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**Title:** *Interview with Wanda Dowell*

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**Interviewer:** *Francine Bromberg*

**Also Present at the Interview:** *Terilee Edwards-Hewitt, Susan Cumbey for last half of interview*

**Transcriber:** *Terilee Edwards-Hewitt*

**Abstract:** *City Archaeologist Francine Bromberg interviewed Wanda Dowell, who worked at the Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site in Alexandria, Virginia. Wanda started working at the historic location in 1965 and worked there for thirty-seven years.*

**This transcript has been edited by the interviewee and may not reflect the audio-recording exactly.**

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	<b>Introductions and Work History</b>
Fran Bromberg	I'm Fran Bromberg, I'm the acting City Archaeologist for the City of Alexandria [Virginia.] I'm here at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site on October 19, 2013 with Wanda Dowell.
Wanda Dowell	I'm Wanda Dowell.
FB	Can you tell us a little about how you began to work at Fort Ward and when that was and how long you worked here?
Wanda Dowell	I came to Fort Ward on Saturday March 9, 1965. I was hired as chief museum aid, and the director was called the curator at that time. There were two part-time museum aids as well as a full time armorer, which is now called a museum tech [technician]. There was a full-time security guard and a maintenance crew stationed at the park at that time.
FB	Throughout the course of your time here, were you promoted to...
Wanda Dowell	Well, the titles changed. Not so much a promotion, but the titles changed. The curator became a director, and my position became the curator, and then the museum aides. Then, later on, much later on, the armorer was changed to a museum technician position.
FB	And then you became a director in--
Wanda Dowell	Yes.
FB	In 1981.
Wanda Dowell	1981.
FB	So you were here for?
Wanda Dowell	Thirty-seven years.
	<b>Development and Administration of Fort Ward Park</b>
FB	Thirty-seven years. That is so amazing. So you really saw the development of the--
Wanda Dowell	Yes, when I came here, the park had been dedicated and opened on Memorial Day [May 30] 1964. I came in March 1965, so really the only thing that was pretty well developed was what we know now as the Park Road; that was off the original road, which was just below the fort. Anything outside the Park Road was heavily overgrown. There was one house near Braddock Road, and there was a really deteriorated house over near the maintenance area. Honeysuckle was just rampant around here, and they spent months and months clearing the honeysuckle because it was just so overgrown. They began to slowly establish some areas for picnics. The maintenance yard was always over there [pointing at map]. Originally, they had planned to have a petting zoo in that area. They already had some goats and some chickens, but as time passed, more foxes were also here because there was a lot of woodland; so the foxes ate the chickens.
FB	Oh no.
Wanda Dowell	And, in an effort try to get rid of a lot of the honeysuckle, some person, I guess someone from one of the other City departments, sprayed it with weed killer, hoping to kill it. Well, the goats ate the honeysuckle, and they demised as well.
FB	Oh no.
Wanda Dowell	So that was the end of the plan for the petting zoo. However, the maintenance

