



THE DATUM POINT

April 2024

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

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MONTH'S PRESENTATION IS ONLY ON ZOOM!!!! See

the link in the email and in this Datum Point!

The next ASV Board meeting is at Kittiewan on April 27th. The Northern Virginia Chapter has three members on the board: myself as President, Yvonne French and Diane Schug-O'Neill as elected Board of Directors. Contact one of us if there is something you want us to present or discuss.

Certification Students can find many opportunities for archaeology, as well as the General Member of the ASV. If you have experience drawing shape files for site boundaries or want to learn, let me know, as I have over 40 sites on Bull Run Mountain to record!



Chapter meeting only on Zoom at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 10 via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89798006910>

“Grave Matter: Practice and Protection of Cemeteries and Burial Areas at Fort Barfoot”

By Connor Sparks

Cultural Resources Technician for the Virginia Army National Guard, Department of Military Affairs



This month's presentation, "A Grave Matter, Practice and Protection of Cemeteries and Burial Areas at Fort Barfoot" will be via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89798006910>. It will highlight the history of the installation in south-central Virginia and the communities within the tri-county area consumed by its creation.

When Fort Barfoot (then Camp Pickett) was created, families in the area were forced off their land

through eminent domain, and along with them, all (or most) of the cemeteries related to these families were removed. Efforts were made to locate as many as possible, and burials were "exhumed" to one of three new locations in and around Blackstone, Virginia.

While records indicate burials were removed, methods then were not what they are now. The Virginia Army National Guard (VAARNG) currently treats all burial areas as extant cemeteries because of the possibility that unmarked graves could remain given known errors in the initial contractor's efforts to relocate these burials (as there are four extant cemeteries still located on post). The remaining cemeteries on the post have intact burials with headstones present.



These four cemeteries have been Sparks's main concern since his arrival at Fort Barfoot (then Pickett). Evidence of natural decomposition and neglect can be seen through the broken and unkempt state of headstones, as well as missing or derelict fencing. There was even an instance during the winter where it appears a bear was able to knock down fencing and the headstones at one cemetery. Challenges with cultural material concerns and government agencies include lengthy waits, lack of funding, and insufficient support. In this case, however, these concerns have garnered more positive outcomes. Actively visiting and sharing the information and solutions with multiple departments and tiers of command have resulted in steps to correct these issues. Replacement fencing for the cemeteries, cleaning of headstones, and work to repair broken stones are underway.



While there is still much to do, Sparks can honestly say "We practice what we preach" when it comes to best practices and protections of our cemeteries.

Connor Sparks is the Cultural Resources Technician for the VAARNG, Department of Military Affairs. His role primarily supports 106, 110, NEPA, ARPA Compliance for the whole agency (along with Dr. Lisa Jordan). His interest in Archaeology began back in 2018 with his first field school in Alabama, Fort Tombeche, an initial French frontier fort during the French and Indian War, and later became an English and then Spanish fort. His bachelor's degree is in History and his Masters in Anthropology at the University of Southern Mississippi is nearly complete. It was during his time at USM that he had an internship with the Mississippi Army National Guard doing similar work but on a much larger scale. He moved to Virginia in February 2022 to begin his career here with the VAARNG. Some of his areas of archeological interest include Antebellum/Turn of the Century sites, changes in foodways, and salt production in the Civil War.



Availability of Rubis-Fuller Research Fund

The purpose of the Rubis-Fuller Research Fund (RRF) is to provide financial support to the scientific research efforts in the Northern Virginia Chapter (NVC) of the Archeological Society of Virginia (ASV). This will enhance the level of archaeological knowledge among the Chapter's members through

the recommended recipient's sharing the results with the Chapter.

The Rubis-Fuller Research Fund was established through generous donations from the family and friends of Dave Rubis and Patricia Fuller. Dave Rubis, a Chapter volunteer, was committed to the use of scientific methods in archaeology and developed new techniques that greatly enhanced the Chapter's archaeological efforts, particularly at Cactus Hill. Patricia Fuller was a longtime Chapter member who volunteered on many sites and held Chapter offices.

No more than \$300 will be awarded in any calendar year. The Chapter officers retain the right to accept a part of the proposal. Under exceptional circumstances, a higher amount may be recommended where the potential benefits to the Chapter are deemed to justify the higher level of funding.

Completed applications will be received between January 2 and September 15.

A recipient of the award must:

- provide the Chapter Treasurer with an accounting of the research fund expenditures on a form to be provided by the Chapter, with appropriate documentation,

- give the Chapter a copy of the research results, in an appropriate format,
- write an article for the Datum Point within three months of receiving the results of the research testing. This article will describe the item(s) being tested, the methodology of testing, the anticipated results, the actual results, and the way the results will be incorporated into the project's continued research and/or its reporting. This article will be 150-300 words in length, and
- give an oral report at the monthly meeting when the written report is handed to the Chapter.

While these are examples, they are not meant to limit applications; all legitimate scientific research efforts will be considered for the Rubis-Fuller Research Fund award. The application is available at <http://www.nvcasv.org/rubisfuller.pdf>. Once complete, give the application to any chapter officer. All proposed awards will be approved by the Chapter membership. This approval will be sought through the usual voting procedures of the Chapter. A notice in the Datum Point will precede the vote and a period of discussion will follow the call for vote.



The following are examples of how the fund award might be used.

- dendrochronology
- phytolith analysis
- carbon analysis
- neutron analysis
- pollen analysis
- analysis of wood or cloth
- ethnobotanical and faunal analysis
- forensics
- Soil analysis
- Carbon-14 (C14) dating

2024 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET 703-244-6275
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Datum Point Editor	Kurt Fredrickson	Kurt.N.Fredrickson@hotmail.com
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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 703-638-9724
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
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. *Due to COVID-19 concerns, 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!!!!