



THE DATUM POINT

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

February 2009

FROM THE PRESIDENT – ANN WOOD

As we emerge from an unusually cold winter, we are hoping for some digging and certification opportunities in the coming weeks. According to Fairfax County Archaeologist Mike Johnson, we will return to Cardinal Glen when weather permits to finish recovery of the area beside the cut bank. And Paul Inashima is planning to open up Clark's Branch around the beginning of March.

We are putting together a certification program, probably for an early Saturday in March. Jolene Smith of DHR has agreed to give a training session on DSS electronic site form filing, and CK Gailey will present the companion course on site form preparation. We expect to include other material pertaining to survey as well, along with the opportunity for candidates who have found sites to record them.

I am pleased to announce that Diane Schug-O'Neill has agreed to be our chapter's representative on the ASV's long range planning committee. While Diane has more than enough to do, the planning process will benefit from her knowledge as editor of the ASV Quarterly Bulletin.

And finally, friends of Pat Fuller bid her farewell at a memorial service on January 30. She died on January 16. She was an active participant in Virginia archaeology for some time, was a certified archaeological technician, and was vice president of our chapter at the time of her death. She was a friend to many of us.

APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Now is the time to apply for our annual scholarship for attending field school. For more information, go to <http://www.nvcasv.org/scholarship.html>. Applications will be restricted to NVC members until April 1. If no NVC members apply, applications will be opened to all ASV members until May 15.

To apply for scholarships for interns attending a conference, or for chapter members speaking at a conference, please email annpwood@comcast.net until we finish updating our web site.

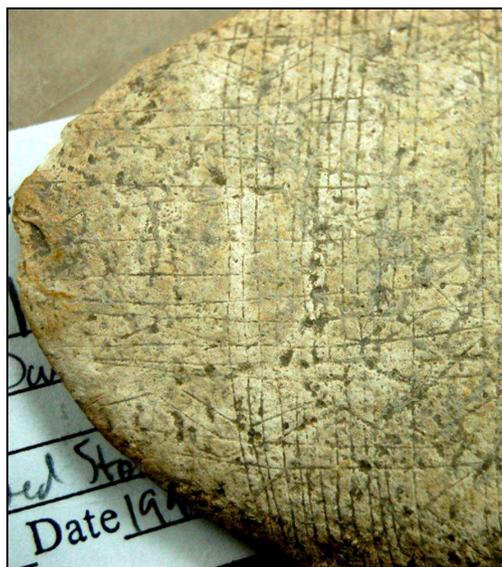
**FEBRUARY'S SPEAKER – MIKE JOHNSON,
FAIRFAX COUNTY SR. ARCHAEOLOGIST**

THE GAULT SITE, A STRATIFIED CLOVIS SITE IN TEXAS

See related story inside!



Mike Collins lectures crew



Etched limestone tablet

NVC VICE PRESIDENT PAT FULLER



Pat Fuller, vice president of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia and long time participant in local archaeology, died of pancreatic cancer January 16 at her home in Falls Church. She was surrounded by her family, including her husband Hal, daughter Amanda, son-in-law Andy Richards, and her three-week-old grandson, William Patrick "Liam" Richards.

Pat loved archaeology and participated in digs ranging from Cactus Hill to Gunston Hall. She was a regular in helping out with lab work and frequently joined the Tuesday lunch group. When the county archaeology program came under attack several years ago, she was among a group of volunteers who worked successfully to preserve it. As vice president of our chapter, she took a lead last year in updating our scholarship bylaws to make our scholarship funds more accessible.

In 2003, Pat completed a substantial course of study under the Archeological Society of Virginia and the Council of Virginia Archaeologists and became a Certified Archaeological Technician. Since then, she has helped to mentor others in this program.



Pat receiving her ASV Certification in 2003

Pat's family and friends celebrated her life at a memorial service at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, recalling her years of travel and adventure as part of a foreign service family, her love of archaeology, her humor and commitment, and her devotion to family. An exhibit of her paintings was on display.

Pat will be missed and remembered by her many archaeology friends.



