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Friends' hosting dig in Woolwich

Volunteers sought for Thwing's Point project

The Times Record



FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY invites volunteers to assist with the project. Participants are required to pre-register with a time commitment of a half day, though multi-day assistance is encouraged, space permitting. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO WOOLWICH

The Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is hosting an archaeological dig at Thwing's Point in partnership with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission July 7-18 and invites volunteers to help with the project.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB) continues its Outside! 2014 series with a unique opportunity to unearth some of Maine's deepest history.

According to a press release, "In 1654 at the home and trading post of Thomas Ashley, on what is now Thwing's Point in Woolwich, a group of early settlers met and signed papers forming the first Europeanstyle government in the Merrymeeting Bay region. The site has been described as possibly the most significant un-excavated historic archaeological site in Maine."

The 2014 dig continues earlier efforts homing in on the original building site, including two formerly unearthed cellar holes. This site is loaded with artifacts of the period. The last FOMB excavation in 2009 ended just as a skull was partially uncovered in one of the pits.

Leading the dig is retired MHPC historical archaeologist Lee Cranmer. Any artifacts recovered remain the property of the landowner.

FOMB invites volunteers to assist with the project. Participants are required to pre-register with a time commitment of a half day, though multi-day assistance is encouraged, space permitting. A \$20 minimum donation to FOMB is suggested to help defray the \$2,000 FOMB cost share of the \$7,000 project. Donations of at least \$50 from non-FOMB members include a one-year membership in the organization.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to work with, and learn from, trained archaeologists while making important contributions to Maine historical knowledge. A maximum of six volunteer slots are available per half day session. Donations — at levels far less than a similar field school might cost — support continued FOMB work in areas like this one, the press release states. The morning time slot is 8 a.m. to noon and the afternoon slot is 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. with a lunch break at noon.

Pre-registration is required with dig coordinator Sarah Cowperthwaite at 449-1450 or sarahcowperthwaite@rocketmail.com.

Next in the FOMB Outside! 2014 series is a Little Swan Island paddle with Warren Whitney on July 16 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Intermediate paddlers are invited to meet in Richmond but must bring their own boats. PFDs are required. Pre-register with Whitney at 666-3376.

Visit www.fomb.org for more Outside! 2014 events and to learn more about how you can help protect Merrymeeting Bay.

Coming up

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