



# NCRI Report

## Donation of "Lawson Library" Caps 16 Years of Volunteer Work in Archaeology

Paul Lawson, a National Park Service volunteer of 16 years, has made the largest donation of books and journals pertaining to the archaeology and history of the Pacific Northwest to the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute. The over 2000 books and journal volumes include works on ceramics, glass, Native American items, antiques, historical references, and archaeological sites. Even subjects as esoteric as the dating of barbed wire are included in the collection.

“Paul’s donation is a crowning achievement of many years of service to Fort Vancouver,” said Doug Wilson, Director of the Institute, “This collection will greatly augment the Archives and Reference Collection and will serve generations of students, volunteers, and other researchers.” In addition, Lawson donated a substantial amount of archaeological field equipment.

Paul Lawson began volunteering at Fort Vancouver in 1988, during the third year of the



*Paul Lawson during his military service (left) and as a volunteer excavator on the 2000 Jail dig at Fort Vancouver (right).*

Oregon Archaeological Society’s excavation of the Counting House or New Office (ca. 1845).

Over the following 16 years, he donated thousands of hours to the park in archaeological excavation and the cleaning, treating, study, and cataloging of artifacts in the museum. As a volunteer, he helped to create the digital photography archive, which allows the public to observe museum specimens online.

Lt. Col. Paul Lawson served at Vancouver Barracks from 1958 to 1962 as Subsector Commander in charge of supervision and training of Army Reserve strength in Oregon and southwest Washington. He served in World War II in North Africa and the Italian Campaigns with the 34th Infantry Division and received the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars. After retiring from the army, he was State Geologist at the Bureau of Mines until 1987.

## Announcements

Museum Technician **Heidi Pierson** will marry Scott Veith, an archaeologist for Applied Archaeological Research, next month. The ceremony will be held at the Grant House, the oldest surviving building on the Vancouver Barracks post.

**Martin Adams** has been hired as the new Lab Director. He will be overseeing the analysis of the new objects coming in from this summer's field school on the Parade Ground, as well as working on the Powder Magazine report. Martin is a graduate student in anthropology at Portland State University, and is currently writing a thesis on tracking paleoclimatic change using insect remains.

**Jacqueline Marcotte**, a Portland State University (PSU) student, has been working on the archaeological survey of the Fort Vancouver waterfront. The underwater work will continue through the summer, made possible by funding from two grants: the PSU Scholarly and Creative Activity Grant and the McNair Scholarship, totaling \$4,650.00. Jacque was also accepted into the graduate program in Maritime Studies at East Carolina University for this fall. Additionally, she was awarded an assistantship at ECU for two years totaling \$15,000. We wish her the best of luck!

**Meagan Huff** and **Cassandra Anderson** are cataloging the incredible backlog of archaeological records in the archives. They will be processing and rehousing field notes, maps, photographs, slides, analysis sheets, and reports. This is the first phase of a two-year project to catalog the park's entire archival collection and create finding aids. Next year will focus on historic items and resource management documents. This project is made possible by NPS project funds.

# Distinctive *A Speo* Beads Found in Station Camp Assemblage

by Dr. Robert Cromwell, NPS Archaeologist

As presented in the last Report, the Station Camp site represents a seasonally occupied Chinook encampment, and may be where Lewis and Clark established their Station Camp during the winter of 1805. Analysis on the artifacts continues to evolve.

One of the more exciting artifact types recovered from the site is glass trade beads. Beads were often used as currency in the fur trade of North America, and Lewis and Clark even discuss their importance in trade with the Clatsop Indians. A total of 662 beads were recovered from the site.

These beads were analyzed by Dr. Christopher DeCorse of Syracuse University. Using a newly developed analysis system, which he terms the Systematic Bead Description System (SBDS), DeCorse separated the beads into 60 separate unique types!

His analysis shows that the beads are, for the most part, relatively nondescript monochrome varieties of European origin. However, a notable category of beads are those made with the *a speo* method of heat rounding. This technique was used by European manufacturers from the early 17th century through the 18th century. It involved placing drawn bead segments on an iron implement, which was then inserted into the furnace and rotated until the beads were rounded to the desired degree.

