

The Scoop

A Newsletter of the Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources FOFA



Please join the Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources and the Cultural Resource Management and Protection Branch of the Fairfax County Park Authority in welcoming our four guest speakers for an archaeological symposium on:

The Archaeology of the War of 1812

**Saturday, Oct 25, 2014
9:30 AM - 2:30 PM**

**James Lee Community Center Auditorium
2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church, Virginia**

Continental breakfast and light refreshments appropriate to the time. Free to FOFA members, \$15.00 (the price of a membership) for all others.



Kevin Bradley (URS)

The Archaeological Potential of a Burned Capital – On August 24, 1814, the British Army routed an American force near Bladensburg, Maryland and marched on the United States nascent capital city. Virtually abandoned, English soldiers set the public buildings of Washington, D.C. aflame delivering a clear political message to the young nation. A number of organizations in the metropolitan area will remember the bicentennial of the city's burning and other significant events that occurred in the final months of the War of 1812 throughout the summer of 2014.

Though limited in number, the material remains of the conflict held by the Washington, D.C. Historic Preservation Office offer tangible reminders of the invasion and an opportunity to promote awareness of the city's early history to the general public. The potential of future archaeological findings within Washington, D.C. may also provide researchers and the public a clearer understanding of the actions and attitudes of both civilians and soldiers during the conflict.

**Ruth Trocolli (City Archaeologist,
D.C. Historic Preservation Office)**

Joshua Barney and the Battle of Bladensburg: an archaeological investigation – British forces invaded the capital after defeating American forces in the Battle of Bladensburg. Archaeological investigations and intensive map and GIS research revealed long-lost details about the battle and subsequent events.

**Noel Broadbent (Research Associate
at the Department of Anthropology,
National Museum of Natural History)**

Joshua Barney and the Battle of Bladensburg: an archaeological investigation – The British Army launched their attack on Washington on August 24th 1814. The center of third line of American defense was held by Commodore Joshua Barney with 400 flotilla-men, and 120 marines under Captain Samuel Miller, USMC. With their battery of 5 cannon they inflicted heavy losses on the British. According to various descriptions, Barney's two 18-pounders (naval guns) were placed directly in the Washington Turnpike a few yards from the Rives' barn. Barney, who was severely wounded, was treated by nearby spring. In 2012, a volunteer archaeological project finished documenting this site, including the Rives' barn, the original turnpike and Barney's spring, all of which were lost to history.

**Patrick O'Neill (Archeological Society
of Virginia, Northern Virginia Chapter)**

Archaeology of the Battle of the White House – The Battle of the White House after the burning of Washington is the fascinating story of seven British warships that ascended the Potomac River to participate in the attack on Washington in August 1814.

Brigadier General John Pratt Hungerford's 2,500 Virginia militia fought beside the crew of the frigate Essex and the famous Captain David Porter to "annoy or destroy" the warships and bring the seat of war to the Potomac River. For over five days, these brave American citizen soldiers and seamen fought against war seasoned British seamen and marines at batteries erected on the bluffs at White House landing almost at point blank range. The battle also included the first use of a torpedo device on the Potomac River, personally built by Robert Fulton.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Upcoming FOFA Membership Meetings

- 1. November 15th at Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria VA**
- 2. January 10, 2015 at Frying Pan Farm, Herndon, VA**

RESIDENT CURATOR PROGRAM

A public meeting will be held on **October 23, 2014 at 7 p.m.** to present the results of the Resident Curator Program Study, which was prepared by John Milner Associates, Inc. The study can be downloaded from the county website: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/planning/resident-curator-program.htm>

