



The Datum Point

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

Website – www.nvcasv.org

February 2008

FROM THE PRESIDENT – ANN WOOD

A few mid-winter notes...

With lots of volunteer help, we are getting all caught up with the processing of last year's artifacts in the lab. Meanwhile, Mike Johnson is managing to find a warmer day here and there to get some of us out in the field for survey work at Riverbend.

I attended my first Archeological Society of Virginia board meeting in Charlottesville. I must say, I was very impressed at the large and wide-ranging amount of work that is being done by ASV as steward of Virginia's archaeological resources.

In response to a query, Bruce Baker, co-director of the ASV Certification Program, said course offerings are expected this winter and spring. Bruce and co-director Carole Nash have been in the process of standardizing course content. I told him a number of you who are candidates for certification are eager for courses to be made available.

Come to our chapter meeting on Wednesday, February 13, and learn more about the growing field of underwater archaeology (7:30 p.m. at the James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church). Check Mike Johnson's schedules to join us in the lab or out in the field.

Here's to a great 2008 in the Northern Virginia Chapter!

WILLIAMS/MULLEN SCHOLARSHIP-

Opportunity for chapter members - This a reminder to chapter members that the Williams/Mullen Scholarship Fund is available to chapter members for field school work. The deadline for submitting an application is April 1st. 2008. For more information and an application form contact Pat Fuller at pmfuller@juno.com or call her. Tel. 703-207-0440

FEBRUARY SPEAKER: TOM BERKEY, MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CANALERS, SCOWS, & SCHOONERS: SHIPWRECKS OF CIVIL WAR CAMPAIGNS



The Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society (MAHS) is an organization of avocational underwater archaeologists based in Washington, D.C., dedicated to historic preservation and enhancing public awareness of the significance of historic shipwrecks and other submerged cultural resources. Tom Berkey, the Society's Education Director, will discuss ongoing MAHS investigations along the Pamunkey River documenting the remains of vessels used in several Civil War campaigns, including McClellan's Peninsula Campaign and Grant's assault on Cold Harbor.

In 1862, McClellan amassed a virtual armada of ships, barges, and other vessels to transport tens of thousands of troops up the James and York rivers and tributaries to attack Richmond. The campaign failed and as the army retreated, many vessels were abandoned along the rivers. On a different scale, Grant also used these rivers in mounting his 1864 assault. MAHS has conducted a remote sensing survey of one of the York River's tributaries, the Pamunkey River, and has begun systematic on-the-ground (and in-the-water) surveys documenting the vessel remains, beginning at White House Landing, the ancestral home of Martha Custis Washington.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY
ARCHAEOLOGY WORK SCHEDULE
BY MIKE JOHNSON**

Riverbend Park Survey - FCPA tested the water filled ditches on the floodplain to see if possible stone walls were present. None were found. As a result, it is likely the features are "flood shoots" and not sections of the Potowmack Canal as hypothesized earlier. The testing involved systematic probing of the banks with four foot long tile probes.

We did verify one site and find three new sites. We verified a large prehistoric site (44FX1629) which overlooks the bend in the Potomac River. The site produced a moderate scatter of quartz and quartzite debitage and FCR. It also produced a greenstone, "bannerstone" perform shown below.



One of the new sites, located in the Potomac River floodplain near the current edge of the river, contained two small historic concrete, rectangular foundations, the downstream one of which had two concrete pipes exiting the downstream wall. The upstream foundation was 4x7 feet and the downstream foundation, located six feet Datum Point

away, was 2x1.5 feet. The two exit pipes were only about 2 feet long but another pair, which lined up with the first two, was observed 19 feet downstream. They extended underground into the floodplain levee.

The other two sites were prehistoric and included light, quartz artifact scatters. One was against a large rock face near the foundation and the other was on a small hill top.

Schedule - We **will** be in the lab on Saturday (2/9). We **will not** have lab (including Cactus Hill) or fieldwork on Tuesday (2/12), Saturday (2/16) or Tuesday (2/19). I will be away on a trip to Austin, TX to give a presentation on Cactus Hill and the Nottoway River work the ASV has been doing.

