

Mid-Lothian Mines

Explore the nation's industrial heritage at the location of the first commercial coal mines in America and the first railroad in Virginia. The mission of the Mid-Lothian Mines and Rail Roads Foundation is to provide educational, cultural and recreational opportunities through the preservation, reconstruction and interpretation of the historic coal mining and railroad sites in and around the village of Midlothian.

13301 North Woolridge Road.
Details: 748-1623 or midlomines.org
Hours: Dawn until dusk



Pocahontas State Park

The scenic 7,625-acre park is located five miles from the Chesterfield County Courthouse in the center of Chesterfield County. Park amenities include picnic shelters, a heritage center and amphitheater complex that are available for meetings, conferences and special events. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has opened a museum to honor the men who worked to build the Virginia State Parks. Park offerings include a swimming pool, boating, bicycling, hiking and individual and group camping.

The Park is open year-round from dawn until dusk. The campgrounds are open April through November. There is a park admission fee.

10301 State Park Road.
Hours: Dawn until dusk
Details: 796-4255



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Eppington

Eppington was built in the early 1770s by Francis Eppes VI. Thomas Jefferson, Eppes' brother-in-law, was a frequent visitor. When their father-in-law died, Monticello slaves like Sally Hemings lived and worked at Eppington while Jefferson was Minister to France. Later, it was at Eppington that Jefferson received President George Washington's invitation to become the nation's first Secretary of State. Admission is free.

14600 Eppes Falls Road.
Hours: Open to small tour groups by reservation only. Details: 748-1624



Magnolia Grange

This Federal-style plantation house was built in 1822 by William Winfree. Magnolia Grange was named after the circle of magnolia trees that once graced its front lawn. Noted for its distinctive architecture, Magnolia Grange contains elaborate ceiling medallions and sophisticated carvings on mantels, doorways and window frames. Today, the house is home to artifacts that interpret life at a country plantation during the 19th century.

10020 Iron Bridge Road
Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Open to tour groups by reservation only.
Details: 748-1498



Castlewood

One of the finest Federal-period houses in Chesterfield County, Castlewood was completed sometime between 1817 and 1819 and features a formal, five-part design that differs from any other recorded Virginia dwelling. Its unique architecture consists of a two-story, gable-fronted central block flanked by slightly different wings, each 1½ stories high. Castlewood features molded plaster ceilings in the main rooms, two stairways to each of the adjacent wings, and beautifully carved mantels with King of Prussia marble surrounds. The house currently serves as the headquarters for the Chesterfield Historical Society and houses the Historical Society's research library and offices.

Iron Bridge Road. Details: 777-9663



Falling Creek Ironworks Park

This park is the site of the first ironworks in the New World. Hopes were unleashed, battles fought, and unrealized dreams gradually faded at Falling Creek. The sound of industry was first heard on these shores. The Ironworks was constructed by the Virginia Company between 1619 and 1622, and iron production began in late 1621 or early 1622. Today, this archaeological site yields information about iron production. Parks and Recreation, 748-1623.



Henricus Historical Park and Dutch Gap Conservation Area



Henricus Historical Park is re-creating the second successful English settlement in the New World. The development of the first hospital, the chartering of the first college in the New World, the English home of Pocahontas and other important events that occurred at Henricus contributed to the significant roles this settlement played in the creation of a way of life and a nation.

Also journey through the 810-acre Dutch Gap Conservation Area, the site of major Revolutionary War and Civil War action. With the James River as a backdrop, Dutch Gap offers one of the best birding sites on the East Coast and boasts a bounty of woodlands, wildlife, waterways, fishing spots and hiking trails.

251 Henricus Park Road.
Hours: Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sundays, noon-5 p.m. Details: 748-1161 or henricus.org



County Museum, Historic 1917 Courthouse and Old Jail



The Chesterfield County Museum is just one of the many places to learn about the county's heritage. Built as a replica of the 1750 courthouse, the Chesterfield County Museum is located directly behind the Historic 1917 Courthouse. Its collections tell the history of Chesterfield County from prehistoric times through the 21st century.

The Old Jail, adjacent to the museum, was built in 1892 and housed prisoners for 70 years. The upstairs, with its original iron-barred cells, has been virtually unchanged since last housing prisoners in 1962. Historical exhibits from the county's Police and Fire and Emergency Medical Services departments are displayed downstairs.

6813 Mimms Loop
Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Open to tour groups by reservation only.
Details: 768-7311

Chesterfield County



1607

Sir Christopher Newport explored the James and Appomattox Rivers along the Chesterfield borders five days before Jamestown was settled

1612

Tobacco was first cultivated scientifically in America at Bermuda Hundred by John Rolfe, husband of Pocahontas.

1614

Bermuda Hundred was incorporated as the first town in America.

1619

Falling Creek was the site of the first iron furnace in the New World

1622

Mount Malady, near Dutch Gap, was the site of the first American hospital.

1709

Midlothian produced the first commercially mined coal in America.

1795

Bosher's Dam, near the community of Bon Air, was the first large multi-purpose dam in Virginia.

1803

Midlothian Turnpike was the first paved road in Virginia.

1811

The first commercial tramway in America, the predecessor of the railroads, ran from the Brown, Page and Burr gunpowder plant on Falling Creek to its storage magazine a mile away.

1812

The first school for deaf mutes in the United States was located at Cobbs on the lower Appomattox River.

1831

The Midlothian to Manchester Railroad was the first in Virginia.

1862

Corporal John B Mackie won the first Marine Corps Medal of Honor to be awarded for his brave and courageous conduct on board the USS Galena during the May 1862 battle of Drewry's Bluff.

1921

Father's day was originated by three ladies from Drewry's Bluff.

1934

The first wayside park in Virginia featured the Old Stone Bridge over Falling Creek, completed in 1826.