Scholarship takes time. Years may pass between the germ of a question and the publication of its answer in a book or article—and those years are full of research, thought, more questions, and even struggle. When the questions are tough, the research is tougher.

The VFH supports not just any kind of humanities research, but that which can help us navigate the rough waters of the world we live in. Research on the winding roots of modern politics and society, or on a past that included ignorance and cruelty as much as hope and wisdom. Research on how peoples who have suffered violence manage to rise above its alluring calls for vengeance and redress. But also research on the brighter side of things: music, literary genius and artistic perception, and the ways people use them to give life meaning. The tools of an examined life, and the results of such examinations.

Overall, the Fellows who spend precious little time here (usually one semester) accomplish much in their short tenures. They advance the cause of the truth that lies in the details. They ask us to enrich our own lives by seeing, with them, just how complicated, multivalent, and rainbow-hued American life is and will be, and how we are all products of a long struggle to live up to the highest human ideals: the worth of each individual, the right to self-determination and safety, and the ever-desired pursuit of happiness.

Through the work of VFH scholars we understand more about our state’s multihued and ambivalent history, and about the long struggle for civil rights in which some Virginians must still engage. Scholars at the VFH have expanded the field of women’s studies, reinstating lost writers like Ellen Glasgow and documenting the dangerous work of suffragists and civil rights activists like Irene Morgan, who integrated interstate transit in Virginia over a decade before Rosa Parks kept her seat on a bus in Alabama. VFH scholars have even helped to open a new field of research—violence studies.

Sometimes our Fellows’ work is inspired, and counter to given wisdom. William M. Kelso concluded that the Jamestown Fort—long assumed to be underwater—must still be on dry land, and while alone one afternoon began to dig. Years later, he came to the VFH to finish his book documenting one of the most important archeological finds of the 21st century—Jamestown Fort.
VFH Fellows

Continued from cover

Independent historian and Fellow Deborah Lee researched white women’s anti-slavery efforts in a region assumed by scholars to have been rabidly pro-slavery: the Upper South. She documented their participation in the underground railroad, their correspondence with northern abolitionists, and their own personal resistance to the slaveholding practices of their husbands and brothers.

Sometimes the work is courageous: In our internationally focused work on violence, Fellow Margarita Castillo showed what it took to re-incorporate the Nicaraguan military into civilian life following the civil war there. Priya Kumar showed how novels popular shortly after the Partition of India expressed the shame, pain, and suffering that could not be spoken within families. Victoria Sanford’s research on the exhumation of bodies in Guatemala helped to document the genocide there in the 1970s, and Kimberley Theidon’s work on spirituality in Peruvian towns showed how true peace is a priceless commodity after mass violence. Conferences here have brought together people trying to restate peace after war and document how it is best accomplished.

Perhaps our greatest contribution to the literature of our times and to the issues that face us as a nation, however, is Fellows’ work on African American history and civil rights. We have supported basic research on African American life in the South, including the intricacies and contradictions of slave society, in which all was far from black and white. The work of Civil War historian William Freehling shows how failure to resolve questions of slavery led to impossible divisions among the states and finally to the collapse of the Union. His next project will show how even Lincoln, remembered for the Emancipation Proclamation, began his presidency supporting a Constitutional amendment legalizing slavery in perpetuity. Kathy Bassard’s work on the literature of race and place, on the other hand, explores how slaves could still feel some pull to the geography of the South—how a land of cruelty might still be inscribed on one’s body as home. Camille Wells explored the ways in which Southern mansions kept slaves on the “back stairs” and below—out of the sight of those who, while they depended upon and defended slavery, often felt insecure about its legitimacy and their own safety. Scott Casper, writing of the period after the Civil War, documents how the harsh history of a painful era played out through the life of Sarah Johnson, who was born a slave at Mount Vernon, worked there for 27 years after the Civil War and finally bought land that had once belonged to Washington. Her story of personal struggle and triumph marches alongside a national paroxysm and its painful, lengthy aftermath.

Fellows here have not turned from even the most controversial subjects: Ervin Jordan took on the question of how African Americans fought the Civil War, and was the first to explain the complex reasons that led some to side with the Confederates.

