



This 1934 photograph of the 1907 St. Clair Bridge, taken while the current bridge was under construction, shows a former structure location in the background, and the King and Queen Seat along the tree line to the left.

King and Queen Seat

Although the King and Queen Seat will not be impacted by SHA's project, SHA investigated possible former or current use by Indian tribes. Local tradition (and signs in the Park) holds that the geological formation known as the King and Queen Seat, was culturally significant to the Susquehannock Indians. An 1879 popular history of the *Rocks of Deer Creek* by Thomas Wysong stated that in 1680 a Susquehannock village was once in the Rocks vicinity. Wysong narrated legends concerning Indian use of the King and Queen Seat and the Rocks area, but confessed to "intermingling fact and fancy." Virtually all subsequent published information about the Susquehannock use of the King and Queen Seat is based on Wysong's account.

SHA archeologists closely examined historical and archeological literature and contacted experts on the now extinct Susquehannock Indian tribe, but were not able to substantiate any associations of the Susquehannock Indians with the King and Queen Seat. The Susquehannock once had major villages in the lower Susquehanna River valley in Pennsylvania and briefly occupied sites in Southern and Western Maryland (Kent 1984). This tribe acted as middlemen and controlled much of the early colonial Indian/European trade. The remnants of the Susquehannock Tribe, by then known as the Conestoga Indians, were massacred by a gang known as the Paxton Boys in 1763 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Eshelman 1908).

SHA consulted with the three federally recognized tribes in New York with whom the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and SHA have a relationship: the Oneida Indian Nation, the Onondaga Nation, and the Tuscarora Nation. We also contacted the Seneca. These contacts revealed no evidence that the King and Queen Seat represents a "traditional cultural property." SHA was unable to verify that Indians from New York used the Rocks in recent decades.

Information was also solicited from the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs. No associations with Maryland Indian groups were reported. The Piscataway Indians in Maryland owned land north of Rocks Creek Park in the late 20th century, but this land was outside their traditional territory in Southern Maryland. None of the three Piscataway groups indicated a relationship with the King and Queen Seat.

Archeological Survey

In 2009, SHA hired a consultant to conduct an archeological survey of the MD 24 project corridor. Because future impacts to the full corridor are not yet known, the area surveyed extended 30 meters (98 ft) beyond the road edge on both sides of MD 24, as well as the Deer Creek streambed, from the St Clair Bridge to south of Stirrup Run. The archeological survey included additional detailed background research, walkovers of the project area, and small test excavations to locate and document archeological sites. In addition, the consultant recorded the above-ground remains of the LaGrange Furnace site south of St. Clair Bridge Road. The remnants of the Ma & Pa Railroad bed on the west side of Deer Creek, both inside and immediately adjacent to the project area, were mapped and photographed.

Five archeological sites were identified during the archeological survey and were assigned state site numbers. These include the Rogers House/Ramsay Store site (18HA308), two domestic sites with ruins (18HA309 and 310), the LaGrange Furnace site (18HA311), and the Preston Ford (18HA314). During the archeological survey, information on the physical remains of the Ma & Pa Railroad bed, sections of abandoned roadbed, drill marks on rock faces, historic graffiti, and retaining walls along MD 24 was collected. These latter resources were not evaluated as archeological sites.



Archeological survey of the Deer Creek streambed.

The importance of archeological resources is evaluated using the four criteria of significance for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), in combination with the physical integrity of the specific archeological site (<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>). Because archeological sites are already in a largely buried state, their potential significance is usually evaluated under Criterion D, relating to the ability of a site to yield important information about history or prehistory. Most archeological sites that meet this criterion have undisturbed soil deposits, a significant artifact assemblage from good context, and/or features like pits, cellars and foundations. Deposits that have been disturbed by construction or grading, or that have mixed artifacts from several time periods, are difficult to interpret accurately and therefore would not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register. By law, projects using state or federal money must consider their impacts to National Register-eligible sites. If sites are ineligible for National Register listing, further consideration is not required.

Recorded Archeological Sites

The *Rogers House/Ramsay Store site (18HA308)* was the residence of Evan Stanly Rogers who, with his father Isaac, established the LaGrange furnace on the location of an earlier forge. The residence was converted into a general store in the early 20th century, and was later torn down and replaced by a Park building. A 1930's picture of this property shows what the site looked like when it operated as a general store. Archeological investigations found some early artifacts dating to the Rogers' occupation,

but only in heavily disturbed contexts. The overlapping 19th and 20th century occupations have resulted in the mixture of artifacts and soils from different periods and meaningful information can no longer be obtained. The site was recommended as ineligible for listing in the National Register.