CONGRESSMAN JAMES P. MORAN, MAYOR WILLIAM D. EUILLE CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF FREEDOM HOUSE MUSEUM IN ALEXANDRIA

Mayor William D. Euille and Congressman James P. Moran will join the Northern Virginia Urban League in celebrating the official opening of Freedom House Museum on Tuesday, February 12 at 11:30 a.m. The museum is located at 1315 Duke St.



The museum was once headquarters for the Franklin and Armfield Company, the largest and most successful domestic slave-trading firm in America. The building where the museum is located is also the main office of the Northern Virginia Urban League, which moved into the building in 1996.

The festivities will include a ribbon cutting ceremony, slave narrative readings, a reception, and tours; guests

will learn of the fascinating history of the museum through vibrant visuals, historic displays and multimedia that give accounts of the domestic slave trade and those who both benefited—and suffered—because of it.

For more information about the museum, please visit www.freedomhousemuseum.org or call 703.836.2858.

WALKING WITH WASHINGTON

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) member Bob Madison has generously donated twenty of his "Walking with Washington: Walking Tours of Alexandria, Virginia" guide books to FOAA for resale. The 120-page guide is available for \$12 at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. The "Walking with Washington" walking tour, also designed by Bob, will be offered every Sunday (weather permitting) in February free of charge in honor of George Washington's birthday. The 1 1/2 hour walk begins at 1:30 p.m. at the Market Square fountain, 301 King Street. Reservations are not required.

AROUND THE CORNER: JOHN SMITH AND THE CHESAPEAKE

On Thursday, February 21, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., Dr. Stephen Potter will present Rethinking John Smith's Map of Virginia to the Washington Map Society (<http://www.washmap.org/>). This is one of America's most famous colonial maps. For over a century, historians, cartographers, anthropologists, and archeologists have used the map mainly as a guide to locate the sites of Native American towns shown on it.

But Dr. Potter shows that there is much more that we can learn from and about the map. By using historical linguistics, historical chronology, and new interpretations from ethnohistory and anthropology, he transforms Smith's map from a static geographical representation of Indian settlements to a dynamic cultural landscape upon which to interpret a rapidly changing aboriginal world.

Dr. Potter is Regional Archeologist for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service. He received his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of North Carolina and has done archaeological fieldwork in DC and a number of states, including Maryland and Virginia. His research interests include the eastern United States, the southern Algonquian Indians, the 17th and 18th century frontiers, and the American Civil War.



Meetings are held in the Reading Room, Geography and Map Division, B level, Library of Congress, Madison Building, 101 Independence Ave., S.E., Washington, DC. Please allow time to pass through the security checkpoint at the entrance. The Library is one block from METRO's Capitol South Station, on the Blue and Orange lines.

BOOK TALK AND LECTURE AT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA, RICHMOND

Time: Noon - 1:00PM Place: Conference Rooms
FREE EVENTS

Thursday, February 07, 2008

An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

Remembering Richmond's Tommy Edwards and It's All in the Game



FIND IT VIRGINIA - BIOGRAPHY RESOURCE CENTER: AFRICAN AMERICANS

In recognition of African American History Month, Find It Virginia has added Biography Resource Center: African Americans to all Find It Virginia public library accounts for the month of February 2008. Find It Virginia is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and a Virginia public library card is the only requirement to use these resources. Virginians can visit their local public library to register for a library card. Visit <http://www.finditva.com/cgi-bin/main.cgi>.

ALL MANNER OF USEFUL GOODS: HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES AND CRAFTSMANSHIP IN EARLY AMERICA

Fri., March 28 from 9 – 3:30 p.m.
George Mason University

The symposium, cooperatively produced by George Mason University and the Fairfax County Park Authority, will explore a host of hand-crafted materials and objects necessary to the daily running of households in early America from 1750-1850, the craftsmanship entailed in making and methods for marketing these wares. Advance registration with the symposium fee of \$65 must be received by March 1. For information and registration forms, email susan.clark@fairfaxcounty.gov or phone Museum Collections at 703/631-1429 or FAX 703/631-8319.