Tom Costa and Jerome Handler established databases and websites on Virginia runaway slave notices and the transatlantic slave trade, two of the most chilling sites on the web: one can’t visit them without viscerally sensing the inhumanity of the slave system. Henry Wieneck wrote that Washington struggled mightily with the morality of the “peculiar institution” and by his death was convinced of its bankruptcy. But he arrived at his conviction too late to offer any moral light to the new nation, which settled into a long, immoral sleep with slavery. You can see how it happens then: the works...
of Freehling, Jordan, Wiencek, and the others begin to weave a large, three-dimensional image of a time and the lives within it.

A whole cadre of Fellows has studied how many of the nation’s foremost African American intellectuals—and thinking about race in general—found a home in Europe in a time when Jim Crow ruled the South and discrimination was a way of life. Walter Jackson showed how liberals adopted Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal’s *An American Dilemma*, and called on the Federal government to stop discrimination by law. Susan Pennybacker showed how the Scottsboro Boys, accused of gang rape in Alabama and defended by the Communist Party, stimulated European interest in American racism. Lawrie Balfour brought the analytical tools of legal and political thought to the work of James Baldwin and W.E.B. DuBois. Next year, civil rights scholar Patricia Sullivan will come to the VFH to work on a major history of the NAACP, and Balfour will return to write on NAACP founder DuBois’ prescient perspective on the matter of reparations for slavery. In work of this kind, Fellows prepare the materials the rest of us need to better understand our own history and our world.

During the 2007 Virginia Festival of the Book, we will celebrate the VFH Fellowship Program’s 20th anniversary with a gathering of VFH scholars. Many Fellows will be presenting their most recent work. Come hear William Freehling, Bill Kelso, and many others tell us about parts of our own lives and history that we never knew. And ask them about the program: perhaps you would like to come and study what you believe the rest of us should know.

Many, many Fellows could not be included in this brief retrospective. Our gratitude and respect extend to all who have worked here over the program’s 20 years.
Frances Latimer is part detective, part storyteller, part journalist, part master artist, and sometimes a magician. By this I mean she’s a community historian, one trained mostly on the job; and, as it happens, one of the best historians—local or otherwise—in Virginia.

She works long hours, at home, behind a stack of records at the courthouse, or in her car, driving down any one of a hundred back roads on Virginia’s Eastern Shore looking for some lost landmark, clues to another piece of the story of African Americans in a part of the state where this story is in urgent danger of being lost.

Sometimes it’s a building, maybe a Black church that’s still in use. Sometimes it’s just a spot of ground where a building—a lodge hall for example—once stood. Or maybe it’s a former school, unoccupied and run-down, sitting on a parcel zoned for new business or multi-family residential, a prime site for “re-development.”

Fragments of the past. Places that once meant something different than whatever it is they mean today; and others whose purpose and meaning in the community are relatively unchanged. Stout lines or slender threads of continuity; whispers you can only hear if you know where and how to listen, strong anchors that hold the present in place and keep it from drifting away.

For Frances Latimer and others who do the work she does in neighborhoods and rural communities across Virginia, the work is often its own reward: high-proof inspiration, fuel when the tank is running dry. Love—of a place and of one’s own community—is what sparks the dedication this kind of history requires. And probably the only thing that can sustain it over the long haul.

It’s what makes Latimer (and the same could be said of her counterparts in other communities) seem, unless you happen to know better, like a person who never gets tired; as if the work isn’t nearly as hard, laborious, and frustrating as it really is.

The work of African American history, at the local level in particular, is exceedingly difficult. The standard documentary sources are often unreliable, incomplete, or missing. This is one reason why the oral tradition is so important. To find or prove the location, or sometimes even the existence, of an historic site, it’s often necessary to connect the dots between existing public records—deeds, wills, birth and death records—and the oral accounts. This requires intuition, as well as exceptional patience and determination.

In December, Hickory House Press and the Eastern Shore Center for Black History and Culture will publish Landmarks: Black Historic Sites on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, the first book devoted exclusively to African American historic sites in Accomack and Northampton Counties.

Research and the costs of producing this publication were supported in part with a grant from the VFH, and several members of the Eastern Shore Regional Humanities Council (see VFH Views, Spring, 2006)—Miles Barnes, Brenda Holden, and John Verrill—served as advisors to the project, along with Barbara Cox, another local historian and genealogist. Latimer is the project director, researcher, and author. The book will include more than 140 sites—churches, schools, lodges, businesses, and cemeteries—that have been, and in some cases still are, landmarks in the history of the Shore’s African American communities. Some of the buildings—the lodge halls and churches in particular—served multiple uses, and as a result they have layers of meaning that are often retained only in the memories of the Shore’s older black residents. The list includes four former Rosenwald schools (see related grant...
A capsule history is provided for each of the sites; and with a handful of exceptions, each site “portrait” includes at least one photograph. There are maps of each county showing individual site locations (those that are not publicly accessible are so noted); and every site is identified with GPS coordinates—an important step since many of these sites either have already been transformed, are threatened by development, or the buildings themselves are badly deteriorated and in danger of being lost.

