



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18HA253

Site Name: Gunpowder Meeting House (GMH)

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Methodist meeting house

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 39.4037

Longitude -76.2990

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m Site slope

Ethnobotany profile available Maritime site

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Canal Creek

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 76 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

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

Ownership

Private

Federal

State of MD

Regional/county/city

Unknown

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Archaic site

MD Adena

Early archaic

Early woodland

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

Late archaic

Late woodland

Unknown prehistoric context

Contact period site

ca. 1820 - 1860

ca. 1630 - 1675

ca. 1860 - 1900

ca. 1675 - 1720

ca. 1900 - 1930

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

ca. 1780 - 1820

Unknown historic 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

Methodist Meeting House, Church

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"/>	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"/> 1	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/> 1			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts			
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<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 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 Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 67	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/> 91	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
		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 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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Brief

Description:

Methodist meeting house

Unknown

External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MAC Lab

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Gunpowder Meeting House Site (18HA253) is characterized by a low-density scatter of late 18th through late 19th century material that represents the archeological component of the National Register of Historic Places listed property Gunpowder Meeting House. The extant structure was built in the mid-19th century, and likely replaced a late 18th century (non-extant) structure. The site is located on the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) facility in Harford County, Maryland. APG is a U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command (TECOM) installation in the U.S. Army Material Command. Site 18HA253 is situated in a slight depression between a local road and a railroad berm east of Canal Creek. The soils at Edgewood are defined mainly by a sequence of unconsolidated clay, silt, sand, and gravel deposits. A profile of intact soils at the site consists of brown (10YR4/3) silty loam from 0-13 cmbs over brownish-yellow (10YR6/6) silty clay from 13-36 cmbs, over a yellowish brown (10YR5/6) silty clay from 36-54 cmbs. These soils likely correspond with the Woodstown series.

Several early prehistoric sites, including two Paleo-Indian sites are present within APG, which are all located along shorelines. Native American occupation continues from the early period through the Late Woodland and Contact periods until the first European settlement at Spesutie Island in 1652 where Nathaniel Utie established a trading post. A 1652 treaty with the Susquehannocks encouraged the expansion of settlement in the area and the first land grants were patented in 1658. By the early 1700s, the Susquehannocks had left the region.

Gunpowder Meeting House was built on the Gunpowder Neck tract, land that was originally deeded to John Collett, Jr. ca. 1663. Collett left the land to his cousin, Matthew Gouldsmith, who in turn left the land to his nephew, George Gouldsmith, Jr., who in turn left it to his daughter, Martha Gouldsmith Presbury. In ca. 1740, the dwelling 'Quiet Lodge' was built by Martha's son, Joseph, and under the Presbury family, the building served as an early Methodist meeting house prior to the construction of Gunpowder Meeting House. In 1773, Presbury sold one acre of land from his "Presbury's Discovery" tract for one shilling to nine trustees for the establishment of a meeting house which came to be referred to as "Presbury's Preaching House". An itinerant preacher by the name of John Asbury preached in the meeting house after it was constructed several times between 1773 and 1777; Asbury would later become the first bishop of the Methodist Church in the United States. In 1838, the property was purchased by Mary Sanders. The deed of transfer included a clause which stated that the acre property on which the meeting house stood was excluded from the transfer. The original meeting house was likely constructed of logs, as was the custom of the day. It is likely that the extant structure, built in the early to mid-19th century, was constructed on the foundation of the original structure. The one-room brick structure has a stone foundation and measures about 7.98 x 10.77 m (26'2" x 35'4") with 35.56 cm (14") thick brick walls. A chimney is located in the north gable.

In 1886, the church was abandoned then in 1890 it was sold to an African-American Methodist congregation. For the next 29 years the congregation operated a church and a school in the building until the Harford County Board of Education acquired the site and sold it to the U.S. Government. The U.S. military acquired the property in 1919 as part of the Edgewood Arsenal (a chemical production facility). During APG's ownership, the meeting house was used as a grenade storage building until it was later returned to its original use as a meeting house. In 1974, Gunpowder Meeting House (MIHP# HA-357) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR-222). Aberdeen Proving Ground and the Edgewood Arsenal were joined administratively in 1971 forming the modern APG installation. By 1992, about 2,000 buildings covering over 321 acres of floor space and over 16,000 personnel were located at the installation. The installation continues to grow under the Base Closure and Realignment Act as other activities are relocated to APG. Not surprisingly, over the last 90 years environmental impacts have greatly affected the archeological potential of the installation's land holding. Extant structures remain at APG, dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, World Wars I and II, and up to 1950 (the historical building cut-off date).

Federal cultural resources mandates led the installation commander at APG to assign the Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment (DSHE) the task of preparing a cultural resources management plan (CRMP) to define the process for managing cultural resources located on the property. The goals of the installation preservation program were to 1) identify, evaluate, nominate, manage, and update the inventory of historic properties, 2) comply with NHPA, NEPA, all Federal laws, and Army regulations in managing those historic properties, 3) integrate cultural resources management with other installation environment, property, and natural resource planning, and 4) preserve and protect cultural resources within the APG's mission.

