



THE DATUM POINT

April 2023

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org



FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

PATRICK O'NEILL

What a beautiful spring! Things are starting to happen in archaeology! Make sure to take advantage of Mike Johnson's lab and field work on the Jasper Ridge artifacts, as well as Smith Mountain Lake. In May, I hope to return to Bull Run Mountain to survey more archaeological sites.

Hand excavations around the barn at Kittiewan are continuing April 15, and I am now planning to be out there on April 22, as well. Please come down to help, and to see Kittiewan, the home of the ASV!

Historian Don Wilson from Prince William County died last month, and Diane has a writeup for him in this DP. He was very instrumental on my projects at Bristow Station and Bull Run Mountain. Always eager to help with research, no project or question was too big or too small. He will be missed.

The ASV Board meeting is on April 29, 2023, at Kittiewan. If you have anything you would like to ask the Board let me, Diane Schug-O'Neill or Yvonne French know.

The April meeting is in-person!!!!!! Come hear what Liz Crowell has to say about Fairfax County Archaeology!



In-Person Meeting This Month

Wednesday, April 12. 7:30 p.m.

**Richard Byrd Library,
7250 Commerce Street Springfield, VA**

This month's presentation

Top Fairfax County Archaeologist Will Discuss Present Work and Future of Dynamic Program

Elizabeth Crowell, Branch Manager of the Fairfax County Archaeological and Collections Branch of the Fairfax County Park Authority, will offer a lecture "Post-Pandemic Archeology in Fairfax County: A Synopsis," at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 12, at the Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, in Springfield.

Dr. Crowell has served in her position in the Archaeological and Collections Branch (ACB) for 20 years. She holds a master's degree in History/Historical Archaeology from the College of William and Mary and an MA and Ph.D. in Historical Archaeology from the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to joining the Park Authority in 2003, she worked for 20 years as a principal investigator on cultural resource management projects in the eastern United States and the American southwest. In 2017, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, an honor

awarded to only a select few in the field. The award is based on criteria that includes a minimum of 20 years in archaeology in the mid-Atlantic region, ethics appropriate to the protection of archaeological resources, research that reflects a broad understanding of the field and that has been made available to other scholars, and service as a mentor to students of archaeology. She is active in numerous professional archeological groups and is a past president of the Council of Virginia Archaeologists.

Her presentation will touch on the following topics:

For those who might not be familiar, the archaeology program in Fairfax County started in 1978 with the hiring of a County Archaeologist, Dr. Mike Johnson, by the Heritage Resource Branch of the Office of Comprehensive Planning. County Archaeology documented archaeological sites countywide that were threatened by development. County Archaeology also authored the Heritage Resource Management Plan to guide archaeology in the county. By 1987 the Fairfax County Park Authority recognized the need to document archaeological resources on parkland. Richard Sacha was hired and the Park Authority undertook a robust program to identify, evaluate, and interpret archaeological resources on parkland. In 1996, the county placed the two archaeological groups under the administrative oversight of the Park Authority. Since that time, they have been responsible for archaeology both on parkland and county-wide. Beginning in 2003, the two groups were consolidated into a cohesive unit under the direction of the Branch Manager.

Among the tasks they do is to assess the archaeological potential of properties scheduled for development; make recommendations for future work; and review resulting reports. They provide technical oversight, participate in federal, state, and locally mandated projects, and direct and conduct a full slate of archaeological projects with scopes that range from preliminary assessments to full-scale data recovery projects. “The pandemic required us to think creatively and continue to produce high quality work,” said Dr. Crowell. Staff conducted socially distanced field and laboratory efforts. They prepared archaeological technical reports that included data from both recently completed fieldwork and from legacy projects. They prepared guidance documents and updated policies and procedures. They created social media content, publishing the blog artiFACTS at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/artifacts>. They updated computerized databases and mapping efforts, and continued responding to citizen inquiries.



