

Alexandria Archaeology

VOLUNTEER NEWS

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Summer 2008



Getting to the Alexandria Archaeology Museum just got cheaper & easier! See page 3 for details.

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DIGGING THE HISTORY OF FREEDMEN'S CEMETERY

by Eric L. Larsen

Archaeology shows us that some changes have occurred on the site at Freedmen's Cemetery over millennia, not just in recent times. The original digging of the graves during and just after the Civil War overturned the ground that made up a bluff overlooking Hunting Creek to the east. As the gravediggers worked, they turned up carefully flaked tools that had been made and used by the American Indians who once occupied this bluff. The Clovis spear point found by our team last summer was very likely dug up from where it had been discarded as long as thirteen thousand years ago. Most of the other artifacts found were not as old and suggest a more constant use of the area between 9,000 and 3,000 years ago. As the Civil War-era gravediggers were busy doing their jobs, they probably didn't recognize the stone tools mixed in with stone flakes left over



Burial decorations of oyster shells uncovered at Freedmen's Cemetery

Freedmen's continued on page 7

MAPPING FREEDMEN'S CEMETERY

by Eric L. Larsen

As the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Improvement Project began, archaeology came to be involved with the Freedmen's Cemetery. First, through ground penetrating radar and electromagnetic survey, regular patterns – believed to be possible graves – were noted at the site. It was not positively known that graves had survived at Freedmen's Cemetery until the excavations were done. In 1999 and 2000, Potomac Crossing Consultants (URS Corporation) conducted archaeological testing on the Virginia Department of Transportation-owned property adjacent to I-495 and confirmed the presence of graves at the site. It is important to mention that, from the start, it was agreed that no disturbance of graves or grave shafts would be allowed. The goals were simply to identify and record. URS's work identified 78 graves.

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HATS OFF!

Even though field season won't begin until next month, volunteers have been busy in the Museum, at their laptops, and in the laboratory, logging in more than 60 hours.

Joan Amico and Marya Fitzgerald continue to hold down the Museum, answering phones, greeting visitors, editing the newsletter, maintaining the FOAA database (Joan) and assisting with educational programs (Marya). They are joined every Friday by "The Lab Ladies": Cynthia Ford, Sarah Revis, Sue Gagner, Mary Jane Nugent, Anna Lynch, Sandra Humphrey, Montie Kust, and Jeanne Springmann.

Oral History Project volunteers Joanne La Fon, Donise Stevens, Richelle Brown, and Carla Grantham have been busy recording and transcribing, while research volunteers Ted Pulliam, David Sherman, Margarete Holubar, and Mary Jane Nugent have been pursuing a variety of research questions.

Artists Andy Flora and Neil Pelletier continue to produce artwork illustrating shapes, forms, and patterns from our collection of artifacts..

If you have volunteered since January 1, 2008, and don't see your name mentioned above, contact Joan Amico at 703.838.4399 with the number of hours worked, the date, and task performed, and she will happily add your hours to the database.

FOAA'S ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

At the FOAA Annual Meeting held in the Museum on April 19, FOAA Treasurer Kathy Scheibelhoffer presented the FY 08 budget, and the 2008-09 Board of Directors was elected. (See box below for list of officers.) Brief presentations were made by Dave Cavanaugh, FOAA's representative to the Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC); by Margarete Holubar and Mary Jane Nugent explaining their research project identifying USCT originally buried at Freedmen's Cemetery; and by new board member and FOAA secretary Catherine Sumner, who presented a design draft for a new FOAA brochure.

Steve Shephard presented an interesting illustrated lecture titled *Evidence of 19th-Century Coffins at Freedmen's Cemetery: The Perception of the "Proper" Coffin*, which was co-authored by Fran Bromberg and originally presented in February for the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference in Ocean City, Maryland.

FOAA's Annual Report will be posted on the City's website at <http://oha.alexandriava.gov/archaeology/ar-support-foaa.html>

Annual FOAA membership dues received now are good through June 2009. Membership is tax-exempt and helps promote and support archaeology in Alexandria. The box below lists the various membership categories. Join or renew and become a Friend today!



