

The Datum Point



NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

March 2004

From the Veep – C.K. Gailey

Many thanks to Dr. Joe Dent for a fascinating talk last month on the Shawnee Minisink site in Pennsylvania, a truly once-in-a-lifetime excavation. 15 feet of profile! This month we have Daniel Koski-Karell. Daniel gave a talk at last autumn's ASV meeting which was a real attention-getter. He is also interested in under-water archeology, so any of you web-footed diggers don't want to miss him. In this issue of the DP you will find tributes to and remembrances of Edith Sprouse and Pat Gallagher. If any of you wish to add something on either of these great ladies, just sent it to me or to Patrick for future issues of the DP. See you at Clark House on the 11th.

Elections

At the meeting last month the current officers were all reelected. Thanks to all of them for their unselfish giving of time and effort to make the Northern Virginia Chapter run.

March 11th 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 town homes. **Turn at the bus stop enclosure.** Overflow parking 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.

March Talk

The Antillean Lithic: possible precursor to Mainland Paleoamerican settlement in the Americas

By Dr. Daniel Koski-Karell

Dr. Daniel Koski-Karell holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Cornell University, and Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the Catholic University of America. He has worked as an archaeologist for more than thirty years and has extensive experience with terrestrial and underwater prehistoric and historic period archaeology in North America and the West Indies. He also works professionally as an architectural historian.

The title of my presentation is "The Antillean Lithic: possible precursor to mainland Paleoamerican settlement in the Americas." I discuss Old World and New World environmental and cultural settings during the late Pleistocene before, during and after the last glacial maximum, which occurred 18,000 years ago. This period overlaps Paleoamerican settlement in North and South America including the appearance of Clovis 13,000 years ago. I provide an introduction to the Antillean Lithic, the earliest settlement period in West Indies prehistory. Its artifact assemblages share characteristics with late Pleistocene Old and New World groups including Clovis. Skulls from what appears to be the Antillean Lithic's Old World ancestral region are remarkably similar to contemporaneous Paleoamerican skulls, including Kennewick Man. I suggest that the Antillean Lithic is one, and perhaps the original, precursor to Paleoamerican settlement of mainland South and North America.



Dr. Joe Dent giving his talk at the February meeting



Ann Wood and George Monken receiving their certification awards from VP Gailey

All new and experienced volunteers

By Bob Wharton

All new and experienced volunteers are cordially invited to an orientation to the Fairfax County Park Authority and specifically to the Resource Management Division Volunteer Program of which we are a part. Whether you think of yourself as a "County Archaeology Volunteer" a "Cultural Resource Management/Protection Volunteer" or just a good person who likes Archaeology come learn about the Park Authority and your place in it.

The program is being held in Huntley Meadows Park (in the Mount Vernon District) on the 6th of March, from 9:30 to 11:30 A.M. RSVP to Erin Chernisky by March 3rd erin.chernisky@fairfaxcounty.gov or (703) 324 - 8750

- **Meet and learn from other volunteers**
- **Discover the opportunities and benefits available to all volunteers**
- **Gain a new perspective on your key role in the community**

A Few Favorite Things: Pleasures and Pastimes in Early America, 1750-1850.

Jeanne Nichols, Collection Manager, FCPA sent the following item for the DP readers:

A Few Favorite Things: Pleasures and Pastimes in Early America, 1750-1850. A symposium on March 26, 2004, at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Sponsored by the Fairfax County Park Authority and the GMU History Department, this symposium examines selected amusements in early American homes from the colonial period to the Civil War. Presentations focus on music, sweets and confections, toys and playthings, pets and pet paraphernalia, and include discussion of who owned or took part in these diversions and what their meaning and value was to those who enjoyed them.

Speakers include David Hildebrand (Colonial Music Institute), Wendy Woloson (Library Company of Philadelphia), Tracey Rae Beck (Winterthur Museum), and Katherine C. Grier (University of South Carolina.) Carson Hudson (Historic Diversions) portrays an itinerant performer. The program also features demonstrations and exhibits on period dance, musical instruments, games and theatrical activities. Prepaid registrations are required and must be postmarked by March 15, 2004. The \$60.00 fee covers all sessions of the symposium, parking and lunch. To register or request registration forms, email susan.clark@fairfaxcounty.gov or phone Historic Collections at (703) 631-1429.

Thoughts on Pat Gallagher

CK Gailey - The NVC/ASV VP

I first worked with Pat Gallagher at the Centreville tanyard Block 6. There I was, having never dug anything. Larry Moore told Pat to take me in hand and open a unit next to the parking lot. 250 nails later, she had taught me how to dig, how to trowel, how to screen and how to keep track of what we found. For 5 years Pat was in charge of the artifact bags at the Tanyard. Nobody dug anything before they got a bag from Pat, marked with the location and date and entered in the bag log. She was The Bag Lady and proud of it. Because of her attention to detail, we have total control of the hundreds of thousands of artifacts from the tanning pits. Beginning with the McDonald Civil War disinterments, I found another side to Pat: her abiding interest in the Civil War. In researching the Union burials in Centreville, she was

constantly guiding the work with her knowledge of troop movements, interlaced with arcana about commanders and soldiers.

