

MEETING OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC

Come join FOFA at our Annual Membership Meeting with

Sean Devlin: Mount Vernon through Archaeology

Saturday, February 1, 2020 at 9:30 AM

James Lee Community Center

2855 Annandale Road,

Falls Church, VA

Annual Membership Meeting Scheduled for February 1, 2020

The Annual Members Meeting of the Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2020 in the **Urbanites Room** of the **James Lee Center**. **Coffee and light refreshments will be provided during the meeting.**

FOFA will hold a brief meeting prior to the presentation in order to elect the 2020 FOFA officers and board members. If you would like to serve on the Nominations Committee (we are looking for 2-3 replacements) please email FOFArch@gmail.com. Nominations also will be taken from the floor at the meeting.

Following the brief business meeting, our guest speaker will be **Sean Devlin**, Curator of Archaeological Collections at George Washington's Mount Vernon.

Sean will discuss the archaeological and historic landscape and collections at Mount Vernon, including the recent discovery of the foundation of a "necessary" or privy that may have been constructed for the "Quarter People" and the "numerous trash pits, drainage ditches, planting

holes, and even an undocumented building" wrote Devlin (<https://www.mountvernon.org/blog> - Sept. 30 and Jan. 9, 2019 posts).

Sean has over a decade and a half of experience in historical archaeology. He earned his Master's degree in Anthropology from the College of William and Mary and is currently finishing his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Minnesota. His experience and research interests are centered on the origins, evolution and legacies of the plantation system within Anglo-colonial societies. As such, his work has included research at numerous sites in Virginia, as well as, the Caribbean islands of Barbados and Jamaica. He has served as in his current position since 2016.

Inside:

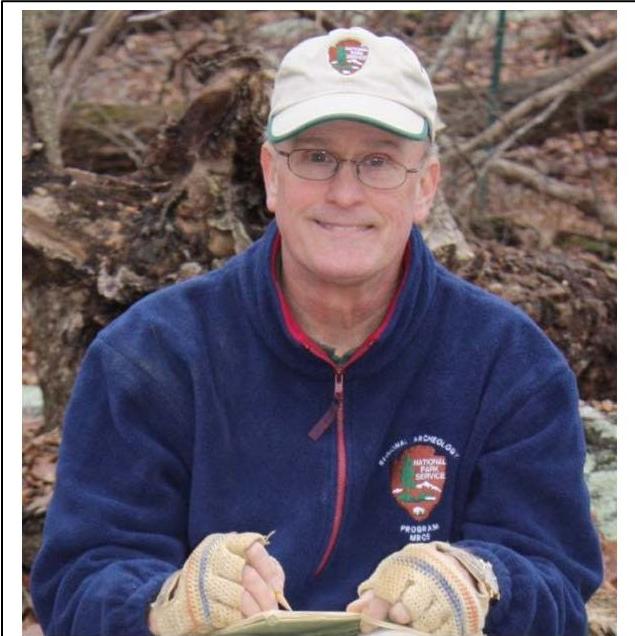
1. *Board Member Stephen Potter to Keynote MAAC 50th anniversary meeting @ March 21, 2020*
2. *Gunston Hall Symposium: Material Culture of Transportation @ March 14, 2020*
3. *Museum & Archaeological Collections Facility Update*
4. *Cemetery Symposium Is a Big Success!*
5. *County Archaeology Research Team Busy as Year Ends*
6. *Congratulations to Volunteer Richard Eilers!*

Stephen Potter to Keynote the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference

FOFA board member Stephen Potter will deliver the keynote address at a banquet celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference, March 21, 2020, in Ocean City, Maryland. The banquet will be held in conjunction with the March 19-22 meeting.

Wrote Potter in an introduction, "Starting in 1995 and continuing to the present day, the National Park Service has been conducting Overviews, Assessments, Identification and Evaluation studies of 11 major parks in the Potomac River basin." Banquet-goers will hear about "13,000 years of changing human lifeways and different cultures represented by campsites, villages, workshops, stone quarries, domestic sites, taverns, kilns, mills, armories, forges, fortifications, and battlefields."

For more information about MAAC, visit <http://www.maacmidatlanticarchaeology.org/conferences.htm>.



Stephen Potter, Ph.D., Regional Archaeologist Emeritus, National Park Service and FOFA Director

Save the Date!

