

Colonial Williamsburg News

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG'S PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS

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Colonial Williamsburg Reopens

Colonial Williamsburg took its biggest steps yet toward a “new normal” with the reopening on June 14 of some Historic Area sites, along with the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg and some Hospitality facilities that closed in March to limit health risks posed by COVID-19.

President and CEO Cliff Fleet announced reopening details to employees and the community on June 5, the day the state entered Phase 2 of Gov. Ralph Northam’s “Forward Virginia” plan. Fleet’s message and details about the initial reopening are available at emergency.cwf.org.

“Throughout this time, you’ve worked hard together through difficulties we could never have imagined, and that I know have seemed overwhelming at times,” Fleet wrote in his message to employees. “I am so proud of the way this organization continues to pull together to meet every challenge.”

Further resumption of Hospitality operations will depend on sustained business demand. In addition to its extensive community food donations during the closure, Hospitality’s food and beverage team operated The Cupboard Grab & Go at the Williamsburg Lodge, offered curbside service at Sweet Tea & Barley and reopened the Chowning’s Tavern garden during Phase 1.

By June 1, most merchant tenants in Colonial Williamsburg’s Merchants Square had reopened, supported by the Foundation’s waiver of April rent and the city of Williamsburg’s special zoning guidance allowing restaurant seating on closed streets and parking areas. The Foundation and the city also teamed up to provide 40 new outdoor dining table sets with umbrellas for public use in Merchants Square.

Some employees on administrative leave or furlough have been called back, and additional employees are returning over time as operations expand. Those able to work from home continue doing so. Colonial Williamsburg is also maintaining health insurance coverage and other benefits for covered furloughed employees, including continuation of rent waivers for furloughed employees living in Colonial Williamsburg housing. Scaled pay reductions remain in place for salaried employees, including senior management.

Safe operations have required extensive new procedures and training before employees return to work on-site. Mandatory training for employees and managers ensure Foundation staff protect themselves, guests and the community as Foundation operations resume over the coming weeks and months.

“Excited as we are to welcome back the public to these spaces, this will be a different experience for our guests, whom we will ask to work with us to protect everyone’s health and safety — theirs, and ours,” Fleet wrote.

In the interest of safety, public access to sites and programming is reduced, and most programming is being held outdoors and limited to the state’s Phase 2 limit on social gatherings. Guests and staff are required to wear face coverings while inside Foundation-owned buildings, as well as adhering to social distancing.

Ticket prices are reduced given the scope of programming during the initial reopening phase. The Foundation is encouraging online ticket purchases and digital redemption via mobile device to limit use of paper tickets. Active annual passes, including Good Neighbor passes, are valid during the initial reopening.

Foundation leadership continues to monitor risks and following government and public health guidance with the goal of further resuming operations.

“Thank you for continuing to stand by Colonial Williamsburg, and each other,” Fleet told colleagues. “I’m honored to join you in the noble work you are all doing, and excited to see many more of you in person soon.”



Erin Lopater and Jason Copes comprise the Museums, Preservation and Historic Resources digital imaging team.

Digital Imaging Team in Demand During Closure

If you see an image of an object from the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg's collection, the Museums, Preservation, and Historic Resources' digital imaging team probably had something to do with it.

The two-person team of photographer Jason Copes and Erin Lopater, associate registrar for imaging, is responsible for photographing the objects in the collection and managing that archive of images — no small task for a collection that comprises more than 70,000 examples of fine, decorative, mechanical and folk art.

This growing digital archive currently has nearly 200,000 images of museum objects, architectural sites and collections, archaeological artifacts and Historic Area interiors. All images are archived, organized and maintained so that they are retrievable internally on the Museum System database, the Source and on the public-facing eMuseum.history.org.

“Through exceptional photography, principally of our decorative arts and folk art collections but also of exhibitions, Historic Area sites and installations, architecture and gardens, this team responds quickly, nimbly and accurately to support the work of so many departments in the Foundation,” said Virginia Foster, director of collections programs and operations.

With the recent effort to create a more robust digital experience for guests who are currently unable to visit because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital imaging team is in demand more than ever. Nearly every

social media post, blog article and webpage include at least one image, many of which the team is responsible for not only producing but maintaining in a way that makes them easily retrievable upon request. Because the public is now frequently directed to the eMuseum site, the team is working to grow that database of images so more objects can be seen.

