

The Datum Point

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

Website – www.nvcasv.org

January 2008

FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT – ANN WOOD

A Happy New Year to all! We are looking forward to an enjoyable and productive year in the Northern Virginia Chapter of ASV – with outdoor opportunities at opposite ends of Fairfax County, a push toward certification by a number of chapter members, and planning to host the ASV Annual Meeting in our area in 2009.

Your new officers are pleased to give our hard-working former president Patrick O’Neill a break. We are honored to step into the following roles:

Ann Wood - President
Pat Fuller - Vice President
CK Gailey - Treasurer
Felicia Glapion - Recording Secretary
Maggie Johnson - Corresponding Secretary
Patrick O’Neill – Editor

As you see, Patrick will remain active in the chapter as editor of our newsletter, the Datum Point, allowing Diane Schug-O’Neill to devote full time to editing the Quarterly Bulletin of the ASV. Of course, Patrick is also president-elect of the ASV, preparing to move up in October. Big thanks to both of them for all they have done and all they continue to do! And thanks to Vicki Monken, who steps down as corresponding secretary.

Our chapter meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the James Lee Center, the place to hear interesting speakers and learn about upcoming digging and lab opportunities. In certification, we anticipate a new schedule of course offerings around the state to help candidates complete their requirements.

Here’s to a great 2008 in the Northern Virginia Chapter!

Datum Point

JANUARY 2008 SPEAKER – PATRICK O’NEILL

KITTEIWAN PLANTATION - THE NEW HOME OF THE ASV



Patrick O’Neill has been a professional archaeologist for 25 years traveling across the United States and into Canada. He has a BS in Anthropology from Kansas State University and a MA in History from West Texas A&M University. Patrick is past President of the Northern Virginia Chapter, and serves on many ASV committees. Currently, he is the President-elect of the ASV, assuming the presidency in January 2009.

Kittiewan Plantation, a wood frame, middle class farmer’s house, was built prior to the 1770s and occupied by Dr. William Rickman of American Revolution fame and several members of the Harrison family, including siblings of the ninth president. The house has survived from over 220 years and many portions have not been altered in the time period! The plantation house and grounds are in trust with the ASV managing the property, making it their new home of operation. This talk will show the behind the scenes look at this marvelous 18th century property!

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44FX1 THE FRASER SITE

By CK Gailey

Ever wonder what was the site assigned the very first 44FX number? The question came up the other day and the answer turned out to be interesting. A quick check of the site files yielded a one-page registration form. In November, 1961, R.B. Looker, Jr., filled out an Archeological Society of Maryland Site Survey Record for a site on the second terrace of the Virginia side of the Potomac River “two miles downstream from Seneca Creek.”

The one-acre site was identified as a village with site number 44FX1. Mr. Looker recorded that the site was mapped by Richard G. Slattery in 1941 and that Mr. Slattery had collected surface material and was the owner of the collected material. Mr. Looker [author and co-author of several papers for the ASM in the 1960's and '70's] gave the name of the site as the “Lower Seneca Site.”

There were a couple of problems with the site description. No mention was made of what artifacts had been collected by Mr. Slattery. The site form didn't even identify whether the site was prehistoric or historic. The site was identified as 500 feet from the Potomac, on the second terrace, yet the coordinates of the site were on the shore of the river. Finally, the site as recorded in the Virginia Department of Historical Resources' Data Sharing System (DSS) had no additional information.

Checking with Mike Johnson led, of course, to a wealth of further information. He referred to the site as the Fraser Site, a name not otherwise recorded. He also went to his reference shelf and pulled out a dissertation written in 1972 by Ellis Ebaugh McDowell, a Ph.D. candidate at American University. It turned out Dr. McDowell-Loudan (as she now is) had dug the site in 1971 as part of her degree work.

Recognizing that the DSS records provide researchers with invaluable data about sites in Virginia, and that many of the early-recorded sites have sketchy information in DSS, Mike and I decided to supplement the 1961 data on 44FX1 in

DSS so that future researchers might have more complete information on this important site.

Dr. McDowell-Loudan's dissertation provided a rich source of additional information on the Fraser Site, beginning with that name for the site. It turned out that, not only did she dig the site in 1971, but a professor at American University, Dr. William Harrison, had previously dug the site in 1963 and Richard Slattery had continued to visit the site.

The two professional digs produced thousands of flakes and debitage, more than 180 lithic tools and more than 1500 pottery sherds. The site may occupy the entirety of the geophysical feature: a former island on the south side of the Potomac whose southern channel silted up many years ago, so that it is part of Virginia rather than Maryland.

