



# THE DATUM POINT

December 2016

Newsletter of the  
NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER (NVC) OF THE  
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

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



## FROM THE PRESIDENT DIANE SCHUG-O'NEILL

Well, congratulations to us all ó we're officially well into our 50<sup>th</sup> year, we've accomplished a lot during the year, and we *deserve our end-of-year party!* Remember to bring something to share, along with your good cheer. We start this meeting earlier ó **6:30PM** ó don't worry about arriving a bit late; there's always plenty of food throughout the party.

This month rounds out my second stint as your President. I think that makes a total of 5 years for me (my first go-round was for three years, if I remember correctly). **It's been an honor to serve you all;** I hope future officers will agree; I know past officers already do. There will be some new changes to how we'll run the Chapter in 2017. Please stay tuned to the new President's columns to read/hear more. Basically, this will mean there will be more, smaller opportunities. I hope you enjoy the upcoming changes. We've already enlisted a new Chapter member's help with programs and another new member will also assist in more subtle ways.

*Happy Hanukkah!*  
&  
*Merry Christmas!*

## NVC CHRISTMAS PARTY



**Don't be a mean one,  
Mr. Grinch!**

**Come to the NVC's 2016  
Christmas Party  
at the James Lee Center in  
the URBANITES Room!**

**Starts at 6:30 pm  
on December 14th**

**Potluck, so bring something  
yummy to share!**

## **2017 NVC OFFICER ELECTIONS**

These are the candidates for the 2017 slate of officers for the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia. The elections will be held at the December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**President - Rich Eilers**

**Vice-President - Chris Havlicek**

**Treasurer - Isabel Tonkavitch**

**Recording Secretary - Nancy Ehlke**

**Corresponding Secretary - John Kelsey**

**Certification Program Liaison - Ann Wood**

Our hats off to those people who step up to give support to the chapter by serving as officers. Without these people, there would be no meetings, no speakers, and very little in way of communicating archaeological tours or opportunities to participate in activity across the state and region!

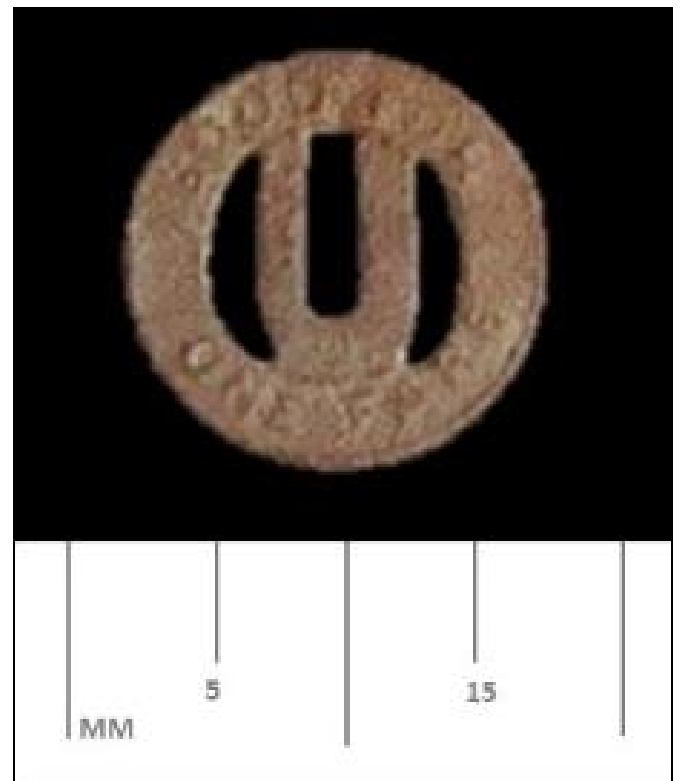
## **CART UPDATE**

Samantha W. is joining CART as a new employee. She was previously an intern with CART in the summer and fall of 2015. During spring 2016, she was an intern at Mount Vernon and assisted in their lab and field. She is completing her undergraduate work at George Mason University in Anthropology and will graduate in just a few weeks. From now until graduation she is only joining us a few days a week to finish up school. We look forward to working with her (again)!

Cool and dry fall weather has allowed volunteers and staff to continue excavation at the current park project. CART is still recovering domestic artifacts, but no indication of a house or large trash area has been discovered. The plowing of the area, for probably over 100 years, might have erased any evidence of the structure. The artifacts are likely the remains of the precursor to a partially standing historic structure on the site. Eighteenth century artifacts such as wrought nails, pearlware and creamware are some of the domestic artifacts recovered in the unit excavations (shown in the image). The few nails recovered at the site are

mainly wrought which date from the eighteenth into the nineteenth century.

