

Jamestown Rediscovery

HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE

Contact: Angel Johnston
704-759-6458
ajohnston@preservationvirginia.org

Jamestown Rediscovery Honors Virginia's Indigenous History for Archaeology Month

JAMESTOWN, Va. (October 3, 2022) –

October is Virginia Archaeology Month, and this year the Virginia Department of Historic Resources partnered with the Jamestown Rediscovery archaeology team to create a commemorative poster showing current archaeological research. The theme of this year's poster is "Jamestown in the Land of Tsenacommacah," and highlights the Indigenous history of Jamestown Island and the numerous Virginia Indian artifacts found in and around James Fort. Jamestown was built in the heart of Powhatan territory—on the lands of the Paspahegh Tribe—and discoveries made over the last 28 years speak directly to the complicated interactions and entanglements between the English and the people of Tsenacommacah.

Current excavations at Jamestown are uncovering more about these interactions. Generously funded by the Jamestowne Society, the archaeology team is excavating a 17th-century pit containing English armor fragments and Native American potsherds. The ceramics likely originate with traded food from the Powhatan people, who significantly supported the colony in its early years. A few feet away is the 1607 palisade and a newly-discovered building that may be a gatehouse or watchtower, which highlights the wariness with which the English regarded their Powhatan neighbors. This juxtaposition—evidence of friendly trade side-by-side with military fortifications—presents a microcosm of the complex negotiations of space, control, and autonomy that took place between the English and Powhatan beginning in 1607.

Evidence of these subtle, complicated interactions may be at risk. Increasingly severe storms, an expanding swamp, and a rising water table all threaten to inundate and erase important archaeological resources on Jamestown Island. The archaeology team is working hard to understand and mitigate these threats before it becomes too late. The shared history of Jamestown is too important to let slip beneath the waves.

The complex story of Jamestown and the urgency of archaeological research will be featured during our upcoming Archaeology Day event. On Saturday, October 8, visitors can look in on current excavations, chat with archaeologists as they uncover 400-year-old history, and tour the site with staff archaeologists to understand how archaeology helps history evolve. A full schedule of Archaeology Day events can be found at historicjamestowne.org/visit/archaeology-day.

Programs including Archaeology Day are made possible through the support of The Edward Maria Wingfield Endowment, which was established by The Wingfield Family Society to honor Wingfield as a soldier, investor, and Jamestown's first president.

More information about Archaeology Month, archaeology events around the state, and how to get a copy of the Jamestown Rediscovery Archaeology Month poster can be found at the [Virginia DHR website](#).

Photos of archaeologists at work, as well as the large collection of Virginia Indian artifacts excavated at Jamestown [can be found here](#).

About Historic Jamestowne/Jamestown Rediscovery

Historic Jamestowne (HJ) preserves the original site of the first permanent English settlement in America and is jointly administered by Jamestown Rediscovery and the National Park Service. Entrance tickets are available at the HJ Visitor Center from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and the grounds remain open until dusk. General admission is \$25.00 per adult (which includes both Historic Jamestowne and Yorktown Battlefield for seven consecutive days). Children 15 & under are free. National Park Passes and Preservation Virginia Memberships are accepted; however a \$10 per person fee may apply. Entrance tickets and passes include admission to the archaeological site, the Memorial Church, the Voorhees Archaearium Archaeological Museum, as well as scheduled daily walking tours and public programs. For opening hours of the Dale House Café and information about special events, please visit www.historicjamestowne.org or call (757) 856-1250.