
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE 2007 REENACTMENT TOUR:
AN OVERVIEW

In 1608, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed was a wild, verdant country spanning rich and endless marshlands, towering forests, and thousands of miles of fresh, salt, and brackish waters. Populated by communities of Native American Indians who thrived on the environmental largesse offered by the fertile soils and tidal waters, the Chesapeake John Smith explored was a land of environmental and cultural abundance.

Having left the struggling Jamestown colony behind, Smith and fourteen crewmembers embarked in 1608 on a 1,700-mile journey that would help to redefine the European concept of the "New World". John Smith's voyage of the Chesapeake was the first comprehensive exploration of the region by a European settler, and the detailed, amazingly accurate map of the region he produced in 1612 was the seminal guide to the Bay used well into the end of the seventeenth century.

In commemoration of the 400-year anniversary of Smith's extraordinary voyage of exploration, Sultana, Inc., a non-profit educational organization based in Chestertown, Maryland, has constructed a replica of the vessel Smith and his crew used to navigate the Chesapeake. The recreation of Smith's "Discovery Barge" is a thirty-foot open boat, or "shallop," that was constructed at the Sultana Shipyard under the direction of master shipwright John Swain. The shallop was launched on November 4, 2005 in Chestertown.

The culmination of the *Captain John Smith Four Hundred Project* will take place in May 2007 when fourteen modern-day explorers, historians, naturalists, and educators set out in the shallop to recreate Smith's 1608 voyage. The crew will retrace the route that Smith and his crewmen took, powered only by oar and sail, and stop at 31 ports in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. along the way to educate the public on Smith's legendary voyage.

Accompanying the shallop will be an interactive 20 x 30 ft. exhibit tent offering a wide variety of educational content including a timeline of John Smith's Chesapeake exploration, descriptions of the Native Americans of the Chesapeake region in 1608, and information on the ecology of the Bay during the seventeenth century and today. Visitors to the exhibit can watch a short film about the voyage on overhead televisions, learn about John Smith and the Chesapeake on interactive computer stations, and find out more about what their local region was like in 1608. Shallop crewmembers will also be an educational resource, and visitors will be able to speak with them at each port visit about John Smith history and their experiences on board the shallop.

For more information about the *Captain John Smith Four Hundred Project*, visit www.johnsmith400.org.