	was always located there [on the east side of the park]. At first, there were just some sheds that kind of protected some of the equipment and the molds they used to make the concrete picnic tables. When the property on Marlboro Drive was developed, they put up a fence and planted some trees along the border to screen that area from everything. Then, they also built a greenhouse. It became the working area for the park crew at that point.
FB	So, you've answered so many of my questions already here. Maybe we can take on some of these one at a time, if that's okay. So basically, to start off with, when you got here, the museum was built?
Wanda Dowell	The museum was here as well as the officer's hut and the gate. They had hired a professional design company to do the exhibits in the museum, but they were pretty much static. They had installed pegboard in the exhibit cases, and of course, there were no museum studies classes at that time. It was an emerging field; museums have been around a long time, but this was just like night and day compared with what we now accept in a museum. I think the Recreation Department envisioned it more as a visitor center rather than a museum with collections and changing exhibits.
FB	And so it was part of the Rec [Recreation] Department at that time?
Wanda Dowell	Yes.
FB	Do you know when it became part of OHA [Office of Historic Alexandria, a City of Alexandria department]? I don't even know.
Wanda Dowell	It was probably in the late [19]70s that we were transferred. There was a move afoot to coordinate the museums in Alexandria; Fort Ward was the only museum that was in the Recreation Department. The other museums including Archaeology and the Tourist Council were in General Services; so they moved Fort Ward out of Recreation and into General Services for a while. And then the Office of Historic Alexandria was established.
FB	So just to be clear, the museum, and of course the historic fort, is part of the Office of Historic Alexandria, but the maintenance--
Wanda Dowell	Yes, we were charged with just maintaining the fort and the museum. Anything inside the Park Road was considered the historic area.
FB	And anything outside was just--
Wanda Dowell	Was Recreation and Parks.
FB	And now--basically, I'm really interested in what the property looked like when you started, a lot of which you've already covered. We're [attempting to gain insight into] what we might find archaeologically and whether you have any knowledge of what was here before that time and whether or not we can take that information and pinpoint [locations of] <b>archaeological</b> sites or things of significance things in the ground. So that's my main interest in trying to do this interview.
Wanda Dowell	No, the Park Road was just a gravel road, and nothing on the outside was developed at that point. The workmen who were here at that time said the area had become a community dump. The field below the bastion was a junk yard, where the community dumped everything. One of the workmen [Ralph Hall] said that they worked for weeks on end pulling debris out of there before they could even begin to work in the historic area.

FB	So this was before you started?
Wanda Dowell	Oh, yes, that work probably began in the late [19]50s. I was told by Bill Hurd, who was instrumental in the project with [Charles] Chuck Beatley, that the money that they used for Fort Ward restoration came from the insurance money the City recovered when the Alexandria Armory burned. The whole project was done for some five hundred thousand dollars. The City hired a historian and an archaeologist to ensure that the work was done correctly. Archaeology then was not what it is today.
FB	Right.
Wanda Dowell	And they did find some small artifacts. The historian talked about all the junk that they found in the back of the park there and the old road. There's still, I think, evidence of what was the original road that goes just below the northwest bastion. You can still see the area there where it's flat.
FB	Right, yes.
Wanda Dowell	That was the road, so everything beyond that down toward areas what we knew as picnic areas 3, 4, or whatever they are now, where the shelter is, that was all just a junk field.
FB	And from your knowledge, the things that were there weren't actually part of the community here.
Wanda Dowell	No, it had just been dumped by whoever chose to bring trash out here and dump it at that time.
FB	So we don't really know if any of that could be related to the people living here.
Wanda Dowell	There was no way to determine that.
FB	And this is just--this is actually--I'm going to show you on this map so I can-- [brings out map.] I think the road, this is hard to see on this, but I think the road that you're talking about comes through--
Wanda Dowell	Comes through right here, it comes right through here and down. That was the old road that came on that [the west] side, and that was originally the road that went around when they cleared all this out. That's when the new loop Park Road was established.
FB	So there was a road here [west of the fort], and there was a road here [north of the fort]. The roads that Wanda's talking about are actually the roads that were historically part of the Eagle Crest Development.
Wanda Dowell	Oh, okay.
FB	We know that from some of history that we've done on the property. So I'm trying to be able relate what you're saying to some of the historical information that we have. And so, beyond this, you're talking about everything--
Wanda Dowell	Back in here, it was just like a debris field, in other words.
FB	And that is, who told you about--
Wanda Dowell	The men who worked here at that time.
FB	And their names were?
Wanda Dowell	They were Ralph Hall and Reuben Beverly. They worked here. John Healey was the Park Superintendent. There was also another man who was here for a while, but those three men were here in the beginning. They were part of the

