



CONTACT
Robin Crawford
2019 Commemoration
robin.crawford@finnpartners.com
PH: (202) 466-7800

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW EXHIBITION, *1619 DEMOCRACY, DIVERSITY, AND DISCOVERY*, EXPLORES THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Jamestown, VA (April 16, 2019) – This week Jamestown Rediscovery opened new exhibits in the Nathalie P. and Alan M. Voorhees Archaearium, the award-winning archaeology museum at Historic Jamestowne, and within the Memorial Church. Through these new exhibitions, Jamestown Rediscovery seeks to reveal the stories and circumstances that led up to the transformative events which occurred in the summer of 1619 and how they helped shape the course of American history. The new exhibits are a legacy project of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution.

“The new exhibits at Historic Jamestowne provide a glimpse into the struggles, accomplishments and everyday life of the colonists who influenced the path of America,” said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. “Through these legacy projects we encourage visitors to explore the foundation of Virginia and American history and develop an understanding of events that shaped our nation over the course of 400 years.”

New exhibits, “From Fort to Port: Legacies of 1619” and “A Foundation for Success” in the museum examine Jamestown’s evolution from a small triangular fort to a thriving port city and challenge long-held perceptions of democracy, diversity, and race in early English America. They explore difficult themes such as the ‘othering’ and exploitation of Africans, Virginia Indians, and indentured servants; the genesis of an English system of race-based slavery; and the establishment of a plantation society reliant on tobacco.

Within the Memorial Church, Jamestown Rediscovery will showcase the remarkable discoveries they have made over the past two years of excavations. Archaeologists are now able to outline the exact footprint of Jamestown’s 1617-18 Church where the first Legislative Assembly took place and where democracy in America was born. The new exhibit, “In the Footsteps of Democracy,” will replicate the floorplan of the assembly church. Visitors will have the opportunity to sit in the very spot where Sir George Yeardley, the governor who presided over that historic meeting, his four councilors, and 22 elected burgesses met 400 years ago.

“Historical anniversaries provide a touchstone for public debate and reflection on issues from our collective past that continue to influence and challenge us today,” shared Dr. James Horn, Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation President. “Through our World of 1619 special programming, we have the ability to engage new audiences and bring history to life for visitors to Historic Jamestowne.”

In 2019, American Evolution is convening more than 20 events, programs, educational initiatives performances and exhibitions that showcase several key events from 400 years ago in 1619 Virginia, which set our nation on the course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. In addition to the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, these pivotal 1619 Virginia events include the recruitment of English women in significant numbers, the arrival of the first Africans to English North America, the first official English Thanksgiving in North America and the development of the Virginia colony's entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. A full schedule of American Evolution programming can be found [here](#).

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About the 2019 Commemoration

The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution™, highlights events that occurred in Virginia in 1619 that continue to influence America today. Featured programs, events and legacy projects will position Virginia as a leader in education, tourism and economic development. American Evolution™ commemorates the ongoing journey toward the key ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. Dominion Energy is an American Evolution Founding Partner and Altria Group and TowneBank are Virginia Colony Partners.