Often an item was right in her own extensive library. She had a gift for organizing masses of documents and items of information; without her formats and instant recall, there's no telling how much information we would have lost. This went on to several other projects, including reconstruction of an entire regiment's casualty list at the Battle of New Market and the researching of the Union soldiers who had signed the walls of the Fairfax City mansion of Blenheim. At the latter, Pat's diligence led to our contacting several descendents of the soldiers, a distinct pleasure. I will treasure the phone calls when we would go over what we knew, what we could find next and how we could go about doing that.

Pat displayed another skill in the work at Blenheim. She was an inspired decipherer. Several of the signatures would be unread to this day if it had not been for Pat's persistence in working out what they said. In addition, she transcribed and annotated a soldier's diary found in his pension file. The notes she added are worth the reading of the diary all by themselves. All in all, Pat was that rarest of people, someone who could work with almost anyone and create a synergism greater than the sum of the parts. We will all miss her tremendously.

"Nails" Gailey

Thoughts about Edith Sprouse



Edith at work in the Lee Center

Myra Lau - formerly of Gunston Hall:

I have just a few words regarding Edith that her family might appreciate. I was at the Memorial at the Lyceum, which was a wonderful tribute to her and an event she would have enjoyed, had it not been about her! She was much too humble for that. But the memories shared and the humor expressed would have pleased her, I'm sure. I considered going up and saying a few words, but felt awkward as someone no longer working at Gunston. But there were many Gunston volunteers present and I recalled our thoughts about and admiration of Edith that we all shared on a weekly basis. So, should you still be putting together words and thoughts, I submit the following:

Edith Sprouse was a giant, despite her small stature. As a member of the archaeology staff at Gunston Hall for four years, I saw many volunteers come and go, but there were only a handful of the die-hard, week after week volunteers, who religiously showed up to assist in our efforts. Edith was one of those volunteers and one who doubled her volunteer time after the department experienced a reduction in staff in 2002.

A few days after Edith's passing, I noticed a church billboard in the Mt. Vernon area displaying the following quote: "Aspire to Inspire before you Expire." Edith did not need to "aspire".... She WAS Inspiration. There is no more fitting word for Edith and for her life than "Inspiring." Volunteers regularly said they felt inspired by her active life, by her sharp mind and quick humor. During the field season, when most of us were outdoors, Edith worked diligently alone in the lab to keep the washing and cataloging of artifacts up to date.

I know that she was extremely intelligent with a wealth of historical knowledge and ready to give it away at the slightest hint of need, evidenced by all her friends who spoke at her Memorial. I personally received help from her on research at Gunston and we often benefited from her words of wisdom about the 18th century and about particular county sites she had researched. But it was her cheerful, faithful attendance and beautiful spirit that we experienced more often and enjoyed each week. If we each could "aspire to inspire" with only a 10th of the effect Edith had on so many, we would be living life meaningfully.

We miss you, Edith.
Myra Lau

Esther White - Archaeologist from Mount Vernon:

I only saw Edith a few times but I was always impressed that she remembered me and the historical archaeology we were doing at Mount Vernon. About every six months or so I would get an envelope and inside would be a Xerox or note concerning Mount Vernon or George Washington. Some surprise she had discovered while researching other topics. Not too long ago it was a copy of a 1920 newspaper photograph of the dilapidated distillery at Rippon Lodge, once it was a clipping about items found during a renovation of the smoke house. I'll miss these random and unexpected leads appearing in my mailbox. She was a loyal and thoughtful researcher and friend.

CK Gailey - The NVC/ASV VP

What can be said about Edith Sprouse? She had her hand in half the documents in the Virginia Room; what she hadn't written she had read, digested, taken notes on and remembered. It seemed that, regardless of what I was researching Edith could give depth to the dry data. She had a genius for bringing the past to life; these were real people, not just entries in censuses or tax records. Edith could be counted on to suggest avenues of research, with references, that helped greatly. The general rule for research was: **ask Edith first**; save yourself a lot of time. A true measure of her impact on Northern Virginia was the attendance at her memorial service. There were leaders from libraries, historical societies, archeological groups, museums, and any organization, which puts us in touch with our past. Two things made Edith stand out from everyone else. First, she was a doer. When she found an interest in history, she served on the boards of the Historical Society and the History Commission. Second, she published. Research is fun; writing is work. Edith has put her research out where others can access it. For all of this we are forever in her debt.

Cultural Resource Protection Group

Huntley Historic Site restoration and park design is continuing on schedule. The archaeological report, completed by **The Louis Berger Group** was reviewed by staff, which approved this final version. The report helps complete the picture of site development as well as define the material cultural of it various owners. More archaeology will be conducted in house this spring.

Huntley Historic Site is the first park to receive studies in cultural resources, cultural landscapes, natural resources, historic background review and extensive architectural investigation as part of the overall General Management Datum Point

Plan (GMP). Springtime will see the beginning of active work in the reconstruction of the house and outbuildings, of course depending on bond funding.



Huntley in Hybla Valley

John Rutherford completed another General Management Plan (GMP) for **Woodglen Lake Park** which called for a complete historic archival review and field survey. The results of the effort produced a terrific local history and located one small prehistoric lithic scatter. The GMPs, while not always locating remarkable cultural resources, do provide a random sampling method for Parkland surveys.

Don't forget the March MAAC: We hope to see all of you at Rehoboth Beach for the Session on Fairfax County. **Liz Crowell, John Rutherford** and **Richard Sacchi** are among the speakers and topics range from Mt. Air to GIS. The Session goes on at 1:00 Friday.



Excavation of wagon ruts at Union Mills

Langley Oaks Quarry - The lab has made impressive progress on the 1,400+ bags from the five-meter excavation square dug in 1/4 meter sub units. After cataloguing about 1/2 of the bags, it is becoming clear that the site may be more than only a quarry. We have been identifying an unusually large quantity of worked and edge worn artifacts, including sidescrapers, spokeshaves, spurs, and possible heavy duty, flake, cutting tools. The low number of bifaces also indicates that the site was not primarily quarry related. Only one positively unidentified point has been catalogued so far and no preforms or point fragments have been positively identified. The site is clearly unusual. Since we are cataloguing from the deeper levels toward the upper levels, we may learn more in level 1, where the majority of the artifacts were recovered.

Laurel Hill Golf Course - The survey is planned for March on the preliminary clearing of the new Park Authority golf course on the old Lorton prison property. It will involve following the combination of grading equipment and rain to recover any artifacts that may be exposed on the known and any new sites.

Land Bay A - Berno Tops is planning to recover the last of the pit feature in the northern part of the site during the week of March 8-11. If the weather is good he will also start with the shovel testing pattern. That means that we will be starting three weeks early, weather permitting. We have been informed that the development will not begin until June, which gives us time to complete the sampling and possible excavate other significant areas of the site found during the sampling.

Nottoway River Paleoamerican Survey (NRPS) - Note the new term for the Paleoindian period. If Cactus Hill and the other potentially Pre-Clovis sites are as old as indicated, and the early skeletons are not American Indian, then it is possible that the current American Indians were not the first people here. During the last week in February, we completed the field portion of the first phase of NRPS on the Chub Sandhill Nature Area. It involved approximately 30 auger tests, some as deep as 13-14 feet. Our initial transect was designed to recreate the soil depositional history of the Nottoway River floodplain at the project area. Later transects were designed to test the soil and identify buried archeological components on promising landforms. Although the landforms looked good (on the surface) for producing Cactus Hill-like sites, we found that none had any soil or artifact evidence for any cultural horizons older than ca. 6,000 B.C. Two large sites were found. One produced a Woodland pottery component (auger sample) and possible Late Middle Archaic Guilford point fragment (surface). Another large site produced one Middle Archaic Morrow Mountain II point from an exposed sand pit bank. Neither site had the appropriate

soil for older occupations. This means that we will probably not have an April field session on the Nottoway. I am setting up to do soil testing on several other promising areas but the results will not be available for this spring season. As a result, the next possible attempt to discover a Clovis and Pre-Clovis occupation in the Nottoway will not be before October, 2004.

Notes from ASV Board Meeting

By George Monken

George Tolley is the new Newsletter editor. There will be some changes in the format and content of future Newsletters. Each chapter will be asked to provide an article of their Chapter's events. George is working on a "deadline" schedule and will keep everyone apprised of changes and "deadlines".

Kittiewan sill needs volunteers for a multitude of projects. Harry Jaeger announced a schedule for volunteers. The 3rd Monday of each month as well as the 2nd Saturday of even months starting in February. The hours will be 9Am to 4PM. Let Harry know if you can help out on one of the Volunteers days.

ASV Field School will be 12 July - 1 August at Keyser Farm, a continuation of last years Field School, where several features were identified and these features will be excavated. The site (44PA1) is a contact site hoped to provide insight into first contact between Native Americans and Europeans.

Keith Egloff of DHR is going to offer class on DSS (entering/updating archeological sites data) for certification candidates. Classes are tentatively schedule for Saturday 21 February and Saturday 15 May. There is no certification requirement to take the class. DHR's desire is to have as many new sites and updating of present sites be done directly into DSS vice sending in Paper forms for DHR to enter.

The ASV is writing a letter to key the State Representatives supporting the DHR budget. There concern that part of the DHR budget in the future could be cut. The 2004 Annual ASV meeting will be in Lexington Virginia 20-31 October. It will be held at the Best Western at Hunt Ridge off of I64/81. Price of rooms is \$74.95, which also includes a full breakfast.

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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
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