



THE DATUM POINT

December 2017

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



Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT **RICH EILERS**

My year in office is coming to a close. I want to express my gratitude to those people whose hard work has taken the Chapter forward during 2017. John Kelsey has done an exemplary job as our Communication Director handling all Chapter correspondence and his self initiated daily archaeology news items from around the world. Yvonne took on the role as our In Reach Director coordinating all the speakers and tours for this year and the first half of 2018. Nancy did her typically great work as our Recording Secretary insuring our minutes captured the range and complexity of Chapter deliberations and decisions. Many thanks to Chris for taking on the webmaster job, a role that will bring the Chapter web site into the 21st century and substantially decrease its cost. Patrick continues to crank out a superior Datum Point product that represents our primary interface to the Virginia Archaeology community. I want to give Barbara a special shout out for showing noble constraint by not including our Chapter funds as part of her Lost Wages gaming funds! Finally, many thanks to Mike and Patrick for sharing their archaeology passions and projects with the membership.

Everyone is invited to the Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 13th, 6:30pm at the James Lee Center. I have invited archaeology students from George Mason to attend and join the ASV and NVC using grant money provided by Carol and the ASV Research Committee. Since I did not require a RSVP from GMU attendees, we will see how this recruitment effort turns out! I will be providing several medium trays of finger food and holiday drinks to augment the hors d'oeuvres being provided by Chapter attendees. It was suggested we play a slideshow or the year in retrospective.

The Party will include a tribute to CD Cox. The Board reviewed and approved a request from CD's daughter Thea through Ann Wood to include this as part of the celebration. Ann will coordinate with Mike Johnson and other potential Tributeeers. Ann please extend the invitation to Cox Family. We will include a slideshow of CD exploits as a Chapter Members. I have Ann's and a few other pictures. Please forward all pictures including CD to me for consolidation.

Elections for the 2018 Chapter Board will be held at the Christmas Party. The candidate slate was published in the November Datum Point.

NVC CHRISTMAS PARTY



**Don't be a mean one,
Mr. Grinch!**

**at the James Lee Center in
the URBANITES Room!**

**Starts at 6:30 pm
on December 13th**

**Bring something
yummy to share!**

CART

County Archaeological Research Team

The last few months have been busy for CART and our volunteers. Despite some cool and wet fall weather, enough good days allowed for excavation to be completed on Feature 5 (the large cellar), and for Feature 9 to be almost finished. Feature 9 is a roundish, dark feature that contains charred wood, brick fragments, and angular quartz rock. CART has yet to recover a significant amount of artifacts from Feature 9. Some of the artifacts recovered include small fragments of bone and curved fired clay fragments.

Feature 9 is the only area on the site which contains large amounts of charred wood fragments and brick or fired clay inclusions. A few of these fragments have finger and palm prints (see image). Continued excavation, water screening, and flotation samples will help to provide insight about Feature 9. During cataloging of Feature 5, the large cellar, interesting artifacts are further analyzed such as the large stoneware jug fragments and the flint lock gun hammer/cock (see image). As always, our volunteers have been crucial to our success not only in the field, but in the lab as well.



This Fall CART attended the annual Indian Festival at Riverbend Park in Great Falls, Va., the annual Archeological Society of Virginia conference and Gunston Hall Archaeology Day. These events were great opportunities to connect with the public through artifacts and presentations of the rich history of Fairfax County.



Two of our outstanding volunteers were recognized for the hard work and dedication at the Elly Doyle Park Service Awards, Emiko T. and Denise M. These two stars along with our other volunteers have contributed over 2815 hours this year!! Thank you so much to everyone who has help discover the history and artifacts all around Fairfax County.

Changes are happening with CART. We are excited to have Robin R. join us as our new Assistant Lab Director. Robin took over Kayla's position, as Kayla has transitioned to Assistant Collections Manger with the Archaeological Collections part of our branch. While some of Kayla's work is similar, it encompasses curation of our collections and managing the collections facility. CART hired Charles S. to join the field team, who brings years of experience from excavations all along the East Coast of America. We also said farewell to Jonathan B. who has worked with CART for over four years. His hard work and dedication with CART will be missed.

CART would like to wish everyone a great Holiday Season and a Happy New Year! Hope to see you in the field or lab soon.

For questions about volunteering in the field, email CART staff in the field at cart.volunteers@live.com. Volunteer days in the field are Thursdays through Saturdays. Volunteer days in the lab are Wednesdays through Fridays. Keep an eye on our blog: cartarchaeology.wordpress.com for information on local events and recent finds by CART.

