Alexandria Archaeology

VOLUNTEER NEWS

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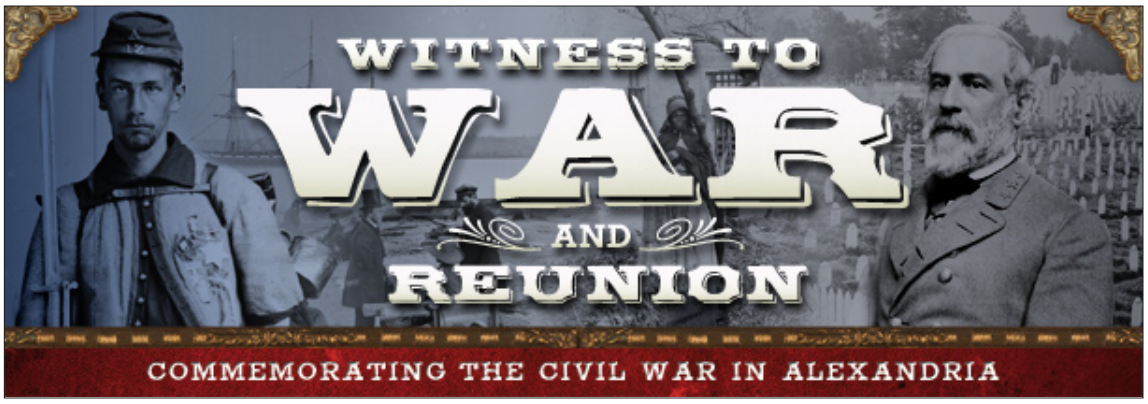

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Discover how Alexandria was transformed by the Civil War on the 150th anniversary weekend of Alexandria's occupation by Federal troops! "Life in Civil War Alexandria: A 150th Commemorative Event," a kick-off for Alexandria's Civil War Commemoration, will be held on Saturday, May 21, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Market Square in Old Town Alexandria.

This extensive living history event will feature an opening ceremony; music by the Federal City Brass Band; interpretations of Robert E. Lee, a Civil War photographer, an army surgeon, and Union and Confederate soldiers, and African American civilians; as well as a U.S. Military Railroad portrayal; the Victorian Dance Ensemble; and a variety of other interpretive activities to help tell the story of Alexandria's experience during the Civil War.

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology will be just one of the many groups on hand to interpret Alexandria's Civil War history. Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum will offer free tours. The Carlyle House will host "Spies and Scouts of the Civil War," a program where visitors decode secret messages and try their hand at disguises. Down the street, at 201 Prince Street, the Athenaeum will host "Poetry and Music of the Civil War" from 1 to 3 p.m.

Geographically, politically and socially, Alexandria was directly in the path of the American Civil War with the Union, the Confederacy, and African Americans all having a major role in the City's history. Because of Alexandria's strategic importance as a railroad center and port, Federal troops took over the town, arriving on the morning of May 24, 1861, the day that Virginia's secession from the Union went into effect. This same day, Colonel Elmer Ellsworth of the New York Fire Zouaves and Alexandria innkeeper James Jackson, an ardent secessionist, were both killed in an incident at the Marshall House hotel on King Street that made them martyred heroes in the North and South.

*See **Sesquicentennial**, page 3*

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: FOAA in Focus...

New FOAA Board of Directors

by Ruth Reeder

FOAA elected its 2011-12 Board of Directors at its annual meeting, held in the Museum on March 19th. The new Board includes: Joan Amico, Dave Cavanaugh, Marya Fitzgerald, Laura Heaton, Margarete Holubar, Hoosey Hughes, Liz Kelley, Jane Morris, Mary Jane Nugent, Kathy Scheibelhoffer, and Cat Sumner.

On April 20, between its annual dinner and meeting with the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, FOAA elected the following officers: **President,** Marya Fitzgerald; **Vice President,** Margarete Holubar; **Treasurer,** Katie Wagenblass; **Secretary,** Jane Morris; **AAC Rep**, Mary Jane Nugent.

FOAA embarked on its 25th anniversary by sponsoring the first-ever Civil War Ivy Hill Cemetery walking tour. Tara Knox and Lucy Burke Goddin, officers of the Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society, presented the first tour on April 2 and the second on April 3.

Thank You, Kathy!

Kathy sorting through boxes of T-shirts

After 22 years, 18 of which were spent as FOAA Treasurer, Kathy Scheibelhoffer retired from that office. We are fortunate that she has agreed to remain on the FOAA Board. Kathy, pictured at right sorts through a shipment of "I Dig Alexandria" T-shirts.

Over the years she has helped to spread the word about archaeology and preservation in Alexandria during festivals and special events. She has been the longest-serving board member in the history of FOAA. Thank you, Kathy!!

JOIN FOAA TODAY!

BE SURE TO VISIT THE ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM ON FACEBOOK

Alexandria Archaeology Volunteer News

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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

2011-2012 FOAA Board of Directors

Marya Fitzgerald, president; Margarete Holubar, vice-president; Katie Wagenblass, treasurer; Jane Morris, secretary; Mary Jane Nugent, AAC representative; Joan Amico, Laura Heaton, Hoosey Hughes, Dave Cavanaugh, Liz Kelley, Kathy Scheibelhoffer, Cat Sumner, members of the Board

***Sesquicentennial**, from page 1*

For four years, Alexandria, Robert E. Lee's hometown, was occupied by Union forces, the longest military occupation by Union troops of any town during the conflict. Alexandria was transformed into a huge logistical supply center for Federal armies fighting in Virginia. Private homes, churches, and local public buildings were commandeered for military barracks, hospitals and prisons, while thousands of African Americans came to the former slave trading town

Washington Post Magazine Peeps Diorama entry by Ruth Reeder depicting the May 24, 1861 deaths of Ellsworth and Jackson at the Marshall House. The diorama will be on display at the FOAA booth. Photo by Anna Frame.

seeking freedom and security behind Union lines.
FOAA will be located at Booth #24, across from the fountain and just above the ramp to the underground parking garage on North Fairfax Street.

For more information about Historic Alexandria's Civil War Commemoration events or Alexandria's Civil War history, please visit www.historicalexandria.org.

The Death of Ellsworth at Fort Ward & Portrait Gallery

Current exhibits at both Fort Ward Museum and the National Portrait Gallery recount the death of Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth. Ellsworth, the first Union officer to be killed in the four-year-long struggle and personal friend of President Abraham Lincoln. Ellsworth commanded a regiment of New York Fire Zouaves -- regiments raised for volunteer service -- which participated in the invasion of Northern Virginia on May 24, 1861.

