

Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

95th Annual Meeting

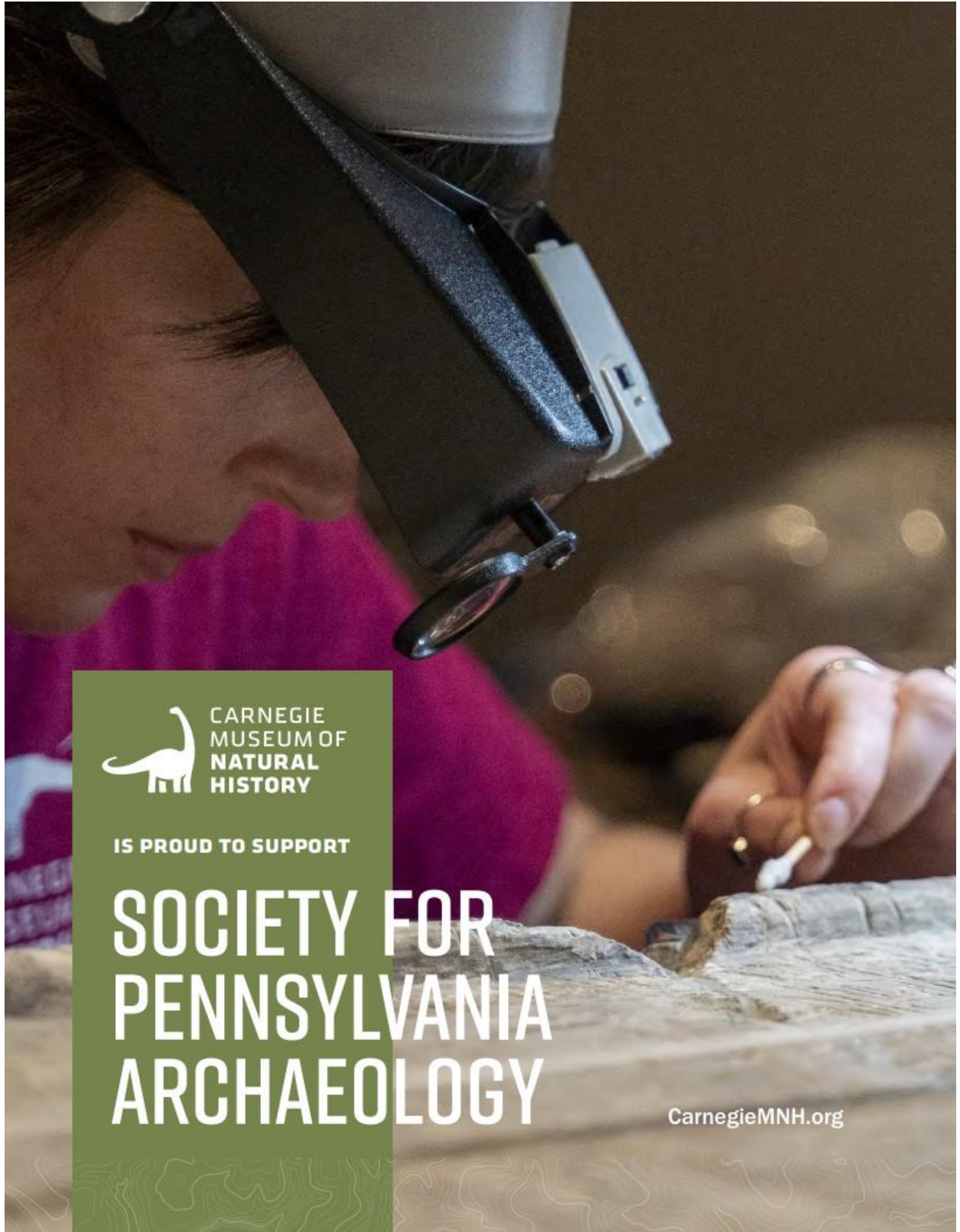
April 10 - 12, 2026



Pennsylvania Archaeology in a Time of Change

Comfort Suites

Dubois, Pennsylvania



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Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology 95th Annual Meeting

Pennsylvania Archaeology in a Time of Change

Comfort Suites, Dubois, Pennsylvania

April 10 - 12, 2026

Friday April 10, 2026

1:30 PM – 5:00 PM SPA Registration

Pennsylvania Archaeological Council (PAC)

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM PAC Business Meeting

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM Lunch: on your own

1:15 PM – 4:20 PM **PAC Spring 2026 Symposium:**

New Perspectives and Research on Native American Lifeways in the Upper Ohio Valley (1050-1630 AD)

Organizer: Amanda M. Filmeyer, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, excavations conducted by the Carnegie, academic institutions, and SPA chapters throughout the Upper Ohio River Valley defined a variety of cultural traditions that illuminated the diversity and complexity of Native American lifeways during the Late Precontact period (1050-1630 AD). Despite the abundance of archaeological data, studies on this region and time period suffer from an overreliance on cultural history paradigms, inaccessibility to gray literature, and a lack of publications that synthesize new archaeological data and interpretations with those introduced over 50 years ago. The goal of this symposium is to revisit the Late Precontact Period of the Upper Ohio River Valley by presenting previously unpublished archaeological data and analyses that add to the understanding of this period through the application of new technologies and interpretive perspectives.

