



The Datum Point

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

Website – www.nvcasv.org

June 2007

From the President – Patrick O’Neill

The Chapter raised over \$500 (and still counting) for the Virginia Archaeological Research Center, to be housed at Kittiewan Plantation in Charles City County, Virginia! We far surpassed our expectations of \$250!!! “Great job!” goes out to Diane Schug-O’Neill for getting this spectacular event lined up. *Tickets are still available for our Archaeological Tour of Alexandria, including the Freedman’s Cemetery and more!*

Come to the June meeting to help vote on when and where we will have the Chapter summer picnic! All ideas are welcome!

June 13th, 2007 Chapter Meeting

Speaker – Barbara Heath, University of Tennessee

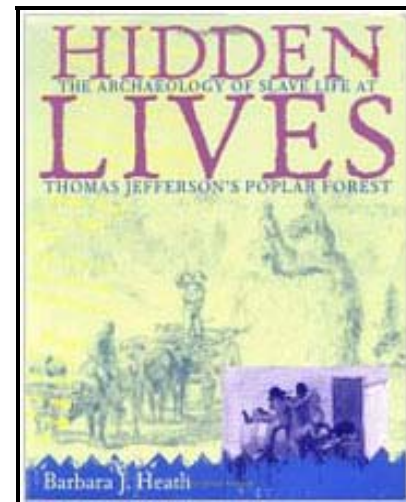
Topic – Archaeology of Plantation Slavery in Virginia

Dr. Heath will summarize several decades of research on plantation slavery in Virginia, including such topics as current scholarship on the African origins of enslaved people in the 17th and 18th Chesapeake, the built environment, plantation landscapes, and material culture associated with slave quarters.

Barbara Heath is an assistant professor of anthropology, specializing in historical archaeology. She holds a MA and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania and a BA from the College of William and Mary. She has spent more than 20 years studying slavery in the middle Atlantic and the Caribbean. Dr. Heath has worked as an archaeologist at Colonial Williamsburg and Monticello, and from 1992-2006 directed the department of archaeology and landscapes at Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest. Her work there

included excavations at three 18th-early 19th century slave quarters, Jefferson’s gardens, and the broader plantation landscape.

Heath authored *Hidden Lives, The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest*. She has twice served as the president of the Council for Virginia Archaeology, and has been a member of the Virginia State Review Board for Historic Preservation and a member of the board for the Society for Historical Archaeology.



Archeological Lectures & Events

MADELEINE McCOY – STAR VOLUNTEER

In April, Madeleine McCoy received an *Exceptional Service Award* for her historical research efforts which have been incorporated into VDOT’s project plan. Madeleine has spent 550+ hours over a two-year period, researching the background of the Guinea Road Cemetery Project. This area was the former site of an African American Community in the Braddock District. Respect for old burial sites is taken very seriously by VDOT and Madeleine’s research contributed significantly to this cause. The staff at the Fairfax

City Regional Library, especially the Virginia Room staff, appreciates her hard work.

ALEXANDRIA'S FREEDMEN'S CEMETERY

This summer Alexandria Archaeology will offer guided tours of the recently rediscovered Freedmen's Cemetery in Old Town Alexandria. Tours are free and will be held at the site at South Washington and Church streets during the following dates and times:

Saturday	June 2 nd	2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Saturday	July 14 th	2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Saturday	August 11 th	2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

City archaeologists will give interpretive tours and on June 2, Field School students from The George Washington University will also be on hand to share and explain their discoveries. Space is limited and reservations can be made with Alexandria Archaeology at 703-838-4399.

Freedmen's Cemetery was established in 1864 after thousands of African Americans fled slavery and came to Union-occupied Alexandria seeking freedom. Without adequate shelter, food and medical care, they died at an alarming rate. The military authority overseeing Alexandria ordered that a cemetery be established, and over the next five years, approximately 1,800 people were buried there before the federal government abandoned the cemetery.

Over time the cemetery was forgotten, and in 1955, a gas station was built on the site. Local historians later discovered evidence of the cemetery through burial records and historical newspaper accounts, and when planning for the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge began, a citizen group, *Friends of Freedmen's Cemetery*, urged the City to research and preserve the site. A subsequent examination by archaeologists confirmed the existence of graves. The City recently acquired the property, demolished the buildings and rededicated the site as a cemetery.

Last week City archaeologists began their investigation to identify and preserve graves for the future creation of Alexandria Freedmen's Memorial Park, due to open in 2010.



Field School students from George Washington University at the Freedmen's Cemetery

“HERE LIES FAIRFAX COUNTY”

Jack Hiller will present a slide lecture tracing the earliest contacts between Europeans and Native Americans in the Fairfax area, the Northern Neck Proprietary, the creation of Fairfax County out of Prince William County, the evolution of roads and towns, government by the courts, the social hierarchy, and some of the artifacts and sites that remain from those eras.

Jack Hiller is a member of the Fairfax County History Commission, a former history instructor at both Groveton and West Potomac High Schools. He has a bachelor's degree from William and Mary and master degrees from both the University of Virginia and Carnegie-Mellon University.

The Hollin Hall Senior Center is located 4 miles south of the city of Alexandria just off Fort Hunt Road at 1500 Shenandoah Road in Fairfax County, Virginia. Any

questions about the above program should be directed to Harold McClendon of the Mt. Vernon Genealogical Society at publicity@MVGenealogy.org.

MIKE MILLER – HISTORIAN OF THE YEAR

On April 24th, Mike Miller received a proclamation announcing he is the "*Historian of the Year*" by the Alexandria Historical Society. Mike has supported archaeology since Day 1. He actually started excavating on Alexandria's first archaeology site in 1977, and has continued to provide outstanding history---often times even before the archaeology is conducted. Mike alerted Alexandria Archaeology to important sites that would otherwise go unnoticed -- such as, the Freedmen's Cemetery and Shuter's Hill Plantation – and he also writes the history for the sites we excavate.

Mike has been a committed historian of Alexandria all these 30 years -- whether he worked for the Lee-Fendall House, the Library or the Office of Historic Alexandria. Alexandria Archaeology congratulates Mike!

LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

(Located at 800 East Broad Street in downtown Richmond; *free parking* is available under the building)

Thursday, June 14 @ 5:30 pm

John d'Entremont will present a special program titled "May We Be Worthy of Our Birthright: Defining the Meaning of America at the Jamestown Commemorations, 1807-2007." D'Entremont, the Theodore H. Jack Professor of History at Randolph Macon Woman's College, will explore the effort to define America at the Jamestown commemorations of 1807, 1857, 1907, 1957, and 2007. Because America has always been a set of hopes as well as a spot on a map, and because the founding of the United States was accompanied by a document proclaiming principles as the nation's reason for being, every generation of Americans has been consumed with interpreting those principles and arguing over their application. Americans, by definition, care and often disagree about what it means and what it requires to be American. Civic commemorations are one venue at which that concern becomes vivid.

Thursday, June 28 @ Noon

Pippa Holloway will discuss and sign *Sexuality, Politics, and Social Control in Virginia, 1920 - 1945*. Her book explores how the white elite who dominated politics in the first half of the 20th century sought to increase state control over African Americans and lower-class whites, whom they saw as oversexed and lacking sexual self-Datum Point

restraint. In order to reaffirm the existing political and social order, these politicians legalized eugenic sterilization, increased state efforts to control venereal disease and prostitution, cracked down on interracial marriage, and enacted statewide movie censorship.

On the World Wide Web

VIRGINIA MILITARY DEAD

Edwin Ray, reference librarian at the Library of Virginia, has been at work on a remarkable database of Virginia Military Dead, which is now five years old.

<http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/mil/vmd/index.asp>

The Virginia Military Dead (VMD) database was first released to the public on May 21, 2002. The tenth semiannual update was released in commemoration of Memorial Day. In the interim, the database has grown from 3,728 entries, representing five conflicts (Spanish American War through World War I), using about 75 sources to 34,400 entries, representing more than twenty conflicts from the seventeenth century to the present, using more than 744 sources.

At the current pace, at least, another five or six years' of work lay ahead, before getting past the building phase to a maintenance level. Mr. Ray was assisted by staff and volunteers in IT, Reference, Archives, Publications, and Circulation, et al. Usage statistics, feedback from the public, and citations in other places indicate the VMD has begun to be a very helpful reference source.

Volunteer Opportunities

RIVERBEND PARK SURVEY

The volunteer crew continued to survey the southern part of the park in May. Although they only worked two days during the month they have increased the number of sites recorded to 27. This includes 16 historic and 17 prehistoric components, some sites containing both a historic and prehistoric component.

On the last day in the field we located four new historic sites, dating to the mid-20th century. The sites appeared to be "get-aways" for people wanting to get away from the city. We were helped by Geographical Information System mapping in verifying site locations. The sites did not even excite our historic crew so we chose to resurvey a prehistoric site found by Justin Patton when he worked for the Fairfax County Park Authority.

The resurvey involved examination of exposed ground around the base of trees. No holes were dug. As a result

we added a lot of functional information to the list of artifacts from the site. They included a quartz quarry, simple hammerstone, a pitted hammerstone, fire cracked rocks and additional kinds of raw material.

