



# THE DATUM POINT

June 2026

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

Chapter Website – [www.nvcasv.org](http://www.nvcasv.org)



**THIS MONTH'S MEETING WILL  
BE JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> AT THE  
RICHARD BYRD LIBRARY**

7250 Commerce St.  
Springfield, VA 22150  
7:30-9:00pm

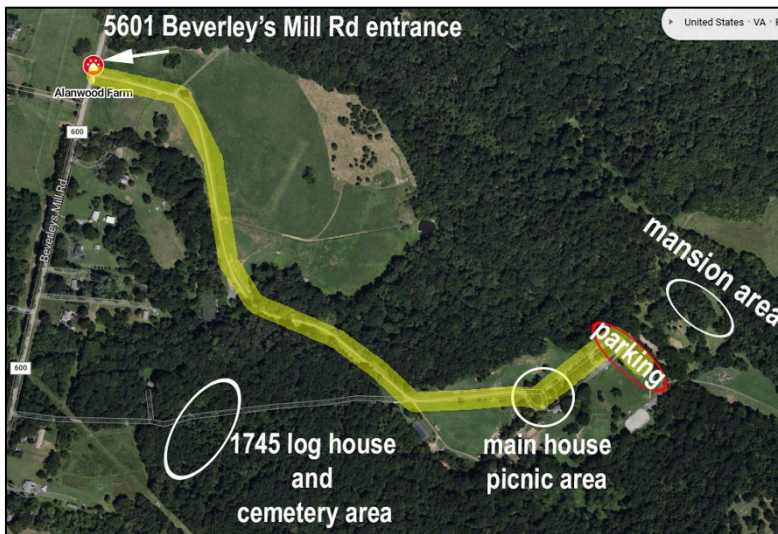
**Clovis point allometry, modularity,  
and integration:**

***Exploring shape variation due to tool  
use with landmark-based geometric  
morphometrics***

**By Dave Thulman**

**FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT  
PATRICK O'NEILL**

I am excavating several STPs around a potential colonial outbuilding at Saints Hill the next three Saturdays on June 13, 20, 27. If you would like to participate, let me know. We will meet at 9am at 5601 Beverley's Mill Rd, Broad Run, VA. See map below.



Allometry is the study of changes in shape through time. It usually is used to study changes in an organism as it grows, but the same concepts apply to artifacts as they are used, the only difference being that artifacts grow smaller. Modularity and Integration examine how the component parts of an artifact are designed to function as a unit. These three concepts can be used to better understand how artifacts were designed and used. Here artifacts are examined using geometric morphometrics, a technique that rigorously evaluates shape outlines. I will discuss how these concepts were used to better understand Clovis points and how we can better understand artifact design evolution.

*David Thulman was born in Washington, DC, where he spent his formative years in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. He obtained an anthropology degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1978, a JD from George Washington University Law School in 1982, and a PhD in anthropology from Florida State University in 2006. He presently teaches archaeological ethics at George Washington University and is president of the Archeological Research Cooperative, Inc., which focuses on prehistoric underwater archaeology in Florida.*

## Arlington A250 Celebration

Patrick O'Neill, Diane Schug-O'Neill, Mary Green, Charlie Grymes and Cathrine Ring manned a table for the Chapter. We had a Tri-Fold, pamphlets, a tabletop and ground level "experience digging" demonstration, that was clearly a *hit!* We had 16 people sign up to learn more and three of those people attended the May meeting, five days later. Clearly worth our time 😊.



The Northern Virginia Chapter's Tent at Arlington's A-250 celebration.



Cathy Ring explaining what to 'excavate' to the children.



Mary Green discussing various aspects of archaeology with a watchful Mom.



Future excavators?

## One of Virginia's most eccentric patriots was John Sinclair, a government-sanctioned pirate

*Privateers were an important component of the American war effort. They were something akin to government-sanctioned pirates — armed vessels that chased down and confiscated the cargo of civilian enemy merchant ships. The techniques privateers employed wouldn't pass muster today. They'd often approach a ship under a false flag, and captain and crew would get a large cut of the captured loot. One of the most famous was John Sinclair, Ben Swenson writes.*

