

# THE DATUM POINT

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

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

September 2012

## FROM THE PRESIDENT – JOHN KELSEY

Despite the weather forecast for the day of the Chapter picnic, we had no rain until the very end, and the great facilities provided courtesy of Cox Farms and the Cox family helped to make the picnic a success. The pterodactyls were provided free of charge (see photos). Special thanks to Chef Patrick (O'Neill) for outdoing himself on the grill and to Steve Cox for the pies (which were still WARM!



**No Meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**Because of the Chapter Trip to**  
**Werwicomico on Saturday**  
**September 15<sup>th</sup>!**

On a much more somber note, you are all aware from emails that Jerry Lyons, a long-time Chapter member and great contributor to archaeology and history in Fairfax County, recent passed away. Your chapter officers approved a donation of \$100 to Gunston Hall in Jerry's memory. He will be greatly missed. Sallie, our thoughts are with you.

Because of the picnic last month and the upcoming field trip to Werowocomoco, **there will be no Chapter meeting in September.** The trip will be on September 15<sup>th</sup>, at no cost. The group will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Ruby Tuesday's at 6749 Fox Centre Parkway, Gloucester Courthouse, VA. and will drive from there to the site for a tour which is expected to last one and a half to two hours. Plan on bringing your own bag lunch. A tour of Fairfield Plantation with Thane Harpole is planned for after lunch for those who want to continue. If you have any questions at this point, please get in touch with Diane at [schugoneill@gmail.com](mailto:schugoneill@gmail.com).

If you're planning to go to the ASV Annual Meeting in Wytheville, now's the time to be thinking about making room reservations, as well as registering for the meeting. In addition, a tour has been planned to Saltville and the Museum of the Middle Appalachians on Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.

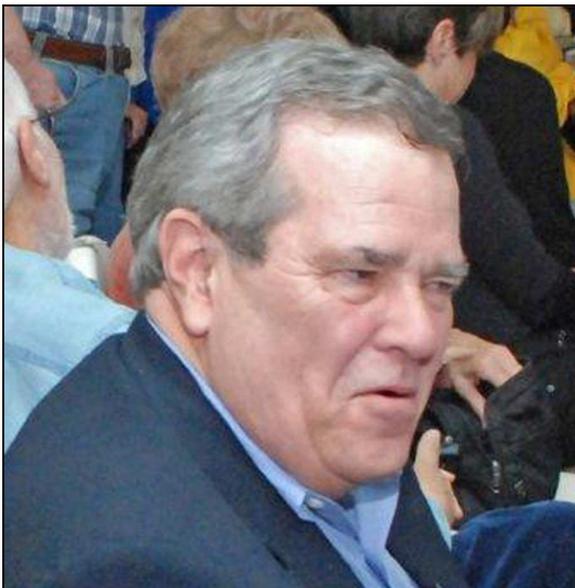
That's a separate sign-up for those of you who want to go. See the ASV website for details on all this.

At a meeting of Chapter officers on August 18<sup>th</sup>, we discussed officers and activities for 2013. The offices of president and recording secretary will need to be filled for next year, and our Vice President, Chris Havlicek, was asked per the bylaws to chair a nominating committee. Please think seriously about serving as an officer. If you enjoy and benefit from Chapter activities (as I hope you do), serving as an officer is a good way to pay the Chapter back and help maintain our momentum. New people bring fresh ideas, and that's always a good thing. Please get in touch with Chris ([christo829@juno.com](mailto:christo829@juno.com)) to volunteer or point the finger at another Chapter member. Along the same lines, I'd really like to get your suggestions for future Chapter speakers and other activities. Emphasis added, because that so seldom happens!

Finally, I'd like to welcome Catherine Grymes as a new Chapter member.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY**  
**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR FOR 2012 –**  
**STEVE KIMBEL**

Here's what the County archaeology office has to say about Steve. NVC President John Kelsey seconds their remarks.