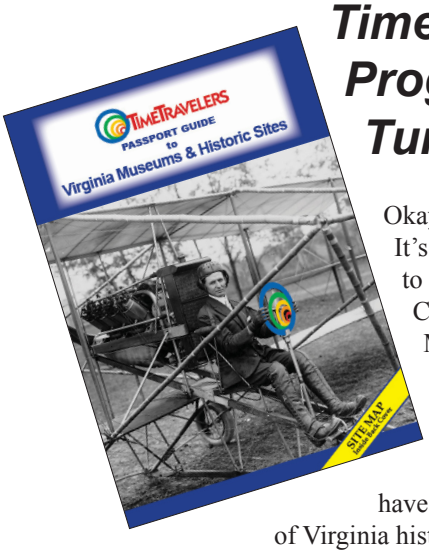
Ellsworth's death made headlines throughout the country and he became a martyr in the North and an inspirational figure for legions of Yankees marching off to war. His funeral services were held in the White House, where thousands of mourners viewed his corpse lying in state in the East Room. Throughout the Civil War, his name, face, and heroism were commemorated on stationery, sheet music, and memorial lithographs.

Francis E. Brownell, the soldier who killed Ellsworth's assailant, bequeathed several artifacts to the Smithsonian Institution, including the weapons used in the incident and Brownell's Congressional Medal of Honor.

The National Portrait Gallery's exhibition will bring together a select grouping of once-prized mementos, including portraits of Ellsworth and Lincoln and Alonzo Chappel's historic painting, *The Death of Ellsworth*.

For more information on Fort Ward's exhibit, "Elmer Ellsworth: From Man to Martyr" visit their website at http://alexandriava.gov/historic/fortward/default.aspx?id=39648

TimeTraveler Program at a Turning Point



Okay, all you TimeTravelers. It's the time of year for you to start your new journeys. Come to the Archaeology Museum and pick up a copy of the Passport Guide to Virginia Museums & Historic Sites. For $6 you will have a glimpse into a wealth of Virginia history, including 29 sites in Northern Virginia. This year's theme is Turning Points –remarkable moments in time when things change forever. In 1861 Virginia and the United States faced a turning point – the American Civil War, a time of great turmoil and tragedy, but also a turning point for good: the end of slavery. Right here in our own Museum you will find artifacts from the Civil War in addition to some that are between 8,000 and 13,000 years old and some that were excavated just this spring from the Shuter's Hill site, behind the George Washington Masonic Memorial.

Wherever you visit, remember to have a stamp or sticker put on your Guide. We hope to be overwhelmed by enthusiastic TimeTravelers.

Hats Off !!

Dear Friends

A Note From Steve

Thank you so much for making my retirement party a truly memorable experience. I loved the ambience and history of the ballroom, the food was great and the sentiments expressed to me touched my heart. I thought the Powerpoint of photographs that Ruth and Rose so skillfully put together was wonderful. Jennifer Barker did such a great job of organizing everything and dealing with the invitation list and responses, plus the gift money. I felt humbled by the remarks from Mark Jinks, Louise Massoud, Lance Mallamo, Pam Cressey, Fran Bromberg, and my dear children Chris and Alexi. I feel proud, grateful and appreciated.

The gifts were welcome and unexpected. I look forward to enjoying the champagne from Lance and the OHA staff. I will never forget being knighted in the Holy Order of George Washington by Dennis Pogue, and the gifts of the cane and bobble-head from Esther White and Eleanor Breen. The book of well-wishing messages from various friends, the cake with my photo, and of course the fabulous gift of the money for a special Bed and Breakfast vacation are presents that mean a lot to me. Thank you, Pam, Fran, Ruth, Rose, Jennifer and all of you who made the party so special and contributed generously to the Bed and Breakfast vacation for Martha and me.

I know I will be busy next year with getting our house ready to go on the market and searching out a new home in the Williamsburg area. I hope to see many of you in the future and thank you, every one of you, again!!

Many Heartfelt Thanks

A Note From Staff

Once again Alexandria Archaeology is indebted to many people for their support and generosity. Special recognition is very much in order to the following:

Sunday Volunteers - Vince LaPointe, Marya Fitzgerald, Ann Davin, Katy Cannady, Kathy Scheibelhoffer, Margaret Holubar, Theresa Weems, and Tam Mihailovic have kept the Museum open on Sunday afternoons.

Keurig Coffee/Tea/Cocoa Maker - Andy Flora donated a wonderful coffee pot to the Museum that prepares tea, coffee, or hot chocolate on demand.

Crimean Oven Diorama - Site Director at the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, Lauren Gleason, pictured at right, created a diorama of the Crimean Ovens (see page 12) that will be on display at the May 21 "Life in Civil War Alexandria" event at Market Square.

Clay Firing & Painting - Torpedo Factory ceramicist, Bob Rosselle, fired the clay oven (mentioned above) in his kiln. The Art League School gave us paint to paint the oven.

If Not #1, At Least #3!

FOAA members, volunteers, staff, commission members, friends, family, and their pets gathered and marched through Old Town Alexandria in the annual George Washington's Birthday Parade and were awarded third place in the Community and Fraternal Organizations category. Afterward the group met back at the Museum for a well-deserved feast of pizza and cherry cobbler.

Thanks to Bugsy's Pizza Restaurant and the Creamery for the great food and to Joan Amico, Sheila Wexler, Hope Marrow, Tom & Ruth Reeder, Barbara Magid, Jess Tava, Gloria Vestal, Pam Cressey, Noah Andreen, Marya Fitzgerald, James McCall & his dog Angus, Margarete Holubar and her little dog Nellie, and to John Fuller for the great photos.

Although our marching/chanting only earned us a third place award, in our hearts we will always be No. 1!

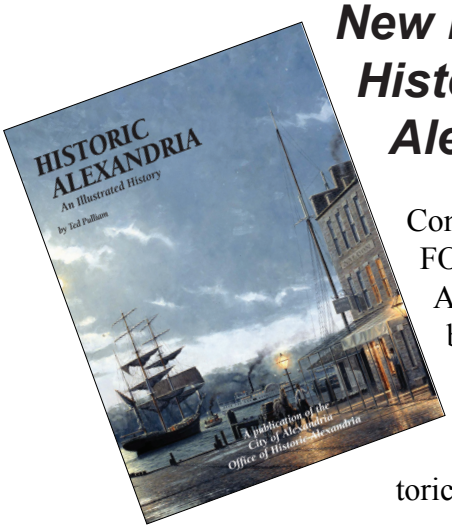
AAC Hard at Work...

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC) continues to work on reviewing drafts of the Waterfront Plan after authoring a Waterfront History Plan in 2010. Thanks to the leadership of James McCall, the commission has provided testimony at public meetings and in written form to ensure that plans for City enhancements and private development will also enhance the historic character, fabric and meaning of Alexandria's maritime past. Diane Riker, once a member of the commission, has conducted new research on a variety of topics related to the waterfront, and she is now organizing a timeline for the Civil War. Tom Fulton, AAC member, met with City Council at a work session in March in his role as chair of the Fort Ward Ad Hoc Advisory Group. He presented the group's report to Council and fielded questions regarding the group's recommendations. Kathleen Pepper, AAC chair, provided comments regarding the commission's position that Fort Ward Park is a significant historic place associated with post-Civil War African Americans and that further archaeological work is necessary to discover unmarked graves and honor those who once lived there. City Council is considering adding funds to the FY2012 budget in order to complete a history and a second stage of archaeological testing in order to identify African American, Civil War, and American Indian resources.

...As Is Ft. Ward History Group

The Fort Ward History Working Group is moving forward on additional research on African Americans. Elizabeth Drembus and Meg Bryan are reviewing files created by the Davis-Ruffner firm, who once did much of the settlement work for property transactions in the city. Thanks to Glenn Eugster, the boxes were identified with pertinent Fort Ward files. Elizabeth and Meg are going through each file and creating overviews, while the Archaeology staff are scanning the documents. These documents are then circulated to the other members of the history group. This research is closing many gaps in the chain of title and residency of the African Americans living in "The Fort."

New Release: Historic Alexandria

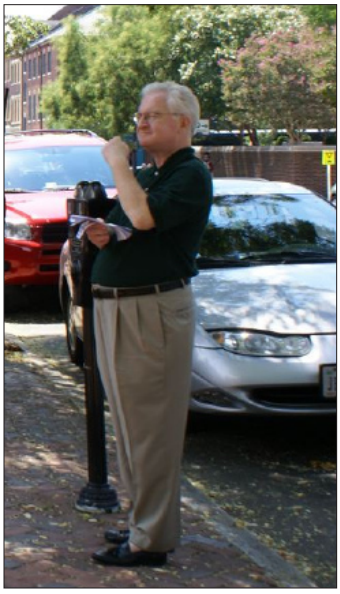


Congratulations to FOAA member and AAC board member Ted Pulliam for his much-anticipated book on historic Alexandria.

FOAA will be hosting a book signing in October for Virginia Archaeology Month. But if you can't wait until then, FOAA will be selling the books as soon as they arrive. Check the FOAA list serve and Alexandria Archaeology facebook for details.

Remembering Doug Thurman

By Sarah Coster and Audrey Davis



Doug Thurman, a kind and generous man, passed away in January after battling cancer. He served on many boards and organizations in the City of Alexandria. As past president of the Alexandria Historical Society (AHS), Doug was a gentle leader who thrived on sharing his enthusiasm for Alexandria's history. He was a long-time patron of Carlyle House. A former employee of the National Archives, Doug was always humble and happy to avoid the spotlight. He will be deeply missed by everyone who knew him.

Donations in Doug's memory can be made to the Carlyle House or to St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

ORAL HISTORY UPDATE:

Fort Ward Memories Revisited

by Jen Hembree, Oral History Coordinator

Native Alexandria Residents Recall Depression-Era Fort Ward

Interview by Patricia Knock

Edmonia Smith Mcknight

In 1994, Edmonia McKnight was interviewed by volunteer Patricia Knock. Mrs. McKnight was born in Fort Ward in 1921 and lived in Alexandria her entire life. During the interview she discussed life on Fort Ward during the Great Depression, as well as the families who made their homes there.

Fort Families

E. S. McKnight: It [Fort Ward] was a big settlement….The Peters, the Ashbys, the Randalls, the Cravens, the Smiths, and there was some Thompsons…

Sunday School at St. Cyprian's

E. S. McKnight: …Honey, I went to an Episcopal church all my life….

Interviewer: Did you go to St. Cyprian's when it was on the Fort?... Could you tell me about that? What St. Cyprian's looked like?

E. S. McKnight: Yes…. That was an old schoolhouse. Because when I was five or six years old, honey, I was going there to Sunday school. Our Sunday school teacher, his name was Mr. Warner…. He was a German man, but he was just so nice to all of us kids…. He was dynamic, really, he was. And, of course, I think he was a student at the Seminary up here…. There was quite a few students after he left. There was quite a few came down and taught us kids.

Going to School

Interviewer: …When you were a little girl, you only knew the school at Fort Ward as being Episcopal, St. Cyprian's, so where did you go to school then?

Descendant family members Anthony and Barbara Randall with Leanear in front of a house that may have been part of the original Shorts' home. The house burned down prior to the creation of Fort Ward Park. Piers and a fireplace discovered during the archaeological work may be surviving evidence of this structure. Courtesy of Adrienne (Randall/Terrell) Washington and Fort Ward & Seminary African American Descendants Society.

E. S. McKnight: Over here where T.C. Williams is now. It was a four-room school….That was the primer when I first started school [at six years old]. They called it a primer. They didn't say "first grade." They called it primer….

I remember my little book. It was called "Baby Ray!" It was just a little book and that's the name of the book. "Baby Ray went to sleep," "Baby Ray did this, and Baby Ray got up, and Baby Ray went to get some water," and all that.

My teacher was named, when I first started, was Ms. Campbell…. Then there was Ms. Costner…. And then was Ms. Ross --the late Reverend Ross's two big daughters and they used to live in Alexandria….And [then] Mrs. Geraldine Stevenson…. It went to the seventh grade. [Then] you used to go to Parker Gray [in] Alexandria. Either [there], or you went up to Manassas.

Shopping and Food

Interviewer: Would you go in there [Alexandria] for food shopping when you were a child?

E. S. McKnight: My daddy did. There used to be a store called Mellison's, [or] Medlison's [possibly Donaldson's]…. Right 'round the corner here....That used to be a store and practically everybody used to get groceries from there -- or go to Bailey's Crossroads.

I didn't do any canning, but we had a garden. My daddy always had a cow, hogs, chickens…. A lot of people would have pens to put their chickens in. And sometime they would get out, but they just pick around the yard… .

We had four or five hogs that my daddy killed every year. Had an old smokehouse. I know that my Daddy used to put the smoke and then smoke it. Put the little barrel and smoke it.

Maydell Casey Belk

Also interviewed in 1994, Mrs. Maydell Casey Belk was around sixty years old at the time of the interview. She lived at "The Fort" (Fort Ward prior to its establishment as an historical park) for fifteen years from 1952 until 1967. Mrs. Belk described what it was like to live there before indoor plumbing, running water, or air conditioning, and also described how life there centered around the local church.

Fort Families

Belk: I lived up on Fort Ward for about fifteen years, and the McKnights and another family called the Youngs remodeled the old school [later St. Cyprian's] into a home… I know my mother said she went there [to] the old schoolhouse.

My grandfather was Wesley Casey that worked up at the Theological Seminary…and I had an uncle named Charles Casey—he also worked up at the Theological Seminary…that was the only jobs.

And it was the McKnights who lived in front of us. I lived in the seventh house, and then the schoolhouse that was turned over to a house, and then the graveyard was right behind that.

Gardening and Watering

Belk: Mostly, we grew tomatoes and things, but nothing unusual… Yeah, my mother and them did all that canning…We had a well. There was one well for the three families that was with us, then the other families had their well.

Church

Maydell Casey Belk: Mostly everyone that lived up in Fort Ward belonged to the Episcopal Church… I moved up to Fort Ward after I got married, but the Oakland Baptist Church got started—from when I heard my parents talking-- they used to have the church up in a school… And then the Rosses, the Gazes, and the Terrells, and they all go together, and that's how they started Oakland Baptist Church.