In order to facilitate the CRMP, archeological testing was conducted in two stages at the installation between 1992 and 1993. One of the main objectives of the archeological investigations initiated in 1992 was to develop an archeological sensitivity model for APG that would be designed to 1) identify and document areas that possess a high probability for containing prehistoric and historic sites, and 2) identify areas that have a low probability for containing cultural resources and areas that have been previously disturbed. This first stage of field testing of the model involved the Phase I survey of 8 testing areas: Sites 1-4 were located in the Edgewood Area and Sites 5-8 were located in the Aberdeen Area. Stage two archeological and architectural evaluations were conducted at several terrestrial sites at APG, and an underwater survey was done in a high probability area of the Bush River. As a result of the two stages of fieldwork, approximately 295 terrestrial acres were tested, 240 underwater acres were subjected to a remote sensing survey, and 1,069 buildings constructed prior to 1951 were identified and all but 393 were evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (175 possessed significance for listing and 501 did not possess significance). The results of the archeological survey and field investigations are contained in Volume II of the Aberdeen Proving Ground Cultural Resource Management Plan series (Volumes I-IV) and the results of the architectural evaluations are contained in Volume III.

During the second stage of the investigations at APG in 1993, an architectural survey and conservation analysis of Gunpowder Meeting House was conducted. No subsurface testing was undertaken at that time; however, it was recommended that drainage improvements were necessary at the site to retard moisture damage to the historic structure. The first archeological testing at the Gunpowder Meeting House site was conducted in 1998 ahead of the proposed installation of new drainage pipes. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) was an area of about 35x35 m, or less than 1 acre. The combined Phase I/II investigations were undertaken because the presence of the intact structure suggested that an archeological component was likely. The goals of the investigations were to determine the presence or absence of a sub-surface component related to the structure, to determine the nature, age, and function of the archeological resource, to define the horizontal and vertical boundaries of the site, to determine if the archeological component possessed research potential and integrity, and to gain a better understanding of the evolution of activities associated with the building since its construction, thereby contributing to the significance of the National Register structure. The Phase I/II testing at 18HA253, started with the excavation of 58 shovel test pits (STPs) dug at 3 m intervals. Next, 3 test units (TUs 1-3) measuring 1x1 m were excavated in areas where STPs indicated high artifact concentrations. All excavated soils were screened and all materials were retained.

Testing revealed that the soils across most of the site have been very disturbed. The natural topsoil was removed and replaced with fill that was probably deposited during or shortly after the construction of the adjacent railroad berm during the World War II expansion of APG. The top 3 strata identified across



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portions of the site represent fill: 0-15 cmbs dark grayish-brown (10YR4/2) loam above variegated clay, including gray (2.5Y6/1) clay and yellowish-brown (10YR5/8) clay extending from 15-42 cmbs. This in turn overlies a discontinuous layer of black (10YR2/1) sandy grit and coal slag interspersed with dark yellowish brown (10YR4/4-4/6) sandy clay from 42-52 cmbs. These fill deposits, with the clay capping the coal/slag material, were laid down around the structure to facilitate drainage. Those fill layers sit above natural deposits: dark grayish brown (10YR4/2) sandy clay from 44-55 cmbs over yellowish brown (10YR5/6) sandy clay from 55-64 cmbs (the maximum depth of TU 1). The only potentially intact soils were identified in TU 3, on the east side of the structure, although there was evidence that some topsoil may have been removed during grading of the area.

A total of 126 historic artifacts were recovered during the Phase I/II investigations. Of those, 39 were retrieved from the modern (disturbed) fill layers and 87 were collected from intact soil deposits. In all, 5 activity items were collected (1 slate pencil fragment, 3 pieces of lamp glass, 1 length of braided rope). There were 91 architectural items (6 brick fragments, 52 pieces of window glass, 13 cut/wrought nails, 4 machine cut nails, 5 wire nails, 9 unidentified nails, 1 spike, 1 possible bolt). These items were recovered from both fill and non-fill levels. A total of 1 clothing item (a brass button) was recovered from intact soil. The 19 kitchen-related items included 13 bottle glass fragments and 6 ceramic sherds (1 porcelain, 1 creamware, 1 pearlware, 1 ironstone, 2 Rockingham/Bennington), and 1 animal bone fragment. Bottle glass, creamware, and the Rockingham sherds were all found in natural soil levels. There were 8 miscellaneous items (2 unidentified glass pieces, 5 unidentified metal pieces, 1 piece of sheet metal). There was 1 arms-related object (1 English gunflint) which was found in intact deposits. Based on the artifacts that derived from non-fill deposits, a generalized late 18th through late 19th century range of occupation was postulated.

The Gunpowder Meeting House Site (18HA253) is characterized by a low-density scatter of late 18th through late 19th century material that represents the archeological component of the National Register of Historic Places listed property Gunpowder Meeting House. Due to the nature of activities associated with the function of the building, a high artifact density was not expected in the surrounding area. Methodists at the time were unlikely to drink or smoke so they did not leave behind wine bottles or pipes on the church property. No foundations of an earlier structure or associated outbuilding were located within the survey area. Due to the extensive disturbance around Gunpowder Meeting House and the limited nature of the material assemblage, it was determined that the archeological component, Site 18HA253, lacks the integrity necessary to possess significant research potential. Consequently, the site is not a contributing resource to Gunpowder Meeting House's National Registry status. No further work was recommended at the site.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00000796, 00007565