a ripe history

Heirloom Plants Offer Taste of Tradition

Also in this issue:
Mount Vernon’s 150 Years of Restoration
The Greatest Land Deal Ever
Pictures on Plates
Family Tree Web Logs
Paula Zahn: An Eye on History
Look carefully..... You will think you are really there. William E. Poole has captured the very essence of historic Colonial Williamsburg within this new portfolio of 18 home designs. Each is created with exacting details lovingly gleaned from the originals.

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photo by Bob Neimy © tomatofest.com

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Dear Editor:

I very much enjoyed your kind review of my brother Stephen’s latest book, *To America*. Stephen, older brother Harry and I are sons of a Daughter of the American Revolution. Our mother, “Cee Cee” (Rosepha Montague Trippe), was a proud member of DAR, having gained entry through our great-great-great-grandfather, Major Richard Montague. Cee Cee and our father, Stephen, raised us in Whitewater, Wis., with character, high self-esteem and pride in country. Cee Cee passed away prematurely in 1971; on her headstone is the DAR emblem.

William G. Ambrose
N. Yarmouth, Maine

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed “Defenders of Freedom” (March/April 2003). However, you missed the “Angels of Bataan and Corregidor,” those brave Army and Navy nurses interned in the Philippines during World War II.

Ruby Bradley and Beatrice Chambers were nurses at Camp John Hay in Baguio when the Japanese bombed the city on December 8, 1941. When Baguio fell, these nurses were interned on Scout Hill at Camp John Hay. I was 12 years old and in the same camp with my family. My mother, Ethel Herold, a no-nonsense lady, and Ruby challenged the Japanese commandant when our group of less than 500 civilians was moved to Camp Holmes. They insisted the 17 babies born the first two months of internment and their mothers occupy what became the “Baby House,” a small cottage separate from the huge women’s barracks. The moms didn’t wish their infants to awaken a barracks full of unhappy women.

Ruby and Bea were subsequently transferred to Santo Tomas Internment Camp in Manila and liberated by the 1st Cavalry on February 3, 1945. Ruby remained in the Army, was the third woman to become a colonel and earned more than 34 medals. She died May 28, 2002, at 94 and is interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Ruby, Bea and other nurses are featured in Elizabeth Norman’s *We Band of Angels*.

Betsy Heimke, Vice Regent
Mission Hills Chapter
Overland Park, Kan.

Please send us your questions and comments. We encourage e-mailing them to the editor at americanspirit@dar.org. Please limit letters to 200 words.
From The President General

As I write this, Spring has come to Washington after a long and snowy winter. The National Mall has started to turn green and cherry trees are in bloom. Beside me at my desk, the layouts for our cover article on heirloom plants remind me of my father’s garden in Tennessee, and I can almost taste those lovely tomatoes fresh from the vine.

Just a few miles away from our National Headquarters, the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association continues to restore and preserve a priceless part of our history. Celebrating their sesquicentennial this year, the MVLA is recognized as the first major historic preservation organization in the United States. After reading our feature story, “Saving Mount Vernon,” I know you will be inspired to begin historic preservation projects in your local communities.

The MVLA has worked tirelessly over the years to preserve and protect our nation’s heritage. But historic preservation takes many shapes. In 2003 we began the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase. This issue features state activities that celebrate this bold move that doubled the size of our infant nation.

This is an historic issue of American Spirit, the publication of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. For the first time, our magazine is available to the public on newsstands across the United States.

If you are not familiar with DAR, we are a 112-year-old non-partisan, non-profit women’s service organization dedicated to carrying the torch of patriotism. Since its founding, DAR has admitted more than 800,000 members; today, DAR has more than 170,000 active members in 3,000 chapters in every state and 11 foreign nations. We are united by a common bond that is the primary requirement for membership: each of us has traced our lineage to a patriot of the American Revolution—whether a soldier, a seamstress, a farmer, or other person who contributed to the cause of freedom. If you would like to learn more about making a difference in the lives of children, America’s veterans, or your own community, we encourage you to visit our Web site, www.dar.org, for details on the work of our organization and information about membership.

DAR actively promotes not only patriotism, but also historic preservation, education, genealogical research, the arts and literacy. In addition, many of our members have been outspoken crusaders for women’s rights, and we celebrate the crucial contributions of women to this marvelous land of ours.

American Spirit is a history magazine especially for women—all women, not just DAR members. It celebrates the principles and interests of DAR, with a particular emphasis on the innumerable contributions of women to U.S. history. We hope you will become a regular reader as American Spirit tells their stories.
Hamilton House

SOUTH BERWICK, MAINE, c. 1788

By Sharon McDonnell
As the Colonial era receded into America’s past, it was simultaneously idealized and dismissed as old-fashioned. So in 1898, when two wealthy Boston women bought Hamilton House in South Berwick, a small town in southern Maine, as their summer home, they embarked upon an ambitious plan to restore the house and land to reflect their romantic ideals of Colonial America.

A pale blue clapboard Georgian mansion on the banks of the Salmon Falls River, Hamilton House overlooks a dreamy pastoral setting of water, gardens, forest and fields on Vaughan’s Lane. New Hampshire lies just across the river from the 35-acre site where Col. Jonathan Hamilton, an affluent merchant and shipowner involved in the East India trade, chose to build his mansion in 1785–87.

The setting was ideal—the town landing and its shipyards were nearby, while sawmills and gristmills were just upstream. Ocean-bound traffic bustled up and down the Salmon Falls River, which flowed past the town into the Piscataqua River and thence into the Atlantic.

Col. Hamilton died in 1802 and the property changed hands. Eventually a family named Goodwin bought it. For more than 60 years, the Goodwins struggled to farm the place—they raised sheep, built a barn and planted an orchard. But the region fell into decline in the 19th century. First the sea trade stumbled, then farming flagged as cheaper produce from the Midwest supplanted produce from New England farms.

By the time Emily Tyson, widow of the president of the B&O Railroad, and her stepdaughter, Elise Tyson Vaughan, purchased Hamilton House, it was known locally as “The Ruin.” The structure was dilapidated—it had undergone no major renovations since Col. Hamilton’s time and badly needed care. Luckily, its original woodwork was still intact. Sarah Orne Jewett, author of Country of Pointed Firs and a friend and neighbor in South Berwick, encouraged them to buy Hamilton House and restore it.

Through a complete renovation, Emily Tyson and Elise Vaughan created a masterpiece. They filled the Colonial Revival country house with antiques recalling the late 1700s. They entertained writers such as Henry James, Willa Cather (Jewett’s protégé) and William Dean Howells. Their splendid garden, which blended the symmetry of an Italian villa garden with the lush wild beauty of an English cottage garden, was regarded as one of New England’s finest in the 1920s. In 1929, House Beautiful magazine featured it in a pictorial.

In the late 19th century, railroads opened up coastal Maine as a resort destination for city folks, and the two Bostonians resolved to entice guests away from popular spots like York Harbor to their inland retreat. While some wealthy Americans chose to pursue summer lifestyles of conspicuous consumption in Newport, R.I., and other places, others preferred to summer in their family homes in the country, or to buy or build a home in a rural setting. The Tysons were proudly part of the latter group.

Today, this National Historic Landmark is framed perfectly by a white arch. Rectangular flowerbeds, with the river and forest on one side, flank a straight path to the mansion. The idyllic setting tempts visitors to shut their eyes and visualize the river humming with passengers, cargo and shipbuilding noise—but it’s almost impossible to imagine. “It is all one harmony, house and grounds and human spirit,” exclaimed a 1910 article in Century magazine.

Visitors who enter the mansion discover how the Tysons cleverly integrated nature into the house’s interior. In the drawing room, a mural by George Porter Fernald depicts a fantasy landscape of the Piscataqua River and the nearby Salmon River Falls. Colonial mansions line the shore, including Hamilton House and several in Portsmouth, N.H., a few miles distant. Aristocratic citizens in Colonial dress stroll the riverside past a ship and a peacock in this mural, which ingeniously incorporates the existing wallpaper.
Clockwise from top left: Exterior of Hamilton House from the garden. Interior drawing room with murals. Mrs. Tyson’s bedchamber with hooked rugs and collection of green glass. Paper hanger photographed by Emily Tyson in 1898.

For more information, visit www.spnea.org/visit/homes/hamilton.htm
Hamilton House, 40 Vaughan’s Lane, South Berwick, Maine 03908, (207) 384-2454
Open: Wednesday through Sunday, June 1 through October 15. Tours on the hour from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Admission: $5, SPNEA members and South Berwick residents free. Grounds open dawn to dusk.
Designed to impress, the high-ceilinged room features ornate woodwork and moldings, arches with a Greek key pattern, mahogany window seats and Japanese-inspired furniture—such as a lacquered writing desk, card table and settee—to reflect Col. Hamilton’s trade in the East. A bust of George Washington, a classic Colonial Revival icon, sits on the mantel.

In the dining room, another Fernald mural displays an imaginary Italian landscape with crumbling classical ruins. Wealthy Americans adored European antiquities. Influenced by Edith Wharton’s 1904 book, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*, and a visit to Italy in 1905, the Tysons looked to Italy to inform their notion of a country house. Their illustrious guests dined at a mahogany Duncan Phyfe-style table in this room, whose exterior door opens onto the garden.

In the back parlor, trellis and ivy wallpaper mimics the outdoors. The room features an engraving of a ship commanded by John Paul Jones engaged in battle. A bust of Ben Franklin and silhouettes on the valances represent characters in Jewett’s 1901 Colonial-era novel, *The Tory Lover*, which she set at Hamilton House.

The Tysons chose not to modernize the original kitchen, so they limited themselves to restoring the fireplace and displaying pots and utensils. They added a two-story wing for kitchen and laundry facilities, camouflaged with woodwork, seen from the hallway. Above: The hallway features 1898 reproduction wallpaper.

*Upstairs, the bedrooms showcase the Tysons’ passion for handmade women’s crafts they collected in reaction to the machinery of the Industrial Age. This was ironic, considering that their wealth sprang from the railroads, long symbolic of progress and technology. Hooked rugs, hand-cut paper lampshades, candlewick- and crewel-embroidered bed coverlets, colored glass and—in Emily’s room—Currier & Ives prints of winter scenes furnish the bedchambers."

“A glimpse of sunshiny, idle Italy: the sparkling river and the blue sky, the wide green shores and the trees, and the great gray house,” Jewett called Hamilton House. In contrast, her own South Berwick house in the center of town enabled her to survey goings-on from her second-floor study. Here she grew up as a doctor’s daughter, and returned there each summer from Boston, where she lived in the thick of its literary circles.

The Hamilton House garden is an enchanted landscape. An Italian marble fountain, classical statues, sundials, birdbaths, columns topped by pineapple finials and millstone-paved paths—all Colonial Revival elements—lend a stately air. The use of different elevations—also a Colonial Revival element—helps define the landscape into outdoor “rooms” as visitors amble from the mansion through the garden to the cottage. Boxwood hedges, lattice and fieldstone walls further define the space. The main line of the garden runs perpendicular to the river.

Tiger lilies, phlox, hollycocks and globe thistles turned the garden into a riot of purple, pink, orange and white during my visit in late summer. Picnickers on the riverbank clearly were enjoying the grounds, which are open year-round to the public. Earlier in summer, irises and peonies bloomed.

The garden cottage was built of beams and paneling reclaimed from Colonial buildings. The Tysons used it as a rustic spot for entertaining or as a cozy retreat from the main house. Vintage photos of the garden in its heyday adorn the walls, as Elise Vaughan was an amateur photographer. Today so open in feeling, the garden—designed with the help of Boston architect Herbert W. C. Browne—formerly had a more enclosed look. A vine-choked wooden pergola enveloped the garden on three sides, and a glass-sided teahouse and lattice walls once stood here.

