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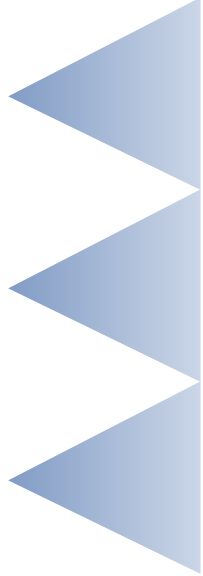
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**Tom Higgins
at Quarterpath
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Artifacts From Archaeological Dig On Quarterpath Property Far Exceed Expectations

Riverside bought the 350-acre Quarterpath Property in Williamsburg in 2004, with plans for it to be the site of a new medical campus that will include a medical office building, a convalescent center and the new Doctors Hospital of Williamsburg. The property, however, has substantial historical significance. One of Riverside's first acts was to donate to Williamsburg a piece of land that was the sight of a Civil War fort and battlefield.

To further explore the property's archaeological value, Riverside contacted James River Institute for Archaeology to determine if the site might contain valuable secrets from the 17th and 18th centuries. JRIA assigned senior archaeologist Garrett Fesler and project archaeologist Tom Higgins to lead the study and oversee any possible excavation.

According to Fesler, "The Quarterpath tract holds campsites of Native Americans that predate the settlement of Jamestown. It also has traces of African-American slaves or indentured servants, and tenants and their families from near the end of the seventeenth century."

He explains, "Riverside asked us to do a formal survey and to help them make sure they were fulfilling any responsibilities they had regarding the property. Our excavation work has been on what we refer to as Site 44WB0100, where we found the archaeological secrets to be remarkably well preserved. There are two primary components, one on top of a small rise (upper component 40AE) and a lower component (40AH) at the base of the rise. Both may have contained as many as three dwellings."

The archaeological team determined that the lower site was the first to have occupants and that activity later gravitated to the upper site, although the two probably were not active at the same time. Activity at the lower site was probably from the 1670s to the 1720s, whereas the upper site was occupied from the 1740s to the 1770s.

"We got involved in 2005," say Fesler. "We felt the sites had been occupied, but we didn't anticipate the amount of artifacts and information we found. The wealth of information from both sites far exceeded our expectations."

Tom Higgins was at the site on a daily



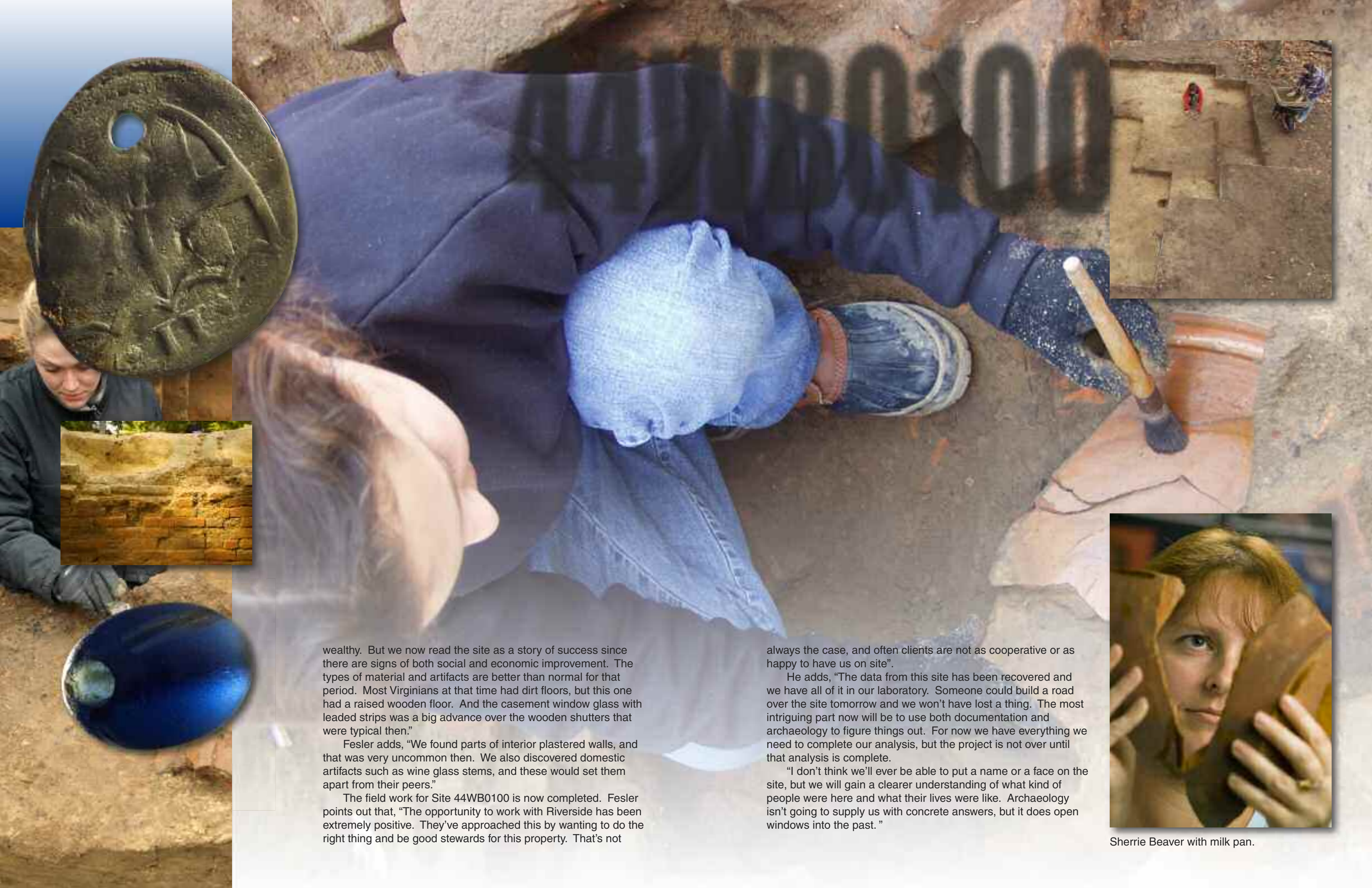
basis, and he found a lot of puzzling things as he dismantled the site. He recalls, "I kept telling Garrett 'you're not going to believe what we found today.' We would have a notion of what we could expect, but those notions frequently were disabused. It was exciting, because almost every day we'd wonder what new information would come out.

