



# THE DATUM POINT

March 2017

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

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



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT** **RICH EILERS**

Looking at our blooming cherry tree in the front yard reminds me that digging season is nearly here. I encourage each of you to access the [nvcasv.org](http://nvcasv.org) volunteer page to query the local historical organizations on their excavation plans this year. These organization have ongoing laboratory opportunities for those less inclined towards "shovel bum" activities.

Virginia maritime archaeology is moving forward with February's initial organizational meeting of ASV's Maritime Heritage Chapter at VDHR. Forty two people attended the meeting including the operations director from Clive Cussler's NUMA organization, State of Maryland Archaeology, Institute of Maritime History (IMH), ASV, VDHR, and the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society (MAHS). Just an aside, "Dirk Pitt" does not look anything like the books portray! We received several interesting presentations including NUMA's hunt for the Hunley and the Virginia permitting process. Membership is open to divers and non divers. A Nautical Archaeology Society(NAS) primer course is currently in planning on underwater site preparation and layout. I will be taking these courses and will keep you informed as to their location and time. MAHS is an education organization offering a full Maritime Archaeology certification program in the classroom and on DVD. You can access their website for more information.

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**Join Chapter members at Anthony's  
Restaurant at 6 pm before the meeting!  
Located at 3000 Annandale Rd, Falls  
Church, VA 22042 - (703) 532-0100**

**Weds, March 8, 2017, 7:30PM**

## **LINCOLN LEWIS VANNOY (PATRIOT) PARK**

**BY MEGAN VENESS AND CHRIS SPERLING**

Fairfax County Park Authority's archaeologist and field director will give a pair of illustrated lectures on sites in the western portion of the county during the chapter meeting at 7:30 p.m. on March 8.

Senior Archaeologist Christopher Sperling will present A Little House on a Hill: Surprises in Heritage Resource Management. Field Director Megan Veness will describe An Unexpected Find Under the Plowzone.

Sperling will describe how the County Archaeological Research Team, Archaeology and Collections Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority, will soon begin a Phase III Data Recovery of a late 18<sup>th</sup> through mid-20<sup>th</sup> century site. Proposed development mandated a cemetery delineation as well as Phase I and II investigations that identified two temporally sequential and spatially distinct loci of activity as well as an interesting tract history. For example, the earlier of the loci has yielded suggestions, including colonoware and glass beads, of an African American presence.

“This project demonstrates the benefits of sound local cultural resource policies and the dedication of the agency toward responsible stewardship,” said Sperling.

Veness will explain Patriot Park North, a 67-acre park in which the Fairfax County Park Authority is  
**See Park cont'd page 2**

### **President cont'd from page 1**

Those who have not yet paid their ASV and/or NVC dues are strongly encouraged to complete the process. I have asked Isabel for a NVC membership status audit. Our NVC members are reminded that paid dues applies to the calendar year it is paid. At present, our Chapter charter require full year dues payment regardless of when in the year a person joins.

The Chapter Board is currently considering two outreach efforts. The first is a Colchester day teaming with FOFA and Fairfax County Archaeology. The second is manning a table at the Fairfax County 275<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. More details will be provided and votes taken at the March 8th meeting.

### **Park cont'd from page 1**

planning to construct a ball field complex. Fairfax County Park Authority Archaeology and Collections Branch (ACB) conducted comprehensive Phase I and II surveys from summer through winter 2016. The surveys revealed an area that contained a concentration of late-third-quarter 18<sup>th</sup> century artifacts. This area was explored further with a 1-by-1 meter excavation unit in a large block that exposed Feature 5, which turned out to be a 20-by 9-foot storage pit or cellar containing artifacts ranging from black glazed earthenware to green shell-edged pearlware and brass buttons.

“With further testing and continued analysis of the recovered artifacts, archaeologists can reconstruct the areas of use within the structure, and shed more light on the inhabitants of Fairfax County in the eighteenth century,” said Veness.

Their talks will be followed by a 15-minute question-and-answer session. The talks are in-depth previews of what Sperling and Veness will present March 17 at the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, see [maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org](http://maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org), in Virginia Beach, where conference-goers will learn that Fairfax County contains a culturally and temporally diverse archaeological record. Large portions of the county are developed commercially, residentially, and for government purposes, all of which require utilities and an expansive transportation network. Local, state, and federal cultural resource management laws and policies

have resulted in a wealth of archaeological information stemming from compliance projects.

The Fairfax County Park Authority, cultural resource management firms, institutions, and avocational organizations such as the Northern Virginia Chapter of ASV all contribute to an understanding of the county's past by continually adapting modern technologies to improve the quality of the data collected and its interpretation for future generations.

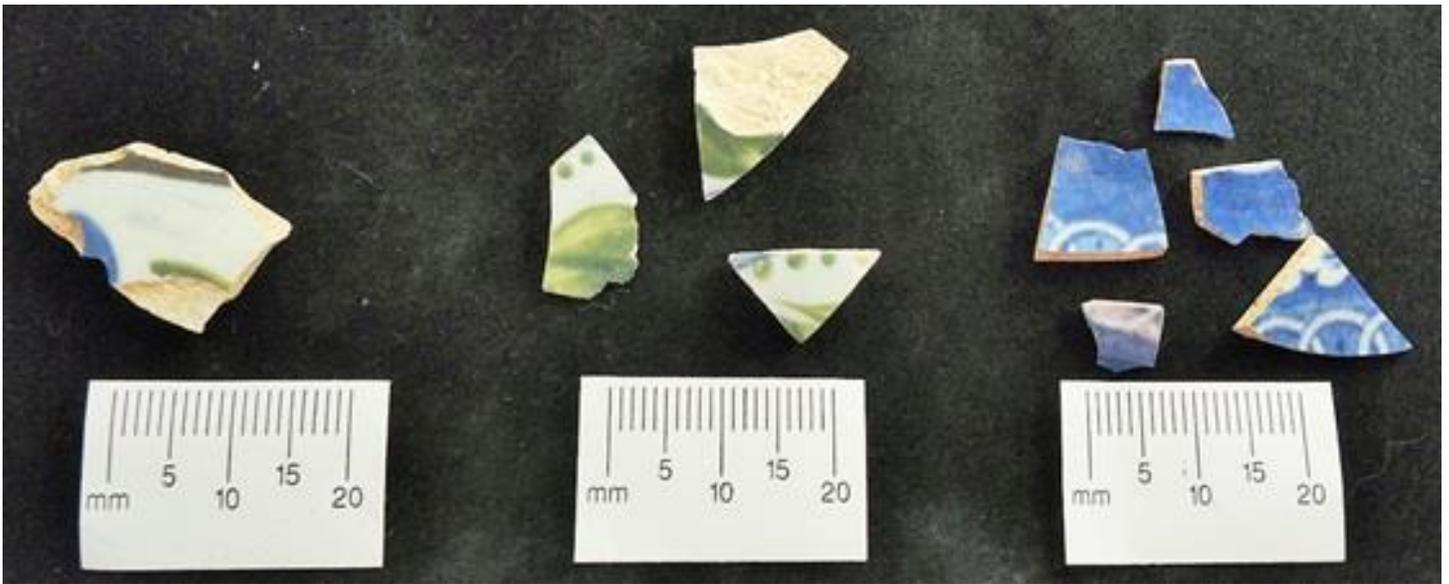
### **CART**

Extended dry and Spring-like weather has allowed CART (County Archaeological Research Team) to continue excavation at our current site, outside of Centreville. More features are being revealed each week, and soon excavation into the features will begin. The feature soil is first screened with a quarter-inch mesh screen over a piece of plastic. Any artifacts in the quarter-inch mesh are removed and sent to the lab for washing, and the soil on the tarp is saved in white sandbags for wet water screen through window screen processing.

Warmer weather will allow staff to process the samples once or twice a week, to move through the bags throughout the Spring and Summer months. Once the water screen processing is underway, the samples will need to be picked through in the lab. Many of our volunteers participated in this activity last winter with samples from Old Colchester Park and Preserve.

The number of volunteers in our lab has been steadily increasing. Wednesdays are fairly busy at the James Lee Center lab. Volunteers mainly focus on processing the artifacts as they come through the lab. Sometimes some of our older collections need attention and volunteers help to update and process those artifacts. Our current focus has been mainly colonial to early national periods simply because that is what we are finding at the sites we are excavating.

The ceramics are varied including colonoware (shown in the image), creamware, pearlware with minimal cobalt polychrome handpainted decoration (shown in the image), and English brown stoneware. The nails have been almost entirely



wrought nails. We have also been able to identify some hand blown glass. The lab can't wait to see what kind of artifacts are discovered in the pickings from the features.

Some CART members are heading to the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC), in March to discuss our recent findings. For more information on the MAAC conference please follow this link:

<http://maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org/conferences>. Hope to see you there!

Please email CART staff to volunteer in the field at [cart.volunteers@live.com](mailto:cart.volunteers@live.com) or in the lab at [cartarchlab@live.com](mailto:cartarchlab@live.com).

Keep an eye on our blog: [cartarchaeology.wordpress.com](http://cartarchaeology.wordpress.com) for information on local events and recent finds by CART.



## **ROBERT BALL SR. CEMETERY SAVED!!**

By Patrick O'Neill

The Arlington County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to declare the Robert Ball Sr. Cemetery in Ballston an Arlington County Historical Landmark. The Central Ballston Methodist Church is developing the property containing the cemetery. Originally, the developer wanted to remove the cemetery to an offsite location. However, local historians, the Arlington County Historic Preservation Division, and an online petition (created by Patrick O'Neill) on Change.org strongly opposed the removal of the cemetery. Over 1100 people signed the petition!

The designation of the cemetery as a historical landmark mandates the preservation of the cemetery, and allows the development of the church property to proceed. The preserved ground is a little over 500 square feet. The building will overhang over 65 percent of the cemetery. A combination low stone wall and iron fence will surround the graveyard, and interpretive signage will be added.

## 2017 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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### Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

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<b>DC City Archaeologist</b>	Dr. Ruth Troccoli	<a href="mailto:Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov">Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov</a> 202-442-8836

### NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

Student (\$5) \_\_\_\_\_

Family (\$17) \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:**

Isabella Tonkavitch, Treasurer, NVC/ASV

8304 Graceway Drive

Lorton, VA 22079

**Chapter members must 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!!!!**