This method produces several distinctive attributes, all of which he found within four specific types,

a total of 257 beads. Interestingly, these bead types are wound, not drawn, segments and present a variation of the technique. As a matter of comparison, less than ten *a speo* beads have been identified in the Fort Vancouver collection, of the more than 250,000 total beads.



*An example of an a speo bead from the Station Camp site.*

According to DeCorse, beads with these attributes are found on sites dating from ca. 1660 to the 1770s in the eastern United States. Noted bead researcher Karlis Karklins notes that "If the process continued in use thereafter for beads at the smaller end of the *a speo* size range, it is likely that it did not survive the introduction of the much more efficient rotating-drum method in 1817."

Excitingly, the beads from the Station Camp Site fit within this later time, and provide a fairly definitive period of occupation of pre-1820, and certainly no later than 1830. The presence of these unique beads in the Pacific Northwest again represents the importance of and distinctive nature of the Station Camp site.

# Conserving the McLoughlin House Textiles

by Heidi Pierson, NPS Museum Technician

The beautiful textiles at the McLoughlin House unit have been undergoing a thorough examination by textile expert Eileen Trestain. She has been working to assess, clean, conserve, and appraise them. I have learned a great deal about textiles from observing her work, and am using the information to catalog these objects.

We are also making sure the textiles are stored properly, and rotating some of the more fragile textiles into storage from display.

Most of the textiles were donated to the site, and cover a wide range of time periods. These textiles include a lovely handwoven cream and indigo coverlet, ca.1830-1850; a crib-sized matelassé coverlet circa 1830-1860; a 1920s “broken



*Eileen Trestain and Joan Beck clean the ca. 1790 calamanco quilt.*

dishes” pattern quilt; and an 1865 quilt with a variable star pattern.

Some of the dates on these quilts are more precise based on information from the time of donation, but most of the dates are based on the fabric patterns and style of workmanship.

The oldest—and one of the most interesting—of the quilts is an

indigo calamanco quilt, made ca. 1790, and in excellent condition. Calamanco is glazed wool; the glaze was created by rubbing the fabric with a stone or glass ball or the application of wax or egg white. This quilt has batting of natural black wool, so if the batting beards through the top it won’t be visible on a dark quilt. Quilts of this type were made by professional quilters.

Eileen uses clean string to create a grid over the quilt, and uses the grid quadrants to analyze the condition of the quilt. Each stain, rip and discoloration is recorded.

The cleaning process consists of first vacuuming dust and debris through a one millimeter grid and then brushing dust and larger debris from fragile textiles.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve is a partnership of the National Park Service, the City of Vancouver, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Army. It includes Fort Vancouver and its village, Vancouver Barracks and Officer's Row, Pearson Field and Air Museum, portions of the Columbia River waterfront, the Water Resources Education Center, and the McLoughlin House unit in Oregon City, Oregon.

## **Fort Vancouver National Historic Site & Vancouver National Historic Reserve**

612 East Reserve Street  
Vancouver, WA 98661

### **Phone**

360 816-6230

### **Website**

[www.nps.gov/fova](http://www.nps.gov/fova)

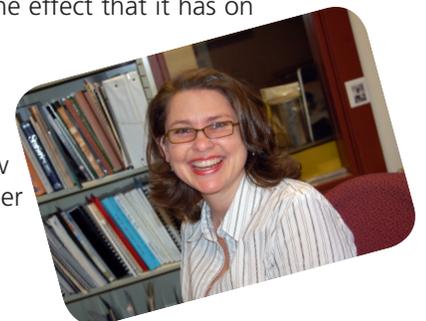
The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## Under the Microscope: Sara Williams

Sara Williams moved to the Pacific Northwest in the summer of 2003 to attend Washington State University Vancouver. As a native of San Diego, California, the climate has been the biggest adjustment for her, yet she has developed a great fondness for the region.

She received her bachelor’s degree in anthropology, magna cum laude, in 2005. During her time at WSU she served as the President of the River Cities Anthropological Society for two years where she coordinated lecture series, regular club meetings, and club trips to the annual Northwest Anthropological Conference. In 2004, she participated in the field school at Fort Vancouver. In her senior year, using data from the Powder Magazine excavations Sara began a research project looking at collection bias and the effect that it has on site interpretation.

