The Past Is Not Dead: 

*Encyclopedia Virginia*

By Matthew Gibson

Where does one find a reference work on Virginia, a guide to its storied past and contemporary complexity? During the 20th century there were several efforts to create reference works on Virginia that employed "encyclopedia" somewhere in the title. The first was Lyon Gardiner Tyler’s (the president of William and Mary and son of U.S. President John Tyler) *Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography* in 1915.

A quick Google search brings up two others: Sam Hurst’s *Encyclopedia of Virginia Law* from 1922 and Somerset Publishers’ *Encyclopedia of Virginia: A Reference Guide to the Old Dominion* from 1992. (The University of Virginia’s Health Sciences Library owned a copy of the latter at one time but it is now “missing.”) Since 1915, many new perspectives and stories about Virginia have emerged that make Tyler’s work obsolete and a print reference work that is “lost in circulation” of little use.

In November of last year the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities added another work to this list with the launch of *Encyclopedia Virginia* (**encyclopediaVirginia.org**). In contrast to its predecessors, however, *Encyclopedia Virginia* (also known as *EV*) is not something to put on a bookshelf; rather, it is a growing and dynamic Internet publication that anyone can view in a web browser. It is a free and interactive resource of comprehensive and peer-reviewed content that focuses on Virginia’s people,
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Continued from cover

history, government, economy, and culture.

In 2001, the National Endowment for the Humanities supported more than a dozen organizations—the VFH among them—with planning grants to investigate the feasibility of building an online encyclopedia for their respective states and localities. Four years later, with generous funding from the state and private donations, VFH hired its first staff member. From 2005 until today, the VFH has built the technical framework for managing and delivering content; established workflow and pre-publication peer-review processes to ensure content credibility; and has currently engaged more than 350 writers from across Virginia, the nation, and the world to write the text for EV entries.

But what exactly are “entries”? They are text, certainly, but they are also a collection of still photographs, moving images, and audio clips that add rich dimension, immediacy, and context to the written word. And as more entries are added to the site, users will be able to employ EV as a tool for exploration and discovery.

One could learn, for instance, that many of today’s arguments over gay marriage actually reference arguments made in the 1967 United States Supreme Court case of Loving v. Virginia that struck down laws banning interracial marriage. Users will also discover fascinating relationships between seemingly unrelated topics: the entry on suffragist Adele Clark connects to the Commonwealth’s larger Woman Suffrage Movement; from woman suffrage a user can connect to the entry on the novelist, suffragist, and social activist Mary Johnston, which connects to the entry on her cousin, Confederate general Joseph E. Johnston. In three clicks a user can go from a leading activist of woman suffrage to a popular novelist of the early 1900s to the Civil War.

EV is an ambitious project. The only way we can succeed in this endeavor is by leveraging the expertise of the VFH staff and by collaborating with other cultural organizations across Virginia and beyond.

Within the VFH, EV serves as a platform where content from one program can integrate with and add context to another program. For instance, in the EV entry on Earl Hamner, Jr.—who most of us remember as the creator of The Waltons—there is a VFH Radio-produced audio file of Hamner speaking at the 2007 Virginia Festival of the Book; and the entry on Morgan v. Virginia, written by Derek Catsam, a former VFH Fellow, contains a With Good Reason broadcast from 2005 that discusses Irene Morgan’s court case in more intimate detail.

Collaboration with other cultural organizations is also crucial to the project’s success. In 2005 and 2006 EV began to formulate “media partnerships” with archives, museums, and libraries both to make EV’s entries more visually engaging and informative and to profile and provide easier access to rare collections and objects that tell the visual and audible story of Virginia.

Every year the alliances grow. With initial support from the Virginia Historical Society and the Library of Virginia, we now have developed formal relationships with the University of Virginia Library’s Special Collections, the Virginia Commonwealth University Library, the University of North Carolina Library, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, and the
The past is not a bunch of dead facts; it is a messy moving current that continually impacts and speaks to our present.

Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library. We also have a “text partnership” with the Library of Virginia’s Dictionary of Virginia Biography project which allows us to share and syndicate content.

Encyclopedia Virginia features content we have developed in 20th-century history, literature, and Civil War topics. While we continue to add to these topics, this summer we begin sections in Virginia Folklife and, with the help of a $280,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Colonial History and Pre-Colonial History. EV is also exploring a partnership with educators across Virginia to build the Virginia Studies Flexbook—a textbook for the 21st century.