Jean and Colleen recently completed a Phase I archaeological survey at John C. and Margaret White Gardens. This 13.6 acre resource park is located in Falls Church, Virginia just around the corner from the County Archaeology Team's headquarters at the James Lee Community Center! The archaeological investigation was done in collaboration with the Natural Resources Branch ahead of meadow improvement. Park policy requires cultural resources survey ahead of ground disturbing activities.



A variety of different artifacts were recovered during shovel testing and are currently being processed by the lab staff and our amazing volunteers. One of the more interesting artifacts recovered from the survey is a small token (shown in the image) for the United Railway and Electric Company. One side of the token reads "UNITED RY & ELEC. CO. BALTIMORE" and the opposite side, "GOOD FOR ONE FARE." The United Railway and Electric Company operated a street car service in Baltimore, Maryland between the years 1899 and 1935.

CART has been working hard to prepare the lab and collections storage area for the upcoming visit from AAM. AAM, the American Alliance of Museums, is an organization that was established to advocate for museums and other collection repositories. They provide peer-based assessments of an institution's professional, legal, and ethical standards. The Park Authority will be undergoing the reaccreditation process in mid-December. Staff and volunteers at JLC have worked diligently over the past couple of years to ensure our collections meet professional standards and we're looking forward to the visit from AAM for reaccreditation!

Please email CART staff to volunteer in the field at [cart.volunteers@live.com](mailto:cart.volunteers@live.com) or in the lab at [cartarchlab@live.com](mailto:cartarchlab@live.com).

Keep an eye on our blog: [cartarchaeology.wordpress.com](http://cartarchaeology.wordpress.com) for information on local events and recent finds by CART.



## ROBERT BALL CEMETERY UPDATE

Many of you are aware that I created an online petition to save the Robert Ball Family Cemetery in Ballston. I am happy to announce that the United Methodist Church I going to preserve the cemetery in place, and has redesigned their development to that end! The redesign still needs to be approved by Arlington County officials, as well as traffic patterns, utilities, etc., but the main point is that the cemetery will not be moved. Arlington County is still in the process of declaring the cemetery a Historic County Landmark, which will be addressed in February.

## BALL SELLERS HOUSE EXCAVATION COMPLETE

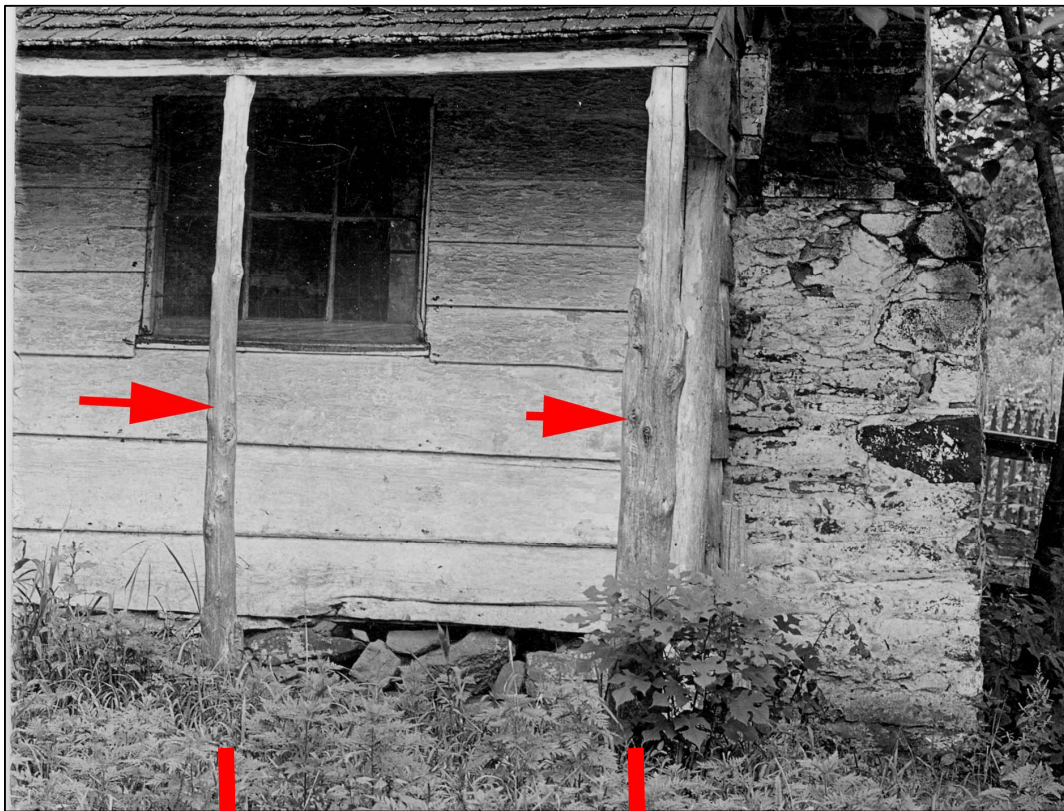
After just over four months, the four week summer project at the Ball Sellers House in Glen Carlyn, Arlington County, is finished. Or, at least the field work is completed for the winter.

