



# ASM Ink

November 2011, Vol 37, No 11

Newsletter of the Archeological Society of Maryland, Inc.

[www.marylandarcheology.org](http://www.marylandarcheology.org)

## On a good day, you can see 12 inches

By Lara Lutz

*Condensed from the Bay Journal, September 2011*

Archeologist Julie Schablitsky normally works on land. For this job, she learned to dive.

Then, in the murky waters of Maryland's Patuxent River, she touched a piece of the nation's past.

Schablitsky, chief archeologist for the Maryland State Highway Administration, is helping to excavate a U.S. vessel that fought British forces on the Chesapeake Bay during the War of 1812.

Most of the sunken shipwreck is covered by 6 - 9 feet of silt that a team of archeologists from the SHA, Maryland Historical Trust and U.S. Navy began to remove this summer.

Sediment - a pollutant that fouls Bay water quality - hangs heavy in the water, too, and makes work difficult. On a good day, divers can see about 12 inches in front of them. After rain, almost nothing.

"I'm used to picking up an artifact and letting my eyes see it," Schablitsky said. "But reaching through that water and having my hand 'see' it first just took me instantly back to the War of 1812. It gave me goose bumps."

The vessel was once part of "Barney's Flotilla," a small but scrappy collection of gunboats launched in 1814 to confront the superior British navy, but scuttled rather than let the boats fall into British hands. Fifteen gunboats and Commodore Joshua Barney's flagship, the *USS Scorpion*, sank to the bottom of the river.

Investigators have located a handful of sites that may hold remains from Barney's Flotilla. But the current site is the only one to be explored and dated to the War of 1812.

Donald Shomette and Ralph Eshelman identified and partially excavated the wreck in 1980.

Archeologists are now conducting the first extensive exploration, just in time for the war's bicentennial and the development of the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and National Scenic Byway.

It lies just north of the expansive wetlands of Jug Bay, where the Patuxent cuts a slow, wide serpentine path through the marsh. But here, the river is narrow and brown, a sleepy, tree-lined stretch shorn of panoramic majesty and hardly suggestive of dramatic historic events.

Susan Langley, underwater archeologist for the MHT, said the original setting is hard to determine. Sixteen ships were scuttled, but they may have drifted apart before settling to the bottom.

The configuration of the river and its marshes have also changed greatly. Erosion has dumped so much sediment into the upper reaches of the Patuxent that the ships of 1814 would run aground today.

"Isn't it amazing to try to visualize 30 vessels in the upper Patuxent?" Langley asked.

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## Upcoming events

**November 13:** CAT Workshop Day. Agricultural History Farm Park, Derwood.

**December 3:** ASM board meeting, Howard County Central Columbia, 10 a.m. All members are welcome.

**January 4-8, 2012:** Society for Historical and Underwater Archaeology (SHA) meeting, Baltimore.

## Volunteer opportunities

The following volunteer opportunities are open to CAT participants and other ASM members:

**Montgomery County** is offering opportunities for lab and field work Wednesdays, 9:30 to 2:30. Call 301-840-5848 or contact [heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org). CAT opportunity.

**ASM field session collection:** Volunteers have finished upgrading the ASM field school collection. They are working on the Rosenstock (Frederick County) material. The lab in Crownsville will be open Tuesdays from 9:30 until 4. Contact Louise Akerson at [lakerson1@verizon.net](mailto:lakerson1@verizon.net) or Charlie Hall [chall@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:chall@mdp.state.md.us).

**The Lost Towns Project** of Anne Arundel County welcomes volunteers for its prolific Pig Point prehistoric site. Fridays. Call Jessie Grow at 410-222-1318.

**Mount Calvert.** Lab work and field work. 301-627-1286.

**Jefferson Patterson Park** invites volunteers to take part in its activities, including archeology, historical research and conservation. Contact Ed Chaney at [echaney@mdp.state.md.us](mailto:echaney@mdp.state.md.us) or 410-586-8554.

The Archaeological Institute of America provides an online listing of fieldwork opportunities worldwide. Call up [www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/) to get started. Remember to add the extra A in archaeological.