The site is in “Beta” launch, which means users might not find exactly what they are looking for just yet. Beta also means that we are still adding functionality and tools, so users can do things like save and organize content in a personal account to be used in the classroom or in other contexts. With approximately 30 new entries added every month—each of which is reviewed by content experts, editors, fact checkers, and copyeditors—EV is making steady progress and fulfilling its role as a dependable, dynamic, and engaging resource backed by the imprimatur of the VFH.

And yet, despite these developments, EV should always be thought of as a work-in-progress. Histories, cultures, and our stories about them continually change. As any good student of Faulkner knows (or can see our entry on William Faulkner at EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Faulkner_William_1897-1962), the past is not a bunch of dead facts; it is a messy moving current that continually impacts and speaks to our present and it is from our present that the past itself changes. In this spirit, it is the responsibility of EV to maintain relevancy, to see the past through the lens of the present, and to understand how the past has shaped Virginia today.

William Faulkner
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Carl Van Vechten Collection, [LC-USZ62–117664]

VA League of Women Voters, 1923
Courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society
Masters and Apprentice Showcase

BY CAROLYN CADES

In the early morning hours of Saturday, May 9, Ubaldo Sanchez and his group Alfo-Conce, surrounded by large bags full of colored sawdust, began to lay out templates for the Alfombra, or traditional Guatemalan Easter “carpet,” which they would install in the parking lot of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Such a colorful welcome could only mean one thing: the 6th Annual Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Showcase was at hand.

The Brunswick Stew Masters began frying fat back and peeling potatoes for the famous dish they would cook up in a pot big enough to feed the 200 hungry souls arriving soon to help celebrate the Virginia Master Artists and their apprentices. Frances Davis of Rocky Mount and her apprentice Annie Elaine James unloaded buckets of flour, jugs of vegetable oil, skillets, sacks of dried apples, and all the ingredients needed to make their signature fried apple pies from Southwest Virginia.

Virginia State Oyster Shucking champion Deborah Pratt and her sister Clementine—who taught her to shuck on the back steps at home in Virginia’s Northern Neck—readied their sharp knives and iced oysters and commenced to shuck.

These and other Master Artists and Apprentices were selected from an open competition for applicants in all forms of Virginia’s traditional, expressive culture—from flatfooting to mandolin making, from basket making to quilt stitching, from country ham curing to Old Time banjo playing. The apprenticeships also feature folk traditions newer to Virginia, for example, Mexican folk dancing and Indian Tabla drumming. Apprenticeships are awarded for nine months, from May through February. The teams demonstrate their skills at the Apprenticeship Showcase, and share the creative results of their work together at the Showcase the following year.

The program included performances such as Moges Seyoum Ethiopian Orthodox church choir and Kathy Coleman’s Appalachian storytelling, but also left some time for informal jam sessions for Old Time fiddler Mark Campbell with his apprentice Barrow Wheary, and Iranian musician Ali Analouei with his apprentice Behnaz Bibizadeh.

The crafts held just as much discovery for the crowds: teams discussed their processes for making maple sugar candy, banjos, wild turkey calls, hard cider, handmade guns, and traditional architectural bricks.

Finally, the Showcase concluded with a rousing performance by gospel singer Maggie Ingram and her apprentices, the three backup vocalists the Ingrames, whose moving words and beautiful harmonies brought the proceedings to a soul-stirring, hand-clapping culmination.

To learn more about the Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program, and to view photos and videos of the Showcase, please visit VirginiaFolklife.org.
Deep Traditions, New Expressions

Recent VFH Grants Explore Virginia’s Musical Heritage

BY DAVID BEARINGER

Three recent grants from VFH, all awarded in December 2007, will result in new recordings, publications, and exhibits exploring Virginia’s music traditions and their continuing vitality in the present day.