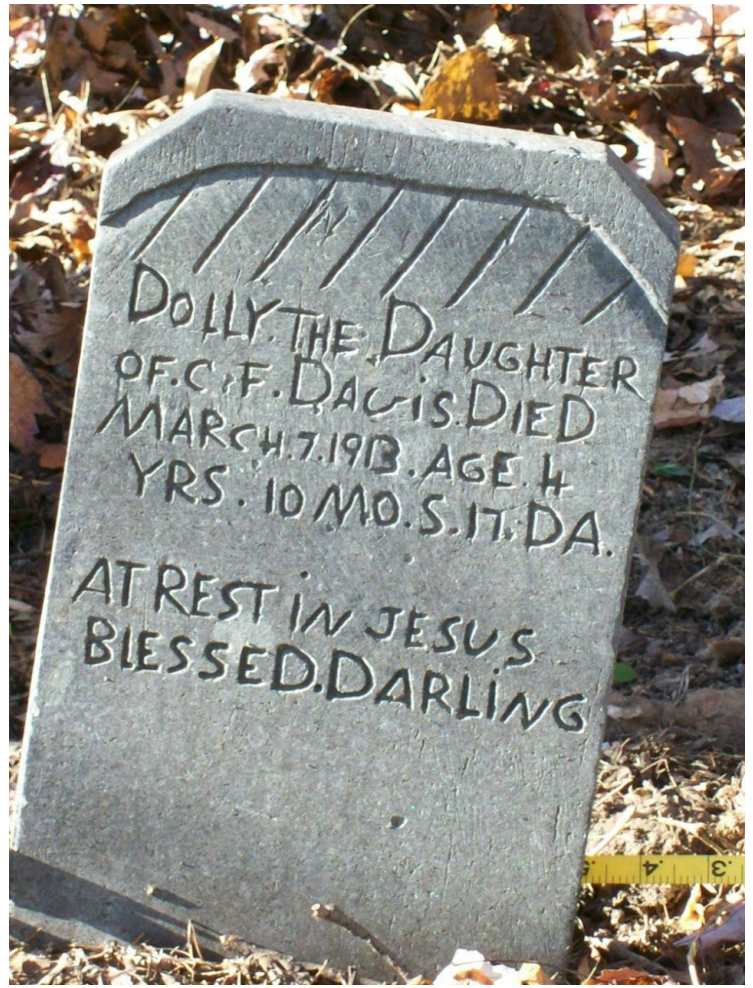
Masked lab work during the pandemic

The upcoming presentation will report on their progress during the pandemic and will discuss current and future planned work. Current ACB projects include a multi-phase cemetery survey for which volunteers are being accepted periodically. The survey had its genesis with Jane Kirkpatrick-Wall's 1977 gift of transcriptions of 100 Fairfax County cemeteries. In 1994, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors requested that the records be updated and made available to researchers. This resulted in the manuscript, "Cemeteries of Fairfax County, Virginia," by Brian Conley, a reference guide and updated listing of some 360 cemetery surveys.



Socially distanced field work during the pandemic

The survey will provide updated location information, including nearest street address, geographic coordinates, and tax-map and parcel number. It also will give information about current legal ownership, caretakers, and a general description of current conditions. Where feasible, headstone transcriptions may be provided, as well as an estimate of any unmarked burials. This information will assist genealogical researchers, staff providing comments for development projects, homeowners and their associations, and scholars studying the history of Fairfax County. The survey is just one of the projects that Dr. Crowell will discuss.



Unique folk-art headstone at Wakefield Chapel Cemetery

CART
COLLEEN BOYLE
Fairfax County Archaeological Research Team



CART Senior Archaeologist Aimee Wells giving her presentation *Grave Misunderstandings: Purpose and Progress of the Fairfax County Cemetery Re-Survey* from March 4, 2023 at *Gunston Hall*. Her talk focused on the new standards for researching and documenting cemeteries throughout Fairfax County. Click [here](#) more information on CART cemetery surveys.

Earlier this month, staff from Colvin Mill Run Historic Site visited the Park Authority's museum collections storage facility at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. Led by Archeological and Museum Collections Manager **Kelsey Atwood**, the tour explored a selection of objects in the Park Authority's permanent collection that are not currently on display. The group viewed several items created or used at Colvin Run Mill by the Millard

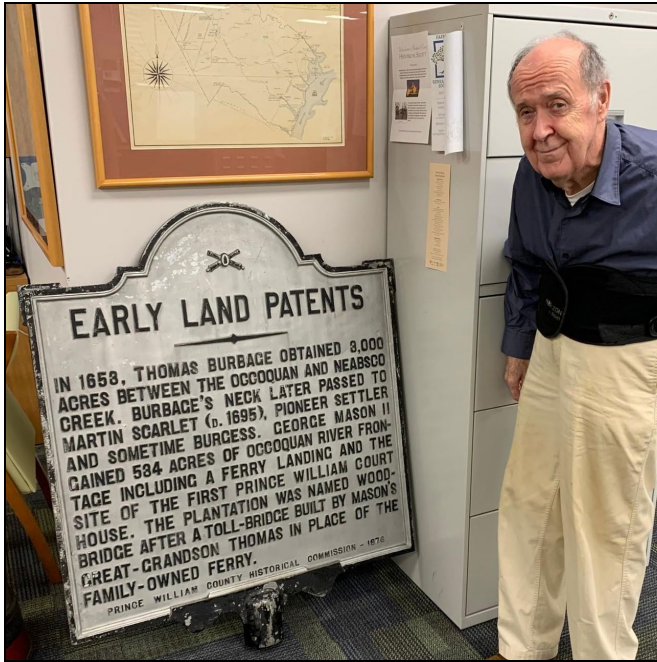
family including a family Bible (image above), handmade scoops, Millard Brothers branded four sacks, and a handwritten recipe for whole grain flour bread.



To see more from **CART**, check out our latest artiFACTS blog posts: "Extra, Extra: Historic Finds Opens Eyes to Women's Suffrage in Fairfax County" by **Elizabeth Paynter**. The artiFACTS blog can be found at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/artifacts>.



