quarry with Montgomery County Parks and the Maryland Geological Survey to discuss collaborations for investigating and interpreting the quarry site.

On January 21st, Zac presented on the results of the Piney Grove investigations to the Oregon Ridge Nature Council.

On February 25th, Zac presented on the results of the PaleoDigger and geoarchaeological excavations for the Archeological Society of Connecticut.

On March 3, 4, and 6th, Zac participated in the remote sensing survey at Blue Heron Golf Course in Kent Island. Zac led the GPR data collection. Intriguing circular anomalies were encountered, which may be mill related.

On March 12th, Zac and Bob Wall will be presenting on research at the Barton site for a virtual lecture for The Archaeological Conservancy.

Zac will be attending the Annual Meeting of the Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference from March 20th-23rd. Zac will be presenting on the deep test excavations at the Barton site.

A follow up article on the Piney Grove excavation is slated to run in the *Baltimore Banner* on 3/13/25.

### **MAC Lab Activities Report — Scott Strickland**

Mr. Strickland reports that Dr. Patricia Samford will not be able to attend today due to an illness. Scott will provide an update on MAC Lab activities instead.

The MAC Lab expansion project is 81% complete and on or ahead of schedule, with an anticipated substantial completion date of late April 2025. The loading dock and the new isolation room are complete and the field processing room is almost completed. The siding has gone up on the exterior of the new curation wing and is currently being painted. Four weekly deliveries of compactible shelving are underway, with shipment 3 arriving on Tuesday March 18. The landscaping work around the new wing is underway. Subcontractors are finishing up work on the new fire suppression system and ductwork.

Scott reports that the official grant period for the *Witnesses of Wallville* project ended and staff completed the two volume final technical report on the project and submitted it to the NPS in late December. Twenty-one copies of the report have been printed and are currently being bound for distribution. The *Women of Wallville* exhibit at the Calvert Marine Museum will open on April 4th and remain up for 18 months. The funding request to Chesapeake Gateways for creating a long-term 1,000 square foot exhibit on the Wallville community for installation in the Exhibit Barn at JPPM is up in the air, given the current political climate. At the encouragement of Elizabeth Hughes, Rod Cofield, and others, the Wallville project staff wrote and submitted an Award of Excellence nomination for the American Association of State and Local History for the Wallville Project.

Scott reports that Public Archaeology registration is half full. Internship applications will be accepted through March 21. The program runs every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from May 1st through May 30th. This year's program will conduct work on a Black tenant farm occupied by the Straiten family, who worked for the Petersons before the property was sold to Jefferson Patterson. Testing there in late 2023 showed that the site contains significant evidence of occupation there as early as the early 19th century.

On March 26, lab staff will pick up the Middle Plantation Mareen Duvall site collection from the William Doeckens family. Mareen Duvall was a French Huguenot that settled in Anne Arundel County in the 18th century and William Doeckens, the owner of the property excavated the site in the 1960s and early 1970s, consulting with professional archaeologists to guide his work. He prepared a report on the site and the artifacts (over 200 tomato boxes and 11 bushel baskets of bulk material) have been in the basement of the main house since the work took place. The Doeckens family approached the lab in early December about serving as the curation facility for the collection. Staff visited the Doeckens Farm in mid-December and created a box inventory, assessed conservation needs and have been working with the family on a deed of gift for the collection.

A 51-box collection will be coming March 20th for a data recovery at the Newman site, 18AP39.

William and Mary student John Henshaw borrowed a 25-box collection from Rosenstock and Walker Village, while also returning items loaned from Biggs Ford.

MAC Lab digital archivist, Hannah Wells, has completed digitization of old NEH project sites with thousands of records and slides. She is now tackling the Addison site, which has over 3,000 slides to digitize. The Lab has received a new large format scanner that is good for digitizing X-Rays and fragile oversized maps/plans. Hannah has also worked with Greg Brown in developing and testing a new Curator's Choice development website, which will go live very soon.

