



The Datum Point

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

Website – www.nvcasv.org

September 2007

September 12th, 2007 Chapter Meeting

Speaker – Mike Wilke, President of the Archeological Society of Virginia

Topic – *YOU are the ASV*

From the President – Patrick O’Neill

We had a beautiful day for the NVC Summer Picnic at Cox’s Farm in August. Good food, good people, good times! Next year, plan to come! I am involved with several archaeology projects, including a potential slave cemetery in Culpeper County, a late 19th to 20th century church cemetery in the Great Falls area, a house site in Leesburg, and excavations at Kittiewan. If you are interested in helping, let me know!

Clovis Point @ Freedmen’s Cemetery

by Mike Johnson
(Fairfax County Archaeologist)

Clovis Find at Freedman's Cemetery - After 30 years of recovering and conserving Alexandria City's archeological heritage a team of archeologists working for Alexandria Archeology has recovered the first evidence of Late Ice Age Clovis people in the City. The discovery of the 13,000 year old Clovis Point has made most of the local press and has caused quite a bit of excitement.

The City's archeology program has been excavating large blocks and trenches on what was a large Free Black cemetery from the Civil War. The purpose of the excavations is to locate and map the tops of grave shafts from the 1800 total graves documented as having been placed there during the Union occupation of Alexandria.

As the Union Army moved through parts of the South many slaves fled north to escape their bondage. Thousands ended up in Alexandria, where their living conditions were not the best. Many died of disease and other causes. The Union Army appropriated the high ground on the corner of Washington Street and Cameron Run to bury the dead, many of which were children.

The property has been acquired by Alexandria for a park to commemorate those former slaves who were seeking freedom and are buried there. The excavations are designed to help park planners avoid graves when the park is developed as a memorial.

In the process, the crew under the direction of City Archeologists, Steve Shepard and Fran Bromberg, have been recovering evidence of an earlier, intensive prehistoric occupation of the site.

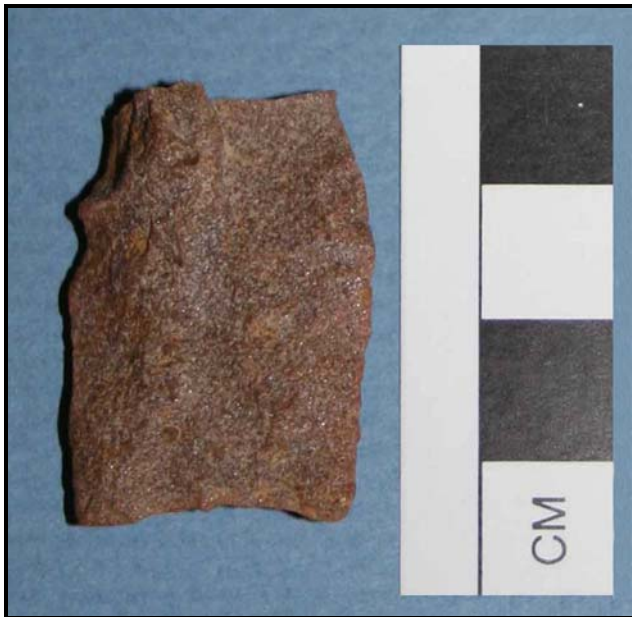
The site is on a high, south-facing promontory overlooking the Cameron Run floodplain. It also probably offered an excellent view downstream to the east to the Potomac River.

Fairfax County Senior Archeologist, Mike Johnson volunteered to help identify the prehistoric artifacts. On the first afternoon of cataloguing artifacts Johnson identified Middle Archaic Morrow Mountain II and Halifax points, and Late Archaic Savannah River and Hellgrammite points, along with hundreds of tools and debitage that Alexandria's lab volunteers had pulled from the total assemblage.

