

DIGITAL MODEL OF THE JAMES ORONOCO DEXTER HOUSE

July 11, 2014 Matthew Mlodzienski Buildings, Day of Archaeology 2014, Digital Archaeology, Historical Archaeology Dexter, Doug Mooney, Drexel University, Glen Muschio, historic insurance records, Jed Levin, Matthew Mlodzienski, National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, Philadelphia Archaeology Forum

I am a freshman at Drexel University studying 3D Animation and Visual Effects. As part of my participation in this year's STAR (Students Tackling Advanced Research) program at the University, I am working with Dr. Glen Muschio to continue work on the James Oronoco Dexter house model. The 18th century house stood on grounds now occupied by the National Constitution Center. It is of historical significance because in the 1790's it was lived in by Dexter, a manumitted slave active in Philadelphia's African American community. Students have previously modeled the exterior of the house as well as the first floor, including furnishings. Today I worked on laying out possible configurations for the house's second floor and garret.



As part of my work on the house, I have reviewed Independence National Historical records (<http://www.nps.gov/inde/historyculture/dexter-who.htm>) concerning the house, as well as historic insurance records. Last night, July 10th, I spoke with Philadelphia Archaeology Forum members Jed Levin and Doug Mooney, archaeologists who excavated the Dexter site. They reviewed my preliminary models and offered suggestions for consideration. There are no archaeological remains of the second floor of the house, which means we cannot be sure of the correct layout. However, we can infer from historical records describing similar homes and from standing historical houses from that era what the layout might have been like. With this information it is possible to produce a number of layouts that might

have been possible within the given space. Without the benefit of an archaeological record we have no way to know the exact layout. Submitted by Matthew Mlodzienski