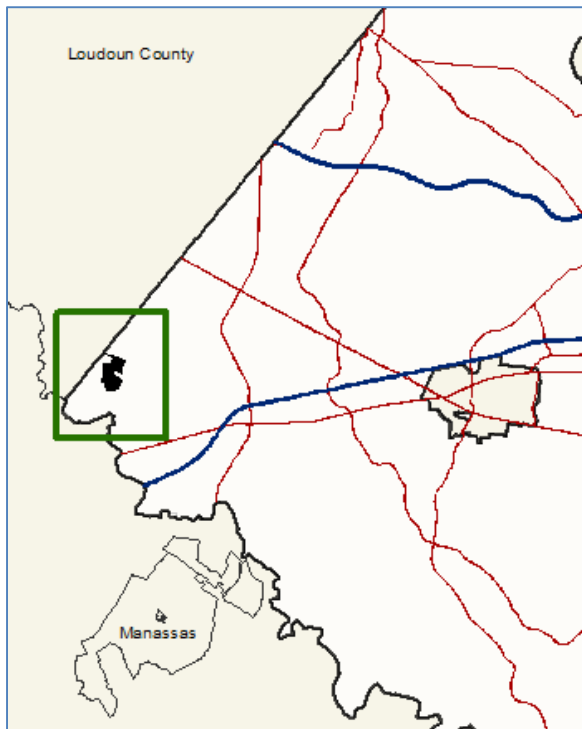
Resident curator programs have been used to preserve and protect historically significant buildings in jurisdictions across the United States and the county is exploring the use of such a program in Fairfax County.

For more information about this meeting, call the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662.

SWAT EXCAVATIONS at SULLY WOODLANDS PARK

Contributed by John Rutherford, CRMPB
(edited by John Mullen)

A subset of elite archeologists known as the Sully Woodlands Archaeological Team (SWAT), working under FCPA's Cultural Resource Management and Protection Branch (CRMPB), recently completed Phase I and II archeological investigations within a portion of the Sully Woodlands, an assemblage of over 4000 acres of parkland in western Fairfax County.



Sappington Parcels Location Map

Phase I Survey – Sappington Parcels

The Phase I investigation was conducted on the Sappington parcels, a 222-acre subset of parcels contiguous to Ellick Preserve. The purpose of the investigation was to identify any cultural resources within the project area, which would aid resource management and to guide master planning processes for the FCPA.

Prior to the purchase of the parcels by the FCPA in 2010, the land was utilized throughout the historic period primarily for farming, the land being part of the 41,660 acre “King” Carter grant of 1724. During the 18th century the Sappington parcels passed between Fairfax and Loudon counties twice, finally becoming a part of Fairfax County again in 1798.

Today, the majority of the project area is covered by unused fields, shown as agriculturally altered in aerial photography from the early 20th century. Vegetation over these fields consists largely of grasses along with Eastern Juniper (Red Cedar) and Virginia Pine saplings. Understory present in these areas is sparse, though several invasive species were encountered during investigations including Wineberry, Autumn Olive and Multiflora Rose.

Topography generally consists of slight ridges (predominately north-south oriented) and low-drainage cuts. In the northern portion of the project area, elevation reaches the highest point at 250ft ASL. In the southern portion of the project area, elevation dips to the project area's lowest point at 200ft ASL and the topography is cut by a north-south draining seasonal stream.

A total of 3,777 shovel test pits (stp's) were excavated, but only 186 contained historic or prehistoric artifacts. Seven new archeological sites were identified, including five 20th-century trash scatters or remains of small agricultural outbuildings, and one was a small prehistoric lithic scatter. Due to two centuries of farming activity and naturally shallow soil, the stratigraphic integrity of the Sappington parcels is unfortunately very low.

Only one site warrants further investigation. Site 44FX3711 is a multicomponent site containing 214 prehistoric period artifacts and 23 historic period artifacts. A majority of the diagnostic prehistoric components, consisting of several projectile point types, date to the Archaic cultural period (see above photo). The Early Woodland Period is also represented by a single Piscataway point.



Though the area is heavily disturbed, the abundance and variety of prehistoric materials recovered from 44FX3711, as well as the site's extensive size, warrant further investigation and a Phase II is currently in progress.

Phase II Evaluation of Site 44FX3172

In addition to the Phase I investigation, the Sully Woodlands Archaeological Team completed Phase II work on site 44FX3172, a transitory camp dating to the Late Archaic cultural period, which is located approximately 1.5 miles north of the Sappington Parcels on the Elklick Preserve portion of the park.

The site was first documented in 2002 by county archeologists as a transitory camp dating to the Late Archaic cultural period and is situated along an undulating terrace that dips down to low wetland areas to the east and south. Though the site had suffered disturbance from agricultural activities, the core of the site

remained concentrated on the high point of the terrace. A second concentration on a slight rise in the westernmost portion of the site, just bordering Loudon County, was also noted.

