

DAY OF ARCHAEOLOGY WITH THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 26, 2014 David.E.Rotenizer Community Archaeology, Conservation, Day of Archaeology 2014, Education, Maritime Archaeology, Public Archaeology, Science Archaeology, Archeological Society of Virginia, ASV, Bateau, Batteaux Boats, Chesapeake Bay, Council of Virginia Archaeologists, Gloucester County, James Madison University, Kittiewan Plantation, Nelson County Courthouse, Northampton County, prehistoric site, Prince George County, Public archaeology, Shenandoah Valley, Threatened Sites Committee, Threatened Sites subcommittee, United States Forest Service, Virginia, Virginia Association of Museums, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

As readers of the Day of Archaeology (DOA) blog have realized, there are many aspects to what goes on within the field of archaeology. Throughout much of the U.S., many states have archaeological societies. Typically, these non-profit volunteer organizations bring together those involved in archaeology as a unified voice and force for the archaeology of that particular state.

Since 1940, Virginia archaeology has been promoted by the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV). Yes – the society uses the “eo” spelling variant of archaeology in its title. For the past 74 years, the ASV has been a dynamic and active voice for Virginia archaeology.



During its quarterly meeting, the Board of Directors of the Archeological Society of Virginia was divided into small work groups. The board participated in a Value Exercises to discuss and better understand the mission and objectives of the society. Photo courtesy David E. Rotenizer.



View of the Board of Directors of the Archeological Society of Virginia at its quarterly meeting 12 July 2014 in Bridgewater, Virginia. Photo courtesy David E. Rotenizer.

It was perfect timing that the ASV Board of Directors held its quarterly board meeting that coincided with the DOA event. I felt this was a unique opportunity to participate in DOA and help bring to light the fact that archaeology is often supported by organizations such as these. The meeting was held in the Town of Bridgewater, which is situated within the Shenandoah Valley of western Virginia. Being a statewide organization, the meetings move around the state.

Responsibility for directing the activities of the ASV is vested in a Board of Directors that consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past President, six elected Directors, chairs of Standing Committees and the President of each Chapter. Yes, it is a large board, but it is functional.

With this blog entry, I'll discuss some of the topics and items brought up during the meeting.



View of one of the Bateaux Boats recovered with ASV support in 1983. The ASV is seeking funds to help with the proper conservation and study of the remains. They have been stored in fresh water the past 30 years. The ASV Board of Directors voted to allow the boats to be submitted the Virginia Association on Museums' annual Top Ten Endangered Artifacts Program. Photo courtesy Lyle Browning.

LISTING FOR TOP TEN ENDANGERED ARTIFACTS

In 1983, during a construction project in downtown Richmond, Virginia a number of historic bateaux boat remains were recovered. Bateaux were rapids running craft, invented and patented in 1765 by the Rucker Brothers. They were up to 70 feet long and 7 feet wide, pointed at both ends with sweep oars and a hearth for the tiller man to tend. They carried tobacco hogsheads and other cargo downstream and any cargo needed was poled upstream.

Prior to the excavation, we had limited knowledge how the craft were constructed. The boats were built by master craftsmen with individual boards tapering over 40 feet to the bow. This is in contrast to later boats that were basically industrial constructs with straight boards that had pre-constructed nose-cones nailed to a rib. In order to complete the report, we need space to conserve the boats and we need the chemicals to preserve them. This boat and others have been sitting in fresh water for 30 years and are in danger of deteriorating without proper conservation and the information regarding them needs to be reported to fill a large gap in the history of Virginia history.

The ASV Board voted to approve having the boats submitted to the Virginia Association of Museums' annual Top Ten Endangered Artifact listing. This is a program designed to help bring attention and awareness to many of Virginia's artifacts at risk. It is our hope that awareness for the boats will lead to funding for much needed treatment and research regarding this collection. I hope you can [go on-line](#) to help vote for our candidate.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

An objective for this committee is the capacity to maintain a public presence for the sharing of both organizational and scholarly information. Current vehicles for this mission include a quarterly newsletter, a quarterly journal, special publications, a website, and an emerging social media presence. It was almost a year ago that the ASV launched its first Facebook page, which has continually grown. Please [visit our page](#).

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The ASV directly and indirectly supports archaeological research in Virginia. Some chapters of the society are currently collecting slag samples from historic iron furnace sites. The slag will be chemically analyzed for sourcing purposes. As a result, iron found on archaeological sites could be traced back to where it was manufactured, thus giving insight on past economic trade patterns. Another survey activity is the documentation of Civil War earthworks at risk to loss.