VIRGINIA FORUM

The third annual Virginia Forum will convene at the University of Mary Washington, in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on April 11-12, 2008. The Virginia Forum offers an opportunity for exchanges of ideas among scholars, teachers, archivists, librarians, museum curators, and all those interested in Virginia history, environment, and culture.

Registration and hotel information can be found at <http://virginiaforum.org>. Please contact Jeffrey McClurken, Local Arrangements Chair, at jmcclurk@umw.edu with any questions.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT MOUNT VERNON

This year, from March through September, Mount Vernon Archaeology will be excavating in the Upper Garden, one of two walled gardens that flank the western approach to George Washington's home. Washington created the garden during his 1775 redesign of the Mount Vernon grounds, transforming a circa 1760 rectangular garden into an elliptical space bounded by a brick wall as well as a greenhouse and slave quarter to the north.

In the near future, a major restoration effort will be undertaken in the Upper Garden and archaeological evidence will be important in developing the plan for this work. Volunteers will aid in field excavations under the direction of the archaeology staff and will assist in interpreting the site to the public. Volunteers will also assist in the Archaeology Lab, washing, labeling and otherwise working with the artifact collection recovered from the excavations.



No archaeological experience is required, but outdoor work will be strenuous and the weather undoubtedly will be hot and humid during the summer months. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to participate and willing to commit to at least a half day of work. The Mount Vernon Archaeology staff provides necessary tools and training in excavation, recording, and interpretation.

Opportunities to volunteer are available Monday through Friday and on Saturdays during the months of June, July and August. Work hours are between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. A typical week includes lab work on Monday and field work Tuesday through Friday; lab work is also carried out on rain days. Contact Curt Breckenridge at cbreckenridge@mountvernon.org or (703) 799-6303 if you would be interested in volunteering.

MONTICELLO DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The Monticello Department of Archaeology is seeking temporary field technicians for the Spring 2008 season of the Monticello Plantation Archaeological Survey. This is a shovel-test survey, which this year will focus on the mountaintop just outside the First Roundabout. The season is anticipated to run from the last week in February through the end of April. Hourly wages; no per diem or housing provided.



Please contact Sara Bon-Harper at (434) 984-9811 or sbonharper@monticello.org.

Sara Bon-Harper Archaeological Research Manager
Monticello Department of Archaeology
<http://www.monticello.org/archaeology/index.html>

ASV CERTIFICATION STUDENT PARTICIPATION

John Mullin, COVA member and Cultural Resources Director for Fort A.P. Hill, has called to say that work continues on the Civil War sites on the installation. He has asked us to inform you that he will be back in the field from Feb. 19-24, working on a variety of sites. The focus is on excavation. The sites are generally located in wooded areas, but conditions vary (e.g., roadside vs. wooded walk to site).

This project will provide hours toward the field survey requirement. If you are interested and would like further information, please contact John at: 804/633-8761. An alternate e-mail address is: jtuba@earthlink.net. We hope that some of you will be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Thanks to John for thinking of the Certification Program. Carole and Bruce

Carole Nash
Datum Point

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM ON ARCHAEOLOGY FEBRUARY 29, 2008 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FAIRFAX CAMPUS, JOHNSON CENTER ROOM E (3RD FLOOR), 10:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Archaeology provides empirical evidence for the full range of the human experience. Yet this evidence is rarely integrated into larger discussions of social issues being conducted both elsewhere in academia and among the general public. If the relevance of our research is to be established, scholars and the public need to be brought together to establish new dialogues.

