

Annual Status Report:
George Washington's Boyhood Home National Historic Landmark,
2017

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David Muraca
Director of Archaeology
George Washington Foundation

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The staff of the archaeology department at Ferry Farm enjoyed another productive year in 2017. Their accomplishments included progress in the areas of conservation archives, standard laboratory processing, artifact conservation, specialist analysis, and significant reduction of the artifact backlog. Department staff completed the technical report on the 2014 field season as well. They also made a number of presentations to the public. Their field work consisted of archaeological monitoring of ground disturbing activities related to construction activities.

Fieldwork

2017 Field Season – There was no field season or block excavation in 2017.

Archaeological Construction Monitoring

For the work reviewed and approved in 2015, and detailed in the 2015 Assessment of Actions form and its supporting reports and plans, monitoring activities continued on January 2, 2017 and were conducted intermittently through October. Construction activities included the interpretive structure and the installation of a new entrance road, an extensive pedestrian pathway system, multiple interpretive yard fences, and a utility trench that connected the interpretive structure to a new utility building.

Archaeological monitoring of all these construction projects was conducted as per the approval-conditions of 2015. Daily observation logs detailed the work accomplished and monthly reports were submitted summarizing the results. Staff supplied revisions or additional information when requested by the reviewers. Construction of the new entrance road afforded us a look at a cross-section of what may be an original 18th century entranceway from Rt. 3 (called Kings Highway in the eighteenth century), and the installation of the pedestrian pathway uncovered the remains of an early 20th century farm building. Both discoveries are being documented in the Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources’ VCRIS system.

Laboratory Work-

Artifact Processing Completion as of Nov. 2, 2017:

	FF-23 (2015)	FF-24 (2016)	FF-25 (2015-16)	FF-26 (2016)
Washing	100%	100%	0%	84%
Cataloguing	100%	100%	0%	64%
Labeling	100%	100%	0%	26%
Storage	100%	100%	0%	26%

Minimal Vessel Count and Cross Mending Projects:

- Mended 100% of the Whieldon ware.
- Added additional sherds to the previously mended and catalogued Westerwalds.
- Cross mending of all Washington era table glass
- Mending of wine bottle glass from the Washington House cellar
- Wig Curler Analysis Project: cross-mended wig curler fragments in order to create an estimate of the percentage of this artifact class that has been recovered to date.

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 conservator Howard Wellman (Howard Wellman Conservation LLC).
- Reorganized the conservation records, including hard copy and digital.
- Hired Howard Wellman Conservation in Halethorpe, Maryland to conserve metal, stone, and composite artifacts including a hearthstone that was once part of the Washington House.
- Continued efforts collecting atmospheric data for the Visitor Center building in new areas by gathering systematic hygrometer.
- Downloaded and labeled digital photographs.

Specialist Analysis-

Small Finds – Small Finds Analyst Laura Galke conducted small finds analysis.

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

Colonial Period Figurines Analysis Lab Director Melanie Marquis continued conducting in-depth research into Agatized Figurines recovered at Ferry Farm.

Professional Presentations

Galke, Laura. *The Dissonance of Washington's Youth*. Middle Atlantic Archaeology Conference. Part of an organized session on gender, managed by Brad Hatch and Julia King. March 18, 2017.

Laura Galke also organized two Small Finds Workgroups in 2017 - African American Experiences, Mount Vernon, VA, and Science with a Capital A, St. Mary's College of Maryland, MD.

Public Presentations

Hair Powder Residue. Class lecture. Virginia Commonwealth University. Laura Galke
Washington's Boyhood, Ferry Farm. Stafford County Historical Society. Dave Muraca
The Mother of the Father of Our Country. GWF Lecture Series, CRRL. Laura Galke
Introducing the New Ferry Farm GWF Lecture Series, CRRL. Dave Muraca
The Archaeology of George's Youth. Mary Washington Library Bus Tour Event Lecture.
18th Century Gentility. Great Expectations. Laura Galke
Narratives of Mary Ball Washington. Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Society, Stratford Hall, Virginia. Laura Galke
Home Improvement: The Washingtons' Ferry Farm. Washington Heritage Museum. Laura Galke

Historical Research

Continued transcribing and digitally storing historical documents relating to the occupants of Ferry Farm. Research topics included Hermits and pleasure gardens in 18th c. England and America, Chimney niches and hearthstones, Port Royal shipping and merchants, and more historic glue recipes.

Publications and Submissions

Kaktin, Mara and Melanie Marquis

Ceramics in America 2016 edited by Robert Hunter “*Mary Washington's Mended Ceramics: A Study of Eighteenth-Century Glues*”

Galke, Laura J. and Clarence R. Geier

2017 *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*. In *The Historical Archaeology of Virginia From Initial Settlement to the Present: Overview and New Directions*, edited by Clarence R. Geier. The Archaeological Society of Virginia.

Heath, Barbara, Laura J. Galke, and Lori Lee

2017 *Antebellum Period (AD 1790 – 1860)*. Commonwealth of Virginia State Plan Special Publication of the Archaeological Society of Virginia. In *The Historical Archaeology of Virginia From Initial Settlement to the Present: Overview and New Directions*, edited by Clarence R. Geier. The Archaeological Society of Virginia.

In Press

Galke, Laura Tressed for Success: Hair Care at George Washington's Childhood Home. Submitted to *Winterthur Portfolio*.

Galke, Laura *Colonoware: State of Knowledge and Current Debates. Essay entry for Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology. Springer.*

Reviews

Galke, Laura Sets and Sensibilities: The Excavation of Ideology in Upstate New York. Reviewed for *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, March 2017.

Consultation

Provided advice and expertise to a number of organizations including Dovetail Archaeology University of Mary Washington Historic Preservation Department, Germanna Foundation, Virginia Commonwealth University, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Marion McCabe, Archaeological Society of Virginia, Mary Ball Washington Museum and Library, Richard Grubb and Associates, MAC Lab, Poplar Forest Archaeology, Chrysalis Archaeology, Belle Grove Plantation, and the Nantucket Historical Association.

Report Production

The department completed and submitted to NPS and VDHR the report of the 2014 Field Season. Work on the 2015 technical report started.

Collaborations

The Virginia Commonwealth 3D Artifact Scanning project in 2017 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 investigation involves residue analysis from two medicine vials.

Student Assistance

- Nubgaard, Amber 2017 Master's Thesis: Ferry Farm Reconstruction, George Washington University.
- Stafford High School Mentorship Program
- Sandra Speiden Scholarship Committee (ASV/COVA)
- Lectured on careers in museums for SUNY Potsdam undergraduate level practical archaeology class.
- Lectured to a VCU anthropology class.