Pat giving the NVC a tour of the Gunston Hall Cemetery in 2005



Pat screens on a trip to the Rubis-Pearsall site in southern Virginia



Pat relaxes, on a trip to the Rubis-Pearsall site in southern Virginia

The following poem was written by Pat Fuller's daughter Amanda, who read it at the memorial service, as Pat had requested:

Archeologist

**Shaking dirt through a sieve,
my mother shows me how**

**human beings are brittle bone,
curved potsherds of dun and black,**

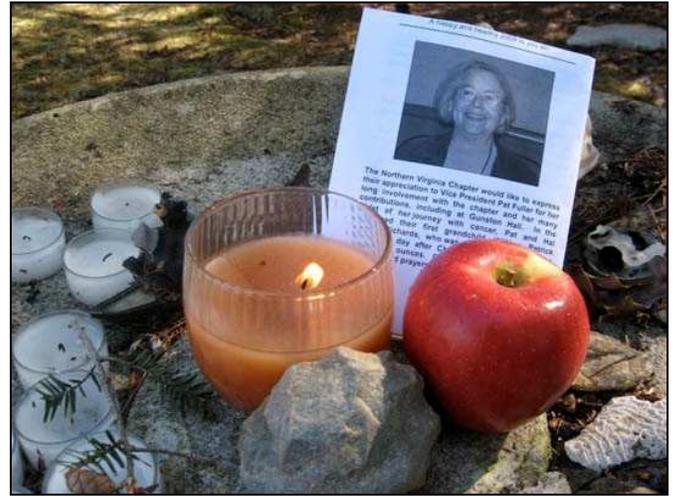
**amber glass winking at the sun,
threads of cloth, a tiny red bead--**

**artifacts clenched in Earth's fist
until her fingers are pried open**

and we lie naked against her skin.



Joyce Pearsall remembers Pat in her labyrinth in Brevard NC



Candle for Pat in Joyce Pearsall's labyrinth

BETH MITCHELL

By Susan Levy

Fairfax County author Beth Mitchell passed away on February 1, 2009, in Honey Brook, Pennsylvania (about half way between Lancaster and Philadelphia), at the Tel Hai Retirement Community where she and husband Myles moved to in 2008. Among her many works were **Beginning at a White Oak: Patents and Northern Neck Grants of Fairfax County, Virginia; Fairfax County in 1760, an Interpretive Historical Map; and Fairfax County Road Orders, 1749-1800.** She also indexed court records of Fairfax County, abstracted claims of Fairfax County residents for Civil War Losses, and much more.

There will be a memorial service there for Beth on Friday, February 6, 2009. The viewing is at 10 am that morning, with the memorial service in the Chapel at 11 am. Tel Hai Retirement Community's address is 1200 Tel Hai Circle, Honey Brook, Pennsylvania 19344 (telephone 610-273-9333).

You can send condolences to her husband at the retirement community's address in the paragraph above. Her contributions to northern Virginia research are legendary.

Fredericksburg.com Obituary

Mary Elizabeth Mitchell, 78, passed away Sunday Feb. 1, 2009. Mary Beth, or Beth as she was known to most, was born on March 31, 1930 in Oklahoma. She was the daughter of William L. Anderson and Ina Redman Anderson. She was predeceased by her brother Louis J. Anderson.

Beth was the loving wife of Myles B. Mitchell, and they shared almost 60 years of marriage together. Beth was an intellectually curious woman who enjoyed many interests in life. She loved to read and travel around the world with her husband Myles. Beth also enjoyed gardening, puzzles, and being surrounded by her family and friends at their lake house.

The "genealogy bug" found Beth in the early 1970s, and life was never the same for her again. She started with family research that rapidly grew into authoring books and maps.

These are often the first references consulted when doing research in Fairfax County. She is remembered in the history community for her modesty about these key accomplishments, her impeccable research and her willingness to mentor new historians.

In addition to her husband, Beth is survived by her three loving daughters: Linda Lalonde and her husband, Joseph, of Manassas Park, Janet Singer of Connecticut, and Nancy Amicon and her husband, Gregg, of Glenmoore, Pa. She also is cherished by 11 grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a sister- and brother-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Friends of City of Fairfax Library-Virginia Room, 10360 North St., Fairfax, Va. 22030.

