



# THE DATUM POINT

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

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

August 2011

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT – JOHN KELSEY**

In July, I attended the summer ASV Board Meeting in Roanoke. I was impressed with the experience and commitment of the ASV officers and other board members. They are grappling with some challenging problems, including the management of Kittiewan Plantation and how to structure the organization to fulfill its public education and research goals. I'll talk a bit about this at the August chapter meeting. For those of you interested in some "light" reading on archaeology, remember that there is a list of ASV publications on the ASV website. The website has recently had some work done to it. You should be able to order and pay for pubs through Paypal, but a little patience may be in order.

The Annual Meeting this year will be in Staunton, October 13-16, and it promises to be a very good event. See more on this later in this edition.

Diane Schug-O'Neill has updated the Chapter website to include all its activities for the rest of this year. You'll note the Chapter picnic which Mike Johnson will host on September 17<sup>th</sup>. More details will follow. By the way, Diane is in the process of setting up a tour at the Meadowcroft Rock Shelter in southwestern Pennsylvania on August 13<sup>th</sup>, for those who don't mind a pretty long drive. If you're interested but haven't gotten in touch with Diane, please do so right away.

Please join me in welcoming as new members of the Chapter Richard and Nancy Ehlke.

**August 10<sup>th</sup> Presentation  
by Pamela Cressey**

## **Fifty Years of Archaeology in Alexandria – Looking Back and to the Future**

Come join us as Pam Cressey presents the accomplishments of the City of Alexandria's archaeology program. Cressey is the City Archaeologist and Adjunct Assoc. Professor at GWU. She has a PhD from the University of Iowa and specializes in historical and public archaeology.



## **FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY**

By retired(?) Mike Johnson

**Pig Point (18AN50)** – We completed our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> auger cores last Friday. These were on the hill to the north of the main house, where the landform looks more natural. Previous testing indicated that the back yard, which is exposed to the Patuxent River floodplain and the northwest, was disturbed, possibly by extensive fill. It was hoped that the more natural looking landform would produce less disturbed cores. That was the case.

The stratigraphy was much more like those in similar settings and soil found in the Nottoway River Valley. Also, whereas the first three core samples produced historic artifacts as much as 155 inches deep, the new cores were largely artifact sterile below 25 inches. However, in our last core sample on top of the hill, we recovered one small quartz flake in the 52-57-inch deep sample at the boundary between the later eolian-like (mostly wind deposited) sand and earlier river deposited, very coarse sand and gravel.

This appears to be consistent with the data from the Lost Town Project's excavation where they recovered an Early Archaic (11,500-10,500 BP) Palmer-like point from on top of the coarse sand and gravel. It is unlikely that there will be *in situ* artifacts from below that level, because the coarse sediment, which is river deposit, had to be deposited when the Patuxent River bed was much higher and closer than any time in the last 20,000 years+.

This last core suggests that there is an early component 4.5 feet below the surface on that hill. Although it is possible that the flake fell down the hole during augering and got mixed with the core, it is not likely, because the odds that it would have done so at that soil boundary is slim. No other positive artifacts were recovered from below 25 inches. A concerted effort was made to prevent such contamination to the point that it was better to lose some good data than contaminate the sample.

No more work is planned at Pig point until the weather improves – gets cooler, and we can digest the data. Further work requires a good research design.

**Westbrook (44FX2660)** – We will have regular lab next Tuesday (8/9) at the James Lee Center. The metamorphosed quartzite (flagstone) hoe-like tool bit, recovered from block C, is pictured in this month's NVC-ASV Datum Point.

**Cactus Hill/Blueberry Hill** – We will have regular lab next Tuesday evening (8/9).

**Gault** – The fall field session at the Gault site near Georgetown, Texas has been scheduled for October 31-November 5. Please get in touch with John Kelsey ([jkelsey@cox.net](mailto:jkelsey@cox.net)), copy me, if you would like to join the crew.





## WONDERFUL VACATION!

Just a few shots from Patrick and Diane O'Neill's 8,400 mile odyssey vacation across the north US!



Serpent Mound in Ohio



Knife River Indian Village



Former NVC member Bill Lindquist in Illinois



Fort Union Trading Post, ND (Patrick dug here)



On-A-Slant Indian Village in Mandan, ND



Crazy Horse Mountain



Inside Mandan earth lodge



Lewis & Clark's Fort Clatsup, Oregon

## **NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS**

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## **Fairfax County Archaeology (FCPA)**

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Mount Vernon	Esther White	<a href="mailto:ewhite@mountvernon.org">ewhite@mountvernon.org</a>
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	<a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-550-0441
Alexandria Museum	Pam Cressey	<a href="mailto:pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov">pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399 (information)

## **NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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**[ ] Please send *Datum Point* via e-mail**

Individual (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

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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 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. 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.  
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