Thus, the book is both an interpretive record and a brace against time and change. In the past, the march of “progress,” natural decay, and economic pressures have often pushed important African American landmarks into the shadows of Virginia’s “hidden history,” where after a generation or two they are lost even to memory.

This problem is especially acute in places where rapid development and gentrification are displacing long-established communities and vital links in the oral tradition are broken whenever people die or move away.

Initially copies of Landmarks will be distributed free-of-charge to every public school and library on the Eastern Shore and to the local historical societies, as well as to the owners of historic sites and the organizations they represent—lodges, churches, and others.

But this publication is also a landmark in its own right, a milestone in the “history of history” on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, and a model that could be used to inspire and encourage other communities in the state to undertake similar projects. A volume of Eastern Shore African American biographies is currently being planned as a follow-up.

Documenting and interpreting Virginia’s African American history is one of the Foundation’s core commitments, reaching back to the beginning of the organization in 1974 and projecting far into the future. We are grateful not just for the work that Frances Latimer, her colleagues, and others statewide have invested in the preservation of African American history, or for the results of these efforts, impressive as they are; but also for the imagination and diligence—the love and determination—that have made this work possible and successful against forbidding odds.
Folklife Apprenticeship Showcase Dazzles Again

BY TORI TALBOT

On Sunday, September 17, the Madison Hummingbirds, an African American “shout band” from Portsmouth, Virginia, marched and blared onto the back lawn of the VFH with 15 brass instruments playing “When the Saints Go Marching In.” Minutes later Reverend Frank Newsome of Haysi, Virginia, took the stage and sang an a cappella hymn. Though the Hummingbirds and Reverend Newsome reside 400 miles apart, both brought a sublime expression of spirituality to the stage to kick off the fifth annual Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Showcase.

The Showcase celebrated both the completion of the 2005-06 apprenticeships and the introduction of the new class of 2006-07 apprenticeship teams. Tables that day were covered with an array of Virginia folk crafts—handmade banjos, blankets produced by traditional fiber artists, and hewn log home construction equipment. A pin-striped hot rod painted by Master Folk artist Tom VanNortwick shimmered in the parking lot next to a handmade skiff built by master boat builder George Butler of Reedville. As the aroma of frying ham and baking biscuits filled the air, the sounds from instruments that one often associates with Virginia—banjos, fiddles, mandolins—intermixed with instruments from abroad, such as steel drums from Trinidad and Tobago.

The legendary master tobacco auctioneer Bob Cage entertained the capacity crowd with his imitations of famous auctioneering styles. “It’s a distinct art form that, because of the changes in the tobacco industry, is really dying out,” said Jim Crawford, Cage’s apprentice. “I’m excited to learn the skills of the trade, just so someone remembers what this tradition was all about.”

The afternoon was replete with musical performances from both the graduating and entering class of apprenticeship teams. Scott Fore, a master flatpick guitarist, appeared with his apprentice, Cheryl Lunsford. Thornton Spencer, an old-time fiddler, joined his daughter Martha Spencer on several numbers with the Whitetop Mountain Band. Apprentice Leah Strickland and master bluegrass singer Linda Lay wowed the crowd with their vocal stylings. Not to be outdone, the mother and daughter apprenticeship team of Laura and Ariel Hobza Ortiz dazzled the audience with their traditional Mexican dances performed in colorful costume.

Elton Williams, master steel drum maker, provided impromptu lessons on the steel pans, while Olen Gardner and his apprentice Ross Matthews performed on banjo throughout the afternoon. The stellar musical performances were capped with master mandolin player Herschel Sizemore and apprentice Spencer Blankenship.

Next year will mark the fifth anniversary of the Folklife Apprenticeship Program.