It was very difficult to determine where the walls of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century addition to the original 1740s log cabin were located. As luck would have it, three superb historic photographs have survived which made all the difference in the world.

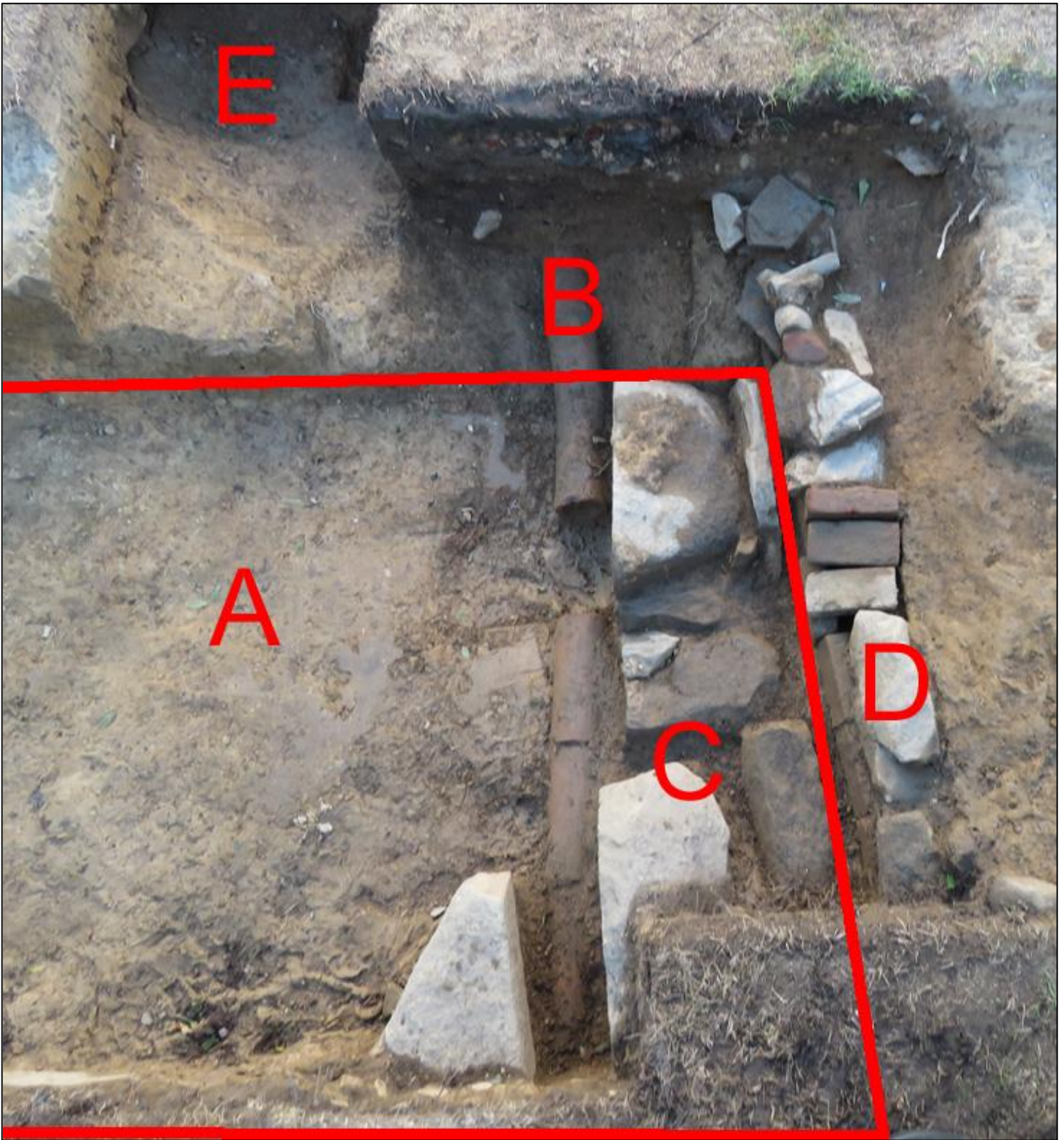
Two post molds were found in the area of the southern porch (see next page). These post molds were located inside larger rectangular post holes that had been excavated to place the posts. These two posts were seen in one of the historic photographs! And, the remains of the cedar post were still preserved in the corner post of the porch. This allowed the team to find the dimensions of the addition!

