



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST569

Site Name: Myrtle Point

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Early & Late Archaic and Early, Middle, and Late Woodland short-term resource procurement camps or base camps

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.3349 Longitude -76.4974
Elevation 6 m Site slope 0

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 9

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater 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

Ownership

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

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Patuxent River

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 10 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- Paleoindian site
- Archaic site
- Early archaic Y
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic Y
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland Y
- Mid. woodland Y
- Late woodland Y
- Unknown prehistoric context

- Contact period site
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820
- Unknown historic context
- Unknown context
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1860 - 1900
- ca. 1900 - 1930
- Post 1930

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American
- Hispanic
- Asian American
- Unknown
- Other

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

- ### Prehistoric
- Multi-component
 - Village
 - Hamlet
 - Base camp
 - Rockshelter/cave
 - Earthen mound
 - Cairn
 - Burial area
 - Misc. ceremonial
 - Rock art
 - Shell midden
 - STU/lithic scatter
 - Quarry/extraction
 - Fish weir
 - Production area
 - Unknown
 - Other context

- ### Historic
- Urban/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 N
 Flotation samples taken Y Other samples taken Faunal

Historic context samples Soil samples taken
 Flotation samples taken Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types		Koens-Crispin	
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

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"/> 152	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"/> 8	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	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"/> 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"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/> 1833	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/> 140
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/> 527	Oyster shell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 185	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lithic Material

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

Dated features present at site

Pit features 6, 5, 18, 21; assoc. w/oyster shell, FCR, fired clay (daub), faunal, botanical, Townsend ceramics, several points

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/> 509	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<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: 1740 +/- 90 years BP	Reliability	Sample 2: 1050 +/- 60 years BP	Reliability	Sample 3: 870 +/- 60 years BP	Reliability
B-25136: wood charcoal from pit Feature 6, assoc. w/ faunal and botanical remains	High	B-25137: charred nut shell from pit Feature 5, assoc. w/ charcoal, shell, prehistoric ceramics and lithics	High	B-25138: charred nutshell from pit Feature 18, assoc. w/ oyster shell, FCR and botanical remains	60
Sample 4: 690 +/- 60 years BP	Reliability	Sample 5: +/- years BP	Reliability	Sample 6: +/- years BP	Reliability
B-25139: wood charcoal from pit Feature 21, assoc. w/ oyster shell, FCR, fired clay (daub) and botanical remains	High				
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

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Myrtle Point (18ST569) is a multicomponent prehistoric site with Early & Late Archaic and Early, Middle, and Late Woodland short-term resource procurement camps or base camps. The most intensive periods of occupation appears to have been the Late Archaic and Late Woodland. There is also a small historic period scatter. The site is situated on a long, fallow field comprising a portion of Myrtle Point, on the lower Patuxent River in St. Mary's County. Myrtle Point is the 20th century place name for the narrow, flat headland bound by the deep outlet channels of Cuckold Creek to the north and Mill Creek to the west, and Little Kingston Creek to the southeast. The site occupies an area of about 4 acres above the Patuxent. Soils in the site area are Matapeake silt loam and Sassafras sandy loam.

The lower Patuxent River was an area occupied by prehistoric peoples for more than 9000 years. Archeological evidence suggests that populations grew rapidly in Southern Maryland during the Early Archaic period (7,500-6,000 BC). Increasing populations and resource diversity occurred during the Late Archaic period in the lower Patuxent. The earliest dated oyster shell middens along the lower Potomac River are dated to that period. The Early Woodland (1,000 BC – AD 200) is marked by increasing sedentism and the appearance of ceramics, particularly of Accokeek pottery in the lower Patuxent. The Middle Woodland period in the Patuxent drainage is characterized by the appearance of large special purpose sites, a rise in intra-component artifact diversity, and evidence of inter-regional exchange networks. By the Late Woodland period, and into the 17th century, there appeared to be trends toward residential sedentism accompanied by political nucleation and status differentiation throughout the Chesapeake estuary. The exception seems to be in the Patuxent drainage and north along the western shore of the Chesapeake where social ranking and stratification appear to be less prevalent.