Charles McKnight

Interviewed in 1992, Charles McKnight grew up in the Fort Ward neighborhood. Charles served as secretary and Sunday school superintendent for the Episcopal mission at St. Cyprian. His great-aunt, Clara Adams (with whom his family lived for a time), was a founder of the nearby Oakland Baptist Church.

Remembering Aunt Clara's Home

McKnight: Clara's house had a porch on it. Facing Braddock Road. And as you entered, you entered like a hall and on the left was a stairway going up to two rooms upstairs. On the right was what you considered her living room. Straight to the back was a kitchen, and then after Clara Adams took my father in (because he lost his old home place), my father had what they considered like a lean-to room put on what became the kitchen. So, therefore we had the dining room, and so that gave us three rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. [Upstairs] she had her bedroom and in the back of the house was just one large room, say about a room this size.

Aunt Clara didn't have a garden, no, but on the right of the house there was a pear orchard, like…She always had chickens, and I don't recall any other domestic animal, like a pig or a cow or a horse, or anything like that.

It was really a picture. Her husband, Bob Adams, planted trees straight down the walkway. And Clara Adams and people would come out there, even families in later years would come from Washington, D.C., out there to have picnics and just to sit out there. The yard was beautiful. She had benches out there. She had a glider swing, and opposite the lean-to —the kitchen—was a chain well. I pulled water many a time at that chain well. And then, a little farther back was what they called the coal house. All these things were there before we moved in with her. And farther down was the outdoor privy.

Remembering the Old Schoolhouse

(which became St. Cyprian's)

McKnight: The old frame schoolhouse, I would venture to say, was I guess, like old schoolhouses looked like that time of the year. I want to refer to it as this: When I was stationed in Freeport, Louisiana, they had a home -- they called it a shotgun home -- you look in the front door and straight through to the back door.

The Congregation of St. Cyprian's

At that time, we had the Peters family, we had the Randall family, we had the Craven family, and the McKnight family. We had the Thomas family, and I would venture to say that was the gist of the congregation, made up of those families there.

St. Cyprian's ceased to be and I don't recall who was the bishop of Virginia then. It was Bishop Goodwin? It had to have been… They saw fit to merge Meade, which was a mission, and St. Cyprian's mission as to come as one. It was around the 1930s, early '30s, or 1940s.

Early Plow Found at Chinquapin Park

by Dale May

Like other long-time gardeners at Chinquapin Park, I've found my share of glass marbles, toy soldiers, and coins of World War II vintage while spading earth at the community gardens – small relics of the days when Chinquapin Village existed to house the Torpedo Factory workers and their families during the wartime "forties" and beyond. But last July, I found a larger and more exciting artifact from an earlier era – what may well have been farmer John McGinnis's horse-drawn plow, used during pre-Chinquapin Village days.

I discovered the rusty but still intact steel farm tool along the woods adjacent to the service road just below Chinquapin Organic Gardens. It came from a spot that had a lot of honeysuckle vines, poison ivy, and debris, all removed early last summer by T.C. Williams students who were putting in volunteer time. While cleaning up there not long after that, I noticed part of the tool protruding just slightly out of the soil, so I uncovered the rest of it.

Considering its possible historical significance, I contacted Alexandria Archaeology about the find, and as a result, the plow is now on display at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum within the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Old Town. City Preservation Archaeologist Fran Bromberg came out to Chinquapin, photographed the area where it was found, and accepted the implement for further research and display.

Some of Alexandria Archaeology's publications tell of farmer John McGinnis, who lived in a house near the tennis courts and had a spring that can still be seen along the nature trail below that point. A leaflet, "Discover Archaeological Clues to the History of Chinquapin Park," issued for Earth Day 1995, tells of the recollections of Mrs. Elizabeth Douglas, who lived in the area all her life since 1918. She remembers McGinnis, an African American farmer who in the 1930s (and possibly before) grew many vegetables, and also sorghum.

After harvesting the sorghum, McGinnis would harness his horse to a millstone, the leaflet says, and crush the stems. Then he would load up his horse-drawn cart or wagon with the resulting syrup in containers, ride to market in Alexandria to sell it for processing into molasses and sugar. He sold produce there and brought back some of the sugar. Another leaflet, "Archaeology at Chinquapin Park," issued for Earth Day 1997, discusses McGinnis's farm operations, as do some of the signs on the Nature Trail below the gardens and bordering Taylor Run.

Mrs. Douglas's oral history is on the city's website. [http://alexandriava.gov/historic/info/default.aspx?id=29562#douglas]. It gives a fascinating account of life at Chinquapin as she was growing up and also serves as a starting point for further research into the life of a resident – John McGinnis – who may well have left some clues, including possibly this plow, to help us in our quest to learn more about earlier life in the area where we do gardening.

Happy Digging, Mike Johnson

by Pam Cressey

About 33 years ago I met Mike Johnson when he interviewed for the job of Fairfax County Archaeologist. Since then, Mike and I have been privileged to work together, for our respective communities, for one-third of a century. Mike took on the archaeological leadership of one of the biggest counties in the region without flinching.

Many would say that Mike is an archaeologist's archaeologist. He was in the forefront in knowing that preservation planning was key to the long-term management of our resources. Fairfax County produced the first archaeological preservation plan in the state, and under that, Mike conducted impeccable excavations, processed thousands of artifacts, and created innovative American Indian timelines and consistently-produced reports on his sites. His development of the Archaeological Society of Virginia certification program and mentoring of the Northern Virginia Chapter will always be two of his most enduring contributions.

And, Mike has been a wonderful neighbor--coming over to our laboratory to identify American Indian artifacts and teach us about prehistoric toolmaking from his experiments. In retirement he will continue to excavate, research, write, and earn his doctorate. Mike, thank you for being the best neighbor and friend! Thanks for giving so much to our profession and the public!

Early Cobbles Recently Discovered In Wales Alley

In late April, while resurfacing Wales Alley during construction work on the former Olsson's Bookstore site, contractors exposed an earlier roadway of cobbles. City staff Fran Bromberg and Rose McCarthy examined

Above: The 50-pound cobble removed from the shovel test pit pictured below, exposing earlier layers. The shovel test was dug to try to date the construction of the cobble alley, with the hope that diagnostic artifacts would be recovered from the underlying layer.The cobbles were embedded in a layer of sand. They were packed so tightly together that it was extremely difficult to remove one to dig the test pit. The only artifacts associated with the cobbles were two small shards of porcelain, one of which was edged in blue. At right: Rose McCarthy trowels the exposed cobbles in Wales Alley, across from Firehook Bakery on South Union Street.

and recorded portions of the historic stone alley. Work associated with the restaurant project at 106 South Union Street discovered the stones, which were hidden under asphalt.

Through a process called "banking out," Irish immigrants John Fitzgerald and Valentine Peers created this block in a muddy tidal area after the Revolutionary War. The alley would have serviced Fitzgerald's Wharf, now home to the Old Dominion Boat Club.

