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2009 Archaeological Fieldschools Addressing African Diaspora Subjects

Christopher Fennell

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, cfennell@illinois.edu

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2009 Archaeological Fieldschools Addressing African Diaspora Subjects

Compiled By Christopher Fennell

The following fieldschool list includes announcements sent to me by the fieldschool directors and others listed on various directories. The fieldschool announcements that follow are presented below in alphabetic order by location, starting with those in North America and four in Africa.



North America

University of Maryland Archaeology in Annapolis, Field School in Urban Archaeology. June 2 to July 11, 2009. Dr. Mark P. Leone, Director; Jocelyn Knauf and Amanda Tang, Associate Directors. The University of Maryland's Department of Anthropology and the Office of Extended Studies announce the continuation of the Archaeology in Annapolis project. This intensive, six-week field school devotes eight hours daily to supervised archaeological fieldwork, laboratory work, stratigraphic analysis, technical drawing, writing and interpretation. The summer 2009 excavations extend a long-term program of public archaeology in Maryland's state capital that is supported by the Mayor and City Council of Annapolis. This year excavations will be conducted in the City of Annapolis, and outside the City of Annapolis at Wye House, the former plantation of Edward Lloyd on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, on Maryland's Wye River. Skill development will focus on: soil identification and description; accurate record keeping and photography; artifact identification and cataloguing; understanding of site formation processes and

reconstruction of site stratigraphy; basic surveying and mapping; elements of site report production (e.g., background historical research, reconstruction of site stratigraphy, production of unit summaries and familiarity with professional standards and guidelines for conducting and reporting on fieldwork and laboratory analysis); and public speaking and interpretation. Students will tour a selection of sites excavated to date by Archaeology in Annapolis throughout the quarter-mile historic district of Annapolis within the context of the broader project and its goals, research design and accomplishments. Arrangements will also be made to visit gardens and landscapes associated with former plantations on the Eastern Shore where possible. This year excavations will be conducted outside of the city, at the former plantation of Edward Lloyd on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, on Maryland's Wye River. This former plantation is where Frederick Douglass was enslaved as a boy, and is described in his autobiography, *My Bondage, My Freedom*. Test excavations were carried out during the summer of 2005, and these verified the location of a former quarter for slaves and the existence of very rich archaeological deposits from Frederick Douglass' time. Intensive excavations at this site began during the summer of 2006 uncovering the complete foundation of a slave quarters as well as parts of foundations of two other structures. For further information, contact: Dr. Mark Leone (mleone@anth.umd.edu), Department of Anthropology, University of Maryland, 1111 Woods Hall, College Park, MD 20742-7415, 301-405-1429.

Archaeology of the Harriet Tubman Home Site, Auburn, New York. May 14 to June 3, 2009. This summer's archaeological field course will explore Harriet Tubman's House, a National Historic Landmark in Auburn, New York. This course is open to all students and offers both an introduction to archaeological field techniques and historical background into the life of Harriet Tubman and her network of family, friends, and associates. As part of the field program, students will learn basic excavation, survey, mapping, and laboratory techniques. Harriet Tubman is well known for her heroic acts in liberating African Americans from slavery and fighting for emancipation. She has been described as "America's Joan of Arc" and "the Moses of her people." Yet, the full story of her life is little known and her continued, lifelong, commitment to social causes and reform has not found its way into the pages of history -- until now. Contact: Professor Douglas V. Armstrong, darmstrong@maxwell.syr.edu or 315-425-6276.

Lloyd Manor Archaeology Field School, Lloyd Neck Harbor, Long Island, NY. Hofstra University. June 24 to July 31, 2009. Join us in the excavation of an 18th century slave quarter on Long Island as we recover information about the diverse lives of those enslaved at Joseph Lloyd Manor. During this interdisciplinary project, students will participate in research focused on the day-to-day lives of those who labored under slavery in early New York. Lloyd Manor was home to many enslaved people of African descent, including Jupiter Hammon, one of the earliest published African Americans. Hammon spoke and

wrote for both black and white audiences, challenging the injustices of slavery. Set in dialogue with information recovered from archaeological research, Hammon's voice becomes one within a dynamic community on Lloyd Neck engaged in generating culture, tolerating differences, and constructing freedoms. This season, we seek to expand our understanding of community construction by African Americans enslaved in early New York while collaborating with the modern local public to better comprehend the impact and meaning of history today. In partnership with the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, the Center for Public Archaeology offers students the opportunity to take part in an intensive hands-on course through Hofstra University. Students will learn the techniques in archaeological site survey, field research, excavation, recording, artifact analysis, and public interpretation. This course runs 40 hours a week and involves strenuous daily outdoor activity. Participants must provide their own transportation and housing.