But by the time Mrs. Vaughan, who inherited the property after her stepmother died in 1922, died in 1949, the structures started to weaken. A hurricane in the early 1950s left most in the sort of ruins the Tysons so loved in Italy.

Mrs. Vaughan bequeathed Hamilton House to The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA). She also donated nearly 200 surrounding acres to the State of Maine for preservation. In 1997, the society began restoring the landscape to accurately reflect its glory days of the 1920s, based on the Tysons’ photographs and plant lists.

Nothing could be more appropriate: The society’s founder, William Sumner Appleton, was a frequent guest of the Tysons. The garden arch, fieldstone walls, a brick path and cottage garden with flower and herb beds and a gravel path were rebuilt. Sixteen healthy elms replaced dead or sickly trees. There are plans to rebuild some architectural elements, such as the pergola.

“The landscape and house are so intertwined, it’s phenomenal,” says Peter Michaud, co-manager of the SPNEA’s historic properties in Maine and coastal New Hampshire. “The Tysons’ idea was a continuous theme that blends the outside with the inside, and it works today as well as it did then.”
What's better than adding another branch to your family tree? The surge of pride you get when you share your findings.

Thanks to Web logs, an increasingly popular form of Internet publishing, spreading the word about your family history is easier than ever.

Commonly referred to as blogs, Web logs are journal entry-like musings recorded chronologically, in which Web users share thoughts on a particular topic. Some blogs contain hyperlinks to other Web sites; others just feature plain text. On any given day, you can find thousands of blogs where Web users rant about subjects ranging from politics to fashion and everything in between.

A virtual diary

Ralph Brandi, a Web site designer from Tinton Falls, N.J., created a blog (www.brandi.org/geneablogy) to record his family history as he researched it.

"I was finding so much stuff in my first month, I realized I needed a journal to keep track of it," he says. A blog was his medium of choice because it enabled him to organize his information in a way that would be easy to find later. Had he used a spiral notebook, for instance, Mr. Brandi would have had to thumb through numerous pages to find a particular tidbit of information. With the search engine on his Web site, Mr. Brandi can type in a particular word or phrase and easily zero in on the information he's looking for.

Plus, he says, "if you write it in a notebook, you're the only person who will see it."

Bragging rights aren't the only benefit of posting family history online. There's always the chance that an unknown family member will come across the information, recognize it and contact you. That's what happened to Mr. Brandi soon after he posted his blog.

"I got an e-mail in Polish about a year ago from a woman," says Mr. Brandi. "She had typed the village she came from into the search engine Google and up popped my site." The woman recognized a name on Brandi's site and got in touch with him. That correspondence led Mr. Brandi to family members he wasn't even aware he had.

A few weeks after Mr. Brandi put up his site, he discovered another benefit to recording his search for family on the Web. Not only did he find other family members, but Mr. Brandi also captured the attention of people who were embarking on similar genealogical quests. Some of those people gave him tips for expanding his search.

In fact, one budding genealogist was searching for family in the same village as Mr. Brandi. After reading the blog, he made contact, and the two helped each other find new sources of information. Both of their genealogical quests benefited from the collaboration.

Pat Isaacs Richley, a computer instructor in Bradenton, Fla., who pens Dear Myrtle's Daily Genealogy Column (dearmyrtle.com), advises people exploring their family histories to create blogs because they outlast hard drive meltdown and other disasters that can befall a computer.

"One of the scary things about using our computers to record our genealogy is we don't know how long [the computers] will last," she says. Even "if a person passes away, at least [with a blog] that information will be preserved electronically."

So how do you create a Web blog? Although you can purchase your own domain name and find a Web hosting company to host your site as Mr. Brandi did, it isn't necessary.

Some Web sites offer free blog-publishing tools—Blogger (blogger.com) and DiaryLand (diaryland.com)—or inexpensive publishing tools, such as Live Journal (livejournal.com). The major blog-publishing sites let you create and store Web pages on their servers at no cost.

Before creating your Web log, peruse the blog-publishing sites to see what other users have done. That way, you'll get a feel for the medium and see the differences between the blogs created by each of the various services. That will help you decide which publishing site to use. Register at a blog-publishing site by selecting a user name and password and providing basic personal data such as your name and e-mail address. Now you're ready to begin.

The site will automatically generate a Web address for your blog's online home. For example, a blog created using Blogger.com might be stored online at
A Web user perusing your site will see the most recent entry first, followed by your previous ones, with the oldest entries at the bottom. If you want people to comment on your blog, be sure to provide contact information for them to do so. Some bloggers even encourage or solicit comments from all Web users.

**A little bit of attitude**

One of the most appealing aspects of blogs is that they allow creators to express their opinions in whatever manner feels most comfortable to them. There are no conventions. Because the entries can be like those of a diary, feel free to ramble, rant and be as long-winded or short-winded as you like. In fact, some of the most popular blogs on the Web are highly opinionated and reflect much of the creator’s personality. The more attitude you have when creating your blog, the better.

If you’re already familiar with Web page design, you might feel limited by the editing capabilities the free services offer. But for those more concerned with the content than special effects, the free tools will work just fine. Those who are totally unfamiliar with Web design will feel at home since there is virtually no learning curve involved with using the free services.

For a fee, some sites will give you more extensive editing tools, letting you upload photos, for example. Other pay features include the ability to gather statistics on the number of people who view your blog, and the right to keep ads off of your blog. The latter may be important to you, because some services make their money by selling Web ads on personal blog pages.

If you already have a Web page, some blog sites will let you use their tools to create your Web log, even if you choose to upload it to your own site rather than one of their pages.

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**The safety factor**

But there is a cloud with every silver lining. Public blogs are so easy for random Web users to find, that you should be cautious with the information you share.

Keep certain tidbits confidential, such as maternal surnames. Armed with your mother’s maiden name, an identity thief can access and wreak havoc with your financial accounts. A clever thief could also deduce such information if you publish surnames even further up the line, such as that of a maternal grandparent or even great-grandparent. (The same caution applies to Web sites open to the public.)

Parents of small children should be particularly wary about how much information they publish. An innocent chat room conversation in which a child mentions a family Web site could arm an unsavory character with enough information to fake familiarity with the child, or in a worst-case scenario, even find out where the child lives.

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Internet safety experts, in fact, recommend that parents refrain from putting information about their children on the Web at all. Those dangers can be avoided with a spoonful of caution and a dash of common sense. As long as you’re careful, the benefits of blogging—sharing family information with multiple people in an easy-to-use and enduring way—far outweigh the risks. So what are you waiting for? Get blogging! 🍌

**myfamilytree.blogspot.com.** An editable field lets you type whatever information you want to appear on the blog, and in a matter of minutes your blog will be uploaded onto the Internet.

When you’re ready to add a new entry, simply log onto the blog-publishing site by entering your user name and password. Type in your update, and it will be published above the previous entry. Even after blog entries have been published, you can go back and edit them.

However, some bloggers may decide they want to share their blogs with their families and no one else. Blog-publishing sites make that possible, giving users the option of making blogs public or private.

Should you decide to keep your blog private, you’ll be given a password for accessing it. If you want family members and friends to be able to see your blog, just give them your password.

For a fee, some sites will give you more extensive editing tools, letting you upload photos, for example. Other pay features include the ability to gather statistics on the number of people who view your blog, and the right to keep ads off of your blog. The latter may be important to you, because some services make their money by selling Web ads on personal blog pages.

If you already have a Web page, some blog sites will let you use their tools to create your Web log, even if you choose to upload it to your own site rather than one of their pages.

Editing features aside, one of the best features about blogs is their promotional value. Blog-publishing sites frequently highlight new and updated personal blogs so others can easily find them. Some blog-publishing sites even submit blogs to Internet search engines, a move that gives personal bloggers an even bigger audience.
As soon as you board the ferry bound for the San Juan Islands from Seattle, you leave behind the city’s fast pace for a world where time passes much slower.

Forty of the scenic San Juans are inhabited, but the majority of people live on Lopez, Shaw, Orcas and San Juan Islands.

The islands are a haven for naturalists and birders. The San Juan Islands have the highest concentration of nesting bald eagles in the United States. Other seabirds nest here as well, and it’s an important pupping site for harbor seals.

In addition, the islands are home to three resilient pods of orcas—killer whales—totaling about 100 of the sleek aquatic mammals. Whale-watching tours are available, with sightings most likely between May and September. You can also visit the Whale Museum on San Juan Island, where you’ll learn about the natural history of marine mammals, particularly those that reside in the waters of the San Juan Islands.

Hikers will want to check out the extensive trails in Moran State Park on Orcas Island, where you can trek through an old-growth forest and along a 6-mile driftwood-lined beach. Mt. Constitution, the highest point on the islands, is located here, too. Several other parks offer peaceful walking opportunities.

Accommodations range from island farmhouses to Craftsman-style homes to cottages and B&Bs, complete with hot tubs, fireplaces and private beaches.

Farmers’ markets in the summer offer a taste of the local produce and a chance to purchase some handcrafted objects made by island artisans. A stop at one of the island’s vineyards is a great way to sample some Washington state wines.

Several interesting historical museums also dot the islands and trace the history of the Pacific Northwest as it relates to the San Juans.

For More Information: Visit www.guidetosanjuans.com
Bicycle rides, Victorian architecture and fudge. Sounds like the makings of a great getaway, and it’s just a sample of what Mackinac Island offers summer visitors.

Motorized vehicles aren’t allowed on Mackinac (to get there, take a ferry from Mackinaw City or St. Ignace), so you can opt for horse and buggy, bike or just walk around the 8.3-mile island.

The village boasts Victorian homes and shops that have been faithfully restored, including the Beaumont Memorial, Mission Church, the Biddle House and cottages of some of the island’s earliest pioneers.

Fort Mackinac, constructed by British soldiers during the American Revolution, contains original fort buildings and memorabilia from the War of 1812. Hourly musket demonstrations, cannon firings and tours by costumed guides bring the long-ago era to life.

While Mackinac is home to several B&Bs and other charming hotels, The Grand Hotel, a National Landmark, is a standout. The Grand, with its 381 rooms, is known as one of the top 100 hotels in the world. You don’t have to be a guest to savor the view from its 660-foot front porch or enjoy afternoon tea, an elegant lunch or dinner or a round of golf.

Fudge has been a part of the island’s history since the 1800s, and you can watch the delectable confection being made at many village shops.

The 54th annual Lilac Festival (June 6–16) honors the fragrant flowers that bloom all over the island. One of the largest “All Horse Hitch” parades is held in conjunction with the festival, which has been designated one of the nation’s top 100 tourist attractions.

For More Information: Visit www.mackinac.com

The Grand Hotel
With two flourishes of a pen and a price of just doubled in size by sealing the

The Louisiana

TERRITORY OF LOUISIANA 1762-1800

 Territory actually delivered by FRANCE to SPAIN, April 21, 1764 under treaty of Nov. 31, 1762.

 Louisiana Territory east of the Mississippi River was ceded by FRANCE and SPAIN to GREAT BRITAIN, Feb. 10, 1763.
4 cents an acre, the United States in 1803 virtually greatest real estate deal of all time —

Purchase

Bicentennial Celebration

by Geoffrey D. Witham
The price was a then-staggering $15 million—more than seven times the $2 million Congress had authorized. But Congress knew a good deal when it saw one and approved the purchase as a treaty on October 20, 1803. Exactly two months later, the American flag was raised over New Orleans for the very first time.

And not just over New Orleans. The purchase secured 800,000 square miles of land that would eventually become all or part of 15 states: Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas and, of course, Louisiana.

The venture started with humbler goals. In early 1803, President Thomas Jefferson sent James Monroe to Paris to join Robert Livingston, the American Minister to France, in troubled negotiations to secure American trade access on the Mississippi River. Jefferson had hoped to purchase New Orleans and portions of Florida from the French for less than $10 million, but would have settled for the acquisition of perpetual rights of navigation and deposit on the Mississippi River.