The cobble pictured above is currently on display in the Museum.

Marking 50 Years of Archaeology in Alexandria

by Pam Cressey

Alexandria's passion for its history inspired the first archaeological excavation within the City limits 50 years ago, in 1961. Community concern over the potential loss from subdivision development in historically significant Fort Ward led the City Council to preserve the historic fort site, adding adjoining acres as a historical park and establishing the Fort Ward Museum.

The City of Alexandria conducted the first archaeology on the northwest bastion of the fortification with the aim of recovering and recording information leading to its reconstruction.

Thirty years later, in 1991, Alexandria Archaeology conducted a second investigation to discover additional Civil War features. While this goal was met, artifacts were also uncovered dating after the Civil War.

Research by volunteer I. Patricia Knock turned up deeds and other records confirming that these artifacts once belonged to African Americans who lived in this neighborhood, called The Fort, for nearly 100 years. She also conducted several oral history interviews, now on our website, with long-time residents. These interview gave vivid portraits of black life at The Fort and the larger Seminary community.

Contemporary interest in the historical nature of the park, resource management, and the African American history in the last two years has led to a ground-penetrating radar survey to identify unmarked graves and a third archaeological investigation just completed in January 2011—fifty years after the first study.

Additional research and memories have brought greater recognition of the fact that the black Fort neighborhood was lost in the process of the City's efforts to purchase the land and create the historical park.

The 2011 archaeological results document unmarked graves in the Jackson Cemetery and Old Graveyard, as well as foundations and artifacts associated with one of the earliest households at The Fort—Burr and Harriet Jackson's -- and a black school. The Ottery Group conducted this archaeology for the City of Alexandria and will produce a report and cultural resource inventory.

FOAA Given Inaugural Tour of Ivy Hill Cemetery

by Tara Knox

I am not a particularly odd person. Ask anyone. Yet even before I became part of the Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society here in Alexandria, you couldn't keep me out of cemeteries.

For me, as a student of history intrigued by archaeology, it is a joy to explore a cemetery. One of the first places I head for as a tourist anywhere is to a local cemetery. There is history on each grave marker. The tombstone symbols reflect the beliefs and eras of the people they represent. The inscriptions tell the personal stories of a town, city, or country community.

The largest gathering of Civil War soldiers in Alexandria, outside of the National Cemetery, is in Ivy Hill Cemetery. As we start the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the Civil War, the Historical Society will begin highlighting the personal stories of the 72 veterans of the war who are buried at Ivy Hill.

A self-guided tour of the gravesites, along with life stories of the veterans, will be available for download from the Society website in May. The primary source of biographical information for the tour is culled with permission from the 2010 book, *This Forgotten Land II*, by Donald C. Hakenson.

The personal stories of the soldiers paint vivid images of their time. A prime example is Benjamin Franklin "Frank" Stringfellow. The lore about this Confederate Confidential Scout for General Robert E. Lee abounds. One of the more outrageous stories has Stringfellow, a relatively small man, using his surroundings well by hiding under the generous skirt of an Alexandria miss while Union soldiers searched the premises during one of his spy missions.

In fact his size – only about 100 pounds and under five feet, eight inches – nearly kept him out of the fray completely. When he volunteered to fight for the Confederate States of America, he was looked at critically for his puny build and summarily turned down. He decided to prove his potential value by scoping out a Confederate encampment and later capturing three guards whom he marched in and presented to their commanding officer as his prisoners. His plan worked, and he began his service in the CSA army. His reputation was built upon a series of daring actions. According to the Hakenson book and *Confederate Scout, Virginia's Frank Stringfellow* by James Dudley Peavey, he came to the attention of J.E.B. Stuart who asked

On April 2, the Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society conducted an inaugural Civil War guided tour of Ivy Hill Cemetery for the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA). Lucy Burke Goddin, the Society President, and Tara Knox, the Society Executive Director, led the tours. Left: FOAA members were treated to, well, treats by Margarete Holubar and Laura Heaton on the crisp April morning.

Stringfellow to become his personal scout. While in that post, he met fellow scout John S. Mosby, who would later lead the group known as Mosby's Rangers. In 1864, he overheard Mosby state his desire to see the play *The Guerilla, Mosby and 500 Sutler Wagons* that was playing to sold-out crowds in Alexandria. Stringfellow decided to ride on horseback all night to reach the city; gather intelligence from casual conversation with Union soldiers while there; attend the play that night; and ride back to the encampment, all within 36 hours. Mosby was impressed. Stuart referred to Stringfellow as "a young man of extraordinary merit."

Stringfellow spent the war gathering intelligence in many creative ways. More than once he posed as a dentist's assistant and a young woman, and eluded capture by hiding in an attic and under a fallen tree.* After evading his enemies multiple times, even successfully capturing his pursuers on occasion, he was eventually captured and exchanged for a Union soldier.

He escaped to Canada near the end of the war, after having being captured again by Union troops. He stayed with our northern neighbors for a time after the war while a $10,000 reward was offered for his recapture. By the

time he returned to the States, his goals had changed. This graduate of Episcopal High School married his Alexandria sweetheart, Emma Green, in 1867, entered the Virginia Seminary and was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1876. He was later able to enlist as a chaplain in the Spanish-American War despite his age of 57. To this end, he provided President McKinley with a letter from President Grant, which stated that any U.S. President would be willing to honor a request from Stringfellow for his refraining from shooting General Grant when he had the chance to do so during the Civil War. Stringfellow had brought the story to Grant's attention, telling him of the opportunity he had refused to take, hoping it would be meaningful to Grant.

In 1913 Stringfellow died in Alexandria of a heart attack. His tombstone, in the tradition of all Confederate soldiers' graves, is pointed at the top in order to prevent Union soldiers and sympathizers from sitting on it.

Every grave marker has a story. A walk or ride through the beautiful rolling hills at Ivy Hill is an enjoyable way to encounter history. For more information about the Historical Society, visit www.ihchps.org or write with questions to tara@ihchps.org.

* Additional source: http://www.myhenrycounty.com/frank-stringfellow.ph

Fort Ward -- A Place for All Times

by Pam Cressey

The City of Alexandria through its consultants, The Ottery Group, has just finished the first step in the archaeological investigation of Fort Ward Park for planning purposes. The City Council provided $50,000 to start this study of the park, determine appropriate methods for identifying unmarked graves and complete a cultural resource inventory. For more than a year, the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, Lance Mallamo, the City archaeologists, and staff from Fort Ward Museum and the Alexandria Black History Museum have been meeting with descendant families, neighbors, a steering committee of citizens, and a group of researchers. While most of the park, including the Civil War fortification, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, little has been written about the vibrant African American community that was there for nearly 100 years after the war.