The base of the chimney was found (see second following page for image). Ö represents the prepared base of the chimney, which was excavated into a slope to provide a flat surface for the chimney foundation. Area C are the remaining chimney foundation stones, all others being removed or dislocated when the chimney was removed.











Three drain systems were found removing water from the log cabin cellar, something still being done today, only with an electric sump. The first system was an uncovered drainage ditch excavated into the surface on the slope east of the log cabin. This was probably done in the mid-1700s. This open ditch is located under the ceramic drain tile ðBö seen in the previous page.

In the mid to late 1700s, the addition was built over this open ditch, and a gap left between the foundation of the chimney to allow the water to continue to drain. The gap is to the lower left of the letter ðCö previous page.

In the mid-1800s, a ceramic tile drain ðBö was laid inside the open ditch under the addition floor boards and covered over. It is believed that this allowed for storage under the addition, and a cellar like depression was excavated ðEö, under the addition. The ceramic tile drain also went out to the east side of the addition under the chimney through the gap.

The addition was razed/dismantled around 1915. At this time, a flat bottomed channel was excavated and lined on the bottom and sides with handmade brick from the chimney top, as soot marks were seen on the bricks lining the drain ðDö. Both bricks and stones covered the brick drain, which was excavated to bypass the large stones of the chimney foundation.

The stratigraphy outside the north side of the addition was amazingly intact (see following page). The north side of the addition was the back yard of the log cabin and addition, but no doors were located on that side of either building. Yet, a thick developed A-Horizon with a cornucopia of artifacts

in the thousands was recovered from this area! They were literally throwing everything out the kitchen window seen in the historic photograph! We could follow the spread pattern!!!!

In the coming months, the lab analysis and cleaning will begin! We found soooooooo much stuff, the volunteers have no idea what they are in for! Everyone is welcome to help, we will need it!

The excavations could not have happened without support from three individuals shown in the photograph below standing in the chimney footprint. Annette Benbow, the Chair of the Ball Sellers House Committee got the project off the ground to contact me and kept the equipment flowing and the volunteers coming! She became a NVC member!!!! We had over 60 individuals, plus a few tour groups, that helped on all levels from digging to screening. **And we were out there when it was over 100 in August, and finished when it was in the 30s and freezing!!!!**

