



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN542

Site Name: Pyles Historic

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Possibly Early Woodland isolated find; Mid-Late 17th century refuse pit or house site

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 38.9381

Longitude -76.5522

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 12 m

Site slope 0

Ethnobotany profile available Maritime site

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Topography

- Floodplain
- Hilltop/bluff
- Interior flat
- Upland flat
- Ridgetop
- Terrace
- Low terrace
- High terrace
- Rockshelter/cave
- Hillslope
- Unknown
- Other
- Shoreline

Ownership

- Private
- Federal
- State of MD
- Regional/county/city
- Unknown

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Spring

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 61 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Archaic site

MD Adena

Early archaic

Early woodland

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

Late archaic

Late woodland

Contact period site

ca. 1820 - 1860

ca. 1630 - 1675

Y

ca. 1860 - 1900

ca. 1675 - 1720

Y

ca. 1900 - 1930

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

ca. 1780 - 1820

Unknown historic context

Unknown prehistoric context

Unknown context

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American

Asian American

African American

Unknown

Anglo-American

Other

Hispanic

Y

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component

Misc. ceremonial

Village

Rock art

Hamlet

Shell midden

Base camp

STU/lithic scatter

Rockshelter/cave

Quarry/extraction

Earthen mound

Fish weir

Cairn

Production area

Burial area

Unknown

Other context

isolated find

Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural

Domestic

Homestead

Farmstead

Mansion

Plantation

Row/townhome

Cellar

Privy

Industrial

Mining-related

Quarry-related

Mill

Black/metalsmith

Furnace/forge

Other

Transportation

Canal-related

Road/railroad

Wharf/landing

Maritime-related

Bridge

Ford

Educational

Commercial

Trading post

Store

Tavern/inn

Military

Battlefield

Fortification

Encampment

Townsite

Religious

Church/mtg house

Ch support bldg

Burial area

Cemetery

Sepulchre

Isolated burial

Bldg or foundation

Possible Structure

Post-in-ground

Frame-built

Masonry

Other structure

Slave related

Non-domestic agri

Recreational

Midden/dump

Artifact scatter

Spring or well

Unknown

Other context

refuse pit

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken Butchering marks on bones



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types		
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Koens-Crispin	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	4	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	3	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	3	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	3
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shell midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ossuary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lithic Material

Jasper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Dated features present at site

Historic cellar or rubbish pit dating from 1660-1663.

Historic Artifacts		
Pottery (all)	19	
Glass (all)	6	
Architectural	310	
Furniture	4	
Arms	4	
Clothing		
Personal items		
Tobacco related	160	
Activity item(s)	6	
Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Misc. kitchen	50	
Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Misc.		
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Historic Features

Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>		

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 2: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 4: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 5: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 6: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 7: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 8: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 9: +/- years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at American University

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Pyles Site (18AN542) is the apparent remains of a small 17th century refuse pit, along the South River in central Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The pit feature is likely the sole surviving feature of the "Poplar Neck" plantation settled by Richard and Rachel Beard in 1650. The site is situated just below Londontowne (on the river), on the edge of a local road and just to the southeast of a springhead. When the site was initially discovered in the early 1980s, the soil surface had been graded for road-related construction, exposing the feature. Soils at the site were the sandy loams and loamy sands of the Annapolis-Urban land complex.

The site was initially discovered by Mr. Gary Pyles, a local developer, after the feature was partially impacted by road construction. The Maryland Historical Trust was notified and MHT archeologists subsequently visited the site and made a surface collection of the site vicinity. The feature was apparent on the freshly graded surface as an irregular, roughly circular dark stain with an admixture of oyster shell and some artifacts. The site faced on a new road cut and was imminently endangered by curb construction. On Mr. Pyles' instructions, construction crews worked around the feature to preserve it for archeological investigations.

The site was excavated in 1982 as part of a combined Phase II/III project related to the larger 52 acre South River Landing development tract. The area was under examination because of the threat of impending development of the waterfront. Fortunately, the land developer (Mr. Pyles) was interested in the local archeology and generously agreed to voluntarily finance excavation work as needed following the discovery of 18AN542 and other sites on the tract. The 1982 work was carried out by students and faculty of the American University's Potomac River Archeology Survey (PRAS). As part of the PRAS project, extensive archival research was conducted to try and determine the origin of the 18AN542 deposits.