Alexandria Archaeology first noted the African American presence after its 1991 work near the historic fort when postwar artifacts were found and volunteer I. Patricia Knock conducted historical research and oral history interviews. Through Pat's work, Ruth Reeder developed the first interpretive tours featuring the housing remains and historic landscape of "The Fort" neighborhood. The memories of long-time residents at The Fort and within the larger Seminary community gave us all pause to remember the self-sufficient people of African descent who built homes, raised their children, attended school and church, and buried their family members here. Several descendants shared photographs and stories of this past. Please see our website to read the memories of Maydell Casey Belk, Elizabeth Douglas, Mary Crozet Wood Johnson, Charles McKnight, Edmonia Smith McKnight, Dorothy Hall Smith and Barbara Ashby Gordon, and Sergeant Lee Thomas Young: http://alexandriava.gov/historic/info/default.aspx?id=29562

The Ottery Group will be writing a management summary of this work as well as completing the inventory of cultural resources. At this stage—before the laboratory analysis of artifacts and full mapping of discoveries—we can provide some results. One of the first goals of the investigation was to determine the effectiveness of ground-penetrating radar (GPR) in identifying unmarked graves. Oral history and documentary research provided several pieces of evidence that there were more burials than the number of gravestones would suggest. Several burial-ground locations (although not necessarily all locations) were ascertained from this evidence: two in the park maintenance yard--the Adams Family Cemetery and an unnamed set of burials spanning from mid-yard north to the Oakland Cemetery that might include the grave of Amanda Clark; the "Old Graveyard" just south of the Oakland Baptist Cemetery and west of the maintenance yard; and the Jackson Family Cemetery. The GPR survey conducted by Sarah Lowry in 2009 identified 38 locations that might have graves. These GPR locations are referred to as "anomalies" because they represent places where the instruments detect differences (such as buried objects, tree roots, or disturbances to the natural soil layers) below the ground surface.

Careful excavation in 36 of these 38 places produced some interesting results that can be used to consider the future use of GPR at Fort Ward. [Note that two of the GPR locations could not be examined at this time given location (under a road) or weather conditions.] A total of 22 graves were discovered in a careful process that protected all burials and left them untouched. Only three of these graves were marked: Clara Adams (1865-1952), Virginia Fitzhugh (1853-1918), and W.E. Javins (1878-1907). The latter two

headstones are in the Old Graveyard. Mrs. Adams was the daughter of early founders of The Fort, Burr and Harriet Shorts, and was herself a founder of the Oakland Baptist Church. See the article in the *Alexandria Times* about the ceremony held by descendants of Seminary families at some of these graves in December 2010. http://www.alextimes.com/news/2010/dec/20/after-decades-making-up-for-grave-disre/

Careful analysis of all the excavation results indicates that the 36 GPR findings were accurate in only 14 cases. In the Jackson Cemetery, the seven GPR anomalies yielded four graves, while only eight graves were discovered after excavating the 21 GPR anomalies in The Old Graveyard. In the maintenance yard, two graves were found when excavating 10 GPR anomalies. In addition, eight graves were found that had not been detected by ground-penetrating radar technology in The Old Graveyard. Therefore, while there may be some use for GPR in the future, excavation will be needed to identify additional graves, regardless of the use of this technology.

The archaeologists from the Ottery Group also found artifacts and architectural remains associated with The Fort. While much of the ground had experienced changes since the mid-20th century, many artifacts remain. It appears they span from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century and are mostly concentrated in the lot on which the Shorts home was constructed. Two brick piers and a fireplace base were also found on the Shorts lot. A privy or trash pit in the maintenance yard also has the potential to have many artifacts. Some evidence remains of a structure where the school was constructed in the 19th century and modified into a church and later into a home in the 20th century. More excavation is needed to see whether more remains of this building, particularly of its earlier period of construction.

For more than 15 months, members of the History Work Group have been conducting a great deal of research including census, deed, tax, and school records, city directories, genealogical sources, oral history, City archives and City Council records, and Fort Ward and Alexandria Archaeology files. The Ottery Group's next task is to compile research, complete some early deed research on the property and complete the inventory. Ottery will write a management summary report to aid in planning the future of the park as well as to use in interpretive formats, such as exhibits.

From the top: Copper lamp bracket, fork, Catholic medal, porcelain doll from Germany, US Military cartridge-box plate from the Civil War.

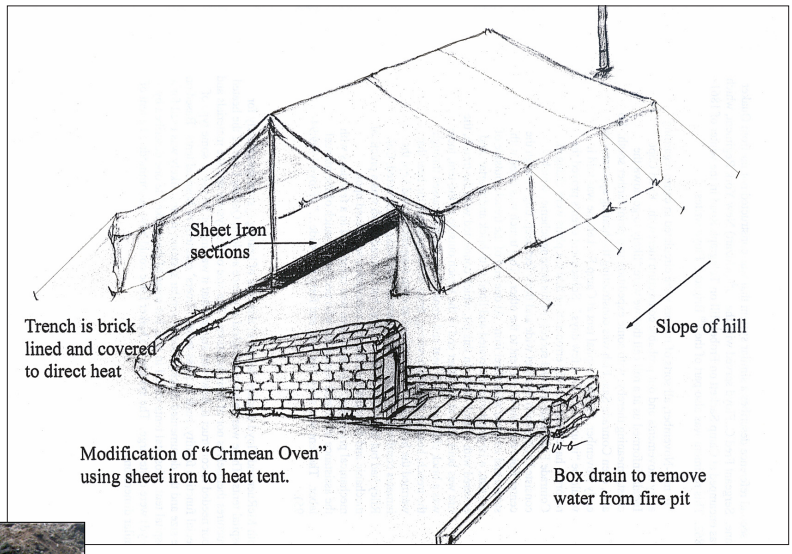
With a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, we have also been working with family members and researchers on several interpretive signs for The Fort and Seminary community. These signs will be the subject of future reports in the newsletter. Frances Terrell, Joyce Sanchez, and Adrienne Washington as family members have been writing and reviewing the text and finding photographs. Research for the signs is based upon the work of Dave Cavanaugh, Tom Fulton, Glenn Eugster, Elizabeth Drembus, and many others. The Ad Hoc Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Stakeholders Advisory Group has just completed its *Recommendations for the Management of Fort Ward Historical Park*, which can be viewed at http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/parks/FWAdHacFinalRecommendationJan132011.pdf

The family members also have formed the Ft. Ward and Seminary African American Descendants Society and can be accessed through Facebook. Adrienne Washington and Frances Terrell have written papers about their families and reflections on the African American presence at Fort Ward for nearly 100 years. Both have also served on the Ad Hoc Advisory Group. Glenn Eugster developed the Facebook page and a website.

We look forward to a fuller report of the findings, as well as future planning efforts to enliven and protect the heritage of Fort Ward.