---

### Master Artists and Apprentices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2005-06</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master Piedmont blues guitarist</td>
<td>Flatpick Guitar Master Scott Fore and apprentice Cheryl Lunsford of Radford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Cephas and apprentice</td>
<td>Traditional Fiber Arts Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc Pessar of Rappahannock County</td>
<td>Sandra Bennett and apprentice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Mexican folk dancer</td>
<td>Linda Wright of Tazewell County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Ortiz and apprentice</td>
<td>Old Regular Baptist Hymn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Hobza-Ortiz of Arlington County</td>
<td>Singing Master Reverend Frank Newsome and apprentice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master African American shout band The Madison Hummingbirds and apprentices C.J. McCauley, Aaron Guy, and Michael Thomas of Portsmouth</td>
<td>Buster Mullins of Buchanan County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Old-Time fiddler</td>
<td>Master Automobile Pinstriper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thornton Spencer and apprentice Martha Spencer of Grayson County</td>
<td>Tom VanNortwick and apprentice Andrew Elder of Henry County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master steel drum maker</td>
<td>Master Tobacco Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elton Williams and apprentice Earl Sawyer of Hampton</td>
<td>Bob Cage and apprentice Jim Crawford of Halifax County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master boat builder</td>
<td>Hewn Log House Construction and Pioneer Crafts Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Butler and apprentice Warner Rice of Northumberland County</td>
<td>Charles McRaven and apprentices Willy Lehmann and Daniel Malcolm of Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master banjo maker and repairman Olen Gardner and apprentice Ross Matthews of Floyd County</td>
<td>Master Bluegrass Singer Linda Lay and apprentice Leah Strickland of Winchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master country ham curers</td>
<td>Master Mandolin player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack and Nannie Branch and apprentice John Maeder of Washington County</td>
<td>Herschel Sizemore and apprentice Spencer Blankenship of Roanoke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The globalization of Virginia began in 1607, and probably before. Today, the Old Dominion is a polyglot nexus, a hub of multi-cultural intersection and sometimes collision; a full participant in the global economy and, increasingly, in the international life this participation demands.

The influence of the world on Virginia is undeniable; the need for greater understanding of the world beyond Virginia’s borders is inescapable.

In recent years, the VFH has focused its attention abroad in a number of ways and through a variety of international programs, always in light of our central mission which is to make the humanities accessible in ways that benefit the lives of all Virginians.

We have supported the work of international scholars through our Fellowship Program. We have hosted two major conferences on the history and culture of Ireland and its influence on Virginia and the U.S. We also brought together an international group of leaders representing nations on five continents for extended discussions of peace in the aftermath of violence.

Our grants have supported a South Asian film and literary festival, the 2004 Masters of Mexican Music tour, script development for a film on Ethiopian music and musicians in the U.S., and a teachers’ institute on Francophone Africa. Most recently, we helped sponsor the visit to Virginia by a group of traditional throat-singers from the Altai Republic in Central Asia.

In May of this year, three members of the VFH staff (Rob Vaughan, Andrew Wyndham, and David Bearinger) traveled to China as guests of the China Association for International Friendly Contact (CAIFC). This delegation, which also included Richmond photographer Christopher Winton-Stahle, visited historic and cultural heritage sites in three cities—Beijing, Luoyang, and Shanghai—and the surrounding countryside, meeting with local government officials and others interested in heritage preservation and educational exchange programs.

Discussions focused on Virginia and Chinese history and cultural heritage, as well as contemporary issues—economic growth and sustainable development, for example—that China and Virginia have in common.

The Foundation’s success in documenting and preserving Virginia’s history and cultural traditions—especially at the local level—as well as our experience in working with many different kinds of communities, urban and rural, could well serve as a model for similar efforts that are just getting underway in China.

At the same time, VFH is interested in developing new educational programs for Virginia audiences focusing on Chinese history and culture. We are currently exploring the possibilities for collaboration with Chinese studies programs already established in Virginia and with potential partner organizations in China.

In September and October, two representatives from the CAIFC organization’s office in Dalian, a port city in northeastern China, visited Virginia. They attended the September VFH Board meeting and other VFH-sponsored events and accompanied members of the VFH staff on visits to the Eastern Shore, Southwest Virginia, Richmond, and Williamsburg.

They also attended portions of this year’s China-America Festival of Film and Culture and a related teachers’ institute at Virginia Commonwealth University, both funded in part by the VFH.

In the decades ahead, China’s global influence and its impact on the lives of Virginians will be immense. The two societies, different in so many respects, have much to learn from one another but the opportunities for Virginians to explore the history and culture of China are still very limited.

With more than thirty years’ experience exploring Virginia’s history and cultural traditions as well as important public issues through the humanities, VFH is in a strong position to create educational programs and opportunities focusing on this emerging world power—programs that can lead to a better understanding of Chinese history and culture, and of the Sino-American relationship.
MARCH 21-25

VIRGINIA FESTIVAL OF THE BOOK
2007

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

Tickets Now On Sale

Most festival programs are free and open to the public. Information on those requiring paid ticket reservations is provided below:

Business Breakfast—Michael Veeck, owner of six minor-league baseball teams and co-author of Fun is Good: How to Create Joy and Passion in Your Workplace and Career. Wednesday, March 21 at 7:30 a.m. Tickets $25, order online.

Authors Reception—Hosted by Lee Smith, Hal Crowther and Earl Hamner. Wine and hors d’oeuvres at Carr’s Hill, Home of UVA President. Saturday, March 24 at 6 p.m. Tickets $25, order online.

Crime Wave Luncheon—Lee Child, author of the Jack Reacher series, will be the speaker for this year’s Crime Wave luncheon on Saturday, March 24 at noon at the Omni Charlottesville Hotel. Tickets $45. (Currently at capacity.)
Young Readers in Virginia Encouraged to Enter *Letters About Literature* Contest

The VFH Center for the Book announces the 2006-07 *Letters About Literature* reading and writing competition. Students in grades 4-12 are invited to write a personal letter to an author explaining how the author’s work inspired and affected them. They can select authors from any genre, fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic. *Letters About Literature* is sponsored nationally by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and Target Stores. Deadline for entries is December 8, 2006.

The statewide winners will receive cash prizes and Target gift cards and will be invited to read aloud their letters at the March 21 Opening Ceremony of the Virginia Festival of the Book. The required entry coupons are available now at virginiafoundation.org/bookcenter by clicking on *Letters About Literature*; by calling the VFH at 434-924-3296; or by e-mailing spcoleman@virginia.edu.

Teachers and parents can access online related lesson plans and curriculum resources at loc.gov/letters.

PBS Broadcasts Another Southern Humanities Media Fund-Supported Film

On Thursday, September 7, PBS broadcast *American Creole: New Orleans Reunion*, the latest Southern Humanities Media Fund-supported production to appear nationally. *American Creole* follows preparations for the Joseph family reunion—highly accomplished Creole musicians coming back to New Orleans “to break bread and play music.” Husband-and-wife filmmaker Glen Pitre and Michelle Benoit saw in the family’s story a unique opportunity to explore what it means to be Creole and from New Orleans. “Cousin Gwen had been a back-up singer with Elvis, cousin Thaddeus had played with Paul McCartney’s Wings; one cousin backed up Outkast, and cousin Plas played tenor sax in the themes from *The Pink Panther* and *The Odd Couple*. They are the best musicians you’ve never heard of.” SHMF review panelists agreed, supporting the film with a $33,000 grant in July 2005.

And then, only a month after the SHMF award, Hurricanes Rita and Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast. Instead of delaying *American Creole’s* production plans, the disaster infused Pitre and Benoit—both Louisiana natives—with a sense of urgency. “Especially after Katrina,” they said in a recent interview, “it’s important to take a look at what has contributed to the unique culture we have here.” Proof of their passion and commitment, Pitre and Benoit incorporated Katrina’s impact on the family into the storyline and advanced the production schedule to complete the film in ten months. Louisiana Public Television broadcast *American Creole* on the one-year anniversary of Katrina’s landfall, August 29, 2006, a week before its national PBS debut.

Six humanities councils currently contribute to the SHMF—Arkansas Humanities Council, Humanities Tennessee, Mississippi Humanities Council, North Carolina Humanities Council, South Carolina Humanities Council, and the VFH—collectively offering stronger support for filmmakers addressing matters of regional importance. In the Fund’s 15 year history, $1,911,263 dollars in grant support have gone to 54 projects. This year, for the first time, a private donor contributed to the fund. Thanks to Caroleen Feeney through the French American Charitable Trust, the Southern Humanities Media Fund will expand its support for independent documentary filmmakers and the stories they tell.

For more information about *American Creole* or to purchase the DVD, visit secure.lpb.org/shoplpb
Public radio listeners across Virginia heard more local stories this year because of VFH Radio’s Humanities Feature Bureau, which marked its first anniversary this fall. A visit to a master mandolin maker in Mouth of Wilson, the restoration of an historic African American school in Rappahannock County, the use of children’s books to improve adult literacy in Springfield … these are a sampling of the 51 short features that VFH Radio commissioned this year. Broadcast on WCVE in Richmond, WHRV in Norfolk, WMRA in Harrisonburg, and WVTF in Roanoke, these stories reach 56,400 listeners weekly during local news in NPR’s “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered.”

