



# THE DATUM POINT

October 2017

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** **RICH EILERS**

By now most if not all of you have heard of CD Cox's death in September. He made the Northern Virginia Chapter a part of his family and in a sense became the Patriarch of our Chapter. Our membership sends their heartfelt thanks to the Cox family for sharing him with us across the last four decades. We miss him. I miss him. My impressions of CD and his impact on our Chapter are summarized in eulogy printed in this issue. Mike Johnson has provided a moving eulogy for Carol Nash to present at the ASV Conference on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.

September provided our Chapter with several outreach activities. Kudos to Yvonne for coordinating and executing an outstanding tour of Theodore Roosevelt Island. While the advanced signup was sparse, over 20 Chapter members walked the 2 mile guided walk covering the island's occupation and use history over a 250+ year period. Archaeology Day at Gunston Hall saw NVC members providing knapping demonstrations, manning the Chapter and Arlington Historical Society tables, introducing excavation techniques to visitors and overseeing screening operations. Separately, we even had an advanced scouting team to check out next May's Chapter Tour location. Chris and Yvonne continue to fill next year's calendar with quality speakers and tours.

Patrick will be our featured speaker at the October 11<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting. As always 7:30pm on the second Wednesday (October 11<sup>th</sup>) at the James Lee Center on Annandale Rd north of US50. Visitors are encouraged.

A final note on the survey I asked John Kelsey to transmit. I have received 10 responses to date with

the hope of receiving the majority of our membership's responses by next Wednesday. My intent is to use the participation inputs as part of our Chapter report to the ASV Board at the Conference. Your inputs on things that would enhance each member's participatory will be used by next year's Chapter Board to address potential operations changes and enhancements.

**Join Chapter members at Anthony's  
Restaurant at 6 pm before the meeting!  
Located at 3000 Annandale Rd, Falls  
Church, VA 22042 - (703) 532-0100**

**Chapter Talk 7:30pm  
October 11, 2017**

## **Ball Sellers House and Robert Ball Sr. Cemetery By Patrick O'Neill**

From July to December 2016, Patrick O'Neill led a team of over 100 volunteers, excavating a razed addition to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Ball Sellers House for the Arlington Historical Society. Built by John Ball in the 1740s, the log house had a late 18<sup>th</sup> century addition that was torn down around 1915. A trove of artifacts and information on construction was found and presented by O'Neill. At the same time he was heading the Ball Sellers excavations, O'Neill became involved with stopping the removal of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Robert Ball Sr. Cemetery, the namesake for Ballston. The cemetery is being saved, thanks to his efforts, and incorporated into the fabric of the church being rebuilt on the site!

**IN MEMORY OF**  
**CHARLES DONALD "CD" COX**  
**1916 – 2017**

Our Chapter lost its most iconic figure last month when CD took it upon himself to personally seek out the creators of the prehistoric artifact he collected and excavated over his long career as both a collector and advocational archaeologist. We in the Northern Virginia chapter shared his enthusiasms and benefited from his nearly unlimited knowledge on the subject during his 30 year career beginning on the Taft Site in 1986 and ending with his weekly laboratory work at the Beverley Chapmen Mill in early 2017. While our Chapter has a cohort of members covering the same time period, none of them started their run at the age of 70! The attached photos highlight his 4 decade spanning participation from shoveling sharpening at the Taft Site in the 1980s, excavating in his red shirt and white painter's pants at Cactus Hill in the 1990s, demonstrating an uncanny level of virtuosity with the Gault Cart in Texas in between water screening sessions in the 2000s, and finally processing and identifying lithic materials from the Mill and Smith Mountain Lake sites in The Plains in late 2016 and early 2017. He is remembered by many of our members for his unceasing thirst for knowledge and his incredible depth and breadth of knowledge across a wide range of subjects.



CD brought his family into our Chapter life. The annual Chapter picnic has been held at Cox Farms where this year Eric Cox treated us to a preopening

photo opportunity at Coxhengeö. The 40 members and guests present sang Happy Birthday to CD and shared a day of camaraderie. Steve made sure the Chapter had several of Mom's outstanding pies to share as he has done at numerous Chapter monthly meetings over the years. Over the years we shared Gault Site expeditions and Smithsonian lectures with Thea and other family members. We met Frank, other family and friends at CD's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party. The true measure of a person's life is the family they create and nourish. Our Chapter became an extension of CD's family.