MAC Lab staff continue to work with Greg Brown and Mary Kate Mansius (MHT) on revamping the Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland project, which will be renamed Diagnostic Artifacts. The new site will be mobile device friendly and will be searchable through the use of tags. We are currently on track for a summer 2025 launch.

Scott relayed that with the completion of some construction tasks in the main conservation space, the lab is back to taking in revenue generating projects. The lab's largest external client project at this time is

James Madison's Montpelier, which experienced a fire last April. Arianna Johnston is separating artifacts from melted plastic bags and recovering their context information.

Sara River-Cofield and Nichole Doub staffed a table at the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) meetings to promote the lab – the MAC Lab monogrammed toothbrushes were a big hit!

The lab re-advertised for the vacant conservator position since the applicants of our choice declined to take the job. The lab just received the list of candidates from the second round of posting. Unfortunately, we will have to post the position a third time for another 4 weeks.

MHT staff and staff of the MCAAHC's working group to determine how to repatriate ancestral remains of African ancestry to lineal descendants or local communities continues to meet monthly. The group is working to get the four sets of ancestral remains from the Deep Creek Cemetery in Anne Arundel County reinterred in June. The group is currently seeking information on labs that conduct ancient DNA testing at the request of the MCAAHC.

Sara Rivers-Cofield recorded a podcast for the NPS George Washington Birthplace on clothing in the 18th century. In addition to talking about clothing and clothing related artifacts, she promoted the MAC Lab and collections access.

Discovering Archaeology Day will take place at JPPM on Saturday April 12th from 11 AM to 4 PM.

Scott hosted a UMD class on Piscataway History at JPPM in December.

Scott designed Maryland Archaeology Month materials with suggestions and help from Zac.

The MAC Lab received the Mark E. Mack Community Engagement Award at the SHA Annual Meeting.

## **Review and Compliance Activities Report — Dixie Henry**

Dr. Henry reports that the Project Review and Compliance Unit continues to successfully fulfill its Section 106 responsibilities, complete reviews, and provide technical assistance to program customers via conference calls, virtual meetings/site visits, in-person site visits and meetings, and participation in interagency working groups.

Project review submittals remain at a steady volume – in the past 3 months (December, January, February), the PRC unit reviewed a total of 1,637 state and federal projects – nearly 600 more than the previous 3-month period. 89 Determinations of Eligibility (DOE's) were also completed in those 3 months.

The PRC Unit is still down a person (Archaeologist/Preservation Officer). PRC still has their triage strategies in place to keep handling the workload and provide good customer service. Everyone is taking on more projects, determining which projects need to be prioritized, limiting the number of meetings and site visits, etc. The vacant position was posted for 4 weeks and closed on March 3. The selection committee is now reviewing the 123 applications.

Dixie has attended multiple monthly and quarterly interagency meetings to facilitate agency coordination, including: MDE/COE JE meetings and the MDOT SHA quarterly meeting, as well as coordination

meetings with DNR, MTA, FEMA, USFWS and the NPS. Site visits to Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge and Monocacy National Battlefield to discuss upcoming projects and visit resources that may be impacted.

Some of PRC's bigger projects (large-scale, complex, or those receiving a lot of public attention) include the Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study, Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project, and the Annapolis City Dock Flood Mitigation project. Dixie reports that she has a consulting parties meeting this afternoon with FEMA, the Advisory Council, City of Annapolis, and other consulting parties to discuss the possibility of drafting a programmatic agreement for the City Dock project.

PRC staff are coping with the changes resulting from the National Energy Emergency Executive Order. They are reaching out to federal agency partners such as the Corps of Engineers. MHT is prepared to facilitate the expedited 7-day reviews of projects that are subject to this EO and to provide any helpful support or guidance that they may need from MHT. The Corps has responded, stating that there is, "significant pressure to move the permit process expeditiously for a series of energy projects...being tracked closely by Corps HQ....The Corps appreciates your understanding and flexibility...."