GAULT SITE, TEXAS

By Mike Jonson

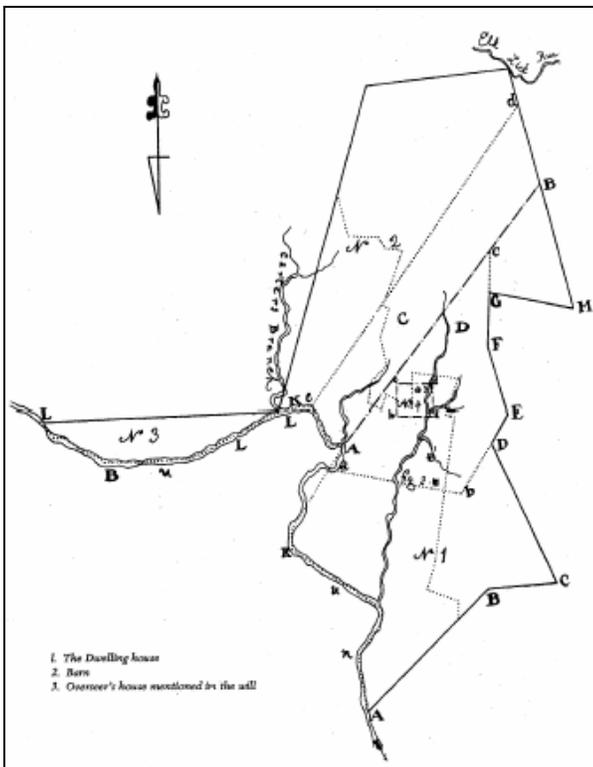
The Gault site is one of two extremely large, stratified Clovis age sites in North America. The other is the nearby Thunderbird site (44WR11) south of Front Royal. Both sites are enormous chert/jasper quarries, associated workshops and base camps.

Gault is located on the edge of the Edwards Plateau in east central Texas near Georgetown and Waco. The site is in a broad, deeply cut stream valley that exits toward the southeast and the Gulf Coastal Plain. The stream's down-cutting has exposed lenses of high quality Edwards Plateau chert. Sediment deposited on terraces adjacent to Buttermilk Creek has covered and sealed stratified human living areas dating from the hypothesized earliest (pre-Clovis) people in the Americas up through modern times. Since the site is surrounded by Edward's Plateau limestone, the site has some bone preservation.

The site is most famous for the deeply stratified Clovis material, especially an elaborate core and blade technology. However, less well known but of potentially far greater significance is a unique rock rubble floor-like feature that is almost identical to Magdalenian floor-like features found in France. Those features are contemporary with Clovis. Also the site has produced incredibly detailed etchings on limestone slabs, possibly from Clovis contexts (pictured). This would be some of the earliest portable rock pictographs yet found in the Americas. The discovery that led to the current block excavation involved potential pre-Clovis cultural horizons, stratigraphically well below Clovis.

A crew of 11, including eight scholarship members from the Northern Virginia Chapter (Ann Wood, CD Cox, Nancy Anthony, Vicki Monken, George Monken, John Kelsey, Chris Ramey and Mike Johnson), one from the Nansemond Chapter (Cynthia Hansen), and two relatives (CD's Granddaughter, Petra and her Father, Steve Cox). Dr. Mike Collins was particularly pleased with their first, three generation crew (CD, Steve and Petra). Crew members stayed either at local motels or in the "bunk house." The weather for the entire field school was just about perfect - a little cool some mornings.

After an initial orientation by Collins, Clark Wernecke (Project Director), and Cinda Timperley (volunteer coordinator, paleontologist, curator, database manager etc.) they threw the crew right in to the excavation. We also had on-going instruction from Field Crew Chief (in training), Nancy Littlefield. At the end of the first day,



Map from Beth Mitchell's *Beginning at a White Oak book*

Collins was overheard saying, "We don't have to worry about this crew. They know what they are doing."