2018 NVC OFFICER SLATE

The slate of officers to be voted on at the December elections for 2018 are as follows:

President:	Patrick O'Neill
Vice-President:	Yvonne French
Treasurer:	Barbara Leven
Corresponding Sec:	John Kelsey
Recording Sec:	Nancy Ehlke
<i>Datum Point</i> Editor:	Patrick O'Neill
Webmaster:	Chris Havlicek
Certification Liaison:	Ann Wood

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor! Please come and support your candidate, or throw your hat into the ring!!!!!! Diane Schug-O'Neill retired after serving as webmaster for many, many years, so a big thanks to her service for the chapter!

ARCHAEOLOGICAL METAL DETECTING CLASSROOM AT MONTPELIER

By Rich Eilers

Over a five day period in mid November, I joined 14 other metal detecting practitioners and novices in a hands-on historical archaeological survey class using a remote sensing tool you know as a metal detector. The Montpelier archaeology department has developed a national reputation as a center of excellence and innovation in the use of metal detecting surveys to increase the effective of their limited funding and staff. Before I go into the details a little background behind why I ended up in the class.

To further our likelihood of hitting the õbigö gold strike, first Mike Johnson then I purchased intermediate level detectors only to find their use not practical in Virginia with its myriad of property and ASV ethical constraints. I discussed metal detecting surveys with Chris Sperling and Eric Larsen (Germana) to a lukewarm reception. It became apparent that I needed to obtain a certification of some sorts in archaeology applied metal detecting.....problem.....there is only one available to the advocational Archaeologist and it is not locally available. After listening to the two

Smoketown metal detection based discovery presentations at this year's ASV conference, I reached out to Montpelier through its LEARN program and enrolled in its metal detecting Expedition.

Our Expedition cohort consisted of men and women from as far north as New Hampshire and west as Nebraska. We had a mix of 25+ year old hands who have visited sites around the country to the newbies like myself with lots of theory and limited hands on practical to those with no experience whatsoever. Each of the 5 days consisted of a lecture, lab or excavation segment with longer periods of metal detecting field survey including demonstrating proficiency in filling out the paperwork under a Montpelier Staff member providing documentation training and quality assurance.



Our metal detecting classroom consisted of an approximate acre south and directly adjacent to the Madison graveyard. The staff had pre-surveyed the tract and marked out 60x60 sections each subdivided into 36 10x10 squares. Our cohort was divided into two person metal detecting teams with an assigned staff member per 60x60 section. The target of our survey was iron nails, the anathema of

all metal detectorists! Each Expedition member received a handout that tied wrought and cut nail configurations to mansion ownership and evolution periods. The objective of our hunt was to identify the likely location of the overseer's house dating to the original Madison family occupation in the 2nd quarter of the 18th century.

Over the 5 Expeditions days, my partner and I surveyed 3800 square ft, locating and documenting over 7800 possible artifacts and recovering, tagging and documenting 115. The vast majority were nails ranging from point and spatulated rosette wrought to the more familiar "L" head cut configurations. My partner Ryan from Nebraska uncovered a 1817 Large Cent in good to fine condition (another group uncovered an 1817 Large Cent about 50' away). Moreover I had the opportunity of nearly 15 hours of individual instruction with their senior detectorist. The most important thing I learned was that my detector performed as well as the Minelab 5000 in the iron heavy soil at Montpelier. This was a total surprise to the old metal detecting heads!

My impressions of the program can be summed up by the following examples. One of my roommate from New Hampshire found a flint lock hammer and pan mechanism plus several other interesting iron objects. As we were packing out Friday night, he said he was going to include iron discrimination in his future efforts rather than tuning out the iron returns. My other roommate from Loudon County planned on contacting Chris Sperling of Fairfax County Parks Archaeology about supporting a metal detecting survey of Lincoln Lewis Vannoy Park. I plan to volunteer on any metal detecting surveys at LLV and future excavation at Smoketown (lead ASV organization is the Northern Shenandoah Chapter). It may not be gold but the satisfaction of discovery is just as powerful!

2017 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Rich Eilers	eilersrl1@aol.com 703-440-3753
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Webmaster	Chris Havlicek	christo829@juno.com
Certification Liaison	Ann Wood	annpwood@gmail.com

Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)	Dr. Elizabeth Crowell	elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov 703-534-3881
Mount Vernon	Dr. Luke Pecoraro	LPecoraro@mountvernon.org 703.799.6831
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-550-0441
Alexandria Museum	Dr. Eleanor Breen	Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399
Chapmans Mill	Frances Allshouse	chapmanmill@gmail.com 540-253-5888
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Trocolli	Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov 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 must join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia at asv-archeology.org

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month at the James Lee Center, 2855-A Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!