	park crew that was here until Recreation moved the crew out of Fort Ward.
FB	So they were basically the people who did all the clearing work.
Wanda Dowell	And had the knowledge of what had transpired.
FB	So you have told me a lot about the vegetation and the fact that it was all overgrown with honeysuckle. Were there stands of trees anywhere on the property?
Wanda Dowell	Yes. Where--let's see-- This area that used to be picnic area one? You renumbered this, I think. In this area, down towards Fort Ward Towers, there was a stand of trees, a lot of pine trees in the park, and over here, as well. Then, a wind shear came through the park one time and just took them all down.
FB	Wow.
Wanda Dowell	I mean they all just fell all the way down the hill. This pretty much cleared the whole area--what was once picnic area one? I don't know what it is now.
FB	And on our map, Wanda's pointing to what we also call Archaeological Research Lot 1. [Figure 1] Basically, these are research area numbers that reflect land ownership and have nothing to do with the picnic area numbers.
Wanda Dowell	Okay.
FB	But it gives us a sense where you're talking about.
Wanda Dowell	It's where the playground is now located. That entire area was cleared by that one wind storm that came through. It also took some trees down over by the restrooms on the west side. In addition, it came right across the fort and took trees down through the area you're talking about.
FB	Now do you recall a stand of trees right over here? [See Figure 1, Archaeological Research Lot 11.]
Wanda Dowell	Yes, that was a stand trees there, and that was cleared to improve the overall ambience of the front of the park.
FB	[Pointing] I'm talking about this -- right next to where that old graveyard was, here, which we'll get to later.
Wanda Dowell	Oh you're talking about, Braddock Road, oh okay.
FB	Here's Braddock, so you're--
Wanda Dowell	This area I was talking about, I'm sorry, is up here. This is the graveyard you're talking about [points to Old Grave Yard in eastern part of Archaeological Research Lot 11].
FB	Right, right over here. I'm just wondering when these trees came down here because historical maps show this as a sort of wooded area, and I can show you something else.
Wanda Dowell	It probably was before they started using it as a maintenance area.
	<b>Cemeteries</b>
FB	In 1927, you can really see the area here to the east of the old graveyard [Archaeological Research Lot 11] where historical area photographs show a grove of trees. One question I have is whether there were any graves here.
Wanda Dowell	Well, (John) Jack Healey, the Park Superintendent, suspected it, and I don't know why. Archaeological work was not done in any area except for the fort at that point, but he was protective of the area just inside the maintenance yard. This would be the maintenance yard, correct?

FB	Correct.
Wanda Dowell	He had always felt that perhaps there were some graves in this area, even though when the City negotiated with the Oakland Church for the cemetery, I was told that the church did not want to fence in the area where those two graves are outside the fence [referring to the Old Grave Yard]. Oakland had the option, as I understand it, but they chose not to because they were not members of their church. I don't know, but Healey would not allow any kind activity to be done in this area. He kept that clear. Everything was focused up in this upper area, up in here, and I don't know if they were aware that there was anything in that area or not. Jack always said that "I just have a feeling that there might be some graves in that area," and Recreation was not interested in doing archaeological digs around the park at that point.
FB	Right, well, you know, the whole history of archaeology has evolved considerably through time, so--.
Wanda Dowell	As far as I know, they were not aware of it. I understand that there have been grave sites found in other locations in the park, but as far as I was aware, no one knew that graves were there.
	<b>Azaleas</b>
FB	Right, okay, so we've talked a little bit about the grounds changing over the course of time. Now, do you remember the azalea beds being put in, the arboretum. Can you tell--
Wanda Dowell	They were put in by Charles Hendryx, who was the city arborist at that time. Many of the plants came from the arboretum down at Norfolk, and a lot of them came from the arboretum here in D.C. Because Hendryx was friends with people from those two sites and worked with them, they gave him cuttings. Then, behind the maintenance building, they established a cold frame where they rooted the cuttings. Then, over near the maintenance area under that stand of trees, they established planting beds for whatever azalea plants grew. They had one year old plants, two year old plants, and three year old plants over there. And I don't know if there are any of them left now or not, but the focus was, actually, intended to provide plants for planting throughout the city.
FB	And you're talking about the maintenance building being a little building on the side of the museum parking lot.
Wanda Dowell	Right.
FB	That structure was not here when you started. Or was it?
Wanda Dowell	All the buildings on the eastern side were here in 1960. These buildings and the flag pole and the fort had been the only focus of the restoration project.
FB	So the restroom was actually here at that time as well.
Wanda Dowell	No, the restroom building on the west side was a later addition.
	<b>Roads and Access</b>
FB	Now, you've talked a little bit about the roads and access. So, in the beginning, the Park Road was gravel?
Wanda Dowell	It was gravel, but it was still the same location you see today; only it has been paved.
FB	And you don't know when it was paved, do you?

