



THE DATUM POINT

November 2019

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

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org



FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

PATRICK O'NEILL

The ASV Annual Meeting was a huge success! Almost 200 ASV members attended, making it one of the largest ASV Annual Meetings in recent years! More on the meeting inside!

At the December meeting, elections will be held for chapter officers. Here is the slate for 2020:

Patrick O'Neill ó President
Yvonne French ó Vice President
Barbara Leven ó Treasurer
Nancy Ehlke ó Recording Secretary
John Kelsey ó Corresponding Secretary
Chris Havlicek ó Webmaster
Ann Wood ó Certification Liaison
Patrick O'Neill ó Datum Point Editor

Nominations from the floor can be made for any of these positions, but the floor candidate must be at the meeting to be nominated.

The December Meeting will also be the Annual Chapter Christmas Party! Bring something to share! **We will start at 630pm on December 11th!**

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

**Chapter Meeting 7:30pm
Weds November 13, 2019**

BROKEN LIVES AND SHATTERED BONES: DISCOVERING A FIELD HOSPITAL AT MANASSAS BATTLEFIELD

By Brandon Bies, NPS



In 2014, archeologists monitoring a utility trench excavation at Manassas National Battlefield Park observed bone fragments scattered across the soil.

This discovery led to further archaeological excavations in 2015, which resulted in the discovery of the remains of a Union field hospital surgeon's pit dating to the Second Battle of Manassas.



A .577 Enfield bullet lodged in the right femur bone

Archeologists recovered the nearly-complete remains of two Union soldiers, along with eleven amputated arms and legs. This unprecedented discovery is the first of its kind on a Civil War battlefield, and has greatly expanded our understanding of the decisions made by surgeons on who could, and could not, be saved.



Amputated long bone

Brandon Bies is the superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park and has managed the park since March 2017. Prior to this, he served as the legislative coordinator for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service. Bies has also served as the Site Manager of Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, where he oversaw planning for a \$12.35M rehabilitation made possible by philanthropist David Rubenstein. Bies began his work in national parks as an archeologist at Monocacy National Battlefield, and has also served as Cultural Resources Specialist for the George Washington Memorial Parkway and as Site Manager of Great Falls Park. He holds Bachelors degrees in American History and Anthropology and a Masters degree in Applied Anthropology.

CART

Fairfax County Archaeological Research Team

This month, CART archaeologists attended the Archaeological Society of Virginia's (ASV) 79th annual meeting in beautiful Williamsburg, Virginia. Fairfax archaeologist, Chris Sperling, presented a paper focusing on the benefits of using historical research alongside archaeological investigation to inform our understanding of the past. Chris's paper utilized archaeological data recovered from CART's excavations at Patriot Park North (Lincoln Lewis Vannoy) and evidence detailed in historic census and probate records to glean information about the lives of enslaved individuals in 18th-century western Fairfax.



Chris Sperling presenting at the annual ASV meeting

shovel tests have not! Deeply buried deposits mean that shovel tests are often up to a meter in depth, and compacted soils make for tough digging. The field crew has been working hard and putting in some serious elbow grease to move the project along!

In the lab staff, crew, and volunteers are busy processing the artifacts excavated from both Riverbend Park and Mt. Air. Please note that New Volunteer Orientations have been temporarily suspended until additional volunteer space is available. Lab Hours for current volunteers have changed to Thursday and Friday, 9 am to 2:45 pm, by appointment.

ASV ANNUAL MEETING PICS

By Patrick O'Neill

Fairfax archaeologists, Chris Sperling and Aimee Wells, also presented papers at the Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resourcesø (FOFA) recent symposium, entitled ðAt Rest? Cemeteries and Cemetery Protection in Fairfax County and Beyond.ö Aimee's presentation explored the use of archaeology as biography, using the Melvin family cemetery as a case study. Through archaeological inquiry, genealogical research, and osteological study, archaeologists uncovered a great deal about who Mr. Melvin was, not just in death but also in life.

My partner in crime for the Annual Meeting was Mary Green, whom shared the ride with me down and back! Here, Mary is helping out at the Kittiewan Work Day laying branches to curb the path for the Civil War Trench Trail.



Aimee Wells presenting at the FOFA symposium (photo courtesy of FOFA president, John Mullen)



In the field, systematic survey of Riverbend Park continues. While the weather has been nice, the

One very interesting presentation was by Cassandra and Madeline Mullin, daughters of John Mullin, Fort A.P. Hill Archaeologist: **Bringing Archaeological Sites to the Public – How we Created a Simulated Archaeological Site that Brought Monticello to Richmond.** This is their abstract for the presentation.

In August 2019, the Public Education Committee of the Council of Virginia Archaeologists sponsored a public archaeology event at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The event was coordinated with the Heart of Virginia Council of the Boys Scouts of America and gave Scouts an opportunity to earn the Archaeology Merit Badge. During the event, participants learned the basics about archaeology field and laboratory work using a simulated archaeological site based on archaeological features at Monticello. The simulated site was created by copying portions of a feature plan drawing onto a large drop cloth. As part of the event, the participants were given bags containing actual artifacts from Monticello and asked to identify the materials. They were then asked to place the artifacts on the drop cloth site plan and explain how their interpretation of the artifacts changed once they saw the artifacts in context. This type of simulated site proved to be a relatively simple method to teach the importance of provenience in archaeology and can be duplicated for use in places where it is not possible or feasible to visit an actual archaeological site.

ability to identify soil color and type this activity increases understanding of the scientific aspects of archaeology and helps create a full and encompassed picture of the past.



John Mullin and daughter Madeline with drop cloth



Milena Krushelnisky, from the Virtual Curation Laboratory at VCU, Test your Munskills

She was demonstrating the Munsell process by creating an interactive scaled up version of a few Munsell book pages. Children and adults can test their

We had a wonderful tour of the archaeology lab at William and Mary, where they showed us artifacts from the Custis Square.



Finally, I received a very special award from the Kittiewan Committee for my 12 years of service. I am stepping aside to let someone else serve for the ASV. The pipe on the award is a 3D scan print of the Late prehistoric clay pipe they found on the terrace above the creek at Kittiewan this past summer, possibly even Contact. Bill Bjork and Wayne Edwards also received this prestigious award, as they, too, are leaving the Kittiewan Committee.



Below, you will see a 3D model of the Fairfield Manor on the left, and a 3D model of the archaeological remains of the Fairfield brick foundation. They are designed to fit together like a puzzle! I have posted a video on my Facebook page if you want to see it in action!



2019 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET 703-244-6275
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Other Public Archaeological Programs in Northern Virginia/DC

Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)	Dr. Elizabeth Crowell	elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov 703-534-3881
Mount Vernon	Joe Downer	JDowner@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
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Troccoli	Ruth.Troccoli@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 www.virginiaarcheology.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!!!!