After months of impasse, Napoleon authorized his foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, to make one offer only: all of Louisiana for $15 million, or nothing at all. Although Congress had authorized only $2 million for the purchase, Monroe and Livingston accepted the deal. (See sidebar.)

This year, many states are celebrating the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase by recreating some of the adventures the land deal offered early Americans. These celebrations offer unique tours, memorials, performances and exhibits. Listed below, state by state, are just a few of the many events; for a more complete list visit LouisianaPurchase2003.com.

Arkansas
www.lapurchase.org

In a swamp at the corners of Lee, Phillips and Monroe counties, William Dunbar and George Hunter began the first official survey of the vast Louisiana Purchase—every legal description of the lands depended on measurements taken from this point.

In their journals, surveyors called this region a land of “briers and swamps and briers aplenty,” but modern tourists need not get wet or pricked to visit this historic site. It is now part of Louisiana Purchase Historic State Park, and a boardwalk will safely conduct you through the swamps and wilderness where Mr. Dunbar and Mr. Hunter began their arduous trek.

Louisiana Purchase Historic Park, Hot Springs National Park and the first floor of the Arkansas State Capitol all serve as good starting points for a visit to Arkansas, which is celebrating the Louisiana Purchase with exhibits at 13 museums, guided journeys through Arkansas’ wilderness areas, educational seminars on surveying and numerous workshops on traditional arts, including gourds, candle making, fire building, dyeing, pottery and flint knapping. Highlights include:

Lake Darandelle State Park will present “Floating through History on the Arkansas River” on May 3, June 7, August 2, September 6 and October 4, 2003. The program will cover the history of navigation on the Arkansas, from wooden canoes to modern commercial barges, and every participant will build a model canoe to take home. Call (479) 967–5516 for details.

An illuminated tour of the Cedar Heights Cemetery will take place on May 3, 2003, with local residents reenacting the stories of several Lee County historical figures who are interred there. Call (870) 295–2469 for more information.

The Arkansas Storytelling Festival will take place at DeGray Lake Resort State Park from October 17–19, 2003. The festival will feature contemporary storytellers as well as historical reenactments, along with storytelling workshops, hayrides and eagle tours. Call (501) 865–2801 for details.

Iowa
www.lewisandclarkne-ia.com

After the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson thought it necessary to explore these new lands to “enlarge our knowledge of the geography of our continent.” He asked his neighbor and former secretary, Meriwether Lewis, to lead the expedition. Lewis asked his former commander, William Clark, to accompany him. The two assembled four dozen men into a Corps of Discovery, and so began one of the greatest adventures in American history.

Lewis and Clark created a thorough and influential record of America’s tribes, wildlife, lands and rivers during their 28-month journey. Two states on opposite sides of the Missouri River, Iowa and Nebraska, are jointly celebrating the journey of Lewis and Clark with many events. Unique among them:

The Lewis and Clark Festival, held at Lewis and Clark State Park in Onawa, Iowa, from June 13–15, 2003, will feature a historically accurate 1804
Montana
lewisandclark.state.mt.us/events.shtm

When the Corps of Discovery arrived at the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers in the spring of 1805, they celebrated: Lewis and Clark thought for certain that they were mere weeks away from the Pacific. While this fabled Northwest Passage never materialized, the Corps’ journey into Montana did generate information needed to establish trading posts and forts. Montana will honor its early 19th-century roots in 2003 with numerous summertime festivals, including:

West Bank Park and the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail will jointly hold the Lewis and Clark Festival from June 25–29, 2003. The festival will feature performers, food and goods from the period of the Corps, as well as seminars, college courses and a children’s day camp. Call (406) 452–5661 for details.

North American Indian Days, held from July 10–13, 2003, at the Blackfeet Celebration Grounds, is the largest Blackfeet tribal event, hosting Native Americans from every region of the United States and Canada. Features include traditional dwellings, drumming and dancing contests, the crowning of Miss Blackfeet and a parade. Call (406) 338–7276 for details, or visit www.blackfeetnation.com.

Clark Day will celebrate Captain Clark’s visit to Pompey’s Pillar, with free admission and camping at Pompey’s Pillar National Historic Landmark on July 26, 2003. Visit numerous historic interpretive stations, canoe the Yellowstone River, eat buffalo burgers, go bird watching and listen to bluegrass music. Call (406) 896–5235 for more information.

South Dakota
www.travelsd.com

Just north of Nebraska, the Missouri cuts through South Dakota, the land where Lewis and Clark encountered the Sioux and Arikara tribes, as well as lush vegetation, immense herds of buffalo, and—to their great surprise—barking squirrels. South Dakota has established a Lewis and Clark Trail to trace the footsteps of the famous explorers, but you can cover the same miles somewhat more easily—in your car. Lewis and Clark travel tapes can be rented at any Information Center along I-90 and I-29, allowing you to listen to stories of the Corps while you drive the trail. Worth stopping for:

The Sacagawea Learning Center will host the Sacagawea Unity Fest, May 23–24, and again October 10–11. The Unity Fest will feature some of South Dakota’s finest artists and musicians in workshops, exhibits and concerts. The autumn celebration coincides with Native American Day. Call (605) 845–7700 for more information.

The town of Mobridge will host its annual Lewis and Clark Rediscovery Festival from August 8–10, 2003. Historical interpreters will reenact the meeting between the Corps and the Arikaras, against a backdrop of life-size exhibits that trace the history of Mobridge through its founding in 1806 and its heyday as a railroad town in the mid-19th century. Call (605) 845–7700 for more information.

Louisiana
www.louisianatravel.com or www.louisianapurchase2003.com

As you might expect, the state that shares its name with the Purchase has the most extensive celebrations planned. More than 600 events will take place throughout the year. Numerous art and historical museums will be involved, of course, but Louisiana is also sponsoring horticultural exhibits, a symphony, an IMAX film, a musical and two operas dedicated to the Louisiana Purchase.

Savvy historical tourists will find educational and entertaining events throughout the year, but for a unique Yuletide experience, you may wish to bring your family to Louisiana during the holiday season. December 2003 will feature not only the traditional plantation Christmas celebrations and river tours to see holiday levee bonfires, but also the closing ceremonies for the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial. Notable December destinations include:

The New Orleans Public Library will hold an exhibit entitled “A Great and Growing City: New Orleans in the Era of the Louisiana Purchase,” from February through December 2003. The exhibit will showcase original manuscripts, maps, books and other materials that tell the story of New Orleans’ people, politics, architecture and society before and after 1803. Call (504) 596–2610 for more information, or visit nutrias.org.

The San Francisco Plantation will operate the Louisiana Purchase African American Interpretive Center through January 2004. Through numerous historical interpretive stations, the center will trace the path of slavery and black culture in the Louisiana territory from the late 1600s through 1803 and beyond. Call (985) 535–2341 for details, or visit sanfranciscoplantation.org.

The Cabildo, the very site in New Orleans at which the original Louisiana Purchase transfer ceremony took place in 1803, will host a Reenactment of the Louisiana Purchase on December 20, 2003. The ceremony will be enlivened with local music, food, artwork and historical displays. A number of international dignitaries have been invited, and organizers expect a large turnout of tourists to participate in this capstone celebration honoring our nation’s greatest bargain.
The Louisiana Purchase: What If?
By Geoffrey D. Witham

Like so many other historical milestones, the Louisiana Purchase was the result of a remarkable series of events in four nations that made the Purchase uniquely possible only at that one time. Consider the following:

**SPAIN**
Still a Colonial superpower in its autumnal years, Spain allies itself with France in the sixth year of what would come to be called the Seven Years’ War. Unfortunately for the Spanish, the British win impressively in 1763. Spain receives the gigantic territory of Louisiana from France as compensation. But it loses Florida to Britain, only to gain it back 20 years later when the Americans, now Spanish allies, succeed in their Revolution.

In the 1790s, Spain makes a couple of poor decisions in Europe—including siding with the monarchy during the French Revolution and then joining the coalition to restore the monarchy in France. After these disasters, Spain in 1800 signs a secret treaty with Napoleon’s government, ceding to France all of its North American territories, but maintaining governmental control over them.

However, Spain is stymied in its efforts to control trade in the region. Foreign goods are brought in by British and American ships, and in 1796, the British even set up blockades between Spain and North America. The resulting loss of income leads the Spanish authorities to clamp down on one of its more liberal policies: U.S. merchants may no longer deposit goods duty-free in New Orleans for transshipment up the Mississippi.

**BRITAIN**
Britain, while winning impressive victories throughout Europe, North America and even India, is encumbered by huge debts from the Seven Years’ War, so the government leans heavily upon its colonies for cheap materials, labor and taxes. This source of revenue becomes a source of humiliation after the American Revolution.

The British strategy now turns away from its own colonial expansion and focuses instead on securing monarchical power in Europe and British trade superiority throughout the world.

Britain’s archenemy, of course, is France. Napoleon is not only seeking to overtake land and trade routes, he is also (at least in his own viewpoint) a champion of democracy. Needless to say, the British authorities are not so keen on civic rights and see the spread of democracy as a threat. In 1799, they begin efforts to restore the French monarchy, and in April 1803, they resume the war at sea against Napoleon’s fleet.

**FRANCE AND NAPOLEON**
Napoleon, democracy’s loudest advocate, is actually a very powerful military dictator. But even very powerful military dictators have trouble with colonies—and the British, of course. (Everyone at this time has trouble with the British, it seems.) In 1803, he must make some tough choices.

For months, two pesky American ministers have been trying to purchase New Orleans from Napoleon, but that has not been an option because Louisiana was needed as a close and cheap source of supplies for his forces in Santo Domingo, Hispaniola. But by the spring, revolutionaries and yellow fever have decimated the troops, and the British have just launched attacks against the French at sea. Needing to summon manpower and raise funds for a planned invasion of Britain, Napoleon in April decides to make the Americans one offer: all 800,000 square miles of Louisiana for $15 million, or nothing.

**UNITED STATES**
President Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Constitution, senses he is in a bit of a bind. He had already authorized his ministers, James Monroe and Robert R. Livingston, to spend up to $10 million—five times as much as Congress had allocated for the purchase of New Orleans.

Also, there is nothing in the Constitution that grants the executive branch the power to acquire land, especially so much of it. He suspects that, technically, he needs an amendment, but amending the Constitution is a slow process, and France, of course, wants money quickly. There seems to be just one viable loophole: invoke his power to make treaties. He agrees to the deal and presents it to Congress as a treaty. Both houses mull it over for six months but then ratify it in October. In one of those delectable ironies, Congress decides to borrow much of the money—which Napoleon will use to fight the British—from English banks.

Although loath to go on record with their speculations, historians occasionally play “What If?” In this game they ask: Which pieces of this puzzle could be left out and still result in the Louisiana Purchase? What if Spain had never revoked U.S. merchants’ right of deposit in New Orleans? What if Britain had chosen a less aggressive policy toward Napoleon? What if French soldiers had been magically blessed with a natural immunity to yellow fever? The Louisiana Purchase seems rooted in a complex yet delicate synchronism of factors; excluding any one of them may have changed the very course of American history.

So, what if the Louisiana Purchase had never happened? This question is impossible to answer fully, but the addition of so much land had a far-ranging impact on America.
“Any acquisition of such a large territory raises new questions for a nation and its future,” says Dr. Leslie Rowland, a historian at the University of Maryland. The immediate effects of the Purchase included exploration of the continent, establishment of trade routes and towns and, unfortunately, conflict with the indigenous tribes of the new land.

Dr. Alecia Long of the Louisiana State Museum notes: “At the same time the frontier helped establish what is popularly considered American character, it also decimated Native American character.” A great deal of speculation has been devoted to the question of whether tribal societies would have flourished if Americans had not insisted upon “settling” their Western lands.