After field school, Sara decided to stay on as a volunteer at the Fort. Sara has been one of our most dedicated volunteers over the past few years, and she continues to find time to volunteer in the lab, despite her busy work schedule.



# Finding Evidence of Dr. McLoughlin's Garden Through Microscopic Pollen Grains

by Elaine Dorset, NCRI Intern and PSU Student

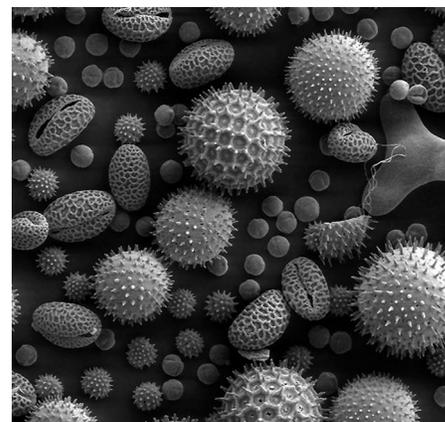
The archaeological investigation of Dr. McLoughlin's Garden at the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver includes the identification of microscopic paleobotanical remains. These remains, specifically pollen grains, were found in sediment samples taken during 2005 and 2006 excavations.

Pollen analysts for this project have identified pollen grains of several significant plants, including walnut and either cherry or plum trees, roses, phlox, and crocus.

Also, strawberry was found in several samples, indicating it was planted throughout the garden. There was also pollen of the herb tarragon (although this could be naturalized), and cereals, which could include wheat, oats, barley and rye.

In addition, it has been suggested that there were extensive manicured lawns in the immediate area, although this statement is tentative and requires further investigation. If it is determined that this suggestion is accurate, it could confirm our hypothesis, based on the absence of other surfacing materials (established during our excavations), that the garden paths were surfaced with grass.

The information obtained from this project will greatly enhance the NPS's ability to accurately reconstruct the garden, ensuring that visitors will truly experience what life was like at Vancouver.



*Scanning Electron Micrograph illustrating pollen grains from a variety of plants.*

## Historical Fragment

**Roberts, George B. "Letters to Mrs. F.F. Victor." OHQ 63 (June-September 1962): 209 & 211**

William H. Gray, an American who helped create Oregon's provisional government in 1843, had much to do with fomenting anti-Catholic and anti-HBC sentiment with the publication of *A History of Oregon 1792-1849*. In the passages below, HBC clerk George Roberts recalls some jocularities at the fort involving Gray.

In those years Gray came to Vancouver for supplies, was young and inexperienced probably been raised on some creek bottom...I remember [Francis] Ermatinger was particularly kind to him at the same time had fun of him. I heard 'E' say Mr Gray & I were partaking of Brandy & water together - Gray's confusion - E's saying I beg pardon Mr G, I was drinking the brandy and you the water.

[William Glen] Rae, [George T.] Allan & I lived together in Batchellors hall & I think Gray was there at that time on a visit. I remember Dr. Tolmie asking Grey what Countryman Rae was as he had rather a pleasant burr on his tongue, Gray like a good Yankee guessed enough English, Scotch, Irish, Hindoo &c to poor Rae's confusion confessed when told, that he had never heard of the Orkanies."

## NCRI Director's Letter

Hello from the field! As I write this note, the 7th Annual Archaeological Field School is in full swing and we are preparing for the 60th Anniversary of Archaeology reunion event at Pearson Air Museum. The excavations have proven once again how robust the archaeological remains are at Fort Vancouver. Student and staff excavators exposed intact flooring from the first (A.D. 1850) barracks kitchen within 10 cm (about 4 in.) of the top of the sod. It is amazing to hear visitors to the site talk about having walked across the parade ground many times, never suspecting that there was so much directly beneath their feet. My teaching assistants: Beth Horton, Elaine Dorset, Meris Mullaley, and Stephanie Simmons, Lab Director Martin Adams, and the rest of the Institute staff have enjoyed working with this year's batch of students. Beth Horton's Ph.D. Dissertation will have a plethora of remains to explore the frontier military in the Victorian era.