Rockbridge Friends of Mountain Music and Dance received a grant supporting interviews and video “field recordings” of traditional banjo players. The result will be a double music CD with in-depth liner notes and an accompanying DVD documenting various claw-hammer and picking styles whose roots extend back prior to the advent of Bluegrass music in the 1940s and ’50s. The collection focuses mainly on younger players in their 30s and 40s, illustrating how this branch of the “roots music” of the southern Blue Ridge and Appalachian regions continues to evolve. The interviews and the liner notes will be written by Mike Seeger, himself a master of many musical styles and instruments (including the banjo), and one of the greatest living scholars of American traditional music. This compilation will be published and distributed nationally by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College received support for an exhibit, an accompanying double-CD with extensive liner notes, and a related publication, all focusing on the history and musical and cultural impact of Rockabilly music in Virginia. Rockabilly is an engaging and often edgy blend of blues, country, and rock-and-roll that had its zenith in the late 1950s and early ’60s, attracting a broad spectrum of enthusiastic listeners and profoundly influencing the later growth and development of rock-and-roll. Its influence continues to be felt today. The collection will include recordings by more than 50 Virginia Rockabilly artists, including one former member of the General Assembly; and many of the musicians who are still living have already been interviewed with support from a previous VFH grant.

A grant to The Lonesome Pine Office on Youth in Big Stone Gap has resulted in the production of a companion CD of contemporary Appalachian music released in tandem with the film series Appalachia which premiered on PBS with national distribution in April. (Ten years ago, VFH provided funds to support research and script development for this four-part documentary film series.) Liner notes were written by Ted Olson, Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at East Tennessee State University. The project director, Paul Kuczko, was the Executive Producer of the “Music of Coal” compilation, also supported by a grant from VFH (see VFH Views, Spring 2006). Kuczko is also the founder of Lonesome Records, the publisher of both collections.

All three of these projects will make extraordinary individual contributions to our understanding of Virginia’s musical traditions. Together, they offer listeners a rich trove of great music, and we encourage our readers to take advantage of the pleasures these collections offer.
The 15th anniversary Virginia Festival of the Book was an injection of vitality and hope into a season that seemed to have little other good news. Between March 18-22, an audience gathered in Charlottesville to turn their attentions to books, stories, and public discussions that would stimulate their curiosities and enrich their lives.

Programs this year included the largest single event ever—a sold-out Paramount Theater audience of more than 1,000 people for a program with poet Rita Dove and violinist Boyd Tinsley. Other popular and packed events included the luncheon with Adriana Trigiani and the business breakfast with Dan Ariely, author of Predictably Irrational.

Alan Cheuse and Mary Doria Russell discussed historical fiction with “With Good Reason” radio host Sarah McConnell in an event taped for later broadcast on NPR. John Grisham and Stephen L. Carter were featured in a conversation moderated by Slate.com editor Dahlia Lithwick. The Festival website VABook.org is now posting a number of programs captured on video and audio by the City of Charlottesville, VFH Radio, and independent recorders.

A cumulative audience of 20,690 came out for hundreds of events in schools and in public venues. This was the sixth straight year that the Festival drew crowds at or above the 20,000 mark.

What were some hot topics? The oceans, the Hubble telescope, the Civil Rights movement, remarkable trees of Virginia, Jack Kerouac, and avid book reading and reviewing. One highlights of the youth program was “Hip-Hop Speaks to Children,” influenced by Nikki Giovanni’s children’s book, drew more than 250 kids for music, drumming, dancing, and poetry.

The downturn did have an effect. The Festival gathered about 3% fewer out-of-state visitors than in previous years (dropping from 10% to 7%). Also, the number of events undertaken that week (190) was smaller than in previous years (224 in 2008).

The Festival Steering Committee and organizers had hoped to draw the same large public audience to 15% fewer offerings in an effort to both concentrate the Festival and protect it in a climate of diminishing resources. The strategy worked, with virtually no drop in the number of people attending public events and a remarkable 96% reporting the discussion “broadened” or “enriched” their thinking on a topic. Anecdotally, many preferred the trimmer Festival size.

While corporate funding did lessen, the number of individual donors doubled in a year from 91 to 180. “This year’s biggest increase was in the number of individuals supporting the Festival financially,” noted Festival Program Director Nancy Damon. “More people donated in small and large amounts—the Festival community is very generous, and we are grateful.”

Festival support is still welcomed, and many recorded resources are still available online. Visit VABook.org for more information. The sixteenth annual Virginia Festival of the Book will be March 17-21, 2010.
The three state winners of the Letters About Literature reading and writing competition were honored at the March 18 Opening Ceremony of the Virginia Festival of the Book. They were:

Jenny Labovitz (Level I) of Colvin Run Elementary, Vienna, for her letter to Barbara Park, author of The Graduation of Jake Moon.

Charlotte Keeley (Level II) of Buford School, Charlottesville, for her letter to Julie Andrews Edwards, author of The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles.