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FRIENDS OF ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization supporting archaeology in the City of Alexandria. Annual membership dues, running from July 1 to June 30, may be sent to:

FOAA
P.O. Box 320721
Alexandria, VA 22320

Individual - \$20 Family/Groups - \$25 Sponsor - \$50 Benefactor - \$100 Corporate - \$500

2008-2009 FOAA Board of Directors

Marya Fitzgerald, president; Joan Amico, vice-president; Kathy Scheibelhoffer, treasurer; Catherine Sumner, secretary; Dave Cavanaugh, AAC representative; Laura Heaton, board member; Margarete Holubar, board member



POINTS OF INTEREST

Early Stoneware Bottle Departs for Williamsburg

Though this diminutive stoneware bottle is undecorated and just six inches tall, it is a rare and important object. Found in a privy/well on Market Square, the bottle was made in England around 1850 and used (and broken) at Arell's Tavern. The tavern was built in the 1760s, and the associated archaeological features contained some of the earliest historic-period artifacts found in Alexandria. This bottle has an unusual form -- just a few are known to have been imported to America. Eight similar bottles are known, according to an article in the *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*. The bottle will appear in a Colonial Williamsburg publication on salt-glaze stoneware in Early America (1607-1800), and will be on display at the Dewitt Wallace Museum in Williamsburg beginning May 30, 2009. The bottle is going to Williamsburg sometime before May 20, so that it can be photographed for the catalogue. If you'd like to see it before it leaves Alexandria, it is currently on display in the Arell's Tavern exhibit case.



scanned and saved digitally, continuing to label slides and contact sheets for Freedmen's Cemetery, and processing any new images from future excavations, including the work to be performed at Shuter's Hill this season. To date, the following materials have been processed : 1910 prints, 3881 slides, 750 negatives, and 200 contact sheets.

Help Save Postage & Paper!

As we attempt to save resources, please consider receiving your *Volunteer News* electronically. Email ruth.reeder@alexandriava.gov to be added to the newsletter email list. Each issue will also be posted on the Alexandria Archaeology website at <http://oha.alexandriava.gov/archaeology/ar-support-foaa.html>.

All Aboard the King Street Trolleys

As of early April, four rubber-tired "clean-diesel" trolleys now run up and down King Street between the river and rails (from the foot of King Street to the King Street Metro station). The free service operates from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily and is a great way to travel between this season's excavation site at Shuter's Hill (behind the Masonic Memorial) and the Alexandria Archaeology Museum.

Generous Donations to the Museum

The Archaeology Museum recently received two very different donations. They include Bob Madison's donation of 20 copies of his book *Walking with Washington*, a \$240 value. In addition, Robyn Nichols, a sergeant with the Alexandria Police Violent Crimes Unit, donated \$350 for a full summer-camp scholarship, ensuring a camp slot for a deserving kid.

Museum's Image Archival Project Update

Karen Wilkins and Terilee Edwards-Hewitt have almost completed archiving the Museum's collection of slides, negatives, prints, and contact sheets. A few things remain to be done, including deciding which slides need to be



KIDS' CORNER: TIMETRAVELERS 2008 PASSPORT PROGRAM

Kids, drop by the Archaeology Museum and pick up a free TimeTravelers passport. Visit six participating museums in Alexandria, or anywhere in Virginia, and be eligible for a T-shirt (pictured above), a patch, and a certificate from Governor Tim Kaine!

This year's theme, Virginia Harmonies, celebrates Virginia's rich music heritage, from gospel singers to bluegrass festivals. Our TimeTravelers exhibit highlights Civil War drummer boys. Featured in the Museum exhibit is a 14-year-old Union drummer awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery during an 1863 battle at Vicksburg. The display includes a letter that Felix Voltz, a drummer boy stationed at Arlington Heights (now Arlington National Cemetery), wrote to his parents on May 20, 1865, promising "...if God lets me get Home safe again I will try to behafe [sic] and mind my Parents better than I have..."