Mike Johnson's announcements that he and CD were saddling up for another conference or dig out West still amaze me. This Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid friendship illustrates the strong bonds that archaeology can build and nourish. Speaking of nourishment, we will miss CD bring along apple cider donuts and kettle corn from Eric's Fall Festival at this year's ASV Annual Conference! Our Chapter members will miss our stopovers at CD's house following a day at the Mill where we would share that day's discoveries and memories.

In Mike Johnson's words, the Northern Virginia Chapter has lost its patriarch. We miss him and cherish the memories of our shared experiences with him and his family. Several of us were fortunate to share time with his family several hours before CD's death. It is fitting the Chris Ramey brought a newly excavated quartz projectile point which he and Eric pressed into CD's hand as a tribute and farewell.

The family has requested that any gifts be directed to the Gault School of Archaeological Research (GSAR) at [URL.gaultschool.com](http://URL.gaultschool.com).



CD exercising the Gault Cart



CD washing at Gault

## CD Cox

by Mike Johnson

On September 12 of this year, Charles D. (CD) Cox died of "old age" at the age of 101. Had it not been for old age, CD would have lived and loved archeology until he was 201.

For many years and up until recently, CD, accompanied by his son, Steve, regularly attended the No. Va. Chapter monthly and ASV Annual meetings. They were joys to him but his heart was always in the field/lab. He continued pursuing the elusive first people to enter the New World until the last months of his life.

CD grew up on a farm in Adams County, Ohio, where Serpent Mound is located. He developed a love for collecting prehistoric artifacts at an early age. While raising a large family, CD had a full professional career, much of which involved farming, but also including a "short" career (he retired from that job) as a civilian Quality Control specialist for the U.S. Army Ordinance Corps after WWII.

I had the privilege of driving tens of thousands of miles with CD to all corners of the United States and into Canada in pursuit of archeological adventures. With his wealth of experiences CD made sure I never fell asleep while driving. I was amazed that throughout those years he rarely told the same story more than once. That spoke volumes about how he chose to experience life. He was big on sampling and I guess he lived that model.

After many years of artifact collecting, CD discovered archeology in the early 1980s while still relatively young at 60. He was smitten by "Paleoindian" archeology and the understanding of how the First Americans lived. The evidence for his work is in print.

He was proud of his early work in the Northeast with Art Spiess and Mike Gramly on the Paleo sites in Maine, and his contributions to Jack Holland's lithic type collection at the Buffalo Museum (now at the Smithsonian). The proof is in print, where he is pictured working at the Adkins Paleo-site in 1984 (Gramly 1988: 95), Michaud Paleo-site in 1985 (Spiess and Wilson 1987: 6), and Lamb Paleo-site in 1985/6 (Gramly 1999: 26), where he cut his teeth on real archeology.

CD even attended a lithic technology field school with Errett Callahan in Oregon in the early 1980s. He claimed to have not gotten beyond the biface stage of evolution.

My first encounter with CD was in 1987, when he volunteered at the Taft site (44FX544). I treasure a slide image of him employing the correct way to sharpen a flat shovel. Unlike most "newbees," CD sharpened it on the top side. It showed he understood the importance of the small things needed to make things work better. In the image from the Lamb site CD is using a flat shovel. Obviously, it wasn't new to him. He knew how to properly sharpen a shovel before 1930.

He worked a number of "early" sites including Cactus Hill (with the ASV), Smith Mountain Gap (with WMCAR), and the huge pre-Clovis and Clovis Gault site in Central Texas (with the University of Texas and Texas State). All were memorable for both him and those working with him.

However, Gault held a special place in his heart. As he progressed into his 90s, CD had trouble navigating the trek to the site from the parking area and warned everyone that he could no longer go and would not be joining the Northern Virginia Chapter's annual and sometimes bi-annual trips. Project Director, Mike Collins scoured the Texas countryside and found an old golf cart that he was able to acquire especially so that CD could continue to work at Gault. It became known as the "Gault



cart" and when CD was there it was his. Anyone who needed it for other purposes had to borrow it from CD.