In January 1642/43, Nicholas Harvey was granted the patented for 1,000 acres of land called St. Joseph's Manor. The Manor was originally located within Mattapanient Hundred, lands held by the Jesuits. Harvey and his family fled to Virginia during the "time of troubles" precipitated by Richard Ingle's conquest of the colony in 1645. At about that time, it has been suggested that raiders burned Harvey's house down. The records indicate that after Harvey's death, a man named Edward Lloyd purchased St. Joseph's Manor from Thomas Green, who had married Harvey's widow. There are no further mentions of Lloyd, Green, or the widow. Documents suggest that ownership of the Manor passed to Harvey's daughter, Frances, who had married George Beckwith. The Beckwiths developed the property into a tobacco plantation and rebuilt the dwelling house burned down by Ingle's men. The Beckwiths also kept and maintained a ferry boat used for crossing to and from Point Patience. By the end of 1659, approximately 425 acres on St. Joseph's Manor had been subdivided and sold. By the 1720's, all of the Manor lands had been sold out of the Harvey and Beckwith families. For several years following the Beckwiths' deaths, the land remained unpatented. Then in 1727, George Plater II obtained the patent for St. John's Manor totaling 1,250 acres. Sometime later, a 50 acre portion of the Manor was sold to Samuel Jenifer and became known as Harveytown, the early colonial port which functioned from ca. the 1660's to the early 18th century. The community of Harveytown was located in the settlement called Harvey Hundred. By 1798, a total of 34 individuals or estates owned land in Harvey Hundred. Early 19th century maps identified the peninsula as Town Point (now located at the southern abutment of the Thomas Johnson Bridge to the east) and Thomas Point (the northeastern most promontory of the peninsula). The record taken of Harvey Hundred in 1810 listed 5 owners of parts of St. Joseph's Manor. From the early 19th century through the mid-20th century the land had several owners who made various improvements to the property. The US Coast and Geodetic Survey map of 1848 indicated that the area around site 18ST570 was deforested and under cultivation during the 19th century. By 1896, the site area had been transformed to pasture. Reforestation apparently began only in the 1930's. In 1966, a portion of the Manor land that included the site area was sold to Patuxent River Farms, Inc., who then sold it to Route 347 Realty Corporation in 1986.

The Myrtle Point site was first identified during a Phase I archaeological survey of the 211-acre Patuxent River Farms/Route 347 Realty Corporation property conducted from the summer of 1986 through the spring of 1987. Work was conducted ahead of proposed construction of an intensive townhouse, single family residential, and recreational development. The purpose of the survey was to locate historic and prehistoric sites in the areas of potential impact. The preliminary survey identified 37 sites, including 9 which were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Two eligible sites could not be avoided during construction, the Myrtle Point site (18ST569) and the nearby Thomas Point site (18ST570).

Field methods included dividing the property into 13 areas defined on the basis of topography, ground cover, and applicable survey techniques. The areas were assigned non-consecutive letters A through P. Site 18ST569 was located in Area P in the northern portion of the study zone. Low field vegetation allowed for a systematic surface collection strategy in Area P. Seven 5 m wide transects were cleared, plowed, and disked along the length of the field. Transects 1-5 (T1-T5) were about 15 m apart and Transects 6 and 7 (T6, T7) were spaced approximately 27 and 60 m from adjacent transects respectively. Each transect was collected in 5X5 m units. In total, 725 surface units were collected in Area P. Of those, approximately 142 surface units related to site 18ST569. All artifacts were collected except for oyster shell fragments, which were counted and left in the collection units.

The site was identified as a high density concentration of prehistoric artifacts and oyster shell, although there was an extraordinarily broad scatter of flakes, shell, ceramics, and fire cracked rock (FCR) across nearly the entire length of Area P. Chronologically diagnostic artifacts scattered across the area suggested a complex history for use at the location over perhaps 4,000 years. The Myrtle Point site has the longest record of occupation and the highest density of artifacts of any prehistoric site recorded during the Myrtle Point survey.