Other local facilities participating in the program include the Carlyle House, Gadsby's Tavern, Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary, Friendship Firehouse, The Lyceum, Fort Ward, Masonic Memorial, Christ Church, Lee-Fendall House, Torpedo Factory, and Alexandria Black History.

The program is sponsored by the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM). To download a passport and for additional information, visit www.timetravelers.org.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

86 Years Young & Still Going Strong

In late March, stellar volunteer Montie Kust celebrated her 86th birthday in the Museum surrounded by friends and staff. Montie's volunteer career with Archaeology began in the early 90s when she signed on with the Tavern Ceramics Research Project (TCRP), a collaborative effort between Archaeology and Gadsby's Tavern Museum processing artifacts excavated from the Gadsby's Block during the 1960s urban renewal of Old Town. Over the years Montie has helped in the field and in the lab and has taught us how to highstep through Old Town during the GW parades -- it's not everyone who can boast being trained by a genuine Radio City Rockette! She was awarded FOAA's John Glaser Award in 1998 and the Volunteer of the Year Award in 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002! Every Friday she can be found in the laboratory as part of the Lab Ladies, a dedicated group of women who spend the day processing Alexandria's artifacts.



Montie Kust

Our Own Living Legend

Anna Lynch, our own researcher and teacher extraordinaire, is among the 2007 nominees for "Living Legends of Alexandria," a project cosponsored by the Rotary Club of Alexandria and the *Alexandria Gazette Packet*. Anna's photo appears among the 48 Alexandrians nominated for this honor in the "Living Legends" exhibit at the Lyceum from April 24 through September 8, 2008. Anna is seen below with Living



Legends Project Chair and photographer, Nina Tisara.

Also to Anna's volunteer credit are the hundreds of hours

Legends Project Director and photographer Nina Tisara and Anna Lynch

she has spent researching for both Black History and Archaeology. See the Spring 2008 FOAA newsletter to read a sample of Anna's research into Alexandria's history. Other works to her credit include three volumes of *A Compendium of Early African Americans in Alexandria, VA*, available for sale on line at www.HistoricAlexandria.org and in the Museum. In 1994 Anna was awarded the distinguished Alexandria History Award from the Alexandria Historical Society.

Rhonda Williams Remembered

As field season approaches and we prepare to return to excavations at the Shuter's Hill Site, our thoughts turn to one volunteer who will be sorely missed. Sadly, Rhonda Williams succumbed to cancer last fall. We were lucky to have her as a volunteer in the summer and fall of 2006. She impressed us with her deep interest and enthusiasm for the fieldwork.



Rhonda Williams

As she gained excavation skills, her inquiring mind made her want to find out more about the techniques we employ to excavate a site, about how to read the soils to determine what stain is a feature, as well as how we surmise what that feature might be. She loved finding artifacts, and she wanted to know anything we could tell her about those. Rhonda was excited enough about the site to bring her mother out to see what she was doing. It was fun to see her enthusiasm in explaining the site and the unit where she was working. We will remember her smiling friendly face and the winning personality that made her a joy to work with, whether as a supervisor or fellow volunteer. Never once did she give the impression that she was sick; rather she brightened our days whether the sky overhead was sunny or cloudy. When we return to the site, we will think of Rhonda and remember her fondly.

Volunteer Spotlight

Recently, Lindsay Eschmann, an eighth-grader from Carl Sandburg Middle School, worked on a lengthy project in which she assisted in cataloging and organizing the Archaeology Museum's twenty-two-volume scrapbook collection dating from the 1960s to



Lindsey Eschmann and her dad

the present. Her volunteer time was used to fulfill part of a middle-school civics class requirement.

Ruth Reeder, Museum Educator, suggested that Lindsay reorganize the Museum's scrapbook collection of clippings. The clippings focus primarily on Museum activities, discoveries, and digs covered in newspapers and magazines. Throughout the years, many of the articles and photos had shifted inside the plastic covered scrapbook pages. Many others were duplicate articles that had been tucked between the pages, and still others were out of chronological order.