1:15 **Opening Remarks**

Amanda Filmeyer, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Jonathan Libbon, SWCA Environmental Consultants

1:25 **The Drew Expression as seen from the Jones Site (36Gr4), a small Unfortified Monongahela Habitation Site in Greene County, Pennsylvania**

John Nass Jr., California University of Pennsylvania (Professor Emeritus) and University of Wisconsin-Madison (Visiting Honorary Fellow)

1:45 **Subsistence, Settlement, and Legacy Collections: Reevaluating the Mary Rinn Site (36IN29) Through Fire-Cracked Rock and Paleoethnobotanical Analysis**

Heidi Hepburn, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

2:05 **The Glaciated Allegheny Plateau (GAP) Tradition and the McFate Phase People on the Hill**

Andrew J. Myers and Patricia A. Stahlman, Allegheny Archaeology Research, LLC

- 2:25 **A Study of Cultural Identity at the Squirrel Hill Site (36WM35) Using Raw Material Analysis**
Amanda M. Filmyer, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- 2:45 **Break**
- 3:00 **Dating the Johnston Site: New Perspectives on the Chronological Narrative for the Upper Ohio Valley**
Sarah W. Neusius, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Professor Emeritus) and Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Research Associate
- 3:20 **An Analysis of the Spatial Organization of the Johnston Site (36IN2) in the Upper Ohio River Valley**
Katherine Thorwart, Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers, Inc.
- 3:40 **Discussion**
Bernard K Means, Virginia Commonwealth University
- 4:00 **Discussion**
David George-Shongo Jr., Seneca Nation of Indians



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Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology (SPA)

Friday evening April 10, 2026

- 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM SPA Committee Meetings
- 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM SPA Board of Directors Meeting
- 8:00 PM – Midnight Hospitality Suite open

Saturday morning April 11, 2026

- 8:00 AM – 8:50 AM SPA Business Meeting
- 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM Registration
- 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Book room open
- 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Silent auction display
- 8:55 AM – 9:00 AM Conference welcome

Saturday Morning Paper Session: *Stewardship, Public Archaeology & Community Engagement*

Moderator: Dr. Phil Neusius, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Professor Emeritus)

9:00–9:20 AM

Keeping an Eye on Things: Volunteer Archaeological Site Monitoring and Inventorying on Pennsylvania Public Lands

Joe Baker, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry

9:20–9:40 AM

The ICC and How It Will Benefit Collections Access and Care

Amy Covell-Murthy, Carnegie Museum of Natural History and Allegheny Chapter 1, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

9:40–10:00 AM

A Century of Pennsylvania Archaeology: Preserving the Carnegie Museum's Archives

Kristina Gaugler, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

10:00–10:20 AM

Pittsburgh's Chinatown: A Study of Chinese Diaspora Archaeology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Laura Broughton, NTM Engineering, Inc.

10:20–10:40 AM — Break: Snacks and refreshments provided by GAI Consultants, Pennsylvania Archaeological Council and SWCA Environmental Consultants

Moderator: Jonathan Libbon, SWCA Environmental Consultants

10:40–11:00 AM

Updates from the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO)

Cherilyn Gilligan and Justin McKeel, Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

11:00–11:20 AM

2025 Summer Fieldwork Recap for the DCNR Heritage Resource Team

Abdul Jones, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

11:20–11:40 AM

“An experiment was being given thought”: Archaeological Investigations at Two Pennsylvania Segregated Civilian Conservation Camps, ca. 1933–1938

Angela Jaillet-Wentling, Katherine Peresolak, Amanda Filmyer, and Isaiah Cullum, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

11:40 AM–12:00 PM - Discussion, Q&A

12:00–1:30 PM — Lunch on your own or by pre-purchased buffet





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Saturday afternoon April 11, 2026

Saturday Afternoon Paper Session: *Field Investigations & Site-Specific Research*

Moderator: John Nass Jr., California University of Pennsylvania (Professor Emeritus) and University of Wisconsin-Madison (Visiting Honorary Fellow)

1:30–1:50 PM

Fort Halifax Rediscovery: Summary of the 2023 and 2024 Juniata College Archaeological Field School
Jonathan A. Burns, Juniata College

1:50–2:10 PM

A Preliminary Update on the 2025 Excavations and Systematic STP Testing at the Shoop Site in Central Pennsylvania

Kurt W. Carr, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (retired); Joseph A. M. Gingerich, Ohio University; Sharon McDonald, Robert Ronngren, Joseph P. Vitolo, Friends of Fort Halifax; and Kevin Macomber, Shoop Site Volunteer

2:10–2:30 PM

Moral of the Story: Those Plowzone Historics Are Trying to Tell You Something!

Thomas R. Baker and Patricia H. Baker, Thomas R. Baker Archaeological Consultant (TRBAC)

2:30–2:50 PM

Fudge Ripple & Smiley Faces: Interpreting the Odd Features at 36SO220, A Middle–Late Woodland Site in Southwestern Pennsylvania

Gary Coppock, Terracon, Inc.