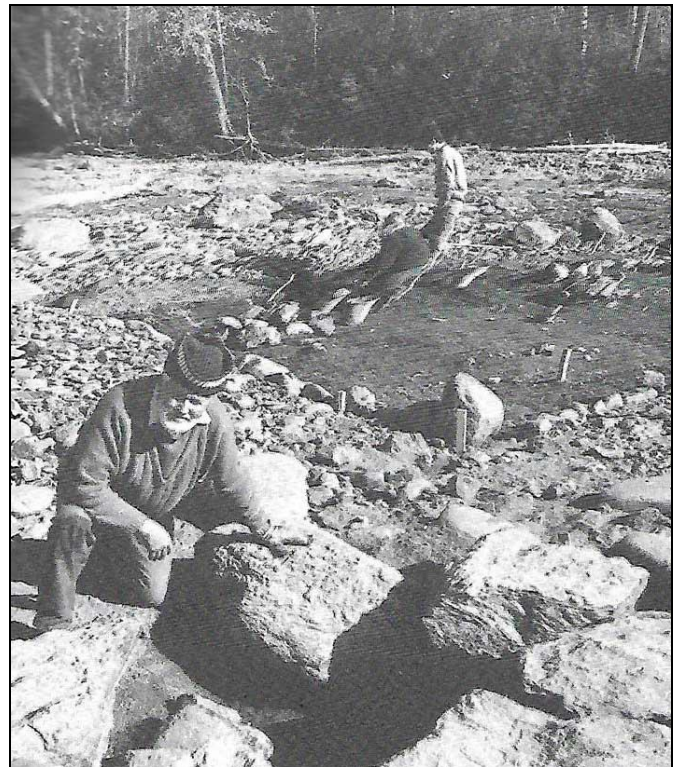
CD ran the Gault site's massive water screening operation, when we were there. The job usually involved processing scores of buckets containing soil destined for 1/4- and 1/8-inch processing. Often he inherited more than 50 buckets of unscreened organic-rich clay left by the college field schools that preceded our arrivals. CD always left the screen operation with no more than a day's worth of un-screened material ó remember he retired as an efficiency expert.

The Gault School of Archeological Research (GSAR) will be dedicating one of its new picnic tables at the Gault site in memory of CD. Contributions in memory of CD are requested to go to the GSAR.

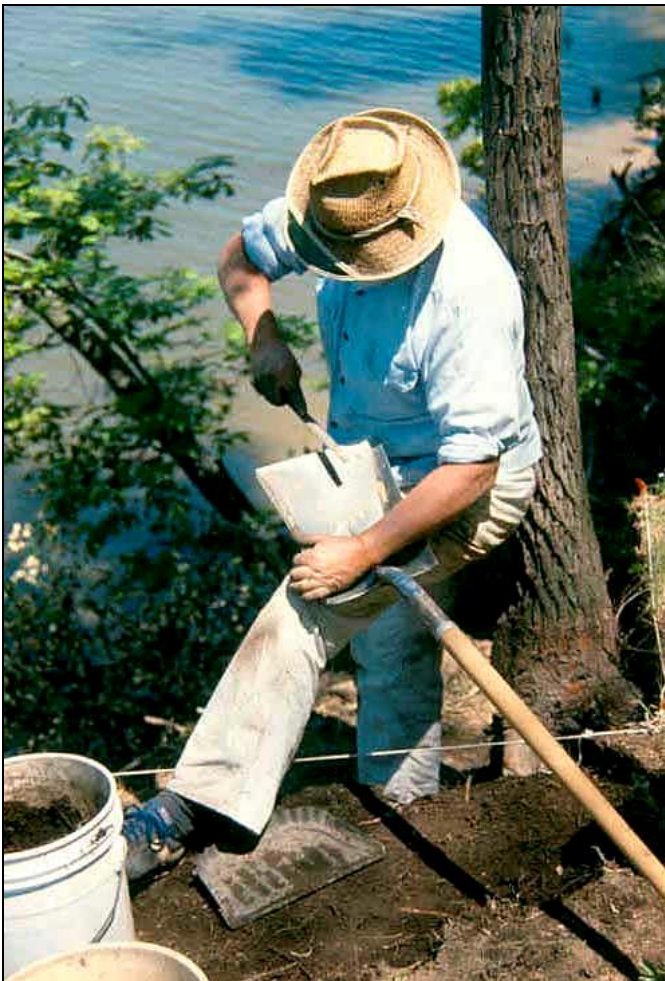
Personally, I already miss CD a lot. His life was a lesson to me and everyone about how to live.



CD at Lamb in 1985-86



CD at Adkins in 1984



CD at 44FX544-1987, flat shovel sharpening





CD at Michaud in 1985

### **ROOSEVELT ISLAND TOUR**

By Yvonne French

More than 20 members of the chapter and their guests went on a 2-mile archaeological walking tour of Theodore Roosevelt Island on Saturday, September 16. Led by National Park Service docent Elise Milstein, the tour included information about landscape and previous digs as well as the history of the island now named for Theodore Roosevelt, known as the Conservation President.