African American Dennis Farm Archaeological Field School, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania. May 26, 2009 to July 03, 2009; application deadline May 22, 2009; <http://anthro.binghamton.edu/fieldschool>. Project Directors: John Roby, Dr. Ann Stahl, and Dr. Nina Versaggi, Binghamton University. The Binghamton University Department of Anthropology will return to the property of the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania for our 2009 Archaeological Field School. Dennis Farm is a sprawling 153-acre farmstead settled by one African American family in the late eighteenth century. The property has remained with descendents of these early settlers since then. As part of a multi-year study, students will participate in an archaeological investigation of the property. This research will address research themes, such as the role of free African Americans in community formation on the frontier, the shaping of an agricultural landscape, the place of Dennis Farm in historical memory, and new perspectives on the African Diaspora. Students will learn basic archaeological techniques of surface and subsurface survey, unit excavation, mapping using a total station and GPS,

field photography, and artifact identification and processing. Instruction will include an overview of the historical settlement of the area, as well as current issues in the archaeology of the African American experience, including the types of research questions being raised by archaeologists working in the historic period. Instructors and guest lecturers will introduce the historic preservation process and discuss career paths in archaeology. The curriculum is designed to give students the basic knowledge and skills necessary to participate in professional excavations and to secure employment in the field of Cultural Resource Management. Enrollment is open to all undergraduate and graduate students, and individuals holding a college degree. Contact information: John Roby, Anthropology, Binghamton University (SUNY), Binghamton, NY 13902-6000 USA, 404-394-5624 or 607-777-2738, 607-777-2477, jroby2@gmail.com.

Great Dismal Swamp Archaeological Field School, Virginia and North Carolina. May 31 to June 25, 2009. Director: Dan Sayers, American University. American University in Washington D.C. will be holding the first annual Great Dismal Swamp Archaeological Field School this coming summer 2009. We will be working at the "nameless site" in the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge of NC and VA. Dan Sayers performed excavations at this 20-acre site during the 2003-2006 seasons and demonstrated that it was home to long-term resistance communities comprised of "maroons" and disenfranchised indigenous groups between ca. 1630-1860. We are going back this season to test several ideas about the impacts of 19th century logging and canal company exploitation of the Great Dismal on interior maroon and indigenous resistance communities at the nameless site. This will be a unique and exciting opportunity for field school participants to actively help piece together this long poorly understood Diasporic history and help us engage public and federal groups in open dialogue. This field school will be of interest to anyone who is fascinated by maroon, indigenous, or Diasporic resistance community archaeologies. There will also be possibilities for exploration of precontact settlements in the swamp for those that might be interested. Contact: Dan Sayers, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Battelle Tompkins Building, American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20016-8003, sayers@american.edu, 202-885-1833.

The Archaeology of Chesapeake Slavery and Landscape, Monticello, Virginia. June 1 to July 10, 2009. Monticello's Department of Archaeology and the University of Virginia are pleased to offer a six-week archaeological field school at Monticello. The program offers six credits to undergraduate and graduate students through the University of Virginia School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Monticello will offer successful applicants half-tuition fellowships. Since space is limited, please be sure to have all materials postmarked or emailed by the application deadline. *Research Focus:* Our fieldwork addresses changing patterns of land use and settlement on Thomas Jefferson's, Monticello Plantation from c. 1750 to 1860, along with their ecological and social causes and consequences. Toward the

end of the 18th century, spurred by shifts in the Atlantic economy, Thomas Jefferson and planters across the Chesapeake region replaced tobacco cultivation with a more diversified agricultural regime, based around wheat. Our research is revealing the enormous implications of this shift for what the landscape looked like and how enslaved African-Americans worked and lived on it. Significant questions remain about the ecological processes that were unleashed, how they were experienced by slaves and slave owners, and the importance of changing slave work routines in explaining social dynamics among enslaved and free people. Field School students will focus on two major efforts during the summer of 2009. The first is the exploration of how the domestic lives of slaves changed during the shift from tobacco to wheat cultivation. The second is devoted to documenting the ecological effects of agricultural change. *Program:* Students will learn basic archaeological excavation and recording techniques required to execute successfully multi-disciplinary field research in landscape archaeology. Technical topics covered include survey and excavation strategies, the analytical possibilities for ceramics, faunal remains, plant phytoliths and pollen, deposits and the sediments they contain, soil chemistry, and spatial distributions of artifacts. The Field School, like the program of which it is a part, emphasizes multidisciplinary approach to archaeology. Guest lecturers are drawn from a variety of disciplines including geology, zooarchaeology, palynology, architectural history, and social history. On-site instruction, lectures, and discussion sessions at Monticello will be complemented by field trips to related sites. Students will attend classes forty hours per week, with the bulk of that time spent doing on-site field research. Reading assignments, lectures, and discussion sessions will cover both technical and historical issues. Most weekends are free for individual travel. Monticello-University of Virginia Archaeological Field School, Monticello, P.O. Box 316, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