## CAT corner

A CAT Workshop Day will be held Sunday, Nov. 13, at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, Montgomery County. The event will feature workshops on prehistoric ceramics workshop and archeological ethics and maybe two others. A CAT Q&A forum will be held at lunchtime. Contact CAT committee chairman, [Alex McPhail](#), for more details.



# Highlights from the 2011 Annual Meeting

More than 80 people showed up at the Robinson Nature Center in Columbia Oct. 8 for ASM's Annual Meeting. In addition to the speakers, the highlights of the meeting included the presentation of the 2011 William B. Marye Award, for outstanding contributions to Maryland archeology, to Jim Sorensen, who has long served both the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and ASM. Also, Belinda Urquiza became the latest CAT graduate and \$1,315 was raised for the analysis fund via the silent auction.



*CAT chair Alex McPhail honors Belinda Urquiza*

## Profiles in Maryland archeology

### An interview with ... Jim Sorensen

*2011 Marye Award winner Jim Sorensen, a former member of the ASM board of trustees, recently retired from Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.*

**Q. How did you get started in archeology?**

A. I got started in archeology by working archeology. I was finishing up a master's degree in linguistic anthropology at American University and I had taken a field school with American and had worked at the Shawnee Minisink Site and because of that when American University started their contract department because I had some field school they hired me as one of the diggers. This was about the bicentennial time so there was a lot of archeological excavations starting up. After about three or four years I was doing archeology mostly full time. I decided I'd better go back and get a degree if I was going to continue in the subject. I started at American again. I already had a master's degree so I had to get a doctorate. I started the doctoral program at American with about nine credits in archeology. I wanted to do historical archeology and there was no historical archeology at American at that time. What I did was I interviewed people like the archeologist down at St. Mary's, things like that, and found out what they thought would constitute the course work that was sufficient for a doctorate. And I found that I could find those courses within a consortium of universities so I asked American University to let me in as a doctoral student in historical archeology based on the fact that these courses were available in the consortium. So in 1980 I started the PhD program.

One of the first larger excavations I started working on in the early '80s was the Archeology in Annapolis Program through the University of Maryland. I started out as the director of one of the archeological sites, it was the Reynolds Tavern site. Next year Mark Leone wanted to start his program for public archeology so I switched to working on the victualing warehouse down at the docks. I started getting out of excavation and getting into public archeology. We actually hired a theater director to help us get together a story about the victualing warehouse and the archeology with it. So, for a number of years, I worked on that, as one of the people who led tours through the site. I stopped that and went back to American to finish my PhD. Among the things that I did I worked on the Oaks II project. The Riggs farm site we found was probably built around 1800. So I did a lot of the archeology on that, learned about historic ceramics through dealing with that site too. I decided that this would be the subject of my dissertation. The interesting thing was that sometimes when courses came up, for instance I worked in ethnohistory, documents and things like that, I was writing

history for the project itself, I could use those as chapters for my dissertation. So the course work helped a lot with putting the dissertation together. It finally ended up as a study about the change between the regional folk tobacco culture and its change to a national culture based on the cultivation of grains and cereals. And what we found was interesting was we could look at the ceramics and relate the earlier ceramics to a folk culture, the Gaudy Dutch folk ceramics, and then after about 1840 we saw a change where the Riggs family who owned the farm switched actually to a sort of keeping up with the Joneses, the ceramics reflected the national culture and that would have been the beginnings of white ironstone. So we actually could tell from excavating ceramics in the ground to getting into cultural changes.

**Q. When did you get started with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning?**

A. After I got my doctorate in '86, I had done work, as I said, in Montgomery County on the Oaks II Site and the historian, Mike Dwyer of the Park and Planning Commission, proposed that Montgomery County have its own archeologist because some mill sites had been destroyed by the gas company and things like that. Because I knew him through the Oaks II excavation he asked me if I wanted the job



as the archeologist for the Park and Planning Commission on a contract basis. I said, "Yes." After that I hired Heather Bouslog to help, because I had known her through the Potomac River Archeology Survey after she had taken a couple courses at American University. So the two of us together started in 1989. The Park and Planning Commission said, "You know about archeology. Tell us what needs to be done in the county and how to go about achieving those results." And so we began. In the middle '90s we got a grant from the Maryland Historical Trust to do a management plan for archeology for the county and we did this in connection with Montgomery College, which then had hired its first archeologist, Eugenia Robinson, and we collaborated with them to finish that survey. We discovered that because the Park and Planning Commission is a stream-valley park system that a goodly number of prehistoric sites were preserved because of the relationship between water, south-facing slopes, knolls and stream valleys.

