Garden Party

Annual Daffodil Festival Blooms in Gloucester County, Va.

The Founding Fathers: How Did Their Gardens Grow?
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.

( O New  O Renewal  O 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
3. Credit Card # ___________________________ Security Code #: ___________________________
   Exp. Date: ___________  O MC  O Visa  O Amex  O 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.
Land That They Loved 22
The owners of Monticello and Mount Vernon tended their gardens with the curiosity of scientists, the eyes of designers and the imagination of dreamers.

BY GIN PHILLIPS

A Pioneering Journalist 28
Born with printers’ ink in her blood, Mary Katharine Goddard set type for some of the first newspapers in the country; often scooping competitors with her revolutionary news.

BY EMILY MCMACKIN

Colonial Rites of Passage 39
Lives were shorter. Funeral feasts were more excessive. Memorial tokens were more extravagant. Yet our Colonial ancestors commemorated death in ways still recognizable today.

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR

Q&A With Neil Baldwin: Our Enduring Beliefs 45
Historian Neil Baldwin explores the fascinating stories behind our most enduring symbols and national beliefs.

BY JAMIE ROBERTS

ABOUT THE COVER: STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEXANDRA CIABATTONI/JUPITER IMAGES.
Leading Lady
Former Miss Universe Sylvia Hitchcock Carson's crowning achievement is her work for the community.

BY LENA BASHA

The Spirit of 1776
David McCullough chronicles that fateful year when American independence was first proclaimed and defended.

BY BILL HUDGINS

Bloodsuckers
Peek inside a special jar and learn how leeches are enjoying a resurgence for their modern medical value.

FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE DAR MUSEUM

Scripting History
Discover the personality traits of your ancestors using an increasingly popular technique—handwriting analysis.

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

Delightful Daffodils
Springtime brings millions of cheerful daffodils to welcome visitors to Gloucester County, Va.

BY PHYLLIS SPEIDELL

A House Rescue in Michigan
DAR helps preserve the history of a pioneering town.

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

President General's Message
Letters to the Editor
Whatnot
American Spirit

From the President General

Visitors to Mount Vernon and Monticello are always impressed with the beautiful gardens and intricate landscapes of our Founders’ estates, all witnesses to their owners’ love for the land. The world of horticulture fascinated George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, who weren’t afraid to experiment with crops, plants, fields and landscapes to make their agricultural ventures more successful—or to simply satisfy their curiosity. Our feature investigates the Presidents as “gentlemen farmers” and demonstrates how much they enjoyed the agrarian life.

Few have heard of the pioneering Colonial printer Mary Katharine Goddard, but she is a fitting woman to profile as we celebrate National Women’s History Month during March. Mary Katharine lived most of her life in the shadows of a print shop, serving the public as a printer, journalist and postmistress. Patriots in Providence, R.I., Baltimore and Philadelphia could depend on her to keep vital information and business flowing during the precarious Revolution years.

The details of our ancestors’ daily lives are fascinating, but so is the way they approached death. Our feature on Colonial funerals returns to the roots of these rituals, explaining how the social position, ethnic origins and cultural heritage of the deceased determined how they were buried and mourned.

In our Q&A feature, historian Neil Baldwin, author of The American Revolution: Ten Ideas That Shaped Our Country from the Puritans to the Cold War, explores the reality behind our most enduring symbols and national beliefs. He shares the surprising origin of our Great Seal and its motto, E Pluribus Unum, and examines the genesis of Common Sense, Thomas Paine’s famous treatise on self-determinism.

If the doldrums of winter have made you crave spring flowers, then take a peek at this issue’s sunny Spirited Adventures story. American Spirit takes you to Gloucester County, Va., for its Daffodil Festival, a community event that enchants visitors every April.

Our Historic Home department features another preservation story with DAR ties. Members of the Abiel Fellows Chapter, Three Rivers, Mich., spearheaded the renovation of the Sue Silliman House and turned it into a museum dedicated to local history. The Silliman House, now on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of three historic homes owned by the Michigan State Society.

Handwriting analysis is playing an increasing role in genealogical research, as family members have old papers, letters and diaries analyzed to find out more about the personalities of their ancestors. In our Genealogy Sleuth department, readers can learn how to use handwriting analysis to give them a more complete picture of their relatives and help history come alive.

Fans of the National Treasures column won’t want to miss the DAR Museum’s new exhibition—“Obsolete, Odd and Absolutely Ooky Stuff from the DAR Museum Vaults.” This entertaining exhibit, running from March 10 to September 2, 2006, features strange objects from the collection that visitors rarely see.
Cover Boy
The American Spirit arrived today, and I am thrilled that Ben Franklin is on the cover. The features in the magazine are well-done and documented, and they create enthusiasm for DAR. There is a nice variety for many interests. My husband, a retired history teacher, reads it a lot. $18 a year is a bargain, and I have given many subscriptions as gifts.
Marcelyn Karagosian
Honorary State Regent, Massachusetts

Cheers for Edenton
Congratulations for another terrific American Spirit magazine. The November/December 2005 issue is beautiful and full of Christmas cheer. Thank you for the wonderful article about Edenton, N.C. It is a lovely little coastal town with great history, and if you are ever in North Carolina and are “down” east, please make a point to visit it. I love to go there myself and soak up its beauty. The people are very friendly, too, and the Edenton Tea Party Chapter is a very active DAR chapter there.
Jane O. Barbot
State Regent, North Carolina
Caswell-Nash Chapter, Raleigh, N.C.

The Wrong Promotion
In the article about DAR veterans on page 40 of the November/December 2005 American Spirit, you said, “She arrived in India as a 1st lieutenant and was promoted to 2nd lieutenant by the time she returned to the United States in Spring 1948.” It should be the other way around; she was a 2nd lieutenant who was promoted to a 1st lieutenant.
Tim Syzek, CPT (Ret.) USAR

International Kudos
I am a subscriber and an advertiser, and I thoroughly love receiving every issue. The entire Upper Canada Chapter (as I’m sure many other chapters do) salute you and your team on a great job.
Francesca Maines
Vice Regent
Upper Canada Chapter, Toronto, Ontario

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

GET WOVED BY THE WEIRD
In its latest exhibition—“Obsolete, Odd and Absolutely Goky Stuff from the DAR Museum Vaults”—DAR curators showcase some of the museum’s stranger treasures. From March 10 to September 2, 2006, check out such wonders as a drinking glass in the shape of a dachshund and a snuffbox made from a raw’s head. Costume items include jewelry made from human hair and 18th-century sunglasses. For those fascinated by early American medical care, the collection offers such oddities as a leech jar (see page 11 for a closer look), a tooth key and an earwax spoon. The entertaining exhibit will also throw in a healthy dose of American history—and it won’t hurt a bit. For more information, visit www.dar.org/museum.
Sylvia Hitchcock Carson remembers a lot about 1967. In May, she was a 21-year-old student at the University of Alabama, honing her skills as an artist. By August, she was making public appearances around the world, fulfilling her role as Miss Universe, after having won both Miss Alabama and Miss USA. Nominated by her Chi Omega sorority sisters, she says she didn’t see it coming. “I just walked out on the runway and had a good time, never thinking I would win. The crown just sort of fell in my lap, just because I was being myself. I knew I couldn’t please everybody, so I focused on being myself and having fun.”

Today, Mrs. Carson, a community servant, dedicated DAR member, wife for 35 years to William Carson, mother of three and grandmother of two, is just as vibrant as the day she won.

“The one who lives the longest are the ones who keep active. Staying active is important for the sake of aging gracefully.”

For that reason, she thinks retirement is the worst thing in the world—and it shows in her packed schedule. On any given day, you’ll find her bouncing from meeting to meeting or promoting a book in which she’ll be featured, Universal Beauty (Rutledge Hill, 2006), to be released in April.

One of her proudest accomplishments was her involvement in the Friends of Cypress Gardens, a grassroots effort that successfully preserved Florida’s oldest public attraction and protected it from private developers.

Growing up in a patriotic family—three of her five siblings served in the military—Mrs. Carson is also dedicated to advancing the principles of the DAR. Her aunt and mentor, Sylvia Gardner Little, helped Mrs. Carson get involved in the DAR in 1967 as a member of the Betsy Ross-Samuel Adams Chapter, Methuen, Mass. Mrs. Carson transferred to the Lake Wales Chapter, Lake Wales, Fla, in 1988.

“We all need to be involved in history,” the former chapter regent says. “We need to know what happened so we can learn from it. Yet, I also see DAR as about the future—not just about resting on the laurels of our ancestors and what they did. We should be doers. We owe it to our country because our forefathers died for us.”

To emphasize the importance of history education, Mrs. Carson encourages her grandchildren to be involved in historical celebrations like Constitution Week in September. She also chairs the Constitution, American History, ROTC and DAR Good Citizens committees for her local chapter.

“I stay so involved because I love the camaraderie. They’re such fun people and you can learn so much from them,” she says of her fellow Daughters. “It’s fun being with intelligent, motivated people, who, most importantly, stand up for what they believe.”

Next on her list is a trip to Costa Rica, where she’ll teach one-stroke painting to impoverished locals. “By teaching them this easy trade, they can sell their art,” she says.

Mrs. Carson knows she could probably do less, but she wouldn’t live her life any other way. “You never know what little thing you might do that could have a major impact on someone’s life,” she says. “I always try to work toward that.”

To nominate a Daughter for a future issue, e-mail a description to americanspirit@dar.org.
TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years. On January 4, 1872, J. Sterling Morton, a pioneer from Detroit, proposed a tree-planting holiday called ‘‘ Arbor Day.’’ On April 10, 1872, an estimated one million trees were planted in Nebraska.

Morton’s simple idea quickly spread throughout the country, with other states proclaiming Arbor Day observances as early as the following year. Today, the most common date for state Arbor Day observances is the last Friday in April—but a number of state Arbor Days are celebrated on different days to coincide with their most ideal tree-planting weather, from January in the South to May in the North.

Visit www.arborday.org/dates to find out when your state observes Arbor Day. Then, start planning your celebration. The National Arbor Day Foundation suggests the following ways to get involved.

• Plant a tree: Do it by yourself or get students, friends or family to help.
• Dedicate a tree: Use the ceremony as an occasion to talk about stewardship.
• Host a block party: Get together with your neighbors and spend a morning tending to the trees on your street.

For more information on these activities, visit www.arborday.org. You can also order a free ‘‘Celebrate Arbor Day!’’ booklet online.

ON THIS DAY
TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.

TRIP TO NEBRASKA TODAY wouldn’t offer a single clue as to how barren it was in the 19th century. Thanks to one proactive nature lover, though, residents of the state have reaped the aesthetic and practical benefits of trees for more than 130 years.
After *The American Legion* magazine ran a story honoring the legacy of service of the U.S. Merchant Marine, Ian Allison, co-chairman of the Just Compensation Committee, received more than 3,000 calls, as well as letters, faxes and e-mails from ex-Merchant Mariners of World War II and their spouses.

Their reason for calling: They were in dire need of help from the government. But because they weren't considered a part of the U.S. Armed Forces, they never qualified for veteran benefits. A pair of bills before Congress could change that. House Bill 23 and Senate Bill 1272, sponsored by Rep. Bob Filner and Sen. Benjamin Nelson, would provide tax-free, $1,000 per month payments to the surviving veterans or their spouses. The benefits are not automatic, though; former Merchant Mariners or spouses would need to apply.

For more information, visit www.usmm.org, or contact Ian Allison at (800) 545-4173 or by e-mail at mra@allisonusmm.com.

---

**Honoring Community Builders**

FOR EVERY WELL-KNOWN leader like Rosa Parks, there are thousands of other remarkable but unheralded women who deserve recognition for their valuable contributions to society. The National Women's History Project (NWHP) seeks to give these women their due during March's Women's History Month commemoration. This year's theme is "Women: Builders of Communities and Dreams," which honors women for bringing communities together and restoring hope in the face of difficult odds. Women like Mary Taylor Previte, founder of the Camden County Youth Center in Camden, N.J., and Winona LaDuke, director of Minnesota environmental group Honor the Earth, will be honored this month by the NWHP. Activities are taking place all over the country to honor women who make a difference in their communities.

For more information on this year's Women's History Month events, visit www.nwhp.org.

---

**Face Forward**

A NEWLY DESIGNED NICKEL debuts this year, featuring the first image of a president ever to face forward on a U.S. coin. The image of Thomas Jefferson that appears on the new nickel, designed by North Carolina artist Jamie Franki, was inspired by an 1800 portrait of the president by Rembrandt Peale. Franki's design was selected from a pool of 147 submissions in the U.S. Mint's Artistic Infusion Program. The redesign is part of the Mint's Westward Journey Nickel Series, which commemorates the bicentennials of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition. President Jefferson was a strong proponent of expanding the new country's horizons. After Congress passed the bill, President George W. Bush signed legislation in 2003 allowing the Mint to redesign the nickel for the first time since 1938.

---

**Garden Birthday Party**

ON APRIL 13, the 263rd anniversary of the birth of the third President of the United States will be celebrated at Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home just outside of Charlottesville, Va. Visitors will be invited to listen to remarks by a noted speaker, hear music by the Army's 3rd Infantry Fife and Drum Corps and witness a wreath-laying ceremony at Jefferson's gravesite. Plus, April is the perfect time to tour Monticello, built in 1769 in the Roman Neoclassical style, and its grounds, which feature acres of lush flower, fruit and vegetable gardens.

For more information on visiting Monticello and taking part in Jefferson's birthday celebration, visit www.monticello.org.
Restoration Discovery

YOU NEVER KNOW what you'll discover when you peel back the layers. Just ask any Missouri Daughter. While removing 1950s-era wall paneling in Roslyn Heights, the 1894 Queen Anne-style mansion that serves as the headquarters for the Missouri State DAR in Boonville, Mo., contractors uncovered an oil-on-plaster mural that covers an entire bathroom. Because it shares the same colors as other surviving murals on the ceiling in the front parlor, art conservators believe it is original to the house.

“When you step in the bathroom, it's like you are in the middle of a lake with cattails and lily pads all around you,” Missouri State Regent Sally Bueno says. A restoration artist will be working to clean, repair and restore the mural to its original beauty. “No need for wallpaper now,” Bueno says.

Extreme Makeovers

Two Midwestern 19th-century getaways are getting extreme makeovers this year. The French Lick Springs Resort and neighboring West Baden Springs Hotel, two southern Indiana hotels on the National Register of Historic Places, closed their doors recently to undergo a $350 million restoration. They are scheduled to reopen in December 2006.

The resorts are on the site of French Lick, one of the earliest outposts in the Midwest wilderness, which was first settled more than 200 years ago by French traders. After the discovery of rich mineral springs, which attracted animals that flocked to the waters and wet rocks, this valley became known as the Lick.

For more information on the restoration project, visit www.frenchlick.com.

What's in a Name?

IN THE NEWS American Spirit unveiled a new feature to highlight the meanings behind some of the DAR Chapters’ fascinating names.

Do you know who Puc Puggy was? The Daughters of the American Revolution’s Potomac Chapter, Lady Lake, Fla., do. William Bartram was a botanist researching plant life in Florida in the late 18th century. He lived among Seminole Indians, who called him “Puc Puggy,” the Seminole word for “flower hunter.”

The Hungerford’s laventine Chapter, Potomac, Md., was named after the tavern of Charles Hungerford of Montgomery County, and the chapter's organizing meeting was held exactly 200 years after the signing of the “Hungerford Resolves,” the local Patriots’ contribution to the events that led to the American Revolution.

The Natalia Shelikoff Chapter, Kodiak, Alaska, organized in 1982, derives its name from the courageous wife and partner of Grigor Ivanovitch Shelikof, founder of the Russian Colonies in America. She was influential in establishing schools, developing agriculture and bringing the Russian Orthodox Church to Alaska.

Answers to the quiz on page 6:
1. 1.5 billion 2. About 800
3. 100 percent 4. The equivalent of a 100-foot high, 18-inch diameter tree.
5. The Douglas Fir, which can grow to a height of 329 feet.

(Quick Quiz)
David McCullough’s 1776 is in many ways the tale of two Georges—occasionally about King George III of world-straddling Great Britain, but mostly about George Washington, commander of an undisciplined, ragtag, beleaguered band of citizen soldiers known as the Continental Army.

1776 (Simon and Schuster, 2005) chronicles that fateful year when American independence was first proclaimed and defended, the year that saw the flame of independence ebb during a series of defeats bracketed by stunning American victories at Boston and in New Jersey.

The two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning McCullough begins and ends with meditations on the state of the two Georges. We first see King George III in October 1775, as the monarch addresses the opening of Parliament amid rising criticism of the handling of the American situation. King George asks for support to suppress the insurrection and, after heated debate, Parliament concurs.

King George III preferred the country to the urban scene; his personal accomplishments were widely derided and underrated. He was personable in casual settings and possessed strong moral fiber, McCullough notes.

McCullough describes the king as being “notably willful and often short-sighted, but ... sincerely patriotic and everlastingly duty-bound.” The press, then as always, was opinionated, he writes: “The Evening Post, the most partisan in its denunciations, called the war ‘unnatural, unconstitutional, unnecessary, unjust, dangerous, hazardous, and unprofitable.’” Another paper, the St. James’s Chronicle, blamed it on “a foolish, obstinate and unrelenting King.”

Nevertheless, King George was popular, and the empire was rich, powerful and far-reaching. As the distant war grew more controversial in the press and in Parliament, this George “saw clearly that he must play the part of the patriot-king,” McCullough writes. Ironic comparisons can go only so far, and McCullough’s seem intended more to demonstrate that few things in politics, war or life are truly new under the sun.

That was certainly true of the situation of the king’s nemesis, George Washington, charged with leading a band of irregulars against the most-feared professional army in the world. When we first meet Washington, he is short of supplies, with short-term troops made short-tempered by lack of pay, food and creature comforts.

His generals vary widely in capacity and temperament, while Congress dithers, pinches pennies and second-guesses its field commanders. The populace remains divided over the question of independence, with Loyalists dominating some key areas such as New York City. Foreign assistance is spotty, unreliable and slow in coming.

The year’s events foreshadowed the next five years until Yorktown: Washington struggled to hold the army together and tried everything to keep soldiers from walking off the job. His chief accomplishments prior to the Christmas gift of Trenton lay in salvaging the army from total defeat, giving ground against overwhelming odds in order to fight another day.

However, the British had troubles of their own. At Fort Ticonderoga, rebels had defied terrible odds to capture cannons, which they managed to haul all the way to Boston. They also engineered a stunning victory in the Siege of Boston, driving the British from that nexus of revolutionary sentiment. True, the British had secured strategically important New York, but the bulk of the Colonial army slipped away.

The rebels were on the run, but the Redcoat generals seemed unable to follow up victories by capturing the slippery Continental Army. At home, Parliament and public remained divided over the war, as the administration dispatched additional manpower and sea power to deal with it.
As the year ended, George III continued to escalate Britain's commitment to the war, as Washington moved into winter quarters after the victories at Trenton and Princeton. It would be March before the news of those battles reached London, but British commanders in America had begun to realize that this would be a long, difficult struggle.

As in his other enormously popular works, McCullough brings the characters and events to life. We feel the hot breath of the Redcoats on our backs as we wait our turn for a boat across the Hudson out of New York City. He creates palpable tension as Washington's troops creep through the icy dark toward the garrison at Trenton, even though we know the outcome.

Whether the story is familiar or new to you, McCullough's storytelling power gives it excitement and immediacy.

McCullough also makes it clear that our first year as an independent country was almost our last and only. If Las Vegas had existed, the smart money would have been on the Redcoat team. But the oddsmakers would have discounted the spirit of the army and the personal power of its leader.

McCullough prefaces this popular history with a quote from Washington: "Perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages." This certainly was the case of the American Revolution, and 1776 was a year destined to demonstrate the truth of that adage.
Let It Out

In 2004 the Food and Drug Administration approved the use of leeches for medical treatment, so jars like this one from the DAR Museum’s collection could start becoming more commonplace. For thousands of years, leeches were used for bloodletting, a common medical procedure dating back as far as ancient Egypt. It was thought that too much bile in the bloodstream caused sicknesses and thus illnesses could be cured or averted by letting blood, often in very large quantities. Even George Washington received this popular treatment, which was thought to cure a wide variety of illnesses and even headaches, obesity and mental illness. The use of leeches peaked in the early 19th century, particularly in Europe, causing the species to almost go extinct.

This jar, which would have been found in an apothecary shop, dates between 1820 and 1840 and was possibly manufactured by Leeds Pottery in Yorkshire, England.

The use of leeches in treating sick patients has made a comeback in recent years, but not for bloodletting. Today leeches are used to draw excess blood from reattached limbs. The benefit of leech therapy isn’t the amount of blood a leech can draw, though. Leeches can draw only about two teaspoons of blood before getting full. Instead, the powerful anti-clotting agent contained in leech saliva keeps blood flowing for hours.
HISTORY IN HANDWRITING

Your genealogical research can reveal your ancestors’ names and lead you to find out where and when they lived and died. But can you also find out who your ancestors really were—what made them tick? How did they interact with each other? What were their talents? A growing group of experts says, yes, you can find out such specifics about the personalities of those who came before you—and the clues are evident in your ancestors’ handwriting.

Handwriting analysts, also called graphoanalysts or graphologists, use the detailed study of handwriting strokes to assess the character and personality of an individual—even those who are no longer living. “For a handwriting analyst, it’s a thrill to get to speak to people who are no longer here but who speak through the flow of the writing,” says Hedy Bookin-Weiner, Ph.D. (www.traitsecrets.com), a certified graphoanalyst and former university professor. “It’s a reflection of the way their nervous system works, and their personality and style come through in much more detail and nuance than in an old photograph. Like fingerprints, handwriting is uniquely one’s own. It reflects one’s thoughts and feelings at the time the document was written.”

The analysis of handwriting is an ancient practice, but only in recent years has it been applied to genealogical research—and it still isn’t widespread. However, the trend does seem to be gaining appeal. “Handwriting analysis is in the early stages of focusing on genealogy,” says Irene P. Lambert (www.IPLambertLLC.com), a certified graphoanalyst who speaks and writes frequently about the discipline. “Historians, genealogists and the general public are beginning to understand the benefits of handwriting analysis, and I predict it will continue to increase in popularity.”

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON
WHY STUDY ANCESTORS’ HANDWRITING?

Only so much can be learned from old papers, photographs and courthouse documents. Names, locations and dates of births, marriages and deaths have traditionally created a complete genealogical picture. But the prospect of handwriting analysis allows seekers to dig deeper, learning more personal information about their ancestors and linking real personalities with lifeless names and dates.

“‘In genealogy, the prime focus is to establish kinship and to place our ancestors in a time and place,” says Diane O’Connor, executive director of the National Genealogical Society. “As part of that, we are interested in who they were. That includes their physical characteristics and their personality traits. A study of their handwriting may assist us in understanding their personality.’

And learning more about their ancestors often helps genealogy buffs discover more about themselves. With handwriting analysis, “the descendant can get to really know the personality of the ancestor,” Bookin-Weiner says. “This can sometimes help one understand why a parent or grandparent acted a particular way, which influenced generations. Of course, many personality traits are genetically linked, and it’s interesting to see about those.” (See sidebar for a list of traits often handed down through generations.)

While handwriting analysis is widely accepted in some parts of the world, many in the United States consider it experimental, so some genealogists do not trust it as a reliable tool. “Graphology is still not well understood and therefore is viewed as akin to astrology,” Bookin-Weiner says. “This is why although many Fortune 500 companies use it [to determine employee aptitudes], they, for the most part, keep very quiet about it. Therefore, people don’t realize how it works and what it has to offer.”

“The biggest drawback is that, like genealogists who are often seen as pedigree chasers rather than serious students of family and community history, graphology is primarily seen as entertainment rather than science,” adds Barbara Vines Little, president of the National Genealogical Society. “As a result, serious genealogists are reluctant to use, or in many cases give credence to, graphology. However, like many other tools that we use, including neighborhood reconstruction, handwriting analysis can help build a probable picture of an individual and his or her life.”

Handwriting analysts “can play an important role in genealogical research,” Lambert adds. “Handwriting analysis allows people to become familiar with their ancestors, even though they never met them.”

WHAT CAN GRAPHAOANALYSIS REVEAL?

Handwriting analysis reveals results similar to those of psychological testing, according to Sharon DiLuvio (www.4genealogynuts.com), a certified graphologist specializing in genealogy. But unlike psychological tests, where those being tested may manipulate the results by responding as they think they ought, handwriting “can’t be faked,” DiLuvio says.

“Graphoanalysis gets to the core of the personality and offers information that can explain various behaviors,” Lambert says. “We can tell the emotional makeup, thinking patterns, achievement potential, fears, ability to cope with fears, integrity, sociability and aptitudes of the person being analyzed.

In addition to innate personality traits, handwriting analysis can often reveal the reasons behind certain behaviors. For instance, Bookin-Weiner once analyzed a client’s British ancestors. “At that time in Britain, conformity was essential if you weren’t upper class and could be eccentric, and people in the middle class were shunned if they weren’t conformists,” she says. “This man was entrepreneurial and ambitious. Knowing that, I knew that was probably why his handwriting showed frustration and anger at a young age. Later, he seemed calmer. My client informed me that [the ancestor] had emigrated here and become a major entrepreneur in the West.”

Another of Bookin-Weiner’s clients “wanted to know the truth about an ancestor,” she says. “The handwriting was of a person who was not to be trusted, but gave clues as to why—probable childhood abuse and substance abuse problems. It also showed some positive aspects of the man.”

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The ability to uncover personality details through the handwriting of ancestors who lived long ago may seem both intriguing and hard to believe. While practitioners acknowledge that
there are plenty of phonies in the market, they say that bona fide, certified handwriting analysts can truly shed a new light on family history.

"As in any profession, there are those who debase it by offering simplistic, 'this equals that' type analyses," Bookin-Weiner says. "These people usually advertise by offering to help you learn the 'secrets' of others."

Instead, "it takes years to develop into a good handwriting analyst," Lambert adds. "Reading a book and declaring oneself an analyst, as some have been known to do, would not produce a reputable analyst."

Professional handwriting analysts treat the study as a complex science, sometimes analyzing up to 550 different handwriting variables. "Handwriting analysis is only as reliable as the analyst," DiLuvio says. "If you have somebody who's careless or not trained well, he or she will come up with an analysis that's not accurate. But if the analyst is well-trained and does the necessary charting, you can come up with an extremely reliable analysis." Along with charting handwriting variables, analysts also measure the slant and size of handwriting, often using a tool that helps them see different sizes and slants, DiLuvio says.

Reliable analysts also consider the complexity of an individual. "Each person carries a number of roles, such as daughter, mother and professional, and in each role, you have different personality traits," DiLuvio says. "In your handwriting, you show a mixture of traits, so a good analysis will show which ones are most prevalent, and how different traits interact with each other. For instance, if you're a shy person, you may have a temper—but because you're shy, you're not going to show it. [Analysis] is a complicated process, and it takes genuine study to become an analyst."

But even the most reliable analyst can be limited by the handwriting samples available. Letters and diaries are the best types of documents to analyze. Little says, but it can be "extremely difficult" to locate documents written by ancestors.

"A signature is not enough, you'll learn only how the person wanted to present himself or herself to the world," Bookin-Weiner says. "More than one letter is important to make sure that the writing isn't just reflecting the mood of the moment, but if there is only one, you still can get a fair amount, if the analyst is well-trained and willing to explain the limitations. And you need to be sure your ancestor actually wrote it. If the signature is quite varied from the body of the letter, it is possible he or she didn't write it. People in particular times often could only sign their names and used secretaries or dictated for other purposes. A good analyst can give you the probabilities on that."

Putting all the pieces together can be difficult, but when the right sample meets the right analyst, history comes to life. More than simply entertainment, handwriting analysis can enlighten younger generations about their ancestors' authentic selves—and remind those who knew them about who their ancestors really were.

"Many of my studies have been validated by the people who knew the individuals I analyzed," Lambert says. "In one case, I was told that the grandmother and great-aunt were on the edge of their seats, waiting for the next analysis of their ancestors because they were so excited about the reports."

---

**QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HANDWRITING ANALYST**

Do you want to find a handwriting analyst to help uncover your ancestors' personalities? Determine whether an analyst is qualified to help by asking these questions.

- **Are they certified?**
  Reputable, professional analysts have been certified by one of several organizations, such as the International Graphoanalysis Society or the National Society for Graphology.

- **How long has the individual been an analyst?**
  More experience often yields a more reliable analysis.

- **How many genealogical analyses have they done?**
  For an accurate analysis, find a graphologist who has specific training and knowledge in the area of genealogy, according to Hedy Bookin-Weiner, Ph.D. "A graphologist who is great for corporate analyses may not have the skills for a good genealogical analysis, unless the ancestor learned to write in the United States in the past 70 years or so," she says.

- **Do they have access to copybooks—books formerly used for teaching penmanship—of different time periods and countries?**
  "Handwriting is considered in relation to copybooks; it's the divergences from it that give the best information," Bookin-Weiner says. "For example, in some countries, a very angular form was used at a certain time, which would indicate a particular meaning. The analyst must realize that slight divergences from this mean more, although handwriting reflects national character. For instance, in the former Soviet Union, conformity in handwriting was so extreme that, if you didn't know that, you would assume a rigid, conformist person. The tiny variations are much more important there. The analyst also should ask you when and where it is likely your ancestor learned to write—the analyst should have a good knowledge of the history and cultures of that country as well as U.S. history."

---

American Spirit • March/April 2006 | 15
Spring comes to Gloucester County, Va., in sunny shades of yellow—just as it has for 350 years, rain or shine. Daffodils—or jonquils to some—dance in the breeze, fluttering in yards, fields and public greens. They line the roads and peek from wooded areas along the highways. Millions of cheerful blossoms nod their heads, welcoming the visitors who flock here each April for the annual Daffodil Festival.

BY PHYLLIS SPEIDELL
In the 1930s, a low brick wall replaced the rail fence, probably as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, local historians say. The Court Circle is so picturesque that many visitors mistakenly assume that its five vintage buildings—including one of the oldest continually operating courthouses, a jail, a court clerk’s office and a debtor’s prison—were moved from other locations to create a historic district.

The buildings, all original to the circle, have been restored, and some are open to the public. While court is no longer held at the 1766 courthouse—a showpiece of fine Colonial brickwork and arched windows—residents use the building for government and community meetings.

Few visitor centers are as secure as the one in Court Circle. It was built in 1896 as the clerk of the court’s office—with fireproof walls and a cement-lined roof. Each room can be sealed off with a heavy iron door. County officials weren’t going to take any chances. Gloucester, like many other Virginia towns, has lost its official records several times to fire.

The circa-1810 debtor’s prison is the most current restoration. The sturdy little building also doubled as an arsenal during the Civil War. Two layers of plasterboard were removed from the interior walls and ceiling to reveal wooden planks laid horizontally with close-set studs—an early attempt at escape-proofing the prison.

Debtors were incarcerated overnight, but allowed out during the day to exercise, free to roam anywhere in the village within boundaries marked with white stones—anywhere, that is, without a billiards table.

By the first Saturday in April, the county courthouse green already blooms with dogwoods, hyacinths and daffodils.

This is where Court Day was held once a month in the 1700s. While court was in session, locals gathered on the green to socialize and auction off livestock. Originally a rail fence bordered the circular green and its collection of government buildings dating back to 1766.

Daffodils are everywhere in Gloucester—on front door wreaths, T-shirts and the collectible festival posters that are a guaranteed sellout.

Gloucester County covers slightly more than 250 square miles in southeastern Virginia. Along its highways and byways, vendors like Tracey Lynn sit by the road with buckets of daffodils for sale. For a couple of dollars, you can buy a bunch. A few dollars more, and you can have an armful, choosing from the palest cream to the deepest saffron.

Lynn has been selling daffodils since 1987 when she was still in high school. "I like spreading a little joy in the community—it’s like giving people spring and getting back lots of waves," says Lynn, who waves to the passing vehicles with a smile as sunny as her daffodils.

Traditional harbingers of the English spring, the golden-cupped flowers flourished in the Gloucester climate as well.
By the first of April, Gloucester County is overflowing with daffodils, which welcome visitors from doorways, gardens, fields and even from roadsides. Tracey Lynn (above) has been selling buckets of daffodils since 1987 when she was still in high school. Gloucester County Visitors Center, one of five vintage buildings in the picturesque Court Circle, was built in 1896.

PHOTOS (PAGES 1-21) BY JOHN SHEALLY II
The settlers shared bulbs with their neighbors. Soon, the daffodils spread from tidy yards and cottage gardens to meadows and fields, where they grew wild and free.

In the 1890s, farmers began to cultivate daffodils. Each spring, children were dismissed early from school to pick the flowers that were packed in wicker laundry hampers, covered with cheesecloth and sent by steamboat to the Baltimore flower markets.

In the 1920s, while other farmers still grew variations of the wild daffodils, Charles Heath built a vast flower farm planting bulbs imported from Holland. By the late 1930s, the flower business boomed. Gloucester named itself the daffodil capital of the United States and created an annual daffodil festival.

World War II saw the flower farms faltering, and the community ended the festival. But wild daffodils still blanketed the county each spring, and Heath's family still ran a bulb farm. In 1987, volunteers from all over the county renewed the festival, centering it in the county seat, Gloucester Courthouse, a village of about 2,000 residents. Proceeds from the event beautify the county and provide scholarships for local high school seniors.

"We plant daffodils wherever and whenever possible," says Jennie Graziano, the county's tourism coordinator. "We also support other community projects, such as giving $15,000 to the Gloucester Free Library for its community room."