The Montpelier Archaeology Field School, Montpelier Station, Virginia. James Madison University Field School, May 11 to June 12, 2009 (18 June for 5-week, 5-credit course); Montpelier Archaeology Field School, June 29 to July 24, 2009 (registration starts April 5, 2009; accredited through SUNY Plattsburgh). The Montpelier Archaeology Field School has for over two decades been contributing to our understanding of plantation archaeology and what was the lifelong home of James Madison, "Father of the Constitution" and fourth president of the United States. In most recent years field schools have concentrated on exploring and restoring the presidential landscape, but now our research has once again turned to the hidden minds and faces of Montpelier: the African American Slaves. Field school students will acquire a solid foundation in archaeological techniques and 19th century plantation archaeology, including: excavation of archaeological strata and features, rigorous documentation of those deposits, identification and dating of historic artifacts, and analysis and interpretation of the site not only to ones peers but also to the interested public.

Historic Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. January 01, 2009 to January 01, 2010; application deadlines rolling; www.mountvernon.org/learn/pres_arch. Project Director, Esther White. Since 1987, a program of archaeological research has been carried out at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington in Fairfax County, Virginia. The program focuses on a number of historical archaeology themes, including African-American and plantation archaeology, landscape studies, material culture studies, and museum education and public outreach. We offer an ongoing unpaid archaeology internship program intended to give high school, undergraduate, and graduate students experience in the field of historical archaeology. Interns are introduced to the methods and techniques that archaeologists use to carry out their research; opportunities involving both field and laboratory work are available. Mount Vernon does not offer college credit, but can work with students to arrange credit from their university. To apply for an internship, please send your resume, a cover letter detailing your interest, and two references. Please note if you wish to receive credit through your institution. Volunteers are also welcome to participate in our program, allowing those with an avocational interest in archaeology to assist in both field and laboratory work and aiding our program through their contributions of time and labor. No previous archaeological experience is required; all of the necessary training is provided. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to participate and commit to at least two days of work. Typically, we only work on weekdays, but weekend work may be offered during the summer or fall. If interested in volunteering, please contact us to discuss your interest and when you may be available. Contact information: Curt Breckenridge, PO Box 110, Mount Vernon, VA 22121 USA, 703-799-6303, cbreckenridge@mountvernon.org.

Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest Field School. June 7 to July 10, 2009.

<http://www.poplarforest.org/archaeology/learning-ops/field-school>. Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest and the University of Virginia are pleased to offer the Twenty First Annual Summer Field School in Historical Archaeology. The field school provides a foundation in current methods and theories of historical archaeology, and offers a solid introduction to the practical skills of site survey, excavation, recording, and laboratory procedures. Students will actively participate in our ongoing interpretation of archaeology to the public. In the summer of 2009, field school participants will excavate an early nineteenth-century building complex, believed to be associated with plantation work spaces and possibly slave quarters, adjacent to Jefferson's ornamental grounds. Students will spend 40 hours a week at Poplar Forest, with most of the time split between the excavation site and the archaeology laboratory. Strenuous daily activity will require physical endurance and good health. Participants will have the opportunity to work with state-of-the-art equipment and software, including a total station for recording field information, a database system containing both the archaeological artifact and context records, and a complete inventory of over 1,000 historical documents relating to Poplar Forest. The program includes: weekly readings on topics in historical archaeology lectures by staff and noted authorities covering such topics as landscape history, plantation life, 19th century material culture, professional opportunities in historical archaeology, and the role of public archaeology a half-day

workshop on architectural restoration and preservation philosophy day trips and an overnight trip to sites where historical archaeology is underway. Contact: Jack Gary, Director of Archaeology and Landscapes, Poplar Forest, P.O. Box 419, Forest, VA 24551, jack@poplarforest.org.

Africa

Abomey Plateau Archaeological Field School in Benin. July 19, 2009 to August 29, 2009; application deadline rolling through July 15, 2009; <http://www.archaeology.ucla.edu/Benin/overview.htm>. Discover West Africa's history by participating in the Abomey Plateau Archaeological Field School. Situated in a 'wet savanna' zone approximately 100 kilometers north of coastal Benin, the Abomey Plateau is a culturally and ecologically diverse region. It served as the political center of the precolonial Kingdom of Dahomey, example of a precolonial West African centralized state par excellence and one of the principle African partners in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. You'll work on excavation, survey, and laboratory duties in and around the town of Cana, a precolonial urban center on the Abomey Plateau. You'll explore rural villages, ritual centers, and palatial complexes, providing a truly diverse introduction to West African archaeology. Additionally, because of the Kingdom of Dahomey's historical connections with the Atlantic world, you'll gain experience identifying and analyzing both local material culture and European imported objects. We will stay in the bustling city of Bohicon, four kilometers from historic Abomey, while we explore together the archaeology of a truly exceptional people and culture.



Interdisciplinary Ethnographic Study of Ghana, University of Ghana. June 8 to July 3, 2009. You are invited to join this educative and fun ethnographic study trip in Ghana. This course provides students with the opportunity to experience and learn the dynamics of Ghanaian culture; visual art, heritage (historical and archaeological), tourism and hospitality, educational system, music, traditional practices, health care system, traditional and national governance, as well as environmental and other socio-cultural practices. The course (six credits) has two components: an integrated coursework and a field study session in Ghana. Participants will acquire and practice skills in field research by proposing their own topics and collecting data to write their reports. It is our goal that this bottom-up approach will help students to understand and better appreciate the diversity of cultures in Africa. Contact: Wazi Apoh, Ph.D, Assistant Professor Frederick Douglass Scholar, Department of Anthropology, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, wapoh@bloomu.edu; Dr. Kodzo Gavua, Chair, Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, University of Ghana, kgavua @ug.edu.gh.

Senegal: University of Chicago Summer Program in African Historical Archaeology. Application deadline, May 30, 2009. Building on last year's very successful season, we will spend another summer in Senegal, one of West Africa's most fascinating countries. In addition to boasting a rich, complex history and dynamic cultural life, Senegal has been the theater of first-rate archaeological research in the past decade, making it an ideal setting for this summer field studies program. In the course of this summer program, you will have the opportunity to participate in an ongoing research projects as you become familiar with theory, methodology, and analysis in African historical archaeology. The field school

will continue the initial work begun last year in the coastal village of Ngasobil, which was the site of a Catholic mission created in the 1840s. While practical life at the mission is what interests us, the property on which it sits forms a large and complex site, which boasts a long record of human occupation going back at least to the 1300s, and possibly earlier. Last summer's work was very much exploratory and focused on 'making sense' of a complex archaeological terrain: mapping portions of the site, isolating archaeological manifestations, and 'testing' archaeological deposits. Part of our task this summer will consist in expanding this background work, while focusing our attention on target areas identified last year through pedestrian survey, archival research, and collection of oral memory. The field school will be preceded by a short 3-day orientation stay in Dakar, the capital-city, and will be followed by a few days back in Dakar. After five weeks spent in the quiet of Ngasobil, this will enable students to spend some time in Senegal's largest urban center, visit cultural institutions (including the IFAN, Cheikh-Anta-Diop University, the Arts Museum), do some sight-seeing (Gorée) and shopping, experience the markets, and enjoy the city's exciting atmosphere, night life, and vibrant musical scene. Contact: Francois Richard, University of Chicago, Department of Anthropology, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, 773-702-7714, fgrichard@uchicago.edu.

Archaeological Field School at the Swahili site of Songo Mnara, Tanzania. June 6 to July 19, 2009. <http://www.songomnara.rice.edu/>. The 2009 Rice University Archaeological Field School will be held at Songo Mnara, an important ancient Swahili coastal port located on a small island just off the southern Tanzanian coast. The importance of this site is underscored by its inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage site list. The six-week field school will investigate the extensive standing ruins at the site, focusing on the houses and central area. Together with Kilwa Kisiwani, a well-researched site to the north, Songo Mnara was a central participant in Indian Ocean commerce during the 15th and 16th centuries AD, facilitating exchanges of goods from the African continent with traders from ports in the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and western India. The site boasts some of the most well-preserved architectural ruins on the southern African coast, including more than 40 houses, five mosques, and numerous tombs. The 2009 Field School will be the first substantial research program at the site and will include survey, testing, excavations and laboratory analysis. Contact: Jeffrey Fleisher, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology-MS 20, Rice University, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251, 713-348-3482, jfleisher@rice.edu.