Wanda Dowell	It was probably sometime in the early [19]70s that it was paved.
FB	Yes. And you've also talked about the two other old roads that were visible on the landscape, but now, do you know when the road into the maintenance yard was constructed?
Wanda Dowell	It was there when I came because there were sheds over there that they were using when I came in 1965. I just assumed it had been an access road to the area throughout the restoration project and that it had been used from the beginning.
FB	Yes. So you don't recall any moving or extending that road or anything like that?
Wanda Dowell	Pretty much the same as it had always been. And there were the remains of an old road bed just outside the maintenance area fence that had gone up to a house or something.
FB	And where would that be?
Wanda Dowell	It would come off of--Let's see where we are. It would come right along over in this area. There's an old road bed just outside the fence. I'm sure you can see the remains of it there today.
FB	And actually you can, and that is the extension of what is called the School House Road, which comes in [off Braddock—west side of Research Lot 21].
Wanda Dowell	Right.
FB	It also looks to me as if there's another possible road bed that comes up [from Braddock], which is this one right here [near Archaeological Research Lot 30]. I don't know if you ever noticed this road, but it sort of corresponds to the location of the actual Civil War road, where it joins with the old road around the fort. The Civil War road was here, so I thought that was pretty interesting.
	<b>Consolidation</b>
Wanda Dowell	Well this probably was the parcel of land for which we couldn't determine an owner when I tried to get all of this rolled into one parcel of land. When I would call the assessor's office for land values in order to use the facility as matching funds for grants, I found out through the years that there were thirty-nine or forty parcels of land.
FB	Right, right.
Wanda Dowell	And so we worked with an intern in the city attorney's office one year to wrap it all into one parcel of land, combining everything. There was one long stretch that appeared to be a lane or something. I think they took it by eminent domain because an owner could not be established. They just concluded it was probably a road bed.
FB	This actually, I think it was this little parcel right here, which is that the parcel? I believe that's the parcel.
Wanda Dowell	Could be.
FB	Oh, I'm wrong. It's this parcel right here. It's this little road that goes into the area in the school house/church area. So that's it. It's what we're calling [Archaeological Research Lot 12], and I don't know if they talked about eminent domain, but they took those properties--
Wanda Dowell	Yes, incorporated all into one parcel. I was surprised to find that had never

	been done. I guess it was just an oversight.
	<b>Fences</b>
FB	Right, and that was one of the few parcels, I think, [for which an owner could not be identified]. That might have been the case. So we talked about the maintenance yard, and when it was [established];...the first fence that went up, of course, was between Marlboro Estates and the--
Wanda Dowell	Well, they fenced it all pretty much at the same time.
FB	Oh okay, so the fence that's there--
Wanda Dowell	Yes, because they wanted to leave equipment and supplies over there at night, and there was no way to secure anything under those sheds if it was just an open area.
	<b>Grading</b>
FB	Yes. Do you have any recollection of grading or anything like that happening in the maintenance yard?
Wanda Dowell	The only time that might have happened was when they created a foundation for the greenhouse, but other than that, no.
FB	Right. And the greenhouse. I've seen it in some aerial photographs, some structures in the south end of maintenance yard, sort of toward Braddock Road, but they weren't there for too long a period of time.
Wanda Dowell	No, the greenhouse was more or less in this area up here.
FB	Right, so you're talking about the greenhouse, you know, in this area. Sort of the south, I mean, but more precisely, the central east portion of the maintenance yard [Archaeological Research Lot 20]. They recently took that that greenhouse down.
Wanda Dowell	Yes.
	<b>African American Community</b>
FB	Basically, what did you know about the African American community?
Wanda Dowell	We knew there had been an African American community here because of some projects we had done. The Seminary, we understood at that time, was instrumental in settling some of the contrabands in this area who had come into Alexandria during the war. It had been an African American community.
FB	Yes.
Wanda Dowell	But by the late [19]50s, there were maybe two or three of the old houses still here. The house on Braddock Road was in the best condition, and they rehabbed it for the park superintendent's residence [Archaeological Research Lot 13].
FB	And how long did he live here, do you know?
Wanda Dowell	Until the late [19]70s.
FB	Yes. Sorry, I know that was the house that was actually burnt down, right?
Wanda Dowell	Yes, to make way for a tennis court.
FB	Oh, which, of course--
BOTH	Never happened.
Wanda Dowell	Because of the National Register nomination.
FB	Well, I guess we're fortunate that, in terms of the history, the whole park didn't become an athletic field.

