

The Datum Point

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

July 2008

FROM THE PRESIDENT – ANN WOOD

Digging, lab and certification opportunities are available to our volunteers as the summer settles in. Since the water dropped, the Clark's Bridge dig has been active several days a week, guided by weather. The lab is busy processing the artifacts.

A dozen certification candidates took some of the three certification courses offered in June. We hope to add more courses in July. And, with a huge thank you to John Kelsey and Maggie Johnson, we are unveiling our new and improved certification library in its latest location in the prehistoric lab.

At our upcoming chapter meeting on July 9, we hope to hear more details of the October celebration of 30 years of archaeology in Fairfax County. Due to power outages, Pat Fuller's May report did not get into the Datum Point, so here's a quick summary of May-June chapter actions. We approved amendments to our scholarship bylaws allowing a written report back to the chapter, if preferred to an oral report, and shortening chapter membership requirements for a scholarship. We'll be looking at additional amendments ahead.

We also approved a \$200 scholarship to Patrick O'Neill, for chapter members attending Kittiewan Field School, and a \$750 scholarship to Mike Johnson for members digging at Gault in Texas in November. We approved memorial gifts to VARC of \$50 each in memory of Rick Koestline and Ed Hon, longtime NVC volunteers. We have received messages of appreciation from both families.

And finally, we wish the very best in every way to Bob Wharton, who retired as a Fairfax County archaeologist (see the last page of this issue!).

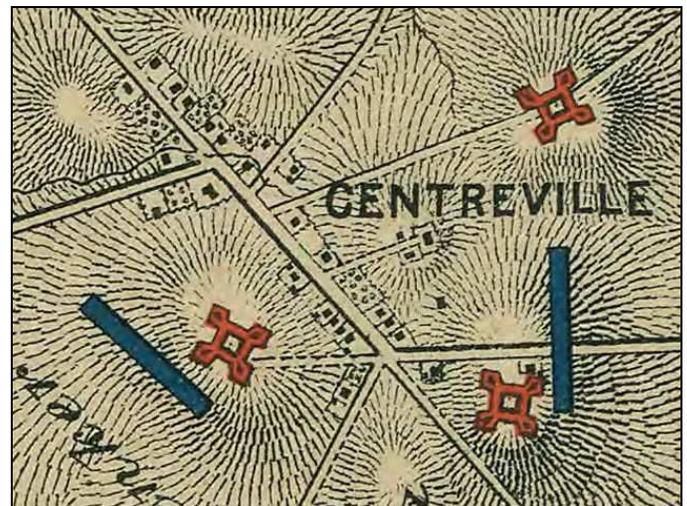
Have a great retirement, Bob and Gail!

Datum Point

July 2008

JULY SPEAKER: RICH SACCHI
JAMES LEE CENTER: 7:30PM

CENTREVILLE TANNERIES



The archaeological material was resurrected from a 5 year project beginning in 1990 by Larry Moore with volunteers and paid staff. They uncovered two tanneries in Centreville dating from the early 19th century to just before the Civil War. Many problems existed preventing the reestablishment of the tanneries after the Civil War. A discussion of Tanneries in general and the specific Centreville tanneries will be discussed as well as the artifacts found and the Civil War.

Richard Sacchi is a senior archaeologist for the Fairfax County Park Authority where he has worked for the last 20 years. Prior to that, he spent many years in contract archaeology and worked for American University, Maryland University and the Cultural Resources Section in North Carolina. He received an M.A. in Anthropology from American University in Washington, D.C.

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KEVIN RICHARD KOESTLINE

May 22, 1954 - April 22, 2008

(Newspaper obituary)

Kevin -- known as Rick to his family and to his archeology friends -- was born in Nashville, Tennessee, the third child of Frances Glaze Koestline and Henry Koestline. He grew up in Nashville, St. Petersburg, and later Miami, Florida. He attended Miami Dade Junior College, where he was involved with the theater department. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Scarritt College in Nashville, majoring in Anthropology and Social Sciences.