Not only are the festival committee members natives and newcomers alike—passionate about the event, they're also stoic about the weather.

Graziano remembers an early April nine years ago as frigid and rainy, but the festival went on. Little girls from local ballet companies froze in their tutus, but marched in the parade anyway.

"Some years we are in shorts, and other years we shiver in layers of clothing," she says. "It is just so much fun and such a wonderful community effort."

In 2005, it took days of continuing downpours to convince the festival committee to cancel. But the Courthouse Circle was still decorated with arches of yellow tulle and daffodils and, during the next few weeks, the visitors still came.

Festival volunteer Kathy Tyree chatted with a few tourists as she adjusted a garland of daffodils.

"The festival is a great way to bring the community together to celebrate," she says. "And we draw visitors from all over the country."

The daffodils carpeting the Court Circle spelled spring to Peter Viens and Michelle Beauchemen. The couple had stopped in Gloucester on their way to a Virginia Beach vacation. At their home in Quebec, snow was still on the ground.

The Heaths are also known for creating an annual daffodil festival. In 2007, volunteers from all over the county renewed the festival, centering it in the county seat, Gloucester Courthouse, a village of about 2,000 residents. Proceeds from the event beautify the county and provide scholarships for local high school seniors.

"We plant daffodils wherever and whenever possible," says Jennie Graziano, the county's tourism coordinator. "We also support other community projects, such as giving $15,000 to the Gloucester Free Library for its community room."

Not only are the festival committee members natives and newcomers alike—passionate about the event, they're also stoic about the weather.

Graziano remembers an early April nine years ago as frigid and rainy, but the festival went on. Little girls from local ballet companies froze in their tutus, but marched in the parade anyway.

"Some years we are in shorts, and other years we shiver in layers of clothing," she says. "It is just so much fun and such a wonderful community effort."

In 2005, it took days of continuing downpours to convince the festival committee to cancel. But the Courthouse Circle was still decorated with arches of yellow tulle and daffodils and, during the next few weeks, the visitors still came.

Festival volunteer Kathy Tyree chatted with a few tourists as she adjusted a garland of daffodils.

"The festival is a great way to bring the community together to celebrate," she says. "And we draw visitors from all over the country."

The daffodils carpeting the Court Circle spelled spring to Peter Viens and Michelle Beauchemen. The couple had stopped in Gloucester on their way to a Virginia Beach vacation. At their home in Quebec, snow was still on the ground.

The Heaths live in a sprawling farmhouse on a tributary of the North River—surrounded, of course, by daffodils growing on test plots. They test each new bulb Brent says, for 10 to 15 years.

Becky settled the daffodil versus jonquil controversy.

"All jonquils, usually with narrower and darker foliage, are daffodils, but not all daffodils are jonquils," she says. "And all daffodils and jonquils are narcissus."

A glance through the Heath bulb catalog is a crash course in daffodils—from "Ice Follies," with creamy white petals and a broad, open, sunny yellow cup, to the "Sabine Hay," bronzey gold petals around a small, brick-red cup.

"We are educators first, and bulb peddlers second," she says.

If everyone could improve their little corner of the world, Becky explained, then eventually all the little corners would merge into a prettier, brighter world.

Gloucester's daffodil enthusiasts have a good start on that.
FOUNDING FATHERS AND THEIR LOVE OF THE LAND

OTHER PEOPLE BUILT MONUMENTS TO GEORGE WASHINGTON AND THOMAS JEFFERSON FOR THEIR LOVE OF COUNTRY, FOR THEIR LOVE OF THE LAND, THESE FOUNDING FATHERS BUILT THEIR OWN MONUMENTS. MOUNT VERNON AND MONTICELLO STILL STAND—WITH TOWERING TREES, BLOOMING BEDS AND WINDING PATHS—AS PROOF OF THEIR ATTACHMENT TO THE SOIL.

BY GIN PHILLIPS
Their fondness for the land was an attachment born of ideals. For the new United States, successful agriculture meant survival. And for the deeply curious, the horticultural world offered untapped opportunities for exploration. Methods of fertilization, crop suitability to certain climates, the potential of crop rotation—no one had the answers. And the questions themselves fascinated Washington and Jefferson.

The attachment to the soil was also rooted in class. Despite all of their love of the land, Washington and Jefferson came away from their efforts with neatly drawn plans and pages of notes—not calloused hands and aching backs. Servants and slaves did the bleeding and the sweating.

Other gentry—and other presidents—devoted time and effort to their own grounds. But because of the meticulous records kept by Washington and Jefferson, including both plans and lists of plants, the gardens and landscaping of their time could be recreated for posterity.

The scope of their efforts also set them apart. John Adams, for instance, simply didn’t have the resources to explore his agricultural interest in the same fashion as the first and third presidents did. He’d grown up in a simple, five-room house, and even after his father’s death, his property increased to only 40 acres—though that was a significant amount of land in his hometown of Braintree, Mass. The generations before Adams were farmers who had scratched out a living through long winters. Washington, on the other hand, oversaw 8,000 acres at Mount Vernon alone and owned more than 100 slaves as a labor force.

The Dreamers

As much as ideals shaped the country, ideals also shaped the two presidents’ views of the land. A certain romanticism colored their notions of farming; despite Washington’s pragmatic sense of agriculture, he and Jefferson both saw a kind of purity to working the land.

“The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs the better I am pleased with them,” Washington wrote. “I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth than all the vain glory which can be acquired by ravaging it, by the most uninterrupted career of conquests.”

Their view reflected that of a gentleman farmer and an intellectual. In Abraham Lincoln (Orion, 2005), Thomas Keneally compares Lincoln’s idea of farming with Jefferson’s. Lincoln’s father was “the archetype of the Protestant subsistence farmer” who Jefferson would have seen as “the stuff of American virtue.”

Having suffered under the strict discipline and hard labor required by his father, Lincoln didn’t see it quite the same way. “Where Jefferson believed he saw forthright independence, Lincoln saw ignorance and brutalizing labor,” Keneally writes.

In the midst of the carnage and chaos of war, both Washington and Jefferson likely found solace in something they could control to the last detail.

In David McCullough’s 1776 (Simon and Schuster, 2005), McCullough writes of the pages Washington filled with instructions for his manager while away from home at the start of the Revolutionary War.

“If all could not be as he wished with the army, if all could not be ‘exactly answerable and uniform’ or ‘executed in a masterfully manner,’ concerning the war he was expected to wage and win, then he would at least have it so at his distant, beloved home,” McCullough writes, also noting, “Mount Vernon was his creation, everything done to his own ideas and plans.”

“There is some sense that he’s never living his dream—he’s always away from Mount Vernon,” says Fran Sorin, a gardening expert, designer and author of Digging Deep: Unearthing Your Creative Roots Through Gardening (Warner Books, 2004).

For both men, time at home was more wish than reality. Jefferson moved to Monticello in 1770, but didn’t act on his gardening plans until 1807. Though he spent more time at his home than Washington could manage, he still returned only for quick visits, until his retirement in 1809. George Washington lived for fewer than three years after retiring to Mount Vernon in 1797.
Only the gentry had the luxury of possessing pleasure gardens like Washington's acre-size flower garden.

"There were still many people here just trying to survive," says Dean Norton, director of horticulture at Mount Vernon. "Gardens didn't come about until people had the time for pleasure. Once you reached a certain level, you had staff or slaves, and you could financially maintain the necessities of gardening. In England they were far beyond that—they had an established country, and they didn't have our level of disease."

The Founding Fathers came from that "pleasure garden" class. And for Washington, rank came with a certain obligation.

"Washington recognized how far he had come in society, and it was important for a person of his standing to have a fine, landscaped garden," Norton said. "Even when he wasn't there, people would visit, and he had almost an obligation that even when he was absent the gardens should look as pristine as possible."

However, the gentleman, for the most part, was not the one actually laboring to develop those pristine gardens.

According to Jefferson's slave Isaac, "For amusement he [Jefferson] would work sometimes in the garden for half an hour in right good earnest in the cool of the evening.”

---

**The Students**

Both Washington and Jefferson drew inspiration from popular English gardening books, in particular those that focused on landscape gardening.

Jefferson (then American minister to France) and Adams (then American minister to England) embarked on a joint tour of English gardens in 1786. Using Jefferson's 1770 copy of *Observations on Modern Gardening* by Thomas Whately, they headed through the countryside, the first and only time they'd spent time on their own, "free of work and responsibility, and at heart both were countrymen, farmers, with an avid interest in soils, tillage, climate and 'improvements.'"

They saw striking examples of English landscape gardening—"private parks" that covered hundreds of acres. The gardeners and architects of them saw themselves as "landscape painters" on a "vast scale."

"Whole valleys were carved out, hilltops removed, streams rerouted, thousands of trees planted to achieve the desired look. The colossal expense seemed of no concern," McCullough writes in *John Adams* (Simon and Schuster, 2002).

For Washington, the 1728 book *New Principles of Gardening* by Batty Langley offered formative ideas of gardening features, from bowling greens to planned wilderness.

"In their minds, coming over from England, there was nothing here," Sorin says. "So they're trying to control nature, which is why you see all the fences and the very orderly design. Control and order are very appealing, especially after you've been through the Revolution."

---

**The Designers**

You'd expect a little independence from Washington and Jefferson. And both Mount Vernon and Monticello illustrate the innovative minds of their designers.

The gardens at Monticello don't hold Colonial Virginia staples like boxwood, zinnias, sweet alyssum and crepe myrtle. Unlike other flower gardens in Virginia at the time, Monticello's reflects a lifetime of study and travel. Jefferson's interest in gardening dated from boyhood—he kept a record of flowers in the garden and fields of his childhood home. His "Garden Book," kept from 1766 to 1824, is filled with dates and details of planting: "March 30, 1766: Purple hyacinth begins to bloom. April 6: Narcissus and Puckoon open."

By the time he moved to Monticello in late 1770, Jefferson had spent plenty of time visiting other gardens. Familiar with gardens from Philadelphia to Annapolis and New York to Williamsburg, his grand design for his land was, nonetheless, all his own.

He liked the idea of "naturalistic gardening," incorporating the ideas of "gravelled walks" and "oval raised beds, cultivated and flowers among shrubs," wrote Edwin Betts.
in his 1941 book, *Thomas Jefferson's Flower Garden at Monticello* (revised by Peter Hatch in 1986). Jefferson's European travels later contributed to the samplings, with friends like the superintendent of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris continually sending him new seeds and plants to try.

His plans for his gardens date to 1807 when he decided to leave presidential office after his second term. In keeping with his reading and travels, his grounds include winding walks, trees planted in clumps and a roundabout road system—all efforts to work with the existing landscape while imposing control on it.

Despite his aristocratic bearing, Washington wasn't from the elite class. But, as a working farmer, his attachment to the land was bred deeply—the earliest Washington coat of arms featured a herald's sign that the bearer owned land and farmed. Born on a plantation, Washington "until manhood had never even seen a town of 5,000 people," wrote Paul Leland Haworth in *George Washington: Country Gentleman* (Bobbs-Merrill Co, 1925).

The 1,000-foot long garden terrace at Monticello served as both a source of food and an experimental laboratory. Right: Jefferson's "Garden Book," which he filled with dates and details of planting.
Jefferson's vegetable garden and south orchard are visible in this aerial shot of Monticello Mountain from the southwest.

With experimental plots around his plantations, Washington had peach orchards and grafted cherries and plums. In 1768, he mentioned wanting every possible specimen of native tree or shrub known for its beauty. He later succeeded in his wish. Washington focused on plants native to the area: “His nursery was his woods,” says Dean Norton, director of horticulture at Mount Vernon.

Beyond agriculture, Mount Vernon’s horticultural world included a pleasure garden for visitors to enjoy, a botanical garden for experimentation, a kitchen garden to grow fruits and vegetables, and a nursery. Washington loved trees, particularly blooming ones, which he called “the clever kind.” Trees he had planted still stand at Mount Vernon.

Both presidents, not known for lacking resolve, stood by their vision for their grounds through “blizzards of foreign visitors,” writes Ann Leighton in *American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1986). “Neither of them ever added one suggested feature to his own original design.”

The Scientists

Radical politics paired nicely with radical agriculture. Both men were passionate about experimenting with specific plants, crop rotation and fertilization.

Unlike most gentry gardeners, Jefferson focused on hot weather crops, such as okra, tomatoes, lima beans and sweet potatoes, all of which were becoming part of indigenous American cuisine along with Caribbean and African influences. The Lewis and Clark expedition sparked Jefferson’s interest in part because of the potential for discovering more about Native American crops.

Being the first to try something, though, guaranteed a low success rate.

“A lot of his experiments were failures,” says Peter Hatch, director of gardens and grounds at Monticello. Hatch points to fruit cultivation as the most successful of the areas.

The sheer extent of Jefferson’s samplings dwarfed other gardeners. While other gentry gardeners were avid horticulturists, “their interest wasn’t as expansive as Jefferson’s,” Hatch says. Jefferson documented 330 vegetables and 170 varieties of fruit on his grounds.

“If I were to pick one garden to learn in, it would be at Monticello,” Sorin says. “Jefferson’s curiosity was insatiable.”
While Jefferson has a widely recognized reputation as a scientist, Haworth called Washington "one of the first American experimental agriculturalists," noting he was "always alert for better methods, willing to take any amount of pains to find the best fertilizer, the best way to avoid plant diseases, the best methods of cultivation, and he once declared that he had little patience with those content to tread the ruts their fathers trod."

Virginia farmers were following a dangerous route in farming, which Washington realized. With no crop rotation practiced, tobacco ruined the soil. Land was cheap enough that Jefferson believed that buying an acre of land was cheaper than fertilizing an old one. So farmers left swaths of decimated land behind.

"The aim of the farmers in this country," wrote Washington in 1791, "is, not to make the most they can from the land, which is or has been cheap, but the most of the labour, which is dear; the consequence of which has been, much ground has been scratched over and none cultivated or improved as it ought to have been."

Washington grew tobacco for years before realizing its negative effects, then shifted to wheat and flour and later grass and livestock.

Like Jefferson, he was willing to fail. Methodical and scientific in his approach, he tried some seemingly ridiculous experiments, such as sowing oats to see if they could withstand a Virginia winter. No sources existed to advise him—experimentation was the only way to answer that question and thousands more.

"Washington was willing to fail so others could succeed, and he had the means to do that," Norton says.

But always, his approach mirrored that of a working farmer. He wanted a better product, a better output. In 1760, for instance, he experimented with fertilizers, boxing off compartments of soil with different types of compost mixed in—different dung types, molds and muds. Sheep dung and black mold proved to be the most successful.

The Problem Solvers

Revolution interrupted Washington's farming experiments, but after peace was won, his impoverished soil garnered much of his attention. He couldn't get large enough quantities of manure to replenish it, and clover and grasses didn't restore the soil quickly enough for him. He thought muck from the nearby Potomac River would work wonders, but found no feasible way to extract it.

"He found creek mold, but you just couldn't get the quantity necessary to make the difference," Norton says, adding that Washington also attempted manure, lime and a seven-year crop rotation.

"He was dealt an incredibly bad hand," Norton adds. "The soil was already depleted by his time, and a lot of soil wasn't that great to begin with. He just didn't get the yields, but continued to work at it. He was more into the saving of these fields than making money."

Monticello's placement on a mountaintop presented its own dilemmas, such as erosion. So Jefferson experimented with contour plowing and terracing. An inadequate water supply plagued him, and he never solved the problem, according to Hatch. But the mountaintop was warmer than the surrounding land, which meant when frost killed his neighbors' fruit trees, Jefferson often had reason to gloat.

The Presidents Above All

For both men, all the work and exploration, failure and success ultimately traced back to the country's future.

"A lot of experimentation was based on the changing socioeconomic culture of the day," Hatch says. "To alleviate slavery, for example, some looked at the planting of sugar maple orchards as a way of eradicating sugar cane in the South, which depended on slave labor."

"Washington felt a sound agricultural base would allow for a successful country," Norton says. "He realized agriculture had to become better; he thought the practice followed at the time was totally wrong. The land you inherited should be farmed your whole life based on sound agricultural practices. Even before he became president, he saw what the future of the country was based on: You have to feed your people."
MARY KATHARINE GODDARD spent most of her life in the shadows of a print shop, setting type for the first newspapers in the country and editing articles that set the stage for America’s rebellion against England and its emergence as a democratic nation. While most women in her era focused on supporting their Patriot husbands and raising children, Goddard poured her passion into serving the public as a printer, journalist and postmistress and keeping vital information flowing during the precarious Revolution years. Though she was not the only female printer at the time, she was one of the few who wasn’t forced into the trade by the death of a husband or father; she chose it herself and tackled it with diligence, viewing herself as a participant in the new republic, not a spectator.

By Emily McMacKin
"Mary Katharine Goddard saw herself as a public servant and defined herself that way," says Christopher Young, Ph.D., a history professor at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Ill., who has studied Goddard.

Her reputation for steady, selfless work earned her respect among colonists and the Continental Congress, which commissioned her to print the first signed copies of the Declaration of Independence. But the government she believed in later disappointed her when political patronage and discrimination led to her removal as postmistress of Baltimore, and she lost her livelihood when her brother forced her out of the printing business.

Still, Goddard continued to work quietly in the shadows, leaving behind a legacy of not only a pioneer printer and a revolutionary editor, but a champion of liberty.

INK IN HER BLOOD

Mary Katharine was drawn to the printing shop where her mother and brother worked and soon started to spend most of her time there “more from sheer exuberance and pleasure than from necessity,” writes Ward Miner in William Goddard: Newspaperman (Duke University Press, 1962). She set the type for weekly editions, while Sarah helped William run the press and edit the paper. Instead of dressing in silk gowns and attending society balls like most young women her age, Mary Katharine “had the sleeves of her dress rolled up and wore a goodly sized apron as she used her own printer’s stick in the composition of the paper,” Miner writes.

Colonial newspapers at the time were on the cusp of the Revolution; many existed to exert political influence and stir the simmering revolt against England. Content consisted of satirical essays, fiery columns and letters to the editor, most of which reflected the publisher’s views and were signed with pseudonyms. Opinion permeated even local stories. Newspapers were as much of a lucrative enterprise as an idealistic medium, with merchants relying on papers to advertise goods and read news about ships arriving at port. Print shops were a hub of activity—and the exciting atmosphere probably appealed to Mary Katharine.

When William, discouraged by scant circulation, moved to Philadelphia in 1765 to find a new project, he left Mary and their mother in charge of his print shop and bookbindery. The women revived the Gazette, which William had discontinued, and published it, along with almanacs, pamphlets and occasional books. Despite the Gazette being printed under the name of “Sarah Goddard and Company,” readers continued to address their letters to the editor to “Mr. Printer.”

PROVING HER PRINTING PROWESS

By this time, Mary Katharine had become as accomplished as her brother in printing and editing, and even William described her as an “expert & correct Compositor of Types.” If she and her mother had wanted to continue publishing material on their own, their hopes were dashed when her brother sold his business to a partner in 1768. William convinced the women to move again, this time to Philadelphia to help him with his next paper, the Philadelphia Chronicle and Universal Advertiser.

Despite the uncomfortable tension between William and his Philadelphia business partners compounded with their mother’s death in 1770, Mary Katharine devoted herself to the paper, dutifully keeping the finances and the printing on track, while her brother was frequently thrown in jail for his public outbursts and inflammatory articles. As William’s enemies grew, he lost interest in the Chronicle and turned his attention to starting a newspaper in Baltimore.

“Not that this means [the Chronicle] was allowed to come out irregularly or be slovenly in its appearance,” Miner writes. “Mary Katharine proved her mettle as a printer and a newspaperwoman.”

She managed the paper on her own when William moved to Baltimore in 1773 and kept it afloat despite a paper shortage. While her brother struggled to print regular issues of the Maryland Journal and the Baltimore Advertiser, she published the Chronicle with “clocklike regularity,” Miner writes.

Within a year, William was frustrated with
his new venture and anxious to try his scheme to start a Colonial postal system to counter the Royal Mail Service, which harassed colonists by scanning their mail for hints of rebellion. William discontinued the Chronicle in February 1774 and summoned Mary Katharine to Baltimore to publish his newspaper, while he left to set up postal offices between New Hampshire and Georgia.

A REVOLUTIONARY EDITOR

The role demanded much of Mary Katharine, who overnight became the Journal's primary editor, writer, news gatherer, subscription manager, debt collector and press foreman—but she thrived on the challenge.

“She took over the newspaper at a time when citizens were becoming increasingly aware of the power of the press to give voice to the idea of freedom,” writes Virginia Drachman in Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business (University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

Newspapers were becoming a crucial communication medium; their numbers doubled as colonists turned to them to spread revolutionary ideas and stay abreast of the conflict developing around them. The Journal was one of the first papers to report on the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord in April 1775 that sparked the Revolution. The news, printed a week after the event, was considered a scoop at the time. When a complete report of the conflict arrived later, Mary Katharine hustled to print broadsides, or “extras” as journalists call them today—a practice she followed with other key American victories.

She wasted no time in promoting her role at the Journal, replacing her brother’s imprint at the bottom of the May 10, 1775, edition with “published by M.K. Goddard.” Historians dispute whether this was an act of confidence on her part or the result of a financial agreement with William, whose financial troubles had landed him in jail once again.

The tone of the Journal changed with Mary Katharine at the helm. Unlike her erratic brother who used the newspaper to stir controversy and further his interests, she was a steady, impersonal editor who never allowed personal concerns or grudges to seep into the newspaper. Though the Journal clearly supported the Patriots, it probably offered a more objective style of news.

Shortage of supplies during the war as well as inflation forced newspaper publishers to sacrifice. Mary Katharine sometimes printed the Journal on smaller sheets of olive gray paper because of the lack of larger, high-grade sheets. She had to double the price of the paper to make it profitable and published almanacs and ran a bookbindery to supplement her income. When she couldn’t collect from subscribers, she accepted alternative payment, such as beef, pork, lard and any items she could sell at a dry goods and stationery store she also maintained. Despite the hardships, she always found a way to get the paper out.

“From 1775 to 1784, a period of great anxiety and difficulty in the history of American journalism, she printed the paper without a break and at a standard of excellence that rivaled the leading newspapers of the day,” observes Joseph Towne Wheeler in The Maryland Press: 1777 to 1790 (Maryland Historical Society, 1938).

Mary Katharine balanced her newspaper duties with a job as the first postmistress of Baltimore, a position that made her the “center of the information exchange,” Young says. While she likely received the appointment through her brother’s connections, she took the responsibility seriously and kept the mail moving by digging into her own pocket to pay post riders and cover postage costs. In a letter to General Horatio Gates, Postmaster General Ebenezer Hazard testified that she was so punctual about sending payments that the government usually owed her money by the end of the quarter.

MAKING HISTORY

Though Mary Katharine was selfless in her work, she was no shrinking violet; she stood her ground when she felt discriminated against. In 1776, she filed a complaint to the Baltimore Department of Safety, accusing a man of abusing her with “threats of indecent language on account of a late publication in her paper.” The Baltimore County Committee censured the man for trying to “influence the freedom of the press.”
When William, unsuccessful in getting the Army post he wanted, returned to Baltimore at the end of 1776, Mary Katharine continued to run the newspaper, while he dabbled in local politics. She remained respected by townspeople, while local mobs threatened to run William out of town twice for publishing supposedly unpatriotic political articles in the *Journal*. In 1777, the Continental Congress, which had fled to Baltimore, commissioned her to print the Declaration of Independence—the first copy with the signers’ names—to distribute throughout the Colonies. Mary Katharine risked arrest when she identified herself as the printer at the bottom of the Declaration, a document that the monarchy considered treasonous.

**LOSING HER LIVELIHOOD**

William allowed Mary Katharine to guide the *Journal* through the difficult years during the war, but as peace and prosperity returned, he grew discontented with his sister’s control of the paper. Sibling loyalty turned to rivalry. On January 2, 1784, Mary Katharine’s name disappeared from the *Journal*. Most historians agree that William forced his sister out, a speculation supported by the fact that she filed five lawsuits against him in one day. William took their quarrel public, publishing a 1784 almanac that mimicked hers and attacking her in print as a “certain hypocritical character” who published an almanac “for the dirty and mean purpose of Fraud and Deception.” The two never reconciled.

In 1789, Mary Katharine was stripped of her postmistress position in favor of a male appointee. She was given no reason for her removal at first, though the assistant postmaster general later claimed it was because a woman couldn’t handle the new travel demands of the job. Mary Katharine refused to accept that reasoning and petitioned George Washington and Congress for reinstatement, expressing her disappointment as “much easier felt than described.” In the petition, she pointed out her sacrifices and stellar record and challenged officials for any example of misconduct.

“She was frustrated by what she saw as an injustice and expected that something would be done about it,” Young says. “But she didn’t present herself as a woman in distress; she focused on the fact that she was a Patriot dedicated to the American cause.”

**HER LEGACY**

Though more than 200 Baltimore businessmen endorsed her petition, her plea was ignored. Mary Katharine operated a bookstore in the city until about 1810, but with no family in her life and her printing opportunities gone, her last years must have been lonely. When she died in 1816, she left her estate to her slave, Belinda Starling, whom she also freed in her will.

Though Goddard left behind no letters, journals or essays for historians to dissect, her example of patriotism and service lives on. Her story continues to inspire women in the Mary Katharine Goddard Chapter, Omaha, Neb., a group that adopted her name because they admired her independent spirit.

“All her life, she was probably doing things that were considered unladylike,” says Chapter Regent Sara Fraiser Sellgren, “but she was also doing things that were necessary and important.”

Emily McMackin, contributing editor, explored the life of Catherine Ferguson for the [January/February 2006 issue](#).

![A ledger page from October 1783 gives an account of Mary Katharine’s days as a Baltimore postmistress. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.](#)
The Historic Silliman House: Tribute to an American Family and Town

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON  PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARR CIALETTA
SUE SILLIMAN was a woman before her time. Born into a pioneer family in the late 1800s, she left her home in Three Rivers, Mich., to attend New York’s Columbia University. After obtaining her degree, she returned to Three Rivers—not to live the child-raising, crop-growing life of a typical pioneer woman, but to dedicate her life to the study and preservation of history.

Particularly interested in the history of her own frontier town, Silliman served as Three Rivers’ city librarian from 1902 to 1945. Her tireless historical research of Three Rivers and the St. Joseph County area culminated with the writing of her book, *St. Joseph in Homespun*, published by the Three Rivers Publishing Company as a commémoration of the county’s centennial in 1931. Silliman served as an active member of the Abiel Fellows Chapter, Three Rivers, Mich., during the 1920s and 1930s, so it is only fitting that the chapter now owns and maintains her family home, the Historic Silliman House and Museum.
HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

While Sue Silliman’s work as a local historian adds to the historical importance of her home, there are other reasons for its significance. The home was originally built in 1876 by Silliman’s blacksmith father, Arthur Silliman, to house both his family and his business, a unique setup during that time. Arthur’s mother and father, Alexander Silliman, were descendants of Revolutionary War Patriots and migrated to Michigan from the East Coast in 1845.

“This house is worthy of preservation because of its uniqueness. Its design is that of a New England factory, and the building was used both as a factory and a home,” says Michigan State Regent Mary Ellen Crusoe Byrne.

In addition to the Silliman family’s role as important pioneers in the area, the home’s location is noteworthy. When Arthur Silliman purchased his lot, he selected a choice parcel right at the confluence of the town’s three rivers. It is from this spot that the town received its name from local pioneer Jacob McInterfer in 1828. The home also sits on the site of the ancient trail along the St. Joseph River that the area’s earliest residents, the Potowatomi Indians, followed in their travels north.

The Silliman home is a simple, Georgian-style structure built of native fieldstone and brick. Strong and secure, its walls consist of solid brick with no bearing partitions, its floor joists are 12 inches on center as opposed to the standard 16 inches, and every joist is bridged, an uncommon practice in home construction, according to Katherine Langworthy, a member of the chapter’s Restoration Building Committee and a docent at the Silliman Museum. The home’s gabled roof contains six chimneys, and the house features three open porches, two of which are built over fieldstone basement rooms.

Not only is the house extremely well-built, but it is also uniquely designed for the ultimate work-life balance: Mr. Silliman’s thriving business, a blacksmith factory, sat just below the quarters where he lived with his family. The blacksmith shop fills the basement and originally included three forges. The main floor was the family home, and the third level was used for storage. The original house included no stairways between floors; the storage area was accessed by an outdoor stairway, and the basement was also reached from the outside. For more than 60 years, the Silliman family lived and worked in the home, helping build an American community.

MOMENTOUS RESCUE

After Sue Silliman’s death in 1945, the local chapter of the American Legion purchased her home. After almost 30 years of use, the group sold the home in 1974 to the General Telephone Company, which planned to raze the building. When Helen Wickman, another local historian and member of the Abiel Fellows Chapter, heard of the plans, she went to them and said, “You can’t do that,” Langworthy says. “Helen explained to them the importance of Sue Silliman as a historic woman in the area, and the phone company decided that if she got an estimate [for renovating the house] and raised the money to do it, they would give her the house.”

Upon making the agreement with the phone company, Wickman went to her fellow DAR members and asked for help saving the home. “Many people in our chapter were daunted by the prospect,” Langworthy says. “But with gentle persuasion, Helen won over the skeptics.”

As part of her efforts to save the Silliman home, Wickman completed the necessary research to obtain a listing for the house on the State and National Historic Registers, the first such listing in the city of Three Rivers. Beginning in 1976, Wickman spearheaded the chapter’s restoration efforts—forming a building committee, launching a fund drive and seeking bids for the restoration. More than two-thirds of the funds raised came from the local community, and another third came from a grant outside the area. Local entrepreneurs, the Three Rivers Foundation and employers who matched employees’ donations helped raise the needed funds. By 1980, the chapter met its fund-raising goal, the phone company signed the historic home over to the DAR and restoration began.

EXTENSIVE RENOVATIONS

When the DAR took over the Silliman home, it found plenty of work to be done. Not only was the house more than a century old, but the American Legion had made many changes during
1. The Abiel Fellows Library, located inside the Silliman home, has more than 300 books and military records, many on Michigan history.

2. The house is furnished to reflect the 60-plus years the family lived there and features some original Silliman furniture.

3. A clock in the main floor hallway belonged to Sue Silliman.

4, 5. Arthur Silliman chose to build at a choice spot right at the confluence of three rivers. The home sits on the site of the ancient trail along the St. Joseph River that the area's earliest residents, the Potowatomi Indians, followed in their travels north.

6. Arthur's blacksmith shop fills the basement and originally contained three forges.

7, 8. A vanity mirror, Raggedy Ann doll and chair belonging to Sue Silliman are a few of the personal accents found throughout the home.
its ownership of the building, and the DAR wanted to restore the structure to its original look as much as possible. To that end, public bathrooms were removed, partitions were replaced, floors were cleaned of tile and walled-up windows were exposed, Langworthy explains. The American Legion had added a dance hall addition to the building, which was removed to expose the original wall. The exterior brick was cleaned and tuck-pointed, chimneys were repaired, the roof was replaced and porches were rebuilt.

"Some concessions to modernization were made," Langworthy continues. The original home included no indoor stairways from one floor to the next, but it seemed wise to retain the stairs built by the American Legion. The interior stairwell added during the legion's tenure was opened up and turned so it now ascends from the former dining room. All wiring and plumbing were replaced, and a half-bath was added for the convenience of visitors.

Perhaps the most interesting component of the renovation involved the blacksmith's forge in the basement. While the original home included three forges, only one has been fully restored. It is a side draft, water-cooled brick forge typical of the style used in New England during the 1870s. The basement ceilings are 12 feet tall, allowing for plenty of room for blacksmithing. "Brian Robertson, a blacksmith from Owosso, Mich., rebuilt the forge after doing a lot of research into forges during that time period," Langworthy says. "He thinks it's built just like some of the carriage houses used back east during that time."

**HISTORIC SHOWPLACE**

After four years of restoration and ongoing fund-raising, the Historic Silliman House and Museum was ready to open to the public in 1984. At an open house gathering, the local telephone company relinquished control of the property to the Abiel Fellows Chapter. The house has since become known as the Three Rivers History Museum, housing local and area memorabilia, and serves as a center for genealogical research, Langworthy says. "The Abiel Fellows Library [located in the Silliman House] has more than 300 books including military records and books and other information on Michigan history. There are files on families, cemetery records and [records of] county communities."

Wickman, now in her 90s, left 17 volumes of her own research to the library when she moved out of state. These volumes include Wickman's research on 35 buildings in downtown Three Rivers that helped the town obtain a National Historic District listing on the State and National Register of Historic Sites in 1979, the first one designated in Michigan. Wickman's research available in the library also includes history on the Native Americans who lived in the area and Abiel Fellows, the chapter's namesake.

The Silliman House is open to the public once a week and by appointment for tours and for forging demonstrations by Robertson, a master blacksmith. The home also opens for special community celebrations, meeting groups and an annual holiday tour of homes sponsored by the local high school.

"The Silliman House is located at the foot of the downtown area, so it's right in the center of everything that happens in our community," Langworthy says. "It has become an important meeting spot and a place for learning more about the history of our area.

Nancy Mann Jackson, a contributing writer, covered the Ben Franklin tercentenary for the January/February 2006 issue.

---

**Preserving History Across Michigan**

ONE OF THE THREE OBJECTIVES OF THE DAR IS historic preservation, and the Michigan Daughters take that goal seriously. In addition to the Silliman House, local DAR chapters own two other historic homes in the state. They include the Governor Charles Miller Croswell Home in Adrian, owned by the Lucy Wolcott Barnum Chapter; and the Governor's Mansion in Marshall, owned by the Mary Marshall Chapter.

The fact that Michigan DAR chapters own three historic homes in the state "shows that Michigan Daughters are very interested in historic preservation," says Michigan State Regent Mary Ellen Crusoe Byrne: "All three chapters have worked and are still working hard to restore and maintain these three historic properties."

While the Silliman House was the home of an important pioneer family and served as both a home and a business, the state's other two DAR-owned homes served as residences for former governors of Michigan. "Governor Charles Miller Croswell's residence is a beautiful example of Greek revival architecture and is in Adrian's historic district," Byrne says. "The Governor's Mansion owned by the Mary Marshall Chapter was the home of James Wright Gordon, who served as Michigan's acting governor in 1841. The home was built as the future executive mansion, but then Lansing, instead of Marshall, became Michigan's capital."
COLONIAL FUNERAL RITES
AND
MOURNING RITUALS

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR

for Whom the Bell Tolls

© GETTY IMAGES / JOHN ER MOURNING RING: MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

American Spirit • March/April 2006
George Washington’s remains first rested in this tomb at Mount Vernon. All the caskets in the old family tomb were transferred to a new vault in April 1831. Photo by Robert C. Lautman.

This mourning locket decorated with the tomb of Washington was believed to hold the intertwined hair of George and Martha Washington. It was common by the 18th century to wear mourning jewelry containing strands of hair to remind mourners of the deceased.

1799, AMERICANS GRIEVED FOR GEORGE WASHINGTON in a funeral spectacle befitting a man of his status. Descriptions of the elaborate processions and arrangements held at Mount Vernon on December 20, 1799, appeared in Colonial newspapers. In the South Carolina Gazette, an article equal parts eulogy, news and event program proclaimed “the Father of his country and Friend of man, was consigned to the tomb, with solemn honors and funeral pomp.” A band played for the procession consisting of soldiers, clergy, pallbearers, mourners and Masonic brethren. The Herald of Liberty published a list of participants. Thousands of people—including laborers, masons, bakers and farmers—witnessed mock funerals that paid homage to Washington in cities like New York and Philadelphia.
While it was common by the mid-18th century for affluent members of society to stage funeral events complete with public processions, masses, gifts of remembrance and internment in a family plot, average citizens expected far less. Most families held small graveside ceremonies for relatives and friends of the deceased.

The way family members grieved and buried loved ones in the Colonial period depended on a set of traditions based on the social position, ethnic origin and cultural heritage of the deceased. "Many of the things we associate with modern funerals are actually ancient traditions based on folklore and myth," says Jon Austin, Director of the Museum of Funeral Customs in Springfield, Ill. The roots of contemporary death rites—wakes, funerals and feasts—were brought to this country by our Colonial ancestors.

While Washington lived to be 68, the average person expected to die well before their senior years. In the 17th century, only 2 percent of the population lived past 65, and by the late 18th century that number had risen only slightly. Life expectancy today is mostly about diet, exercise and genetics, but in early America it related to geography and disease. According to David Hackett Fischer in Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (Oxford University Press, 1989), the annual death rate in New England for all causes and ages in the 1730s was 30 per thousand, while it was twice as high in Virginia and in the South. The high death rate was primarily due to epidemic diseases like measles, smallpox and yellow fever. Infant mortality in an age of rampant illness and crude medicine ranked even higher. Death could be sudden and unexpected, with a person well in the morning and dead by evening.

In the Colonial period, waves of epidemics swept through the population, wiping out entire families.

Bells tolled throughout the northern Colonies to announce the death of a citizen—nine times for a man, six times for a woman and three times for a child, followed by bells tolling to signify the child's age. Dutch families paid a person known as an aanspecker to invite people to funeral ceremonies. "It was more traditional for families to issue a printed invitation to a funeral, much like you would for a wedding," Austin explains. Unless the deceased was a prominent member of the community, funerals were private affairs for family, close friends and neighbors.

Before the advent of funeral homes, the family was responsible for preparing the body for burial. Embalming wasn't introduced in the United States until the 1840s. Until that point, relatives of the same sex washed the deceased and placed the body in a handmade shroud or wrapped it in a cloth sheet for internment.

Wooden coffins made by a male family member or by a local carpenter were the norm throughout the Colonies in the late 1700s. Stores sold special coffin hardware—screws with heads shaped like weeping cypresses and nails shaped like crosses. As Americans prospered, the demand for different types of funeral services increased, leading coffin makers to diversify their businesses. The Bachman family opened the first funeral home in America in Germantown, Pa., in 1769. Individuals like Michael Jenkins, a cabinetmaker and the first coroner of Baltimore, began making coffins in 1799 before his business evolved by the mid-1800s into Henry W. Jenkins & Son, Funeral Directors and Cabinetmakers.

According to Austin, Colonial families didn't hold visiting hours or wakes; instead, family members usually slept overnight in the same room as the corpse. Relatives watched for latent signs of life and protected the body from scavengers. In Jewish families and in some parts of the United States, a dying person was placed on the floor to be in touch with the ground as a symbol of returning to the earth. "In England during the medieval period, open coffins were not unusual to show that the dead hadn't been harmed and had met an honorable death," Austin says. In the backwoods of the Colonies, it became a tradition for everyone in attendance to touch the corpse one at a time, especially in cases of murder. Folklore held that the deceased would begin bleeding when touched by the murderer.

In the late 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, families of the deceased gave mourners gifts, such as scarves, ribbons, cloaks, gloves and badges, as remembrances of the dead. Enamel or gold finger rings and silver spoons with coffin-shaped handles made common memorial pieces. The ritual of providing gloves to mourners dates from...
the mid-17th century. Individuals collected them as a sign of their social standing—the larger the collection, the more important the person. According to Bruce Daniels in Puritans at Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England (St. Martin’s Press, 1996), one minister collected 3,000 pairs of gloves during his lifetime. Many wives and children found themselves destitute after deducting the cost of these tokens from their estate. In an attempt to end these extravagances, New Englanders passed laws discouraging expensive funerals. Yet the traditions continued. When Christopher Avery, a prominent member of the Avery family in Groton, Conn., died in 1661, pallbearers received gloves and gold rings.

According to Daniels, Catholics believed that “the prayers, gifts, good deeds and so forth offered by friends and relatives on behalf of the deceased could shorten his or her stay in purgatory.” In contrast, Puritans in England and America didn’t believe in purgatory, so they buried their dead without excessive mourning or elaborate blessings. “It was too late for God’s mercy, and they felt grieving was unnecessary because the deceased was returning to his real father—God,” explains Carolyn Travers of Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Mass., a living history museum that depicts the 1627 home of the Mayflower passengers.

Puritan leaders in the 17th century attempted to restrict mourning and funerals, but to little effect. Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts devoted only two lines in his diary to his wife’s death. Yet when he died in 1649, the Colony declared a public holiday complete with marching militiamen and a musket volley tribute.

NEW ENGLANDERS BURIED their loved ones in a public plot in a simple ceremony officiated by a minister, with friends and family in attendance. “Puritans felt that standing quietly by the grave during the burial was a sign of respect,” Travers says. In the South, burial usually took place in a garden on the family property for individuals who lived far from town. Laws forbade public ceremonies for slaves, yet private ones were held within the community. For servants, slaves and the poor, burial in unmarked graves was the norm.

Regardless of where one was buried, it often took several years for a family to place a marker on the grave. While the first “headstones” consisted of wood, grave markers carved by local carvers from area quarries appeared in Newport, R.I., as early as 1647. In Virginia, headstones came from England. Gravestones featured a variety of carvings from winged angels to border designs. The Stevens family of Newport began carving stones at the beginning of the 18th century, and the shop is still in business today.

AN INTEGRAL PART of any funeral—whether simple or elaborate—was the food served to mourners after the burial.

The origins of the afterfuneral feast date back to the Middle Ages, when families offered mourners food and lodging. Excessive feasts came to be expected by the late 18th century. At the Christopher Avery funeral in Connecticut, guests received cones of sugar weighing six to 10 pounds each. Immense amounts of liquor accompanied some funerals, often with disastrous results: There are accounts of injuries ranging from drunken attendees (including children) falling into open graves to shootings among armed guests. Quakers served cakes and wine before the burial and a meal afterward with limited amounts of alcohol.

Throughout the Colonial period, the death rites of both the rich and the ordinary shared three commonalities—liquor, food and tokens. While the degree of extravagance, expense and memorial tokens varied based on the economic circumstances of the deceased, our ancestors commemorated the lives of their family and friends in ways that are still recognizable today. On the bicentennial of George Washington’s death in 1999, Mount Vernon recreated his 1799 funeral. It was a reminder that our funeral customs for heads of state and the famous aren’t that different from those 200 years ago.

This gravestone in the Newport, R.I., Common Burying Ground was designed and carved by John Stevens II, whose father founded the John Stevens Shop in 1705 in Newport. Three centuries later, the stone-carving business they started is still thriving under the ownership of Nick Benson.
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: _______________________

CRAFTING A COUNTRY OF VALUES

A Q&A WITH

NEIL BALDWIN

By Jamie Roberts

AN AWARD-WINNING HISTORIAN EXPLORES THE OFTEN SURPRISING REALITY BEHIND OUR MOST ENDURING SYMBOLS AND NATIONAL BELIEFS.

While many writers have begun to rely on digital records to examine their historical subjects, as well as assistants to do the grunt work, historian Neil Baldwin steadfastly remains a hands-on researcher. In the course of writing his award-winning biographies—on topics ranging from the inventor Thomas Edison to the artist Man Ray—Baldwin insists on traveling far and wide to see and, in some cases, to hold original photographs, prints, letters, even the journals of his subjects. He’s the guy at the library Xerox machine, putting in coins to copy pages from a source. He even buys used books so he can write in the margins.

Baldwin believes that this kind of primary research was essential to his sixth and latest major nonfiction book, The American Revelation: Ten Ideals That Shaped Our Country From the Puritans to the Cold War (St. Martin’s Press, 2005). “I need to read and absorb everything for myself,” he says. “Every single word that goes into my books is my responsibility, and I have to be 100 percent certain that I can vouch for every sentence.”

After his exhaustive research, Baldwin puts the history and facts together in the frame of a narrative. “Without a sense of story, you are lost,” he says. “That’s why the bibliographies of my books tend to be lengthy. The factual background needs to be impeccable, so that the story on the surface moves along swiftly.”

American Spirit spoke to Baldwin about the process of writing The American Revelation, named one of the Chicago Tribune’s best books of 2005. The book explores fundamental ideals—such as self-reliance, manifest destiny and the melting pot—that have shaped the country, and how 10 Americans expressed those ideals and ushered them into the national conversation.

“I wanted to focus on familiar expressions most people would recognize from high school, the expressions people would initially
think they already knew,” Baldwin explains. While he hopes The American Revelation sparks a discussion of national values, he was careful to ensure that his discussion of history avoided a political agenda. “I wanted to be clear about what these principles meant in their own time and place, not what they theoretically mean to us now,” Baldwin says. “I wanted to create a snapshot of 1630, 1890 or 1947. One way to find out what we really believe now is to go back and dig up what we used to stand for and then see how far we may have strayed or, perhaps, how closely we still hold to those values.”

One chapter focuses on Thomas Paine and the genesis of the influential pamphlet Common Sense. What was surprising about this Patriot’s life? What lessons can we learn from Paine about the ideal of self-determination?

When Paine came to America in the fall of 1774, the story he created about himself was that Common Sense was his first public statement about freedom and democracy and participating in public life. However, when you go back and explore his life leading up to his emigration to America, you realize that he had already been very politically involved in England. After being fired as an excise officer [a tax collector], he wrote a pamphlet, The Case for the Officers of Excise, which was a rehearsal for Common Sense. He had it in his mind that America was a place where he could be a blank slate. That touched me. After all, isn’t that what people think about America in the ideal sense? It was the same for the Pilgrims and their leader John Winthrop, the governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. America was a place to begin anew, people believed, which is true even in the 21st century.

I like that Paine could exploit that feeling about this country. Before he got to Philadelphia, he had no real prospects. If you think about that, Common Sense becomes even more meaningful. It’s so often taken at face value. It isn’t just about emancipation from England. It’s also about Thomas Paine’s emancipation as a person.

Why was it so important for you to see an actual copy of Common Sense? Why is hands-on research so important?

What struck me in seeing it for myself is that Common Sense is a handy, pocket-sized item. That’s not the image I had in my head. It’s so intentionally designed to stick in your pocket. To be read on the run. In snatches. The typography is very clear. The letters are very dark and black and readable. There are great, big capital letters on the cover.

I made the trip to Philadelphia because I wanted to actually hold the booklet in my hand. I didn’t want to talk about it in the abstract. It was the same when I was researching the artist Man Ray. I had to see every photograph by Man Ray in every museum and in every private collection. In the same way, it was important that I could look at all of Thomas Edison’s journals in his laboratory. Until you come to grips with the object itself, it can be difficult to come in contact with the person you’re writing about. The digitizing of records is a great thing, but I don’t want to lose touch with the actual, physical objects.

Another ideal you explore is E Pluribus Unum—“Out of many, one.” How was the creator of the Great Seal’s motto an embodiment of this ideal?

I was impressed that a Swiss immigrant, someone not even born in this country, dreamed up our motto. That’s a very powerful piece of symbolism. Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin were on the Great Seal committee in the summer of 1776, but they couldn’t come up with anything acceptable to the Continental Congress. They hired a freelance portrait artist, Pierre Eugene Du Simitière, who came up with the slogan.

Du Simitière was impoverished and lived in a cramped apartment in Philadelphia, but he loved America. He made a little money doing sketches, and he charged a penny admission for people to see the objects he collected and displayed in a cabinet in his living room. Despite his poverty—he probably died of starvation—he never wanted to go back to Switzerland or to the West Indies where he could live much cheaper. His story tells us that these three Latin words—E Pluribus Unum—weren’t an abstract concept that just so happened to characterize America. They were real in the life of Pierre Eugène Du Simitière.

Can you explain your process for choosing the individuals who embodied your 10 ideals?

The one thing everyone in my book had in common was that their ideals stood up to this common standard. They were legitimate and sincere at the moment they were conceived and introduced to the culture.

The challenge was to find the actual historic moment when the ideal entered the culture at large. I was curious how the ideals of self-reliance and manifest destiny crossed over from someone’s mind or someone’s journal to the larger world. It’s one thing to sit in your room and have a great idea, but then what? What
medium do you take to make it enter the public discourse? How is a concept introduced to the culture, and who is responsible for that? How do you reach the people you want to reach and influence the people you want to influence? That's a much more complicated thing to determine.

What do the ideals in your book have in common?

Although current events played a role in shaping the book, I resisted tying the ideals together in a "big bow," such as I could easily have done by relating manifest destiny to the war in Iraq. However, I do believe these ideals can cause people to ask questions of themselves, or to ask where the country is going. For example, people are throwing around the idea of a "Marshall Plan for Louisiana" after Hurricane Katrina, but is that a misunderstanding of the term? Do people understand what George Marshall's plan meant for Europe after World War II?

That's why it's important to go back to the history. The further we get away from these ideas, the harder it gets to recapture what an idea like self-reliance—the guiding belief behind American individualism—meant. Did anybody ever try to figure out why Ralph Waldo Emerson decided to write his essay "Self-Reliance"? He started thinking about the phrase in preparation for a lecture at Harvard Divinity School, yet his manifesto wasn't an abstract sermon; it was about his own quest for self-reliance and struggle for personal freedom. When you discover an idea's genesis, it's less of an abstraction and has more intrinsic meaning.

What misconceptions about our country's founding do you hope your book clarifies for readers?

If you look at Puritan times through the late Colonial period, one of the big misconceptions would be this magical unity of the country. Unity was very much desired, but it took a long time to accomplish.

I also wanted to convey that no one should be surprised that religion is in the forefront of our discourse today. Religious thought has always been very much a part of the identity of this country. From the most ferocious partisan to the most casual observer, religion plays a large role in our culture. It did that from the very beginning.

How would you teach a history course on these themes?

I wouldn't start with asking the students to memorize dates or a time line. That's why kids are bored; I would be bored. I'd talk about real people. What kind of person was Thomas Paine? What does it tell you that someone comes over to America with just a letter from Benjamin Franklin in his pocket? What does that tell you about that person's personality? Instead of asking for the symbolism of the first page of Common Sense, I would ask for an interpretation of the person who created such an important, inspiring work. You can't just talk about these ideas in the abstract. Common Sense didn't just fall from the sky. A real person wrote this pamphlet, and real people read it—from George Washington to the generals in his army to the members of the Continental Congress.

B

orn in New York City, Neil Baldwin received his Ph.D. in modern American poetry from the State University of New York at Buffalo. His first major nonfiction book was a biography of American poet William Carlos Williams, To All Gentleness (Atheneum, 1984). His biography of Man Ray (Clarkson Potter, 1988) was the basis for the award-winning PBS documentary "Man Ray: Prophet of the Avant-Garde." Business Week magazine named Baldwin's biography of Thomas Edison (Hyperion, 1995) one of the 10 best books of the year.

The author of three volumes of poetry, Baldwin has also taught literature and creative writing at several universities in New York. In 1996, he co-edited a collection of interviews with National Book Award Winners titled The Writing Life. After 15 years as founding executive director of the National Book Foundation, he stepped down in 2003 to devote himself to writing and public speaking.

For more information or to contact Baldwin, visit his Web site at www.neilbaldwinbooks.com.
I approached the Puritans this way. I started with John Winthrop's journal and tried to humanize him. I discovered he wasn't just some craggy guy with black clothes preaching that you have to be a good person all the time. Every day at the same time while they were separated by an ocean, he and his wife would pray, no matter where they were. He had a family, and he left all his property in England to come here. You have to respect him for these qualities.

What do you hope The American Revelation adds to the current cultural debate about American values? Why is this debate important, even essential?

I'm more interested that there's a conversation. It's very hard to find that these days. So many self-styled pundits are yelling and arguing everybody is seizing some side of an ideology and demonizing the other side. If we could have a proper discourse about the true nature of these ideals, then I would be satisfied. I'd like my book to spark a discussion of who we are as a country and what has made us who we are.

What new projects do you have in the works?

For a total change of pace, I've been writing a novel. I started out my writing career at the very beginning as a poet, but for the past three decades my genre has always been nonfiction. The main difference that I'm discovering between making up characters and story lines out of my imagination and strictly adhering to reality and facts is that the former has no limits—and the latter has very strict limits. However, structurally I've learned a lot from writing nonfiction, wherein you have to force yourself to write a narrative that people will enjoy reading, while staying in touch with facts. The necessity to tell a good story is applicable to both genres.

**A KEY IDEAL.
AN UNLIKELY SOURCE**

In the following excerpt from Chapter 3 of The American Revelation, author Neil Baldwin describes the unlikely source for our national motto, E Pluribus Unum, or "Out of many, one." The task to design an emblem and national coat of arms ultimately took six years and the combined efforts of 14 men before the Great Seal of the United States was adopted on June 20, 1782.

On July 4, 1776, the distinguished gentlemen of the Second Continental Congress gathered in the Pennsylvania State House assembly room to adopt and date the revised Declaration of Independence. The document would not be signed by the members until August 2. Only one other piece of business remained in the late afternoon before the agenda was completed: "Resolved, that Dr. Franklin, Mr. J. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, be a committee, to bring in a device for a seal for the United States of America." At seventy, Franklin was the elder statesman of Congress. An energetic participant in collective decision making, he was already involved with the Committee of Secret Correspondence and the Committee on Maintenance and Supervision of the Continental Army, among several other groups. With Adams, Franklin had been working for the previous three weeks on a committee to prepare a list of protocols for treaties with foreign powers, while at the same time the two men had been suggesting minor modifications to Jefferson's draft for the Declaration.

There was some urgency to complete the mission of the Great Seal Committee as soon as possible. Within a week of the committee's establishment, John Adams proposed that the seal be ready in time to attach to the fully executed ("subscribed") Declaration of Independence. Since none of the three statesmen possessed specialist talents in heraldry, they needed to find someone "creatively involved in the art" to "apply himself with gusto" to the task. To assist in the creation of the Great Seal they required a consultant. They called upon the talents of an eccentric son of the Enlightenment, a Swiss draftsman, artifact collector, numismatist, cartographer, historical researcher, and sometime silhouette cutter, a solitary bachelor who lived in two disorderly and cluttered rooms rented from a Mrs. Robinson on Chestnut Street opposite the Fountain Inn in Philadelphia. His name was Pierre Eugène Du Simitière.

**From The American Revelation by Neil Baldwin. © 2005 by the author and reprinted by permission of St. Martin's Press, LLC. Now available at all online booksellers and wherever books are sold. Available in paperback July 4, 2006.**
A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room, and pays for itself!

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp combines the benefits of natural daylight indoors with a savings of $77 over the life of one bulb!

Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are compounded...and the effects of indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to physical well-being. Many people believe that the quantity and quality of light can play a part in one’s mood and work performance.

Now there’s a better way to bring the positive benefits of natural sunlight indoors.

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces. Studies show that sunshine can lift your mood and your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun, unfortunately, does not always shine. So, to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, use the floor lamp that simulates the full spectrum of daylight. You will see with more clarity and enjoyment as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces eyestrain.

Its 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing, needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes.

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp for the best value ever! Now more than ever is the time to add sunshine to every room in your home at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with a 1-year manufacturer’s limited warranty and firstSTREET’s exclusive guarantee. Try this product for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

SAVE $77 over the life of one Balanced Spectrum® bulb!

A 150-watt incandescent bulb uses $0.013 per hour in energy cost. The Balanced Spectrum® bulb uses an average of 70% less energy which saves you $0.009 per hour. Based on 8,000 hours bulb life, the Balanced Spectrum® bulb will save $72 in energy cost. Plus, because the Balanced Spectrum® bulb lasts 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb priced at an average of $0.50, an additional $5 savings is realized.

As soon as I turned on the lamp and began to read the newspaper I could see the wonderful difference. This lamp is just what I needed. Thank you so much.”

Donna E.
Scranton, PA

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp for the best value ever!
National Society Daughters Of The American Revolution
Official Insignia

Chapter Regents Blue Enamel with Historic Emblem
Past Chapter Regents and Emblem with Center Diamond
Chapter Bar, Ancestor Bar and Emblem

J·E·CALDWELL & CO
OFFICIAL JEWELER TO THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE DAR SINCE 1892

To order, call us at 800-786-5890 or visit www.jecaldwell.com.