

TRAVEL

400 YEARS OF HISTORY

Historic Triangle of Virginia hosts 400th birthday of Jamestown

By **J. ERIC ECKARD**
Assistant News Editor

JAMESTOWN, Va. — Next month, a 17th-century replica ship, the Godspeed, will begin an 80-day tour along the East Coast, making stops at six major ports along the way.

The Godspeed was one of the original ships that brought colonists to Jamestown, the country's first permanent English-speaking settlement.

In other words, the birthplace of the United States.

By itself, the Godspeed tour seems like a major undertaking to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown.

But this is just the first of 10 major events scheduled to commemorate this historic birthday.

"We should be able to put Virginia on the map," said Kevin Crossett, public relations manager for Jamestown 2007, the organization coordinating the 18-month celebration.

Really, Virginia's "Historic Triangle" — Jamestown, Williamsburg and Yorktown — already is on the map, with an estimated 3½ million visitors to these sites each year.

But in continuing a tradition that started in 1807 with Jamestown's 200th birthday gala, quadricentennial organizers are bringing together 135 communities and incorporating the American Indian culture into the commemoration.

"That's the first time this has happened," Crossett said.

Most of us have heard the story of Pocahontas and Capt. John Smith, through Disney animated movies, an Elvis song or history books.

And a new movie is retelling the tale of Jamestown.

"The New World," starring Colin Farrell as Smith, was filmed in Virginia and debuted on the East Coast in December in Colonial Williamsburg. After being released in January in theaters, the movie grossed more than \$26 million for producers and filmmaker Terrence Malick, who lent his vision of one of the first encounters between Europeans and Indians in the New World to the movie.

"Actually, there were three cultures that converged — Powhatan, English and African," said Debby



Padgett of the Jamestown Settlement, adding that the first documented Africans in Virginia came from Angola as indentured servants.

Main events for Jamestown 2007 include "Virginia Indian Heritage Events" from Oct. 5-6 in Williamsburg and "African-American Imprint on America," with several activities throughout the 18-month gala.

Today, there are actually two Jamestowns — Jamestown Settlement and Historic Jamestowne. The

former was built for the 350th birthday party in 1957 and is a replica of the triangular fort and its interior buildings, as well as the ships that brought the settlers to the New World. The latter is the actual fort site, with continuing archaeological digs and statues of Smith and Pocahontas, as well as the Jamestown Memorial Church.

Jamestown Settlement

Over the years, Jamestown Settlement has been adding, replacing and renovating buildings and structures, but the Discovery Tower — a 80-foot-tall monument to the settlers — remains.

"We've been gradually replacing all the buildings in the fort to try to make them more historically accurate," Padgett said. "But we've retained one thing from 1957 — the Discovery Tower."

"The World of 1607" is one of the signature events for the 400th anniversary, taking place throughout the entire 18-month party at the Jamestown Settlement's 30,000-square-foot exhibit hall. A 15th-century copy of the Magna Carta will be on

display there.

"We're transforming our museum for 2007," Padgett said.

Historic Jamestowne

A few miles away at Historic Jamestowne, archaeologists have recovered 750,000 remnants of the original site of the fort, part of which now is under water.

"Every week, we get something new," said Bly Straube, Historic Jamestowne's senior curator.

Straube and the rest of the staff are trying to identify a skeleton found two years ago, theorizing that it is that of Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold, who would have been as famous as John Smith had he lived.

"He recruited John Smith," Straube said.

Although recent DNA tests couldn't confirm the skeleton was that of Gosnold, researchers continue their efforts to identify the bones.

America's Anniversary Weekend set for May 11-13, 2007, marks the actual landing at Jamestown.

Colonial Williamsburg Williamsburg was Virginia's capital until 1765 when it was moved to Richmond. A few months ago, newly elected Gov. Tim Kaine took his oath of office in Williamsburg to help commemorate the upcoming celebration.

Williamsburg was the first place Patrick Henry was called a traitor for speaking out against the Stamp Act. George Washington was a burgess there for 16 years before he was named general of the Army. The church bell in the Bruton Parish Church was constructed by the same craftsmen who built the Liberty



Telegram photos / J. Eric Eckard

A replica of the Susan Constant, left, one of three ships that brought English settlers to Jamestown in 1607, is on display at the Jamestown Settlement. At top, a horse-drawn buggy meanders through the streets of Colonial Williamsburg. Above, a Revolutionary War re-enactor shows off Continental Army encampment at the Yorktown Victory Center. Below left, a farmhouse, complete with an outdoor fire pit, sits at the edge of Colonial Williamsburg.

IF YOU GO

■ For a complete list of the 10 signature events and other activities planned for America's 400th anniversary:

www.jamestown2007.org

■ Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center are operated by the same foundation.

www.historyisfun.org

■ APVA Preservation Virginia oversees operations at 24 historical locations in Virginia, including Historic Jamestowne. www.apva.org or www.historicjamestowne.org

■ Colonial Williamsburg's restoration started in 1926, when the Rev. W.A.R. Goodwin, rector of the Bruton Parish Church, asked philanthropist John D. Rockefeller for financial help. Rockefeller invested \$35 million of his own money into the project.

www.colonialwilliamsburg.com

■ Virginia is for (history) lovers.

www.visitwilliamsburg.com

Lodging

■ Williamsburg Inn

■ Williamsburg Lodge

■ Woodlands Hotel and Suites

■ Kingsmill Resort and Spa — www.kingsmill.com

Area attractions

■ Bacon's Castle — www.apva.org

■ Chippokes Plantation State Park —

www.state.va.us/dcr/parks/chippoke

■ Berkeley Plantation —

www.berkeleyplantation.com

Bly Straube, senior curator for Historic Jamestowne, shows off some of the hundreds of thousands of artifacts found from the original Jamestown settlement.

