



THE DATUM POINT

June 2023

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

Smoke, haze, ugh! I hope that everyone has been safe through the smoke haze from Canada fires. Outside was not a good option! However, the sun was never more beautiful as it rose for the past couple of days!!!

The NVC will vote on raising the \$ amount that the Executive can approve without chapter approval. (see page 4. I will also ask the Executive to approve donating \$100 to the Arlington Historical Society so they can spray for damaging post beetles at the 1740s Ball-Sellers House in Alrlington, where the NVC has done remarkable archaeology over the past few years. You may donate yourself by going to this link: <https://gofund.me/f05a59bf> (may have to cut and paste).

It is highly probably that the July meeting will be a tour of Old Town Archaeology Lab at the Torpedo Factory and walking tour. In August, the Chapter will hold the annual summer picnic. Place to be determined, but probably will be in Burke at the O'Neill house or by the pond behind the house.

The NVC will host a table at the Day of Archeology in DC on June 10th. If you want to attend and help out! See page 3.

In-Person Meeting This Month

Wednesday, June 14. 7:30 p.m.
Richard Byrd Library
7250 Commerce Street, Springfield

The Lost History of Potomac Marble

By Paul Kreingold



British burn the Capitol

The destruction of Washington in 1814 by the invading British challenged President Monroe and Benjamin Latrobe with the task of rebuilding the edifices that had been destroyed.

As did Washington and Jefferson before them, they understood that the principal buildings of the government were not mere offices but symbols of the aspirations of the Republic. They had to be more than

functional, they had to be beautiful. As classicists, their notions of beauty were derived from the ancient Greek and Roman republics. Like the Greeks and Romans, their preferred building material was marble. The question was, where was such building material to be found? The building material that was discovered and used was Potomac Marble, which exists in abundance on both sides of the Potomac River, extending from Leesburg to Montgomery County. It is not actually marble, but a limestone conglomerate. Architect of the Capitol Benjamin Latrobe and President Monroe rode up and down Loudoun and Montgomery counties opening up quarries, and despite many problems and political opposition, Latrobe was able to build the beautiful columns in the Capitol from this marble.



Polished Potomac Marble sample showing inclusions.

In the process of his research, Kreingold has re-discovered some of the 200-year-old quarries and has polished samples from these local quarries for display.

Kreingold will discuss the step-by-step invasion of the British from the Patuxent River to D.C., the methods

the British used to actually burn the stone buildings, how stone was quarried in the early 19th century, along with sample quarry tools, and the utilization of George Washington's Potomac Canal to ship the stone to D.C. for carving.



Potomac Marble columns in old House chamber

Mr. Kreingold is the Author of *Potomac Marble: The History of the Search for the Ideal Stone*, published by History Press. It is available at [Barnes and Noble](#), [Amazon](#) or [BAM](#). He is a 37-year resident of Leesburg, Virginia, where he and his wife raised two children. He is currently the president of the Banshee Reeks Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists, and the conservation director of the Izaak Walton League, Loudoun County Chapter. His interest in geology and history dates back to his college days, but after a long career in computer system design, he has devoted his time in the last five years as a researcher and educator. Besides public lectures throughout Loudoun, Montgomery and Frederick counties, he leads expeditions to the rediscovered Latrobe Potomac Marble quarry along the Potomac River.





Vicki Monken

By Diane Schug-O'Neill

It is with great sadness that we say “So long” to our friend and colleague Vicki Shuck Monken. Vicki passed away on April 17th after battling dementia. A memorial Service will be held on 5 June to celebrate her life.

Vicki always brought mirth and levity into a room. She was quick with a smile and mischievous giggle! Her care and concern for everyone she met was only matched by her interest in archaeology.

In the lab and in the field, Vicki excelled at organization. She spent countless hours digitizing the catalog sheets for Fairfax County Archaeology. At Gault, Vicki curated the daily dig activities. By ensuring the

day’s artifacts matched properly filled-out log sheets, Vicki allowed volunteers to dig more quickly and freely. Her efforts compounded interest in the lab, providing a level of confidence in the accuracy of work with Vicki’s personal touch.

Vicki had a number of interests and the family encourages you to remember Vicki by donating to a charity of your choice, or to one of Vicki’s: Gault School of Archeology (<https://www.gaultschool.org>) and music such as the Harmony Project (<https://www.harmony-project.org>) and those providing aid to those In Need such as Good Neighbor Alliance (<https://svshelter.org>) and Cochise Serving Veterans (<https://www.cochisevets.org>) or medical research/help into dementia such as Dementia Society of America (<https://www.dementiasociety.org>).