Farewell to Don Wilson **By Diane Schug-O'Neill**



It is with great sadness that we bid a fond farewell to our longtime stalwart supporter. Don Wilson was an active Chapter member since the 1990s. Don began working as a Reference Librarian in DC suburbs in late 1970; he found his home with Prince William County Library in 1979. Don worked tirelessly to improve local history by continually curating collections and leveraging knowledge from everyone he helped search the local documents. Don constantly matched local historians with each other to further everyone's knowledge base and encouraged publishing the information.

As a longtime supporter of the Northern Virginia Chapter and the Archaeological Society of Virginia, Don ensured the Prince William County Library's RELIC Room subscribed to both the *Datum Point* and the *Quarterly Bulletin*. Known as the "Genealogy Dr." Don educated any and everyone about family genealogy. Don spoke to our Chapter about genealogy in March 2008. In

the early 1990s, I was lucky enough to partner up with Don during a dig of a post-in-ground home site. It was there that Mike Johnson pointed out to me that Don's color blindness was actually an asset on such a dig. His "disability" gave him more acuity when looking at various soil colors, a key to identifying the post holes and post molds on the site. I learned a lot from Don that day and many days throughout our friendship. Virginia history and archaeology are better for Don's involvement through the Northern Virginia Chapter. Don passed away on March 6th and was interred at The Manassas Cemetery on March 23rd.



Julian Williams and Eleanor Mullen Field School

Scholarship Available

To be eligible for consideration for the scholarship the applicant must be a member of the ASV in good standing for at least four months prior to the application deadline date of May 1. The scholarship award of up to \$400 but not more than \$750 in special circumstances may be used for: tuition and fees; travel, lodging, and subsistence expenses; equipment and supplies to be used by the recipient during the field study experience; or any other legitimate expense that serves to enhance the field study experience. The recipient(s) will be announced on or before the June issue of the *Datum Point*. Two people may receive a scholarship in any one year.

Learn more about the scholarship at [Williams-Mullen Field .School Scholarship](#) and how to apply at [Williams-Mullen Scholarship Application](#).



Availability of Rubis-Fuller Research Fund

The purpose of the Rubis-Fuller Research Fund (RRF) is to provide financial support to the scientific research efforts in the Northern Virginia Chapter (NVC) of the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV). This will enhance the level of archaeological knowledge among the Chapter's members through the recommended recipient's sharing the results with the Chapter.

The Rubis-Fuller Research Fund was established through generous donations from the family and friends of Dave Rubis and Patricia Fuller. Dave Rubis, a Chapter volunteer, was committed to the use of scientific methods in archaeology, and developed new techniques that greatly enhanced the Chapter's archaeological efforts, particularly at Cactus Hill. Patricia Fuller was a longtime Chapter member who volunteered on many sites and held Chapter offices.

No more than \$300 will be awarded in any calendar year. The Chapter officers retain the right to accept a part of the proposal. A higher amount may be recommended, under exceptional circumstances, where the potential benefits to the Chapter are deemed to justify the higher level of funding.

Completed applications may be received between January 2 - September 15.

A recipient of the award must:

- Provide the Chapter Treasurer with an accounting of the research fund expenditures on a form to be provided by the Chapter, with appropriate documentation;
- Give the Chapter a copy of the research results, in an appropriate format;
- Write an article for the *Datum Point* within three months of receiving the results of the research testing. This article will describe the item(s) being tested, the methodology of testing, the anticipated results, the actual results, and the way the results will be incorporated into the project's continued research and/or its reporting. This article will be 150-300 words in length.
- Give an oral report at the monthly meeting when the written report is handed to the Chapter.

The following are examples of how the fund award might be used:

- dendrochronology
- phytolith analysis
- carbon analysis
- neutron analysis
- pollen analysis
- analysis of wood or cloth
- ethnobotanical and faunal analysis
- forensics
- soil analysis
- Carbon-14 (C14) dating

While these are examples, they are not meant to limit applications; all legitimate scientific research efforts will be considered for the Rubis-Fuller Research Fund award.

The application is available at

<http://www.nvcasv.org/rubisfuller.pdf>. Once complete, give the application to any chapter officer. All proposed awards will be approved by the Chapter membership. This approval will be sought through the usual voting procedures of the Chapter. A notice in the *Datum Point* will precede the vote and a period of discussion will follow the call for vote.



2023 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET 703-244-6275
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Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)	Dr. Elizabeth Crowell	elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov 703-534-3881
Mount Vernon	Joe Downer	JDowner@mountvernon.org 703.799.6831
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-638-9724
Alexandria Museum	Dr. Eleanor Breen	Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Trocolli	Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov 202-442-8836

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Dues:

Individual (\$15) _____

Family (\$17) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Please make check payable to NVC/ASV.

Return to:

Barbara Leven, Treasurer, NVC/ASV

9518 Liberty Tree Lane

Vienna VA 22182

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month. *Due to COVID-19 concerns, meetings may take place in-person and/or on Zoom. Details with start time and on-line/in-person information will be provided in the Datum Point newsletter prior to each meeting.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!