1619 was a landmark year in Virginia history. Among the important “firsts” were the first meeting of the first legislative assembly in English North America (Virginia’s General Assembly), the arrival of the first Africans to the colony, the recruitment of women to the colony in large numbers, and the first Thanksgiving.

To commemorate these events, HCC&M’s Education Committee created a series of special speakers, traveling exhibitions, bus trips and musical performances for 2019. Our Sunday Speaker Series, The Bones of Our Past: Jamestown and the Making of America, features four acclaimed Virginia historians who explore the legacies of Jamestown for the American experience.

Our 2019 spring crawl bus trip travels on June 14 to Historic Jamestowne and Jamestown Settlement. The day before the trip, renowned curator Bly Straube takes us to the world of Jamestown through the amazing artifacts and discoveries that have made it one of the richest archaeological sites in the world. In the fall we journey to historic Hampton for tours of Fort Monroe, the Hampton History Museum and St. John’s church. HCC&M will also host two 1619-themed traveling exhibitions in July.

The “Bringing Music to Life” concert series returns with a special performance in May by The Evermore String Quartet with Andrew McEvoy, Classical Guitar. In September, the Wien Masters, a Williamsburg baroque quartet, will perform “Jamestown 1619: Music from the New World and the Old.” You don’t want to miss these special opportunities to hear classical music inside the superb acoustical setting of Historic Christ Church.

Coming in 2019!

Brandon Hull of HullFilm will be on site May 6-7 for a Panoramic, 360 photo shoot of Historic Christ Church. Hull will use the film to create a virtual tour of the church.

The Virtual Tour of Historic Christ Church will be accessible from our website and by mobile devices. It will serve as an educational tool and provide visitors from around the world an introduction to this magnificent building, spurring an interest in them to see the site in person. Guests who visit HCC&M in the off season will be able to use the Virtual Tour and a new Visitor’s Guide to tour the site on their own when volunteers and staff are not available.

Mr. Hull is a renowned filmmaker whose virtual tours include Mount Vernon, Monticello and Civil War 360. For more information on virtual tours and to see a selection of his work, please visit HullFilm.com.
Museum Debuts New Children’s Exhibits

Families visiting Historic Christ Church & Museum this spring will discover two exciting new exhibitions. *Be A Builder* and our *King Post Roof Truss* use digital and tactile hands-on experiences to teach children about architecture and building in colonial Virginia. *Be A Builder* is a touch-screen interactive where children explore the different people who built Christ Church and the tools they used. The *King Post Roof Truss* is a replica of the king post roof trusses that frame Christ Church’s magnificent roof. Both play on children’s natural love of building things and through unique hands-on experiences help children become active participants in STEAM-based learning (science, technology, engineering, arts and math). We thank the River Counties Community Foundation, the Jessie Ball duPont Fund and the J. Edwin Treakle Foundation for their generous support of these exhibitions.

*Be A Builder* features 46-inch touch screens on both sides set within a compass design that evokes the windows in Christ Church. Above Left: Children meet the free, enslaved and indentured craftsmen who constructed Christ Church under the “Builders & Tools” section. Above Right: Like the carpenter example seen here, users select from four choices which tool a craftsman used for a particular job on the church. Incorrect answers describe the function of each tool and encourage users to “Try Again” to choose the correct tool.

Nick Truelove of Truelove Fabrications stands with the King Post Roof Truss he and his father Butch are constructing. Made of a high-density foam, the truss will feature epoxy coatings that replicate 18th-century tool marks and Roman numerals like the actual trusses in Christ Church.

Dr. Gavin Garner, professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at the University of Virginia, used a computer program and laser cutter to draw and cut a small model of the roof truss. Instead of pegs in the mortise-tenon joints (which visitors often broke), Garner came up with the idea to use rare earth magnets to hold the joints, which would then give (instead of break) when pulled apart with too much force. Garner’s new truss is at the bottom, below the original version now broken. While the large truss (left) will be used in organized school and summer programs, visitors will be able to play with the small truss anytime the museum is open.

Students will learn how to assemble the truss using the same basic joint carpenters in colonial Virginia used: a mortise-tenon joint. The oak tenons visible between the foam layers here will fit into mortises cut into other parts of the truss and be joined by a treenail (trunnel) or peg.
The Foundation has hundreds of good friends, business sponsors, and organizations, near and far, who evidence their commitment to the preservation and interpretation of Historic Christ Church through their annual financial support. We send our appreciation to all for their generosity in empowering the Foundation to fulfill its mission.

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving

2018 Annual Giving
2018 Annual Giving Memorials

*Life Members

2018 Annual Giving Honors

In addition to visitors with our regularly scheduled docents, three group tours were scheduled for Marilyn Loomis (pictured above) and Betty May, Co-Chairs, Group Tour Docents committee, on October 10th. At the 30th Annual Memorial Service, theCarters Society: Descendants of Colonial Virginia Mark & Mary McIntosh The John J. Page Family Kevin D. Page & Marie Marie Page Douglas Earle Quarles, IV, Mr. Stephanie Colesman, President, Convent of Charlotte 1627 Melvin Edwards, Sr.

2018 Gifts-In-Kind Donations to the Foundation and its mission of preserving Historic Christ Church come in many forms and from a variety of givers. These generous offerings are deeply appreciated.

American Legion, Adams Post 88 Mrs. Melvin Edwards, Sr.

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Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel P. Neblett, AIA

FHCC Volunteers, past, present and future
Mr. Laurence J. (“Larry”) Thomas & Mrs. Priscilla (“P.C.”) Thomas

FHCC Staff: Douglas E. Walker, Mrs. Jessica Fyffe & Ms. Marjorie R. Page

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Robert & Julia Chase Smoak visited June 8th to celebrate their 59th wedding anniversary.

Kathleen Willingham of Fauquier County was one of several artists who painted Historic Christ Church in April as part of Plein Air Unleashed, a special program with the Allure Art Center in White Stone.

Ayla Morgan Crawley shows off the colonial silhouette she created at HCC&M’s Ice Cream Social in August. Joining Ayla are her grandparents, Lauri and Andre Wilson and John Wilson.

Members of the Volunteer Council gather after a meeting in February. Comprised of 17 chairs who oversee docents, receptionists, flowers, hospitality, costumes, school programs, the gift shop and more, the Council is the backbone of Historic Christ Church & Museum.

Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander (left) joins FHCC President Steve Harris and American Evolution 2019 Executive Director Kathy Spangler after her presentation in April for our Sunday Speaker Series on Virginia Women in History.

Snapshots from 2018

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Beyond the Kelley Grave Plot
by Patrick Heffernan, Ph.D., Scholar and Author

Like many of the volunteers at Historic Christ Church, I wear more than one hat. Mine are researcher and docent. When called upon to lead a tour as a docent I find that I cannot remove my researcher hat. Rather, I put the docent hat on top of it. The result is that almost anywhere I look in the church or churchyard, some historical event connected with it gets called to mind. And I may or may not start talking about it, depending on the interest of the visitors.

This is certainly true of the Kelley grave plot. Having provided the visitors with an account of what is before our eyes, I may go on to talk about some historical connection that is not there to be seen. Perhaps I might talk about:

• How James Kelley, the father, a tenant farmer on the Corotoman estate, was often called upon by its young owner George Carter, Esq. to lend him money. In 1788 George died, leaving his widow Lelia and two children, Charles (3) and Mary (not yet 1). In 1791 Lelia married St. George Tucker and the family moved to Williamsburg.

• How, not long after Mary’s marriage to Joseph C. Cabell in 1807, St. George Tucker received a letter from an unknown writer. James Kelley’s widow Judith wrote to him, asking that he prevent her eviction from the estate, on the grounds that George Carter had assured her family of their allotted land “for three lives.” It was Joseph who had caused Judith’s alarm, following his first visits to Corotoman after inheriting it through Mary.

• How the graves of six Kelley sons are marked with emblems commemorating their service in the Virginia Militia during the War of 1812. All six remained unharmed but quite surely saw action. The Royal Navy controlled the Chesapeake and for two years conducted surprise raids on both the Maryland and Virginia shores to take whatever provisions they wanted for their forces – grain, meat, water, wood, and more. The Kelley brothers, like other local defenders, were surely engaged in trying to stop some of these random raids.

• How over 3,000 slaves escaped to the British ships during this time, and that the largest group to do so fled from the Corotoman estate, the very land on which the church and the Kelley grave plot remain. Sixty-nine Corotoman slaves gained their freedom in this way.

• How in 1836 Mary decided, with her husband and her mother, to offer the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia a ninety-nine-year lease on the church, on condition that some immediate repairs be undertaken. Kelley sons James and William were among the trustees to whom the church was deeded and they immediately repairs be undertaken. Kelley sons James and William were among the trustees to whom the church was deeded and they

• How the 1836 deed also assured pews of their choosing to both Lelia and Rebecca Parke Farley Carter, the orphaned daughter of Mary’s brother Charles. Thus, though never used, there were two other Carter pews in the church, created about a century after the well-known pew of its builder, Robert “King” Carter.

