The Roots of Revolution

George Washington
Bathed Here

Catherine Ferguson's Legacy

Knitting: A Craft For All Generations

A Silversmith Makes Her Mark

America's First Celebrity:
Ben Franklin Turns the Big 300
Get *39%* off the cover price on Gift Subscriptions to *American Spirit* Magazine.

DON'T MISS EVEN ONE ISSUE OF THIS GREAT PUBLICATION. DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO RECONNECT WITH YOUR PAST, LEARN ABOUT GREAT DESTINATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND READ ABOUT FELLOW AMERICANS WHO SHARE YOUR VALUES OF HERITAGE, HISTORY AND FAMILY.

*Yes! I want to save 39% on *American Spirit* Magazine.*

(○ New  ○ Renewal  ○ Gift)  ○ One Year (6 issues) $18  ○ Two Years (12 issues) $36  ○ Three Years (18 issues) $54

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________

City ____________________________ State ______ Zip ______

Phone (____) ____________________________ E-mail ____________________________

Chapter ____________________________ National No. ____________________________

THREE Easy Ways to Begin Receiving *American Spirit* Magazine:

1. Subscribe online at [http://www.dar.org/americanspirit](http://www.dar.org/americanspirit)


3. Credit Card # ____________________________ Security Code #: ____________________________

   Exp. Date: ____________________________ ○ MC ○ Visa ○ Amex ○ Discover  * All payments must be in U.S. funds.

Save 39% off the cover price of $4.95/issue. Please allow 4-6 weeks to receive subscription.

Canada and Mexico, $23/yr., $46/2yrs. or $69/3yrs. Other international subscriptions, $30/yr., $60/2yrs. or $90/3yrs.

First Class Air Mail add $20/yr., $40/2yrs. or $60/3yrs.
World on Fire 30
A Q&A with historian Ann Fortescue reveals new ways educators are triggering students' interest in pre-Revolutionary War times.

BY DENNIS MCCAFFERTY

Unforgettable Ben Franklin 34
Philadelphia throws an inventive party to celebrate the 300th birthday of Citizen Ben.

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

From Slave to Educator 39
The legacy of 18th-century philanthropist Catherine Ferguson shapes the lives of young women and children in Detroit.

BY EMILY MCMACKIN

French Patriots: Our Allies for Liberty 44
France saw advantages to supporting America's rebellion.

BY ELISABETH WHITMAN SCHMIDT
Departments

{Today's Daughters}

A Soul for Service 5
The creative, compassionate Joni Crane found a way to help Hurricane Katrina victims from thousands of miles away.
BY LENA BASHA

{National Treasures}

Heavenly Harmonies 9
The grand harmonicon uses surprising musical methods to produce celestial sounds.
FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE DAR MUSEUM

{Early American Women Artists}

The Mark of a Silversmith 12
Hannah Robinson was a pioneer in Colonial Delaware. Her artisan signature marked her as both craftswoman and business owner.
BY GIN PHILLIPS

{Crafts}

Knitting Together Families 16
Generations are bound by a shared love of knitting
BY JAMIE ROBERTS

{Spirited Adventures}

Washington Bathed Here 22
Visitors have flocked to Berkeley Springs, W. Va., since Colonial times to experience the warm, healing waters of its natural mineral springs.
BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

{Film Focus}

The Roots of Revolution 27
A new PBS documentary dramatizes the war that changed the face of North America—and set the stage for revolution.
BY LENA BASHA

{Plus}

President General's Message 3
Whatnot 6
Bookshelf 10
From the President General

In honor of Benjamin Franklin's 300th birthday on January 17, American Spirit follows the creative celebrations planned for Philadelphia's most inventive citizen. A group of award-winning chefs even studied culinary history to bake Franklin an historically appropriate birthday cake. This issue’s Bookshelf follows the tercentenary theme as we review a modern retelling of his autobiography, as well as a new account of Franklin's years as one of America's representatives in France.

Franklin had been dispatched to Paris in 1776 to seek aid from the French. Fortunately for our Patriots, France saw advantages to supporting the Revolution. Their contributions, as our feature on the Franco-American Alliance explains, were crucial in our fight for independence.

Ann Fortescue, historian at the Pittsburgh Regional History Center, is the focus of this issue’s Q&A feature. She directs an educational program that uses storytelling and biography to interest students in the French and Indian War, as well as the cultural interaction between American Indians and colonists. This important but little understood period in the nation’s history will be dramatized in “The War That Made America,” a new PBS documentary airing this month, which we preview in our Film Focus department.

History records little about the life of Catherine Ferguson, a former slave who gained her freedom at 16 and went on to found one of the first Sunday Schools in New York City in 1791. Ferguson devoted her life to educating neglected children. Her memory continues to inspire teenage women, who are given second chances at a Detroit high school bearing her name.

Our magazine often spotlights women artists who were pioneers in their fields. Consider Hannah Robinson, a silversmith in early 19th-century Wilmington, Del. Not only was she an outstanding craftsman, but she also owned a thriving business.

The social rewards of knitting—a little easier to master than Hannah Robinson’s favored craft—are earning it a 21st-century revival. American Spirit stops in on three generations of women who are carrying on the tradition and using it to strengthen their own family threads.

Even with toasty knitted sweaters and scarves, wintry weather makes many of us dream of a trip to the spa. In Colonial times, travelers in search of warm, healing waters flocked to Berkeley Springs, W.Va. With George Washington as one of its vocal advocates, the town also had a surprising role in the nation’s development.

The Today’s Daughters feature recognizes Utah State Society’s Joni Crane whose charity efforts brought school supplies to Louisiana students displaced by Hurricane Katrina. We salute her and the many Daughters who continue to aid our Southern neighbors in the aftermath of the tragedy. NSDAR is, after all, a service organization. All of us should applaud the extraordinary efforts of our members who give of themselves to help others in their hour of need. The new year gives us the opportunity to rededicate ourselves to serving others and living out the mission of DAR every day.
Five questions every woman should ask herself.

- Do I have a signed will to protect my assets as well as my family and friends and is it stored in a safe place?

- Do I have any low-yielding stocks that I could reinvest in a charitable gift annuity or living trust for a better stream of income?

- Did I protect my family from the burden of high estate and income taxes due upon my death?

- Did I make arrangements in my estate plans to preserve the futures of the charitable organizations, like NSDAR, that I supported during my life?

- Did I take advantage of the new NSDAR gift planning program that is free with no obligation?

If you answered “no” to any of the questions above, you may benefit from speaking with a member of the Gift Planning staff in the Office of Development at the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Simply complete the form and mail it to the address listed, or please call 1-800-449-1776 or e-mail giftplanning@dar.org to speak to someone about bequests, gift annuities, trusts or other estate planning tools.

I would like to receive more information about:

- General Estate Planning
- Life Income Gifts (Charitable Gift Annuities, Living Trusts, Pooled Income Funds)
- Wills and Bequests
- Gifts of Life Insurance or Retirement Plans
- Gifts of Personal Property or Real Estate

Name:________________________________________
Street Address:________________________________________
City:______________ State:__________ Zip:__________
Telephone:_________________________ Best Time To Call:_________________________
E-mail:________________________________________

A Soul for Service

JONI CRANE accomplished a huge feat this year, but don't expect her to take much credit for it. After Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, Mrs. Crane wasted no time finding out what she could do to help.

She learned that the schools in the region—in particular, in Alexandria, La., which took in many displaced students from New Orleans and other cities—were overcrowded and short on supplies for the influx of displaced students.

From her home in Vernal, Utah, more than 1,500 miles away from Alexandria, Mrs. Crane got to work organizing a relief effort. On October 7, 2005, a 48-foot tractor-trailer pulled into the parking lot of the Rapides Parish School Board after 30 hours on the road. Inside the truck were cases of notebooks, backpacks, pencils, glue sticks, crayons, textbooks, even nap mats and toys—all donated by Crane's friends, co-workers, neighbors and fellow DAR members of the Color Country Chapter, St. George, Utah.

"I helped a lot of good people do what they would have done anyway, they just didn't have a way to get it there," she says. "When you surround yourself with good people, you can't stop good things from happening."

Daughters from the Centennial State Chapter, Greeley, Colo., where Mrs. Crane had just moved from last spring, were very generous, too.

WHEN YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH GOOD PEOPLE, YOU CAN'T STOP GOOD THINGS FROM HAPPENING.

When you pass the hat for a good cause, you'll always get a response—but not one this large, she says. "These ladies poured out their hearts and donated more than $700 at one meeting."

Mrs. Crane is no stranger to charitable work. In 1999, living 20 minutes outside of Columbine, Colo., she volunteered with Project Linus, which provides blankets to seriously ill or traumatized children. When the Columbine High School shooting happened, she offered 100 blankets to the school.

"It dawned on me while watching it unravel on television that blankets would bring a lot of security to these teenagers," she says. "But when I dropped them off at the churches near the school, they told me, 'Do you really think they'll want them? These aren't babies. They're teenagers.'"

Her hunch proved right, however. The next morning, Mrs. Crane got a call requesting more blankets as fast as she could get them. After placing an ad in the paper soliciting volunteers, more than 1,000 people came to the church to help her sew blankets for three days straight. In the end, the volunteers delivered 1,600 blankets.

"My husband always tells me, 'Joni, you cannot save the world.' My response is always, 'Well, I can save a little piece of the world.' I don't think we're using our talents to the best of our ability by saying someone else will do it."

That's the same mentality she had when she moved to Utah and immediately got involved with her DAR chapter. Now she serves as the State Chairman of the following committees: Program; Public Relations/Motion Picture, Radio and Television; and Volunteer Information Specialists. Mrs. Crane is also the State Vice Chairman of the Membership Committee. She has even created the Utah State Web site—and six individual Web sites for Utah's nine chapters.

"I'm hoping to get people enthused, just like my old chapter got me excited about the DAR in Colorado," she says. "It's not a lineage society in which we just pat ourselves on the back because we have these impressive bloodlines. The reason DAR stands out is because of its mission: patriotism and preserving the memory of the Patriots through education."
Rewarding Research

BUDDING GENEALOGISTS LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

CLOSE TO 300 GENEALOGISTS crowded the halls of the DAR Headquarters for the Conference on Early American Genealogical Research, October 15-16, 2005. Covering American genealogical research topics from the Colonial period to the pre-Civil War era, the conference featured 30 diverse workshops led by 17 experts.

