Woman’s Day 1770
THE FOUNDATION OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, COUNTRY

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ABOUT THE COVER:
Time for a woman to read and reflect was precious in Colonial America (as it is today). Photo: Corbis.
Dear Editor,

While reading the November/December issue of *American Spirit*, I noticed an error in “Forgotten Patriots” by Diane Dunkley (page 18). The article states that Washington’s troops camped at Valley Forge during the winter of 1778–79. These dates are wrong.

Gen. George Washington and his Continental troops went into winter quarters at Valley Forge on December 19, 1777, and left on June 19, 1778. As Commander-in-Chief of the Society of the Descendants of Washington’s Army at Valley Forge (DVF), I wanted to be sure this error was noticed.

Sincerely,
Barbara Waltz Stone
Commander-in-Chief
Society of the Descendants of Washington’s Army at Valley Forge (DVF)

Editor’s note: We thank Commander Stone for calling this error to our attention. To paraphrase Alain René Lesage and John Adams, dates are stubborn things. There was also an incorrect date in the article, “Black Patriots,” in the January/February issue. The Battle of Great Bridge was in December 1775, not 1776. We apologize for the errors.

Tell American Spirit About Your “Personal History”

We’ve all had that “eureka!” moment—when we’ve finally confirmed a long-lost ancestor, found an old diary, gazed at a faded photograph and seen something of ourselves looking back. That moment when our personal history becomes richer, deeper and more meaningful.

Your first impulse was “I have to tell someone, to share this wonderful find!” Now American Spirit offers you a chance to share your explorations with our readers.

Maybe it’s the story of a quest to learn about your heritage or the discovery of an unexpected ancestor. Maybe it’s an account of a journey to visit the old homeplace or country. Or maybe it’s just a box of things left to you and you have no idea what they are.

We want to hear about it! Just drop us an e-mail at americanspirit@dar.org, with a few paragraphs describing your Personal History story and details how we may contact you. And your story may become part of a future issue of American Spirit.

Let’s hear from you!
FROM THE PRESIDENT GENERAL

As this issue goes to print, our country is preparing for war with Iraq. Across the nation, our armed forces are mobilizing and being deployed. Thousands of others in the Reserves and the National Guard are putting their civilian lives on hold as they are called to serve. Theirs is the highest expression of patriotism—they willingness to put themselves in harm’s way to defend their loved ones, our country and our way of life. As parents, siblings, spouses and friends, we pray for their safety and for a swift and successful conclusion to this conflict.

Not long ago, the majority of those preparing for battle would have been men; women would have also been mobilizing, but mainly as nurses and clerical workers. This issue looks at the new roles of women in the military and the parts they play as “Defenders of Freedom.” It is fitting, with March being Women’s History Month, that we salute our female patriots.

Of course, without the heroic efforts of Sybil Ludington, the female version of Paul Revere, and other Colonial women, there might well be no United States. Women’s work was truly never done in 18th-century America, as we see in “Women’s Day 1770.” Working from journals, diaries, letters and courthouse records, scholars are only just beginning to discover the important roles women played in our nation’s early history.

Also, in keeping with Women’s History Month, this issue of American Spirit presents a selected list of “firsts” achieved by American women from Colonial days to the present in our article, “First Ladies.”

Profiled in this issue is Pat Summitt, Head Coach of the University of Tennessee–Knoxville women’s basketball team, who in January scored a significant first by becoming the only woman basketball coach to win more than 800 games. Beyond her remarkable achievement, though, is her winning attitude.

Her insights into motivation and competition may be equally applied to our families, employees and friends, as well as to the athletes she inspires.

As we prepare American Spirit for the newsstand, we invite you to explore your “Personal History” by sharing with us the ways that your life has been touched by the events of history. This would include your own genealogical quests, your efforts to preserve family and community history, and surprising discoveries such as old maps and diaries that shed light on the past. Please see page 3 for more information.

At this critical time for our nation, let us draw strength from our heritage of independence, courage and self-sacrifice. As Americans, we shall stand firm and strong to defend our heritage and our legacy of freedom.

Linda Tinker Watkins
President General
Last of the Main Street Mansions
Roslyn Heights House
Boonville, Missouri

By Jennifer Fuqua
Photos by Ed Pfueller

Roslyn Heights, architecturally described as “Queen Anne with Romanesque Revival affinities,” was completed in 1895. The house, known as the “Last of the Main Street Mansions,” was built by Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens Johnson at the southern edge of a group of fine homes adjacent to the business district.

Most of the original neighboring dwellings have vanished, leaving only Roslyn Heights still standing. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been owned since 1983 by the Missouri State Society DAR, which uses it as their state headquarters and for special events.

The three-story house stands on a foundation of Indiana limestone with pressed brick and is trimmed in Warrensburg stone. It boasts a number of distinct exterior features including towers, turrets, buttresses and a porte-cochere (covered carriage way). The latter has segmental arches with Moorish elements that are echoed in other areas inside and out.

Much of the house is original, such as the gaseliers on the front porch and porte-cochere, as well as the brick sidewalk on the south side of the house. The kitchen, however, has been remodeled. Originally, a door opened from the kitchen out to a large back porch, but this part of the house was damaged by a fire and never replaced.

The front entryway features original paneling and a mosaic tile floor. The focal points of the foyer include a coal-burning fireplace and bentwood canopy of Moorish design. Original pressed paper accented with hammered copper milling covers the lower portion of the walls and extends up the front stairway and throughout the second floor hallway.

The interior features four solid-wood pocket doors with cast brass fittings. The house was originally lit by gas and electricity and heated by steam. There are eight fireplaces in the house; each has its own decorative mantel that sets the theme for that room.

Colorful garlands of flowers painted on the parlor ceilings were the work of a traveling artist who lived in the house for three weeks while creating these master-
In addition to the parlor ceilings, he also decorated the ceilings of the other rooms on the main floor. The bay windows in the dining room have a spindle bentwood canopy frame. The ornate fireplace has wood carvings and is accented with tile embossed with a fruit pattern.

A fireplace mantel of elaborately embossed blue tile is a focal point in the second parlor or library. Other notable features include the polygonal bay windows and an original chandelier with alternating gas and electric branches. All rooms have wallpaper appropriate to the Victorian era.

The master bedroom was on the second floor next to Mrs. Johnson’s sitting room. The bird’s-eye maple fireplace mantel features pink tile embossed with angels and flowers. The Regent’s bedroom, formerly the Johnsons’ daughter’s bedroom, is also located on the second floor. It has an original light fixture and a white oak fireplace with wheat-colored embossed tile.

There are two other bedrooms on the second floor, including one used by the Johnsons’ housekeeper. Bright-red tile embossed with a leaf design covers a cherry fireplace and sets the color scheme for the fourth room, which is known as the Red Room. Echoing the crimson theme, the glass chandelier has an etched red shade decorated with clear crystal teardrop trim.

The ballroom on the third floor was considered the ne plus ultra of elegance for its time. An intricately designed white cast-iron fireplace provided a warm place for guests to rest, and built-in seating in the turret tower was said to be a comfortable niche for chaperones to sit while observing their charges. Instead of swirling dancers and coy couples, the former grand ballroom now houses two pianos and a collection of dolls. The adjoining room, once used for serving refreshments, now contains a collection of toys and children’s belongings. On one wall is the original butler’s pantry door, while the large closet contains compartments specially designed to store gentlemen’s top hats.

The Victorian home was the main residence for the Johnsons, who hosted lavish social events in the house during the height of the Gay Nineties. Mrs. Johnson’s brother, Lon Vest Stephens, served as governor of Missouri from 1897 to 1901. The Johnsons and the Stephens moved comfortably in similar circles and played a prominent role in area social activities.

In 1923, the Johnsons moved to Kansas City and sold Roslyn Heights to Anna and Amanda Berndt, two sisters of German descent who crafted elegant garments for Boonville’s elite.

MSSDAR extensively renovated the exterior in 2000, then gave the house a partial interior facelift and landscaping update in 2001. The Hannah Cole Chapter of Boonville meets there, and the house is available for use by any chapter in the state.

Elegantly furnished and decorated according to the period in which it was built, the furnishings were acquired from other DAR properties and from friends. The house is considered a living museum and is used for chapter meetings, dinners, receptions, bridal showers, weddings and other special occasions. Is there a historic building in your area you’d like to see profiled in American Spirit? If so, please e-mail us at americanspirit@dar.org.
Survey Courses

AMERICAN HISTORY IS HOT AT THE BOOK COUNTER. Perhaps no author of the past 20 years is more responsible for the steadily growing commercial success of American history books than Stephen Ambrose. The Pulitzer Prize-winning professor’s accessible approach to historic nonfiction captured a mass audience with titles such as Undaunted Courage and Citizen Soldiers. That style—active-voice, chronological storytelling based heavily on recollections and impressions of participants—has become a near-universal formula for general history titles.

These easy-to-read narratives are reaching a new audience—people whose previous readings in history were limited to history survey courses. The survey course is, by necessity, broad and sweeping, typically focused on dates, battles and leaders. Mr. Ambrose and his contemporaries discovered that stories are more engaging than dates; common people more compelling than kings and generals.

An example of this focus on the “story” in history is Measuring America, reviewed below. It is literally a survey book—that is, a history of land surveying in America. Yet, it is also a narrative of the lesser-known people and events who solved a problem crucial to the growth of the nation.

Mr. Ambrose’s To America, also reviewed here, is his farewell address—a valedictory in which he reflects on his career and its rowdy, unruly subjects. Bringing American history to life, explaining its relevancy, capturing its spirit and voice. Lamenting its faults. Rejoicing its contributions. That is the essence of Mr. Ambrose and perhaps his most far-reaching contribution to the genre.

In a loosely connected series of essays, Mr. Ambrose surveys the whole of American history with the unstated yet apparent goal of setting right some of his past opinions and interpretations. Once more, he sweeps through the major events and characters explored in his earlier works: a type of “best-of” compilation of themes, profiles and conclusions.

Yet in this volume, Mr. Ambrose apologizes for his past sins of political correctness, sexism and misinterpretation. While far from condoning their misdeeds, he expresses new insight into the positive contributions of historic figures he earlier found less than favorable: He exonerates Ulysses Grant, Theodore Roosevelt, even Richard Nixon, to differing degrees.

Despite a declaration of personal patriotism, Mr. Ambrose does not use his parting volume to forgive the sins of the fathers. He clearly expresses disdain for what he believes are American tragedies and mistakes. Slavery, racism, sexism, the continuous exploitation and recurring mistreatment of the Native Americans, the damming of the Columbia River, the Vietnam war—all get their turn upon his pillory.

For such transgressions, Mr. Ambrose suggests some possibly laudable yet unlikely retributions ranging from a Canadian-styled return of public lands to Native Americans to a dismantling altogether of western dams.

However, despite his condemnation of national misdeeds, Mr. Ambrose does not brood like Hamlet upon them. As in previous work, he expresses unabashed awe of the people, places and events of American history. As with his most popular work, a steady theme of optimism and can-do spirit serves as the foundation for his storytelling.

Knowing the physical condition in which he wrote this book (and the controversy surrounding some of his past work which erupted during this period), it is clear that Ambrose shares this uniquely American brand of optimism.

This “American Spirit,” Mr. Ambrose writes in his parting words, “comes from the Founding Fathers, was developed by Jackson, Grant and both Roosevelts, taken abroad. That Spirit got us through September 11, 2001, and it will see us through the future.”

To America: Personal Reflections Of an Historian

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE
Simon & Schuster, 2002
288 pages, $24

Faced with the challenging realities of being diagnosed with lung cancer, Stephen Ambrose was convinced by his physician and two nurses that his best chance for fighting the disease was to continue his regular regimen: eating, sleeping, exercising, reading—and writing.

As a result, his grateful fans and admirers have this fitting coda to his popular repertoire of American history best-sellers. Thanks to his therapy, his devoted readers once more can experience his gift of finding and telling the “story” of American history.

To America is not a conventional memoir, yet it is a very personal account of how his work, and the events and people he encountered in writing two dozen books, changed his life and outlook. While interspersed with recollections, To America seeks more to re-explain and wrap up rather than to recount his life’s story. Too bad we have to leave that story to another.
Measuring America: How an Untamed Wilderness Shaped the United States and Fulfilled the Promise of Democracy

Andro Linklater
Walker & Company
310 pages, $26

According to Measuring America author Andro Linklater, the century-long history of the survey and settlement of American public lands west of the original Colonies can be compressed into one day: April 22, 1899. At noon that day, 50,000 would-be claimants on horse, wagon, foot and even bicycle, rushed onto 2 million Oklahoma acres laid out in “sections, halves, quarters, even quarter-quarters.” By nightfall, all of the former Indian Territory belonged to the horde of claimants.

In this one day we now call the Oklahoma Land Rush, a uniquely American story was retold: a story of greed, of promise, of betrayal, of science, of philosophy, of war, of peace. In the tradition of Dava Sobel’s Longitude, the bestselling page-turning account of the development of the chronometer, Mr. Linklater spins an entertaining yarn from diverse threads related to mathematics, economics, politics, agriculture and human thought.

Despite its narrow focus and compact format, Measuring America is a sweeping narrative that explores such diverse influences as European enlightenment, British industrialism and French astronomy in the development of more accurate and uniform measurement standards. Once established, these standards encouraged and enabled post-Colonial westward expansion and the development of free market capitalism.

The early-American context in which Mr. Linklater’s tale unfolds is familiar to the reader, with leading roles played by George Washington, Robert Morris and Thomas Jefferson. Yet it is the compelling stories of lesser-known, yet vital players that bring this book alive: the honest yet inept national geographer, Thomas Hutchins; the brilliant and driven coastal surveyor, Ferdinand Hassler; the unlucky metric-system missionary, Joseph Dombey; the quirky British minister turned mathematician, Edmund Gunter, whose 17th-century survey chain would play a crucial role in evolving land measurement technique from a vague medieval concept to a precise practice.

Mr. Linklater spins an entertaining yarn from diverse threads related to mathematics, economics, politics, agriculture and human thought.

The ability to own land in measured and titled plots was one of the strongest magnets to American settlers. In a practice “so obvious, so widespread, that few Americans recognize it was remarkable,” land ownership proved to be one of the most influential foundations of early American economic and political development.

In 1837, the visiting English writer, Harriet Martineau, wrote, “The possession of land is the aim of all action, generally speaking, and cure for all social evils among men in the United States. If a man is disappointed in politics or love, he goes and buys land. If he disgraces himself, he betakes himself to a lot in the West. If the demand for any article of manufacture slackens, the operatives drop into the unsettled lands.”

To enable such land ownership, to fulfill obligations made to its Revolutionary War veterans, to raise money for its empty coffers and to catch up with the squatters already pouring into the region, the new country had to develop an efficient approach to measuring its public lands west of the Allegheny Mountains.

When George Washington addressed Congress for the first time, the new president outlined what he thought were the country’s three most pressing matters: defense, the economy and the need for a uniform system of weights and measurements. Yet such a uniform system would not be fully in place during Washington’s presidency nor even his lifetime.

(It is interesting to compare this situation with that in Revolutionary France, where efforts to rationalize thousands of measurements led to the development of the metric system. This fascinating story is set forth in The Measure of All Things: The Seven-Year Odyssey and Hidden Error That Transformed the World by Ken Alder. Free Press 2002, 422 pages, $27.)

Because that first Congress did not heed the president’s call, it missed a window of opportunity, Mr. Linklater argues. Because such standards were not agreed upon at the time—despite the recommendations of Washington and Jefferson—the subsequent conflicting approaches to measurement would require generations of legal and legislative actions to redress the inevitably resulting fraud and confusion.

Like so much in American history, the consequences of decisions made by the founding fathers, both good and bad, have been felt for the past two centuries and will be into the future.

Mr. Linklater’s survey of why today we buy and sell in dollars, pick crops in bushels, own land in acres and travel in miles is a compact book that tells a story as big as America.
Affordable, flexible digital cameras come into their own

By Tamara Holmes

If you’re thinking about replacing your old camera, you should consider going digital. Not only do today’s digital cameras capture photos that give your film-based camera a run for its money; they also let you save on photo processing and film costs.

There’s even more of an incentive to buy a digital camera if you like the idea of immediately seeing how a photo will turn out. Most models have a liquid-crystal display (LCD) screen that lets you preview a finished shot to make sure the baby is looking at the camera or that no family members were blinking when the flash went off. If the shot isn’t to your liking, you can easily erase it and retake the picture.

But while your reasons for switching to a digital camera may be clear, the act of wading through so many choices is likely to cause some confusion. There are cameras with a wide array of features to fit every budget, ranging in cost from about $39 to more than $5,000. However, with a little thought about how you plan to use your digital camera and a little information on what digital cameras have to offer, you can zoom in and focus on the right choice.

Assess your needs

Before you go shopping for a digital camera, assess your photography needs. Do you plan to use the camera for professional purposes or are you just going to take snapshots of the grandchildren? Because digital cameras are ideal for uploading pictures into a computer and onto a Web site, you should decide if most of your photographs will appear online and be sent via e-mail, or if you plan to print out the pictures on photo-quality paper.

Also consider how comfortable you are with technology and photography. Do you want the ability to manually adjust the exposure, flash and focus of the camera or would you rather have the guesswork taken away with one-click point-and-shoot features? Once you answer these questions, you can find a camera that will suit your needs.

Mind the details

As you search for the perfect digital camera, here are a few important details to keep in mind:

One of the most critical technical details of digital cameras is their megapixel rating, which indicates how detailed the resolution of your photographs will be. Digital cameras range from the most inexpensive cameras costing less than $100, but they offer little in terms of flexibility. These cameras tend to have a fixed lens, meaning you can’t adjust a shot to get a close-up or change the focus.

Inexpensive cameras also tend to be short on memory, so you can’t store many images on the camera. Many of the most inexpensive cameras have only built-in memory, while more high-end cameras tend to support memory cards that provide extra storage capacity. Hewlett-Packard’s 1-megapixel PhotoSmart 120 and its 2-megapixel Photosmart 320 are both entry level digital cameras.

Cameras in the $100 to $200 price range usually have reasonable image quality, but few customization features, meaning you may not be able to manually adjust your shots. But if you crave simplicity and aren’t comfortable fiddling with photographic equipment, one of these might be right up your alley. Some, such as the Fujifilm FinePix A200, come with removable memory cards.

You will probably get the most for your money in the $200 to $499 price range. This class of cameras is targeted toward consumers who want a lot of options, but don’t want to sacrifice simplicity.

Many of these cameras have auto-focus capabilities that eliminate the guesswork if you’re not a photographic wizard. However, for those who want to experiment with settings as they take pictures, these cameras do offer customization features.

Some cameras in this price range will also allow you to capture video clips, so not only can you get still images of everyone at the party, you can also record a little video, as well.

Pixel Perfect

UNDERSTANDING THE CHOICES

DIGITAL CAMERAS fall into three basic categories: Consumer cameras for hobbyists, professional cameras for those who depend upon photography for business, and prosumer cameras for people somewhere in between.

On the low end of the spectrum, the most inexpensive cameras cost less than $100, but they offer little in terms of flexibility. These cameras tend to have a fixed lens, meaning you can’t adjust a shot to get a close-up or change the focus.

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from one to five megapixels; the higher the number, the better the resolution of the photos.

The amount of resolution you need depends on what you plan to do with your photos. If you plan to post them only on a Web site or share with others via e-mail, you don’t need high resolution. A camera with a one- or two-megapixel rating will suffice.

However, if you plan to buy photo-quality paper and print out 5-by-7 or 8-by-10 photos, you need a camera with a three-megapixel rating. If you plan to print out even larger photos, get a four- or five-megapixel camera.

Not surprisingly, cameras with higher megapixel ratings cost more, so seriously consider what you’ll do with your photos before buying the equipment.

Another important technical consideration is the camera’s image sensor, the chip inside the camera that actually captures the image. The two most common types of image sensors are CCD or charge-coupled device sensors, and CMOS or complementary metal-oxide semiconductor sensors. Generally, CCD sensors produce better images, but they also tend to be found in more expensive cameras.

### Accessories

When shopping for a camera, consider the costs of extras, such as batteries and memory cards for image storage.

Digital cameras use up battery power quickly, so look for a camera that has rechargeable batteries. Otherwise, you’ll be replacing your non-rechargeable alkaline batteries frequently.

When it comes to memory cards, the size of your images—and whether or not they are compressed—will determine how many photos can be stored. Shop for a memory card as you would for a hard drive: The more megabytes or gigabytes of data a memory card can store, the more photos you can take.

Your camera should make it as easy as possible to transport images to your PC. Cameras that support a USB interface are appealing because they can be connected right to your computer’s USB port. Some cameras also come with docking stations for easy PC connections.

Finally, before making your purchase, test the camera to see how it feels. Is it big or small enough for your hands? Check to see if the buttons are big enough and easy to reach. You want to make sure you’re getting the perfect fit.

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### Focus on Details

#### Image Sensor

The chip inside a digital camera is responsible for capturing the photo image. The two major types of image sensors are CCD (charge-coupled device) and CMOS (complementary metal-oxide semiconductor).

#### LCD viewfinder

The screen on the back of many digital cameras shows you what the lens sees.

#### Megapixel

A method of measuring a digital camera’s resolution. A one-megapixel rating indicates that a camera can capture 1 million picture elements, or points of data.

#### Memory Card

A removable storage device where you save the images captured by a digital camera. There are different types of cards. The most common types of memory cards are CompactFlash, SmartMedia and Secure Data cards. Make sure you purchase the type that your digital camera supports.

#### Pixel

Short for picture element, a pixel is one point of data in a digital image.
When you think of New Orleans, what pops into your head? Mardi Gras, jazz, beignets, the French Quarter, above-ground tombs, Huey Long, mosquitoes, antebellum mansions, Cajun cooking. This city contains all that and much more. The Big Easy is a city you must see, hear, smell and taste to soak in all it offers.

Tourism certainly drives the economy of this Louisiana city, and there are museums, antique shopping, interesting architecture and nightclubs to entice visitors. Not to mention a bevy of incredible, reasonably priced restaurants where you can find oysters, étouffée, jambalaya, gumbo, muffuletta, po’ boys and crawfish, just for starters.

You can take swamp, haunted history, architectural, riverboat or spirit tours, or sign up for one of the walks through the historic Garden District or the French Quarter. Carriage rides are also available, taking visitors by Jackson Square, the muddy Mississippi River and rowdy Bourbon Street.

Gamblers will want to try their hand at Harrah’s Casino, which is located near the French Quarter. Besides gaming tables, the casino features a mini Mardi Gras parade every day.

This year, Louisiana celebrates the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase with a special exhibit of rare documents at the Historic New Orleans Collection through June 7.

And if you want to make it down to the Crescent City sooner, the Jazz and Heritage Festival runs April 24 through May 4.

For More Information
Visit www.neworleans.com or www.neworleansonline.com
Oregon’s North Coast is a place of scenic beauty. And the small town of Astoria—population 10,000—is situated in the midst of all that natural splendor.

Astoria, which is often called the “little San Francisco of the Pacific Northwest,” is the oldest American settlement west of the Rockies and full of hundreds of Victorian homes that cling to steep wooded hillsides. A revitalized 1920s-era downtown draws visitors, as do attractions like Fort Clatsop (the 1805-06 winter quarters of Lewis and Clark), the Columbia River Maritime Museum, the Flavel House Museum, Fort Stevens State Park and the Astoria Column (below left). The latter was built in 1926 and is 125 feet high. Climb the 164 steps and you will discover breathtaking views of the city and its surrounding forests, the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean.

Fishing charters allow you the thrill of catching your own salmon, crab, sturgeon and other marine life that thrive in the cold waters of the Pacific. There are also eco-cruises on the Columbia River that explore the abundant wildlife of the area. Visitors to Astoria will want to drive across the picturesque, 4.1 mile-long Astoria Bridge, which connects the city to Washington state. Astoria celebrates its Scandinavian heritage with a Midsummer Festival in June (far right). It features authentic music, dancing, crafts and a tug-of-war that pits local Danes, Swedes, Finns and Icelanders against one another.

Be sure to take a ride on Astoria’s Riverfront Trolley, a restored 1914 trolley that runs for 3 miles along the Columbia River. The conductor offers an interpretation of the area’s history and attractions, with added trivia about some of the movies filmed here such as “The Goonies,” “Kindergarten Cop,” “Free Willy” and “Short Circuit.”

For More Information
Visit www.el.com/info/astoria
Treasure Hunt

Whether she’s admiring her impressive China teapot collection inherited from her great-grandmother, or adding a new piece to her assortment of needlepoint tools, Mrs. Rolfe Teague, Curator General of the DAR Museum, and a member of the Col. Joseph Winston Chapter in Winston-Salem, N.C., definitely has the heart of a collector. She frequents local flea markets, antique stores and auctions in hopes of acquiring a unique addition to one of her several collections. With a sense of adventure and the uncertainty of what may be around the next corner, she continues her lifelong hobby of acquiring treasures.

