

THE DATUM POINT

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

August 2014

Chapter meets at the James Lee Center, 2855 Annandale Rd, Falls Church, 2nd Weds. of each month

FROM THE PRESIDENT – JACK HRANICKY

It seems like yesterday, but it has been 25 years since the National Museum of the American Indian was opened in Washington, DC. I am a charter member and have promoted the Museum in many ways, namely my books and the ASV Newsletter. Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Museum Director, sent me a personal note: “I am proud to be a part of this important work at the Museum, and thank you for all you have done to help make it possible.”

If you have not visited the Museum, do so. You will be pleased (and informed) by what you see. Director Gover’s leadership has made the Museum one of the best in the world.



NO CHAPTER MEETING THIS MONTH!

CHAPTER PICNIC TIME!

It is time for the Chapter’s Annual Picnic which is:

Host: CD Cox (703) 830-4121

Cox Farms: <http://www.coxfarms.com/>

Time: 11:00 am

Date: Saturday August 16, 2014

Location: 15621 Braddock Road, Centreville, VA 20120 (Corner: Braddock Road and Pleasant Valley Road) It is the same place as last year.



We have a great meal coming up, thanks to long-time chapter member CD Cox. He is preparing pulled pork for us. Past and present officers are providing the picnic basics, but we still need simple dishes and desserts; so if you are inclined, bring a small one. Not much more for your president’s message, but so far, it has been a great summer weather wise. **Remember, there is no chapter meeting this month.**

WHITE HOUSE FARM FIELD SCHOOL

by Jackie Cuyler

Northern Virginia Chapter members are involved in many archaeological activities, including excavation and labwork at historic Chapman's Mill, Gunston Hall, Mount Vernon and Old Colchester as well as prehistoric Smith Mountain Gap and the Allegheny Valley Project in western New York.

Two members, Diane Schug-O'Neill and Jackie Cuyler, recently attended the 2014 White House Archaeological Field School in Page County. Directed by Dr. Carole Nash, this field school continues the work started by her in 2012 and was a huge success! Carole, with 27 volunteers in attendance, managed to oversee the excavation of a series of 1.5x1.5 units in the side yard, linear and block units around the house, excavation and coring in the basement of the house, and an outdoor artifact washing station.



Diane Schug-O'Neill and Jackie Cuyler

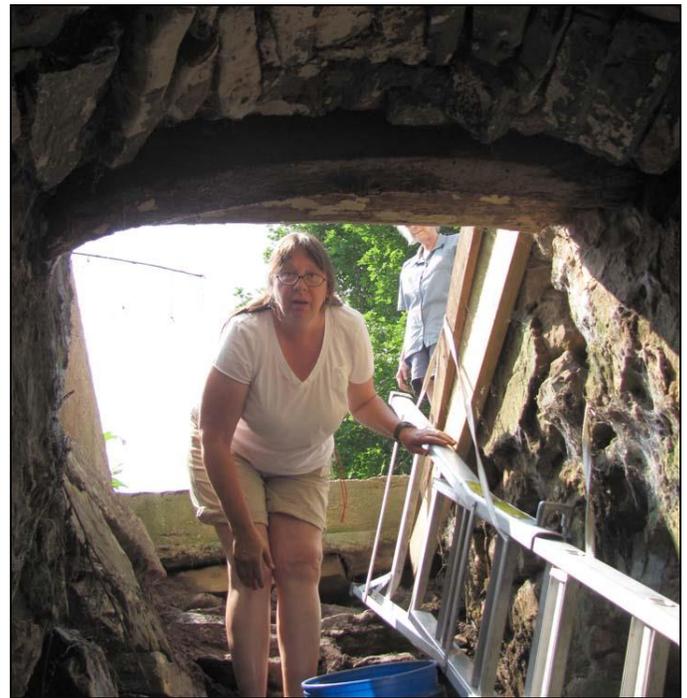
The "White House" was built in 1760 by German Mennonite minister Martin Kauffman and is located on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River flanked by the Massanutten Mountains, about five miles west of Luray. Referred to as a *Flurkuchenhaus*, the two story stone house with a vaulted basement and full attic is typical German Rhineland design.

The house was built during the French and Indian War on the Virginia Frontier and is sometimes referred to as a stone fort, although this was not a

defensive structure. The house was built as a residence and used as a Mennonite and Baptist meeting house.

The house has experienced severe flooding throughout the years, in addition to plowing quite close to the structure. With the help of Claudia MacDonald (Richmond Chapter) Diane and I were tasked with searching for the original floor in the beautiful vaulted basement. The basement has a fireplace, a vent and hand-forged hooks still attached to the ceiling. We believe it may have been used for smoking meats and food storage.

With no steps down to the basement, and no electricity, this was quite the adventure! Carole brought us camp lanterns and one of the employees with the White House Farm Foundation built a gangplank for entry and exit. We laid out a series of 5x5 units, but once we discovered the depth of the flood deposition, we scaled back to a 2.5x2.5 finding the original hard-packed clay floor. Artifacts included bones, eggshells, and slip decorated redware.