Civil War Crimean Ovens on Quaker Lane

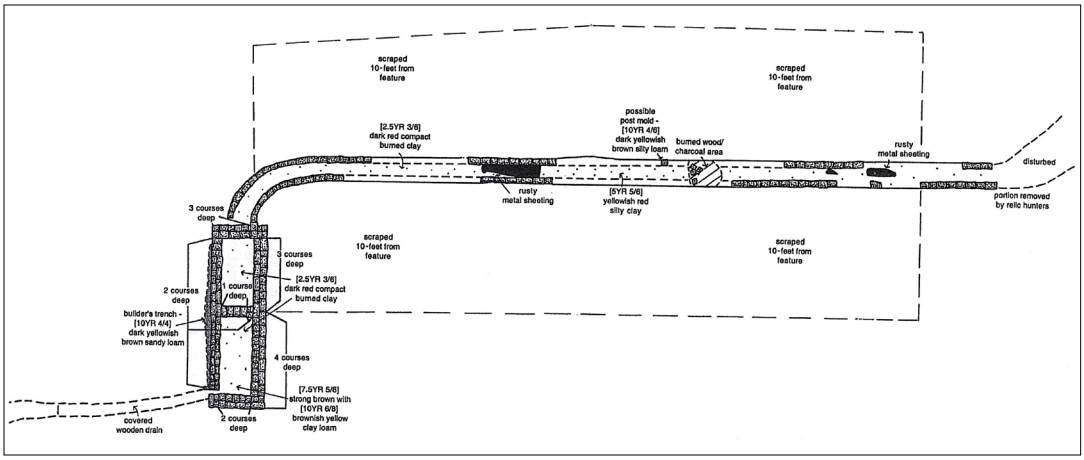
Two intriguing discoveries were made in Alexandria in 2003 and 2004. These were underground heating structures built by Union troops during the Civil War to heat hospital tents. It is believed that these are the first features of this exact type ever to be excavated. These structures were called Crimean Ovens and may have been somewhat experimental in nature.



Above: Interpretive drawing of Crimean Oven and tent by Wally Owen. Left and below: Thunderbird photos of firebox and scale drawing of the complete Crimean Oven in situ.

The Firebox End

The land where the first Crimean Oven was uncovered was on a residential lot on Quaker Lane, which was once part of the plantation *Cameron,* owned by General Samuel Cooper.



General Cooper was the Adjutant General of the U.S. Army (the second highest officer in the army) before the Civil War. When Virginia seceded, he resigned and became the Adjutant General of the CSA. Army. Because of his action, his property was confiscated by the federal government and one of the forts in the Defenses of Washington was built on his land. The Cooper house was torn down and the bricks used to construct the large powder magazine of the fort. The fortification was referred to as "Traitor's Hill" until 1863, when it was officially named Fort Williams. Federal army units camped in the vicinity of the fort, as well as in many places places throughout Alexandria.

Prior to development, the City, in accordance with the Archaeological Preservation Ordinance, required an archaeological investigation of the lot on Quaker Lane. It was likely that the remains of a Union camp were present because the property was just to the southeast of the site of Fort Williams.

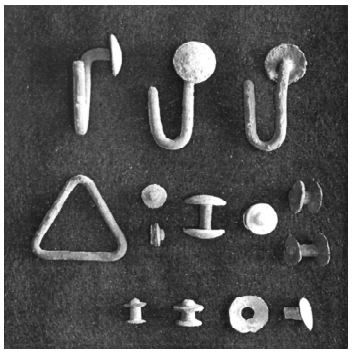
Wally Owen, Assistant Director of Fort Ward Museum and a local authority on the Civil War, examined the area and observed how the property adjacent to the lot to be developed shows evidence in its undulating lawn of the raised regimental company "streets," with drainage ditches on either side, that are typical of long-term Civil War period encampments.

The developer hired Thunderbird Archeological Associates and the fieldwork was conducted during the summer of 2003 by archaeologists directed by Tammy Bryant.

The owner had given permission for a local relic hunter to use a metal detector on the property, and he found various Civil War period artifacts in addition to an area with bricks. He claimed to have removed "at least a hundred" bricks before the archaeologists began their work.

The archaeologists uncovered a channel about 50 feet long, a foot wide, and about a foot below the ground surface, edged on both sides by three courses of bricks. In three or four places thin sheets of metal, possible covers, were found crushed down into the bottom of the channel. The parallel lines of bricks descended down a slope and ended in a two-course-wide brick rectangular structure about eight feet long, three feet wide, and two feet deep.

There was a partial dividing wall near the center of this box that might be the wall of the original box, which was then expanded to double its size. The earth in the bottom of the box was reddened and baked almost as hard as a brick, as was the dirt floor of the flue channel extending from the box. A layer of charred wood lay on the floor of the structure and was covered with a layer of fine sand about three inches thick. This probably was an ash pit that would have been below a fire where wood was burned.



The fill soil of the entire feature contained artifacts dating to the Civil War and earlier, including minie balls, a brass button from a New York Regiment, plus a brass-and-lead eagle breast plate. The end of the brick channel opposite the firebox was totally disturbed where the relic hunter had removed the bricks. The soil was scraped on each side of the flue to try to identify any remains of tent locations. The idea was that tents or huts could have been heated by hot air diverted from the flue channel. No evidence of structures was observed.

Stephen Potter, NPS National Capital Region Chief Archeologist, provided a reference to the MA thesis of Todd Jensen, on archaeological evidence of Civil War camps. The thesis contained a reference to a letter written by a Union surgeon describing a heating system for heating hospital tents. Wally Owen went back to the original letter and found a nearly exact description of the feature found on Quaker Lane. In November of 1861, Dr. Charles S. Tippler, Surgeon and Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac, described how to build a heating system: "...for warming the tents and drying the ground a modification of the Crimean oven, which has been devised and put in operation by Sr. McRuer, the surgeon of General Sedgewick's brigade, appears to me to be the cheapest and most effective." He goes on to describe the system:

> *A trench 1 foot wide and 20 inches deep to be dug through the center and length of each tent, to be continued for 3 or 4 feet farther, terminating at one end in a covered oven fire-place and at the other end a chimney. By this arrangement the fire-place and chimney are both on the outside of the tent; the fire-place is made about 2 feet wide and arching; its area gradually lessening until it terminates in a throat at the commencement of the straight trench. This part is covered with brick or stone, laid in mortar or cement; the long trench to be covered with sheet-iron in the same manner. The opposite end to the fire-place terminates in a chimney 6 or 8 feet high; the front of the fire-place to be fitted with a tight moveable sheet-iron cover, in which an opening is to be made, with a sliding cover to act as a blower. By this contrivance a perfect draught may be obtained, and no more cold air admitted within the furnace than just sufficient to consume the wood and generate the amount of heat required, which not only radiates from the exposed surface of the iron plates, but is conducted throughout the ground floor of the tent so as to keep it both warm and dry, making a board floor* entirely unnecessary, thereby *avoiding the dampness and filth, which unavoidably accumulates in such places. All noise, smoke, and dust, attendant upon building the fires within the tent are avoided; there are no currents of cold air, and the heat is so equally diffused, that no difference can be perceived between the temperature of each end or side of the tent. Indeed, the advantages of this mode of warming the hospital tents are so obvious, that it needs only to be seen in operation to convince any observer that it fulfills everything required as regards the warming of hospital tents of the Eighth Brigade, and ascertain by observation the justness of this report.*

In the summer of 2004, a property just to the south of the Quaker Lane project was to be developed. It was a lightly wooded row of backyards of modest houses built between 1940 and 1955. This property also had the potential to contain the remains of Union camps. John Milner and Associates, archaeologists, directed by Joe Balicki, conducted the investigation.