BY JENNIFER FUQUA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE RUNION - BLACK HORSE STUDIO

COLLECTIBLES COURTESY OF ROLFE TEAGUE

Much like a real feline, this unique Chinese teapot created in the likeness of a cat sits contently on the windowsill. With Oriental painted flowers and butterflies, this piece holds special sentimental value to Mrs. Teague because inside the teapot she keeps a personal note written to her by her father when she was in seventh grade. Next to the cat is an elongated green pot from Switzerland with a hand-painted design of pine branches and pine combs.
Hidden Treasure

During the Civil War, the Chelsea teapot above, featuring a pattern of luster grapes, narrowly escaped being destroyed by fire. Mrs. Teague’s great-grandfather (her father’s paternal grandfather), George Towle, owned a General Store during the war in the border state of Missouri. Just before the Confederate Army burned his store to the ground in a raid to prevent Union forces from having access to supplies, Mr. Towle hid the teapot in a well, saving it from the fire. Ironically, the man who led the raid was Capt. William Sloan, Mrs. Teague’s other paternal great-grandfather (her father’s maternal grandfather).

Very popular in the mid-19th century, this English teapot (on the top shelf) has an Oriental theme of birds and bamboo in rich shades of orange and blue.

Afternoon Tea

Three different styles of teapots bring dainty style to this windowsill.

(L-R) The grapevine pattern that surrounds this English teapot, made in the mid-nineteenth century, shimmers thanks to a gold metallic accent. The Haviland teapot (center), from the late-nineteenth century, is a French import with a painted gold design. The teapot on the far right has an intricate transferred pattern.
Birds of a Feather

Taught at the age of 10 to do needlework by her grandmother, Mrs. Teague has been an avid collector of needlepoint tools since 1979. Most of her collection of more than 100 needlepoint tools date back more than a century, including these Victorian sewing birds. Constructed of iron and brass, these birds are not only beautiful, they are also functional. The iron clamp secures the bird to a table, while the beak holds fabric taut, and the pincushions keep needles and pins at your fingertips.
Sewing Bee

Purchased at a Brimfield, Mass., flea market, the brass bumblebee needle case was the first tool Mrs. Teague purchased. An animal lover, all of the pieces in Mrs. Teague’s collection share an animal theme.

Arranged below are pincushions including a poodle, cat, bear, squirrel, frog and turtle. The needle and sewing cases are disguised as an oyster shell, and a brass fish and butterfly.

Resembling a pair of scissors, the silver bird-shaped ribbon pullers are used to incorporate ribbon into a needlework design.

The chantelaine, a piece worn on the belt of a Victorian lady to hold various needlework and sewing tools, has two silver-plated needle cases and a silver-plated thimble case attached to the owl-faced clamp.

Surrounded by a silver band and filled with red thread, the wire mesh thread winder has a chantelaine chain attachment.

The whale-shaped stiletto is used to puncture holes and remove thread from fabric.

Measuring Up

All of Mrs. Teague’s miniature tape measures are Victorian, dating back to the 1890s. Most were found at flea markets and auctions and have a tape length ranging from 24 to 36 inches. Carrying on the animal theme of her collection are the brass monkey with gold glass eyes, the metal turtle with a humorous note requesting the user “Pull my head, not my leg,” and the brass bulldog guarding his red painted enamel house.

With unexpected design features, the tape measures are as fun to use as they are to admire. By winding the silver pig’s tail, tape is released from its stomach; and when the tape is pulled from the brass birdcage base, the bird perched inside revolves.
Center of Attention

The blue Wedgwood teapot in the center is a commemorative edition made in honor of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. The raised white silhouette is that of Prince Philip, while the opposite side features the silhouette of Queen Elizabeth herself.

To the left is a charming Victorian teapot with a painted strawberry pattern. Just behind the Victorian teapot sits a blue and white piece with a Neo-Classical transferred pattern.

Mrs. Teague hopes to keep these teapots in her family by donating them to The Ellwood Museum in DeKalb, Ill., the Victorian home where her great-grandmother, grandmother and mother spent part of their lives.
Future Genealogy

There have been significant changes in genealogical research over the last five years, catapulting family history into its position as one of the top hobbies in America. What more can we expect over the next five years and how will those changes help us better understand our family’s background?

Six influential people with a wide variety of experience in genealogy have answered these questions: Michael Armstrong, editor, UK’s Family Tree magazine; Rob Armstrong, Senior Vice President, A&E Television Network and General Manager, Genealogy.com; Myra Vanderpool Gormley, syndicated columnist and RootsWeb Review Missing Link co-editor; Matthew Helm, co-founder and Executive Vice President, Family Toolbox and co-author, Genealogy Online for Dummies; Cyndi Howells, creator of Cyndi’s List; Loretto Szucs, Executive Editor, Ancestry; and Curt Witcher, President, National Genealogical Society.

BY BARBARA KRASNER-KHAIT
the past

New Technology

“It all kind of ties into one,” says Myra Vanderpool Gormley of the impact the computer and the Internet have had on genealogy over the past five years. The panel emphatically agree technology has spurred interest in family history. There’s no doubt in Rob Armstrong’s mind, for instance, that technology has reduced the amount of time it takes to have satisfying genealogical pursuits and has made it easier to collaborate and share information.

“Five or six years ago,” he says, “when someone was working on his or her family history, he or she would post a notice on a genealogical bulletin board or in a publication. Maybe 25,000 to 30,000 people would see it. Now, with the availability of commercial Web sites, 3 million people a month could see it.”

As a result, says Cyndi Howells, genealogy has entered the mainstream and garnered more public attention. Thanks to increased availability and reduced cost, scanners, personal digital assistants and other electronic products have helped to make genealogy easier, quicker and less expensive.

Record Digitization and Software Availability

Loretto Szucs attributes the enormous growth of the computer industry as a whole to the creation of compiled indices to major collections and online indices to actual images like the digitized U.S. Census. In just the last half of the 1990s, says Curt Witcher, several important materials have come online: The Library of Congress’s American Memory project, the Latter-day Saint’s familysearch.org, the Library of Virginia’s digital materials, and of course, the Ellis Island records.

Moreover, Matthew Helm believes e-mail fundamentally changed the way people did research individually and in groups. It generated the ability to communicate easily, even across oceans. Genealogy utility programs, such as GEDCOM, allowed people to contribute their own information, including research in progress, to Internet search engines and databases.

Mrs. Szucs points out that the industry has also benefited from enhanced genealogical software programs so everyone—from the casual hobbyist to the serious researcher—could find one in the computer or office supply store and take it home to use.

The result? Record digitization and software availability, says Ms. Gormley, and easier and faster record keeping, a boon for today’s busy genealogist. However, according to Mr. Witcher, genealogical societies are struggling to deal with the change. He says, “They’re online and leaving lots of electronic footprints.”

The Downside

Despite the advantages technology and the Internet have brought to genealogy, information accuracy and sound genealogical methodology have taken a hit. “Don’t take it for granted that just because it is on the Net, it is correct,” says Michael Armstrong. This becomes especially important before assimilating the information into your own research and before any subsequent posting back on the Web.

Mr. Witcher sums up the changes that have occurred over the last five years nicely. “Before, people were retired and had to dedicate—and be motivated to—commit their time,” he says. “Technology has changed all that, and now millions of people are tracing their family’s heritage.”

the future

Increased Digitization

Over the next five years, Michael Armstrong believes digitization will have the single greatest impact. More sources will come online. As a case in point, he notes that the Society of Genealogists in London has recently made parts of its document collection available in digitized form on the Internet. Rob Armstrong sees the creation of indices tied to source documents available either online or on CD, such as the 1900 U.S. Census. Is this just the tip of the iceberg? He thinks so. “The Internet allows us to provide primary and secondary sources, not just indices.”

He also expects technological advances to continue, including the availability of greater storage capacities. High-speed access with practically unlimited storage devices will be able to capture high-resolution images of documents to upload and store. “I can take a picture of a source and associate it with the information I’m recording in my genealogy and tie other people to it. I can show the inside of family bibles or love letters from my great-great-grandfather to my great-great-grandmother.”

Mr. Helm predicts greater digitization of sources and more online availability, including major record sets like draft registrations and immigrations, at least at the federal level. It will take more work at the state and local levels because there are more records to deal with. He also expects less reliance on compiled genealogy and tertiary sources, replaced by increased emphasis on original sources and data extraction tools.

Ms. Howells looks forward to increased efforts in volunteer initiatives to put information online. She speaks specifically about an NGS project, Digital Bible Archives, that will make transcribed family bibles and their images available on the NGS Web site. She says, “Home records, like the Bible—no one would ever have seen them before.”

She also expects people will become more realistic about just how much of their family history they can find online. And not all records will be digitized, at least not for a long time. That will take money, time and lots of energy. Ms. Howells observes, “Our mission is to harness technology and make it work for us.”

Mrs. Szucs foresees great masses of online information. “This is exciting for all of us. We’re seeing this on a daily basis now. We see the growing interest,” she says. Increased record availability, such as the later censuses, is now attractive to a huge portion of the population.
FOCUS ON PEOPLE

Ms. Gormley believes people will become better genealogists because they will focus less on collecting names. “Having just the names doesn’t mean anything. It’s what you know about them historically.” She envisions that family historians will learn more, use better methodologies and do more in-depth research on a particular branch of the family vs. the whole tree. Ms. Gormley, for instance, applied Civil War narratives to put her ancestors’ lives in a richer historical context. The resources to do this were available online. She says, “I couldn’t have attempted this a few years ago.” Adds Mr. Helm, “Genealogy will become much more than names and dates. It will provide associations between family members.”

Collaboration will also increase because of the ease of scanning important family documents and sharing them across the Internet. For instance, in Ms. Gormley’s family, someone found an old Bankston family Bible from May 1800, scanned the family record images and sent them around to cousins.

Researchers “will remember Grandma or Grandpa, and the sources will have personal relevance,” says Mrs. Szucs. Connectivity will be tremendously important because of the Internet. It won’t matter how distant relatives are, and researchers will still post family trees and notices on message boards. “We’re creating a global family,” she says. “There’s the potential each day for each of us to connect to family.”

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE AND VIRTUAL HISTORIES

Mr. Witcher predicts the Internet and its eventual successor will offer more interactive sites with a more perfect “Ask Jeeves” approach. The family historian could input a couple of generations and execute a search online, involving a kind of “research assistant.” Software firms will lead these changes by creating more sophisticated code.

Mr. Witcher also foresees more powerful, less-expensive personal digital assistants (PDAs) within the next three years. “These will allow us to capture almost all of our genealogical data with no storage problem,” he says. “We’ll have our entire database with us. It may be big in the beginning—more like a day planner—but it will evolve to the standard Palm Pilot.”

Future family historians will spend their time in the best places, Mr. Witcher believes, because they’ll be able to visit sites virtually, eliminating false leads. They’ll validate where they should travel based on their online access to bibliographies, files and charts. They’ll still use tape recorders and digital cameras as well as the old pencil and paper, though they may carry scanners around when they visit cemeteries, churches and courthouses. They’ll publish on the web and broaden the way they share through newsgroups and online discussion groups.

“There’s nothing more personal, exciting and satisfying to the ego than to explore and learn about the past,” Mr. Witcher says. “The next generation will witness some tremendous things that will be available, and their challenge will be to use that data.” And where do we stand in 2003? At the crossroads, he adds. “These really are the best of times.”
Women’s History Month is the perfect time to reflect on remarkable American women who have shaped our country’s history. Whether in government, science, the arts, sports or medicine, the United States boasts a multitude of pioneers—women who were willing to break doors down so the rest of us might benefit from their struggles. Here is a chronological look at some of America’s greatest achievers.

**Anne Bradstreet**

*The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up In America*, Anne Bradstreet’s book of poetry, was published in 1650 in England, making her the first published American woman writer. Born c. 1612–13 in Northamptonshire, England, she and her husband immigrated to America where her poems documented the hardships of New England Colonial life. Her brother-in-law surreptitiously took the manuscript to England and had it published without her knowledge.

**Henrietta Johnston**

Thought to be America’s first professional woman artist, Henrietta Johnston immigrated to America in 1707. Later that same year, to help support her ill husband, she began work as a portrait artist in Charles Towne (now Charleston), S.C.

**Mary Katherine Goddard**

At a time when few women could own property or businesses, Mary Katherine Goddard blazed three distinct trails. In 1766, she became the first woman publisher in the United States when she began publishing the *Providence Gazette* newspaper. She became the first woman postmistress in the country in 1775, and in 1789, she opened a bookstore in Baltimore, the first woman in America to do so.

**Phillis Wheatley**

Born in West Africa, Phillis Wheatley was kidnapped, taken to Boston and sold into slavery when she was 7 years old. She soon learned to read and write. She began writing poetry, and her first poem was published by the Newport, R.I., Mercury in 1767. With her owners’ help, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, a collection of 39 poems, was published in London in 1773.
1773—the first published book of poetry by an African American.

