

THE DATUM POINT

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

January 2013

FROM THE PRESIDENT – JACK HRANICKY



As the historians like to say, one more year in the history books. And, same for the Chapter. As you probably noted (and duly voted), we have a change in the Chapter president from John Kelsey to Jack Hranicky. We certainly thank John for his three years as chapter president. The Chapter can expect a carry-on in activities, meetings, news events, etc. We have speakers lined up through the summer and planning on several Chapter tours.

We will also participate in area excavations, have our annual chapter picnic and, as always, we will have our annual holiday party. All these events should keep us busy; but, if you would like to see us do something else, let me know, especially ideas for October's Archaeology Month.

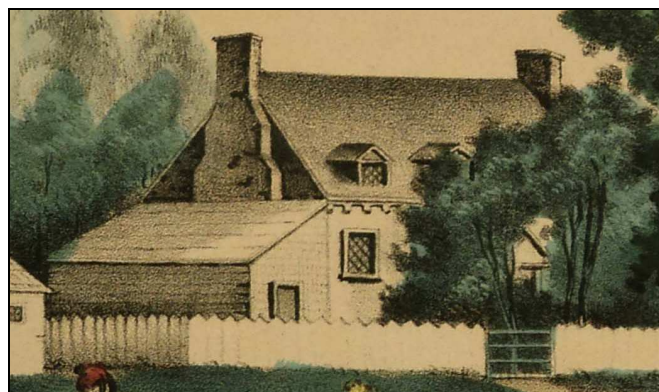
Our certification program is ongoing, including site surveys, excavations, and laboratory work; you can become a certified amateur archaeologist - just sign up. And, our speaker list will present very informative and knowledgeable archaeologists, who will talk about work going on in Virginia and other areas.

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Presentation on January 9th

THE SEARCH FOR HENRY CLAY'S BIRTHPLACE

By Patrick O'Neill



Henry Clay was born in Hannover County, Virginia in 1777. The house was destroyed by a fire in 1871. Local tradition stated the current house was built on the foundation of his birthplace. In 2011, the owner uncovered portion of a thick brick-walled cellar less than 100 feet from the current house. Volunteer archaeologists spent four weekends exploring the foundation, finding three of four corners of the cellar and other architectural details. Was this the birthplace of Henry Clay? Come and find out!

Patrick O'Neill has been an archaeologist for almost 30 years. Working in 32 states, he has had the fortune to excavate on many great sites such as Fort Union Fur Trading Post, the Virginia State Capitol, and Arlington House. He was President, and is now Datum Point Editor for the Northern Virginia Chapter and Past President of the ASV from 2009-2010, now the ASV Membership Secretary (**pay your state dues, please!**).

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And, as a reminder, the Chapter has a field school scholarship for students and ASV members who would like to attend a field school...anywhere. This is a great Chapter benefit, and we need people to apply (see Website - <http://www.nvcasv.org/>). You must have been a Chapter member for at least four months.

Dues are “due”. Come to the January meeting and pay your dues – you can save using a stamp (but you can mail it in, the Post Office needs help). I am looking forward to serving as your chapter president and, as John did, I'll try and keep you (all) informed of the year's archaeology; I bet we will have a-couple-of-finds this year that will make national headlines. What's fun about archaeology is: there is *always* something new (from the old) to discover.

PAM CRESSEY RETIRES

In her own words!

In case you are not on Facebook for the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, I wanted to also write to those of you on our Listserve:

As I sit in my office this wintery Saturday I see that I only have a few hours left as City Archaeologist. My retirement is effective today. Fortunately, Fran Bromberg will be the Acting City Archaeologist, and we all know what a fine person and incredible professional she has been with OHA/Alexandria Archaeology for almost 22 years.



I want to extend my most profound thanks to the City of Alexandria, its residents, the thousands of volunteers and visitors to our museum over the almost 36 years I have been here. What a joy! This has been literally, "The Time of My Life!" While I loved history and archaeology as a student and college professor, I had no idea of the passion and pleasure--and actual joy--that comes from working within a community to rediscover, save share the past.

I credit some of our greatest leaps forward to community members: preserving sites like the Alexandria Canal and Freedmen's Cemetery, creating a heritage trail across the city telling thousands of years of history, developing the Alexandria Archaeology Code, establishing the Museum in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, developing a summer camp program for teens.

And, the professional reputation and high quality work has come from extraordinary archaeologists like Steven Shephard and Barbara Magid and all the staff today.

I will continue to work on projects and hopefully will even post more things on this page as I work on Mason Neck near the Potomac where I live by the eagle preserve.

Many thanks to all of you who care about the past and know that it has meaning today and value for the future. Pam

I will be retiring at the end of December. Francine Bromberg will be the acting City Archaeologist as of January 1, 2013—you may reach her at Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov. Please send all requests and information related to archaeology in Alexandria to Fran.

I will continue to do some research and writing for the Office of Historic Alexandria, so this email will continue to be a method of contacting me. Thank you.

Pamela J. Cressey Ph.D., RPA

A TRIBUTE TO VIVIENNE B. MITCHELL

By Wm Jack Hranicky

Born on a farm in West Chester County, New York, Vivienne Mitchell passed away December 14, 2012 at the age of 94. She was a graduate of William and Mary and had many interests, such as historic archaeology. She spent nearly 20 years excavating Nominy Plantation and was instrumental in getting a canal lock excavated and preserved in Alexandria. As for this interest, she was a member of Virginia's Canal Society.



She was the first member on the newly-created Alexandria Archaeology Commission in 1975, served on the Executive Board of the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV), and spent many hours over 30 years working in Alexandria's archaeology laboratory. She was a great historian along with her husband Joe Mitchell, who died years ago. Both were active in the Northern Virginia ASV Chapter.

In those days, the chapter met at Ft. Ward. She was an excellent example of what you can do in archaeology. For another example of her work, she published 3 papers in the ASV Quarterly Bulletin, namely Glass Wine Bottle Seals Found at Nominy Plantation (1975 and 1978) and Decorated Brown Clay Pipebowls from Nominy Plantation Report. She was a long-time friend who loved history; and as I recall, she loved her historic pipes.

For more information go to:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?pid=161893839#fbLoggedOut>

CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCES OF VIRGINIANS

From: Discussion of research and writing about Virginia history [mailto:VA- The Civil War experiences of Virginians from all walks of life and all corners of the state can be found at the Library of Virginia.

The Library of Virginia houses nearly 2,000 (and growing) collections of state records, local records, and private papers chronicling life in Virginia during the conflict of 1861-1865. Military life, politics, business, and the home front are all documented in collections ranging in size from one leaf of paper to almost 600 cubic feet.

Now, information about all of these collections is gathered in the Civil War Records in the Archives Guide, an online resource located on the Library of Virginia's website.

For more information on the guide and how to use it --

http://www.virginiamemory.com/blogs/out_of_the_box/2012/12/14/5997/

The Civil War Records in the Archives Guide can be found here --

<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/civil-war.htm>



At last, the mystery of the Mayan calendar revealed.

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Alexandria Museum	Francine Bromberg	Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399 (information)

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

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Please send *Datum Point* via e-mail

Individual (\$15) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Family (\$17) _____

New _____

Renewal _____

Return to:

Isabella Pease, Treasurer, NVC/ASV
8304 Graceway Drive
Lorton, VA 22079

Chapter members should join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia at asv-archeology.org

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month at the James Lee Center, 2855-A Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!

THE DATUM POINT

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