



The Datum Point

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

January 2006

From the President – Patrick O'Neill

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! I hope everyone had a safe and joyous holiday season! The Northern Virginia Chapter is ringing in the New Year with great hope and expectations! This year we hope to publish the articles by Edith Sprouse as well as all that digging and artifact processing we all love to do!!!! Tom Boltz has joined the ranks of officers as the new editor of the Datum Point! He will start with the February issue. We bid a fond farewell to the outgoing editor, Karen Schweikart, but she will still be at meetings and digging!

- **Chapter Awards** - This month I want to establish an awards committee for the Northern Virginia Chapter. Those wishing to serve or offer suggestions on the types of awards given, please contact me.
- **Gunston Hall** - The chapter members at the December meeting unanimously voted to send the Datum Point to Gunston Hall. This will hopefully encourage people at Gunston Hall to know and possibly join the chapter, as well as promote volunteer opportunities, too!

I recently found evidence of the **largest** ceramic vessel ever built, the Steamer CERAMIC (see below!). Built for the White Star Line, the same line as the Titanic, the SS Ceramic was a one-funnel steamer. I wonder what category this **ceramic vessel** would fall into (vessel???? A great pun!!!) Anyone want to guess?!!!!



January 2006 Speaker -

Justin Patton - Prince William County Archaeologist

Mr. Patton will give an overview of Cultural Resource Management in Prince William County and possibly an overview of archaeological research at the Brentsville Courthouse and the current fieldwork.

Justin Patton graduated from Longwood College in 1988 and is the County Archaeologist for Prince William County, Virginia. He has conducted archaeological investigations and cultural resource management projects in the Middle Atlantic region (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, and Washington D.C.), Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, Ohio, and Texas. He has also conducted international historic preservation efforts assisting the Republic of Georgia and an oil company consortium preserve and mitigate cultural resources from the Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Medieval Age. Prior to his current position he worked as a Senior Archaeologist for URS Corporation in Gaithersburg, Maryland, as an archaeologist for Parsons Corporation, as Assistant Cultural Resources Manager for Fairfax County Park Authority, and as a staff archaeologist for Engineering-Science, Inc. He received his Masters in Applied Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park, in 2001.

Announcement

Quakers, African Americans, Antislavery, and the Underground Railroad in the Mid-Atlantic Region

February 4, 2006, 2-4 p.m., No fee
Thomas Balch Library in Leesburg, Virginia

In recent years, historians have found that a significant number of Quakers, African Americans, and others in the mid-Atlantic region were actively working to end slavery through a variety of

strategies and tactics. Their findings shed new light on abolitionism and the coming of the civil war.

This informal conference will allow historians from several states to collaborate further and discuss their research and interpretations with the public. Presenters will include Glenn Crothers, University of Louisville and the Filson Historical Society; Christopher Densmore, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College; Deborah Lee, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities; Jenny Masur, National Park Service, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program; and Bronwen Souders, Waterford Foundation. For further information, call Jenny Masur at (202) 619-7136.

Thomas Balch Library in Leesburg, Virginia, is the sponsor and location of the conference. The library is a research facility in the National Park Service National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program.

Thomas Balch Library
208 W. Market Street
Leesburg, Virginia 20176
Phone: (703) 737-7195
Website:
<http://www.leesburgva.gov/services/library/>

THE YEAR IN REVIEW FROM MIKE JOHNSON:

We completed excavations at the Land Bay A site and said "farewell" to Berno Tops and his wife, Ruth. As Nancy Anthony will attest, without Berno, the Fanny Wilson site (44FX2511), emergency recovery would have been far less successful in 2002. Who knows? Without Berno, we may never have had time to investigate the vernacular garden in the front yard of the main house foundation. Fanny Wilson daffodils are alive and well - thanks to Nancy and crew.

Berno vastly improved the quality and quantity of data recovered in 2003 from the Turtle Hill site (44FX2636). Because of Berno we were able to test the site at a 10-foot interval and locate the all-important features that demonstrated the site's good integrity. The high quality of the results may have saved the site.

Berno was Paul Inashima's right hand on the spectacularly effective recovery effort at the David site (44FX2634). Paul, Berno and the volunteers excavated 50% of the threatened part of the site,

which is at least five times the area normally done on a Phase III, government archaeology, data recovery. It was only through that effort that the intrusive features were finally located.

Berno was Field Director on the Land Bay A site (44FX2723) data recovery. He discovered the first evidence of undisturbed hearths, which led to the intensive testing of the rest of the site. That resulted in discovery of huge fire cracked rock feature underlain by pit features. One of the features even had a soapstone bowl lug handle in it. Another, dating to 4500 years ago consisted of a charcoal-lined pit that only someone with Berno's experience would have discovered. Had it not been for Berno's discovery of the first "hearth," we may not have spent the 2004 and first part of the 2005 seasons on the site.

We also sent Rachel Roeske off to start her career finding bigger and better things in Archeology. Rachel spent two internships (2004 and 2005) working on Fairfax County archeological projects. She was Berno's right hand on Land Bay A in 2004 and in 2005 did an outstanding job analyzing the residues on fire cracked rocks from the large hearths at Land Bay A. Rachel has applied to graduate schools. Like all of us, she is hooked.

This year we hired Paul and Nancy back for the Meadowood Farm Survey. This project is a cooperative agreement between the Federal Bureau of Land Management (which owns the 800 acre property) and the Fairfax County Park Authority. The County's task was to do an intensive, reconnaissance level survey of the entire 800 acres. Two hundred new archeological sites were discovered. Since it involved a dollar for dollar, hard (salaries and expenses) and soft (volunteer time) match by the county for Paul's and Nancy's salaries, which were paid by BLM, our entire field program got involved. Some people helped with the field survey part being done by Paul and Nancy and others, including Bob Wharton and I, surveyed and tested around the Haislip site (44FX2912), which we have been reporting on throughout the year. Most of the fieldwork was completed in 2005. Some minor reconnaissance work is left to do at the eastern end of the property.

Earlier this year a crew of hearty volunteers from the Northern Virginia and Nansemond Chapters of the ASV helped excavate 55 tons of sand (excavating and backfilling) at Chub Sandhill down on the Nottoway River in Sussex County, Virginia.

The project was the first phase of the archeological part of a geoarcheological assessment of potential Paleoamerican occupations on Virginia's Chub Sandhill Natural Resource Management Area. The report on the 2005 testing is about half done.

The lab: Between finishing up the Land Bay A and Meadowood artifacts, we spent the year working on artifacts from two backlogged excavations: Bazuin and Langley Oaks (Quarry). We saw a changing of the guard on the Bazuin site cataloguing. Marion Dana, who had been handling the complex data management, turned it over to Nan Barrera. Marion and her husband, Steve moved to Las Vegas. Marion had been managing the cataloguing for several years. The project involves recataloguing all of the artifacts (more than 120,000) from a contract excavation on a large multi-component site on Lowes Island on the Potomac River. The site (44LD3) is actually in Loudoun County but the excavation was paid for by the Fairfax County Water Authority, when they put in a large water intake at the northern end of the county in the late 1970s. The Langley Oaks site (44FX329) was excavated in 1981 in advance of residential construction near Langley high school. Initially thought to be an expended quartz quarry, recent cataloguing has demonstrated the site to be much more complex. It has produced a wide range of tools and worked items not associated with quarry workshop activity. Because of a short time frame and the high density of artifacts, we excavated a large 5-meter square in 400, 1/4-meter sub-squares marked with red swizzle sticks, hence the term "swizzle stick archeology." We controlled depth using three natural levels, which produced 1,200 artifact bags. In those days, we were sizing each artifact and noting every miniscule attribute on the catalog sheet. That is why we never finished the cataloguing and are doing it now. We will be cataloguing this site into 2006.

The future: 2006 offers many opportunities. We have several projects in the works. They include a survey of Lexington Plantation (George Mason V), rescue archeology on threatened prehistoric sites along the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, as survey of the Camp Washington soapstone quarry complex are the three biggest items looming over the horizon. We still have to finish Meadowood early in the year. If the State can acquire land adjacent to the Chub Sandhill Management Area, we will also attempt to complete the last phase of the Paleoamerican survey there.

Salutations: We wish Berno, Ruth, Rachel, Paul, Nancy, Marion and Steve all the best in their new endeavors for 2006 and beyond. I want to thank them and everyone else who have made 2005 such a joyous and archeologically productive year.

Announcement

Prince William County

RELIC PRESENTS - UPCOMING

PROGRAMS

Following are upcoming programs at Bull Run Regional Library related to local history and genealogy. Regular times for monthly programs are the fourth Tuesday of each month (except December) at 7:30 p.m. Group programs are held in the Library's community room. Sign language interpretation of library programs is available if requested three weeks in advance. Funding for RELIC programs is supported by grants from the Friends of the Central and Bull Run Libraries.

See the latest issue of the PWPLS monthly magazine "Off the Shelf" for a suggested activity while you are visiting family during the holidays. Go to www.pwcgov.org/library then click on E-mail Newsletters then Off the Shelf, December 15.

- Tuesday, January 24 - Historic Preservation in Prince William County.
- Tuesday, February 21 - Finding Your Family in the U.S. Census. [Note this is the third Tuesday, not the fourth]
- Saturday, February 25 - Using Chancery Records.
- Saturday, March 25 - Digging Up Dirt on Jamestown.
- Tuesday, March 28 - Finding Female Ancestors.
- Saturday, April 1 - RELIC After Dark Special Event.
- Tuesday, April 25 - Cemetery Preservation and Research.
- Friday, April 28 - Resources of the Library of Virginia.
- The Genealogy Doctor is In - First and third Thursday of each month.

To register for these free programs listed above and described below, contact RELIC at (703) 792-4540 or TTY: (703) 792-4524 or at relic2@pwcgov.org.

Tuesday, January 24, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS TODAY
IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**

We will be celebrating Prince William County's 275th anniversary in 2006. To enlighten you about some of our history, Ray Goodrow of the Prince William County Department of Historic Preservation will depict the growing list of historic properties now owned by the County. He will tell what is being done to restore them and open them to the public. You will also learn about public programs and activities already under way at several of those sites. The program will be held Tuesday, January 24, 2006, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the Bull Run Library's community room.

Tuesday, February 21, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

FINDING YOUR FAMILY IN THE U.S. CENSUS.

All U.S. population census records from 1790 to 1930 are now freely accessible through PWPLS online subscriptions. They are an important source for persons just beginning their search for family history as well as for those deeply into it. This program, presented by RELIC's Don Wilson, is intended to help you locate those pesky relatives who don't seem to want to be found in the published and electronic indexes. What reasons might there be for the problem? Learn some unorthodox methods for tracking them down. The program will be held Tuesday, February 21, 2006, from 7:30 to 8:30 in the Bull Run Library's community room.

Saturday, February 25, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

**KEYS TO THE COURTHOUSE - USING
CHANCERY RECORDS TO UNCOVER YOUR
FAMILY'S PAST**

An interactive workshop presented by Joan W. Peters, C.G., designed to help you understand and use an important series of records that are available in every courthouse. Chancery (a.k.a. equity) records may help you solve some difficult research problems, even if your family had little property. Limited seating for this program. It will be held on Saturday, February 25, 2006, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Bull Run Library's community room.

Saturday, March 25, 2:00 p.m.

**DIGGING UP DIRT ON JAMESTOWN: TEN
YEARS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REDISCOVERY**

Beverly (Bly) Straube, Senior Curator of the Jamestown Rediscovery Project, will tell about the exciting discoveries made in Jamestown over the past decade. Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in America, will celebrate its, and Virginia's, 400th anniversary in 2007. This program will be presented at Bull Run Library's community room on Saturday, March 25, at 2:00 p.m. (Note: March 25, 2006, is the 275th anniversary of the establishment of Prince William County.)

Tuesday, March 28, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

**THE SILENT, THE INVISIBLE, AND THE
UNIMPORTANT: FINDING FEMALE
ANCESTORS.**

In most cultures and time periods, women have been shortchanged in the realm of record keeping. Charles S. "Chuck" Mason, Jr., C.G., will present some techniques for identifying and tracing elusive female ancestors. The program will be presented on Tuesday March 28 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Bull Run Library's community room.

Saturday, April 1, 7:00-11:00 p.m.

**RELIC AFTER DARK - A SPECIAL
FUNDRAISING EVENT TO SUPPORT THE RELIC
COLLECTION**

We sponsored a very successful evening event last spring, after the Library's regular hours, featuring hot hors d'heuvres, assorted beverages and desserts, along with a liberal dash of history and genealogical research. This year we want to repeat the winning formula. Our celebrity guest will be Tom Jones - no not that Tom Jones! (That's the only "April Fool" you're getting, though the gala does take place on April First.) This time our special guest speaker will be Thomas W. Jones, Ph.D., C.G., a nationally known speaker and co-editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. Dr. Jones will tell us about "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Genealogists." Library staff will be on hand for help with our library's print, microfilm and electronic resources. You can stay as late as 11:00 to do your personal research. We hope it will be an evening to remember.

The register for this special event, please send a check for \$25.00 per person, made out to PWPLS (Prince William Public Library System) - RELIC event. Additional contributions are welcome. Proceeds will benefit the RELIC Collection.

Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

CEMETERY PRESERVATION AND RESEARCH

Gravestone inscriptions are important sources of genealogical data, as well as objects of artistic value. Learn more about cemetery preservation and research from Dick and Dorothy Bishop, members of the Association for Gravestone Studies. This program will be help on Tuesday, April 25, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Bull Run Library's community room.

Friday, April 28, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

FOCUS ON VIRGINIA RESEARCH: RESOURCES OF THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

Minor T. Weisger, Archives Research Coordinator for the Library of Virginia, will present a double bill: Tour the Library of Virginia's Award-Winning Website (1:30-2:30 p.m.) and Specialized Resources for Virginia Genealogy (3:00-4:00 p.m.)

THE GENEALOGY DOCTOR IS IN

Schedule a private, 30-minute visit with RELIC's Don Wilson for tips on starting your own research or to discuss and analyze an historical or genealogical problem that has stumped you. First and Third Thursdays of each month, 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon.

Upcoming available dates: January 5 and 19, 2006. Choice of times: 10:00, 10:45, 11:30 a.m. Call RELIC at 703-792-4540 for a free appointment.

The Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center for Genealogy and Local History, Prince William Public Library System, Bull Run Regional Library, 8051 Ashton Avenue, Manassas, VA 20109. 703-792-4540



This cartoon appeared in the comics last week. **THE FLYING MCCOYS** - by Gary and Glenn McCoy. Note the Garfield behind the stalactite!

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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
2855 Annandale Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042

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

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the James Lee Center at the above address.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!

The Datum Point

Northern Virginia Chapter
Archeological Society of Virginia
2855 Annandale Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED