

**Annual Report of Archaeological Activities at George Washington's
Boyhood Home National Historic Landmark,
2016**

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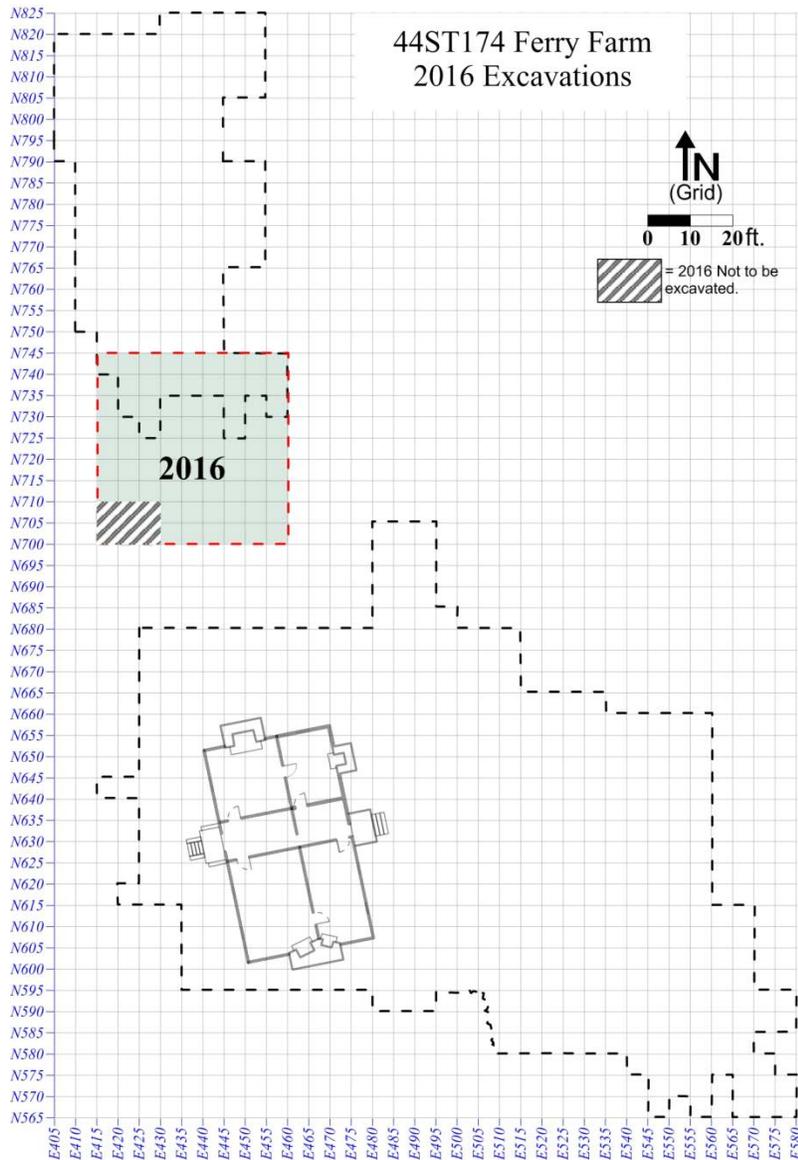
**David Muraca
Director of Archaeology
George Washington Foundation**

December 15, 2016

The staff of the archaeology department at Ferry Farm had another extremely productive year in 2016.

They conducted an excavation at the Washington Farm from March into June. Field schools from University of South Florida joined them and a small number of volunteers to conduct this excavation. Staff member Laura Galke supervised the field work.

Other accomplishments, detailed below, included progress in the areas of archives, standard laboratory processing, artifact conservation, specialist analysis, and curation. Department staff completed the revised technical report on the 2012 field season as well. They also made a number of presentations to the public and to peers.



Location (Gray) of the FF24/FF26 Excavation Block

Fieldwork-

FF26 - Block Excavation

The department continued to work on a portion of a block excavation located between the Washington House and a slave quarter situated to its north. This block measured 45 feet by 45 feet and work on this area began in 2015 (FF24). Excavation was started in March 2016 and was completed by June 2016. Forty-eight of the 81 squares that make up this block have now been either partially or completely excavated. This area contained the same stratigraphic sequence seen in the FF18/FF20/FF22 block (see 2012 technical report for a more complete description of these layers.) The partial excavation of this block suggests this area was used as clean space, as the numbers of artifacts and features recovered in this area was less than any other area previously excavated.

FF25- Archaeological Construction Monitoring

For the work reviewed and approved in 2015, and detailed in the Assessment of Actions form and its supporting reports, monitoring activities began on February 25, 2016 and continued intermittently throughout the year. At first, the monitoring focused on construction activities related to the Washington house, but later in the year switched to infrastructure monitoring, including the new entry road and utility system, for the Maintenance and Operations building.

A colonial period feature was encountered by trench monitoring and the trench was relocated to avoid this feature. The feature underwent plan-mapping but was not excavated.