March 14, 2020

Gunston Hall Archaeology Symposium

Museum & Archaeological Collections Facility Update

Earlier this year, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) selected a consulting firm to design the new Museum and Collections Facility, which will be housed in an existing industrial building near the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center. A 2016 Parks Bond provided funding for the selection of the design firm; a new bond referendum will fund the construction of the building.

Building W-35 was originally used as a boiler plant for the I-95 landfill but the new goal is to expand and convert the building into "a secure, environmentally stable, archaeological and museum collections storage facility, with museum exhibition, storage, laboratory and office components".

Fairfax County is the steward of over 10,000 historic objects, such as furniture and paintings, and of over 3 million archaeological artifacts dating back to 10,000 B.C. These irreplaceable objects are inadequately stored at various facilities across the County, including the basement of the James Lee Community Center in Falls Church.

Dr. Crowell, who has been with the county for almost 17 years, is excited about the new facility. Crowell oversees archaeology on parkland as well as county-wide historic preservation and museum collections. The Archaeology and Collections Branch received sought-after accreditation in September from the American Museum Alliance.

SUPPER TIME at the James Lee Center



(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b3/Frederick_George_Cotman_-_One_of_the_Family_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

Just in time for family holiday dinners and celebrations, the Archaeology and Collections Branch displayed several artifacts outside of their offices at the James Lee Center that are similar to objects depicted in the ***One of the Family*** painted by Frederick Cotman in 1880. The artifacts on display include dishes, flatware, glassware, flowerpots, horse buckles and my favorite (!) Lusterware (depicted below and in the upper right hand corner of the painting)



Lusterware Pitcher

A small pitcher sits on a shelf in the painting's top right corner. It has a shiny surface, just like this pitcher. This type of ceramic is called Lusterware. The thin metallic glaze that decorates the pitcher fused to the ceramic body during firing, leaving a lustrous finish. Lusterwares were first made in England by 1805 and were most popular around 1860. This pitcher is in our archaeology **type collection**. We can compare excavated ceramic shards to this pitcher to determine if they are Lusterware.

Cemetery Symposium Is a Big Success!

About 35 people attended FOFA's October 5th cemetery symposium at the James Lee Center: ***At Rest? Cemeteries and Cemetery Protection in Fairfax County and Beyond***. FOFA President John P. Mullen opened the symposium with an overview of local protections. Fairfax County, home to at least 400 known cemeteries, currently mandates that during development, known cemeteries must be shown on plats. Neighboring counties such Prince William and Loudoun have more stringent ordinances, some recently enacted. Mullen presented research on a recent controversial project involving the data recovery of human remains in his paper, *The Archeological Recovery of Human Remains from a Forlorn Cemetery*.

Joanna Wilson Green, archeologists with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, gave a comprehensive overview of cemetery protection at the state level: *Cemeteries and the Law: How the Code of Virginia Protects (or Affects) Our Burial Grounds*. Green said most cemeteries in Virginia are moved because of development pressure. Because it is a felony to displace or remove a dead, buried human body, the remains must be properly removed, such as by a qualified professional archaeologist and anthropologist. She said the Virginia General Assembly has recognized the importance of African grave sites. "These resources are unique, they are local, and they belong to everyone. I hope what these northern counties are doing will spread south."

Two unknown family cemeteries were discovered by county archeologists working in advance of improvements to Patriot Park North according to Chris Sperling in his presentation, *Avoidance is the Best Mitigation: Treatment of Two Cemeteries in Fairfax County*. The park is located about three miles east of Centreville near the intersection of Braddock Road and the Fairfax County Parkway. Sperling found during his archaeological delineation that the Rigg Family Cemetery, which consisted of depressions with head and footstones of local quartz, contained 12 grave shafts. He surmised that the inner shafts were family and that three outer shafts may be those of enslaved

persons. Also found nearby and left undisturbed were nine small burial features, possibly of enslaved children. "It is important to see how enslaved persons were treated in life and in death," he said. "People will be walking by here on a path" in the park, which will have several baseball fields. Both cemeteries were avoided by the new construction

The final presentation, *Recovery and Reburial at the Melvin Family Cemetery, Fairfax County, Virginia* was delivered by FCPA Archaeology Collections Manager, Aimee Wells. Following the 2012 derecho, a homeowner's association called the county to report a red oak had fallen over and exposed a gravestone in the 8-foot-tall root ball. Wells said the soapstone headstone was of metamorphic talc probably quarried near Clifton and carved in the vernacular style. It was that of W. W. Melvin, 1833-1893, an African American who was born free. She recovered his remains along with mismatched coffin hardware and reburied him in a nicely joined pine box, discovering along the way he was "a Virginian, a farmer, a twin, husband, father, son, "mulatto," farm laborer, and witness to history. Wells also located a living descendant in Woodbridge across the river from where he was buried.

