

# Chesapeake: Historical Inquiry

*Ronald G. Helms  
Wright State University*

## **Introduction**

The Dayton American History Project is a professional development program for teachers of U.S. history in the fifth, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades. The three and one-half year project is funded through the “Teaching American History” grant program of the U.S. Department of Education (<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/tahgrants/>.) “Citizenship, Creativity, and Invention” are the themes of the Dayton Teaching American History Project, which is directed jointly by the Dayton Public Schools and Wright State University in partnership with ThinkTV and area historical museums and organizations.

The \$1 Million Partnership grant received \$916,000 plus dollars from the Teaching American History federal funds and together with numerous state and local grants exceeded the \$1 Million grant. The Teaching American History grants are highly competitive federal grants that may be awarded to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in partnership with universities, humanities organizations, libraries, or museums (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/index.html>)

An online lesson bank of 300 deeply-aligned American history lessons, created by an historian from trusted sources such as the National Archives and Library of Congress, is available to all Dayton Public School teachers twenty-four hours a day at the Teaching American History WWW site. This Teaching American History WWW site provides American history curriculum and lesson plans for grades 5, 8, 9, and 10 at [http://www.dps.k12.oh.us/academic/secsoc/americanhistory/teaching\\_01.htm](http://www.dps.k12.oh.us/academic/secsoc/americanhistory/teaching_01.htm)

## **The Chesapeake Expedition**

The teachers desired mobile summer institutes. As project director, I learned that few southwestern Ohio teachers had visited Gettysburg and the historical areas of Virginia. Teaching About Early American Historic Sites: Virginia, the Chesapeake, and Washington, D.C. became a mandatory goal for several years of the TAH institute, which included an expedition to the Chesapeake region and sites such as Gettysburg National Battlefield, Smithsonian’s American History Program, D.C. memorials, Mt. Vernon, Manassas, Colonial Williamsburg, and the National Road Zane Grey Museum. The expedition offered free college credit, free meals and lodging, free transportation, as well as stipends to purchase classroom resource materials.

Since the expedition required reading for both course credit as well as preparation for the actual historical sites, dinner meetings were held prior to the expedition to discuss the following texts:

Ellis, J., *His Excellency: George Washington*.

Edinger, M., & Fins, S. *Far Away and Long Ago: Young Historians in the Classroom*.

Finkelman, P. *Slavery and the Founders*.

McCullough, D. *1776*

Price, D. *Love and Hate in Jamestown: John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a New Nation*.

Based on the readings the performance objectives were the following:

Participants will construct lesson plans relevant to grade levels 5, 8, 9, & 10 in American History, using the Teaching American History Lesson Plan format that includes:

Designing lessons/units that will give students the opportunities to explore, engage and experience history.

Ohio Social Studies Academic Standards, benchmarks and grade level indicators for topics in American History.

Writing essays on the required history texts.

Identifying data based research for applications of specific skills for success in teaching/learning history content.

Developing an assortment of informal/formal assessments for student evaluation of skills and content taught.

Including activities that for differentiated instructional strategies for all students to learn.

Organizing Units/Lessons for the Teaching American History web site for other teachers to use.

The project director arranged for two mini-vans for the transport of the eight-ten teachers per historical visit. Adequate space was provided for baggage, snacks, and for the purchase of teaching materials. Laminated foldout maps of DC were given to each teacher; each teacher received a DC Metro pass. The project director selected a “branded” hotel within walking distance of the DC metro.

### **The Chesapeake Expedition: Implementation**

The Gettysburg National Military Park (<http://www.nps.gov/gett/>) is a critical visit and experience for educators and for students. In addition to WWW resources, we equipped all teachers with the following guides:

National Park Civil War Series (1994). *The Battle of Gettysburg*, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior (1998). *Gettysburg – Official Map and Guide*, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior: *A Field Trip Guide for Educators – The Battle of Gettysburg*.

The Battle of Gettysburg has important focal points: Little Round Top, the Wheatfield, Devil's Den, the Peach Orchard, Culp's Hill, Pickett's Charge, Cemetery Hill, Cemetery Ridge, Seminary Ridge, a cast of leading generals, and statistics that may seem arcane to both teacher and student.

Several of the “tavern dining inns” may add a to this unique visit (<http://www.gettysburg.travel/visitor/index.asp>.) This same WWW site provides a number of historical package visits for those who prefer to leave the planning to others; visit [http://www.gettysburg.travel/visitor/ps.asp?ps\\_category\\_id=280](http://www.gettysburg.travel/visitor/ps.asp?ps_category_id=280) for more information.

The single premier WWW site is The Gettysburg National Military Park at <http://www.nps.gov/gett/>. The WWW site For Teachers (<http://www.nps.gov/gett/forteachers/index.htm>) suggest planning a trip, curriculum materials, and even a “Traveling Trunk” for those students who may not be able to visit Gettysburg.

An essential factor in an education tour is to employ a Licensed Battle Field Guide (<http://www.nps.gov/gett/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>.) The fee is extremely reasonable given the knowledge and personal attention that the Licensed Battle Field Guides provide.

Washington, DC (<http://www.washington.org/>) is hot, humid, and a tourist magnet in the summer. DC is a logical area to visit, and many tour companies provide assistance. Laminated foldout maps of DC were given to each teacher; each teacher received a DC Metro pass. The project director selected a “branded” hotel within walking distance of the DC metro.

Old Town Trolleys (<http://www.trolleytours.com/washington-dc/>) provided a nice tourist's eye view of the capitol, and also provided an “on-off” opportunity that fit our schedule.

Next, I scheduled the teachers for a tour of DC in the evening by way of the Potomac River. We provided the teachers with tickets to the Potomac River Boat Company (<http://www.potomacriverboatco.com/>) and sights included Washington's majestic landmarks, such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the Kennedy Center.

The Chart House in Alexandria (<http://www.chart-house.com/>) offers excellent dining as well as “spectacular views of the Capitol, Washington Mall from its waterfront location on the Potomac. Old Ebbitt Grill (<http://www.ebbitt.com/main/home.cfm?Section=Main&Category=History>) is a must visit

experience for every DC trip. Phillips Seafood Buffet (<http://www.phillipsseafood.com/index.cfm?page=menus&id=19>) while more tourist orientated, is located within easy walking distance of the mall. McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant (<http://www.mccormickandschmicks.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.display&pageID=338>) is simply delightful.

We had several reservations for our visit to Washington DC: The National Museum of the American Indian, the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the National Archives, The World War II exhibit, The Viet Nam Wall, The FDR Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, and MT Vernon. This is a very ambitious schedule, and for the most part, we toured as a group. Pre-arranging professional tours of sights added to the educational value, and the teachers contributed to the DC economy by purchasing educational artifacts that were destined for classroom use.

Colonial Williamsburg (<http://www.history.org/>) is a short drive from the metropolis of Washington, D.C., but historically, the drive to this tidewater area is a journey of over 400 years. Our Ohio license plates were celebrating 200 years of history, while the Virginia license plates were reminding us that Jamestown history is over 400 years old. My wife and I are careful to avoid Williamsburg in the summers, and we prefer a week's residence in a Williamsburg condo during the Christmas season.

The Official Williamsburg Guides were preordered for the teachers. Tickets were preordered in order to save some dollars and especially to save time. Each teacher received the special Governor's Key-to-the-City Pass at \$49.00, and at an Internet price of \$44.10. Tourists were actually waiting in two-hour lines at the ticket center.

Our tickets included access to as many as 20 to 40 Historic Area buildings and exhibits, such as the Capitol, Raleigh Tavern, Great Hopes Plantation, all historic trades sites (wheelwright, blacksmith, silversmith, milliner, wigmaker, etc.), all gardens, and all original 18th-century exhibition sites (the Courthouse, Gaol, Magazine, and the homes of Peyton Randolph and George Wythe), along with admission to Revolutionary City®. Also includes Capitol tour, orientation tour, regular daytime programs, and viewing of the movie classic Williamsburg—The Story of a Patriot. Plus, free parking at the Visitor Center and use of Historic Area shuttle buses. Because I am very familiar with Williamsburg, we by-passed the lines to the Historic Area shuttle buses and parked the vans near Raleigh Tavern.

Williamsburg is a town that the teachers could enjoy without a specific schedule, and we broke into small groups and visited the ticketed area of town. I had reservations for our group at Christiana Campbell's Tavern (<http://www.history.org/visit/diningExperience/christianaCampbells/>)

and we spent nearly three hours enjoying a historical dinner and entertainment; we were provide our own dining room, and conversation grew loud. The Trellis restaurant (<http://www.thetrellis.com/>) is frequented more by locals than the tourist population.

Of course, we scheduled time for the Williamsburg Education Center:

The Educational Resource Center offers a centralized location to obtain teaching materials. Some items available for sale at the center include: lesson plans, videos, children's literature, teacher's resource books, and reproduction artifacts and documents such as the Virginia Gazette, and the Virginia Declaration of Rights

Jamestown and Yorktown (<http://www.historyisfun.org/>) required a full day to visit and to participate in a planned education seminar. Of course, we pre-arranged the special teacher seminar and teacher tours of Jamestown and Yorktown.