2:50–3:00 PM - Discussion, Q&A

3:00–4:00 PM — Student Poster Session

Snacks and refreshments and poster awards sponsored by Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Heberling Associates, Inc., and Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Poster titles and authors:

Paleoethnobotanical Investigations at the Late Woodland Nash Site. Matthew Biwer, Eleanor Arcaro-Burbridge, Ava Hoffer, Liam Lopic (Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, Dickinson College), James Herbstritt (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission)

The John and Julia Hopkins House: Excavating in Gettysburg's Third Ward. James Duke, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

An Archaeological Investigation of a 19th-century Mill. David Hay, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Embedding Watershed Context Statements into Graduate Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Abigail Hutchins, Dr. Lara Homsey-Messer, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Ancient Vision: An End-to-end Solution for Digital Artifact Documentation. Ethan Yisha Li, Alexandra Zeng Guo, Guoliang Qiu, Carlo Huang, Steven Yang, Srikar Yedida, Henry Zhang (multiple middle schools; please see abstract for details)

Upper Ohio Valley Archaeology and Preserving Excavation Archives and Context. Cynthia Maz, Carnegie Museum of Natural History and University of Pittsburgh

Using PA-SHARE for Creating Watershed Context Statements, focusing on Watershed 17B, the Lower Clarion River. Eva Miller, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Data Storytelling with GAUD: Gathering Archaeological Unified Data (GAUD) Database. Isabel Shelatz, Department of History and Art History, Juniata College

4:00–5:30 PM — Skills Challenge

6:00-8:00 PM – Cash Bar, Banquet, Awards

8:00–9:00 PM — Evening Banquet Presentation: A Decade of Archaeology at Camp Security, a Revolutionary War POW Camp

John Crawmer, George Washington’s Mount Vernon

8:00 PM – Midnight - Hospitality Suite open



Sunday morning April 12, 2026

Sunday Morning Paper Session: *Methods, Technology & Interpretation, Historical Landscapes & Labor*

Moderator: James Herbstritt, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

9:00–9:20 AM

Lake Erie Submerged Landscape Survey, 2024 and 2025 Results

Ben Ford, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Jessi Halligan, Texas A&M University; and David George-Shongo, Jr., Seneca Nation of Indians

9:20–9:40 AM

Finding Deeply Buried Paleoindian Sites with the PaleoDigger Machine

Brian L. Fritz, Quemahoning LLC

9:40–10:00 AM

Taphonomy, Chronology and Typology: A Case Site Study from Northeastern Pennsylvania

Al Pesotine, Pan Cultural Associates Inc., Archaeological and Historical Consultants and James Herbstritt, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

10:00–10:20 AM

Gifford Pinchot's Sawmill?

Danny Younger, Lenape Chapter 12, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

10:20–10:40 AM — Break: Snacks and refreshments provided by North Fork Chapter 29 and Terracon.

Moderator: Chuck Williams, North Fork Chapter 29, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

10:40–11:00 AM

Imbibed: Uncovering a Nineteenth-Century Brewery with Ground Penetrating Radar

Stephanie L. Zellers, Terracon Consultants, Inc.

11:00–11:20 AM

Ground Truth and Historic Reconstruction: A Matter of Opinion

John Nass, Jr., California University of Pennsylvania (Professor Emeritus) and University of Wisconsin–Madison (Visiting Honorary Fellow)

11:20–11:40 AM

Itinerant Colliers: Charcoal-maker Migrations and Occupational Transitions in the 19th Century Iron Industry of Mercer County, Pennsylvania

Charles E. Williams, North Fork Chapter 29, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

11:40 AM–12:00 PM — Discussion, Q&A, Closing Remarks



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PAC Symposium Abstracts

A Study of Cultural Identity at the Squirrel Hill Site (36WM35) Using Raw Material Analysis. Amanda M. Filmyer, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Research Associate, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Squirrel Hill Site (36WM35) and Johnston Site (36IN2) are the primary type sites defining the Johnston Phase (1450-1590 AD) of the Monongahela Cultural Tradition. This period was defined exclusively by ceramic analysis with little attention to other artifacts like chipped stone tools and debitage. Additionally, studies on Monongahela sites have generally ignored chipped stone artifacts despite their abundance as an artifact class. This paper presents the results of raw material analysis on both formal and expedient chert tools from the Squirrel Hill and Johnston sites, which are located downstream of each other along the Conemaugh River Valley. The proportions of chert types may aid in better understanding the movement of the Johnston Phase Monongahela across the landscape. Additionally, the presence of specific cherts at the Squirrel Hill Site may illuminate aspects of regional cultural identity that are invisible in ceramic analyses.

Subsistence, Settlement, and Legacy Collections: Reevaluating the Mary Rinn Site (36IN29) Through Fire-Cracked Rock and Paleoethnobotanical Analysis. Heidi Hepburn, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Mary Rinn site (36IN29) is a Late Precontact (1050-1630 AD) archaeological site located in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. Recent investigations of the site, coupled with the lack of a definitive central plaza, have complicated the site's initial characterization as a permanent village site. The current research reevaluates the function of and duration of occupation at the Mary Rinn site by analyzing FCR and macrobotanical remains recovered throughout previous investigations. By linking FCR selection criteria to mobility and subsistence to seasonality, it integrates both datasets to make productive use of legacy collection materials. In doing so, it provides a foundation for reevaluating whether the site has been accurately classified as a permanent village or was instead the location of more seasonal occupations.

