

PENINSULA MAPPING PROJECT - 2013 PLAN

Historic Routes/Trails Mapping Project: The Peninsula

I have reviewed everything I have collected and created over the past several years and three things stand out. First, I have done a lot of persons and places research that is contained in binders and composition books. While initially useful (when the project was smaller) this has grown cumbersome. All these materials will be reorganized into folders linked to landmarks. This is not a perfect system, but I think better serves the spirit of the research model. Second, there are a lot of "loose ends," which are the result of partially complete research. While I cannot hope to master each of the disciplines I hope to better connect for the purposes of this project (eg. remote sensing, geology, cartography, traditional historic research, etc...) I need to understand each more than I do. Finally, it is clear the proposed internships (at UVA) to advance technical aspects of the project will need to be completed before significant additional progress can be made. While the proposed internship(s) might occur this summer they most likely will not. Either way, I plan to spend 2013 seeking funding for and performing research necessary to provide structure to the proposed internship(s).

2013 Monthly Plan

January is almost over. I plan to spend the next couple days and all of February reading various partially completed books. Presently, I am researching military fortifications design history, religion on the Peninsula and African American culture.

March. After having devoted a couple months to reading I will shift gears back to maps analysis and hopefully will have fresh eyes. I am very familiar with most maps depicting large regions of the Peninsula, but have spent less time analyzing property surveys, which often contain historic names and features no longer referenced elsewhere.

April and May. Remote Sensing. There is incredible potential here and my knowledge is far too shallow. I will continue analyzing creeks to differentiate between drainage patterns and roads.

June. I plan to focus this month upon creating a list of historic road segments. These will include sections of roads in undeveloped areas of the Peninsula or which became isolated as a result of road improvements.

July. Henning's Statutes at Large. In particular, I am looking for laws concerning roads, bridges, ferries and other means of transportation.

August. Storm surge, topographic and coast survey maps analysis. I will identify specific shoreline changes and make predictions concerning the impact of sea level rise upon settlement patterns. The coast survey maps from the mid-1800s are detailed enough to identify specific changes.

September and October. Land patents analysis and study of surveying techniques over the last few hundred years.

November. Identify sites within the Virginia Coastal Plain that “represent” sites once existing on the Peninsula and test theories regarding site location using available aerial photography and LiDAR data.

December. Consider progress and tweaks necessary to continue to advance the project.

2013 General Items

Each month I plan to continue creating and posting worksheet maps on the York County Historical Museum’s website (time permitting). While what information I can include is limited by available space and other factors I am hopeful these will provide insight into the research model.

Unfortunately, my time this year is very limited and I will have difficulty keeping up with all I have planned to do. As I stated at the beginning my focus this year will be the internships I hope we can coordinate through the University of Virginia. If I find pockets of time to pour into certain research topics I will. If not (and I am afraid that is more likely) I will simply continue to do everything I can to keep pulling things together.

2013 Proposed Quarterly Updates

1. In either April or May I will prepare and send my first quarterly update and plan to write about an early intersection that may have existed at about the current location of the Patrick Henry Airport (Newport News Williamsburg International Airport). My best guess is this intersection ceased to be significant in the early 1700s.
2. In August (or thereabouts) I plan to write an article concerning the colony’s efforts to legislate into existence better road networks.
3. In December I will send an update regarding our road to a bigger project. Hopefully, that update will describe a clearly visible thoroughfare into the sunset and not a sleepy woods trail. While I am happy to continue to work with the latter my goals require the former.

In the meantime, I enjoy the questions and insights I have received over the years from interested history and map lovers (My new email address is pemigholz@gmail.com.)

Happy New Year!

Paul

P.S. I recently read Yorktown’s Civil War Siege: Drums Along the Warwick (by John V. Quarstein and J. Michael Moore). It is well written, informative and provides a glimpse into the personalities of the individuals involved. It’s a good read!