We ended up with over 700 archeological sites, as of the present time. We started out with 100, 110 or something like that. We have everything from Paleo to Late Woodland. We also have farmsteads, tenant farms, slave quarters, a number of mills because Montgomery County is on the fall line where streams become swifter and deeper. I think we have 22 mill sites. And a few gold mines. We were excavating and we found a fantastic Civil War site, an early Civil War site in Blockhouse Point. One of the latest things that's happened is that we've excavated the site of Dowden's Ordinary, which was a tavern site built about the early 1750s. It is associated with General Braddock's troops, who spent two nights there on the way to his defeat at Fort Duquesne in the French and Indian War. We also found a diary in a bible which associates it with the Committee on Safety and Secrets of the Revolutionary War and George Washington. Number 711 is mentioned as taking part in some of the various activities. Also in the county, we developed a very fantastic group of volunteers and a lot of the volunteers have had archeology experience before. The Park and Planning Commission has told us that we are the best in the county for integrating nonprofessional people into the program. So much so that I prefer to think of them as archeological associates rather than just sort of volunteers. Very, very good people. Really dedicated.

**Q. What's the most interesting discovery you've made?**

A. If you're talking about archeological sites, I'm really interested in the Civil War. That Civil War site is

pristine - the Blockhouse Point. We're learning a lot of good information about the Civil War in Montgomery County. Over 30,000 Union troops were stationed in the county at one point. It's an area that has been overlooked. Another one would be the soapstone quarry on Ednor Road. There were a number of soapstone outcrops in Montgomery County, the one on Ednor Road was one of the last ones that has been undisturbed. We're looking to add that as a park to the county system. Probably the most interesting one as far as artifacts go is Oakley Slave Cabin in Brookville. What we found there was that the cabin, based on the artifacts, was built probably about 1820, something like that. One of the interesting caches, by the back door were artifacts consisting of quartz crystals and large pennies, which has eagles on them. And those symbols have been associated with African-American spiritual rituals and things to contact the spirits of the ancestors. Other ones have been discovered in Annapolis, so we knew what they were when we found them. Perhaps the same things that were going on in the county were going on in other parts of the state and even in Virginia.

I think one of the assets that have come from the archeology program is that the county is now aware of its archeological heritage. One of the things that Heather has done, and I worked to set up too, was the excavations in the summer. We have the adult field school that we advertise. We also have four or five weeks of elementary school field experiences. These have been very popular and introduce archeology to the rest of the county, make people aware of the rich archeological heritage that still can be found in the county.

**Q. What is the future of Maryland archeology?**

A. It's an impression, I'm not sure whether it's widely felt, but I think in Maryland people are more sensitive to archeology than perhaps in other states. I think that the way that the Archeology Society and various chapters have lobbied perhaps for archeology that the state is much more aware of its archeological heritage and what archeology can give to the state, which is knowledge of the everyday, ordinary people who sort of slip through the history books. It gives it a great opportunity to look at the everyday, ordinary people, the people like us. I think getting this point across, the state is beginning to recognize that archeology has a place that gives cultural information that would otherwise be lost to history books. It gives us a much wider base for interpreting how we got to where we are today. I think that Maryland is perhaps ahead of some of the other states.

## State's Indian population grows slightly

By Carol Ebricht

*Condensed from CRaB, the SHA newsletter, Fall 2011*

Based on recently released 2010 federal census data, 58,657 Maryland residents reported having some American Indian or Alaska Native ancestry. About two-thirds did so in conjunction with at least one other ethnic affiliation. But 20,420 recorded that they were solely Native American, an increase of about 5,000 individuals over the last 10 years.

Overall, the Maryland Native American population increased by just 0.1 percent since 2000, to 0.4 percent statewide. Greatest gains occurred in Prince George's and Montgomery counties where the Native American population nearly doubled, to some extent following general population growth trends around Washington D.C., but perhaps also reflecting higher rates of self-identification as Native American.