Wanda Dowell	There were plans for that, too. But anyway, no, and as for the house on the hill, I don't know. I wasn't privy to any of the area over there when I came here. It was pretty much our job to run the museum and fort.
FB	Right, you were inside the road.
Wanda Dowell	We were inside, that was out. Our job was to operate the museum and the fort. The park crew took care of everything outside, and those were the days when they didn't want me walking over into the--
FB	Into the brush!
Wanda Dowell	But, they tore the house down. Healey said it was in such a stage of disrepair that there was no way to do anything for it.
FB	So do you recall--I have a map here from 1962 that shows the structures. There are the structures in yellow that were on the property, at that time; perhaps most of them were gone by the time you got here.
Wanda Dowell	Oh yeah.
FB	Now this, the names on here are not correct. This was an earlier version of the map, but I believe that the house you're talking about, the caretaker's house, would've been this one.
Wanda Dowell	Probably, yes.
FB	Let's see, that would be in our Archaeological Research Lot 13 here. That had a circular drive.
Wanda Dowell	Right. The other one was over in this area somewhere. I think they described it to me as what they called a shotgun, you know one of those houses that was built straight back. I don't know what it was, because I never really saw it up close. I just know it was there and they tore it down.
FB	So it would've been one of these--
Wanda Dowell	And that was the only house besides the one in Lot 13 that was here when I came in [19]65.
TEH	I'm sorry, just real quick, this is Terilee Edwards-Hewitt, and I'm a staff member at Alexandria Archaeology. So she's pointing to at the map -- Archaeological Research Lots 19 and 20, is that right? Or is it Lot 16? I can't-
FB	This one is Lot 16, and this is 18. These are the two research areas, it's probably--you don't think it was along Braddock?
Wanda Dowell	No, it was further back toward the maintenance area.
FB	It may have been Research Lot 18 or any of the lots between 18 and 21 that had structures on them at the time.
Wanda Dowell	But any structures, except those two, had been destroyed prior to when I came.
FB	To when you came. Yes, from what you said, you didn't really walk around these areas, so you wouldn't know if there were piles of bricks or anything.
Wanda Dowell	No, only the people who were digging up the honeysuckle or trying to eradicate that would probably notice that because I've never heard them talk about any piles of brick or anything like that. The only thing they talked about was all of the trash and debris that was in the back.
FB	Yes.
Wanda Dowell	And if there had been bricks, they would've probably hauled them out when

	they cleared the area.
	<b>Cemeteries, Graves, and Gravestones</b>
FB	Yes, when you first arrived, were you aware of the cemeteries and the burials?
Wanda Dowell	I was aware of Oakland Baptist Church cemetery.
FB	Yes.
Wanda Dowell	The first Saturday I was here, a funeral showed up, and I thought, "Oh my goodness." I didn't even know that the cemetery was not part of the park because I was new. I had not been told that Oakland Baptist Church had a cemetery within the park and that they were allowed to use it. Yet, this long line of cars came through with a hearse and there was an interment. I called the park superintendent who explained to me that yes, they're allowed to use the cemetery. He also explained that the cemetery was owned by Oakland Baptist Church.
FB	And do you know, can you recall, did they come through the park for the--
Wanda Dowell	Interments? Oh yes, they used the Park Road. They would park their cars along either side of the Park Road, and up toward the maintenance area along the road there..
FB	Yes, so they used basically the road that went toward the maintenance yard at that time.
Wanda Dowell	Yes, they usually pulled the hearse down in that area, close to the opening of the cemetery, and all the cars would park on either side. This happened many times over the years. I don't know how frequently this happens now, but over the years there were occasional interments there.
FB	One of the most crucial pieces of information that we're trying to get during this project and with the archaeological work relates to whether or not there are cemeteries or burials in other parts of the park, and basically, whether there were more burials in the maintenance yard. A little bit of this, you've spoken about already, so...
Wanda Dowell	To my knowledge, there was never any talk or, I guess, knowledge of any other cemeteries being within the park.
FB	Yes.
Wanda Dowell	If there was, there was no indication of headstones or anything that might have identified the area as having been a cemetery or a burial site.
FB	Right, other than this little graveyard with the two stones outside...
Wanda Dowell	Outside over here [eastern side of Archaeological Research Lot 11].
FB	Were you aware of the grave that was marked in the maintenance yard?
Wanda Dowell	Yes, and Healey thought there may be others. As I said, he always protected that area. It was always strange to me, however, why Oakland wouldn't let them fence in the entire area because it would've been preserved. This was based only on the fact that they were not members of the church, and it seemed strange to me. These were people who had been interred, so why aren't they enclosed inside the cemetery, especially the ones just on the left, outside where you'd go up to the maintenance yard.
FB	Yes.
Wanda Dowell	But, you know, that was a choice made in the [19]60s.
FB	Oh, and so you were aware when they did the land swap between the two.