Mike analyzed McDowell-Loudan's dissertation in light of the subsequent 35 years of knowledge of Potomac River lithics and pottery. The results were then incorporated into a supplement to the DSS record. 44FX1, The Fraser Site, is now recorded as Middle and Late Archaic and Early, Middle and Late Woodland. The site is a combination of early camps and Woodland village. The DSS record now contains updated mapping, references to all the archeology at the site and listings of the artifacts found by Harrison and McDowell-Loudan, as well as a citation for Dr. McDowell-Loudan's dissertation.

The site, as well as a total of 233 acres of riverside property, has been preserved by its sale between 1966 and 1973 to The Nature Conservancy by Mrs. Bernice G. Fraser, who had owned it with her husband since 1936.

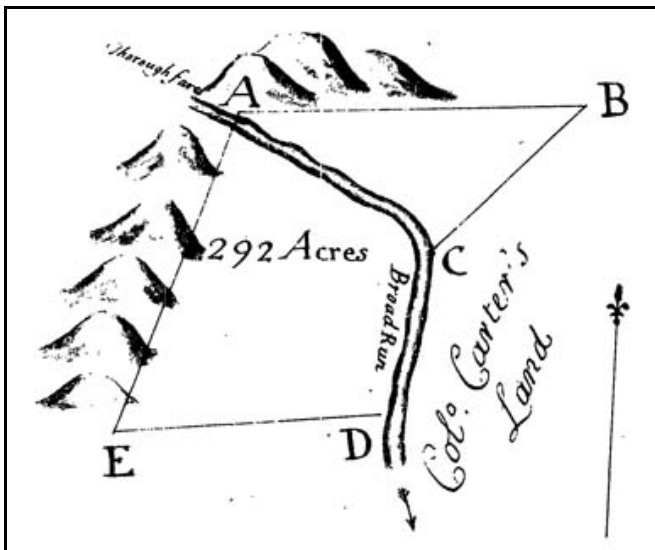
The artifacts from the site are in three places. The American University dig artifacts are at that place. Richard Slattery donated his collection to the Smithsonian Institution. His long-time friend and fellow researcher, Hugh Stabler, who accompanied him on many of his early trips on the Potomac and who may have collected artifacts from the site, donated his collection to the Maryland Historical Trust.

CHAPMAN'S MILL

Have you ever noticed the old burnt out stone mill west of Gainesville on the north side of I-66 when driving west? Ever wonder about it?



Members of the Northern Virginia Chapter visited the mill in early December 2007. The first mill was built in the 1740s on land patented in the 1730s by Catesby Cocke. John Chapman, whose family owned the mills until the Civil War, lived on site for most of the time.



The mill was one of the first landmarks in the area shown on mid-18th century maps. Placed at a gap in the mountains, the only easy east-west path in the area was right where the mill was located. That is the reason the railroad was built next to the mill in the 1840s. The

boundary between Fauquier and Prince William County actually bisects the mill itself!



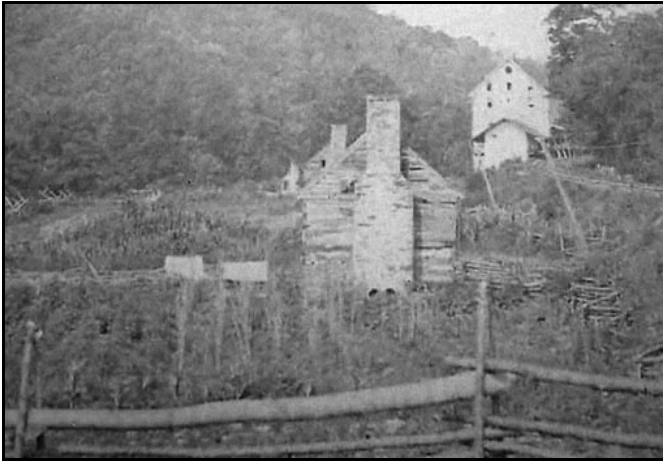
1770 map by John Henry (Library of Congress)

The Chapmans built a large stone house near the mill, but was separated from the mill site when the railroad was built in the 1840s. The house was abandoned around the Civil War.



Wall remnants of the old stone Chapman House

The Chapmans had slaves and the mill was built and operated by these people, who many later became paid workers at the site after the Civil War. It has not yet been proven, but this photograph of workers houses could be showing old slave quarters.



1880s image of mill and worker houses

A large house was built for the owners in the 1880s. This house stood until the 20th century. The foundation is still quite visible.

