

THE DATUM POINT

February 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

The Northern Virginia Chapter looks forward to celebrating our **50th Anniversary** in September 2016! We've started off the year with a great talk by Dr. Mike Johnson about Turtle Hill. He also discussed some plans for the coming season at Chapman's Mill (<http://chapmansmill.org/>), where several members of our chapter have volunteered over the years, and still do! Our Chapter has spent many hours with the site and look forward to more this year.

The Northern Virginia Chapter also looks forward to more activity at Gunston Hall (www.gunstonhall.org/). Fairfax County may also have some upcoming opportunities for volunteering we usually get monthly updates at our meetings. (www.cartarchaeology.wordpress.com/)

This month, Dr. David Clark will be discussing Community Outreach. Some of our members have been lucky enough to work with Dr. Clark on a site or two; others may remember him from his talk back in 2012.

Please join us! We meet every month and are planning a couple of tours. In April, we will be visiting Menokin (<http://www.menokin.org/>).

**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**

Public Outreach in Archaeology By Dr. David Clark

**Weds. February 10th
The Urbanites Rm
James Lee Center 7:30PM**



David is a professional archaeologist, public archaeology outreach specialist, and educator. He is executive director and principle investigator of the Loudoun Archaeological Foundation, and he maintains archaeological research and community outreach partnerships in Loudoun County with Claude Moore Historic District Park, Oatlands Plantation and Morven Park. He conducts a variety of scientific archaeological research and outreach programs in the local area including prehistoric/historic archaeology, several archaeological summer-camps for kids, science/archaeology camp programs for girl/boy scouts.

OLD COLCHESTER

BY CART

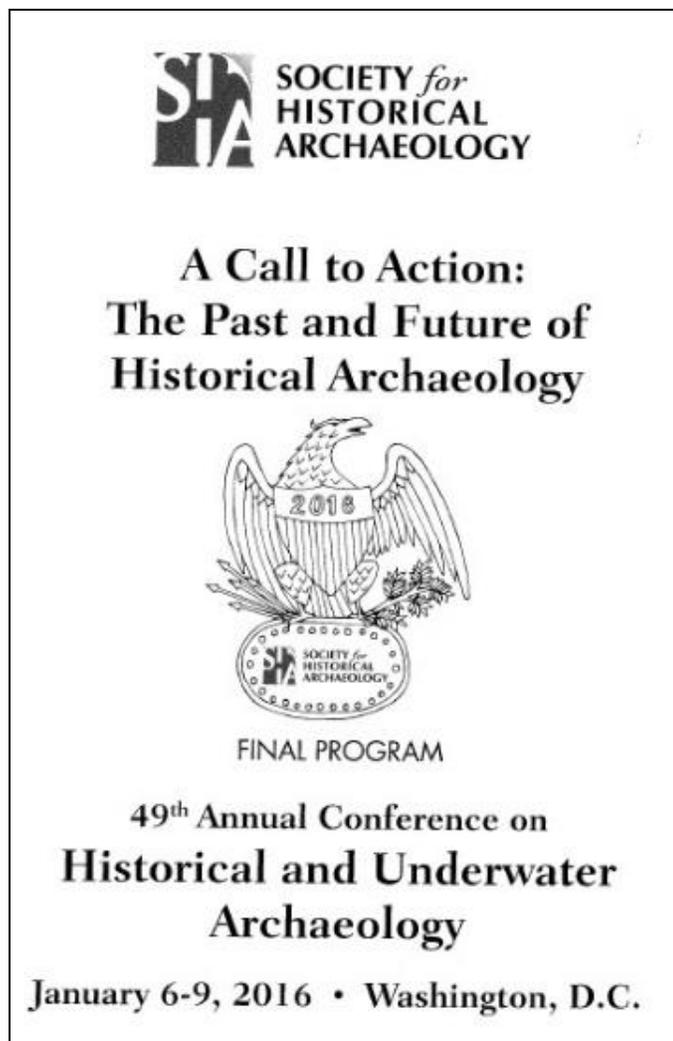
January was a busy month for the Fairfax Archaeology department, as four members attended the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) conference in Washington DC. Chris S. presented on the Ash Grove Meat House restoration, Erica and Megan presented on the current excavations at the Cemetery Site, and Jean and Megan had a large poster which highlighted the stone foundation discovered a few years ago near the intersection of Furnace Road and Old Colchester Road. CART members are also preparing presentations for the Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference (MAAC) in Ocean City MD in March. Hope to see you there!