Carole Nash

Due to flooding the soil around the house was soft and sandy, literally melting through the screen. A few of the neatest artifacts include a piece of eight, cord and corn cob impressed Albemarle sherds,

pewter button, lithic tools and Shenandoah pottery. And, as we all know, the most exciting finds come at the end of a dig. In this case volunteers excavating a feature discovered a ring of stones close to the house which may be a possible òwell capöi í stay tuned for the 2015 field school!



Ken and Gail Tuley, & Maxine Grabill



Bill Bjork (left) Hard at work



JMU Students



Ken and Gail Tuley



The White House



Janice Biller (left) and Kay Veith (right)



Len Blasiol and Lynn Waggy



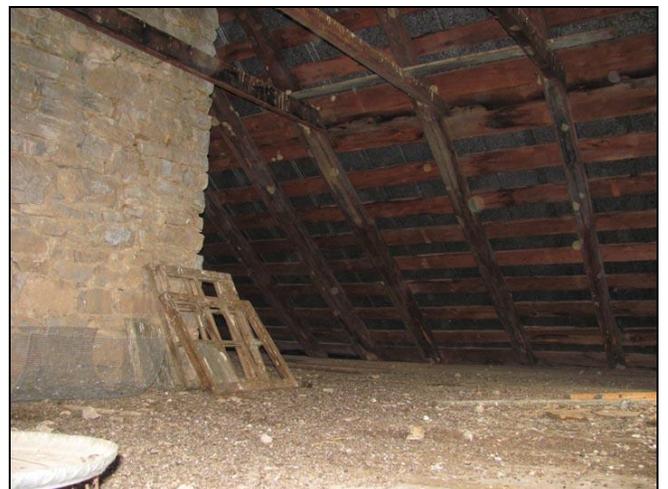
Stairwell to upper story



The cellar



Fireplace



Upper story

OLD COLCHESTER

By CART

This summer many things are happening with CART, from public outreach and teen archaeology camps, to learning about the various exotic lithic types found at Old Colchester Park and Preserve from Dr. Callan Bentley, Assistant Professor of Geology at the NOVA campus in Annandale. Dr. Bentley's presentation informed the staff and ASV volunteers about the geology of the region and how the various types of lithic materials found in and around Old Colchester Park and Preserve and the processes of their creation millions of years ago.

Currently CART is in the middle of the archaeology summer camps through Huntley Meadows and Riverbend Park. At these youth camps, the participants learn what archaeology is all about from the various types of artifacts to understanding stratigraphy. They will also come to the lab to assist the staff in washing artifacts.

Another summer program will occur at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, in which participants will participate in excavations in the front of the Walney Visitor's Center looking for evidence of a structure in the area. If any ASV members would like to assist in these camps, or need their public outreach hours filled, please email cart.volunteers@live.com for more details and hours.

CART GIS Specialist Marion Constante and FCPA Senior Archaeologist Chris Sperling were featured in the 30 May 2014 Team Fairfax Insider, discussing the archaeology work at Colchester and the importance of detailed data recovery and GIS integration. This newsletter is sent out to all Fairfax County employees, so CART got the word out about the exciting finds from the past three and a half years and the ongoing data analysis with GIS.

In the Lab, we are winding up the analysis of the first phase of excavation of the big prehistoric site. The majority of artifacts recovered were lithic, including tools, manufacturing debitage, and fire-cracked rock. Quartz was the main material used at the site. However, the prehistoric inhabitants of the area also exploited exotic lithic sources either through trade or travel over long distances.

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We know this because we recovered flakes and other debitage made of rock types that were not local in origin. Some of these exotic materials can be sourced as far away as 120 miles in southern Virginia. In addition, a significant proportion of prehistoric ceramic sherds were recovered. Many of the ceramics appear to be cord-marked and sand-tempered and date to the Early Woodland.

We have expanded our blog to include writings of most staff as well as interns and students. The content is now varied including lithics, stratigraphy, drawing in archaeology, context, ceramics, history and much more. Check out our continually evolving blog: <http://cartarchaeology.wordpress.com/> To volunteer with CART in the field please email cart.volunteers@live.com.



NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Jack Hranicky	hranickyj@archeology.org
Vice-President	Chris Havlicek	christo829@juno.com
Treasurer	Isabella Pease	ipease@cox.net
Corresponding Sec.	Maggie Johnson	stillmaggie@cox.net 703-455-6902
Recording Sec.	Nancy Ehlke	703-978-6724 rce2@cox.net
Editor	Patrick O'Neill	patrickloneill@verizon.net 703-249-9593
Webmaster	Diane Schug-O'Neill	schugoneill@gmail.com
Certification Liaison	Ann Wood	annpwood@verizon.net

Fairfax County Archaeology (FCPA)

Dr. Elizabeth Crowell elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov
703-534-3881

Other Public Archaeological Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon	Esther White	ewhite@mountvernon.org
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-550-0441
Alexandria Museum	Francine Bromberg	Francine.bromberg@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399 (information)

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Please send *Datum Point* via e-mail

Individual (\$15) _____

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8304 Graceway Drive
Lorton, VA 22079**

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

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