The sessions were broken down into three tracks: “The Wars That Shaped the Nation,” “Sources and Methods for Early American Research” and “Write, Analyze, Organize, Edit, Publish.” Attendees, who hailed from California to New York and everywhere in between, learned best practices, ways to maximize search results when using technology, how to read military records and more.

In between the sessions, conference attendees conducting genealogical research crowded in the DAR Library. Founded in 1896, the Library is world-renowned for its wealth of unique genealogical resources such as books, documents, DAR membership files and periodicals relating to genealogy.

This was the first genealogical conference held at the DAR Headquarters since 1984.

For more information on upcoming genealogical events and visiting the DAR Library, go to www.dar.org/library.

A Daily Dose

CALLING ALL HISTORY BUFFS. Celebrate history year-round with a pair of boxed calendars from Sourcebooks. Featuring original quotations, biographical sketches and commentary from noted historians, “2006 Founding Fathers: A Year of the Heroic People and Remarkable Events That Shaped Our Nation” gives you a daily glimpse of the people and events that helped found our country. “2006 On This Day: 365 Remarkable People, Extraordinary Events and Fascinating Facts” is rich with profiles, stories and fun facts about the world. Both calendars are $11.99, available wherever calendars are sold.
Something Old, Something New

TAKE A TRIP BACK TO THE VICTORIAN ERA and step into the future with a visit to the Stanford Mansion, the former home of railroad pioneer Leland Stanford in Sacramento, Calif. Nineteenth-century Victorian sofas meet flat-screen TVs in one of California’s finest historical homes, which will serve as the state’s official location for diplomatic and business receptions.

Built in 1856 and then expanded to its current size in 1872, the Stanford Mansion underwent a 15-year rehabilitation that ended recently. “It has been amazing to see the building come back to life, right before our eyes,” said Susan Peters, chair of the Leland Stanford Mansion Foundation. “After peeling back the Stanford Mansion’s many layers, we’ve truly rediscovered a historic gem.”

The Stanford Mansion is open to the public. For more information, visit www.stanfordmansion.org.

All-American Page-Turner

SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD, a Tupperware demonstration starts every two seconds. The original recipe of 7Up included the tranquilizer lithium, but it was removed in 1950. Facts like these are what you’ll find in Nick Freeth’s Made in America: From Levi’s to Barbie to Google (MBI, 2005). Celebrating entrepreneurship and realizing the American Dream, this book examines 200 all-American products, shedding light on the little-known facts of some of the world’s greatest innovations.

{QuickQuiz}

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1. How many years of formal education did Benjamin Franklin have?
2. Who was Silence Dogood?
3. What position, currently held by John Potter, did Benjamin Franklin hold under the Continental Congress?
4. What two important documents did Benjamin Franklin sign?
5. What was Benjamin Franklin’s favorite pastime?

Answers on page 8.
THE FIRST FRONTIER

IN 1740, A GROUP OF COURAGEOUS PIONEERS journeyed into the wilderness to New England’s northern frontier, looking for a new future. What they found was plantation No. 4, formally called Charlestown, N.H. Life on the northern frontier, especially when the French and Indian War broke out in 1754, was never easy. Even with a fort, the people of Charlestown, who numbered 175 in 1754, were a tempting target for the war that raged around them.

Take a trip back to life on the frontier at the Fort at No. 4. Tour with guides dressed as original settlers of No. 4 and watch daily demonstrations of hearth cooking, musket firings and military drills.

For more information, visit www.fortat4.com.

What’s In a Name?

MANY OF THE NEARLY 3,000 DAR chapters throughout the United States and foreign nations are blessed with colorful names that celebrate the history of their local community, events or Patriots from the American Revolution, or other vibrant parts of the American story.

Individually, these names preserve a piece of forgotten lore, but when combined, they create a rich historical tapestry that’s fascinating to unravel. This issue, American Spirit unveils a new feature aimed at highlighting the meaning behind our amazing monikers.

The first chapter in Connecticut and the second in New England, the Wadsworth Chapter, Middletown, Conn., was named for Gen. James W. Wadsworth, who served with the Continental Army in both the Boston and New York campaigns of the American Revolution. Later he was a delegate to the Continental Congress.

The story of the Peace Pipe Chapter, Denver, Colo., is equally interesting. On June 1, 1910, its inaugural luncheon meeting was held. What was in the center of the table? A real Indian Peace Pipe tied with NSDAR colors. The organizing regent suggested the name Peace Pipe because of its historical significance in the development of the West.

Does your chapter name have an interesting story behind it? E-mail a description to americanspirit@dar.org

Answers to the quiz on page 7:
1. One. He attended grammar school at the age of 8, but was put to work at the age of 10 as a printer’s apprentice to his older brother.
2. Benjamin Franklin’s first pseudonym. At the age of 16, he wrote letters to the New England Courant as Silence Dogood, a middle-aged widow.
3. Postmaster General
4. The Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
5. Franklin was an avid chess player. In 1750 he wrote the essay, “The Morals of Chess.”

Take a Bow The Federal Highway Administration received recognition recently for its efforts to protect historic transportation facilities. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation presented the agency with its highest award, the Preserve America Presidential Award, in November. Since 1992, the agency has supported more than 2,500 historic preservation and rehabilitation projects, such as restorations of lighthouses, train depots and ferry terminals.
Heavenly Harmonies

An early 19th-century American musical instrument, the grand harmonicon, or musical glasses, was patented in the United States by Francis H. Smith in 1825. The origin of the DAR Museum’s grand harmonicon, dated from around 1826 to 1833, is unknown.

Derived from the Italian word armonia, meaning harmony, the instrument is an arrangement of 24 various-sized glasses that produce celestial sounds when the rims are rubbed with a moistened finger. Of the 24 blown glasses encased in the mahogany chest, only three are not original to the DAR Museum’s grand harmonicon.

A similar instrument was popular in Europe in the 18th century and was used by both Mozart and Beethoven in their works. With his 1825 patent, Smith revived interest in the grand harmonicon as an instrument for the home. Accompanied by an instruction book, the instrument could be mastered by anyone.
The Father of Enterprise

Benjamin Franklin made many contributions to the evolving United States as a statesman, negotiator, philosopher and inventor, but forming the fire brigade, experimenting with electricity and securing French aid for the Patriots may not be his most enduring legacy. His most lasting gift may be his autobiography.

In an age of corporate scandals and ethics crises, the business world could learn a thing or two from the Founding Father’s frank autobiography, which abounds with practical lessons about how to grow a profitable enterprise, handle cutthroat competition and influence the marketplace and public opinion—all without sacrificing integrity.

Baylor University business school professor Blaine McCormick calls the memoir “the most underrated business story in American history.” Unfortunately, many Americans never pick it up because of its flowery language and archaic structure. McCormick wants to change that with Ben Franklin: America’s Original Entrepreneur (Entrepreneur Press, 2005), a modern translation of the autobiography.

McCormick’s version makes the story accessible to today’s audiences by updating the formal wording, restructuring fragmented chapters, providing commentary and putting the book into a contemporary context. He scatters Franklin’s Poor Richard’s Proverbs throughout the book and draws parallels to modern-day business practices in relevant sidebars.

Franklin may be best remembered as a champion of the American cause, but he considered himself—first and foremost—a businessman. His autobiography reflects this entrepreneurial drive. Though Franklin traveled widely, read avidly, spoke several languages and mastered the prose of his day, he was a pragmatist at heart who favored the turkey instead of the bald eagle as an American symbol, and relied on prudence, frugality and common sense to run his business and personal affairs.

In his book, Franklin constantly advocates values—such as honesty, hard work, thrift and doing good for others—and relies on reward rather than punishment to persuade others to help him achieve his goals. His business acumen permeates his memoir, which chronicles not only his rise as an entrepreneur and public figure until the 1750s, but also the beginnings of free enterprise in America.

The story opens with Franklin as a young apprentice, trying several different trades before settling into his brother’s printing business. He gains a taste for independence early when his brother grows abusive. Demonstrating his thriftiness, he adopts a cheaper meal plan than the one his brother provides. He also begins his lifelong quest for self-improvement, giving himself writing exercises and training himself in polite debate, and spending every bit of spare money on books.

In humorous detail, Franklin describes arriving in Philadelphia after escaping his brother’s print shop with no money, friends or proper clothes. He takes readers through his struggle to find employment and the right crowd of friends. Though he falls prey to youthful “passions,” he always learns from his mistakes, which teach him the value of hard work, honesty and a good reputation. His ability to make connections with the right people wins him respect and opportunity and serves him throughout his life.

Franklin devotes the bulk of the book to experiences in the printing business. The way he handles economic obstacles, difficult partners and even contracts—with a mix of candor and cunning—sets him apart from competitors. Even as his wealth and franchise grow, he lives frugally, dining with a pottery bowl and pewter spoon instead of china and silver. He expresses his passion for the marketplace of ideas by forming a club to share books and papers on philosophy, politics and morality. This sparks his public library epiphany—the first of many projects that he developed for city improvement.

Franklin illustrates how he uses his printing press, his extensive network and his fund-raising skill to ensure the success of his endeavors. His civic involvement leads to public offices where he applies his business knowledge to military projects and diplomatic efforts. Even as his political star rises, Franklin strives continually for self-improvement—particularly with regard to humility. Though he finally resigns himself to being a “spotted ax,” this virtue seems to have taken root. Franklin refuses a patent for his stove, for instance, because he believes he owes the universe an invention.

McCormick’s version of the autobiography will encourage Americans to read more on the Founding Father—and maybe even pick up the original for Franklin’s “sparkle and wit.”

BY EMILY MCMACKIN
Making It Up as He Went

It has often been said that Benjamin Franklin was America's first celebrity, achieving what today would be rock-star fame in Europe and especially in France, which regarded him as a kind of Enlightenment demigod.

In Stacy Schiff's new account of Franklin's years as an American representative in Paris during and immediately after the American Revolution, we see how his prestige worked both to our nation's advantage and occasionally to its disadvantage in securing French aid.

Packed with vivid detail, A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America (Henry Holt and Co., 2005) brings to life the interpersonal and political wrangling that constantly threatened to destroy the tenuous French lifeline to the rebellious Colonies.

Meticulously researched, A Great Improvisation is a marvelous read, often seeming like a modern celebrity tell-all, offering up little-known facts in juicy, gossipy tones. Schiff sometimes overdoes this—the facts alone can give us a good idea of the players' state of mind and don't need embellishing. On the whole, however, her style moves the complex story forward at a fine pace.

And what a story. The book opens with the 70-year-old Franklin's arrival in Paris in December 1776, to join Silas Deane and Arthur Lee as commissioners to France. The commissioners were seeking financial and military aid, hoping to secure a treaty that would bring France and her ally Spain into the conflict against Britain.

The task was daunting. As Schiff notes, "Franklin was charged with appealing to a monarchy for assistance in establishing a republic." It would seem a hopeless cause but for France's bitter defeat in the Seven Years' War, the most recent eruption of the centuries-old rivalry with Britain.

The infant nation had few prospects of success, and republics historically had a notoriously short life span. Most of Europe preferred to sit this one out while the English government poured blood and treasure into quelling the rebellion. At the worst, the contest would distract and sap England's strength and might leave some easy pickings in the West. At the best, it could seriously hobble the English before they bested the rebels.

America was as divided on the issue of French aid as it was on the whole question of independence. The diplomats in France shared this division. Moreover, Franklin's rapturous reception by the French and his ability to adopt an oblique, patient approach to diplomacy rankled his fellow commissioners.

Fittingly as the tamer of electricity, Franklin was a lightning rod for controversy, attracting loyal adherents and fierce enemies. Schiff brings this characteristic to life. Combining through volumes of correspondence from an age of prolific writers, Schiff liberally seasons the book with telling comments from foes such as Arthur and William Lee and John Adams.

The Franklin of their letters and journals is an aging, corrupt, swell-headed libertine more concerned with French flattery than with securing desperately needed French aid. They begged Congress to at least recall Franklin, if not punish him for his sins.

Most everything about France irritated Adams, but nothing more than the honors it paid Franklin. The New Englander thoroughly distrusted the French government, while bluntly insisting that it should hand over huge amounts of aid. Franklin spent considerable time smoothing ruffled feathers in order to keep help flowing.

Still, Schiff takes pains to present Franklin's less amiable side. As she notes in her introduction, he could be "manipulative, inconsistent, unmethodical, uncommunicative, vindictive, breathtakingly impolite." Her account bears this out: Franklin rarely communicated with Congress, was infuriatingly adept at keeping silent about his plans and treated members of his family appallingly. He employed diplomatic sleight of hand to procure supplies for America, and more than once played fast and loose with the truth to further America's interests.

It was this devotion to the cause of independence that outweighed his faults, and why he now has the respect he deserves.

BY BILL HUDGINS

Give the gift of heritage.

Teach somebody you love the Pledge of Allegiance with our pledge pillow and honor your patriots.

francesca@thepatrioticheart.com, 905-271-2597 DAR # 809043

www.thepatrioticheart.com
A WOMAN'S MARK

One SILVER

Above: This c.1750 engraving shows silversmiths at work. Inset on right: Hannah Robinson crafted this teaspoon sometime between 1845 and 1865.
SMITH'S STORY

By Gin Phillips

THE IMAGE OF A SILVERSMITH—FLUSH WITH THE HEAT OF THE FIRE, CLOTHES SWEAT-SOAKED, THE RING OF HAMMER HITTING METAL IN THE BACKGROUND—MAY NOT FIT THE STANDARD NOTION OF A 19TH-CENTURY WOMAN. BUT IT DID FIT SILVERSMITH HANNAH ROBINSON. FROM 1845 TO 1878 SHE WORKED IN HER SHOP ON MARKET STREET IN WILMINGTON, DEL., DEVELOPING A THRIVING BUSINESS BASED ON HER HANDCRAFTED PIECES.

The only known woman silversmith in the state from 1700 to 1850, Robinson is one of few known American women to have her own mark, or artisan's signature, on her pieces. Even that mark illustrated her dual role as craftswoman and business owner. Experts suspect her creations were marked "H. Robinson" in a rectangle with the name raised, while her name incised into metal was likely her dealer's stamp.

Born in 1803, Robinson was the third child in the Robinson family. Her father, a shipping merchant, had his business ruined when his ships were captured in the War of 1812. His 16 children were then "on their own," according to a letter by a great-niece of Hannah Robinson's in the Historical Society of Delaware archives.

The loss of security and family money undoubtedly shaped Robinson's entry into a trade. "People think women didn't work then, but they're not thinking about working-class women," said Gayle Clarke, a silversmith at Colonial Williamsburg.

In England during the same time period, trade guilds kept precise records of those who registered marks, leaving behind documentation of rank-and-file silversmiths. With no guilds in America, the history of most craftsmen—and craftswomen—remains unknown and virtually untraceable.
Receipts from purchases made or repairs completed at Hannah Robinson's shop. With repairing damaged silver providing a mainstay for most silversmiths, Robinson's ads boasted, "repairing neatly done."

But sources document that in England during the same time as Robinson, women's roles followed narrow social constraints. According to Philippa Glanville in *Women Silversmiths*, 1685–1845 (National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1990), "women were normally in a position to register a mark only on the death of a husband already in the craft."

Many of the women involved didn't actually work with metal at all. They instead managed a husband's business after his death. (Men, too, would frequently have managed a business without necessarily working the metal themselves.) "The essential ingredients of a successful silver business were a team of skilled craftsmen, patterns and molds, a good foreman and shop manager, strong credit and satisfied customers," Glanville wrote. "None of these were attributes that necessarily vanished on the death of a master goldsmith. If a woman remarried,
she vanished again beneath the identity and mark of her new husband."

But Hannah Robinson never married, etching a name for herself in her trade based on her own skills. Her brother’s silver business gave her an entry into the field—after teaching school briefly, she joined her brother in the silver and jewelry business in his Market Street shop. He accidentally shot himself to death in 1867, but records show she was conducting the business of the shop nearly two decades before his death.

For Robinson to gain a foothold in the business through a brother rather than a husband may have been unusual, but a family business often dictated women’s daily work.

“Families worked together more then they do now,” said Clarke, who has been researching working women in early America for 15 years. “Families included women—and work included all the trades.”

One picture in Ben Franklin’s Poor Richard Illustrated, for instance, shows a blacksmithing family working together, with the woman slinging the heavy hammer. And Clarke points to the family of America’s most famous silversmith, Paul Revere, as another example—his mother’s mark is found on several silver pieces.

A complex, labor-intensive craft, silversmithing required both study and talent. The trade took seven full years of apprenticeship “to learn the required techniques of working a medium, as well as studying other skills such as skillful designing, business acumen and finding a market for the product,” wrote Henry Kauffman in The Colonial Silversmith (Astragal Press, 1995).

A meticulous record keeper, Robinson ran a successful business. Ruthanna Hines in Delaware Silversmiths 1700–1850 (Historical Society of Delaware, 1967) mentions Robinson’s “keen appreciation of the power of advertising” noting that she was the only Delaware silversmith to advertise her products by distributing broadsides, or large sheets of paper printed on one side.

An 1850 inventory of her stock confirms that by that date she was selling manufactured goods, but still crafting items. Her advertisements list jewelry, sterling silverware and plated goods, thimbles and spectacles. With repairing damaged silver providing a mainstay for most silversmiths, her ads boasted, “repairing neatly done.”

Top and bottom images: Advertisements for H. Robinson’s Jewelry, Silverware and Spectacle Shop in Wilmington, Del.

Middle image: A closeup of one of Robinson’s silver “fiddle-back” handle teaspoons shows her unique artisan’s mark. From the Winterthur Museum collection.

American silver design followed a style distinctly different from British standards, according to R.T.H. Halsey in a 1906 exhibition catalog called American Silver (Joslin Hall, 1990 reprint). “Simple in design and substantial in weight,” the look of American silver bore little resemblance to “the magnificent baronial silver” in England. With their emphasis on practicality and utility, early Americans wanted pieces to be more purposeful than pretty. Bowls, tankers and church silver were common.

Since no significant sources of silver were discovered in America before the 1850s, the first step in crafting new pieces usually involved melting down coins or earlier pieces. Finding the silver was only the first step in the process. After being melted, the metal needed to be transferred to a form suitable from which to shape objects, Kauffman notes. Typically, a silversmith cast the molten metal into ingots and then hammered them into a sheet to be crafted further.

Robinson and her sister, Sally, who also never married, lived together and ran the business for years, living “a very frugal but not unhappy life in which the chief interest was religious,” wrote their great-niece. Active in the church, Robinson helped raise her younger brothers and sisters and remained close to her family throughout her life. When she died in 1878, she left jewelry and furniture to all her family members, as well as enough savings to support her sister.

Experts can’t say how rare Robinson’s position was, but in the only record she personally penned, she wastes no time discussing her gender or its limitations. In her diary kept after retirement, her thoughts center on the ins and outs of the day, with no time spent on introspection.

It is a businesswoman’s diary, not an artist’s. It contains no musings on her unique professional career, the obstacles she faced, her thoughts on marriage and family. Instead she ticks off the letters she’s received from friends and family, her visits to church, whether the weather is cloudy or fair. She jotted down payments she made, the cost of six yards of muslin for undershirts, the amount of loans to friends. It is only her silver—scattered throughout museum, and private collections—that speaks of the artist.

Gin Phillips is a contributing writer. She wrote about early American naturalists for the September/October 2003 issue.
knitting together family

Brighten up your winter by learning the art of knitting, a craft for all generations.
Ann Shaw Miner, her daughter Amy Cotton and grandchildren Emma Cotton, 10, and Samantha Cotton, 8, strengthen the threads of family with a shared love of knitting.

They're just a few of the millions embracing the ancient craft. Although its popularity has waxed and waned through the centuries, knitting is enjoying a 21st-century revival. Today's practitioners hail from all ages and backgrounds, from celebrities to subway-riding city slickers and grandmothers to their 5th grade grandchildren.

Ann, of Madisonville, Ky., attributes knitting's popularity to its ability to relieve stress and calm nerves. “It's therapeutic,” she says. “A lot of my friends do needlepoint, but that's hard on the eyes. Knitting is more relaxing.”

Amy, of Brentwood, Tenn., points to the social benefits of a craft that allows for conversations among fellow knitters—as well as its cross-generational appeal. Her daughter, Emma, learned to knit during a family gathering over the Fourth of July. “She picked it up in an afternoon, then she went at it like gangbusters,” Amy says. “It only took her a few hours to knit a scarf. Then she taught me how to do it.”

Emma has always loved arts and crafts, and has shown proficiency at drawing and painting, but was ready to learn something new. “When I saw my great-aunt and grandmom doing it, I thought it looked pretty easy,” she says. “I practiced all afternoon and woke up the next day and tried it again. I was hooked. Now I can do it while talking or watching TV, or even with my eyes closed!”

The basic stitch is easy to learn, Ann says. “Then you add more difficult stitches. If it's an intricate pattern, you might have to look down and count every once in awhile, but eventually you can do it automatically.”

Emma and her sister, Samantha, are testaments to knitters' ability to work magic on autopilot. One November afternoon after school, they laughed and told stories among their friends and family, while effortlessly knitting row after row of tight, beautiful stitches.

Carrying on a Tradition

The Miner and Cotton families are carrying on a tradition that dates back at least to the 14th century, when Europeans recorded the first references to knitting. However, the craft probably had earlier origins: Knitted socks dated between the 3rd and 6th centuries A.D. have been discovered in Egyptian tombs.

By the 16th century, hand knitting was an established craft, and Paris was home to the first knitting trade guild in 1527. In 1589, William Lee, an English clergyman, invented the first knitting machine designed to speed up the knitting process. Trade guilds continued to develop the industry, and the widespread use of knitted stockings made the craft more lucrative. By the end of the 1600s, Britain exported millions of knitted stockings to Holland, Spain and Germany.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, knitting was especially popular in Scotland and Ireland, with entire families involved in creating sweaters, socks and stockings to protect against the harsh winters. The 19th century's Industrial Revolution moved textile manufacturing into factories, where the consistency of wool could be made more uniform.

During WWII, hand knitting reemerged as patterns were issued for citizens to make winter-wear items for the armed forces. After the war, knitting gained popularity as more diverse colors and styles of yarn were introduced. Sales of yarn and patterns declined in the 1970s and 1980s, until late 20th-century designs of specialty yarns renewed interest in the craft.

Today's knitters have made the old skill a hip new trend again, with the organization of community knitting groups—some who even knit en masse in public places—and younger and younger crafters taking up their grandmother's knitting needles.

getting started

Knitting, the art of using yarn or thread to make fabric from interlocking loops, doesn't require a lot of materials to get started, but you will need a good teacher to show you the basic stitches. You will also need:

• A pattern
• Skein(s) of yarn

There are five basic types of yarn, ranging from finest to thickest: baby/ginger, sport/baby, worsted weight, chunky and bulky. Novelties such as metallic threads, eyelash yarn or textured threads are growing in popularity.

• Two size 8, 14"-long knitting needles

Knitting needles vary in size from 0 (2 mm) to size 15 (10 mm) and larger, from as small as a pencil lead to as big as your thumb. They are made of aluminum, plastic or wood.

• Measuring tape
• Small scissors
learning how  There are thousands of how-to books and Internet sites that teach the basics of knitting. The official site of the Craft Yarn Council of America, www.learntoknit.com, has easy instructions and diagrams, as well as a discussion forum for asking questions and sharing ideas. Local craft, yarn and fabric stores often host knitting and crochet classes. (Look under “yarns” in the Yellow Pages.) One site—knitting.meetup.com—encourages local knitters to meet and share techniques.

sharing your talents  The Warm Up America Foundation promotes, organizes and assists in the creation of knitted afghan blankets by volunteers and distributes these blankets through agencies serving needy and homeless people. Knitters can get involved by going to www.warmupamerica.com.
Berkeley Springs State Park remains the centerpiece of the town. Shown here are two of the oldest buildings: the Gentleman’s Spring House and the Roman Bath House, with a museum on the second floor.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BATHED HERE

by Nancy Mann Jackson
SPA RESORTS have become some of the most popular destinations among modern travelers. But the HEALING EFFECT of visiting a spa is not a new discovery. Take Berkeley Springs, W.Va., for instance. For hundreds of years, travelers have flocked to the area to experience the warm, healing waters of the natural mineral springs found there. During Colonial times, one of the town’s most frequent visitors and vocal advocates was GEORGE WASHINGTON himself. Today, Berkeley Springs still offers travelers plenty of opportunities to relieve stress in its healing waters. But this healing comes with a bonus—a fascinating history and a surprising role in the nation’s development.
Located in Berkeley Springs State Park, George Washington’s Bath Tub is an historic replica of the type of Colonial bath Washington would have encountered. One of the warm springs bubbles up in this tub.

A HISTORY OF HEALING

Before the first Europeans discovered the warm waters of Berkeley Springs, the area was already a “health mecca” that attracted Native Americans from the Great Lakes to the Carolinas and as far away as Canada’s St. Lawrence Seaway, according to a historical account published by the Berkeley Springs State Park. Frontier explorers wrote about the mineral springs during the 1740s, and Warm Springs, later named Berkeley Springs, was noted on a 1746 map created by Peter Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson’s father, according to Jeanne Mozier, Vice President of Travel Berkeley Springs, the local convention and visitors bureau.

By the time 16-year-old George Washington made his first visit as part of a surveying party in 1748, the area was already well-known among colonists. In fact, Washington wrote in his journal about stopping at “ye fam’d warm springs.” According to his journals, Washington returned in 1750 and 1751 with his brother, Lawrence, to see if “taking the waters” could help with Lawrence’s illness.

While the health claims have varied with the centuries, Mozier says, the warm springs have long been lauded for relieving rheumatism and a number of digestive and skin diseases. During Colonial times, mineral springs were popular in England for relieving ailments. The English who came to America “were nearly as prone as those who stayed at home to seek out and try the efficacy of mineral springs,” Carl Bridenbaugh wrote in a 1946 issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly*. “In this they were aided by the Indians, whose faith in the recuperative powers of mineral waters was of long standing.”

A number of mineral springs were discovered throughout the Colonies. According to Bridenbaugh, Bostonians visited Lynn Red Spring as early as 1669, and visitors began using mineral springs at Bristol, north of Philadelphia, in 1720. However, Virginia was the first Colony to develop towns around the springs. Bridenbaugh notes, and Berkeley Springs was the first.

By 1760, a full-blown spa society had developed at the warm springs, and in 1776, the Virginia Legislature created a town named Bath around the springs. Mozier says, “The law forming
Berkeley Castle was built as a Victorian summer cottage. Overlooking the town and springs, the castle is a private residence open for special events.

Berkeley Springs has a walkable downtown filled with two dozen unique, owner-operated shops.

the town specifically states that it was created to encourage ‘the purchasers thereof to build convenient houses for accommodating numbers of infirm person, who frequent those springs yearly, for the recovery of their health.’

Among the notable colonists who purchased lots in the town when the first auction was held in 1777 were George Washington; his brother, Samuel Washington; his cousin, Henry Whiting; his brother-in-law, Fielding Lewis; Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, a signer of the Constitution; Charles Carroll and James Smith, both signers of the Declaration of Independence; James Wilson, a signer of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; and General Horatio Gates. Today, plaques throughout town note the original owners of various plots.

**Backdrop for Growing Patriotism**

During the second half of the 18th century, visiting the mineral springs was quite in vogue. The ending of the American phase of the Seven Years’ War in the 1760s released a series of forces that combined to bring the springs into fashion. “That decade witnessed the beginnings of the annual seasonal migrations of individuals and families, which made the aristocracy more urbane and more cosmopolitan than many of its English contemporaries,” Mozier says. “The Colonial gentry were on the move; thousands of our forefathers visited the springs in the decade before the Revolution. Fear of the fevers and a desire to escape the humid heat of the southern and insular Colonies literally drove planters, officials and merchants northward and westward.”

It was universally acknowledged that there was some medicinal or therapeutic benefit in the waters, even more so in the mineral baths. “American springs, especially those of Virginia, proved equal or superior to those of Europe,” Mozier says. “Colonial spas were cleaner, their surroundings more airy and natural, and in consequence, their benefits more lasting.”

While the springs were known for their physical benefits, they also became ideal spots for airing intellectual concerns and discussing revolutionary thoughts, as well as promoting unity.
Visitors to Berkeley Springs State Park can enjoy the warm mineral waters that flow from the springs at a constant 74 degrees Fahrenheit.

between colonists. "They were the most significant inter-Colonial meeting places," Mozier says. "At the spas, representatives of each Colony met in person. Some came back year after year; some made lifelong friends; some began correspondence; some learned of common American interests, which inspired a sense of class solidarity." She asserts that these watering places dissolved provincialism, which could have proved destructive to the unity of a fragile new country.

**The Tradition Continues**

Today, Berkeley Springs remains a destination for health seekers as well as history buffs. "We have three times as many massage therapists as we do lawyers," Mozier says. The contemporary spa town includes more than 100 hotels or lodges, five full-service spas offering more than 50 different body and beauty treatments, two dozen owner-operated shops downtown, fine dining and numerous art galleries and antique shops. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the area’s golf and hiking.

Berkeley Springs State Park is located in the center of town. Its location once served as The Grove in 19th-century cottage society and was the public space established in 1776. The park contains the town’s Roman Bath House, built in 1815, "and bathers today can enjoy the same water as George Washington and Colonial visitors," Mozier says.

The park contains several spring water pools, including George Washington’s Bath Tub, which is the largest open display of mineral water among all the spas of Virginia and West Virginia. Visitors can follow the footsteps of Washington by driving the 58-mile Washington Heritage Trail and surveying the lots Washington owned, which are located across the street from the visitors center and overlook the springs.

While Berkeley Springs is a year-round destination, the town hosts a number of festivals and events at certain times during the year. In January, Spa Feast is a free Saturday morning fair featuring samples from the area’s numerous spas and health-related businesses. The Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting is held each February and offers close to 100 different waters in five categories. And each March, the town of Berkeley Springs holds the George Washington Bathtub Celebration to commemorate Washington’s love of the area. The celebration, which includes readings from the president’s journals, is held on the weekend closest to March 18 to mark Washington’s first visit to the springs in 1748.

The historic Inn and Spa at Berkeley Springs was built on the site of the 500-room Berkeley Springs Hotel, which burned in 1898. The town also offers a number of B&Bs in exquisite Victorian houses,” Jeanne Mozier says. Just outside of town, the 1,300-acre Coolfont Resort, Conference, Spa and Wellness Center welcomes guests to its 19-room lodge, cabins in the woods and vacation home rentals. In addition to its full-service spa, Coolfont boasts the popular Treetop House Restaurant, a lake, hiking trails, horseback riding and tennis. And Cacapon State Park, built as a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) project in the 1930s, is now a favorite family resort.

For more lodging options and travel information for Berkeley Springs, visit www.berkeleysprings.com.
The Roots of Revolution
by Lena Basha
On May 28, 1754, a 22-year-old George Washington, then a major of the Virginia militia, made a decision—the impact of which would resonate throughout the world. As the story goes, acting on information that a camp of French soldiers was encroaching on land claimed by the British, the young major—eager to prove himself to his Colonial commander—ordered his men and Indian allies to open fire on the French just as they were waking up for breakfast. What followed was a bloodbath. As the wounded French commander lay on the ground explaining that his mission was one of diplomacy, an Indian chief, seeking to start a larger battle, killed him. The young Washington had just witnessed—and would later be held responsible for—the beginning of the French and Indian War, a period of history when the territorial agendas of Britain, France, their Colonial settlers and the American Indian nations clashed. Today, the poorly understood but vastly important war comes to life in “The War That Made America,” a four-part documentary premiering this month on PBS.

The dramatized documentary, released to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the French and Indian War, provides a straightforward look at the war’s complexities, betrayals and nuances—and the reason the young Washington became embittered with the monarchy, so much so that he would later lead the forces fighting for America’s independence from it.

**A Sign of Things to Come**

“The French and Indian War makes for a very complicated story because it was a complicated war with many moving parts,” says Laura Fisher, co-executive producer of “The War That Made America.” “The Civil War had a beginning, a middle and an end, but this one is not as easily understood, and it’s hard to think about. Seeing George Washington as a loyal British servant is not normally in our frame of reference.”

But it’s a war that is critically important for Americans to understand because it changed the face of North America—and set the stage for revolution, Fisher adds. “All of our textbooks tell us that America was born in the 1770s, and that the time period before is somehow pre-American. But in understanding the French and Indian War, you come to understand that the American Revolution was never foreordained. We tend to look back at it as though it was inevitable, but in fact, there was no foreseeable future in mid-18th-century North America.”

The war is also significant because it’s a clear example of how an individual can impact the course of major world events, Fisher says. “The power and importance of the individual is so pervasive in the French and Indian War. We tend to think of these big geopolitical forces, but ultimately what happens in history is people acting on the best information they have.” That’s what George Washington did when he ordered his men to open fire on the French in 1754. It’s also what General Edward Braddock, who had little battlefield experience, did when he mistakenly used proper European battle protocol to try to seize the French-controlled Fort Duquesne the following year. Braddock underestimated—or completely dismissed—the capabilities and motives of the powerful American Indian nations.

**Another Major Player**

“The War That Made America” attempts to reestablish the role of Native Americans as an instrumental but underappreciated player in the struggle for North America. Their motives differed vastly from those of the British, the French and their Colonies, though. The British and French wanted to expand their empires; the American Indians were protecting their land and struggling for survival.

“They controlled the balance of power in the 18th century, and, culturally, they were enormously sophisticated,” Fisher says. From wampum—a beaded belt or sash used as a ceremonial pledge—to scalping, many facets of Native American culture are elucidated in the documentary. “I hope that we have created a context for understanding Indian violence,” Fisher says. “It was not gratuitous violence but cultural, as well as deeply spiritual.”

**True to Form**

Narrated by Graham Greene, the Native American actor well-known for his starring role in “Dances With Wolves,” the documentary features Native American actors in all Native American roles. That’s just one of the ways “The War That Made America” accurately represents the French and Indian War. In many cases, the story unfolds through George Washington’s own words, which are amassed from various source materials such as letters and journals. And much of the documentary was filmed in the Laurel Mountains, a range outside of present-day Pittsburgh, Pa., which two British expeditions crossed to take Fort Duquesne. Scenes were also filmed at Fort Ligonier, established in 1758 under British General John Forbes. Filming at the same location where their characters fought 250 years previously helped the actors connect to their roles, Fisher says. “They all came to have a wonderful sense that the war really happened here,” she says. As for the costumes and makeup, the production team took rigorous care to make them as authentic as possible, a tough feat considering the differences in appearance among the Native American nations, Fisher says.

At four hours, the documentary only brushes the surface of the French and Indian War, which is exactly what the creators wanted to achieve. “We hope that people get intrigued enough to want to know more—pick up a book, visit a historic site or even just visit the Web site,” Fisher says. The companion book by the same name, written by Fred Anderson, gives readers richer details of the war, the events leading up to it and its global ramifications.

Part one of “The War That Made America” premieres January 18 at 9 p.m. EST on PBS. For more information about the documentary, visit www.thewarthatmadeamerica.org.
The actors in "The War That Made America" literally walked in the footsteps of key figures in the French and Indian War, including George Washington (top left), played by Larry Nehring, and Gen. Edward Braddock (top right), played by Alex Coleman. Eastern American Woodland Indians (far right) shaved and painted themselves from head to toe to vanish completely into the forest during warfare.
In the pre-Revolutionary War period, colonists and American Indians often worked together on and off the battlefield—whether the task related to war, commerce, culture or international relations. One Seneca Nation leader emerged as a battleground hero to the pioneering Americans. Other American Indians taught the new settlers how to better navigate untamed land in deep, punishing snow and showed them how to make creative meals out of a simple corncob. This was also the era in which the first bioterrorism attack in our nation’s history was launched. In this case, American Indians were the victims.
Ann Fortescue, Director of Education and Visitor Services at the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center, wants to help teachers better engage students in this obscure period of American history. She directs a groundbreaking educational program that uses storytelling and biography to interest students in pre-Revolutionary War times. Now being implemented in two dozen classrooms in six states, "Worlds in Motion" focuses on cultural interaction between American Indians and colonists off the battlefield.

With national demand resulting in plans to launch the program in classrooms throughout the United States in June 2006, Worlds in Motion responds to the "We the People" challenge of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The challenge calls for scholars, professionals and cultural institutions to elevate Americans' knowledge of the roles this nation's people played in our history.

"World on Fire," a sister program, focuses on the French and Indian War (1754–1760), which was the Colonial phase of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). As a published curriculum, World on Fire is now available to schools nationwide for grades four through six, and more than 500 curriculum kits have been distributed since 2004.

Before joining the Pittsburgh Regional History Center, Fortescue served as assistant curator of education at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum in Springfield, Mass. There she led the annual 17th-Century Festival, which drew more than 80 artists and 5,000 attendees a year. With a degree in history and a master's degree in museum education, she has written a half-dozen history curriculum kits, with 10,000 in circulation throughout the mid-Atlantic and Southeastern states.

Fortescue also chairs the American Association of Museums' professional committee on education. She's driven to find new ways museums can appeal to young people. "History museums are one of the largest in number for the association," Fortescue says. "One of our prime goals as museum educators is to reach students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Biographies, for example, are getting very popular because they tie directly into history, and kids are very interested in a historic person's life."

Indeed, biography and fascinating anecdotes are the prime ingredients for success when it comes to the World projects. In a recent conversation with American Spirit, Fortescue elaborated on the building of that success.
Until April 15, the Pittsburgh Regional History Center will feature the exhibit “Clash of Empires: The British, French and Indian War, 1754–1763.” Among the many rare period objects in the exhibit is the Treaty of Fort Necessity, the original surrender document signed by 22-year-old British officer George Washington of the Virginia Regiment in 1754 after a resounding defeat by French and American Indian forces. On loan from the Royal Ontario Museum, it is a gift of Dr. Sigmund Samuel.

How did the World projects begin?

It started in the summer of 2003. Teachers were finding a lot of gaps when it came to learning about American Indians during the pre-Revolutionary period. Fortunately, here in western Pennsylvania, there was a local effort among museums to mark the 250th anniversary of the war. So we were gathering more and more resources that addressed the role of American Indians. The Worlds in Motion project came out of my discussions with the educational consultant for the French and Indian War anniversary project, Susan Buckley. We came to the conclusion that, while places like Mt. Vernon and Colonial Williamsburg had plenty of resource materials about British colonists’ life in this era, we should launch our own effort to generate materials that addressed this gap.

After all, nearly every American knows who George Washington was. But how many can name even one American Indian leader at the time who helped Washington establish this country? Washington actually came to western Pennsylvania six times before this nation was established, and he couldn’t have achieved what he did without American Indians. They were a critical part of the process of forming this country during this time.

Was there a Native American who stood out?

There was Tanaghrisson who was a Seneca Nation leader. The Senecas were part of the Iroquois Confederacy, which was one of the largest and most influential groups of American Indians in our history. Tanaghrisson aligned himself and his people with Washington and participated in the ambush of the French soldiers at Jumonville, Pa. This was the first action that triggered the French and Indian War. Washington and his men were about to deliver a message to the French to get out of western Pennsylvania. But he received word that the French were coming to confront him. He advanced to Jumonville with Tanaghrisson to launch the attack. Throughout the course of the war, Tanaghrisson proved himself as an ally to the English settlers.

You tell teachers that they can capture young people’s attention with this topic because it has somewhat of a “Star Wars” theme and structure.

Yes. If the American Revolution is the first three “Star Wars” films, then this period is akin to the more recent prequel trilogy. And, just like “Star Wars,” you have characters who play major roles in both the first and the second triologies. George Washington can be seen as somewhat of an Obi-Wan Kenobi of his time. In the Revolution, he’s a heroic leader who helps establish the new republic. But in the earlier period, he’s younger and still learning how to lead. These were character-building experiences for him; he learned how to work with American Indians here. And, as Obi-Wan Kenobi often came close to a fatal
encounter in the first trilogy. Washington had to survive the elements. He nearly drowned in the Allegheny River while crossing the river on a raft in the winter. The students we teach find this very compelling.

We're sure battlefield stories grab the attention of today's students. But are there peacetime anecdotes that intrigue them as well?

They're fascinated to learn about all the contributions the Indians made to Colonial society. It was in Fort Pitt that American Indians brought their furs to establish trade commerce with the settlers. This vibrant commercialism paved the way for the city of Pittsburgh to take shape. They taught the settlers how to make many meals out of corn. They'd mash it to make an oatmeal-like dish for breakfast. They'd flatten it and bake it to eat it like a pancake or cracker. And their invention, the snowshoe, really caught on with settlers. They found they could navigate into rough, winter terrain much better than with their boots because the snowshoe allowed for them to walk on top of snow, instead of treading knee-deep in it. Students love these stories.

I'm sure they're fascinated by the story about the nation's first bioterrorism attack.

Yes. After the French and Indian War, there were hostilities between the British and the Indians. At Fort Pitt, commanders came up with a plan. They'd give Indians blankets as gifts to get them through the winter. But the blankets were contaminated with smallpox. With the threat of bioterrorism a given in our lives today, students are amazed to learn that germs were used even back then as a military weapon.

You've led the Worlds in Motion teachers on some very eye-opening, hands-on trips as well.

During the summer, we took the group to Ganondagan in upstate New York, where there's a replicated Seneca village from the 1600s. They've built a version of what's called the "long house," where Seneca Indians lived back then. It was a house made of stretched bark over a frame of saplings tied together at the top along the roofline—a shape similar to a barn today but much longer. When you see these long houses in history books, you can't appreciate how huge they were. But up close, you can see how they served as a habitat for two or three sets of extended families under one roof.

The feedback we've received about this trip has been great. Teachers are amazed at how adept the Indians were at surviving there. Having a hands-on experience—seeing up close how to make cornmeal, for example—only adds to their zest for teaching about this topic in the classroom.

What's next for the Worlds in Motion program?

Starting in June 2006, we'll be making individual lesson plans available for downloading on our Web site, www.pghhistory.org. The 26 teachers taking part have, through the years, developed various curriculum plans to teach the American Indian experience in the Colonial era, and we'll be making that available for any teacher to use, anywhere.

How much interest does your program attract?

Plenty. Just this past April, we did a conference to introduce this program, and we hosted no less than 700 teachers throughout the United States. We have interest from advanced placement high-school teachers who want to use it to teach students how to better use documentation from a historic time period. And we have interest from elementary school teachers who simply want to present compare/contrast lessons for their young students, to demonstrate to them how people lived then and how they do now. We're very eager to see how this program will take off. ✨

Dennis McCafferty's last Q&A feature was the January/February 2005 interview with Elise Kird, White House music historian.
Benjamin Franklin once said that reputations are like glass and china, “easily crack’d, and never well mended.” While his proverb is reliable, Franklin’s own reputation is no example of its truth. Three centuries after his birth, the world still reveres the ultimate Renaissance man, who was by turns scientist, inventor, statesman, printer, philosopher, bookseller, musician, shopkeeper, ambassador, soldier and economist—and successful at each endeavor.
Franklin has long been one of America’s favorite revolutionaries, and not just because his image graces the $100 bill. In fact, Franklin was the most famous American of his day, and today, he continues to be viewed as “the Founding Father who winks at us, the one who seems made of flesh rather than marble,” according to biographer Walter Isaacson, author of Benjamin Franklin: An American Life (Simon and Schuster, 2004).

This January 17 would have been Franklin’s 300th birthday, and as the world remembers one of its great citizens, Franklin’s adopted hometown of Philadelphia is throwing the birthday party of the century (or three). “People just love Ben Franklin,” says Cara Schneider, public relations manager at the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC). “If you’re paying attention, over the course of a year, you’ll see him everywhere—a category about him on ‘Jeopardy,’ a mention of him on ‘Law and Order.’ There have been 10 books published about him in the past few years.

“Franklin just had a hand in everything,” Schneider continues. “There are few characters who have had an impact in so many fields, and he did it in such a sweet, endearing way.”

Three Hundred Candles

No birthday party would be complete without a birthday cake, and the city of Philadelphia believed Franklin’s 300th deserved an extraordinary dessert. In preparation for the birthday celebration, the GPTMC sponsored a cake-baking contest, inviting some of the area’s top chefs to create a historically appropriate confection and compete for the right to present Franklin with his official cake on his birthday.

“The cakes could be no larger than 30 inches and had to have something related to Ben,” Schneider says. “That could be ingredients, a Franklin theme or aphorism, or using a cooking method from Franklin’s time. We gave them a list of ingredients that Ben liked, such as rhubarb, apples, cranberries and tofu, which he brought to the new world. And some chefs did research and found actual recipes from Franklin’s time. Most had a fun Ben name as well.”

Although the competition was stiff, three professional chefs who served as judges unanimously selected the “Spiced Penny Pound Cake from the Desk of B. Franklin,” created by Chef Jennifer McDonald of the Fountain Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia, as the winner.

In creating the winning cake, McDonald and Executive Pastry Chef Eddie Hales used some of Franklin’s favorite flavors, such as apples and cranberries, according to Ruth Hershey, public relations director for the Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia. “Those fruits were incorporated into a traditional pound cake,” Hershey says. “And the decoration of the cake is to look like Franklin’s desk, or what they thought his desk might look like. It includes items such as his glasses, an inkstand, a notebook for recording observations and ideas, and a key to signify his discovery of electricity. It’s all in honor and in recognition of Ben Franklin.”

While there were other cakes in the competition that were more elaborate, McDonald’s creation had the technical perfection that “blew the judges away,” Schneider says. “It was very simple. At first, the judges thought the apples on the desk were real apples, but they were all blown sugar. It was understated but exquisite.”
FRANKLIN’S FIRSTS. From left: Franklin (played by Bill Ochser) tugs on a kite during a re-enactment of his famous kite-and-key experiment of 1752. • Obsessed with science, he owned this “Electrical Battery” of Leyden jars. • Franklin was first in America to create a political cartoon, “Join, or Die,” published in The Pennsylvania Gazette in 1754. • Always the inventor, he designed this glass harmonica, a simple instrument made of spinning glass, in 1761. • Chef Jennifer McDonald poses with the winning 300th birthday cake. • Re-enactors show off some of his greatest contributions to society, including swim fins, bifocals and the first volunteer fire department. Below: Franklin discovered he could harness the power of the wind with his kite and be pulled effortlessly across a mile-wide pond.

A Citywide Franklin Fest

Visitors who gather in Philadelphia to celebrate Franklin’s birthday may not get to sample his official birthday cake, but they’ll be able to experience plenty of other Franklin-themed activities, attractions and even food. The centerpiece of the celebration is an international traveling exhibition “Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World,” which can be seen at Philadelphia’s National Constitution Center through April 30. The exhibition will immerse visitors in Franklin’s world. Highlights include a 25-foot model ship that visitors can climb aboard to recreate Franklin’s method of charting the Gulf Stream, a video animation of a young Franklin swimming with a kite to save energy and five of America’s key founding documents, all signed by Franklin.

Arts and cultural organizations are joining the celebration as well. In March, the Pennsylvania Ballet will present a revival of former Artistic Director Christopher d’Amboise’s “Franklin Court.” The Philadelphia Theatre Company is producing “Ben Franklin: Unplugged,” a comical monologue that debuts this month. And the historic site Stenton, former estate of James Logan, secretary to Pennsylvania founder William Penn, will present “Shaping Franklin,” a tour and exhibit highlighting young Franklin’s friendship with Logan, his mentor.

Among other restaurants getting in on the celebration, Le Castagne, an Italian eatery on Chestnut Street, will launch a three-course Franklin-themed lunch for $17.06, the year of his birth. A complete calendar of events for the Benjamin Franklin’s Tercentenary is available at www.benfranklin300.org.

Nancy Jackson is a contributing writer who explored the art of sacred harp singing for the January/February 2005 issue.

Beyond Birthday Cake

In celebration of Benjamin Franklin’s 300th birthday this year, chefs across Philadelphia have created Ben’s Birthday Desserts, which will be available on their menus throughout the run of the “Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World” exhibition at the National Constitution Center, open now through April 30. Some of the desserts you can sample in Philadelphia this year in honor of the birthday celebration include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNMEAL CRUNCH</th>
<th>BEN FRANKLIN’S</th>
<th>BEN-APPETIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAKE WITH HONEY</td>
<td>LIGHTNING BREAD</td>
<td>Pompeii,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POACHED PECANS</td>
<td>PUDDING</td>
<td>1113 Walnut Street,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Grill, 2301</td>
<td>Old Original Bookbinder’s,</td>
<td>(215) 829-4400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairmont Avenue,</td>
<td>125 Walnut Street,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(215) 978-4545</td>
<td>(215) 925-7027</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DR. FRANKLIN’S FIZZ</th>
<th>“EARLY TO RISE” JOHNNYCAKES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Franklin Fountain,</td>
<td>Rx,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116 Market Street,</td>
<td>4443 Spruce Street,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(215) 627-1899</td>
<td>(215) 222-9590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Announcing

Internet GENEALOGY

A new magazine from the publishers of Family Chronicle and History Magazine!
The first issue will carry a cover date of May 2006 and will be on newsstands across North America at the end of February. Internet Genealogy will be published six times a year and will be available by subscription, on newsstands and as an online magazine on the web. The cover price will be $5.95 (US) and the subscription rate of the printed magazine will be $28 (US). However, for a limited time, we are offering an introductory subscription rate of $20 (US).

Internet Genealogy will primarily deal with conducting your genealogy research using the Internet, but will also tell people what to do if they cannot find the records they need and how to confirm their findings. The magazine will also cover advanced genealogical methods such as DNA analysis, as well as software reviews, case studies, databases and other Internet-related topics.

A preview issue of Internet Genealogy will be carried in the January/February 2006 issue of Family Chronicle.

Visit www.internet-genealogy.com to see sample articles

Guarantee

There is no risk. If Internet Genealogy fails to meet your needs, or live up to the promises we have made, you are entitled to a refund on all unmailed copies for any reason or no reason. Any refund will be made promptly and cheerfully.

Halvor Moorhead
Editor & Publisher
Catherine Ferguson:
An 18th-Century Educator Inspires 21st-Century Youth

By Emily McMackin
Photography by Cybelle Codish
History records little about the life of Catherine Ferguson, a former slave who founded one of the first Sunday Schools in New York City in 1793. Though she gained her freedom as a young girl, she never learned to read or write, leaving behind no letters, journals, or memoirs. Despite her reputation as the finest cake maker in the city, she died with no money, property or descendants. While she devoted her life to educating and caring for neglected, destitute children of all races who roamed the city streets, the passage of time has diminished her sacrifice, at least to modern historians.

Scattered recollections of Ferguson drift like forgotten ghosts through yellowed, out-of-print books and periodicals languishing in the back shelves of libraries. Yet each spring, her name appears on 120 crisp, white diplomas — tickets of hope for teenage mothers in Detroit.

Girls who attend Catherine Ferguson Academy, an alternative high school for pregnant teenagers and single mothers, know little about Ferguson’s history, but her name means everything to them. It stands for second chances and new beginnings. Ferguson, who lost her mother, husband and children early in life, hoped to save children in impoverished neighborhoods by providing them with the principles, preparation and purpose to steer them on the right path. Her legacy lives on at the inner-city academy bearing her name, where the mission is much the same.

“This is a place where life is changed every day,” principal Asenath Andrews said. “Kids find themselves, and they find the road to where they are going. That road may change, but they find the light, and they follow it until they get to the next decision, the next decision and the next decision.”

Girls come to the school on the verge of dropping out. Many lack the direction, motivation and focus necessary to escape the poverty in which they grew up — a cycle they seem destined to repeat with their children. The school teaches them life skills, along with academics, and pushes them toward college. With nurseries where girls can bring their babies, nurses, a scholarship consultant and an attorney on staff, it also provides resources to help them conquer the obstacles in their way.

Some girls take as many as three buses a day to get to the school — a beacon in an impoverished neighborhood. Inspirational messages and art greet them inside. While students go to class, their babies participate in a Head Start program that teaches pre-literacy and word-recognition skills.

Children of teenage parents typically start school two years late, a statistic that Andrews refuses to repeat here. “My goal is to have every child who starts his life with us and leaves us at 3 at the same developmental level, having had the kinds of activities that give him an opportunity to be successful in school,” she said.

Through field trips, museum tours and library visits, the school exposes girls to culture that many have never experienced. A beehive, orchard, garden and farm on campus with horses, goats and other animals teach them discipline and practical lessons about health, parenting and life. Students built the bright, red barn that houses the livestock and installed the solar panel and windmill that power it. These projects give girls a sense of accomplishment many have never felt before, Andrews said.

“Life-altering, pivotal moments happen here because of the alternative things we do. We hope that we give girls so much of a sense of their own power that they’re not as susceptible to things that they might be susceptible to otherwise.”

A Worthy Namesake

The school, which started in the Salvation Army, initially served girls for only six weeks after their pregnancies before sending them back to their regular schools. When Andrews, a former fine arts teacher studying educational psychology, arrived in 1985, she saw that the arrangement wasn’t working.

“It didn’t make any sense because girls were dropping out and telling us that they weren’t going to school because they didn’t have child care,” Andrews said.

She and others eventually convinced the superintendent to move the program to a bigger facility and adopt an experimental curriculum. As the program evolved into a high school, Andrews encouraged students to pick a new name by researching black women in history and campaigning for which woman would have best represented the school. Despite her scant biography, Catherine Ferguson won the most votes.

“There isn’t a lot of information about Catherine Ferguson, but what we do know about her is so appropriate,” Andrews said.
A Benevolent Force

Despite the hardship that marked her life, Ferguson was a cheerful, industrious woman who tended to the needs of the less fortunate around her. She sought freedom and admission to the church as a young woman, and gaining both, supported herself with cake making and lace cleaning while pouring her passion into caring for Manhattan's youngest and poorest. Though illiterate, she understood the value of education and used it to reach out to those forgotten by society.

“The secret of Katy’s usefulness was her fervent, uniform and consistent piety,” Lewis Tappan wrote in an 1854 obituary printed in the New York Tribune and the American Missionary months after her death. “No one could be with her, even for a little while, without feeling its influence.”

Katy—as her contemporaries commonly called her—possessed great faith in God, Tappan went on to write, and “it found expression in acts of benevolence to his children.”

Much of Ferguson’s story comes from her obituary, which Tappan, an evangelical anti-slavery activist, based on an interview with her four years earlier. He believed her life warranted a memoir. Historian Benson J. Lossing found her worthy of inclusion in his 1855 book, Our Countrymen, or Brief Memoirs of Eminent Americans, a collection of 330 people who shaped early America.

The example of such a life ought not to be lost ... She was a philanthropist of the truest stamp,” Lossing wrote.

The American Tract Society also acknowledged Ferguson in a short profile that was part of an 1875 collection of narratives of black Americans, noting that “uneducated as she was, she possessed extraordinary taste and judgment. Of a truly refined nature, she appreciated the beautiful, wherever found.”

From Slave to Educator

Ferguson was born in 1774 on a ship sailing from Virginia to New York, where her mother, a slave, was being traded to a new owner. Katy referred to the man only as R. B., “apparently to conceal his identity and thereby protect his family,” wrote historian Allen Hartvik in a 1972 Negro History Bulletin article.

At 8 years old, Ferguson was separated from her mother, an experience she described in her interview with Tappan.

“R. B.,” said Katy, “sold my mother away but I remember that before we were torn asunder, she knelt down, laid her hand on my head, and gave me to God.”

Ferguson never saw her mother again, a loss she felt for the rest of her life, according to Tappan, who wrote that “the recollection of her own anguish when separated from her, she said, made her feel compassion for children.”

R. B. was an elder in a Scotch Presbyterian church, and Ferguson adhered to his faith. At 10, she promised him that if he gave her liberty, she would serve the Lord forever—a request he denied.

She longed to learn to read, but her mistress wouldn’t allow it because Ferguson already knew more than the daughters of the house. When one of the sons asked if Ferguson would teach him geography, she said she couldn’t. He replied, “Yes, you can; if I don’t read right in the Bible, or if I don’t say my catechism right, you can tell quick enough.”

Ferguson knew scriptures by heart, which some historians attribute to her mother’s influence, while others credit her retentive memory and exposure to the teachings of the Reverend John M. Mason, a renowned minister who led the church that R. B.’s family attended. At 15, “when under the conviction of sin,” Tappan wrote, Ferguson visited Rev. Mason, but was trembling as she rang his bell. He opened the door, and before she could speak, he asked, “Have you come to talk to me about your soul?”

The next Sunday, to the shock of a mostly white membership, Rev. Mason walked down the aisle to meet Ferguson—who was usually confined to sitting in the balcony with other blacks—took her hand and placed her in a seat at the communion table, recalled an acquaintance, Mrs. John Olcott, in a tribute written in 1909 and published in 1923 in The Southern Workman.

Sweet Spirit

At the age of 16 or 17, a female abolitionist purchased Ferguson’s freedom for $200. Hartvik speculates that this benefactor was probably Isabella Graham, a wealthy widow and philanthropist attending Ferguson’s church. At first, the woman hired Ferguson and gave her six years to reimburse her, but later returned half of Ferguson’s wages after 11 months of service. Prosperous New York merchant Devie Bethune, Graham’s son-in-law, raised the rest.
Ferguson married at 18 and had two children, but her husband and children died soon after. She took up baking and quickly gained a following for her sponge and pound cakes, which "filled the pantries of Old Dutch housewives in New York" and were "past belief in toothlessness," Mrs. Olcott recalled. When not swamped with wedding orders, Ferguson sold pastries on the streets. Her spirit was as sweet as her cakes, Mrs. Olcott remembered, and customers welcomed her presence.

"I can recall her in my mind as she started out, the basket on her arm, her hands clasped before her, her peaceful countenance shining because of her loving spirit."

Sunday School Pioneer

The Revolutionary War left Manhattan a partially destroyed seaport town with a swelling population of immigrants. The city struggled to cope with abounding poverty as well as growing vices, such as gambling, which entrapped the poor. On Sundays, Ferguson began inviting children who roamed her neighborhood into her home on Warren Street and getting "suitable persons to come and hear them say their catechism," Tappan wrote. Mrs. Olcott, who visited the school often, described it as a haven for poor children of all races.

The Sunday School movement, founded by John Wesley and organized by Robert Raikes in England in 1780, gathered children and adults on Sundays to teach reading and writing as an outreach to the poor. Eventually, these schools started to emphasize the study of scripture as well as basic education. A few Sunday Schools existed in Philadelphia at the time, but none in New York. Historians dispute whether Ferguson's school, created in 1793, was the first in the city, but it was a forerunner in the movement.

Ferguson probably instructed children in the Bible, while recruiting educated friends to come to her home to teach them reading and writing.

"Much of Sunday School learning involved the memorization of hymns and scriptures," Hartvik wrote in 1972. "Katy had committed much of the Bible to memory and was probably quite capable of hearing the children recite verses."

White acquaintances, such as Graham, sometimes invited Ferguson's students over to their homes to recite lessons. When Rev. Mason began building a new church on Murray Street around 1810, he convinced Ferguson to move her school to a new lecture room being built at the church.

eventually moved to Thompson Street, but continued these meetings for 40 years.

"Tract distributors, city missionaries and others remarked that where Katy lived the whole aspect of the neighborhood was changed," Tappan wrote.

Ferguson mourned over the poverty she saw and took in 48 orphaned or neglected children—half of them white. She placed some in homes and helped to raise others. When Tappan asked if she had laid up any property, she replied, "How could I when I gave away everything I earned?"

A Lasting Legacy

After Ferguson's death from cholera in 1854, her story received brief recognition before fading into obscurity. The city established the Katy Ferguson Home for unwed mothers in 1920, which William Clark of the New York Age lauded as "one of the most useful social centers in New York" in a 1923 article. The home cared for troubled girls temporarily, taught them parenting, life and work skills and placed them in domestic jobs. It closed in the mid-1950s due to lack of funding.

Despite brief references in black history books, Ferguson receives little attention today because her illiteracy prevented her from writing about her experiences, and others who did mention her in their memoirs may have understated her role, Hartvik wrote.

"She did, nevertheless, respond to the needs of the poor in an era in which the poor were notably neglected," he noted.

Asenath Andrews hopes to carry on her spirit at Catherine Ferguson Academy, where girls on the brink of failure learn that they can be and do more than they ever thought possible. If Ferguson could visit the school today, Andrews knows she would be proud.

"I think she would be completely blown away. She would stand back and watch as the girls enter during graduation, as they march up to the stage and get their diplomas. And she would weep—with happy tears."

Emily McMackin is a contributing writer. She reviewed patriotic children's books for the November/December 2005 Bookshelf.
French Patriots
OUR ALLIES FOR LIBERTY

By Elisabeth Whitman Schmidt

Soon after leading the American Expeditionary Force into France during World War I, General John J. Pershing visited the grave of the Marquis de Lafayette on July 4, 1917, to pay tribute to the Franco-American Alliance forged during the American Revolution. Gen. Pershing was reputed to have solemnly declared, “Lafayette, we are here.” Nearly 150 years after France had come to the rescue of the emerging United States, American troops arrived in Europe to repay a long-standing debt of gratitude.

All images, The Granger Collection, New York

Map showing the British fortifications and the siege lines of the French and American forces at Yorktown, Va., in 1781. Watercolor drawn for General Lafayette by Michel Capitaine Du Chesnoy.
The Colonies’ fight for independence from England didn’t inspire much support among European monarchs. France, Spain and the Netherlands were the only nations who showed any interest in the internal difficulties of the British empire. Overthrowing a king never appealed to these three powers, but diminishing the economic and maritime superiority of Great Britain did. France had her own agenda for encouraging political and military agitation among King George III’s subjects. After humiliating losses during the Seven Years’ War, France saw advantages to supporting the Revolution.

ANSWERING THE CALL

The Continental Congress dispatched Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane to Paris in 1776 to make contact with the French government and seek financial aid. Their efforts resulted in supplies being sent through Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais and his agents. With outposts in the West Indies, this clandestine operation posing as “Roderique Hortalez and Company” sent its first ship, Amphitrite, loaded with 62 pieces of artillery, 6,100 rifles and 49 French officers to aid the Americans. Extensive reforms in the French Army in 1770 made equipment available to the Americans for purchase. Aristocrats with military training were eager to serve in the Revolution, with no current wars in Europe to enhance their military records. Deane had been told to recruit four or five well-qualified French engineers, but instead sent 200 young officers, most of whom expected to be paid by the Continental Congress.

Many Frenchmen volunteered to join the American military effort. Jean Raymond Daney de Marcillac, an officer born in Martinique, was assigned to Saint Dominique when he joined the Americans. He received a certificate signed by John Hancock on January 1, 1777, appointing him as a lieutenant in the Regiment of Foot under Colonel Jim Bigelow. Lafayette arrived fully equipped and prepared to pay all of his expenses. Neither man served in French units during his years with American military forces, so their records are located in the papers of the Continental Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C.

Among the engineers so desperately needed by Americans was General Louis LeBegue du Portail. Hired by Franklin and Deane in 1777, he served as Commandant of Engineers from 1777 to 1783. His service to the Colonies extended from Brandywine to Yorktown, including the bitter winter at Valley Forge. After the Revolution, Gen. Portail returned to France to continue his military career, until he was dubbed a Royalist during the French Revolution. He escaped to America, but died at sea while returning to France in 1802.

THE AID OF FRENCH DESCENDANTS

Not only were the overseas French active in supporting Americans, French descendants in North America also aided the cause. In the Nova Scotia province of Cumberland County in 1776, Captain Isaias Boudreau raised a company of 19 Frenchmen. The Massachusetts General Court sponsored these men, most of whom served under Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Eddy for about six months. One of these soldiers was Joseph-Isaac Thibodeau, whose parents were among the French Acadians deported when the British assumed control of Nova Scotia in 1755. Unfortunately, British troops overwhelmed Capt. Boudreau’s men at Fort Cumberland in November 1776. Many were taken prisoner and others fled, ending a campaign to seize Nova Scotia for the Americans.

day we were exposed to the most intense heat and at night to bitter cold,” complained Meyronnet de Saint-Marc. Relations between the French and West Indian troops were so tense that Adm. d’Estaing issued printed notices, ordering that the “people of color [would] be treated at all times like the whites. They aspire to the same honor, they will exhibit the same bravery.” Many of these West Indian troops died during the campaign. Plans are now under way to erect a memorial to Haitian soldiers at the site of their battle station in Savannah.

D’Estaing brought another interesting group of soldiers to Savannah, known as “Dillon’s Regiment,” or the “Irish Wild Geese.” These men came from families who had fled Ireland to maintain their Catholic faith. They served in French and Spanish armies and navies, but were notable at the Battle of Savannah during the Revolution. Led by Colonel Arthur Dillon, they sustained heavy casualties during the allied defeat on October 9, 1779.

**ROCHAMBEAU’S MEN**

The tide of war changed dramatically with the arrival of Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, in Newport, R.I. He came with a fleet of ships, a large complement of men, supplies and financial aid, bringing long-sought relief to General George Washington. In a federal pension application, French soldier Michael Miller claims that he arrived in Newport in July, along with four French regiments and one Dutch regiment. Miller did not return to France after the Revolution, but lived in Bedford County, Pa., filing his pension from Montgomery County, Ohio, in 1824. John Polereczyk also came to America as an officer with Rochambeau and received a pension from France for one year, which ended when he didn’t return to his country after the French forces departed. He applied for a federal pension in 1825 as a resident of Lincoln County, Maine. Jean Geandreau, who enlisted in the French Navy in 1776 at age 15, served aboard Neptune under Captain M. Renaud D’Aliens and was in the fleet at Newport. Geandreau returned to France, but by 1817, had moved to Alabama, where he received a land grant.

**STRATEGIC TEAMWORK**

Rochambeau and his troops remained at Newport during the winter of 1780 to 1781 while additional French naval forces engaged the British. French and British fleets clashed during the first Battle of the Capes near Chesapeake Bay on March 16, 1781. Another group of 800 French soldiers and sailors on four ships commanded by Commodore Baron de Monteil joined the Spanish in capturing Pensacola, Fla.

In the summer of 1781, Rochambeau and Washington received important information that British General Charles
Cornwallis might be in a vulnerable position in southern Virginia. Admiral François Joseph Paul, Comte de Grasse, was available to rendezvous with the combined French and American forces only until late October. The ensuing effort to move the armies south proved the strategic superiority of French and American leaders. The 600-mile route taken by the troops in their march to Yorktown is now identified as the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route. The 225th anniversary of the route will be commemorated in several events taking place this year in New York.

**HONORING FRENCH ALLIES**

The Battle of Yorktown involved one of the most skillful naval operations in history. Today, the battlefield is a hallowed spot, drawing the attention of history buffs from around the world. A cemetery sits in a secluded area adjacent to the battlefield, the final resting place of Frenchmen who gave their lives in the engagement. Some died in battle; others died months later from wounds or succumbed to disease. On the observance of Yorktown Day each year, a ceremony at the cemetery honors the fallen allies.

While the Revolution continued until the Treaty of Paris was signed September 3, 1783, the French Army and Navy departed after the Battle of Yorktown. In the United States and France, the memory of the alliance endures. An obscure plaque on the campus of St. John’s College in Annapolis, Md., memorializes Lafayette. A tablet marks the spot where Lafayette and his Light Infantry received a gift of equipment from patriotic Baltimore merchants. In Rochefort, France, the Hermione-Lafayette Association has embarked on a project to rebuild the ship they refer to as “the frigate of liberty,” the 38-gun Hermione on which Lafayette returned to America on March 10, 1780, bringing news to Washington that Louis XVI would, at last, commit ships and men to support the Colonies.

**A LASTING LEGACY**

The French left an enduring legacy that made the independence of the United States possible and also contributed to our cultural diversity. Many Frenchmen stayed to become citizens. They filed numerous claims with state legislatures and the federal government based on their military and naval service. Many newspapers, including the *National Intelligencer* and the *Washington Advertiser*, published obituaries of French Patriots. One memorializes John Amoux, an 80-year-old Marseilles native who volunteered with Lafayette, was wounded at Savannah, saw action at Yorktown and died February 10, 1822, in New York.

Washington paid the ultimate compliment to the French in a letter to Rochambeau written on February 1, 1784: “We have been contemporaries and fellow laborers in the cause of liberty and we have lived together as brothers should in harmonious friendship.”

Elisabeth Whitman Schmidt, a member of the Dr. Elisha Dick Chapter, Alexandria, Va., wrote “Marius Bell” for the January/February 2005 issue.
Listen to TV at your own level without disturbing others.

“TV Ears saved our marriage!”

— Darlene and Jack B., CA

TV Ears® has helped thousands of people hear television clearly without turning up the volume.

More than 28 million Americans have some degree of hearing loss. If you struggle to hear TV, or family members complain the TV is too loud, you need TV Ears®! Doctor recommended, TV Ears® is a powerful new device that has helped thousands of people with mild, moderate, or severe hearing loss hear the television clearly without turning up the volume. Now you can listen to television at your own level while others may adjust the volume to fit theirs. TV Ears® helps you hear every word clearly. Imagine watching your favorite programs, and actually being able to hear every word and sound — it will change your life! If you are dealing with the frustration and arguments that come with turning up your TV volume too loud... read on.

From George Dennis, president and founder of TV Ears, Inc. “The inspiration for TV Ears® was based on the well-known statistic that nearly 80% of people with hearing loss go undiagnosed and untreated for a variety of reasons which may include vanity or cost of treatment. TV Ears® has proven to be an appealing product to the average person and an excellent introduction to those seeking improved hearing health.”

TV Ears® is powerful (120 db), and features voice enhancement technology to make hard to hear words easier to understand and background sounds are kept in the background. The cheaper, commercial headsets are limited in output and amplify all sound at the same level.

“Now my husband can have the volume as loud as he needs... and I can have the TV on “Mute” or at my hearing level. “TV Ears” are so unobtrusive that Jack forgets he has them on! We take them to the movie theater and he can once again hear and understand the dialogue. We have given “TV Ears” as a gift to dear friends. They are absolutely the finest product.” Sincerely

— Darlene and Jack B., CA

Try them yourself! If you aren’t totally amazed... send them back! We’re so sure you’ll be absolutely astonished with the increase in sound and clarity when using the TV Ears®, that we’re backing them with first STREET’s exclusive in-home 90-day trial. If you aren’t completely satisfied, simply return them for the product purchase price.

TV Ears® Item # 33-3874 Regular price of $169.95,

“Now only...3 credit card payments of... $49.95 ea

Special FREE shipping - a $17.95 Value Free shipping within Continental U.S. Only.

Ask about our special price on additional headsets

Please mention promotional code 30706.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day

866-254-4708

Special offer available on phone orders only.

To order by mail, please call for details.

first STREET

See it here first

(formerly TechnoVox)

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonia Heights, VA 22834

All rights reserved © 2003 first STREET, Inc.