Of those reported as solely Native American, more than 9,000 listed no specific tribe. About another 8,000 designated tribes with traditional territories outside of Maryland. The total population of Native Americans residing in Maryland who are also indigenous to Maryland remains unknown.

The census strategy of allowing multiple affiliations provides a greater opportunity for individual Native Americans indigenous to Maryland to be counted and acknowledged, even though their communities lack federal and state recognition. For the most part, modern indigenous Maryland communities are located in counties with relatively low numbers of reported Native Americans.

Charles County stands out with its high number of Native Americans in an otherwise low population county, reflecting the many Piscataway residents of this area. Charles County continues to have the highest percentage of Native Americans in Maryland, despite the recent influx of new residents in rapidly expanding suburbs.



# On a good day, you can see 12 inches

Continued from Page 1

Archeologists spent most of the summer diving from an open-air barge anchored beside the shipwreck. After suctioning large amounts of silt away from its timbers, they mapped the size of the wreck and the location of its features. They sometimes used an unusual aid: a Zip-Loc bag filled with clear water and a glow stick. Pressed to their scuba masks, it cuts through the murk.

Underwater, divers found that burial in the oxygen-starved sediment has left both the wreck and its artifacts in remarkably good condition.

The ship's bow points upstream with clear evidence of rigging. Planks from the deck have a surprising yellow sheen, indicating that the wood is well-preserved. The timbers of the stern are jagged and strewn, likely torn apart by the explosion that scuttled the ship.

Over the next few years, a temporary coffer dam will be erected around the site and water drained from the enclosure. Archeologists will then begin a full-scale search for artifacts.

This year, they only brought a few artifacts to the surface - those that were dislodged, at risk of damage, or part of the general site survey. Among them were a stoneware bottle, scissors and a corn cob.

On one of the summer's last dives, Schablitsky groped through the butterlike clay near the ship's hold and found a slender glass bottle.

"When I lifted it out of the mud, air bubbles trapped from Aug. 22, 1814, were released and traveled up to meet the 21st century," Schablitsky said.

## Book review: When war came to the Chesapeake

*Terror on the Chesapeake: The War of 1812 on the Bay*, by Chris George, Burd Street Press, 224 pages, \$20 (paperback)

Unlike most histories of the War of 1812 with, at most, a few lines about the attacks at Georgetown, Caulk's Field - Kent County, Elk Landing, Principio Furnace, Frenchtown, Lapidum and the burning of Havre de Grace, George provides detailed reports for each of these upper Chesapeake sites based upon original references and eyewitness accounts. Although I may question some minor points, such as the placement of batteries at Havre de Grace, I believe this is one of the best accounts of the events of 1813 I have read on this subject.

-- Bill McIntyre

# Drone helps in creating site model

By Charles Choi

Condensed from *LiveScience*, October 7, 2011

A miniature airborne drone has helped archeologists capture images for creating a 3-D model of an ancient burial mound in Russia, scientists say.

Archeological sites are often in remote and rugged areas. As such, it can be hard to reach and map them with the limited budgets archeologists typically have. Scientists are now using drones to extend their view into these hard-to-reach spots.

"There are a lot possibilities with this method," said researcher Marijn Hendrickx, a geographer at the University of Ghent in Belgium.

The machine tested in a remote area in Russia called Tuekta was a four-propeller "quadrocopter": the battery-powered Microdrone md4-200. The fact it is small -- the axis of its rotors is about 27 inches -- and weighs about 35 ounces made it easy to transport, and researchers said it was very easy to fly, stabilizing itself constantly and keeping at a given height and position unless ordered to do otherwise.

The engine also generated almost no vibrations, they added, so that photographs taken from the camera mounted under it were relatively sharp. Depending on the wind, temperature and its payload, the drone's maximum flight time is approximately 20 minutes.

Tuekta is in the Altai Mountains where Russia, China, Kazakhstan and Mongolia come together. Researchers there have discovered burial mounds, called kurgans, 2,300 to 2,800 years old and up to 250 feet wide.

The test area the researchers chose measured approximately 1,000 feet by 330 feet, including five giant mounds and dozens of smaller structures. They flew the drone at a height of 130 feet to study one mound in greater detail.

The lightweight nature of the microdrone was a problem at times. "In the field we had to deal with rising wind," Hendrickx recalled. "At some point we even lost the radio connection with the drone — this led to a sprint between the kurgans."