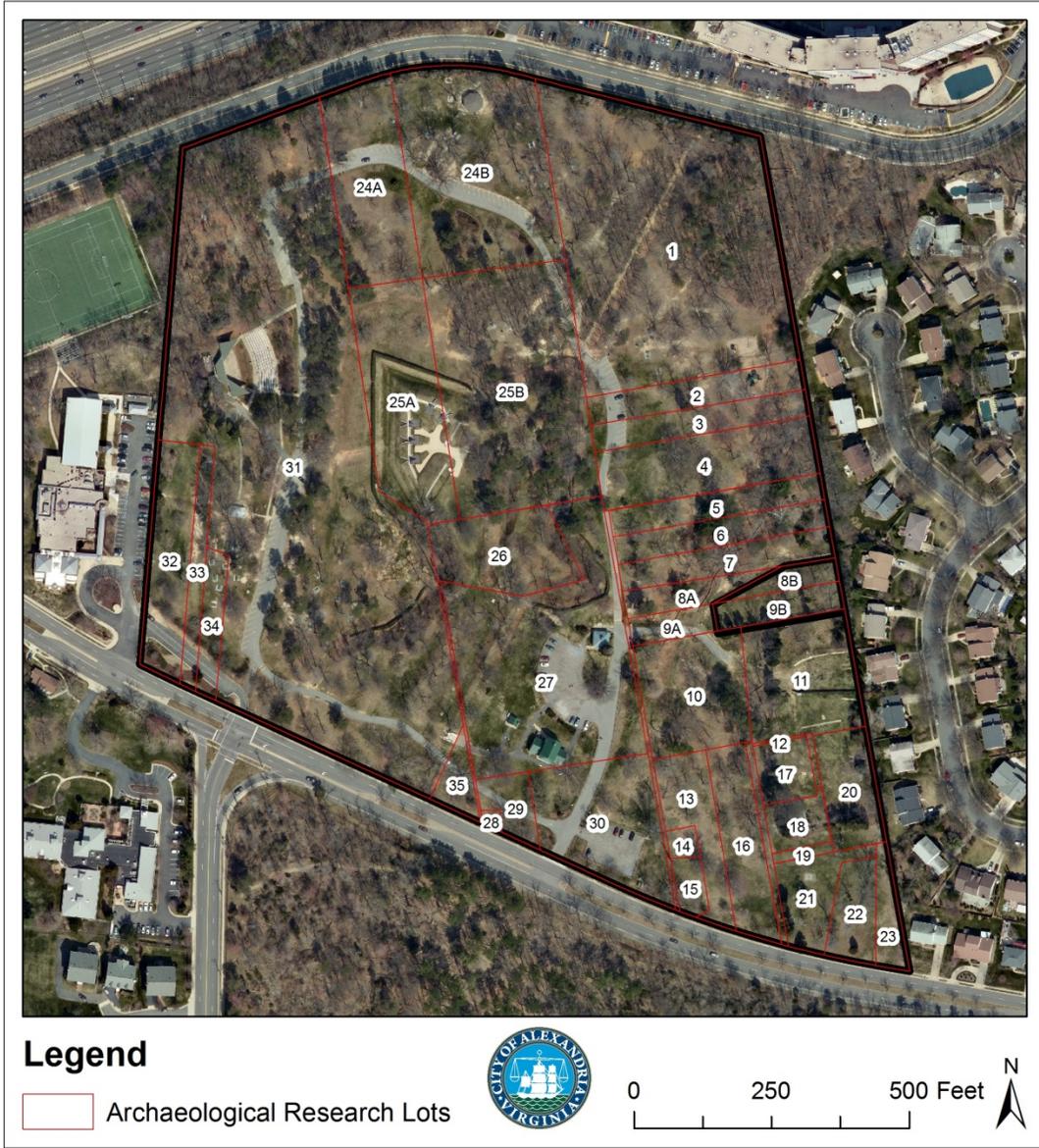
Wanda Dowell	Yes, that was done.
FB	In [19]69, and the fence went up at that time after the land was--
Wanda Dowell	Established.
FB	And now, you probably don't know this because you probably haven't been following all the archaeology, but we have found additional graves lined up in the maintenance ground.
Wanda Dowell	Well, I'm not surprised.
FB	With Clara Adams' gravestone, there is a row of four burials, and then there are two burials in the southeast corner of Research Lot 11.
Wanda Dowell	We never followed up on that because we were never given reason to at the time. I mean, nobody was ever inquiring about it, so there was really no reason as long as they were there and nobody was bothering them. But no, I did not know they were there, but I just knew Healey always suspected there were graves there.
FB	And Mr. Healey was--?
Wanda Dowell	The Park Superintendent, John Healey, yes.
FB	And what was his range of time here?
Wanda Dowell	So far as I know, he was here right at the beginning.
FB	Same time as you?
Wanda Dowell	Well before I was here. He was here when I came in 1965, and he left in the [19]70s, late '70s.
FB	And was it Mr. Healey who lived in the caretaker's house?
Wanda Dowell	He did. That was his residence. He was the park's superintendent. He opened the park in the morning on Saturdays and Sundays, and he closed it at night sometimes. He was the first responder to the security call for the museum. When the alarm went off, he was the first to respond because he was so close, then it rolled to Colonel Mitchell, and then to me. We were the three responders--
BOTH	The line of fire.
Wanda Dowell	So to speak. But it was really a good working relationship for the park. And I guess maybe around 1980, the Recreation Department began to realign its entire work force. They then took the crew out of Fort Ward because they thought they were not needed here. So they reassigned them to do projects on the street and in other places in the city. That was the end of the really good maintenance here at Fort Ward.
FB	So, now, sort of getting back to the gravestones, possibility of gravestones, now you know there were gravestones in the old graveyard, but were you aware of any gravestones anywhere else in the cemetery and of course--
Wanda Dowell	No.
FB	Clara Adams' [unclear] gravestone was there, too.
Wanda Dowell	They did find some in the debris down in the back, but they had no idea where they came from.
FB	I see. So who--have you seen those? Or were they just--?
Wanda Dowell	That was just what the workmen told me.
FB	The workmen said that they saw--
Wanda Dowell	The workmen saw gravestones in the debris that was hauled out of here, but

