



## **Snakes and Groundhogs and [White] Squirrels—Oh my!**

I started off the summer with a bang, or, more accurately, a honk. The third weekend of June, which was my second full week of interning at Sully, was the annual antique car show. It was a huge event with over 400 automobiles on the grounds, and we had around 4,000 visitors enjoying the show, music, and food at our site. I was in charge of first aid at the car show, and thankfully nobody got hurt – not on my watch! I also worked the gates and the kids’ tent during our World War II Living History Weekend, and gave Civil War period house tours during our Civil War event.

In late June, one of our volunteers, Dottie, and I, complete within 1800s attire, led an outreach program for two summer camps at South Run RECenter. The preschoolers were given the opportunity to learn about the Nuttington’s, the first squirrel family that lived here at Sully, and were spooked when we mentioned the mysterious white squirrel that once roamed the halls of the house. The children were very intrigued with the story and the puppet show and were curious to learn more about squirrels in general. The second group consisted of at least 50 elementary-aged students who had the opportunity to write with a quill pen. They were able to take their souvenir markings home with them to show their families what they had learned at camp that day.

Tory and Tammy, two of our staff members, and I prepared the house for the summer. We put gauze over the mirrors, portraits, paintings, and the hanging lamp in order to protect them from any bugs and dirt that would have flown in with the breeze when the doors and windows were left open during the summer in the 1800s. We also put covers over the sofa and some of the chairs to protect them. Some of the furniture was rearranged, particularly in the hall and in the dining room. A few other changes were made throughout the house in order to invite our visitors into the Federal Period lifestyle. Every so often, I had the task of dusting our furniture and, at the end of the summer, I cleaned out the closet. It was a messy yet necessary challenge.

Throughout July we had Dairy Days and Game Days. I spent hours making and churning ice cream and butter, while occasionally joining the kids running around in the lawn playing the game of graces and hoops and sticks.

I ended my time at Sully by planning a volunteer tea. Our volunteers have been so wonderful this summer; they are always willing to help out and always have a lot of interesting stories to share. I thought planning a tea would be a nice opportunity to show our appreciation. It was successful, and a great hit among both our staff and volunteers.

This entire summer, I gave a ton of house tours. I was able to share my knowledge of the Lee family and history in general from what I learned as an intern combined with what I already knew from Juniata College, my school. I also had the chance to work on opportunities for the public to learn about the architecture at Sully. I made a brochure, sign, and a tour guide of the house and out buildings for our visitors to look at and learn from. Be sure to look for these new additions at Sully during your next visit!

Written by Kymberly Mattern, Sully Historic Site Intern, Summer 2013

*The Fairfax County Park Authority offers several intern positions during summer months. Sarah Guthrie writes about her takeaways as one of those interns this year.*

I am a senior history major at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA., and I interned this summer with the Fairfax County Park Authority Cultural Resources Archaeology lab. I mainly worked with artifacts being unearthed at the colonial tobacco port town of Colchester near the Occoquan River. I live quite close to Colchester, so there was an extra boost to the fun of the internship because I was learning about the history of my local home area.

The internship was a great opportunity to learn new skills that will be applicable in my future, as well as a chance to help the archaeologists check off the requirements of their to-do lists. Time spent at the lab became a learning experience that revealed both the work and the fun side of archaeology. Seeing the process of archaeology evolve and all the effort that goes into it - from the digging of an artifact out of the ground to its cleaning and placement into the archives - was fascinating to learn.

One of the best moments of the internship was near the end of the summer when the artifact washing backlog was eliminated. An archeological lab with no backlog is rather unusual, and some of my co-workers said that many places they knew about had artifact backlogs of several years. I had done pretty much nothing but wash artifacts the first two weeks of my internship, and did plenty more throughout the summer. Even with many other people washing as well, I felt for most of the summer like the backlog was never-ending. Then, one day I noticed the Colchester non-feature bags were almost gone, and I got excited by the idea that the washing might get completed. Soon after, digging began on an area called the Kite Property near the

Occoquan River, but the bags from there were much smaller than those from the previous dig, and thus quicker to wash. Throughout the next week or so, the Kite Property artifacts kept coming in and were being washed almost immediately. When I got to last pile of artifacts I pressed on with washing to get it done and the bins for artifacts waiting to be washed were finally empty! Weather conditions then sent the field team inside where they wrote reports, and because they were not digging up more artifacts the backlog disappeared.

I am proud to have been part of eliminating a backlog and making sure that Fairfax County's archaeological lab does not become one of those places with a backlog of several years. Having no backlog allows workers to attend to other tasks, including the identification and cataloguing of artifacts that enhance knowledge of history.

Looking to the future, I hope to be working at a museum or historic site in the education or library/collections department. The knowledge about archaeology learned through the Fairfax County Park Authority will be valuable for my goals because many historic sites have archaeological programs and artifacts in their museums.



Work truck and sign

pictures from CART blog) <http://cartarchaeology.wordpress.com/>



The lab with Jonathan screening artifacts (both



Picture of me