Welcome to Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area!

The buildings and streets of our community hold many stories. Here, you will meet people from different places and very different circumstances as they work, sacrifice, endure, and achieve. These people will help you explore ideas of democracy, freedom, ingenuity and revolution, and share the diverse origins of America.

Throughout the city you will encounter costumed interpreters who are here to help you on your journey of discovery. At “performances,” you will see interpreters portraying people who lived in Williamsburg during the period of the American Revolution, 1763 to 1783. You will meet costumed interpreters leading tours at key locations throughout the area and working in historic trade shops, practicing 18th-century trades. The individuals you encounter will highlight many aspects of the political, social, cultural, and economic climate of Virginia’s colonial capital.

In our trade shops, you will find tradespeople demonstrating American ingenuity. From melting metal to arm revolutionary forces, to cultivating the land to feed the community, tradespeople used the resources around them to forge a new nation.

Within the homes, government buildings, and taverns of this colonial capital city, you will hear people from all walks of life debating the definition of “We the People.”

Some lived and worked here in Williamsburg by choice, others were brought or kept here by force, and some had been here long before any newcomers arrived. All these individuals shaped our nation’s ideas on equality and freedom.

Be sure to ask questions and engage with those you meet as they are here to share stories with you. The conversations and debates that began here in Williamsburg in the 18th-century continue today, and we encourage you to add your voice to the American experiment.
Our mission: That the future may learn from the past.

At Colonial Williamsburg, we are committed to creating an environment where together, we can explore our complex history in a manner that is respectful for all. Violators of this policy will be asked to leave the premises.

For your safety and their diets, please refrain from petting or feeding the animals.