*Stephen Kimbel has volunteered his time with Fairfax County's archaeology program from its infancy in the early 1980s, and, though he had to leave us for a time due to life getting in the way, we were thrilled to welcome him back last year.*

*He has become an integral part of the Old Colchester Park and Preserve cultural resources assessment, working every day that the lab is open to volunteers. He has quickly become an essential part of the lab team. Specifically, Steve has been working to clean, sort, identify and weigh the archaeological material that has been excavated from the Colonial period port town of Colchester, in southern Fairfax County. This work will help Park Authority archaeologists to better understand the extent and integrity of the remains of this early economic center of the county. The material he classifies and catalogs goes into a database that will be used as a reference for Colonial period work in the county for years to come.*

*Though the work is often tedious, and certainly requires a level of patience and concentration that not everyone possesses, Steve dives in with enthusiasm and true love for the work. He understands that the tiny bits and pieces of the past that pass through his fingers are a part of a bigger story of our fledgling nation and its people. He has a passion for American history, and often has knowledge at hand that directly relates to the project or the period.*

*Most of all, Steve's willingness to do whatever the lab most needs to have done, which is often not the most exciting of tasks, is appreciated by staff and other volunteers alike. In addition, he is someone who makes new volunteers feel welcomed and doesn't hesitate to act as a mentor to those with less experience. He is kind, warm, and funny, and a pleasure to be around.*

**WESTBROOK UPDATE**

by Mike Johnson

Development has begun on the Westbrook site (44FX2660). The developer has started the initial clearing of the site. We have permission from the

developer to make a final effort to recover artifacts from the newly disturbed surface of the site. Due to liability issues, we have permission to work on weekends and when they are not on the site.

Our aim is to fill in gaps in the chronology and function of the site. Although we excavated approximately 1,800 square feet, the site is more than 50,000 square feet in size, which means that we recovered only 3.6% (if my lousy math has not failed me). As a result, all of our basic data on the site comes from a 1% transect interval sample (one-foot square samples on a ten-foot grid) and six block excavations. Large parts of the site containing important information about the site and region were not excavated. This is a result of priority and time constraints.



A crew of Chris Ramey, Isabel Pease, Rich Eilers and Don Williams met out at Westbrook over the weekend of August 25-26 and did a thorough surface collection of the exposed part of the site. Chris came out before the rain and used a small rake to rake through the area near old Block E, which was one of the two major pitted hornfels blocks. He was quite successful. Although the site had not been washed down the soil was so dry that it was powder and easily raked.

On Sunday morning the rest of the crew completed the full sweep of the site. By then it had rained. Also during the collection the site and crew was doused by several heavy downpours, which exposed many artifacts. Not unexpectedly, the collections were dominated by quartz artifacts (attached photo).

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The quartz domination was in spite of the admonition to the crew (and myself) to be looking for hornfels, not quartz. If one looks for the dark materials one has a better chance of detecting them.

One won't miss the quartz, anyway. In fact, only one hornfels artifact was recovered before Don identified a patinated hornfels flake. Even after that, very few were seen. This further demonstrates the fact (!) that water screening under those soil conditions is essential to prevent biasing samples in favor of quartz artifacts. However, even surface washing doesn't help in the field because of leaf and bark litter, which masks coarse grained artifacts.



Numerous quartz, unifacial, scraper-like tools were recovered, which may help with the functional analysis of the site. Several points and a stone ax bit (attached) also were recovered. All of the points, except one hornfels stemmed point, appear to be late Middle Archaic, Halifax-like, side notched points. Those date to about 5,500 BP. That is odd, since Halifax points were not that common during the excavation. Since they were all recovered from an area along the west edge of Block E, it is possible that they marked a Halifax occupation that had not been excavated. We have noted in the lab that the fire cracked rocks in block E seem to be concentrating along the western edge of the block. Had we had the lab feed-back from Block E during the field excavation phase, it is likely that we would have expanded Block E in that direction rather than going back to Block B at the end of the field excavation.

The surface collection work will continue until the top soil has been removed.

In the lab, the crew is within 200 proveniences of completing the wet screen results from the 1,800 one-foot square samples recovered during the testing and excavation.

### UP-COMING EVENTS

The Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, D.C. will host its 19<sup>th</sup> annual symposium, “The World Around Them: How Pre-Columbian Societies Created Their Cultural Landscapes,” on September 15<sup>th</sup> at the US Navy Memorial and Heritage Center, Washington, D.C. For further information, see [http://www.pcswdc.org/powercms/files/Symposia/2012/Brochure%20\(web\).pdf](http://www.pcswdc.org/powercms/files/Symposia/2012/Brochure%20(web).pdf).

Preservation Virginia’s annual conference on “Bridging the Gap: Connecting People & Resources to Preserve Virginia’s Historic Places” will be held in Leesburg September 23-25. For more information, see <http://preservationvirginia.org/programs/annual-conference>.

