



TOUR – Ferry Farm

9 October 2013

Sponsor: Randy Fennemore

Presenters: Mara Kaktins and Laura Galke

CERAMICS AT FERRY FARM

The recent discovery of 18th century glue residues on excavated ceramics from Ferry Farm, George Washington's boyhood home, has raised several questions. Associated with George's mother Mary, these ceramics include tea and tableware.

- Why was Mary mending her ceramics?
- Were these wares intended for post-repair use, or simply for display?
- What do these sociotechnical artifacts say about a woman in Mary's social position?

We will present preliminary results of chemical analysis of the glues as well as explain what experiments were conducted. Meet at Ferry Farm, on Route 3 East in Stafford County. From Fredericksburg, turn right just after the Ferry Road stoplight





The framework of the family home was discovered in 2008 after an exhaustive archaeological search spanning decades. Now the Washington farmhouse has been reproduced as a living history museum for all ages to explore.



Mara Kaktins

Archaeology Laboratory Supervisor
at The George Washington Foundation

The George Washington Foundation

Apr 2012 - Dec 2020

8 years 9 months

Archaeologist - Ceramics and Glass Specialist

Archaeology Laboratory Supervisor

In September 2019, Laura Galke joined DHR as the agency's new chief curator. Most recently, Laura served as an archaeologist for the George Washington Foundation at George Washington's childhood home, Ferry Farm, near Fredericksburg. Additionally, she has conducted field work throughout the Chesapeake Bay region, focusing on the historical period.

Her past experience also includes stints as a field director for cultural resource management firms, as a laboratory supervisor, field director and instructor at Washington & Lee University, and as the assistant southern regional archaeologist in the Maryland Historical Trust's MAC Lab (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory).

In 2012, members of the Archeological Society of Virginia recognized her as "Archaeologist of the Year."



Laura Galke
Chief Curator
Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Among her pursuits, Laura Galke collects “colonial hair curling tongs,” an interest that no doubt informs her professional work, as evidenced by an article she authored,

“Tressed for Success: Male Hair Care and Wig Hair Curlers at George Washington’s Childhood Home,” published in the journal *Winterthur Portfolio*, Volume 52, Summer - Autumn 2018.



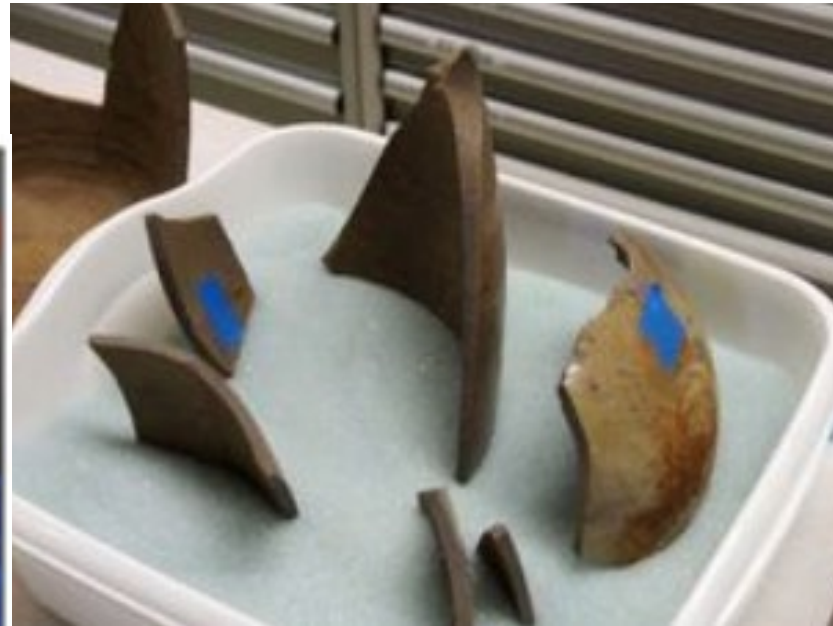
18th Century Curling Tongs

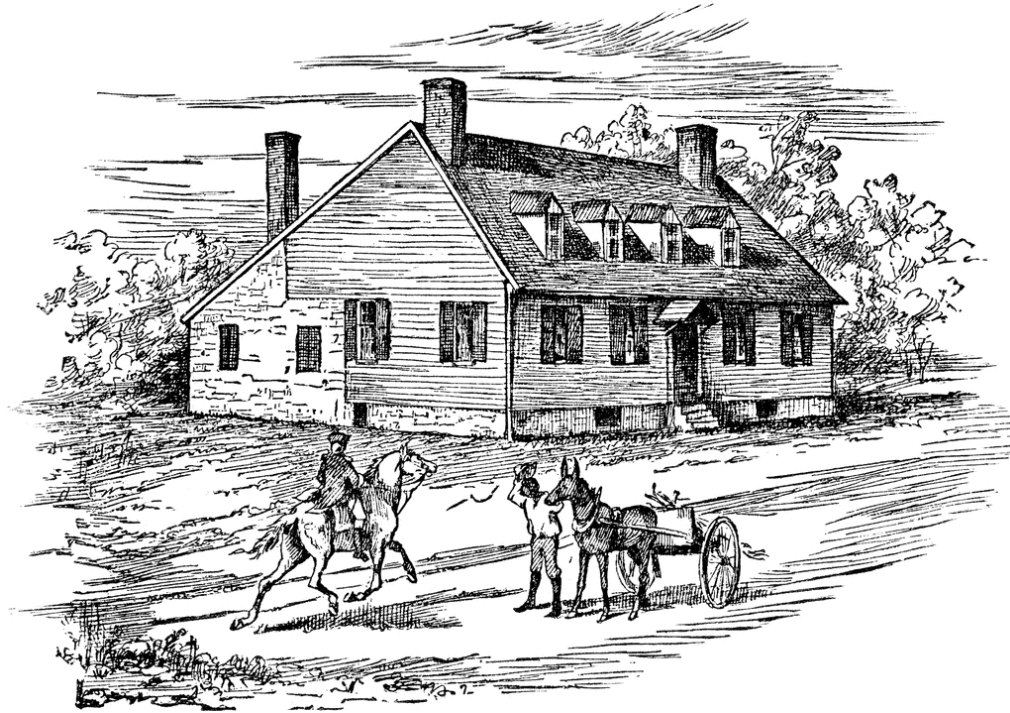
Once outdoors, you can follow the app trail stops, explore the demonstration gardens, stroll the old ferry road, enjoy one of the many hiking trails or do some bird watching.





The parlor had a corner cupboard built into the house and on display. There are several ceramics with glue holding broken pieces together. The original artifacts with glue survived all those years.





As was the custom at the time, the home's front entrance faced the river. Since it was built on an escarpment, it was visually stunning and most impressive to anyone who viewed it from the other side of the river.

FERRY FARM MIDDEN

In the 18th century, they opened windows or doors to throw their garbage out, so a wealth of artifacts was found in the midden.

Plans are underway to fill the midden with “trash” again for a better visual understanding of what it would have looked like. Most of the gentry had given up eating wild animals by then, but the remains of raccoons, squirrel, fish and possums were found in the midden.