"I am very interested in archaeology and hope someday to be involved in a dig," Lindsay said. "I was happy to help out doing anything with the Museum. I learned a lot about Alexandria history and had fun at the same time; and even though I finished my civics class requirements, I'm looking to do more with the Museum."

VOLUNTEER FOR MOUNT VERNON

Through September, Mount Vernon Archaeology will be excavating in the Upper Garden, one of two walled gardens that flank the western approach to George Washington's home. Washington created the garden during his 1775 redesign of the Mount Vernon grounds, transforming a ca. 1760 rectangular garden into an elliptical space bounded by a brick wall, a greenhouse, and slave quarters to the north.



In the near future, a major restoration effort will be undertaken in the Upper Garden, and archaeological evidence will be important in developing the plan for this work. Volunteers will aid in field excavations under the direction of the archaeology staff and will assist in interpreting the site to the public. Volunteers will also assist in the archaeology lab - washing, labeling and otherwise working with the artifact collection recovered from the excavations.

No previous archaeological experience is required, but the outdoor work will be strenuous at times and the weather undoubtedly will be hot and humid during the summer months. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to participate and willing to commit to at least a half day of work. The staff provides all of the necessary tools and training in excavation, recording, and interpretation.

Opportunities are available Monday through Friday; in addition, we will be working on Saturdays during the months of June, July, and August. Work hours are between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. A typical week includes lab work on Monday and field work Tuesday through Friday; lab work is also carried out on rain days. Contact Curt Breckenridge at cbreckenridge@mountvernon.org or (703) 799-6303 if you would be interested in volunteering.

NEW INTERN

My name is Sara Belkin. I am a 21-year-old junior at The George Washington University. I started as an international affairs major, but after I traveled to Israel, I became hooked on archaeology and learning about the past. Since that fateful trip I have worked with Alexandria



Archaeology on excavating Freedmen's Cemetery. I studied abroad in Jerusalem and traveled to Egypt and Jordan and throughout Israel, trying to see and learn as much as I could. This past semester I have been interning here and working on the prehistoric data from the Freedmen's site. This summer I am heading back to Israel to dig at Megiddo, the site of more than a hundred ancient battles. After I graduate next spring, I hope to go on to get my master's and doctorate. I am having the best time at Alexandria Archaeology where the people are so much fun, and I am learning a great deal about archaeology.

FLORA'S ARTWORK FEATURED



Multitalented volunteer Andy Flora, pictured above, and his Clovis point illustration, at left, are featured in the new timeline installed on the south exterior wall of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. The timeline mural narrates the history of the area, beginning with the Clovis point's being discarded by an American Indian some 13,000 years ago and ending with its discovery this summer during the excavation of the Freedmen's Cemetery site. If you look very carefully along the left side of the panel, you will see Andy's name, along with those of photographers Anna Frame, Gavin Ashworth, and Erik Kvalsvik, whose images are included in the project. The timeline is one of a series of interpretive signs installed along the boardwalk to direct and inform visitors arriving via the new water taxis.



RECAP OF SAA MEETING

by Dr. Pamela Cressey
City Archaeologist

I recently attended the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) in Vancouver, British Columbia. It is always important to attend such professional gatherings to keep abreast of ideas, trends, and technological innovations. Yet this meeting provided an even greater opportunity. I was one of four archaeologists speaking about local archaeology programs in a forum about the value of archaeology operating at this scale. Three of these individuals spoke about localities from the American Southwest: Santa Fe, NM, and Pima County in Tucson, AZ. Alexandria was the only local jurisdiction outside the Southwest. See (<http://www.pima.gov/cultural/>) for information on Pima County's Cultural Resources and Historic Preservation Office and Santa Fe's Historic Preservation web site at <http://www.santafenm.gov/index.asp?NID=237>.

Although I had not interacted with the other archaeologists before, it was fascinating to hear how they preserve archaeological resources in their localities. Even with cities and counties of very different sizes, types of resources, and staffing levels, all of us had long personal histories of working in our jurisdictions. It was an honor to represent the City of Alexandria and speak about Alexandria Archaeology, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, and the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology.