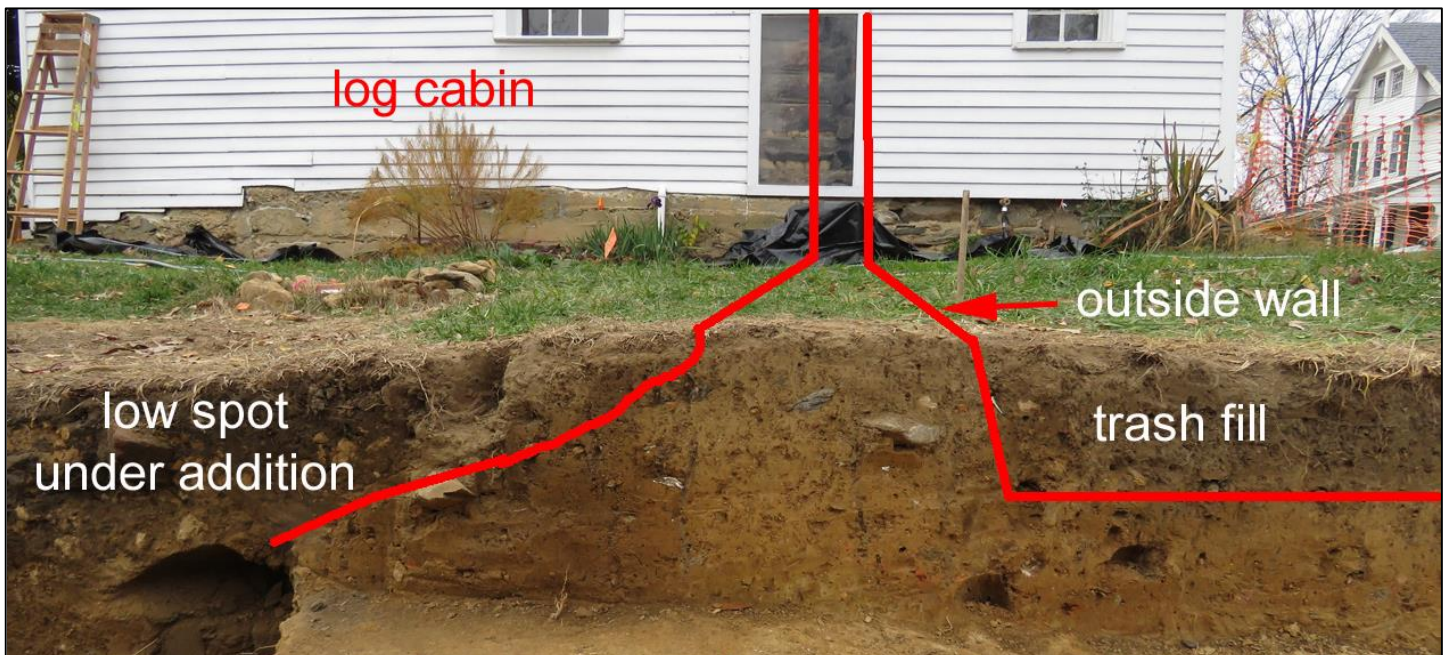
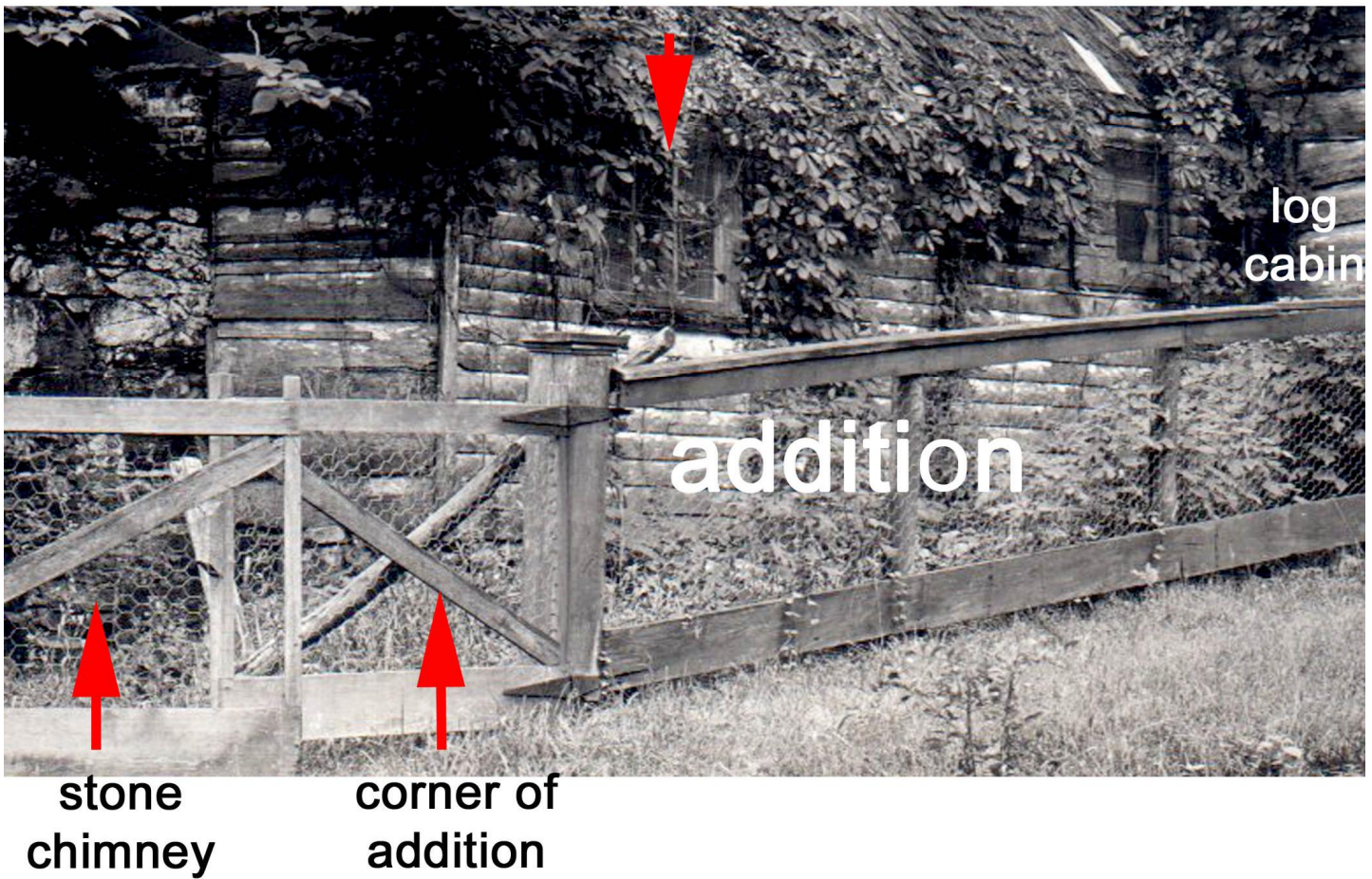
Diane Schug-O'Neill, President of the Northern Virginia Chapter, who as usual, gave personal sacrifice to make things work on a field project. Diane got volunteers, trained newbies, and provided verbal abuse, I mean, verbal support to me when things were hectic! And, Karl Van Newkirk, President of the Arlington Historical Society and returning member of the NVC, for giving us the support from the AHS and help digging!