Early in February CART will be presenting information about the current excavations at the *History Beneath our Feet: Archaeology in the Chesapeake Region* archaeology symposium at 9 am at Gunston Hall on 6 February 2016. Four other professional archaeologists from around the region will also be presenting. For more information, visit the Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources, <http://www.fofaweb.org/>.

The colder winter weather has allowed CART field members to work with volunteers and the CART lab staff in processing of artifacts and report writing. Volunteers have been busily weighing all of the artifacts CART has recovered over the past few years. This data can be used as a proxy for artifact size since quantity can sometimes be misleading when items are broken into small pieces. For example, the weight helps to differentiate between items that are caught in window-mesh versus the items recovered in a quarter inch size screen and is useful in calculations for our interpretive analysis.

CART volunteers have also been amazingly productive picking through the water-screened window-mesh samples. Now, cataloging has begun for these artifacts. CART staff sort through each pile of tiny artifacts carefully separating different types of ceramics, small fish and rodent bones, and metal artifacts like lead shot and straight pins. Even

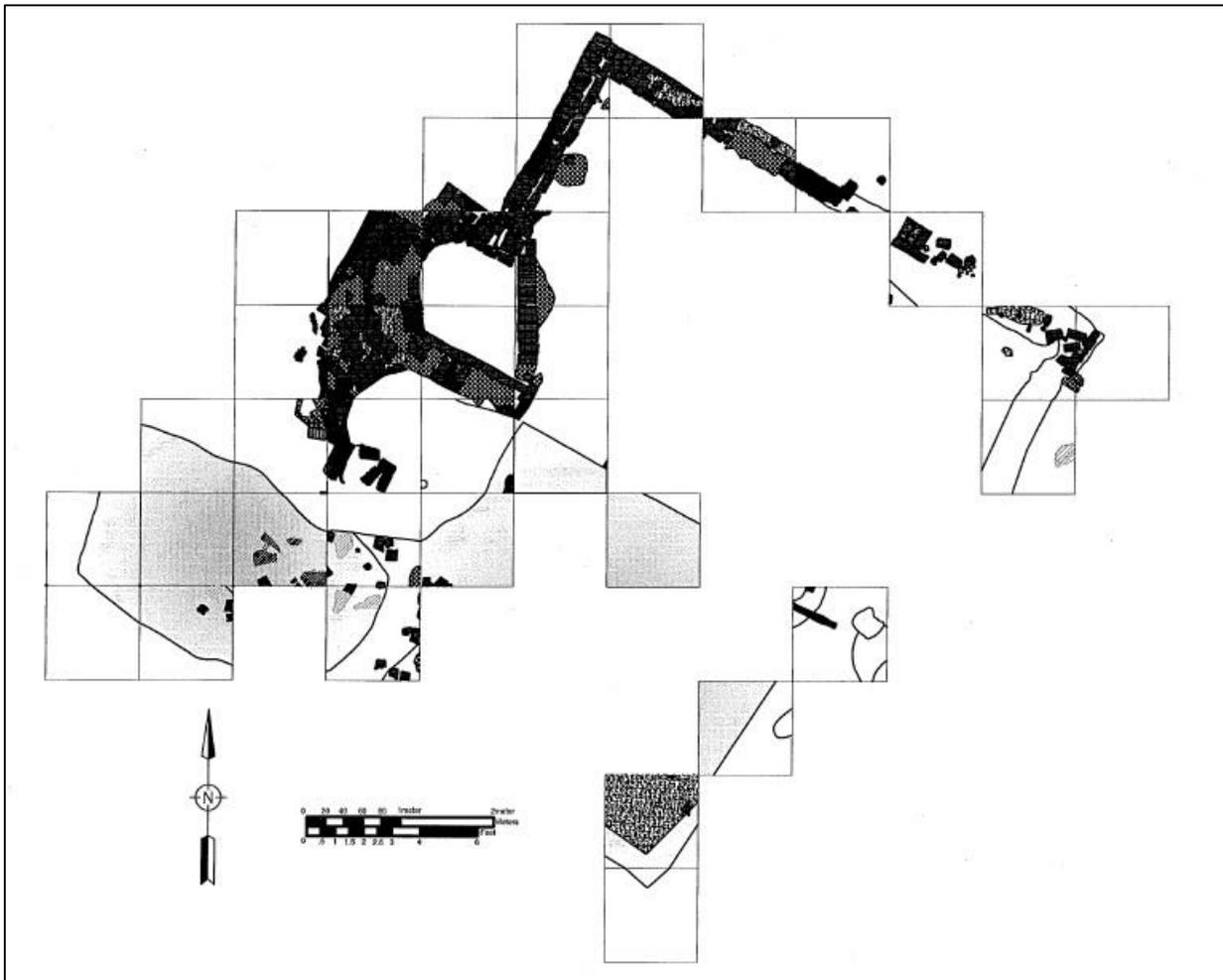


at such a small size many of the artifacts can still be identified. The ceramics and glassware tend to be similar to the pieces found in the dry ¼ö samples, but the window screen helps us to recover entire artifact classes that we would completely miss if we only used the larger screen size. Cataloging these samples takes a long time to sort through the sometimes hundreds of tiny artifacts that have been recovered. We still have a long way to go before the warmer weather approaches!

The CART crew is grateful to gain new volunteers each month. Our New Volunteer Orientation provides an opportunity to learn about archaeology as well Virginia's history. For both those new to archaeology and the more experienced, the CART orientation introduces our department as well as our work at the Old Colchester Park & Preserve. The next orientation will be Saturday February 20th. New volunteers can either write us for more information or sign up online by Fairfax Volunteer website <https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov>

After digitally mapping the field drawings into AutoCAD, CART can see the relationships of the cellar features to the intact brick foundation, as seen in the image, giving us a much larger picture of site which is especially vital now since it has been backfilled. The shaded areas to the south and west designate the cellar fill. These features have not been excavated, but have been split-spoon augered, and the fill continues approximately three feet below surface.

Check out our blog at www.cartarchaeology.wordpress.com for more information about volunteering and other happenings around Fairfax County.



VIRGINIA UNTOLD:

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN NARRATIVE