Through the use of metal detectors, and aided by a trusted local relic hunter, they found a typical scatter of Civil War-period dropped bullets, buttons, and other military accouterments, along with a number of small hearths indicating a light encampment. As the work continued, during the excavation of an epaulet, bricks were found.

The Chimney End

Further excavation uncovered another Crimean oven flue with the intact chimney end – the only part missing from the Quaker Lane site oven. The construction of this feature was nearly identical to the one previously found, except that the firebox end of this structure had been graded away, probably when the nearby house was built.

Zark's Kid's Word Puzzle

by Suzanne Schaubel

A	R	M	Y	P	T	L	L	O	F	G
K	E	P	I	T	Z	A	Q	M	A	E
O	M	P	C	S	X	R	K	O	L	T
L	M	S	O	I	F	E	C	N	E	A
L	U	F	I	N	R	D	A	I	X	R
E	B	A	Y	O	N	E	T	T	A	E
Y	J	C	L	I	S	F	D	O	N	D
L	M	M	N	T	J	L	R	R	D	E
E	C	I	V	I	L	W	A	R	R	F
B	C	R	N	L	Y	X	H	Q	I	N
E	S	R	M	O	R	E	T	W	A	O
R	D	N	A	B	A	R	T	N	O	C
Y	D	S	L	A	V	E	R	Y	Q	F

- **Abolitionist** - Someone who wishes to 'abolish' or end the practice of slavery.
- **Alexandria** - city founded in 1749, Alexandria was a Confederate town occupied by Union troops.
- **Army** - The largest organizational group of soldiers, made up of one or more corps. There were 16 Union armies and 23 Confederate armies.
- **Bayonet** - A metal blade, like a long knife or short sword, which could be attached to the end of a musket or rifle-musket and used as a spear or pike in hand-to-hand combat.
- **Bummer** - A term used to describe marauding or foraging soldiers. Although armies on both sides often had rules against foraging or stealing from private homes, some soldiers often found ways to do so.
- **Civil War** - a violent conflict within a country. The American Civil War was fought between the North and South from 1861-1865.
- **Contraband** - Escaped slaves who fled to the Union lines for protection.
- **Confederate** – Term for people loyal to the Confederacy. Also called Secessionist, Rebel or Southern.
- **Federal** – Term for people loyal to the government of the United States. Also known as Union, Yankee, or Northern.
- **Hardtack** - hard crackers often issued to soldiers of both sides during the Civil War. Consisting of flour, water, and salt, they were simple and inexpensive to make in very large quantities. However, these crackers became almost rock solid once they went stale.
- **Kepi** – Cap or hat worn by Union soldiers.
- **Monitor** - the first ironclad warship in the United States Navy. The vessel had a large, round gun turret on top of a flat raft-like bottom, which caused some spectators to describe it as a "cheese box on a raft".
- **Rebel Yell** - A high-pitched cry that Confederate soldiers would shout when attacking. First heard at First Manassas (First Bull Run). Union troops found the eerie noise unnerving.
- **Slavery** - A state of bondage in which African Americans (and some Native Americans) were owned by other people.
- **U.S.C.T.** - United States Colored Troops. Federal Army regiments composed of African-American soldiers. The U.S.C.T.'s were established May 22, 1863 and included infantry, cavalry, and artillery regiments.

Contributions to FOAA are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

FOAA, P.O. Box 320721, Alexandria VA 22320

Annual Membership extends from July 1 to June 30:

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Include email address and receive the newsletter electronically and in full color!

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

May 16-20 & 23-27. *George Washington University & Alexandria Archaeology Field School in Public & Historical Archaeology*
http://alexandriava.gov/historic/archaeology/default.aspx?id=33900#fieldschool

Saturday, May 21. *Life in Civil War Alexandria: A 150th Commemorative Event.* **2-5 p.m. FREE**
Market Square, 301 King Street.
http://visitalexandriava.com/about-alexandria/history/civil-war/

Saturday, May 21. *Poetry and Music of the Civil War*
The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street. 1:00 to 3:00 pm. FREE
As part of the city of Alexandria's commemoration of the sesquicentennial anniversary of the Civil War, and to honor the role of the Athenaeum (known then as the Bank of the Old Dominion), poet Peter Lattu will read Civil War poems and poet John Finerty will read original poems about Civil War events. A trio of flutists will perform period music. www.nvfaa.org

May 24-25. Landscape Preservation: Advanced Tools for Managing Change (AIC / CES). http://www.npi.org/sem-ls2.html

Wednesday, May 25. *Alexandria at War: Star of the South and the North.* **7:30 p.m. FREE**
The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street.
Military historian and longtime Alexandrian Kim Holien will discuss how the Civil War transformed Alexandria. Hosted by the Alexandria Historical Society.

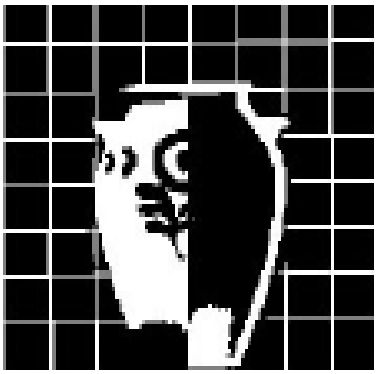
June 1 – August 7. *Historic St. Mary's City Archaeology Field School.* See http://www.stmaryscity.org/Field%20school.html

Sat., June 11, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. *Genealogy Workhop: Paths to Freedom*, part of Ms. Char Bah's ongoing genealogy series, *Their Voices Can Be Heard*. $5.
Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St.
703.746.4356. Reservations recommended.
During the Civil War, thousands of people seeking freedom from slavery came into Alexandria for safety behind the Union lines. But where exactly did they come from? How important were their family connections? Genealogy and historian Char Bah traced the migration of several families associated with Freedmen's Cemetery and shares important links between their families and places – in freedom and in slavery.

Sat., June 25, from 10 a.m. to noon. *Field Orientation*
Required of all new field volunteers. Free but reservations required. Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age. Contact ruth.reeder@alexandriava.gov.

Saturday, June 25. *Brady's Michigan Sharpshooters*
10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. FREE
Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road.
Civil War reenactors from this Union regiment will interpret the unit's specialized weaponry and skills with drill and firing demonstrations, a rifle display, bugle call demonstrations, and a visit with a clerk at the Officers' Hut. Weather permitting. For more information:703.746.4848 or fortward@alexandriava.gov

Ongoing - TimeTravelers Passport Program
Passport $6 each, for sale in Museum. See page **3.**
www.TimeTravelers.org for details.



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