The Governmental Affairs Committee of SAA hosted the forum to draw attention to some key issues: 1) federal and state regulations and initiatives for archaeological preservation have not expanded in recent years; 2) local archaeology is an important focus in the future for such archaeological preservation; 3) more archaeological resources can be protected by local legislation than federal or state; and 4) residents of communities have many ways of using and appreciating archaeology.

A key point emerged from the forum: Each community develops its own archaeological program and services to meet its needs, types of resources, and development pressures. Pima County is large and has taken an interesting approach--purchasing land or receiving donated land from developers to protect fragile resources. It has six archaeologists working for the county to oversee the large number of private development and local government projects. The Joint Courts Archaeological Project (<http://www.pima.gov/JointCourts/>) is a massive project Santa Fe operates in a much smaller mode, with a committee of volunteer archaeologists reviewing archaeological projects conducted by private firms. Alexandria has a comprehensive community program befitting its citizens' needs for public education, promotion, tourism, park planning, collections management, web development, and so on.

Many communities want to increase archaeological preservation and education by establishing local programs. Currently, committees of SAA and the Society for Historical Archaeology will consider ways in which local archaeology can be enhanced.



DEL RAY CELEBRATES

On April 12, new signs honoring Del Ray's history were dedicated at the seasonal opening of the Del Ray Farmers' Market. Presiding over the event were Mayor Bill Euille, members of the City Council, Archaeology Museum director Pam Cressey, OHA director Lance Mallamo, and members of the Potomac Centennial Committee.

These seven new signs commemorate the history of Del Ray, starting with the founding of the Town of Potomac in 1908. Potomac was created when the communities of Del Ray and St. Elmo came together with adjacent areas. These communities had been established as "streetcar suburbs" north of the City of Alexandria since 1894. The improvements initiated by the Town of Potomac (in taxing privileges, sanitation, roads, and law enforcement) attracted the attention of the City, which annexed it in January 1930.

The signs, which were designed by Dennis Kund, showcase Del Ray's railroad and streetcar heritage, Potomac's municipal government, and 19th-century structures no longer in existence. The signs and their locations are as follows:

- Town of Potomac and Mt. Vernon Avenue** at Farmers' Market (E. Oxford and Mt. Vernon avenues), pictured above;
- Electric Railway** (Mt. Vernon Community School, west side);
- Schools of Potomac** (Mt. Vernon School, east side);
- St. Asaph Racetrack** at Charles Hill Park (E. Oxford & De Witt avenues);
- Bluemont Line** at Mount Jefferson Park (200 block of E. Raymond Avenue);
- Almshouse** at Simpson Stadium Park (426 E. Monroe Avenue); and
- Town Hall & Firehouse** at Fire Station 202 (213 E. Windsor Avenue)

For more information, visit www.historicalexandria.org under Town of Potomac Centennial.

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from the making and sharpening of the tools.

The archaeology at Freedmen's has recorded several episodes of change over the twentieth century. Today, it is clear that graves once extended out under present-day Washington Street. Construction of the Mt. Vernon Parkway in the 1930s covered these graves. Before the parkway, Washington Street dead-ended at Hunting Creek, not far from Freedmen's Cemetery. There was then little traffic to this end of Alexandria and no need for much more than a cart track. When the bridge over Hunting Creek was constructed and the parkway finished, the already neglected cemetery found itself fronting a new north-south transportation route connecting Alexandria with Mt. Vernon. This alteration would accelerate the changes to Freedmen's.

With the commercial potential enhanced by the presence of roads, the cemetery lands were rezoned in the 1940s. The site was sold and then developed as a gas station in 1955. Later, the construction of I-95 (the Beltway) and an office building further altered the site. With the landscape and land use altered, public memory of the cemetery faded.

The gas station's impact on the site was significant. The building, its pumps, and its underground storage tanks clearly destroyed graves. In addition, the bluff above the creek, a high spot on the landscape where American Indians once worked their stone tools, had been largely scraped away. Archaeologists found evidence of graves just below the station's driving surface. Many grave shafts had been scraped very close to coffin level, and in some cases, it was clear that whole graves had been graded away completely.

A record of names of the Freedmen's dead was "rediscovered" in Richmond in the 1990s. This list of names, ages, and dates of death written down during the active years of the cemetery is known as the Gladwin Record. About 800 of the 1800 names from this record belong to children under the age of five. The deaths of older children bring the presence of the young to about half of those buried in Freedmen's Cemetery, according to the Gladwin Record. Only 19% of the graves identified by archaeologists can be attributed to children. The reason for the discrepancy is currently unclear, but children's graves might not have been dug as deep. Grading at the site may have had a greater impact on children's graves.

Archaeologists are also interested in what the layout of the cemetery might tell us. The cemetery was created at the

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Tara Giuliano and Steve Shephard identify burial shafts while carefully troweling the exposed ground surface.

As plans for a memorial cemetery developed, the City of Alexandria assumed a greater role. In 2004, City archaeologists tested the areas around the gas station and office building, both still privately owned at that time. This work found 45 additional graves, bringing the total number of graves found to 123.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE IDENTIFIED 534 GRAVES

The final set of excavations began in May 2007. After the gas station and office building were torn down, the concrete slabs that had served as their ground floors stood out amidst the asphalt driving surfaces that had covered the site for the previous five decades. The archaeologists' first job was to have this surface removed (by backhoe), along with other deposits associated with twentieth-century development of the site. At one to two feet below the paving, the crew began to see remnants of the graves of the 1800 individuals that historic records told us were buried in the cemetery between 1864 and 1869.

Most of our work involved clearing, identifying, and recording of graves in 1,000-foot-square blocks. The blocks provided us with a reasonable work area and limited the number of open areas exposed to weather. We organized the work in long trenches, and before long we began encountering the tops of grave shafts. The trenches were helpful in providing us with some idea of the original layout of the cemetery. With our longest trenches, we

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Robert Montague

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: ALEXANDRIA MEMORIES

by Jen Hembree with photographs by Rita Yurow

In fall 2006, Alan Palm interviewed Robert Montague III and Richard Bierce about the development of the City of Alexandria’s preservation movement and their involvement in it over the years.

Richard Bierce is a historical architect and consultant who has

been involved in the City’s preservation movement since he moved here in 1973.

Asked about the importance of architectural and historical preservation to the City of Alexandria, Mr. Bierce stated, “...It’s the essence of why the City is significant. It’s important for lots of reasons in a contemporary sense...without the architectural context of Old Town and the close association with significant events in American history, beginning with George Washington, Mr. Lee, and many players of lesser note in between...without it, we are just another medium-sized city of which there are dozens up and down the Eastern seaboard...And the programs that the city has supported over the years, archaeology, research, BAR, all come together to reinforce that identity and continue it as a fundamental attribute of ‘who is Alexandria’—to the world.”

Robert Montague, a local attorney, is former president of the Historic Alexandria Foundation and former chairman of the Preservation Commission, as well as former president of the Old Town Civic Association and the Northern Virginia Conservation Council. He reviewed some of the issues those groups have dealt with since his arrival in Alexandria in 1964.

Interviewer: How did you get interested in historic preservation and history?

Montague: “It started with my aunt, Gay Montague Moore. She wrote the book *Seaport in Virginia: George Washington’s Alexandria* in 1949 and was responsible for my interest in Alexandria...I’m her nephew—her oldest nephew...[S]he came to Alexandria in 1929 and



Richard Bierce

restored the house at 207 Prince Street, which is the George William Fairfax, or Fairfax-Moore-Montague, house, where I live now. She was one of the founders of the Historic Alexandria Foundation and one of the original members of the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission...My father was the first resident-director of George Mason’s home, Gunston Hall, so he had quite a bit to do with my interest in historic preservation as well. We were the last family to live in that mansion. I later went to law school at the University of Virginia and then became an assistant attorney general with the state of Kentucky; and while [I was] working out there, one of my state agency clients was the Kentucky Historical Society, which became the

State Historic Preservation Agency in Kentucky...I did research for that agency as an assistant attorney general. I brought that [experience] with me to Alexandria when I moved here in 1964, and it developed into an article that was published in the *Virginia Law Review* [with the] title “Planning for Preservation in Virginia” in 1965, and it was published in another form by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1964, and that’s what got me started with a reputation as a lawyer who was interested in historic preservation.”