Michael Graham (Level III) of Deep Run High School, Richmond, for his letter to Mitch Albom, author of Tuesdays With Morrie.

This year, more than 54,000 students across the country submitted entries to LAL, which is sponsored in Virginia by the VFH Center for the Book and nationally by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and Target Stores. The competition is open to all students in grades 4-12. The next contest begins September 1st, 2009, with a December 12th submission deadline. Entry information can be found at VirginiaFoundation.org/bookcenter/letters.html.

The Center for the Book has received its fourth Big Read grant and again will be celebrating the “Big Read in Virginia,” beginning in September 2009 and ending May 2010. The featured novel for this statewide program is A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines. The Center encourages libraries, schools, book groups, and all book lovers to participate. Visit VirginiaFoundation.org/bookcenter and click on “Big Read” for more information.

The Big Read is sponsored nationally by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

Ernest J. Gaines
A LOT OF HISTORY IN ONE YEAR

As BackStory with the American History Guys marks its first birthday this June, it celebrates accomplishments generally reserved for shows with more, well, history behind them. The show—produced by VFH Radio and hosted by historians Ed Ayers, Peter Onuf, and Brian Balogh—has already gained attention from major public radio stations and humanities organizations nationwide.

BY CATHERINE MOORE

First, the prizes. In November, the Federation of State Humanities Councils awarded BackStory the Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize, given each year to the three most outstanding humanities projects in the country. Then, in March, BackStory received a $74,990 development grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, as part of the NEH’s We the People initiative.

Meanwhile, BackStory’s radio audience continues to grow. May’s “Mother’s Day” episode, for example, was broadcast by several major-market stations (including NPR affiliates in Chicago, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Austin, and Seattle) as well as a number of smaller stations. Also in May, the show was featured as a “Staff Favorite” in the podcast category of the iTunes store, a boon that nearly doubled the number of BackStory podcast subscribers.

On each episode of BackStory, the History Guys take a topic from the here-and-now and explore its historical context. Past topics have included environmental crisis, financial panics, family values, presidential transitions, and incarceration. A recent episode about the history of federalism illustrated the show’s wide range—it began with a phone call from a truck driver about the import of state lines, moved into a discussion with Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, and arrived finally at an interview with historian Eric Foner about the 14th Amendment.

The BackStory team is currently at work on their Labor Day show, “Looking for Work: A History of Unemployment.” To participate in this or other episodes, or to listen to past episodes, visit BackStoryRadio.org.
Visitors enter the Capitol's lower level and encounter a replicated longhouse and dug-out canoe, a one-room Indian school, and the work of nine contemporary Virginia Indian artists. Cases of artifacts, on loan from Virginia's Department of Historic Resources, demonstrate the changing cultures of tribal peoples through more than 18,000 years, and quotes from tribal members allow visitors to experience those cultures in context.

Upstairs, in the Capitol's East and West hallways, “Family Portraits: Virginian Indians at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” another VFH-funded exhibit, showcases Virginia Indian life between 1895 and 1945. The collection includes more than 30 photographs, taken by such notable figures as anthropologists James Mooney and Frank Speck. Photographs of tribal gatherings, along with individual and family portraits, poignantly illustrate the lives of Native people just a few generations ago.

A partnership between the VFH, the Capitol Square Preservation Council, and the Offices of the Clerks of the Virginia House and Senate, the exhibit will be viewed by more than 100,000 visitors during its year-long appearance in Richmond.

“Beyond Jamestown” originated at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, where it debuted two years ago with the opening of their new facility in Martinsville. Since then, it has appeared at the James Madison University Art Gallery in Harrisonburg. It will appear in Virginia Beach in 2010.

The “Family Portraits” exhibit first appeared at Sweet Briar College, with images gathered from the archives of the Smithsonian Institution, the Virginia Historical Society, and the Valentine Museum, among others. Two years ago, anthropologist Lynn Rainville recreated the exhibit, with new labels contributed by tribal descendants. The Board of Trustees at Sweet Briar then donated the exhibit to the Virginia Indian Heritage Program. Since then, it has appeared at UVA's Newcomb Hall and JMU’s Art Gallery.

It is fitting that Richmond's historic Capitol building should host the story of Virginia Indian peoples as its first exhibit. From Werowocomoco to Williamsburg, Virginians of Native and European descent developed the unique form of representative government that we continue to celebrate. The contributions of Virginia’s Native peoples are essential to our understanding of American history. Without them, Virginia today would be a different place altogether.