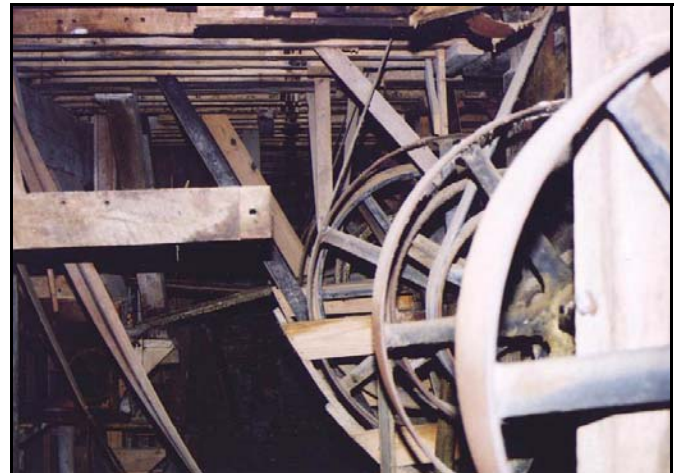
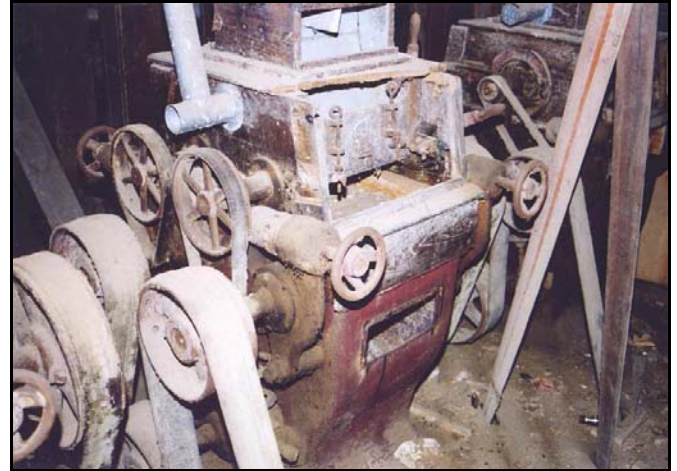


Late 19th century house by mill

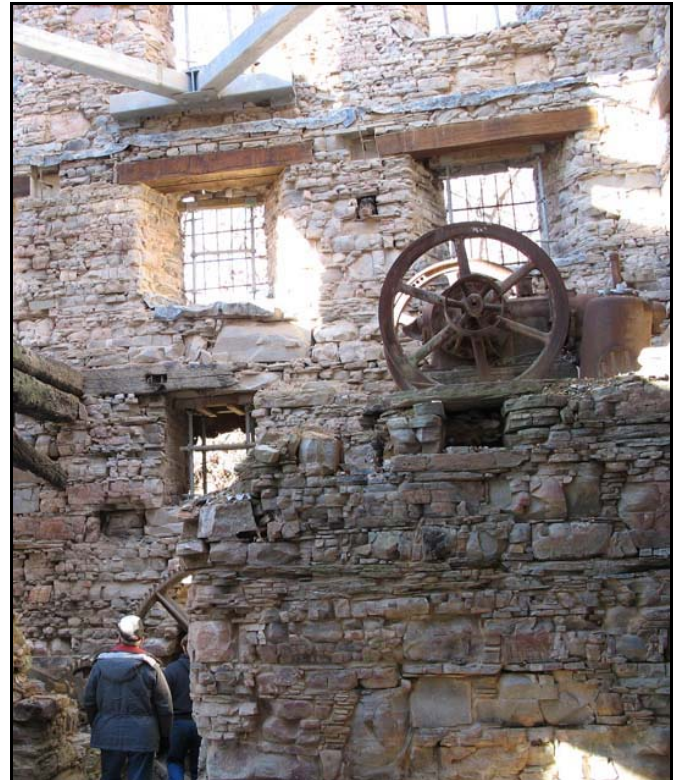


Mill and railroad tracks

Chapmans Mill was put on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in the early 1970s, after I-66 was built nearby. This visual impact was not as bad as one would have thought as the traffic can be heard but not largely seen from the mill. The mill contained much of the 20th century equipment until the 1990s.



In October 1998, arsonists methodically spread accelerant around the interior of the mill and set it ablaze. It is truly amazing the walls stood after such a conflagration!



Interior with machinery and human scale!

The Northern Virginia Chapter plans to do some mapping and hopefully some digging and construction monitoring at the mill site in 2008. If you are interested in helping, contact Patrick O'Neill at patrickloneill@verizon.net.

The Turn the Mill Around Campaign has raised money to stabilize the walls of the mill, but donated money is now only trickling in. They are applying for grants and matching finds from various groups in hopes of revitalizing the mill and grounds.



