An Introduction to Archaeology in Loudoun County

Clerk of the Circuit Court, Historic Records Division

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Stephen M. Thompson, County Archaeologist
OUTLINE

1. Loudoun’s Native American and Historical Periods

2. The Phases of Archaeological Research

3. Archaeology in Loudoun’s Land Development Process
   - Cemeteries and Burial Grounds
# Archaeological Chronology in Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paleoindian</td>
<td>13,000? BCE</td>
<td>8000 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>pre-Clovis</td>
<td>13,000? BCE</td>
<td>11,150 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clovis</td>
<td>11,150 BCE</td>
<td>10,850 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Paleoindian</td>
<td>10,850 BCE</td>
<td>10,550 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dalton-Hardaway</td>
<td>10,550 BCE</td>
<td>8000 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archaic</td>
<td>8000 BCE</td>
<td>1200 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>8000 BCE</td>
<td>6000 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>6000 BCE</td>
<td>2500 BCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late</td>
<td>2500 BCE</td>
<td>1200 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>1200 BCE</td>
<td>1600 CE</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>500 BCE</td>
<td>900 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late</td>
<td>900 CE</td>
<td>1607 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Era</td>
<td>1607 CE</td>
<td>1750 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colony to Nation</td>
<td>1750 CE</td>
<td>1790 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early National</td>
<td>1890 CE</td>
<td>1830 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antebellum</td>
<td>1830 CE</td>
<td>1861 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>1861 CE</td>
<td>1865 CE</td>
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<td>Reconstruction &amp; Growth</td>
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<td>1917 CE</td>
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<td>WWI to WWII</td>
<td>1917 CE</td>
<td>1945 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Dominion</td>
<td>1945 CE</td>
<td>present</td>
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</table>

13,000 BCE - 1607 CE
First Peoples, Western Hemisphere
Paleoindian hunter-foragers 13,000 – 8000 BCE
Important Paleoindian Sites in Virginia

Thunderbird Archaeological District (093-0165)
Shenandoah River, Warren County

Cactus Hill (44SX0202)
Nottaway River, Sussex County
White Sands National Park, New Mexico

21,000 – 19,000 BCE

Ancient Lake Otero in the Tularosa Basin
Early Archaic

Middle Archaic

Late Archaic

Later Archaic ground stone axes

Late Archaic soapstone bowl

Atlatl Mechanics

The atlatl or spear-thrower is 30 to 100 cm long and extends the thrower’s arm. A stone weight attached to the atlatl balances the weight of the dart tip and may add more power.

The throwing motion resembles pitching a baseball. The foot may remain more or less planted but body weight shifts during the throw to maximize momentum.

Much of the power comes from core muscles and thighs supplemented by the arm and a final flick of the wrist.

Because of the applied force, the dart shaft bends during release and slowly straightens mid-flight.

Feathers at the back of the dart (‘fletching’) create drag that keeps the dart from wobbling.

An atlatl dart can be thrown the length of a football field but is accurate up to about 40 m.
All Native American Archaic Period Sites
Early Woodland
Selden Island Pottery

Middle Woodland
Accokeek Creek Pottery

Late Woodland
Shepard Pottery
All Native American Woodland Period Sites
All Native American Pre-Contact Era Sites
Colonial Land Grants in Loudoun County

Courtesy of Wynne Saffer
An Ordinary on the Potomac Path at Broad Run

Archeological Data Recovery at Site 44LD0729, Loudoun County, Virginia

[Image of artifacts and site map with coordinates 44LD0729]
gaming pieces (mankala)

Overseer/quarters for enslaved

circa 1770 - 1830

44LD0539
circa 1770 - 1830

colonoware

button blanks

44LD1158
circa 1770 - 1830
Rail Bed, Loudoun Branch of the Manassas Gap RR c. 1855
Howardsville
053-0062; 44LD1629
The Process of Archaeological Research

- Phase I: Identification
- Phase II: Significance Evaluation
- Phase III: Data Recovery
Phase I Survey
Phase II Significance Evaluation
Phase III Data Recovery
Archaeology and Development in Loudoun

All Federally Funded and/or Permitted Projects and all Projects on Federally Owned Land

(Roads, Cell Towers, Gas Pipelines and other Utilities, Any Impacts to Waters of the U.S.)

Must Comply With SECTION 106 of the NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT and Consider Impacts to “Historic Properties”

- Identify Historic Resources
- Evaluate Significance (which properties are “historic”)
- Avoid or Mitigate Adverse Effects
Archaeology and Development in Loudoun

Applications for Land Development

• Legislative Applications (Rezonings, Special Exceptions)

• Administrative ("by-right") Applications (Subdivisions, Site Plans, Construction Plans, County Road Plans)
Phase I Archaeological Survey in Loudoun County

> 70,000 Acres
Phase I Archaeological Survey in Loudoun County

1,922 Sites
Preservation Through Avoidance
Windmill Parc/Dulles Town Center

Concept Development Plan
ZMAP-2002-0017

Site 44LD0947
Preservation Through Avoidance
Hartland Subdivision

Site 44LD1819
Chas. Duncan Pottery

circa 1780 - 1830
Preservation Through Avoidance
Lovettsville Community Park

44LD1567, Henry Ruse House Site
Cemeteries and Development in Loudoun

- Reconnaissance Survey
- Archaeological Delineation to Define Cemetery Boundary
- Fencing of Boundary
- Access Provided
- Buffering and Easement to Protect and Preserve