The Drew Expression as seen from the Jones Site (36Gr4), a small Unfortified Monongahela Habitation Site in Greene County, Pennsylvania. John Nass Jr., Professor Emeritus, California University of Pennsylvania and Honorary Fellow, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The name Drew refers to the type-site for what has become known as the Drew Phase of the Monongahela Tradition. Using the artifact trait-list initially developed by Buker, the taxon has been expanded to incorporate additional sites from southwestern Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia. Ten field seasons of excavation at the Jones site has revealed roughly 80% of an unfortified habitation site situated on an outwash terrace overlooking 10-Mile Creek. Two AMS dates place the site within the 12th AD. The current accepted synthesis of Drew suffers primarily from the lack of extensive site excavation and AMS dating. Skeletal, isotope, artifact, and faunal analyses from the Jones site provide an opportunity to reexamine the existing narrative and move beyond culture history regarding the Drew Phase as currently described in the literature.

Dating the Johnston Site: New Perspectives on the Chronological Narrative for the Upper Ohio Valley. Sarah W. Neusius, Professor Emeritus, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Research Associate, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

The Johnston site (36IN2), located along the Conemaugh River near Blairsville, PA, was considered to date to the end of the sixteenth century by Dragoo in 1955, and this site subsequently became the type site for the Late Middle Monongahela Johnston phase recently described by Johnson and Means as beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century and continuing until approximately AD 1590. The 44 radiocarbon dates, including 34 AMS dates, obtained by IUP during its 2005 - 2014 excavations at the site suggest a longer and more complicated occupational history at Johnston than traditionally presumed. This paper presents an analysis of the context and reliability of the Johnston site dates which is essential to the interpretation of site history. This analysis not only facilitates Johnston site interpretation but also provides perspective on radiocarbon dating, regional chronology, and past lifeways.

The Glaciated Allegheny Plateau (GAP) Tradition and the McFate Phase People on the Hill. Andrew J. Myers and Patricia A. Stahlman, Allegheny Archaeology Research, LLC

The Glaciated Allegheny Plateau (GAP) tradition was proposed by Johnson (1994) and refined in a series of presentations and publications. This tradition represents an approximate 500 to 600 year-long cultural continuum based on changes in ceramic types and the persistent use of final S-twist cordage patterns found preserved on the exterior surface of the ceramic vessels. This presentation will begin with a brief review of the GAP tradition summarizing the three phases of group progression. This will be followed by a discussion of some recent archaeological work conducted on the "hill", a plateau region found in the upper reaches of the Clarion River and Tionesta Creek. During these investigations, several hilltop sites were identified attributed to the McFate phase of the GAP tradition. These sites lack earthen features and are considered specialized purpose campsites of unknown function although pigeon collecting activity is suspected. A suite of AMS dates suggests this occupation occurred from around AD 1450-1550.

An Analysis of the Spatial Organization of the Johnston Site (36IN0002) in the Upper Ohio River Valley. Katherine Throwart, Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers, Inc.

The Johnston Site (36IN0002) is a multicomponent Monongahela village that serves as the type site for the Johnston Phase of the Late Middle Monongahela Period. This paper examines the results of my 2020 Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) master's thesis, which utilized ArcGIS software to examine the distribution of cultural material at the Johnston Site to identify spatial, temporal, and cultural variations within the site. Artifact classes and attributes were examined with respect to the site's features, zones, stratigraphy, and radiocarbon dates. This research and GIS examination identified probable separate activity areas and possible concentric structural zones at the site, including a zone of newly identified, non-domestic structures separated from the known domestic area by a structureless zone relatively devoid of cultural material. The identification of these zones indicates the village is more complex and highly organized than previously hypothesized.



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SPA Evening Banquet Abstract

A Decade of Archaeology at Camp Security, a Revolutionary War POW Camp. John Crawmer, George Washington's Mount Vernon

Constructed in 1781 amid the turmoil of the American Revolution, Camp Security was a detention center for British prisoners captured at Saratoga and Yorktown. The complex included a village of huts, work areas, a cemetery, hospital, and a stockaded enclosure which, at its height, imprisoned more than a thousand soldiers and their families. After the camp's abandonment in 1783, its exact location faded from memory and became the subject of local lore. The Friends of Camp Security sponsored a long-term program of community archaeology that relocated the site and gained new insights into the daily life of its prisoners. This talk traces the past decade of archaeological discovery at Camp Security and considers future directions for research.

SPA Paper Abstracts

Keeping An Eye on Things: Volunteer Archaeological Site Monitoring and Inventorying on Pennsylvania Public Lands. Joe Baker, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry

As public sector budgets shrink and threats to resources increase, the role of citizen volunteer monitors for both natural and cultural resources on public lands becomes increasingly important. Pennsylvania's State Forests and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Corridor are piloting an approach that uses professional training and supervision of citizen site monitors to help identify and steward archaeological sites and historic properties on public land. This approach, piloted on western public lands as far back as the 1970s, can play an important part in site management and protection, and can help agency staff make good stewardship decisions and allocate scarce resources effectively. It's also an initiative tailor-made for volunteer organizations like SPA chapters. This paper will review the history of citizen monitor programs, review the training requirements for monitors, and highlight their accomplishments to date.