Interior mill walls

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To see more photographs of the mill and fire as well as learn about the efforts to save the mill, go to <http://www.chapmansmill.org/> or write to:

Turn The Mill Around Campaign
P.O. Box 207
Broad Run, VA 20137

BREN MAR PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRESENTATION

By Patrick O'Neill

Patrick O'Neill gave a presentation at the Bren Mar Park Elementary School in Alexandria off Edsel Road in November 2007. This has become a bi-annual event at this school, and the third time he has participated.

The school gymnasium is used for 24-30 local professionals to set up tables for the students to spend 15 minute sessions with professionals of their choice to learn about their jobs. By the organizer's request, the presentations include information about:

- Educational background or training required
- Necessary skills
- Daily responsibilities
- Tools/equipment used
- Predictions about the future of this career
- Positive and negative aspects of your job

The tables include FBI, bakers, animal doctors, nurses, plumbers, translators, and meteorologists. It was the hardest to compete with the two cosmetologists who had hair extensions and makeup to show! However, there were just as many young women as young men interested in archaeology!

If you would like to participate next year, contact Patrick O'Neill. You could participate in the archaeology booth or set one up on your own profession! The students are happy to see us and learn about what we do!



Patrick O'Neill and students



Cosmetology booth



Animal care



Fire Protection Engineer



NVC Archaeology booth

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

Alexandria Archaeology is hosting the following event for Black History Month on February 9, 2009: "Black History Above and Below Ground" is a free guided walking tour for Black History Month from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Participants will meet at 1800 Diagonal Road in Alexandria, Virginia.

Admission is Free!

Join Pamela Cressey on a walking tour of little-known Civil War sites associated with Alexandria's rich African American history. Meet at the Dutch Touch, 1800 Diagonal Road, across from the King Street Metro Station. Free, but reservations required.

Phone: 703-838-4399

archaeology@alexandriava.gov

www.AlexandriaArchaeology.org

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY NEW BUILDING OPENS JANUARY 26, 2008!!

New Location *Grand opening celebration on Saturday, January 26, 2008*

10360 North Street (juncture of Old Lee Highway & North Street)

Site: 50,000 square feet

Building: 44,450 square feet

Two-story garage: 199 spaces (5 for handicapped)

Collection capacity: 200,000 items

Meeting room seating capacity: 100

Virginia Room

Public PC workstations: 16

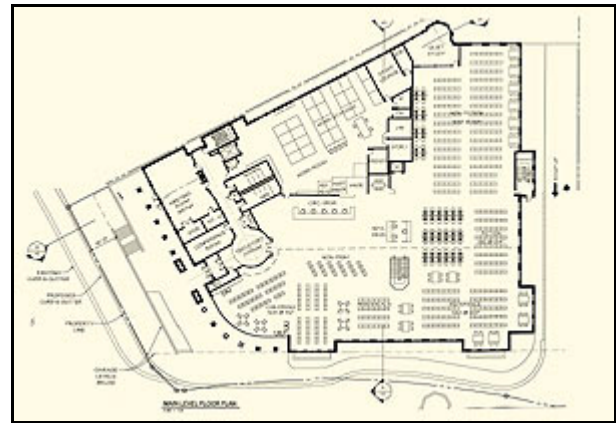
Conference room seating capacity: 12

Collection: 20,000 books + other items

Rare Books Room



New FCPL Library



Floor plan of FCPL

ARLINGTON COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY

By Connie Ramirez

Join us - citizens, county employees, workers, and visitors - to celebrate the beginning of our 7th year of offering this opportunity to learn about the history and historic preservation in Arlington during your lunch break. Here's one way to be informed about the places and traditions that are unique to Arlington. We hope to see you here!

January 2008 Meeting of the
Historic Arlington Roundtable
Brown-bag Lunch
Tuesday, January 8th at 12:15 pm
Conference Room 715, Arlington County
Building 2100 Clarendon Boulevard

This month's topic:

Virginia Indian Heritage Trail

Speaker: Karenne Wood of the Council of the Monacan Indian Nation; Director of the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail and PhD. Candidate in Anthropology at the University of VA.

Learn how descendants of the Native Americans who were here long before John Smith's exploration of the Arlington area have lived and survived in Virginia.

For more information about the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail publication, see www.Virginia.org/site/features.asp?featureid=404

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Loudoun Co. Archaeologist	Mike Clem	michael.clem@loudoun.gov
Alexandria Museum	Pam Cressey	pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399 (information)
Pr. William Co. Archaeologist	Justin Patton	jspatton@pwcgov.org 703-792-5729

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Phone (H): _____
(W): _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Individual (\$15) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Family (\$17) _____

New _____

Renewal _____

Return to:

NVC/Archeological Society of Virginia
2855 Annandale Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042

Chapter members are encouraged to join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia.

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the James Lee Center at the above address.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!

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Northern Virginia Chapter
Archeological Society of Virginia
2855 Annandale Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED