



# THE DATUM POINT

June 2024

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

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



## FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

**PATRICK O'NEILL**

I hope that many of you are raring to go dig! Next weekend (June 15th), we hope to start excavations at the Everhart Mill in Northern Loudon County, north of Lovettsville. If you're interested in participating, please let me know by email - [patrickloneill@verizon.net](mailto:patrickloneill@verizon.net). Most work will be done on Saturdays. This is a joint project shared with the NVC and Banshee Reeks chapters.

Mike Johnson is still going strong at Jasper Ridge, too! Field work and lab work!

Let's talk picnic! Give me some ideas and let's do it in August!



Chapter meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 12

Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88485351478?pwd=zrU0QafVOcwZZ93BU0iYekb7VFsWzb.1>

## **“Reexamining Factory-Made Slipware at George Washington’s Mount Vernon”**

**By Alice Keith**

Mocha ware, annular ware, banded ware. All these terms and more describe ceramics which fall into the broader genre of factory-made slipware. These ceramics were produced primarily in Great Britain from the 1770s into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with peak popularity in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. An incredible variety of decorations were created using slips, engine-turned lathes, and dendritic elements. Factory-made slipwares are often described as the cheapest decorated ceramics at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Fragments of factory-made slipware vessels are found regularly in excavations across the Mount Vernon estate, and yet only a handful of examples were represented in our study collection. Their presence on the Mount Vernon landscape was not understood.

My project undertook an inventory and analysis of all factory slipware fragments in the collections, with three main goals. First, I wanted to create a more thorough and representative sample within our study collection. Second, I hoped to identify any areas on the estate with large concentrations of factory-made slipwares. Third, I sought to better understand who was using these wares and when. Was there evidence these ceramics were used at Mount Vernon during George Washington's lifetime, and thus should be interpreted to the public? Were these ceramics used by the enslaved population, members of the Washington family, the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, or some combination of the three?



*Alice Keith presenting at MAAC in March 2024.*

This presentation will walk through the steps and challenges of this project. I will provide an overview of factory-made slipware ceramics and the different decoration types found at Mount Vernon. Then I will jump into some analysis, looking at the 791 fragments identified in the collection so far.

These fragments were recovered from excavations conducted across four main areas: the Gristmill & Distiller, Union Farm, the George Washington Library site, and Mansion House Farm. Finally, we will discuss some preliminary conclusions and remaining research questions.



*Fragments of a factory-made slipware mug or tankard.*

Alice Keith is the Museum Curator for Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve (NPS), in Jacksonville, Florida, where she looks after the collections from Timucuan Preserve, Fort Caroline National Memorial, Castillo de San Marcos National Memorial, and Fort Matanzas National Memorial. Alice earned a BA in History and French from

Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, and an MA in



*Fragments of a factory-made slipware bowl.*

History from Durham University in England. She has previously worked at George Washington's Mount Vernon, served with American Conservation Experience/AmeriCorps, and conducted research for Dunans Castle Ltd (Scotland). She continues to volunteer with Durham University Archives as part of a group making digitized early modern collections more accessible for researchers.



## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Many thanks to Darius Roby for volunteering at the annual DC Day of Archaeology Festival June 1, 2024. The festival gathers archaeology organizations in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia together in one location to inform our community about local archaeology resources.



## 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.

### 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

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.



## 2024 NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

<b>President</b>	Patrick O'Neill	<a href="mailto:PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET">PATRICKLONEILL@VERIZON.NET</a> 703-244-6275
<b>Vice-President</b>	Yvonne French	<a href="mailto:yvonne.french2@gmail.com">yvonne.french2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Barbara Leven	<a href="mailto:levenbarbara2@gmail.com">levenbarbara2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Recording Sec</b>	Diane Schug-O'Neill	<a href="mailto:schugoneill@gmail.com">schugoneill@gmail.com</a>
<b>Datum Point Editor</b>	Kurt Fredrickson	<a href="mailto:Kurt.N.Fredrickson@hotmail.com">Kurt.N.Fredrickson@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Webmaster</b>	Chris Havlicek	<a href="mailto:christo829@juno.com">christo829@juno.com</a>

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

<b>Fairfax Co. Archaeology (FCPA)</b>	Dr. Elizabeth Crowell	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov">elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov</a> 703-534-3881
<b>Mount Vernon</b>	Joe Downer	<a href="mailto:JDowner@mountvernon.org">JDowner@mountvernon.org</a> 703.799.6831
<b>Gunston Hall</b>	Dave Shonyo	<a href="mailto:archaeology@gunstonhall.org">archaeology@gunstonhall.org</a> 703-638-9724
<b>Alexandria Museum</b>	Dr. Eleanor Breen	<a href="mailto:Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov">Eleanor.Breen@alexandriava.gov</a> 703-838-4399
<b>DC City Archaeologist</b>	Dr. Ruth Troccoli	<a href="mailto:Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov">Ruth.Troccoli@dc.gov</a> 202-442-8836
<b>Germanna Foundation</b>	Kelly Arford-Horne, MA, RPA	<a href="mailto:kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org">kelly.arford-horne@germanna.org</a> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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!!!!**