Rick returned to Miami and worked for the State of Florida on an archeological dig in downtown Miami which turned up ancient pre-Colombian artifacts. The following year Rick worked in Tallahassee in the State Department of Archives cataloging these artifacts.

After studying computer science at Florida International University in Miami and receiving a B.S degree in Computer Science in 1981, Rick moved to the D.C. area. He worked for a time in computer cartography for the U.S. Navy. While working, he earned a Masters Degree in Computer Information Systems in 1991 from Strayer College, and later, a certificate in Historical Preservation from Goucher College. More recently, he worked for Exxon-Mobil in a variety of assignments.

Through the years, his fascination with archeology led him to volunteer work with the Fairfax County Park Authority's Cultural Resource Protection and Management Division and with the Archeological Society of Virginia. He participated in various excavations, seeking evidence of the early existence of humans in this area, as well as on sites from the colonial period. To acknowledge his work in the field and in the laboratory, the Fairfax County Park Authority awarded him a certificate for 10-years-plus volunteer service. An archeological site on the Nottoway River was named "The Koestline Site."

An avid reader and perennial student, Rick continued to pursue his high school interest in Latin. His collection of Latin literature occupied a large portion of his book shelves. He also had a

particular interest in readings in theology, including Niebuhr, Kung, Borg, Spong and others in progressive Christianity.

Mike Johnson and several members of the Northern Virginia Chapter attended Rick's memorial service.

PLAN WOULD OUTLINE SITE OF FORT LOUDOUN ON STREETS

By Eric Beidel, *The Winchester Star*

Winchester — The outlines of the original Fort Loudoun seem ghost-like today, difficult to trace among houses and city streets.



A local organization has proposed a way to make it easier for people to envision where the fort's walls once stood.

The French and Indian War Foundation of Winchester, formed in 2002, has asked the city government for permission to use painted asphalt on public streets to illustrate the fort's outline.

George Washington oversaw the construction of Fort Loudoun in 1756, when he was a 24-year-old colonel in the Virginia Colonial militia.

The fort served as the anchor for a 400-mile-long defense network of smaller forts, from Maryland to North Carolina, during the French and Indian War (1754-63).

Fort Loudoun covered a half-acre (21,780 square feet) and housed hundreds of soldiers and their families. It was guarded by cannons and was never attacked.

After the war, local residents disassembled the fort, using its limestone and hewn logs to build their homes. Some of those houses still stand in the city's Historic District, meaning that remnants of Fort Loudoun's bastions can still be seen.

The French and Indian War Foundation plans to use stamped asphalt to create a footprint of the original fort.

The area affected by the proposed project covers roadways between the intersection of Peyton and Loudoun streets and the north end of the property line at 419 N. Loudoun St.

The footprint would extend about 15 yards east on Baker Street from its intersection with Loudoun.

Work on the project would take two to three days, according to a letter that foundation President Patrick Farris sent to city Public Services Director Perry Eisenach.

It would require removing the top layer of asphalt from the streets and laying down fresh, colored asphalt. The new asphalt would be stamped with lines indicating where the fort's walls and interior buildings once stood.

The foundation would pay for the work, but it could take a few years to raise funds for the project, Farris said.

The foundation would use a muted rust or brick color to avoid distracting motorists, he said.

As part of a streetscaping project two years ago, the city government created a similar effect along Boscawen Street, applying a decorative, brick-like surface to the asphalt near the Loudoun Street Mall.

While the Fort Loudoun project would not directly affect private property, the city has sent a questionnaire to property owners within the fort's footprint to seek their opinions about the proposal, Eisenach said.

At a recent Public Services Committee meeting, the item was tabled until the city's Geographic Information Systems staff could provide an accurate depiction of the area to be affected.

At that meeting, Farris said the foundation's goal is to attract more visitors to the site and better link it to the George Washington Office Museum and Abrams Delight Museum — two other representations of Winchester's Colonial history.