Interviewer: Of all these activities that you’ve seen, are there any that you would consider the most important?

Oral History Volunteers Still Needed: We need volunteers to interview our Black History Museum contacts and former Potomac Yard employees and assist in our City Employee and City Preservation Movement Oral History Project. Others are needed to transcribe past interviews or assist in updating the website.

Upcoming Oral History Training Sessions Planned: Current oral history volunteers who have not yet received training, as well as any new volunteers, should attend a training session. Space is limited, and an accurate head count is needed in order to prepare handouts.

Training Dates: Saturday, May 10 and June 7, from 10 a.m. to noon. Free but reservations are required.

To participate in any of these activities, please contact Jen Hembree at jen_hembree@hotmail.com; or 703/838-4399.

Montague: "...One of the things that I consider as important as anything is the easement program that the Commission—the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission—undertook when I was chairman of it. Senator Patsy Ticer was very supportive of our effort to get easements donated on properties in Old Town, particularly [those] that had open space around the gardens that had not been built on and that needed to be protected from development. They were tempting sites for construction of housing and would probably have disappeared if it were not for the easement program, which permanently protects open space."

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beginning of 1864, when the Military Governor of Union-occupied Alexandria seized the land of a secessionist family who had left town. Oversight for the cemetery was given to the military-appointed Superintendent of Contraband in Alexandria, the Reverend Albert Gladwin. (It was he who began the recording of names now known as the Gladwin Record.) This military connection suggests that the cemetery's layout and operations might be similar to those found in Alexandria's National Cemetery nearby. We know that U.S. Colored Troops were buried for a short time at Freedmen's before being disinterred and reburied at Alexandria's National Cemetery. However, while the Freedmen's Cemetery layout is very regular, it does not have the sectioned layout typical of other military cemeteries of the time. So the name Freedmen's Cemetery is appropriate; everyone buried there lived (even if only briefly) and died in the free territory of Alexandria, and they are therefore part of the history of the City.

Mapping continued from page 7

could begin to see rows and the density of graves across the site. We backfilled as we went along, moving from the far areas of the site back toward its entranceways. We did this to avoid having heavy equipment driving over areas no longer covered with asphalt.

As we worked, we identified a unique buried surface along the western portion of the site. This surface, called an A-horizon, was original to the cemetery and, unlike most areas of the site, had not been graded by modern development. We were hopeful that here we might find grave decorations typical of other old African-American cemeteries. A tantalizing find of canning-jar sherds whetted our hopes. The buried surface also hinted at the possibility of identifying an intact prehistoric

component at the site. URS's work had turned up a good number of prehistoric stone artifacts, but all had been found in disturbed contexts. Now, American Indian stone artifacts were turning up in this undisturbed layer.

One of the most important finds of the summer was associated with the area of the buried surface. There we found a concentration of oyster shell. We left the shells in place but cleared around them and found the top of a grave shaft. The grave was likely a child's by its size; it was located on a slope. The oyster shell had probably shifted over the years; however, it was found in a concentration that was not seen elsewhere on the site. This type of grave decoration has been found in other African-American cemeteries, including ones on South Carolina's Barrier Islands and in the Freedmen's Cemetery of Dallas.

Today we know the location of 534 graves at the Freedmen's Cemetery. All of these graves have an east-west orientation. More than 40 distinct north-south running rows have been found across the site. We know that the rows closest to S. Washington Street contained more than 49 graves. Many of the identified graves were for children.

