

Fairfield Foundation

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Saving Our History with the History Channel and Botetourt Elementary School



Lewis Burwell II and Education:

Lewis Burwell II was an active supporter of the College of William and Mary, and from a court record in 1711, we learned that he was also interested in a school at Yorktown. When William Stark gave a quarter acre lot in that town for "the proper yuse of a schoule forever", Burwell's name is recorded in the deed as one of the "benefactors" of the school.

Public outreach is essential to any archaeology program that hopes to make a difference in its community. From its inception, The Fairfield Foundation has made this a major goal for all of its activities, receiving tremendous support and encouragement for the future. Most recently, the History Channel funded a pilot project working with fourth grade students at Botetourt Elementary School. As part of the Save Our History grant program, the Fairfield Foundation staff work with the students in the classroom and on four different plantation sites across Gloucester County, teaching the students how we learn from historic landscapes and why we should preserve them for future generations. During recent visits to Cappahosic, Warner Hall, Rosewell, and Fairfield, the students documented these unique landscapes through digital video recorders, photography, and some measured drawings and sketches of the standing buildings. They also discussed historic documents and the role that archaeology plays in understanding the complex history of these noteworthy landmarks. Their hard work will be on display in a supplement of the Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal in the late spring, describing the history and unique character of these dynamic plantations. This supplement will be augmented by videos, with footage taken by the students themselves, portraying each plantation and the project's goals. We hope to make these available on YouTube. Lastly, the students will create a coloring book to spread the message of preserving our fragile historic landscapes to all of Gloucester's fourth grade students. The Fairfield Foundation hopes to continue this program in 2010, expanding the scope to include other elementary schools in Gloucester and focusing on a variety of historic landscapes quickly disappearing from our community.



HISTORY MADE EVERY DAY™



**SOCIETY for
HISTORICAL
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**2009 CONFERENCE ON
HISTORICAL AND UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY**
January 7-10, 2009 –The Fairmont Royal York, Toronto, Canada

Fairfield Goes North of the Border: SHA Toronto

The frigid cold and chaotic travel to Toronto for the 2009 Society for Historical Archaeology conference could not dampen the excitement of the Fairfield Foundation's first symposium on the archaeology of the Burwell plantation in Gloucester County, Virginia. Packed with an assortment of current interns, staff, and Fairfield alumni, the symposium entitled "A New Look at an Old Virginia Plantation: Changing Landscapes and the Material World of Fairfield Plantation" was a resounding success.

Thane Harpole and David Brown, co-directors of the Fairfield Foundation, were happy to put together a symposium pulling together many of the lessons learned through years of excavations in Gloucester. Mark Maloy began the session with his research on the first European settlement at the plantation with a paper entitled "The Lost Fairfield: Searching for the Elusive Seventeenth-Century Manor House." His research was undertaken through an internship in 2007 with the National Institute for History and Democracy (NIAHD) at The College of William and Mary. Anna Hayden and Melissa Pocock combined their 2008 NIAHD Internship research with the paper "Skewed Views: Landscape Perspectives of Eighteenth-Century Fairfield." Focusing on the eighteenth-century post-in-ground buildings, slave quarters, and midden deposits near the manor house, they demonstrated how undergraduate field research contributes to work at Fairfield.

Danielle Cathcart presented her 2008 NIAHD Internship research with the paper "Identity and Place Making: A Study of Colonoware at Fairfield Plantation." After hours upon hours of studying and labeling tiny sherds of this low-fired earthenware found throughout the plantation, Danielle was able to show the complexities of assigning its manufacture to any given ethnicity and the importance of connecting where it was found with who might have made and used these vessels. Elizabeth Clites followed with her paper "Quarters in Comparison: The Fairfield Quarter in a Temporal and Geographical Context." Beth is currently an archaeological analyst at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and used her familiarity with our third president's plantation and the on-line Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS) to compare the quarters at Fairfield with others in Virginia, the Carolinas and the Caribbean.

Fairfield Foundation staff archaeologist Meredith Mahoney presented a paper entitled "Reading the Women of Fairfield in Textual and Material Terms" which was the first presentation on the complex lives of women at the plantation in the early nineteenth century. Her paper was followed by Charlotte Gintert's presentation on the material lives of late nineteenth-century African American women at the plantation entitled "Medicine Bottles and the Mystery Room: Life at Fairfield Plantation During its Final Years." Finally, Lauren Anderson and Katherine Egner analyzed the six surviving late nineteenth-century photographs of the plantation's manor house in their presentation "A Snapshot of History: Fairfield Through Photographs." They analyzed the house along with all the other objects, assembling short narrative descriptions of snapshots in time, but also investigating the deeper history inherent in these historic photographs.