Ms. Milstein described the island's strategic location like a cork in the Potomac River between the fall line and the coastal plain where anadromous fish ran, supporting native inhabitants.

The guided tour circumnavigated the Island over gravel trails, giving views of most remaining features and locations. Many in the group spent significant time with eyes on the ground spotting historical ceramics that liberally dot the trails, one of which is more than 200 years old.

The island was associated for more than 100 years with the family of the patriot/founding father George Mason, including the plantation of his son, Georgetown merchant John Mason, from 1796 to 1833. He constructed a manor house and ornamental pleasure garden on the island and had orchards and experimental crops that included

peaches up to 1 pound in weight and an award-winning yellow-tinged cotton.

During the Civil War the island was taken over by the Union Army and used as a training camp for the first regiment of black soldiers. One stop takes in the photo location of Civil War photographer Mathew Brady. After the war the island was later used as a refugee camp for formerly enslaved persons, both escaped and freed.

In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps buried remaining structures and planted more than 35,000 trees to return it to a natural climax forest.

The mansion site and the Civil War building sites are ripe for further archaeological exploration. Although it is unknown if National Park Service has plans for that, they are said to be desirous of more in-depth interpretation of the island.

The tour was also attended by members of Friends of Fairfax Archaeology and the Arlington Historical Society. For those who missed it or would like to see the landscape without foliage, Ms. Milstein is planning another archaeological tour in March 2018. [Friends of Theodore Roosevelt Island](#) also offers moonlight tours for the price of \$20, which helps maintain the island and central monument plaza, which celebrates its 50th anniversary on October 29.

### **GUNSTON HALL ARCHAEOLOGY DAY**

By Phil Mulford

On 30 September, Gunston Hall, Home of George Mason, hosted Archaeology Day for the public. Organizations manned tables including:

- Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia (NVC/ASV) manned by Richard Eiler, Patrick O'Neil and Philip Mulford;
- Friends of Fairfax County (FOFC) manned by Sallie Lyons and Jim Evans;
- Fairfax County Park Authority, Cultural Resource Management and Protection, Colchester Archaeological Research Team manned by Colleen Boyle and Harley Hoffman;

- Ball-Seller House project, Arlington Historical Society's effort at the Ball-Seller House manned by Annette Benbow, Thea Crouch, Nelson Crouch, Dakota Springston, Phumejai Phantipong and Patrick O'Neill.
- Maryland Archaeological Society manned by Sarah Rivers-Cofield and others as needed.

Many NVC/ASV members are actively involved in additional Virginia and other out-of-state archaeological sites.

Included were activities for children from pre-adolescence to adolescence. These included:

- Searching for artifacts in a corn-kernel-filled box operated by Yvonne French,
- Actual excavating at a site supervised by John Kelsey,
- Screening for artifacts by Philip Mulford,
- Artifact mending of ceramics manned by Amanda Hartman, Susan Hardenburch and Grace May, and
- Artifact identification and Munsell Soil Color table manned by Claudia Wendling and Jerry Foster.

The younger attendees could also screen to find pre-historic and historic artifacts. One enthusiastic adolescent picked out pieces of ceramic from artifacts from several screening, and mended some of the pieces together. This accomplishment was a total surprise to Dave Shonya, the Gunston Hall archaeologist.

For the second year, Dr. Michael Johnson demonstrated flint knapping under a large tree. This included a large personnel display of replicated Native American lithic (stone) artifacts and figures. Dr. Johnson talked and demonstrated the various techniques and skills required to make the replica artifacts. Replica artifacts included points (arrow/spear), and finely-detailed art figures, all of stone.













## 2017 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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### 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> 703-534-3881
<b>Mount Vernon</b>	Dr. Luke Pecoraro	<a href="mailto:LPecoraro@mountvernon.org">LPecoraro@mountvernon.org</a> 703.799.6831
<b>Gunston Hall</b>	Dave Shonyo	<a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-550-0441
<b>Alexandria Museum</b>	Dr. Eleanor Breen	<a href="mailto:Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov">Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399
<b>Chapmans Mill</b>	Frances Allshouse	<a href="mailto:chapmanmill@gmail.com">chapmanmill@gmail.com</a> 540-253-5888
<b>DC City Archaeologist</b>	Dr. Ruth Trocolli	<a href="mailto:Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov">Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov</a> 202-442-8836

### NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

**Return to:**

**Barbara Leven, Treasurer, NVC/ASV**

**9518 Liberty Tree Lane**

**Vienna VA 22182**

**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!!!!**