“We cannot continue to be the forgotten people in the Virginia history books or on the landmarks across this Commonwealth. Our Creator placed us here as the gatekeepers of this land, and our magnificent story cannot and will not be buried.”

— Chief Kenneth Adams (Upper Mattaponi), from the “Beyond Jamestown” exhibit
New VFH Board Members Announced

VFH bids farewell to four outgoing Board members and welcomes four more.

**Michael Galgano** (Harrisonburg), **Charlie Guthridge** (Richmond), **Ron Heinemann** (Hampden-Sydney), and **Jim Lott** (Staunton) left the VFH Board of Directors following the expiration of their terms in the Fall of 2008. All four were enthusiastic and supportive Board members. Their wise counsel and passion for the humanities will be missed.

Joining the Board in 2009 are:

**Stephen R. Adkins** has served as Principal Chief of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe since 2001. He is a graduate of Bacone Jr. College, Muskogee, Oklahoma, where he received his Associate Arts degree and Virginia Commonwealth University where he received his B.S. in Business Administration. He was awarded an honorary masters degree in Humane Letters from Bacone College on May 5, 2007. He currently works for the Commonwealth of Virginia as the Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Human Resource Management. He retired from DuPont in 2006 after 40 years of service and currently serves on the Board of Directors of DuPont Fibers Federal Credit Union. Steve and his wife, Eunice, have five children and eight grandchildren.

**Jack Censer** is the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at George Mason University. A native of Memphis, TN, he earned his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. After three years at the College of Charleston, Dr. Censer came to George Mason in 1977 and was promoted to full professor in 1987. He served as the Chair of the Department of History & Art History from 1995-2006. He has held visiting professor appointments at Cornell University and the University of Maryland.

**Rose Nan-Ping Chen** is the founder and President of The Rose Group for Cross-Cultural Understanding. Born and raised in Taiwan, she graduated from the National Taiwan University with a degree in agricultural chemistry in 1971 and received her master’s degree in medical microbiology in 1973 at the University of Illinois Medical Center, Chicago campus. She then worked as a research associate at the University of Pennsylvania, Merck Research Laboratory, and Medical College of Virginia before becoming a business owner for 15 years. A devotee of arts, spirituality, and community service, she founded The Rose Group in 2002 to fulfill her lifelong commitment to promoting multiculturalism in our society and fostering understanding and harmony between different cultures.

**Peter Wallenstein**, a professor of history at Virginia Tech, has received awards for both his teaching and his research. He grew up in New Hampshire, earned degrees at Columbia University and Johns Hopkins, and subsequently taught in New York, Canada, Korea, and Japan. His most recent books are Cradle of America: Four Centuries of Virginia History (2007) and Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses (2008). His current research is on civil rights, mostly in 20th-century Virginia.

VFH New Staff Appointments

**Sheryl Hayes**, who has served as VFH Director of Development since 1997, is transitioning into a new role as Special Assistant to the President. In her new position, she will work closely with both the President and the Board of Directors, acting as Secretary to the Board; directing special projects, government relations and public relations; managing institutional research and analysis; and working with the senior executive team on strategic planning, policy development and implementation, and budgetary and personnel issues. Prior to joining the VFH, Sheryl served as the Director of the Annual Fund at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, AL. She earned her M.A. in Philanthropy and Development at St. Mary’s College in Winona, MN.

**Gayle Hunter Haglund** joined the VFH as Chief Advancement Officer on June 1. She comes to the VFH from Union-PSCE, where she was the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and successfully led the $50 million “One in Mission” campaign to completion. She is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne College and continued graduate school at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota. Prior to joining Union-PSCE, she was the chief development officer for Trinity Episcopal School in Richmond for more than seven years. Haglund served as Vice President of Development at SES, Inc., an adult vocational rehabilitation organization, from 1987–1993. She is married to Kurt Haglund, and they have three grown children.

