



THE DATUM POINT

January 2016

Newsletter of the
NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER (NVC) OF THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org



FROM THE PRESIDENT **DIANE SCHUG-O'NEILL**

Happy 2016, everyone! Cheers to a new year with new opportunities and great fellowship. We're going to start the year off with a couple of great talks. Mike Johnson will speak to us about Turtle Hill and David Clark will discuss Community Outreach, in February. Dr. Clark's talk should be especially appealing to our Certification Students.

For those of you who don't know, our Chapter has had a large number of members graduate from the state program. In fact, the ASV's first graduate came from our ranks, Malcolm "Rich" Richardson. The program offers [and requires] time in the field, the lab, and the class. To learn more about the program, contact our liaison, [Ann Wood](#).

This year, I'm working on a couple of tours. These will likely take place on the Saturday after the scheduled Wednesday meeting date. These off meetings will be publicized via the *Datum Point* and email, through our newly re-tooled Corresponding Secretary. Maggie Johnson has stepped down from this position, after several years of faithful service to our Chapter. Maggie, we all thank you for your devotion to the Chapter. I thank you especially for your delicate and diligent work to get all of our members as well as our gratis members (ex: County Supervisors) to receive our *Datum Points* electronically.

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January 13th talk

Turtle Hill (44FX2636)

By Mike Johnson

This prehistoric site was worked back in 2003; Berno Tops was the principal investigator, under Mike's oversight. The site featured Early Archaic and Middle Woodland objects.

For many years, Dr. Johnson has been notorious among those who know him for sharply criticizing common CRM Phase I and II box checking or lowest common denominator methodologies for producing unacceptable numbers of false negatives seriously warping the archeological record. Following the Phase I reconnaissance and Phase II assessment of Turtle Hill (44FX2636), a common type of interior, floodplain prehistoric site in central Fairfax County, the author had an opportunity to lead a controlled audit of the initial Phase II, which produced marginal indications of a significant Woodland occupation. It was the first of several CRM methodological audits.

This paper will discuss the stark differences between results from the 1/400, horizontal transect interval sample and subsequent test excavations, and the audit, involving a 1/100, horizontal transect interval sample and additional test excavations. Surprisingly, the 1/100 horizontal STP sample showed potentially significant internal site integrity, including probable discrete hearth and possible specialized work areas. It also produced evidence of Archaic occupations dating at least as far back as the Early Archaic Palmer-Kirk phase.

**Join Chapter members at Anthony's
Restaurant at 6 pm before the meeting!
Located at 3000 Annandale Rd, Falls
Church, VA 22042 - (703) 532-0100**

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Our new Corresponding Secretary is a familiar face and name, John Kelsey. Not only do we know John as past Chapter President and past ASV Board member, but you've likely seen him in many state and out-of-state dig shots. John's mug shot has been museums. John's role as Corresponding Secretary is equally as familiar. Unless you tell him otherwise, John has been sending you emails sharing news items, events, and opportunities to Chapter members. This is the new duty of our Corresponding Secretary. Many members have already caught on to sending John a note to share with everyone. I encourage all members to send John a note, if you run across information to share with the Whole Chapter. Funneling these through one person allows us all to identify his email as *not spam*. So, please use him/this service.

I'll take a little more time to thank all of our Chapter Officers *ó Thanks for your work and dedication!* All of our officers have many years service because they care and it doesn't hurt, Honest! Many of you stepped up to help with the 75th Annual ASV Meetings and I think we all benefitted. This year, we've got our own 50th Anniversary to prepare for and celebrate in September. I look forward to another great NVC Party. Keep your eyes and ears open and feel free to make suggestions.

Reminder:

Chapter Membership is due this month. Form at the end of the DP!

\$15 / self
\$17 / family
\$5 / student

You'll stop receiving the *Datum Point* and emails from John, if we don't receive your renewal.

ASV Dues are due in January, as well. For the ASV, you can pay online via [PayPal](#), also.

ASM TO EXPLORE ADDING MARITIME TO CAT

By Susan Langley
Maryland State Maritime Archeologist

In response to requests from the membership, the ASM Board has determined to explore augmenting the CAT Program with maritime-related courses. Living in the Chesapeake region it is not surprising that members have expressed a desire to include research and projects relating to Maryland's maritime heritage.

While it's relatively easy to add pertinent segments to existing CAT courses, such as those for ethics and law, or laboratory techniques, other courses will be developed. As with the present CAT Program, some courses may be mandatory and others would be optional or elective.

Although some ASM members may be SCUBA divers, courses would not involve diving.

The Institute of Maritime History (IMH), a non-profit organization with an active membership in Maryland, has already drafted the outline for a research project that would aid its current search for the fleet scuttled by Lord Dunmore in the Potomac River off St. George's Island in August, 1776.