The ASV team was split into two person crews with CD managing the elaborate and efficient water screening operation, while Vicki and Mike J. managed the block-wide paperwork and took pictures. Steve Cox, who did not plan on coming out, could not stay away and arrived, mid-week to help his Father, CD, with the water screening. The rest of the crew excavated three one-meter squares and helped with a variety of other tasks.

The assignment was to straighten out and excavate the next levels in three squares that varied in depth from the Early, Middle Archaic down to the Early Archaic, which was located some four feet deeper. Work was confined to a large block in what is called a "burnt rock midden." The midden consisted of very dark, almost black, organic-rich, clayey soil, full of artifacts and burned pieces of limestone. The Gault staff had discovered that the burned and fire cracked limestone fragments were the residue from elaborate camas processing hearths. Whether dry or wet, the soil was hard to excavate carefully. Mike C. also gave the crew a detailed lecture on the site's stratigraphy and soils.

The specific area for the block excavation was chosen because last year a field school crew, under the direction of Dr. Bruce Bradley, from Exeter University in England had discovered significant quantities of flakes stratigraphically well below the well-documented Clovis horizon near the center of the block. The ASV crew's job was to help reduce the amount of Archaic archeological deposits over the Paleoamerican zone.

However, one of the jokes in archeology happened. The crew ran into massive "cultural interference." "Cultural interference" is an euphemism for finding a lot of good "stuff" in the way of where you want to get. Some of this might have been the result of the highly trained and competent crew. One of our ASV crews discovered a hearth feature in the upper level square. That crew (George and Chris) also identified the first Andice point flute found on the site in the nine years, since the site was opened. They also found several points. As a result of the hearth discovery the entire ASV crew was treated to observing the recovery of the fire burned rocks for thermo-luminescence analysis: more cultural interference.

Nancy A, Petra and Ann also found some 20 pieces of charcoal in their square, which was at the Early Archaic-Middle Archaic boundary. Nancy's extensive experience played a big part in that discovery, which is unique for the site. During an earlier visit to the site
Datum Point

Mike C. informed Mike J. that, according to a soil scientist, the reason why the site has produced no datable charcoal is that every piece of charcoal on the site has been through the digestive tract of a worm at least three times. It looks like the worms missed a spot. Fortunately someone as competent as Nancy was there.

Cynthia and John Kelsey had the deepest square. They, too, made "cultural interference" discoveries. Cynthia discovered a greasy-like stain that extended into an adjoining, more deeply excavated square. Her extensive experience with prehistoric feature gleaned from ASV field schools at Keyser Farm and other sites was critical to that discovery. She and John also recovered a moderate sized bone.

The overall quality of the work done by the ASV crew was evident. Unfortunately for Gault and most other sites, a lot of the excavation is done by field school students and new volunteers, who take a while to get up to speed. That is not the case with the ASV crew, who left their squares in better shape than when they arrived.

Although it is feared that the ASV crew did not excavate as much soil as was hoped by the Gault staff, we can hope that we made up for it with all of the high quality discoveries. The talk at this month's meeting will be divided between the ASV crew experience and the impressive discoveries at the Gault site. All NVC crew members thank the Chapter for supporting this field school. The state certification members, particularly, got relevant, high quality experience and lectures.

MOUNT VERNON FIELD SCHOOL

The following comes from Mount Vernon Archaeologist Esther White:

Thanks for all your help with our excavation this fall. As promised (and many of you already know) we are currently working on a survey for a new building. We are offering two Saturdays in Feb. -- this Sat. the 7th and the 21st.

We can offer survey hours and are willing to work with you on specific survey items that you might need to do.

Email Curt -- cbreckenridge@mountvernon.org with questions or to sign up.

Hope to see you soon,
Esther White



Archeological Society of Virginia

<http://asv-archeology.org/>

Start thinking about the 2009
Archeological Society of Virginia's

Student Paper Competition



The Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV) provides cash prizes to the best student papers presented at the Annual ASV Meetings. This year's meeting will be held in Fredericksburg, Virginia in October [dates to be announced]. The competition is open to **undergraduate** students and **graduate** students. Three official award categories exist, recognizing student research contributions in **Prehistoric Archeology** (The McCary Award), **Historical Archeology** (The Williams Award), and **Collections-Based Research** (The VMNH Award). Two judges will evaluate the presentations.