According to the site boundaries established by the excavators, only 142 surface units related directly to 18ST569. Therefore, only the artifacts from those units, rather than from across the entirety of Area P, are presented here and in the table above. A total of 740 prehistoric artifacts were retrieved from the site. There were 603 pieces of debitage (123 quartz flakes, 457 quartzite flakes, 6 rhyolite flakes, 16 jasper/chert flakes, 1 undetermined material) and 7 quartz and 8 quartzite bifaces/preforms. There 8 projectile points and point fragments including 3 Piscataway, 4 Holmes, and 1 unidentified Late Woodland triangular point. There was 1 groundstone object (either a gorget or bannerstone fragment). There were 85 fire cracked rocks. A total of 28 ceramic sherds were found including 2 Potomac Creek (1 cord-marked and 1 plain), 5 Rappahannock (1 fabric impressed, 3 incised and 1 plain) (recorded as Townsend in the table above), 1 Townsend cord impressed, 2 Sullivan Cove cord-marked (similar to the Townsend cord-marked), 9 Late Woodland shell tempered, 7 unidentified shell tempered, 1 unidentified shell and grit tempered, and 1 unidentified tempered sherd. The artifact totals were taken from the inventory listed in Appendix I in the original report. In the text relating to site 18ST569, it was indicated that 1 Accokeek and 2 Pope's Creek sherds were located within the site boundaries; however, this was not born out in the artifact catalog and as such those pottery types were not included in the table above. A total of 2,278 oyster shells and shell fragments were recorded in the field but were not retained; therefore, they were not included in the total in the table above.

In the Patuxent valley, quartzite was the predominant material used for the production of points during the Late Archaic period. The high ratio of quartzite in the assemblage suggested, then, a Late Archaic component at the site. Artifact concentrations and spatial distribution suggested that FCR was found in



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association with quartzite debitage. This association was suggested to possibly represent a major area of Archaic as well as Woodland occupation. FCR was not, however, found in any concentrations in areas of oyster density. This indicates possible functional or temporal differentiation of activities at the site. In summary, it was proposed that the higher frequencies of quartzite debitage, FCR, and bifaces, primarily located in the north-central part of the site, represented a centralized Late Archaic base camp. Units with higher frequencies of ceramics, shell, and quartz debitage were widely dispersed across the site and interpreted as small camps occupied for short periods of time principally during the Late Woodland period.

A total of 534 historic artifacts were also recovered from the site. The assemblage consisted mainly of architectural items (n=502). There were 498 brick fragments, 2 window glass shards, 1 cut nail, and 1 wire nail. Kitchen-related items consisted of 2 table glass fragments, 1 whiteware sherd, and 1 either pearlware or whiteware sherd. There were 27 miscellaneous items (unidentified metal objects). There was 1 pipe stem fragment. The site is located in relative proximity to several historic sites (18ST582, 18ST580, 18ST552, 18ST590, 18ST600) that were identified during the survey. It is possible that the artifact scatter relates to one or more of those sites.

It was determined that the proposed residential development would severely impact the site. Therefore, from 1987 through 1989 Phase II and Phase III investigations were conducted at Myrtle Point. The study was designed to evaluate the archeological resources at the site and to integrate this information into the larger body of archeological data and theory developed for the Patuxent River drainage. A focus of the original report was the analysis and distribution of lithic artifacts.

A systematic intensive surface collection (SISC) of an area comprising 6.67 acres was implemented in Phase II investigations at the site. At the outset, vegetation was removed from the area followed by plowing and disking of the soil. Then a 10 m interval grid was established for provenience control. This resulted in a grid of 272 units. The base datum (N0/W0) was set at a point in the northeast corner if the field previously established in 1987 by the developer's engineering firm. Any culturally modified object, including fire-cracked or broken rock and shell, greater than 1.27 cm (1/2") was retained. The collected artifacts were then quantified and the results were used to determine areas where subsurface features might be located. The Phase III portion of the investigation involved mechanically stripping the plowzone in areas of high artifact density where features were expected and after test pits were excavated. After analysis, the shell and broken rocks were discarded.

Spatial distribution maps were produced for the oyster shell, lithic debitage, and FCR recovered during the investigation. Resulting analysis indicated that oyster shell was more dense on the northern side of the site suggesting that shellfish processing and shell disposal were more common in that area. Spatial distribution of lithic debitage indicated that the density was higher on the eastern side of the site adjacent to the river. There was some indication of increased frequencies of quartz and quartzite flakes in the feature locations. The spatial distribution of the FCR indicated that the 2 areas of highest density were on the northwestern and eastern parts of the site where shell and debitage were also dense. Subsurface features were found in the areas of lithic debitage and shell concentrations.

Lithic artifact classes such as cores and bifaces, as well as diagnostics, were also subjected to spatial analysis. Some clustering in the distribution of quartz core debris appeared to correspond to the location of features, although concentrations in areas where features were not found were also noted. Early-stage quartzite bifaces exhibited greater spatial organization clustering near the center of the site. It was suggested that proximity to beach access, where the cores were procured, was the explanation for the pattern of disposal (thus indicating a location of lithic reduction activity). Late-stage diagnostic bifaces did not extend into the western part of the site. The location from which most of the Woodland period diagnostics were recovered corresponds to high frequencies of oyster shell.

Mechanical stripping of the plowzone encompassed the removal of about 1,265 square meters or about 5% of the total area of the surface collected. All excavated feature soils were water-screened through nested screens with mesh sizes of 1/4" and 1/16". A 10 liter flotation sample was collected from each excavated feature subarea. Carbonized plant remains and bone were sorted from the heavy fraction samples. Faunal remains were further sorted from the light fraction samples. The botanical remains and the light fraction faunal remains were analyzed individually by specialists. Complete reports of those analyses are available at the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum.

A total of 21 features were identified at the interface between the plowzone and the subsoil. Of those, 11 were determined to be cultural in origin and 10 were determined to be the result of bioturbation. Feature 1 (F1) was identified as a surface concentration of oyster shell over an area of about 2.5 m in diameter. A 16 m segment of the feature was exposed and several 1 m² units were dug across the feature. Excavation revealed it to be a straight trench approximately 1.35 m wide, with parallel walls about 40 cm deep. All indications were that the trench was dated to the historic period, possibly for drainage or as a boundary marker. Feature 2 (F2) was a continuation of F1. It was oriented perpendicular to the river. The width of the trench remained constant but in the area of F2 it was deeper (to 50 cm). F2 was located closer to the water and lower in elevation than F1. A variety of faunal material and lithics and prehistoric ceramics were recovered from F1 and F2 along with oyster shell and charcoal. F2 contained several fragments of reptile bones and large mammal bones, which were not recovered from any other feature fill. The excavator assigned the shell and bone to the prehistoric period, rather than the historic period, because their presence in the possibly historic trench indicates that prehistoric features were truncated, incorporated into the plowzone, and redeposited through plowing displacement and colluvial action.

Feature 3 was a shallow (20 cm), basin shaped pit approximately 30 cm by 50 cm in size. The generally poor condition of the pit suggested that it was severely leached and truncated or that it represents a non-cultural depression which was filled with plowzone soil containing shell and lithic artifacts.

Feature 4 (F4) was first identified as a broad scatter of oyster shell near the river bluff in the northwestern corner of the site. When excavated, a second trench was exposed. The outline of the F4 trench was much less regular than the trench identified in F1 and F2 although it was also oriented perpendicular to the river. At the base, it measures about 1 m wide. Faunal material, several prehistoric sherds and lithic debitage were recovered from the feature.