Dr. Rowland and Dr. Long point out another more sinister outgrowth of the Louisiana Purchase: the Civil War. The addition of so much territory, followed by more additions after the war with Mexico, brought the issue of slavery to the forefront in American politics. The expanse of territory and desire in the new regions to catch up economically with longer-established states created great pressure for cheap labor. When new territories from the Purchase began applying for statehood, they altered the balance between free and slave states (11 each before 1818).

Compromises were reached—notably the Missouri Compromise in 1821 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854—but as we all know, the compromises did not last. Had the slavery issue remained balanced among 22 states, the lives of many Americans may have been spared; on the other hand, how many more black Americans would have suffered through enslavement?

And if the American ministers to France had not secured the Louisiana Purchase, it seems unlikely that Americans would have been content to remain at merely 22 states. While the Louisiana Purchase may have created conditions that led to the Civil War, if the Purchase had never happened, there is a good chance that America might have gone to war with France in the early 19th century.

Historian Dr. Roman Heleniak of Southeastern Louisiana University believes that “if Monroe came home empty-handed, sooner or later—probably sooner—we would have taken Louisiana. As more and more rawboned Americans moved into the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, it would have become a necessity to gain total control of Louisiana.”

In fact, among historians there is widespread belief that one of the greatest impacts of the Louisiana Purchase was upon American character. The concept of Manifest Destiny was widely popular even before John Louis O’Sullivan coined the phrase in 1845, and the Louisiana Purchase presented a young nation—recently freed from Colonial authority—with a magnificent frontier to explore, settle and govern. For all the complications that came with the new territories, they also brought natural wonders, civic challenges and seemingly infinite possibilities.

In 1893, historian Frederick Jackson Turner was the first to argue the existence of the frontier had profound and permanent effects on American character, chief among them that we could be a people forever moving onward, forever making progress. Now that our borders are firmly established and our nation stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and beyond, we are still a “westering” people, in such challenging arenas as global trade, the entertainment industry and the space program.

Dr. Long points out that, even today, “there continues to be a real romance with the American West.” The photographs of Ansel Adams and Richard Avedon, the films of John Wayne and Clint Eastwood, the paintings of Georgia O’Keeffe, the novels of Barbara Kingsolver and even the clothing designed by Ralph Lauren—would any of these have been possible if the frontier had remained French? No historical moment is expendable, but very few can rival the continued cultural importance of the Louisiana Purchase.
living
every spring, Thomas Jefferson competed with neighboring gentleman gardeners over who could produce the first fresh garden peas of the season. The winner hosted a feast for the community that featured the fresh-shelled vegetable.

Jefferson grew 19 kinds of peas, devoting three full squares of his 1,000-foot-long kitchen garden at Monticello to varieties such as Early Frame and Hotspur. Although contemporary home gardeners may not want or be able to devote as much space to the pea as Jefferson did, they can enjoy the same taste by cultivating heirloom peas like the Prince Albert, which is “indistinguishable” from Early Frame, according to Peter Hatch, Director of Monticello Gardens and Grounds.

Heirloom gardeners call their vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers “living antiques” because, to be considered an heirloom, these plants must have been grown for at least 50 years. They have survived by being handed down in families instead of sold commercially. The Prince Albert pea easily fits the heirloom category, having been introduced to the United States in the 1840s.

An heirloom is old, passed-along and time-tested,” says William Welch, a noted landscape horticulturist with Texas A&M University and the author of several gardening books.

Almost all seeds and plants sold in commercial nurseries are modern varieties or hybrids, which are created by cross-pollinating or grafting two different varieties. But thanks to the budding popularity of heirlooms, gardeners with a Colonial heritage are more likely than ever to be able to track down the seeds of varieties their ancestors grew. Several companies now grow and sell heirloom seeds exclusively:

“It’s fun to try growing all kinds of things, but an heirloom is a piece of history,” says Jere Gettle, owner of the six-year-old Baker Creek Seed Company in Mansfield, Mo. “The hybrids don’t have any ties, where with a lot of heirloom varieties you can find out that Thomas Jefferson grew this one or George Washington grew that one.”

Peggy Cornett, Director of Monticello’s Center for Historic Plants, urges home gardeners to dig into their Colonial roots, saying, “Avoid modern cultivars and go for the species or the period cultivars. If it’s a restoration, do your homework.”

She recommends looking in diaries, periodicals (including newspaper ads), letters, nursery catalogs or gardening periodicals for documentation of plants grown locally or in a particular family. The Cherokee Garden Library in Atlanta, the Center for American History at the University of Texas in Austin, the Berkowitz Memorial Library at the Des Moines Botanical Center,
the Blaksley Library of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden in California and the Elisabeth C. Miller Horticulture Library at the University of Washington’s Center for Urban Horticulture in Seattle are great resources for gardeners. Another valuable source is Twinleaf, an annual journal and catalog published by Monticello.

“Concentrate on what was in your own family,” Mr. Welch says. “Learning more about [these plants] is exciting and can be very meaningful.” Adds Ms. Cornett: “Think about utility. People needed gardens to sustain themselves, so they contained a wide diversity of crops.”

To survive, the Colonists had to learn how to grow crops at different times of the year. They relied on some North American plants, such as corn and bayberries, but imported far more. Only a handful of fruits—the Concord grape, blueberries and cranberries—are natives of the United States; of the 50 or so vegetables typically eaten by Americans, only nine originated in the New World—and none within modern U.S. borders. Corn, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, lima beans, common beans (also called kidney or French beans), tomatoes, winter and summer squash, and peppers all are indigenous to Central and South America.

Colonial-era gardens commonly produced beans, broccoli, cabbages, cucumbers, lettuces, melons, onions, squash and, of course, Mr. Jefferson’s beloved pea. Colonists also harvested all the basic herbs: basil, chives, dill, fennel, lavender, parsley, rosemary, sage, tansy, tarragon, thyme and yarrow.

May is too late to start growing many of these edibles from seed, but cold crops like lettuce can be sown for a fall harvest. The United States has such a diversity of climates that the length of growing season from region to region differs dramatically. In some parts of the Rockies, gardeners only have 70 days to go from planting to picking, while Southern California growers can cultivate crops almost all year.

In cities with intense summers like Savannah, Ga., Austin, Texas, Las Vegas and San Diego, gardeners are better off waiting for the long autumn growing season to start most vegetables. In the Southwest, warm crops like tomatoes can be planted in late winter for an early summer harvest. Cold crops do especially well in the Pacific Northwest, where experienced gardeners know they’ll have to use season-extending techniques for warm season varieties.

Regardless of region, there’s still time to seed the following Colonial-era heirloom varieties:

- Basil was brought from Europe to the Massachusetts Bay Colony by 1621 and was common throughout America by the late 1700s. A favorite type was Sweet Basil. Grown in pots or in the ground, basil must be sown in full sun after the last frost.

Beans tend to have lengthy growing seasons, often taking as long as three months to mature. Gardeners willing to grow beans for their elegant vines and colorful flowers might consider the ornamental Caracalla bean (also known as Snail Flower), which can be purchased as a plant from Monticello.

The Blue Coco snap pole bean, also called Purple Pod and Blue Potted Pole, has a relatively short, 60-day season. This heat- and drought-tolerant French heirloom, dating to 1775, should be planted after the last frost and harvested when the pods are young for best flavor. Its pink flowers, purple-tinted leaves and purple-blue pods are beautiful on trellises, although the beans can be supported by poles tied together to form a tepee. Space-conscious gardeners often plant a salad crop inside the tepee, where the beans shade the heat-sensitive greens.

Other beans that may still be planted in areas with long growing seasons include the Red Calico Lima Bean, a Southern family heirloom from the 1790s; the Carolina Sieva Lima Bean, which Jefferson noted in 1794; and the Vermont Cranberry Bush, a sweet shell bean dating to the 1700s. These three varieties should be planted in full sun after the last frost and need about three months to mature.

Cabbage may be planted in spring and fall. Colonists sowed it in the fall because it can survive winter and provide greens for early spring. Jefferson grew the Early York, which is similar to the widely available Early Jersey Wakefield. This compact heirloom needs rich soil and full sun, but can’t take the heat. Southern gardeners should plant it only as a winter crop. Cabbage belongs to the brassica family, which also includes broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and kale. These biennials can be difficult to grow; so beginning gardeners often stick to lettuce.

One of the easiest brassicas to cultivate is Dwarf German Kale, introduced by the Pennsylvania Dutch in the early 1700s. Less vulnerable to insects and disease than other cabbages, it’s often planted six to eight weeks before the first frost. More than one plant is needed to produce seeds.

Cucumber seeds shouldn’t be sown until the soil has warmed. Early Cluster is one of the oldest varieties, dating to 1778. Another tried variety is the Early Frame, which has been grown in the United States since the 18th century.

Lettuce was established in American gardens by the late 1700s. Two of the most common were Brown Dutch, an extremely hardy variety that will survive winter if protected with straw or mulch, and Tennis-Ball, a parent of modern Boston lettuces. They should be planted in late summer for a fall crop.
Colonial salads also included spinach, endive, orach, corn salad, pepper grass, French sorrel and cress. Eighteenth-century gardeners used every inch of sprawling nasturtiums, harvesting their leaves for greens, picking the colorful flowers for salads and substituting the seeds for capers. These annuals, which are also known as Indian cress, thrive in full sun and will flower all summer.

Squash seeds are planted directly in the garden after the last frost date because they don’t do well in wet or cool soil. One of the oldest varieties, the Summer Crookneck, was documented in 1807 as having been grown by a New Jersey family for nearly a century. This yellow summer squash grows in a bush and is harvested when it is still young and tender, about six to eight weeks after planting.

Any discussion of Colonial gardening must mention pumpkins, also called winter and giant squash. The Connecticut field pumpkin, which many believe was grown by North American Indians long before European colonization, takes three to four months to produce bright yellow-orange fruit weighing 15 to 25 pounds. They aren’t good for cooking, but are ideal for carving into jack-o’-lanterns.

French tarragon was cultivated in the Colonies during the 1600s and is reputed to have been Jefferson’s favorite culinary herb. Monticello sells it as a plant.

Noticeably absent from this list is the tomato, a favorite of contemporary gardeners. This native South American fruit was not common in Colonial gardens: It didn’t come to the United States until after the Revolution and was somewhat ignored until the mid-1800s.

Horticulturists deem Brandywine the best heirloom tomato, but it dates to the late 19th century. Seed Savers Exchange sells transplants of Beam’s Yellow Pear Tomato, which dates to the 1800s and was introduced to the United States before 1805. This disease-resistant variety is an ambitious producer of pale pear-shaped fruits with a mild flavor.

Another variety from the early 1800s is the Costoluto Genovese, an Italian variety that looks like a pattypan squash. It has an intense, acidic flavor that makes it best suited for sauces and pastes. Seeds should be started indoors six to eight weeks before the last frost, then transplanted into full sun once several leaves have appeared. Although this variety loves summer heat, it’ll continue producing prolifically into early fall.

Heirloom gardening initially may be difficult—even unsuccessful—for newcomers, warns Kristen Howard, publisher of the Heirloom Gardening newsletter and Web site. Challenges include learning how to grow plants from seeds and determining which varieties grow best in the area. Beginners might consider growing heirlooms in conjunction with hybrids and more modern varieties until the heirlooms are established.

“Once you do find the right varieties, you will have a more reliable harvest and healthier flowers than with the hybrids that are prominent in the gardening stores,” according to Ms. Howard.

There’s one other reward for those who stick with it. Because the seeds of heirlooms are saved for the next planting season, “one does reach a point where the need to purchase plants is no longer necessary.”

Seeds for the plants listed in this article can be purchased from Monticello at twinleaf.org or (800) 243–1743, or the Seed Savers Exchange at seedsavers.org or (563) 382–5990, as well as other heirloom seed suppliers.