**Suzanne Vaillande**

Born in France, this talented woman came to the United States via Santo Domingo, French West Indies. In 1792, she appeared in *The Bird Catcher*, thought to be the first ballet presented in New York and in the United States. She is credited with being the first woman to work as a choreographer and set designer in this country, and also performed as a mime.

**Elizabeth Blackwell**

This English-born woman received her medical degree from the Medical Institution of Geneva, N.Y., in 1849, becoming the first woman in America with a medical degree. Dr. Blackwell practiced in New York, although she was at first barred from city hospitals. She founded her own infirmary and eventually established a women's medical college to train other women physicians.

**Amelia Bloomer**

The first woman to own, operate and edit a newspaper for women, Ms. Bloomer founded *The Lily* in Seneca Falls, N.Y., in 1849. Even though she was a woman of modest means and little education, she was driven to work against social injustice and inspired many other women to do the same. Her paper contained everything from moralist tracts to recipes but mostly focused on women's rights. It also advocated changes in women's clothing, including the knee-length undergarments that came to be known as "bloomers."

**Antoinette Blackwell**

Ms. Blackwell was the first woman to be ordained a minister in a recognized denomination (Congregational). She was not permitted to participate in classroom discussions, attend graduation or be awarded a preacher's license while she was studying at Oberlin College in 1850. After she was ordained in 1853, she served as pastor in Wayne County, N.Y. She was a leader in women's rights and was one of the movement's few pioneers to live long enough to cast her ballot in 1920 after passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**Dr. Mary E. Walker**

In 1865, Congress awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor to Dr. Mary E. Walker for her service as a contract surgeon during the Civil War. She was the first—and to date, the only—woman to receive the nation's highest honor. Her medal was rescinded in 1917 along with 910 others; some say it was because of Dr. Walker's involvement as suffragette. The government said it was rescinded to increase the prestige of the award, but in any case, Dr. Walker refused to return it. A DAR member, she died in 1919, and 58 years later, Congress posthumously reinstated her medal.

**Myra Bradwell**

The wife of a lawyer, Mrs. Bradwell passed the Illinois Bar Exam in 1869 with high honors, becoming one of America's first woman lawyers. But despite an appeal to the state Supreme Court, the state refused to admit her to the bar because of her gender. A year earlier while studying law, she had founded the *Chicago Legal News*, which reported news about laws, ordinances and court opinions. She staunchly advocated women's rights and helped create Chicago's first women's suffrage convention.

**Ellen Swallow Richards**

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology admitted Ms. Swallow Richards "as an experiment" in 1871. The experiment worked—she was the first woman to earn a bachelor of chemistry degree in America. In 1884, she became the nation's first female industrial chemist. She was not allowed to study for her doctorate at MIT, but in a renovated garage on the campus, she opened the Science Lab for Women, the first of its kind in the world.

**Mary Baker Eddy**

Almost 60 in 1879, Mary Baker Eddy established the Church of Christ, Scientist, becoming the first woman to found a major religion. She had suffered ill health in her earlier years, but recovered her health through the ministrations of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, a healer who eschewed medicines. After his death in 1866, she suffered a fall that nearly killed her; she was miraculously healed while reading her Bible. She was also a member of the DAR. The Mother Church is in Boston, and there are 2,000 branch churches worldwide in 79 countries.

**Julia Morgan**

Ms. Morgan's trailblazing career helped open the field of architecture for American women. In 1890, she became the first woman student at the University of California at Berkeley, College of Engineering, and went on to become the first woman to receive a state architect's license in California.

**Florence Sabin**

Florence Sabin was gifted in medicine and proved to be a talented researcher. She won one of four coveted internships at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and in 1917, became its first woman full professor. In 1925, Ms. Sabin became the first woman elected to the National Academy of Sci-
ence. She went on to do research in tuberculosis at Rockefeller Institute. Late in life, she returned to her native Colorado where she crusaded for improved public health programs.

**Nellie Tayloe Ross**

Mrs. Ross became the first woman to serve as governor of a state (Wyoming), when she won a special election to succeed her deceased husband, William Bradford Ross, in 1924. She served for two years, losing a reelection bid. Active in Democratic politics, she campaigned for Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. He rewarded her efforts by naming her director of the U.S. Mint, making her one of the first women to head a federal agency.

**Louise Boyd**

In 1924, explorer Louise Boyd, who was born in San Francisco, was the first woman to set foot on Franz Josef Land in the Arctic, where she photographed the landscape. Ms. Boyd was later elected to the Council of Fellows of the American Geographic Society, the first woman in the society’s history to be so honored.

**Amelia Earhart**

The Kansas native gained worldwide celebrity in 1932 when she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, to Ireland. The flight took approximately 15 hours. Just a few years earlier, Ms. Earhart was one of 99 co-founders of the “Ninety-Nines,” an international organization of women pilots, and served as its first president. In 1937, she set out to circumnavigate the world and vanished near Howland Island in the Pacific. Her remains were never found.

**Gertrude Stein**

One of the foremost American writers of the 20th century, Gertrude Stein was born in Pennsylvania but spent most of her life in Paris, writing the books that, while obscure during her lifetime, would help define the Modernist movement. Her best known work, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (1933), was also the most easily accessible, and an instant success. While in Paris, Stein hosted salons at her apartment where writers and artists could gather and converse. Through these salons she met and influenced a new generation of American writers, including Ernest Hemingway, Djuna Barnes and Janet Flanner.

**Frances Perkins**

Born in Boston in 1882, Ms. Perkins was appointed Secretary of Labor in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, making her the first female to hold a cabinet post in the United States. She held the post for a record 12 years. Formerly head of the New York Consumer’s League, she helped draft landmark New Deal legislation, including Social Security and minimum wage laws.

**Lettie Pate Whitehead**

Born in Virginia in 1872, Mrs. Whitehead in 1934 was one of the first American woman to serve on the board of directors of a major corporation—the Coca-Cola Co. In 1903, her husband, Joseph Brown Whitehead, and a partner had secured rights to bottle the beverage virtually nationwide. When he died in 1906, she took charge of their numerous business interests, including bottling and real estate. She served on the board of the soft drink company for 20 years.

**Maria Frances Cabrini**

Maria Frances Cabrini was born in Italy and immigrated to America in 1889. She became an American citizen in 1909 at age 59. She was the first U.S. citizen to become a saint when Pope Pius XII canonized her Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in 1946. She was known as the Patroness of Immigrants. In her 29 years of missionary work, she traveled overseas 25 times and created 67 houses/missions around the world, one for each year of her life.

**Mildred “Babe” Didrikson**

One of the greatest woman athletes of the first half of the 20th century, Ms. Didrikson in 1947 became the first American to win the British Women’s Amateur golf tournament. The next year, she and five other women created the Ladies Professional Golf Association. Before taking up golf, she competed in track and field, basketball, baseball, billiards, tennis, diving and swimming. She set more records and won more medals in more sports than any other 20th-century athlete.

**Virginia Apgar**

Dr. Virginia Apgar developed the Apgar Score in 1949, which is used to assess newborn babies’ viability. A pioneer in the medical field, she was one of the few women admitted to Columbia University’s College of Physicians in the 1930s. She was
Daughters of the American Revolution

soon named director of anesthesiology at Columbia, the first woman to head a department at the university. In 1949, she was named the first full professor of anesthesiology, making her the first woman to hold a full professorship in any discipline at Columbia.

Gwendolyn Brooks
Gwendolyn Brooks published her first poem when she was 14. Eventually her poetry appeared in Harpers, Poetry and The Yale Review. In 1949, she published Annie Allen, a series of poems that traced the progress of a black girl to womanhood. It won the Pulitzer Prize in 1950, making Ms. Brooks the first African American woman to win the esteemed award. She was also the author of children’s books, a collection of poetry about South Africa and an autobiography.

Maria Goeppert Mayer
Ms. Mayer was the first American woman and the second woman ever to win a Nobel Prize in physics, in 1963. Within nine years, she produced 10 papers applying quantum mechanics to chemistry, one of which was hailed as a “milestone.” Her research laid the groundwork for the further development of nuclear physics. A few years earlier, at age 53, Ms. Mayer had been appointed as a full-time professor at the University of California at San Diego.

Marian Anderson
Marian Anderson made history when she became the first African American opera singer to perform at the Metropolitan Opera in 1955. She also made civil rights history with her 1939 concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. At President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s invitation, Ms. Anderson became the first African American woman to win the esteemed award. She was also the author of children’s books, a collection of poetry about South Africa and an autobiography.

Margaret Chase Smith
In 1964, U.S. Sen. Margaret Chase Smith of Maine became the first woman to have her name placed in nomination for president of the United States by a major political party. She finished second behind fellow Sen. Barry Goldwater in the balloting at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco. A member of the DAR, Sen. Smith was also the first woman to be elected to both houses of Congress. In the House of Representatives, she succeeded her husband, Clyde, when he died in 1940 and served four terms. She ran successfully for the Senate in 1948 and served until losing reelection in 1972.

Muriel Siebert
In December 1967, Muriel “Mickey” Siebert became the first woman among 1365 men to own a seat on the New York Stock Exchange and the first woman to head one of its member firms. Ms. Siebert also served as superintendent of banks for the state of New York and owned her own financial firm, Muriel Siebert & Co., now Siebert Financial Corp.

Shirley Chisholm
In 1968, Shirley Chisholm became the first African American woman elected to Congress. She represented the state of New York in the U.S. House of Representatives for 14 years. During that time, she strongly opposed the Vietnam War and campaigned for programs to aid urban poor. In 1972, Ms. Chisholm was the first African American of either gender to seek a major party nomination for president. Also an author, she wrote Unbought and Unbossed (1970) and The Good Fight (1973).

Wilma Rudolph
After she contracted polio at the age of 4, doctors told Wilma Rudolph she would never walk without the use of braces. The 20th of 22 children, the Tennessee native proved them wrong and went on to play basketball and perform in track and field events in high school and college. In 1960, she gained worldwide fame at the Rome Summer Olympics when she became the first American woman ever to win triple gold medals in a single Olympics. She won them in the 100-meter dash, the 200-meter dash and as the anchor on the 400-meter relay team.

Wilma L. Vaught
One of the most decorated military women in U.S. history, Brig. Gen. Vaught became the first female Air Force officer to attend the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in the early 1970s. She was also the first female brigadier general in the USAF and the first woman to deploy with a Strategic Air Command operational unit. A DAR member, she serves as the senior military representative to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services and chairs the Committee of Women in the NATO Armed Forces. (Also see “A Fitting Memorial on page 34.”)
Sylvia Earle
Ms. Earle has been at the forefront of the marine biology world, as an oceanographer, conservationist and entrepreneur. In 1979, she walked untethered on the sea floor at 1,250 feet, lower than any other person before or since. In 1970, after she was rejected for an underwater research project because she was a woman, she led the first team of women aquanauts on a two-week exploration of the ocean floor.

Sandra Day O’Connor
In 1981, President Ronald Reagan appointed Sandra Day O’Connor as the first woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. She was born in El Paso, Texas, and served as a state senator in Arizona from 1969 to 1975 and as an assistant attorney general from 1965 to 1969.

Dr. Sally K. Ride
In 1983, this California-born astronaut was the first American woman to fly into space. Before joining the astronaut program in 1978, she was a professor of physics at the University of California, San Diego. An avid athlete, Dr. Ride considered a career as a professional tennis player in her youth. She has written a children’s book, To Space and Back, about her experiences in NASA.

Ann Bancroft
Ann Bancroft was the first woman to travel across the ice to the North Pole and the only female member of the Steger International Polar Expedition in 1986. In 1992, she led the first American women’s team in a trek east to west across Greenland on skis. A year later, she led the American Women’s Expedition of four explorers who skied more than 600 miles pulling heavy sleds to the South Pole.

Wilma Mankiller
In 1987, Wilma Mankiller was named the first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, making her the first female in modern history to lead a major Native American tribe. She represented the second-largest tribe in the country, with a population of 140,000 and an annual budget of more than $75 million.

Dr. Mae Jemison
When the space shuttle Endeavor lifted off September 12, 1992, it carried Mae Jemison into history as the first African American woman in space. Born in Alabama, Dr. Jemison was a science mission specialist conducting life sciences experiments. She is a chemical engineer and physician and currently directs the Jemison Institute, which works to advance the use of technology in developing countries.

Toni Morrison
Born Chloe Anthony Wofford in Lorain, Ohio, Toni Morrison in 1993 became the first African American woman to receive the Nobel Prize in literature for her book Jazz. She also received the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for her novel, Beloved. She made history as the first African American woman to appear on the cover of Newsweek magazine. Her other writings include the novels Sula, Tar Baby and Paradise, as well as several collections of essays.