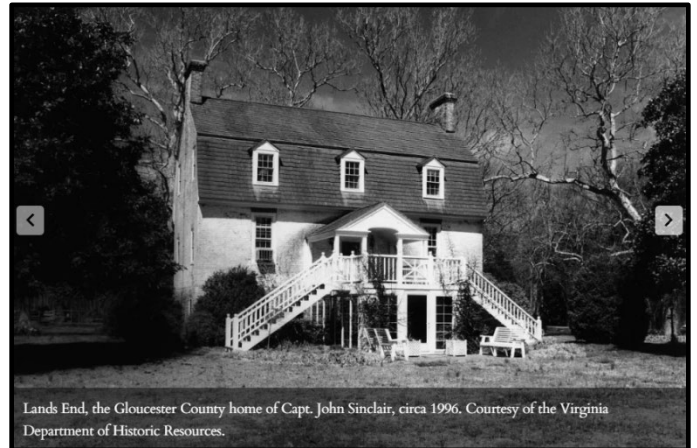
It was this long memory that in a way made Sinclair an unsung hero of the American Revolution — and almost cost him his personal freedom in the early days of the republic. Sinclair's story is one of talent and daring, accusations and betrayal. He was a seemingly fearless seafarer who contributed unconventionally to American independence while forging a personal and professional life of moral complexity. The memory of Sinclair has largely been obscured by time, yet in all his eccentric glory, he is emblematic of the country the war for independence established: passionate, bohemian, resolute.

It's an odd turn of fate that Sinclair's story is not well known. His descendants number in the thousands. You might have met one without knowing it. You certainly know of one: Award-winning actress Glenn Close traces her lineage back to Sinclair.

His ample progeny starts with a humble Virginia upbringing. He was a scrappy lad, born in 1755 in Hampton to a father who had been kidnapped from Scotland and raised in the Old Dominion. Evidently Sinclair's father, Henry Sinclair, had no love for British nobility; the death of a couple elders in Scotland meant that Henry became the rightful Earl of Caithness, but he refused to return to accept the title.

John Sinclair grew up as a merchant seaman, learning the trade from his father. Tall and comfortable in the rigging of ocean-going ships, Sinclair was known to have a temper and developed the sort of extravagant cockiness that often washes over young sailors. His

hubris might have been well deserved; by his late teens, he was commanding his own merchant vessel.



Lands End, the Gloucester County home of Capt. John Sinclair, circa 1996. Courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.



Lands End, the Gloucester County home of Capt. John Sinclair, in 2021. Photo by Mae Tilley, courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

[Read the full story at Cardinal News here.](#)

### 2026 ASV ANNUAL MEETING

**Banquet Speaker:** Matt Reeves (Montpelier Archaeologist)

**Location:** Richmond, VA

**Date:** **September 24-27**

**Registration:** [2026 Annual Meeting](#)

Payment via PayPal link inside Registration

**Hotel:** Drury Plaza Hotel **804-354-1542**

11049 West Broad Street

Glen Allen, VA 23060

**Meeting:** \$40

**Banquet:** \$45

## [The Mystery of the Māori Mummy](#)



Images pulled from video

This link is a 2018 video discussing the Museum at Rouan and a famous Māori mummified head held there for many years. The museum holds many examples of human and animal remains that used to be on display. It discusses the museum’s reopening and discovery of the Māori mummified skull. The museum officials wrestled with what to do ethically and lawfully on an international scale. It presents a detailed view into how Europeans/Westerners used to collect artifacts of other civilizations and how modern curation struggles with those decisions. Before re-contacting the Māori officials, the head was digitized in minute detail using “the Handi-Scan” at the micron level, before sharing and studying. Officials worried that it was a European head tattooed after death with Māori artwork.

*CAUTION: The video contains sensitive objects.*

## **Landmark Property in King William Returns to the Pamunkey Indian Tribe Tidewater Land reunited with its Original Stewards**

In a landmark moment of cultural restoration and historical continuity, the Windsor Shades estate has been sold to the Pamunkey Indian Tribe, reconnecting one of Virginia’s most significant colonial and Revolutionary War landmarks with the people who originally inhabited and stewarded the land centuries before English settlement.

Situated on a commanding outside bend of the Pamunkey River in King William County, the 13-acre Windsor Shades estate occupies ground first documented by Captain John Smith in 1608, when he observed a Native village on the site. Archaeological artifacts later confirmed the longstanding Indigenous

presence on the property, now returning to the descendants of those original inhabitants.

The sale represents a profound full-circle moment in American history — from Indigenous homeland, to colonial plantation and Revolutionary War landmark, and now back into the care of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe, one of the nation’s oldest continuously recognized tribes.

“The return of Windsor Shades to the Pamunkey Indian Tribe honors the enduring connection between this land and the people who first called it home,” notes Chief Kevin Brown. “This is more than a real estate transaction. It is an act of historical recognition and cultural preservation.”



Windsor Shades (LongandFoster.com)

The story of Windsor Shades spans thousands of years and reflects the layered history of Virginia itself. The property originated as part of a 5,000-acre crown grant awarded in 1644 to William Claiborne for fending off Native people during colonial conflicts. Originally known as Romancoke, the estate evolved into a thriving plantation, ferry crossing, tavern, and inn under Augustine Claiborne, who constructed the present house between 1745 and 1750.

Architecturally, Windsor Shades is regarded as one of the finest surviving examples of an 18th-century Tidewater planter’s house. The two-story frame-and-brick residence retains remarkable historic integrity, including its notable massive Flemish-bond brick

chimneys and one of the largest interior fireplaces in Virginia, located in the original tavern basement visited by George Washington and General Lafayette.

Read full article [here](#).

## **Viking Link Interconnector Archaeological Work**

**Wessex Archaeology** undertook archaeological investigations to support construction of the new [Viking Link Interconnector](#), which transmits electricity between Britain and Denmark. It is the world's longest land and sea electricity cable, spanning 475 miles, and connects Bicker Fen substation in Lincolnshire with Revsing substation in southern Jutland, Denmark. The onshore route within Lincolnshire was divided into three zones based on landscape character: the Lincolnshire Marsh, the Wolds and the Fens.

Our first course of action was to undertake trial trenching to test for the presence of archaeology, with over 200 trenches excavated. Using the results from this trial trenching we planned and undertook a programme of archaeological work. This involved the excavation of 38 sites of archaeological interest. This work was undertaken in accordance with the relevant Written Schemes of Investigation, detailing the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed for both the fieldwork and post-excavation work.

All the archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's digital recording system. A complete record of excavated features and deposits was made, including plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales and tied into Ordnance Survey's National Grid.

Aerial photography was collected using an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) for the purpose of producing detailed topographic datasets of certain excavated areas. These datasets could also create 3D photogrammetry models of archaeological features.

In addition, photogrammetric recording was used to record the inhumation burials uncovered in one area for detailed 3D models and orthomosaic images.

[LINK](#)

## **Next Month!**

### **Who:**

**Father Andrew Fisher of St. Ambrose Catholic Church**

### **Title:**

**The 1570-1571 Spanish Jesuit Mission in Virginia.**

### **Location:**

**Thomas Jefferson Library  
7415 Arlington Blvd  
Falls Church, VA 22042**

### **When:**

**July 8, 2026 7:30pm**

## 2026 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

<b>President</b>	Patrick O'Neill	<a href="mailto:PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET">PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET</a> 703-244-6275
<b>Vice-President</b>	Darius Roby	<a href="mailto:darius.robby@live.com">darius.robby@live.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Barbara Leven	<a href="mailto:levenbarbara2@gmail.com">levenbarbara2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Recording Sec</b>	Matt Windt	
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<b>Webmaster</b>	Chris Havlicek	<a href="mailto:christo829@juno.com">christo829@juno.com</a>

### Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

<b>Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)</b>	Dr. Jeffery Alvey	<a href="mailto:fcpa-archaeology@fairfaxcounty.gov">fcpa-archaeology@fairfaxcounty.gov</a> 703-534-3881
<b>Mount Vernon</b>		
<b>Gunston Hall</b>	Dave Shonyo	<a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-638-9724
<b>Alexandria Museum</b>	Dr. Eleanor Breen	<a href="mailto:Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov">Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399
<b>DC City Archaeologist</b>	Dr. Ruth Troccoli	<a href="mailto:Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov">Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov</a> 202-442-8836
<b>Germanna Foundation</b>	Dr. Kelly Arford-Horne, MA, RPA	<a href="mailto:kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org">kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org</a> 540-423-1700

**NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

The link above allows you to pay online via PayPal (no need for an account) or Venmo. You can still pay via a traditional check, as well. Our dues go towards many different supportive efforts beyond paying for our website. We participate throughout the state with: Scholarships; Donations to Sites; Memorials; Fieldwork Opportunities; Educational Programs; and more.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues:**

Individual (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

Family (\$17) \_\_\_\_\_

Student (\$5) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to NVC/ASV.**

**Return to:**

**Barbara Leven, Treasurer, NVC/ASV**

**9518 Liberty Tree Lane**

**Vienna VA 22182**

**The Chapter usually meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of each month. \*Meetings may take place in-person and/or on Zoom. Details with start time and on-line/in-person information will be provided in the Datum Point newsletter prior to each meeting.**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!**