



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN959

Site Name: Bluff III

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Early & Late Archaic and Early, Middle, & Late Woodland short-term camp; Late 18th-19th century possible house

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 8

SCS soil & sediment code GaB,PfC

Latitude 38.9657

Longitude -76.7013

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m

Site slope 0-5%

Ethnobotany profile available Maritime site

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Patuxent River

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 50 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

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

High terrace

Hilltop/bluff

Rockshelter/cave

Interior flat

Hillslope

Upland flat

Unknown

Ridgetop

Other

Terrace

Low terrace

Ownership

Private

Federal

State of MD

Regional/county/city

Unknown

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Contact period site ca. 1820 - 1860

Archaic site

MD Adena

ca. 1630 - 1675 ca. 1860 - 1900

Early archaic

Early woodland

ca. 1675 - 1720 ca. 1900 - 1930

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

ca. 1720 - 1780 Post 1930

Late archaic

Late woodland

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=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

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

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken

Other samples taken

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken

Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

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

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	46	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>			
		Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>			
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		

Historic Sherd Types

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

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts						
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	1079	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	72	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	109	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	61	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	cryptoquartz	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

possible late 18th century outbuilding

Historic Artifacts							
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>	3		
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3		
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	78	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	168
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	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 type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input checked="" 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 Mac

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Bluff III site (18AN959) is multi-component prehistoric short-term camp northwest of Davidsonville in Anne Arundel County. A late 18th century occupation is also present at the site. The site is situated on a bluff on the eastern side of the Patuxent River, along a flat to gently sloping ridge directly to the south of a deeply incised intermittent spring-fed drainage that flows into the Patuxent River. The site area is wooded and covered with a significant amount of dead fall and secondary undergrowth. A north-south oriented unimproved roadway and a large borrow pit lie to the east of the site. Soils at the site are Galestown loamy sands.

The site was first examined archeologically in 1993, during the course of a Phase I survey by the Argonne National Laboratory of the Andrews Air Force Base and associated Davidsonville Transmitter Station. The site area was shovel tested at 15 m intervals in transects parallel to the bluff edge. Three of the initial shovel test pits (STPs) produced artifacts, resulting in the excavation of "bracketed" shovel tests at 5 m intervals around the positive finds. Since the bracketed STPs produced artifacts, the overall shovel testing intervals was reduced to 10 m. In total, 34 STPs were excavated.

Artifacts recovered during the Phase I survey included 9 quartzite flakes, 1 chert chunk, 3 quartzite chunks and 4 ceramic sherds. Three of the four ceramic sherds recovered exhibited a very tight cord-marking decoration, most probably cord-wrapped paddle-impressed. The fourth sherd had a plain, undecorated and highly eroded surface. The temper in these sherds was of sand and crushed quartzite, although one has larger quartzite particles. Aside from the one undecorated sherd, the sherds appear to be Early Woodland Accokeek cord-marked ceramic ware. The sherd with larger temper particles may be an Early Woodland Prince George cord-marked sherd. The site was determined to be roughly 25 m by 50 m in extent.

Additional research was conducted at 18AN959 from January through April of 1998 as part of a Phase II investigation of Andrews Air Force Base and the associated Davidsonville Transmitter Station (where 18AN959 is located). These excavations were conducted to maintain compliance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to identify and evaluate any cultural resources on their land that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and if necessary, nominate eligible resources to the NRHP. The Phase II investigations were the direct result of consultations with the Maryland State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) about the 1993 Phase I survey which had identified 6 sites at Andrews Airforce Base and another 3 at the base's Davidsonville Transmitter Station in Anne Arundel County.

Phase II work in 1998 began with the establishment of an arbitrary datum within the previously identified site boundaries, just to the south of the intermittent drainage. From this datum, a grid was established using a compass (magnetic directions) and measuring tapes. The metric system was used for measurement. A series of 41 STPs were excavated across the site to establish boundaries and identify areas of high artifact density. Based on the artifact distribution and site boundaries, twelve 1 m² test units were placed and excavated across the site.