The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the first phase of Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative, a new digital collection of records that will help the public break through the "roadblock" that has long impeded African American history research. The project will bring to light the pre-Civil War experiences of African Americans documented in the Library's primary source materials. Virginia Untold can be accessed at <http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/aan/>.

The Virginia Untold project began in 2013 through a generous donation from Dominion Resources. Since then more than 100,000 African American names have been indexed and nearly 40,000 digital images created. In this initial release, images of almost 5,000 records containing thousands of African American names are available on Virginia Untold. The images include freedom suits, freedom certificates, coroners' inquisitions, certificates of importation, deeds of emancipation, petitions to remain in the commonwealth, petitions for re-enslavement, apprenticeship indentures, cohabitation registers, and tax lists.

Collectively, the documents found in the initial offering of Virginia Untold tell the stories of African Americans, enslaved and free, dating back to the 17th century. These stories include that of Hester Jane Carr, a free African American who was tricked into leaving her home in New York City and sold as a slave in Petersburg, as well as the sad story of Jenny, a slave who was brutally beaten to death by a white plantation manager in Brunswick County. Researchers can also learn about Dennis Holt, a free African American living in Campbell County who petitioned to be re-enslaved so that he could remain with his enslaved wife, or Rachel Findley's successful years-long effort to win freedom for herself and more than 35 of her descendants in a Powhatan County court.

"Virginia Untold marks the first step in making records from the Library's vast collection of pre-Civil War African American historic records available in one interface," said Librarian of

Virginia Sandra G. Treadway. "We invite members of the community, educators, historians, and the digital library community to review our efforts by visiting

<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/aan/> and contact us with your feedback about the site. Your comments will help us seek appropriate avenues for increased funding to enhance Virginia Untold and explore the possibility of collaborative partnerships."

Exploring Virginia Untold will reveal how various record types work in concert to create a fuller picture of the lives of individual African Americans. For example, the story of an emancipated slave named John Brown can be found in a deed of emancipation and a petition to remain in the commonwealth, both found in Petersburg court records. Similarly, these stories may not be confined to one locality. Free African Americans were required by law to register in the locality in which they resided. Through Virginia Untold, one can trace the migration of free African Americans from one locality to another through the freedom certificates they received when they registered with local government officials.

