

The Datum Point



NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

January 2004

From the Veep – C.K. Gailey

I hope everyone had really fantastic holidays. Some of us went down to Williamsburg the week before Thanksgiving to attend the Jamestown Seminar. Talks included dating 18th and 19th century brick, the pre-1610 well discovered inside the Confederate Fort at Jamestown, and the discovery of the third corner of the original 1607 Jamestown Fort, which showed the fort to be smaller than interpretation of 17th Century documentation had indicated. An unexpected pleasure was that Andrew Veech was one of the presenters.

The trip was a little more thrilling because of a flat tire. After changing the tire, discovered the spare was even flatter. Put the half-flat back on and limped to a service station to put air in it. Air stayed in it through the return trip (whew!), but who needed the double tire change?

The Chapter sponsored a great Holiday party for the archeological volunteers of the county. I've just finished putting some 350 more architectural sites (as in, future archeological sites) into the GIS database, so we now have almost all the Fairfax County sites DHR knows about. This adds to the information Mike and Bob have when they make recommendations to building contractors regarding required archeology. There was an element of sadness, recording sites which were reported in the late '70's and early '80's and which no longer exist. We do pay a price for progress!

See everyone on the 8th!

January 8th Meeting - 7:30 pm Clark House

Located at **6332 Barcroft Mews Drive** in Falls Church, take the Beltway Exit east on Little River Turnpike 2 miles to a left on John Marr Drive. Make a right onto Columbia Pike, go 1.8 miles and turn right onto the service road at Barcroft Plaza (by a Harris Teeters). Turn left on the service road and proceed to the Barcroft Mews Townhomes adjacent to the plaza. Clark House is a three story yellow house on the left as you enter the townhomes. **Turn at the bus stop enclosure.** Overflow parking will be in the Plaza.

Coming from Bailey's Crossroads: West on Columbia Pike. Go through light at Braddock Road. Take the **FIRST** left (protected turn lane) and make an immediate left to townhouses. (If you pass the traffic lights at Lincolnia and Columbia Pike, you've gone too far).

Datum Point

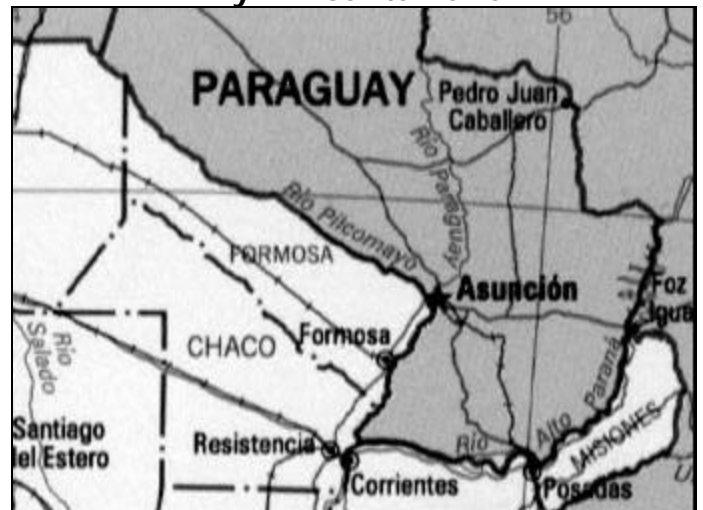
January 2004

January Talk

(re-scheduled from November 2003)

PREHISTORY AND HISTORY OF THE ARGENTINEAN GRAN CHACO

By Wil Santamaria



Two years ago, Wil Santamaria went to the Chaco province of northern Argentina to visit some friends and the little abandoned museum in the town of Charata. He was surprised at the amount of prehistoric and historic artifacts they had collected without no archeological work. They were, however, teaching the locals to recognize potential sites and try to preserve them as part of their heritage. The region is known as the IMPENETRABLE. **Wil traveled to Argentina, Chaco Province, and Impenetrable region partly funded by the Williams-Mullen Scholarship Fund from our chapter!** Come and see Wil's presentation on a little known part of Argentina!!

VISIT THE CHAPTER WEBSITE AT
www.nvcasv.org **& SEE THIS ISSUE IN COLOR**
ONLINE AFTER THE JANUARY MEETING!

page 1

CULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION GROUP

Winter Work at the County Parks

The Winter season has been a busy one at the Parks. First of all, some congratulations are in order. Richard Sacchi is back from knee replacement surgery. We ALL hope he is back on the golf course by spring! Chrissie Bachmann got married over the Thanksgiving holiday in Jamaica! Our best wishes go out to her.

It has been a busy Autumn and early Winter. We have completed excavation for the Phase I at Union Mills. Our contractor, Parsons did an outstanding job, and has found that one of the large stone features associated with the Fort was likely a domestic site built prior to the Civil War, as large numbers of early 19th century domestic artifacts were recovered. Historic research is ongoing, and may yet find deeds or other documentation that will allow us to ascertain who lived there and when. Other research included testing the fortifications. Each gun placement showed evidence that platforms existed for the guns at the fort. Artifacts consisted mostly of nails and spikes used in the construction of the gun supports. We also tested the tent platform areas north of the fort, and the privy areas.



Digging stone features in the snow!



Privy at Union Mills.

Other important projects included field reconnaissance of a new park, Woodglen Lake Park. One additional site was found, and consists of a Native American quartz quarry and workshop on a small bench along the south side of an unnamed tributary feeding into the west side of the lake. Research for historic sites is ongoing.

