New experiences and engaging exhibits await at Jamestown Settlement, as the stories of real people and events unfold in refreshed permanent exhibition galleries that incorporate new historical research, immersive design and innovative technology to connect visitors with an expanded storyline of early Virginia.

Completed in 2019 as part of a $10.6 million phased enhancement of the 30,000-square-foot exhibition space – which originally debuted in 2007 – expansive galleries explore the convergence of Powhatan Indian, English and Angolan cultures in 17th-century Virginia presented in six major themes: Before Jamestown, Three Cultures, Virginia Company of London, Founding of Jamestown, 1619, and Jamestown 1699.

Exhibits feature an expanded collection of more than 500 period objects from Virginia, Europe and Africa – some on display for the first time – including portraits, documents, furnishings, toys, ceremonial and decorative objects, tools and weapons, and archaeological items. Dioramas and short films are accompanied by a one-of-a-kind experiential theater interactives that allow visitors to compare and contrast each of the three cultures, examine the impact of 1619 historical events that shaped Virginia, and discover personal stories displayed on monitors, life-size screens and projections in re-created settings.

DLR Group of Washington, D.C., served as lead architect, and Gallagher & Associates of Silver Spring, Md., as exhibit designer. Cortina Productions of McLean, Va., produced the films and interactives.

While at Jamestown Settlement, make time to view the introductory docudrama 1607: A Nation Takes Root and make historical connections alongside costumed historical interpreters outdoors in re-creations of a Powhatan Indian village, three 1607 ships and 1610-14 colonial fort.

Williamsburg, Virginia ★ historyisfun.org
1. BEFORE JAMESTOWN
2. THREE CULTURES
3. VIRGINIA COMPANY OF LONDON
4. FOUNDING OF JAMESTOWN
5. 1619 GALLERY
6. JAMESTOWN 1699

Refreshed Permanent Exhibition Galleries