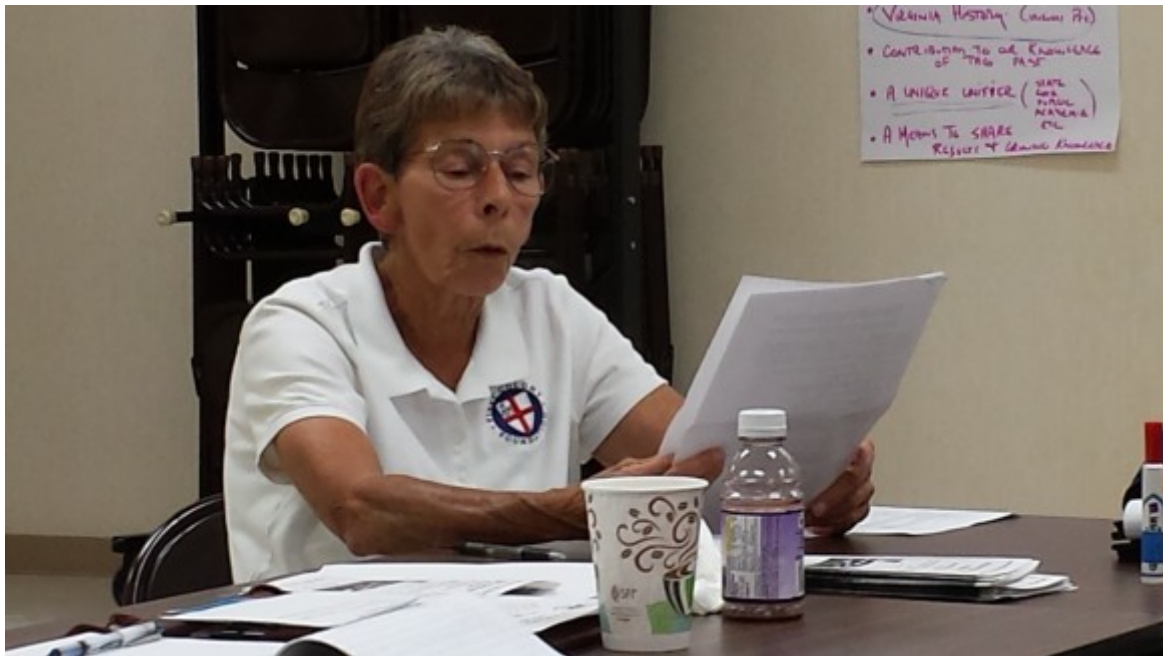
A number of field schools recently took place this spring that included the ASV, in partnership with other stakeholders such as the Virginia Department of Historic Resources; James Madison University, and the United States Forest Service. These projects touched upon a range of site types, including testing of a Woodland Period shell midden eroding into the Chesapeake Bay, a low artifact density, yet stratified prehistoric site in Northampton County and a nearby 17th century historic site, and the testing around a circa 1760 house in western Virginia.

Virginia has a unique program that helps to address important archaeological sites and collections at risk. The Threatened Sites subcommittee works with the Threatened Sites Committee of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to help target a small amount of available funding for its best use. During 2013-2014, the nine projects funded by this program included the study of the effects of maize horticulture, the testing of the Nelson County Courthouse, the analysis of a Gloucester County 18th century artifact assemblage, side-scanning sonar of 1812 British Fort Albion as well as a 17th century church site, a listing of Civil War shipwrecks, a survey of sites on the Eastern Shore, the evaluation of an Atlantic Archaic site, the dating of a Prince George County shell midden, and final analysis of an occupation at Maycock's Point. The Threatened Sites Program is important to Virginia archaeology.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

This committee is charged with developing and implementing instructional programming, encouraging scholarly development, and promoting best uses for archaeological collections. The committee reported that two field schools had been conducted since May. An annual “field school,” with a focus on lab work, will be hosted at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond. Many of the committee’s activities are held in conjunction with the Archaeological Technician Certification Program.

The ASV maintains a research library which is currently being cataloged. It was reported that nearly 4,000 items have now been cataloged. The library recently obtained collections from the estates of Cindy Dauses and Ed Bottoms. The committee strives to develop and award scholarships to students, primarily in support of student paper presentations at the ASV annual meeting.



As part of our commitment to the original deed of trust for Kittiewan (granted to the ASV from Mr. Bill Cropper in 2006), we must read the requirements of maintaining the property each year at an ASV board meeting. This year, Martha Williams read the Will. Photo courtesy of David E. Rotenizer.

KITTEIWAN COMMITTEE

In 2006, the ASV was bequeathed from Bill Cropper, the 18th century Kittiewan Plantation and its 720 acres containing evidence of 6,000 years of occupation. This facility functions as the ASV’s headquarters and base of operations. The property also operates as a historic site and hosts the ASV collections and research library. Kittiewan recently [hosted a festival event](#) to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

74TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASV

Each year in October, the society holds its annual meeting. This conference is perhaps the highlight of the society. The meetings are always held in October. The locations move around the state. This year (2014) it will be held in Richmond. Meetings are held on a weekend, with Friday being a day of meetings and presentations hosted by the Council of Virginia Archaeologists (COVA) – an organization of professional archaeologists working in Virginia. It was reported that the meeting is on track and the Call for Papers has gone out.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Archeological Technician Certification Program is designed to give individuals the opportunity to obtain recognition for formal, extended training in the techniques and goals of archaeology without having to participate in an academic degree program. Certification students are provided technical training in both the field and laboratory in conjunction with rotational lectures and workshops and required readings.

The program is sponsored by the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV), the Council of Virginia Archaeologists (COVA), and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR). There are currently 115 participants enrolled in the program.

RESOURCES

ASV [Facebook Page](#)

ASV [Website](#)_(Changing to: www.ArcheologyVA.org)

[Blog](#) for Virginia Archaeological Technician Certification Program

Kittiewan Plantation (ASV's Home): [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