	no one knew where they had come from. They were piled in with other debris, so they couldn't establish if they had been brought in from the outside and dumped with all the other debris.
FB	Uh huh. So this, the area you were talking about that was in the back here behind that road--
Wanda Dowell	Yes, it would be in areas all down in this area here.
FB	Uh huh. So when you're saying, this was the area, you're talking about Research Lot 24A and
Wanda Dowell	Lot 24B and even just beyond this road that went around here. The whole area down through here became, as I understand it, primarily just a debris field.
FB	And one of the reasons I'm questioning a lot about this is because there's an archaeological concentration in one of these areas, and we don't know whether it's related to the park, to the previous occupants of the park, or to the dumping that went on in the back there. Now, was there any burning of the debris to your knowledge?
Wanda Dowell	No, the only thing they ever burned was, once, they had raked some leaves into the gulley that goes off from the cemetery down through that area. Somebody threw a match in it, and the leaves caught on fire. That's the only fire of which I'm aware.
FB	Uh huh, so they--
Wanda Dowell	No, they did not burn debris.
FB	Okay, the archaeological evidence indicates this was an area that clearly was burned, so perhaps it does relate to the burning of trash.
Wanda Dowell	Could have been.
FB	Or, I don't know, maybe we could get more information about [trash burning] before the park was developed. Maybe there could have been burning at that time. Susan Cumbey's here, who is the current museum director. You don't--
Susan Cumbey	I don't have information about that.
FB	Okay, so [going back over the list of questions], I think you've covered this question about the fence built around Oakland. I think we've covered that the Oakland fence was put up at the time of the land transfer. So those are really my main questions. I really want to thank you so much for--
Wanda Dowell	You're welcome.
FB	We've talked about what the grounds look like, and also, in particular, about whether you had any knowledge about the cemeteries that we could use. Going back over the list, I have one more quick question about the cemeteries that's just occurred to me. There are some other areas where descendants or historical research indicate a possibility for graves to be present, including Research Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8—or 5, 6, 7 and 8A, actually. So this is an area north of Oakland cemetery, did you recall any burials in the location?
Wanda Dowell	None whatsoever that I'm aware of.
FB	And also in this lot; that's where you're talking about the debris. We call this the Craven lot because that's the family who owned it, but this lot that's just north of the fort -- north of the northeast bastion in Research Lot 25B?
Wanda Dowell	No.