The subject of human rights presents a particular challenge to archaeologists. The body of relevant evidence is extensive, but has rarely been framed by the modern debate. The role of archaeologists in the ongoing human rights struggle throughout the world is well-documented, but archaeological evidence itself - pertaining to slavery, oppression, maltreatment, justice, revolt, and conflict - is seldom invoked. In developing the theme of human rights for the 2008 symposium, we will emphasize two topics that have received considerable attention in recent archaeological discussions: exploitation and resistance. Our speakers will present empirical evidence representing historic and prehistoric periods from diverse regions to address these subjects, in the process demonstrating how the modern debates over human rights can be illuminated by the experience of our ancestors.

Participants and Preliminary Abstracts

**Archaeology and the “great moral issue of our time”:
Working-class poverty and the 1913-14 Southern Colorado
Coal Strike;** Sarah Chicone (Museum of the Earth at the Paleontological Research Institution)

Democratic presidential candidate Jonathan Edwards calls poverty, the “great moral issue of our time”. As national and international rhetoric seek to define and reduce its consequences, anthropology has the potential to refocus attention on the social processes at work in poverty’s production, to call into question its quantification and the homogenization of its effects and outcomes (Green 2006). Archaeology is uniquely positioned to actively engage this evolving national and global discourse and to question poverty’s reification.



This paper uses the events of the 1913-14 Southern Colorado Coal strike to explore emergent historical narratives of working-class poverty and the role they play in shaping contemporary ideologies and public policy. It seizes upon public interest, to look beyond the ineffectiveness of the either-or dichotomies of deserving and undeserving poor, blame and responsibility. The Ludlow Massacre thrust the brutalities of labor conflict into the American consciousness. The well-publicized reforms that followed the strike focused national attention on improvements made to miners' lives and the new relationship forged between management and labor in the early 20th century. While the strike influenced poverty's production, it did not lessen its pervasive hold on the region.

We need to take advantage of events like Ludlow that force us to confront the working poor face-to-face. The events at Ludlow do more than just mark a significant moment in labor relations; they mark a significant moment in the on-going battle waged by America's working poor.

“From Time Immemorial:” Archaeology and Social Responsibility; Elizabeth Grzymala Jordan (Virginia Department of Transportation)

Although the Dutch first imported slaves to the Cape of Good Hope in 1658, until recently the subject has received relatively little scholarly attention. While this is in part a function of sources, it is also a result of National Party policies that transformed Afrikaner heritage into South African history. Apartheid not only constrained the social, cultural, and material lives of non-white South Africans, but repressed and distorted their histories as well. My doctoral project, centered on the washing places and municipal washhouses of Cape Town, represents an historical archaeological attempt at redress.

Using archaeological, archival, and oral historical data, it was possible to reconstruct the daily lives and labors of slave washerwomen and their descendants; to explore the strategies they employed for survival; to trace the extent of their family

and community networks; to witness the varied expressions of their occupational solidarity; and ultimately, to experience their success in overcoming nearly three centuries of continuous oppression. In this paper, I use examples from my doctoral research to illustrate how academic theory and social responsibility can be integrated into archaeological practice.

Land of the Free, Home of the Slave: Race and Contested Human Rights in Antebellum Virginia; Lori Lee (Syracuse University/George Mason University)

Rights to life, liberty, freedom of expression, and equality before the law were not universal in nineteenth-century Virginia—they were denied to enslaved African Americans. Archaeology provides a means of understanding the past of exploited groups, such as enslaved laborers, whose versions of history remain largely unwritten. This paper focuses on the archaeological record of antebellum slavery in central Virginia at Poplar Forest plantation.

Antebellum plantations were contested landscapes where race and class relations were mediated through exploitative work relationships. Contemporary historical documents from Poplar Forest indicate passive and active resistance to this exploitation through malingering, physical insubordination, running away, murder, and arson. Archaeological analysis reveals resistance through material evidence of social and consumer practices that index a self-definition that struggled against the imposed identity of ‘slave’ and the denial of basic human rights.