Of the 534 graves identified by archaeologists, only 293 have been intact. Some were disturbed by the building of roads or the construction of the gas station and office building. Some were disturbed by the burying of utilities across the site. Some graves we could not completely uncover because we were unable to excavate the whole site. Of the 293 complete graves, 55 measured four feet or smaller. This means that nearly 19% of the graves found belonged to children.

Once we had finished our documentation of each grave, City surveyors came in to record the locations of marked graves onto a larger site map—with all the grave locations and elevations available for current and future reference—for planning and management purposes.

Our team of archaeologists accomplished many of our primary objectives: finding graves, determining the limits of existing graves, documenting disturbance at the site, providing a map with elevations, and assuring that a minimum two-foot buffer lies over each existing grave. This information has been passed on to the memorial park design phase of the project. A design competition for Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial is currently under way, with submissions due by April 25, 2008. Meanwhile, historical research and analysis continue. Our goal is to place this cemetery into a larger context. We wish to view it not only as a resting place for the dead but also as a part of the larger history of Alexandria.

[Google "Freedmen's Cemetery" to find the link to the competition website.]

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Alexandria Preservation "101," a series of workshops and lectures to educate historic property owners

- Tuesday, May 6 - Lecture: 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., \$10
Overview of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines by Pratt Cassity, University of Georgia
- Saturday, May 10 (two sessions)
Workshop: 10 a.m. to noon, \$15
Ornamental Plaster by Hayles & Howe, Inc.
Workshop: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., \$15
Wall Plaster by Hayles & Howe, Inc.
- Tuesday, May 13 - Lecture: 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., \$10
The Basics of Alexandria Architecture
by City Architect Al Cox
- Saturday, May 17 (two sessions)
Workshop: 10 a.m. to noon, \$15
Repairing Historic Windows
by David Gibney, restoration carpenter
Workshop: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., \$15
Restoring Historic Porches
by David Gibney, restoration carpenter
- Tuesday, May 20 - Lecture: 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., \$10
Archaeology and Your Backyard
by City Archaeologist Pamela Cressey

Lectures cost \$10 each or \$25 for the series of three, and workshops cost \$15 each or \$50 for the series of four. Advance registration is requested and can be made by calling 703.838.4554 or visiting the "Shop" online at www.historicalexandria.org.

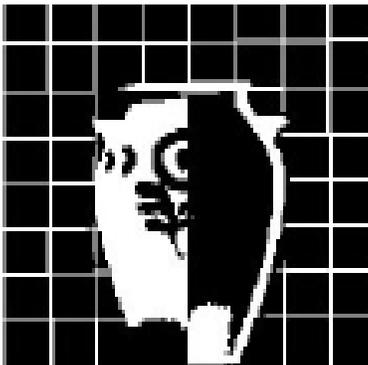
May 10 & June 7 - Oral History Orientation - 10 a.m. to Noon
Required for new volunteers interested in participating in the Alexandria Legacies: Oral History Project. See page 8 for details.

May 19 to 23 & May 27 to 31
George Washington University & Alexandria Archaeology 2008 Summer Field School in Public & Historical Archaeology
For more information visit
www.summer.gwu.edu/summerDC/programs.htm

May 31, June 14, July 12, August 16, Sept. 20, & Oct. 18
Family Dig Days -- 1:30 to 3 p.m.
Call 703.838.4399 for details and to make the required reservations. Space is limited.

June 7 - Field Orientation - 10 a.m. to Noon
Required for new volunteers interested in field work. No experience necessary. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. Free but reservations required. 703.838.4399.

Alexandria Archaeology Summer Camp 2008
Session I: July 21 to July 25
Session II: July 28 to August 1
9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily - \$350/session
12-to-15-year-olds, help City Archaeologists excavate a real archaeological site! Learn professional excavating, recording, and artifact-processing methods. Uncover the City's buried past while protecting historical resources. Visit <http://oha.alexandriava.gov/archaeology/ar-programs-summercamp.html>.



Alexandria Archaeology
105 North Union Street, #327
Alexandria, VA 22314



Alexandria Archaeology is owned and operated by the City of Alexandria

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