All excavations were conducted using hand methods (shovels and trowels) and excavated soils were screened through hardware cloth. The A horizon and/or plowzone was removed as a single level and soils below it were removed in arbitrary 10 cm levels. All excavation units were excavated at least 10 cm into culturally sterile subsoil. Artifacts recovered were bagged in the field by provenience and all relevant information was recorded on standardized field forms. Plan views were prepared as necessary and profiles were drawn for at least one wall of each test unit. Excavations were documented through photography as well.

Based on STP and test unit data, Site 18AN959 measures approximately 95 m north-south by 57 m east-west, with artifacts and features located in greater concentration in the central portion of the site. Excavation units represent a sample of less than 1% of the site. The site is roughly triangular to oval in shape, with the longer axis being oriented north-northeast to south-southwest. All of the cultural material recovered from this site was found at depth of less than 100 cm below surface.

Several features were identified during the Phase II testing. Feature 1 was encountered in an atypically deep upper soil stratum. The feature was a dark stain containing some charcoal and a concentration of bones. The bones were interpreted as being from a small domesticated animal such as a goat and were thought to be associated with historic occupation. Features 2, 2b and 2c represent two apparent historic postmolds and remnants of possible postholes. Feature 2 contained a wrought nail and 2 kaolin pipe fragments mixed with debitage and a possible Marcey Creek sherd. The wrought nail suggests an 18th to early 19th century date for Features 2 and 2b, but Feature 2c (the second postmold) appears to possibly postdate the other features. Features 1, 2, 2b, and 2c were all encountered within the same test unit. Feature 7 was also associated with historic occupation. It was a shallow, linear stain thought to be associated with fencing.

Feature 3 was a basin-shaped soil stain that intruded into the subsoil by about 5 cm. One piece of cortical quartz shatter was recovered from this feature, but directly below it, a cluster of 4 core fragments was encountered. Surrounding Feature 3 were three possible postmolds, each measuring 6 cm or less and extending into the subsoil no more than 5 cm. Feature 5 was also determined to be a postmold. It measured 5 cm in diameter, tapering with depth and bottoming out at 33 cm below the surface. No cultural material was recovered from any of these postmold features.

Features 4 and 6 were ultimately determined to represent tree roots.

Artifacts recovered during Phase II testing included 6 projectile points/point fragments, 1 endscraper, 10 bifaces/biface fragments, 8 modified flakes, 1,041 pieces of debitage, 72 pieces of fire-cracked rock, 57 pottery sherds, 2 possible aboriginal pipe fragments, 16 pieces of animal bone (mostly calcined), 4 fossils, 2 pieces of charcoal, 105 other lithics (some of which may not be cultural), and 270 historic artifacts. Diagnostic projectile points included an argillite Savannah River, 2 rhyolite Kirk stemmed points, and 2 possible Lamoka points (1 of quartz and 1 of rhyolite). Pottery sherds that were large enough and diagnostic enough to identify as to type included 2 Marcey Creek sherds, 43 Accokeek cherts (at least 2 rims), 4 Mockley sherds, and 2 Potomac Creek sherds.

The historic assemblage consisted of 3 activity items (hardware), 78 architectural artifacts (15 brick fragments, 1 piece of window glass, 35 wrought nails, 6 cut nails, and 21 unidentifiable nails), 8 ceramic sherds, 7 pieces of container glass, 167 animal bones (mostly goat), 1 shell fragment, 3 kaolin tobacco pipe fragments, and 3 arms objects (a .22 cartridge and 2 amber-colored gunflints).



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Artifact recovery during Phase I and II excavations at 18AN959 suggests that this site was occupied intermittently during prehistoric times and it functioned as a short-term occupation site. This site appears to have been occupied as early as the Early Archaic period, based on geomorphological evaluation and the recovery of two possible Kirk point fragments. In addition, projectile points were recovered that suggest a Late Archaic occupation as well (Savannah River and Lamoka points). Pottery encountered at the site ranged in time from the Early through Late Woodland to Protohistoric periods, with most of the pottery recovered dating to the Early Woodland (Accokeek). In addition, artifacts were recovered and features were identified which appear to be associated with a late 18th century domestic site.

There is some indication of intact Woodland deposits at the base of the plowzone. Intact 18th century features also appear to be present (perhaps representing an outbuilding). Pedological analysis concluded that eolian sand was present atop a better developed soil. There is potential that a buried Early Archaic and possibly Paleo-Indian component is present. Site 18AN959 has been recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00007631, Site Files