"At the lower component site we found some post holes and a brick-lined cellar. In those days you put down posts then set timbers on them. I figured there must be more posts, and that this building might be unconventional for its time. The cellar walls had the same orientation as the posts and we eventually found other postholes. Other buildings began to emerge and now we had a complex with a variety of events and people.

"There might have been a tenant farmer with limited means, but who eventually prospered enough to build a cellar under one end of the house."

Fesler recalls that, "We were looking for folks at a low economic scale, and figured they probably couldn't leave as much for us as if they had been





wealthy. But we now read the site as a story of success since there are signs of both social and economic improvement. The types of material and artifacts are better than normal for that period. Most Virginians at that time had dirt floors, but this one had a raised wooden floor. And the casement window glass with leaded strips was a big advance over the wooden shutters that were typical then.”

Fesler adds, “We found parts of interior plastered walls, and that was very uncommon then. We also discovered domestic artifacts such as wine glass stems, and these would set them apart from their peers.”

The field work for Site 44WB0100 is now completed. Fesler points out that, “The opportunity to work with Riverside has been extremely positive. They’ve approached this by wanting to do the right thing and be good stewards for this property. That’s not

always the case, and often clients are not as cooperative or as happy to have us on site”.

He adds, “The data from this site has been recovered and we have all of it in our laboratory. Someone could build a road over the site tomorrow and we won’t have lost a thing. The most intriguing part now will be to use both documentation and archaeology to figure things out. For now we have everything we need to complete our analysis, but the project is not over until that analysis is complete.

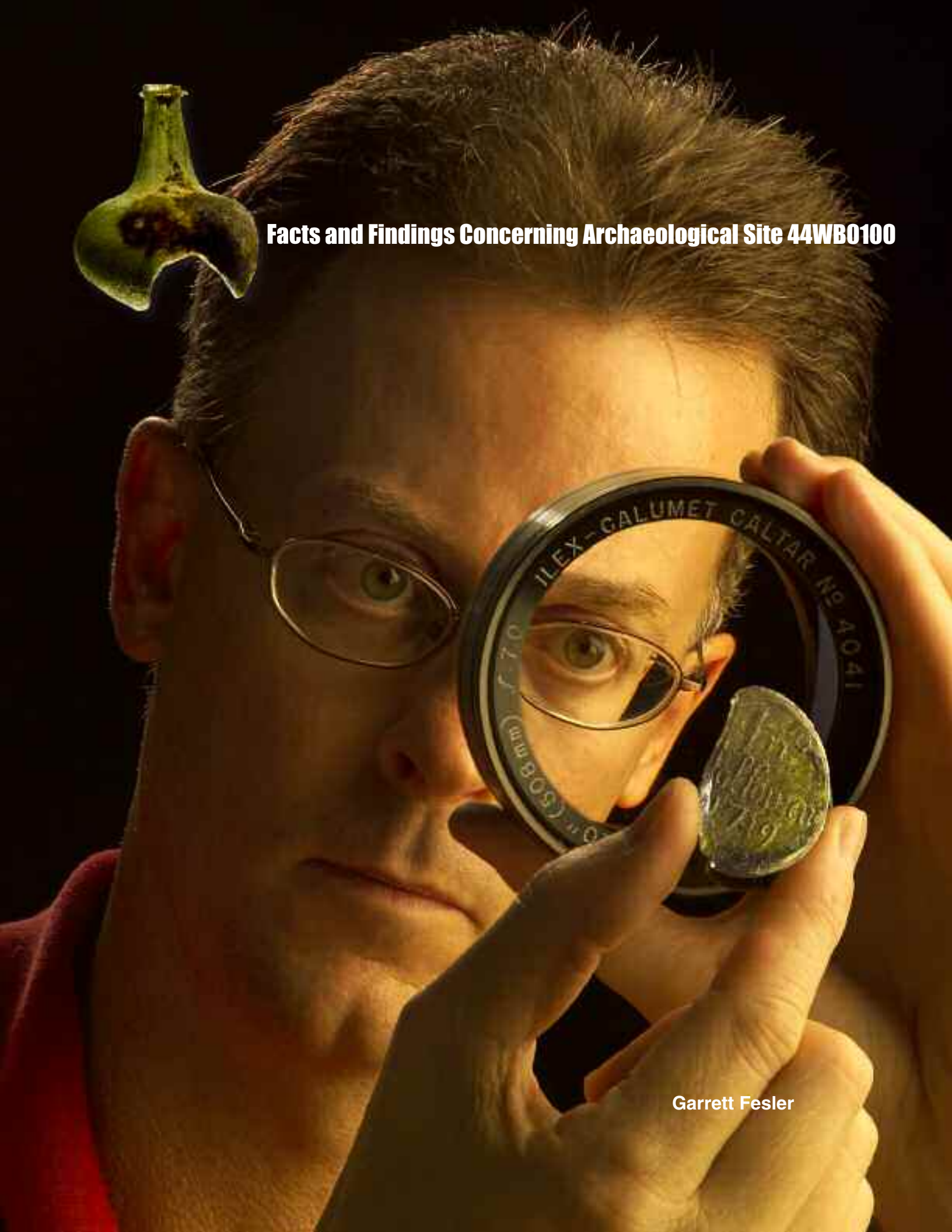
“I don’t think we’ll ever be able to put a name or a face on the site, but we will gain a clearer understanding of what kind of people were here and what their lives were like. Archaeology isn’t going to supply us with concrete answers, but it does open windows into the past.”



Sherrie Beaver with milk pan.



Facts and Findings Concerning Archaeological Site 44WB0100



Garrett Fesler



44 indicates the state in which the site is located (Virginia), WB is the city or county (Williamsburg), 0100 is the number of the site registered in that county (here the 100th site).

At Site 44WB0100, archaeologists found thousands of artifacts dating between 1650 and 1750 when the area was known as Middle Plantation.

Middle Plantation was renamed Williamsburg in 1699 and, in the same year, the capital of Virginia was moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg.

At the lower component site (40AH), three buildings were uncovered, the largest measuring 48 feet by 18 feet. The other two buildings might have housed slaves or indentured servants.

All of the 40AH buildings were made from post-hole construction, which consists of driving poles into the ground, setting timbers on them and then framing the house on the timbers.

The post holes allow the archaeologist to get an accurate depiction of the size of the houses.

The upper component site (40AE) did not use post hole construction, probably because these later inhabitants found it easier to lay down logs and build a cabin.

Many of the artifacts found were farming tools, primarily hoes and sickles. The land most likely belonged to tobacco farmers who used their proximity to the James River to transport their products.

Items found at the site included ceramic bowls, jugs, glass beads, wine glasses, pewter utensils, brass straight pins and clothing buckles, many of which had been imported from Europe.

Clay tobacco pipes found at the site were some of the locally created items recovered.

Also found was a silver coin that featured Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, which was made between 1649 and 1660 while England was not run by a monarchy.

