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Love, Early American Style
Portland, Ore., City of Roses
Duncan Tavern Reborn
Nathaniel Bowditch, Charter of the Seas

‘Founding Mothers’
Cokie Roberts Unveils the Women of the Revolution

Martha Washington
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From The President General

The issue of American Spirit you hold is the last one of my administration. When I took office three years ago, one of my major goals was to revamp NSDAR publications. We decided to divide the previous magazine into two publications. The Daughters newsletter devotes itself to internal communications to members about local, state and national activities.

American Spirit, on the other hand, is designed to bring our organization’s beliefs and principles to a broader audience than our members. We wanted a fresh, contemporary look for the magazine that would be attractive not only to DAR members, but also to potential members and to a much broader, more diverse readership. At the same time, the articles would advance and celebrate our three objectives of patriotism, historic preservation and education.

Since its launch, American Spirit has successfully made the transition from subscription-only to newsstand. It has won several awards for design and writing, and, by the time of this year’s Continental Congress, I hope to announce the results of competitions being judged now.

It has been one of the great pleasures of my administration to see American Spirit become a reality, and to watch each issue surpass the last.

This issue is no exception. Our cover story about Cokie Roberts’ new book, Founding Mothers, reveals the lives of the wives, sisters, daughters and female friends of the Founding Fathers. Their roles in shaping the Revolution and maintaining the home-front—in some cases, with firearms—is little-known by the public. This book will certainly help enlighten many readers.

Speaking of Founding Mothers, our article on Early American courtship and weddings, “For Love or Money,” looks at the often hard-nosed business of romance in the Colonies.

Our stunning pictorial essay on “Historic Trees” captures the enduring, yet all-too-vulnerable beauty of trees that have rooted themselves in our history and imaginations. These pictures should inspire us to work harder to protect venerable giants in our communities. The article on the Korean War DNA project presents a different side of genealogy, examining the emerging realm of DNA testing to establish family ties. The article also explains how you may be able to help in the identification and repatriation of U.S. soldiers’ remains from the Korean War.

On a much lighter note, we also profile a true genius of the early 19th century, Nathaniel Bowditch, whose unique talents made seafaring much safer and more accurate—and also helped found the insurance industry. One more article of note concerns the remarkable achievement of which we can all be very proud. The article on the Korean War DNA project was one of the results of competitions being judged now.

There’s even more waiting for you inside this issue of American Spirit. In closing, I urge you to continue to support the magazine with subscriptions. Share it with your friends outside DAR, and offer it to local schools and colleges. Help us continue to reach out to all in the spirit that has made DAR great.
Spirited comments from our readers

Top-notch Researcher
Thank you for the outstanding article by Hazel Kreinheder, whose dedication to obscure details is a blessing to researchers with almost insurmountable genealogical difficulties. When I was assisting a prospective member for the Belle Air Chapter, NSDAR, who was a Lumbee Indian from North Carolina, Hazel’s generosity was most welcome! The prospective member had researched extensively for many years and could not complete her documentation, though she knew she was descended from Samuel Bell, 1749–1835, from North Carolina. No one had ever joined DAR on his service. With Hazel’s assistance, this person is now a member of our chapter, opening the way for all her relatives who have waited for her to complete the process. Samuel Bell was listed under “New Ancestors” in the July/August 2003 issue of the Daughters newsletter.

Bonita Daniel
Plummer, Idaho

‘Furry Forecaster’
The article on “America’s Furry Forecaster” by Jeanmarie Andrews was very interesting, mainly because I was born on that day in 1944. Thank you for contributing such a good article in your excellent magazine.

Bonita Daniel
Plummer, Idaho

Home Remedy
As I read Mardy Fones’ article on Colonial health and medication (September/October 2003), I remembered a paper among those my mother saved. This was written much later, but reveals how little was known about healing, even in the early 20th century.

When my grandfather moved his family in 1909 from Mississippi to North Dakota, my great-grandfather, James P. Terry, wrote out the following recipe for “healing pain”:

8 ounces of oil [of] sassafras
8 ounces of aqua amonia
8 ounces of sweet spirit of nitre
1-1/2 ounces of oil origannum
1/2 ounce of oil assize
3 ounces of chloroform

“Soothes pain. Shake before taking and cork tight. Rub the parts where the pain is. If it don’t stop the pain, take a teaspoonful in water.”

Dorothy Snedeker
Highland Park, NJ

‘Deerfield Raid’
In the article on the Deerfield Raid in the January/February 2004 issue of American Spirit, quotations from Lyle Manring attempt to minimize the murder of 19 white captives by their Indian captors as “mercy killing” because “a captive who was ill or struggling ran the high risk of perishing along the way.” It would seem better to perform a “mercy killing” under the circumstances, she says. It would be equally valid to use the same reasoning to excuse the Japanese for murdering over 5,000 American prisoners of war during the Bataan Death March of World War II. In both cases, the captors created hardships and then killed those who became liabilities because they could not endure the hardships. To explain this as “mercy killing” defies both decency and common sense. Neither “mercy killing” story would be accepted by most Americans, particularly those who still have memories of some of the Bataan victims.

Roland J. Benjamin
Park Ridge, Ill.

Rice vs. Zahn
After I read the “Letters to the Editor” in the January/February 2004 issue of American Spirit referring to Paula Zahn (May/June 2003) and Dr. Condoleezza Rice (March/April 2003) with such animosity, I had to find those magazines to read the articles once more. Paula Zahn is a beautiful, gifted and intelligent lady. She was portrayed accurately, and there was no mention of her nor CNN’s political leanings. Because of her accomplishments, Paula Zahn deserves to be highlighted in our magazine. Dr. Condoleezza Rice has earned the right to be included among “some of America’s greatest female achievers.” She is a brilliant scholar whom we are fortunate to have advising our leaders in this perilous time of global unrest. The lady written about in the column directly above Dr. Rice, who was given nearly twice as much space, was Madeleine Albright. Thank you, American Spirit, for striving to be a balanced, unbiased publication.

Mary Janice Glover
Jacksonville, Fla.

Bringing Families Together
I have a copy of your November/December 2003 issue and find your publication to be extremely well-written, informative and entertaining. A DAR member, Mrs. Martha McLain, gave me a copy. I was struck by the article written by Ms. Karla Zimmerman. I am also a direct descendant of the James Alford Dula mentioned in the article. I have quite an extensive Dula family history if she would be interested. I would also be interested in any Dula family research she has done in or around the Lenoir, N.C., area. Please accept my very best wishes for continued success.

Brett Mason Dula
Austin, Texas

(EDITOR’S NOTE: We were pleased to forward this to Ms. Zimmerman to facilitate research on the Dula family.)
Nearly 59 years after World War II ended, the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated in Washington, D.C., on May 29, 2004. The celebration on the National Mall over the Memorial Day weekend will culminate 11 years of effort to honor our World War II generation. Congress authorized the memorial in 1993, and work began in September 2001. DAR has donated more than $500,000 to the project. The official dedication celebration will span four days. It will include a WWII-themed reunion exhibition on the Mall, staged in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage; a service of celebration at the Washington National Cathedral; and an entertainment salute to WWII veterans from military performing units. Other related activities in cultural venues throughout the city are expected. Information is available at the Web site, www.wwiimemorial.com, and also by calling (800) 639–4992.

California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), has launched a new online history resource that presents the little-known story of slavery in the state. The Underground Railroad Digital Archive project went online on February 17 at digital.lib.csus.edu/curr.

Launched as part of the university’s celebration of Black History Month, the archive uses high-quality digital images of letters, journals, photographs, documents, newspapers and more to tell the often-overlooked experiences of African-American slaves in California and the state’s involvement in the Underground Railroad. The collection brings together materials collected from around the state and includes a bibliography of more than 1,000 documents related to 19th-century African-American history in California and the West Coast.

The CSUS Library archive is one part of the National Park Service’s Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program, an interpretive program that looks at how blacks and some whites worked together to help Southern slaves escape to freedom in the North and West, as well as Canada, Mexico, Europe and the Caribbean. The university’s archive will be linked to similar projects across the nation.

Dates to Remember

May 3, 1494: Christopher Columbus spots Jamaica
May 4, 1626: Dutch colonists land on Manhattan
May 9, 1754: “Join or Die,” generally believed to be the first American political cartoon, appears in The Pennsylvania Gazette
May 14, 1607: Jamestown, Va., established—the first permanent British settlement in North America
May 28, 1851: The Ohio Women’s Rights Convention held in Akron
May 30, 1868: May 30 proclaimed as a memorial day by John A. Logan, Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic
June 9, 1534: Jacques Cartier enters the mouth of the St. Lawrence River
June 11, 1880: Jeannette Rankin, first woman elected to Congress, born
June 14, 1777: Continental Congress adopts the design of the U.S. flag
June 14, 1916: President Woodrow Wilson proclaims Flag Day
June 14, 1943: U.S. Supreme Court holds that one cannot be compelled to salute the American flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance
June 17, 1775: Battle of Bunker (Breed’s) Hill
June 18, 1812: War of 1812 begins when President James Madison signs a declaration of war against Britain
June 19, 1885: The Statue of Liberty arrives in New York Harbor
When you think of Portland, Ore., don’t think about rain, but about roses. Think 10,000 roses filling a sunken garden. Think 3,000 blossoms creating a stained-glass effect in a labyrinth of gardens. Think the second-largest floral festival in the nation. For 99 years, this city has lured visitors to the Pacific Northwest with its spectacular gardens, dedicated exclusively to one of the most romantic flowers in existence.

Portland was named for the town in Maine after a coin toss in 1845. (Had the coin landed on the other side, we’d have a Boston on each coast.) It earned its nickname as the “City of Roses” during the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition of 1905. For the exhibition, city gardeners planted roughly 50,000 candy-pink Mme. Caroline Testout hybrid tea roses.

The quantity of roses planted has taken on mythic proportions. Depending on whom you ask, the miles of streets that were lined with flowers range from 20 to 200—but nearly everyone agrees that roses filled the grassy space between every existing sidewalk and curb. Visitors can still find a few of these original plantings in Portland’s West Hills neighborhood or along Southwood Avenue in the city’s southeastern section, according to Fred Edmunds Jr., former President of the American Rose Society and founder of Edmunds’ Roses, a local nursery.

Mme. Caroline Testout roses can also be found in the city’s three public rose gardens, all managed by Portland’s Department of Parks and Recreation, says Harry Landers, an experienced rose garden horticulturist with the department. The International Rose Test Garden, Ladd’s Addition Rose Garden (also called Ladd’s Circle and Squares), and the Peninsula Park and Rose Garden differ dramatically, making it easy for a visitor to find one that suits any mood or style.

The most famous of Portland’s public gardens is the 5-acre International Rose Test Garden in Washington Park, at 400 S.W. Kingston Ave., (503) 227–7033. Nestled 600 feet above the city in the West Hills, the garden also offers a spectacular view of perpetually snow-capped Mount Hood. Approximately 800,000 visitors a year come from all over the world to see this panorama and immerse themselves in nearly 700 varieties of roses, enjoying free admission and long hours. (The garden is open from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.)

What makes the test garden unique, though, is not the abundance of blooms, but the display of new hybrids that the garden tests as a participant in the All-America Rose Selections trial program. This association of professional rose growers has been testing roses since 1938. The Portland site is the oldest official, continuously run public rose test garden in the association’s network of 26 gardens.

Here visitors will find new rose varieties 18 to 24 months before growers start marketing and shipping them to local nurseries. Every year, hybridizers send four of the same variety of rose to the test garden for a two-year trial (three years for climbing roses). This year, there are 47 entries, says Landers. Unfortunately, visitors won’t know the names of their favorites because each variety is given a code number to prevent judges from knowing which breeder sent them. Over the trial period, the roses are scored on 15 points such as color and shape of bud...

The Portland skyline, as seen from the International Rose Test Garden, frames snow-capped Mt. Hood within luminous blossoms.
Think 3,000 blooms creating a stained-glass effect in a labyrinth of gardens.
and bloom, uniqueness of color, disease-resistance, bush shape and fragrance. As many as four varieties in the garden each year may be named an All-America Rose Selection winner.

To compete, each grower might plant and weed through 100,000 seedlings before settling on their entrants, according to Landers. Major companies, such as Jackson & Perkins, may plant as many as a half-million seeds. “It costs several million dollars to get a rose to the All-America standard,” Landers says.

The International Rose Test Garden opened to the public in the 1930s, but the city acquired the property in 1917 to develop a West Coast rose test garden. The only other rose test garden at the time was on the East Coast, according to Edmunds. The city’s land purchase was prompted by American nurserymen who sought another test garden during the World War I closing of such gardens in Europe, according to Marlene Wallin, a research associate in the Oregon Historical Society’s Research Library.

Jesse Currey, a rose hobbyist and regional trustee of the American Rose Society, led the effort to establish the garden. Largely because of his singular efforts and contacts with European rose growers, new hybrids were sent to the fledgling Portland garden from all over the Continent, including France, England, Ireland, Germany, Holland and Denmark. This made Portland the new world capital for the rose, says Dorothy Butler, a Director of the Portland Rose Society Board. As a result, Portland is the only North American city to issue an internationally recognized award to roses of merit—the Gold Award, also called the Gold Medal. For his work, the Royal Horticultural Society of England honored Currey with a fellowship. In addition to the test and main gardens, there is a Shakespeare Garden with the flowers mentioned in the bard’s writings; the Royal Rosarian Garden; the Gold Medal Garden with examples of all of the winners to date; and the Rose Garden Amphitheater, where plays and concerts are held in the summer.

Ladd’s Addition Rose Garden is the smallest and most intricate of the city’s parks. It covers about four blocks in the historical southeastern Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood just south of Hawthorne Boulevard and across the Willamette River from downtown. William Sargent Ladd, member of a prominent Portland family and mayor in 1854, created the garden when he subdivided his 126-acre farm in 1891.

Inspired by Pierre L’Enfant’s complex layout for Washington, D.C., Ladd designed a diagonal street system that yielded four diamond-shaped parks surrounding a central, circular park. The result is a difficult maze for drivers to negotiate, but an unexpected Eden for those who literally have time to stop and smell the roses. Because the 3,000-plus roses are planted on a public right-of-way, visitors can enjoy this garden any time they’re in the neighborhood.

Until recently, the garden’s 75 to 100 varieties were mainly antique hybrids, says Landers, the city horticulturist. A previous curator removed many of these older varieties and planted moderns in their stead. City horticulturists are now in the

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(Left) Peninsula Park and Rose Garden was the city’s first public rose garden. (Right) The Japanese Garden comprises five gardens that draw thousands of visitors annually.
Portland’s

Asian Gardens

Rose gardens are not the only horticultural attraction. The city has a pair of Asian gardens considered among the finest in the world.

The 5.5-acre Japanese Garden in Washington Park above the International Rose Test Garden features five formal garden styles: the Strolling Pond Garden, the Natural Garden, the Sand and Stone Garden, the Flat Garden and the Tea Garden.

The Japanese Garden is open every day except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day. Hours vary, so it’s best to call ahead, (503) 223–1321, or go to www.japanesegarden.com when planning a visit. Admission is $6.50 for adults, $5 for visitors age 62 and older, $4 for college students with I.D., $4 for children ages 6 to 17, and free for children ages 5 and under. Guided tours are available April 15 through October 31 at 10:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at no extra charge.

The Portland Classical Chinese Garden, www.portlandchinesegarden.org or (503) 228-8131, which opened in 2000 at Northwest Everett Street and Northwest Third Avenue in Chinatown, is the largest of its type outside of China. Walls surround the garden to create an urban oasis of bridges, pavilions and winding paths. The majority of the plants are indigenous to China, but grown in the United States. The Chinese Garden is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., November through March, and from 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., April through October. Admission is $7 for adults, $6 for seniors, and $5.50 for students. Children under age 5 are free.
process of restoring some of the older rose varieties to the garden. “We can’t replace the antiques, so we probably will move some varieties from the test garden that can’t be purchased today,” Landers says, adding that this maneuvering will also help make the test garden more contemporary. “It should be more modern,” he says. “Visitors should be able to look at a rose there and then go buy it.”

Peninsula Park and Rose Garden (North Albina Street at Ainsworth Street), the city’s first public rose garden, contains more roses than the test garden, but is largely unknown by city residents. The 2-acre, formally designed sunken garden in the Piedmont neighborhood of north Portland can’t be seen from passing cars. “We call it our secret garden,” says Landers, noting that the beds are worth seeking out. “It’s breathtaking when you stop at the top of the garden’s staircase, and it’s in bloom below. You see 10,000 roses framed in boxwood hedges and lawns.”

Overlooking the garden is an octagonal bandstand, built in 1913 and used during World War I for patriotic demonstrations. This gazebo is now a National Heritage Historical Landmark. Also in the 16-acre community park is Portland’s first community center, built in the Italian villa style. In the 1950s, its outdoor pool temporarily housed a group of penguins newly arrived from Antarctica while the city zoo finished proper facilities for them. Older residents often still refer to the park as Penguin Park. The city purchased the park land in 1909; it previously had been the site of a roadhouse and racetrack for horses. Much remains of city purchased the park land in 1909; it previously had been the site of a roadhouse and racetrack for horses. Much remains of the park’s original features, including lantern-style street lamps, brickwork and a nearly century-old fountain in the center of the rose garden.

Rose enthusiasts should make at least one pilgrimage to Portland in June for its annual Rose Festival. This year’s gala starts June 3 and features more than 60 events, including river cruises on U.S. Navy ships, a midway with rides, the 19-race Champ Cars World Series, a jazz classic, an arts festival, fireworks and three parades. Edmunds, who is a former member of the festival’s Board of Directors, recommends booking a hotel room early as this flower festival is second in size only to the Pasadena Tournament of Roses.

With more than 2 million spectators, the festival generates more than $80 million for the local economy—which is precisely what its founders nearly 100 years ago intended for it to do. After the successful Lewis and Clark Exposition, local businessmen were eager to continue using the rose as a magnet for tourists. The merchants “enjoyed the increased business during the exposition and didn’t want it to end,” says Mike Donahue, anchor man for Portland’s KOIN television station and author of Portland Rose Festival. Financial problems almost destroyed the festival in the late 1920s, according to Donahue. A local merchant revived it in 1930 when he came up with the idea of picking a queen and court from local high schools, a plan that aroused the competitive spirit and increased attendance and sponsorships.

During the festival, the Portland Rose Society hosts its own show, the largest and longest-running rose exhibition in the United States. The city tradition began in 1888, in the private King Heights garden of Mrs. Henry Pittock, wife of the first publisher of the Oregonian newspaper. According to Dorothy Butler at the Portland Rose Society, Mrs. Pittock hosted a picnic at her mansion and asked her guests to bring a rose. The flowers were displayed and awarded prizes.

“Everyone enjoyed it so much that they did it again the next year,” convening that time at a local church, says Butler. Now the annual event is held at the significantly larger Lloyd Center Ice Chalet at 2201 Lloyd Center. (503) 282–2511.

Two other natural sites worth visiting are Mount Tabor Park, Southeast 60th Avenue and Salmon Street, to see the only (extinct) volcano within city limits in the Lower 48, and the 175-acre Hoyt Arboretum, (503) 228–8733, on the west side of Washington Park. The arboretum includes 900 species of trees, 10 miles of hiking and guided tours on the weekends. At the south end of the arboretum is the Vietnam Veterans Living Memorial.

If you’re interested in picking up some books about gardening, Lewis and Clark, the Pacific Northwest, or just about anything else, make your way to one of the city’s six Powell’s Books. One of the best independent bookstores in the country, Powell’s has specialty bookstores for travelers, cooks and gardeners, and for technical needs, in addition to its massive Powell’s City of Books at 1005 W. Burnside St.
Kentucky was still a part of Virginia when Revolutionary War veteran Major Joseph Duncan built his Georgian-style home on a well-traveled stage road, the Buffalo Trace, in 1788. Even the name of the town was different—called Hopewell then, it was later changed to Paris.

The building attracted attention, not only because of its imposing size—a cellar plus three floors containing 13 rooms—but because it was made of native limestone in a settlement of log cabins, including the Bourbon County Courthouse across the street. But, like his neighbors, Duncan used abundant local ash and oak to frame the structure. In the cellar, long horizontal beams called sleepers (in this case, original whole logs still covered in bark) support the blue-ash planks of the first floor. The supporting walls are 2-foot-thick limestone, with lathing of hand-split hickory to support the plaster.

Over this rustic frame, a distinguished stone building rises from the street. A center-gabled pediment, flanked by two dormers, breaks the roofline. A semi-circular fanlight on the third floor in the middle of the pediment echoes the curve of a Palladian window on the floor below. The main entrance on the ground floor is an exceptional 10-paneled door, framed by sidelights and transom lights. Another sign of the building’s high style are the elegant stone staircases to the street; stairs descend from both sides of the front door to parallel landings, which give way to return staircases that widen as they meet the street.

Duncan used the grand structure as a home for his growing family before opening the tavern in 1795, three years after Kentucky achieved statehood. The bustling courthouse drew lawyers and statesmen, including Kentucky’s first governors and U.S. senators, who flocked to the tavern for lodging and meetings. Frontiersman Daniel Boone, who represented Bourbon County in the Virginia Assembly, also frequented the tavern.

Adjoining the tavern is the house built in 1802 by Duncan’s widow, Anne McLaughlin Duncan. Here she raised her six children while leasing the tavern to another operator. The Duncan family sold the tavern and house in 1829, and relatives of Aaron Burr owned the property from 1829 to 1880. The tavern was used as a private home until the 1920s, then began two decades of decline, ending as a decrepit tenement condemned by the city.

In 1940, The Kentucky Society DAR (KSDAR) purchased the tavern and began extensive repairs. The tavern opened as a historic center and museum in 1941, with KSDAR members serving as curators and docents. KSDAR founded the John Fox Jr. Library for genealogical collections on the premises in 1950.

In 1955, KSDAR bought and renovated the Anne Duncan House. Both it and the tavern were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. After 60 years of continuous operation, the buildings once again required serious attention, and KSDAR launched an ambitious restoration in 1998. The three-phase restoration is expected to wrap up in June 2004, when the center will again be open to the public after being closed for five years.

Inside the tavern today, original hand-carved mantels and stone fireplaces grace the principal rooms, which are furnished in antiques of the period 1780–1830. The tavern’s cellar contains two winter kitchens with their original storerooms, fireplaces and iron cooking pots intact.

Historians involved in the restoration have noted that the original locks and latches throughout the two buildings are unusual. Some, called carpenter locks and made of wood and metal, are English, while others are early American. Some locks upstairs display striking star patterns of black metal. According to an old newspaper article, one unique, two-knobbed latch was designed so that a one-armed Revolutionary War veteran could open the door with his elbow without putting down his candle.

Aside from such built-in fixtures and features, few artifacts and furnishings in the buildings today are original, but KSDAR members have brought several significant antiques to the property over the years. At the rear of the main hall of Duncan...
(Top left) This double lock secures the front door. You lock it, take the key out, insert the key upside down in the lock and lock it again.

(Top right) Front of Duncan Tavern and Anne Duncan House shows its 2-foot-thick limestone walls.

(Center) The second kitchen in the cellar of Duncan Tavern, with cast iron cooking utensils.

(Lower right) The first bedroom in the Ann Duncan House. The quilt is the “Westward Ho” pattern and is supposed to represent covered wagons. The three-cornered washstand belonged to Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy.

(Lower left) Its top seen through a railing, the Bourbon County courthouse faces the tavern.
Tavern is a tall Jacobean, English-style chair from the 1600s with green velvet upholstery. It used to reside in the House of Representatives and was later used by a chief justice of the Supreme Court of Kentucky.

The Ardery Room on the first floor of the tavern contains a cherry butterfly cabinet—so-called because of the shape of the shelves—that displays Staffordshire plates and ruby glass. An English mahogany secretary desk with a glass front belonged to the family of James Garrard, the second governor of Kentucky.

The Blair Room on the first floor is believed to have been the business office of the tavern, because a built-in cabinet contains a secret depository safe. An unusual wishbone lock, named for its shape, secures the cabinet. The room also contains stenciled rosewood chairs and a round rosewood table displaying a tea set of French porcelain.

The Isaac Shelby Room, named for the first governor of Kentucky, contains furnishings largely donated by members of his family. An inlaid wine chest stands next to the fireplace, and a Chippendale mirror hangs between the windows facing the street. On the inside of the door is the unusual two-knobbed lock designed for the one-armed soldier.

The James Garrard Room, named for the state’s second governor, contains a five-drawer chest with corners inlaid with bellflowers of poplar and birch, and a gilded wood Chippendale mirror, crowned with an eagle in a pediment. The fireplace and cupboards in this room are original.

On the first floor, a spacious banquet hall overlooks a memorial garden through the rear-facing Palladian window. The table seats 22. In the corner stands a cherry sugar chest, divided to hold white sugar on one side and brown on the other, which belonged to the Duncan family. A cherry Chippendale sideboard was made in 1798.

In the hallway on the second floor is the Palladian window facing Courthouse Square. Standing to the right of the window is a musical instrument called a psalter, a multi-stringed instrument resembling a piano, that was made before 1780. Next to the psalter, large green-glass demijohn bottles once contained rum from the West Indies. The chairs on each side of the room are comb-back Windsors made of walnut and oak.

The tavern’s upper floors hold many other intriguing objects and furniture, including two original Currier and Ives portraits, a bedstead with hand-carved pineapples, a cherry case-goods chest that belonged to the Duncan family, and several furnishings donated by members of the nationally prominent Clay family.

The John Fox Jr. Library occupies an addition on the backside of the old cellar of the tavern. With 6,500 volumes, family vertical files and periodicals, this library contains one of the state’s finest genealogical collections.

KSDAR has also renovated the Anne Duncan House, installing fine cabinet woods, decorating it with period furnishings, and adding a limestone facade salvaged from “Fairfield,” the 18th-century house of Gov. Garrard. The sitting room displays antiques such as a pair of rare French girandoles, or candle-holders, on the hand-carved cherry mantel, and a handsome secretary fashioned from curly walnut and mahogany with original blown glass.

The dining room shows off a Delft punchbowl, pewter teapot and a silver crucet set and butter stand. The carpenter’s lock in the dining room is made of three different woods. In the drawing room, KSDAR members installed a hand-carved cherry mantel, cupboards and paneling with original wood pegs from another historic home. Against one wall stands a mahogany and cherry sideboard, a stylistic transition between Sheraton and Hepplewhite, that was once owned by the Kentucky explorer, Simon Kenton. Candlelight from a brass candelabra sitting on a wall table reputedly illumined treaties signed by Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and John Adams.

Lynda Closson, KSDAR State Regent, says the most recent restoration project addressed structural problems from water damage, as well as updating mechanical and electrical systems throughout the two buildings. She says KSDAR is working with a conservator at the University of Kentucky Center for Historic Architecture and Preservation to inventory and establish provenance for all artifacts and furnishings as part of the restoration.

“I’m proud that this has been the state project during my term as state regent,” says Mrs. Closson, who views the finished work as a continuation of the stewardship performed by KSDAR for more than 60 years. The Duncan Tavern Historic Center will reopen to the public in June 2004.
Building ‘America’s Attic’

My first major trip alone (without family, classmates or fellow Boy Scouts) was to Washington, D.C., during the summer between my junior and senior years in high school. I stayed in the guest bedroom of distant family friends, who deposited me each morning outside the downtown offices where they worked. I would then spend the entire day wandering on my own among the familiar federal buildings and marble monuments. No guide, no tour book: Just a teenager with an unusually heightened passion for American history and for government and with a lot of time on his hands.

After a day or two of visiting the marquee sites, I decided to devote the remainder of my solo trip to exploring the museums and galleries that collectively make up the Smithsonian Institution and line the National Mall. At a pace notably slower than the tour groups and families zipping past me, I took in the artifacts, artwork and exhibits that are just a small percentage of the institution’s vast collection, but which easily display how it got its popular nickname, “America’s Attic.”

For the next few days, I read hundreds of display placards affixed to museum walls and sat for more than an hour watching a massive pendulum swing back and forth, gently knocking over small pegs arranged in a giant circle on the marble floor, displaying—in a way I still do not fully comprehend—the rotation of the earth.

I have returned to the Smithsonian dozens of times during the 30 years since that summer. However, I have never again had such a leisurely visit with no agenda other than to be surprised and amazed by the mysterious treasures found around the next corner.

One of the strangest mysteries I discovered during my first visit was in the Smithsonian’s original red-brick building, known popularly as “The Castle.” In the foyer of what today is primarily an office building, but which then still housed many exhibits, I encountered the burial crypt of James Smithson. I still recall my amazement at how little was known about James Smithson and why he had left his money to a country that he had never visited, for an institution that one day would be home to Judy Garland’s slippers and George Washington’s dental work.

As it turns out, I’m not the only Smithsonian fan with such a bewildered fascination.


Burleigh’s search for the real John Smithson begins with an introduction set nearly 75 years after his death. It recounts the fascinating, yet ghoulisht story of how the then 56-year-old Alexander Graham Bell and his wife traveled to Genoa, Italy, in 1903 to rescue the remains of Smithson before nearby quarry blasting sent his grave and its surroundings crashing down an eroding, 200-foot ocean cliff.

In much the same way as I enjoyed a leisurely first search down the hallways of the Smithsonian, Burleigh’s book wanders with wonderment through the life and times of Smithson, the illegitimate son of the Duke of Northumberland—a minor (by birth), yet extremely wealthy (thanks to marriage and cunning) English aristocrat. As history has recorded few specifics about the life of Smithson, Burleigh must occasionally resort to telling his story by explaining his times. This she does with an eye for detail that delights the reader with its fascinating explanation of cultural nuances of the British aristocratic class during the tumultuous late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Despite his illegitimacy, Smithson’s mother had the financial means (how is yet another fascinating backstory of Burleigh’s text) and social status to put his son through Oxford, where he studied geology. His zeal for field research and his association with noted mentors helped Smithson gain early recognition for his scientific endeavors and earned him entry in 1787 as the youngest member of the prestigious Royal Academy.

Despite this accomplishment, Burleigh notes, “he was not terribly original or brilliant.” Thus, despite its adventurous moments—Burleigh’s description of at least one of Smithson’s geological travels reads like an earlier-era Indiana Jones plot—Smithson’s life and work went greatly unnoticed outside his private parlor-room world.

When he died without heirs in 1829 (at age 64, or 11 years younger than what he ordered carved on his gravestone), his will directed that his considerable estate...
go to the United States for the purpose of creating an institution in Washington “for the diffusion of knowledge.” As he had never visited the United States nor had any significant connection to America, his reasons for naming it as his beneficiary is one of the great unsolved mysteries Burleigh sets out to solve. In the end, what Burleigh discovers and concludes is less important than her meticulous examination of the fragments left behind from Smithson’s life.

Burleigh’s story does not end with Smithson’s gift of $500,000, roughly equivalent to $50 million in today’s economy. As difficult as it may be for a 21st-century American to imagine, a major controversy arose in Congress over whether or not to accept the gift and what to do with the money. As with other issues in the context of the times, the role of the federal government and the issue of slavery played a part in the controversy, according to Burleigh.

John Quincy Adams would eventually champion the cause of how to receive the gift and what to do with Smithson’s money, a story Burleigh tells with insight and skill. Far from anticlimactic, this facet of the Smithsonian story is filled with intrigue and scandal.

In the decades since my first visit to the Smithsonian, it has been greatly restored, enlarged, reorganized and enhanced in attempts to make its treasures and mysteries more accessible to the millions of Americans who visit each year. Likewise, Burleigh’s book is a valuable and enjoyable additional resource for those who wish to gain a better understanding of one of the Smithsonian’s greatest mysteries.

‘Rebels & Redcoats’

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cheduled to air June 23 and 30 on PBS, just before the July 4 holiday, “Rebels and Redcoats: How Britain Lost America” may rouse patriotic hoots of derision, as well as some squirms. Co-produced by WGBH Boston and Granada Television in association with BBC Wales, the four-part series presents a distinctly British point of view that promises to dispel myths and reveal “the untold story.” Viewers versed in the era’s history will find little that is “untold.” For less informed viewers, the series misses a chance to provide the kind of deep context that, sadly, is not often told.

British military historian Richard Holmes narrates the series, which includes vivid dramatizations of battles and eyewitness accounts. It begins in the early 1770s. Holmes argues that Colonial protests against British tax measures were unreasonable—business was booming here, taxes were far lower than in Britain, and in any event, they were needed for our defense. In short, he says, the Colonists “never had it so good.”

Brandishing a bottle of Samuel Adams ale, Holmes lays the real blame for revolt on a handful of prosperous but discontented radicals cloistered in the “taverns of backstreet Boston.” Greed and long-held grudges, he says, drove Adams and his co-conspirators—“merchant, smuggler” John Hancock, and engraver and “arch propagandist” Paul Revere. Firing public sentiment with Revere’s “propaganda masterpiece” of the Boston Massacre (above), they began to lay plots that led to the battles of Lexington and Concord and finally, all-out war.

At this point, the series shifts its focus to the military struggle, which it dramatizes quite well: Re-enactors wade through swamps, tramp barefooted through snow, fix bayonets, charge and retreat. The year 1781 looms as the doom of the rebel cause, until French aid and stupendous British blunders lead to Yorktown.

Holmes notes the irony that a war for freedom meant freedom only for some. Slavery remained. “Free” women had few rights. Thousands of loyalists had to flee. Britain’s Native American and slave allies were imperiled. As a final irony, he says, the Constitution betrayed the dreams of the Revolution’s originators by reshaping the government into one not unlike that of Britain. He concludes that a coup had taken place and hardly anyone noticed.

— Bill Hudgins

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Flowers mark our passage through life. Their colors brighten our gardens, lawns and homes, and their fragrance evokes seasons, romance and partings. For untold ages, we have pressed flowers to preserve something of their brilliance and thus illumine our memories.

photography by kristin barlowe
Although there are specially designed botanical presses, all you really need is a large book such as a legal tome, atlas or even a phone book to press most blossoms. The thicker the book, the more flowers you can press at one time. Try second-hand bookstores or flea markets for unusual books that can be displayed decoratively while they are pressing blossoms. Many flowers press well, especially those with flat leaves. Your local garden club or botanical society may be a good source of advice for flowers to choose; they may also know of others who enjoy this hobby.

Pick blossoms when they are dry and at their peak, avoiding any with blemishes. If you don’t want to save the stems, trim them close to the bloom. Open your book and lay a sheet of tissue paper on one page. Place the flower face down on the paper. The leaves should also be face down. Arrange leaves and petals to the shape you want to achieve and position them so there is no overlap (unless that is a look you want). Lay another sheet of tissue paper over the flower and gently close the book. The book should completely cover the plant material.

If you are pressing more than one flower in the book, leave a thickness of one-eighth to one-quarter inch of pages between each. Weight the book down and leave it undisturbed for about two weeks. Open it gently and carefully remove the fragile pressed flowers.

When finished, the preserved blooms can be used in many ways, including greeting cards and crafts such as candle making, or arranged and framed like a still life. Clear or white glue works well for attaching them to paper and other backings. Keep the blossoms away from sunlight, which can fade them.

For more information, visit preservedgardens.com. To see examples of pressed flowers used in art, visit the Worldwide Pressed Flower Guild at wwpfg.org, or the International Pressed Flower Art Society at www.ipfas.org/e.
In Cokie Roberts’ new book, there are stolen elections, wild political partisanship, presidents dodging the press and the press criticizing First Ladies. Is the National Public Radio and ABC-TV political analyst examining today’s political scene?

Hardly. *The Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation* (William Morrow, 2004, $24.95) illuminates the personalities and lives of the women who influenced the founders of our nation. After spending more than two years reading their letters, journals, biographies and recipes, Roberts decided that women’s responsibilities have changed in 200 years about as much as politics have. Which is to say, very little.

“Women have been doing what we’ve been doing from time out of time,” Roberts told *American Spirit* during an interview at her Bethesda, Md., home. “There is this kind of late 20th-century notion of baby boomers that they were creating everything for the first time. It’s baloney.”

The Founding Mothers were incessantly pregnant; constantly entertaining; taking care of parents and children and in-laws; managing farms, households and businesses; and defending themselves from the British while the important men in their lives were rarely at home. The women also played a vital intelligence role, keeping the men informed of political events and gossip. Roberts shakes her head at “the notion that there was some sort of sweet, quiet time back there and that the First Ladies sat around, pouring tea and doing nothing else.”
“This whole business of ‘I can’t be superwoman’—well, can I introduce you to your great-grandmother?” she says. “I have felt very strongly all of my life that women are these very strong people who are the carriers of the culture and the tough ones, so [in writing this book] I was reconfirmed in that view. But reconfirmed delightedly because they’re fun, interesting people.”

Beyond Martha Washington, Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison, many of Roberts’ Founding Mothers will not be well-known to most readers. Even she wasn’t familiar with most of them, discovering their names while tracing the lives of men such as John Jay, the Continental Congress President and first U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice, and Revolutionary War hero General Nathanael Greene. From the outset, Roberts says, she limited her scope to the women “who had the ears of the Founding Fathers,” mostly mothers, wives and daughters. There are Founding Mothers beyond this definition, influential women who aren’t connected to these men, but “this is a different conceit,” she admits. “We have honored [the Founding Fathers], appropriately in my view, all this time, and obviously the women in their lives had influences on them. So that was the point, to go specifically to the women.”

In her other books, We Are Our Mothers’ Daughters and From This Day Forward (the latter co-authored with husband Steve Roberts, a columnist and university journalism professor), Roberts interspersed chapters about her own life with historical accounts of marriage and women’s careers. But in The Founding Mothers, the women of history have the pages to themselves. Readers meet the spirited Catherine “Kitty” Littlefield Greene, who played a key role in the invention of the cotton gin, and the downtrodden Deborah Read Franklin, whom Benjamin Franklin abandoned for 16 years while gallivanting in London. They also get to see a new view of Martha Washington, who Roberts believes has come down in history as “a sort of namby-pamby” instead of “the rock that she was. She probably kept the army from deserting year after year.”

Eliza Lucas Pinckney, the mother of Founders Charles Cotesworth and Thomas Pinckney, developed a business acumen at 16 when her father put her in charge of three South Carolina plantations. While managing the farms, she also cared for her sick mother and toddler sister, taught her sister and slave children, drew up wills for poor neighbors, and experimented with agriculture. Eager to find another farm export for the Colony beyond rice, she eventually turned indigo into a cash crop.

Sarah “Sally” Livingston Jay “turns out to be a treat,” says Roberts. “She’s funny, she’s smart, she was apparently a great beauty, and so everybody loved her. She was just the life of the party and her letters give a sense of that.” The daughter of William Livingston, the first governor of the state of New Jersey, Sally Jay was also politically savvy and in-the-know. She kept her husband informed of local politics, such as which counties were stealing the vote during Jay’s 1894 run for New York governor, and likely influenced treaty negotiations while in Paris.

Although Roberts especially admires Martha Washington, Abigail Adams and Sally Jay, her research led her to feel kinship with all of the women. “Steve called the other day, and I said [in a sobbing voice], ‘Eliza Pinckney just died!’ and he said, ‘I’m so sorry. Give my condolences.’ You get to feel very attached to them.”

Roberts was thrilled to learn how involved the women had been in laying the emerging nation’s foundation, including launching a massive, interstate fund-raising effort in 1780 to support the American troops. During the Revolution, the Mothers began to press for women’s education. As a result, several female academies opened in the 1790s. “Every day I would just say, ‘You know what? You know what?’ And I’d always promise at every meal, I’m only going to talk about the 18th century once. But of course, that was a lie.”

The idea for The Founding Mothers stemmed from a 2001 newspaper column in which Roberts paid tribute to Martha Washington, Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison. After editing the column, Steve Roberts told his wife, “This is your next book.”

“And, Steve was kind of sad about that,” Roberts says, “because we’d had so much fun writing a book together, but this was clearly not a joint project. This needs the passion of the girl.”

Before she got started, she did an informal survey, asking people whether they’d ever heard of Colonial playwright, poet and historical writer Mercy Otis Warren. “I’m talking about Ph.D.s, you know, and hardly anybody outside of women’s history expertise had.” Roberts picked Warren as the litmus test for the book’s marketability because Warren was published and her work remains accessible.
“She’s really the only one of the Founding Mothers that you can talk about in her own right, as opposed to because she was the wife of or the mother of or the daughter of, or whatever. And still nobody’s ever heard of her. [Her letters and other works] have been catalogued and indexed and all of that, so the idea that nobody’s heard of her is a real failure in terms of teaching history.” Roberts hopes that The Founding Mothers will make its way as a text into classrooms. “I’m very eager for girls to meet these women, to have some sense that this country was built on the tremendous sacrifice and work and spunk and ideas of women,” she says.

Roberts’ own ancestry certainly leads to a Founding Mother or two, but there’s no paper trail of letters or diaries for her to follow back. The Claiborne family, from which Roberts descends on the side of her mother, former Vatican Ambassador and former U.S. Representative Corinne “Lindy” Claiborne Boggs, arrived in Jamestown in the 1620s. (Roberts isn’t a DAR member, although her mother is.) While serving as the sole U.S. representative from Tennessee, William Claiborne helped break the electoral tie between Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Jefferson rewarded Claiborne by naming him governor of the Mississippi Territory and then the first governor of the Louisiana Territory. The Claibornes have been politically active in every generation up to Boggs.

This is a lively personal history to grow up with, but not a completely fulfilling one. Roberts says in the introduction to the The Founding Mothers that she needed to know what the women in Claiborne’s life were doing while he was helping to run the new country. “I can pull up William Claiborne’s letters to James Madison and Thomas Jefferson online. I’ve never seen anything written by a Claiborne woman before my grandfather’s generation,” she writes in the book.

Accessibility problems beset the project from the beginning. “I’m completely constrained by the written word,” Roberts told American Spirit. “If they didn’t write anything, there’s not a lot I can do about them.” She repeatedly hit dead ends with women who didn’t save their letters and journals, which was the case with almost every one, including Martha Washington. “The only reason we have all those wonderful Abigail [Adams] letters is because John was smart enough to ignore her when she said to burn them.”

Even when the letters did exist, it took monumental efforts to locate them. Roberts and her long-time friend, Ann Charnley, who also helped research Roberts’ two previous books, repeatedly came across references to women’s letters, but couldn’t locate the letters themselves. For example, biographer Richard Brookhiser advised Roberts to include Eliza Powel, who was the wife of a wealthy Philadelphia merchant, and is among those given credit for convincing George Washington to seek a second presidential term.

“And of course, I’d never heard of Eliza Powel,” Roberts says. She found a few references to her, but it wasn’t until two weeks before she finished writing the book that she determined that the letter she sought had been written in 1792. She went to the Library of Congress Web site, where she could easily access Washington’s letters from that year, but not Powel’s to him. As she soon learned, the library can’t put the letter online because it’s in a book published by the University of Virginia, and Mr. Jefferson’s university has a copyright on the transcription. Eventually, she did obtain a copy of the letter.
The Founding Husbands and Fathers?

While Roberts doesn’t plan to attempt that dish, she is interested in a chicken fricassee that sounds similar to one she ate growing up. Reading the recipes was fun, but it led to a bigger and more fundamental question: Who could cook and read? She learned that literacy among women varied tremendously. Most of them had no formal education, but if their parents were enlightened, they often studied with their brothers. Mercy Otis Warren had the same education as her brothers until they went to Harvard; Abigail Adams was tutored by young ministers studying with her father.

Roberts intends to write a sequel, covering the nation’s early years and its new capital of Washington. Given her family’s political lineage and her own career as a Congressional analyst, it might seem more likely that she would want to spend her free time writing books on politics instead of women’s issues. But, she says, “This is more interesting! Don’t get me wrong. I’ve done politics my whole life. But I love this stuff. It just fascinates me.”

THE FOUNDING HUSBANDS AND FATHERS?

In The Founding Mothers, Cokie Roberts may focus on the women who influenced the Founding Fathers, but one of the most compelling aspects of the book is the unconventional perspective of presenting the men almost exclusively in relation to their wives, daughters, sisters and female friends.

“They’re going to hate Benjamin Franklin,” Roberts says. Not only did he abandon his wife, Deborah Read Franklin, for nearly two decades to live in London, but he returned to America to manage his business affairs only because she died. Then he went to Paris, where he negotiated an alliance key to U.S. independence. While he was doing that, his daughter, Sarah “Sally” Bache, was escaping the British in Philadelphia. But before she went, even before she shuttled her own children out of the city, she packed off her father’s library collection for safekeeping in the country. When it was safe to go back to Philadelphia, she wrote to her father, asking for feathers and jewelry for an upcoming ball.

“And he writes her this snitty, horrible letter about, ‘That’s ridiculous. You shouldn’t be putting yourself in the finery,’” Roberts says. “And he’s going to Versailles for dinner, right? She’s escaping the British. He’s at Versailles.”

If Alexander Hamilton has any contemporary popularity, it will surely plummet when readers learn that he cheated “non-stop” on his wife Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, Roberts says. Worse, one of his lovers was his wife’s sister.

Thomas Jefferson also poses some likeability challenges. He adored his wife, Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson, and was very close to his children, especially his oldest daughter, Patsy. But, Roberts says, “You do wonder if his wife was terribly ill with each pregnancy … why he kept getting her pregnant.” Mrs. Jefferson bore seven children (one in a previous marriage) and died four months after giving birth to Lucy Elizabeth, an experience from which she never fully recovered.

Despite these flawed characters, Roberts believes that, overall, the men “tremendously” respected the women in their lives. “That’s why they had an influence, and I find that very interesting. There’s not this ‘little lady’ stuff going on at all, and so I like the men better from that perspective. Even Benjamin Franklin listened to women, just not his wife and daughter. He listened to these French women.”

Although she used the women’s own writings as much as possible, she also had to rely extensively on biographies and other secondary sources. In her finished basement, not too far from an upright piano and a clutter of preschool toys for her grandchildren, are bookcases laden with the stacks of books Roberts used in her research. Covering a nearby table is a timeline, tracking the simultaneous life chronologies of the women. The research detritus would probably be even more ample if not for the Internet, where Roberts found a great deal of information and historical documents. She gives especially high praise to the Massachusetts Historical Society for making much of its archives accessible online.

Recipes also provided a window into the lives of the women, and Roberts includes a few near the end of the book. She ordered the recipe book of Eliza Pinckney’s daughter, Harriet, which included some interesting biographical information as well as tips on how to dress a whole head of cow.
Historic Trees

photographs and text by Jeff Krueger
John Endicott, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, started planting his orchard in the seaside town of Danvers in 1632. This orchard is thought to be one of the first European cultivated nurseries in the New World. The Endicott Pear (Pyrus communis var. Bon Chretien), planted around 1640, is believed to be a living remnant of this orchard. In 1964, vandals stripped every leaf and branch. The town rallied around the tree as its trunk stubbornly resprouted the next year. It still bears hundreds of sweet pears. Adams Yellowwood (left) The planting of the yellowwood (Cladrastis kentukea) at Adams National Historic Park, Quincy, Mass., is attributed to Louisa Catherine Adams, (1775–1852), but the date of planting is unknown. Survivor Tree (below) On April 19, 1995, a terrorist bomb killed 168 people in or near the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. A previously unremarkable American elm (Ulmus americana) in the parking lot across the street was stripped, scorched and blackened by the blast. Surprisingly, it relieved and henceforth became a symbol of resilience to the community and nation. During the design of the new national memorial, survivors and surviving family members asked that the Survivor Tree take a prominent position. Mt. Vernon White Ash (right) Next to a path at Mount Vernon walked by hundreds of visitors each day, such as the passerby shown here, stands a massive white ash (Fraxinus americana) planted by George Washington. Washington was a great lover of trees: His diaries of 1760–88 include more than 10,000 words about tree plantings and observations of species habits. Mount Vernon is home to 13 tree specimens planted by Washington around 1785, when he improved his serpentine walk.
early American history, large stately trees were noted landmarks in the cultural landscape. People gathered beneath certain oaks or important events happened under magnificent trees to lend events even greater majesty. Today, these same trees, when they survive, seem cut off from their own dignity like elderly orphans in a landscape dominated by automobiles and climate-controlled buildings. While many of these trees are left to happily fend for themselves, others have their roots paved over. The result is a photographic inventory of the peculiar manner our society interacts with these emissaries of the natural world and nature itself.”
**Dueling Oak** [left] In the early 19th century, duels were all too common in New Orleans. Duels with foils, sabers, rapiers, bowie knives, poison pills, pistols and shotguns are recorded. A pair of live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) located sufficiently far from town were a favored site for Creole gentlemen to settle disputes of honor. As many as 10 duels in a day might occur, sometimes witnessed by 200 or 300 spectators. By the mid-1800s, the surrounding live oak forest was being used as an informal park (now City Park) and the police began to enforce laws prohibiting duels. No duels are recorded after 1891. Only one of the Dueling Oaks survives today. A crypt of unknown provenance lies beneath.

**Pinchot Sycamore** [top right], on Route 85 at the Farmington River, Simsbury, Conn. With a trunk 25 feet in circumference and a branching spread of 138 feet, the Pinchot Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) is the largest tree in Connecticut. Gifford Pinchot, an early and influential conservationist, was born in Simsbury and likely knew this hulk of a tree that was dedicated to him in 1965. Along with President Theodore Roosevelt, Pinchot helped found the U.S. Forest Service.

**Coolidge Sugar Maple** [lower right] at the Coolidge Homestead, Plymouth Notch, Vt. In August 1923, Vice President Calvin Coolidge returned to his boyhood home for a vacation. The famously quiet and unassuming politician set about repairs that needed to be done. A news photographer shot a picture of Coolidge tending to the sugar maples (*Acer sacchaum*) in front of the house on August 2. That night, Coolidge received word by telegraph that President Harding had died. Coolidge and his father, a notary public, stepped out in front of the house, beneath these trees, and at 2:47 a.m., swore the oath of office of the President of the United States. “Silent Cal” is reported to have gone back to bed.
In William Penn's agreements with land purchasers, he stipulated that one acre in every five of forest must not be felled. Thus, he preserved much of the original forest. Pennsylvania was also a haven for Penn's fellow Quakers. Appropriately, the London Grove Friends built their meeting, or place of worship, near one such protected white oak (*Quercus alba*), called the Penn Oak because Penn reportedly took a meal here. This tree is the Pennsylvania State Champion for its species. Evangeline Oak [below] The famous live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) beside the Bayou Teche in St. Martinville, La., witnessed the tragic end of an epic love story. The true story of Evangeline and Gabriel, as told in Longfellow's poem "Evangeline," begins in Nova Scotia. In 1755, the English governor forced the French Acadians to swear allegiance to the crown and foreswear Catholicism or leave. So persecuted, many found their way to Louisiana, a French colony tolerant of Catholicism. One young couple, betrothed in Canada and then divided, found their way separately to St. Martinville. Louis Arceneaux ("Gabriel") arrived first at the wharf beneath the live oak. Three years later, Emmeline Labiche ("Evangeline") arrived with her wedding gown, only to learn that Louis, believing her lost, had married another. Heartbroken, she soon died. Cathedral Oak [right] This incredible tree next to St. John's Cathedral, LaFayette, La., is thought to be 450 years old and is the third-largest live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) in the United States.
Battle of Gettysburg Witness Tree [above left] This swamp oak (Quercus bicolor) stands near the headquarters of Major General Daniel Edgar Sickles. Six other trees, witnesses of the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, still survive. American Elms [above right] In 1921, the city of Minneapolis planted rows of American elms (Ulmus americana) along 3.5 miles of Victory Memorial Drive, one tree for each of the World War I soldiers lost from Hennepin County. Sycamore at LaFayette’s Quarters [below] Brandywine Battlefield. The Marquis de LaFayette, aide to Washington, saw his first battle at Brandywine, Chadd’s Ford, Pa. He was quartered the night before at the stone farmhouse of Gideon Gilpin (visible on the right). This large sycamore (Platanus occidentalis), estimated to be more than 320 years old, stands near Gilpin’s house and has been incorrectly rumored to be the spot where LaFayette’s leg wound was dressed. In 1825, LaFayette returned to the site to visit Gilpin and the tree.
Genealogy and DNA

The tools of genealogy are indispensable for nurturing family trees, but otherwise may seem rather limited in scope and abstract in application. However, 50 years after the close of the Korean conflict, the U.S. Army has been employing a mix of traditional genealogy and high-tech genetic research to reunite families with the remains of soldiers who died in that action. Called the Korea Repatriation Project, the program uses DNA samples from the maternal line of survivors coupled with the research tools and techniques of genealogists to identify the 6,000 Army personnel whose bodies remain in Korea.

Photos, this page and page 36, from the U.S. Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.
“We have a mandate for Korea, specifically, because the government has lost touch with the families of those missing,” says Lieutenant Colonel Suzanne Walker, Director of the Army’s Repatriation and Family Affairs Division. The rationale for the Army’s Family Reference Database is complex. A half-century has passed since the end of the Korean conflict, yet political tensions have meant the bodies of many soldiers remain in North Korea. The trail is hard to follow: Families of soldiers have moved or died. Most significantly, a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, in 1973, destroyed about 80 percent of the medical and personnel records needed to identify those soldiers.

Left with little documentation and a trail that is 50 years cold, the Army has recruited civilian genealogists who have proven adept and resourceful allies in the search for these soldiers’ families. They use their skills with familiar genealogical resources—census records, newspaper archives, Internet searches and other databases—plus mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) tests. The mtDNA samples are then stored and can be compared to DNA from the remains of Korean conflict soldiers when they are repatriated.

ON THE TRAIL

In the United States’ 200-plus year history, the military’s response to coping with those killed in service to their country has become increasingly sophisticated. According to Steven E. Anders, the Army’s Quartermaster Corps Historian, “Caring for our dead is a far cry today from where it was 150 years ago. There has been a continual effort to improve the techniques, equipment, doctrine and organizations to care for the dead,” he says. He points out that during the 1846–47 Mexican War, there were no bodies returned to families. “After World War II and the Korean conflict, that number rose to 78 percent. In Vietnam, 96 percent were recovered.”

Fundamentally, time is meaningless when it comes to recovering and providing appropriate burial for American war dead, says Walker. “In 1988, an excavation at Fort Erie in Canada found the remains of soldiers who fought in the Battle of 1812. Twenty-eight of those were identified as Americans, and they were buried in a Veteran’s Administration cemetery in New York.

“When we enlist a soldier, we [promise] he will be taken care of, that we won’t leave him behind. It’s a commitment we take seriously. Right now, we have accountability for 47 percent of soldiers left behind in Korea,” says Walker. This includes remains identified by traditional forensic techniques and mtDNA. “Our goal is 100 percent recovery and identification.”

SEARCHING FOR CLUES

Megan Smolenyak is a self-professed Army brat whose passion for genealogy inspires a high degree of doggedness in her work on behalf of Korean conflict families and soldiers. She says she can put herself in the shoes of these families, because her father was a soldier. “I remember what it was like as a kid to cross off the days on the calendar until my dad came home.”

When a case packet arrives from the Army, her genealogical passion fires up. “The packet contains from two to 10 sheets of information about a soldier,” says Smolenyak, author of Honoring Our Ancestors (Ancestry Publishing, 2002). “I may just have a soldier’s name and his date of birth and where he enlisted, which can be a hint about where he was from.” So far, she’s found the families of 194 soldiers, or more than 94 percent of cases she’s handled. It’s like a puzzle, she says, but one that keeps changing shape. Her starting point is the 1930 census, where she looks for mentions of these soldiers as infants. She calls and calls phone listings in communities in and around the soldiers’ towns of origin, mindful that the ‘30s and ’40s saw much westward and northern migration.

She wades through marriage, birth and death records, seeking gossamer threads of connection. She recalls a case in point—the family of a soldier she was seeking in which two DNA-eligible brothers were also uncle and nephew and had the same middle and last name. Another man enlisted in Philadelphia, where her search began. It ended in Canada when she discovered he’d been vacationing in the United States when he enlisted.

“I did a search on one soldier’s name and came up with a [current] list of Marine promotions,” she says. “On a hunch, I called a name that was the same as the soldier whose family I was looking for. It turned out the promoted Marine was the grandson of that man.” The records themselves sometimes stymie searches. Soldiers fudged their ages. Hispanic soldiers Anglicized their names. Typos or errors occur on documentation.

Therese Fisher, another researcher for the Korea project and author of A Basic Genealogy Workbook describes her work as “a practical application of an abstract line of thinking. I often wake up in the middle of the night with an idea of how to solve something.” She describes her search process as being similar to the steps required to complete a Daughters of the American Revolution application. “There has to be a clear line of descent. You can’t finish one of these cases by saying, ‘I think these people are related.’” Challenging cases demand creativity.

“There was one soldier from New York City who had a common Hispanic last name, but we couldn’t find anyone from his family,” says Fisher. Frustrated, she appealed to a Brooklyn newspaper, which published a Memorial Day story about the search. Within 48 hours, she got a call from the man’s brother, who had moved to Florida.

Some cases just call for old-fashioned legwork, says Fisher. When the trail of one search went cold in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City, the
researcher “went house to house explaining who he was looking for and why until he found someone who knew the family. He finally got in touch with them,” says Fisher.

Both Fisher and Smolenyak concede they can be obsessive about their searches. “I’ve returned a few cases that I couldn’t find,” says Smolenyak, who is writing a book about DNA testing and genealogy. “But in the end, I’ve asked for them back and finished them.”

“I had to turn some cases back because the trail ended at the soldier’s family’s immigration to the United States,” says Fisher. Smolenyak has used existing genealogical resources in Europe to pursue and identify soldiers’ families. “Cases have involved all sorts of obstacles—adoptions, orphan train riders, illegal aliens, falsified documents, etc.—but if you’re stubborn enough, you can get over almost every hurdle,” she says.

THE WAITING IS OVER
Finding a soldier’s family is one thing, actually talking to them can be another. One family repeatedly hung up on Smolenyak, thinking she was a telemarketer. Many routinely screen calls with caller ID and won’t pick up because they don’t recognize Smolenyak’s number. In another case, a family member worked a swing shift and depended on voice mail. Since the genealogists believe their work is too sensitive to leave a message, they just keep calling until they get a live person on the line. Unlisted numbers and cell phone-only users are other barriers.

“I’ve called the police, I’ve called the neighbors, I’ve called other family to get the person I’m trying to reach to talk to me,” Smolenyak says. Even if the family maintains they have no relationship to the person they’re searching for, the genealogists always provide a call-back number, just in case the families later discern a link.

Once she connects with the key individual, she follows a prepared script, explaining the Army’s mtDNA Family Reference Database. Sometimes the person she’s calling has never heard of the soldier.

“So I walk them back through the family tree,” she says. Other times no DNA-eligible person from the soldier’s family is still alive. That’s when the researchers start another genealogical hunt, tracking a
family line back as much as 200 years to find a female progenitor, then forward again to a current member of that line.

“I found a 100-year-old mother who was still waiting for news about her son,” says Smolenyak. “Most folks are astonished and thrilled when I call. Sometimes they cry. It’s a release for them. They’ve been wondering all these years,” says Fisher, “Our calls are like a pinhole of light that shines on 50 years of pent-up emotion.”

According to Walker, when a DNA match is confirmed, the soldier’s remains are entitled to full military rites. “The U.S. is unique in its persistence in finding and identifying remains,” Walker says. “Those who think we’re wasting our time don’t know what it’s like to live with an unanswered question.

“I met a woman who was 13 when she lost a brother she idolized. At 83, she said she had missed him every day of her life. She was able to bury him in the church cemetery near her home. Through our work, she finally got resolution.

“These are real people. They had families and hope for a life that was never fulfilled,” she says. “Each went off to do what his country called him to do. And they made the ultimate sacrifice. Helping to properly lay their memories to rest is the least we can do.”

‘Y’ DNA WORKS

Understanding how genealogists can use the two most common kinds of DNA tests—Y chromosome and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA)—means grasping the basics of genetics.

“The Y chromosome is passed intact from father to son,” explains Megan Smolenyak, who is working on a DNA-related book on genetics and genealogy with fellow genealogist Ann Turner. “It conveniently follows surnames on a pedigree chart, which makes it nice and tidy for genealogical purposes.”

Y chromosome studies focus on the 23rd chromosome, which determines gender. “Everyone has 22 matching pairs of chromosomes—one from each parent—but the 23rd differs,” says Turner. These X and Y chromosomes determine whether a child is male (XY) or female (XX). Mothers always provide the X chromosome in her eggs. If the father provides an X, the baby will be female. If he provides a Y, then the baby is male. That’s why the Y chromosome travels from father to son, she explains.

“The genetic material on the Y chromosome doesn’t mix with each new generation, so it rarely changes,” says Turner. “That’s because all 23 chromosome pairs line up to exchange random bits and pieces of DNA with their matching partners, except the mismatched XY pair. The information carried on the Y chromosome travels from father to son as a nearly exact copy of itself.”

Occasionally, mutations do occur, and they distinguish the Y chromosome of one individual from an ancestor. This leaves a genetic record of the male line over generations.

On the other hand, mtDNA exclusively tracks the maternal line, says Turner. “Mitochondria is the energy component in all cells in the human body, and is passed from mothers to all of their children,” she says. The mitochondria is located outside the cell’s nucleus and has its own unique DNA. To determine mtDNA, a blood sample or cheek swab from a relative with the same maternal ancestry as the soldier’s is used.

Compared to nuclear DNA, which has about 3.2 billion base pairs and is arranged in a long double helix, mtDNA has a relatively paltry 16,500 base pairs and looks like a small doughnut under the microscope, says Turner. Based on studies of mtDNA, anthropologists have determined there are about 30 distinct mtDNA groups called haplogroups, along with many sub-groups.

Matching someone on the mtDNA side indicates a common female ancestor, but the time interval to that ancestor is typically several thousand years. This, along with the challenge of following the surname changes that occur in a maternal line, means mtDNA has limited genealogical application, says Smolenyak.

Even so, she explains, it does indicate a genetic connection and can be useful for learning about migration and deep ancestry. “I have had mine checked, and it matches [the haplogroup of] 7 percent of those of European origin,” says Smolenyak, “and if it happened to be rare, it could provide more insight.”

Also, mtDNA is harder than the Y chromosome, so it may be used to identify old remains through the maternal line. “It was used to link the remains of the Romanovs to a living family,” says Smolenyak of the Russian royal family, who were killed in 1918. Their remains were only recently found and identified with mtDNA testing. Similarly, mtDNA linked the remains of a baby found in the Titanic wreckage to contemporary family members. “The true strength of mtDNA is in dealing with history’s mysteries,” says Smolenyak.
THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE

THE THRILL OF THE HUNT— that’s how some genealogists describe the quest for ancestors and familial links. But the thrill is tempered by long, tedious hours of research.

For some, DNA testing’s potential as a shortcut is tantalizing. But experienced genealogists and scientists say it is far from a familial final frontier. “It can help people who don’t know much about their backgrounds, or run into a situation where a courthouse has been burned, or who may suspect a non-paternity event or adoption,” says Nancy Sheperdson, author of Ancestor Hunt (Scholastic, 2003).

For example, you and a couple of second cousins could be tested to confirm if your grandfather and his alleged brothers were blood relatives. “If there’s no other way to know for certain, the test results could provide that confirmation,” she says. But what if the test shows the cousins are related, but you’re not? That one question spawns new ones. “DNA testing isn’t the shortcut you think it is, because it doesn’t provide the kind of detailed information you need or can get from research,” she says. “Ultimately, it can provide more questions than answers.”

FACT FROM FICTION

The popularity of incorporating genetic testing in genealogical research is growing, says Max Blankfeld of Family Tree DNA, a Texas firm specializing in genetics and genealogy. “But in the final analysis, it is just another tool. When you join genetic testing with traditional research, it can help give you a direction,” he says. One person tested in isolation reveals nothing, he explains, but when two people who believe they are related are tested, they may learn they do have a common ancestor, but not who that ancestor is. “The more people in a family who are tested, the more [revealing] the information becomes,” says Blankfeld.

“By testing everyone in a family, it’s possible to see where mutations occurred. You may be able to draw a conclusion about where you have a common ancestor.”

DNA testing can also facilitate a bi-directional approach in which a genealogist digs for traditional links, while supplementing findings with DNA tests of as many people as possible who think they are part of a family group. Many

DNA testing is akin to observing from 50,000 feet, as compared with 500 feet as with more traditional genealogy.

African-Americans are trying this tactic to break through the genealogical wall created by slavery. The African-American DNA Roots Project at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) and at Africanancestry.com compares the DNA of those seeking roots in Africa with that of contemporary Africans.

According to Bruce Jackson, Ph.D., principal investigator with the BUSM project, “When slaves arrived in America, their owners controlled them, in part, by separating them from their language and customs.” This disconnect leaves a cultural gap traditional research can’t cross. “For us, the great mystery of DNA analysis is, how do you breach this wall? Where did my family come from? What holidays did they celebrate? What are their stories?” Jackson wonders.

DNA AND DIGGING DEEP

For amateur genealogists such as James H. Lawrence of Mullica Hill, N.J., DNA testing has proved to be both a beginning and an end. From traditional research, he learned that his fourth-great-grandfather, a Lorentz, arrived in 1748 in Philadelphia on the same ship as two brothers, also named Lorentz. Via the Internet, he met another Lawrence who was related to one of the brothers. Armed with what seemed proof of their shared origins, he went to the German village where the two brothers were from, and from where he believed his ancestor had come. Church records seemed to confirm his ancestor’s connection by a baptism and communion for a like-named child. He convinced two residents of the town, whom he suspected were his cousins, to have DNA tests. The results revealed that they were not related.

“It was a disappointment for me,” says Lawrence, who has a Web site for his search, bellersouthpwp.net/1a/lawren05, “but a real bonanza for the two guys in Germany and their cousin here, because I’d already done their family tree. Of course, this leaves me with no hometown in Germany for my Lorentz ancestors. But the whole idea of genealogy and DNA testing isn’t just making connections; it’s also to clear the air so you’re not looking for family in the wrong place. Genealogy is about finding the truth. Let’s face it, information is valuable, no matter what it is.”

For now, he and 18 other men sharing that surname or its variants have had DNA tests to help sort out their origins. He is optimistic that as awareness grows of DNA’s usefulness in genealogy, others will try it. “The real promise for DNA and genealogy is in the future. “If you go back far enough, we’re all connected,” he says. “Right now, we’re laying the groundwork for genealogists to come, who, when they can’t prove their family connections with research and paperwork, will be able to do it with DNA.”

DNA tests took John (left) and James Lawrence to Germany in search of their family’s roots.
FOR LOVE OR MONEY?

How our Colonial ancestors met and married is fodder for many a romantic novel, with plot lines ranging from brides being carried off by prospective grooms to families deciding whom their children would marry. But for most of Colonial America, marriage was less about romance than forging economic and social alliances.

FINANCE, NOT ROMANCE, OFTEN RULED COLONIAL MARRIAGES.

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR
Although beliefs about marriage were fairly well unified in the Colonies, there were definite regional differences in courtship rituals and wedding practices. David Hackett Fischer’s book, Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America (Oxford University Press, 1989), discusses traditions brought to various regions of the country by four groups—the East Anglican Puritans to New England, the Southern English Cavaliers and indentured servants of Virginia, the Quakers from the North Midlands to the Delaware region, and the borderlands to the American frontier. The common courtship and marriage customs brought here from different cultural and religious backgrounds provide the basis for some of the regional customs still in existence today.

COURTSHIP

Brides and grooms in the 17th and 18th centuries probably knew each other their entire lives. They may even have been relatives or in-laws, following the European custom of marrying first or second cousins or choosing a sibling of someone married to their sisters or brothers. However, some groups, such as the Puritans and Quakers, disallowed the first-cousin marriages popular in Virginia. Parents strongly influenced their children’s choice of spouse, and in aristocratic Southern families, parents selected their children’s marriage partners. While not made to marry against their will, children who chose to marry someone other than their parent’s choices could suddenly be without a dowry and disinherited.

Even in arranged marriages, there was an emphasis on making a good match, so couples were given time to get to know each other. Dating consisted of social visits at the prospective bride’s house or meeting at church occasions. These public events were generally the only opportunities for a couple to be together before deciding to marry.

In New England, courtship rituals like bundling and the courting stick gave prospective couples an opportunity to speak “privately” in houses where everyone occupied the same space. A courting stick was a hollow tube several feet long that allowed whispers to be carried between the couple—the way two kids using paper cups or tin cans and string might play “telephone” today. Bundling consisted of the couple sleeping in the same bed with a board between them to prevent more than talking.

MARRIAGE CONTRACTS

Once a couple and their families decided upon a betrothal, there was a contract and sometimes an espousal ceremony performed by a minister that combined religion with business. An engagement was viewed as a legally binding business contract. If either party broke the contract they could be held in breach of contract and the matter settled in court. The banns, or intention to marry, were announced in religious meetings three times to provide an opportunity for individuals to come forward with reasons to discourage the union, particularly in cases of potential bigamy or a second marriage contract.

Physical intimacy between couples was strongly discouraged, but in some parts of the country, it was overlooked between betrothed couples. In 17th-century New England, strict Puritan doctrine forbade pre-marital sex—with the result that most children arrived after nine months of marriage. By the mid-18th century, a return to European customs that permitted dalliances between betrothed couples meant more children were conceived before marriage.

WHO MARRIED WHOM

For most of the country, marriage was about economic and social alliances, not finding a soul mate. For instance, several intermarriages among the children of James Avery and Thomas Minor of Connecticut solidified the social and political links between these two founding families. Minor kept notes in his diary about occasions when meetings took place between their children at their parents’ houses. Business relationships could also be secured through marriage. In Colonial St. Louis, for example, trading families married sons to daughters of Native American tribes, thus solidifying trade relations.

Religious groups such as the Quakers adhered to a set of marriage customs that reinforced their teachings. They believed marriage should be founded on Christian love—not attraction, passion or economic gain. Quakers usually married within their faith. Those who chose to marry “outsiders” faced disciplinary actions from their meeting, or congregation.

Economic factors were a serious consideration throughout the Colonial period and affected not only choice of partner, but also age at first marriage. Men generally waited until they had property, tools and livestock to support a family, which meant they married between 22 and 27 years of age. Brides were typically younger than grooms, with most marrying between 17 and 20. Children generally married in birth order from oldest to youngest. In frontier regions, age at first marriage tended to be several years younger because earlier marriages resulted in more childbearing years—a necessary component for families in need of labor. Indentured laborers couldn’t marry until the end of their contracts; many immigrants entered into contracts at age 21 that lasted from five to seven years.

Multiple marriages were not unknown. In a society where many women died in childbirth and military conflicts killed their spouses, remarriage was not just a choice, it was a necessity to keep a household functioning. Widows and widowers often quickly remarried after the loss of their spouse.

WEDDING TRADITIONS

These beliefs about marriage unified British America, but there were regional differences in wedding ceremonies and practice. For example, the concept of voluntary abduction came to America via the border customs of northern England and...
Scotland. Marriages in frontier America often featured abduction games such as “steal the shoe,” where guests attempted to take the bride’s shoe until men “fought” to regain it.

Weddings provided opportunities for mischief in a social setting. In some areas of the country, the groom’s party would travel together to the bride’s home where the ceremony would take place at noon. There were often pranks such as tying grapevines across the path, a mock ambush or male members of the wedding party engaging in “run for the bottle”—a horse race to reach a whiskey jug on the bride’s doorstep.

When a couple agreed to marry, the wedding ceremony and celebration were usually held on the bride’s family farm during the less busy months of November through February. According to Jack Larkin in *Reshaping of Everyday Life 1790–1840* (Perennial, 1989), brides rarely wore white, instead selecting a brown or dove-grey color fabric. Many a bride simply wore her best dress, of whatever color.

The Puritan and Quaker faiths discouraged elaborate ceremonies, but more variation existed on the frontier and in the South. In Virginia, there were often two ceremonies—one performed by a minister and the other performed by the couple themselves after the religious ceremony. According to Fischer in *Albion’s Seed*, “jumping the broomstick” was part of weddings in Britain and other parts of Europe, as well as in Southern Colonial marriages. This ritual, in which the couple crosses over a broomstick or line in the presence of friends and family, has ancient roots.

There were other differences in traditions. For instance, in frontier weddings, a bride was given away by the best man, not by her father. Exchanging rings is a standard part of contemporary wedding ceremonies, but it was not always the custom. The *English Prayer Book* of 1549 specified that both brides and grooms wear rings their left hands—a tradition that remains today—but the Puritans banned wedding rings.

Weddings served a social function. A large feast for the families and the entire neighborhood, with dancing, drinking and games, followed the ceremony. Guests often traveled considerable distances to attend weddings and stayed for several days. Fischer mentioned that in the backcountry, couples participated in a game called a “bridewain.” The couple is seated, and the bride keeps a pewter dish on her knee. Guests put money into the dish, thus providing the couple with a financial beginning.

Southern grooms presented their guests with gifts, but in New England, gifts were not part of the festivities. Sometime before midnight, the bride’s friends would take her off to bed to be joined by her husband. Throughout the night they were brought food and drink. Guests gathered beneath their windows singing bawdy songs, drinking and celebrating until sunrise.

**RE-CREATING A COLONIAL WEDDING**

When Lisa Simpson and Dan Lutts decided to marry in July 2003, there was no doubt it would be an 18th-century event. Dan is a Rendezvous Re-enactor, a group that does civilian re-enactments, and he works at His Majesty’s Fort at Crown Point, N.Y., while Lisa works at Fort Ticonderoga in New York. They wore attire appropriate to the time period and encouraged guests to do the same. The ceremony and reception held at the His Majesty’s Fort at Crown Point included some contemporary elements, such as a modern wedding cake.

Incorporating family history also became part of the ceremony, with Lisa wearing a tartan sash for Dan’s MacKenzie family roots and placing holly, the clan symbol, on the cake. They gathered information on 18th-century wedding traditions from other re-enactors and sought ways to combine authenticity with 21st-century sensibilities. Here are some ways you can do the same:

**ATTEND A RE-ENACTMENT**

A list appears in the monthly newsletter for Smoke and Fire Company, [www.smoke-fire.com](http://www.smoke-fire.com), a supplier for re-enactors. The sutlers, or merchants, in attendance at these living history events sell appropriate clothing as well as other items to give your wedding an authentic feel.

**FOLLOW THE TRADITIONS**

Research the customs and traditions followed in your area of the country and incorporate them into your ceremony. Fischer’s *Albion’s Seed* is a great resource.

**KEEP IT SIMPLE**

Select elements that will enable your guests to have a good time. Keep the food recognizable and the setting comfortable. Hold your event in a historic house, tavern or fort. Fraunces Tavern in New York City has tips on planning a Colonial wedding there ([www.frauncestavern.com](http://www.frauncestavern.com)).
Even staid New Englanders included parts of this tradition in their wedding celebrations. Parties often continued for another day at the groom's house. The events often ended with guns being fired—with the unfortunate result that funerals often followed many wedding celebrations.

The contemporary concept of a honeymoon was almost unknown, as most couples immediately began tending their farms. Quaker couples usually spent two weeks with the groom's parents before settling into their own homes.

**AN IDEAL MARRIAGE**

The patriarchal society of the 17th and 18th centuries dictated women's roles before and after marriage. Unmarried adult women were allowed to conduct business and to buy and sell property under a legal status known as *femme sole*. Women were expected to marry, however, and fewer than 10 percent of the total female population of the United States remained single in the 18th century. Singleness was considered unnatural for both sexes, but it wasn't always possible to find a potential spouse, especially in the South where men outnumbered women.

Puritans viewed marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman of unequal status. Once married, a woman legally became known as *femme covert* and was dependent on her husband. She could no longer conduct legal business, such as property transactions, wills and contracts, without the permission of her husband. This doesn't mean that all women agreed. Sarah Harrison refused to utter the “obey” in her marriage vows to Dr. James Blair in 1687 Virginia and persisted until Blair conceded the point.

The traditional view of marriage in Britain and the American Colonies held that a successful marriage encompassed basic necessities: a place to live, furnishings, clothing, employment and money. Marital expectations remained relatively unchanged until the revolutionary period. Civil law required obedience from a wife and tenderness from a husband. It was a wife's civil and religious duty to be subordinate to her husband. During the revolutionary period, these expectations began to include the concept of companionate marriage, a shift away from the notion of unequal partners.

These ideals about the marriage covenant were disseminated through newspapers and marriage manuals. Newspapers frequently published notices for theatrical performances concerning marriage and also ran articles offering advice to men and women. An example is a letter by a “Well Wisher to Matrimony,” appearing in the *Providence Gazette* on December 30, 1769. Entitled “RULES and PRECEPTS for promoting matrimonial happiness,” the article counseled women to respect their husbands, obey their wishes and be frugal. Popular marriage manuals of the late 18th century advised against marrying for money. After 1750, manuals, newspapers and magazines all advised couples to form a companionate marriage—one based on love, kindness and common interests.

Marriage in the 17th and 18th century was for life. Divorce was either difficult to obtain or non-existent. The courtship and marriage rituals followed by our ancestors provided them with a way of getting to know each other’s families—gauging whether they were making a good match—while the festivities welcomed them into the community as a married couple.

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**Weddings Exhibit Opens at DAR Museum**

*Something Old, Something New: Inventing the American Wedding* opened April 16 at the DAR Museum, featuring more than 15 vintage wedding dresses and a variety of grooms’ attire, along with wedding–related ephemera. The exhibit, which runs through September 4, traces the evolution of the American wedding from a simple affair in the 18th century to the sometimes lavish, heavily etiquette-laden event of today. It also explains how white became the color of choice for modern brides and how the influence of famous brides from Europe and England shaped the rituals and traditions of today’s weddings. The DAR Museum is located at 1776 D Street, NW, in Washington, D.C., and is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays. Closed Sundays. Admission is free.
Portrait of Nathaniel Bowditch (1773–1838), Oil on canvas, Charles Osgood (1809–90)
147 cm x 109 cm. Painted on order of the East India Marine Society, 1835.
Photography by Mark Sexton. Photograph Courtesy Peabody Essex Museum
It's no surprise that his legacy lives on today on both land and sea. A walking tour of Bowditch's Salem honors the Great Age of Sail; a historic trolley named the "Bowditch" shuttles visitors around Salem; and a 1923 windjammer, the Nathaniel Bowditch, plies Maine's Penobscot Bay on pleasure cruises. The non-profit group, Historic Salem Inc., created a program called "The Bowditch Initiative," which in turn led to the development of the “Bowditch Curriculum” for local elementary schools, inspired by his achievements in math, astronomy, navigation and character-building.

“His fame is of the most durable kind, resting on the union of the highest genius with the most practical talents, and the application of both to the good of his fellow man,” declared the Boston Athenaeum upon his death in 1838.

Born in 1773, he was one of seven children of Habakkuk Bowditch, a mariner who lost several ships at sea and returned to his early trade as a cooper, making barrels for ships. The family was poor. For a time, they lived on relief from the Salem Marine Society, a benevolent organization for seamen, in rented or borrowed houses. Their condition reflected sad ironies: Bowditch's grandmother, Mary Turner Bowditch, who lived with his family, was the daughter of Salem's richest merchant of the early 1700s. She grew up in what is now called the House of the Seven Gables, New England's oldest surviving mansion, built in 1668 overlooking Salem Harbor and immortalized by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Furthermore, his mother, Mary Ingersoll Bowditch, was a sea captain's daughter who was related to Captain Samuel Ingersoll, a later owner of the house and also Hawthorne's uncle.

After his mother died when he was 10 years old, Bowditch left school and joined his father in the cooper trade. At age 12, he was apprenticed to a ship's chandler, which provided him with room, board and clothing until he was 21. At the ship's chandlers, Ropes & Hodges and Samuel Ward's, his quick mind and bottomless thirst for knowledge won him mentors who changed his life forever, while visitors discussed navigation with him. His boss’ father, Judge Nathaniel Ropes II, loaned him books on math, astronomy and navigation. When he was 15 years old, two ministers, the Rev. William Bentley and the Rev. John Prince, allowed him to use Salem's Philosophical Library, a collection of scholarly books captured by a privateer.

His native genius soon became apparent. After Bentley loaned him Isaac Newton's *Principia*, the era's greatest scientific treatise, the teenage Bowditch wrote a letter to a Harvard University professor about an error he had discovered in the work. Most scholarly works were in Latin or French, so Bowditch taught himself to read these languages. By his mid-teens, he had already invented a crude barometer and sundial.

At age 21, Bowditch went to sea for the first time, as a ship's clerk on a voyage to Mauritius (then called Ile-de-France). The ship was owned by Elias Hasket Derby, a Salem merchant regarded as America's first millionaire. Derby's family traded...
with the Caribbean and Europe before the American Revolution, and his ships were some of the first to be commissioned as privateers employed in seizing supplies and munitions from British ships to help the Continental Army.

Salem prospered as New England’s second-busiest port, after Boston, from the Revolutionary War until the War of 1812. Its ships traded with India, China, Arabia, Indonesia and Ceylon on voyages that lasted as long as two years. Its waterfront was filled with the pungent aromas of cloves, pepper, tea, coffee and cinnamon—all luxuries at the time—and alive with the noise of ships being unloaded, orders being barked, and sawing and hammering at nearby shipyards. Indian cotton, Chinese silks, carved ivory, fans and lacquerware filled many sea captains’ and merchants’ homes and shops.

According to James Hamilton Moore, Salem ships became so common in Indian and East Indies ports that some traders believed the town was actually a country in its own right. Its ships opened the southern tip of Africa in 1786, allowed Salem ships to become so common that other traders believed the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa in 1786. Salem ships became so common that some traders believed the town was actually a country in its own right. Its ships opened the southern tip of Africa in 1786, and returned the same way. Its ships opened the southern tip of Africa in 1786, and returned the same way.

During a third voyage, to Cádiz in southern Spain, he found many more errors—8,000, in fact—and continued to rewrite much of the book. After returning to Salem in 1799, his corrected version, The New Practical Navigator, was published. At the time, he was only 26 years old.

Bowditch knew about measuring longitude using a chronometer. The problem of calculating longitude had baffled sailors and scientists for centuries—England’s Parliament in 1714 even offered a prize of 20,000 pounds for a solution. An early but inaccurate approach had been the astrolabe, a crude navigation instrument that mapped the movement of the sun, moon, stars and planets. It was a round disk whose rim was divided into 24 segments, representing hours, with an adjustable index arm. First invented by the ancient Greeks and improved in the Arab world, it was introduced by Arab-ruled southern Spain to Europe in the early 12th century.

The problem was solved in the 1740s when John Harrison, an English carpenter, invented the chronometer, which accurately measured time at sea. But chronometers were expensive and delicate, so they were used only aboard the biggest ships and not by commercial mariners until much later in the 1800s.

Bowditch preferred to rely on the sextant. By measuring the angle from the moon to a fixed star, then comparing it with measurements in a reference book of lunar tables based on those at Greenwich, England, mariners were able to calculate local time. Figuring one’s latitude was simpler—sailors measured the angle of Polaris, the North Star, which appears closest to true north in the Northern Hemisphere. Often, long voyages were made by sailing due west from Europe, thus keeping at the same latitude, and returning the same way.

Because Bowditch had so much new material, including how-to information for navigational equipment and how to calculate the ship’s location and direction over a long voyage, his publisher in Newburyport, Mass., Edmund Blunt, persuaded him to write a navigation book under his own name. In 1802, Bowditch’s The New American Practical Navigator was published. Mariners quickly embraced the guide, which sold 30,000 copies in his lifetime. Today, the updated version is available from the federal government’s Defense Mapping Agency.

The year 1802 also marked the last of Bowditch’s sea voyages, to Sumatra and Mauritius, as captain and part-owner of the Putnam. After this fifth voyage, he turned his full attention to business. He became president of the Essex Fire and Marine Insurance Company in Salem in 1804, where his mathematical talent and precision came in handy. Because of the risks involved in any sea voyage, the nascent insurance industry was important to the maritime industry, and also created seed money for new businesses. Harvard University also bestowed an honorary Master of Arts degree on Bowditch around this time.

In 1805, he and his wife, Mary Ingersoll—a cousin whom he married in 1800—moved to 12 Chestnut St. in Salem, where they lived with his former employer at the ship chandlery.
Jonathan Hodges, until 1811. This handsome house with its beige brick walls, white Doric columns and black shutters, is located on a street lined with large Federal-style mansions once owned by sea captains and affluent merchants. The area is part of the McIntire Historic District that was named after Salem’s renowned architect, Samuel McIntire. The house is diagonally across from Hamilton Hall, a red brick 1805 mansion, where the Marquis de Lafayette was honored for his help in the American Revolution at a banquet in 1824.

Harvard began to occupy more of his life. He was elected to its Board of Overseers in 1810, and in 1826, to the Harvard Corporation, a smaller group with more responsibilities. He applied his mathematical talents to the university’s serious financial problems. The man who left formal schooling at age 10 initiated a thorough review of the university’s finances and recommended widespread cost cutting. This included reducing the salaries of professors and even of Harvard President John Kirkland; ordering professors to teach a specific number of hours per day; selling the college sloop, the Harvard; and requiring the students to pay for sacramental wine at Communion. When Kirkland ignored the orders, Bowditch lambasted him.

“To everyone’s surprise, Kirkland submits his resignation March 28, 1828,” notes Harvard’s historical database. “The corporation accepted it. Students registered shock and indignation over the loss of one of Harvard’s most beloved presidents, and seniors wrote him an eloquent farewell: ‘We thank you for the honors which your award has made more sweet, and we thank you for the reproof, which has been tempered with love.’”

Bowditch declined a professorship in mathematics at Harvard, which gave him an honorary doctorate, and turned down offers from West Point and the University of Virginia as well. In 1814, he translated Mecanique Celeste, a French book containing all known facts on the heavens, which he regarded as his life’s work. In 1823, Bowditch was named to head the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, which meant moving his wife and eight children to Boston.

The Bowditch House at 9 North Street in Salem, light blue with a Corinthian-columned entrance and black shutters, is a National Historic Landmark under restoration by Historic Salem Inc., for use as a research and education center. Formerly used for offices for Salem’s Park and Health Departments, the house is next door to the Witch House, a forbidding black building built in 1642, which was the home of Judge Jonathan Corwin, who presided over the Salem witch trials in 1692. The Bowditch House is also one block from sea captain Nathaniel West’s Federal-style house, built in 1834 and now known as The Salem Inn, along with the 1874 Peabody House, owned by a wealthy merchant, on the same block of Summer Street.

Today, Salem honors his memory in many ways. Bowditch was an early member and later president of Salem’s East India Marine Society, founded in 1799 for captains and supercargoes who sailed around Africa or Cape Horn at the tip of South America. His portrait and navigation tools are displayed in the East India Marine Hall at the Peabody Essex Museum, the country’s oldest continuously operating museum, whose collections evolved from the exotic objects and sea journals mariners brought back.

The Bowditch collection includes an octant of ebony, ivory and brass; a sundial and scales to calculate sunrise and sunset; a quadrant; a moon and tide calculator scale with a slide rule converter he made when he was 19 years old from mahogany, brass and lead; and an astrolabe from 1650.

Another honor is “The Bowditch Initiative,” a school curriculum that includes concepts such as the importance of self-education and re-checking one’s work, as well as math, science and history lessons. The curriculum was developed in
collaboration with representatives of the City of Salem, the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem State College, The House of the Seven Gables and the National Park Service, which manages the Salem Maritime National Historic Site on Derby Wharf.

“In a way, his genius was not so much in creating the new, but adapting things and making them more accessible,” says Susan Bowditch, the curriculum’s coordinator, whose husband, Nathaniel, is the great-great-great-grandson of the navigator. “The goal is to show children from underprivileged or dysfunctional homes that you can make it if you persist, and offer a role model,” adds Susan Bowditch.

A delightful way to ponder Bowditch’s achievements is a leisurely sail off the Rockland, Maine, coast on the Nathaniel Bowditch. A schooner first outfitted in 1923 as a racing vessel, it was later reborn for submarine patrol by the U.S. Navy for service in World War II, and afterward it served as a fishing boat.

The ship is one of 14 schooners in the Maine Windjammer Association. Most of these living museums were working cargo ships until steamboats and locomotives eclipsed them. “Windjammer,” in fact, was an insult hurled by steamboat captains at the older sailing vessels. Half the boats are National Historic Landmarks, and some offer theme cruises on astronomy, maritime history and navigation, where passengers learn to use nautical charts and command a vessel; information on the program is available at www.sailmainecoast.com. If you go, be sure to ask for a peek at his masterpiece, “The Bowditch.”

The House of the Seven Gables, New England’s oldest surviving mansion, is where Bowditch’s mother lived as a child.
Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are compounded. And the effects of indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to physical well being. Many people believe that the quantity and quality of light can play a part in one’s mood and work performance. Now, there’s a better way to bring the positive benefits of natural sunlight indoors.

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