

# Jamestown Rediscovery

HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE

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## Jamestown Rediscovery Premieres New Virtual Experience for Visitors Near and Far

JAMESTOWN, Va. (February 17, 2023) –

Jamestown Rediscovery recently completed an expansive update to the Digital reDiscovery initiative, first begun during the Covid-19 pandemic, thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The initiative includes the popular [Dig Deeper video series](#), video and history content on [Digital reDiscovery at historicjamestowne.org](https://www.historicjamestowne.org), support for in-person, family-focused programming, and a new internet-accessible [virtual reality tour of The Natalie P. & Alan M. Voorhees Archaearium](#).

Like many cultural organizations during the pandemic, Jamestown moved programs and experiences online and quickly developed new video series, increased social media content, and created new ways for the public to learn about and engage with recent archaeological discoveries and our extensive artifact collection while at home. Even as on-site visitation has ramped back up, audiences remain engaged with unique digital history content throughout the year.

The new virtual reality tour of the Archaearium was developed by Senior Staff Archaeologist and Photographer Dr. Chuck Durfor. Using high-resolution 360° photography, Chuck captured the interior of the Archaearium's exhibits in exquisite detail, which resulted in an immersive, self-guided tour of the museum containing many of the most significant artifacts recovered at the first successful English colony in North America. Audio introductions to each gallery and bonus content further highlight the moment of discovery and give users the opportunity to learn more about the history of Virginia Indians, European colonists, and enslaved Africans. The virtual tour is available at no cost to any user with an internet connection and represents a new level of public outreach at Jamestown.

"Through this new VR tour, we can share our amazing archaeological finds with everyone around the world," said Chuck Durfor. "The high-resolution images permit users to zoom in on the fine details of the smallest artifact and read every label. As an image-based tour, it's also accessible to people with a broad range of backgrounds and knowledge of this history."

In addition to bringing the Archaearium into the digital world, the grant enabled Jamestown staff to enhance the on-site experience through the use of QR codes, accessible via smartphone, allowing visitors to view bonus video content while touring the museum. Videos include the excavation of the cranium of "Jane," which would later confirm 17th-century reports of survival cannibalism during the Starving Time winter of 1609-1610. The use of adaptable, user-friendly technology allows curators to continually add to the visitor experience and knit the stories of over 3 million artifacts (and counting) into the larger history of Jamestown.

NEH funding also supported the expansion of the Digital reDiscovery initiative, an online story map featuring tour segments and related archaeological, historical, and artefactual information through an interactive map of the James Fort site. The site now includes four tours: 1) an archaeology tour; 2) a first-person tour with Anas Todkill, a soldier who came to Virginia in 1607; 3) a tour that explores the relations between the Powhatan chiefdom and the European settlers; and 4) a tour that examines the arrival of the first Africans in 1619. Now, just as in-person visitors can explore Jamestown history alongside Rediscovery archaeologists, living history interpreters, and historians, virtual visitors can do the same in the reDiscovery platform.

As Jamestown Rediscovery grows and expands, digital history content will remain part of public outreach. A central aspect of Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation's mission is to better understand and share the complex and often conflicted stories of our past. Making history content available online will help shed new light on our nation's rich and diverse history. Jamestown staff gratefully acknowledge the funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, which made this work possible.

Images for this story [may be found here](#), with appropriate captions and crediting information.

#### About Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation

*The Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation (JRF) preserves and shares the original site of James Fort and Jamestown, established in 1607. JRF is dedicated to uncovering, preserving, and sharing Jamestown's diverse history, and highlighting its major contribution to the foundations of modern American society. Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit. JRF jointly administers Historic Jamestowne alongside the National Park Service. Historic Jamestowne is open seven days a week. Admission includes the James Fort site, New Town, and the Voorhees Archaearium Archaeological Museum, as well as walking tours, living history, and public programs. For more information about visiting Jamestown, please visit [www.historicjamestowne.org](http://www.historicjamestowne.org) or call (757) 856-1250.*