Copes, who has been with the Foundation for five years, and Lopater, who transferred from Historic Interiors and Collections Care to this position in September, may have just recently started working together for Colonial Williamsburg but they have a long history. Both worked at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, where their time overlapped for about five years. Copes served as a photographer; Lopater handled image requests, mostly external.

For Colonial Williamsburg, the duo largely manage internal requests. They work closely with other Foundation staff who handle the archiving of other types of images. Marianne Martin, visual resources librarian, and Tracey Gulden, media collections manager, are key points of contact for the team as requests for images pour in from around the Foundation, as well as from outside scholars and media. Martin and Gulden maintain the hundreds of thousands of images that exist outside of the scope of the digital imaging team's purview.

Each new object acquired for the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum needs new photography. When a new exhibition is mounted in the museums or in the Historic Area, the photography for any object included is reviewed and, as necessary, replaced. The same is true whenever an object is mentioned or featured in a publication or program. Along the way, the digital imaging team works with curators to find objects in the collection that have not been reshot in decades. Currently, Copes and Lopater are coordinating with Tara Chicirda, curator of furniture, on a long list of furniture pieces that need fresh photography.

“Our goal is to have as much updated photography as possible and to make sure that photography is accessible across the Foundation and to the public,” Lopater said. “If someone reads about one of our objects or sees a photo of one somewhere, we want that object available online in case they're curious enough to search for more information.”

Copes shoots thousands of photos each year over the course of about 400 sessions, each one prompted by a specific request that can come from just about anyone or anywhere around the Foundation: curators, conservators and registrars, who need object images for research and documentation; interpreters, for use in a presentation; Publications, for inclusion in *Trend & Tradition* or an upcoming book; and Development, for donor outreach materials, to name a few. Copes takes images from multiple angles of an object or exhibition to maximize the usefulness of the images.

“Objects are not always in the best condition when we acquire them,” Copes said. “Some objects may not be beautiful anymore in the traditional sense, but it's my job to show them in their best light. Some objects are truly spectacular, and the goal is to show them how they are. It's about simple, straightforward, well-lit photos of the objects.”



YOUR STORY: Erin Lopater

For each issue of CW News, volunteer Chuck Reusing interviews one of our many talented staff members to give us a sense, in their own words, of who they are, what they do and why their work is important.

JOB TITLE: Associate Registrar for Imaging, Digital Imaging Team, Division of Museums, Preservation, and Historic Resources



YEARS OF SERVICE: I have been in my current position since September of last year, having transferred from the Historic Interiors and Collections Care team, which I joined in June 2019. Before that, I was employed by The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation as coordinator in the Photo Services department.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: I manage and organize all of the vast number of digital images that are available and archived in the Collections department. I receive many requests regularly from Foundation staff asking for various digital images from our collection of more than 70,000 objects. This includes staff from Research, Education, Publications, Exhibitions, Social Media, Marketing, Development and Products, to name a few. We have been especially busy in recent months due to the pandemic since many of the Foundation’s endeavors have been made available on our website during the closure of our public spaces. Many of our digital images have been used in this online public outreach. Our office is in the DeWitt Wallace Collections and Conservation Building at the Bruton Heights School Education Center, and I am one of two staff members on the digital imaging team.

We also receive external requests for digital images, including from scholars conducting historical research and writers from different publications. Through the years, our colleagues have created a huge archive of images for The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation that continually needs to be added to, updated, organized and maintained. A recent example is documenting the three-year expansion project at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg.

WHAT I DO TO IMPROVE THE GUEST EXPERIENCE: Most of our work is essentially behind the scenes, as we primarily serve as a resource for other Colonial Williamsburg staff. However, many of our images are on the Colonial Williamsburg website and eMuseum, which are accessible to millions of people throughout the world. We have provided digital images for our virtual tours that are now available on social media to potential guests and visitors who are not able to visit our sites during our recent closure to the public.

Also, we support Foundation staff as they prepare for presentations and exhibitions at the many Foundation-sponsored events, such as the annual Antiques Forum and Working Wood in the 18th Century conference. We also receive many requests for images of Historic Area installations, sites, architecture and gardens.

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE: While working toward my master’s degree in museum studies from Newcastle University in Newcastle upon Tyne, England, I participated in a summer internship at the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin. During my internship, I assisted with the preparation of an exhibition titled “Medieval Ireland 1150–1550,” which is now a permanent exhibition. This was a special experience for me.

BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: My biggest accomplishment is knowing that the work I’m doing reaches a global audience and contributes to the educational mission of Colonial Williamsburg. As a relatively new employee, I have felt very welcomed by my colleagues and feel fortunate to work with such a productive and positive group of professionals.

INTERESTS/HOBBIES: I create stained glass art in a variety of representational and abstract designs. I have a workspace at home and a wonderful group of other stained-glass artists with whom I regularly meet for camaraderie and inspiration. I also enjoy getting out on our beautiful biking and walking trails in the area.





Alyssa Elkins sings patriotic songs as part of Colonial Williamsburg's virtual Memorial Day commemoration.

Virtual Memorial Day

Commemoration Hits the Mark

On Monday, May 25, Colonial Williamsburg debuted its first-ever virtual Memorial Day commemoration on the Foundation's social and web platforms. In less than 24 hours, the ceremony had been viewed more than 22,000 times on Facebook alone, with positive feedback continuing to pour in from viewers across America, including Alabama, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Florida and California.

Each Memorial Day, the Foundation offers a service for the community honoring fallen military throughout America's history. It is presented in partnership with the Williamsburg Chapter of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Traditionally, the program involves a public procession and wreath laying at various military resting sites in the Historic Area.

When it became evident that public gatherings over Memorial Day weekend would be impossible due to COVID-19, Foundation staff found another way to commemorate Memorial Day and all it represents. In early April, the special events team began rolling out plans to film in advance a ceremony that viewers from across the nation could watch from home.

"We kept things simple and used this opportunity to do something completely new while reaching a much broader audience than we ever have in years past, through this virtual experience," said Robert Currie, director of entertainment.

Bill Schermerhorn, creative director of signature events, designed the sequencing of the program based on past Memorial Day commemorations.

The Governor's Palace Revolutionary War cemetery, where 156 men and two women were laid to rest after the Yorktown campaign of 1781, was chosen as the site for the virtual commemoration. The program was filmed in short increments over several weeks with strict physical distancing measures in place.

Colonial Williamsburg President and CEO Cliff Fleet delivered a preamble to the ceremony from the Governor's Palace entryway. Representatives of the Sons of the American Revolution offered a presentation of wreaths at the cemetery. Alyssa Elkins, a tavern performer, sang "God Bless America" and "The Star-Spangled Banner." Military interpreters Justin Chapman and Dominic Giardino performed an 18th-century musket salute. James Fore, sound technician, provided audio and sound support.

Some staff brought their outside interests to the effort. Layne Chappell, apprentice pewterer and founder, filmed and edited the ceremony from start to finish. Joseph Feaster, a Nation Builder who portrays young Gowan Pamphlet, offered invocations and a moment of silence in his capacity as U.S. Navy chaplain candidate, lieutenant junior grade.

Chappell edited the segments into a 12-minute program. The result was a moving tribute that furthered Colonial Williamsburg's mission and served as a reminder to all Americans that the freedoms enjoyed through America's unique system of governance are not free and must continue to be protected.

"Through the planning, performance and production of the video, [we] managed to send out a little reminder that CW will always be able to find a way to talk with our guests about America's history, despite unexpected hurdles," Chappell said.

As one Facebook commenter wrote, "This was a beautiful tribute to our fallen heroes! Thank you so much. As a schoolteacher, I shared this with my students . . . praying they will watch and understand the price paid for their freedom."



Nation Builder Joseph Feaster offers invocations and a moment of silence during the virtual commemoration in his capacity as a U.S. Navy chaplain candidate.



American Red Cross

Employee volunteers who helped administer Red Cross blood drives on May 1, 7 and 27

- Tina Bleakley
- Kathryn Brown
- Frances Burroughs
- Patricia Chrenka
- Bill Drewry
- Rachel Eiland
- Sherri Galentine
- Karen Hartman
- Sharon Hollands
- Rebecca Howard
- John King
- Jen “Bird” Losik
- Christine Macdonald
- Darrin McDonal
- Jaqui McDonald
- Felicity Meza-Luna
- Andrea Neidrich
- Julie Yates

CW Volunteers are the Life’s Blood of Red Cross Blood Drives

Frances Burroughs, textile furnishings specialist in Collections, regularly donates blood to the American Red Cross. Her father encouraged her to donate blood at a young age, and she sees it as her civic duty to give back to her community.

Shortly after the COVID-19 outbreak in late February, Burroughs received a call from a Red Cross case manager informing her that she might have been exposed to the virus during a blood drive in Hampton Roads. She would need to self-isolate for 14 days. While Burroughs was cleared from quarantine with a clean bill of health, it was during her self-isolation that she realized just how desperately the community needed larger venues for blood drives.

“I knew then that I had to do something to help provide a larger location more conducive to social distancing and that could accommodate more donors,” she said.

When Burroughs shared the Red Cross’ need with Colonial Williamsburg leadership, the Foundation quickly stepped in to help. Within weeks, three blood drives were arranged at the Woodlands Conference Center on May 1, 7 and 27. The conference space, unoccupied during the Foundation’s closure, allowed Red Cross staff and donors to operate at safe distances. Employees from across the Foundation volunteered to staff the drives so that the Red Cross could focus its energy on collecting blood. Some employees also donated blood to the effort.

Employee volunteer support was critical to ensuring safety procedures were closely maintained throughout the day. Ahead of each drive, conference services and volunteer staff helped to clean and set up the space according to social distancing guidelines. Sandwiches made by the Hospitality staff were donated to accompany snacks, water and juice boxes for Red Cross donors and employees. Foundation employee volunteers staffed the check-in and registration table, tended to the refreshment table and took donors’ temperatures as they arrived for their pre-scheduled appointments.

“The Woodlands blood drive was as organized and efficient as drives pre-COVID-19,” said Burroughs. “I enjoyed the personal interaction, even from 6 feet away. It was [my] favorite part of my volunteer time.”

John King, a historic orientation interpreter, signed up to volunteer at all three drives. This was not King’s first time volunteering for the Red Cross. He previously offered his services during the aftermath of 9/11 at one of the Red Cross’ largest facilities in New York City.

“Service helps me to feel like I’m doing something productive and gives my spirit a boost to assist those who are in need. I am very proud of how CW has responded to [the pandemic] by giving service to our community,” he said.

The community impact of the drives far exceeded the Red Cross’ goals for the events. Donation appointments were booked at capacity all three dates. The drives raised a combined 184 units of blood to support the Red Cross’ lifesaving work, exceeding the monthly goal by 34 units. Given that one unit of blood can help save or sustain up to three lives, the Foundation drives could positively impact up to 552 lives.



Golden Horseshoe a Respite for Golfers During COVID-19

All of Colonial Williamsburg shared in the profound impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet one guest-facing group enjoyed a semblance of normalcy: The Golden Horseshoe Golf Club.

Virginia is among the states that qualified its stay-at-home order to allow for outdoor exercise and golf course operation, so the Golden Horseshoe remained open to offer recreation when it was needed most. The golf club has hosted more than 8,000 rounds of golf since the Foundation closed most public facilities in March.

It was still not business as usual.

Keeping employees, members and guests safe and helping slow the spread of the virus required the golf staff to adapt their usual procedures in accordance with the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the state of Virginia.

Marc Guiseppi is the general manager of the golf club. He said the procedures included extensive sanitation of all shared equipment, removing as many common touch points as possible, consolidating operations to one clubhouse and limiting the number of tee times available to maintain social distance among golfers.

“Obviously, we missed out on the traveling golfers and group outings that drive revenues in the spring, but we are very grateful to have a loyal membership that continues to support us during this difficult time,” he said. “It was also great to see a lot of new faces from the local community enjoying the golf courses. So, while the pandemic definitely impacted us greatly, it was not to the same extent as some neighboring states that weren’t able to open their facilities until late May.”

While remaining open, the Golden Horseshoe has, like the rest of Colonial Williamsburg, stepped deeper into the virtual realm to remain engaged with the golf community. In addition to flyover videos of each hole available on the Colonial Williamsburg Resorts website, the team has stepped up content available on the Golden Horseshoe’s Facebook page and in emails to members and past guests.

“We also introduced some new methods to engage golfers during the stay-at-home order,” said Guiseppi. “We launched an online shop so people can purchase Golden Horseshoe merchandise with free shipping or curbside pickup, and our PGA golf professionals posted golf tips on our new YouTube channel to help everyone improve their game from home.”

When Virginia entered Phase 2 of the “Forward Virginia” plan, the golf club eased some of the restrictions that were in place. The Gold Course Grill is now open for lunch from Friday through Sunday, and the Gold Course lounge is available for take-away beverages during the same time. Groups of up to 50 are now allowed to gather with proper social distancing, creating opportunities for larger golf outings and tournaments.



Repurposed Fabric Protects Employees, Community

Face coverings may not have been an 18th-century style, but coverings with a colonial flair can be seen around Williamsburg, thanks to Colonial Williamsburg staff.

By mid-May, employees had created more than 3,000 face coverings, and they have continued to produce nearly 500 a week. They donated 100 to Sentara health-care workers with the rest being used on-site.

The face coverings are made with what Colonial Williamsburg’s Costume Design Center has in stock, explained Brenda Rosseau, manager of the center. That means no elastic. The linings and interior pockets are made of cotton muslin, which is covered in scrap cotton, mostly bits and pieces left over from making women’s attire. Twill tape is used for the ties.

Beverly Prewitt, a cutter, draper and pattern maker, cut most of the face coverings. A three-person team consisting of Rosseau, tailor Tina Charity and Clarissa Brinkley, supervisor for issuance and inventory, prepared unassembled kits. Employees across the Foundation, including Costume Design Center staff, tradespeople, conservators and curators, put them together.

“This truly was a group effort,” said Rosseau. “Many, many people made this happen.”



Colonial Williamsburg’s Costume Design Center became an assembly line for face coverings this spring.



Melissa Mead puts her sewing skills to work to prepare face coverings for employees during the shutdown.



Olivia Ballard contemplates her next stitch at her sewing machine.



Michael Ramsey works through a stack of face coverings.



Colonial Williamsburg donated 100 face coverings to Sentara health-care workers during the height of the pandemic.



Teacher Institute Fast-Tracks Online Learning

The Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute is introducing two online programs this summer. The new programs are a response to requests from teachers and part of an effort to explore ways to provide professional development and resources. They also fill a special need for teachers who can't come to Williamsburg this summer because COVID-19 forced the cancellation of the Institute's on-site seminars.

Both online programs have sold out.

Adding online programming has been a strategic goal of the Institute since before the virus forced the temporary closing of the Historic Area, according to Tab Broyles, Colonial Williamsburg's Peter L. and Patricia O. Frechette Director of Teacher Development. The closing made it even more of a priority.

One of the programs focuses on applying Colonial Williamsburg methods of teaching history in the classroom. Five webinars include segments on using primary sources, learning history through storytelling and creating museum exhibits. Participants connect with Colonial Williamsburg experts, such as Jack Gary, director of archaeology; Meredith Poole, senior staff archaeologist; Trish Balderson, manager of special programs and visitor services for the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg; and Kelly Arehart, a Colonial Williamsburg historian. Participants also spend time with character interpreters and master teachers, and Teacher Institute staff members will help teachers find resources available through the Foundation.

"Nothing beats being on-site," said Andy Engel, manager of program development for the Teacher Institute. "But for teachers who can't join us here, this is an opportunity to learn the same strategies and techniques they would on-site."

The second program, which was filled within 24 hours, focuses on teaching about slavery and race during the colonial and Revolutionary periods. It's designed primarily for upper elementary and middle school teachers.

Stacy Hasselbacher Hernandez, coordinator-trainer for the Teacher Institute, said that the program evolved from one she and Stephen Seals, Historic Area program manager, have used for in-person workshops at various sites as well as from programs Engel did with the Chicago and New York City public school systems. It also draws on lessons learned from 40 years of interpreting African American history in the Historic Area.

Because of the complex and sensitive nature of the topic, the program requires a greater time commitment than the methods program and involves readings and activities beyond the live interactions with Colonial Williamsburg staff members.

"What we found doing in-person workshops is there was never enough time," Hasselbacher Hernandez said. "We want to see if this online format allows us to go into the depth teachers want." And, Hasselbacher Hernandez added, "we want to try out different techniques."

Since 1989, the Teacher Institute has hosted more than 10,000 primary and secondary school educators for weeklong sessions and three-day themed seminars, immersing them in an interdisciplinary approach to teaching social studies with a focus on American history.

*"Tell me and I forget,
teach me and I may remember,
involve me and I learn."*

— BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



Virtual Interpreter Training Sessions Keep Staff Engaged

By Jeff Klee

Foundation scholars have reinvented staff training to keep interpreters on top of their game during Colonial Williamsburg's extended closure of public sites and social distancing due to COVID-19.

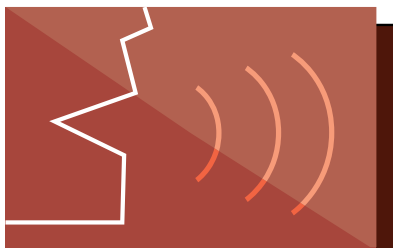
Every Friday afternoon three scholars from different disciplines within the Foundation deliver a live virtual presentation via Microsoft Teams about a Williamsburg site or a relevant thematic subject. Up to 100 participants voluntarily attend the weekly training sessions, which include subject matter experts like Meredith Poole, Kelly Arehart, Jack Gary, Cathy Hellier, Amanda Keller, Angelika Kuettner, Kelly Ladd-Kostro, Katie McKinney and Eric Schweickart

Recent presentations focused on the Governor's Palace, the Custis excavations and the subject of waste, which covered everything from household garbage to chamber pots and privies. Each presentation is followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer period that is both lively and informative. Having specialists from multiple disciplines allows participants to learn from each other, which contributes to the growth of the Foundation's shared store of knowledge about 18th-century Williamsburg.

Conversations among participants often continue after the presentation through direct messaging and email. This commitment to learning illustrates the degree to which Williamsburg is a fascinating subject of study for so many as well as the great dedication of front-line staff.

Training sessions are recorded and archived, so staff who are unable to attend can watch presentations at their own pace at <https://cwfoundation.sharepoint.com/sites/erhi/ResearchandInterpretiveEducation/SitePages/Virtual-Training-Content.aspx>.

Editor's note: Jeff Klee is among the subject matter experts who regularly present at the virtual staff training sessions.



Guest Feedback!

Guest comments are unsolicited and received via CW's online comment card.

Though it is sad that CW was closed for so long, it is absolutely beautiful with all the work done during this time. I watch the webcams several times a day and am so happy to view all the beauty. Congratulations to everyone for their hard work, it will be enjoyed by so many for years. Susan B. (June 23, 2020)

Wanted to comment on how great it was to spend our day at Colonial Williamsburg's "reopening." The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Art Museum ladies were so inviting and our time spent there totally enjoyable. Everywhere we walked the staff we met were cheerful and a pleasure to speak with. One of your interpreters near the Milliner & Tailor Shop was very much like a spring robin welcoming everyone in sight! It's great to have you back, even with the necessary precautions. Stan G. (June 15, 2020)

Wanted to give a shout out to Joe the weaver. Outstanding talk. Mr. Jefferson was warm and informative. Valued his discussion on small pox. Interpreters in the palace and courthouse were superb especially lady on stairs at palace. Museum gift shop staff off the scale helpful and bent over backwards to make the day perfect. Will be back often. Ann V. (June 21, 2020)

I am an email subscriber and enjoy the newsletter from Colonial Williamsburg. My late wife and I used to come nearly every year for a visit (from 1994 through 2007). We also brought friends with us on many of our annual visits. Our experiences there were always rewarding and instructive. Your recent newsletter with its virtual tour of the Governor's Palace and the recent births of the Leicester lambs was especially noteworthy. Thank you for preserving our American past. When an opportunity presents itself for me again to make a visit to CW, I will be very happy. Your newsletters and emails always give me a little view of that beautiful, historical area in Williamsburg and environs. Hope to see you soon! Michael P. (June 22, 2020)



Graduation Procession

On Thursday, June 11, Colonial Williamsburg hosted a drive-through graduation procession for Williamsburg–James City County high school seniors and their families to safely celebrate their accomplishment during COVID-19. Seniors from Lafayette, Jamestown and Warhill high schools “paraded” through the Historic Area in their decorated vehicles at 9 a.m., noon and 3 p.m. respectively.





Exploring Colonial Williamsburg's Past through CW News Digital Archive

More than 1,800 issues of *CW News* dating from 1940 to the present are now available for viewing online, thanks to the work of the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library staff. The digitized collection offers an unparalleled look into the organizational history of Colonial Williamsburg and the Restoration. "You cannot underestimate the importance of *CW News* to employees during the last eight decades. It's one of the single best resources for information on the history of our organization," said Carl Childs, executive director, research and education, and Abby and George O'Neill Director of the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library.

When launched in 1940, the paper provided highlights of restoration initiatives, guest programs and operational news. It also played a significant role in memorializing employees' professional and personal achievements and significant events in their lives.

"*CW News* was the social media of its time and reflected Colonial Williamsburg and its evolution both as a working and social community," Childs said.

Employees are invited to take a walk through Colonial Williamsburg's history.

When using the *CW News* digital archive, Childs said, it is important to remember that it reflects the realities of its time. Issues may contain language considered inappropriate today but was in common use in Virginia at the time. For example, columns in the 1940s issues included a "News of the Colored People" section. Separate reporting of African American and white social events was indicative of the segregation that was the legal norm in Virginia at the time.

The *CW News* digital collection is available to the public and can be viewed in full at <https://cwfpublishations.omeka.net/collections/show/10>.



November 1942 Issue

DoG Street Receiving a Much-Needed Grooming

The Historic Area's first street repaving in roughly two decades is underway.

The city project, conducted in close collaboration with the Foundation, began April 27 after preliminary patching of potholes and leveling.

Duke of Gloucester, Court, Blair, Francis, York and Waller streets have been resurfaced with asphalt in place to cure until it is covered with the more familiar aggregate this fall. Future phases include Nicholson Street and additional cross streets.

"We're grateful to various members of our team who have supported the project, and to our guests and neighbors for their patience," said Vice President of Operations Robert Underwood. "We're especially appreciative of the city's partnership, and for helping inform the public that the current look is only temporary."

The repaving is critical for safety and ease of travel for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles and Coach and Livestock animals.

The part of Duke of Gloucester Street being repaved stretches approximately three-quarters of a mile between Boundary and Blair streets. On his Oct. 20, 1934, visit to the restored city, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called Duke of Gloucester Street "the most historic avenue in America."



Remembering Ann Lee Saunders Brown



Churchill Bell recipient Ann Lee Saunders Brown

*“Determine never to be
idle. No person will have
occasion to complain of
the want of time, who
never loses any.
It is wonderful how much
may be done, if we are
always doing.”*

— THOMAS JEFFERSON

In the 1940s, Ann Lee Saunders spent summers working in the Historic Area as an interpreter. Later, she and her husband, Charles Brown, became generous supporters of Colonial Williamsburg interpreters and programs. Ann Lee Saunders Brown died this past winter at the age of 101.

Charles and Ann Lee Brown were awarded the Churchill Bell, Colonial Williamsburg’s highest honor, in 2004. Charles Brown, who had been a Colonial Williamsburg trustee and chairman of the board, was given the award posthumously. He died in 2003.

Together the Browns created the Ann Lee Saunders Brown & Charles L. Brown Endowment Fund for Improving the Teaching of History, and she funded a position for interpreting Thomas Jefferson. She also served as a member of the Colonial Williamsburg President’s Council.

“Ann Lee Brown was a wonderful citizen of Colonial Williamsburg,” said Colin Campbell, who as Colonial Williamsburg’s president and chairman at the time presented Brown with the bell. “Her appreciation for the history that was made here, for the iconic leaders in the 18th century whose stories we tell and for the place — the Historic Area — was reflected in her generosity to the Foundation.”

“She identified with Colonial Williamsburg and its employees and was beloved by all who came to know her,” Campbell added.

Campbell noted that Brown not only supported Colonial Williamsburg’s interpreters but was herself a gifted storyteller. At gatherings of the Raleigh Tavern Society, other members were inspired by her charm and her obvious affection for Colonial Williamsburg.

Bill Barker, who portrayed Thomas Jefferson for Colonial Williamsburg until last year, recalled that it was always a pleasure to converse with Ann Lee Brown.

“I will never forget her charming stories of her lifelong association with Colonial Williamsburg and her deep regard for preserving the lessons of our nation’s history,” said Barker. “Her kindness, grace and zeal for Colonial Williamsburg will ever remain inspirational.”

An avid gardener, Ann Lee Brown’s gifts have benefited the Governor’s Palace gardens as well as its ballroom. She also loved riding horses and supported Colonial Williamsburg’s Coach and Livestock program.

An outstanding athlete as a youth — she was on the basketball, field hockey, tennis and archery teams at Collegiate School for Girls in Richmond — Ann Lee Brown carried the Olympic torch through a stretch of Oregon on its way to Los Angeles in 1984.



Meet the Senior Leadership Team

The next several issues of CW News will introduce employees to Colonial Williamsburg's senior leadership team. The senior leadership team is responsible for directing the Foundation's overall strategy to share America's enduring story



Davelin Forrest
Chief Human Resources Officer

Through five presidents, many different programs and offerings, and the evolving needs of our guests, I have seen quite a bit during my more than 30 years of service here at the Foundation. I began my career with Colonial Williamsburg in 1986 as a secretary B in the Department of Collections. My starting salary was \$5.16 per hour, and for me and my husband that was a lot of money for our growing family. Like now, the global economy faced uncertain times, and the opportunity to learn at the Foundation was one I could not turn down.

A graduate of Kee Business College, I have held several executive-level administrative posts at the Foundation, eventually becoming CW's first-ever chief of staff. Today, as the chief human resources officer and a member of the Foundation's senior leadership team, I draw inspiration from the wonderful employees I serve. Helping people, particularly those who do not feel seen or heard, is personally rewarding and what I believe I have been called to do. Leading others is, first and foremost, about service. Drawing upon my vast experience within the Foundation, my role is to support every employee to the very best of my ability.

When I'm not working, I love spending time with my family and catching a good "Columbo" TV marathon.



Mark Hileman
General Counsel

I've been with Colonial Williamsburg since 2016. I am a native Virginian, having grown up in Bath County, one of the most rural areas in the state, and I attended UVA for both undergraduate work and law school.

The general counsel is the chief legal officer of the Foundation. Along with my colleague, Assistant General Counsel Hazel Wong, I'm responsible for handling the Foundation's legal work and for providing advice on a wide range of subjects to President Fleet, the board of trustees and employees of the Foundation.

As general counsel, I really wear two hats: I am a legal advisor and a member of the senior leadership team. As a lawyer, I ensure that the Foundation complies with all laws and regulations. As a member of the leadership team, I also work to further the Foundation's strategic and business goals. This requires me to look at problems from multiple points of view and to help find thoughtful and creative solutions.

I've always loved Virginia, but my career took me to other places for many years. For example, before I joined the Foundation, I was general counsel for the *Boston Globe* newspaper in Boston, Massachusetts, where my family and I lived for almost two decades. Joining the Foundation was an opportunity to come home and to do something meaningful with this portion of my career. It also played to my lifelong love of history. It was truly a perfect fit.

Like many of my colleagues, I enjoy reading. My bookshelves are full of history, especially American history and the history of ancient Rome. I also enjoy science fiction and the occasional mystery. I'm a determined but very average golfer, and I have contributed a lot of golf balls to the ponds on the Gold Course. My wife and I also love to travel and hope to be able to resume doing so very soon.



Meet the Senior Leadership Team



Jeffrey Duncan,
Vice President of Real Estate

Originally from Tampa Bay, I spent six years in the U.S. Navy and then attended Christopher Newport University, where I received a bachelor’s degree in accounting. I started my career in public accounting with the CPA firm of Coopers & Lybrand in Norfolk, Virginia. That experience led me to a role with Colonial Williamsburg in 1987 as manager of general accounting. Over the next 33 years at Colonial Williamsburg, I have had the privilege of serving in many finance positions, including interim chief financial

officer. In 2016, I began my current role as vice president of real estate.

Working alongside three extremely talented directors, our team is responsible for developing Colonial Williamsburg’s excess land that reaches from Interstate 64 to Route 199, identifying commercial tenants and negotiating lease terms for Merchants Square businesses, managing and leasing nearly 100 Colonial Williamsburg residences, developing product licensing opportunities, space planning and designing the interiors and exteriors of CW’s buildings, and managing our vendor contract for the operation of CW’s shops in the Historic Area, the Visitor Center, the Art Museums, the Williamsburg Lodge and Merchants Square.

Wearing my real estate hat requires working closely with the city of Williamsburg’s various boards and commissions, city council and staff to plan for future property development and expansion, bringing new businesses to downtown Williamsburg, and creating new and exciting ways to attract shoppers and diners to downtown Williamsburg — all for the benefit of the community and Colonial Williamsburg. I am always eager to pursue new opportunities that would enhance the visibility, livability and attraction of the Greater Williamsburg area.

During my Colonial Williamsburg career, my family grew from two young children in 1987 to now four children and 10 (soon to be 12) grandchildren. Outside of CW, my loves include family (of course), golf, reading, traveling and movies (especially Marvel).



HR Benefits Do You Need Help?

Optima’s Employee Assistance Program (EAPONLINE) provides a wide range of online resources to help manage a variety of life’s challenges. What you need to know about this FREE resource:

Member Benefits:

- Topics: COVID-19, family matters, marital concerns, parenting, stress, personal development, health, child and eldercare resources, legal and financial information, and other topics commonly addressed through employee assistance programs.
- Available: Confidential 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week access from your home computer.
- Privacy: Does not require any personal identifying information.
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