I also want to let you know that we are preparing a book on the amazing museum artifacts in our collection. Written by myself, Theresa Langford, Robert Cromwell, Greg Shine, and Heidi Pierson, it will discuss and display (through the skills of John Edwards, our fabulous photographer) some of the truly exceptional artifacts that archaeologists have discovered over the past 60 years or that were donated to the museum by people with a direct connection to the Fort. This unique publication will convey the story of the site's role in the history of the Pacific Northwest through the eyes of material objects! We hope to be able to release it next year for the anniversary of the founding of the park.

Dr. Douglas Wilson

## Current Research

### Greg Shine

An article entitled "On the Fly: The Rise of Organized Base Ball in the Portland/Vancouver Area" is featured in the spring 2007 issue of the Washington State Historical Society's quarterly journal, *Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History*. The article is excerpted from Greg's 2006 NCRI Historic Resource Study and features historic images from the Library of Congress, Washington State Historical Society, Clark County Historical Museum, as well as a current photograph of the annual Vintage Base Ball Game special event by park guide Marv Binegar.

### Susan Johnson

Susan, a graduate student at the University of Oregon, is completing a historic structure analysis of the ca. 1849 Barclay House at the McLoughlin House unit of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Susan has been making physical measurements of the architectural features of the house, and doing historical research on the structure and on Dr. Forbes Barclay, an HBC physician who worked at Fort Vancouver and later settled in Oregon City, Oregon. Susan is completing this project as her M.A. thesis. The report will include scale drawings of the structure, interpretation of the many physical changes to the structure, and a background history of the Barclay family. Susan's research will form a significant portion of a Historic Structures Report, which will guide NPS management decisions on the preservation and use of the structure. Dr. Robert Cromwell, NCRI archaeologist, is one of Susan's thesis committee members, and has been assisting Susan in the physical analysis of the structure.



# Material Culture Notes: Tobacco Pipes

by Theresa Langford, NPS Curator

The earliest pipes in the Fort Vancouver collection are carved stone, usually made of argillite or other pipestone. These objects of Native American manufacture come in a wide variety of shapes with a diverse array of designs. The craftsmanship is sometimes crude, and other times exquisite.

Two of the most notable pipes in this category are a Haida-style pipe that resembles a bird, and an anthropomorphic pipe. This latter pipe is in the shape of a man with a flattened head, and has incised lines on the face which resemble tattooing. The archaeologist who recovered it theorized that its artwork combined local Chinookan and Hawaiian attributes. If true, it would represent one of the collection's only handmade artifacts demonstrating a melding of cultural traditions.



Tobacco pipes of European manufacture were imported to Fort Vancouver in great quantities. They became a very popular trade item, as well as a staple for most employees and their wives. During archaeological excavations,

short segments of stems are often found, since the clay pipes were "disposable"; after the tip became worn, a piece was snapped off and the pipe continued to be used. The stem pieces are often found clustered around doorways. Smoking was prohibited in some buildings because of the risk of fire; in other areas, such as outside the shops, men were likely just waiting for their turn to enter.



The imported pipes were most often manufactured in England or Scotland. They could be plain with only a hint of decoration, or unique figures like famous people, animals, or fantastical creatures. The majority are unglazed white kaolin clay, but others are glazed or even decorated with handpainted scenes. The pipes of Fort Vancouver remain one of the most rich yet understudied type of artifact in the collection.





National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site  
612 East Reserve Street  
Vancouver, WA 98661

A partner in the  
Vancouver National Historic Reserve

## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

This is the official newsletter of the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute. The NCRI is a cooperative partnership dedicated to facilitating research and educational activities relating to archaeology, history, curation, and historic architecture at the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

**Director of the NCRI, Archaeologist**  
Dr. Douglas Wilson

**Archaeologist**  
Dr. Robert Cromwell

**Curator, Editor of the NCRI Report**  
Theresa Langford, M.A.

**Historian**  
Gregory Shine, M.A.

**Museum Technician**  
Heidi Pierson

**Archaeological Technicians**  
Eric Gleason, Jacqueline Cheung,  
and Martin Adams

## MYSTERY ARTIFACT

This issue's mystery artifact was found during a recent underwater survey on the Fort Vancouver waterfront.

The mystery artifact in the last issue we believe to be a **parasol finial**.