Prior to emancipation, enslaved people were engaged in a significant informal economy of property ownership and trade throughout the South. The acquisition of property did not lessen the oppression of slavery, not did it equate to freedom. However, through the selective process of consumer choices the enslaved were able to acquire things they both needed and desired. Significantly, these choices were made within the restraints imposed by a racialized social structure wherein the enslaved themselves were classified as property. Consequently, consumerism among the enslaved also provides evidence of the constraints of race and concomitant poverty in the antebellum period.

“Now the God of the Spaniards is Dead”: Archaeology, Human Rights, and the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 in Colonial New Mexico; Matt Liebmann (College of William and Mary)

In August of 1680, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico united in an armed uprising, expelling Spanish colonists in one of the

most successful indigenous rebellions in the annals of North American colonialism. Until recently, this tumultuous phase in the history of the American Southwest has been poorly understood, as the Pueblo peoples did not record their versions of these events in writing. In the past decade, archaeological research has made significant contributions to understanding this era, playing a vital role in reconstructing the period of Native independence that followed the Pueblo Revolt.



Through an examination of artifacts and architecture from late seventeenth-century New Mexico, this paper will investigate both the causes and the effects of the Revolt, comparing Spanish records with the cultural forms adopted and adapted by the Pueblos in the wake of the uprising. In so doing it seeks to demonstrate that archaeology can make a unique contribution to the recovery of subaltern voices in the past, while at the same time raising questions regarding the relationships among colonialism, human rights, and anti-colonial resistance.

“Benign Irrelevance”: Archaeology’s Place in the Social Sciences; James E. Snead (George Mason University)

The traditional perception of archaeology in the social sciences is one of “benign irrelevance”: providing curious artifacts for museums and public consumption or to occasionally embellish interpretations provided by more “serious” scholars. This stereotype has numerous sources, including a broadly-based intellectual disinterest in material culture, the distinctive historical origins of archaeological theory and practice, artificial disciplinary boundaries, misconceptions over the relevance of the past for “modern” concerns, and the reluctance of archaeologists to engage a broader audience.

This marginalization is particularly unfortunate given the unique position of archaeology to provide evidence from a “global” past for a wide range of subjects. The topic of this year’s GMU symposium on archaeology, “archaeology and

human rights,” highlights new research bearing on the issues of exploitation and resistance in a variety of cultural/historical contexts, making the contribution of archaeology to these topics quite clear. This presentation will introduce the subject and outline the potential for archaeological research to engage the social sciences and the public at large in new and important ways.

Archaeological Contributions to Human Rights Investigations: Documenting Evidence of Atrocities; Dawnie Wolfe Steadman (Department of Anthropology, Binghamton University, SUNY)

Anthropologists have been formally involved in the investigations of human rights abuses for over two decades. In the 1990s well over 100 forensic anthropologists and archaeologists participated in more than 1300 investigations in 33 countries. Eye witness testimonies may be ambiguous or unavailable so objective, empirical data from the deceased victims provide the most unequivocal evidence of atrocities.

Systematic archaeological excavation of mass graves can aid in reconstructing the events of death and burial. For example, the position of the bodies indicates whether individuals were shot above the grave and fell in or were thrown or placed in the grave after death, ballistic evidence around the site can demonstrate where the assassinations took place, soil survey can indicate the tools used to dig the grave, and taphonomic evidence indicates if the grave had been tampered with. Similarly, anthropological examination of the victims yields a wealth of incriminating evidence. Assessment of age, sex, ancestry, stature and antemortem pathological conditions assists with personal identification and careful interpretation and documentation of perimortem and postmortem injuries adds to the reconstruction of the death event.

For instance, the trajectory of bullets entering the back of the skull of each of ten victims buried together effectively refutes any “official story” that the deaths occurred during a battle. The empirical anthropological data are critical to the prosecution of the accused and anthropologists are often called to testify in criminal and war crimes trials. In addition, these efforts give families long-awaited knowledge of the fate of their loved ones and provide an objective historical record of the victims (embodying the dead). Paradoxically, the effectiveness of the anthropological investigations in obtaining objective evidence of atrocities has created problems in that political and armed obstruction of the investigations is not uncommon.

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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