FB	And of course, how about the Jackson cemetery [the cemetery on the west glaxis of the fortification [Research Lot 31 on the glaxis of the western side of the fort]? You weren't even aware of that one.
Wanda Dowell	No, we were aware of none of those because there had been no question ever arising about the subject.
FB	Right.
Wanda Dowell	None of the descendants ever came around when I was trying to prevent the superintendent's house from being burned. I called Oakland Baptist Church to try to find out if we could get some input, and if they had any information. They didn't know anything or didn't want to participate whatsoever. At one point, Jean Federico, a previous director of OHA, wanted to place a marker in the park to acknowledge the fact the community had existed.
FB	Uh huh.
Wanda Dowell	She wanted to put a table marker with plantings around it. Michael Miller, a former City Historian, and I did some research for her. I found out about the school, but nothing about the graves. But Jean did want to acknowledge the community.
FB	Uh huh.
Wanda Dowell	But I don't know what happened. Obviously, it never came to fruition, but that was the extent of the effort at that time.
FB	Okay. Well again, thank you so much for talking to me and giving us this insight that we can put on our website.
Wanda Dowell	Added to your knowledge, in fact, I've also learned a couple of things--
FB	You definitely have provided us with additional knowledge. It's always good to have the people who were here at the time speak about what they knew.
Wanda Dowell	Well, you know, talking to the people who were here from the beginning was interesting because they knew what had gone into establishing the park as well as restoring the northwest bastion.
FB	Right and do you know of any of them who are--
Wanda Dowell	Still alive? I don't think so. Beverly moved down to southwest Virginia, and Hall moved to, I think, Bristol, Tennessee. They were both much older than I at the time, so they're probably not around. Jack Healey moved to Rhode Island, and I learned later that he had died.
FB	Right, I do know that.
Wanda Dowell	I think it was the change in dividing the park and the historic area that caused a lot the ensuing problems. While the Recreation Department had one focus, we [OHA] were focused on conservation and developing a professional museum. So, it was a constant struggle to meld the two together.
FB	Right. I think that now we're trying to do a better job with this, as we go forward with a management plan. There is a memorandum of understanding between the departments of Transportation and Engineering Sciences; Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities; and the Office of Historic Alexandria on how to work together at the park.
	<b>Conclusion</b>
Terilee Edwards-Hewitt	Oh, before we turn this off, if you could both-this is Terilee again-if you could both state your names again and spell your last names just so we know we

	have it spelled correctly.
FB	Fran Bromberg. B R O M B E R G.
TEH	Okay.
Wanda Dowell	Wanda Dowell. D O W E L L.
TEH	All right, thank you very much.

# Fort Ward Historic Park and Museum Archaeological Research Lots



Alexandria Archaeology, Office of Historic Alexandria, 20 Jan. 2016

Figure 1—Archaeological Research Lots