

Summer 2009

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Special Issue on Volunteers



The Stats:

- Hours donated in June 2009: 1395*
- Hours donated by our top volunteer: 1257 (yep, Andy Kincaid...in only 3 years!)
- Years in a row with 4000+ volunteer hours: 3*
- This year: 5020 hours* (and it's only September!)

*-record



The Engine that Keeps Fairfield Moving: Interns, Fellows, and Volunteers like YOU!

As the summer draws to a close, we are reminded of all the hard work that people of all ages contribute to the Fairfield Foundation each year. Hundreds of hours screening, digging, mapping and troweling in the field; countless additional hours spent washing, sorting, picking, labeling, and mending in the lab—these efforts are what keep us going. The energy and interest that each volunteer brings drives us to work harder, to dream bigger, and to keep our research and outreach going. This issue is dedicated to all of you who have made a contribution to the Fairfield Foundation.

Since January, we've hosted six dig days, over 35 lab nights, worked with 16 high school and college interns from as far away as Connecticut and Ohio, and worked alongside our first two Fairfield Fellows (see page 2). More than 37 volunteers have contributed at least 25 hours (qualifying them for a free 1-year membership) and more than half of them have done so for the first time—adding strength to our corps of dedicated volunteers, many of whom are spending their fourth year working with us.

Volunteers contribute much more than their time and manual labor, though. They share with us their excitement for learning about the past. They share their friendship, their insight, and their encouragement. Without these things, Fairfield would not be the success it is today. THANKS!!

Fairfield Fellows and Interns Make Great Discoveries



The great advantage of working at Fairfield is that the site is the perfect place to teach and to conduct research on colonial Virginia plantations. This summer we had the pleasure of working with our first two Fairfield Fellows as well as 15 interns from colleges and high schools across the United States. Jennifer Fitzgerald and Danielle Cathcart were the first two recipients of The Fairfield Foundation Summer Fellowship in Plantation Studies which provided \$2500 each for five weeks of field and lab research on independent research projects. Jennifer chose to examine how fence lines were used to delineate space and how the use of these spaces changed over time. Danielle built on earlier research to study the correlation

between colonoware concentrations and slave quarter buildings outside the primary slave dwelling area. The fellowship allowed them to gain experience with designing and implementing their own research with the support of the Fairfield Foundation's staff and volunteer corps. They supervised the excavations and artifact processing, cataloged the artifacts recovered, interpreted the data, and summarized their work in a short report that we hope they will publish. The goal of the fellowship is to encourage new research from young scholars, including advanced undergraduates and graduate students. We plan to offer the fellowships again during the summer of 2010.



Joining Jen and Danielle were interns Molly Weisblatt, Jessica Taylor, and Amy Nicole Clinger from The College of William and Mary's National Institute for American History and Democracy (NIAHD) and Old Dominion University student Cory Meyers. Each intern pursued an independent research project designed and overseen by Fairfield Foundation staff members and resulting in short research papers. Molly focused on the Fairfield icehouse, hoping to understand its age, size, construction methods, and demise in order to place it within the context of landscape changes at Fairfield and the history of icehouses in Virginia. Jessica continued her work with the descendant community living near Fairfield, undertaking oral history interviews with individuals who grew up in the area during the early twentieth century. Amy expanded her research into issues of gender and identity for enslaved African-Americans at 18th-century Fairfield, while Cory Meyers researched the origins and development of African-American spirituality and religion in Gloucester County, with a specific emphasis on the community near Fairfield plantation. Working alongside them throughout the spring and summer were first-time interns Bryce Vogel, Emily Dickinson, Emily Schwalbe, Elizabeth Bucklen, Erin Duffin, Caroline Herritt, Kalli Mayton, Chelsea Denault, Ciara Cryst, Caroline Dixon, and Christopher Godschalk. Many of them hope to return next year to do their own research projects at Fairfield.



Archaeological Certification with the Archeological Society of Virginia's Middle Peninsula Chapter

In 2009 the Fairfield Foundation continued its work with the Middle Peninsula Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia (MPCASV). Our work focused on excavations at the mid-17th-century Bailey Site in Mathews County and the Middle Woodland period Hogge site in Gloucester County. Both sites provided members of the MPCASV with the opportunity to learn excavation techniques and participate in the discovery and documentation of understudied periods of the region's history. Members and other volunteers excavated shovel tests to establish site boundaries and dug test units to evaluate site integrity, finding cultural features at both sites (a post hole and a small pit). Both sites were previously identified by other archaeologists, although no reports were ever written on their findings. These excavations allow us to draw attention to significant sites, complete their analysis, and share our findings with the public. The field projects drew tremendous interest in the lab as well. Volunteers and members joined us on lab nights to wash, sort, and catalog the finds from these excavations.

A handful of our members are also pursuing Archaeological Certification—a program jointly sponsored by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Council of Virginia Archaeologists, and the Archeological Society of Virginia. Though aimed at a non-professional audience, the Certification program provides a structure for participants that trains them as qualified archaeological technicians, capable of assisting with survey, excavation, and laboratory processing on sites across the state of Virginia. Certification students and graduates are one of the most valuable resources in Virginia for completing archaeological projects which often have limited time and funding.



Many of our volunteers and MPCASV members are participants in this program, including chapter Vice-President Forrest Morgan and chapter Treasurer Linda Bryson. Both are Mathews County residents and are actively involved with the survey, excavation, and analysis of the Bailey site. Chris Knowlton, a Gloucester resident, is researching prehistoric sites that were found in his neighborhood by archaeologists in the 1970s. Eric VanFössen is researching the Hogge site, also found in his neighborhood in the 1970s. Eric is the MPCASV's first official graduate of the certification program, earning his certificate at the October Annual Meeting of the ASV.

By helping take the survey and excavation work from start to finish, and adding previous research into the mix, certification program participants are leading by example. Archaeology is about more than finding cool stuff. These volunteers understand that there is tremendous hard work and time necessary to do archaeology and there is an obligation by archaeologists to both accurately document and share their findings with the public. Through their hard work, the certification program is also ensuring that our community has proponents of archaeological site preservation beyond the limited ranks of professional archaeologists. It is an honor for the Fairfield Foundation staff to volunteer its time and resources to work with the MPCASV and we appreciate all of the hours they spend helping us at Fairfield.

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 *new* Fairfield T-shirt is available for purchase and is FLYING off the shelves! We're approaching our third print run, so now is the perfect time to get your T-shirt and buy a second one that you don't want to get dirty– or give as a gift. They are \$15 each plus \$2.50 shipping and handling (\$.50 s/h for each add'l shirt). **Order more than one and get a free one-year membership with the Fairfield Foundation!**

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

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