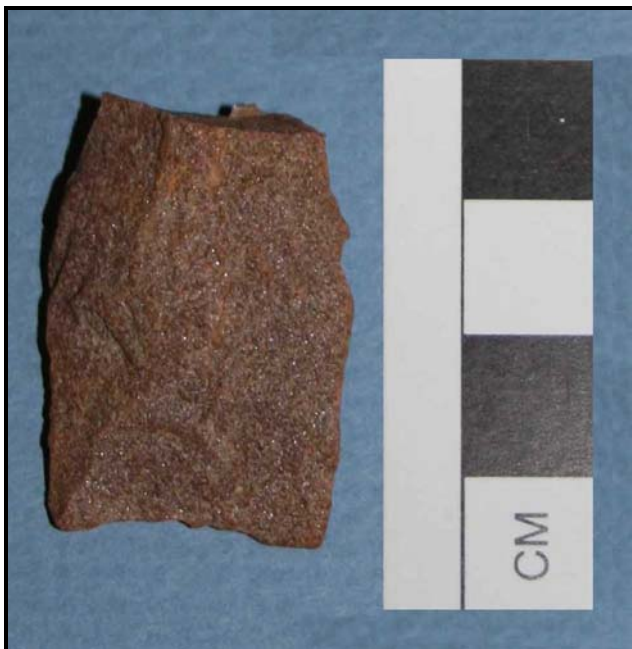
At the end of the day Lab Director, Barbara Magid showed Johnson two points that had been recently recovered. They included a possible Late Middle Woodland Potts point and a dark brown quartzite fluted Clovis point, which was broken in the very

late stages of manufacture. That started the excitement, interviews, and media coverage.

The Paleoindian Clovis point appears to have lost its tip during late stage lateral thinning, when the knapper slightly miss-hit trying to knap off a small lump near the tip. Fortunately, the point was near completion and had already been fluted. The lateral edges around the base were not ground. Lateral and basal edge grinding is a common trait on finished Clovis points. That is the basis for the hypothesis that the point was unfinished.



Quartzite Fluted Clovis Point, Side A



Quartzite Fluted Clovis Point, Side B

The point appears to be from local cobble material and probably was intended as an expedient replacement for another point that had been broken. Clovis knappers seem to have preferred the highest quality chert and jasper. However, they were extremely competent and could adapt their knapping techniques to almost any kind of knappable stone, including quartz, rhyolite, hornfels, orthoquartzite and quartzite. As any modern knapper will tell you, this is not easy to do. This is because most modern knappers try to adapt the stone to their techniques.

As the excavations continue it is likely that most of the local prehistoric time periods will be represented on the site. Since the Clovis find, Johnson has added a possible Middle Archaic Rice Lobed point fragment and a late Archaic Calvert Point.

Archeological Lectures & Events

DELAWARE – SEPTEMBER 6TH @ 10AM

All of you have expressed an interest in the workshop on 17th-century artifacts. This will be an informal affair, basically a “show and tell” session. We will have on hand some artifacts recovered from the recent excavation of some late 17th century sites excavated in the Rehoboth Bay area. Many of us suspect the Delaware River Valley early colonial occupations have a different signature from those of the Chesapeake Region, and we should gather regularly in the attempt to define it. This informal session will begin at 10 AM on September 6th, at the Tudor Park collection facility in Dover.

The conference will be held at the DHCA Tudor Park Collections Facility on Otis Road. Drive all the way to the back, as the Collection Building is the last one on the right, number 800. For directions, call 302-270-2571 Craig’s cell.

Craig Lukezic (craig.lukezic@state.de.us)
Archeologist, Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs (DHCA)

DHR LAB TIME

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources is again offering Certification students the opportunity to chalk up lab hours at the Richmond Office by working on interesting collections from Virginia sites. A continuation of the lab days of this past spring, these are scheduled in Friday/Saturday pairings for the following dates:

September 21 – 22 9am – 4pm
October 26 – 27 9am – 4pm
November 9 – 10 9am – 4pm

If you are interested in participating in these, or if you would like more information, you need to contact Dee DeRoche, DHR Curator. Please make sure you let her know of your interest ahead of time so she can make sure she has space for everyone.

Contact Dee DeRoche for details
(email: dee.deroche@dhr.virginia.gov)
phone: 804-367-2323 x134)

FAIRFAX COUNTY HISTORY CONF.

Saturday, October 20, 2007 (8:30am – 4:15pm)

Northern Virginia Community College
8333 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, VA 22003

Gerrald Conelly – *Welcome and Kick-off*
Doug Owsley – *Keynote Speaker*

Session 1

Marion Dobbins – *My Family History, a Family Affair. The Lees and Collins of Fairfax.*
Mike Johnson – *Native American History in Fairfax County*
Sallie Lyons – *Early Settlement and the Town of Colchester*

Session 2

Page Johnson and Phyllis Walker Ford – *African American Schools*
David Sa'adah – *The Quaker Influence*
John McAnaw – *Civil War and Bull Run*

Session 3

Edwin Henderson – *The Founding of the NAACP in Chapter – Fairfax*
Chris Martin – *Suburban Development*
Joe Marinucci – *What's in a Name? Names of Streets, Streams, and Settlements*

New Books

VIRGINIA SLAVE BIRTHS INDEX, 1853-1865

In 1853, the Commonwealth of Virginia began an annual registration of births and deaths. The Birth Index of Slaves, 1853-1865 was later transcribed by the Works Project Administration (WPA) and recorded on microfilm. While the information -- name of slave owner, infant's name, mother's name, birth date, place of birth -- is of immense value to genealogists, working with the microfilm can be problematic. Hence the creation of this multi-volume reference work, Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865. In 2003, staff and volunteers with Local History/Special Collections, Alexandria Library began to transcribe the WPA microfilm, enter data into spread sheets, and sort the information by slave owner's surname and given name.

Entries include single births, multiple births, and stillbirths. Occasionally, both parents of an enslaved infant are identified. In rare instances, the name of a freeborn infant appears. Independent city and county names are spelled out. Data not reported in the microfilm is denoted by "----." Illegible text in the microfilm is denoted by "####." This index includes more than 130,000 entries.

The Local History/Special Collections Division of Alexandria (VA) Library announces the release of three more volumes of the Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865:

Vol. 1, A-C
Volume 2, D-G
ISBN 978-0-7884-4333-6
Volume 3, H-L
ISBN 978-0-7884-4334-3
Volume 4, M-R
ISBN 978-0-7884-4453-1

Available from Heritage Books at
<http://www.HeritageBooks.com>
or call 1-800-876-6103.

ASV Certification Program

by Ann Wood

Carole Nash, co-director of the ASV certification program, has announced that courses on *Historic Glass* and on *DHR DSS Site Forms* (training) will be offered to certification candidates on **October 14**, the final day of the ASV Annual Meeting in Williamsburg, VA.

The timeliness of this announcement means that you can plan to attend part or all of the ASV Annual Meeting if you wish, signing up for the courses on Sunday morning. Information on the annual meeting, which will be held October 11-14 at the Ramada Inn 1776, has been mailed to ASV members and is also available on the ASV web site <<http://asv-archeology.org/>> It's a great way to get better acquainted with archaeology in Virginia.

REMINDER...If you hurry, you may still have time to sign up for the two-course offering at Mount Vernon on **September 8**. Courses will be taught on *Historic Ceramics* and *Historic Metals* and there will be an opportunity to examine some of the Mount Vernon artifact collections. If you signed up for the earlier four-course offering, you need to SIGN UP AGAIN, and you must be a certification candidate. To sign up for Sept. 8, email annpwood@comcast.net

Ann Wood
NVC/ASV liaison to the certification program

Local Celebrities

WAMU – KOJO NNAMDI SHOW

<http://wamu.org/programs/kn/07/08/30.php#15658>
Look for "Listen to this segment" to the RIGHT of the Time Capsules headline and listen to Alexandria's Pam Cressey. Pam was joined by Knute Berger, Seattle based writer, and John Porter,

Assistant Superintendent for Administration,
Alexandria Public Schools.

Lead in: Time capsules are buried throughout our region, and one historic high school has lost their "buried treasure". We talk with a local archaeologist about what time capsules say about us and how it compares with what's being discovered within our region's walls and beneath the dirt.