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**For more information:**

Baker Creek Seed Company Contact: (417) 924–8917 or rareseeds.com

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation history.org/history/cwland/nursery2.cfm

Heirloom Gardening newsletter and Web site heirloombgarden.com

Heirloom Seed Project Contact: (717) 569–0401 or landsisvalleymuseum.org/seeds.htm

Monticello Contact: (800) 243–1743 or monticello.org

Mount Vernon mountvernon.org

National Colonial Farm Contact: (301) 283–2113 x908 or e-mail farming@accokeek.org Web site at accokeek.org

Seed Savers Exchange Contact: (563) 382–5990 or seedsavers.org

The Southern Garden Web site aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/

**Book sources:**

Rudy and Joy P. Favretti For Every House a Garden: A Guide for Reproducing Period Gardens

Ann Leighton American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century: For Use or For Delight

Early American Gardens: For Meate or Medicine

Benjamin Watson Taylor’s Guide to Heirloom Vegetables

William Woys Weaver Heirloom Vegetable Gardening: A Master Gardener’s Guide to Planting, Seed Saving and Cultural History
More than 1 million Irish died during the Potato Famine of the 1840s. Even though the disease also rotted mainland European and North American fields, only Ireland was devastated. Farmers there had been planting the potato for nearly 200 years and relied on it as a major food source. For many of the poor, the potato was the only food they ever ate.

Winds blew the blight across the Atlantic from Mexico, where potatoes exposed for years to the disease had developed resistant strains. In Europe, though, potatoes were genetic clones of a few South American plants, produced from cut-up pieces of potato instead of seeds. These genetic replicas had identical genetic strengths and, unfortunately, identical genetic weaknesses.

Contemporary hybrids rest on a similarly narrow genetic base, risking large-scale crop failure. Although they’ve been bred to resist specific fungi or viruses, they can’t fight all diseases nor withstand a newly mutated one.

Plants genetically altered for certain strengths also bear deficiencies that aren’t immediately known. In 1970, fungus destroyed 15 percent of the U.S. corn crop. Scientists realized they’d introduced a vulnerability when they modified corn to produce sterile tassels. Corn naturally reproduces when tassels release their pollen into the wind, but, because farmers plant hybrids (which aren’t open-pollinated), they must spend a lot of money and time to manually de-tassel their crops. The sterile seed had been eagerly received and comprised about 80 percent of the U.S. crop.

The corn failed “because of a quirk in the technology that had redesigned the corn plants of America until, in one sense, they had become as alike as identical twins,” the National Academy of Sciences concluded in a 1972 study. “Whatever made one plant susceptible made them all susceptible.”

The agriculture industry continues to drive standardization. Seed companies and commercial growers favor a handful of hybrid varieties that have been bred for economic reasons: to resist a prevalent disease or popular pesticide, to withstand the rigors of long-haul transportation or to ripen at once instead of staggered across several weeks. Sometimes, a major buyer like McDonald’s, which buys 7 percent of all U.S.-grown potatoes, determines what variety is produced.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture supports several gene banks, most notably the National Seed Storage Lab in Ft. Collins, Colo., to preserve the seeds of plants like corn that are crucial to the economy.

Concern about governmental under-funding has led to the establishment of several private U.S. seed-saving organizations, the largest of which is Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, Iowa.

These organizations encourage the planting of heirloom varieties to guard against homogenization and prevent plant species from disappearing. It may seem strange to think of plants as endangered, but many are.

Black-eyed Susans, daisies and Queen Anne’s lace used to be among the basic “weeds” growing along road-sides, says Kristen Howard, publisher of the Heirloom Gardening newsletter and Web site. To enjoy these flowers now, they must be cultivated because they no longer grow in the wild. Also, rural gardeners have maintained the majority of heirlooms, but urbanization is making it difficult to find seed heirs. Unless its seeds are saved and re-planted, an heirloom strain will become extinct.

Hybrids have been the varieties most marketed to home gardeners since the 1940s, even though heirlooms often taste better, store longer and bear longer or better than hybrids. Additionally, hybrid growers must buy new seeds every year because the seeds of a hybrid are either sterile or considered unstable. When two plant varieties are cross-pollinated to produce a hybrid seed, the resulting plant will have traits of both parents. But the traits of the hybrid’s offspring aren’t known until the offspring materialize, if the hybrid produces at all.

“A hybrid will come up with a mix,” says Jere Gettle, owner of Baker Creek Seed Co. in Mansfield, Mo. “If you liked the hybrid, you can’t be sure that’s what you’ll get when you plant its seeds. It takes a lot of years to stabilize.”

The more a species is manipulated, the less hardy it tends to become, says William Welch, a horticulturist with Texas A&M University. “I’m committed to the time-tested concept of plants. A plant that’s grown for more than a hundred years indicates that it will grow with or without assistance.”

Heirloom gardening preserves more than personal history

By Stacey Evers
Mr. Poole’s residential designs are so authentic, richly detail-oriented and proportionately correct that the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation commissioned him to create a collection of homes modeled after 18 quintessentially Colonial buildings in its Historic District, including the George Wythe House, Christiana Campbell’s Tavern and The Red Lion.

Mr. Poole, a North Carolina native whose company is now headquartered in Wilmington, has also designed three historically themed collections for *Southern Living*. The homes within these collections include such endearing features as cozy front porches, white picket fences, carriage house-style garages and weather-vane-topped cupolas.

Indeed, Mr. Poole’s homes have such memory-invoking appeal that *Classic American Homes* (formerly *Colonial Homes*) asked him to design two of its Anniversary Homes.
Everyone knows that old houses have lots of history and memories hidden deep within their walls. **WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON’T REALIZE IS THAT NEW HOUSES CAN ALSO BE WRAPPED IN HISTORY AND HERITAGE.** That is, if the new home was created by William E. Poole, a self-taught architect who has spent almost 40 years designing new homes based on historic architecture in classical American neighborhoods.

Victoria magazine also knocked on Mr. Poole’s door when it came time to create its first portfolio of homes, a collection known as Romantic Cottages.

“I try to offer Americans architecture with heritage,” says Mr. Poole, who estimates that more than 1 million people live in a William E. Poole Designs home. “I don’t try to duplicate the past … I am inspired by it.”

Indeed, he has traveled all over the United States sketching, measuring, photographing and videotaping old homes that capture his imagination, his sense of romance and the spirit of America.

In New England, he has found great inspiration in Mystic and Stonington, Conn., as well as the Massachusetts communities of Concord, Lexington, Deerfield, Salem and Cape Cod. In the South, he’s drawn to Natchez, Charleston and Savannah. In the Mid-Atlantic, Colonial Williamsburg has been a long-standing passion. “I’m pulled to these places because of the history; the architecture is magnificent and has a sense of America,” he says.

Homes from the Colonial era and pre-Civil War period especially inspire Mr. Poole. In fact, portfolios for his historical collections usually include intriguing summaries about the significance of the original dwelling’s design and even details about its occupants.

“I love to choose houses with a history that the nation should know about,” says Mr. Poole, noting that the George Wythe House, a gracious brick-front Georgian Colonial is his personal favorite in the Williamsburg Collection. “Thomas Jefferson was a protégé of Mr. Wythe and lived there for a time. Plus, our founding fathers walked the streets in and around the house. I love the home’s stateliness. It’s as Georgian as Georgian can be.”

The Natchez is another of his historically themed favorites. It was inspired by the Briars, a well-known planter’s cottage in Natchez, Miss. “Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy married Varina Banks Howell in the parlor of the Briars,” he says.

“It’s a home with wonderful character,” including a come-sit-a-spell porch with tapered columns, fanlight doorway and gabled dormers. The home exudes so much charm and character that when the Natchez debuted in the April 1989
issue of Colonial Homes, “there was a firestorm of interest from all over the world,” recalls Mr. Poole. “It’s my best-selling design ever and it took me from being a regional company to a national company.”

Mr. Poole is also proud of the Hudson Valley House he designed for Colonial Homes 10 years later. A primary stimulus for the design was the Dyckman House, a Dutch Colonial farmhouse in the upper reaches of Manhattan.

Now a museum and an official New York City Landmark, the house was rebuilt in the 1780s after the British burnt the original down during the Revolution. Among the distinctive features the Hudson Valley House borrowed directly from the Dyckman House are the flared gambrel roof, the inviting full-length front porch and a façade that mixes clapboard, shingles and stone.

Although the exteriors of Mr. Poole’s home evoke yesteryear images, the interiors are all 21st-century American family. Floor plans are open and spacious, with kitchens flowing into family rooms, wood-paneled home offices/libraries, sunrooms, first-floor master suites, plenty of closets, and as he likes to joke, “kitchens and bathrooms that are inside the house instead of detached like in the Colonial days.” The interior details include handcrafted woodwork, rounded archways, classical columns, stone hearths, pocket doors and many more ornamental touches.

As for why Americans find his homes so appealing, Mr. Poole thinks it has to do with a yearning for simpler times and down-home comforts. “I think we are all drawn to neighborhoods where we grew up or aspire to grow up … in most towns, there’s a neighborhood where you don’t have to advertise to sell a house. It’s the neighborhood with the classical architecture, picket fences and sidewalks. It’s what people imagine a home should be.

“It feels right and looks right. Today, it’s the neighborhood of the ’30s and ’40s that people want to turn back to and those neighborhoods are filled with classical designs.”

Mr. Poole’s own love affair with classically designed homes goes back to his childhood spent growing up in a family of very modest means and living in a Raleigh housing project. “As a child I walked through the historic district of Raleigh sketching houses I wished I could live in,” he recollects.

Today, that boyhood wish is his reality. For the past nine-and-a-half years, he and his wife have been living in and restoring a 180-year-old home in Wilmington’s historic district. Once the restoration is complete, Mr. Poole has plans to fulfill another longtime wish—designing himself a house that looks 100 years old and will be built on a site overlooking the North Carolina coastline.

No doubt, he already has an inkling as to which of the country’s historic seacoast neighborhoods he should explore again for inspiration. His sketchbook is ready.

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As a Colony, America was forbidden by British law to manufacture finished goods, so it was by necessity as well as inclination that Americans imported English products to furnish their households in the latest styles. Even after achieving independence, Americans still looked to England, whose manufacturers were quick to tailor products to the American market. This was particularly true of the transfer-printed earthenware that graced tables on both sides of the Atlantic from the 1780s through the mid-1800s.
While the wealthy imported fine hand-painted Chinese porcelain and the poor set their tables with locally made redware, the middle classes ate from durable white-bodied earthenware printed first in blue and later in numerous colors. Transferware sold for a modest sum most families could afford. It was made in complete sets that could number more than 100 pieces: plates from dinner to cup size, platters, pitchers, compotes, gravy and soup tureens, vegetable dishes, and tea wares from pots to sugars and creamers, sometimes with a different pattern on each piece. The patterns and colors provide a timeline of decorative styles.

The transfer-printing process was patented in 1756 by English potters in Liverpool and perfected in the 1780s in Staffordshire. A design was engraved on a thin copper sheet, which was then heated. A pigment-oil mixture was rubbed over and into the recessed design. The potter then pressed tissue paper onto the copper to absorb the ink, cut the paper to shape and pressed it on the earthenware to transfer the design. The paper was soaked off and the object lightly fired to rid the pigment of oil before being glazed and fired again. Because cobalt was plentiful and could withstand the intense heat of the final firing without blurring or fading, the deep blue it created was the earliest and most popular color.

It was also what the Chinese used on porcelain, introduced along with teas, spices and silks to the West through maritime trade. With transfer-printing, Chinese designs—weeping willow and orange trees, pagodas and junks, figures in oriental dress—could be copied on less expensive earthenware. These designs dominated until about 1815, when potters began to refocus on the American market.

As American patriotism swelled with victories over Britain in the Revolution and the War of 1812, smaller Staffordshire potters who could not compete at home with Wedgewood, Minton or Spode, swallowed their national pride and began selling patterns that appealed to the patriotism of the new Republic. Because it was too costly and time-consuming to keep engravers on staff, smaller potteries used independent engravers, who copied designs liberally from printed sources. Like views were produced on different forms by several potteries, but most distinguished their wares with a unique border pattern, if not a maker’s mark.

Naval scenes and images of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, also found on black transfer-printed pitchers known collectively as Liverpool ware, were among the first patriotic views marketed to America. After the War of 1812, the publication of naval paintings and books illustrating American events and landmarks gave engravers new design sources.

One of the most popular patterns centered on the Marquis de Lafayette’s return to America in 1824. Andrew Stevenson’s pottery, which operated from 1808-29 in Cobridge, pioneered American views. Most were supplied by Irish artist W.G. Wall, who came to the United States in 1818 and provided Mr. Stevenson and other English potters with scenes of New York City and the Hudson River Valley.

Hundreds of American views were printed on earthenware through about 1860; one of the last series, called “Texian Campaigne,” celebrated America’s victory over Mexico. Such designs were historically significant then and now, because many early landmarks no longer exist either in reality or in print. Historic events pictured on plates ran the gamut from the Pilgrims landing at Plymouth to Lafayette kneeling at Washington’s tomb. Sites were as varied as Niagara Falls and paper mills on Delaware’s Brandywine Creek; structures ranged from Daniel Wadsworth’s hexagonal tower in Avon, Conn., to New York’s insane asylum to Mount Vernon.

There were special series: Beauties of America focused on hospitals, colleges and churches; Cities Series traveled from Philadelphia to Detroit; Medallion Portrait Series showed the 1825 opening of the Erie Canal, bordered by portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Lafayette and New York Gov. William Clinton; American Series of Arms of the States depicted the industries of each original colony.

World events also influenced pottery designs. As Britain expanded its empire, interest in foreign countries such as India grew. Those who could not afford to travel could satisfy their curiosity through travel journals. Potters captured images of such oddities as onion-domed buildings, camels and elephants on transferware beginning about 1820. Later in the decade, a fascination arose with archaeological excavations in ancient Greece and Rome, reflected in classical architecture and views of temples, urns and acanthus leaves on furnishings and accessories, including transferware.

As technology improved and glazes became clearer in the late 1820s and ’30s, potters began using combinations of various oxides to produce black and shades of brown, red, purple, green, mulberry, pink and lavender as well as a range of blues. Printing wares in two or more colors began around 1840.

Passage of the Copyright Act in 1842 prevented engravers from copying printed illustrations, so designs became more fanciful. Along with exotic views reminiscent of foreign countries, romantic landscapes offered an antidote to the bleakness of rapid industrialization. Victorians...
This transfer-printed sugar bowl was made for the mass market and purchased at abolitionist fairs by those who wished to express their anti-slavery convictions. The fettered figure of the helpless, half-nude female slaves was an image intended for the abolitionist movement. It helped stir up outrage among abolitionists and swelled the ranks of the anti-slavery societies.

Pearlware sugar bowl with transfer-printed decoration: England, 1825-1835. DAR Museum Collection
looked to nature for emotional and spiritual solace; the presence of flowers (or their images) in the home, for instance, was thought to be morally uplifting. Floral motifs on earthenware were most popular from about 1833 to mid-century.

While earlier landscapes celebrated the natural wonders Americans were discovering as they ventured west, later pastoral scenes were formulaic, with mountains or stylized buildings in the background, a water source such as a river or lake in the midground, and people and animals in the foreground. By the early 1840s, the popularity of Sir Walter Scott’s stories brought Gothic Revival motifs—buildings with arches, turrets and towers—into architecture and decorative arts.

Designs in each general classification—Chinese, American, exotic, classical, romantic, floral and Gothic—enjoyed a long span of popularity, says Patrick Sheary, Associate Curator of Collections at the DAR Museum. Extensive research on undated wares by ceramics scholar Patricia Samford confirms that peak production for each lasted about 20 years, with many peaks overlapping in the 1830s.

The quality of production varied significantly as well, Mr. Sheary notes. “In the museum’s collection, an 1820s dinner service by Josiah Spode II has a design that is very detailed, and the printing was well transferred to the piece, while on others, especially plates, the printing is blurred or misaligned. Sometimes the glazes were also poorly done.”

Jeffrey B. Snyder, author of Historical Staffordshire: American Patriots and Views, calls the period between 1815 and 1835 the height of quality and creativity. Middle-class purchases dropped off after 1835 because earlier wares had not broken and consumers saw no reason to purchase new patterns. Potters were forced to standardize designs and apply them to more cheaply made earthenware for farmers and factory workers.

In the 1860s, transferware gave way to minimally decorated white earthenware and ironstones. Although a brief revival of transfer-printing occurred in the 1880s, the designs were decidedly Oriental, based on asymmetrical collages of birds, blossoms, bamboo and butterflies found in Japanese arts. The American views that had dominated the first half of the century were no longer in vogue.

SOURCES
American Historical Views on Staffordshire China, by Ellouise Baker Larsen (New York: Dover Books, 1975)
“Dating English Printed Earthenwares,” by Patricia Samford, Early American Life, June 2001
Nearly every American is familiar with the tribute to George Washington given by fellow Virginian Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee III, his intimate friend and companion-in-arms, when news of his death reached Congress on December 14, 1799. Few are aware, though, the sentence ended with the words, "he was second to none in the humble and endearing scenes of private life." Although conservative in the public realm, Washington was creative and innovative in private. He directed the continuing expanding and redecorating of his home at Mount Vernon with a keen architectural eye and fashionable taste, and he made the estate profitable by employing the latest agricultural methods and supplementing its harvest with profits from a gristmill, distillery and fishery. "My agricultural pursuits and rural amusements...have been the most pleasing occupation of my life, and the most congenial to my temper, notwithstanding that a small proportion of it has been spent in this way," he wrote. The estate reached the height of its development in the year of his death.

A scant 50 years later, the magnificent estate had fallen into deplorable condition. Its last family owner, Washington’s great-grandnephew John Augustine Washington III, was unable to maintain it amid declining harvests and endless public pilgrimages, yet he was desperate to preserve it. He had offered to sell it to the federal government, then to the Commonwealth of Virginia, but with the country poised on the brink of civil war, neither expressed interest.

After seeing the mansion from a passing steamer on the Potomac River, Mrs. Louisa Cunningham wrote to her daughter, Ann Pamela: “I was painfulst distressed at the ruin and desolation of the home of Washington, and the thought passed through my mind: ‘Why was it the women of this country did not try to keep it in repair, if the men could not do it?’”

Cut off from a normal family life as wife and mother by a spinal injury that left her in chronic pain, Ann Pamela Cunningham, daughter of a wealthy South Carolina plantation owner, found inspiration in her mother’s words. She embraced the rescue of Mount Vernon as her life’s work. On December 2, 1853, in an anonymous letter to the Charleston Mercury, she appealed to the women of the South to join together to save Mount Vernon. As small societies formed and donations poured in, she expanded her appeal to include the Northern states and centralized fund-raising efforts by establishing the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association of the Union in 1854.

As leader, or regent, Miss Cunningham chose like-minded, independent, socially prominent women to serve as vice regents for each state. They spearheaded fund-raising activities that ranged from regular contributions by such groups as Masonic lodges and fire companies to benefit balls and theatrical performances to sales of commemorative items. The organization appealed to individuals and civic organizations in the belief that Washington belonged to the entire nation, so his home should be saved by all. For $1, anyone could join the Association and become a partner in rescuing Mount Vernon. The Mount Vernon Record, published monthly from July 1858 to June 1860, ran historical sketches and anecdotes about Washington and listed the name of every contributor.

One of Miss Cunningham’s most profitable moves was enlisting the aid of former Massachusetts Sen. and Harvard
At left, photograph of Ann Pamela Cunningham, by James Reid Lambdin, circa 1860. Above, the mansion’s deplorable condition circa 1855, when old ship’s masts were used to prop up the crumbling piazza.

Mount Vernon

The story of the rescue and restoration of Mount Vernon is chronicled in the exhibition *Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America*, on view through September 21 at the National Building Museum, 401 F Street NW, Washington, D.C. Among the displays are the weather vane Washington commissioned for the mansion in 1787, the purchase agreement between the Association and John Augustine Washington III, and early souvenirs sold by the Association to raise funds. Also on view is “Mount Vernon in Miniature,” a 10-by-8-foot furnished replica of the mansion, created by craftspeople from across the country and donated by Washington State to Mount Vernon in 1998. For more information: George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens, P.O. Box 110, Mount Vernon, VA 22121, (703) 780-2000. www.mountvernon.org
University President Edward Everett. He donated the proceeds of 129 recitations of his “Oration on the Character of Washington,” given over three years throughout the country.

As the campaign to save Mount Vernon gained momentum, the New Yorker asked Mr. Everett to write a weekly column about American history. He agreed to a yearlong contract to write the column gratis if the newspaper would make a $10,000 donation to the Association. In total, he raised nearly $70,000, or more than a third of the $200,000 purchase price.

By 1858, the Association had raised enough to make a down payment on the estate, with the balance to be paid in four installments. In December 1859, more than two years ahead of schedule, the Association made the last payment, taking possession of Mount Vernon on Washington’s birthday, February 22, 1860.

With no precedents to guide her, Miss Cunningham determined to rescue, restore and preserve everything related to the estate—including the surrounding landscape and outbuildings that had been dismissed by others because they had “housed menials”—not only for the current public but also for future generations.

Her 1874 farewell address to her fellow regents captured the spirit of their mission: “Ladies, the Home of Washington is in your charge. See to it that you keep it the Home of Washington! Let no irreverent hand change it; no vandal hands desecrate it with the fingers of progress! Those who go to see the Home in which he lived and died, wish to see in what he lived and died! Let one spot in this grand country of ours be saved from change! Upon you rests this duty.”

In the 150 years since Ann Pamela Cunningham initiated the rescue of Mount Vernon, the Ladies have remained true to their mission, driven by the desire to reflect Washington’s absolute integrity of character through the most accurate possible restoration of the estate in 1799.

They began with crumbling buildings and only three significant possessions of Washington’s—the Houdon bust, a terrestrial globe and the key to the Bastille, given to him by Lafayette. Slowly but steadily, guided by continuous research, they have restored what remained, rebuilt what was lost, recreated interiors and landscapes true to Washington’s original design, and reacquired about 30 percent of the original furnishings. In the process, they have shaped the nation’s preservation movement and set the standard for others to follow.

Samuel Vaughan, a London merchant who had settled in Philadelphia, drew this layout of the estate in 1787 after a visit to Mount Vernon. It has guided the restoration of the grounds and outbuildings. Orator and statesman Edward Everett, who single-handedly raised more than a third of the estate’s purchase price.

In the past 15 years, they have expanded their mission to address the appalling lack of knowledge about the character and contributions of Washington. Last spring, the Association launched an $85-million campaign, “To Keep Him First.” The MVLA plans to construct a state-of-the-art complex housing an Orientation Center to provide the historic context for tours of the mansion and grounds.

Also planned are an Education Center to teach about Washington’s military and political career, and a museum to offer exhibitions on various aspects of Washington’s life and showcase artifacts rarely seen before because of lack of space.

“We want visitors to get to know George Washington the young surveyor, George Washington the general, George Washington the president and George Washington the entrepreneur,” says James C. Rees, Executive Director of Mount Vernon.

“The future Orientation Center, Education Center and Museum will allow us to present these other areas of Washington’s life with the hope that visitors will leave Mount Vernon understanding why Washington was so admired, why his character was unmatched and why he deserves to remain ‘first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen.’

MILESTONES OF PRESERVATION

1853–60 Through an unprecedented nationwide grassroots fund-raising effort initiated by Ann Pamela Cunningham, the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association of the Union raises $200,000 to purchase the mansion and 200 acres and begin their restoration.

1861–65 New Yorker Sarah C. Tracy, secretary to Miss Cunningham, safeguards the estate during the Civil War by exacting promises from both Union Gen. Winfield Scott and Virginia Gov. John Letcher to keep troops off the property. She also preserves Association funds by smuggling them from an Alexandria bank into the hands of Association treasurer George W. Riggs in Washington, D.C.

1874–75 The mansion’s two colonnades, piazza and balustrade are restored. Three cisterns are constructed to provide water for firefighting—one of Washington’s primary concerns—and a manual-powered fire engine is acquired.
1895–1901 Through the support of California Vice Regent Phoebe Apperson Hearst, a 2,150-foot seawall is constructed to bring an end to erosion and landslides.

1899 An entry gate to facilitate the arrival of visitors by the new electric trolley is constructed with funds raised by the people of Texas.

1912 The mansion and dependencies are re-shingled with authentic “Dismal Swamp” cypress thanks to a national “Raise the Roof” campaign.

1922 Thomas Edison designs and directs the installation of a complete electrical system in the mansion to reduce the risk of fire; an emergency generator is also constructed as a backup.

1922–24 A 25,000-gallon reservoir and new pumping station are constructed. Henry Ford donates the first motor-driven fire engine to Mount Vernon.

1928–29 The museum and administration building are constructed.

1931–33 A brick boundary wall 6,500 feet long is constructed around the estate. The mansion’s structure is strengthened and treated to repel termites.

1950–52 The Historic Greenhouse and Slave Quarters are rebuilt on their original sites using bricks from the White House, also under renovation at the time.

1955 Frances Payne Bolton, Vice Regent from Ohio, purchases for $333,000 nearly 500 acres along the Maryland shoreline across the Potomac from the mansion, thus saving it from commercial development and preserving the pristine view so integral to Washington’s plan for the estate.

1979–81 Mount Vernon is among the first historic sites to undertake a comprehensive, scientific paint analysis; the evaluation of nearly 2,500 samples guides the repainting of every room and establishes a foundation for interpreting 18th-century color preferences.

1982 A Slave Memorial is designed by architecture students from Howard University and built on the original slave burial ground.

1990 The root cellar of the original House for Families slave quarters is excavated, uncovering more than 65,000 artifacts and providing one of the most important sources of information on 18th-century slave life in the Chesapeake region.

1991–96 A replica of the 16-sided “round” barn is reconstructed with period tools and techniques based on Washington’s specifications; it is heralded as the most accurately reconstructed 18th-century agricultural site in the country. Horses and mules tread wheat sheaves on the upper floor; grain drops through slats to the floor below; where it is collected, winnowed and stored. The barn serves as the centerpiece of the interpretive program, “George Washington: Pioneer Farmer,” which also examines Washington’s use of crop rotation and new planting methods—deep plowing, planting seeds in regularly spaced rows, amending the soil with organic matter and restoring fallow fields by planting grasses and clover.

1996–2002 George Washington’s Gristmill, reconstructed on its original foundation by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1933, is returned to working order. Installation of a replica of Oliver Evans’ automated mill system for processing wheat, which Washington installed in 1791, will be completed by spring 2004. (As president, he signed U.S. Patent No. 3 for the invention.)

1996–2003 The site of Washington’s distillery, adjacent to the gristmill, is excavated. Research will continue next year, followed by a design plan and reconstruction of the structure, expected to be completed in 2006.

2001 The Dung Repository, designed to compost horse manure and other organic waste for fertilizer to maintain the soil’s productivity, is rebuilt on its original foundation adjacent to the mansion. The remarkably intact, original cobblestone floor is retained in the new structure.

2001–2002 Bed hangings, window hangings, furniture slipcovers and carpeting, reproduced based on fragments from the mansion and other period examples, are installed in the Downstairs Bedroom, Lafayette Bedroom and Small Dining Room.

2001–2003 Further advances in paint analysis allow for a major restoration of the Small Dining Room; in the process, original layout lines inscribed by the artisan known only as the “French Stucco Man” are uncovered for the first time since 1775.
When you’re the most prominent woman at the world’s most visible news channel, you don’t get rattled easily. Take Emmy-winner Paula Zahn, the 23-year news veteran who anchors CNN’s flagship morning program, American Morning with Paula Zahn. Ms. Zahn’s trademark style is that of a smart, smooth newswoman who can take on any kind of subject—breaking news, international crisis, business developments, sports—with professional polish. She can handle that major breaking story literally in mid-broadcast and make it look effortless. Perhaps the most telling indication of this was her first day on the job at CNN: It happened to be on September 11, 2001, as the World Trade Center towers were crumbling in her own city of New York. On that day, she interviewed rescue workers and survivors, as well as Jordan’s King Abdullah, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and New York Gov. George Pataki.

The list of famous people Ms. Zahn has interviewed is a virtual “who’s who” of the global and domestic personalities and leaders who shape our world and our culture: Presidents Bill Clinton, George Bush (the elder), Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford; former Russian Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin; actors Katharine Hepburn and Warren Beatty; and baseball legends Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio.

There’s much more to Ms. Zahn’s life than network news, however: She’s a trained cellist who started at age 5 and actually played Carnegie Hall in 1992. Before a recent accident, she was an accomplished skier and recently won the Lexus Challenge with her teammate, Olympic champion Alberto Tomba. And she’s a devoted wife and mother, living “just five minutes” from her studio with her husband, Richard Cohen, a real estate developer; and their three children, Haley, 13; Jared, 9; and Austin, 6.

In a recent chat with American Spirit, Ms. Zahn exuded a warm and gracious side as she reflected upon what anyone would consider a well-lived life. Among other highlights she elaborated on: How late-stage pregnancy helped her get a scoop with Cuban President Fidel Castro and her early days as a police radio-surfing beat reporter.

So few musicians ever get to play Carnegie Hall. What was it like?

It was the most extraordinary experience of my lifetime. I’ve never been more intimidated about performing anywhere. I had a double major in music and journalism at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo. I actually went to college on a cello scholarship that required many public performances, both as a soloist and as an orchestral player. Many years later, in 1992, I was contacted by the New York Pops and was asked if I was interested in playing Carnegie Hall as a soloist. I said "Yes" immediately. And then I wondered what I had gotten myself into.

I was working for CBS at the time, but there was nothing more intimidating to me than stepping onto the stage knowing
that the world’s greatest musicians had played there. But I worked hard with a teacher, and everything went great. I performed a medley of songs from Oklahoma, and had a one-minute solo. I’ve never been in a hall where the sound carries like it does there. You play a note, and it comes back to you a second later, and then you’re engulfed in this glorious sound. It was a joy, and my friends and family were there. The most reassuring thing to me was that my cello section gave me a standing ovation. That was important to me. They were my colleagues in the trenches.

But they haven’t called me back to perform there again in 10 years. I hope they’re not trying to send me a message! (Laughs)

**We’re sure they’re not. They must assume you’re too busy, with all you have on your plate. Which stories really inspire your professional passion?**

A lot of them have touched me over the years, but I’ve really enjoyed focusing on education. I did a special on the mainstreaming of the handicapped for 48 Hours that I’ll never forget, in the mid-1990s. I spent a great deal of time with a high school student named Michelle who had Down Syndrome. We followed Michelle through her day at home, at school and at work. She even allowed us to tag along with her to her junior prom.

Her story shed a lot of light on the challenges that children with Down Syndrome face and the victories they can have when they’re blessed with a strong support system. The parents told me that, if they did what society told them to do, she’d be institutionalized. But they didn’t do that, and she ended up having a productive life. She has a job. She’s living in assisted housing in a group situation. She’s doing well.

That’s an important story to tell, about the benefits of mainstreaming people with disabilities in our society. I’m eager to do health stories, too. My family has confronted cancer more times than I care to remember. It’s important for journalists to do early-detection stories.

**Then you are inspired by all the work that the Today show’s host, Katie Couric, has done on this topic?**

Absolutely. I’m inspired by anyone who can communicate information to an audience that can save lives. In the early 1980s, I was in local news in Houston, and my station did something that was considered revolutionary back then: A public service effort called “Colorectal Cancer: The Cancer No One Wants to Talk About.”

We did the series with the cooperation of a chain of drug stores and a group of local hospitals. We offered free screening tests for colon cancer over a month-long period. The hospitals processed the test results for free.

As a result of our series, dozens of our viewers found out they needed surgery. In some cases, the surgery was lifesaving. In other cases, the surgery was minor and the polyps were pre-cancerous. Thank goodness for early detection. To this very day, I’m proud of that effort. As a newsperson, I can’t repeat the early-detection mantra enough. No matter how often you do, there’s always someone out there who hasn’t heard it before.

**How did you get your start?**

My first job was in Dallas for the ABC affiliate WFAA. It has a reputation as being one of the most competitive stations in the country. It was a great proving ground. I was assigned to the police beat. I drove this old hatchback and had a police radio in there. It was a great experience. I had to learn a lot and learn quickly.

I can’t believe I was actually paid to live in France for six weeks, and then Norway for six more. In France, we were on the shift from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m., given the time change. I lived pretty large in the morning. I’d get off of work and hit the ski slopes early, eat a big lunch and then go to sleep.

In Norway, it was so spectacular. It was a very different feel. We broadcasted from a farm that, in some parts, was actually more than 300 years old. The people there treated us like royalty, like part of the family, making these huge, wonderful meals for us. Anywhere you looked, there were spectacular views of the mountains. My family was there with me through the Games, which also made it special. That’s how we get to ski so much over the years.

**What’s the difference between cable news and the traditional networks?**

It’s an interesting transition. While at CBS, I was doing the newsiest of the morning shows, but you still weren’t broadcasting it 24/7. It’s a major decision as to whether you’re going to break into the programming with news. You need to go through an approval process to get it. But at CNN, our sole mission is to cover news. I like being on the edge and not

**Talk about baptism under fire! I had great training in college, but once you’re on the job, you have to produce like a 30-year veteran, and you find out what you’re made of.**

It wasn’t uncommon for my director—who taught me so much—to rip up my news script right there in the middle of the newsroom if he didn’t like the story I was telling. He wasn’t picking on me, either. He did this to any of the journalists there. We learned by terror.

**Covering the Olympics is such a special thing that you never really understand or appreciate fully enough until you do it. I covered the Atlanta Games in 1996 for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and I’ll never forget it. What are your favorite Olympic memories?**

I was told about the Atlanta Games in 1996 for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and I’ll never forget it. What are your favorite Olympic memories? It wasn’t uncommon for my director—who taught me so much—to rip up my news script right there in the middle of the newsroom if he didn’t like the story I was telling. He wasn’t picking on me, either. He did this to any of the journalists there. We learned by terror.
knowing whom I’m going to be interviewing over a three-hour period. If something breaks, CNN will book someone on the topic, and I'll have a producer in my ear saying we have to drop a previous segment and go to a place somewhere in North Carolina instead.

I couldn't be more thrilled than to be at CNN. It's a place where journalism is taken so seriously.

Tell us about your first day on the job at CNN, on September 11.

I wasn't supposed to go to work until six months later. They were going to launch a morning show in spring 2002. So, on that day, I was enjoying one of my first days off in a very long time.

I just dropped my three kids off at school, then I got an anxious call from my husband's office saying that he was downtown, but he was OK. I had no idea what his assistant was talking about, so she told me to just turn on the TV. I did and couldn't believe what I was seeing.

Once I was able to find out that my husband was OK, and figured out how to get my kids out of school, I called my (former) boss, Walter Isaacson, and told him I needed to come to work that day. He said, "Great, we need you. Get in as soon as you can."