The Riverbend Park survey is one of the rare survey opportunities for certification. Survey opportunities at Riverbend should continue on Tuesdays into July.

SENECA TRAILS

The Fairfax County Park Authority also assisted the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) in surveying and assessing a large multi-component prehistoric and historic site on the *Seneca Trails Regional Park* in far northern Fairfax County. This was to help the NVRPA find a safe location for a horse trailer parking area and turn around.

Initially the County did a partial assessment on an historic farmstead discovered by Claire Blanchard of the NVRPA. Surface expressions of the site consisted of one sandstone lined cellar, other depressions, surface artifacts and ornamental vegetation. Two long shovel test pit (STP) transects, employing one-foot square STPs spaced at 20-foot intervals indicated that the site was approximately 200 feet across, north to south. Artifacts indicated possibly two different occupations, one from the 19th and 20th centuries and the other from the 20th century. The latter was indicated on the 1937 aerial photographs in the County GIS and possibly confirmed in the ground.

The 19th century component was indicated on the 1879 Hopkins Atlas as possibly the "Walters" farmstead. However, it is likely that the site had been occupied since at least the early 19th century. That was based on the presence of likely pearlware and a large diameter bore white ball clay pipe stem. Gray salt glazed stoneware also was recovered.

The major surprise occurred when we discovered part of a large quartzite biface in the south 140 STP. We came back and extended the south transect to 340 feet south of the sandstone foundation. Prehistoric stone artifacts were found in each STP out to the south 280-foot STP.

As is typical of our methods we recovered everything but bugs a plant remains that did not go through the screen and took it all back to the lab for water screening. Since the soil was generally wet most of the prehistoric and many of the historic artifacts were missed in the field. We were able to eventually extend the prehistoric component all the way to our north 140 STP. That made

the prehistoric site very large: at least 420 feet long on the north-south axis.

As a result of this work the Park Authority will be helping the NVRPA evaluate a third option for locating the parking area.

RUBIS-PEARSALL SITE

Recent work in southern Virginia by a crew from the Northern Virginia chapter and other ASV volunteers has identified a new Paleoindian site. It was named for two people who were indispensable to the NVC's and ASV's excavations at the Cactus Hill Paleoindian site.



Jasper unifacial core and quartzite celt from 35" deep



Heavily reworked, quartzite Plamer point from 25-27" deep

Dave Rubis, who several years ago died suddenly while volunteering to clear trails in the Bull Run Mountains, helped with numerous sites as well as Cactus Hill and also was the inventor of the Rubis Hydro-Level or water level as it is commonly called. It proved to be an invaluable replacement for the often inaccurate line

levels commonly used to measure depths on archeological sites.



Dave Rubis, demonstrating Water Level at Gateway site

Joyce Pearsall helped start the Cactus Hill experience and served as the "bag and paperwork Nazi" (technically the Site Manager) throughout most of the nine years of the Cactus Hill excavations by the ASV. She now lives in Brevard, NC but stays in touch and remains a member of the NVC.



Joyce Pearsall (former NVC/ASV Pres.) at Harwell site

The location of and particulars on the buried Paleoindian component of the Rubis-Pearsall site are not being made public because of the serious looter problem in the Cactus Hill area. Sadly, in their greed to find and possess or buy and sell Clovis age artifacts, some people would destroy the rest of site to get at the objects of their obsession.

Mount Vernon Distillery Party

Several chapter members attended the archaeology party at Mount Vernon's distillery for the local archaeology

community on May 19, 2007. And a "blast from the past" happened: Hal Bonnet, former NVC/ASV President, was sighted. (He's doing fine and says, "Hi!") The new facility is really wonderful, with a working flue from the distillery that drains back into the mill race. Unfortunately, there were no taste tests for us!!!



Mount Vernon Distillery



Inside the Distillery distilling water for demonstrations

The Datum Point

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	patrickoneill@erols.com 703-244-6275 (cell)
Vice President	Ann Wood	annwood@comcast.net
Treasurer	C.K. Gailey	treas@nvcasv.org
Corresponding Sec.	Vicki Monken	vmonken@gmail.com
Recording Secretary	Diane Schug-O'Neill	schugoneill@erols.com
Editor	Diane Schug-O'Neill	schugoneill@erols.com

Fairfax County Archaeologists (FCPA)

Chapter Sponsors	call 703-534-3881
Elizabeth Crowell	elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov
Mike Johnson	Richard Sacchi
Bob Wharton	John Rutherford

Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon	Esther White	ewhite@mountvernon.org
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!!!!