The Ramsay Store in the 1930s. Note the gas pumps next to the porch.

Site 18HA309 consists of concrete and cinderblock structural ruins, and a possible cold cellar location that date to the early to mid 20th century. This site reflects the occupation of John Ayers, who purchased the property in 1902. The property was later incorporated into the Park. Artifacts were found on the surface or in shallow soils. Because of the lack of archeological deposits containing artifacts in good context, this site can yield little new information about early 20th century lifestyles. This site has been recommended to be ineligible for listing in the National Register.

Site 18HA310 is also a residential site with structural ruins, probably affiliated with the Rogers holdings. The site includes a fieldstone foundation, a former outbuilding location, and a well shaft. A historic photograph from 1934 shows a two-story frame building on the foundation; this structure is absent from the 1948 topographic map of the area. Artifacts recovered generally date from the mid to late 19th through mid-20th century. This site is characterized by thin soils, many of which have been disturbed by grading and prior road construction. The shallow, mixed, archeological deposits and narrow site area limit the research value of this site, and it has been recommended as ineligible for listing in the National Register.

The **LaGrange Furnace site (18HA311)** includes furnace ruins, a road trace, and a collier pit (charcoal-making feature) that lie immediately adjacent to the northern end of the project area near St. Clair Bridge Road. The furnace site is marked by an interpretive sign on a Park trail. The furnace site is considered potentially eligible for listing in the National Register, but no further archeological work by SHA is planned because no impacts to the furnace site are proposed. Should future impacts be planned, SHA would conduct additional archeological investigations to evaluate its significance for listing in the National Register. Other unrecorded sites associated with the LaGrange iron industry complex probably exist, but are currently well outside SHA's potential impact area.



Surviving stonework at the LaGrange Furnace site.

The ***Preston Ford (18HA314)*** is located in the Deer Creek streambed. The ford is shown at slightly different locations on 19th century historic maps. The earlier ford appears to be marked by a concentration of rocks in the stream. Timber cribbing embedded in the streambed matches the location of a former road crossing mapped in 1878. The current project does not impact this feature and its National Register significance has not been evaluated.

Other Resources Documented During Archeological Survey

The ***Ma & Pa Railroad*** paralleled MD 24 on the west side in the southern half of the MD 24 project corridor, before crossing Deer Creek and extending northeastward out of the Park. The portion of the railroad in the Park had its origins in 1878 when the Baltimore and Delta Railway was chartered (Hilton 1999). A narrow gauge line was completed from Bel Air, Maryland to Delta, Pennsylvania, through the Rocks area, by 1884. The railroad route shown on Martenet's 1878 county map above appears to be a proposed route and differs from the actual route shown on Martenet's later 1885 Map of Maryland. The rail line later became part of the Baltimore and Lehigh Railroad, and was converted to standard gauge in 1901. That year it became part of Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad, known as the Ma & Pa (Sansonetti 1997). Rocks Station was located on the east side of Deer Creek, outside the MD 24 project corridor. Slightly less than a mile to the south, a smaller flag station was located at Ferncliff, on the west side of Deer Creek, just outside the project limits. The Maryland District of the Ma & Pa was abandoned in 1958. The photographs below show the Copper Rock Trestle #335 formerly located in the south end of the project corridor. Although the trestle is gone, the stone retaining wall and railroad cut still remain. Another former trestle in the project corridor, the Wysong's Road Trestle, was located at the current Sharon Road intersection with MD 24. Large concrete blocks in a tributary paralleling Sharon Road within the project corridor are the remains of the trestle piers.



Copper Rock Trestle and stone retaining wall adjacent to MD 24, circa 1950.



Stone retaining wall adjoining the Cooper Rock Trestle in 2009.



Railroad cut adjoining the former Copper Rock Trestle in 2009.

Site Protection

This summary of results is being provided so that the public and concerned citizens will have an overview of the results of archeological investigations conducted for the MD 24 project. State and federal law protects archeological site locations to prevent vandalism and looting of these fragile, non-renewable, resources. The locations of archeological sites referenced in this summary have not been disclosed for this reason. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Rocks State Park regulations forbid artifact collection or any other disturbance by the general public.

SHA follows both state and federal law (*State Finance and Procurement Article 5A-325 and 326 of the Annotated Code of Maryland* and *Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act*) in evaluating project impacts to these resources. The Maryland Historical Trust has not yet commented on SHA's archeological report and recommendations on the eligibility of specific archeological sites for listing in the National Register.

References

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