County Archaeology Research Team Stays Busy as Year Ends

Excerpted from the December 17, 2019, edition of C.A.R.T. Archaeology, the blog of the County Archaeological Research Team, part of the Archaeology and Collections Branch of the Fairfax County Park Authority, conducting ongoing archaeological investigations on parkland across Fairfax County.

by Brittany Blanchard – Archaeological Technician

Sleeve buttons, commonly referred to as cufflinks, typically consist of two small button-like objects attached to each other by a metal bar or links. The buttons are meant to be placed through shirtsleeve buttonholes creating a tension that draws the cuff together. Sleeve buttons were worn regularly beginning in the late 17th century and grew in popularity as interchangeable accessories that

allowed the wearer to incorporate personal style preferences and/or subtle political statements in a noncommittal fashion. Those archaeologically recovered in recent years from Patriot Park North and Old Colchester Park and Preserve are made of metals such as brass, copper, and pewter which were cast into round, oval, octagonal, or more complex shapes. Colored glass was often molded, faceted, or rounded and used as insets to produce the appearance of ornate yet inexpensive decoration.



Copper alloy, round-shaped sleeve buttons with faceted colored glass insets were archaeologically recovered at Old Colchester Park and Preserve.



Bronze, oval-shaped sleeve button with the words *Tallio* inscribed above a fox archaeologically recovered at Patriot Park North.

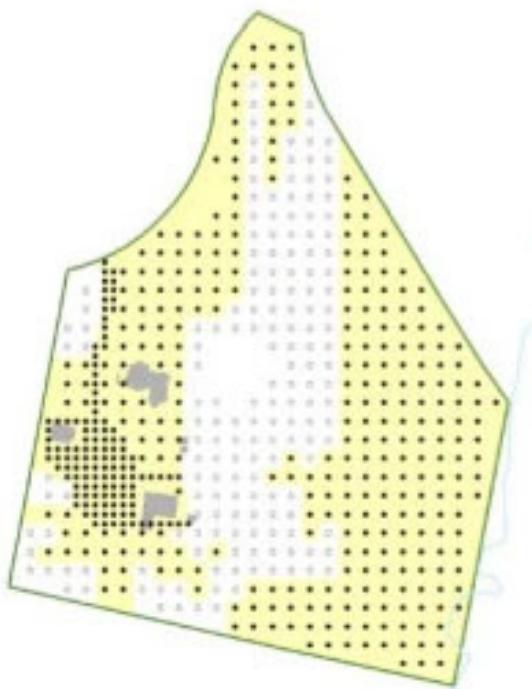
Read more about *Tallio* sleeve buttons
http://annapoliscurator.blogspot.com/2014/09/william-pacas-sleeve-buttons_12.html

*Excerpted from the December 6 and November 22, 2019,
edition of C.A.R.T. Archaeology*

Archaeological testing at both Mt. Air and Riverbend Park continues. Artifacts from Mt. Air are mainly historic and range in time period, but occasional prehistoric artifacts such as debitage (trash from making stone tools) are recovered. Artifacts recovered from Riverbend park have been mainly prehistoric with occasional historic artifacts such as nails or glass fragments.



Artifacts recovered from recent testing. From Riverbend: quartz debitage and prehistoric ceramics; From Mt. Air, nails, jackfield ceramic, and ceramic electrical insulator.



*STP survey progress at Mt. Air—
areas in yellow have been completed!*

Congratulations Rich!

Congratulations to Richard Eilers, former Northern Virginia Chapter President of the Archeological Society of Virginia for receiving the Outstanding Volunteer Award at the FCPA Elly Doyle Awards in November. Rich can often be found helping with artifacts at the CART Lab at the Archaeology and Collections Branch office at the James Lee Center. He is pictured here at a dig outside of Fairfax County.

(Photo by Y. French)



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 become 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/>.



Membership Form here.