Land patents for central Anne Arundel County began to be issued on January 1st, 1650, with the tract "Poplar Neck" patented for Richard and Rachel Beard less than a week later (January 6th, 1650). Unlike most pioneer settlers in the area, the Beards were not newly arrived from England, having immigrated instead from the adjacent colony of Virginia. While Richard Beard's Virginia origins are not specifically known, Rachel was the daughter of Edward Robbins of Accomack County. The couple were married in 1646 and came to Maryland in 1650, probably to escape the persecution of Quakers then current in Virginia. Accomack and Northhampton were the principal home counties of the Virginia Quakers, and the Beards would have been among the first emigrants from the area.

In addition to the normal role of a planter, Beard was a Boatwright and the location of Poplar Neck on the South River between Puddington Harbor and Almshouse Creek may have figured prominently in selection of the tract. In particular, the utilization of the area as a principal anchorage for the tobacco fleet may have provided seasonal opportunities for a resident shipbuilder.

As Quakers, the Beards were members of a sect comprising a disproportionate percentage of the influential population of early colonial Maryland. Quakers and Catholics were particularly active in politics and prior to effective exclusion from office following the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 held down a large portion of provincial public offices. Richard Beard was one of the members of this "political elite" group, being elected Anne Arundel representative to the lower house in 1662, 1663, 1664, and 1666.

While political success in itself implies a person of some standing in the community, Beard also enjoyed wealth by contemporary standards. At his death in 1681, his estate included 1,485 acres (having grown from an original holding of 200 acres in 1650), and 19,067 pounds of tobacco. This legacy compares favorably with the holdings of many councilors, men appointed by Lord Baltimore to serve as the upper house of the legislature and regarded as the cream of contemporary society.

A further insight into Beard's social position is provided by his relationship to William Burgess, the most important of the earliest local settlers and husband to Rachel Beard's sister, Elizabeth. Burgess originally owned the tract adjacent to Beard's, later to become the site of Londontowne. In the early days, Burgess operated a shipyard on the site, an activity which may reasonably have involved his brother-in-law, the Boatwright. Burgess' position as a member of the 'native elite' was consolidated by the marriage of his daughter to a stepson of the third Lord Baltimore, and his own appointment as a councilor from 1682 to 1687. Both Burgess and Beard are remembered in local place names by the naming of major creeks.

Richard and Rachel retained possession of Poplar Neck until September 24, 1663 when they re-patented the tract and assigned the patent to a "John Mott". Mott did not long survive the transaction, dying sometime prior to October 24th, 1664 when his will was probated and the property passed to his daughter. In the meantime, the Beards moved inland to a virgin tract, where they remained until Richard Beard's death in 1681. Based on the archeological data recovered from the feature at 18AN542, the site would appear to be associated with the Beards' occupation of the area.

Archeological fieldwork at 18AN542 entailed the excavation of 3 one meter wide trenches (1 through the features and 2 to the north and east of the feature) and a single 1 X 1 m test unit about 1 m west of the feature. Because feature boundaries were poorly defined on the surface, it was decided to make use of the flat face provided by the road cut to trench into the feature from the north. This was Trench 1. This method would expose the deposit vertically and allow for easy identification of possible stratification within the feature. If present, these strata could then be removed as separate units. While the procedure successfully delineated pit shape, the deposit was found to be essentially homogenous, with the only evidence for fill sequence provided by the vertical distribution of faunal remains. The upper 1/3 of the pit was filled with oyster shell, while the lower 2/3 contained a heavy concentration of swine bones.

Shallow test trenches excavated to the east of the main deposit produced substantial quantities of cattle bone and may indicate that these remains overlay the shell before dislocation by heavy equipment. While this sequence may suggest that deposition in the pit was not a single event, it is notable that cross mending ceramics have been recovered from the heavy equipment smear (disturbed former top of the deposit), upper and lower portions of the pit. In particular, single vessels of English combed slipware and North Devon gravel-tempered earthenware are very broadly distributed throughout the pit deposit and probably preclude an extended use-life for the feature. It was undeterminable from excavation whether usage should be measured in a day or up to several months.

