



THE DATUM POINT

November 2025

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org



THIS MONTHS MEETING IS ZOOM !
WEDS NOVEMBER 12, 2025 AT
7:30PM

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88152806018>

**AN EXPLORATION OF
BLACKSMITHING HISTORY AND
TRADITIONS AT JAMES MADISON'S
MONTPELIER**

**BY CHRIS PASCH, PAUL FRITZ, AND
STEPHEN BILLY**

FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT
PATRICK O'NEILL

The Chapter had a great turnout at the ASV Annual Meeting in Staunton. More inside!

November means advertising for Chapter elections to be held at the Dec 2025 meeting. Below are listed those people who are on the slate, BUT, anyone can contract me to be added to the slate, including from the floor at the December meeting!

Those on the current slate are:

Patrick O'Neill – President
Darius Roby – Vice-President
Treasurer – Barbara Leven
Datum Point editor – Diane Schug-O'Neill
Recording Secretary – Matt Windt

I hope to return to Saint's Hill soon to do some more brush removal and conduct some more ground survey for additional buildings and landscape features.

Mike Johnson continues his efforts at Jasper Ridge, both in the field as well as inside lab work. The research is very productive, and he is also actively writing a preliminary report.



This past summer, the Montpelier Archaeology Department investigated an 18th-century Blacksmith shop that was run by Moses, an enslaved blacksmith owned by James Madison, Sr. Moses ran the blacksmith shop during the American Revolution. Moses' blacksmith shop provided supplies for the Continental Army during the War. They are investigating this site to find evidence for the forge, items produced, and structures that were present at the site.

Chris Pasch, M.A. Archaeology Field Director, joined the Montpelier staff in 2017. Prior to coming to Montpelier, Chris worked at Historic St. Mary's City, in Southern Maryland, as a Field Supervisor and Assistant Lab Supervisor. He has over a decade of experience working in the Mid-Atlantic on pre-contact indigenous sites, 17th-18th century colonial settlements, 19th century plantation landscapes, and

early 20th century sites. Chris received his MA in Historical Archaeology from the University of Leicester and his BA in History and English Literature from St. Mary's College of Maryland. His M.A. thesis used the Temple and icehouse at Montpelier to explore the experiences and knowledge of enslaved laborers conducting icehouse labor, and their readings and perspectives on the Temple as a symbolic structure in the early American republic. Chris specializes in landscape archaeology, memory and heritage studies, public and community based archaeology, the archaeology of identities, geographic information systems (GIS), and digital data collection. Outside of archaeology Chris is usually lost in Tolkien lore, Star War cannon, D&D, or is simply enjoying a cup of coffee.

Paul Fritz received a B.A. in Applied History, focusing on public history education. He has been a blacksmith for over twenty-eight years working in museums and on his own. Through his work designing, building, and managing exhibitions, he became more involved in the technology side of museums. This led to his leaving museums and working full time in the IT field. Paul has never lost his passion for museum education and continues to provide blacksmith demonstrations at local museums and festivals. Paul was thrilled to learn of the 18th century blacksmith program at Montpelier as it provided an opportunity to combine his love of blacksmithing, passion for museum education, and experience in archaeology from his applied history degree and past programs.

Steven Billy J.D., Public Archaeologist, completed his undergraduate degree in Political Science and History from James Madison University. He went on to obtain a J.D. from William and Mary Law School. After practicing law for more than twenty years, he decided to switch careers, and recently completed the Montpelier Field School. Steven also has experience on a number of other archaeological projects throughout Virginia. He has a particular interest in introducing the public to archaeological concepts and communicating how archaeology can be a valuable tool to help communities gain insights into past people and rewrite misplaced historical narratives.

MARK BECKLER – 1969-2025



Mark Beckler was a member of the State ASV and was also a member of both the Maritime Heritage Chapter and the Northern Virginia Chapter. He attended many of the NVC in person meetings and assisted Mike Johnson on the Jasper Ridge Project. He also enrolled in the ASV Certification Program. Mark was memorialized at the ASV Annual Meeting by the Maritime Heritage Chapter.

Please go to the following link to view Mark's formal obituary.

<https://www.mcintirebradhamsleek.com/2025/09/22/colonel-ret-mark-milo-beckler/>

ASV ANNUAL MEETING IN STAUNTON

By Patrick O'Neill

The ASV Annual Meeting was a success in all avenues! The Northern Virginia Chapter was well represented through the event. Yvonne French gave a presentation "Using Geographic Information Systems for Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Sites", Liz Crowell on "Archaeology in Fairfax County: A retrospective", Patrick O'Neill on "Saints Hill Cabin and Mansion" and "Everhart Mill in Loudoun County", and Molly Kerr "Shopping Stories: Using Ledgers in an Archaeological Context".

The NVC was also prominent in the Awards Ceremony during the banquet. NVC member Eric Larsen, formerly at Germanna, was selected as the 2025 ASV Professional Archeologist of the Year!



Eric Larsen and Mike Barber (Photo by Bill McGovern)

Longtime NVC member Jackie Cuyler was awarded the 2025 Avocational Archeologist of the Year!



Mike Barber and Jackie Cuyler (Photo by Bill McGovern)

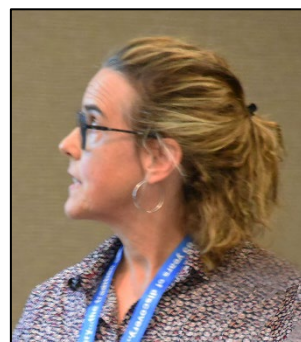
Patrick O'Neill, your esteemed NVC President and President of the ASV, was awarded a special leadership award by the ASV Executive Board.



Mike Barber and Patrick O'Neill (photo by Bill McGovern).



Clockwise: Molly Kerr, Liz Crowell, Yvonne French (photos Bill McGovern)



NVC members at the Banquet (photo by Diane Schug-O'Neill)

2025 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET 703-244-6275
Vice-President	Darius Roby	Darius.Roby@live.com
Treasurer	Barbara Leven	levenbarbara2@gmail.com
Recording Sec	Diane Schug-O'Neill	schugoneill@gmail.com
Datum Point Editor	Ishtar Watson	Ishtar@anti-proton.com
Webmaster	Chris Havlicek	christo829@juno.com

Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)		
Mount Vernon		
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-638-9724
Alexandria Museum	Dr. Eleanor Breen	Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Trocolli	Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov 202-442-8836
Germanna Foundation	Kelly Arford-Horne, MA, RPA	kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org 540-423-1700

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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 meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month. *Due to COVID-19 concerns, 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!!!!