Report for the CRMPS excavations at Huntley Historic Site has been finished. This work was done as an addendum to excavations conducted by The Louis Berger Group last Spring. We attended and participated in the Potomac River Conference in Alexandria. Elizabeth Crowell delivered Rich Sacchi's paper on Mount Air.

We look forward to more exciting projects in the New Year.

If interested in volunteer work (Laboratory work during the Winter), please call either John Rutherford or Rich Sacchi at (703) 827-8672.

FRIENDS OF ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

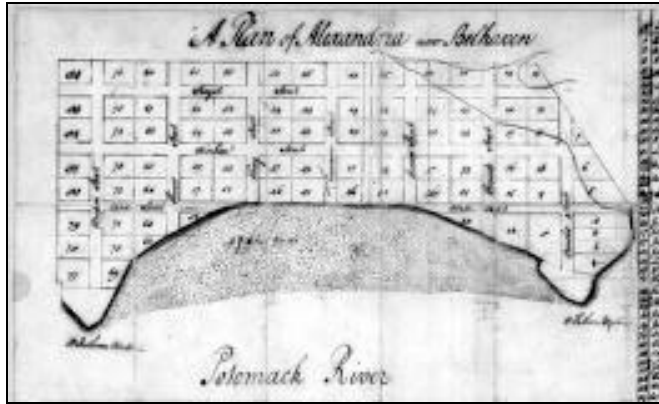
Friends of Alexandria Archaeology Explore the 18th Century Transformation of the Alexandria Waterfront

The Friends of Alexandria Archaeology will host a Java Jolt presentation featuring Dr. Steven Shephard, Assistant City Archaeologist, on Saturday, January 24. Shephard's lecture, *Reaching for the Channel: Some Documentary and Archaeological Evidence of Extending the Alexandria Waterfront*, will begin at 10 a.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street. Admission is free, but reservations are required. Please reserve your space by calling 703.838.4242.

When Alexandria was founded in 1749, the town was laid out on a crescent bay between West's Point and Point Lumley. There were sandy flats along the shore behind which rose banks, or bluffs, probably fifteen to twenty feet in height. The street that intersected the shoreline was called Water Street (later renamed Lee Street) and did not connect through at the center. The owners of waterfront lots could fill in the water along their shoreline to expand their property, which was undertaken from the 1750s to the present day.

The majority of the bay was filled during the period of the 1760s through the 1780s. Unfortunately, there is only one scale map during this time, dating to 1763. The next map dates to 1798. Much of the fill soil was taken from the banks, eventually causing the land

along the waterfront to lose elevation, but extended it out into the bay and toward the ship channel.



Alexandria in the 1749 by George Washington, himself!

Various methods were used to create this land, including the sinking of old ship's hulls, building cribbed wharves, or depositing fill behind bulkheads. Though there are few records documenting this process, we are able to give some insight into this significant change in landform from deeds indicating the creation of waterfront lots, visitor accounts of the banks and the bay, various tidbits in newspapers, testimony in court cases and a few accounts in the City Council Minutes.

Glimpses into the methods used in creating land along the waterfront have also resulted from archaeological investigations. Buried remnants of 18th-century stone and wooden wharf structures, debris-covered surfaces of wharves, and artifacts included in fill have been uncovered. Even evidence of the prehistoric sites that once existed on the banks has been found.



Alexandria in 1915, mostly filled in!

Dr. Steven Shephard's Power Point talk will present some of the intriguing documentary and archaeological findings relating to the "banking out" process with the hope of offering a better

understanding of this 18th-century transformation of the Alexandria waterfront.

Please call Gadsby's Tavern Museum to reserve your space, 703.838.4242. The Alexandria Archaeology Museum and Gadsby's Tavern Museum are owned and operated by the City of Alexandria.

Just for fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Some of the Bristoe Station Field Volunteers: Phil Gloss with his back to us, Diane Schug-O'Neill in the center and Dale Brown behind Diane.



Humor always abounds on a dig! Bev Regenbaugh (sp?) brought a rubber hand and foot and took some photos of the "accident" for Centex Homes!

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President position open
Vice President C.K. Gailey ypnvc@nvcasv.org
703-425-4668
Treasurer George gmonken@BraemarNet.com
Monken 703-393-6775
Corresponding Sec. Vicki Monken same as above
Recording Sec. Rachael Mangum 703-934-2336 (work)
EDITOR Patrick O'Neill patrickoneill@erols.com
703-244-6275 (cell)

FCPA ARCHAEOLOGISTS

CHAPTER Sponsors:

Elizabeth Crowell elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov
703-324-8675 (work)
Mike Johnson and Bob Wharton 703-787-3778 (work)
Rich Sacchi and John Rutherford 703-827-8672 (work)

Archaeological Educational Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon Esther White ewhite@mountvernon.org
Alexandria Museum Pam Cressey 703-838-4399 (info)

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____
Phone (H): _____
(W): _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Individual (\$15) _____
Student (\$5) _____
Family (\$17) _____

New _____

Renewal _____

Return to:
NVC/Archeological Society of Virginia
2739 West Ox Road
Herndon, VA 20171-3807

Chapter members are encouraged to join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia.

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!

The Datum Point

Northern Virginia Chapter
Archeological Society of Virginia
2739 West Ox Road
Herndon, VA 20171-3807

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED