

## MAGAZINE RESTORATION AND MILITARY PROGRAMMING

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## The Magazine Restoration and Military Programming

*Right:* Archaeologists search for evidence that reveals more about the Magazine's original appearance.

*Below:* Actor Interpreter Nat Lasley portrays a Continental Army officer.

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Colonial Williamsburg conducts research to fully and accurately share the significant events that shaped our nation. As part of these efforts, the Foundation is undertaking an extensive investigation and restoration of the Magazine, which played a key role in the Gunpowder Incident. Further philanthropic investment is needed to accurately restore and authentically interpret this historically significant building.

One of the Foundation's original structures, the Magazine stands as the primary source document for its rich and impactful story. Having witnessed history, the structure bears the evidence that will help researchers who are exploring what the structure looked like, how it was used and what happened here.

The building was last restored in 1938 in the Colonial Revival style. This work included plastering over the interior walls, meaning it has been more than 80 years since anyone has seen or studied them. Today, through new technology and analytical processes, we can better understand and interpret the structure and the important events that occurred here.

It is already known that the incorrect type and number of weapons were previously on display and the orientation and size of the windows and access to the structure were likely different. The original height and defense of the wall are being researched.

Archaeological excavation inside the wall has uncovered fragments of clay roofing tiles, suggesting that the structure's roof was not composed of wooden shingles as it is today. Archaeologists have also discovered large



postholes which may indicate that a wooden structure previously adjoined the building.

The Magazine was constructed in 1715 as a storage facility for arms and ammunition dispatched from London for the defense of the colony. In 1775, it also was the site of a historically consequential dispute known as the Gunpowder Incident. This confrontation between Virginia's last Royal Governor, John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, and a militia led by Patrick Henry became a pivotal moment for the American Revolution. The work underway is scheduled to be completed by 2025, the 250th anniversary of this turning point in the fight for American independence.

This project lies at the heart of our preservation and education aspirations. When we reopen the renovated Magazine, our Military Program interpreters will explain the purpose of the Magazine as well as its role in the history of Virginia and the nation. Through this project we also will support Military Program staff, the Musket Range and Fifes & Drums. Your support of this project will help us discover and share valuable historical context, inform interpretation programs and preserve this invaluable structure.