



# THE DATUM POINT

January 2022

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

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



## **FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT** **PATRICK O'NEILL**

Happy New Year! We welcome 2022 with new officers within the ranks!

President	-	Patrick O'Neill
Vice-President	-	Yvonne French
Treasurer	-	Barbara Leven
Corresponding Sec.	-	John Kelsey
Datum Point Editor	-	Kurt Fredrickson
Webmaster	-	Chris Havlicek
Certification Liaison	-	Ann Wood
Recording Sec.	-	Maggie Johnson

I am turning over the Datum Point Editor position to Kurt after holding that position for 15 years!!!!!! He will do a great job! I encourage chapter members to contribute articles, photos, ideas for submission to Kurt. Yvonne French will be setting up chapter presentations, and please give suggestions to her for speakers! Nancy Ehlke served for many years as the Recording Secretary, and we thank her for her service, now succeeded by Maggie Johnson. The rest of us are the returning usual suspects!

The ASV Board will hold their January 2022 meeting through Zoom at the end of the month. Let me know if you have anything you would like for me to bring to their attention.

I have agreed to do some shovel tests at the Ball Sellers House in Arlington ahead of a proposed expansion of their vegetable garden. I will let you know when that will happen. It may be as early as February or early March.

**CHAPTER DUES!!!! Please see the last page of the DP for Chapter Dues! Mail a check to the name and address.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86049308859>

January 12, 2022 7pm

## **Archaeology of the Dependencies at Arlington House**

By Patrick O'Neill



*Selina and Thornton Gray's room*

Arlington House was built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Washington. In addition to the huge brick mansion, two brick dependencies were built in the rear of the building. The dependencies served as storage, a smokehouse, a summer kitchen, as well as living quarters for many of the enslaved people that worked in and around the mansion. Archaeology and architectural history of the dependencies have uncovered several layers of historic living surfaces within the lower levels of the buildings, giving insight to the lifeways of the enslaved people who worked and lived within those walls, including the family of Selina and Thornton Gray.

## NVA Chapter members participate in Smith Mountain Lake excavation

By Mike Johnson

In early November 2021, Yvonne French, her husband Paul, Kurt Fredrickson and I participated in week-long testing at the Smith Mountain Gap Archaeology (SMGA) project. A lot of great artifacts and a possible hearth on 44PY98 were recovered but the illusive, *in situ*, fluted point(s) were not recovered. We dug at our main excavations on site 44PY152 and at 44PY98.

The Arlington lab crew have completed cataloguing the material from the 44PY98 shovel test pit sampling. I picked up the excavated material from SMGA stewards, Bill Childress and Jeanette Cole on Jan 5. We will begin cataloguing everything as soon as the weather permits. Based on imbedded and disturbed surface finds, we are certain we were digging in the Paleo-American periods. In fact, in one test square we recovered artifacts as deep as between 27 to 33 centimeters below that surface in association with a cobble feature. That most likely is from an older than Clovis (pre-13,000 year old) occupation level.

A cursory examination of materials from the detailed excavations, produced flakes of numerous stone types, bifaces, and tools. Several charcoal samples were also collected for future analysis. They included from a potential hearth on 44PY98. Squares were excavated in 3-centimeter levels.



*A crystal quartz flake recovered from 44PY152*



The soil on both 44PY152 and 44PY 98 were challenging and had the consistency of baker's chocolate. Needless to say, everyone's trowels were frequently in need of sharpening.

Although we recovered hundreds of artifacts, many were very small. Project Director, Joe Gingerich, of Ohio University carefully captured their horizontal and vertical positions with a total station, which should prove interesting when analyzing the 3-dimensional distribution of artifacts. We also recorded dip and strike of each possible artifact to help assess potential disturbance processes.

The weather was spectacular and we had a great crew of enthusiastic and competent adults, including college students along with the older crew of avocationals, Virginia certified archaeological technicians/candidates, and professionals, including the State Archaeologist, Elizabeth Moore and Southwest Regional Archaeologist, Tom Klatka. Considering the high quality of our college student crew, they are included in the adult category.





## CART

### Fairfax County Archaeological Research Team

This month the CART team started working in the Southern Ridges of Riverbend Park. This will be the largest section of the survey within Riverbend; the park is so large that we need to split the phase I survey into multiple sub-areas. The ridges, for example, are split into 3 different regions: the northern, central, and southern ridges. This allows for a closer analysis of the variety of landforms within the park and serves to keep our work organized as we move through the survey.

In the lab, Heather has created a beautiful new display in the James Lee Community Center just down the hall from the lab and offices! The “Passing Time” display focuses on a variety of toys that CART has recovered throughout the years, including artifacts like a plastic toy cow to a variety of marbles!



We hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season! Please note that we are not taking volunteers at this time, and our offices remain closed until further notice. We will post new opportunities on the Volunteer Management website when they become available. Until then, ACB volunteers are encouraged to share their talents with other branches and/or parks where opportunities are now available. For more information, please visit Fairfax County's Volunteer page for more information. If you would like to be notified when we can accept volunteer assistance again, please email [cartarchlab@live.com](mailto:cartarchlab@live.com)



## 2022 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

<b>President</b>	Patrick O'Neill	<a href="mailto:PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET">PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET</a> 703-244-6275
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<b>Certification Liaison</b>	Ann Wood	<a href="mailto:annpwood@gmail.com">annpwood@gmail.com</a>

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

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<b>Gunston Hall</b>	Dave Shonyo	<a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-638-9724
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<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 can join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia at [www.virginiaarcheology.org/](http://www.virginiaarcheology.org/)**

**The Chapter meets at 7:00p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of each month either in person or on Zoom.**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!**