Linda Chavez-Thompson
The daughter of sharecroppers, Linda Chavez-Thompson has spent most of her life in the labor movement. She began as an organizer for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and rose through the ranks to become the first person of color elected as executive vice president of the AFL-CIO in 1995. She also served as an International President of AFSCME from 1988 through 1996. She now serves as the Vice Chair of the Democratic National Convention.

Madeleine Albright
Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where her father was a Czech diplomat, Mrs. Albright came to America in 1950 when her parents fled the communist takeover of her native land. She earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. in public law and government from Columbia University and taught international affairs at Georgetown University. She also served as president of the Center for National Policy and was a member of the National Security Council staff. In 1993, President Bill Clinton appointed her the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Four years later, he appointed her Secretary of State, the first woman ever to hold that post, which is also the highest rank ever held by a woman in the U.S. government.

Condoleezza Rice
President George W. Bush in 2001 appointed Condoleezza Rice as National Security Advisor, the first woman to serve in that governmental position. Dr. Rice enrolled at the University of Denver at 15 and graduated at 19 with a degree in political science. In 1981, she joined Stanford University as a professor of political science and won two of its highest teaching honors—the 1984 Walter J. Goeres Award for Excellence in Teaching and the 1993 School of Humanities and Sciences Dean’s Award for Distinguished Teaching.
Enterprising American Women

By Margie Markarian

Though you may consider yourself well informed on American history, chances are you don’t know the first copies of the Declaration of Independence were printed by Mary Katharine Goddard (1738–1816), a respected Philadelphia printer, publisher and postmistress, or that pyrotechnic night signals patented by inventor Martha J. Coston (1826–1902) helped give the North naval superiority over the South during the Civil War. Until the recent debut of a one-of-a-kind exhibition, *Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business*, there has been little historical research done on entrepreneurial women in early America.

Indeed, Goddard and Coston are just two of the more than 40 fascinating business women featured in the *Enterprising Women* exhibition now touring the country. Developed by the Schlesinger Library of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, Mass., the exhibition celebrates the varied and important roles women entrepreneurs have played throughout our nation’s history, from the colonial era to the present day.

“The stories of these women are especially exciting and engaging because so few people know about them,” says Hilary Anderson, Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the National Heritage Museum, where *Enterprising Women* premiered. “Many people don’t realize that there have been important women entrepreneurs in this country since the beginning. Their stories shed new light on American history.”

“This exhibition marks the first time anyone has taken a look at the long and complex relationship between women and business in this country,” says Jane Knowles, Project Director for Enterprising Women and Archivist for the Radcliffe Institute’s Schlesinger Library. “It’s inspiring for people to come and see what women have achieved and accomplished.”

Visitors will be especially interested in women of the 1700s and early-to-mid-1800s. “Women have always faced obstacles in business but during these time periods, women couldn’t own property, couldn’t vote or attend business school,” points out Ms. Knowles.

Nonetheless, some women such as Elizabeth Murray (1726–85), a Scottish immigrant who settled in Boston, managed to run successful businesses. Mrs. Murray ran three: a dry goods store, a sewing school and a boarding house. She circumvented property laws and maintained her economic independence by entering into prenuptial agreements with her second and third husbands.

The exhibition is organized into five sections, starting in the 18th century with profiles on three colonial women and ending in 2000 with profiles on 10 contemporary women who have changed the face of business, including Oprah Winfrey, Martha Stewart, Katharine Graham and Meg Whitman, CEO of Ebay. Within the exhibit there are settings that take visitors back in time to a colonial print shop, an 1800s dressmaking shop, a turn-of-the-century beauty parlor and present-day corporate office.

Among the most intriguing artifacts on display within the exhibit are an original copy of the Declaration of Independence, a portrait of Elizabeth Murray painted by John Singleton Copley and a Women’s Army Corps (WACS) uniform designed by Hattie Carnegie (1886–1956), the great arbiter of fashion in the 1920s, ’30s and ’40s.

*Enterprising Women* will be on display at the New York Historical Society from March 25 to May 31. From there it will head to:

- **Atlanta History Center**
  July 4, 2003 to September 21, 2003

- **National Museum of Women in the Arts**, Washington, D.C.,
  October 24, 2003 to January 11, 2004

- **Los Angeles Public Library**
  June 19, 2004 to September 19, 2004

- **Detroit Historical Museum**
  October 18, 2004 to January 9, 2005.

For more information, visit [www.enterprisingwomeneXhibit.org](http://www.enterprisingwomeneXhibit.org)
From nurses and spies to pilots, American women have always been near the front lines.

BY STACEY EVERS

Defenders of Freedom

Middle row: L-R: Nurses aboard U.S. Army Hospital Ship Relief (later USS Relief 1908–1919) in Cuban waters, 1898 (U.S. Naval Historical Center). WAVES Aviation Machinist Mates 3rd Class Bernice Snasburg and Violet Falkum (top) work on the engine of an SNJ trainer at Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Fla., c. 1943 (National Archives). A Navy nurse tends patients just out of surgery in the intensive care ward of the hospital ship USS Repose (AH-16) off the coast of Vietnam, October 1967 (National Archives).

Bottom row: WASPS at the Four Engine School train to ferry the B-17, Lockbourne AAF, World War II (National Archives).

Previous page: WWI Yeomen (F) at Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H., October 1918 (U.S. Naval Historical Center).
The first American women known to die defending our nation lost their lives in very different ways during Gen. Benedict Arnold’s 1775–76 expedition to capture Quebec: Jemima Warner was killed by enemy fire, while Susanna Greer died when an American soldier accidentally discharged his musket.

Mrs. Warner, worried about her husband’s health, had accompanied him to battle to help him endure the rigors of winter and war. As she feared, he fell ill and died just hours after his unit had to leave them in the wilderness. Mrs. Warner covered her husband with dried leaves, picked up his gun and caught up with the column. She was still assisting those men when she died in Quebec on December 11, 1775.

Mrs. Greer, killed four months later, followed her husband to war “simply because she didn’t want to stay home. This was an adventure,” says Dr. Judy Bellafaire, Chief Historian at the Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial Foundation. Mrs. Greer often forged ahead of the men, inspiring perseverance. Men who didn’t want to cross streams because of the cold “were reluctant to complain when they watched the lady grab her skirt and hike right across.”

MRS. WARNER AND MRS. GREER illustrate just one end of the spectrum of roles women have taken to defend the United States. But their distinct stories, documented in three soldiers’ journals, combine to reveal women in their most steadfast role: as patriots prepared for war.

The ways women supported the armed forces didn’t change much until about 1900. They were nurses, laundresses and cooks. They spied on the enemy and dressed as men to sneak into battle. Noteworthy women include:

Margaret Corbin. In 1776, she took over her husband’s cannon at Fort Washington in New York after he was killed. She was hit in the shoulder, permanently losing the use of an arm. In 1779, the Continental Congress granted her the first federal pension awarded to a woman wounded in battle.

Elizabeth Newcom: During the 1846 Mexican War, she enlisted as a man in the Missouri Volunteer Infantry and marched to Colorado before she was discovered and discharged. Congress granted her back pay and land.

Dr. Mary Walker: A commissioned assistant surgeon for the Union, she was held prisoner in Richmond, Va., during the Civil War. Of about 3,400 recipients, she is the only woman to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Elizabeth Van Lew: During the Civil War, this Richmond, Va., resident established one of the first Union spy rings, which transmitted its data in a code she created. In thanks, Gen. Ulysses Grant named her postmistress of Richmond.

Then, at the outset of the Spanish-American War, a prominent DAR member made an offer that ultimately would transform the military’s relationship with women. Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee, DAR Hospital Corps Director, persuaded the Army to hire the Corps to review the applications of women who wanted to be combat nurses.

When the war ended, she then pressed the Army to create a permanent nursing corps, which it did in 1901. The Army Nurse Corps marked the first time women served as bona fide members of the armed forces, obtaining a permanent voice in the military. The Navy set up its nurse corps in 1908.

THE 1,500 SPANISH-AMERICAN War nurses “impressed the military establishment so much, being willing to work hard, to live in the field in circumstances that were very, very difficult,” says Mrs. Bellafaire. “Up until then, the military had the feeling that women might be more trouble than they were worth. Some doctors grumbled that if you put women nurses in, they were going to want rocking chairs in their tents.”

The ways women supported the armed forces didn’t change much until about 1900. They were nurses, laundresses and cooks. They spied on the enemy and dressed as men to sneak into battle.

In World War I, the Navy and Marine Corps for the first time enlisted women because men stationed in state-side clerical jobs were needed for combat overseas. Just over 12,000 women signed up, receiving the rank “Yeoman (F)” and the same salary as male yeomen.

THESE EXPERIENCES TROUGHT out to be a proving ground for an even larger enlistment in World War II, when the military created temporary women’s
The story was largely unknown until 1999, when nurse Agnes Mangerich wrote *Albanian Escape*. “This lost story is significant in that these women could handle these difficult situations and could do so without collapsing into hysterics, without failing physically to make the grade,” says Mrs. Bellafaire. “This is a beautiful example of what women can do.”

**EMBOLDENED BY THE EQUAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

More than 500,000 women now work in civilian or active military jobs for the Defense Department, making it the nation’s largest employer of women.

In her first assignment, Mrs. LaPorte was the only female flyer on base; only one other woman had been there before her. While she constantly strove to blend in, special treatment was sometimes unavoidable. Until 1992, Strategic Air Command crews served weeklong duty in special facilities, ready to act “if the big one actually happened,” she says. But when she arrived in the rank of colonel—as the director of the women’s component.

Three years later, the Defense Department established an advisory committee on women to study recruiting and retention issues. This didn’t mean the military always handled those issues well, though.

Gladys Haynes, DAR National Vice Chairman for Women Veterans and a member of the Gov. William Livingston Chapter in Spring Lake, N.J., joined the Air Force as a dietician in 1963. When she married a few years later, colleagues expressed “absolute shock” that she stayed on active duty. If she had become pregnant, she would have been forced to resign. She didn’t receive an increase in her quarters allowance, although men who married did, and her husband couldn’t use the Post Exchange or receive health-care benefits. The wives of male personnel had full privileges.

“My big thing was to see the world,” says Mrs. Hawryschuk, who went to work in the personnel office. She transferred to the WACs six months later and was posted to Cheltenham, England, then to Normandy. In rustic conditions—tents and foxholes and wearing a helmet all the time—she typed ordnance requisitions to the sounds of distant bombing and learned not to wander off the muddy road because of land mines. When Paris was liberated, though, she “danced all night” at the Trocadero and marched in the Victory Parade down the Champs-Elysée.

“Paris was quite lively when we were there,” Mrs. Hawryschuk says, noting that people assigned to other locations “had it much harder.”

That would include the 13 Army flight nurses and 12 medical corpsmen who walked 800 miles out of Nazi-occupied Albania in winter, without being detected by the Germans. The group had left Sicily to evacuate patients from Bari, Italy, but a terrible storm and pursuit by enemy aircraft sent their plane off course. With the help of Albanian partisans, they cut across primitive terrain to safety by walking at night and hiding in ditches during the day.

The sounds of distant bombing men could not listen to on the radio because of the ban on Germany, but a terrible storm and pursuit by enemy aircraft sent their plane off course. The group had left Sicily to evacuate patients from Bari, Italy, but a terrible storm and pursuit by enemy aircraft sent their plane off course. With the help of Albanian partisans, they cut across primitive terrain to safety by walking at night and hiding in ditches during the day.

About 400,000 women joined these units and worked in every theater of war.

DAR member Ethel Hawryschuk, of the Hester Schuyler Colfax Chapter in Pompton Lakes, N.J., joined the WAACs in 1943 on the “spur of the moment”—it was her 21st birthday and she wanted to see the world.

The story was largely unknown until 1999, when nurse Agnes Mangerich wrote *Albanian Escape*. “This lost story is significant in that these women could handle these difficult situations and could do so without collapsing into hysterics, without failing physically to make the grade,” says Mrs. Bellafaire. “This is a beautiful example of what women can do.”
Women took on new roles in Operation Desert Storm. A military policewoman from the Army’s 284th Military Police Company mans an M-60 machine gun atop a Humvee as others search for unexploded ordnance in Zakhu, Iraq (PH2 Milton R. Savage). Lance Cpl. Christi Darrow, USMC VMFA 212, refuels an FA-18C for its next mission during Desert Storm (Sgt. Jeff Wright). Staff Sgt. Karen Fupe, 401st Aircraft Generation Squadron, checks over Mark 84 2,000-pound bombs as the ordnance is readied for loading aboard a 401st Tactical Fighter Wing F-16 Fighting Falcon for the first daylight strike against Iraqi targets (Staff Sgt. F. Lee Corkran). Boatswain’s Mate 3rd Class Robin Eckel carries an M-60 machine gun and 7.62 mm ammunition aboard a port security boat during Operation Desert Shield (PA1 Chuck Kalnbach, USCG). Lt. Susan Globokar, the public works officer for Fleet Hospital Five, supervises about 80 Seabees in support of the hospital and Operation Desert Shield (JO1 Joe Gawlowicz).

To learn more about how women have defended our nation, read:

**Albanian Escape:** The True Story of U.S. Army Nurses Behind Enemy Lines by Agnes Mangerich, Evelyn Monahan and Rosemary L. Neidel

**Side-By-Side:** A Photographic History of American Women in War by Vickie Lewis


Or consult these organizations:
The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service: www.dtic.mil/dacowits

Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation (800) 222-2294, (703) 533-1155; www.womensmemorial.org

at the alert facility for the first time, her supervisors realized they hadn’t considered where she’d sleep or shower. They found a private sleeping space and assigned her to a bathroom on a different floor that was used by the alert facility’s cook.

During a mock POW camp training exercise, instructors posing as captors threatened to harm Mrs. LaPorte. A male classmate "just went nuts hearing that, started to kick and try to bust up his cell," she says. "Later the instructors told us that it’s common for captors to use this sort of tactic to excite feelings of protection and to distract prisoners. I remember wishing they’d quit using me to cause so much commotion."

**IN 1993, CONGRESS OPENED** combat pilot jobs to women, allowing them to fly bombers, fighters and attack helicopters. In 1994, Congress let women serve on surface combatant ships. More than 500,000 women now work in civilian or active military jobs for the Defense Department, making it the nation’s largest employer of women.

Women can work in 92 percent of military specialties, according to Army Lt. Col. Jim Cassella, a Defense Department spokesman. Tanks, artillery, submarines and many Special Operations Force jobs remain closed as political leaders, women’s rights advocates and the military debate whether to allow women in ground combat.

"There’s always a question in a lot of commanders’ minds: ‘Can women take it?’" Mrs. Bellaire says, laughing. "Well, they just haven’t looked at history."

**n 1987, when retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught took on the job of building a memorial to women who have served with and in the military, she wasn’t convinced such a commemoration should be made.**

"I was interested, but not committed at that point," says Ms. Vaught, President of the Board of Directors of the non-profit Women In Military Service for America Memorial Foundation. "We’d fought very hard for integration. Women worked so hard to be considered simply a part of the whole, [should] we take action now to set women apart in this context?"

Talking to women who served in World War II made her “see how important it was to them to have some recognition,” she says. "Women have not achieved total equality by any means much of anywhere, so there still is a need for women to understand more about women."

It took only six weeks for the board to win governmental permission to build the memorial at the impressive opening gates to Arlington Cemetery. Dedicated in 1997, the facility is the first major national memorial honoring the women who have defended the United States from the Revolutionary War to the present.

Its space includes 16 exhibit alcoves, a 196-seat theater and an interactive computer register. Following the mantra "What we don’t record, we lose," the foundation is attempting to register every woman who served in or with the military.

That’s no small task—Ms. Vaught estimates it to be about 1.8 million women, including American Red Cross workers, USO performers and U.S. Public Health Service nurses. Each entry includes details about the woman’s service and, if possible, a photograph of her.

So far, the foundation has registered about 250,000 women. Eligibility requirements include: living or deceased women veterans (active duty, Reserve, National Guard); U.S. Public Health Service uniformed women; women in Coast Guard Auxiliary and Civil Air Patrol; and women who served overseas during conflicts in direct support of the armed forces in organizations like Red Cross, USO and Special Services. Women in the U.S. Public Health Service Cadet Nurse Corps are included in a special honor roll of cadet nurses.

"We believe the story of women’s service will never be complete until every eligible woman is registered, thereby taking her rightful place in history," says the foundation’s spokeswoman, retired Army Lt. Col. Marilla Cushman.

**The foundation also offers:**

The Military Women’s Press, which has published a handful of books. A new volume on Korean War servicewomen is nearly finished.

An oral history collection. The foundation has nearly 300 first-hand accounts from military women and Red Cross workers, is collaborating with the Library of Congress Veterans History Project and recruiting volunteers nationwide to help record the stories of women veterans.

Programs, including educational programs for children, Women’s History Month luncheons, a lecture series and women’s health seminars.

Artifacts such as uniforms, equipment and military-issu items; photographs; film and video footage; and documents such as journals, scrapbooks, recruiting brochures, posters and media articles about military women.

The foundation supports these activities and employs about 60 full- and part-time workers with a $2.7 million annual budget. In addition to raising money to expand the permanent exhibits, make the press self-sustaining, and maintain the memorial, Ms. Vaught wants to establish an endowment.

Another goal of the foundation is to have its own building with more display and storage space for donated artifacts and house smaller women’s veteran organizations. Ms. Vaught is also eager to attract attention to the site. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, annual visitors have declined by about 30,000, to 145,000. Her goal is to attract 500,000 visitors a year. "When I took off my uniform after I retired, I thought, ‘You just finished the biggest job you’ll ever have,’” she says. "But there is no question in my mind that this is the biggest job I’ll ever have."

The memorial is open every day except Christmas. Call (800) 222–2294 or (703) 533–1155 or visit www.womensmemorial.org for more information.

"Molly Pitcher" at the Battle of Monmouth, June 1778. While disputes persist about her identity, the Artillery Order of Molly Pitcher honors women in the United States Field Artillery community. (Copy of engraving by J.C. Armytage after Alonzo Chapel. National Archives.)
Coming in the next issue of American Spirit

Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial: 200 years ago, the greatest land deal in history doubled the size of the United States and set it on the path to superpower status.

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Woman’s Day,

From manufacturing necessities to rearing children, Colonial women helped build America.
Today’s popular image of colonial women bears little resemblance to the reality of daily life during the years between the founding of the Colonies and the American Revolution. Official histories of Colonial America—technically 1603–1776—tend to relegate women to the background as mothers, wives, sisters and helpmates.

But research into other documents such as diaries, letters and books reveal a much richer portrait of women as the foundation of family, community and society upon which American culture was built.

Without them, says Carol Berkin, Ph.D., author of *First Generations: Women in Colonial America* (Hill and Wang, 1996), America as we know it might not exist. “The definition of feminine in the Colonial world was not a helpless, delicate female who squeaked at the sight of a mouse. These were robust, talented, hard-working, able-bodied women,” explains Dr. Berkin, a professor of history in the Weissman School of Arts & Sciences at Baruch College in New York City.

“Running a household is what most women could expect their careers to be. But remember, this wasn’t just cleaning and cooking,” says Dr. Berkin. “Women’s work was skilled craftwork. They were, in essence, manufacturers of most of what the family needed to survive. The appellation, ‘a notable wife,’ was much sought after, designating a woman who kept her place in family, community and society.”

**A Woman’s Place**

“Women’s experiences in the Colonial period were as varied as they are today,” says Mary Beth Norton, Ph.D., author of *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women 1750–1800* (Little, Brown and Co., 1980). She says a Colonial woman’s lot was cast by where she came from and where she settled, as well as by race and socioeconomic status.
So women in the first wave of Colonists typically lived in caves or one-room cabins and eked out a life with minimal resources. By 1750, a Boston woman could buy ready-made cloth, candles and bread, but her sisters on the frontier made their own or bartered for these items with others in the community. On the other hand, despite the integral role Colonial women played in the building of America, they couldn’t vote or be elected to office, and their property rights were limited.

“Laws regulated her identity and action in public,” says Dr. Berkin, explaining that under English common law, women were considered persons only if they reached their majority and didn’t marry. As a femme sole, they could own property, make contracts, operate businesses and be sued.

Once married, it all changed. “As a femme covert, she was stripped of all property and the clothes on her back, her personal possessions, her body and even her children became her husband’s property,” says Dr. Berkin.

“Colonial law gave her the right to a portion of her husband’s estate at his death (if he had any), though the percentage varied by state,” says Dr. Norton, a professor of history at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. “But she didn’t have the right to sell the property since the law also required that it descend intact to her children.

“Without a husband to work this land, she’d have to hire someone or buy a slave. Essentially, the law wasn’t intended to provide the widow with an income, but to keep her from becoming a public charge,” says Dr. Norton.

**Women at Work**

Name an item in a Colonial home and chances are the women of the house made it, likely from raw materials. Need a new broom? She whipped it up from a freshly hewn wooden handle bound to a bundle of straw. Time for lunch? She ground the grain and made the bread that was served alongside the vegetables she preserved and the cheese she bartered for with her neighbors.

Time for bed? Light a candle she had made from animal tallow and wash up with soap she processed from ashes and more animal fat. If her family were lucky and rich, they’d stretch out on a mattress she had stuffed with goose down that she plucked. The less affluent slept on mattresses she had stuffed with straw.

“The home was a huge manufacturing location. They referred to their abilities as ‘the mysteries of housewifery,’ much as if they were members of a medieval craft guild,” says Dr. Berkin. “Men could grow flax, but they couldn’t make linen. Men could grow wheat, but they couldn’t make bread. Men could raise animals, but they couldn’t process them.

“In essence, men were the unskilled labor. Women processed things into usable goods. And bear in mind, she did most of this while pregnant with a baby in her arms and a 2-year-old at her feet.”

That is how women’s communal labor came to form the underpinnings of their communities. “No household could manufacture everything it needed, nor did it have all the tools to do it,” says Dr. Norton. So a woman might trade eggs for cheese from a neighbor who had the cows, equipment and know-how to make it. For labor-intensive tasks, several women might join together to make soap or process food for winter storage.

In the Colonial period, according to Dr. Norton, family was synonymous with household. “Family was an economic definition, not a relationship of blood. One-person households couldn’t survive because of the many different tasks that had to be performed. It’s one of the reasons that a woman needed a daughter to be the first—if not the second—child she bore, so the (daughter) could assume gender-differentiated responsibilities.”

A woman’s work was never done—and it started at a tender age. Even girls as young as 4 years of age were kept busy with tasks such as knitting stockings for the whole family, gathering eggs, carrying kindling, sweeping and caring for younger children.

It took the combined efforts of every family member to keep a Colonial home operating. A fact acknowledged in a 1685 work titled *Good Order Established in Pennsylvania and New Jersey*. In it, the author validates the essential role of even the Colonies’ youngest female members. He also urged the creation of schools for girls so they could be taught “the spinning of flax, sewing and making of all sorts of useful needlework, knitting of gloves and stockings, making of straw-works such as hats, baskets, etc., or any other useful art or mystery.”

No wonder a 1775 entry in young Abigail Foote’s diary brimmed with details of tasks that filled her days: “Fix’d gown for Prude, Mend mother’s Riding-hood, Spun short thread, Fix’d two gowns for Welsh’s girls, carded tow spun linen, Worked on cheese basket, hatchel’d flax with Hannah, we did 51 lbs. apiece, Pleated and ironed, Read a sermon of Dodridge’s, Spooled a piece, Milked the cows, Spun linen, did 50 knots, Made a broom of guinea wheat straw, Spun thread to whiten, Set a Red dye, Had two scholars from Mrs. Taylor’s, Carded two pounds of whole wool and felt Nationally, Spun harness twine, scoured pewter.”

Entry in Abigail Foote’s diary from “Home Life in Colonial Days” by Alice Morse Earle

Marriage, babies and mortality

Owing to the disproportionate number of men in the Colonies, particularly in the earliest days, women married early and bore children often. “Among Puritans, 60 percent of brides were already pregnant when they married and had children every two-and-one-half years, right up to the point where they couldn’t have them anymore,” says Dr. Berkin.

Babies were born at home with friends and family in attendance. Breastfeeding helped women to space their children, says Dr. Norton. “Colonists knew breastfeeding helped reduce pregnancy rates and, in combination with poor nutrition, it did work,” because inadequate diet also decreased fertility, she says.

The combination of a marginal diet and breastfeeding might further jeopardize the woman’s health, “but that was far less of a risk than going through another pregnancy,” says Dr. Norton. “Nearly everyone personally knew someone who had died in childbirth.

“Mortality varied greatly between the 17th and 18th centuries,” she adds. “In the South, owing to the prevalence of disease, the average lifespan was 40 years. One-quarter of their children died in infancy, and another quarter didn’t survive into their teens. In the North, where the climate was better, people lived longer even than people in England. Most children made it to adulthood, and some historians say that grandparents were a New England invention.”

The prevalence of infant and childhood mortality along with frequent early deaths of parents caused families to form and blend quickly. After all, a household without a man to produce raw goods and a woman to process them was likely to fail.

