



October 11, 2012

**Elkton, MD...** The Historic Elk Landing Foundation accepted a check for over \$300 from the Archaeological Society of the Northern Chesapeake on Wednesday evening (Oct. 10, 2012) in gratitude for the society's use of Elk Landing for its 2012 Field Session this past spring.



Speaking at a lecture describing the dig, Society president, Dan Coates, thanked Elk Landing for allowing the society to not only use the grounds, but for the tours of the houses and grounds as well as opening the site for the society's spring picnic.

At the core of the evening was a lecture by archaeologist Dr. James Gibb who supervised the session. Dr. Gibb explained how electronic surveys of the grounds led him and the rest of the team to believe that Fort Hollingsworth was located some one hundred yards south of the Hollingsworth House and nearly right next to the Stone House.



Dr. Gibb noted that while practically no artifacts were found, he believes the trench dug perpendicular to where the fort was believed to be located supplied enough earthen evidence of the fort's location.

Fort Hollingsworth played a pivotal role in the defense of Elkton when, in 1813 and again in 1814, British troops and marines came north up the Elk Creek and attacked Fort Hollingsworth on the east bank of the Little Elk Creek, and Fort Defiance on the west bank. Both times the British were driven off and Elkton was saved from the torch. Dr. Gibb said that the British attached targets in the Chesapeake for two reasons: in retaliation for the burning of several towns in Canada by American forces, and to draw American troops off the Canadian border. He said he gave this same talk in St. Johns, Newfoundland last week and received quite a different response.

“In the Canadian's eyes, they won the War of 1812 or at worst, it was a tie, so they are willing to forget it. Americans too,” noted, Gibb, “try to forget the war, but for the opposite reasons, because, at worst, we didn't win, and at best, we fought to a tie.”



Dr. Gibb's talk to an audience of over 50 people, was not without controversy. He expressed doubts about the presence of the Stone House during the War of 1812 because it was so close to the fort and because no 18<sup>th</sup> century artifacts have ever been found in or around the building. However, as one Elk Landing board member pointed out, newspaper accounts, census records, and a dendrochronology report say otherwise, placing the structure in its present location prior

to and in 1813. As Dr. Gibb responded, "it's only a theory. We need more archaeology to tell us more."

Dr. Gibb's full report on the field session (as well as all research reports concerning Elk Landing) is on the Historic Elk Landing Foundation web site: [www.elklanding.org](http://www.elklanding.org) Just click on "Research" and scroll down to "Little Guns on the Big Elk: Discovering Fort Hollingsworth."

Thanks to the Historical Society of Cecil County for co-sponsoring Dr. Gibb's presentation and a special thank you to the Cecil County Arts Council for the use of its hall.