The teachers were experiencing U.S. history in a way that John Dewey would approve "learning by doing." We found our luggage area nearly full as the teachers carefully selected classroom displays and historical maps, pictures, and charts for teaching lessons.

Monticello (<http://www.monticello.org/>) and Michie Tavern (<http://www.michietavern.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewpage?CFID=271050&CFTOKEN=78807395>) are a short drive from the Virginia Tidewater to the Virginia Piedmont. Because summer tourists are few in this area, it is a simple matter to tour Monticello.

It is normal to expect that urban teachers from Dayton to ask about Sally Hemings ([http://www.monticello.org/plantation/hemingscontro/hemings-jefferson\\_contro.html](http://www.monticello.org/plantation/hemingscontro/hemings-jefferson_contro.html).) On two recent

occasions, The Monticello guides acknowledged that the Thomas Jefferson Foundation agreed with DNA testing that Jefferson fathered several children with Hemings. However, a third guide (southern gentlemen) feigned indignation at the question, and dismissed the Jefferson-Hemings relationship as irrelevant.

Shortly after the DNA test results were released in November 1998, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation formed a research committee consisting of nine members of the foundation staff, including four with Ph.D.s. In January 2000, the committee reported its finding that the weight of all known evidence - from the DNA study, original documents, written and oral historical accounts, and statistical data - indicated a high probability that Thomas Jefferson was the father of Eston Hemings, and that he was perhaps the father of all six of Sally Hemings' children listed in Monticello records - Harriet (born 1795; died in infancy); Beverly (born 1798); an unnamed daughter (born 1799; died in infancy); Harriet (born 1801); Madison (born 1805); and Eston (born 1808).

Since then, a committee commissioned by the Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society, after reviewing essentially the same material, reached different conclusions, namely that Sally Hemings was only a minor figure in Thomas Jefferson's life and that it is very unlikely he fathered any of her children. This committee also suggested in its report, issued in April 2001, that Jefferson's younger brother Randolph (1755-1815) was more likely the father of at least some of Sally Hemings' children.

Although the relationship between Jefferson and Sally Hemings has been for many years, and will surely continue to be, a subject of intense interest to historians and the public, the evidence is not definitive, and the complete story may never be known. The Foundation encourages its visitors and patrons, based on what evidence does exist, to make up their own minds as to the true nature of the relationship.

### **The High Road or The Low Road**

The return trip to Dayton Ohio offers at least two choices. And the project director chose both roads with different expeditions. The "high road" refers to a return trip using I-70 through Ohio and joining the "Old National Road or U.S. 40 to dine at the Old Market House Inn in Zanesville, and then to tour the National Road Zane Grey Museum near Zanesville. The "low road" provided a return trip through Kentucky and dinner at the Bonefish Grill, followed by a guided tour of one of the U.S.'s best restored forts: Fort Boonsboro.

The "high road" provided two very interesting experiences with dinner at The Old Market House Inn Restaurant and a substantial narrated tour of the National Road Zane Grey Museum.

The Old Market House Inn Restaurant (<http://www.theoldmarkethouseinn.com/story.html>), situated across the street from the site of Zanesville's original farmers' market, preserves an era of pioneer Zanesville while offering a gourmet menu in an atmosphere of the bygone days.

The National Road Zane Grey Museum (<http://www.ohiohistoryteachers.org/03/05/se03.shtml>) is nearly an hour due east of Columbus and can easily be a one-day field trip for many schools.

The "low road" provided another fish dinner in Lexington, Kentucky at the Bonefish Grill (<http://www.bonefishgrill.com/>) followed by a guided tour of nearby Fort Boonsboro. Fort Boonsboro was essential to U.S. history and to Kentucky history.

Colonel Henderson reached Boonsboro, with his party, a few days afterwards, and found the people there in a state of careless security, which evinced the most perfect self-confidence. A small fort, which the labor of two or three days would have rendered a sufficient protection against any sudden inroad of the Indians, had been suffered to remain unfinished and wholly useless, and it was not until this little colony had suffered severely from their indiscretion, that Fort Boonsboro was placed in a defensible condition.

### **The Chesapeake Expedition: Assessment**

Teacher participants rated all aspects of these educational trips as a ten of ten. The project director became one with the teacher team. The project director shared 100% of the expedition time with the

teachers, provided tours and narratives upon request, and was flexible to individual requests. These teachers are sharing a wealth of information with the Dayton Public School students.

### References:

- American Civil War Battle, Gettysburg Pennsylvania, July 1-3 1863. Retrieved January 9, 2009 from <http://americancivilwar.com/getty.html>.
- Bonefish Grill. Retrieved January 13, 2009 from (<http://www.bonefishgrill.com/>)
- Chart House in Alexandria. Retrieved January 11, 2009 from (<http://www.chart-house.com/>)
- Christiana Campbell's Tavern. Retrieved January 11, 2009 (<http://www.history.org/visit/diningExperience/christianaCampbells/>)
- Colonial Williamsburg. Retrieved January 10, 2009 (<http://www.history.org/>)
- The Dayton American History Grant. Retrieved January 5, 2009 from <http://www.dps.k12.oh.us/academic/secsoc/americanhistory/index.htm>.
- David McCullough's Talk at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership. Retrieved January 7, 2009 from <http://www.journeythroughhallowedground.org/jthg-mccullough-annual-mtg-2008.html>.
- Edinger, M., & Fins, S. (1998), *Far Away and Long Ago: Young Historians in the Classroom*, York, ME: Steinhouse Publishers
- Ellis, J. (2004), *His Excellency: George Washington*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies. Retrieved January 5, 2009 from <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>.
- Finkleman, P. (2001) *Slavery and the Founders*, New York, M.E. Sharp
- Fort Boonsboro. Retrieved January 15, 2009 from [http://books.google.com/books?id=L1gUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA163&lpg=PA163&dq=Fort+Boonsboro&source=bl&ots=LdYuDg16bH&sig=9fkCeHiB6whhK6DGZhd-amzJonk&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&resnum=15&ct=result#PPA163,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=L1gUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA163&lpg=PA163&dq=Fort+Boonsboro&source=bl&ots=LdYuDg16bH&sig=9fkCeHiB6whhK6DGZhd-amzJonk&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=15&ct=result#PPA163,M1)
- Gettysburg Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Retrieved January 5, 2009 from <http://www.gettysburg.travel/visitor/index.asp>
- The Gettysburg National Military Park. Retrieved December 12, 2008 from <http://www.nps.gov/gett/>.
- The Gettysburg National Military Park Licensed Battlefield Guide. Retrieved December 16, 2008 from <http://www.nps.gov/gett/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>
- Jamestown and Yorktown. Retrieved January 14, 2009 from (<http://www.historyisfun.org/>)
- McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant Retrieved January 16, 2009 <http://www.mccormickandschmicks.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.display&pageID=338>
- McCullough, D., (2005). *1776*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Michie Tavern. Retrieved January 14, 2009 from <http://www.michietavern.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewpage?CFID=271050&CFTOKEN=78807395>
- Monticello. Retrieved January 14, 2009 from (<http://www.monticello.org/>)
- The National Road Zane Grey Museum. Retrieved January 11, 2009 from (<http://www.ohiohistoryteachers.org/03/05/se03.shtml>)
- National History Day. Retrieved January 5, 2009 from <http://www.nationalhistoryday.org/>
- The Ohio Department of Education K-12 Academic Content Standards for K-12 Social Studies. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1706&ContentID=852&Content=59094>
- Old Ebbitt Grill. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from <http://www.ebbitt.com/main/home.cfm?Section=Main&Category=History>
- The Old Market House Inn Restaurant. Retrieved January 10, 2009 from (<http://www.theoldmarkethouseinn.com/story.html>)
- Old Town Trolleys. Retrieved January 16, 2009 from (<http://www.trolleytours.com/washington-dc/>)

Phillips Seafood Buffet. Retrieved January 16, 2009 from  
(<http://www.phillipsseafood.com/index.cfm?page=menus&id=19>)

Potomac River Boat Company January 5, 2009 from <http://www.potomacriverboatco.com/>.

Price, D. (2003) *Love and Hate in Jamestown: John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a New Nation*.  
New York: Alfred A. Knopf

Teaching American History.org Retrieved January 2, 2009 from  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/tahgrants/>.

Teaching American History project. Retrieved January 2, 2009 from  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/index.html>.

Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: A Printer-friendly format Brief Account. Retrieved January 15,  
2009 from [http://www.monticello.org/plantation/hemingscontro/hemings-jefferson\\_contro.html](http://www.monticello.org/plantation/hemingscontro/hemings-jefferson_contro.html)

The Trellis restaurant. Retrieved January 18, 2009 from <http://www.thetrellis.com/>

Washington, D.C. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from (<http://www.washington.org/>)