In the Chesapeake Bay area, in particular, a marriage of nine or 10 years frequently ended in the death of one of the spouses, says Dr. Berkin. That spouse then remarried, bringing the children of the first marriage, soon followed by those of the second and even third. And so the cycle continued.

“With resiliency and flexibility, at least in their language. Colonists spoke of their fathers’ ‘now-wives’ and distinguished children in their care but not of their blood as ‘sons- or daughters-in-law,’” says Dr. Berkin.

In the Company of Women

In the years leading up to and during the Revolutionary War, many women found their roles changing, though more out of necessity than from any specific political or social renaissance, says Dr. Norton. She describes women stepping in as the managers of businesses, farms and plantations as their husbands marched off to war. It was a taste of personal autonomy and public responsibility that ultimately fanned embers of change and buoyed women’s prospects.

Women expressed their own patriotism by participating in boycotts of tea and other items taxed by the 1767 Townshend Act. Prior to boycotts of British goods, manufactured cloth was inexpensive, and in urban areas, cloth was usually bought rather than manufactured. Colonial boycotts of British goods increased the necessity of home manufacture and raised the art of spinning to the level of an act of political protest. The result? Women found themselves in the household business of processing and weaving fabric.

Other women followed their husbands into military service, becoming cooks and laundresses at forts and encampments. A few, such as Margaret Cochran Corbin, fought alongside their husbands in the Revolution. She was the first woman to receive a pension from the U.S. government as a disabled soldier.

“After the war, the pace of change in women’s lives accelerated,” says Dr. Norton. “Women who had managed family estates during the war were no longer willing to accept the standard belief that women were weak. Women today can safely feel a sense of sisterhood with Colonial women. It was a time of great change.”

Unconventional Women

Although ministers preached subservience and politicians passed laws, the indomitable spirit of Colonial women was evident at every turn. Here are a few examples:

Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643) criticized the Massachusetts Puritans for their narrowly legalistic concept of morality. Her protests against the authority of the clergy earned her banishment from Massachusetts. Refusing to recant, she was tried before the Boston Church and excommunicated.

Margaret Brent (1600?–71) was a Maryland settler whose original land grant of 70.5 acres was the first to a woman in the state. She became one of the largest landowners in the Colony. She requested the right to vote because she believed she needed it to manage her holdings and those of former Gov. Leonard Calvert, for which she was also responsible. Her request was denied, and she was sharply condemned for daring to make it.

Hannah Emerson Duston (1657–1736?) was pregnant when she was captured by Native Americans. She later escaped with others by killing her captors, scalping them, stealing a canoe and paddling to safety.

Eliza Lucas Pinckney (1722–93) managed her father’s three plantations in South Carolina when he was called to military duty. After three years of experiments, she succeeded in marketing the first crop of indigo in the United States. She later revived the cultivation of silkworms and manufacture of silk on her husband’s plantation. After he died, she again became a plantation manager.

Anne Catherine Hoof Green (1720?–75) married a printer and after his death, she continued to issue the Maryland Gazette newspaper and later issued the volumes of Acts and Votes and Proceedings of the provincial assembly. In 1768, the legislature formally appointed her the provincial printer.

How’s this for a travel itinerary? Head out to Los Angeles for a meeting, then take the red-eye to make it back home to Knoxville, Tenn., by 10 a.m. Then catch a flight later that afternoon for a business trip to West Virginia. Finally, get on yet another flight that night back to Knoxville. Climb into bed sometime around midnight.
ound like an impossible routine? If you’re Pat Summitt, the legendary basketball coach for the University of Tennessee’s Lady Vols, it’s just another day in the life. The L.A. “meeting” was actually a December match-up against the University of Southern California (which the Lady Vols won, 71–39). The “business trip” to West Virginia was a recruiting opportunity, as she caught a high school game there. During her down time this day, she relaxed—her words—long enough to whip up a great, home-cooked meatloaf meal for her family and also take part in a lively, insightful conversation with American Spirit.

It’s the kind of natural energy and drive that has vaulted Coach Summitt to the peak of her profession. On January 14, 2003, she became the first woman (and only the fourth Division I coach) to win 800 career games. Summitt, 50, has packed much accomplishment into her three decades at Tennessee. Her six NCAA titles rank her just below the all-time winningest coach—former UCLA men’s basketball coach John Wooden, who won 10 championships.

She has led her teams to a dozen seasons of 30-plus wins. In 1998, she and the Lady Vols achieved the ultimate, going undefeated at 39–0 to win a third consecutive national title. She also served as head coach when the U.S. women’s basketball team won the gold medal at the 1984 Olympics. A four-time winner of the Naismith College Coach of the Year, Coach Summitt was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000 and also named Naismith Coach of the Century.

Somewhere between preparing to race off to another appointment and giving a quick hello/goodbye hug to her son, Tyler, 12, Summitt discussed with American Spirit the secrets to motivating young people; the increasing opportunities for women as athletes and scholars; and how, in growing up with three brothers, making a grab for chicken at the dinner table sparked her lasting competitive fire.

You might never have become a coach if you hadn’t seriously injured your knee as a player at the University of Tennessee-Martin. How did things evolve from there?

Coaching came more by chance than anything else. I never really thought about doing it before the injury. I always thought I was going to be a teacher. I loved history. At Tennessee-Martin, I started off as a history major, and then I tore up my knee and the University of Tennessee offered me the opportunity to be an assistant coach and earn my graduate degree at the same time. It was a great opportunity. Then the head coach position opened up.

Did it always feel right, that this would be your life’s vocation?

No! (Laughs) It took a long time before I realized it was the right profession for me. Don’t get me wrong. I always loved the teaching. I always loved the opportunity to go to practice every day and work with the young players. I still enjoy practices more than the games. That’s where you really get to teach and connect. That’s where you see the daily improvement in
the lives of your players. That was my niche from the start.

But the other stuff took a while. It really turned around when Title IX came along in the 1980s. It leveled the playing field for women’s sports. We were finally able to provide lots of scholarship opportunities for female athletes. That changed everything. People finally saw women’s sports as a priority, as every bit a competitive team sport as men’s athletics. The community started really supporting our program.

Yet you didn’t leave playing basketball entirely after the injury. You reh abbled the knee and earned a spot on the women’s team in Montreal, winning a silver medal at the 1976 Olympics. People always associate your greatest career moments as a coach, but where did this one rank?

It’s one of my very proudest moments. For me, it was the pinnacle of my career as a player, coming off that injury. It was a great recovery against all the odds. Back then, that kind of injury was considered a career-killer. The surgeons said, “Give up basketball.” But I came back, and was very inspired to be a part of that Olympic team. That was the first women’s basketball team in the Olympics, you know.

You’re obviously very competitive, as a person and professional. What is your philosophy of competition, in the purest and highest sense of the word—not winning necessarily, but just competing?

When a person really understands what it means to compete, they understand what it means to give their all. I always hated to lose. I still do. But when you step on the court, competing means doing all the things you were taught to do that lead to this moment, and doing so with great intensity. It’s trying to get our players to understand how we, as competitors, have a great deal of influence over how we perform. Those who aren’t competitors don’t focus upon getting better and better every day. But that’s what we strive to do here at our school.

I take it that growing up with three older brothers had a lot to do with being so competitive.

(Laughs) Yep, I had to compete all the time. It could have been reaching for that chicken bone on the kitchen table. Even deciding who could eat the most was part of being competitive. But, in a more serious sense, we had a mom and dad who really inspired the needed work ethic for us to successfully compete. They made sure we understood our chores and our responsibilities. We had to do these things before we could play, and that’s what we did. At the time, on a farm, we milked the cows. Then, my dad bought a grocery store, so we made sure the shelves were stocked. We pumped the gas. We walked bags of groceries out to people’s cars. We raised all of our own vegetables. My dad always said hard work never killed anyone. That stayed with me throughout my entire life.

Dealing with players and their potential, how do you know when to be like Coach Bobby Knight, the consummate disciplinarian, and when to be like Coach John Wooden, the ultimate teacher?

That’s interesting, and I do think about it. When you’re looking to be the best manager—the best leader of young people—it’s all about recognizing who the people really are. It’s not about you. It’s about them. At first as a coach, I was emotional and high-strung. It was more about what I was feeling and not what they were feeling and what they needed. As I gained more experience, and had more interaction with different kinds of personalities and types of people, I developed a better sense of how to handle them. It’s different, really, with every team. It’s different with every individual.

I have a vision about how the game should be played. But I also have a vision for every player. I have an idea of where they are and where they should be, and where the game can take them as a student athlete. I’m looking for ways to constantly improve them and raise the bar for them. There’s far more to that than their athletic skills. I want to see them communicating well on the court, and taking their talent and meshing it so that they improve the performances of others on the court with them. That’s what a great team is.

As a coach, you wear a lot of hats. You’re a role model. You’re a counselor. You’re a psychologist. You’re a disciplinarian. Sometimes, you have to be a friend, to help them with life issues. But the important thing is to keep your door open. You’re there to
help them, not just as players. I was fortunate that I always had coaches who cared about me, as a person with feelings. That meant a great deal to me, and I try to model that myself to this day.

In retrospect now, people associate you with only success and routine national championships. But it wasn’t always this way. In fact, your road to the first one was almost Sisyphean—you kept getting so close, but not claiming the prize.

That’s true. The interesting thing is how little people know about me and our program. It took a long time to cut down that net. We had seven trips to the Final Four and four trips to the finals before we won it all. We just kept working very hard at it. We made our own breaks. We had to really visualize ourselves that entire time getting to the top of the mountain, and we finally did.

But don’t get me wrong. There’s really no one in this profession who hasn’t tried to be the best and failed over and over again, who hasn’t questioned themselves or lost confidence. But I never thought about quitting. I knew if you fall short but put out your very best, you have to recognize that and not beat yourself up over it.

You’ve obviously had a great influence on young women’s lives off the court. Your 100 percent graduation rate for four-year players is a testimony to that.

How are you able to keep this up?

Education, to me, is first and foremost. It’s the reason I have a job today. It’s the real reason my players are here—to be students. I grew up in an era where you went to school every day, and that was that. You did your homework the minute you came home. I never missed a day of school in 12 years.

So we have the “Upfront/No Miss” rule: The players sit in the first three rows, and they don’t miss a class. The players are good about keeping the rules. But we’re upfront with them about that in recruiting them. They figure it out for themselves. If class isn’t for them, then the University of Tennessee may not be the best place for them.

You made a big difference in the life of one very special player, perhaps your best—Chamique Holdsclaw. As a college player, she was selected as the Naismith Player of the Century. But she struggled terribly as a pro in Washington until last season, when you stepped in. She went on to have a fabulous season. What did you do?

I think I’ve gotten far too much credit for what she did. It took the individual commitment from her. But I’ll be the first in line to tell her what she needs to do to improve and challenge her to be the kind of professional she can be. I told her she wasn’t playing up to her potential. She had to be in better shape. She had to be a better leader. I knew all along that she wanted to be a great competitor. She had to figure out how to get that way—hard work and discipline. It’s a daily commitment, and she made it.

How much do you stay in touch with your former players?

Once you join this team, you join a family. It’s four years of your life with teammates and coaches who impact you for a lifetime. You develop great friendships and memories. There are so many who do so well once they leave the university. It’s a long list. Our kids leave and become coaches, nurses and doctors. Or they join some other part of the corporate world and do well. I’m proud of them all.

What’s your management philosophy? Not with the players, but the staff around you?

I’m personally a very self-motivated person. With my staff, I look for people who are very loyal and focused on their careers. You find out what their strengths are and what they can bring to the table, and then you allow them to go out there and do their best. Trying to control everything? That’s not right for me. Some coaches think this is the best way, but I’m not one of them. I’m not watching anyone to see when they punch the clock. We’re about getting the job done here.

Your motivational speaking is in much demand. You spoke to CIA employees just a month after the September 11 attacks. What was that like?

I was honored. They all have to support themselves and those around them, just like a basketball team. But they don’t get any recognition. They don’t get to cut down any nets. They face far more adversity than just losing a basketball game. So it was very special to share with them any experiences that I could about handling different roles well. What struck me about that is that they were very genuine people but very focused.

In just our conversation, you’ve gone through so many milestones for women and sports. Do you think these opportunities will continue to grow?

Definitely. We still are expanding these opportunities. The whole evolution in the last five years has been exciting and the next five will be even better. Certainly, young women have benefited from being able to compete, and that’s translated into more opportunities for them in education and corporate America and even the political arena. This is important for our society as a whole, not just for women.

Your schedule today sounds overwhelming. How do you get through that kind of week?