## **Synthesis Report — Stephanie Soder**

Ms. Soder reports that the Archaeological Synthesis database was updated on February 25, 2025 and resulted in 16 new sites being added.

Calvert, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties are complete. The post-2023 reports for St. Mary's County are now underway. The next database update is penciled in for August 13, 2025 to keep up with the 6 month schedule.

Steph is currently working with CRIM to create a Medusa layer for both the professional and the public synthesis database sides. No updates yet but we hope to be working on it soon once the new Medusa update has been completed by CRIM.

Steph accepted the final report for East Carolina University's Mallows Bay project, which was a FY2023 non-capital grant. They also recently submitted their final project report and final disbursement, which is currently under review. That grant should be closed soon.

The Scouting America Merit Badge workshop will be hosted on April 26 and May 3-4 at the Teague's Point site. So far there are 10 scouts signed up.

Steph will be presenting on the Teague's Point site at the MAAC Conference next week.

Steph reports that staff have secured permission from four landowners to conduct survey related to the Rochambeau grant project being funded by NPS – two at or near the Deer Creek Meeting Friends House and two at or near Cummings Tavern. The Deer Creek Meeting House survey is scheduled two weeks from today, March 26. The Cummings Tavern work is set for July. Firm dates TBD.

Steph also reports that we have received permission from Harford County government to conduct a visual survey at a parcel that is supposed to be the location of an early 18th century mill owned by the Deer Creek Mission. This survey is slated for April 9.



Steph has been taking training courses for commercial operation of a drone. She takes the final exam on March 14.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of MAC Lab Box Fee Increase — Scott Strickland**

Scott provided a brief description of the curation box fee, its purpose, and its history. The curation box fee is a one-time fee per box to offset the initial costs of curation of archaeological collections transferred to the MAC Lab. It has been over 6 years since we have evaluated the need for another increase. The salary of the MAC Lab's Collections Assistant is the only expense charged to the curation box fee fund. From FY2015-FY2024, the total collected box fees averaged \$25,000 annually. The cost of the Collections Assistant position in FY26 is projected to be \$65,000 with fringe and benefits. For the past three fiscal years (FY23, FY24, FY25), the lab has requested assistance from the MHT Board to fund the position. This money helped offset the cost of the salary, while also allowing the curation box fee fund to grow. At present, there should be enough money to fund the position in FY26 without the need to request additional Board funds, but we will likely need to return to the Board for assistance in FY27.

Since the MAC Lab opened in 1998, the collections have more than doubled in size, as has the demand for collections access, both for on-site research and loans for research and exhibit, has also grown. At present, there is only one permanent full-time staff member dedicated to the nine million State-owned artifacts, which represent 90% of the collections curated at the MAC Lab. The Collections Assistant position is invaluable in assisting with all aspects of collections management and without it, MAC Lab Collections program will not be able to meet its responsibilities. Unless or until this position is made permanent, we have no choice but to continue to rely as much as possible on the curation box fees to fund the position. The more raised from these fees, the less the lab will need to request from the MHT Board.

The lab is proposing to raise the curation box fee from \$600 to \$800, an increase that is paced to keep up with inflation.

After brief discussion, Stephen Brighton stated that he supported the increase, but with the caveat that the MAC Lab explore alternative funding scenarios to keep the cost of the box fee low while still retaining the Collections Assistant position.

Stephen Brighton moved to support the proposed increase to the MAC Lab box fee from \$600 to \$800. Bob Wall seconded. The motion passed with 5 members voting for and one member voting against the increase.

**Selection of Next Meeting Date** — Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 1:00 PM in the MHT Executive Conference Room (or virtually).

With no other business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:17 PM, in a motion made by Jane Cox and seconded by Marian Creveling; the motion was unanimously approved.