On the Web

VIRGINIA HERITAGE: Guides to Manuscript & Archival Collections in Virginia

<http://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaead/>

Virginia Heritage is a union database of finding aids to archival and manuscripts collections in twenty-seven Virginia repositories. The participating institutions are: the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, George Mason University, the Library of Virginia, Old Dominion University, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Virginia Historical Society, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, the Virginia Military Institute, Virginia State University, and Washington and Lee University. At present, there are 1600 finding aids in the database. The full text of the finding aids is searchable by keyword and by individual institution.

You can search for the finding aids by limiting the institution and selecting the finding aid you would like to view. Alexandria Library has added three new finding aids:

- 1) A Guide to the Roberts United Methodist Church Records, 1877-1913
- 2) A Guide to the Records of the R. H. Lancaster Lodge No. 1370, Grand United Order of Odd Fellows of the State of Virginia, 1890-1910
- 3) Smith, Sara G. vs. Richmond & Danville Railroad Company and the Virginia Midland Railway Company

BRENT TOWN TRACT MAPS

by Patrick O'Neill

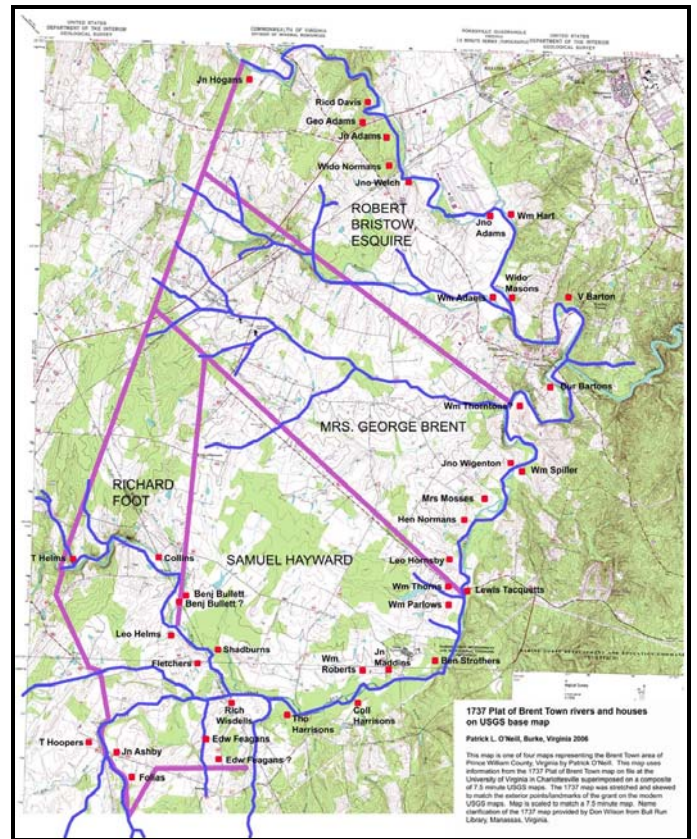
After reviewing an archaeological report in prince William County near Bristow, I realized there were no maps sufficient to relate the historic land distributions to USGS maps for the Bristow area. After using a 1737 and 1824 map set with a modern USGS base, I developed a series of maps to do just that. My results can be found in an article in the Prince William County Reliquary for April 2007 at <http://www.pwcgov.org/library/relic/reliquary.htm>.



1737 map



1737 map with modern creek locations



Modern USGS map with the 1737 map information

Speakers List for 2007:

- Oct 10th Mike Johnson: The Rubis-Pearsall Site
- Nov 14th Mike Barber: The Current State of Virginia Archaeology
- Dec 12th Chapter Party: Please bring a dish to share

Please send suggestions for topics and speakers to any one of the officers (listed at the end of the *Datum Point*). The 2008 schedule will begin to take shape soon.

Herndon's NatureFest:

The NatureFest will be at Runnymede Park, on **Sept. 16th** - off the Herndon Parkway, between Elden & Dranesville Roads.

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Chapter Sponsors **call 703-534-3881**

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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!!!!

The Datum Point

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED