Preserving
THE PATH OF JOHN MUIR

An Apple a Day
The Legacy of Johnny Appleseed in Frontier America

Bird House
John James Audubon in Louisiana

Patrick Henry
Revolution’s Voice

The Art of Henrietta Dering Johnston
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 the 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 12 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.

Preserving the American Spirit
www.dar.org
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21 The John Muir Trail: Path to Preservation
Honoring America’s first environmentalist, the 211-mile John Muir Trail offers a challenging trek for hikers and a quiet respite for nature buffs.
BY MEGAN PACELLA

25 Visions of America
John Muir’s journals pay homage to an untamed West—a land he devoted his life to protecting.
BY JAMIE ROBERTS

28 An Apple a Day
In 1801, John Chapman began traveling the countryside bearing apple seeds. His simple gift made him an American legend.
BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

40 Bird House
Louisiana’s Oakley House, now restored, once inspired naturalist John James Audubon in his quest to chart and paint the birds of America.
BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

33 Revolution’s Voice
Sometimes overshadowed by other patriots of his day, Patrick Henry’s passionate words inspired fellow colonists in the fight for freedom.
BY PHYLLIS SPEIDELL
Today’s Daughters
Racing Against Time
Rear Admiral Donna Crisp’s Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command takes on the noble mission of recovering and returning home the remains of missing service members.

BY LENA ANTHONY

National Treasures
Seat of Revolution
An eye-catching sofa belonged to Declaration of Independence signer Thomas McKean.

FROM THE DAR MUSEUM COLLECTION

Class Act
Beyond Curriculum
Scott Brown, a teacher at Leon High School in Tallahassee, Fla., never limits himself to what’s required.

BY MEGAN PACELLA

Collectibles
Music Makers
Murtogh Guinness’ collection of musical instruments and automata demonstrates the first form of music on demand.

BY JAMIE ROBERTS

Early American Women Artists
A Woman of Firsts
Henrietta Dering Johnston didn’t just paint for fun in the early 18th century; her portraits ensured her family’s financial security.

BY GIN PHILLIPS

About the cover:
Low angle of trees at Muir Woods National Monument, California. © Randa Bishop/Jupiter Images
From the President General

Named after the “Father of the National Park Service,” the John Muir Trail, stretching from California’s Sierra Nevada Mountains through the Ansel Adams Wilderness and culminating at the summit of Mount Whitney, is one of the world’s most beautiful scenic hikes. This issue’s cover feature tempts the adventurous to trek its entire 211 miles—a hike that rewards with stunning views of Yosemite National Park, Kings Canyon National Park and Sequoia National Park, reminding us of our nation’s great debt to the foresight of conservationist Muir.

We also pay tribute to another early adventurer: pioneer John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed. Mythologized as a jolly, barefoot character who bounded across the countryside planting apple trees, the real Chapman was wealthy and generous to his fellow pioneers, selling his apple seeds to families for pennies or on credit. Our story shows how his gift for storytelling made him legendary.

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Our Historic Homes department travels about 100 miles northwest of New Orleans to the town of St. Francisville, La., where, fortunately, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita spared the town’s Oakley House Plantation. Built in 1799, the home is best known as the temporary residence of naturalist John James Audubon, who lived there in 1821 and drew more than 20 of his famous bird pictures while tutoring the young daughter of the home’s owner. These drawings later became part of Audubon’s masterpiece, Birds of America.

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We also pay tribute to another, largely unsung artist: Henrietta Dering Johnston, the first known professional female artist to sell her paintings on both sides of the Atlantic. At the turn of the 18th century, her pastel portraits created in Ireland, Charleston and New York were a major factor in keeping her family afloat financially.

Few have heard of the fascinating collection of brewing heir Murtogh D. Guinness, whose love for musical instruments and grand musical furniture can now be enjoyed at New Jersey’s Morris Museum. The museum recently inherited Guinness’ amazing collection of more than 700 mechanical musical pieces, helping illuminate the history of music and technology.

As we close another issue dedicated to the goals of preservation, education and patriotism, may I wish you and your family a joyous Fourth of July.

Linda Gist Calvin
Bringing the Fallen Home

Since taking command of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), Rear Admiral Donna Crisp has become acutely aware of the passage of time. She says racing against the clock is the biggest challenge facing her organization, which is responsible for recovering, identifying and returning home the remains of the more than 88,000 Americans still unaccounted for in areas where U.S. conflicts from World War II to the Persian Gulf War took place.

“As each day passes, witnesses die and sites are being disturbed,” she says. “But most important, family members are passing away before we can return their loved ones to them.”

JPAC is based at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, with three permanent detachments in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Each year, about 70 teams are deployed around the world to analyze and investigate viable recovery sites and excavate remains. Recovery deployments last an average of 45 days. “It’s a very aggressive schedule, with teams in the field from sunrise to sunset,” she says.

It’s a challenging mission, but one that Rear Adm. Crisp says she’s proud to lead.

“Everyone at JPAC would agree that we’re lucky to have this opportunity,” she says. “It’s such a unique humanitarian mission. We all volunteered to do this mission, and we’re all passionate about recovering our nation’s heroes.”

There is no typical day for the rear admiral, whose schedule could one day put her in Laos for a meeting with government officials to negotiate the terms of the JPAC’s recovery efforts and the next back at headquarters performing the usual duties of a commander—managing the budget and checking on the facilities to make sure they’re in good shape. She also visits recovery sites around the world, which are often remote and difficult to access.

She recently returned from the Republic of Papua New Guinea, where three teams are deployed looking for the remains of military personnel who went missing in action during World War II.

When remains are found, they’re carefully placed in aluminum transfer cases. Draped with the American flag, these cases stay on-site until the mission is over.

“The thing that impresses people the most when we go into the field is how we treat the remains with the respect and dignity that our American heroes deserve,” she says.

JPAC’s emphasis on treating the sites with such care may be part of the reason foreign nations have been so receptive to helping the teams with their efforts. “I’ve been so pleased that each nation I have worked with has been warm, welcoming and helpful,” Rear Adm. Crisp says. “They appreciate that we’re searching for our ancestors years after these conflicts ended. It says something special about America and how we value life.”

When recovery missions are finished, the team returns with the findings to Hawaii, where current military personnel, veterans and community members are waiting to pay their respects to the missing American heroes.

“The arrival ceremony is a life-changing experience,” she says.

The remains are then transported to JPAC’s Central Identification Laboratory for analysis. The lab makes about six positive identifications a month for a total of 75 per year. “Some remains can take several months to several years to be identified,” Rear Adm. Crisp says.

The hard work culminates when families arrive to view the remains before they’re transported a final time for burial.

“We have a special room where they can sit and be at peace with their loved one,” she says. “Closure is a very important part of the process.”

The important mission of finding and identifying America’s missing heroes doesn’t leave much room in the rear admiral’s schedule, but she always carves out time for the DAR. A Daughter since 1998, she is a member of the Great Bridge Chapter, Norfolk, Va., and an associate member of Arlington House Chapter, Arlington, Va., and the Aloha Chapter, Honolulu, Hawaii.

“It’s such an honor to be a part of DAR,” she says. “And to be surrounded by brilliant, hardworking women who put such a priority on service to our country.”

To nominate a Daughter for a future issue, e-mail a description to americanspirit@dar.org.
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Seated in Revolution

Owned by Thomas McKean, a Delaware signer of the Declaration of Independence, this distinctive sofa was made in Philadelphia between 1770 and 1790. Sofas were expensive and rare items even among wealthy families of the 18th century. The peaks flanking the back of the sofa’s central arch or serpentine are rare decorative options; in fact, only eight other examples are known to exist. The wool upholstery was fashionable, more durable and less costly than silk. Whatever the fabric, upholstery was an expensive purchase, costing between 10 and 20 pounds—almost as much as a yearly salary for most people. (The upholstery shown here is not original, but the fabric is an accurate re-creation.)

The sofa, listed in McKean’s 1817 estate inventory, was a gift of the Mary Washington Chapter, Washington, D.C.
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{Letters to the Editor}

Spirited comments from our readers

**Saving a Minuteman’s Home**

Thank you so much for selecting the Colonel James Barrett Farm Restoration Project for an article in the March/April issue. The farm is such an important piece of our Revolutionary history, and the exposure was fantastic. Progress has been slow on the restoration process because funds are getting tougher to obtain in this economy, but the project manager is still working diligently on obtaining grant funds.

We will continue to keep you informed of the restoration progress and will definitely let you know when the DAR marker rededication at this historic farm takes place. We hope that the marker originally placed by our chapter in 1961 will be reset in April 2010—the 235th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington and Concord.

Again, our chapter thanks you for the press coverage. It was a wonderful article.

Carolyn Holbrook, Regent
Old Concord Chapter, Concord, Mass.

**BRAIDING BRIDGES**

I am a rug brazier and enjoyed your article, “Homespun Works of Art,” in the November/December 2007 issue. I signed up to learn how to braid rugs after reading in the paper that an instructor would give free lessons if I bought fabric from her. At that time there were coat factories in downtown Kansas City, Mo., that sold their remnants for 40 cents a pound. The salvaged pieces made nice long strips for braiding.

I’ve been making rugs for more than 40 years now; the largest one (11’ x 17’) took two years and is still in good condition. I’ve made one for every room in my house and some for relatives. A rug can trigger memories, especially when using discarded clothing of family members.

At the Old Shawnee Town I do demonstrations for school groups, and at the Old Sedgwick County Fair I won a blue ribbon for one of my creations. Demonstrating has opened many doors for me, and I’ve enjoyed it so much.

Joan Russell
James Ross Chapter, Shawnee, Kan.

**TEA TIME QUESTIONS**

I am researching American tea drinking between the Boston Tea Party and the Declaration of Independence and wonder whether your readers have any information on the subject. Do the papers of your readers’ Revolutionary ancestors mention tea drinking, tea boycotts, tea “parties,” tea bonfires or a switch to coffee, particularly between 1773 and 1776? I am as interested in men and women who chose not to boycott tea as in those who boycotted, and am particularly interested in any documents describing the reasons behind Revolutionary Americans’ decisions. To share information about an ancestor’s tea drinking or boycotting, please contact me via e-mail at jrf@ln.edu.hk or by mail at:

James Fichter, Assistant Professor
Department of History, GE 302 B.Y. Lam Building
Lingnan University, Tuen Mun, N.T., Hong Kong

**A PATRIOTIC AID**

Congratulations on making each issue of our wonderful American Spirit better than ever! The January/February issue was filled with interesting articles and beautiful photos, some of which I was able to put to good use three days after it arrived. My neighbor called to ask if I would talk to her Girl Scout troop about the U.S. flag since her troop was working on their patriotism badge. Information and pictures from the inside of the front cover through page 9 fit right in with my presentation.

Keep up the good work publishing this award-winning magazine.

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

**CORRECTION ON COLONIAL CHILDBIRTH**

The Colonial childbirth article in the May/June 2008 issue was interesting. However, the author quoted (Nancy Caldwell Sorel in Ever Since Eve: Personal Reflections on Childbirth) says Bridget Lee Fuller was “known to have been on board” the Mayflower. She was not on board; she came a year later with a son on the Anne. I am a direct descendant of Dr. Samuel Fuller (Bridget’s husband), and I have read a lot about the Mayflower.

Bettie Speer
William Dennison Chapter, Aledo, Ill.

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Please send letters to the editor to americanspirit@dar.org.
after nine years of teaching American history at Leon High School in Tallahassee, Fla., Scott Brown can sum up his teaching philosophy with one simple rule: Never limit yourself to what’s required. Step into his classroom and you’ll realize that Brown lives up to that idea every day: He dips into his own pocket to provide each of his students with a copy of the Constitution, and he recently gave up teaching Advanced Placement courses to reach out to students who need more assistance.

Through his work with a youth in government program at the local YMCA, Brown discovered that few students were truly engaged by their history classes; many of them spent classroom time watching movies or plowing through boring book work. Believing that all students deserve an equal opportunity to interact with their teachers and get excited about history, Brown asked his principal if he could teach general students instead of honors students. “Everyone wants to teach the best and the brightest, but I gave that up,” he says. “I said, ‘I’ll teach these classes because I know I can do it.’ ”

Since taking over the general courses, he has introduced students to the Colonial period—an era they would not have studied otherwise since the state of Florida requires high-school history teachers to cover only post-Reconstruction America.

“If I didn’t cover the Colonial era, how would my students learn about the American Revolution?” Brown asks. “It’s not right for them to walk away without a firm grasp on this turning point in American history.”

Brown kicks off every school year with a show-and-tell session of family artifacts. He passes around his great-grandfather’s sword from the Spanish-American War and a fencing book from 1898, and shares his lineage, including his great-grandmother’s involvement with the DAR. Eager to show off their family history, students bring their own heirlooms to share with the class.

“I’ve had students bring in their great-great-great-grandfather’s history book, a christening gown from the 1850s, medals their great-grandfather earned in World War II—even photographs from Ellis Island,” Brown says. “The project makes them realize that American history is literally all around us, and everyone has an impact on it.”

Brown rarely teaches from a textbook, relying on personal interaction and an emphasis on research skills to encourage students to learn actively instead. Each year, Brown’s students re-enact the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, play games that require them to pore through the Constitution and decipher its meaning, and take field trips to examine primary sources.

Brown’s ultimate goal is to push his students to discover unknown American heroes.

“When I assign research projects, students have to choose someone or something they’ve never heard of,” he says. “They’re not allowed to research Harriet Tubman, FDR’s New Deal or Charles Lindbergh. It has to be something I’m not required to cover in the classroom.”

“I do this from the beginning to make sure they know American history is about unknown heroes—that’s what makes it so great.”
The nation’s largest and oldest celebration of folk life, the 70th National Folk Festival, will take place July 11–13 in Butte, Mont. The three-day festival is free to the public and attracts musicians, dance performers and artisans from all 50 states and most U.S. territories each year.

Implemented by the National Council for the Traditional Arts in 1934, the National Folk Festival celebrates the music, food, dance and cultures of the immigrant groups that formed America’s deep cultural roots. Through the years, the event has gained popularity, with recent crowds numbering more than 100,000. This year is a milestone for the traveling festival—it will be held west of the Mississippi River for the first time in more than 40 years and in Montana for the first time ever.

Each National Folk Festival city has the opportunity to display its own traditions and cultures. This year, a special section of demonstrations and exhibits will feature Montana’s finest craftspeople and trades.

The festival will include a broad array of musical styles, such as Celtic, blues, zydeco, reggae and others, to celebrate the richness of American culture. More than 250 musicians will perform on seven stages throughout the city, with the main amphitheater located on the original site of a mine yard. Dance performances and participatory dancing will also be featured during the festival, which will stay in Montana until 2010.

For more information about the National Folk Festival, visit www.nationalfolkfestival.com.
Not Your Typical Vacation Spot

SINCE ITS DOZEN DISTINCTIVE DESTINATIONS program began in 2000, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) has offered an annual list of America’s top travel destinations. To date, it includes 108 sites in 42 states. Each year the NTHP scours the countryside and selects 12 top vacation sites that boast America’s best historical architecture, picturesque landscapes and vibrant downtown areas. Best of all, each of the chosen locations has made a commitment to preservation.

This year’s list honors: Aiken, S.C.; Apalachicola, Fla.; Columbus, Miss.; Crested Butte, Colo.; Fort Davis, Texas; Friday Harbor, Wash.; Portland, Ore.; Portsmouth, N.H.; Red Wing, Minn.; Sainte Genevieve, Mo.; San Juan Bautista, Calif.; and Wilmington, N.C. Visit www.preservationnation.org for more information on this year’s distinctive destinations.

Clockwise: Sunset at Lime Kiln Lighthouse, Friday Harbor, Wash.; Tennessee Williams Home and Welcome Center, Columbus, Miss.; Les Petits Chanteurs (the little singers) in Sainte Genevieve, Mo.

On This Day
In History

(SOURCES INCLUDE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS “AMERICAN MEMORY” HTTP://MEMORY.LOC.GOV)

JULY 1, 1847: The United States Postal Service issues its first postage stamps. Before 1847, stamps were privately produced.

JULY 11, 1804: Political rivals Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr settle their differences with a duel, resulting in Hamilton’s death.

JULY 16, 1790: Congress declares Washington, D.C., our nation’s permanent capital.

JULY 18, 1774: Explorer Meriwether Lewis, who helped create a route to the Pacific Ocean, is born near Charlottesville, Va.

JULY 19, 1848: The first women’s rights convention is held in Seneca Falls, N.Y.

JULY 19, 1814: British troops defeat America at the Battle of Bladensburg and burn Washington, D.C.

JULY 24, 1857: The Panic of 1857, one of the worst economic crises in U.S. history, begins when the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company fails.

AUGUST 3, 1492: Christopher Columbus begins his first voyage to the New World.

AUGUST 18, 1774: Explorer Meriwether Lewis, who helped create a route to the Pacific Ocean, is born near Charlottesville, Va.

AUGUST 19, 1814: British troops defeat America at the Battle of Bladensburg and burn Washington, D.C.

AUGUST 24, 1857: The Panic of 1857, one of the worst economic crises in U.S. history, begins when the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company fails.
SOME GREAT AMERICAN works of art, such as Emanuel Leutze’s “Washington Crossing the Delaware” and the Chrysler Building, are easily recognizable. But many people get to see these masterpieces only as reproductions printed in books, which fail to convey the scale and grandeur of the works. In an effort to give more Americans access to their artistic heritage, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recently launched an innovative program called Picturing America, which uses American art to tell the story of our country.

In January, the NEH awarded this free resource to more than 1,500 pilot schools across the nation. The program is available to all public, private, parochial and charter schools, and home school consortia (K–12), as well as public libraries in the United States and its territories. The Picturing America materials include 40 large color reproductions of significant American works of art, a teacher’s resource book and supplemental online resources. The selected works were carefully chosen for their quality, range of media and ability to maximize the program’s educational potential.

The NEH will offer the program to more schools and libraries through a second application opportunity, taking place August 4 to October 31. In the meantime, a wealth of material is available on the Picturing America Web site. For more information and updates, visit www.picturingamerica.neh.gov or call the NEH We the People Office at (202) 606–8337.
When America was in the heat of World War II battles 65 years ago, it was rare to see a woman in uniform defending her country’s freedom—but that didn’t stop the Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES) from doing their part. Now, to commemorate the legacy left by these extraordinary women, author Evan Bachner has compiled 150 duotone photographs in *Making Waves: Navy Women of World War II* (Abrams, 2008).

While most female recruits served in clerical positions during the war, Bachner highlights the service of those who performed unusual duties in the Navy—such as Judge Advocate General Corps members—as well as those who served in medical operations, communications, intelligence, science and technology.

Most of the photographs, which show women at work on airplanes, training in boot camp and at leisure, are part of the National Archives’ collection and have never before been published.

In order to cull the best from the archives’ 786,000 naval images, Bachner spent eight years sorting through these timeless photographs and choosing the most exceptional 150 for inclusion in the book. To purchase the book, visit www.hnabooks.com.
Our Peoples: Giving Voice to our Histories
National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C., ongoing

For centuries, the histories of American Indian tribes have been told from the perspective of textbooks and historians. In the “Our Peoples” exhibit, American Indians have the chance to tell their own stories, using their own artifacts to express their perceptions of history. The exhibition focuses on the last 500 years and shows how disease, weaponry and the seizure of their homelands altered American Indian history forever. For more information, visit www.nmai.si.edu.

British Museum Exhibition of John White Watercolors
Jamestown Settlement, Williamsburg, Va., July 15—October 15, 2008

John White was the first Englishman known to produce a visual record of early America. Today his 16th-century watercolors of the Algonquin people of the Jamestown region are an important resource in the development of the Jamestown Settlement’s exhibits, as White gave England the first look at what colonists would see in America. The watercolors are the property of the British Museum’s collection and are on display for the first time in 40 years. For more information, visit www.historyisfun.org.

Westervelt Warner Museum of American Art
Tuscaloosa, Ala., ongoing

The Westervelt Warner Museum boasts paintings, sculptures, artifacts and antiques from some of America’s most renowned artists, such as James McNeill Whistler, John Singer Sargent and Andrew Wyeth. Portraits of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Marquis de Lafayette line the gallery walls, as well as original household objects designed by Paul Revere, Duncan Phyfe, Charles Honoré Lannuier and others. For more information, visit www.warnermuseum.org.

Revolutionary War Ancestors have Revolutionary DNA

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Answers to the quiz on page 10.
1. False. Henry opposed the idea of a constitution until the Founding Fathers agreed to add the Bill of Rights. 2. In 1776, Henry served his first term as wartime governor of Virginia. 3. Henry worked as a bartender at his father-in-law’s tavern before educating himself in law. 4. George Washington offered Henry the position of Secretary of State in 1785, but Henry declined. 5. Henry didn’t participate in the convention because he opposed a stronger central government.
In Debt We Trust

With America’s soaring national debt that currently piles more than $28,000 of obligation on top of every resident (according to 2006 figures), it’s hard to imagine that our nation paid off its national debt not once, but twice in its history. Although we would probably applaud this rare feat among nations, there was a time that a national debt was regarded as the glue that could hold a new nation together.

In One Nation Under Debt: Hamilton, Jefferson and the History of What We Owe (McGraw-Hill, 2008), author Robert E. Wright traces the origins and uses of our early national debt, from the early days of Revolution through the end of Jacksonian influence on national policy.

Wright, the curator of the Museum of American Finance, has written frequently about the role of finance in government and politics. He makes clear that he favors significant reforms in the nation’s financial policies that include not just simplifying and reducing taxes but also paring down spending. A good dose of “republican simplicity” in government—with a lowercase “r” meant to relate to his hero, Alexander Hamilton—must be injected in order to bring the modern-day borrowing fever under control, he asserts.

Today’s national debt would probably cause grave concern for our Founding Fathers, who tried all sorts of fundraising devices to feed, clothe and arm Revolutionary War troops, and then to run the infant nation.

Shakespeare famously (and probably with tongue firmly in cheek) warned, “Neither a borrower nor a lender be.” He probably felt that way at times as he begged millions of livres from France to pay the mounting costs of fighting the American Revolution.

Great Britain certainly went a-sorrowing. Deeply in debt from the Seven Years’ War and other ventures, England raised taxes in part to reduce its financial obligations, and instead, it touched off an even more hideously expensive war—which, of course, it had to borrow money to finance.

The tax-resistant Colonies had virtually no capital to speak of and fumbled for years to find some means of financing the war. Stepping into the breach at the penultimate moment, financier extraordinaire Robert Morris put his own reputation and credit on the line to bring some measure of order to the mess. Wright gives an excellent overview of the mechanisms by which the Continental Congress and Morris achieved this. Some require rereading to understand how they worked, although a background in economics is definitely not required.

The financial war did not end with the firing of the last shot. The state sovereignty provided under the Articles of Confederation virtually assured that Congress could not raise enough money to meet daily expenses, much less retire the debt. The states also had their own debts to settle. Creditors ranged from foreign nations to farmers who held Army IOUs for produce sold to the troops.

Things tottered along for several years until the dramatic, history-changing creation of the Constitution. Under its enumerated powers of taxation, the nation began to put its accounts in order. Congress and President Washington resisted calls to renounce the debt, and with Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury, the nation began moving toward retiring it.

Wright traces how our early leaders accomplished this task. Wisely, those leaders saw that a reasonable national debt not only gave the nation good credit standing in order to pursue worthwhile ends, it also bound the states together more tightly. By investing in the future of the country, American citizens had an interest in remaining united to protect their investment; likewise, foreign investors had reason to support the young republic.

Wright’s final chapter recaps our situation today and suggests some broad steps necessary to bring our debt back to the “reasonable” range. The task is daunting, and Wright does not seem hopeful that either our leaders or our citizens are willing to make the necessary sacrifices until things reach a desperate pass. On the other hand, we’ve done it before, and that history could serve as our guide.

—BILL HUDGINS
Remembering the Ladies

For all who thought our democratic ideals in the 18th century were distilled by the Founding Fathers from a few European philosophers, that’s only part of the story. The letters and anonymous plays of Mercy Otis Warren, confidante and adviser to generals and presidents, should be required reading in American history classes because of her profound influence on John Adams and other Revolutionary War leaders.

As Nancy Rubin Stuart makes clear in her new book, The Muse of the Revolution — the Secret Pen of Mercy Otis Warren and the Founding of a Nation (Beacon Press, 2008), Warren was one of the great scribes of our American Revolutionary era. Through her letters and a three-volume history, she communicated the birth and development of our great American heritage.

Warren had to write anonymously at first because, throughout the 1760s and early 1770s, the British would have felt little reluctance to prosecute such a smart, assertive woman—if only they could have identified her. We know her today through her extensive correspondence with John and Abigail Adams, her satirical plays and her History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution.

Abigail Adams famously wrote her husband at the Constitutional Convention to “Remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them.”

—WILDA DODSON
than your ancestors. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.”

These two Colonial families—the Adamses and James and Mercy Warren—were very close. They lived near each other, and both women suffered the trials and hardships of war widows while their husbands fought for independence. These women raised families, educated children and provided for their households—all while advising our leaders behind the scenes.

Mercy Otis Warren and John Adams agreed to keep a history of the Revolution and its leaders through their letters and other writings. Stuart makes us wonder what they could have done with an e-mail distribution list, much less the freedom to write and speak without fear of being charged with treason and other high crimes.

In 1775 Adams wrote Warren to specifically request her guidance as to the “form of government which ought to be preferred by a people about to shake off the fetters of monarchic and aristocratic tyranny.” Her admonition was telling. Warren urged Adams in her reply to avoid a monarchy, favor a republican form of government and establish genuine principles of equal liberty.

While Adams believed that women should be spared the distress and hardship of politics and war, he wrote James Warren that Marcia (his personal name for Mercy) was the “exception” because he had always believed that she owned a share “in the conduct of our American affairs.” This dramatic biography makes it clear that future President Adams relied extensively upon advice from his wife, Abigail, as well as upon the guidance of Mercy Otis Warren. Although Warren and John Adams had a falling out after her book was published because Adams thought he was portrayed unfavorably, Abigail Adams probably influenced their later reconciliation.

As Stuart demonstrates, Warren was a woman of independent hopes and dreams who believed strongly that she could express important ideas to the new American republic with her writing. Thankfully, she was right.

—LARRY AND SARALEE WOODS OWNS BOOKMAN/BOOKWOMAN BOOKS IN NASHVILLE, TENN.
Music Makers

MURTOGH D. GUINNESS’ COLLECTION OF EARLY ‘MUSIC ON DEMAND’

MURTOGH D. GUINNESS, an heir to the Irish brewing family, was only 6 years old when a quirky little present triggered his fascination with mechanical musical instruments. Traveling with his mother in Paris on his birthday, the two stopped in Breguet, a famous clock and watch store, where she told him to pick out a gift. He chose a tiny mechanical singing bird, an object that was still in his possession when he died in 2002. That first piece signaled the beginning of Guinness’ obsession with imaginative music boxes and playful mechanical figures—and, later, sparked his desire to share his collection of more than 700 mechanical musical instruments, grand musical furniture and automata with the public.

BY JAMIE ROBERTS
In his mid-20s, Guinness started collecting in earnest, traveling to London, Geneva, Amsterdam and Paris to antique markets that specialized in mechanical instruments. By the time he settled in New York City—where he bought two town houses to hold all of his treasures—he had gathered hundreds of music boxes, fairground organs, orchestrions and other mechanical instruments from all over the world.

"His lifelong passion was collecting these instruments, and he enjoyed sharing them with his friends," says conservator Jeremie Ryder, who knew Guinness personally and has extensively studied the craftsmanship of the pieces.

Known for his hospitality, Guinness and his ingenious instruments often were the center of attention at his late-night parties, but his goal was to share the items—a clown magician with a vanishing head, a magic cupboard, an automatic banjo—with the public. To keep the collection intact and find the appropriate institution to display the items after he died, he created the Lutece Foundation.

New Jersey’s Morris Museum won the proposal to hold the collection, whose objects range from the 18th to the early 20th century and comprise one of the largest collections of its kind in the world. In addition to an exquisite organ-playing clock and fascinating automats like dancing monkeys, fiddlers and acrobats, it also includes more than 5,000 music-storing media, ranging from player piano rolls to pinned cylinders.

The collection features an 18-karat gold mechanical musical ring made by Pique et Capt in Switzerland between 1802 and 1811. It plays “Le Ranz des Vaches,” an ancient cow herders’ song symbolizing the Swiss motherland, and is decorated with a woman playing a hand-cranked organ to coax a bird to sing a melody.

In November 2007, the museum unveiled a permanent exhibition, "Musical Machines and Living Dolls." Featuring more than 150 pieces, the exhibit takes visitors through the history of these mechanical musical instruments, which are considered early forms of music on demand. The following curator’s favorites are perfect examples of how these objects brought animated, musical entertainment to private settings and public places—well before records, CDs and IPods existed.

The 18-karat gold mechanical musical ring was made by Pique et Capt in Switzerland between 1802 and 1811. It plays “Le Ranz des Vaches,” an ancient cow herders’ song symbolizing the Swiss motherland. With Geneva then under French occupation, it was also considered a song of resistance.

The ring is decorated with a scene of a man and woman in an elegant drawing room flanked by a bird sitting on a three-legged music stand and a pet dog. Once the mechanism is wound and started, the woman plays a serinette—a hand-cranked organ—to coax the bird to sing a melody as the man keeps tempo with his violin bow. The case that contains the moving parts is less than 1 3/4-inch thick and is decorated with patterns pressed into the gold from the reverse side—known as "repousse"—and set with turquoise.

"Each instrument has a great story and is wonderful in its own way, but the musical ring’s ingenuity fascinates so
The Limonaire Brothers’ orchestrophone is a visitor favorite. “It makes you want to get up and start dancing,” says conservator Jeremie Ryder.

Piano, organ pipes that imitate violin, cello and flute, a xylophone, orchestra bells, a bass drum, a snare drum, a cymbal and a triangle. The case features an Alpine scene with a waterfall and a train that moves across an aqueduct.

“Visitors really enjoy this piece because it’s a lot of fun,” Ryder says. “It’s very loud and makes you want to get up and start dancing.”

Designed to imitate the sound of a full orchestra, the Popper’s “Rex” orchestrion would have been a central feature of a beer garden, a dance hall or another indoor public place. Its instrumentation includes a keyboardless piano, organ pipes that imitate violin, cello and flute, a xylophone, orchestra bells, a bass drum, a snare drum, a cymbal and a triangle. The case features an Alpine scene with a waterfall and a train that moves across an aqueduct.

Other featured objects include tabatières, or musical snuff boxes, made in Switzerland, Austria and France in the early 1800s, and a musical chair made in the late 1800s, which is activated by (you guessed it) sitting on it.

“We hope beautiful instruments like these encourage people to think about the role of music in their lives,” Snyder-Grenier says.

So that visitors can see and hear these intriguing historic objects, the museum has a live demonstration of six select pieces daily. “Because of the age and fragility of some objects, not all can be demonstrated, but our exhibition has an audiotape or videotape of almost every single object on view,” Ryder says.

For more information on the Morris Museum, whose exhibitions and performances celebrate science, theatre and history, call (973) 971-3700 or visit www.morrismuseum.org.

Jamie Roberts is the managing editor of American Spirit.
The John Muir Trail
The Path to Preservation

Discovering the Natural World

John Muir’s fascination with nature began in 1850, when his father, Daniel Muir, moved him and his siblings from Dunbar, Scotland, to a homestead in the Wisconsin wilderness, where the children worked long days clearing land for the family’s farm. A strict, pious man, Daniel Muir forced his children to study and recite Bible verses for hours every evening, writes Frank E. Buske in the essay collection, John Muir in Historical Perspective (Peter Lang Publishing, 1999).

Daniel Muir was so zealous in his beliefs that he restricted young John’s reading material, maintaining that the Bible was the only book by which human beings needed to be educated. When his children failed to recite their scriptures correctly, Daniel Muir physically punished them until they could.

According to Buske, “While in Scotland, between the ages of three and eleven, John Muir had been whipped almost nightly to improve his disposition to learn, and could at the end of that time, he later asserted, recite all of the New Testament as well as most of the Old from memory.”

To escape his harrowing upbringing, Muir turned to nature for peace and comfort. In time, his favorite recreation turned into a fascination, leading him to study natural sciences at the University of Wisconsin and work as a botanist during summer breaks.

Tragedy Leads to Freedom

In 1863, before finishing his studies, Muir embarked on a four-year trek through Indiana, Michigan, and Southern Canada. Leaving the back-country only to work, Muir periodically found employment in factories, inventing machines that helped enhance productivity. While fixing a machine at the Indianapolis-based Osgood and Smith factory in 1867, his hand slipped and a file pierced his right eye, damaging the cornea. A few hours later he also lost sight in his left eye from a sympathetic reaction.

Fortunately, Muir’s blindness was only temporary—by September 1867, vision in both eyes had returned. Armed with John Milton’s Paradise Lost, a copy of the New Testament and a journal, Muir fled the industrial world and set out on a 1,000-mile walk to the Gulf of Mexico. He originally planned to sail from the Gulf to Cuba and then on to South America, but he contracted malaria and arrived ill on the Florida Keys with only $100 in hand.

While recovering, Muir decided to change course and head west to the more accessible Yosemite Valley. In the spring of 1868, 30-year-old Muir arrived in Northern California, where he instantly fell in love with the region’s beautiful rock formations and breathtaking waterfalls. For six years, he lived in Yosemite, working as a shepherd and running a sawmill, while devoting his free time to studying and writing about the surrounding wilderness. Committed to learning how the region was formed, Muir made dangerous climbs to glaciers and peaks, developing a strong desire to protect the land from human destruction.

Muir spent the rest of his life working for and writing about wilderness preservation. In 1892, he founded the Sierra Club, an organization devoted to lobbying to protect the outdoors, and served as president until he died. Widely considered the country’s first conservationist, Muir’s writings garnered widespread attention to the idea of wilderness conservation. Two of his works in particular, The Mountains of California (1894) and Our National Parks (1901), caught President Theodore Roosevelt’s attention.

After Muir personally guided Roosevelt through the Yosemite wilderness in 1903, the president began...
The Muir Woods National Monument contains 554 acres of coast redwood trees. The 317-foot Vernal Fall is one of Yosemite Valley’s most popular attractions. Sierra Peaks on the John Muir Trail tower more than 14,000 feet high. Half Dome, an enormous block of granite, stands 4,788 feet above the Yosemite Valley.
a series of conservation efforts, including the 1906 Antiquities Act, which paved the way for the preservation of historic landmarks, structures and monuments. Muir died eight years later in 1914, but his call for preservation lived on: In 1916, Congress passed legislation that officially created the National Park System.

Preserving Muir’s Legacy

Today the John Muir Trail preserves the naturalist’s legacy with a winding path that stretches 211 miles from the mountains of the Yosemite Valley to the towering sequoia forests. The trail, which was constructed by the Sierra Club from 1915 to 1938, traverses five national parks and boasts what many hikers consider the finest mountain scenery in America.

The northern end point of the trail is nestled in the heart of Yosemite National Park, where it winds past iconic landmarks such as Vernal Fall, Half Dome and Cathedral Peak for 37 miles before linking to the Ansel Adams Wilderness. The first part of the trail, with paved sections leading to popular scenic spots, is ideal for amateur hikers. As the path ascends into the Ansel Adams Wilderness, though, the relaxing day hike evolves into a laborious climb. This second portion of the trail was named after the famous photographer who captured images of the volcanic rock formations, hot springs and cinder cones of the region before it became a national park. The trail climbs for 23 miles, ascending to heights of 11,056 feet into a snowy subalpine environment.

If hikers can endure the Ansel Adams Wilderness, the trail leads them to the John Muir Wilderness, which covers 53 miles of mountain lakes, streams, meadows, forests and stunning vistas. Here the trail includes long sets of switchbacks that give experienced hikers a panoramic view of Mount Ritter, one of the most prominent peaks on the Sierra Range.

Kings Canyon National Park contains the fourth portion of the trail, which is 75 miles in length and accessible only on foot. Hikers can take a break at the Muir Trail Ranch, a family-owned base camp that offers cabins, hot spring baths, lounge areas and a restaurant. Many hikers choose to spend a night in these luxurious accommodations to prepare for the most difficult section of the John Muir Trail—the 14,000-foot climbs to Thunderbolt Peak, Mount Sill, the Palisades and other summits.

A 22-mile hike through Sequoia National Park, called the “Land of Giants” for its giant mountain peaks and massive sequoia forests, completes the trail. The final portion of the John Muir is no cakewalk: Hikers must climb to the summit of Mount Whitney (14,495 feet) to arrive at the end point of the trail, where they can sign a register and enjoy a spectacular view before descending.

Each year, thousands of hikers travel the path, whether for a few miles or a four-week trek from Yosemite to the sequoias. Thanks to the National Park Service (NPS), Muir’s bid for wilderness preservation endures in places like the John Muir Trail. The NPS maintains 391 areas and 84 million acres across the country that preserve America’s natural wonders, ensuring that visitors from all over have places to play in and pray in more than 90 years after Muir’s death.

Megan Pacella is a contributing editor of the magazine.
Often called the “Father of the National Park Service,” John Muir’s appreciation of the natural world is apparent in his meticulous journals, 84 of which still exist, covering his explorations from 1867 to 1913. His devotion to conservation led to a commitment to activism, and he was instrumental in the establishment of Yosemite, Sequoia, Grand Canyon, Mount Rainier and other national parks. Take a look at nature through the eyes of the forefather of the modern environmental movement.
"My life these
days is like
the life of a
glacier...one eternal
grind;...soon
I'll throw down
my pen and take
up my heets and
go mountaineering
once more."

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN MUIR
Clockwise from top left: John Muir, probably at Kern River, Calif. Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, Half-Dome, and Vernal and Nevada Falls. John Muir at Merced River with Royal Arches and Washington Column in the background, Yosemite National Park, Calif. John Muir (left) probably with the Sierra Club group at Sequoia National Park, Calif. President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir on Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, Calif. View up the Yosemite of the South Fork of Kings River. An entry from Muir’s July-August 1873 journal includes his drawing of the “Alps” and Little Yosemite.
The Legacy of
JOHNNY
APPLESEED
in Frontier America

By Nancy Mann Jackson
Depicted here in an illustration by F. Davis, John Chapman’s passion for apple trees was contagious, helping his fellow pioneers lay permanent claim to land.
FOR GENERATIONS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN, THE STORY OF JOHNNY APPLESEED HAS BEEN LUMPED INTO THE SAME CATEGORY AS THE TALES OF PAUL BUNYAN OR RIP VAN WINKLE. MANY AMERICANS ARE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT THE HAPPY MAN WITH THE TIN PAN ON HIS HEAD, WHO WALKED BAREFOOT ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE PLANTING APPLE TREES ALONG THE WAY, WAS ACTUALLY A REAL PERSON.

People are fascinated by the legend of Johnny Appleseed, and once they learn more about the real man, a lot of them find that very interesting, too,” says Joe Besecker, director of the Johnny Appleseed Society and Museum in Urbana, Ohio.

Born in Leominster, Mass., in 1774, John Chapman was a generous, wealthy pioneer who earned the nickname Johnny Appleseed because he preferred to travel the country selling his apple trees to frontier families for a few pennies or on credit. An eccentric character on the frontier, Chapman became an almost mythical figure, partly due to his own ability to spin a yarn. “Johnny loved to tell stories,” Besecker says. “He lived out in the woods by himself most of the time, and when he’d come back to civilization, he’d tell stories about what had happened out there. He and his stories became larger than life.”

FOLKLORE AND FACT

The story of Chapman as a traveling pioneer laden with apple seeds is widely known, but few people have heard about the childhood that eventually shaped Chapman’s adult life. He grew up working as an apprentice in the orchard of his Massachusetts neighbor, and it was there that he amased the knowledge of apple trees that he would later take with him to Ohio, Indiana and other Midwestern states. Chapman’s father fought in the Revolutionary War, and while he was away at war, Chapman’s mother and infant brother both died. After his return, the senior Chapman remarried and had 10 more children.

According to an 1871 article in Harper’s Magazine, the first account of Chapman’s apple-peddling was in Ohio in 1801, where he was seen with a load of apple seeds that he planted in various places around Licking Creek. By 1806, when he was seen again on the Ohio River with two canoes full of apple seeds, he had made a name for himself on the frontier.

Known for his peculiar appearance, Chapman almost always went barefoot, even in snowy, icy weather. He wore cast-off clothing that he took from pioneers as payment for apple trees. In his later years, he was rumored to have simply worn a coffee sack with holes cut out for his arms and neck. Despite his singular style, Chapman was treated with great kindness and respect by both white settlers and American Indians, and he was especially beloved by children, according to biographer Robert Price.
“Whatever else John Chapman may have been in fact or fancy, there is no doubt that he was as thoroughgoing an example of good old-fashioned American individualism as ever chopped out a clearing,” Price writes in *Johnny Appleseed: Man and Myth* (Orange Frazer Press, 2001).

Eventually, Chapman’s father, stepmother and half-siblings resettled in Ohio, where Chapman was planting and selling apple trees. “A lot of Revolutionary War soldiers were given free land in Ohio as compensation for fighting in the war,” Besecker says. “Part of the requirement was that they had to have 50 fruit trees growing on the land within three years or they’d lose the title. It was a permanency policy, the government wanted people to settle down.”

While that policy may explain the Chapman family’s move to Ohio, it also sheds light on the advantages that Johnny Appleseed brought to other frontier families.

**AMERICA’S FIRST TREE HUGGER**

Despite his tattered appearance, Chapman was said to be articulate, particularly when speaking about the cultivation of apple trees. “To his eloquence on this subject, as well as his actual labors in planting nurseries, the country over which he traveled for so many years is largely indebted for its numerous orchards,” wrote the author of the 1871 *Harper’s* article. “But he denounced as absolute wickedness all devices of pruning and grafting, and would speak of the act of cutting a tree as if it were a cruelty inflicted upon a sentient being.”

Chapman’s passion for apple trees wasn’t completely unfounded. Not only did the fruit trees allow veterans to lay permanent claim to their land, but they were also easy to grow and maintain, providing much-needed sustenance and sweetness. “People on the frontier didn’t have a lot of fruit,” Besecker says. “They had a lot of meat and could grow vegetables in their gardens, but for fruit they had to rely on wild berries.”

Apples were the perfect solution—not only were they delicious when fresh, but they also stored well because they could be dried and eaten through the winter. Pioneers could also use the fruits to make apple cider vinegar, which allowed them to preserve their meat and vegetables, Besecker says.

“John Chapman was a pioneer who had the public’s interest at heart,” says Joy Flood, manager of the Noble County Information Center in Noble County, Ohio, where one of several monuments to the man stands. “He realized the value of the land and of people. He took on a conviction of, ‘These pioneers need apples; they need food because they’re going through the wilderness. If I can plant trees, at least they’ll have apples when they get there.’”

**A HEAD FOR BUSINESS**

Chapman’s chosen occupation certainly served the pioneers well, but it also rewarded him handsomely. In fact, one of the most surprising facts about Chapman’s life is that “he was a very good businessman, and he made a very good living,” Besecker says.

The entrepreneur would start by picking seeds out of the apple pomace from the cider presses of Western Pennsylvania. After gathering seeds for free, Chapman traveled by foot, and wherever he saw a good spot for an orchard, which was often near creeks and rivers, he stopped and planted some of his seeds. When the young plants had grown into seedlings, Chapman would sell them to settlers.

In some cases, Chapman would even hire a local pioneer to manage an orchard as he traveled further west to plant more. When he came back through to retrieve the seedlings and sell them, he’d share the profits with his orchard manager. “Not only did it help Johnny to plant more trees in more places, but it also helped teach the pioneers how to grow the apple trees,” Besecker says of the system.

Eventually, Chapman owned more than 1,200 acres of orchards. “He didn’t look rich, but he made really good money,” Besecker says. “He had nurseries all over Ohio, and he kept moving westward, anticipating the pioneers’ next movement.”
A MAN OF MISSION

Along with apples, Chapman also spread his faith across the frontier. He was a Christian influenced by the teachings of a Swedish scientist, Emanuel Swedenborg, who founded the Church of New Jerusalem. Chapman is known as one of the earliest Swedenborgians in America, and the church considers him one of its first missionaries.

At each cabin where he stopped to sell apple trees or spend the night, Chapman always asked if the family would like to hear “some news right fresh from heaven,” Flood says. “He had very strong religious convictions, and he was committed to teaching others.”

Frontier families not only loved to hear Chapman read aloud, but many of them also borrowed his religious books (which he supposedly carried under his hat), and he would pick them up again on his next trip. “He was possibly Ohio’s first circulating library,” Besecker says.

A Swedenborgian report published in England in 1817 references Chapman’s missionary work: “There is in the western country a very extraordinary missionary of the New Jerusalem. A man has appeared who seems to be almost independent of corporeal wants and sufferings. He goes barefooted, can sleep anywhere, in house or out of house, and live upon the coarsest and most scanty fare. He has actually thawed ice with his bare feet. He procures what books he can of the New Church Swedenborg, travels into the remote settlements, and lends them wherever he can find readers, and sometimes divides a book into two or three parts for more extensive distribution and usefulness. This man for years past has been in the employment of bringing into cultivation, in numberless places in the wilderness, small patches (two or three acres) of ground, and then sowing apple seeds and rearing nurseries.”

For Chapman, sharing faith and knowledge seems to have been a twin mission. He didn’t just bring apple trees; he also brought valuable information and guidance to the pioneers. “Sometimes we look at all the trees and the brush, and my husband will say, ‘How did the pioneers ever get through and know where they were going?’” Flood says. “But Johnny Appleseed played a role; he knew about land, water and streams; he left orchards along his paths; and he gave guidance to those who came after him.”

NATIVE FRIENDS

John Chapman, aka Johnny Appleseed, seems to have made no enemies throughout his 40 years traveling through the Midwest. Uncommon for a white man during that time, Chapman was even revered by the many American Indian tribes living in the area.

To the Indians, Chapman was regarded as “a great medicine man” because of his strange appearance, eccentric actions and the fortitude with which he could endure pain, according to an 1871 article in Harper’s Magazine. For instance, his method of treating the cuts and bruises he sustained from walking barefoot was to scar the wound with fire and then cure the burn.

During the War of 1812, when many frontier settlers were slaughtered by the American Indian allies of Great Britain, Chapman “continued his wanderings and was never harmed by the roving bands of [Indians],” writes the Harper’s author. “On many occasions the impunity with which he ranged the country enabled him to give the settlers warning of approaching danger.”

Nancy Mann Jackson’s story on childbirth in Colonial America appeared in the May/June 2008 issue.
Of all the Founding Fathers, Patrick Henry was one of the most popular. But despite his blazing oratory and stirring “Give me liberty or give me death” speech, other, more familiar Revolutionary figures often overshadow him.
hat a difference five years makes. At the age of 24, Henry was a congenial fiddle-playing, country tavern host with a couple of failed careers. By the time he turned 29, he had grown into a charismatic legislator whose Stamp Act resolutions launched the Colonies’ ultimate separation from Britain. Few know that Henry, the first elected governor of Virginia, turned down as many offices and appointments as he held. He couldn’t afford a college education, but he died as one of the 100 wealthiest men in Virginia.

Man of Mystery

Henry didn’t leave a paper trail to help historians document his life. According to Edith Poindexter, curator at Red Hill, the Patrick Henry National Memorial, he wasn’t an avid letter writer, didn’t keep a diary and rarely wrote out a speech.

Henry, the “Voice of the Revolution,” spoke extemporaneously, fleshing out his ideas as he gauged his audience. Without written drafts or news reporters capturing his words, the exact text of Henry’s speeches remains vague.

But there’s no doubt about their impact—even today. “He understood the human heart and could play a jury,” says Michael Wells, an attorney and professional actor whose frequent Patrick Henry portrayals channel the founder’s energy. “A persuader, guided by his values and conscience, he believed in what he was saying.

“The first time I felt like he was speaking through me was exhilarating,” Wells says. “As I spoke I realized, ‘I’m not this good; it’s got to be him.’

Henry’s influence spans geography as well as time. Kay Peninger, executive director of the Patrick Henry Committee and St. John’s Church Foundation, said Chinese students flew “Give me liberty or give me death” banners in Tiananmen Square in 1989 when they demonstrated in support of democratic reforms.

A Leader Is Born

The key to Henry’s leadership may lie in another fragment from his famous speech: “I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past.”

His early life shaped his personality and philosophy, nurturing his ability to win friends and stir audiences.

Henry was born May 29, 1736, in rural Virginia. His father, John Henry, had emigrated from Scotland to work as a plantation manager and later married the planter’s widow.

Henry grew up with two brothers, six sisters and numerous cousins. He roamed the fields and woodlands of the family plantations, learning to hunt and honing the attentiveness that later helped him size up a jury. A lifelong hunter, he sometimes appeared in court in his stained hunting clothes.

As much as he relished the frontier’s solitude, he thrived on its social life. Thomas Jefferson, who was a student at the College of William and Mary when the two men first met, later remarked on Henry’s warmth and conviviality, as well as his skill at fiddling, dancing and conversation, which “attached everyone to him.”

Henry attended a neighborhood school and later studied with his father, who also ran a boys’ school. He absorbed the Bible and the classics well enough to quote them throughout his career. His mother’s insistence that he repeat the sermon on the way home from church each Sunday fostered his own evangelical oratorical style.

Henry’s lack of scholarly dedication—and money—ruled out college. Since he had little interest in tobacco farming, he apprenticed in a country store at 15 years of age. Later he and his brother ran the store, but were bankrupt within a year.

Still at loose ends at age 18, Henry married 16-year-old Sarah Shelton. With 300 acres called Pine Slash and six slaves given to him by Sarah’s father, Henry grew tobacco...
for three years until a fire destroyed the couple’s home and belongings.

The couple moved into the overseer’s house and sold a few slaves to finance another store. Two years later, Henry was broke again.

But Henry, whose misfortunes “were not to be traced to either his countenance or conduct,” Jefferson once said, bounced back, considering a career in law.

The family moved to the Hanover Courthouse area where Henry was a popular helper in his father-in-law’s tavern. Shelton’s Tavern may have been across the street from the current circa 1791 Hanover Tavern, says Joseph D. Kyle, former historian with the Hanover Tavern Foundation.

“Patrick Henry was connected to a tavern here in the 1750s, but written references to him are rare since the county records sent to Richmond were burned during the Civil War,” Kyle says.

Henry borrowed law books to study for the Colonial version of the bar exam. Most men prepped for a law career by attending a university or studying with a lawyer, but Henry did it his way, alone and in less than six months.

The modestly dressed, plainspoken young man shocked the licensing examiners in Williamsburg in 1760 by being adequately prepared, though weak in municipal law. They granted him a license with a caveat that he continue to study.
While representing friends and family, Henry's reputation grew as a hardworking lawyer who could win cases—a distinction that attracted some of the Colony's most prosperous planters. In three years he handled 1,185 cases, accepting payment in cash, produce or other goods. He also began speculating in land along Virginia's western frontier.

In 1765 Henry was elected to the House of Burgesses. As a junior member he was expected to defer to the more experienced legislators—advice he ignored.

Nine days after being seated in the House, Henry introduced his resolutions against the stamp tax, declaring, “If this be treason, make the most of it.”

Virginia’s resistance to the tax spread to other Colonies, resulting in a boycott of British goods and Parliament’s repeal of the Stamp Act a year later.

Henry’s fame as a champion of basic, individual rights spread across the Colonies. His passionate patriotism and perseverance endeared him to everyone from the gentry of the East to the settlers of the western frontier.

Around 1770 he bought Scotchtown, a gracious home on 960 acres near Richmond. Sadly, after bearing their sixth child a year later, Sarah sank deep into what might have been post-partum depression.

As Ann Reid, Scotchtown’s site manager, put it, “If you were married at 16, lived in four houses, had one burn down, had six children and a husband traveling around the countryside inciting a war and labeled a traitor, wouldn’t you be depressed?”

Out of concern for Sarah and the children’s safety, the family confined her to a basement room. It wasn’t as harsh as it sounds—the windowed English basement at Scotchtown was more comfortable than many frontier homes. Sarah died in 1775, only weeks before Henry gave his famous speech at the second Virginia Convention in March.
The clandestine convention met at St. John’s Church—the only building in Richmond large enough for 120 delegates and a score of spectators. In the simple sanctuary, Henry’s call to raise a Virginia militia evoked mixed reactions. Some applauded his resolution; others feared it was tantamount to a declaration of war—and disaster.

After what has been called one of the greatest political speeches in U.S. history—and one of the most dramatic, with Henry plunging a letter opener to his heart to dramatize “Give me liberty or give me death”—he won over the convention. Virginia voted to raise a militia less than a month before the first shots of the Revolution were fired at Lexington, Mass.

Weeks later, Henry led a militia of volunteers against Lord Dunmore, the British governor of Virginia, who had seized the gunpowder from the Williamsburg magazine. The militia wore shirts emblazoned with “Give me liberty or give me death.” The intimidated governor fled to safety, paid for the gunpowder and denounced Henry as a traitorous rebel.

Henry’s popularity soared. He served as a delegate to the second Continental Congress in Philadelphia, commander in chief of Virginia’s regular forces and the first elected governor of Virginia.

Despite recurring bouts of malaria, a common Tidewater affliction, Henry served three consecutive terms as governor. In 1777, he married Dorothea Dandridge, Martha Washington’s cousin, who was 20 years his junior. Their first child, Dorothea (Dolly) Henry, was born at the Governor’s Mansion in Williamsburg.

When he turned the governor’s office over to Jefferson in 1779, Henry continued to buy land, including Leatherwood, a plantation on the Virginia frontier, where he lived within 40 miles of the fighting.
Served in the state house of delegates and then again as governor in 1784 before leaving public office in 1785 to focus on supporting his family and speculating in land. The Henry family moved twice more before settling at their last home, Red Hill, in 1794.

At Red Hill, the large one-room home with a sleeping attic overlooked a fertile river valley and housed 14 of the Henry clan. (Henry fathered 17 children and had at least 70 grandchildren.) Their door was always open to friends, and Henry continued to entertain with his fiddle and flute, while also practicing law and accumulating land to leave to his children.

For health and financial reasons, he declined a sixth term as governor as well as appointments as U.S. senator, chief justice, secretary of state and ambassador to Spain and France.

In June 1799, within hours of consuming a “kill or cure” dose of mercury to treat an intestinal ailment, Henry died. He was buried without a headstone—a thrifty alternative that probably would have pleased the plain-living and frugal orator. Years later when St. John’s Church asked to transfer Henry’s remains to Richmond, his family refused and erected a proper grave tablet inscribed, “His fame his best epitaph.”

The United States Congress authorized the Patrick Henry National Memorial in 1986. The memorial is located at Red Hill, where Henry’s original house, which burned in 1919, has been reconstructed.

Ironically, the man without a paper trail left a single sheet of written caution to posterity. It reads, in part:

“Whether America’s independence will prove a Blessing or a Curse will depend on the Use our people make of the Blessings which a gracious God hath bestowed on us. If they are wise, they will be great and happy. If they are of a contrary Character, they will be miserable. Righteousness alone can exalt them as a Nation. Reader! whoever thou art, remember this, and in thy Sphere, practice Virtue thyself, and encourage it in others.”

Phyllis Speidell and John Sheally covered the Preservation Trades Workshop for the March/April 2008 issue.
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Makes a Great Gift Idea!
When John James Audubon arrived at Oakley House Plantation in 1821, the house had already been a home to people who were, at the time, much more accomplished than he. But the pivotal summer Audubon spent at Oakley changed history for both the man and the house: The work Audubon completed there reignited his quest to chronicle an intensive study of bird life in America, which resulted in his seminal work, *Birds of America*, says journalist and historian Danny Heitman. And Audubon’s time at Oakley guaranteed the house a revered place in history for centuries to come.

By Nancy Mann Jackson
Built in 1805 in St. Francisville, La., the Oakley House is located about 100 miles northwest of New Orleans in West Feliciana Parish. According to John House III, manager of the Audubon State Historic Site, which includes Oakley House, the home was constructed mostly by slave labor using materials that were available locally and shipped up the river from New Orleans.

“Visitors seem constantly surprised at the unique history of the home and of the area,” House says. “During the American Revolution, this area was called British West Florida and the area was settled largely by the English. It often has been called ‘England’s 14th Colony’ because of this. However, in 1779, the Spanish conquered the region after the Siege of Baton Rouge, returning it to Spanish control until 1810. Culturally, the area has strong ties to the colonists of the Carolinas and Virginia, though mixed with the French and Spanish of old Louisiana.”

While his stay at Oakley certainly was a turning point for Audubon’s career, it was also a pivotal event for the estate. “Audubon’s legacy has continued to resonate at Oakley long after his departure,” Danny Heitman says.

The Audubon Summer
Those natural surroundings undoubtedly made Oakley House a dream location for Audubon to find himself in the summer of 1821, when he “was in kind of a midlife crisis,” according to Heitman, whose new book, A Summer of Birds (LSU Press, 2008) focuses on Audubon’s time at Oakley. “His once prosperous store and mill operations in Kentucky had gone...
bankrupt, and having little else to lose, he’d decided to pursue his real dream by becoming a full-time bird artist.”

Audubon hoped to find lucrative work in New Orleans, but was unsuccessful, and “he was facing intense financial, familial and creative pressures as a result,” Heitman says. “That’s when Lucretia Pirrie, the mistress of Oakley House, offered Audubon a job tutoring the family’s teenage daughter, Eliza. The offer came at just the right time for Audubon, breathing new life into his audacious plan to create a comprehensive portrait of bird life in America.

“Audubon’s assignment at Oakley House was a dream job,” Heitman says. “He was paid well and given room and board for a half-time tutoring job, and he could spend the rest of his time combing Oakley’s expansive woodland for birds.”

West Feliciana Parish has a unique geography that includes hills, hardwood forests, swampland and pine flatwoods. “The diverse geography translated into a rich bird habitat—so rich, in fact, that Audubon was deeply grieved when he was forced to leave Oakley,” Heitman says.

After only four months, Audubon’s tutorship came to an end after a disagreement with Mrs. Pirrie. But his time at Oakley had made a lasting impression: “Oakley renewed Audubon’s sense of possibility and inspired a period of intense creativity,” Heitman says. In fact, “Carolyn De Latte, one Audubon scholar, notes that at Oakley, Audubon did the best drawings he had yet created.”

Of the 435 bird plates, Audubon either began or finished at least 23 of the pictures at Oakley, and another 16 pictures were possibly linked to Oakley, according to the staff of the Audubon State Historic Site. “For Audubon, Oakley also opened a door to birding wonders in other parts of Louisiana,” Heitman says. “In the 23 months he spent in the Felicinas during periodic visits, Audubon worked on at least 80 of the birds in the elephant folio edition of *Birds of America*, and he began working on 167 bird drawings while he was in Louisiana.”

While his stay at Oakley certainly was a turning point for Audubon’s career, it was also a pivotal event for the estate. “Audubon’s legacy has continued to resonate at Oakley long after his departure,” Heitman says. “In the years after he left, Audubon’s connection to Oakley made it an influential cultural touchstone, inspiring the work of Katherine Anne Porter, Robert Penn...
Clockwise from top: The home’s kitchen is located behind the main house. • A second-story view of Oakley House’s formal garden. • Oakley’s formal dining room features the original punkah fan, typically moved by pulling a rope. • A hostess sweeps the porch of Oakley House before the start of a tour.
Warren and the renowned naturalist Edward Hoagland. The property has also inspired generations of ornithologists and visual artists, including the famous bird artist John O’Neill."

**Ongoing Restoration**

After a long history of influence, the house was purchased by the state of Louisiana in 1947. At that time, it was still without electricity and running water. While it has electricity and central heat and air today, "these amenities have been added discreetly to retain a period feel," Heitman says.

Maintained by the Louisiana Office of State Parks, the home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and is periodically restored, usually every five years, says John House. Outside the main house, a large, detached plantation kitchen, typical of the period, has been reconstructed on the old foundations around the original chimney. The kitchen building also contains a weaving room and a washroom. Two slave cabins, located a short distance from the rear of the house, give a glimpse into the laborers’ way of life on the plantation.

The most recent restoration at Oakley House, completed in 2006, included partial replacement of the roof and rotten timbers on the front and back galleries. Among other projects, the interiors of the second and third levels of the home received a preservation treatment, and more than 30 pieces of furniture were sent away for professional restoration. The result renewed the Federal Period splendor of Oakley House, as it would have looked when Audubon lived there.

"Ongoing research into estate inventories, letters and journals have provided the site with a clearer idea of both room use and furnishings while Audubon was here in 1821," House says. "Donations, purchases and loans from organizations such as the DAR have restored most of the look of the Federal Period to the house. The process, however, is ongoing, and the acquisition of both period pieces and family pieces is always a priority."

**Visiting Oakley House**

Today, visitors to Oakley House experience a structure that is largely unchanged since Audubon’s days there. "What would be most striking to Audubon is the change in the grounds around Oakley House," Heitman says. "The site now is only about 100 acres, as opposed to several thousand acres when Audubon visited. Even so, it’s still possible to see many of the bird species that Audubon saw."

In addition to touring the plantation, visitors to Oakley House can also experience the natural beauty that played such an important role in spurring Audubon to complete his life’s project. "Oakley House and West Feliciana Parish, a prime stretch of Louisiana’s plantation country, is delightful at any time of the year," Heitman says. "But if you want to get plenty of expert guidance on the area and its rich connection with Audubon and birding, the Audubon Country Birdfest held each spring is a great opportunity to take birding tours and experience the local culture."

For more information about the Audubon Country Birdfest, visit [www.audubonbirdfest.com](http://www.audubonbirdfest.com). For more about the Audubon State Historic Site, visit [www.crt.state.la.us](http://www.crt.state.la.us).

Nancy Mann Jackson is a contributing editor to the magazine.

Danny Heitman’s new book, **A Summer of Birds** (LSU Press, 2008), focuses on Audubon’s time at Oakley House, which inspired the naturalist to pursue his dreams of being a full-time bird artist. Not only did Audubon begin or finish at least 23 of the *Birds of America* plates while there, but "Oakley also opened a door to birding wonders in other parts of Louisiana," Heitman says.
Henrietta Dering Johnston painted this portrait of Marie Du Bose (Mrs. Samuel Wragg) in 1708. It and other Johnston paintings are in the permanent collection of the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, S.C.
Only in the last century did art historians connect Henrietta’s Irish work—which she signed under the name Henrietta Dering—to her American work. She arrived in South Carolina in 1708 as a pastor’s wife, and it’s only because of her husband, Gideon Johnston, that history remembers her professional status. In a letter to his bishop in England, Johnston detailed the list of trials he faced as rector of St. Philip’s Church in Charleston. (He had a very long list.) He named his wife as a major factor in keeping the family afloat financially: “Were it not for the Assistance my wife gives me by drawing of Pictures (which can last but a little time in a place so ill-peopled) I shou’d [sic] not have been able to live.”

That sentence carved Henrietta’s place in history. With no known records of other women getting paid for their artistic services, she is widely considered America’s first professional female artist. For a woman to work as an artist at the time would have been remarkable under any circumstances, and Henrietta’s were certainly notable ones.

From Hobby to Profession

Henrietta was born in France around 1674, and her parents, French Huguenots, migrated to England in her youth. The first mention of Henrietta in any public record occurs in a 1694 application for marriage. Her husband, Robert Dering, the son of a baron, came with plenty of land; the newly married Derings moved to Dublin and had two daughters. After her husband died (sometime between 1698 and 1702), Henrietta began painting pastel portraits of his family.

It remains a mystery how she learned to draw professionally at a time when women were discouraged from pursuing careers in any field. It’s possible that she taught herself to paint by studying the Derings’ portrait collection, suggests Martha Severens in a Magazine Antiques article. The Derings knew many renowned artists, so perhaps an artistic family friend noticed her talent and volunteered to teach her at a time when she considered it a hobby.

“I can see her being trained like that,” says Elisabeth Roark, associate professor of art history at Chatham University in Pittsburgh, Pa. “Drawing was seen as an acceptable woman’s medium. That kind of thing was okay as long as women kept it as a hobby. Then, after her husband died, there may have been the necessity to support her family with it.”

Switching Continents

No one can pinpoint why Henrietta and her second husband decided to move to America, but they clearly questioned the decision once they arrived. Her life in Ireland had a much grander tone than life in America. Her first husband had been English gentry with connections and property. Frontier Charles
Town (later Charleston) lacked basic amenities, and since the Church of England only reluctantly passed along her husband's pay, Henrietta lived on the edge of poverty in her new home.

In *Artists of Colonial America* (Greenwood Press, 2003), Roark discusses the perpetual struggle by Colonial artists to earn a living “among settlers more concerned with subsistence than cultivating the finer things in life.”

It was particularly a struggle in Charleston, which at that time was a small Colonial outpost, “a raw frontier,” according to Roark. By the time the Johnstons arrived, the town was about 40 years old and still carving a niche out of the wilderness. The couple hadn’t expected the poverty and the sheer roughness of the community with its oppressive heat, mosquitoes and American Indian resentment. Their new life in Charleston didn’t start auspiciously—Henrietta arrived in America alone because her husband had gone ashore at the Madeira Islands, and the ship left without him. He appeared a few weeks later after surviving a shipwreck.

In her biography of Henrietta, Margaret Middleton points to the uglier aspects of life in the Colonies—pillory, stocks, whippings and wharf rats. “All the time, Henrietta was creating beauty,” she writes in *Henrietta Johnston of Charles Town, S.C: America’s First Pastellist* (University of South Carolina Press, 1966).

She was also earning money—portraits had a distinctly pragmatic side. Life must have been harsh if she was driven to paint for money. The constrictions of her class would normally have prohibited the arrangement.

“She was upper middle class, so she wouldn’t have worked outside of the home unless she was forced to,” Roark says. “And portraits were really the only way to make a living in the Colonies. People wouldn’t pay for anything else.”

Henrietta crafted detailed portraits of the Charleston aristocracy, seeming to particularly connect with the French Huguenots. And she practiced her art while managing the typical workload for a woman at the time, orchestrating her entire household and all of its assorted duties.

Henrietta’s first American pastel portrait was recorded in 1708. She continued to paint through Gideon’s death from drowning in 1716. She later traveled to New York in 1725, where she painted portraits probably arranged by her Charleston connections. Her last dated portrait is from 1726, and the final document from her life is the notice of her burial in 1729.

**The Work**

Henrietta Johnston wasn’t noteworthy only because of her gender; she was also, according to Roark, the first portraitist in the South and the first artist using pastels in America.

“The South developed much more slowly than the North,” Roark says. “It was a plantation society. In the South, you’d usually still go to Europe to have your portrait painted.”

Pastels became popular by the end of the 18th century, but the medium was rarely used during Johnston’s time. Convenience may have driven her choice: Roark points to pastels’ “portability and the minimal number of supplies needed to create pastel drawings.” So for a woman traveling to the homes of her subjects (and across an ocean), portability would have been key. Plus, the materials had a certain aesthetic appeal. “Pastels suited Johnston’s artistic sensibilities, allowing her to work on an intimate scale with a delicate touch,” Severens writes.

However, Johnston’s paintings weren’t perfect.

“Certain details of drawing eluded her,” Middleton writes. “The ears of her subject were often placed incorrectly, and she could not draw arms and hands well. They are either flabby and misshapen or else they are stiff and wooden.”

Typical of work at the time, the paintings “reveal little of ... personalities ... Their intent was instead to record the sitters’ features and social status for posterity,” Roark writes.

The paintings also have served as a connection to the woman who painted them. They offer a glimpse of what she saw and how she worked—and a small peek into how she lived.
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