



Can you identify this Object?

See the back for answer.



April, 2013

Jim Wosochlo will Present a Talk about the Blacksmith Site

The April meeting of the Frances Dorrance Chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology will be held on April the 30th at 7:00 PM in the Duryea Municipal building at 311 Main St., Duryea, PA. The meeting is open to the public and the presentation is free of charge.

This meeting will feature Jim Wosochlo President of Chapter 14 Forks of the Delaware SPA. Mr. Wosochlo will make a presentation on The Blacksmith Site, which includes prehistoric and historic elements. This site (36SC82) is located on his family farm in Schuylkill county. Jim started his collecting at about the age of 10 by searching for surface finds in Schuylkill and Berks counties. The Blacksmith site is documented by surface finds for the most part. A small amount of excavation has been done. The historic portion of this site was discovered when a plow uncovered a small foundation on one of the farm hilltops. Artifacts point to a pre Civil War occupation. Among the historic artifacts are 17 coins. The prehistoric element is represented by several broad spear points. This farm also has another registered site on which Mr. Wosochlo discovered the first recorded Paleolithic points found in Schuylkill county.

Members will remember Jim's previous talks and we are sure that they will also remember how entertaining and informative they were.

The Conrail Site and Other News

By the time everyone receives this newsletter the 2013 excavation will be in full swing. The last few weeks have been used to straighten out our grids after the earlier vandalism and to clean up our unit walls after some weather related minor cave ins. Anyone wishing to dig or just visit are welcome on Sundays between 10:00AM and 3:00PM. If you come to dig and you have never done it before, don't worry, you will be given guidance by those who have participated before. If you come to observe you will be welcomed and given a run down of what is being done. In other words "no experience required" we all started out with zero experience.

The ceramic evaluation of the historic part of our dig is making some real progress. The dates attributed to a large portion of the ceramic artifacts are showing some surprisingly early dates. As this analysis unfolds we will be keeping members informed. It would be fun to be digging in Westmoreland County, Connecticut.

We want to thank John Kurilla and Norbert Katarsky for their donations and the donations of needed supplies by both Lowes and Home Depot. The actions of the vandals was disheartening, but the generosity of our members and the business community certainly gives a renewed bright view of human nature.

Are you aware of any unrecorded archaeological sites in Pennsylvania? If you do, get in touch with the local SPA chapter and get it recorded.

This is one way that sites can be protected or at least investigated prior to any future development. If you don't know how to record a site, ask us for help.

Roman London is Still Visible

Scores of archaeologists working in a waterlogged trench through the wettest summer and coldest winter in living memory have recovered more than 10,000 objects from Roman London, including writing tablets, amber, a well with ritual deposits of pewter, coins and cow skulls, thousands of pieces of pottery, a unique piece of padded and stitched leather – and the largest collection of lucky charms in the shape of phalluses ever found on a single site. Sophie Jackson, of Museum of London Archaeology, said: "The waterlogged conditions left by the Walbrook stream have given us layer upon layer of Roman timber buildings, fences and yards, all beautifully preserved and containing amazing personal items, clothes and even documents – all of which will transform our understanding of the people of Roman London." The horrible working conditions, in a sodden trench up to 7 meters deep along the buried river, resulted in startling preservation of timber – including massive foundations for buildings, fencing still standing to shoulder height, and remains of a complex Roman drainage system, as well as the largest collection of leather from any London Roman site, bone and even a straw basket, which would all have crumbled into dust centuries ago on a drier site. The most puzzling object is an elaborately worked piece of leather, padded and stitched with an image of a gladiator fighting mythical creatures. The archaeologists believe it may have come from a chariot, but are only guessing since nothing like it has ever been found.

What is this Object

Garter Snap

Identifying this item may seem like a no brainer to many of the recipients of the newsletter, but to somebody born after the beginning of the 1960's it may be as mysterious as a cuneiform tablet. The garter snap is a pretty nifty item for interpreting a site. They came into use in the 1920's with the advent of short flapper skirts and silk stockings and were virtually eliminated by the advent of panty hose in the early 1960's. With the exception of fancy lingerie and costume wear, they are rarely used anymore. Finding one of these at a site can tell you that the contents date to a very narrow 40 year period and that women were present. Brand names and styles can narrow the date range even further.

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