The surviving pit deposit was an irregular cone, narrowing to a flat bottom. The feature had been excavated into clean yellow sand and preserved maximum dimensions of approximately 1.47 m (4 ft 10 in) by 1.42 m (4 ft 8 in). The top of the feature had been graded, and the impacted deposit above the oyster shell



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layer contained a greater sand component than was typical of the undisturbed shell and lower pit deposits. These zones were characterized by a dense, dark brown humic soil with frequent flecks or fragments of charcoal. Other evidence of burning could be noted by a minor amount of burned shell, occasional burned nails, and exterior charring of several clay pipe fragments. Burned objects were a distinct minority, however, and did not cluster within the pit deposit.

The intrusion of later artifacts into the trash pit was both rare and limited to the uppermost horizon above the shell layer. These consisted of a wire nail and a piece of constructional asbestos from a barn that stood nearby until shortly before road construction. A wide range of ceramic, metal, glass, lithic, and faunal remains was recovered from the pit deposit and the general site vicinity. These materials point consistently to a deposition in the third quarter of the 17th century. An analysis of maker's marks on clay tobacco pipe bowls recovered from the site, as well as bowl form suggests a likely period of deposition between 1660 and 1665. Given that the Beards owned the property until 1663, and that John Mott only held it for a very short time before dying, it seems that the period of deposition was sometime between 1660 and 1663.

Despite its small dimensions, the Pyles Site was rich in cultural remains, yielding recoveries of 6 activity items (5 flint strike-a-lights and a deer antler tine reamer), 310 architectural items (rosehead nails), 4 furniture items (an iron drawer pull and 3 other copper/brass furniture fittings), around 73 kitchen-related artifacts (19 ceramic sherds, 4 wine bottles, and at least 50 faunal remains), 160 tobacco-related artifacts (93 pipe stems, 52 pipe bowls, 12 substantially intact pipes, a copper tobacco tin, 2 snuff bottles), and 4 arms objects (3 pieces of lead shot and a gunflint spall). The ceramic assemblage included 2 sherds of North Devon gravel-tempered earthenware, a sherd of North Devon Sgraffito Slipware, 1 sherd of North Italian Sgraffito Slipware, 3 sherds of English combed and Trailed slipware, at least 4 sherds of English tin-glazed delftware, a sherd of Rhenish Brown stoneware, 2 sherds of Rhenish Gray stoneware, 1 sherd of gray salt-glazed stoneware, a brown earthenware sherd and 3 pieces of whiteware. The faunal remains include evidence of the use of cattle, swine, chickens, and oysters. Many of the larger bones preserve cut marks and evidence of butchering. The faunal remains suggest that deposition took place in the autumn of the year. Identifiable maker's marks on the assemblage of tobacco pipes reveals 3 pipes made by Richard I. Nooney (Bristol – 1652 to ca. 1713), 3 or more pipes by Lluellin Evans (Bristol – 1660 to 1689), and at least 2 pipes of Wil Evans (Bristol – 1660 to ca. 1698).

A single quartz Piscataway point was the only prehistoric object recovered at 18AN542.

The period of deposition at the Pyles Site coincides with Richard Beard's tenure as Anne Arundel representative to the lower house of the colonial legislature. The Pyles Site rubbish pit provides an unusual opportunity to view some of the activities taking place on a well-off early colonial plantation one fall between the years 1660 and 1663. It illustrates a holding well supplied with typical but good quality ceramics, commanding at least some imported luxuries (such as wine and imported furniture), and capable of supporting both casual discard of usable items and the simultaneous slaughter of multiple large animals. Trade with southwest England (Bristol) appears to be the lifeline of the settlement.

Since the feature was entirely excavated during the 1982 study, and no other features were identified during the trenching activities, the site (as such) likely no longer exists. Its primary research value lies in the extant collection obtained by the American University.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00000456, 00000457