I exercise. Six days a week, about 45 to 50 minutes on the elliptical machine. It’s a big way of releasing stress in my life. I take vitamins. And I like to cook. I cook a lot. Cooking is another way of releasing stress for me. I just cooked a big meal today: Beans and meatloaf and cabbage and potatoes. The whole home-style country-cooking thing.

And now you’re getting ready to take off, yet again. How do you kill all of that time in airplanes?

I catch up on correspondence. I watch game tape on the DVD. I’ll read too. I’m reading My Losing Season right now by Pat Conroy. He’s a great writer. I like his style.

Have you ever had a losing season?

No. (Laughs) And I’m not planning on having one anytime soon either.
Breast cancer. Few other words strike as much fear in women. Indeed, breast cancer is still the most common form of cancer among women in the United States, with more than 200,000 new cases diagnosed annually. (Though rare, men can develop breast cancer, with an estimated 1,500 new cases reported each year.)

The good news is that fewer women are dying from breast cancer, even though the incidence of breast cancer has been on the rise during the past two decades, according to the National Cancer Institute. And the news will continue to improve.

Medical experts agree that breast cancer some day will stop killing. Chemotherapy will no longer be necessary. Breast cancer may even be managed by taking a pill every day.

Do women dare dream of such a day?

Physicians and scientists at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center (VICC) at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn., one of the nation’s top cancer research facilities, agree the dream may become reality.

“Dying from breast cancer, clinical breast cancer, will become more and more rare,” says Dr. Carlos Arteaga,
“This is a major paradigm change, I would say, because 10 years ago any patient who was post-menopausal would get hormones alone,” says Dr. Cristina Truica. “Now more of them get hormones and chemotherapy.”
Dr. Carlos Arteaga. “Cancer in 50 years may be a cell that looks OK, but has all of the genetic repertoire to later become clinical cancer. That cell will be able to be identified and kept in check by some clever combination of molecular therapies.”

medical oncologist at VICC. “I don’t think there are any major conceptual and technical hurdles to do all of this, but it’s going to take time. As long as people realize we won’t have the answers in two years.”

Dr. Arteaga also leads VICC’s Breast Cancer Research Program and directs the Specialized Program in Breast Cancer Research (SPORE), a significant five-year grant awarded by the National Cancer Institute to continue exploring and developing the latest advancements in breast cancer treatment and prevention. The journey from laboratory to bedside can be lengthy, with years of necessary research before treatments or drugs are approved for patient care. But a number of innovative treatments and diagnostic tools have already made their way to patients. Many are positively affecting breast cancer patients every day.

Advances in treatment

There was a time during the past two to three decades when a breast cancer diagnosis usually meant one thing for certain: a radical mastectomy, in which a surgeon removed all of the breast tissue, lymph nodes under the arm and surrounding chest muscles. Today, a much less drastic approach is resulting in the same survival outcome.

“A lumpectomy is now the preferred (surgical) option with early-stage breast cancer,” says Dr. Mark Kelley, director of Surgical Oncology and also of Vanderbilt’s Breast Center. “If you’re looking at the single greatest change in the way we manage breast cancer, it would be the fact that, in the last 10 to 15 years, it’s accepted that a lumpectomy is equivalent to a mastectomy for long-term survival,” Dr. Kelley says. “I think a lot of people are not aware of the level of surgical approval for this.”

A lumpectomy is preferable for several reasons, says Dr. Kelley. In addition to preserving the breast, the lumpectomy is a less invasive surgery, resulting in a quicker recovery time.

Another advance in breast cancer is a diagnostic tool called lymphatic mapping. Lymphatic mapping is done to evaluate the patient’s lymph nodes to see if tumors are present, which can help determine prognosis and treatment strategies.

Prior to the advent of lymphatic mapping, doctors used a procedure called axillary dissection, which worked well to determine if cancer was present in the lymph nodes, yet meant that all of the lymph nodes had to be removed. However, the side effects of axillary dissection were numerous, including pain, shoulder motion limitation and possible development of lymphedema, a chronic swelling condition of the arm.

And all women who were diagnosed with breast cancer underwent axillary dissection. “Three out of four (patients) have no lymph node involvement,” Dr. Kelley says. “The concept was that we were doing a surgery on women who didn’t need it.”

With lymphatic mapping, surgeons are able to determine which of the many lymph nodes might have tumors. They inject a tracer into the breast tissue and follow the cancer’s path to see where the tumor cells may have traveled.

If just two or three lymph nodes accumulate dye, then surgeons remove only those affected, rather than 25. “It’s a much smaller operation that has a shorter recovery period and less pain,” Dr. Kelley says. “This is now getting to be general practice.”

Less invasive diagnosis tools

In the same way that treatments are becoming less invasive, a number of diagnostic tools are following suit. The use of image-guided breast biopsies has eliminated surgical biopsies in some instances, as well as decreased the wait time for results. “This is a real advance in our ability to diagnose breast cancer,” Dr. Kelley adds. “Now we can find out if it’s cancer or not without an operation.” A core biopsy can often be done on the same day that a doctor discusses results from an abnormal mammogram with the patient. “Patients get an answer much more quickly than they would before,” says Dr. Kelley.

Educating women about the importance of screening mammograms cannot be underestimated in saving lives. Dr. Kelley adds. There is no question that, particularly for women ages 50 to 70, screening mammograms reduce breast cancer deaths.

Wider use of chemotherapy

As the frequency of radical mastectomies has declined, the use of chemother-
apy in an adjuvant setting has been on the rise. Adjuvant therapies are those treatments that are used after surgery to eliminate possible micro-metastases. After a surgeon removes the cancerous tumor from the breast, many patients receive chemotherapy as standard practice.

“We are trying to reduce the risk of recurrence and trying to improve survival,” Dr. Kelley explains. “More women are cured when they receive chemotherapy," in most cases. In all cases, there is at least some increased rate of survival.”

“In the past, the criteria for administering chemotherapy used to be very strict,” according to Dr. Cristina Truica, a VlCC medical oncologist specializing in breast cancer. “Newer data shows that even patients with smaller tumors do benefit from chemotherapy.”

Combining chemotherapy with drugs, such as Tamoxifen, a hormonal therapy drug that has been proven to reduce the risk of breast cancer’s reoccurring, also has become more common with patients.

“In a woman with high-risk breast cancer, her risk of dying with breast cancer might be 70 percent,” Dr. Kelley says. “You can use adjuvant chemotherapy and hormonal therapies and reduce her risk of dying by 25 to 35 percent.”

(Survival rates are generally based on a woman’s living at least five years after diagnosis. If diagnosed before the cancer has spread beyond the breast itself; the survival rate is now 96 percent, up from 72 percent in the 1940s. If the disease has spread to nearby tissue or lymph nodes but not yet reached distant organs like brain, lung or bone, the survival rate is 78 percent. If the cancer has already spread to other organs when diagnosed, the five-year survival is only 21 percent.)

Post-menopausal women may benefit most from the new attitude toward combining chemotherapy and hormonal therapies. A recent study by the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project has shown that post-menopausal women benefit from the combination of chemotherapy and hormonal agents.

“This is a major paradigm change. I would say, because 10 years ago any patient who was post-menopausal would get hormones alone,” says Dr. Truica. “Now more of them get hormones and chemotherapy.”

However, hormonal approaches remain the main component for post-menopausal patients, Dr. Arteaga adds. The success with Tamoxifen has led to an increase in developing hormonal therapies that may have similar, or better, effects. “In the past, Tamoxifen was the only drug that was widely used for the hormonal treatment of breast cancer,” says Dr. Truica. Now, more drugs are available, such as Femara, Letrozole, Arimidex, Anastrozole and Exemestane, which are being used to treat post-menopausal women. These drugs—known as aromatase inhibitors—work by decreasing the amount of female hormones in the body which is why they are for post-menopausal women only. Because pre-menopausal women secrete such a large amount of female hormones from the ovaries, aromatase inhibitors would have little or no effect.

Dr. Truica points out that, with fewer side effects and less toxicity, the new drugs offer an array of treatment choices if a patient cannot tolerate Tamoxifen. However, the American Society of Clinical Oncology has issued guidelines stating that Tamoxifen is still the preferred treatment for adjuvant treatment for breast cancer.

**Targeted therapies**

Molecular targeted therapies have been in the latest medical news, as drugs are developed that do what their name implies: target the specific cancer cell or molecule and alter it in some way to inhibit the cancer cells from spreading or living.

Herceptin (chemical name trastuzumab), which has been on the market the longest, targets one member of the family of growth factors receptors (molecules that stimulate the proliferation of cells) called the HER2. Studies have shown that when Herceptin is combined with chemotherapy, patients with metastatic breast cancer survive longer. Not everyone has the HER2 receptor present in high levels, but for those patients who do, Herceptin is a viable treatment.

The excitement about targeted therapies stems from the fact that these treatments are less toxic than chemotherapy, killing only specific cancer cells instead of all...
cells (which is why chemotherapy has so many undesirable side effects).

“I would say that we’re still in the infancy with targeted therapies,” Dr. Truica says. “So far, we haven’t had the success that we have with chemotherapy. With chemotherapy, you give the drug and the tumor melts in front of your eyes. With these drugs it takes longer.” However, these drugs are better tolerated than chemotherapy, adds Dr. Arteaga.

While Herceptin targets the HER2 receptor, other drugs currently in development target receptors like HER1, such as Iressa or Tarceva. Studies are under way that combine drugs. Scientists at VICC have combined Iressa with Herceptin for metastatic breast cancer patients who secrete excess amounts of HER2. The study, led by Dr. Arteaga, is accruing information from across the country.

“The pre-clinical data are tantalizing,” admits Dr. Arteaga. “The idea is that this receptor family has four members. So if you target one member, the rest of them can still take over and do the job of maintaining the tumor cell.

“So we’re trying to target several of these molecules at the same time in order to maximally inhibit this receptor pathway, and we hope, kill more cancer cells this way. I would bet any money in the world that combinations of rational molecular therapies are going to be better than chemotherapy any day of the week,” Dr. Arteaga says. “They will be better tolerated, for sure. Hopefully, they’ll be less costly.

“Many of these drugs are given orally, so they are convenient to take. Side effects are minimal compared to chemotherapy and, more importantly, they are relatively cancer-specific.”

A changing view of cancer

As breast cancer treatments become more sophisticated, the definition of the disease itself may change, adds Dr. Arteaga. “The way we think of cancer now is a cell that looks very abnormal under a microscope,” he says.

“If that’s the case, a cancer diagnosis may not instill fear of long-term illness or death, the way it does now. In the future, after initial treatment, ‘there are going to be a lot of women walking around with dormant cancers,’ Dr. Arteaga says.

Patients with breast cancer might have dormant cancers for many decades, rather than the current norm of 10 to 15 years. "Individuals like this would be technically ‘cured’ of cancer,” says Dr. Arteaga. “It’s a tall order, yes, but it can be done.”

Breast cancer prevention and risk factors

There are hundreds of risk factors, but family history is the most important, says Dr. Mark Kelley, Director of Surgical Oncology and director of the Breast Center at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center.

Family history means having multiple cases of breast cancer in the family, such as mother, sister(s), aunt(s), grandmother(s). “We worry that they may have an abnormal gene,” Dr. Kelley adds.

Some of those abnormal genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, have been identified, and patients can be tested to see if they have them. “We know if there’s a mutation of BRCA1, then the patient has a 75 to 80 percent chance of developing breast cancer,” says Dr. Kelley.

Without a strong family history, other risk factors women must consider include:

- Age of first menstrual cycle
- Age of onset of menopause
- Use of hormones
- Number of previous breast biopsies and their results
- Age first child was born—having your first child when you are 30 or older is believed to increase the chance of developing breast cancer
- Weight—obesity is thought to contribute to breast cancer
- Exercise—regular exercise is believed to decrease the chance of developing breast cancer
- Breastfeeding—may lower the chance of developing breast cancer

Of course, women with a strong family history of breast cancer may not be able to completely alter their futures, although they should definitely discuss preventive options with their doctors.

“We can predict a combination of risk factors, and if you give those women Tamoxifen for a few years,” Dr. Kelley says, “breast cancer incidence is much lower.”

As with most medical research, it will take time to assemble the complete picture of what it means to use Tamoxifen in a preventive setting. “It may be that the Tamoxifen is preventing breast cancer in some people,” Dr. Kelley adds, “but we don’t know if it’s preventing or delaying its appearance.”

For the rest of the female population, doctors recommend women do monthly breast self-exams and have screening mammograms as the first-line of prevention.

Dr. Cristina Truica, a VICC medical oncologist who specializes in breast cancer, offers advice that doctors have been giving women for several generations.

“I would say healthy diet and exercise, healthy weight, those are the things we really need to focus on right now, because those are things we can control,” she says.

“Unfortunately, people want a pill a day, and that’s not going to come anytime soon.”

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