Several record types found in Virginia Untold have been transcribed through our crowdsourcing project Making History:

<http://www.virginiamemory.com/transcribe/> providing even greater search capability by allowing for full-text keyword searching. As more records are transcribed by the public through Making History: Transcribe, they will be added to Virginia Untold.

By making this narrative more accessible and encouraging the public to help transcribe the records, Virginia Untold will promote greater understanding and spark conversation about African American history in Virginia and the nation.

Following this initial release, Library of Virginia project staff will embark on a 6-9 month evaluation and assessment stage before making decisions about future directions for Virginia Untold. During this time period, staff will strive to engage users formally and informally, in person and online,

seeking to understand the demographics of our users, while diving deeper when we can by gathering feedback and opinion on use, collection selection, and technology.

As those findings evolve, we will seek appropriate avenues for increased funding to support new technologies, more digital content, and collaborative partnerships with the public and other institutions.

SAVE FORT MONROE

The Web page of an informal network of people who advocate a UNIFIED national monument or park to transform the split one at Fort Monroe, Virginia—the site of what the Civil War historian Edward Ayers once called “the greatest moment in American history.”*

**Please see the final paragraph in a June 2011 Chronicle of Higher Education [profile](#). Virginia officials finally acknowledged this “greatest moment” stature in a 2014 [op-ed](#). The Web page this is taken from is the original Website, created in 2006, of Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park.*

New in 2016: Fort Monroe’s Mystery Fate Why all the silence from politicians, reporters, editors and Tidewater opinion leaders concerning Fort Monroe? Most people who follow this decade-old controversy want a revenue-generating, innovatively structured Grand Public Place built on the foundation of a substantial national monument or national park, rather than the present split one. They want due respect for Fort Monroe’s four-centuries-old Chesapeake Bay spirit of place, with public enrichment in every sense: economic, historical, recreational, environmental, cultural. **Here are some questions languishing in the silence:**

- * Any progress on Gov. McAuliffe’s fall 2014 resolve to get the split national monument unified?
- * Will the National Trust for Historic Preservation lend its crucial voice to the call for unification, just

like the National Parks Conservation Association, the *Virginian-Pilot*, the Civil War Trust and others?

* The National Trust passionately opposes those James River electrical towers. What about spirit-of-place-deleting condos in the heart of the national monument/park on Fort Monroe’s bayfront?

* After more than four years since designation of a split national monument on parts of Fort Monroe, why is there zero evidence of National Park Service presence?

* Why has the *Daily Press* gone back to falsely reporting that Fort Monroe *is* a national monument when in fact it only *contains* one?

* How will authorities ensure public access to officials’ big-picture “retreat” on Fort Monroe’s future?

* How does the proposed “waterfront park” relate to unification? To what extent is it really just a token measure meant to distract attention from the need for national stewardship of a complete, unsplit, national monument/park on Fort Monroe’s east side (as shown in the illustration below)?

* Given that Hurricane Isabel brought a tenth of a billion dollars in damage to Fort Monroe, what has been done about the Wetlands Watch-criticized lack of flood planning for the envisioned condos? *What planning, if any, is being done to transform Virginia’s Historic Triangle into a Historic Diamond with Fort Monroe anchoring a corner?

Fort Monroe, Virginia, looks across the lower Chesapeake Bay, over Hampton Roads harbor, deep into four centuries of America’s past, and -- if America makes sensible post-Army use of it -- far into the coming centuries. A National Park Service map uses light green to indicate the two parts of the split national monument recently established there. But if it’s true that Fort Monroe saw American history’s greatest moment, that bifurcation is **self-evidently preposterous**. It’s like marring Monticello with hillside development. Here, red has been added to show the sense-of-place-defining bayfront space that needs to be incorporated into the national monument to transform it from fake to real.



HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If you want the national monument unified in something like the way that's suggested by the red area in the illustration above, you're a member of the informal network Save Fort Monroe. You can take action:

- * Please "like" the [Save Fort Monroe Facebook page](#) and promote it whenever you can.
- * Please join the Save Fort Monroe e-mail list by sending your e-address to SaveFortMonroe[at]gmail.com. (Your e-address won't be used often, and won't be used for anything except Fort Monroe.)
- * Please take every opportunity to promote unification of the split national monument via social media, letters to the editor, online comments, and personally contacting Virginia journalists as well as politicians at all levels. They talk to each other!
- * Please [contact](#) Gov. McAuliffe and encourage him to act on his stated belief that Fort Monroe should be unified. Be sure to stipulate: not token unification via a mere "green connector," but **real** unification—from Buckroe down to the fortress and

from Mill Creek across to the bay. (Ask him to consult the illustration on this Web page!)

