



Highland Updates September 15, 2017

Trails

Thanks to a generous in-kind donation from Jim Murray, there are eight miles of rustic trails on the Highland property. Highland also completed a successful [Tribefunding](#) campaign to add historic interpretation. A large proportion of donors to Highland's Tribefunding campaign, like in Highland's other advancement initiatives, are *new* donors to William & Mary. Local and regional alumni chapters are already involved in trail maintenance. A soft opening of the trails will occur in September, with a grand opening to the public later in the fall.

Digital Monroe Papers

This summer Highland together with Special Collections at William & Mary Libraries submitted a second-round grant proposal to the NHPRC for the digitization project *James Monroe Online*. Successful projects will begin after January 1, 2018. A potential donor of matching funds for the NHPRC grant, should it be awarded, is the National Society of the Children of the American Revolution, whose president has chosen James Monroe Online for the national project this year. A private donor in Charlottesville has also expressed interest in supporting through matching funds.

Augmented Reality

The Highland team is deep in the development of an augmented reality (AR) tour experience. Highland is working on this project as the pilot U.S. site for ARtGlass, which already works on cultural sites in Europe. If the technology succeeds and we are able to deliver this tour, it will provide an experience of archaeological discovery and the legacy of James Monroe.

Discovering History

Publicity about the remarkable discovery of James Monroe's 1799 home, and the identification of his 1818 guesthouse continues to be positive. Executive director Sara Bon-Harper is the primary spokesperson, and appears in many venues raising awareness about our Monroe efforts. A [C-Span video](#) from March 2017 tells the story.

Emerald Ash Borer

Highland has begun a preventive treatment for the Emerald Ash Borer that has recently arrived in Albemarle County. This costly treatment will need to be repeated every two years until the insect has moved on, and Highland's 100+ ash trees are no longer at risk.

Community Research

Highland has recently met several neighbors with the family name Monroe, and an oral history of descending from the enslaved community at Monroe's Highland. These relationships are in their infancy, and promise to be enriching.

Partnership Events

One of the ways that Highland extends its reach is by hosting community events. This summer we offered the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities' Folklife Apprenticeship Showcase, a series of children's

language camps with Speak! Language Center and the International School of Charlottesville, a public July 4th celebration with Heifetz International (with thanks to Chris Little), the Tuesday Tunes series of evening concerts with the Front Porch, and the Albemarle County Fair.

Attendance

Our public visitation is markedly down in recent weeks. Attendance had been on a downward trend, and it appears that the aftermath of the August 12 rally in Charlottesville has had a further dramatic effect. Public programs such as partnership events and family programs have balanced the decline.

Links

Highland home page: highland.org

Tribefunding: <https://www.givecampus.com/schools/WilliamandMary/the-highland-trails-project/?a=411133>

C-Span video: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?426144-1/james-monroes-highland>