"There's a small constellation of museums that make downtown, which is very walkable, more attractive," Farris said, adding that the foundation wants to make Fort Loudoun a prime destination in Winchester.

"Right now, it's something that's very hard to see," he said.

After committee discussions, the project would require approval by the full City Council.

Contact **Eric Beidel** at ebeidel@winchesterstar.com

CLARKS BRANCH (44FX3226)

By Mike Johnson

The most recent discoveries have taken the Clarks Branch site to new levels of significance. Paul Inashima and crew recently have recovered one very Early Archaic point fragment and a jasper ramped endscraper with a spur on the end opposite the scraper bit.

The point fragment, made of a highly weathered piece of hornfels is broad and serrated. It was broken at the tip and in the notch. It is characteristic of the Kirk or large Palmer cornernotched varieties that date to before 11,500 BP. It came from level C8, more than four feet deep in test trench 2. The soil is a very well developed, clay-rich, Bt horizon, bordering on a hardpan, which makes it very stable.

The jasper endscraper came from a deep shovel test, in the level between three and four feet deep. The shovel test is about 40 feet down slope from test trench 2, which could explain the apparent depth difference.

It only became clear in the lab that the scraper had a "graver" spur on the "proximal" end, the scraper bit being the "distal" end. Although, spurred

endscrapers are most common with the Clovis technology, it is not impossible that the scraper dates to the very Early Archaic. Finding such ancient artifacts types so deep in a clearly stratified deposit is a major discovery for the Potomac Gorge.

No sites like this have been excavated on the Virginia side of the gorge and few if any on the Maryland side. None probably have been excavated using the same rigorous methods as are being employed by Paul.

The current focus is on completing the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) part of the project. This involves clearing small abutment areas for a new pedestrian bridge across Clarks Branch. However, for the long range, the site offers an incredible opportunity to shed light on cultural sequences and evolution at the Potomac River Falls.

WHERE WE STAND [AT CLARK'S BRANCH]

By Paul Inishima

I would like to thank Paul Antsen, Victoria Arizu, C.D. Cox, Stephen Israel, John Kelsey, Richard Long, Virginia McGovern, Sana Mirza, Bob Norton, Chris Ramey, and Ann Wood for assisting in the field during June. I would also like to acknowledge the lab volunteers: Nan Barrera, Bill Brickhill, George Monken, and Jim Reid.

The geomorphologist, Dan Hayes, made one visit during June. He confirmed that the site occupies a landform with a complex developmental history and encompasses both very recent and very old soil deposits. Trench 3 on the north bank is situated on very recent deposits as indicated archeologically by the occurrence of pottery nearly 3 feet below the surface. Yet, just upstream are old soils which may date to the early Holocene/late Pleistocene. Even older soils exist along the south bank where trenches 1 and 2 are located.

During his investigation, Dan discovered both the latest and possibly the oldest occupations within the site. He recovered a heavily burnt Late Woodland Potomac Creek Cordmarked sherd, circa 500 years old. The sherd may retain sufficient charred material to directly date by AMS. Its

location was subsequently mapped within the site grid (Virginia State Plane) by laser transit. Inspection revealed a relatively heavy presence of fire-cracked rock and other indications of intensive occupation. Recovery of additional sherds with burnt residue in the future may allow us to pursue other research in addition to direct dating. Such research includes identification of fish, mammal, and plant fats and proteins and extraction of bean, corn, and squash phytoliths. All of which would assist in documenting diet and the first occurrence/presence of horticultural species within the local region.

In general, the age of the soil deposits are indicated along the stream banks by the degree of slumping. The older soil banks are nearly vertical, reflecting soils which have lain undisturbed over a long period of time and hence have had a chance to compact. The younger soil banks are indicated by a sloped or slumping profile. Along Clark's, this provides a quick visual marker. The actual determination of soil age, however, involves a series of technical assessments of soil texture, organic depletion, mineral leaching, etc.