The SWAT investigation included close-interval shovel testing, unit excavation, and a geomorphological analysis. The purpose of the work was to evaluate the site's eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and to assess the site's local "Public Significance" as defined by the Fairfax Heritage Resource Management Plan.

Five hundred and thirty-eight shovel tests were excavated, with eighty-three tests positive for prehistoric cultural remains. Some modern trash was scattered across the northern boundaries of the site along with fragments of barbed wire fence and cement blocks; however, no historic cultural remains were recovered from the testing.

Next, SWAT analyzed distribution maps created from shovel testing data to determine the best placement for the larger test unit excavations. Nine of the twelve test units contained prehistoric cultural remains, but three units were sterile. For a comprehensive analysis of the complex stratigraphy at 44FX3172 SWAT employed geoarchaeologist Daniel Hayes.

The artifact assemblage from the Phase I and II investigations is comprised of 509 artifacts; the majority of which consisted of lithic debitage with the remainder of the artifacts consisting of bifaces and utilized flakes. Of the bifaces, three projectile points were identified. One projectile point recovered during the 2002 investigations was identified as a hornfels Orient Fishtail projectile point. Two untyped, hornfels projectile points were recovered in 2013 by SWAT and,

though untyped, have been tentatively dated to the Late Archaic based on similarities to Bare Island projectile points (stemmed with a long, symmetrical tapering blade).

The original site boundaries were expanded south and west, however, it was concluded that the overall research value of 44FX3172 was low. SWAT's investigations determined the site's integrity had been compromised and tests over the site yielded minimal quantities of cultural materials. From the results of SWAT's investigations, 44FX3172 was not recommended eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

CART UPDATE

The staff of CART has been busy working on an interactive web map to inform the public of the history and other information about Old Colchester Park and Preserve. Open the link below and click on the numbers around the park to read information and see artifacts recovered from our last four years of excavation.

[Cultural History Tour of the Old Colchester Park and Preserve](#)

FOFA NEEDS YOU!

FOFA is a 501c(3) non-profit organization that supports the Cultural Resource Management and Protection Branch of the Fairfax County Park Authority. We seek to further promote the understanding and appreciation of Fairfax County's cultural resources through archaeology and historic preservation. Among our other activities, FOFA can now offer support in the acquisition of needed field equipment, artifact storage systems, and computer software.

We need you to becoming a supporting member! Please fill out the attached membership application, and especially let us know areas that you can assist (i.e. website development and maintenance, fundraising, outreach, etc.).

Follow us on Facebook and on the internet at <http://fofaweb.org/>.

PIRATE FEST at LAKE FAIRFAX

Earlier this summer, FOFA and the CRMPB participated in the first annual PIRATE FEST at Lake Fairfax Park. Pirates of all ages designed their own compass rose at the FOFA activity table (thanks Paula for the wonderful idea!). The overall event was a huge success thanks to all the FCPA staff and volunteers.



*Supporting Archaeology,
History, and Preservation
in Fairfax County*





**FRIENDS OF FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY
AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Membership Application

Date: _____ New Member ___ Renewing Member
Annual Dues: Individual (\$15) ___ Family (\$20) ___

Title (Mr., Ms, etc.) First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Street Address City State Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Evening Telephone Cell Phone Email Address

___ Check here if you prefer that your contact information NOT be published in a future directory of members.

Please indicate skills or background that you would be willing to share with the Friends:

___ IT ___ Fundraising ___ Public Relations ___ Events Planning ___ Graphics ___ Photography
___ Writing ___ Archaeology ___ Preservation ___ Other (please specify) _____

What ideas would you suggest for the enhancement and support of Fairfax County's archaeology and other cultural resources programs?

For Family memberships, please provide information for a second member (spouse, partner, or child):
(To provide information for more than two family members, please use multiple membership forms and attach them together.)

Title (Mr., Ms, etc.) First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Daytime Telephone Evening Telephone Cell Phone Email Address

Please indicate skills and background that might be shared with the Friends:

___ IT ___ Fundraising ___ Public Relations ___ Events Planning ___ Graphics ___ Photography
___ Writing ___ Archaeology ___ Preservation ___ Other (please specify) _____

Please make checks payable to FOFA, and mail to:

Charles Balch 2922 Oakton Ridge Circle, Oakton, VA 22124

CBalch@aol.com

For Internal Use: Date Received: _____ Amount Received: _____