A pilot class, Introduction to Ship Architecture, is being offered at the Maryland Historical Trust in Crownsville on Sunday, January 31 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m (this will include refreshments and breaks) and the same class will be offered again on Sunday, February 7 at the same time.

These will be followed on Saturday, February 13 (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) with a tour of the sloop-of-war Constellation in Baltimore Harbor. This provides an opportunity to see and touch the elements covered in the class.

While the classroom portion is free of charge, there is an admission fee for the ship; the group rate is \$8 per person.

Participants should plan to meet at the ship by 10, rain or shine. Dressing in layers is advised. The tour will pause at noon to watch and, if desired, participate in firing the parrot gun on the spar deck. Anyone interested in attending either class and/or the tour of the Constellation, must confirm with [Susan Langley](#) by close of business Tuesday, January 26 to ensure sufficient seating and handouts are available.

Remnants of a late-18th-century vessel were discovered during excavations for a new hotel on the Old Town Alexandria waterfront.

(Kate Patterson/for The Washington Post)

By [Patricia Sullivan](#) January 4

A large, heavy ship, scuttled between 1775 and 1798, is being dug out of its damp grave at the site of a new hotel construction project in Old Town Alexandria.

Archaeologists found the partial hull of a ship at 220 S. Union Street, part of the city's major redevelopment of the Potomac River waterfront. It's on the same one-block site where workers two months ago discovered a [1755 foundation](#) from a warehouse that is believed to have been the city's first public building.

“It's very rare. This almost never happens,” said Dan Baicy, the hard-hatted field director for Thunderbird Archeology, the firm watching for historic evidence during construction. “In 15 years that I've done this work, I've never run into this kind of preservation in an urban environment where there's so much disturbance.”

On Monday, naval archaeologists joined the crew at the site to help dismantle the vessel, timber by timber, looking for artifacts and markings that could identify it and show where it sailed and what it carried. The public is invited to view the findings Tuesday from 10 a.m. until noon, after which the wood will be removed from the site.



Archeologist Daniel Baicy shows a recently discovered privy at a site in Alexandria where a new hotel is planned. (Kate Patterson/for The Washington Post)

The ship's blackened bow was discovered as construction crews excavated the site where the [120-room Hotel Indigo](#) will soon rise. Digging by hand, archeology crews uncovered a nearly 50-foot-long remnant of the keel, frame, stern and flooring, estimated to be about one-third of the original hull. The wood did not decay, Baicy said, because once it was buried, oxygen could not reach it.

Luck also played a factor in the preservation. A huge brick footing for a later warehouse “barely missed the boat,” Baicy said.

The find has archaeologists surprised and ecstatic. Unlike the warehouse, which was noted in old city records, there was no known documentation of the buried ship's existence.

“This is like the jewel in the crown for us right now,” said John Mullen, Thunderbird's principal archaeologist.

It appears the ship was built to carry heavy cargo or was used as a military ship, Mullen said. Archaeologists believe it may have been placed at the site to provide the framework to fill in the cove and sand flats at Port Lumley, one of two spots where the deep-water channels of the Potomac approaches the shoreline.

The wood will be stored in tanks or in a natural body of water and monitored until a preservation lab has room for it, said Fran Bromberg,

Alexandria's archaeologist. The Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab in St. Leonard took the old warehouse but has run out of room and cannot accommodate the ship, Bromberg said.

Carr Hospitality, which is developing the hotel, was required by the city to employ an archeology firm while excavating the site. Carr has paid for 3-D scanning imagery of the ship and is paying the cost of its removal; the Alexandria government will bear the cost of preservation.

Bromberg said that "it's certainly a possibility" that the city will be able to put at least part of the ship back together for display and preservation but added that such an effort could require special fundraising.

The excavation site is just a block from one of several remaining cobblestone streets in Old Town, near many pre-Revolutionary War buildings.

Workers also recently uncovered a large privy, six feet long and possibly three seats wide, the third such outhouse found as part of the hotel project. Such discoveries are just as exciting to archaeologists as the ship and the warehouse, because they contain ceramics, glass, bones and all sorts of other debris that people threw into them centuries ago.

"For some reason, we've found a lot of shoes," said Baicy, who has already begun excavating there.

The photos on the following pages are of the vessel being recovered and the last one is of the Carlyle Warehouse floor.







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NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Phone: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Individual (\$15) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Family (\$17) _____

Return to:

Isabella Tonkavitch, Treasurer, NVC/ASV

8304 Graceway Drive

Lorton, VA 22079

Chapter members must join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia at asv-archeology.org

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month at the James Lee Center, 2855-A Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!