

The Conrad M. Hall Symposium for Virginia History 2025 Preliminary Schedule

- 9:00 – 10:00
 - **Registration**
- 10:00 – 11:30
 - **Welcome + Keynote Lecture**
 - *Give Me Liberty: Virginia & The Forging of a Nation*
 - Dr. Sarah McCartney (Assistant Teaching Professor of History, The College of William & Mary), Dr. Alan Taylor (Thomas Jefferson Foundation Chair, Emeritus, University of Virginia), Dr. Karin Wulf (Director and Librarian, John Carter Brown Library, Professor of History, Brown University)
 - Join leading scholars of the American Revolution for a conversation about the meaning of the United States 250th and the participants' contributions to the VMHC's and Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation's partner exhibition, *Give Me Liberty: Virginia & The Forging of a Nation*.
- 11:30 – 11:45
 - **Break**
- 11:45 – 12:45
 - **Session I**
 - *Jackson Ward: The Birthplace of Black Entrepreneurship*
 - Dr. Sessa Joi Moon (Executive Director, The JXN Project), Enjoli Moon (Executive Director, Afrikana Independent Film Festival), Faithe Norrell (Cultural Heritage Specialist, Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia)
 - Explore the history of Jackson Ward, the nation's first historically registered Black urban neighborhood. The district rose from the ashes of Civil War Richmond into the birthplace of Black capitalism, becoming known as the "Black Wall Street of America."
 - *Revolutionary Relics: Unearthing the Stories in Richmond's Confederate Monument Cornerstones*
 - Dr. Elizabeth Moore (State Archaeologist, Virginia Department of Historic Resources), Kate Ridgway (State Archaeological Conservator, Virginia Department of Historic Resources), Christina Vida (Elise H. Wright Curator of General Collections, The Valentine Museum)
 - The 2021 unearthing of a 134-year-old box beneath the statue of Robert E. Lee on Richmond's Monument Avenue revealed controversial relics that shaped

Lost Cause mythology and uncovered untold stories about the people and communities connected to them.

- *Virginia Ghost Stories and Witchcraft in the Revolution and Beyond*
 - *Patriotic Phantoms: What Do Ghost Stories About Revolutionary War Figures Tell Us About Virginian History?*
 - Dr. Lynn Rainville (Executive Director, Hidden History Group)
 - In this illustrated talk, learn how Revolutionary era ghost stories unveil little-known truths about historical figures and shape our collective memory of the past.
 - *Bewildering Byline: Using Mixed-Methods Research to Transform a Historic Allegation of Witchcraft in Virginia*
 - Aíne Norris (Doctoral Candidate, Old Dominion University)
 - This presentation highlights innovative research used to examine an 1891 news article on Appalachian witches, while also sharing the stories of the women accused and the ways women's history has been interpreted over time.
- *Independence Meant Hard War: Military Histories of the American Revolution*
 - *The Beeline March: 600 Miles to Boston and the Birth of the American Army*
 - John Grady (U.S. Naval Institute)
 - Summer 1775 saw the Berkeley County Rifle Company march 600 miles in 25 days to reinforce Washington's new Continental Army at Boston. Explore this remarkable march, the men who made it, and its legacy today.
 - *"The power of Britain ... is now broken": The Aftermath of the Franco-American Victory at Yorktown, 1781*
 - Dr. John Maass (Historian, National Museum of the US Army)
 - The 1781 Franco-American victory at Yorktown effectively ended Britain's ability to wage a land war in North America. Learn how it spurred political shifts in Britain and propelled George Washington into the spotlight, securing both U.S. independence and Washington's future as the first president.
- Vault Tour
- 12:45 – 2:15
 - **Lunch**
 - *The Almshouse* - Documentary Screening & Panel Discussion
 - Megan Ames (Director of Planning and Development, Barrier Islands Center), Sally Dickinson (Executive Director, Barrier Islands Center), Miriam Riggs (Exhibit Designer/Researcher, Barrier Islands Center), Jim Spione (Filmmaker, Barrier Islands Center)

- Learn about the history of social relief on Virginia's Eastern Shore and barrier islands through this PBS-aired documentary. After the screening, engage with panelists discussing the filmmaking process and the wider history of social safety networks.
- 2:15 – 3:30
 - **Session II**
 - *Revolutionary Regional Histories: From Tidewater to the Backcountry*
 - *From Resolutions to Reality: Wartime Experience in the Virginia Backcountry*
 - Dr. Sarah McCartney (Assistant Teaching Professor, The College of William & Mary)
 - Explore how backcountry Virginia residents experienced the Revolutionary War and actively shaped the American cause through their “preoccupation with local matters.”
 - *"A Most Noble Patriot": How Life at Scotchtown Impacted Patrick Henry's Revolutionary Role*
 - Elyse Werling (Curator of Collections, Preservation Virginia)
 - Uncover how Patrick Henry's radical, Revolutionary politics were shaped by and impacted his life at Scotchtown. Here, his advocacy for liberty contrasted with the experiences of Henry's family and people enslaved there in the years preceding the Revolution.
 - *The Hidden Agents Behind Lord Dunmore's Emancipation Proclamation*
 - Andrew Lawler (Independent Researcher)
 - This presentation reevaluates Lord Dunmore's 1775 proclamation of freedom for enslaved people, arguing that Black Virginians' early, critical support, including their heroism in the summer and fall of 1775, significantly shaped the course of the American Revolution.
 - *Sparkling Freedom: Black Storytelling through Oral History, Genealogy, and Interpretive Tours*
 - *Rediscovering the Williamsburg Bray School (1760-1774): Its History and Legacies through Genealogy and Oral History*
 - Tonia Cansler-Merideth (Oral Historian, William & Mary Bray School Lab), Elizabeth Drembus (Genealogist, William & Mary Bray School Lab)
 - The Williamsburg Bray School educated enslaved and free Black children from 1760-1765. Explore its role in perpetuating and confronting slavery, the quest to find descendants of the school's students, and efforts to raise awareness of the school's history and legacy.
 - *Sparkling Freedom: Enslaved Resistance in Fredericksburg and Stafford, Virginia*

- Dr. Gaila Sims (Curator of African American History and Vice President of Programs and Interpretation, Fredericksburg Area Museum)
- This presentation introduces *Sparking Freedom: Enslaved Resistance in Fredericksburg and Stafford, Virginia*, a trolley tour highlighting resistance by enslaved people, featuring stories of uprisings, escapes, and defiance.
- *New Perspectives on the American Revolution in Virginia*
 - Katy Gehred (Media Editor, Encyclopedia Virginia), Dr. Patrick Hannum (Military Historian, Retired US Marine and Civilian Professor, National Defense University), Dr. David Hsiung (Professor of History, Juniata College), Patricia Miller (Managing Editor, Encyclopedia Virginia), Dr. Ashley Spivey (Executive Director, Kenah Consulting)
 - This panel marks America's 250th by offering fresh perspectives on Virginia's role in the Revolution, featuring the true story behind Norfolk's destruction, the contributions of Indigenous people, the Revolution's environmental impact, and insights into Virginia's wartime boundaries using cutting-edge mapping technology.
- *20th Century Community Builders*
 - *All Revolutionaries Don't Wear Tricorn Hats: Dr. Kate Waller Barrett: A Revolutionary Fighting for Women and Children*
 - Susan Inskeep Gray (Director, Office of Historic Resources, City of Fairfax)
 - Learn about the extraordinary life of Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, an innovative reformer who co-founded the National Florence Crittenton Mission and fought for women's, children's, and veterans' rights in the Progressive era.
 - *Shipbuilders, Stonecutters, and Byrd Park Rangers: Soccer in Virginia, 1910–1930*
 - Matt Gottlieb (Highway Marker Program Research Assistant, Virginia Department of Historic Resources)
 - Explore Virginia's early 20th Century soccer culture, where immigrant-driven, working-class teams in Newport News and middle-class clubs in Richmond shaped the sport's development, reflecting broader shifts in understandings of class and ethnicity during a formative moment in American sport.
 - *Queering NoVA's Cable: Building LGBTQ Community Through Local Cable Television*
 - Savannah Scott (Graduate Student, George Mason University)
 - Discover the groundbreaking impact of *Gay Fairfax*, a pioneering 1990s cable TV show that provided queer coverage for the suburbs of Washington, D.C. and created a unique space for LGBTQ+ community building.

- Exhibition Tour
- 3:30 – 3:45
 - **Break**
- 3:45 – 4:45
 - **Session III**
 - *Building the Shockoe Institute: New Directions in Public Discourse on the History and Legacy of Slavery*
 - L'Rai Arthur-Mensah (Executive Account Director, Local Projects), Dr. Marland Buckner (President & CEO, Shockoe Institute), Dr. Justene Hill Edwards (Associate Professor of History, University of Virginia)
 - Once the center of the domestic slave trade, Shockoe Bottom is now home to the Shockoe Institute, which explores the history and enduring impact of slavery. The institute blends immersive design and interactive programming to connect past with present and discuss the struggle to expand freedom.
 - *With the Constancy of a Roman Matron: Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson's War Years*
 - Nicole Brown (William & Mary PhD. Candidate, Bray Lab Assistant, and Educator, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), Diane Ehrenpreis (Curator of Decorative Arts and Historic Interiors, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello), Ashley Hollinshead (Team Lead, Education & Visitor Programs, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello)
 - This panel discusses new research on Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson to reveal her actions and sacrifices in supporting the Patriot cause during the American Revolution, as well as their suppression by her husband, Thomas Jefferson.
 - *Archaeology and Archives in Revolutionary History*
 - *Discovering the Williamsburg Barracks*
 - Evan Bell (Archaeologist, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)
 - Learn about recent archaeological discoveries by Colonial Williamsburg at the site of the Williamsburg Barracks, which reveal its role in the American Revolution, the rapid militarization of the city, and its connections to Virginia's wartime logistical network.
 - *Revolutionary Virginia Through the Eyes of François-Jean de Chastellux: Uncovering New Sources and Reinterpreting History*
 - Dr. Iris De Rode (Gibson Fellow in Democracy, University of Virginia)
 - This presentation unveils newly digitized and previously unknown sources from the private papers of François-Jean de Chastellux, a French major

general and Enlightenment thinker, offering an international perspective on Revolutionary Virginia.

- *“She had on when she went away...”: Using Material Culture to Free Self-Liberating Enslaved Women from the Silences of the Archive*
 - Emily Doherty (Creative Lead for Performing Arts, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), Rebecca Godzik (Journeyman Supervisor of the Trades of Millinery and Mantua-making, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), Hope Wright (Actor-Interpreter for Performing Arts, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)
 - This panel introduces and explores a program developed by Colonial Williamsburg to use historical “runaway” advertisements concerning enslaved people to demonstrate how they can reveal the often silenced voices of the self-liberated.
- Vault Tour
- 4:45 – 5:00
 - **Break**
- 5:00 – 6:00
 - **Session IV**
 - *Transformative Partnerships: Indigenous Voices in Museum Practices*
 - Travis Henline (Curator of Indigenous History and Culture, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation), Sam McGowan (Program Manager, Indigenous People's Program, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation), Tanya Stewart (Chickahominy Tribe), Jeremy Turner (Shawnee Tribe), Deborah Wilkinson (Upper Mattaponi Tribe)
 - Discover the transformative partnership between the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and its Indigenous Advisory Board, highlighting its impact on reshaping interpretation and education at Jamestown Settlement and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.
 - *How “Revolutionary” Was Thomas Jefferson's 1776-79 Revisal of Virginia Law?*
 - Dr. Warren Billings (Distinguished Professor of History Emeritus, University of New Orleans), John Ruston Pagan (University Professor Emeritus, University of Richmond), Brent Tarter (Senior Editor Emeritus, Library of Virginia)
 - Explore the extent to which Thomas Jefferson's 1776-79 revisal of Virginia law was truly revolutionary, examining whether his legislative proposals represented radical departures from pre-independence law or were more pragmatic adjustments to a new order.
 - *The Spirit of Activism as Exhibit: Crafting “Voices of Change: Student Advocacy and Action from the Archives”*

- Katharine Buckley (Special Collections and Archives Teaching and Learning Librarian, Virginia Commonwealth University), Sarah Clay (Research and Collections Coordinator for Special Collections, Virginia Commonwealth University), Ruth Cody (University Archivist, Virginia Commonwealth University), Jessica Johnson (Collections Archivist, Virginia Commonwealth University), Sarah Scarr (Arts Collection Curator for Special Collections, Virginia Commonwealth University)
- Learn about the creation of the exhibition “Voices of Change: Student Advocacy and Action from the Archives” at VCU, which highlights student activism through protest, art, publishing, and institutional pathways from the late 1960s to early 2000s.
- *Forgotten Patriots: New Research in the Virginia National Guard’s Revolutionary War Lineage and Legacies*
 - Alexander Barnes (Command Historian, Virginia National Guard), Dr. Sarah Burgos (Director and Chief Curator, The Museum of the Virginia National Guard), one serving soldier TBD (Virginia National Guard)
 - This panel reexamines the Virginia National Guard’s overlooked role in the Revolutionary War, focusing on the 116th Infantry Regiment’s direct lineage to Virginia’s Revolutionary militia. Through archival research and military lineages, the presentation demonstrates how past and modern-day National Guard connections can reshape the narrative of independence.
- 6:00 – 7:00
 - **Reception**