Moral of the Story: Those Plowzone Historics are Trying to Tell You Something! Thomas R. Baker and Patricia H. Baker, Thomas R. Baker, Archaeological Consultant (TRBAC)

Phase I/II archaeological investigations in the Glacial Sand & Gravel Company's proposed Mine 60 project area in Scott Township, Lawrence County, Pennsylvania identified 11 sites and tested seven sites. This paper presents the results of Site GSG 60-5 (36LR0354) through surface survey, excavations, and backhoe trenching. Over 4,100 pre-contact artifacts yielded 57 projectile points, dating the site occupations from the Paleoindian through the Late Woodland periods. Not surprising considering the site's high commanding view above the confluence of Taylor Run with Slippery Rock Creek. The real surprise came when almost 8,000 historic artifacts and structural remains dating from ca. 1810-1850 were identified as a former farmstead hidden beneath the previously plowed pasture. Apparently, the farmstead inhabitants found the location as ideal as did their Native American predecessors. The site was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D for its significant contributions to the prehistory and history of the Slippery Rock Creek valley.

Pittsburgh's Chinatown: A Study of Chinese Diaspora Archaeology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Laura Broughton, NTM Engineering, Inc.

During the 19th Century, multiple factors led to a drastic increase in emigration from southern China, with many Chinese diaspora communities moving to the western United States. The influx of Chinese immigration to the United States fostered anti-Chinese sentiments quickly followed by anti-Chinese legislation. Due to this, Chinese immigrants began to form small communities in cities across the country called Chinatowns. At the end of the Gold Rush and the Transcontinental Railroad, as anti-Chinese tensions grew in the western United States, Chinese diaspora communities began to move east in search of better opportunities. In the 1870s, this movement contributed to the formation of a small Chinatown in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This Chinatown became the center of the Chinese diaspora community in Western Pennsylvania, as well as Ohio and West Virginia. This research explores Pittsburgh's Chinatown and who lived there, as well as the factors that led to its decline.

Fort Halifax Rediscovery: Summary of the 2023 and 2024 Juniata College Archaeological Field School. Jonathan A. Burns, Juniata College

This paper presents the results of the 2023 and 2024 Juniata College Archaeological Field Schools at Fort Halifax (36DA008), a mid-18th-century provincial military post decommissioned and dismantled in 1757. Over two seasons, student crews focused on identifying fort-related architectural features to refine the layout of the long-lost fortification. Despite its demolition, the site retains exceptional archaeological integrity, with well-preserved cultural deposits that illuminate a wide range of activities carried out on site. Excavations have produced a rich artifact assemblage, including military hardware, domestic objects, and construction materials, offering new insights into the daily operations of this historically documented frontier outpost. Supported by a National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program grant and conducted in partnership with the nonprofit Friends of Fort Halifax Park, this project highlights the value of undergraduate fieldwork in reconstructing Pennsylvania's early military landscape while fostering community engagement and preservation stewardship.

A Preliminary Update on the 2025 Excavations and Systematic STP Testing at the Shoop Site in Central Pennsylvania. Kurt W. Carr, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (retired), Joseph A. M. Gingerich, Ohio University, Sharon McDonald, Robert Ronngren, Joseph P. Vitolo, Friends of Fort Halifax, and Kevin Macomber, Shoop Site volunteer

The Shoop site covers over 38 acres but consists of 18 to 22 separate artifact clusters. Unfortunately, most of these are poorly mapped and poorly documented. Do these represent separate visits as part of the seasonal round as suggested by Witthoft (1952) or do these represent a combination of residential spaces and associated processing zones from a more limited number of visits by large social groups? Beginning in 2021, test excavations have revealed an unplowed woodlot where artifact patterning has been preserved for 13,000 years. Using a combination of block excavations and close interval shovel test pits, artifact clusters have been identified representing small individual lithic reduction events and larger activity areas such as hide scraping. The goal of this investigation is to better understand community patterning and the number of visits at Shoop.

Fudge Ripple & Smiley Faces: Interpreting the Odd Features at 36SO220, A Middle-Late Woodland Site in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Gary Coppock, Terracon, Inc.

In the mid-90s I directed a data recovery at 36SO220, a Middle-Late Woodland (ca. AD 400-700) site in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, in association with PennDOT's US 219 Meyersdale Bypass Project. The site is situated on the floodplain of Elk Lick Creek, a third-order tributary of the Casselman River. In addition to hearths, roasting pits, and numerous Lowe and Jacks Reef-cluster bifaces, many odd features were exposed with profile attributes described in the field as "fudge ripple" and "smiley faces." A frenzy of last-minute trenching and stripping determined that these were the remnants of an extensive network of interconnected ditches of equal width and depth. Though their origin puzzled archaeologists and geomorphologists alike, I hypothesized that they represent the remains of pre-Middle Woodland-era beaver canals. Recent meanderings through extant beaver habitat at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area provides compelling evidence to support my previous conclusion.

The ICC and How It Will Benefit Collections Access and Care. Amy Covell-Murthy, Carnegie Museum of Natural History and Allegheny Chapter 1, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

In 2023, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded the School for Advanced Research (SAR) a National Leadership Grant for Museums so it could perform a full and robust review of the forthcoming Indigenous Collections Care Guide (ICC). They received feedback and edits in the form of conversations and written comments from 120 individuals who interact with Indigenous collections in museums. As one of these individuals who provided feedback and follow-up interviews, I will speak about the ICC, its contents, and how it will relate to the care of all Indigenous collections at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, including those from in and around Pennsylvania. I intend to show how the ICC is going to be incorporated into the duty of care protocols established through consultation with Tribal Nations as part of ongoing Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act compliance.