The fire ring in Trench 1 has been radiocarbon dated to around 950 years ago (A.D. 1010) which places it within the early part of the Late Woodland. This feature was associated with triangular points and possibly with the truncated postmold which was situated near the west end of the trench.

Charcoal which was recovered from the third major soil horizon in Trench 2 appears to have originated from intrusive cultural features from the excavation level above. This charcoal dates to around 2900 years ago (930 B.C.) and is probably associated with the sherd of Selden Island pottery which was recovered. This date represents only the third radiocarbon date for this ware which has been reported. This date and the Selden Island sherd are, further, probably linked to the stained earth (possible interior living floor), scattered fire-cracked rock (hearth), and postmold which were noted in the east half of the trench.

Late Archaic stemmed points (e.g., Holmes and Savannah River) dating to circa 4,000 years ago

were found in both trenches 1 and 2 below the Woodland levels. A Poplar Island-like basal section dating to the same period was recovered from deep probe A2 approximately 2.5 feet below the surface. An early Late Archaic Brewerton Corner-notched point dating to perhaps 5,000 years ago was recovered from Trench 1.

Within Trench 1, at least two fluvial bed load deposits were observed beneath the Late Archaic levels. The first consisted of a lens of small pebbles, suggesting a slow moving water course. The second consisted of a large cluster of medium-sized cobbles and large schist slabs surrounded by a dense large pebble deposit, suggesting a faster moving water course. The latter was situated near the base (c. 5 foot depth) of the trench excavation. These deposits likely explain the absence of cultural materials within the lower half of this trench.

A Middle Archaic Guilford point dating to circa 6,000 years ago was found in Trench 2. Deposits of paired debitage (lithic material from tool-making) and charcoal were found beneath the Guilford level with an increasing presence of cryptocrystalline (fine-grained chert, flint, and jasper) among the quartz, quartzite, and rhyolite materials. This pairing suggested a series of sequentially older occupations extending through the Middle and into the Early Archaic.

At the circa 4 foot depth, a heavily weathered hornfels Kirk Corner-notched point was recovered in Trench 2. The Kirk provides a date of about 9,250 years ago. This point was found within a tight cluster of debitage, indicating a knapping or tool-making locus. A greenish-brown cryptocrystalline endscaper of similar or possibly earlier age was found below the 3 foot depth in deep probe B3, indicating that the Early Archaic occupation level is fairly extensive.

Returning to the geomorphologist, Dan identified a charcoal lens of apparent cultural origin which was located within the old soils about 7 feet below the present ground surface along the north bank. By comparison to a similar deposit on the Maryland side of the Potomac, this lens potentially dates to 10,000 years ago or older. The lens lies a little over 2 feet above a thick cobble deposit which we

preliminarily believe might date to the Younger Dryas or Late Pleistocene/Early Holocene transition. His preliminary examination suggests that the soils beneath trenches 1 and 2 are even older. In turn, his initial investigation suggests that soil horizons of sufficient age to retain evidence of possible Clovis occupations have survived within the area of current investigation.

STONEWALL STOPPED HERE - ANTEBELLUM ESTATE SITS ON 11 ACRES, AND YOU'D HAVE TO BUY ALL OF THEM

by Patricia Kime
Special to *The Washington Post*
Saturday, June 28, 2008

While cruising along Route 7 in western Fairfax County, it's easy to overlook Holly Knoll, a house built in 1858 that's the namesake for two neighboring subdivisions. Its brick facade peeks from behind giant sycamore, oak and holly trees, and its long gravel driveway trails forlornly through overgrown fields.

For sale for the first time in about 50 years, the once-grand home is one of five antebellum houses on the market in Fairfax County. But it's probably the only one where Confederate Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson knocked on the door.

"Sept. 3 -- Jackson's Army comes to Dranesville and we take Maj. Hart and [2nd Lt. Joshua] Lipman," 28-year-old Kate Carper wrote in her journal in 1862. Carper lived in the house, once known as Bloomfield II, most of her life, according to Cordelia Sansone, a local historian who documented the house's past in a self-published book, "Journey to Bloomfield."

