

Jamestown Rediscovery

HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE

Contact: Angel Johnston
704-759-6458
ajohnston@preservationvirginia.org

More Living History at Jamestown Thanks to the Jamestowne Society

JAMESTOWN, Va. (August 18, 2022) –

This summer, the first-person living history programming at Historic Jamestowne was expanded thanks to the support of the Jamestowne Society, whose members generously funded the expansion of the new program, “Maids to Virginia.” Set in 1621, just after the arrival of 57 women recruited to marry planters in Virginia in an attempt to help stabilize the colony, the program allows visitors to meet two of the young women who made the life-changing decision to cross the ocean and come to Virginia.

Between 1619 and 1621, the Virginia Company of London recruited and transported dozens of young women to Jamestown as potential brides for the overwhelmingly male colonists. These women – of varying ages between 16 and 33 – went through a rigorous eligibility process which included inquiries to their local parish priests and others who could speak to their good character. They were neither criminals nor forced to marry against their will. Most would eventually marry one of the male colonists already living at Jamestown and some of their experiences can be gleaned from historic records. To date, 300 members of the Jamestowne Society trace their ancestry to women who travelled on the bride ships.

Funding contributed by the Jamestowne Society supported two historians, Kaylan Stevenson and Amy Stallings, who researched the women who came to Jamestown on these voyages, built personas and wrote biographical scripts, and hand-crafted their own historically-accurate costumes.

“Through Kaylan and Amy’s work, visitors can get a closer understanding of the motivations of the young women who arrived between 1619 and 1621,” said Willie Balderson, Director of Living History & Historic Trades, “How did they feel walking into an entirely unknown future? What opportunities were they seeking and how did their lives change in Virginia? The experience seems unfathomable to today’s audiences, but this program helps us better understand the significance of the women’s arrival in Virginia.”

“Maids to Virginia” will be offered this Sunday, September 21st at 12:00pm and 3:15pm in Jamestown’s Memorial Church and will continue on select Sundays through the fall. The program is included in regular admission. For an up-to-date program schedule, please visit HistoricJamestowne.org.

Photos with captions and crediting information can be [found here](#).

About the Jamestowne Society

Members of the Jamestowne Society are descended from early settlers who lived or held colonial government positions in Jamestowne, Virginia prior to 1700, or who invested in its establishment. The Jamestowne Society was organized for educational, historical, and patriotic purposes. The Society has a range of activities, from visiting early American sites, providing an annual graduate fellowship for research on Colonial Virginia prior to 1700, funding the restoration of records, and supporting preservation of Colonial sites.

More information about the Jamestowne Society and genealogy information can be found at Jamestowne.org.

About Historic Jamestowne/Jamestown Rediscovery

Historic Jamestowne (HJ) preserves the original site of the first permanent English settlement in America and is jointly administered by Jamestown Rediscovery and the National Park Service. Entrance tickets are available at the HJ Visitor Center from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and the grounds remain open until dusk. General admission is \$25.00 per adult (which includes both Historic Jamestowne and Yorktown Battlefield for seven consecutive days). Children 15 & under are free. National Park Passes and Preservation Virginia Memberships are accepted; however a \$10 per person fee may apply. Entrance tickets and passes include admission to the archaeological site, the Memorial Church, the Voorhees Archaearium Archaeological Museum, as well as scheduled daily walking tours and public programs. For opening hours of the Dale House Café and information about special events, please visit www.historicjamestowne.org or call (757) 856-1250.