“The Battle of Ox Hill/Chantilly,” a talk by local authors Church Mauro and David Welker, will be given at Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. (Mr. Welker gave a very interesting talk on this subject to the Chapter at our September 2010 meeting.)

The Archaeological Institute of America will present “Secret of the Great Pyramid: How One Man’s Obsession May Have Led to Solving One of the Greatest Archaeological Mysteries of Our Time,” a lecture by Bob Brier of Long Island University, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 PM in Room B07, Media and Public Affairs Building, 805 21<sup>st</sup> St., N.W., the George Washington University.

Fairfax County’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual History Conference will be held on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at the Stacy Sherwood Conference Center in Fairfax, VA.

See flyer included in this issue for further information.

### ARCHAEOLOGY EVENTS IN MARYLAND

September 8: **Woodland Indian Discovery Day.** Explore and celebrate the life and ways of Maryland’s first people. Archery, dancing, atlatl toss, pottery, hide tanning, and so much more! 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., St. Mary’s City Visitor Center (18751 Hogaboom Ln.). Admission. St. Mary’s City members free.

September 14: **“A Place Now Known Unto Them: The Archaeology of Anglo-Native Relations, 1634-1711”.** Julia King, Ph.D. professor of anthropology and museum studies chair at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, will look at ways Maryland’s Indian population and the English colonists impacted each other and examine what archaeological discoveries in Charles County are revealing about the everyday but complex relations between natives and invaders. 7 p.m. Visitor Center (18751 Hogaboom Lane). Free.

September 22: **1812 Fair and Reenactment,** Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, 10 AM – 5 PM. See <http://www.jefpat.org/Documents/1812%20Flyer.pdf> for more details.

September 29 & 30: **War Comes to St. Mary’s.** Conflicts, resolutions, technology weaponry, drilling, camp life through the centuries. Celebrating those who stand up for what they believe in. 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Admission. St. Mary’s City members Free.

### OLD COLCHESTER

Historic

Early in August CART, along with assistance from Area 3 crew, backfilled features at 44FX0704 and 44FX3197. They brought us over 33 cubic yards of back-dirt fill and a gator 4x4 machine. Features and units are backfilled with tarp and clean fill dirt to

preserve them for future excavations. With the use of the laser transit, CART can use our site grid and find the unit nails and the features under the 2 feet of fill, to excavate next field season.

Megan Veness continues in the writing of the features found at the historic sites. A review of all the artifacts and the paperwork (as seen in the picture) is necessary for each feature. Megan has found it easier to work at the large lab tables so she can spread out all the appropriate paperwork. Some artifacts deserve a closer look to make sure of their type and technology of manufacture.

Though most features were small and simple, Features 36 and Feature 87 (red drainage ditches) at 44FX3197 (Town Site) had complex stratigraphy. There are many layers of slope wash and fill, and different periods of clean-out during use, which created an interesting stratigraphy. Chris Sperling is analyzing the features of 44FX0704 (Cemetery Site), and using Surfer to plot all the artifacts recovered across the entire site. Hopefully with his analysis, new areas of focus can be decided for next field season.



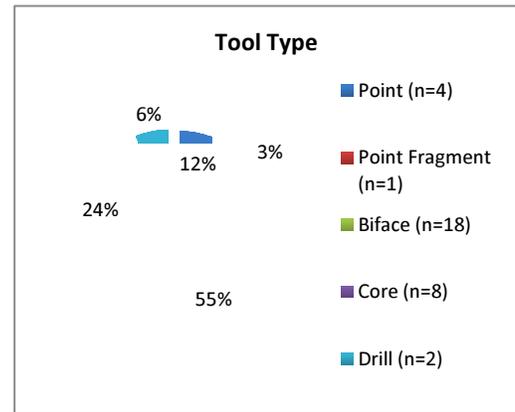
## Prehistoric

The fieldwork on the Uplands has finally been completed, so that means it's full steam ahead on the prehistoric sections of the report! The staff has been making tables, maps, and graphs, working towards the goal of a landscape-level understanding of the prehistoric resources throughout Old Colchester. Similarly to the historic sites, the conclusions from this report will guide future investigations.

The analysis of 44FX1670/2409 is ongoing, and has been challenging due the dynamic nature of the

soils on site. Those who have volunteered with the prehistoric crew are aware that plowing, logging, and significant erosion have taken their toll. The silty soils are a delight to dig through, but variance in stratigraphy is subtle and changes widely across the large area. Therefore, the discussion of results is primarily broken down by the various landforms, and illustrated through graphs. A sample of graphs from one of the landforms is included below.