Awards of \$100.00 are provided to contest winners, once their winning paper is submitted to the ASV's *Quarterly Bulletin*. In addition, award recipients will receive a *free* one-year membership in the Archeological Society of Virginia.

Requirements:



- **August 14, 2009:** Presentation abstract is due to the program chair.
- Competition participants must **register** for the ASV annual meetings and be **members** of the ASV. For details about this year's annual meetings: <http://asv-archeology.org/News/NewsAM.html>
- Students should prepare a **written** version of their presentation, to be submitted by October 2, 2009. This written paper should be provided to **Laura Galke**, Student Affairs Committee chair. An email to Laura Galke (Galke@gwffoundation.org) with the written paper as an attachment is welcome. Papers sent via the postal service should arrive to Ms. Galke, 268 King's Highway, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22405, **by** October 2, 2009.
- Participants should prepare an **oral presentation** to present at the Annual Meeting in October [dates TBA]. The oral presentation should be no more than 20 minutes in length and visual accompaniment in the form of a PowerPoint presentation or slides is encouraged. Presentations will be evaluated based upon content, effectiveness of presentation, professionalism, contribution to the field, and the enthusiasm of the presenter.
- Participants are responsible for **attending** the ASV Annual Meetings in October and **presenting** their paper at their assigned time.

Please watch for upcoming announcements in the ASV newsletter and website for additional details. If you have any questions regarding the contest, please contact

Laura Galke, Student Affairs Committee Chair,

Galke@gwffoundation.org

Phone: 540-370-0732 ext. 26.

Archeological Society of Virginia
Certification Opportunity
(Hours Applied to Excavation Requirement)

44HE0283 Native American Contact Site,
Henrico County, Virginia
March 2 – March 13, 2009

Tree Hill Farm is one of the last undisturbed farmsteads in the Richmond environs. Current plans, however, call for urban development into a residential/commercial community. Prior to land impacting, CRI, a local cultural resources consulting firm, conducted a Phase I survey identifying archaeological and architectural resources within the 511 acre tract. As a result of the survey, one site 44HE0674, was recorded as a Contact-era site possibly associated with the natal village of Paramount Chief Powhatan. This site has been set aside for preservation in cooperation with the DHR and Native American communities. In addition, 30 other archaeological resources were recorded on the tract with 22 containing prehistoric components.

Several other Contact Period sites were recorded on the tract, one of which is 44HE0283. In order to better understand the relationship of the Contact sites to one another and the cultural dynamics of the period, site testing will be implemented on the 44HE0283. While sites of this period can be dispersed and characterized by a relatively low density of artifacts, house patterns, hearths, and numerous post molds have been recorded in high numbers. Excavations will focus on determining the presence of features, the site boundaries, and more precise chronology.

Responsibility for site direction will fall to Mike Barber (State Archaeologist), Chris Stevenson (Capital Region Archaeologist), and Joanna Wilson (DHR Resource Archaeologist).

WHEN: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 13, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.

WHERE: Tree Hill Farm, Henrico County, off Route 5 near Varina

LOGISTICS: Numerous hotels and camp grounds in Richmond area.

SPONSORS

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Archeological Society of Virginia

CONTACTS

Mike Barber (540 857-6341)
Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Ave., Richmond 23221.
mike.barber@dhr.virginia.gov

Certification Program - Carole Nash (540 568-6805)
Geographic Science Program
James Madison University
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Bruce Baker (804 561-0420)
10290 Reed Rock Road
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Fairfax County Archaeologists (FCPA)

Chapter Sponsors call 703-534-3881

Elizabeth Crowell	elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov
Mike Johnson	michael.johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov
Rich Sacchi	Richard.Sacchi@fairfaxcounty.gov

Other Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon	Esther White	ewhite@mountvernon.org
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-550-0441
Loudoun Co. Archaeologist	Mike Clem	michael.clem@loudoun.gov 703-737-8862
Alexandria Museum	Pam Cressey	pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399 (information)
Pr. William Co. Archaeologist	Justin Patton	jspatton@pwcegov.org 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*

**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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