Lake Erie Submerged Landscape Survey, 2024 and 2025 Results. Ben Ford, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Jessi Halligan, Texas A&M University, and David George-Shongo, Jr., Seneca Nation of Indians

Until approximately 3,700 years ago, Lake Erie was lower than it is today, allowing human habitation on large portions of the modern lake floor. The Pennsylvania portion of the lake floor included the margins of two smaller lakes connected by a stream overlooked by a ridge, making it a particularly attractive place for settlement. Subsequent breaches in glacial dams and stone sills led to rapid inundation of the Lake Erie floor, possibly preserving archaeological material in situ. The authors conducted a sub-bottom profiler and side-scan sonar survey, followed by coring, to identify potential living surfaces. This paper summarizes the results from the first two seasons of this work and plans for future research. A portion of this research was conducted as an underwater cultural resource management field school.

Finding Deeply Buried Paleoindian Sites with the PaleoDigger Machine. Brian L. Fritz, Quemahoning LLC

Over the past three years, the PaleoDigger machine has proven to be an effective tool for investigating deeply buried archaeological deposits often inaccessible through conventional Phase I testing. Designed for alluvial environments, the system allows safe and efficient excavation of deep test pits exceeding two meters while maintaining compliance with modern safety standards. Since 2022, the PaleoDigger has been deployed on transportation and energy infrastructure projects for agencies including PennDOT and

American Electric Power, recovering archaeological materials ranging from the Late Woodland through Paleoindian periods. Continued refinements to the machine and excavation workflow have improved efficiency and spatial control. Recent investigations at the Barton Site (36AG3) along the Potomac River in western Maryland identified Paleoindian artifacts at depths greater than two meters, allowing the buried occupation to be spatially delineated through excavation of 31 deep test pits and demonstrating the research potential of mechanized deep testing.

A Century of Pennsylvania Archaeology: Preserving the Carnegie Museum's Archives. Kristina Gaugler, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History houses an extensive archive documenting more than a century of archaeological research in Pennsylvania. As new technologies and changing ethical frameworks influence how records are maintained and shared, it is more important than ever that these materials are preserved. The archive includes field notes, photographs, maps, and original Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey (PASS) forms documenting some of the earliest archaeological investigations in the Upper Ohio Valley. Many represent the only surviving record of sites that were excavated decades ago. With support from the Historical and Archival Records Care (HARC) grant, CMNH has begun reorganizing, rehousing, digitizing, and databasing these archival materials. A work-study student is assisting staff in scanning records and building a searchable database to improve long-term preservation and accessibility. This presentation highlights the archive's significance and explores how improved access can support future research and stewardship in Pennsylvania archaeology.

Updates from the PA SHPO. Cherilyn Gilligan and Justin McKeel, Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

The Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) is a bureau within the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the official history agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Last year brought many changes to PA SHPO, particularly related to archaeology. With the recent addition of the Archaeology Curation Section staff to the PA SHPO, our staff now includes 11 archaeologists (and many others with backgrounds in archaeology too). This talk will highlight recent changes within PA SHPO, outline our priorities in the coming year(s), and to help inform folks about the programs and resources that the PA SHPO has to offer for the public.

2025 Summer Fieldwork Recap for the DCNR Heritage Resource Team. Abdul Jones, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The DCNR Heritage Resource Team (DHRT) is a new partnership between the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) anthropology department and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. This presentation is reporting on the results of DHRT's inaugural fieldwork season, which spanned from May through August of 2025. During this time, the crew traveled to four state parks and two state forests and participated in one public archaeology event at Fort Ligonier. The DHRT crew comprised of three IUP students, all of whom had limited archaeological fieldwork experience before the program. By the end of the season, the DHRT excavated 16 test units and over 600 Shovel Test Pits. The crew also gained valuable experience in cemetery survey and maintenance, artifact processing and analysis, and government compliance archaeological survey.

Ground Truth and Historic Reconstruction: A Matter of Opinion. John Nass, Jr., California University of Pennsylvania and Visiting Honorary Fellow, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Archaeological investigations at historical sites, such as military forts, have the advantage of archival resources to assist in the excavation of such sites. A problem arises when excavations are undertaken for state agencies and local historical organizations who often have a vision of what will be found and how it is to be interpreted. In this presentation, two such sites, 19th century Fort Meigs in Ohio and 18th century Fort Loudoun in Tennessee, will be used as examples that involved a clash between the priorities of archaeology and those of the sponsoring state agency and/or historical organizations. At stake in such arrangements is the narrative and how it will be presented to the public.

Taphonomy, Chronology and Typology: A Case Site Study from Northeastern Pennsylvania. Al Pesotine, Pan Cultural Associates Inc., Archaeological and Historical Consultants, and James Herbstritt, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Since 1990 the floodplain at the confluence of the Susquehanna and Lackawanna Rivers in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania has been the focus of archaeological investigations by the Frances Dorrance Chapter 11, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Inc. Initial testing on the levee's edge of the Susquehanna River identified site 36Lu58 and its stratified soil deposits containing Late and Middle Woodland and Late Archaic period artifacts. Encouraged by these findings the Chapter extended subsurface testing eastward to a higher terrace on Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) property. Investigations there identified another stratified site 36Lu169 with a longer cultural sequence dating from the Early Archaic through Late Woodland periods. Although many aspects of the archaeological record at 36Lu169 are yet to be identified, analyzed and reported, our presentation is about taphonomy, chronology and typology at 36Lu169. We then apply these relative and absolute methods of dating past cultural events to other comparable archaeological sites in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Itinerant Colliers: Charcoal-maker Migrations and Occupational Transitions in the 19th Century Iron Industry of Mercer County, Pennsylvania. Charles E. Williams, North Fork Chapter 29, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

Between 1837 to 1862, 10 charcoal-fueled iron furnaces operated in Mercer County, Pennsylvania. By the mid-1850s, difficulties in obtaining charcoal forced many furnace closures. Those that remained adapted to other fuels with varied success, including bituminous coal, coke, and in one case, wood. Indeed, eventual widespread use of native coal and imported Great Lakes ores by new and refitted furnaces would transform the iron and steel industry of Mercer County into a regional giant. This presentation focuses on the colliers or charcoal-makers of the 19th century iron industry of Mercer County, many of whom did not necessarily benefit from this industrial evolution. Using US Census records and LiDAR-based archaeological prospection, I address these questions: 1) who were the colliers of 19th century Mercer County? 2) where did they come from and how did they cope with a changing industry? and 3) what legacies have they left in the present-day landscapes of Mercer County?

Gifford Pinchot's Sawmill? Danny Younger, Lenape Chapter 12, Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology

Although there is no historic record that Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, ever owned a sawmill – surprising in that Pinchot was a man whose vast wealth came from the lumber industry and who also was a man known for championing the revolutionary concept of ‘scientific

forestry' -- an intact and aesthetically magnificent stone sawmill has been located less than ten miles away from PA Governor Pinchot's historic home at Milford's Grey Towers. Lenape Chapter 12 will be researching this site, a mill equipped with machinery from the Fitz Water Company of Hanover PA.

Imbided: Uncovering a Nineteenth Century Brewery with Ground Penetrating Radar. Stephanie L. Zellers, Terracon Consultants, Inc.

Washabaugh Brewery was one of the oldest breweries in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, operating from at least 1833 but possibly as early as 1815. The brewery complex was large, containing two dwellings, two large stone brewery buildings, bricks stables, sheds and other outbuildings, and underground limestone and brick storage vaults. At different times in its history, it also included a machine shop, a slaughterhouse, a paint shop, and a covered alleyway. By the 1970s, all traces of the complex had been demolished except for one dwelling, which was ultimately demolished in 2016. Looking at the location now, there is nothing remarkable about it. No indication of the brewery that once was. But ground penetrating radar surveys revealed a remarkably complete and complex subsurface record of this historic brewery. Demonstrating the capabilities of geophysical surveys where ground disturbance is not possible.





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Contacts: Sarah Neusius – sraahneusius@gmail.com

John Nass – john.nass.1813@gmail.com

SPA Student Poster Abstracts

Paleoethnobotanical Investigations at the Late Woodland Nash Site. Matthew Biber, Eleanor Arcaro-Burbridge, Ava Hoffer, Liam Lopic, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, Dickinson College and James Herbstritt, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Archaeobotany provides important insights into a wide range of archaeological questions, including past human diets, agricultural practices, and environmental interactions. This poster presents the results of the analysis of carbonized paleoethnobotanical remains recovered from the Nash site (36CN17), a multicomponent Middle and Late Woodland period site located in Clinton County along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Excavated in the early 2000s, our recent analysis focuses on flotation samples collected during excavations between two palisade walls that once encircled the village. The goal of this analysis was to better contextualize plant use and subsistence practices at the site. By identifying seeds, nutshell, and other botanical remains, this study reconstructs aspects of past food systems and local environmental conditions during the Late Woodland period. This research contributes to archaeological interpretations of environmental interactions among Susquehannock communities living along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and more broadly to the archaeology of central Pennsylvania.

The John and Julia Hopkins House: Excavating in Gettysburg's Third Ward. James Duke, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

This paper details the results of Summer 2025 fieldwork at the John 'Jack' Hopkins house in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Located in the heart of Gettysburg's historic Black community, the Third Ward, the site was owned by John Hopkins, a free Black man employed as the groundskeeper of Gettysburg College from 1847 to 1868. Excavations conducted in the home's back yard have revealed data related to the use of the yard space, as well as the economic status of the Hopkins family and boarders who lived in their home. The Hopkins House, purchased in 2023 by Gettysburg History, is slated to be restored to its original 1840s construction for use as part of Gettysburg's first Black History Museum in partnership between Gettysburg History and the Lincoln Cemetery Association.

An Archaeological Investigation of a 19th-century Mill. David Hay, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Wilson-Knight Mill is a 19th-century historic mill located in McConnells Mill State Park in Lawrence County, Pennsylvania. This mill is one of the original examples of milling in northwestern Pennsylvania. This investigation included historical document research, which focused on land and tax records, as well as fieldwork, which consisted of metal detecting, mapping of above-ground features, and dendrochronology of the remaining dam timbers. The historical documents allowed for the identification of the chain of ownership. Dendrochronology of the dam timbers provided dates for when the mill operated. Finally, fieldwork resulted in the reconstruction of the site layout to better understand the milling process used at the site and how it compares to other 19th-century mills in western Pennsylvania.