**Kevin McFadden** was named the Chief Operating Officer of the VFH on May 18. He completed his M.F.A. in creative writing at the University of Virginia in the spring of 2000 and began that fall as the associate program director for the Virginia Festival of the Book. During the last nine years, he helped manage the Festival’s emergence as a locally embraced and nationally recognized event. Kevin is also the VFH liaison to the Virginia Arts of the Book Center. He is the author of the poetry collection Hardscrabble and the recipient of the Fellowship of Southern Writers 2009 George Garrett Prize.
Members and guests of the Northern Virginia Regional Council met in May at the Alexandria Black History museum, hosted by VFH Board and NOVA Council member Audrey Davis, the museum’s assistant director and curator. The Council did its usual eating of mass quantities and round-robin of members’ work and interests, and then consulted with VFH staff member Roberta Culbertson about the upcoming Tough Times Companion. They toured the Museum and its Watson Reading Room, where they took time for a photo by museum volunteer Melissa Hand-Leathers. Left to right (seated) are Audrey Davis, Paddy Bowman, and Mary Briggs, and standing are Ginger Geoffrey, Judy Thibault-Kleivins, Roberta Culbertson, Deborah Lee, Priscilla Mendenhall, Alexandra Gressitt, Banna Dunn, Elaine Thompson, and Chris Williams.

VFH Seeks Board Nominations

The Nominating Committee of the VFH Board is looking for nominees who are broadly representative of the citizens of Virginia, including all geographic regions of the Commonwealth, and the various civic, ethnic and minority group interests. We strive to maintain a balance among scholars in the humanities, civic and business leaders, cultural leaders, and the general public. We are looking for people who will:

Represent the World to VFH by conveying humanities needs to VFH, represent academic disciplines, and be aware of trends that may affect VFH or its beneficiaries;

Represent VFH to the World by connecting VFH to potential beneficiaries, funders, and partners, speak on behalf of VFH to peers and communities, and advocate for VFH in the political arena;

Be informed about VFH program and administrative issues;

Be effective Board Members by preparing for Board Meetings, understanding the pressures that shape VFH, using life skills for benefit of organization and state, participating in fund raising, providing oversight and governance; and above all...

Understand, believe in, and articulate the VFH Mission.

If you would like more information about becoming a board member or about making a nomination, please contact VFH Board Nominating Committee, c/o Sheryl Hayes, sheryl@virginia.edu

Check out the VFH Store:
CDs, Books, Broadsides, and more...
VirginiaFoundation.org

Spring 2009 VFH Fellows

Spring 2009 resident VFH fellows (left to right) are Charles Thompson, a cultural anthropologist and documentary filmmaker at Duke University. His project, “Spirits of Just Men,” is drawn from his research on early 20th century moonshine production in Franklin County, VA. Ellen Contini-Morava, a linguist in the University of Virginia’s Anthropology Department, is exploring the question, “Why do languages have noun classes?” She is considering noun classes in Swahili, Spanish, Chinese, and American Sign Language. Historian Don DeBats, from Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, is examining the place of politics in ordinary citizens’ lives in his research project, “Town and Country: Using New Sources and New Methods to Analyze Tradition and Modernity in the Politics and Society of 19th Century Virginia.” Camille Wells, an architectural historian at the College of William and Mary, is completing her project on houses built and altered by white Virginians in eastern Virginia from roughly 1790 to 1840, entitled “Designs in Black and White: Domestic Architecture in Virginia after 1800.” Not pictured are VFH Senior Fellow William Freehling, who is composing a collection of essays, Disunion Revisited: Shorter Descriptions, Longer Perspectives, and completing research on his next book, Lincoln’s Room for Growth: A Great President’s Early Presidential Stumbles, and Nathan Corrier, a classical composer whose project “War Music” describes his personal journey while composing a full-length musical work based on a contemporary translation of The Iliad by the British poet Christopher Logue.

Soon to arrive are the following VFH Summer Fellows, listed with their projects: Laura Browder, English and American Studies, VCU, “When Janey Comes Marching Home: Stories of American Women in the Iraq War”; Caroline Janney, History, Purdue University, “The Civil War in Memory”; Hermine Pinson, English, College of William and Mary, “A Memoir of Healing”; Katherine McNamara, Literature, Independent Scholar, Charlottesville, VA, “From the First Beginning: A Literary Memory of Peter Kalifornsky and His Discovery of Writing”; and Kathleen Wilson, Material Culture, Independent Scholar, Alameda, CA, “Irish People, Irish Linen.”
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In Virginia on a visit to their sister city of Harrisonburg, a delegation from Florence, Italy, was treated to a tour of the VFH Virginia Arts of the Book Center in the Ix Complex in Charlottesville. Guests included the Deputy Mayor and Culture Minister of Florence Italy, JMU President Linwood Rose, and JMU Associate Provost Lee Sternberger.

VirginiaBookArts.org