Petticoats in The Pulpit
Female Preachers in Early America

Wool Braided Rugs
Homespun Works of Art

Henry Knox
At the Right Hand of History

How to Pen a Family Narrative

The restoration of Jefferson’s retreat

Poplar Forest
Consider membership in the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), a volunteer women’s service organization that honors and preserves the legacy of our Patriot ancestors. More than 200 years ago, American Patriots fought and sacrificed for the freedoms we enjoy today. As a member of DAR, you can continue this legacy by actively promoting patriotism, preserving American history and securing America’s future through better education for children.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP?
Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a Patriot of the American Revolution is eligible for membership. DAR volunteers are willing to provide guidance and assistance with your first step into the world of genealogy.

HOW IS PATRIOT DEFINED?
DAR recognizes Patriots not only as soldiers, but as anyone who contributed to the cause of American freedom. To find out if your ancestor is recognized by the DAR as a Revolutionary Patriot, a request form is available online at www.dar.org by clicking on “Membership.”

HOW MANY MEMBERS DOES THE NATIONAL SOCIETY HAVE?
DAR has 165,000 members in nearly 3,000 chapters worldwide, including chapters in 11 foreign countries. Since its founding in 1890, DAR has admitted more than 800,000 members.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Go to www.dar.org and click on “Membership.” There you’ll find helpful instructions, advice on finding your lineage and a Prospective Member Information Request Form. Or call (202) 879–3224 for more information on joining the work of this vital, service-minded organization.
Penning a Family Narrative 18
Each family history is full of characters and anecdotes that rival the most fascinating novel. Here’s how to create a record of those stories that future generations will long to read.

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

Homespun Works of Art 23
Born out of practicality, wool braided rugs caught on quickly among early Americans and remain a form of artistic expression that goes well beyond cozy floor coverings.

BY PHYLLIS McINTOSH

Petticoats in the Pulpit 28
Though preaching by women was strictly forbidden in most 18th- and 19th-century churches, a spirited few dared to step out of their place and fulfill their calling.

BY KIM HILL

Right-Hand Man 34
The memory of General Henry Knox, who braved the odds to transport cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston and break the redcoats’ siege, lives on in Maine.

BY LEE GIMPEL

Sounds of Freedom 46
America’s first composer, William Billings, worked and prospered during the period of American independence.

BY GREGORY PYSH
{Today’s Daughters}

Breaking Down Barriers 4
Jacque Smith Burdette was a female first in aviation, opening up the field of air-traffic control for women.

By Lena Basha

{Holiday Gift Guide}

Stocking Stuffers 12
Share the American spirit with the loved ones on your list with presents that celebrate family, history and patriotism.

By Lena Basha

{Class Act}

Always the Student 16
A lifelong learner, Kathleen Mirabile charges her students to teach her something new each school year.

By Emily McMackin

{National Treasures}

Capturing Cherubs 17
An 1851 portrait of three young brothers was commissioned on behalf of the boys’ widowed father.

From the DAR Museum Collection

{Historic Homes}

Jefferson’s Retreat 40
Painstaking restoration has rescued the perfect proportions of Poplar Forest, one of Thomas Jefferson’s proudest architectural achievements.

By Phyllis Spiedell

{Plus}

President General’s Message 3
Letters to the Editor 5
Whatnot 8
Bookshelf 14
From the President General

Poplar Forest, Thomas Jefferson’s retreat from the hustle and bustle of Monticello, graces this issue’s cover as the focus of our Historic Homes feature. The circa 1806 house, which Jefferson considered his greatest architectural achievement, fell into disrepair as it passed from owner to owner after Jefferson’s death in 1826. It wasn’t until 1983 that a group of local residents and history buffs formed a nonprofit group to revive the house to its original state, an ongoing process of painstaking authenticity that has earned numerous preservation and architectural awards.

I’m sure you’ve heard of Henry Knox, one of the most legendary generals of the Revolutionary War who was responsible for hauling cannons 300 miles from New York’s Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in the middle of winter. Although his name is familiar to many DAR members, his legacy is in danger of being forgotten by most Americans. That’s one reason we’re spotlighting him in the first of a recurring feature called Our Patriots. We also visit Montpelier, the estate where Knox spent the final years of his life as a gentleman farmer. The property was rebuilt and maintained with local DAR members’ support.

We uncover the story of another little-known Patriot, William Billings, the father of American musical composition whose patriotic songs helped fuel the Revolution. His most famous tune, “Chester,” published in 1770, became a fight song for American troops during the Revolution.

Song may have always been a mainstay in church, but female preachers have not, especially in early American history. The path traveled by female religious pioneers—from Anne Hutchinson, who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638 for leading religious meetings, to Antoinette Brown Blackwell, who became the first female ordained minister in a mainstream denomination in 1853—was anything but easy, as our feature reveals.

We celebrate a modern-day female pioneer in our Today’s Daughters feature. In her distinguished career as an air-traffic controller, Jacque Smith Burdette broke down gender barriers at the Federal Aviation Administration and was inducted into the Women in Aviation Hall of Fame.

As winter creeps in, curl up with our Crafts feature, which examines the home-spun art of braiding wool rugs. Created by necessity to keep colonists warm during harsh New England winters, making and collecting these colorful rugs is now catching on with the younger set.

Just as vital as passing along a craft is the need to carry on a family’s history. Our feature on penning your family narrative gives readers helpful guidelines for making it something that later generations will clamor to read.

As you prepare for the gift-giving season, take a peek at our guide to presents that celebrate family, history and patriotism. (And remember, no Christmas list is complete without an American Spirit subscription!) From all of us on the DAR publications staff, we wish you a warm and wonderful holiday season.

Linda Gist Calvin
BY LENA BASHA

{Today’s Daughters}

As a high-school senior in the small copper-mining town of Superior, Ariz., Jacque Smith Burdette saw a picture of a woman air-traffic controller on the front of a Navy brochure and immediately knew what she wanted to do with her life. But her journey to the top—as one of the most celebrated women in aviation today—wasn’t a smooth ride. Though she started her career when there weren’t many women in air-traffic control, especially ones in positions of power, that never stopped her.

After a three-year enlistment in the Navy at California’s Alameda Naval Air Station, Mrs. Burdette, then a newlywed, took a break from air-traffic control to start a family. While she loved raising her three sons and two stepchildren, she missed her job. “I used to stand out in the backyard and watch Navy jets coming in for landing and dream about being back in a control tower talking to airplanes,” she recalls.

She returned to air-traffic control in 1968, working for the Federal Aviation Administration (then an agency) as a radar controller at the Los Angeles Air Traffic Control Center. Being a woman in a male-dominated field was already tough, but after she and her husband divorced in 1967, she also had to handle the stress of working full-time as a single mother.

“She got that job because she was a woman.’ It would hurt, but it made me stronger.”

As more women joined the aviation field, Mrs. Burdette realized that she and her fellow female controllers needed support. In 1979, she cofounded the Professional Women Controllers, which today boasts more than 500 members.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Burdette continued to break down the gender barriers at the FAA, becoming the first woman facility manager in 1982, which took her to New Hampshire. Another cross-country move happened in 1984 when Mrs. Burdette was named division manager of the western/Pacific region, making her responsible for air-traffic services in Arizona, Nevada, California, Hawaii, Guam and American Samoa. “I had about 3,400 employees under me,” she recalls. “I loved this job and traveled millions of miles doing it.”

Mrs. Burdette rounded out the last years of her career in aviation—and became another female first—as the Regional Administrator in Alaska. It was a slower-paced job, she says, but it was an experience of a lifetime. “I learned to eat moose, caribou, bear, halibut and salmon many different ways,” she says.

She also was the FAA’s executive lead on the inaugural Alaska Airlines flight into Vladivostok, Russia. “That was an amazing trip,” she recalls. “But when we arrived, the Russians didn’t know what to do with me because a woman in aviation was unheard of there.”

After she retired in 1995, the impact she had in aviation—and on her female colleagues—was honored in significant ways. Just before her retirement, the city of Anchorage declared December 5 a day to celebrate Mrs. Burdette. The following year, the FAA established an award named after Mrs. Burdette to recognize leadership and advancement in equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and diversity. In 1997, Mrs. Burdette was inducted into the Women in Aviation Hall of Fame; and in 2003, as part of the Centennial of Flight celebration, she was named one of the 100 women in aviation who made a difference.

Today, Mrs. Burdette is retired, but she’s just as busy spending time with her family (four children and 11 grandchildren) and helping others. She is president of the Gig Harbor Navy League, a deacon in her church and the DAR Veterans Representative for the Elizabeth Forey Chapter, Tacoma, Wash.

“I have a deep feeling about our servicemen and servicewomen, especially our veterans, and the DAR lets me help support them in a small way,” she says. © KARI HAMILTON

To nominate a Daughter for a future issue, e-mail a description to americanspirit@dar.org.
THE MARQUIS IN MASSACHUSETTS

I enjoyed reading the article about the Marquis de Lafayette in the July/August 2007 issue. I knew from Bolton, Mass., history that Lafayette made two stops here on September 2, 1824. Lafayette had dinner at the Abraham Holman Inn and stayed overnight at the S.V.S. Wilder Mansion.

I further researched Lafayette’s visit to our area and found something we could use as a chapter program for the upcoming year: Alan Hoffman’s new book, Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825. Hoffman spent two years translating the account kept by Lafayette’s private secretary, Auguste Lavasseur.

Hoffman lives close by and spoke at our chapter meeting in November 2007. Thank you for the inspiration.
Carolyn L. Holbrook, Regent
Old Concord Chapter, Concord, Mass.

ALL TURNED AROUND

When reading the sidebar on page 41 of the Historic National Road article (July/August 2007), I did not understand why the road in Lexington, Miss., turned south to Mississippi! I found that the abbreviation was incorrect and should be Lexington, Mo., instead.
Marie A. McCollom
Calhoun Mound Chapter, Belleville, Ill.

RESEARCH VS. RECONNECTION

In response to your July/August 2007 article “A Tree Grows Online,” I am appalled that a DAR publication would approve of an article that concludes that a genealogical research project is acceptable if it is inaccurate, and that “reconnecting with living family members is more important than historical accuracy.”

There are many more resources than the undocumented family trees available from Geni.com, such as the millions of pedigrees on FamilySearch.org, which are great for finding relatives. Traditional research is more than “studying appropriate books.” I am disappointed the article does not encourage more accuracy.
Joan A. Griffis
Danville, Ill.

Editor’s Note: The point of our genealogy story was to show readers how the Internet and its 21st-century tools can bring value to a genealogical researcher, especially one who is new to the field. Our article never asserts that it should be the sole means of research, and we clearly state its pros and cons.

MARTYRS’ DETAILS

The article in the March/April 2007 issue about the Prison Ship Martyrs Monument located in Fort Greene Park, Brooklyn, N.Y., contains an error on page 45. The article states, “under the leadership of Major General Nathanael Greene, on August 27, 1776, the greatly outnumbered Continental army lost.” Actually, Gen. Greene succumbed to camp fever four days before battle and was removed. General Washington put Major General Israel Putnam in charge. Also, the parks department removed the plaque presented by King Carlos of Spain for safekeeping because it was being vandalized; it was not stolen.
Margaret Skinner, Regent
Fort Greene Chapter, Brooklyn, N.Y.

FROM A WOMAN’S POINT OF VIEW

A year ago, I became a DAR member and received a subscription to American Spirit. I have been delighted with your magazine and have read each issue entirely. The stories are wonderful and accompanied by outstanding photos; for instance, the photo on page 45 of the July/August 2007 issue depicting the detail of a chair back is rare. I also enjoy the female bent of many articles; it is difficult to learn about history from a woman’s point of view. I look forward to receiving your magazine for years to come.
Christina L. Brady
Fort Nelson Chapter, Portsmouth, Va.

FLAG WAVING

I enjoyed the chronology of July 4th celebrations in the July/August 2007 issue. For July 4, 1959, I was at the Girl Scout Roundup with 12,000 Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from all over the world, camping at the Long and Johnson Ranch in Colorado Springs, Colo. On July 4, we flew a 49-star flag for the first time in honor of Alaska becoming the 49th state. First lady Mamie Eisenhower, the honorary president of Girls Scouts USA, joined us in our festivities. Our flag ceremony consisted of 320 of us raising 110 flags. It was quite a thrill and certainly a memorable Fourth!
Sue Guppy Farnum, Regent
First Resistance Chapter
Great Barrington, Mass.

THE LAST GENERAL

The May/June 2007 article about General John Stark (“A Hero’s Haven”) stated that he was the last surviving general of the Revolutionary War. He died in 1822. Actually, General Rufus Putnam died in 1824 in Marietta, Ohio. Putnam is credited with plans to trick the British by fortifying Dorchester Heights with hay bales and cannons, causing the British to evacuate Boston in March 1776.
Ann Sloan Jones
San Clemente Island Chapter
San Clemente, Calif.

LEASER AND THE LIBERTY BELL

In response to the September/October 2007 letters concerning John Jacob Mickley’s involvement with
Letters to the Editor

Spirited comments from our readers

the Liberty Bell: I believe my fifth great-grandfather, Frederick Leaser, was the farmer who carried the bell in his wagon. This story has passed through my family. The Leaser farm is still on the Blue Mountain where Frederick is buried as a Revolutionary hero.

Marilyn Skiffington
Big Cypress Chapter, Naples, Fla.

An expert’s reply: According to our information, both Mickley and Leaser most likely contributed to the journey of the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia to Allentown in 1777, but to what extent both were involved is unclear. Until substantial documented evidence resolves the issue, I would stay with the facts in the following National Park Service study, “Independence, The Liberty Bell: A Special History Study” by John C. Paige (1986):

“...Legend credits John Jacob Mickley with being the teamster of the wagon carrying the State House bell away from Philadelphia ... A myth that originated in the mid-19th century was that the State House bell was sunk in the Delaware River on this trek and raised when the British withdrew from Philadelphia. The existing evidence indicates that the State House Bell was ... hidden in Allentown. The large wagon train carrying the bell stopped for the night on the south side of the Lehigh River near Bethlehem on September 23. There the wagon carrying the bell broke down and, traditionally, the bell was transferred to the wagon of Frederick Leaser for the final miles to Allentown.”

Robert L. Giannini, III, Museum Curator
Independence National Historical Park
Philadelphia

HATS OFF TO HILEMAN

Last year I had the privilege of meeting Keil Hileman (September/October “Class Act”) and spending time in his crowded and intensely fascinating classroom. I believe that if each student had a teacher like him, American education would be greatly enhanced. I’m pleased that he was honored with this respected award.

Leslie Vander Meaden Canavan
John Sappington Chapter, Afton, Mo.

A TAVERN PLUG

I enjoyed “I’ll Drink to That” (September/October 2007) about American taverns during the American Revolution because our chapter holds luncheons at Gadsby Tavern. One tavern you overlooked mentioning is the Sun Inn in Bethlehem, Pa. It has been in operation since 1760. George Washington slept here, as well as his wife, Martha, John Adams, John Hancock, the Marquis de Lafayette and many other famous guests. And in 1777 it hosted a meeting of members from the Continental Congress.

Barbara Bonstiger Welch
Henry Clay Chapter, Amandale, Va.

VINTAGE VICTUALS

I was enthralled with “I’ll Drink to That” in the last issue. I have always enjoyed a good eating establishment that pays homage to its history. I wanted to bring attention to a Revolutionary-era tavern close to my heart and home: The 76 House in Tappan, N.Y.

The 76 House is the oldest serving dining room in New York and a National Historic Landmark. George Washington visited and ate here three times during the Revolutionary War, and it was used as a prison for British spy Major John Andre. (And the food is pretty darn good too!)

Mary Jane Sexton
Shatemuc Chapter, Stony Point, N.Y.

A NEW FAVORITE

Congratulations on the awards American Spirit received! Until the September/October 2007 issue arrived, my favorite was the “Garden Party” issue (March/April 2006). This latest one may replace it with the wonderful articles and pictures, especially the photo of a young lady dancing in a “sack back gown” on page 29. I have worn a similar gown for years at re-enactments and speaking engagements. I look forward to wearing it as my husband and I host the HODAR dinner at our 2007 state conference. We will honor General Nicholas Herkimer in this 230th anniversary year of the Battle of Oriskany.

Keep up the good work publishing the best history magazine in the world!

Mary Helen Jones, Life Member
Holland Patent Chapter, Holland Patent, N.Y.

OUR REAL DAUGHTER

Imagine my pride upon reading in the September/October 2007 issue that an ancestral relative, Lydia Moss Bradley, was one of the Real Daughters. Her father, Zeally Moss, was the brother of my ancestral great-grandfather, Reverend Nathaniel Moss. I was born in Peoria, Ill., while my father was a student at Bradley Polytechnic. Thank you for this information.

Pauline McKee Fitzgerald, Member at Large
Great Falls, Va.

We want to hear from you. Please send letters to the editor to americanspirit@dar.org.
Provide for your future...

and for NSDAR

That is just what you can do by creating a charitable gift annuity. Advantages include lifetime payments, significant tax benefits and a lasting legacy for NSDAR.

Helyn Luechauer’s charitable gift annuity supports her passion for researching at the DAR Library. Her legacy will help preserve this resource for future generations of genealogical researchers.

NAME ______________________________________________________________________________
ADDRESS _____________________________________________________________________________
CITY ______________________________  STATE ___________   ZIP ___________________________
TELEPHONE _______________________  BEST TIME TO CALL _______________________________
E-MAIL  ______________________________________________________________________________

Return this completed form to NSDAR, Office of Development, 1776 D Street NW, Washington D.C. 20006–5303
What would you say if someone told you centuries of historians have been incorrect, and the first Thanksgiving celebration was actually held near El Paso, Texas? Although most would strongly refute such a claim, those who hail from El Paso would probably reply, “You’re right!”

Many who call this sizable Texas city home believe the true credit for our popular Thanksgiving celebration belongs to Spanish explorer Juan de Oñate, who held his own Thanksgiving during his search for new territory in the New World. Oñate and his men discovered the upper Rio Grande territory and immediately seized it for their king. To celebrate their success, the explorers paused near present-day El Paso to hold a feast of thanks, thus partaking in America’s first official Thanksgiving dinner.

While most of us follow in the footsteps of our ancestors at Plymouth Rock and celebrate Thanksgiving in November, El Pasoans hold their own Thanksgiving celebration every spring.

The annual Heritage Festival Week, held in nearby San Elizario, commemorates this Thanksgiving, along with Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican holiday held on May 5. Heritage Week will take place April 24–May 2, 2008. To learn more, contact the El Paso Convention Center and Visitors Bureau at (800) 351–6024 or www.elpasocvb.com.
Tudor Place Toasts Lafayette

ON SEPTEMBER 19, 1824, Martha Custis Peter, Martha Washington's granddaughter, hosted a banquet for Revolutionary War hero Marquis de Lafayette at her Washington, D.C., estate, Tudor Place. This September, 183 years after the Marquis’ important banquet, Tudor Place toasted the memory of the Marquis in a similar fashion, using many of the same recipes, furniture and china as Peter did. The banquet kicked off the “Hail Lafayette!” exhibit, which features rare objects, manuscripts, books and period costumes.

The exhibit is open daily (10 a.m.–4 p.m.) until the end of the year, and coincides with a variety of special events, including “Drinking with Lafayette,” a French wine tasting, taking place November 8. Visit www.tudorplace.org for more information.

News on View

FROM 1913 TO 1967, Time Inc.’s “The March of Time” offered a firsthand view of the world’s most significant events on film. With archive footage of everything from Albert Einstein interviews and World War I tanks in action to the nation’s hardships during the Great Depression, the collection educated Americans about politics, war and important historic events until its last episode aired in 1967.

Now, 40 years after the series ended, HBO Archives and Thought Equity Motion have teamed up to offer the historic newreels online. With more than 70 million feet of film converted digitally, “The March of Time Collection” is one of the most historically significant newreel services and is available for purchase online. To learn more, visit www.thoughtequity.com/video/home/mot.do.

On This Day
In History

November 11, 1954: Veterans Day is established to honor veterans of all U.S. wars.

November 19, 1863: President Lincoln delivers the Gettysburg Address.

November 21, 1789: North Carolina ratifies the Constitution to become the 12th state in the Union.

November 26, 1883: Preacher, abolitionist and women’s rights advocate Sojourner Truth dies in Battle Creek, Mich.

December 10, 1869: John Campbell, governor of the Wyoming Territory, approves the first law in U.S. history that explicitly grants women the right to vote.

December 11, 1919: Citizens of Enterprise, Ala., erect a monument to the boll weevil, christening the insect as the “herald of prosperity” for forcing economic diversification in this cotton-growing region.

December 14, 1799: George Washington dies at his Mount Vernon home.

December 15, 1791: The new United States of America confirms the fundamental rights of its citizens by adopting the Bill of Rights.

December 23, 1783: George Washington resigns his commission as commander in chief of the Continental Army in the Senate chamber of the Maryland State House in Annapolis.

December 25, 1830: The first regularly scheduled passenger train in the United States begins operation.
Oh, Pioneers?

The July/August 2007 article "America’s Main Street" by Bill Hudgins and the photo of "Madonna of the Trail" really caught my eye. It closely resembles the Pioneer Woman statue in Ponca City, Okla., where I grew up. I was present when Will Rogers dedicated that statue, joking that it was the first time he’d ever unveiled another woman while his wife was looking on. I would appreciate a note about any connection it has with the National Old Trails committee.

—Dick Ettington, Palos Verdes, Calif.

Although it was not one of the 12 Madonna of the Trail monuments, the Pioneer Woman statue was unveiled in the midst of the Great Plains on April 22, 1930, just one year after the final DAR-sponsored monument was dedicated in Bethesda, Md. Oklahoma’s 30-foot-tall statue preserves the heroic character of the pioneer women who set their sights westward and traveled the nation as Americans everywhere voted for their favorites. In the end, Bryant Baker’s vision for the project won by a landslide, as 750,000 voters cast their ballots in his favor.

When Baker began implementing his design, many noticed that his original plan for the monument contained a number of inaccuracies. “The artist listened to the suggestions of people around him and lengthened her bonnet, increased her boot height and changed the child’s clothes to make it more historically accurate,” says Rebecca Brave, director of the Pioneer Woman Museum.

Baker made the necessary changes, and the bronze statue of the woman leading her son to the west was unveiled on April 22, 1930.

Today the pioneer woman is still celebrated with the help of the Pioneer Woman Museum, located near the monument in Ponca City, Okla. Through exhibits, artifacts and educational programs, the museum honors the pioneer women and other women who helped settle the land that is now Oklahoma.

To find out more about the Pioneer Woman Museum or the monument, visit www.pioneerwomanmuseum.com.

Santa Fe’s Unique Celebration

Affectionately called “The City Different” by residents and enchanted tourists, Santa Fe has been a mecca of diversity, rich culture and beautiful artwork since its origin between 1607 and 1610. To celebrate their city’s 400th birthday, citizens of Santa Fe are holding a gala event that will kick off in 2008 and last well into 2010. The three-year celebration, "Santa Fe—El Corazón de Nuevo Mexico," starts this year when the city adds a celebratory flair to annual festivities like the Indian Market, Spanish Market and Santa Fe Fiesta. On March 30, 2009, the city will hold a founding day event to recognize the anniversary of Santa Fe’s origin. Although the actual year of the city’s establishment has been long debated, city and state historians settled on March 30 as the most accurate date. Finally, the real party commences in 2010, with a number of events to honor 400 years of history and ancient traditions. To learn more about Santa Fe, check out santafe.org.

Celebrating Truth

Born into slavery in 1797, Isabella Baumfree later renamed herself Sojourner Truth when she walked away from an abusive master, left her possessions behind and traveled east to preach, relying on the goodness of people along the way to provide her with food and shelter. Truth continued to tour the country advocating the rights of former slaves and women and only ceased to schedule speaking engagements when she fell ill in July 1883. Though she never recovered, she left behind a noble legacy of activism.

Despite her impressive resume, when plans were made to place a monument commemorating American suffragists in the U.S. Capitol, Sojourner was denied inclusion. Upon learning of this discrepancy, Dr. C. Dolores Tucker, then chair of the National Congress of Black Women, initiated the Sojourner Truth Project to encourage the recognition of the deserving activist. With the help of U.S. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, The Sojourner Truth Bill/HR-4510 passed last year, adding Truth to the list of commendable women. Recently, her portrait was placed alongside those of Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Truth became the first black woman to receive this honor in the Capitol.
IN THE GALLERIES

If you’re in the area, stop by these must-see exhibitions this winter

First Ladies: Political Role and Public Image
National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, through December 31, 2007

The beauty and strength of Jackie Kennedy Onassis and the philanthropic activism of Laura Bush are examples of the integral part our first ladies play in American history. This exhibit explores America’s first ladies through their political roles, public images and lives after the White House. The display features 150 pieces of inaugural apparel, clothing, White House furnishings, photographs and campaign memorabilia.

In addition, through December 5, 2007, the center will display world-renowned photographer Richard Avedon’s “The Kennedys: Portrait of a Family.” On the eve of John F. Kennedy’s inauguration, Avedon took intimate photographs of the family that portray the powerful images of John, Jacqueline, Caroline and John Jr. The full set of 27 framed black and white photographs is on display for the first time, providing the public with a rare view of what is arguably America’s most famous family. Learn more at www.constitutioncenter.org.

New Threads: Quilts and Costumes

Have you ever wondered why some objects get accepted by a museum while others do not?

Using recently acquired textile objects, the DAR Museum’s latest exhibition will offer visitors a glimpse into the process of building a collection. Why was a particular object chosen? What are the factors that tell curators to keep an object, when other items were turned down? How are objects acquired? What treasures do museum curators still look for? The exhibit will help visitors understand how the DAR Museum’s collection of 30,000 objects has grown into one of the country’s finest examples of American decorative arts.

THANKSGIVING Answers to the quiz on page 8:
1. Squanto 2. North Carolina, although Vardman, Miss., proclaims itself the Sweet Potato Capital of the World. 3. Yes, but instead of using the pumpkin as a filling, early Colonial Americans used it to make the crust. 4. On October 3, 1863, by proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln. 5. Ben Franklin

What’s in a Name?

Discover the meanings behind some of the DAR chapters’ interesting names.

The Eunice Cobb Stocking Chapter, Glastonbury, Conn., is named for the patriotic woman who ran the gunpowder mill in South Glastonbury. On August 23, 1777, Eunice arrived home after a business trip to Boston to find that the mill had exploded, killing her husband and three adult sons. Fortunately, 7-year-old Eliash had been sent on an errand by his father and was spared. She rebuilt the mill, one of a few in New England, and until the war’s end, supplied the Continental Army with more than 50 tons of gunpowder.

The Mongolia Chapter, Trenton, Mich., selected its name from the Battle of Maguago. In 1812, Brigadier General William Hull decided to attack the British in Michigan, ordering Lieutenant Colonel James Miller to meet Ohio volunteers at the Miami Rapids to escort a supply train to Detroit. At Maguaga, British Major Adam Muir and his 350 troops blocked Miller’s path. After a heavy scrimmage, neither side could declare victory, but since Miller had more troops, Muir and his men quietly retreated to Canada.

The Washakie Chapter, Thermopolis, Wyo., is named for Indian Chief Washakie, who represented the Shoshone Nation in the negotiations during the establishment of the Wind River Indian Reservation in 1868. A large mineral hot spring was located within the reservation’s boundaries, and one of the chief’s main concerns was that a portion of the water always be open for public use. The reservation is now called Hot Springs State Park.

The namesake of the Asthon Sosi Chapter, Pecoria, Ariz., was also known as Louisa Wetherill, who married John Wetherill in 1896 and moved to Kayenta, Ariz. She learned to speak Navajo and was an expert on Navajo customs and traditions. Soon, she became known as Asthon Sosi, or “Slim Woman,” by the Navajo people, many of whom came long distances seeking Louisa’s help and advice.

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

American Spirit • November/December 2007 11
Presents that inspire the American spirit

Holiday Gift Guide

Give a gift and give back with these ornaments from the Hunger Site. Handcrafted by artisans in the biblical town of Bethlehem, these bell, heart and star ornaments are made of olivewood, the same material used by early Christians who sold religious trinkets to pilgrims visiting Bethlehem. For each set of ornaments purchased, the Hunger Site will fund 25 cups of food to help fight world hunger.

COST: $15
BUY: www.hungersite.org

Share the story of the DAR with your friends and loved ones this holiday with American Treasure: The Enduring Spirit of the DAR (Donning, 2007) by Diana L. Bailey. Featuring more than 400 historic and contemporary photos and illustrations—some never before published—the 300-plus page coffee table book blends the contemporary work of the National Society carried out by DAR chapters around the world with the fascinating history of an organization that has stayed true to the important objectives set by its founders in 1890.

COST: $50 ($40 for DAR members)
BUY: www.dar.org/americantreasure
If you’re buying for a baseball fan or a Colonial history enthusiast this year, you’re in luck. Marsha York, a native New England artist, has released a series of ornaments that will appeal to Red Sox fans and history buffs alike. At 3 inches in diameter, these hand-blown glass ornaments are painted on the inside and feature different scenes of Boston, including the legendary Fenway Park. The ornament comes packaged in a red satin box that protects the delicate glass so it can hang on the tree for years to come.

**COST:** $20  
**BUY:** Call the Bostonian Society Museum Shops at (617) 720–1713, ext. 18.

The perfect gift for your favorite history buff, the “10 Days That Unexpectedly Changed America” DVD set from the History Channel provides a closer look at some of the most pivotal events in American history. The set boasts 10 one-hour documentaries on topics ranging from the founding of the Lost Colony of Roanoke to the birth of rock ‘n’ roll.

**COST:** $280  
**BUY:** www.history.com

Have a genealogist on your list? Dazzle her with this family tree birthstone brooch from Red Envelope. Available in silver or gold, the brooch holds up to five birthstones, one for each child, grandchild or family member.

**COST:** $160—$1,900  
**BUY:** www.redenvelope.com
Recent years, scholars have turned increasing attention toward the effects of the French and Indian War, as the Seven Years’ War was known in the American Colonies, on subsequent American history. Sometimes regarded as the first true world war, this conflict embroiled much of Europe in combat around the globe, and found Native Americans fighting on both the French and the British sides in North America.

In *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America* (Oxford University Press, 2006), Colin G. Calloway explores the sweeping transformations that the Treaty of Paris, signed by Britain, Spain and France in February 1763, touched off in North America. As historian Francis Parkman described it, “half a continent ... changed hands at the scratch of a pen.”

Calloway shows how bitterly they were disappointed. The Treaty of Paris weakened, rather than strengthened, boundary protections. In transferring dominion over such vast tracts of land from France and Spain to Britain, the treaty saddled the victor with enormous new frontiers to be maintained. To use a modern phrase, Britain had won the war, but was not at all certain to win the peace.

Peace didn’t last long, Calloway writes. Unable to restrain restive settlers in the Colonies and in Canada, Britain saw violence flare throughout the frontier as Indians sought to repel the invaders and enforce the boundary agreements. British commanders sometimes used biological warfare, in the form of smallpox-contaminated blankets and garments, as Trojan-horse gifts intended to decimate Indian populations. For their part, many of the Redcoat troops hated the American climate, wilderness and settlers, and fared poorly in forest warfare. The fact that they often were dispatched to the Caribbean to protect British interests there further worsened morale; indeed, the tropical diseases carried many troops off before they ever encountered combat.

New treaties, boundaries and official proclamations were struck to try to preserve Indian rights and hold the impetuous settlers in check. To the degree they succeeded, Calloway writes, the agreements angered settlers as well as land speculators such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, who saw the western lands as their just reward for a long, bloody struggle (and a way to pay off their English creditors). Calloway notes that the tensions created by Britain’s efforts to make western expansion a gradual process helped strain relations between the Colonies and the mother country. The strain, of course, only increased over the next 12 years.

Most readers will marvel at Calloway’s descriptions of the complicated political relationships among the various Indian tribes, and with the Colonies. The alliances and antagonisms were as sophisticated as anything in the Old World ...
Bridging the Gap

As today’s youth grow, so does the patriotism gap that increasingly separates them from older generations of Americans. A 2005 Independence Day poll taken by Fox News reported that, “If given the chance, almost one in four young Americans under 30 say they would rather live in another country.” While statistics like these can be discouraging, Americans have too much to lose by giving up the fight for the hearts and minds of their young people.

To help parents bridge the gap, Myrna Blyth and Chriss Winston wrote How to Raise an American: 1776 Fun and Easy Tools, Tips, and Activities to Help Your Child Love This Country (Crown Forum, 2007). From dinner table discussion topics to American history lessons, the book offers 60-minute solutions that can teach even the busiest family about our country’s heritage.

The book features something for both parents and children, offering statistical information about the patriotism gap for parents and “patriot projects” for the kids. The authors teach kids how to dress up like a Founding Father, explore important documents like the Constitution, or throw a birthday party for Ben Franklin. If you need a suggestion for your next family vacation, check out the “Let’s Take a Trip” section for ideas about patriotic getaways across the country. And if it seems impossible to cram an hour-long session with the book into your busy schedule, pack your copy in the car to provide conversation starters that will spark rousing debates. You may never hear, “Are we there yet?” again.

Thomas Jefferson once said that education “is the only sure hope for the preservation of liberty.” How to Raise an American will help spark your child’s interest in preserving those ideals—and along the way, you’ll probably learn a thing or two yourself.

—Megan Pacella

[The Bookshelf]
Always the Student

Longtime teacher empowers students with her enthusiasm

By Emily McMackin

After more than 30 years of teaching, Kathleen Mirabile can sum up the secret to her success with a simple equation: a good teacher of American history is a good student of American history. Inside her classroom at Manchester High School Central in Manchester, N.H., this philosophy is evident. Mirabile has as many books stacked up to read as her students, and she always has some research project brewing about a historical period or cultural movement.

“History is not stagnant,” Mirabile says. “There are always new interpretations and ways of using information or learning something new about different groups of people.”

In her own classroom—where she teaches everyone from honor students to those who struggle with learning and language—Mirabile has witnessed this. Every year, she asks her Advanced Placement students to interview someone who lived through the Great Depression, then write a paper using secondary research to validate that person’s story.

“I feel as though I learn something every year because each paper is so different,” she says.

With students whose American heritage goes back only one generation or less, she takes a different approach, asking them to bring in their (or their parents’) green cards and compare their naturalization experience to that of immigrants 50-plus years ago. Though both projects are different, their goal is the same.

“It allows [students] to link information from their lives to a historical setting—and that makes it so much more real to them,” Mirabile says.

Helping students connect to Colonial history is easy in Manchester, Mirabile says, especially with the home of Revolutionary War hero John Stark right around the corner and Boston’s Freedom Trail just an hour away.

Though many of her students have heard about Stark since the first grade, Mirabile likes to “take what they have learned on a simpler level and plot where Stark went during the war so they see him as part of a movement, not just as a personality.”

In fact, she structures most of her lessons this way, preferring to focus on crisis moments, strategies, decisions and ramifications instead of having her students memorize a bunch of names and dates. Mirabile’s summer research helps her uncover stories that students might not hear otherwise. Most students are familiar with the Boston Tea Party, for instance, but few know about a group of female merchants from Portsmouth, N.H., who banded together to convince British ship captains to take their tea back to England.

“It shows [students] that when you act together you are much more successful than when you act alone,” Mirabile says.

Ultimately, she hopes that her lessons empower students to be more interested, active citizens. With all the priorities students juggle these days, that is what will make history memorable and meaningful, Mirabile says.

“I try to teach them that there’s something bigger than themselves … that they have an obligation to leave the place they are in better shape than they found it,” she says.
Capturing Cherubs

THIS 1851 PORTRAIT commemorates angelic young brothers John Daniel Parsons, Stephen Albert Parsons and Nathaniel H. Parsons. The children are dressed in the height of mid-19th-century finery, with four-year-old John Daniel (left) in a brown jacket trimmed with a black, pleated ruffle collar and cuffs. The youngest, two-year-old Stephen Albert (center), wears a long-sleeved turquoise dress fastened down the front with white buttons and topped with a narrow, lace-edged collar. On the right, three-year-old Nathaniel dons a dark green jacket with a white collar visible above its black collar.

Harriet Robinson Parsons, the boys’ mother, died three days after the birth of her youngest son, and the boys’ aunt and uncle, John and Apphia Parsons, took custody of the children. Aunt Apphia commissioned the painting of the fair-haired, rosy-cheeked, chubby children for their father. According to her account book, Apphia paid artist John Hillman $18 for his work. The painting was donated to the DAR Museum by the great-granddaughter of Stephen Albert Parsons.

Take a step inside the DAR Museum for a closer look at its fascinating collection.
During a trip with her younger sister in 2004, Gay Ingram came to a realization: She was the oldest surviving member of her family, and if any succeeding generations were to know anything about their ancestors, they would have to rely on her. As the “sole repository” of knowledge about the family’s past, “I felt an urgency to write down and record all the bits and pieces I remember about our family,” Ingram says.

By Nancy Mann Jackson
Over several months, Ingram did just that; she began to take notes about all her memories. “As I wrote things down, this helped to dredge up more incidents and details,” she says.

Eventually, Ingram’s memories, along with family photographs, became the basis of a book she compiled and sent to all her siblings, their children and grandchildren. And her family was grateful. Her nieces and nephews were quick to express appreciation, and she was especially proud of a thank-you phone call from a nephew who lived 2,000 miles away, especially since she hadn’t seen or heard from him in years.

While Ingram’s family storybook grew almost entirely from her own memories, some family historians create similar narratives with the help of genealogical research and interviews with relatives and others who knew the family. As a child, Darelene Warren Rothwell loved to sit and listen to her parents tell stories. Native Texans who had moved to California in the 1940s, Rothwell’s parents told “lots of stories about life in Texas and their grandparents, who were slaves,” Rothwell says.

By age 12, Rothwell had begun writing down the family stories and had developed a family tree that went back to the days of slavery. As an adult with children of her own, Rothwell returned to her early interest in family history. She wrote letters to the Texas Department of State Records to learn details about her grandparents and others, and eventually visited Texas’ oldest functioning courthouse in Lyndon, where she found property deeds and other documentation to “confirm the stories I’d always heard,” she says.

In addition to locating important documents, Rothwell spent several years learning details from living sources. “I conducted interviews with lots of relatives and developed a collection of biographies and genealogies dating back to Colonial days,” she says. “I started [by talking to relatives at] family gatherings and picnics, and then traveled to other cities to interview other, mostly elderly relatives. My most notable interview was with a relative who was 101 years old. He was born in 1899 and died in 2003, and had a wealth of information. He knew everything that went on in the town.”

Upon her retirement in 2003, Rothwell wanted to compile all the information she’d assembled over the years into a book, but she didn’t have a clue how to make it happen. At a genealogy workshop in Los Angeles, Rothwell heard a presentation by a publisher who specializes in family history publishing. She approached him afterward and explained her goals.

“We met, he saw my documents, and he got me on the right road,” she says. In 2005, Rothwell’s book, A History of African-American Families and Slaveholders in Cass County, East Texas, From the Colonial Days and Slavery to the Twenty-first Century, was published by Creative Continuum, a short-run publisher that allows authors to self-publish their books. The book has since been purchased by a number of family members, libraries and others interested in recording their own family histories.

Through her book, Rothwell has been able to meet and build relationships with the descendants of slaveholders on both her mother’s and father’s side of the family. She’s currently working on a second edition that will include more extensive information about those families.

Preserving Your Stories
Most families like Ingram’s and Rothwell’s are interested in preserving the stories of their ancestors, and every family history contains interesting characters and anecdotes that can bring the past to life. Creating and publishing your own family narrative is a daunting task, but it can be extremely rewarding.

“If you don’t record your family stories, those stories will be lost,” says Linda Barnickel, author of Oral History for the Family Historian: A Basic Guide. “Stories are so unique to each particular family; just like photographs and heirlooms, those stories can’t be replaced. You can get names and dates from public records, but stories only come from the people in the family or friends and neighbors of the family. Those stories bring people to life. In many ways, stories are what keep family history alive and make it worth passing on.

“It’s so easy to procrastinate,” Barnickel continues. “It takes a sense of urgency before people will do something like that. I do a lot of work with World War II veterans, and as we lose that generation, people are becoming more aware of the importance of those stories. I see a lot of people writing narratives; people are realizing those stories are treasures.”

“Families need to talk about their history, and they need to record it,” Rothwell adds. “As the Native American Chief Dan George said, ‘If the very old will remember, the very young will listen.’”

Organizing Information
If you decide to research and write your own family history, getting organized is the first step to success. Rothwell recommends creating a filing system during the information-gathering stage. “If you’re writing a narrative on a certain person, have a file for that person,” she says. “Categorize information by people’s names. Do the same with pictures; keep
them categorized along with narratives. Also, set up a file for documents. You have to be organized, and you have to continually work on it; it doesn’t just happen.”

Rothwell also recommends avoiding the temptation to throw anything away. “When my father passed—way before I wrote the book—I kept every piece of mail he had, and it helped a lot, especially things like receipts and military records,” she says.

Conducting Successful Interviews

Document research is important for any type of genealogical project, but for preserving unique and interesting family stories, interviews with live sources are especially vital. “I was lucky enough to think ahead, and I interviewed my oldest relatives on tape while they were still with me,” says Sue Spivey, who researched and penned two volumes of family history—one for her family and one for her husband’s family. She says the stories of her German-born grandmother were the most interesting. Orphaned at an early age, Spivey’s grandmother lived with a foster family, attended dressmaker’s school and supported herself as a live-in seamstress for different families, eventually migrating to the United States without knowing English or anyone in America.

Pulling such interesting stories out of elderly relatives can be difficult. While interviews should always be taped (and releases should be signed), Patricia Law Hatcher, author of Producing a Quality Family History, suggests placing the tape recorder in a place where the interviewee can’t see it; most people will talk more openly if they’re not focusing on the fact that they’re being recorded. Hatcher also recommends bringing old family photos and showing them to the interviewee one at a time.

“Even if they have nothing to say about a picture the first time, chances are they’ll go back to one, pick it up and start to talk about it.”

— Patricia Law Hatcher, author of Producing a Quality Family History
they’ll go back to one, pick it up and start to talk about it,” she says. “Do the same thing with family artifacts. And once you get them started, keep your mouth shut. People often try to interrupt to get specifics on a particular story, but let them talk about what they want to talk about, not what you want to talk about.”

When formulating questions for an interview, define your goals for that encounter. “You may need to do several interviews with one person,” Barnickel says. “Set a goal: What’s the one thing I want to learn from this today? That can help you determine your questions.”

While you most likely want to ask about an individual’s career, family life, parenting and other life experiences, “You will sometimes have the best luck with specific questions,” Hatcher says. “Ask specifics about harvesting. Ask, etons are in the closet—but sometimes it’s part of the family history and can be important.”

**Discerning Fact From Fiction**

While living sources can provide you with great stories and allow you to get details firsthand that otherwise may have slipped through the cracks of your family history, there are also drawbacks. “Memory is fallible,” Barnickel says. “While respecting the story and the person who’s telling it, you may not be able to take everything at face value. Sometimes half-truths are passed along the way. Sometimes people forget part of a story and just fill in some details, and sometimes people combine part of a story from Family A and part of a story from Family B. Realize that, often, the answers might be enough to keep them talking.”

When interviewing family members, the more specific the question, the better the answer. “Ask, ‘What do you know how to do that people don’t do anymore?’” Patricia Law Hatcher says. “What was your favorite toy? What did you do on Sunday afternoons? When did you first get indoor plumbing?’ And for people who grew up in the city, ask how they got milk, who lived next door and how many steps up to their house.”

**What do you know how to do that people don’t do anymore? What was your favorite toy? What did you do on Sunday afternoons? When did you first get indoor plumbing?’ And for people who grew up in the city, ask how they got milk, who lived next door and how many steps up to their house.”**

Hatcher offered these words of caution regarding the accuracy of family stories in an Ancestry Daily News article:

- Some stories have grains of truth, but with the facts all mixed up.
- Some stories were meant primarily to entertain, not to inform.
- Some stories were inadvertently altered in the repetitive telling.
- Some stories were altered to make them “make sense.”
- Some stories were created to hide or obscure humble origins.

Because of the frequency of inaccurate memories, Hatcher recommends focusing “on memories individuals have about their own lives, not on those of ancestors,” she says. “Almost no such information that I got from my family was correct, so I’m nervous about this kind of research.”

However, some say that the truth is discernible with extra research and common sense. Barnickel recommends exploring the same story with different people and considering who is closest to it. “You may hear one version from Aunt Judy and another from Uncle Pete, so then you can ask Cousin Jane what she remembers,” she says.

It’s also important to compare the story with the formal documentation you have gathered to check for inconsistencies. “I heard quite a few stories in which some of the information was obviously distorted or misinterpreted,” Rothwell says. “I could often compare it to census records or events...

*Nancy Mann Jackson wrote about the role of taverns in the American Revolution for the September/October 2007 issue.*
BRAIDED RUGS:
Homespun Works of Art

BY PHYLLIS McINTOSH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM EVANS
women laden with armloads of wool and baskets of supplies gather in the fellowship hall of a Maryland church to explore the finer points of ... butts? ... rattails? No, they’re not discussing anatomy or urban ills. Butts and rattails are part of the colorful lingo of the traditional American craft of rug braiding.

Born of necessity among early New Englanders, rug braiding traveled West with the pioneers and is now found in all parts of the country. Because there is no national organization of braiders, no one is sure just how many people in the United States currently practice the craft. One longtime teacher, Nancy Young of Winthrop, Maine, guesses there may be about 700. For many, rug braiding remains a homespun craft with pleasing practical results; for others, it is a form of artistic expression that goes well beyond cozy floor coverings.

Though braiding itself dates back to ancient times, braided rugs are considered an American invention. Often associated with Colonial decor, they actually were not produced until the 1820s or 1830s, when woolen mills sprang up throughout New England, according to Norma Sturges of Littleton, Colo., author of *The Braided Rug Book* (2006). Previously, Americans had covered their wooden floors with straw, corn husks, mats of woven rushes, woven rag rugs or painted floor cloths. Sturges notes. Women in those days had plenty of experience braiding straw into bonnets and floor mats, so when wool became readily available, it was a natural choice for making braided rugs that were decorative, durable and substantial enough to insulate floors during the harsh New England winters.

Photographs taken in the early 1900s by a retired minister named Wallace Nutting depict braided rugs of complicated designs in the homes of the well-to-do, which suggests that rug braiding was appreciated and possibly practiced by the upper classes as well as by those who could not afford imported carpets. Unfortunately, very few early rugs survive because most were used until they wore out.

As new wool becomes more expensive and harder to find—most U.S. mills have closed or moved abroad—some braiders are turning to other durable fabrics, such as denim or polar fleece. Still others scour rummage sales for woolen clothing or blankets that they can tear into strips for braiding.

The simplest form of braiding is done with three strands of fabric approximately 1 1/2 to 2 inches wide. The braids are laced together with heavy cotton thread into a round or oval shape. In some rugs, the raw ends of each circuit are sewn together in a nearly invisible joint known as a “butt.” In others, the braids are laced continuously until the desired size is reached and the last row narrowed down to a taper—or “rattail”—so that it lies flat against the rug. One or two butted rows may then be added to finish it off. A student who completes a beginner’s 2- by 3-foot rug is generally proficient in rug braiding, though techniques such as butting and rattails often require more practice to perfect.

By arranging different color strands, even the novice braider can create zigzag or diamond patterns. But many braiders today are exploring far more complex designs and shapes. Rugs may be heart-shaped, hexagonal, octagonal or a series of circles. Braided edges are applied to hooked or knotted rugs, and some intrepid braiders work with up to 21 strands at a time to fashion wide decorative borders. Delsie Hoyt of Fairlee, Vt., actually creates landscape designs within her rugs, while other braiders, like Donna McKeever of Gig Harbor, Wash., employ rug-braiding techniques to fashion hats, bags and three-dimensional items, such as pumpkins and ears of corn.
Nancy Young of Augusta, Maine, began to braid rugs 50 years ago after reading an article in *Good Housekeeping*. “The article said three things that resonated with me: It said wool-braided rugs were inexpensive to make using ‘found’ wool, they could be made rather quickly by someone who loved handwork, and they were not only a very useful and durable craft, but one that could be handed down to the next generation. Although wool is harder to find now, the last two reasons still hold true today.”
Braiding Bees

Unlike many needlecrafts, rug braiding has not generally been handed down through the generations. “Many grandmothers made braided rugs, but few taught their craft,” Sturges writes. “I’m the grandmother who is going to change that.” She and Young, who both taught themselves to braid from pictures in magazines 50 years ago, have taught thousands of students at schools, community centers, museums and arts festivals. For the past 12 years, Young has offered a rug-braiding class at her Maine home that has attracted some 200 different braiders from as far away as Switzerland and Australia. In 2006, Donna McKeever organized the first national rug-braiding conference in Washington state, which was attended by 35 braiders from 17 states and Canada.

Around the country, several groups of braiders have been meeting informally for years to share friendship and braiding know-how. In the Denver area, students of Norma Sturges have been getting together since 1996, and each summer are joined by braiders from all over the country for a weekend retreat in the arts community of Salida, Colo., where they share their enthusiasm for braiding with locals and tourists alike.

The Silver Spring, Md., rug braiders, many now in their 80s, started as an adult education class more than 30 years ago and have continued to meet long after their teacher moved to California. Led by an indomitable former school principal, 91-year-old DeLoris Zucker, the 12-member group includes a woman who survived the London blitz during World War II, a daughter of British missionaries who grew up in India and Burma and a woman who last summer hiked 500 miles through Spain following the original route of St. James. The token man in the group is Budne Reinke, a pharmacist, now semi-retired, who for 20 years has arranged his work schedule so he can attend the rug group.

He originally enrolled in class with the encouragement of his mother, who remembered her aunt braiding rugs in New England. Besides the camaraderie, he enjoys the physical benefits of braiding. “It’s relaxing, and it’s good for your fingers and upper body strength,” he says.

**A Perfect Pastime**

While most braiders work individually, Nancy Young promotes large group projects. She has helped sixth-grade students in Augusta, Maine, craft a rug for their classroom. “I enjoy making rugs cooperatively with my students,” she says. They have created rugs as fund raisers for the American Cancer Society as well as several that grace rooms for the historic Sun Inn in Bethlehem, Pa. Her most unusual project, for a summer home on Martha’s Vineyard, was a 12- by 18-foot rug made entirely from old denim jeans that had belonged to various members of the customer’s family.

Veteran braiders are gratified that the craft is attracting women in their 30s and 40s who enjoy making decorative and functional items they can pass on to their children. “At the first rug-braiding conference, we had doctors, teachers, nurses, an urban planner and a biologist, which tells me that it’s not just grandmothers out there braiding,” Donna McKeever says. “Rug braiding is the perfect pastime, especially for people in stressful jobs who are searching for something relaxing that they can pick up and do without a lot of concentration,” she adds. “With braiding, they have a creative outlet that’s also a functional work of art.”

Phyllis McIntosh explored the General John Stark House in Manchester, N.H., for the May/June 2007 issue of American Spirit.


American Spirit • November/December 2007
Petticoats in the Pulpit
Female Preachers in Early America
By Kim Hill

In early America, women who ventured outside the traditionally rigid gender roles faced extraordinary challenges. During the 18th and 19th century, when most American Christians believed the Scriptures to be literally the word of God, New Testament passages regarding the public silence of women were regarded as both infallible and God-driven. Public prayer, testifying and especially preaching by women were strictly forbidden in most established Christian orthodoxy.

“This ‘monopoly of the pulpit’ was weightier than other professional barriers women encountered because it struck at the heart of a social structure based on prescribed gender roles believed to be established by divine degree,” writes Beverly Zink-Sawyer in From Preachers to Suffragists (Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). “Although women who entered male professions such as education, law and medicine throughout the 19th century met fierce opposition, they were at least spared the recitation of biblical injunctions commanding women’s silence in church.”
Even though they were seen as “radical” at best and called “prostitutes” or “Jezebels” at worst, more than 100 early American women felt called by God to preach and teach the Gospel. With only a few exceptions, these women have been largely ignored by history until recent years. Here are the stories of a few who dared to “step out of their place.”

Anne Hutchinson

The daughter of a clergyman, Anne Hutchinson arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634 after convincing her husband, William, to follow Puritan minister John Cotton to the New World.

A skilled nurse and midwife, Hutchinson began holding weekly meetings with other women to discuss Cotton’s sermons and study Scripture. Spurred by Hutchinson’s wit, piety and biblical knowledge, these gatherings became quite popular, attracting men as well as women, with as much as 20 percent of Boston’s adult population attending.

Soon, however, Hutchinson began using these meetings to expound her own insights and criticize other ministers, writes Susan Hill Lindley in *You Have Stept Out of Your Place* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1996). This was dangerous ground for anyone, as an obedient life was central to Puritan theology. Hutchinson’s gender doubled the threat to ministerial monopoly, which local magistrates sought to remove by trying her in court.

Though they had a difficult time establishing actual charges, Hutchinson was banished from the colony and excommunicated by her church. She moved to Rhode Island with her family in 1638, and after William’s death, settled in New York, where she and five of her children were killed by Indians in 1643.

Mary Dyer

Compared to most other early American sects, the Quakers were an exception to the notion of women’s preaching. As part of their doctrine of an individual’s direct relationship with God, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) gave women unprecedented authority for public exhortation by abolishing formal priestly authority and emphasizing lay ministry.

Despite the freedom Quaker women enjoyed within their own circles, the Puritans were not ready for that equality. Mary Dyer endured the most severe punishment of all Quaker women. Originally a supporter of Anne Hutchinson, Dyer was likewise excommunicated and banished from Boston. After joining the Quakers in the 1650s, Dyer repeatedly returned to Boston to witness. She was executed in 1660 after the Puritans, who held both governmental as well as religious authority, passed a law allowing the death penalty for Quakers who did not stay out of the colony.

Jemima Wilkinson

“Although it is doubtful that Wilkinson ever would have made so many converts if she had not denied her sex, she unwittingly strengthened the prejudices against female preaching by insisting she was not a woman.”—Catherine Brekus, author of *Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America*

“Although it is doubtful that Wilkinson ever would have made so many converts if she had not denied her sex, she unwittingly strengthened the prejudices against female preaching by insisting she was not a woman.”—Catherine Brekus, author of *Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America*
changed her name to the “Public Universal Friend” and refused to answer to any other name.

Although some listeners scorned Wilkinson when they came to hear her preach, she won many converts, including several socially prominent and wealthy men. In 1790, she and a band of followers founded a “New Jerusalem” in the Finger Lakes area of New York. Their numbers eventually reached more than 300.

“Although it is doubtful that Wilkinson ever would have made so many converts if she had not denied her sex, she unwittingly strengthened the prejudices against female preaching by insisting that she was not a woman,” writes Catherine Brekus in *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998). “When she died in 1819, she was buried as the Public Universal Friend, not as Jemima Wilkinson.”

**Mother Ann Lee**

One of the fastest growing religious groups in early America, the Shakers, was founded by an illiterate English immigrant named Ann Lee. A blacksmith’s wife and mother of four—all of whom died in childhood—Lee worshipped with the “Shaking Quakers,” a group that split from mainstream Quakerism and were known for their spontaneous dancing and trembling.

Shakers, like Quakers, believed that they could directly know Christ without a church, priest or book as the final word of revelation. So when Lee had a vision convincing her that she was the incarnation of Christ’s femininity, she was exalted as a leader in the society. After claiming to receive another vision in 1774 directing her to take her gospel to America, Lee sailed to the New World, with seven followers in tow.

Calling themselves the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Appearing, the group settled near Albany, and in 1780, the first two American converts joined the community, which embraced a strict style of communal living set by Lee. Converts gave up families, property and worldly ties to join “holy families” that sought to transform heaven into earth through rigorous work and a pure, simple life. Men and women lived in celibacy as brother and sister, property was held in common and marriage and childbearing were shunned.

When the Shakers were suspected of not aiding the Patriots during the Revolutionary War, Lee was imprisoned, but later released on the condition that she and the group wouldn’t help the British. Returning to the community, she continued to teach and draw converts until her death in 1784. The Shaker movement didn’t diminish with her passing, however—it only grew larger and more influential as the 19th century dawned.

**Servants First, Women Second**

In Puritan New England, only elite women like Anne Hutchinson (the wife of a wealthy merchant and a renowned midwife) ever dared to challenge the authority of the clergy. During the mid-18th century, however, ordinary women began to pray and exhort in public, Catherine Brekus says.

During the revivals of the first Great Awakening (roughly the period of the 1730s and 1740s), both itinerate preachers and ordained ministers preached a “heart-centered” religion. A movement sparked by the rousing preaching of Jonathan Edwards, the Great Awakening encouraged a more democratic spirit in religion and resulted in doctrinal changes throughout the Colonies. The revivals had the revolutionary effect of breaking down the restrictions on the religious speech of both women and laymen, according to Brekus. “Since heartfelt expression was the most important qualification for ministry, anyone who had experienced the new birth could be an evangelist for Christ,” she writes.

In this atmosphere, a small group of women emerged as religious leaders, Brekus writes. In Newport, R.I., Sarah Osborn’s influence grew until she was hosting evening meetings every day except Saturday, teaching African-American men and women, and white women and children. Her women’s society met weekly at her home for more than 50 years. During the second Great Awakening (1790–1845), Phoebe Palmer led numerous revivals in the United States and abroad. Sally Parsons traveled throughout New Hampshire and Maine in the 1790s, preaching in Freewill Baptist churches, private homes and even barns and fields, Brekus writes.

These female leaders nearly always worked within the gender limitations of the day. Some, like Sarah Osborn, provided quick assurances of their subordination to male ministers. When pressed to defend their religious work, many vigorously asserted their rights to preach, but those rights were always secondary to faith in biblical revelation. These women believed that God had called them as “laborers in the...
harvest,” and their faith was central to all they did. Any argument in support of women’s preaching was made on their interpretation of Scripture, not as an advancement of women’s rights.

Phoebe Palmer’s advocacy of women’s preaching in public to both men and women was radical in the 1840s, but “it was rooted in her theology and in prophetic tradition of religious leadership whereby it is God’s will, not human customs or church traditions, that authorizes preaching,” Lindley writes. Women preachers did not usually seek ordination, nor did they administer the sacraments. They worked to convert souls, but they worked within the gender confines of their times. Palmer, for example, “accepted and valued the domestic role of wife and mother as natural and divinely sanctioned for women, subordinate only to every believer’s first duty to God,” Lindley adds.

Rewriting History

In spite of their successes during the Great Awakening, women preachers did not pave the way for future generations. As dissenting groups such as the Baptists, the New Lights and the Separates grew from marginalized sects into thriving, middle-class denominations, these churches preferred to ignore their early history with women speaking during worship services. “By the 1830s and 1840s, few clergymen wanted to be reminded of the visionary, often uneducated women who had traveled across the country thundering out their condemnations of sin,” Brekus writes. These and other faiths “traded their early egalitarianism for greater political power and influence.” Stories of women preachers were written out of church histories and largely disappeared from public records.

Congregationalists and Episcopalians also opposed female preaching. To them, the Apostle Paul’s order that women “keep silence in the churches” meant that women did not have the right to teach men. Many ordained and educated ministers of the day “believed they were defending the truth of the Bible,” Brekus writes.

But women preachers felt they were defending the Bible’s truths as well, in spite of opposition both within their denominations and in the public sphere.

“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few,” Jesus said in Matthew 9. “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” This biblical command inspired many strong-willed, faith-filled women to toil in the harvest.

Kim Hill’s article on the First Amendment ramifications of the 18th-century John Peter Zenger trial appeared in the January/February 2007 issue.

A First for Women

The legacy of early American female preachers continued with Antoinette Brown Blackwell, who became the first female ordained minister of a mainstream denomination in 1853. Deeply religious throughout her life, at age 8 she told her Sunday school teacher she wanted to be a minister. Her family embraced her interest “in pursuing a religious vocation even as they steered her toward work as a missionary or minister’s wife,” says Beverly Zink-Sawyer in From Preachers to Suffragists. After completing her studies in the theological course at Oberlin College in 1850, Brown lectured nationwide on the newly organized women’s rights movement and preached in churches when invited. She was so popular that Horace Greeley and Charles Dana of the New York Tribune offered to rent a hall for her in New York City so she could preach regularly.

In 1853, however, Brown finally found her perfect opportunity. A small Congregational church in South Butler, N.Y., invited her to become its pastor, and Brown took up her duties in the spring. By summer, the church board decided she should be ordained, something Oberlin College had continued to deny her because of her gender. The college also refused to formally grant her a degree for the same reason.

Brown was ordained in the First Congregational Church on September 15, 1853. “In the church’s 1,800-year history, no Christian woman had until then been set apart for liturgical and pastoral service by ecclesiastical sanction and ordination,” Zink-Sawyer writes.

Although Brown described her parish as “pleasant and very easy,” she felt alienated from neighboring clergy, who ignored her. She continued to lecture on behalf of women’s rights, but those activities “made her suspicious in the eyes of many in the church,” Zink-Sawyer writes. At the same time, “few feminists saw Brown’s work as a minister as part of the common struggle for a change in the status of women.” Brown felt increasingly alone.

Most significantly, Brown’s theological thinking began to shift away from some aspects of orthodox Calvinism. Doubting even her own faith, she resigned as minister of the South Butler church in the summer of 1854.

After rest and reflection, however, Brown resumed her public speaking and reform work. She married Samuel C. Blackwell in 1856 and raised five daughters. In the 1870s, she formally joined the Unitarians and was instrumental in organizing the congregation at Elizabeth, N.J. In 1903, when she was 78 years old, she was invited to conduct Sunday services.

In 1908, Oberlin College awarded her an honorary doctor of divinity degree and listed her as a member of the theological class of 1850.
New rate reduction offers value, convenience and the perfect holiday gift opportunity!

Now American Spirit subscribers can enjoy a discount from the base price of $18 per year by choosing to subscribe for two years at $34 or three years at $48.

A subscription to the award-winning American Spirit magazine will be enjoyed all year long by anyone who loves history, education and patriotism. This beautifully illustrated and well-written publication is both a thoughtful gift and a great value.

Ordering is a snap. Call toll free (866) 327–6242 or visit us online at www.dar.org/americanspirit.

For faster service, call toll free: (866) DAR–MAGA (327–6242) or subscribe online at www.dar.org/americanspirit.

☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift

☐ YES! Send a one-year subscription of American Spirit (6 issues) to the person at right. I’ll pay $18, a 24% savings off the cover price.

☐ Instead, send a two-year subscription (12 issues), $34.

☐ Instead, send a three-year subscription (18 issues), $48.

Save 24% off the cover price of $3.95/issue. Please allow 4–6 weeks for delivery. Canada and Mexico, $23/yr., $44/2yrs. or $63/3yrs. Other international subscriptions, $30/yr., $58/2yrs. or $84/3yrs. First Class Air Mail add $20/yr., $40/2yrs. or $60/3yrs.

SAVE 24% OFF THE COVER PRICE

NAME___________________________________________

ADDRESS_________________________________________

CITY__________________________________________ STATE ________ ZIP ____________

PHONE (_____)_________________ E-MAIL ________________

CHAPTER __________________________ NATIONAL # ________

Please send form and payment in a stamped envelope to: DAR Magazine Office, 1776 D Street NW, Washington, DC 20006–5303.

You may pay by check or credit card.
• Make check payable to: American Spirit, NSDAR.
• Credit Card # ____________________________ Security Code #: ____________________________

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

American Spirit
This 19th-century wood engraving shows soldiers under the command of Henry Knox hauling cannons from New York through the winter snows of 1775–1776 to break the British siege of Boston.
Strung along a rough-hewn line of 300 miles from Fort Ticonderoga in far upstate New York to Boston are 56 granite and bronze markers. Largely unobtrusive and measuring only a few feet high, they sit in parks, along roadsides and, in one case, in a busy parking lot. They constitute the Henry Knox Cannon Trail, but Colonel James M. Johnson, Ph.D. (U.S. Army Ret.), military historian of the Hudson River Valley and executive director of the Hudson River Valley Institute, concedes that few people have ever followed most of the trail, and even local knowledge of what the markers represent is regrettably low.

“I’m afraid that the educational level probably has decayed to the point where we really have to make [awareness of the trail] a major effort,” Johnson says.

By Lee Gimpel
What transpired along the route in the winter of 1775-1776 is one of the most inspiring yet forgotten chapters of the Revolution. Knox's exploits and achievements have ensured his name's survival in a number of places, including Fort Knox, the city of Knoxville, Tenn., and a number of state counties. Yet he seems to have faded quickly from the national consciousness. Even in 1835—shortly after his unexpected death in 1806—the National Portrait Gallery of Distinguished Americans said of him, "There are few of our Revolutionary patriots who are more deserving of having their names handed down to the love and admiration of posterity than the late General Knox; and very few to whose memory so little justice has been accorded."

Self-Educated Soldier

In many ways, Knox's story is a classic American tale of how even the lowborn can reach the highest levels of success through loyalty, intelligence and daring. As opposed to many of his contemporaries who helped shape the nation, Knox did not come from a landed family. Born relatively poor, Knox became a bookbinder's assistant to help support his family. His interest in reading grew and at age 21 he opened his own bookstore in Boston.

"Most of his military knowledge came from reading," says Ellen Dyer, director of education and director of the Center for the Study of Early American History at the General Henry Knox Museum in Thomaston, Maine. "He was recognized as the authority on what you should read if you wanted to know more about the military."

Like many of his peers who would become leading lights of the Revolution, Knox had a variety of interests when it came to reading, but he became chiefly interested in military affairs. In early 1770s Boston, Knox's military interest was probably furthered by current events—the same events that would soon make his unique knowledge a valuable commodity to the nascent republic. As a suspected Revolutionary sympathizer, Knox attracted some attention from British officials. As a bookseller, he caught the attention of Lucy Flucker, the 17-year-old daughter of the royal secretary of the Massachusetts province.

In 1774, he served with a Boston-based volunteer company of fighters who were anticipating the coming war. There he had demonstrated a command of military matters. A few days prior to the Battle of Lexington in 1775, Knox fled Boston with Lucy—they had married in June of 1774—to the rebel cause across the river in Cambridge. At the time, he had little military experience, but was well-read on the topic and especially knowledgeable about artillery. Once in camp, he volunteered to transport the captured cannons, which had been surrendered to Ethan Allen in May without any shots fired, from Fort Ticonderoga hundreds of miles to Boston in order to break the British siege of the city.

The Long Journey

Today the Henry Knox Cannon Trail markers commemorate that journey, though they can't do justice to the travails that Knox faced during his nearly two-month trip. He arrived at the fort on December 5, 1775, and began to disassemble and move the guns down to the dock the next day with his brother and the fort's garrison. The 59 cannons and mortars amounted to some 60 tons. Until then, the weather had remained mild, but just as Knox's men prepared to cross Lake George, the wind picked up, forcing them to row into an icy gale.

By December 11, the flotilla had sailed across, transporting the last cannon to the southern end of the lake just as it began to freeze. Over the course of the trip, Knox had to hope the weather would cooperate. While he needed the lake to be open to boats, he needed the Hudson River to be frozen over—and solid enough to support his largest gun.
which weighed 1,800 pounds—when he crossed it. The same day he began preparations to secure sleds and oxen.

Knox and his men averaged five miles per day, transporting heavy artillery across rough, slick wooded trails and trudging through howling winds and blinding snow and ice. Deep snowfall and the lack of tracks made the 300-mile trip all the more perilous and exhausting.

About a month later on January 7, the artillery train had traveled about 100 miles to Albany through the winter snows of the Hudson River Valley. At Albany, the detachment struggled to rescue a cannon that had fallen through the river ice—two days prior the same thing had happened. The next day, Knox recorded in his dairy, “Went on the ice about 8 O’Clock in the morning & proceeded so carefully that before night we got over twenty three sleds & were so lucky as to get the Cannon out of the River, owing to the assistance the good people of the City of Albany gave.”

Finally, on January 24, 1776, the artillery train entered Cambridge. Washington awarded Knox command of the artillery that was placed along the Dorchester Heights above Boston.

By December 11, the flotilla had sailed across Lake George. Over the course of the trip, Knox had to hope the weather would cooperate. While he needed the lake to be open to boats, he needed the Hudson River to be frozen over—and solid enough to support his largest gun, which weighed 1,800 pounds—when he crossed it.

Puttiing Maine on the Map

The mission won Knox both respect and a right-hand role to Washington for the rest of the war. Washington saw Knox as loyal and capable, but Knox’s admiration of Washington approached hero worship. Ellen Dyer of the Knox Museum claims it is probable that Knox saw the charismatic Washington as something of a father figure and worked hard to gain his respect. At the Battle of Trenton in 1776, it was Knox who staged the surprise river crossing. At the culminating Siege of Yorktown in 1781, it was Knox and his artillery that sealed General Lord Cornwallis’ surrender.

Throughout his service, Knox was separated from his wife. (Ironically, Knox’s cannons forced the British out of Boston, and Lucy’s parents were part of the retreating population. They would never see their daughter again.) Other officers sometimes brought their wives into camp, but Knox believed that his
first duty was to his country, and he saw Lucy infrequently. The couple did, however, correspond frequently by letters—some of which were recently obtained by the NSDAR. The correspondence illuminates not only Knox’s life but also the struggles between balancing the war front and the home front.

In March 1785, he was rewarded for his wartime service with the post of secretary at war under the Articles of Confederation and then became the nation’s first secretary of war in September 1789, a post he held until 1794. Over the course of almost a decade as the nation’s top military decisionmaker, Knox busied himself making plans for a national militia and preparing a regular navy. He also initiated a chain of coastal fortifications, supervised Indian policy and set the groundwork for military academies that would train knowledgeable officers.

At the age of only 44, Knox retired from government service with plans of becoming a gentleman farmer, like...
Jefferson and Washington, in what would later become the state of Maine. His wife's family had been granted some 576,000 acres (900 square miles) in the territory, and while other Loyalist lands were forfeit and thus did not pass on to their American heirs, Knox managed to secure Lucy's sizable holdings.

The disparate interests that characterized Knox's early reading showed in his retirement; he undertook all manner of commerce, including lumbering, shipbuilding, stock raising, brick manufacturing, agriculture (including unsuccessful experiments to cultivate peaches in the far north) and land speculation. He also built a lock and canal system and many roads. Dyer relates that a biographer said of Knox that he "jumped astride a horse and tried to ride off in all directions at once." Knox is also remembered as one of the men who put the Maine territory on the map and paved the way for successful future endeavors, notably in logging and shipbuilding.

Montpelier, his mansion at the head of the St. Georges River in Thomaston, was a crowning achievement for the territory. Built with the same grandeur as Mount Vernon and Monticello, the construction employed many of the area's citizens and gave the territory a true exceptional landmark: a palace in the wilderness.

**KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE OF AN 'INCREDIBLE FEAT'**

When Knox died unexpectedly in October 1806, Montpelier began a steady decline, as his wife, youngest daughter and widowed eldest daughter failed to keep the estate viable. Finally, in 1854, the decaying mansion was sold out of the family. It was razed in 1871 to accommodate the Knox and Lincoln Railroad.

The General Knox Chapter, Thomaston, Maine, continued to celebrate Knox's birthday every year, but without the tangible touchstone of Montpelier, he seemed destined to be forgotten. Plans to rebuild the house began to coalesce in the early 1900s, and by the 1920s, the Knox Memorial Association began a national fund-raising effort, aided in great part by the DAR.

"There was a certain level of embarrassment by that time in Thomaston because there was really very little left to memorialize Henry Knox," Dyer says.

Although the association received many donations, it was the generosity of Cyrus H.K. Curtis, publisher of The Saturday Evening Post, which allowed the association to break ground on a replica Montpelier in 1929. Although the building is located a short distance from where Knox's home sat, it is a true reconstruction of the original oval-on-axis design, aided by Knox's copious notes and correspondence with his builder.

Johnson of the Hudson River Valley Institute is also trying to keep Knox's legacy alive, albeit on a smaller scale. The organization is now pushing to restore the 30 markers erected in the 1920s throughout New York to delineate the Knox Cannon Trail. (The New York project wouldn't cross the border and cover the remaining markers located in Massachusetts.) The cost to fix broken and missing markers and clean the bronze plates is likely less than $150,000, and the National Park Service has expressed some interest in assisting with the project. The Knox Cannon Trail is currently a New York Heritage Trail, but Johnson hopes that it might eventually be elevated and become a National Historic Trail.

“I don’t think we really understand how great a feat it was,” Johnson says. “This was an impressive thing by a young colonel. I think the whole concept was unbelievable—to be able to drag 59 cannons and mortars all the way from New York to Boston in the dead of winter. That’s just an incredible feat.”

Lee Gimpel's story on rediscovering Jamestown appeared in the September/October 2006 issue.

---

**The Knox Acquisition**

IN JANUARY, the NSDAR acquired 32 Henry Knox manuscript items for its Americana Collection. The items include one Henry Knox signature clipping, a 19-page autobiographical manuscript written by Knox's daughter Lucy Knox Thatcher (shown right) and 30 letters between Knox and his wife Lucy, sister Hannah, brother William, and daughters Lucy and Caroline. The topics of the letters, which date from 1774, range from Knox's wartime experiences to the details of daily life and career goals for Knox's grandchildren.

“The collection fits perfectly our mandate to collect pre-1830 American manuscripts. Also, the documents focus on early American women's history, which is of special interest to us,” says Tracy Robinson, DAR director of archives and history.

The Americana Collection is open to both DAR members and the general public. The Knox materials have been transcribed and are available for research use in the Americana Room by appointment. Currently, many of the documents are featured in an exhibit titled “Those Who Knew and Loved Him: The Henry Knox Family Documents in the Americana Collection,” which will be on display for two years.
Jefferson’s Retreat
AT Poplar Forest

By Phyllis Speidell / Photos by John H. Sheally II
In the foothills of Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains, not far from Lynchburg, a 200-year-old octagonal brick house nestles on the rolling terrain. Until 20 years ago, few people realized that the odd-looking farmhouse was once the perfectly proportioned, meticulously landscaped retreat of Thomas Jefferson.

After a devastating fire in 1845, the house fell to generations of different owners who “modernized” Jefferson’s proudest architectural achievement into near oblivion—bricking over doors, lowering ceilings and adding a hodgepodge of rooms around the house. All but 50 of the plantation’s original 4,812 acres were sold off, inviting new residential subdivisions and a golf course to encroach on the property.
The Rescue

In 1980, a doctor from North Carolina bought the remaining property with the idea of reselling it to a preservation group—but none made an offer. The vacant house continued to deteriorate until 1983, when a small group of local residents and history buffs formed the nonprofit Corporation for Jefferson’s Poplar Forest. The grassroots effort put $1.8 million into buying the house, acquiring 50 acres and an additional 250 acres during its first year in operation.

Schoolchildren, historical societies and a nationwide network of supporters continued to donate, enabling the corporation to carve offices and an archaeology lab from the farm’s outbuildings and enlarge the Poplar Forest lands to encompass more than 600 acres. Each year, the corporation earns the $2 million it takes to maintain the property and continue the restoration.

“We hold title to 614 acres, but haven’t finished paying for all of them,” says Lynn Beebe, the corporation’s president.

On July 4, 1986, Poplar Forest opened for public tours. It marked the beginning of an ongoing effort to restore Jefferson’s retreat with the authenticity he himself would have exacted.

Jefferson’s Private Side

Although his list of accomplishments was long—statesman, president, author of the Declaration of Independence and founder of the University of Virginia—Jefferson was a shy man, more of a scholar than an orator. At every step of his career, he found some haven where he could be alone to read, think and study. Often credited with being the United States’ first homegrown architect of any repute, Jefferson devised small refuges when he was governor in Richmond, Va., ambassador in Paris and secretary of state in Philadelphia.

He was in his 60s, in his second term as president, when he began his grandest retreat. He knew it would likely be his last opportunity to cull the best from all his architectural study and create the perfect haven with all the charm of a continental villa and the practicality of a working farm. The house, started in 1806, took 20 years to finish.

“I have an excellent house there ... am comfortably fixed and attended, have a few good neighbors and pass my time in tranquility and retirement much adapted to my age and indolence,” Jefferson wrote in 1821.

“Poplar Forest is the house of a mature man, a mature architect,” says Travis McDonald, director of architectural restoration at Poplar Forest. “It’s filled with things he wanted to do a second time or had never done before.”

McDonald has been with the Poplar Forest project for 17 years. His appreciation for Jefferson shows as he points out some of the house’s innovations—floor-to-ceiling triple sash windows, oversized windowpanes and a 16-foot-long skylight (likely the largest in the country at the time), alcove beds, an indoor privy, European-style oak herringbone floors and shingles made of thin-sheeted iron dipped in tin.

Perfecting a Legacy

In 1773, Jefferson inherited the Poplar Forest property from his father-in-law. His wife Martha died nine years later,
but Jefferson never remarried. Before 1803, he visited Poplar Forest only four times—enough to recognize it as a place where he could find seclusion and peace.

The plantation was 90 miles from Monticello, his residence in Charlottesville, Va. It was a three-day journey by horseback or carriage—even longer for the workmen who walked, carrying their tools.

Jefferson had sophisticated tastes. He spent five years in France, where he fell in love with the country’s elegant grace and architecture. His admiration of 16th-century Italian architect Andrea Palladio’s villas, some of which survive today around Venice, influenced the design of Poplar Forest.

“He used Palladio’s rules of architecture blended with a ‘modern’ French and British style, but it all fits together,” McDonald says.

Jefferson wrote in 1812 to his son-in-law John Wayles Eppes: “When finished it will be the best dwelling house in the state, except that of Monticello, perhaps preferable to that, as more proportioned to the facilities of a private citizen.”

The Virginia architect was also a mathematician. He planned the house’s exterior as a perfect octagon, 50 feet in diameter. Inside, four elongated octagons surround a central room that is a perfect cube—20 feet in length, width and height. A total of 1,927 square feet of living space on the main floor matches an equally expansive basement level devoted to a kitchen storeroom, wine cellar and occasional quarters for servants. In 1814, Jefferson added a 100-foot wing on the east side to house a state-of-the-art (for its time) kitchen and smoke room. The wing’s ingenious flat roof created a terrace where Jefferson and friends could take a twilight stroll.

Project leaders expect the reconstruction of the east wing, destroyed in the mid-1840s, to be completed next year.

Starting in 1809, Jefferson visited the half-finished house for weeks or months, three or four times a year. He surveyed his property, continued to make architectural plans, corresponded with friends and acquaintances, and read the hundreds of volumes in his extensive library.

“I have fixed myself comfortably, keep some books here, bring others occasionally, am in the solitude of a hermit,” he wrote to a friend in 1811.

Five years later, he began bringing some of his grandchildren with him as they grew into teenagers. Among his favorite companions were his granddaughters, Ellen and Cornelia, and his grandson, Frances Eppes. The only “celebrity” to ever visit was General Andrew Jackson, who stopped by on a surprise call in 1815.
A Fading Vision

Grandson Frances stayed at Poplar Forest often on breaks from New London Academy only three miles away. In 1823, he and his bride of less than a year, Elizabeth, moved into the house. His grandfather, 80 then, helped them settle in.

When Jefferson died three years later on July 4, he left Frances the house and 1,074 acres, an estate valued at more than $20,000. The rest of the land was sold to help pay Jefferson’s debts. But the young couple never shared Jefferson’s fondness for the house or Virginia. In 1828, they sold the property for a mere $5,000 and moved to Florida, where Frances became the mayor of Tallahassee.

The seven extended families of slaves who had worked for Jefferson at Poplar Forest left or were sold as new owners brought their own slaves to the land.

Brick by Brick

The restoration of Poplar Forest has been an education for everyone involved and has raised the bar in preservation, says Jimmy Price, master mason and owner of Virginia Limeworks. Price led the masonry restoration of the house, with carpenters and masons using skills, techniques and materials of the early 1800s.

“It’s been a brick-by-brick project,” Price says, explaining that workers have used toothbrushes to clean broken original bricks used in the restoration.

Price became a forensic mason, using laboratory analysis, notes of classic architects and trial and error to replicate lime putty, a key ingredient in the mortar, plaster and lime wash used in the restoration. Jefferson used plastered-over brick to create the look of scarce, expensive stone. Price had to rediscover Jefferson’s lime mortar formula and application techniques to replicate the look of the house’s original plastered brick columns.

Such painstaking authenticity earned numerous preservation and architectural awards for Poplar Forest, including the National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1998.

That’s the year the exterior of the home was completed and, for the first time in 150 years, the world could see Jefferson’s retreat as he had designed it. The interior was—and is—still under way, intentionally.

The restoration, McDonald explains, started at the bottom of the house and worked to the top, then to the roof systems and the interior, following Jefferson’s building plan and schedule.

“Jefferson lived here in an unfinished house for five years—with no ceilings or plaster on the walls,” McDonald says. “We see this house as sharing an experience, not as a museum.”

Poplar Forest will never be a usual museum, nor completely furnished, McDonald adds. Some rooms will remain partially unfinished to give visitors an inside look at the details of the construction.

“We try to emphasize the idea of getting involved in your visit, not just standing behind a rope, but being engaged in understanding what these professionals are doing.” Lynn Beebe says. “There is so much to learn about the very private side of Thomas Jefferson.”

Last June, the annual summer archaeology field school, sponsored by Poplar Forest and the University of Virginia, excavated a 19th-century building complex, possibly plantation work spaces or slave quarters. Five other volunteers work year-round in the archaeology lab or in excavations around the plantation.

“From the archaeology, architecture and records, we have found the newest information on Jefferson in the last 100 years,” McDonald says.

One Perfect Vista

Jefferson was an early proponent of what famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright termed “organic architecture”—designs that integrate human habitations and the natural world so seamlessly that the building and grounds blend in a perfectly unified composition.

Wright had a high regard for Jefferson’s flair for organic design. In 1959, he told Life magazine, “If Thomas Jefferson were with us, he would be sitting where I am now, at the head of the table.”

Jefferson, however, was content to sit in the parlor at Poplar Forest in his Campeachy—an early recliner with a leather sling seat that he called his siesta chair. From there he could, in peace and quiet, overlook the rear portico of the house and the landscaped grounds beyond in one perfect vista.

Visiting Poplar Forest

For information on house and grounds tours, go to www.poplarforest.org, a site maintained by the Corporation for Jefferson’s Poplar Forest, Forest, Va., or call (434) 525–1806.
**Need Help Dating Your Old Photographs?**

**Dating Old Photographs** contains more than 650 dated images, from the 1840s to the 1920s. By comparing your unknown pictures to those in our book, you will be able to compare clothing and hair fashions, the poses adopted by the subject and the background settings. $12 US or $15 CDN — shipping included.

**More Dating Old Photographs** is an all-new 120-page softcover book that features 700 new examples of dated photographs from 1840-1929, an illustrated introduction by renowned old-photograph expert and best-selling author Maureen Taylor and additional sections on hand-tinted and unusual photographs. $16 US or $20 CDN — shipping included.

---

**Praise for Dating Old Photographs:**

“The best part of [Dating Old Photographs] is the examples.”
— Dick Eastman, Dick Eastman Online

“Dating Old Photographs is a must-have for anyone interested in dating old photos.”
— Kimberly Powell, About.com

---

You’ve almost certainly faced the problem: You’ve got an album or box of old photographs, but almost all of them lack any identification. We have a solution: Here are two excellent reference books on dating old photographs. Order individually, or together for one special low price!

---

**Get Both For $22**

**USA Funds $27**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>datings old photographs</th>
<th>$12 US</th>
<th>$15.00 CDN + GST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More dating old photographs</td>
<td>$16 US</td>
<td>$20.00 CDN + GST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two book bundle</td>
<td>$22 US</td>
<td>$27.00 CDN + GST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All prices include shipping. Residents of NS, NB or NL Please remit HST instead of GST

Payment by: □ Check (enclosed) □ Credit Card □ VISA □ MasterCard

Card Number: ___________________________ Exp. Date: ____________

Signature: ____________________________________________________________________________

Your credit card charge will appear as FC/HM 1-888-326-2476. USA purchasers note: Credit card transactions are processed through our office in Canada, but will appear on your statement in US funds.

Last Name: ____________________________ First Name: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

City: ____________________________ State/Province: ______ Zipcode/Postal Code: ____________

Phone Number: ____________________________ E-mail Address: ____________________________

USA orders send to: Family Chronicle, PO Box 194, Niagara Falls, NY 14304
Canadian orders send to: Family Chronicle, 505 Consumers Road, Suite 500, Toronto, ON M2J 4V8

---

www.familychronicle.com
Composer William Billings’ Influence on the Revolutionary War and Colonial Music

By Gregory M. Pysh
IT is difficult to pinpoint exactly when true American music—not influenced by European models—began to be composed. Many will argue the music of Stephen Foster and his 19th-century ballads are the first real examples of American melodies. However, the true father of the American composition school, William Billings, worked and prospered during the fight for American independence.

Musical Training In the Colonies
The training for an aspiring young musician in the Colonies directly contrasted that of his European counterpart. A European music student of the 17th or 18th century, such as Franz Joseph Haydn or Wolfgang Mozart, received formal instruction in harmony, musical form, music theory and music style at a well-known conservatory or with a popular composer, but an American had no similar opportunity to learn and study his art. His “training” amounted to a study of the music and rules for composition in British and American tune books, practical experience and perhaps attendance at a New England singing school.

Singing schools were devoted to teaching the fundamentals of vocal performance, such as tone production, note reading and ensemble singing. The organization of schools varied greatly, as did the competence of the masters, but standard training entailed two or three weekly meetings for three months. The scholars were mostly young adults and teenagers, and the master was usually an itinerant musician. Often sponsored by churches, many singing schools were held on church premises, though sometimes a special room was rented for the meetings. Ideally, each scholar purchased the tune book chosen by the master, though this stipulation was probably not consistently honored. At the conclusion of the singing school term the scholars sometimes presented a public program, called a “singing lecture,” in which an address on music was delivered by a clergyman and several newly learned musical selections were sung.

Most of the scholars leading these schools were quite young, and for the most part, the recreational activities were more important than the instructional or devotional aspects of their training. Whatever musical abilities the singing master possessed, it was his skill as a leader and disciplinarian that determined his school’s success.

Penning a Popular Song
William Billings’ innate musical abilities were apparent early in his life. Though born in Boston on October 1746, with only one eye and one leg shorter than the other, his deformities never seemed to hamper him. He even received a formal education, including music instruction at a singing school, until he was 14. He was forced to quit school when his father died. In order to make money for his family, he began an apprenticeship as a tanner, a trade he practiced throughout his life, rising to the post of Sealer of Leather in Boston from 1787 to 1796.

During his mid-teens, Billings’ love of music began to reassert itself. He was particularly influenced by “Royal Melody Complete,” penned by an obscure Englishman who wrote in the British tradition of parish psalmody. His interest in music soon garnered citywide note, and his skill for the craft led to the publication of the first of his six collections of psalm tunes, The New England Psalm Singer, in 1770.

One of his most well-known pieces in the collection was the tune “Chester,” used by American troops as a fight song. The text is one of the best-known stanzas produced by any American poet of the period:

Let tyrants shake their iron rod
And slavery Clank her galling Chains
We fear them not we trust in God
New England’s God for ever reigns.

After the Revolution, the song “continued to be sung because of its familiarity and patriotic associations as much as for its fervor and attractive, dance-like tune,” writes Gillian Anderson in a 1978 essay on Billings in the Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress. “Its popularity ... arose from the familiar, accessible style of the tune, the compelling text with complex emotional associations, and the perfect wedding of text and tune.”
Adams also helped the composer get enlisting music for the Colonial cause. That Billings was Adams' collaborator in church's choir, and it is well documented purported to have sung together in the school in 1769. Adams and Billings are whom Billings worked with in a singing Barry, the choirmaster at their church became acquainted through John cause. It is possible the two men were an ardent supporter of the Revolutionary cause. That psalmody, that marked Billings as Adams, who was an eager performer of psalmody, was widespread, and it was published in 28 different American tunebooks. During the late 18th century, it garnered the amount of attention normally given to a modern-day popular song.

Helping the Patriot Cause

Billings also contributed to the war effort in other ways. His physical handicaps kept him from participating as a soldier, but he did work for the Patriots' cause, mostly as a messenger. The composer was also a good friend of Paul Revere, who engraved the frontispiece to The New England Psalm Singer. But it was his friendship with Samuel Adams, who was an eager performer of psalmody, that marked Billings as an ardent supporter of the Revolutionary cause. It is possible the two men became acquainted through John Barry, the choirmaster at their church whom Billings worked with in a singing school in 1769. Adams and Billings are purported to have sung together in the church's choir, and it is well documented that Billings was Adams' collaborator in enlisting music for the Colonial cause. Adams also helped the composer get

The song's popularity in the Colonies was widespread, and it was published in 28 different American tunebooks. The re-evaluation of his legacy and the continued popularity of songs like "Chester" have brought his compositions to the forefront as the first truly American tunes. Billings' contributions to the Colonial cause, as well as his uniquely "New World" style of writing, has finally earned him the title of "Father of American Musical Composition."

Gregory Pysh is minister of music at the First Presbyterian Church of Midland, Texas. His wife Kathy is a member of the Colonel Theunis Dey Chapter, Midland, Texas.
Ever since the first humans built a fire in their dark cave, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. But ever since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has, unfortunately, remained relatively prehistoric.

Modern light fixtures do little to overcome problems associated with improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness, and burning. As more and more of us spend longer and longer hours in front of our computer monitor, these problems are compounded. And the effects of improper indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to a physical problem: the quantity and quality of light can also play a part in both our mood and work performance.

Studies show that sunshine can both lift your mood and enhance your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun does not always shine. Now, however, there’s a solution to the problem—a way to bring the positive benefits associated with natural daylight indoors. The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change not only the way you see, but also the way you feel about your living and work spaces. It brings the benefits of natural daylight indoors, simulating the full spectrum of daylight.

The Balanced Spectrum’s 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent of a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. With the lamp’s sharp visibility, you will see with more clarity and enjoyment in close tasks such as reading, writing, sewing, and needlepoint. It is especially helpful for aging eyes.

Experience sunshine indoors at the touch of a switch. This amazing lamp is not only easy on the eyes, it is easy on the hands as well, featuring a special “soft-touch, flicker-free” rocker switch that is easier to use than traditional toggle or twist switches. And its flexible gooseneck design enables you to get light exactly where you need it. The high-tech electronics, the user-friendly design, and a bulb that lasts 10 times longer than an ordinary bulb—all these features make the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp a must-have.

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 firstSTREET’s exclusive guarantee. Try this lamp for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp
Item# BB-3589 . . . . . . . . . . . was $59.95
Call now for $10 instant savings!
Only $49.95 each + S&H
*Order two Balanced Spectrum® floor lamps and get FREE shipping on both lamps.
*Free shipping within the contiguous 48 states only.
Please mention promotional code 34333.
For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.
1-800-711-8094
We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone.
To order by mail, please call for details.
www.balancedspectrum.com

This light can change the way you live and work
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.

For the sewing and knitting that I do, this is the best lamp I’ve found.
–Kari K.

Your lamp has been a wonderful help to me in reading my newspaper and magazines. I would hate to be without this lamp, it’s made such a difference in my life.
–Kenneth K.

Dozens of testimonials on file.
Results not typical.

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb
• 8,000 hours bulb life
• Energy efficient
• Shows true colors

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that’s perfect for a variety of indoor activities.
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.