• How the bachelor brothers, William and James, now buried side by side, made careful provision in their wills for all of their slaves to be emancipated and resettled in either a free state or the newly-formed African country of Liberia. Their journey to Liberia is fully documented, as are the court cases of two old men among them who did not want to go. They took the only course they could to spend their last years in Virginia: they chose to be re-enslaved.

• How, when, why, and by whom did the grave marker of Dr. Charles Taylor come to be placed in the Kelley grave plot? When indeed did he die, since his gravestone is carved with 1825, but the historic marker placed by the D.A.R. states 1821?

The Kelley grave stones serve as steppingstones for me to such events in the history of the parish. They may lead other docents to different historical connections, questions, or mysteries. Is it not this mix of the seen and the unseen that makes Historic Christ Church so very interesting for both the volunteers and the visitors?

What happened to the First Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish?

What we know: The first vestry book for Christ Church Parish dates from September 23, 1665 to February 8, 1759. The book disappeared in the mid-19th century. It would have documented some of the most important events in the history of Christ Church and the parish. Most significantly, this vestry book would have described the building of the two churches that have stood on this site beginning in 1670.

Much of what we know about this lost vestry book comes from two sources: Bishop William Meade and an 1835 letter from Joseph Ball.

Ordained in 1813, William Meade (1789-1862) succeeded Richard Moore as Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia in 1841. Meade visited Christ Church June 1837, and his writings offer the earliest known descriptions of the church. He referenced the first vestry book in 1838 and 1857: “The past history and present condition of this hallowed spot and temple, deserve a more particular notice. The notice is derived from the memorialsl furnished by the house itself, the tombstones around and within, and the vestry book of the Parish, kept from the year 1665 to 1790, to which I had access.” - William Meade, Report to Protestant Episcopal Convention, 1839

“The vestry-book of Christ Church, Lancaster, before the union of the two parishes, commenced, I think, about the year 1654. I saw it for the first time about twenty years ago, and again three years after, I believe, and took extracts from it, some of which were published. Soon after this it disappeared, and, though carefully sought for since, can nowhere be found.” - William Meade, Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia, 1857

In February of 1835, Joseph Ball of Ditchley (1777-1856) reported that the vestry book had been found among the library of the Reverend David Currie, who served as minister of Christ Church Parish from 1743-1791:

Dear Sir, There has recently been discovered among the books of the Revd David Currie, dec’d a Record of Christ Church Parish, beginning the 23rd of September 1665 and ending the 8th of Feby 1759.”

The vestry book would disappear about five years after Ball’s letter. The foundation and its researchers have repeatedly tried to locate it. At one time, a reward was even offered. The first vestry book’s whereabouts remain a history mystery.
At the November 15, 2018 meeting, the Board of Directors adopted the following resolution:

“RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby accepts the recommendation of staff, based on the preliminary scoping work of ITAC, to proceed with the development of an operational plan to address and remediate the Rising Damp project to seek national and international interest, to work with grant funders to secure available grants and with the business community and individuals for their support.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby directs the staff to develop and, in consultation and coordination with the Development Committee and the Executive Committee, implement a fundraising plan with respect to all potential sources of external funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby supports the submission of an application for a “Save America’s Treasures Preservation Grant” to the National Park Service.

The Rising Damp Project is the next step in our five year preservation plan. This follows the completion of the roof restoration and through the remediation of the moisture problem will allow us to address other issues once sufficient drying has occurred.

In December we applied for the “Save America’s Treasures Preservation Grant” which could provide significant funding for this project. The National Park Service will announce grant awards in September 2019. If the Foundation receives an award, we anticipate the project start date will be late 2019 or early 2020. The project is expected to take 15 - 18 months to complete.

We are working with our architects to manage the procurement of proposals from qualified contractors, to provide recommendations on the selection process, to provide oversight of the project throughout the construction phase, and to establish the project timeline.

The Development Committee is working on a fund raising plan to publicize the project to seek national and international interest, to work with grant funders to secure available grants and with the business community and individuals for their support.

We will continue to share updates on the Rising Damp Project as we move through this process. We welcome you to visit our website for more information and to sign-up for our newsletter.

This is a very important project and an exciting time for our preservation and archeological programs. Please join us in support of these efforts.