Thanks also go out to Jackie Cuyler, Karen Schweikart, Bridget O'Neill, Isabel Tonkavitch, and Yvonne French for their help from the NVC!!! I will post more photos of the dig in the next couple of DPs!





back window from  
kitchen/dining room



## 2015 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

|                              |                     |                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>President</b>             | Diane Schug-O'Neill | <a href="mailto:schugoneill@gmail.com">schugoneill@gmail.com</a> 703-249-9593           |
| <b>Vice-President</b>        | Chris Havlicek      | <a href="mailto:christo829@juno.com">christo829@juno.com</a>                            |
| <b>Treasurer</b>             | Isabella Tonkavitch | <a href="mailto:ipease@cox.net">ipease@cox.net</a>                                      |
| <b>Corresponding Sec.</b>    | Maggie Johnson      | <a href="mailto:stillmaggie@cox.net">stillmaggie@cox.net</a>                            |
| <b>Recording Sec.</b>        | Nancy Ehlke         | <a href="mailto:rce2@cox.net">rce2@cox.net</a> 703-978-6724                             |
| <b>Datum Point Editor</b>    | Patrick O'Neill     | <a href="mailto:patrickloneill@verizon.net">patrickloneill@verizon.net</a> 703-249-9593 |
| <b>Webmaster</b>             | Diane Schug-O'Neill | <a href="mailto:schugoneill@gmail.com">schugoneill@gmail.com</a>                        |
| <b>Certification Liaison</b> | Ann Wood            | <a href="mailto:annpwood@verizon.net">annpwood@verizon.net</a>                          |

### Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

|                                       |                       |                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)</b> | Dr. Elizabeth Crowell | <a href="mailto:elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov">elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov</a><br>703-534-3881 |
| <b>Mount Vernon</b>                   | Dr. Eleanor Breen     | <a href="mailto:ebreen@mountvernon.org">ebreen@mountvernon.org</a>                                           |
| <b>Gunston Hall</b>                   | Dave Shonyo           | <a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-550-0441                    |
| <b>Alexandria Museum</b>              | Francine Bromberg     | <a href="mailto:Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov">Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399      |
| <b>Chapmans Mill</b>                  | Francis Allshouse     | <a href="mailto:chapmanmill@gmail.com">chapmanmill@gmail.com</a> 540-253-5888                                |
| <b>DC City Archaeologist</b>          | Dr. Ruth Tricoli      | <a href="mailto:Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov">Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov</a> 202-442-8836                                  |

### NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Student (\$5)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family (\$17)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:**

**Isabella Tonkavitch, Treasurer, NVC/ASV**

**8304 Graceway Drive**

**Lorton, VA 22079**

**Chapter members must join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia at [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, 2855-A Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA.**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!**