Feature 5 (F5) was first identified as a surface concentration of oyster shell located approximately 140 m inland from the river bluff. After removal of the plowzone, three distinct areas (A, B, and C) were recognized by soil discoloration and the presence of shell and charcoal. Area A was a shallow, basin shaped pit that measured about 50 cm in diameter with a depth of 10 cm. Only oyster shell and charcoal were recovered from Area A, indicating the pit may have been either a hearth or a refuse pit. The shallow profile and irregular shape suggest that the feature was truncated. Area B was a shallow pit feature that appeared to have been heavily truncated by episodes of plowing. Any cultural interpretation was not possible. Area C was interpreted as a natural depression created by a tree-throw which was used for a hearth, food processing and the disposal of refuse. Charcoal, shell, prehistoric ceramics and lithics were recovered from F5. A sample of charred nut shell was submitted for C-14 analysis. The calibrated age range (2-sigma) was AD 869-1155.



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Feature 6 (F6) was first identified as a surface concentration of oyster shell located approximately 75 m inland from the river bluff. When about 30 cm of plowzone was removed a large, irregular soil discoloration was apparent. As the feature fill was removed, it was observed that the soil below and surrounding the shell deposit had been fire-hardened and oxidized. The lithic assemblage collected from F6 was indicative of tool sharpening or tool maintenance at this location. Some early stage/cortical quartz debris also suggested that some early stage activities also occurred. Several faunal and botanical remains were also collected from F6. The nature of the depression indicated that pit was not dug purposefully, but created by natural tree-throw. A sample of wood charcoal was collected for C14 analysis. The calibrated age range (2-sigma) was AD 81-443.

Feature 7 (F7) was first identified as a surface concentration of oyster shell located approximately 140 m inland from the river bluff. After removal of the plowzone, three distinct areas (A, B, and C) were recognized by soil discoloration and the presence of shell and charcoal. Area A was a shallow (20 cm) basin 140 cm in diameter. Floral and faunal specimens were the only materials collected from the pit. Areas B and C were shallow and irregular, and lacked cultural artifacts; therefore, functional interpretations for B and C were not possible.

Features 8 and 9 (F8 and F9) were identified by a surface concentration of shell and lithic debris in the extreme northeast corner of the survey area about 30 m from the bluff. F8 was a basin shaped pit that measured about 75 cm in diameter and 15 cm in depth. Faunal remains and lithic debitage were recovered from the pit. F9 was a less regular basin shaped pit that measured about 60 cm in diameter and 10 cm in depth. Only faunal remains (shell and snails mainly) were associated with the feature.

Features 18 and 21 (F18 and F21) were also basin shaped pits, but were distinguished from F8 and F9 by the presence of fire-cracked rock in their fill. F18 measured 1.4 m in diameter with a depth of about 10 cm. A layer of sand covered the bottom of the pit with a layer of charcoal, FCR and shell above the sand. The charcoal appeared to be concentrated at the base of the upper layer, directly on top of the sand. Oyster shell, FCR and botanical remains were recovered from F18. A sample of charred nutshell was taken for C14 dating. The calibrated age range (2 sigma) was AD 1036-1260. F21 was very similar to F18 in form and function but exhibited none of the layering present in F18. F21 also contained pieces of fired clay. Radiocarbon assays on a sample of wood charcoal produced an age range of AD 1224-1399 (Calibrated to 2-sigma). No lithic debris was collected from either of the FCR features which suggested the specificity of their function as short-term hearths/single episodes of site use during the Late Woodland period.

Botanical analysis of the samples of the feature fill identified 4 fragments of squash rind (*Cucurbita* sp.) as the only evidence for cultigens recovered at the site. Several other botanical remains (n=160) identified from feature fills at the site included 9 maple (*Acer* spp.), 65 hickory (*Carya* spp.), 3 hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), 19 ash (*Fraxinus* spp.), 2 walnut (*Juglans* spp.), 20 black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), 11 pine (*Pinus* spp.), and 31 oak (*Quercus*) (3 red, 14 white, 14 (*Quercus* spp.)). Several faunal specimens (n=1,621) were recovered from feature fill contexts (F1, F2, and F4-F9). There were 809 land snails, 29 marine gastropods, 590 marine pelecypods, and 65 barnacles which most likely came in with the oyster shell and are not considered cultural. There were also 49 terrapin and 79 large mammal remains, most of which derived from Feature 2 and Feature 1, with 1 from Feature 4. The terrapin and mammal remains are counted in the 'unmodified faunal' box in the table above. It is unusual that no fish remains were recovered. More than 200 kg of oyster were counted and weighed at the site.

A total of 2,787 prehistoric period artifacts were retrieved during the Phase II/III. There were 1,062 pieces of quartz, quartzite, chert, and rhyolite debitage, and 66 cores. There were 55 biface tools (at least 1 piece esqueelee). A total of 20 projectile points and points fragments were recovered including 1 Palmer, 5 Madison, 1 Levanna, 1 Potomac Creek, 1 Piscataway, 1 Kirk corner notched, 3 Vernon, 1 Calvert, 2 Holmes, 1 Selby Bay, 1 Guilford Lanceolate, and 2 unidentified triangular Late Woodland types. There were 442 FCR. There were 157 ceramic sherds including 2 Townsend, 144 Rappahannock including 1 rim sherd (cataloged as Townsend in the table above), 1 Sullivan Cove rim sherd, 8 Accokeek, and 1 unidentified shell-tempered sherd. Other fired clay objects included 986 pieces of daub.

A total of 33 historic period artifacts were retrieved during the Phase II surface collection. No historic artifacts are noted as having been collected during Phase III in the original report. They covered a date range from the 17th century through the 20th century. They most likely represent episodes of field dumping and are probably associated with nearby historic sites. There was 1 activity item (a horseshoe). There were 6 architectural items (brick fragments). There were 13 kitchen-related items (4 bottle glass fragments, 3 brown lead-glazed earthenware, 1 Rhenish brown, 1 creamware, 2 black lead-glazed earthenware, 1 gray salt-glazed stoneware, 1 glass Mason jar lid liner). There was 1 miscellaneous item (unidentified metal object). There were 11 tobacco items (6 white clay pipe stem fragments (3 small-bore, 3 large-bore), 5 white clay pipe bowl fragments). There was 1 arms-related item (a European flint flake, possibly from gunflint production).

An intensive survey of 18ST569 was undertaken in 1990 ahead of construction of the proposed Washington Gas Light Company Patuxent Pipeline installation. The original plans indicated that construction would impact the site. Fieldwork consisted of a pedestrian survey and surface reconnaissance and subsurface sampling. A total of 16 shovel test pits were excavated at 10 m intervals at the site, which was located in Test Unit 5. Of those, 4 STPs were positive for prehistoric artifacts and 2 others contained oyster shell. Although the pipeline would bisect the site, it was decided that Myrtle Point had already been fully mitigated during the Phase II/III investigations and that those data recovery excavations encompassed all of the gas pipeline right-of-way. It was determined that the amount of data collected from the earlier excavations was sufficient to interpret the site and that the collection of any more information would not add to the site database.

A total of 16 prehistoric artifacts were recovered during the 1990 testing at the site. There were 4 pieces of debitage (1 quartz, 3 quartzite) and 12 oyster shell fragments. One historic artifact was also recovered, 1 architectural item (a brick fragment).

Relatively few systematically excavated sites on the lower Patuxent have produced diagnostic material from datable contexts. The Myrtle Point site (18ST569) is significant because it provides new data on regional chronology and settlement patterns. The artifactual evidence supports a theory of short-term occupations by small groups from the Early Archaic period through the Late Woodland period. The radiocarbon dates suggested that feature installation and the most intensive period of site occupation occurred during the late Middle and early Late Woodland periods. The character of the features indicated short-term and specific use, most likely restricted largely to shellfish processing. The proposed residential development of the late 1980's never became a reality but the pipeline project was completed with slight adverse effect to the site. The area where the site is located is currently the Myrtle Point Park, maintained by St. Mary's County, Maryland.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006457, 00006544, 00000263