There were major challenges. This story was happening in our backyards. It was so traumatic, and you didn't know what was going to happen next. My first goal was to get it right. In the early hours of coverage, we didn't have a whole lot of information.

And it was my first day on the job. I had to earn the respect of my colleagues, as well as of the audiences who had never seen me on CNN before. We needed to acknowledge that so many Americans had been murdered on this day, and find out why.

It was extraordinary to literally stand on the rooftop of CNN and do this kind of journalism. I settled down and knew I was doing OK when a veteran camera operator gave me a thumbs-up 20 minutes into the broadcast. He said he was proud to have me on the team. That meant a lot to me.

I've done. And like all honest fairy godmothers, she also worries whether I'm getting enough sleep.

This is a new concept for women. Men have had the luxury of networking for years. But because of our relative youth in the job market, women are just starting, really. So this relationship is very special to me.

Of all the famous people you interviewed, what was the most memorable experience you've had?

That's easy: Fidel Castro. I was eight months pregnant with my first child when ABC sent me to Cuba for one of my first foreign assignments. Management was concerned about my "state," and had a Lear Jet on stand-by in Havana in case I went into labor early. Fortunately, I did not.

Castro and Gorbachev held meetings for several days and ended their summit with a joint news conference, which I was assigned to cover along with hundreds of my press colleagues. It was a standing-room only crowd of competitive reporters and tense political advisors. Like every reporter on the story, I wanted to land an exclusive with Castro. I was determined and had the good fortune of Castro's bodyguard being especially concerned about my very pregnant condition. They brought me bottles of water and packets of crackers during the news conference.

As it was winding down, those same guards, who were fearful I was going to get jostled, led me to the door through which Castro would exit. The first thing I did was put my back up against the door jam and eventually Castro and I stood belly to belly. I landed the only one-on-one interview.

It was just one of many major "gets" since for you. But you had a setback recently, with a major injury—You broke your right leg in November while skiing in Aspen. How are things going with the recovery?

Slowly. I've been working hard on my rehab. I spend four hours on a motion machine. When I'm off the machine, I have another hour of cycling with no resistance on a stationary bike and strength training through weight and resistance bands. It's tedious. It's painful. And it's necessary.

Will you ski again?

My doctors don't want me to downhill ski again, which is crushing news to a lifelong skier. They tell me that, a year from now, I should be able to chase my kids on cross-country skis or on a bicycle. In the meantime, I'm being very disciplined about my rehabilitation so I can walk again—without crutches. It's one day at a time. 🎿
Paper has made possible the transmission of culture and knowledge across the centuries. For instance, the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, established in 1897, holds 11,000 collections containing more than 50 million items. These items range from notebooks and scrapbooks to press clippings, logs and subject files. Some of the riches include George Washington’s first inaugural address, Alexander Graham Bell’s first drawing of the telephone, the paper tape of the first telegraphic message, the Gettysburg Address and the papers of 23 U.S. presidents.

Although paper stores easily, it isn’t always stored well, nor with an eye to preservation for decades or centuries. The Library of Congress and other archives devote considerable resources to restoring and preserving documents they acquire. But how many of us have stumbled across a cache of dusty letters in a stuffy attic or damp basement? Staring at these fragile windows into our past, weakened and cracked by years of neglect, we are tempted to despair. How can we keep them from deteriorating further?

Anne Rosenthal, a paper conservator in San Rafael, Calif., says her best advice is to keep important papers in a stable environment. “People need to house the item properly and not handle it a great deal,” she explains. “It’s also important to acquire the proper storage materials to keep the object away from acidity and sunlight.”

Ms. Rosenthal also worked on a large collection of documents for the National Park Service related to Yosemite National Park. She described some fascinating pieces, including a notation sealed inside a metal container that was left in the mountains and struck by lightning. There were also letters to family members before Yosemite became a national park. “There was a lot of interesting material in the letters about life in Yosemite Valley,” she says. “They conveyed a lot of history about the people who settled in that area.”

If you have questions about an object, consult a conservator. The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation offers a referral service by location and specialty at aic-faic.org/guide/form.html. The Library of Congress also provides information about caring for paper collections at loc.gov/preserv/care/paper.html.

In the meantime, here are some tips from the experts:

Don’t store books in cardboard boxes or wrap them in newspaper or plastic. Acid-free alkaline folders, polyester film folders or alkaline mats are best for storing paper products.

Shelve books upright (except for very large books such as atlases), and don’t overcrowd bookshelves.

Make sure storage folders or boxes provide adequate support to the items.

“People need to house the item properly and not handle it a great deal. It’s also important to acquire the proper storage materials to keep the object away from acidity and sunlight.”

Anne Rosenthal, a paper conservator

Ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage paper collections. Avoid storing your object in sunny rooms and under fluorescent bulbs. Manuscripts and newsprint are particularly sensitive to light, and sunlight can fade the leather and cloth covers of books.

Handling paper objects too much can ruin them. The oils from fingers can cause staining, and folding and unfolding can lead to creases and tears. If you need to use the piece for research, make one copy of the original, and then copies of that copy. Copy machines use a bright
UV light source, which will cause damage with repeated use.

▶ Never use tape to repair pages. Even “invisible” tape has a high acid content that will destroy the paper over time. Pressure-sensitive tapes (some of which may be called “archival”) can also alter inks and make paper brittle. Lamination, too, adds acid and is irreversible.

▶ Airborne pollutants such as ozone, car exhausts and heating systems can cause damage. Protect your object from dust and dirt.

▶ Monitor your keepsake for evidence of silverfish, rodents and insects such as book lice and bookworms, which can eat, or use rubber bands or string to tie up a document or book. Both can cut into brittle pages and damage covers. And don’t fold down page corners.

▶ If the object doesn’t have value as an historic artifact, you might consider preserving it by transferring the information to microfilm, producing a copy or replacing a volume (if possible) with another copy that’s in better condition.

Our histories can be found in letters to loved ones, in journals, diaries and books, and in other documents that record births, marriages, major life events and ultimately, our deaths. Beyond these personal treasures are the great works of literature, religion and politics, as well as the mundane records of our societies. Many of us have letters tucked away in a box somewhere. My family has a copy of my great-grandparents’ marriage certificate—written in Hungarian. And a letter written by my husband’s great-great-great grandfather, in which he requests his Civil War pension, is also stashed away somewhere in our home.

While sentiment and family history are important reasons to collect and preserve papers, many people collect simply as a hobby or for financial reasons. There’s a strong market for autographs, letters and historically significant documents. The market is so diverse, people can choose to participate at many different financial levels. Some collectors focus on specific areas such as political figures, while others try to anticipate a rising market such as women in American history or African-Americana.

Occasionally, the collector strikes a financial bonanza. For instance, a draft of a break-up letter Marilyn Monroe sent to Elia Kazan on 20th Century Fox letterhead brought $19,000 recently. And an autograph of Button Gwinnett, a signer of the Declaration of Independence who died in a duel within a year after signing, has brought upwards of six figures at auction.

Legacy Art & BookWorks, Inc.

What does a leaf from the Gutenberg Bible, Florence Nightingale’s letters, Laura Ingalls Wilder’s family Bible and Mark Twain’s personal book collection have in common? They have all been touched by the hands of bookbinder and conservator James T. Downey, proprietor of Legacy Art & BookWorks, located in downtown Columbia, Mo.

Mr. Downey says the page repairs and resewing he did to these historic objects were fairly routine, but handling them is still a “professional thrill.”

“It’s always exciting to work on these types of documents, but it carries with it a profound sense of responsibility to the future and the past,” he admits.

“The biggest challenge is always to make sure I do the best job possible, with an eye toward reversibility in case a future conservator needs to do something else to those works.” These objects, like most of the work Mr. Downey does, came from various museums and state historic sites in Missouri, with the exception of Florence Nightingale’s letters, which are owned by a private individual.

His conservation work is all done by hand, using materials like Japanese tissue paper, wheat paste and 100 percent cotton rag matting. Services include everything from de-acidification to full resewing and recovering, custom binding and framing.

“Most of the work I do is on volumes that are post-Civil War,” says Mr. Downey, who trained at the University of Iowa Center for the Book, one of the premier book-arts programs in the country.

“There was a technology change in the way paper was made in the 1850s, but it didn’t become widespread until after the war,” he continues. “That new technology led to the type of paper we are familiar with today, which has a residual acid content. It’s an interesting curiosity that books from the post-Civil War era are much more fragile than books 50 or 500 years older.”

Mr. Downey says safe storage and gentle handling are the most important considerations in preserving paper collections. “There’s a lot of history in the history books,” he adds, “but researchers love having access to these personal items of everyday people. And unless that stuff is taken care of, we’ll lose an important part of our history.”

Legacy Art & BookWorks, Inc. (legacyart.com) is located at 1010 E. Broadway, Columbia, Mo. 65201. Call (800) 776–4924 or (573) 442-0855.
Above, Legacy Art and BookWorks owner James Downey at his book conservation and restoration work area located inside the Columbia, Mo., art gallery he has operated since 1996.

Right, Mr. Downey walks in his Legacy art gallery that focuses on showcasing the artwork of professional, local and Midwestern artists. In addition to his conservation work, the store offers art supplies, book supplies and a full selection of Procion fiber dyes and a wide selection of handmade and decorative papers.

Below, Mr. Downey pages through an old family Bible at his work area in Legacy. Such family heirlooms are typical of the items he restores using techniques such as de-acidification, full resewing and recovering.

From top: Mr. Downey prepares documents that date back several hundred years for conservation by placing them in acid-free mylar protective sheets that are held by double sided tape. Simple tools and thread are among the tools Mr. Downey typically uses in his bookbinding process.
For all but the most ardent students of the Revolutionary War, the battles waged in New England and the Middle Colonies typically get top-billing over those fought in the Carolinas and Georgia. There are several reasons why this is so, most having more to do with academic bias, marketing and tourism than with the history of military strategy.

Overshadowed in the South by the history of battles fought on the same ground four-score years later, the historic significance of certain pivotal people and events involved have been under-examined, even by historians of the region. Such oversight and relegation is quickly becoming a thing of the past, however, as both film and literature related to the subject have been marketed successfully to a general audience.

Mel Gibson’s blockbuster, The Patriot, was at the vanguard of this movement south. Set in South Carolina, the characters are fictionalized composites of military figures and battles waged. While not historically precise, the movie reflects the reality of the war’s brutality and dynamics. Likewise, author John Buchanan’s The Road to Guilford Courthouse, an ambitious look at battles fought in the Carolinas, received wide praise when it was released in 1999.

This year, the newly released trade paperback edition of historian Walter Edgar’s Partisans and Redcoats offers another look at the war in the South, this time in a compact 240-page text that deftly paints intimate portraits of men and women patriots. Especially obvious is Mr. Edgar’s skill at providing a broader context of the South Carolina battles.

As presented by Mr. Edgar, the Revolutionary War is in many ways a continuation of civil conflicts present since the earliest days of the colony’s settlement: Charleston and low-country interests vs. those of the rural back-country; a running feud between Baptists and Presbyterians; a battle over the approach to law-and-order between settlers in factions called Regulators and Moderators. All of these were prelude to the coming dramatic division between Patriot Whigs and Loyalist Tories.

South Carolinians spent much of the early years of the war in relative peace and prosperity. That all changed in 1780 when the British lay siege on and later captured Charleston. From that brink of total defeat, the tides of war began to slowly shift towards the Americans as the result of a string of victories in back-country skirmishes and battles, most notably, argues Mr. Edgar, the fight that came to be known as Huck’s Defeat.

Mr. Edgar’s book falls short only in its brevity, for it leaves the reader wanting to learn more of the heroic and fascinating patriots of South Carolina — fortunately, a shortfall that leaves room for even more film and literature on the topic.
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