



The Datum Point

Newsletter of the
NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

Website – www.nvcasv.org

July 2007

From the President – Patrick O’Neill

I hear that many of the NVC members are busy volunteering on archaeological sites – Great!!! I usually get two to three emails each month regarding membership and volunteering, so if you know someone who wants to get out and enjoy nature and dig, let us know. Be sure and sign up for the Alexandria Archaeology Tour for mid-July (read on!). **Come to the July meeting with ideas for the summer picnic location and food ideas.**

July 13th, 2007 Chapter Meeting

Speakers – Diane Schug-O’Neill and Patrick O’Neill

Topic – Palafitte d’Italia (*Stilt houses in Italy*)

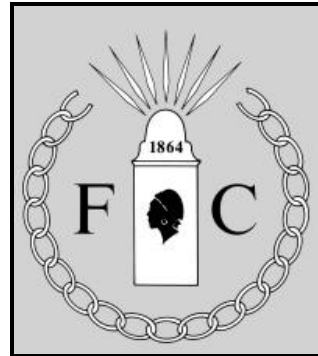


Come see the archaeological sites of the prehistoric “Pole People” at Lago di Ledro and in the neighboring valley, Val Giudicarie in northern Italy. Excavations in the mid-1930s, during a severe drought, uncovered hundreds of preserved hut poles that prehistoric peoples had built onto the lake. Artifacts, including ceramic pots, boats, and human remains, fell in between the poles and have been preserved much like a bog environment.

August’s speaker: Don Wilson, Prince William County Librarian. Topic – Genealogy, from the “Genealogy Doctor.”

Archeological Lectures & Events

NVC TOUR OF ALEXANDRIA



The Chapter tour of Alexandria Archaeology is **July 14th** – we meet at **10am** at the Freedmen’s Cemetery (the corners Washington St. and Church St.)

Parking is tight, zoned for 2 hour limits; read the signs carefully.

Diane c) 703-919-8216

“Tickets” for this tour are available at the meeting site. All proceeds will be going to support VARC. To read more about the Virginia Archaeological Resource Center go to the ASV site: <http://www.asv-archeology.org/>.

RELIC STAFF BACK @ BULL RUN

The RELIC staff are pleased to report the heating and air conditioning work at Bull Run Regional Library has been completed (along with a new roof) and the building and RELIC reopened Monday, June 11.

All of RELIC’s historical and genealogical collections are once again accessible. Staff will be available to help customers all hours the branch is open: Mondays-Thursdays 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday hours will resume in mid-September.

Have a question about Prince William history, places or families? You may contact RELIC staff for help and advice at Ask RELIC <<http://www.pwcgov.org/default.aspx?topic=3D040034001840001757>> or by calling 703-792-4540.

To register for the following free programs, contact RELIC at (703) 792-4540 or at relic2@pwcgov.org.

RELIC Programs:

July 12 (11am) - Stump the "Genealogy Doctor."

Presented by Don Wilson

RELIC's Don Wilson will host an open forum to answer as many genealogy-related questions as possible within an hour. The session will take place at Bull Run Regional Library's community room.

July 24 (7:30pm) - The Clues are in the Census: Finding Former Slaves and Slave Owners.

Presented by Char McCargo Bah

Her research addresses the problem that those with African ancestry often encounter: How to find documentation about an ancestor in the years before slavery was abolished? She will describe techniques for finding links between ancestors and the persons who controlled their lives.

MOUNT VERNON

July 4 - October 31, 2007 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Pioneer Farmer Site.

George Washington's farm marks the beginning of the wheat harvest season July 4 with wheat-treading demonstrations at the George Washington: Pioneer Farmer site. Costumed staff will lead Mount Vernon's horses as they tread wheat in the 16-sided barn at 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. every day. Visitors can witness Washington's innovative treading process, learning first-hand how Washington separated grain from straw.



Wheat Threshing Barn at Mount Vernon

On the World Wide Web

COUNTY LANDOWNERSHIP MAPS

To search for your ancestors (while at lunch, of course) access The Library of Congress' Ancestry Library Edition subscription database (<http://www.ancestrylibrary.com/>); click on the "photos and maps" tab ; and enter the information you are searching for (name of state, name of county, and date range (1860-1920).

A review: The site is fairly easy to navigate. The images are good, if you consider images from a black and white microfiche that have blacked out the color and words - good. The images have the same pluses and minuses as the Sanborn Map project. Where the original fiche had good gray tones to bring out the black lettering, the images are clear. Where the original color maps had dark tones that are black when gray-scaled, it's a nightmare and useless.