Nevertheless, the researchers gathered enough data with the drone to create a digital elevation map of the site and a 3-D model of the mound.

"The 3-D model we created gives us the possibility to calculate the volume of the kurgan," Hendrickx told LiveScience. "With this volume and its precise dimensions, the original shape of the kurgan can be reconstructed."

Archeologists have begun to use airborne drones more often in the past decade or so, including in Peru, Austria, Spain, Turkey and Mongolia. The resulting maps can help archeologists see the big picture of a site where up-to-date aerial or satellite images are hard to get, Hendrickx said.

The researchers are now experimenting with a larger microdrone that can carry more weight.

"This will make it possible to use, for instance, infrared cameras or even a radar system," Hendrickx said. "This can make it possible to see things we can't see with our eyes."

The scientists detailed their findings in the November issue of the Journal of Archaeological Science.

## Chapter notes

### Anne Arundel

Meets five times a year in February, April, June, September and November at the Severna Park Branch of the County Public Library, 45 McKinsey Road. 7:30 p.m. Contact Mechelle Kerns at [AACHapASM@hotmail.com](mailto:AACHapASM@hotmail.com) or the chapter website [www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php](http://www.marylandarcheology.org/aacashome.php)

**November 15:** TBA

### Central Maryland

Central Chapter has no formal meetings planned, but it does engage in field work and related activities. Contact chapter President Stephen Israel, 410-945-5514 or [ssisrael@verizon.net](mailto:ssisrael@verizon.net)

### Charles County

Meetings are held 7 on the first Wednesday (September-May) at Historic LaPlata Train Station. Contact President Carol Cowherd at [cowherdcl@gmail.com](mailto:cowherdcl@gmail.com) or 301-375-9489. Chapter website is [charlescoasm.org](http://charlescoasm.org) and its blog is [ccarchsoc.blogspot.com](http://ccarchsoc.blogspot.com)

**November 2:** Julia A. King, professor of anthropology, St. Mary's College of Maryland, will discuss this summer's search for the Piscataway Fort and other work in the Zekiah swamp.

**December 7:** Tom Forhan will speak on historic archeology of the Riley Tract Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC. Before the government acquired the land for Rock Creek Park in 1890, the area was farmed by a diverse group of landowners and tenants, including William Riley.

## Mid-Potomac

The chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at a local restaurant at 5:45 p.m. Contact [heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:heather.bouslog@mncppc-mc.org) or call 301-840-5848 or Don Housley at [donhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:donhou704@earthlink.net) or 301-424-8526. Chapter website: <http://www.asmmidpotomac.org> Email: [asmmidpotomac@gmail.com](mailto:asmmidpotomac@gmail.com) Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mid-Potomac-Archaeology/182856471768>

**November 17:** Meeting at Needwood Mansion from 6-10 p.m. Heather Bouslog and Cassandra Michaud will conduct a workshop: Introduction to Artifact Cataloging and Labeling. Space limited. RSVP Don Housley at [donhou704@earthlink.net](mailto:donhou704@earthlink.net) to reserve a space. Priority will be given to chapter members. Bring your own dinner or contribute \$5 for pizza/salad dinner.

**December 14 (Wednesday):** Meeting and holiday party at the Agricultural History Farm Park Activity Center, Derwood, from 6-9 p.m. Entertainment includes the latest edition of "Archaeologists Gone Wild" and archeology jeopardy.

## Monocacy

The chapter meets in the C. Burr Artz Library in Frederick on the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. Contact Jeremy Lazelle at 301-845-9855 or [jlazelle@msn.com](mailto:jlazelle@msn.com) or Nancy Geasey at 301-378-0212.

**November 9:** Archeologist Jordan Riccio will speak on "Resistance Communities of the Great Dismal Swamp."

## Northern Chesapeake

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Members and guests assemble at 6:30 for light refreshments. A business meeting at 7 is followed by the presentation at 7:30. Contact Dan Coates at 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/northernchesapeake>

**November 9:** Dan Coates gives "A Report at the Swan Harbor Farm and High Point Prehistoric Sites Along Swan Creek." Havre de Grace City Hall.