Other graphs show temporal association, lithic reduction sequence, and material type. A preliminary conclusion regarding of the prehistoric landscape of the Park is that use changed drastically over time, with certain temporal artifacts concentrating on specific landforms. Though features were rarely encountered during this phase of work, intact strata have been identified, and the analysis being done now will hopefully aid future incarnations of the CART to track down more discrete cultural deposits.



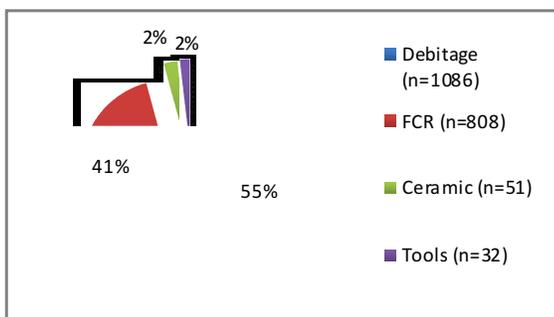
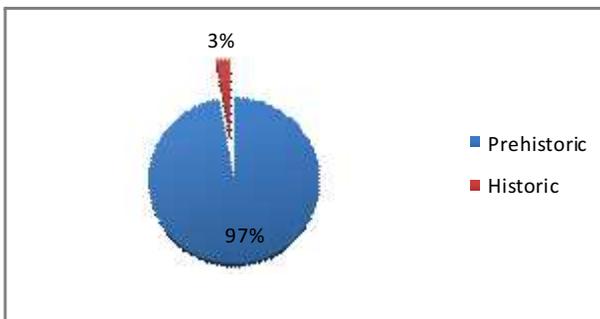
## GERALD LEO LYONS 1938-2012

Gerald Leo Lyons was born in Springfield, Illinois on February 1, 1938 to Frank William Lyons and Erma Doreen Maus Lyons. With his older brother Frank and his younger brother Larry, he grew up in a loving and lively household. He tended his dad's backyard chickens, delivered papers, life-guarded at Lake Springfield, worked produce in a grocery store, and played young Lincoln in the pageant. He graduated from Sacred Heart-Griffith High School.

With interests in art, science, and architecture, he attended Southern Illinois University and Washington University at St. Louis in architecture. He was drafted into the Army in 1961. Stationed at Fort Belvoir, attached to the U.S. Army Engineer's School, he designed training aids in the age of pen and ink, meeting many life-long friends. After 1963, he continued his employment there as a civilian. After working as a designer of educational toys and games, he joined Howard Needles Tammen and Bergendorff in 1970, heading the graphics and cartography department of the Airport Planning and Design office. He became expert in computer illustration. He retired from HNTB in 2005 and joined Sallie's Lyonshare Studios, LLC.

Jerry married Sallie Louise Brown in 1970. They lived for 13 years on the Potomac River in Wellington Villa, a.k.a. the Grand Duchy of Wellington Forest, of which Jerry was Chancellor, a creative community fondly remembered by many.

Daughter Savanna May Lyons was born in 1963. In 1984, the family moved to Colchester on Mason



Neck where Jerry's love of nature, art, history, and community led to his creative support of many projects. He was active in the Mason Neck Citizen's Association board, the Seeds of Independence program at Gunston Hall, and was a founder of the Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources. He designed pro bono roadside interpretive displays for the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route and the David Archaeology Site, and most recently a series of posters promoting the pantry of Lorton Community Action Center.

Jerry loved the Chesapeake Bay region, its people, waters, marshes, and crabs, and oysters, spent many happy vacations camping and boating at Janes Island, Crisfield, Maryland, and did woodcuts of local wildlife.

Jerry passed away on Thursday August 16, 2012 at Fairfax Hospital following a stroke.



Sallie firing cannon tribute to Jerry at Gunston Hall

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703-534-3881

### Other Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

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Alexandria Museum	Pam Cressey	<a href="mailto:pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov">pamela.cressey@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399 (information)

## NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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Please send *Datum Point* via e-mail

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Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:

Isabella Pease, Treasurer, NVC/ASV  
8304 Graceway Drive  
Lorton, VA 22079

**Chapter members should 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!!!!**

### *THE DATUM POINT*

Northern Virginia Chapter  
Archeological Society of Virginia  
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