CHRONICLING AMERICA SITE

Chronicling America Site Now Offers 310,000 Newspaper Pages Program to Put Digitized Newspapers Online Makes Eight Awards.

Approximately 310,000 digitized newspaper pages, dating from 1900 to 1910, are now accessible through the Chronicling America Web site at www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica/. The site is a project of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), a partnership between the Library of Congress and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

New features in Chronicling America include:

- * 80,000 pages have been added (including 11 new titles).
- * The page display has been revised. Adobe Flash Player is no longer needed for viewing.
- * Persistent links are now displayed for every title record and page view. The persistent link enables a user to always return to the same place on the site, and it can be used for citations and hyperlinking to specific newspaper pages or newspaper title information.
- * Searches can be saved.
- * Ability to browse issues by graphic calendar
- * Ability to limit search results to date ranges by using graphic calendar
- * Informational essays linked from directory records with digitized content (also keyword searchable from Directory search)

Volunteer Notes

RICH RICHARDSON HONORED IN APRIL

On April 11th, the Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees honored 38 Star Volunteers and five Community Service Partner organizations. At the library, Library Board Chair Flint Lewis praised the library's corps of over 3000 volunteers who contributed more than 140,000 hours last year. Delegate Mark Sickles, 43rd District, Virginia House of Delegates, emceed the ceremony, which included a posthumous tribute to Star Volunteer **Malcolm "Rich" Richardson**. Awards were given for 1,000, 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 hours of service and for exceptional projects and performance.

Malcolm "Rich" Richardson, a Virginia Room volunteer since 1989, designed the Fairfax County Historic Newspaper Index and indexed over a million records so that this extraordinary tool could be launched on the Library's Web site in 2001. His contribution to the Virginia Room of over 9,000 volunteer hours allowed historians, archeologists, and genealogy researchers all over the world, as well as Fairfax County staff, to access a gold mine of historical information.

Rich never sought public recognition, but nevertheless received awards from the Fairfax County Library Board, the Board of Supervisors, and the National Association of Counties for his exceptional service. When he passed away in December 2006, it was a loss not just for his family and friends, but for the entire community.



Rich's wife, Margaret, received the posthumous award. Rich was a former Northern Virginia Chapter President.

To honor Rich, a memorial plaque will be placed in the Virginia Room of the Fairfax City Regional Library. The Library Board invites Rich's wife Margaret, his son Jonathan, and daughter Amy Lubas – and also Tina Cunningham, Branch Manager of the [Fairfax City Regional Library](#), and Suzanne Levy, Virginia Room

Manager – to come forward for the presentation of the plaque.

Volunteer Opportunities

(Mike Johnson, Fairfax County Park Archaeologist)

RIVERBEND PARK SURVEY

Survey work on the southern part of the park should be completed by the time this Datum point is mailed. We have recorded 44 new archeological sites in Riverbend Park and one in the adjacent Great Falls National Park.

A previously unrecorded cemetery is among the more interesting sites discovered. The site consisted of two bluish-gray schist field stone headstones with comparable foot stones at the opposite ends of the two linear depressions in the ground. We trowel tested the edge of one of the depressions and detected the tell-tail straight line between the surrounding undisturbed subsoil and the disturbed grave shaft soil. The Park Manager, Marty Smith thinks it could be the lost Conn family cemetery.

SENECA TRAILS SURVEY

Completion of our survey for the new horse trailer parking lot on the Seneca Trails Regional Park resulted in a win-win solution. As it turned out all three options proposed for the lot turned out to potentially impact archeological sites. We had the large Walters historic site, which is contained in a larger prehistoric site cause cancellation of options #1 and #2. Then we located two prehistoric sites in the way of option #3. All of the parking lot options were on a ridge top, which turned out to be prime areas for human settlement.

During the last field meeting to discuss what to do about the sites in the way of option #3, a new location was identified, that had no archeological sites. It was only bounded by an old sunken road trace that may have been one of the early accesses to the "Sugarlands" terraces along the Potomac River. The road will not be impacted and the new location is below the crest of the ridge, where it is almost invisible from the trails on the ridge. It is also closer to the main road. Following that meeting we also found three more prehistoric sites on hill tops in the vicinity.

MASON NECK NAT'L WILDLIFE REFUGE

If our application for an archeological permit is approved by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, in August we will shift all of that energy to the Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge. We plan to start work testing the Sycamore Landing area, where George Mason IV of Gunston Hall grew up.

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

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Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-550-0441
Alexandria Museum	Pam Cressey	7030838-4399 (information)
Pr. William County Archaeologist	Justin Patton	703-792-5729

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!!!!

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Archeological Society of Virginia
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED