



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18WC23

Site Name: Harbor Point

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Middle and Late Woodland village with ossuary

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 3

SCS soil & sediment code EpB

Latitude 38.3470

Longitude -75.6115

Physiographic province Eastern Shore Coastal P

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 0 m

Site slope 0-5%

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

### Ownership

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

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Wicomico River

#### Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

#### Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

## 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

ca. 1860 - 1900

ca. 1675 - 1720

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=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

ossuary

### 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 N

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		Koens-Crispin	
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<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	20	Townsend	20	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

<b>Earthenware</b>		Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stoneware</b>	
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"/>	<b>Porcelain</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	10	Human remain(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	1	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	40	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<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 checked="" 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

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

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	1	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<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

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

Harbor Point (18WC23) is the site of a Middle and Late Woodland village with ossuary burials in Salisbury, Wicomico County. The site is situated near the floodplain on the western shore of the Wicomico River. The site was an overgrown, but previously cultivated field when first identified by archeologists in the 1970s. Today, the locale is heavily developed with residential structures.

This site was originally recorded in 1971 after information was received by the Maryland Geological Survey from a local resident who had collected ceramic sherds at the site. Site files state that it was felt to be a "major site" based on the number of sherds recovered despite heavy vegetative cover.

Reports of a site visit in December of 1976 suggest considerable changes to the landscape. The site was described as consisting of two "diked" areas, one in the field and one outside of it, but researchers at the time felt the site had not been impacted by construction. It is noted that because the diked areas blocked the former pathway to the site, no on-site inspection was actually conducted. Reportedly, the site could only be reached by boat at that time.

MHT personnel visited the site in May of 1992. The site had recently been subdivided and one lot had already been sold. The site was fallow and in sparse weeds at that time, so the surface was only partly visible. A few flakes and sherds were observed, especially towards the upriver end of the site. A local collector, who had alerted MHT to the subdivision of the lot provided MHT with a bag of material he had collected at the site in recent months, including a fire-cracked rock, a dark olive green bottle kick-up, pebble jasper and milky quartz flakes, and about 40 Middle Woodland Coulbourn and Late Woodland Townsend sherds. MHT personnel recommended surface sampling before any construction on the new lots commenced. Sub-plowzone features were thought possible due to the time period of the site. MHT personnel attempted to get permission from the landowner to conduct the annual ASM/MHT Field Session in Archeology at the site, but to no avail.

Construction at the site did not begin until 2001. MHT was informed by a local government official that construction had recently begun at Harbor Point. Masons had already dug and laid foundations and footers for one large home with about five or six more coming soon. The official had anecdotal evidence of burials having been identified on the site, but nothing more concrete. Since the construction project involved no State or federal money, licenses or permits, there was no recourse at the time for requiring study. Nevertheless, a local archeologist was able to get permission to conduct some exploratory testing in 2002 on the property, but found nothing below the plowzone. A few Late Woodland artifacts were recovered within the plowzone.

On February 10th, 2004, MHT personnel received a call from the Salisbury Police Department, reporting the recovery of bones during construction of a footer trench for a new home at the site. MHT archeologists visited the site the following day and discovered that large amounts of human remains had already been excavated by police (who initially thought they were investigating a crime scene). The MHT archeologists explained to the builder that the construction appeared to have disturbed a prehistoric ossuary and outlined the various options for dealing with the remains. Ultimately, the developer and homeowner opted to have the remains excavated by an archeologist for reburial elsewhere. Representatives from the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) also visited the site and were consulted regarding their views of how the human remains should be handled. Due to the extensive disturbance that had already occurred, the MCIA also recommended excavation, limited study (MNI, age, sex determinations), and reburial elsewhere. A local contract archeologist was contacted and his crew arrived on February 13th to excavate the human remains over the next few days with MHT assistance.

Fieldwork was initially limited to removing plowzone overburden to expose the full extent of the ossuary, cleaning the floor of the footer trenches, and screening of existing backdirt piles (from the police and backhoe excavations) for human remains. It was discovered that the backhoe had initially just clipped the edge of the ossuary, probably disturbing less than 10% of the feature, but the police had disturbed much more of the ossuary.

A grid of 76.2 cm (2.5 ft) squares was established across the ossuary feature and the feature was mapped in plan view. The ossuary pit measured 1.3-1.4 m in diameter and ultimately it would prove to be roughly 52 cm in depth beginning below the base of the plowzone. This size burial pit is about mid-range for other known ossuaries. Ten of the 76.2 cm square units were excavated to fully expose and disinter the human remains within the ossuary. A high resolution (4 Megapixel) digital camera was used to document the location of burial elements. The feature was divided into quadrants and excavation proceeded by using fine tools (such as bamboo perino picks) to expose bones until removing more soil was impossible without also moving bones. A photograph was then taken. These were labeled in sequences such as NW 1 (northwest 1), NW 2, etc. Bones visible in each photograph were removed and placed in bags. Bag designations began with the photo identifier (i.e. NW 1) and then had a sequential number beginning with "one" (i.e. NW 1-1, NW 1-2, NW 2-1, etc.).

In instances where many small bones were together, the area was circled on the photograph and given an area designation that was recorded on the bag. This was expedient and useful in areas with phalanges or crushed skull fragments. The use of photographs in this fashion was approved by the Native Americans visiting the site and by the MCIA. A condition placed on the use of photographs was that the photographs not be available for viewing beyond their use in the recovery.

Excavation proceeded down through the feature in this way, one quadrant at a time. In many instances, individual bones crossed quadrant boundaries. These bones were labeled on the photograph corresponding to the quadrant that was being worked when the bone was removed. Occasionally, as work progressed, elevations from below the original ground surface were taken. These were recorded on the photographs at the location of the measurement. Otherwise, the only layer indications were the photographs themselves which often show individual bones in sequential photographs as they were slowly exposed. This was not considered an important issue since no internal stratigraphy was evident in the feature and all indications are that this was a single depositional event.

Once bones were removed from the ground, they were taken to a secure lab location and then sent to a qualified osteologist for basic analysis. Any associated bones were rebundled and the entire osteological assemblage was transferred to the Native American community for reburial. It was estimated that 15-20 individuals were present within the ossuary.

Bones within the burial pit were, at first glance a jumble. As work progressed, it was possible to identify certain bundles. In a few instances, there appeared to be semi-articulated bones. In some instances it appeared that skulls rested on bundled long bones but this was not the rule. There were two skulls located at the bottom of the burial pit. There were some skulls that contained phalanges. Burnt bone fragments were scattered through the feature but there was no indication of in situ burning. There was no ash or reddening of the soil. All of these traits have been noted in other Maryland ossuaries.

No artifacts were found within the burial pit. This is important since the plowzone contained numerous pieces of pottery and lithic debitage relating mostly to the Late Woodland period. Since the ossuary was capped with a layer containing cultural material, it must have been placed before the cultural material was



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**Brief  
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Unknown

deposited. If the Late Woodland occupation had been first, excavation and refilling of the pit would have surely deposited some item within the pit with the bones.

Based on the discoveries at 18WC23, it would appear highly likely that the site contains additional intact features and archeological deposits. Due to the lack of access, the site is poorly documented, its extent is not well-known, and its potential is difficult to determine. The site is in private hands and now that it serves a residential function (with multiple owners involved) the potential for future research appears rather limited.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

Site Files, 97003171