Laboratory Work-

Artifact Processing Completion as of Nov. 2, 2016:

	FF-22 (2014)	FF-23 (2015)	FF-24 (2015)	FF-26 (2016)
Washing	100%	100%	100%	25%
Cataloguing	100%	33%	0%	0%
Labeling	100%	33%	0%	0%
Storage	100%	33%	0%	0%

Cross Mending:

White Salt Glazed Stoneware – Over 2000 sherds were vesselized and entered into Object Catalog.

Agatized figurines – Crossmended and glued.

Whieldonware – Crossmending underway.

Artifact Conservation

- Photographed and prepared treatment reports for archaeological artifacts in need of conservation. Performed minor treatment (cleaning artifacts and storing them in Escal) of several metal objects under the guidance of Howard Wellman.
- Reorganization of the conservation records, including hard copy and digital.
- Hired Howard Wellman Conservation in Halethorpe, Maryland to conserve 8 metal and composite artifacts including knife blades, skewers, and a metal pot leg.
- Worked with conservator Emily Williams at Colonial Williamsburg to analyze thread found on a colonial era button.
- Continued efforts collecting atmospheric data for the Visitor Center building in new areas by gathering systematic hygrometer.
- Digital photographs were downloaded and labeled.

Specialist Analysis-

Faunal - The faunal remains recovered in a root cellar situated in the Washington Workyard were loaned to Brad Hatch for analysis. Report produced and on file at Ferry Farm.

Small Finds - Laura Galke conducted small finds analysis.

Ceramics and Glass - Mara Kaktins conducted ceramics- and glass research on objects recovered from Ferry Farm.

Colonial Period Figurines Analysis Melanie Marquis conducted in-depth research into Agatized Figurines recovered at Ferry Farm.

Public Presentations

Ferry Farm staff presented formal papers at various conferences including Mid-Atlantic Archaeology Conference, the Council of Northeast Historical Archaeology annual conference,

and The Society of Historical Archaeology annual conference. Department members also presented numerous public talks to a variety of groups including seniors, students, and the general public.

The department's Small Finds Analyst organized two Small Finds Workgroups in 2016.

Historical Research

Conducted historical research and transcribed George Washington's Ledger Book Zero – his first financial account book.

Conducted historical documentary research on Washington/Ball family members and their enslaved workers in Lancaster Co., VA.

Continued transcribing and digitally storing historical documents relating to the occupants of Ferry Farm.

Disaster Training

Staff took disaster preparedness training with Virginia Association of Museums.

Publications and Submissions

2016 (co author) Virtual Mobility Archaeology Project with Further Applications of Three Dimensional Digital Scanning of Archaeological Objects. Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program, Legacy Project #13-334. Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA.

2016 “Archaeological Evidence, 1715-1785”; “Buckles, 1715-1785”; “Wigs, 1715-1785.” In *Clothing and Fashion in American History Volume I: Pre-Colonial Times through the American Revolution*, ed. Jose Blanco F. and Mary Doering, pp. 27-28; 40-42; 301-302. ABC-CLIO, Inc., Santa Barbara, CA.

Geier, Clarence R. and Laura J. Galke

(In press) *An End to Traditions, a Time of New Beginnings: Reconstruction through World War I (1865-1918): Introduction and Overview of Virginia in the late 19th Century*. Commonwealth of Virginia State Plan Special Publication of the Archaeological Society of Virginia.

Heath, Barbara and Laura J. Galke

(In press) *Antebellum Period (AD 1790 – 1860)*. Commonwealth of Virginia State Plan Special Publication of the Archaeological Society of Virginia.

Joo Yeon Roh, and Kristin Wustholz, Identification of Blue Pigments in Fiber Sample from Ferry Farm site using Surface-Enhanced Raman Scattering (SERS) College of William and Mary Chemistry Department. Conference poster.

Reviews

Galke, Laura 2016 Book Review for *Journal of Middle Atlantic Archaeology* 31:155-159. *Historical Archaeology of the Chesapeake*. Paul A. Shackel and Barbara J. Little, editors.

Consultation

Provided advice and expertise to a number of organizations including Dovetail Archaeology, Sut Chrysalis Archaeology, Belle Grove Plantation, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Stratford Hall, and Sulgrave Manor, UK on multiple projects.

Report Production

The department completed and submitted to NPS and VDHR the report of the 2013 Field Season.

Collaborations

The Virginia Commonwealth 3D Artifact Scanning project in 2016 focused upon a variety of prehistoric and historic artifacts.

The chemical analysis on the historic glue residues continued in conjunction with Mara Kaktins, Dr. Armitage and Dr. Fraser of University of Michigan and Lourdes University respectively, is ongoing. The latest results have determined that there is indeed animal protein similar to hide in at least one of the glues.

Pigment analysis was undertaken of a fiber associated with a button recovered at Ferry Farm. Participants in this analysis included Laura Galke, Small Finds Analyst, The George Washington Foundation, Emily Williams, Conservator of Archaeological Materials, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and Shelley Svoboda, Paintings Conservator, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, College of William and Mary Chemistry Department.