



# THE DATUM POINT

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

Chapter Website – [www.nvcasv.org](http://www.nvcasv.org)

January 2009

## FROM THE PRESIDENT – ANN WOOD

### My New Year's wishes for all of us in the Northern Virginia Chapter:

- Lots of productive digging at some new and revisited sites...
- Signs of a contact site maybe...or a Clovis point...or a few pre-Clovis artifacts...
- Continued camaraderie in the field, the lab, and wherever else we gather...
- Appreciation and support from all those whose decisions may affect our work...
- At least one adventure...like Gault II...
- And, lots of certification grads at the ASV meeting in Fredericksburg in the fall...

A happy and healthy 2009 to you all!



The Northern Virginia Chapter would like to express their appreciation to Vice President Pat Fuller for her long involvement with the chapter and her many contributions, including at Gunston Hall. In the midst of her journey with cancer, Pat and Hal welcomed their first grandchild, William Patrick "Liam" Richards, who was born in State College PA on the day after Christmas, weighing in at 6 pounds, 12 ounces. Our congratulations... and our thoughts and prayers... are with you, Pat!

## JANUARY'S SPEAKER, PATRICK O'NEILL

### BATTLE OF THE WHITE HOUSE, THE ONLY WAR OF 1812 BATTLE IN FAIRFAX COUNTY



The British burned Washington on August 24, 1814, and intended to march down the Potomac under protection from their own ships. The Potomac Squadron, as the ship convoy was called, was late and the British went back the way they came. However, the Potomac Squadron did cause the destruction of Fort Washington on August 27<sup>th</sup>, and held Alexandria Virginia hostage from August 28-September 1<sup>st</sup>.

To "annoy and destroy" the Squadron on their descent, US Commodore John Rodgers, Captains David Porter and Oliver Perry brought 500 seamen and, with 1500 Virginia Militia under Brigadier General John Hungerford, they engaged the British for 5 days at the White House on Belvoir Neck in sight of Mount Vernon. The presentation will also include a display of artifacts from the battle!

Patrick O'Neill has a B.S. in Anthropology and a M.A. in History. For over 25 years, he has traveled across the United States and conducted archaeology and historical research projects in over 32 states. He is the 2009-2010 President of the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV), and the historian for the ASV's Kittiewan Plantation. He also is your editor of the Datum Point!

## FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS

By Mike Johnson

Over the last 30 years Fairfax County Archeology has become the repository for most archeological collections recovered in the County. For many years the collection was split between the Heritage Resource Management Program in the Office of Comprehensive Planning (now Department of Planning and Zoning) and the Cultural Resource Protection program in the Park Authority. With the move back to the renovated James Lee Center the two County programs were physically merged.

As the consolidated program's Collections Manager, Bob Wharton spent several years merging the two artifact collections, which had been kept under separate indexing systems. This was a major undertaking, especially since he was dealing with a County-wide collection that included approximately 3 million items and a Park collection that involved several hundred thousand items.

He eventually completed the task. However, to everyone's surprise that process filled up the brand new storage space including all of the additional shelf space gained by installing brand new "compactor shelving" in the renovated basement ("Dungeon" as it is fondly called). When Bob (and Gail) left the County to take care of Grandchildren, parents and go fishing, etc., that left the critical Collections Manager position vacant. Liz Crowell was able to convince the Park Authority that the collection was important enough to re-fill Bob's position.

Aimee Wells was selected for that position. However, her position has been slated for deletion at the end of this physical year. As a result the long term management of the collection is a serious question. In the interim between Bob's departure and Aimee's hiring the office began a project designed to "compress" the collections in order to increase shelf space and buy time. That process has resulted in compressing all of the collections from 1980 through 2000, which has opened enough shelf space for more than 200 boxes.

Some 25 saved box spaces (more than 10%) has been due to a planned de-accessioning of the Lowes Island artifacts to Loudoun County. Also a large number of massive soil and flotation samples from earlier projects were processed and/or discarded, if appropriate. The largest gain was made when Bob installed a whole new bank of shelves along a previously open wall and the pre-2000 collections involving several thousand

boxes have been moved. As that process has progressed we have discovered errors and backlogged cataloguing.

As a result, much of the lab work over the last couple of months has been on sites dating to as early as the late 1980s. Many of the lab work will be on very interesting material. As we begin the New Year the County Archeology Program will continue to try to get the collection up to the best possible condition so it hopefully can withstand as long as possible a loss of dedicated management oversight.