Embedding Watershed Context Statements into Graduate Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Abigail Hutchins and Dr. Lara Homsey-Messer, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Watershed-based planning has been advocated by the Pennsylvania Bureau for Historic Preservation as a primary framework for organizing precontact archaeological data. Because watersheds function as regional units for interpreting settlement patterns, graduate students preparing for careers in cultural resource management (CRM) and preservation should be able to synthesize archaeological data at regional scales. This poster evaluates a watershed-based cultural context statement embedded in a required core-course, Pre-Columbian North American Archaeology, in Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Applied Archaeology M.A. program. 13 graduate students processed and analyzed data for selected watersheds using Pennsylvania's State Historic and Archaeological Resource Exchange (PA-SHARE) database. Results from individual watershed analyses are compiled into a cohort-level dataset to compare trends. Across the combined dataset, Late Woodland components were most common while Paleoindian sites were sparse, and site frequencies clustered along drainage systems. These results demonstrate the value of watershed-scale synthesis in graduate CRM training.

Ancient Vision: An End-to-end Solution for Digital Artifact Documentation. Ethan Yisha Li^{1*}, Alexandra Zeng Guo^{2*}, Guoliang Qiu³, Carlo Huang¹, Steven Yang⁴, Srikar Yedida⁵, Henry Zhang⁶

1. Great Valley Middle School; 2. Stetson Middle School; 3. Fugett Middle School; 4. Valley Forge Middle School; 5. Charles F. Patton Middle School; 6. Tredyffrin Easttown Middle School

With an average of 25,000 artifacts found at a single site, archaeology faces a "curation crisis" driven by high-pressure excavation and documentation timelines and massive storage backlogs. Traditional manual documentation is slow and error-prone, often losing critical spatial and geometric metadata. Artifact Alliance introduces Ancient Vision, a digital suite that replaces manual labeling with high-fidelity "digital twins." The system features a portable, automatic 3D scanner, a secure localized database, and a mobile app utilizing image-based retrieval to instantly fetch records. Each digital twin includes standardized metadata and colored 3D profiles. Designed as a digital backbone, the platform is built to integrate future AI modules for material recognition and artifact reconstruction. Ancient Vision allows archaeologists to focus on analysis while solving storage challenges through "digital preservation", so they can be responsibly reburied and preserved in situ. This affordable, robust system accelerates discovery while ensuring the sustainable protection of our global heritage.

Upper Ohio Valley Archaeology and Preserving Excavation Archives and Context. Cynthia Maz, Carnegie Museum of Natural History and University of Pittsburgh

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History boasts a collection of millions of artifacts and ethnographic items that is valued over 1 billion dollars, but as any archaeologist knows, these items lack informational value when they are without context. For over 75 years, the Anthropology staff at CMNH have been aiding in official documentation, reports, and analyses for archaeological sites in the Upper Ohio Valley, with millions of pages detailing the rich history of Western Pennsylvania. These files are only available to view at the museum research center and have had little organization or cataloguing to effectively aid in current research. Through an effort to preserve the context and document excavation history of Pennsylvania archaeological sites, the anthropology archives at CMNH have undergone a complete

cataloguing makeover including a finding aid for both PA and CMNH archaeological research, digitization of site records, and rehousing of documents into archival grade boxes.

Using PA-SHARE for Creating Watershed Context Statements, focusing on Watershed 17B, the Lower Clarion River. Eva Miller, Department of Anthropology, Geospatial and Earth Sciences, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PASHPO) encourages the holistic examination of watersheds for a deeper understanding of individual archaeological sites' context, since watersheds often display discernable patterns across their extent. This poster presents an evaluation of Watershed 17B, the Lower Clarion River. It is part of an effort in the IUP Applied Archaeology M.A. program for graduate students to synthesize precontact context statements at the watershed level. The evaluation is based on data compiled from Pennsylvania's Historic and Archaeological Research Exchange (PA SHARE) and a review of Pennsylvania's Archaeological Site Survey Forms (PASS). The data of site locations, categorized by time period, was downloaded from PA SHARE and exported to ArcPro, an ESRI GIS software, for analysis. This poster aims to demonstrate the value of the PA SHARE system and GIS for understanding settlement patterns, site identification variables, and areas for continuing research at a watershed level.

Data Storytelling with GAUD: Gathering Archaeological Unified Data (GAUD) Database. Isabel Shelatz, Department of History and Art History, Juniata College

Pennsylvania State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) provides researchers with a universal Microsoft Access database for curating archaeological artifacts. This database proved to be efficient for cataloging individual, single-occurrence archaeological sites in Juniata College's Cultural Resource Institute (CRI). The database did not prove to be efficient and/or accurate when cataloging longitudinal data or multi-site locations. Due to the database's desktop format, data fragmentations and inconsistencies occurred. Data inconsistencies were introduced by PHMC code changes. To combat these issues, the CRI laboratory and the Statton Learning Commons, Office of Digital Learning, developed a custom relational database entitled GAUD (Gathering Archaeological Unified Data). GAUD is a web-based database, allowing multiple users to input data without data fragmentation and inconsistencies, while also providing time-optimization, normalized data, quality assurance, and custom reports for single instance and multi-site, longitudinal projects. GAUD only requires an internet browser to manage data access from a variety of devices.



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