"The story goes that the occupants of the house offered their home to General Jackson, but he preferred to stay in the fields with his troops," said Dan Shaner, the house's co-owner.



Brushes with history aside -- which included Yankees and Confederates crisscrossing the property on the same day in 1863 -- the property appears to be a developer's dream, offering 11 acres on Route 7 at the juncture of the Algonkian and Fairfax County parkways. But one glitch may keep the old estate intact: right-of-way restrictions imposed by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Under Fairfax County zoning, the property could be developed as a residential neighborhood with up to 11 houses. But the only entry to the property is the nearly hidden bluestone drive, which protrudes from the exit ramp that leads from Route 7 to the parkways. And VDOT won't allow the current -- or future -- property owners to expand the driveway.

"We don't want that volume of traffic going onto the main roadway," VDOT spokesman Mike Salmon said.

According to Salmon, the state would allow access from two adjacent side roads, but the Holly Knoll II Homeowners Association, which owns much of the green space between those roads and the property, would have to grant right-of-way across the community-owned land. And it's not budging, either.

"[The land] can't be conveyed. The board doesn't have the authority to do it," said Lou Kriso, the association president. "It's common property which is to be held for the benefit of everybody."

So, Holly Knoll is being marketed as a single-family house for \$2.99 million.

"We believe this property should be preserved. . . . Just think what you can do with 11 acres. If you want to have horses, or you want to do gardening. Some people like elbow room. And this elbow room is not way out in the country," said listing agent Guy Gravett of Farms & Acreage in Oakton.

Holly Knoll sits at the heart of the Dranesville Tavern Historic Overlay District, a county-designated region that protects a once-popular roadside inn and the site of an early Civil War skirmish.

The five-bedroom house is being sold "as is," and a walk-through reveals peeling paint, plaster and a circa-1960s kitchen badly in need of updating. But the 6,000-square-foot house also boasts soaring ceilings, six-over-six sash windows, seven fireplaces (including one in the vintage kitchen), original mantels and floors, numerous porches, and a grand sycamore allée along the drive.

"I'm selling something that's different, and if you are in that market, this is an opportunity," Gravett said.

Until four years ago, Holly Knoll was owned by Mildred Hand, who moved into it in 1953. According to Hand's son Shaner, the stately, three-story house was a joy in which to live: Shaner's mother and her husband, Frank Hand, threw lavish parties and always had company. Shaner kept a horse, worked at the dairy farm behind the property and attended Herndon High School.

"We hosted a graduation party for my high school class, and you know, I've attended reunions, and people often tell me they don't remember a whole lot from back then, but they remember the party at Holly Knoll," Shaner said.

When Mildred Hand died in 2004, Shaner and his brother, Darby Hand, debated what to do with the property. Shaner, a lawyer in the real estate title business, considered developing the property. But after exploring their options, the brothers decided to sell, Shaner said.

"If I had my druthers, I'd just love to see a family in here," Shaner said.

A scan of Holly Knoll's real estate property assessments is a mini-lesson in the now-vanished boom market. In 2000, the home and its acreage were assessed at \$853,340; by 2008, the county had assessed the property at \$4.3 million. Taxes are \$37,996 -- a little steep for the average shopper.

"Yes, we might have buyers come to us and start saying they don't like this or they don't like that. Well, then, they may not be the right buyer. Someone needs to get on the property and decide 'Hey, this is for me,' and I'm pretty sure that buyer is out there," Gravett said.

Because Holly Knoll is a large historic property at Fairfax County's western edge, future owners might be able to apply for a conservation easement and receive state tax credits, Gravett said. Both he and Shaner say the property is the "gateway to Fairfax County," and, when paired with Dranesville Tavern across the road, should be preserved.

"I love this house. I love this property. I'm sure someone out there will love it, too," Shaner said.



Goodbye and Good Luck, Bob!



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Individual (\$15) _____

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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
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