David Brown and Thane Harpole added a concluding comment on the presentations entitled "Perception, Perspective, and Place: Landscapes and Plantation Archaeology." The symposium successfully demonstrated the need to take many different perspectives on any given subject and approach archaeological research as a discussion...which is what followed as the group enjoyed numerous papers at the annual conference, covering sites from across the world, both terrestrial and underwater. A fine selection of restaurants and historic sites made venturing beyond the conference hotel more than worthwhile. As much fun as it was work, the conference was a successful first foray into sharing the many student-driven research projects at Fairfield with the broader world of archaeologists.

Help us Save a Piece of the Past

Over time, many artifacts left in the ground reach an equilibrium with the soil matrix around them—slowing their deterioration. When archaeologists dig them up, we upset that equilibrium and some artifacts start to deteriorate very quickly. In many cases, such as pottery, stone, and 19th-century glass, the artifacts remain quite stable. In other cases, particularly with metal objects, they need specialized treatment to stop the deterioration. Conserving these objects can be costly. Not every object deserves this special treatment, but here are a few that need your help to make sure we can continue to learn from them in the future. Your sponsorship of one or more of these objects is a direct and visible demonstration of your support for our work and your love for the past (and fully tax deductible).

Object: Iron and brass padlock	- Wrought iron butterfly hinge
Date: Mid- to late 19th century	- Late 17th century
Context: T.U. 163E (Mystery Room)	- Feature 13 (ash pit)
Conservation (both): x-rays, mechanical cleaning, stabilization, coating, storage.	
Significance: An integral element of security that represents the value of access within the house.	- Possibly from furniture owned by Lewis Burwell II.
Cost: \$150	- \$100



This 17th-century butterfly hinge is one of the earliest colonial artifacts recovered at Fairfield.



This 19th-century padlock was found within the manor house.

If you're interested in sponsoring the conservation and treatment of one of these items, simply send a donation to the Fairfield Foundation for the Estimated Cost listed above and note which object you wish to protect. A photograph of the object will be sent to you immediately and status of your object during the conservation will be sent as we stabilize it. At the final stage of conservation, you will be sent an image of the fully conserved object and acknowledgement within our catalog of conservation donors—our Artifact Lifesavers! If you are interested in sponsoring other items, we have many other artifacts that cannot be listed here. Please contact us for more information.

Erika Gibson: Video Intern

This January, I returned to Fairfield to join the Save Our History Grant project. My task was to compile all the raw video footage and photos taken by the students and create short vignettes that showed, from their perspective, the documentation of a colonial plantation landscape. After a quick briefing on the grant, I viewed all the footage to figure out what was usable. When a fourth grader gets a video camera—their first thought is not on the stability of the shot, and there were several hours of footage that would have made most people sea sick. There was some great footage, though, and it was complimented by the pictures they took. After that I was able to create storyboards for four short videos, one for each plantation, and a slightly longer video explaining the overall project. I spliced the footage and photographs together with text and transitions to create drafts of the videos. Then, the most important part: review and comments. This is the most crucial step where the Fairfield staff makes sure that everything in the videos is not only correct but flows well and is easy to follow. We're currently editing the videos and, with only a few weeks left, I still have quite a bit to do to make these videos all that they can be—but I'm excited to see how the finished product develops. Stay tuned!



Erika Gibson, hard at work.



Fairfield Membership

Not a member of Fairfield yet– or you have a friend with a keen interest in archaeology and preservation? Become a member today. Gifts of any size are welcome, and are fully tax deductible. Thank you! Send to:

Fairfield Foundation, P.O. Box 157, White Marsh VA 23183

Annual Giving Levels

Basic: \$15

Family: \$25

Friends of Fairfield: \$30 - \$99 Carter Creek Society: \$100- \$499

Landmark Society: \$500- \$999

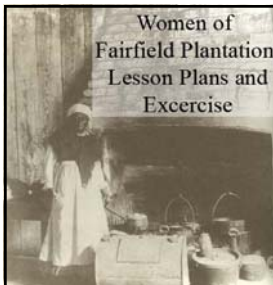
1694 Society: \$1000- \$2499

Lewis Burwell Society: \$2500+

The Fairfield Plantation Interactive Site Tour and the Women of Fairfield Plantation CDs are both available for purchase. Each CD is \$15 plus \$2 shipping and handling. Orders of 3 or more are only \$12 each.

Ordering Info: fairfield@inna.net

(804) 694-4775



Visit us on the web at: www.fairfieldfoundation.org

The Fairfield Foundation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to the archaeological study of the Burwell plantation in Gloucester County, known as Fairfield/Carter's Creek. The foundation has launched an extended investigation into all aspects of this colonial plantation, with the goal of studying, preserving, and presenting this new knowledge to the public.

The Fairfield Foundation

P.O. Box 157

White Marsh, VA 23183