## WHAT'S NEW IN RELIC

**Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center for Genealogy and Local History (RELIC), Prince William Public Library System, Bull Run Regional Library**

January 20, 7 pm - Share Your Family Photos and Genealogy on the Internet, presented by Don Wilson.

February 5, 11 am - Great-Grandfather Comes to Life: a Genealogical Case Study, presented by Larry LeDoux.

February 24, 7 pm - Defending the Homefront: The Virginia State Guard in World War II, presented by Ted Ballard.

March 22, 2 pm - Genealogy 101, presented by Bev Veness.

March 24, 7 pm - Genealogical Standards of Proof, presented by Tom Jones, Ph.d., CG, CGL, FASG.

### The Genealogy Doctor is In

Schedule a private, 30-minute visit with RELIC's Don Wilson to discuss an historical or genealogical problem that has stumped you. Please call 703-792-4540 for a free appointment.

Jan. 15, Feb. 5 and 19 - 10 am-noon.

Share Your Family Photos and Genealogy on the Internet Presented by Don Wilson

With today's far-flung families it becomes a challenge to make sure everyone in the family sees the latest snapshots and has access to the family's photo archive. Those who are compiling the family history also need a way of sharing the information they have collected. With the growth of the Internet there are now many

options for sharing information and digital images. So how do you choose a service?

On January 20, Don Wilson, head of the Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center for Genealogy and Local History (RELIC) will present "Share Your Family Photos and Genealogy on the Internet." He will describe and demonstrate free and inexpensive ways to share your precious memories.

The program is scheduled for Thursday, January 8 and 11 a.m., and will be repeated Tuesday, January 20, at 7 p.m. at Bull Run Regional Library, 8051 Ashton Avenue, Manassas, Virginia.

To register for this free program, stop by the library, email [Relic2@pwcgov.org](mailto:Relic2@pwcgov.org), or call RELIC at (703) 792-4540 or TTY: (703) 792-4524.

Have a question about Prince William County history, places or families? Need guidance with your genealogical research?

You may contact RELIC staff for help and advice by calling us at 703-792-4540.

## **ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

By Cora Foley

On February 3, 2009, there will be a special election for Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Both Supervisor Sharon Bulova and Supervisor Pat Herry participated in our library series.

For information about:

Supervisor Sharon Bulova's campaign: [www.sharonbulova.com/](http://www.sharonbulova.com/)

Supervisor Pat Herry's campaign: [www.patherry.org](http://www.patherry.org)  
Videos of their presentations are available at: <http://fairfaxstories.community.officelive.com/ffxstories/Calendar.aspx>

Thanks to both Supervisor Bulova and Supervisor Herry for supporting the 2008 Library Series on "Fairfax County Stories 1607-2007." Please don't forget to vote on February 3, 2009.

## **VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN 2009**

Beginning in January 2009, the Virginia Historical Society will observe new opening hours. The VHS will be open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 to 5. The galleries will be open Sunday, 1 to 5. The reading room and galleries will be closed to the public on Mondays. The VHS remains free to children under 18 and free to everyone on Sundays. In addition, Virginia House will be closed to the public in January and February 2009 to make improvements that will enhance the visitor experience.

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## **STARGATE CONTINUUM**

For all you science fiction fans don't miss "Stargate Continuum" (DVD)! In the movie the actual USS Alexandria and its crew appear in the nick of time to rescue the heroes of the film.

What I found particularly interesting was a 15 to 20 minute segment in the Special Features section on the submarine and its crew--you got to see inside the sub. It also showed how the sub "hit its mark" and emerged through 4 feet of ice in Alaskan waters. Very interesting!

Pamela F. Budde  
The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum



USS Alexandria

## NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Chapter Sponsors call 703-534-3881

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Rich Sacchi	<a href="mailto:Richard.Sacchi@fairfaxcounty.gov">Richard.Sacchi@fairfaxcounty.gov</a>

## Other Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon	Esther White	<a href="mailto:ewhite@mountvernon.org">ewhite@mountvernon.org</a>
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Pr. William Co. Archaeologist	Justin Patton	<a href="mailto:jspatton@pwecgov.org">jspatton@pwecgov.org</a> 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 should join our parent organization,  
the Archeological Society of Virginia.  
[asv-archeology.org](http://asv-archeology.org)*

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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