Virginia radio stations are enthusiastic about the Humanities Feature Bureau’s creative local content. Bill Miller, General Manager of WCVE-FM in Richmond, says the features are “a big asset to our station to focus more quality attention on things happening in our own back yard.” The bureau’s first year was made possible in part by David Baldacci Enterprises, W.W. Norton, Inc. and the “We The People” initiative of the NEH. To suggest stories for the coming year, contact bureau editor Lydia Wilson at 434-924-6895 or vfhradio@virginia.edu.

With Good Reason Staff Grows

After two years on the With Good Reason team, Nancy King is transitioning to a new role, and Jesse Dukes has moved from Maine to be the new co-associate producer. King will work one day a week, focusing exclusively on news features that complement With Good Reason. The appeal of features, King says, “is being able to use sound creatively. I’m still learning how to use sound to make that special emotional connection with the listener.” How will she use her newfound free-time? Having just delivered her youngest child to college, Nancy plans to celebrate her empty nest by birding all over the country with friends.

The open position captured the attention of independent producer Jesse Dukes. With Good Reason’s engaging variety of topics and high production standards drew him to find out more, and the opportunity to work with host Sarah McConnell and co-associate producer Elliot Majerczyk made it even more appealing. Dukes, a Charlottesville native, studied anthropology and history at the University of Virginia and learned radio production at the SALT Institute for Documentary Studies in Maine. His work has aired on Maine Public Radio, Marketplace and NPR’s “Weekend Edition.”
Donors Gather in Williamsburg

“Jamestown: The Buried Truth” was the topic of archeologist-author William Kelso’s presentation at the annual VFH Donor Recognition dinner on September 13. Current and former Board members, current and former Fellows, staff members and friends met at the Williamsburg Lodge to honor the Foundation’s donors. Special recognition was given to members of the Humanities Associates, who have made unrestricted gifts of $1000 or more in the past year; Cornerstone Society members who have endowed funds or made planned gifts; Program Patrons who have made restricted gifts of $1000 or more in the past year; and Corporate Gold Circle, corporate donors of $5000 or more.

Hosted by VFH Board chair, L. Preston Bryant, Jr., the gala evening included a visit to the Historic Jamestowne Archaearium which houses objects belonging to Jamestown colonists 400 years ago, unearthed from the long lost James Fort site. Thanks go to APVA Preservation Virginia for providing a warm welcome to the site.

Taylor Reveley, Jeanné Wiley, Bill Wiley and Susan Bland.

A New, More Convenient Way to Give

It is now even easier to support VFH. Visit virginiafoundation.org and click “Give Now” to make your gift online. Choose the program you are most passionate about or select our Annual Fund to support all our activities. Our secure online donation form makes giving easier than ever.

Tax Breaks for IRA Gifts

Because of the stock market boom of the 1990s, many Americans have unexpectedly large individual retirement accounts (IRAs). Many taxpayers have a growing interest in giving IRA assets to charities; however, their ability to do so may have been hampered by IRS limits on deductible cash contributions. You may now be able to take advantage of this legislation to make a significant contribution to the VFH while improving the taxation situation for yourself or your heirs, thanks to the Pension Protection Act of 2006. From now through December 31, 2007, individuals age 70.5 and older may make gifts from their IRA accounts directly to VFH and other qualified charities without being subject to Federal income tax on the IRA withdrawal. Moreover, IRA gifts count toward the annual Minimum Required Distribution. IRA gifts under the new law are most appropriate for donors who:

• do not need the income from their Minimum Required Distribution.
• have a taxable estate and wish to avoid the “double taxation” of inherited IRAs.
• do not itemize their deductions on their tax returns.
• are subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax, or whose other tax deductions or exemptions are phased out because of high income.

If you are interested in making a gift in this way, or for more information, please contact VFH Director of Development Sheryl Hayes at 434-924-3296 or by email at sheryl@virginia.edu.
New VFH Grant Opportunity

Virginia’s Rosenwald Schools and African American Education
Deadline February 1, 2007

Detailed information and application instructions are on the VFH website virginiafoundation.org or contact Christina Draper, Director of the African American Heritage Program, at (434) 243-5528. The photograph is a class photo from the Henry County Training School, a Rosenwald School, circa 1920s or 1930s.

[Photo courtesy of the Virginia State University Archives, Richardson Collection]