**December 12:** Annual Dinner Meeting. Program will be a business meeting and feature awards and recognition and reports from committees. Harford Glen Dining Hall

**January 11:** TBA. Havre de Grace City Hall

**February 9:** TBA. Historical Society of Harford County

**March 14:** TBA. Student Center, Room 24, HCC

**April 13:** Al Luckenback, Excavations at Pig Point. Annual Maryland Archeology Month Cresthull Lecture. Edgewood Hall, HCC

**May 16:** Annual Members and Guest Picnic

## Upper Patuxent

Programs are the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Ida in Ellicott City. Potluck suppers are held at 6:15 in September and March. Otherwise, dinner is available at the Diamondback in Ellicott City at 6 p.m. Contact Lee Preston at 443-745-1202 or [leeprestonjr@comcast.net](mailto:leeprestonjr@comcast.net)

**November 14:** Dana Kollman on Page and Keyser internment regimes from the middle and upper Potomac River valley.

**December 12:** Lab session. Native American and historic artifacts.



**January.** No meeting.

**February 13:** Lee Preston on "Made in China: From Terra Cotta Soldiers, to Porcelain and Silk."

**March 12:** Lousie Akerson on "Late Eighteenth/early Nineteenth Century Ceramics." A workshop on the difference between porcelain, stoneware and redware, and some of the common decorations found on late 18th/early 19th Century ceramics. Visuals will include slides and reproduction ceramics.

**April 9:** Celeste Huecker on Easter Island.

**May 14:** Kathie Fernstrom on a subject TBD.

**June 11:** TBD

## Western Maryland

Programs are the fourth Friday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. in the LaVale Library, unless noted. Contact Roy Brown, 301-724-7769. Chapter email: [wmdasm@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdasm@yahoo.com) Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wmdasm>

**November 5:** Chapter field trip on the National Road, with Bob Bantz.

**December:** No meeting.

**January 27:** Show and Tell.

**February 24:** Phillip Allen on a pollen study of the Barton Site.

It's never too early to

## AVOID THE CHRISTMAS RUSH

ASM is now accepting applications for membership renewal for 2012.

See the form on the Membership Page at the ASM website.

*"Wow, next year's membership at last year's prices!"*

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**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

**The Archeological Society of Maryland Inc. is a statewide nonprofit organization devoted to the study and conservation of Maryland archeology.**

ASM members receive the monthly newsletter, ASM Ink; the biannual journal, MARYLAND ARCHEOLOGY, reduced admission to ASM events and a 10% discount on items sold by the Society. Contact Membership Secretary Belinda Urquiza for membership rates. For publication sales, contact Dan Coates at ASM Publications, 716 Country Club Rd., Havre de Grace, MD 21078-2104 or 410-273-9619 or [dancoates@comcast.net](mailto:dancoates@comcast.net)

**Submissions welcome.** Please send to Myron Beckenstein, 6817 Pineway, University Park, MD. 20782, 301-864-5289 or [myronbeck@verizon.net](mailto:myronbeck@verizon.net)

**President**

Claude Bowen  
301-953-1947  
[clauderbowen@comcast.net](mailto:clauderbowen@comcast.net)

**Vice President**

Tom Forhan  
301-270-8073  
[dufour27@gmail.com](mailto:dufour27@gmail.com)

**Secretary**

Suzanne Bucci  
304-876-2189  
[suzruns4fun@frontier.com](mailto:suzruns4fun@frontier.com)

**Treasurer**

Jim Gibb  
410-263-1102  
[JamesGGibb@verizon.net](mailto:JamesGGibb@verizon.net)

**Membership Secretary**

Belinda Urquiza  
PO Box 1331  
Huntingtown, MD  
20639  
410-535-2586  
[burquiza@comcast.net](mailto:burquiza@comcast.net)

**At-Large Trustees**

John Fiveash  
443-618-0494  
[jsfiveash@comcast.net](mailto:jsfiveash@comcast.net)

Valerie Hall  
301-814-8028  
[valeriehall@gmail.com](mailto:valeriehall@gmail.com)

Annetta Schott  
443-949-4122  
[annettaschott@gmail.com](mailto:annettaschott@gmail.com)

Jaimie Wilder  
301-741-2869  
[jaimwilder@comcast.net](mailto:jaimwilder@comcast.net)