

FACTS:

- ◆ Until 1999, archaeologists thought the foundation of Jamestown's original fort lay under the James River. The story of the fort's discovery; original artifacts; and innovative, interpretive displays are part of the recently opened Archaearium interpretive center at Historic Jamestowne.
- ◆ October is Archaeology Month in Virginia; many special programs are planned each year across the state. The theme in 2006 was "First People, The Early Indians of Virginia."
- ◆ In the mid-1950s, Colonial Williamsburg had one of the first departments of historical archaeology in the United States.



Roots of Virginia Culture: Historical Archaeology



EXCAVATORS UNRAVELED the mysteries of Virginia history even before the formal discipline of historical archaeology existed in the United States. Colonial Williamsburg and Jamestown were sites of early historical digs in the 1920s and 1930s.

Today, archaeology is going on throughout the state to unearth Werowocomoco, Powhatan's seat of power in the Tidewater area of Virginia, and a former slave cabin at Montpelier, James Madison's estate near Charlottesville. At the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, visitors can see underwater archaeology in action at the new *Monitor* exhibition.

In Kent, England, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust carries out excavations and educational programs. Near Dover, in September 1992, they discovered a perfectly preserved Bronze Age boat, built from a now-extinct species of yew. The Trust has recently been involved in excavations to gather new information about Canterbury Castle.

(Clockwise beginning from top)

George Gilmore's great-great granddaughters help excavate artifacts at the site of the Gilmore Farm on the grounds of the Montpelier estate.

Photo courtesy James Madison's Montpelier

Kids try their hand at a "mini-dig" conducted by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust in Kent County, England. Photo courtesy Canterbury Archaeological Trust

The new Archaearium at Historic Jamestowne hosts visitors. Photo by Betty J. Belanus, Smithsonian Institution

Excavations started as early as the 1930s at Colonial Williamsburg. Photo courtesy Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

