



THE BIG BANG

DECEMBER 6, 2008

Photo courtesy of Jeremy Powers.

The holiday season began with a bang as students gathered to enjoy Grand Illumination, Colonial Williamsburg's 74th winter fireworks exhibition. Barriers between campus and community life dissolved as locals and students alike congregated on Duke of Gloucester Street to enjoy the show, which blended modern technology with a centuries-old scientific phenomenon.

In the 1700s, fireworks were used in celebration of military victories and other special occasions. Centuries later, the latest innovations in technology have transformed an informal display of jubilation into a pyrotechnic masterpiece. At 6:15 p.m., gold and red lined the sky as fireworks commenced simultaneously at the Governor's Palace, the Magazine, and the Capitol. Thanks to a computerized timing system, onlookers were able to enjoy the exact same display at different locations.

Junior Irene Foley truly appreciated the technological application. "The fireworks were really cool! It was amazing the way they shot off at the exact same time at the different locations," Foley said. However, technological sophistication was only one aspect of the event. For many students, the Grand Illumination provided an opportunity for bonding with family and friends. For senior Alli Honenberger, the fireworks exhibition was a family affair. We all got together for a big dinner before the show," Honenberger said.

For some, the most spectacular feature was sharing in the excitement with members of the Williamsburg community. For Kathryn Phillips the crowds of people added to the excitement. "It was a great night. The fireworks were awesome and the hordes of people just made it more fun," Phillips said.

After the show, the William and Mary

community united with members of the Williamsburg community to create an atmosphere charged with holiday cheer and joyous expectation of what the season would bring. Students and locals window shopped in Colonial Williamsburg's business district and patronized student service organizations selling hot cider and cookies. Rapidly decreasing temperatures caused students and locals alike to fill coffee shops to capacity, chatting over warm drinks and relishing the evening illuminated by the joy of Yuletide.

Despite large crowds and frigid temperatures, the community spirit enlivened the atmosphere after festivities had ended. The evening of fireworks and holiday cheer linked the College and the community together as one.

> Jillian Walton

While the fireworks show explodes behind her, Alli Honenberger pauses to let her fiancé take a photo. At some points during the show, camera flashes rivaled the light from fireworks as people took pictures to remember the occasion.



Photo courtesy of Ashley Fryer.

Visiting sophomore Brittany Johnson from John Tyler Community College and William & Mary sophomores Mary Beth Kensinger and Ashley Fryer pose in front of a decorated evergreen tree on DoG Street. Many students invited friends from other schools to join in the holiday celebration.

Shooting fireworks frame the façade of the Governor's Palace for the thousands gathered on the lawn to view. Fireworks were simultaneously going off at the Capitol Building and the Magazine.



Photo courtesy of Ashley Fryer.

Snapping a quick picture before leaving for the Governor's Palace in Colonial Williamsburg, a group of friends smile after eating in the UC. "Although we may have gotten stares for being such a huge group, it just was fun to eat and celebrate with a bunch of friends," sophomore Erica Shifflett said.



Photo courtesy of Lauren Ellis.