Cert. Students: Earn Public Service Hours June 10

The Day of Archaeology festival will be held on Saturday, June 10th from 10 am - 3 pm at Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street, NW Washington, DC. You will be able to set up starting at 9 am that morning. Tables, chairs and pop-up tents are provided by sponsor Archaeology in the Community (AITC). There will be a food truck on site for lunch. Here's the signup link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0d4ca5ac2b0-certification#/>



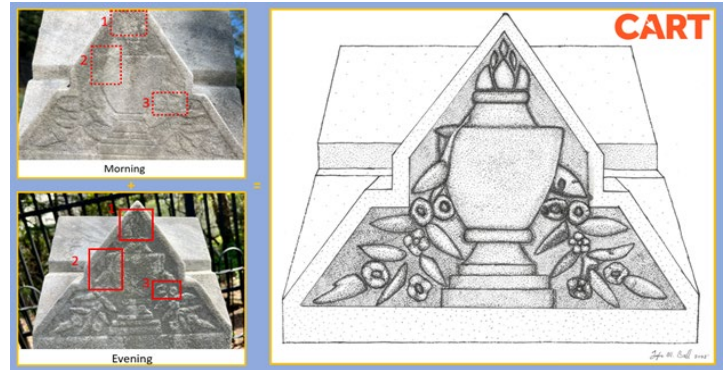
Chapter To Vote at June Meeting

1. Should the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia bylaws be revised upward from \$200 to \$500 the amount that requires a vote of the full Chapter Membership as described in the bylaws:" Positions on substantive issues, and expenditures in excess of \$200.00, shall be approved by a majority vote of a quorum."

2. The Executive Committee voted on May 10 to recommend that the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia approve the provision of scholarships totaling \$2,995 to two applicants to the Julian Williams and Eleanor Mullen Memorial Field Study Scholarship. This amount represents one half of the \$4,791 tuition for Datum Point Editor, Northern Virginia Chapter member, and certification student Kurt Fredrickson to attend the Jamestown Field School and one half of the \$1,200 tuition for Roanoke Chapter member Kateland Weeks to attend the Montpelier Field School. The Williams-Mullen Field School budget is \$12,550, per Treasurer Barbara Leven's April 2023 report. Up to 25 percent of the budget can be approved in exceptional circumstances per scholarship bylaws. Twenty-five percent of the budget equals \$3,137, which is more than the \$2,995 sought. The exceptional circumstances are that Fredrickson and Weeks are poised through their additional courses of studies to make potentially beneficial contributions to the Northern Virginia Chapter and ASV.



CART



Artifact Illustrations by Tyler Ball



CART Archaeologist Tyler Ball (above) cleaning a large foundation stone from the collections. Adorned with difficult to read carved letters and numbers on one side, this stone was collected by Fairfax County archaeologist in the 1990s. In the coming weeks, the **CART** team will use non-invasive methods including casting and photography to uncover the stone's inscription. He has authored *The Art in Artifacts* by Tyler Ball, M.A.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Earlier this month, **CART** Archaeologists Brittany Blanchard, Amanda Benge, and Colleen Boyle finished their first year of graduate school. As a part of their coursework each will begin working on their projects

associated with the Fairfax County Park Authority’s archaeological research and collections. We look forward to seeing the team build skills and share their work as a part of **CART** with the broader archaeological community. To see more from **CART**, check out the latest artiFACTS blog posts at the following link:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/artifacts>

2023 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Mount Vernon	Joe Downer	JDowner@mountvernon.org 703.799.6831
Gunston Hall	Dave Shonyo	archaeology@gunstonhall.org 703-638-9724
Alexandria Museum	Dr. Eleanor Breen	Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov 703-838-4399
DC City Archaeologist	Dr. Ruth Trocolli	Ruth.Trocolli@dc.gov 202-442-8836
Germanna Foundation	Kelly Arford-Horne, MA, RPA	kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org 540-423-1700

NVC/ASV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Dues:

Individual (\$15) _____

Family (\$17) _____

Student (\$5) _____

Please make check payable to NVC/ASV.

Return to:

Barbara Leven, Treasurer, NVC/ASV

9518 Liberty Tree Lane

Vienna VA 22182

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the 2nd Wed. of each month. Meetings may take place in-person and/or on Zoom. Details with start time and on-line/in-person information will be provided in the Datum Point newsletter prior to each meeting.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!