Virginian-Pilot [editorial](#) again warns against "squandering" Fort Monroe and again urges unification of the split national monument. (Please see the red area in the illustration above.)

The *Daily Press* never corrected its [many factual blunders](#) in attacking Gov. McAuliffe's unification plan.

Civil War News [update](#) on Fort Monroe from last year begins, "He hasn't put it in writing, but Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe has verbally called for a "contiguous national monument" at Fort Monroe, joining the two federally protected parcels controlled by the National Park Service." The Tidewater media are mostly ignoring this development, but administration officials say it's happening. Steve Corneliussen asked the governor about it again at a public event. The governor declared emphatically that it's happening. This *Civil War News* article is well worth reading.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)—nearly a century old, with a million

members—spoke up for unification of the split national monument. The Civil War Trust followed suit a week later. Both organizations are boosting strong signals from Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe that he plans to lead the way to unification. NPCA isn't merely calling for some spirit-of-place-denying "green connector" or for a token walking path around the shoreline perimeter. Instead, NPCA's [public statement](#) calls forthrightly and unambiguously for "[p]rotecting the green space that connects the park's Star Fort and North Beach area as parkland." The illustration above uses the color red to highlight that hundred or so acres.

A Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot* [op-ed](#) summarizes Fort Monroe's political outlook as of summer 2014. (Please see also a July 5 Newport News *Daily Press* [letter](#).)

Henry Louis Gates Jr. [tells](#) why Fort Monroe's 1861 special moment in American history matters so much. (Please note also the vigorous online discussion there.)

Wetlands Watch [calls](#) the plan to overdevelop low-lying, ocean-facing Fort Monroe "stupid." (And the Union of Concerned Scientists [warns](#) that sea rise threatens this national treasure.)

Read a [lengthy but highly informative online back-and-forth discussion](#) beneath a March 2013 article in *National Parks Traveler*.

Read the May 22, 2013, [op-ed](#) "Fort Monroe self-emancipators' courageous act changed the world."

FROM THE POLITICAL RIGHT: Former Virginia Delegate Tom Gear -- commended for seven years of Fort Monroe political leadership by Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park -- argues passionately for making the "phony" national park real by unifying its two separated parts.

FROM THE POLITICAL LEFT: *Virginian-Pilot* editorials have called for unifying the split national monument by including the missing bayfront land, in order to avoid Fort Monroe's being permanently "degraded" -- and because to do otherwise would mean "a national treasure will be squandered." (See "The next step at Fort Monroe," "Fix the plan for Fort Monroe," "Governor should protect Wherry" and "Make Fort Monroe a state priority.")

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FROM THE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION: "[Protect Fort Monroe National Monument's Historic Character](#)." (Excerpt: "The proposed development would separate the two parts of the park, undermine the park's historic character, and limit public access. We can't let this happen.")

Read a [Virginian-Pilot op-ed](#) telling why May 23, 1861 -- not May 24 -- started "the greatest moment in American history."

Why the map's red area is so important: [Think Outside the Moat](#)

Three-minute YouTube tour: [Cherish Fort Monroe](#)

[Article and online discussion](#) at *The Root*, an online magazine of the *Washington Post*

Queries, comments, expressions of willingness to help by speaking out: [SaveFortMonroe @at gmail.com](mailto:SaveFortMonroe@atgmail.com)

Note as of summer 2014: This Web site presents the overwhelming, nearly unanimous view of almost everybody who has followed the decade-long process of determining this national treasure's post-Army fate: we believe that the split national monument must be unified. The Web site began as, and still holds the URL of, CitizensForAFortMonroeNationalPark.org, but the politics of Fort Monroe advocacy changed everything in early 2011.

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Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-550-0441
Alexandria Museum	Francine Bromberg	Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399
Chapmans Mill	Francis Allshouse	chapmanmill@gmail.com 540-253-5888
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Troccoli	Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov 202-442-8836

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Phone: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Individual (\$15) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Family (\$17) _____

Return to:

Isabella Tonkavitch, Treasurer, NVC/ASV

8304 Graceway Drive

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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!!!!