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Pride of America EARRINGS

It often has been said that America, a wonderful land of opportunity for so many people from so many different places and cultures, is like an amazing patchwork quilt. And how beautiful that quilt is! For not only is it a symbol of our country’s founding principles, but it also represents the uniquely American craft of quilting, itself, and the labor of love and personal pride taken in work well done and done by hand.

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From the President General

As the newly elected President General of NSDAR, I’m pleased to be a part of the creation of American Spirit. Our cover story spotlights George Washington’s library. His collection of about 900 books is scattered around the country, but a new online project gives everyone access to those treasured items. As part of a project called the Legacy Library, the collection—together for the first time in more than 160 years—is now in one place on the Web. Our story also takes a sneak peek at plans to build a new library at Mount Vernon dedicated to scholarship on the first president.

This issue also explores the origins of Independence Day, the quintessential American holiday. After a rocky start in the late 18th century, the holiday took root in post-Revolutionary War America. After more than two centuries, many traditions of the holiday have remained the same—focused on parades and pyrotechnics—while honoring the idea that freedom must be safeguarded for future generations.

Dandelions can be deceptively beautiful flowers—though we know of the sinister intentions behind that sunny facade. Colonists brought a number of these kinds of invasive plants from their home countries for crops and for ornamental use, while other invasives arrived on ships as stowaways. In our feature, we learn when and how these weeds got here, and why they’re still a threat to the U.S. landscape.

Another feature examines the history of hats. In Colonial and early America, the hat was considered an essential—not an optional—part of a woman’s ensemble. She not only wore it as protection from the elements, but also as a way to express her social status, style and personality. Although hats have fallen out of favor somewhat today, it’s still fascinating to chart the political and social history of the country by looking at hats from different eras.

The Whatnot section is filled with shorter stories focused on modern-day preservation efforts, providing a fresh look at history and sharing the latest in genealogical research. This issue features a piece saluting the 90th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which granted women’s suffrage, a glimpse at what 18th-century travelers ate on road trips, and a seasonal survey of Old Town Alexandria. The Whatnot section is filled with shorter stories focused on modern-day preservation efforts, providing a fresh look at history and sharing the latest in genealogical research. This issue features a piece saluting the 90th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which granted women’s suffrage.

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Also in this edition, we travel to Minnesota’s Twin Cities, Minneapolis and St. Paul; spotlight Daughter Patsy Johnson Gaines, whose talent as a re-enactor brings famous women like Martha Washington, Daniel Boone’s wife, Rebecca, and other historical figures to life; and salute the efforts of history teacher Lesa Downing, who invites veterans into her classroom to interact with students and teach them real-life lessons about service.

Merry Ann T. Wright
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National Treasures
Step inside the DAR Museum for a closer look at its fascinating collection.

Serve It Up

This elaborate epergne, or centerpiece, was made in England out of earthenware between 1780 and 1800. During the 18th century such an item would have been called a grand plat ménage, meaning a pile of plates. In the wealthy household of the period, dessert was often a grand affair, with an object like this one placed in the center of the table. The classical figure of Plenty at the top alluded to the variety of sweetmeats, fruits and nuts that would have been placed in each of the scallop-shell baskets.
Relating History
Ohio re-enactor brings the past alive for audiences of all ages through original dramatic monologues

By LENA ANTHONY

MARTHA WASHINGTON. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell. Caroline Scott Harrison. Those are just a few of the 24 women Patsy Johnson Gaines plays as a historical re-enactor. Since the early 1980s, she has performed as many as 160 times a year in front of audiences ranging from schoolchildren to DAR members to retirement home residents.

Her hobby started with a book on Hannah Dustin she read in 1982. She researched the Puritan woman—who is famous for escaping from her American Indian captors—and turned the story into “Gallant Warrior,” a monologue she performed as a member of a drama circle in her hometown of Wyoming, Ohio.

Mrs. Gaines performed about once a year until 1985, when she promoted herself as an historical re-enactor to local women’s and religious clubs. A few shows later, word spread quickly of Mrs. Gaines’ ability to bring history to life. The secret, she says, is the meticulous preparation she does prior to any performance. “The first thing I do is read every book I can find on the subject and make notes on everything. By reading it all, you can see the common thread, which helps as I decide what to cover in the script.”

Mrs. Gaines develops characters on her own, but she also takes requests from the groups that hire her. A church group, for example, asked her to perform as Susanna Wesley, known as the “Mother of Methodism.” A Jewish women’s group requested she portray Golda Meir, Israel’s first female prime minister.

To relate the ancestry and early life of George Washington, Mrs. Gaines becomes Mary Ball Washington. She also plays historical figures’ wives, including Martha Washington, America’s first first lady, and Rebecca Boone, wife of Kentucky frontiersman Daniel Boone.

One of her favorite characters is Fanny Crosby, who wrote thousands of Christian hymns despite being blind since infancy.

“People tell me they learn more about history through a monologue than they ever did in school,” she says.

At the National Chairmen’s Association Brunch at Continental Congress, Mrs. Gaines performed as Caroline Scott Harrison, first NSDAR President General and wife of President Benjamin Harrison.

Mrs. Gaines just finished a three-year term as Ohio State Regent and is looking forward to doing more work for the Cincinnati Chapter, Cincinnati, Ohio, of which she’s been a member for 27 years.

She’s always on the lookout for new program ideas. “Ever since 1982, I’ve read at least a book a week and have kept track of every single one in a notebook,” she explains. “I write down interesting notes and whether they would make a good monologue.”

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATSY JOHNSON GAINES
Clockwise from top: Mrs. Gaines in character as Caroline Scott Harrison, as Rebecca Boone and in Irish attire.

American Spirit • July/August 2010
The St. Clairs at Home

On behalf of the Phoebe Bayard Chapter, I am writing to express our appreciation for the fine article on General Arthur St. Clair by Dick Phillips that appeared in the March/April issue. We especially enjoyed the inclusion of material describing the family life of the general and his wife, Phoebe Bayard, and the mention of our chapter’s name. *American Spirit* is a pleasure to receive—and an even greater pleasure to read. The articles are always well written, informative and entertaining.

Lois Everette Picking, Secretary
Phoebe Bayard Chapter, Greensburg, Pa.

St. Clair’s Defeat

The article on Arthur St. Clair in the March/April issue was of utmost interest to me. My main DAR ancestor is Captain Robert Kirkwood, who just happens to be one of those killed in St. Clair’s defeat. Many issues—a combination of lack of men, supplies and knowledge of American Indian warfare—helped lead to his defeat. For one thing, the night before the attack he quarreled with his second-in-command, Benjamin Butler. Butler had been warned about an impending attack, but he ignored it and didn’t pass along the warning. St. Clair also sent a number of his troops to search for the missing supply train, and he vastly underestimated the abilities of the American Indians.

Nancy Hall Chotkey
Council Grove Chapter, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Olmsted’s Vision for Vanderbilt’s Estate

With special interest I read the article “A Mountain Retreat” in the January/February issue concerning the Asheville, N.C., area. Much to my dismay, by the conclusion of the article there had been no mention of Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of American landscape architecture, who designed the grounds of the Biltmore Estate. The story attributes the landscape to “George’s original vision.” George Vanderbilt may have wanted beautiful landscaping, but it was the vision of Olmsted that achieved that goal.

My great-grandmother was Frederick Law Olmsted’s first cousin, their mothers being sisters Linda Hull Brooks and Charlotte Hull Olmsted. Fred often visited with his cousins and lived at our home in Cheshire during 1844–1845 while working and learning on our farm, which has been in our family since 1733.

Jean McKee
Lady Fenwick Chapter, Cheshire, Conn.

Building a Nation

Thank you for the March/April article titled, “Pride of the Irish.” So many times the contributions of the Irish and Catholics in building this nation are overlooked, especially the schools, hospitals, etc., that they built. Many people do not know that there was no public school system in the early days—Catholic schools were the forerunner of the public school system.

Betty Cummings
Lucy Wolcott Barnum Chapter, Adrian, Mich.
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Ninety years ago this August, a change of heart by a young, obscure Tennessee state representative broke a legislative tie and unlocked the voting booth for women. Harry Burn’s courageous vote in favor of the 19th Amendment capped a decades-long struggle for political parity for women, who, with few exceptions, had been denied the right to vote since the founding of the nation.

At least since Abigail Adams in March 1776 had implored her husband, John, to “remember the ladies” while creating a new government, women had pushed to secure rights deemed “inalienable” by the—male—founders. “If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies,” she had warned her husband, “we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.” And that’s exactly what happened.

In 1848 at the Seneca Falls Convention, in Seneca Falls, N.Y., delegates demanded an end to discrimination against women, including denial of the vote. Written mainly by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and based on the Declaration of Independence, the convention’s Declaration of Rights and Sentiments proclaimed that “all men and women are created equal” (emphasis added).

At that time, women were one of a number of groups denied the vote; others included slaves and felons and, in many places, free African-Americans and white men without property. After the Civil War, in 1870, the franchise was officially extended to African-American men, including former slaves, under the 15th Amendment. Women, however, continued to be excluded.

As a result, two women’s suffragist organizations emerged to fight for the vote—the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) led by Stanton and Susan B. Anthony (member of the Irondequoit DAR Chapter, Rochester, N.Y.) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) led by Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Blackwell and Julia Ward Howe (Liberty Tree DAR Chapter, Milton, Mass.). The AWSA focused largely on suffrage alone, while the NWSA pursued broader rights for women.

They did more than simply protest. In the 1872 presidential election, Anthony and a number of sister suffragists tried to vote in Rochester, N.Y. They were arrested, tried, found guilty and fined.

In a prescient speech given in 1873, Anthony framed the arguments that would eventually help women secure the vote and outlaw other forms of discrimination. “It was we, the people—not we, the white male citizens nor yet we, the male citizens—who formed the union,” Anthony said, referencing the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution. “And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure
them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people, women as well as men. And it is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means of securing them provided by this government—the ballot.”

The Movement Picks Up Speed

Fast forward to World War I. A new generation of suffragists picketed the White House in 1916 and 1917, asking President Woodrow Wilson how he could wage a war for democracy while half the U.S. population was denied the vote. When passersby attacked the protestors, police arrested the suffragists—not their tormentors. One of the leaders, Alice Paul (Mary Washington DAR Chapter, Washington, D.C.), began a hunger strike in jail; police force-fed her, creating both notoriety and sympathy for the movement.

In 1918, after much pressure, Wilson relented and put his support behind the movement. “We have made partners of the women in this war. Shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil—and not to a partnership of right?” he said in a speech, referring to the many women who worked in industries while men were away in military service.

The next year, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Women’s Suffrage Amendment—first introduced in Congress in 1878—and sent it on to the states for ratification. Three-quarters (36) of the 48 states had to ratify it.

The debates in state legislatures took place amid profound social and cultural upheaval: tens of thousands of demobilized service members returning from wartime horrors, international unrest as world powers divvied up the spoils of war, and the “Spanish flu” pandemic.

The turmoil must have added to the concern over what was the right thing to do. The country was divided, and not always along gender lines—there were women’s groups that opposed ratification, saying meddling in politics was demeaning to the fairer sex.

Starting in June 1919, 35 states ratified the amendment over the next 14 months. Eight rejected it outright, and it would be years before some of them ratified it—Mississippi was the last, in 1984. In August 1919, the Tennessee General Assembly took up the question, and both sides went to war.

The state Senate voted to ratify on August 13, 1920, and the House was scheduled to vote on August 18. The battle was dubbed “The War of the Roses” because supporters took to sporting yellow roses to announce their favor, while opponents wore red roses.

Counting roses before the vote, the suffragists tallied 47 yellows and 49 reds—which could mean defeat, since only a simple majority was required.

Nevertheless, the vote was tied 48–48 on the first ballot, when Representative Banks Turner switched from anti- to pro-ratification. The vote was tied again on the second ballot.

At that moment, 24-year-old Harry Burn carved out his niche in history. The youngest member of the state House, Burn was from Niota, Tenn., and represented McMinn County in conservative east Tennessee. That day, he wore a red rose and had voted against the measure on the first two ballots. On the third, however, he switched his position, becoming the 49th and decisive vote.

Moments later, he literally fled the chamber as angry opponents chased him. According to legend, he hid in the Capitol’s attic until order was restored. He explained that, though he had opposed ratification, his mother had written him a letter, saying “Hurrah and vote for suffrage and don’t leave them in doubt.”

Burn’s district returned him to the House for his second and last term in 1921. He later was elected a state senator, serving from 1949 to 1953, and had a successful career in banking.

Though he had plenty of detractors, Burn believed he had done the right thing. And, thanks to his courage, Abigail Adams’ prophesied rebellion finally claimed a long-sought victory.
Before leaving on a road trip in 1755 to assess security in Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin asked his wife, Deborah, to prepare some food for him. With meals to go, a supply of his wife’s pies and a couple of casks of wine, Franklin finally felt he was ready to tackle the open road, heading north from Philadelphia to Easton, Pa., and into the wilds of the frontier. But not everyone had Franklin’s resources—or a military escort complete with supply wagons to carry his pies and wine. Most travelers in Colonial America made do with what they could carry in a sack, hunt along the way, or find in a tavern. And, in an era when most people either rode on horseback or walked, travelers usually kept the amount of food they carried in their knapsacks to a minimum. Borrowing from American Indian custom, ground corn became one popular choice for meals to go, along with some dried meat or salt pork. The cornmeal could be mixed with water from a nearby stream and heated quickly over an open fire. Throw in a little bear grease or pork fat, and the traveler could fry the cornmeal mush and then use the cooked corn cake to sop up and eat the available fat in the pan. Another popular choice inspired the old nursery rhyme:

Pease porridge hot,
Pease porridge cold,
Pease porridge in the pot
Nine days old.

Pease porridge was an early version of road food for the masses. People would boil up a pot of dried peas or beans, perhaps in a meat stock, possibly throw in a few herbs or an onion, and cook until it thickened to the consistency of oatmeal porridge. In winter, the congealed porridge could be kept cold, even frozen, then thawed and eaten cold or reheated in its pot, presumably for at least nine days. In the warmer months, travelers ate the peas early in the road trip before it started to ferment in the heat. Dried peas and beans were also popular when an evening campfire afforded more time to soak and cook the beans.

On his trip north from Philadelphia to the present-day Syracuse, N.Y., area in 1743, botanist John Bartram lived on basic food supplies from home for the first few days, then he ate ground corn and fresh game and fish caught along the way. He also had meals of squash soup, melon, corn, venison and eel from American Indians with whom he visited in upper New York state. In preparation for his return trip, Bartram slogged through heavy bush and marshlands for a couple of days to reach the fort at Oswego on Lake Ontario, where he replenished his food supplies by purchasing dried beef, a gallon jug of rum and some biscuits.

JOHN BARTRAM PROVIDED A RECIPE FOR HIS FAVORITE “FAST FOOD” WHILE TRAVELING.

“[T]ake the corn and parch it in hot ashes, till it becomes brown, then clean it, pound it in a mortar and sift it; this powder is mixt with sugar. About 1 qr of a pint, diluted in a pint of water, is a hearty traveling dinner, when 100 miles from any inhabitants.”

Bartram’s route that July and August took him through the frontier of Pennsylvania and New York, where one could travel for days without seeing even an isolated cabin; a meal was easier to find along more settled roads, whether at a cabin or an established inn that offered meals and lodging to passersby. In an era when few women traveled very far from home and rarely on their own or on horseback, Boston businesswoman and educator Sarah Kemble Knight traveled by herself from Boston to New York to settle a relative’s estate. When Knight set out on her journey in late 1704, the post road between Boston and New York on which she traveled was filled with miles of dense forests, but it also had settled areas and taverns. These taverns became important service centers offering a meal, a tankard of spirits and an often bug-infested bed or space on the floor by the fireplace for a few hours of sleep.

In the common room, pease porridge hot took on new meaning. One big pot hanging over the fire contained a stock enriched with dried peas, beans, meats and whatever else was available. During the summer months, fresh vegetables might enhance the stew in the pot, or a fresh roast of pork or ham might be served alongside the stew with some bread and butter, if wheat flour and a milk cow were available. From meal to meal, the cook tossed ingredients into the pot. The resulting stew was then ladled out, frequently onto wooden trenchers or bowls, and sometimes dinnerware, depending on how upscale the inn was. Diners ate with their fingers or a knife, sometimes sharing the bowl or trencher with the person sitting beside them. In the days before paper-wrapped hamburgers and disposable cutlery—and government food inspection—the trenchers were not always washed between diners. Customers could only hope that whatever came out of the pot was no more than nine days old and that the trenchers had been washed in the last week or so.

Knight, who taught at a writing school and might have counted Benjamin Franklin as one of her students, remembered one such tavern meal a little longer than she intended. The only menu offering was a stew of pork and cabbage. In her spirited, humorous journal account of her round-trip journey from Boston to New York, published in 1825, Knight writes: “The sause was of a deep Purple, wch I tho’t was boil’d in her dye Kettle; the bread was Indian [corn] . . . I being hungry, gott a little down; but my stomach was soon cloy’d and what cabbage I swallowed serv’d me for a Cudd the whole day after.”

Some like it hot, Some like it cold, Some like it in the pot Nine days old.

Professional Genealogists’ Group Ranks Top Family History Web Sites

ProGenealogists Inc., a consortium of professional genealogists specializing in genealogical, forensic and family history research, recently announced its list of the 50 most popular genealogy Web sites. The list shows some significant shifts in rankings from the 2009 list. “It goes to show that the genealogy space on the Web remains fluid and that people continue to look for data about their families,” said Natalie Cottrill, president and CEO of ProGenealogists. “The presence of six data-rich sites among the first eight is expected. The changing popularity of social networking sites is interesting, too, because it reflects current Internet trends.” With five subscription sites ranked in the top 20, the list shows that family history searchers are willing to invest in their heritage.

The following top 20 sites’ rankings were determined in the first quarter of 2010. Subscription sites are marked with a dollar sign. The 2009 and 2008 rankings are given in parentheses.

1. Ancestry.com $ (1, 1)
2. FamilyLink.com (80, 72)
3. MyHeritage.com (3, 3)
4. FamilySearch.org (5, 5)
5. Genealogy.com $ (2, 4)
6. RootsWeb.com (4, 2)
7. FindAGrave.com (7, 7)
8. USGenWebArchives.net (not ranked)
9. OneGreatFamily.com $ (11, 9)
10. GenealogyToday.com (12, 11)
11. AncestorHunt.com (11, 12)
12. SearchForAncestors.com (19, 21)
13. AccessGenealogy.com (14, 13)
14. CyndisList.com (17, 15)
15. EllisIsland.org (20, 14)
16. Interment.net (16, 16)
17. WorldVitalRecords.com $ (13, 10)
18. USGenNet.org (15, 17)
19. GenealogyBank.com $ (31, 41)
20. FamilyTreeDNA.com (26, 27)

To see the complete list of sites—including DAR.org at No. 43—visit www.progenealogists.com/top50genealogy2010.htm.

7. FindAGrave.com (7, 7)
8. USGenWebArchives.net (not ranked)
9. OneGreatFamily.com $ (11, 9)
10. GenealogyToday.com (12, 11)
11. AncestorHunt.com (11, 12)
12. SearchForAncestors.com (19, 21)
13. AccessGenealogy.com (14, 13)
14. CyndisList.com (17, 15)
15. EllisIsland.org (20, 14)
16. Interment.net (16, 16)
17. WorldVitalRecords.com $ (13, 10)
18. USGenNet.org (15, 17)
19. GenealogyBank.com $ (31, 41)
20. FamilyTreeDNA.com (26, 27)
A TRADITION more than 250 years old is alive in the Old Town neighborhood of Alexandria, Va. Every Saturday morning, farmers and artisans offer vegetables, fruits, preserves, flowers, baked goods and handcrafted items in Market Square, the site of one of the nation’s oldest continually operating farmers’ markets. With its origin dating to the 1750s, the market predates the City Hall building that currently anchors the square, a relative newcomer constructed in the 1870s.

The smell of strawberries emanates from neatly arranged carriers. “Just picked yesterday,” one vendor boasts of his spinach. “Local honey—only three jars left,” calls another. Blooms stand at attention in buckets of water.

Anchored in Trade
Alexandria seems like a natural setting for a centuries-old marketplace, considering the town owes its existence in part to the area’s need for a trade center. In 1748, a group of farmers and merchants petitioned the General Assembly to establish a new market town to serve the settlements spreading across Northern Virginia. (Carlyle House, the home of petitioner John Carlyle, still stands across from Market Square.) Located along the Potomac River and named for the local Alexander farming family, the ensuing port town became one of the busiest ports in the United States by the end of the 18th century.

Feeding a Nation
For a country in which the survival of the earliest settlers depended heavily on the ability to cultivate crops and the willingness to share the bounty, it’s no surprise that the custom of trading goods within a community has survived. Founding Fathers like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson experimented with various crops and planting methods, both for pleasure and in the hope that their findings would benefit other farmers. Washington, who is believed to have sent surplus crops from Mount Vernon to sell at the Old Town Farmers’ Market, felt that learning to farm in a way that cultivated the land rather than depleted it was critical. Sustainability remains at the forefront of today’s agricultural dialogue.

“Purchasing food from a local farmer is not a new concept. In fact, it is one of the oldest commercial arrangements in human history,” observes Jim Bourne, owner of The Lamb’s Quarter farm in Owings, Md., and regular Old Town market vendor.

Nurturing a Community
Buying directly from farmers has its advantages. Farmers’ markets give consumers a chance to form relationships with the people who grow their food and, sometimes, learn about the farmer’s production methods in the process. The Old Town market is no exception. Gardeners contemplating the herb and heirloom vegetable offerings from Blue Ridge Botanicals of Castleton, Va., can consult growers familiar with the region’s soil and climate and receive detailed planting and care instructions. Curious
Discover the meanings behind some of the DAR chapters’ names.

The name of Provincia de la Sal Chapter, Benton, Ark., alludes to the name Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto gave the life-saving river he discovered in 1541. By the time de Soto and his men arrived in the central Arkansas region in the 16th century, they and their animals were suffering from the lack of salt in their diet.

De Soto and his companions came upon a small river where, in the sand along the riverside, they found salt, which they gathered and put into baskets resting atop vessels of water. When water was poured over the sand, the baskets served as filters that allowed the salt to wash into the vessels below while catching the sand. Then these vessels were set over a fire, and the water evaporated, leaving only the salt.

Therefore, de Soto decreed that the area would be known as “la Provincia de la Sal,” Spanish for “the Province of Salt.” Later, the French translation was applied, and ever since the river and the county have been known as Saline.

The name of Taos Mountain Chapter, Taos, N.M., pays homage to the dominant geographical feature of its town. Taos Mountain shares its name with Taos Pueblo, a community of multi-storied adobe buildings that have been continuously inhabited for more than 1,000 years. The site is the only living American Indian community to have been designated both a World Heritage Site and a National Historic Landmark.

The village of Taos was established in 1615 by families that followed Juan de Oñate, who claimed New Mexico in the name of Spain and proclaimed himself governor, in hopes of trading with the Ute and Taos American Indians. American trappers and traders began arriving around 1750, but when Mexico won its independence from Spain in the 19th century, the influx of Americans proceeded in full force. Today, Taos is a center for artists, with the Taos Art Colony still thriving since its inception in 1898.

The name of Captain Henry Vanderburgh Chapter, Evansville, Ind., borrows its name from a captain of the Fifth and Second Regiments of New York. Vanderburgh served from 1776 until the end of the Revolutionary War. He later relocated to the Indiana Territory, where he became involved in the local government of Knox County, eventually serving as territorial judge for the Indiana Territory, a position he held until his death in 1812. In 1818 Vanderburgh County, named in the judge’s honor, was formed. The Vanderburgh Chapter, the fourth DAR chapter in Indiana, was chartered in 1896. Nearly 100 years later, the chapter name was changed to more fully honor the captain for his service.

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

American Spirit • July/August 2010
HAMILTON JEWELERS IS PROUD TO BE
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Hamilton
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Many of today’s children do not have relatives who are veterans, which means fewer of them will grow up appreciating the traditions of service. In her history classes at Creston Middle School in Creston, Iowa, teacher Lesa Downing helps her students bridge that gap.

For more than 12 years, Downing has engaged her students’ minds—and hearts—through a program connecting them with veterans in this community southwest of Des Moines. Her efforts have been recognized: The Iowa state DAR named her Outstanding Teacher of American History in 2006, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars named her Iowa Veterans Teacher of the Year in February.

Downing says she was inspired to start the program by stories her late grandfather-in-law, Melvin Sharp, told about his experiences in the European Theater in World War II, including liberating some of the concentration camps. She realized that local veterans could provide a trove of information that wouldn’t be found in books. And, because she tries to teach citizenship, not just history, the veterans could serve as examples to inspire young minds.

For the first program in 1999, she and her class invited area veterans to an assembly during which they shared experiences and photographs. Downing believes in allowing students to take the lead on projects; with her help, they decided to create a video about veterans featuring clips from every war since World War I and a musical soundtrack from each era.

The program ultimately involved much of the school: Art students made welcoming posters and decorations; members of the Future Farmers of America and National Honor Society assisted with valet parking; special education students distributed programs; and the second-grade students sang and formed a human flag. The packed gym resounded with applause as the veterans, escorted in according to their branch of service, received a standing ovation.

The specifics of the program have varied each year since then, but the essence is the same: The students organize the program and, in the process, meet and learn about remarkable people living just down the street or across town.

“This year they put on a fashion show. The students found uniforms from each war back to World War I, and it was fun to see them get excited and help each other. One would say something like ‘Oh, my granddad has a uniform from the Vietnam War,’ and they’d come up with other ideas.”

Students wore the uniforms at the show, and each student made a presentation about the veteran who owned the uniform and the era in which he or she served. “The look in the veterans’ eyes during the program was so wonderful—they were so proud to have the students wear their uniforms,” Downing says.

The students make scrapbooks of every program. These have become treasured items that are shared with senior citizens and others in the town.

Downing has taken her passion for teaching young people to become responsible citizens beyond the walls of her classroom. She has also been instrumental in starting a middle-school student government whose leadership changes monthly so all the students have a chance to participate.

When she taught high school early in her career, Downing created a Big Sister/Little Sister program that paired ninth- and 12th-grade girls to help provide role models and positive influences for the younger students. Downing also sponsors Y-Teens and Fellowship of Christian Athletes groups, and she volunteers in many community programs.

Some of Downing’s students have formed lifelong friendships with the veterans they have met. “One of my goals with the program was to bridge the generation gap,” she says. “I can honestly say students have gained an appreciation for our veterans of war and the reason our nation honors these fine men and women on Veterans Day.”

Traditions of Service

In Lesa Downing’s classroom, veterans’ inspiring stories teach valuable lessons about citizenship.

By BILL HUDGINS | Photography by GARY FANDEL

Daughters of the American Revolution
Among the more than 875,000 women to join the Daughters of the American Revolution since its founding in 1890 are 767 women who were a single generation removed from their Revolutionary forebears. These are the Real Daughters, DAR members whose fathers contributed to America’s fight for independence.

My Father Was a Soldier: The Real Daughters of the American Revolution, compiled by Tracy E. Robinson and Rebecca C. Baird of the NSDAR Office of the Historian General, collects biographical sketches of 58 of these women, and 18 of their fathers, into one volume. “Real Daughters had not only a genealogical and historical connection to these men and women, but also a personal one,” write Robinson and Baird. “The deeds of their own fathers entitled them to membership.”

An original Committee on Real Daughters formed in 1903, as members sought out these patriot progenies. (Describing the excitement of receiving letters of invitation to membership, Betsey Newton said she felt “as though she were a girl in her teens and wanted for a Greek letter society.”) For members committed to keeping alive the spirit of their Revolutionary ancestors, the desire to honor the literal daughters of the American Revolution was strong. “Many early members felt a responsibility to care for these women,” says Baird, an NSDAR archivist.

Later, Real Daughters retreated from the forefront of the National Society’s consciousness, until in 2007 the Real Daughters Commemoration Project was established to confirm the identities of all Real Daughters, mark their graves and preserve their memory. The culmination of the project’s exhaustive research efforts, My Father Was a Soldier pays tribute to these fathers and daughters of early America using facts and personal anecdotes. (The Real Daughters’ secrets to longevity are particularly charming.)

One of the book’s most vivid inclusions is a scathing letter from Henrietta Lee to General David Hunter, who ordered the burning of her Shepherdstown, W.Va., home during the Civil War. She wrote, “The house was built by my father, a Revolutionary Soldier, who served the whole seven years for your independence. … Two fair homes did you yesterday ruthlessly lay in ashes, giving not a moment’s warning to the startled inmates of your wicked purpose.”

The group of profiled patriots includes men who participated in the Boston Tea Party, endured confinement on the prison ship Jersey, sailed with John Paul Jones, traveled to the United States with the Marquis de Lafayette, persevered through the harsh winter at Valley Forge, and signed the Declaration of Independence. The Real Daughters must have been listening attentively as their fathers recalled their Revolutionary experiences, for a number of them worked as suffragists, abolitionists, businesswomen and advocates for women’s education, helping to further the development of the free country forged by the Revolutionary generation into an enlightened nation. For example, Emily Parmely Collins organized one of the nation’s earliest women’s suffrage organizations in Bristol, N.Y., and Lydia Moss Bradley founded what today is known as Bradley University.

“The Real Daughters’ life experiences, taken as a whole, provide a chronicle of the advance of American culture during its first century,” observes Robinson, NSDAR director of archives and history. “They were among the first generation of United States citizens, and the pioneer spirit was common to so many of them.”

The book’s appendix lists the name of each Real Daughter, her father, DAR chapter, spouse, date of death and the state in which her grave is located. The writers hope it encourages exploration of the hidden stories of the Real Daughters whose biographies aren’t included here.

“The DAR was founded on a love of country and a sense of connection to American history through ancestry. The Real Daughters are a representation of this link,” says Baird. Adds Robinson, “Because of the Real Daughters, the DAR wasn’t just celebrating abstract ideals concerning the American Revolution; it actually had within it hundreds of living links to the Revolution.”

—Courtney Peter
As we celebrate the 234th anniversary of our transformation from 13 Colonies to a nation of 13 states, it seems fitting to review Lost States: True Stories of Texahoma, Transylvania, and Other States That Never Made It, by Michael Trinklein (Quirk Books, 2010). In often whimsical prose, Trinklein presents thumbnail sketches of 70-plus wannabe states no schoolchild will ever have to memorize.

As you might expect, the proposals for most aspiring states originated in the vast territories of the West during the 19th century, though a number arose in the Northwest Territory and the western sections of the original Colonial land grants.

Their motivations for statehood ranged from logical to ludicrous, from pragmatic to pique. Most have become almost forgotten except as great trivia questions, but some continue to rise phoenix-like from their supposed funeral pyres.

Among the more logical, and persistent, were calls for statehood for Long Island and for dividing California into northern and southern components. In the case of Long Island, its supporters pointed out the high concentration of population, its literal separation from the rest of the state, and its large contribution to New York state tax revenues compared with the proportionately small return it gets in services. (For the record, New York City has made similar arguments in favor of becoming a state as well.)

Northern Californians have recently put forth similar arguments for statehood—the name Shasta has been proposed—while also citing the drain on their water resources to supply the ever-thirsty south. California came fairly close to division in 1859, Trinklein says, when Andrés Pico, a wealthy Californio—a Californian of Spanish descent—spearheaded a drive to split off the south to protect it from hordes of land-hungry settlers pouring into the north. (If that plan hadn't run afoul of the brewing Civil War, Southern California might have become a state called Colorado.)

On the East Coast, there have been plans to divide New Jersey to create South Jersey—a more rural entity than the urban north. Again, allocation of resources provided the impetus for the movement, which flared in the 1970s and 1980s and had much support from southern counties until Governor Thomas Kean addressed some of the most pressing issues. But the restive populace is not likely to forget.

It seems the bigger the state (or territory), the more people have wanted to divvy it up. State builders floated many schemes to reconfigure Florida and Texas, the Dakota Territory and the Southwest. Of all the states, only Texas could divide into more states without Congressional approval, Trinklein claims. Texas reserved the right to decide whether to divide itself as a condition of its admission to the Union.

In the early 1800s, in what was then still Spanish Florida, a dashing, larger-than-life character named William Augustus Bowles actually carved out a short-lived nation-state called Muskogee. Named for a local American Indian tribe, the roughly kidney-shaped tract lay on the Gulf of Mexico where the Florida Panhandle turns south. It's a good thing that it didn't survive—it might have thwarted the career of Merle Haggard, who reached stardom with his song “I'm Proud to be an Okie From Muskogee.”

But as Alaska and Hawaii proved, there's no reason a state has to be attached to the contiguous 48. Trinklein cites some seemingly far-fetched potential states that have actually been discussed:

- **Cuba:** As a prize of the Spanish-American War.
- **Taiwan:** To protect it from mainland China.
- **Saipan:** Part of the Northern Marianas group that includes Guam, Saipan has for years produced “Made in the U.S.” apparel for leading brands under sweatshop conditions that the U.S. Department of Labor has called “slavelike.” Making the island group a state would bring its factories under U.S. regulation.

As you can see, this book was made for trivia buffs and hunters of obscure historical facts. Each entry gets two pages—a brief essay and a map or other illustration—and once you start reading, you'll probably go right through to the end.

— Bill Hudgins
Privacy Under Siege

Privacy. The word does not appear in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution or any of the amendments to the Constitution. Nevertheless, a constitutional “right to privacy” has evolved and underlies some of our most controversial issues, including abortion and the investigative powers of government.

In his brief, clear and imminently readable American Privacy: The 400-Year History of Our Most Contested Right, attorney, author and lecturer Frederick Lane concedes the literal word is missing from our founding documents—but not the concept, nor the expectation. This is in many ways a frightening book, because it demonstrates that our privacy has been under siege since the earliest European settlers arrived.

“At its core, the history of America is the history of the right to privacy,” Lane states at the outset. He defines privacy as “freedom to make up one’s own mind about fundamental human issues, including religion, marriage, politics, employment and education.”

Lane explains that English common law contained a basic concept of privacy, succinctly expressed by the adage that “a man’s home is his castle.” An Englishman, and by extension an American colonist, had a right to expect that the government could not interfere with either his person or property except by a specifically defined legal process. For that reason, the concept of privacy was very much a part of the framers’ work, Lane writes.

The Constitution, and especially the Bill of Rights, specifies limits on governmental intrusion—freedoms of religion, expression and assembly; freedom to keep and bear arms; freedom from quartering troops; freedom from unusual search and seizure; freedom from double jeopardy, self-incrimination and arbitrary eminent domain, and the right to due process. All of these are elements of privacy.

In one chapter that is particularly relevant this year, Lane sketches out the history of the Constitutionally mandated census. Since the first census in 1790, Americans have railed against what some regard as governmental snooping—an indicator that privacy was well understood 220 years ago.

In the 19th century, the advent of photography kicked off decades of legal wrangling over how—and if—people could control how photographs of them might be used. Early photographers routinely sold pictures of their subjects for commercial use without permission. People who sued claiming it violated their privacy were most often rebuffed: State laws simply didn’t recognize that right.

Photography, and the growth of an increasingly nosy press, led to a landmark legal treatise in 1890 that laid the foundation for a right to privacy. Written by Samuel D. Warren Jr. and future Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, “The Right to Privacy” argued it was time the courts recognized a common law right to privacy to safeguard individuals from intrusions from advancing technologies.

Their article helped shape future legal thought. The notion of privacy began to appear in cases nationwide. It finally reached the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren.

In tracing the history of privacy in the late 19th century and the 20th, Lane focuses on the rise of wiretapping, of using one’s Social Security number as an easy means of identification, and the linking of corporate and government computer networks to facilitate sharing of information about individuals.

History is full of examples of government agencies seeking more information about us, and not always under due process of law. From J. Edgar Hoover’s G-men to USA Patriot Act-empowered Homeland Security agents reviewing public library records, the worst excesses have been justified in the name of some greater good.

This raises fundamental questions about the price of privacy: How much sharing of information about us among government agencies, without our knowledge or consent, is permissible? Are warrantless phone taps, e-mail reading and searches ever justified? Can we trust the government to act in good faith? If you haven’t done anything wrong, do you have anything to worry about? Or is the quote attributed to Benjamin Franklin correct: “They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety”?

Lane concludes by noting that the phenomenon of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter has empowered people to publish globally far more personal information than they realize—or than is wise. These technologies are demolishing the screens between us and the world, with results no one can predict. © —B.H.
Minneapolis and St. Paul: TWIN CITIES

By Bill Hudgins
Most Minnesotans (and fans of the long-running “Prairie Home Companion” radio show) refer to Minneapolis and St. Paul as the Twin Cities, or just The Cities. But though they are only a few miles apart, their resemblance is more fraternal than identical, as their histories and characters prove.

They do have much in common. The cities share the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers, and they both lie near St. Anthony Falls, the only major naturally occurring falls on the upper Mississippi River. The Dakota American Indian tribe lived in the area for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Mounds Park in St. Paul contains tribal burial mounds, and the region remains sacred to the tribe.
The first white man to visit the area was Father Louis Hennepin, a French missionary who arrived in 1680 and named the falls after his patron saint. Following his visit, France controlled the area until 1762, when Spain assumed control of the portion of the state west of the Mississippi under the Franco-Spanish Treaty; it was absorbed into what became the Louisiana Purchase. The portion of the state east of the Mississippi was acquired by England after the French and Indian War in 1763 and became part of the United States after the Revolution as part of the Northwest Territory.

In 1805 the Dakota tribe ceded 100,000 acres of land to the U.S. government, including the site that was to become Minneapolis. White settlers first arrived in 1848, and in 1855 they incorporated a town named St. Anthony. Minneapolis was incorporated a year later, and the two towns merged in 1872.

St. Paul traces its origins to 1766, when a New Englander named Jonathan Carver set up camp there while trying to find the fabled Northwest Passage to the Pacific Ocean. In 1819, the U.S. Army built a fort on the Minnesota River in nearby Mendota; in 1820, Colonel Josiah Snelling erected a new fort named Fort Anthony across the river. Later renamed Fort Snelling, the new fort served as an American Indian agency and trading post, among other functions.

Settlers soon arrived, including one Pierre “Pig’s Eye” Parrant, who founded a village that bore his nickname. In 1841, Father Lucian Galtier built a chapel in Pig’s Eye and named it Saint Paul, in honor of his patron saint. He convinced his neighbors to rename the village St. Paul. Eight years later, the more sedately named town was designated the capital of the Minnesota Territory, thus denying giggles to future generations of schoolchildren.

Though only a few miles apart, Minneapolis and St. Paul prospered, due to very different industries. Minneapolis evolved into a flour- and saw-milling powerhouse—at various times, it led the nation in these industries. St. Paul, on the other hand, boomed thanks to railroads. As a result, the region produced sought-after domestic products and enjoyed a convenient means of transporting them to distant markets.

The cities attracted different kinds of settlers as well. The Irish immigrant family of Catholic Archbishop John Ireland settled in St. Paul when he was 14. He grew up to be a powerful patron of Irish immigration, helping to bring thousands of impoverished families there. Germans also were drawn to St. Paul. Minneapolis, on the other hand, attracted largely Lutheran Scandinavians. The religious dichotomy often forms a part of humorist Garrison Keillor’s monologues about Lake Wobegon and his native Minnesota.

Today, the cities enjoy a reputation as friendly and culturally diverse destinations, with attractions ranging from museums to professional sports teams to the legendary Mall of America. The area welcomes more than 18.3 million visitors a year, making it one of Forbes magazine’s 30 most-visited American cities.

Both cities have extensive networks of skyways that enable pedestrians to travel in climate-controlled comfort, even during fierce Minnesota winters. The skyway system helps make the cities year-round destinations and keep their downtown areas thriving.

Besides museums and theaters (see sidebar on page 25), the cities offer five professional sports teams: The Minnesota Vikings NFL team, the two-time World Series champion Minnesota Twins, the NBA’s Minnesota Timberwolves, the Minnesota Wild hockey team, and the Minnesota Lynx WNBA team.

If you’re not a sports fan, go exploring on the 51-mile-long Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. Divided into seven districts, the byway shows off Minneapolis’ and St. Paul’s unique landscapes and architectural features, including more than 50 interpretive sites, 12 lakes and ponds, four golf courses, two waterfalls, natural and planned gardens, creek and river views, and 50 miles of hiking, biking, skiing and driving paths.

The cities boast a number of architecturally or historically important homes. One of these is the F. Scott Fitzgerald House in St. Paul. Also known as Summit Terrace, the row house is a National Historic Landmark.

For more information, contact:
• Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Association, 250 Marquette Ave. South, Suite 1300, Minneapolis, MN 55401; (888) 676–MPLS; www.minneapolis.org
• Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Authority, 175 West Kellogg Blvd., Suite 502, Saint Paul, MN 55102; (651) 265–4900; (800) 627–6101; www.visitsaintpaul.com

Parks dot the cityscapes: Minneapolis boasts 22 city lakes and more than 170 parks, while St. Paul has 160 parks. Highlights include the Lyndale Park Rose Garden, with 3,000 plants in 100 different varieties. Theodore Wirth Park contains the Quaking Bog. The water within the sphagnum moss-covered bog is more acidic than that of a typical lake or pond, and the surface, shaded by more than 200 mature tamarack trees, quivers when touched. The 15-acre Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary, founded in 1907, is one of the oldest public wildflower gardens in the nation.

If you bring children along, the Mall of America can keep them entertained while you shop, with The Lego Imagination Center, Underwater Adventures Aquarium and the country’s largest indoor amusement park.
Minneapolis’ and St. Paul’s museums and theaters include:

- The Guthrie Theater, which has a resident acting company that performs classic works and also presents a world-class setting for touring shows. The Guthrie received a Tony Award in 1982 for its contributions to American theater.
- The Walker Art Center, renowned for its collection of contemporary art and sculpture garden.
- The Science Museum of Minnesota, founded in 1907, whose programs include a public science education center, teacher education, research, school outreach and an Imax Convertible Dome Omnitheater.
- The American Swedish Institute, a historic 33-room house, museum and cultural center founded in 1929 and located near downtown Minneapolis.
- The Twin Cities Model Railroad Museum on the second floor of Bandana Square, a circa 1885 Twin Cities railroad building that once housed a Northern Pacific Railway repair shop. The Toy Train Division is located in the historic Chimneys Building just north of Bandana Square.
- The Mill City Museum, built into the ruins of the one-time world’s largest flour mill on the historic Mississippi riverfront. Here, visitors of all ages learn about the intertwined histories of the flour industry, the river and the city of Minneapolis.
- The Museum of Russian Art, the only museum in North America dedicated exclusively to the preservation and presentation of Russian art and artifacts.
- Wells Fargo History Museum, on the skyway of the Wells Fargo Tower in downtown Minneapolis, home to an exhibit featuring the original 1863 Concord Stagecoach.
In the 18th century, silk-covered hats became an essential accessory for fashionable women like English novelist Fanny Burney (1752–1840). Oil on canvas, c. 1784, by Edward Francis Burney.

Opposite page: This 1927 photograph shows a woman wearing a cloche hat, a popular style in the 1920s.
THE ESSENTIAL ACCESSORY
BY EMILY McMACKIN

of hats
Maybe it was in an oil portrait, a faded photograph or an illustrated book. With her matching dress, gloves and hat, she looks like she could step right out of the picture and make small talk. You can’t help but stare and wonder:

Who is she?
What is she doing?
Where is she going?

A hat has a way of evoking a kind of timeless mystique about the woman wearing it, says Janea Whitacre, Colonial Williamsburg’s mistress of millinery and mantua making.

“It’s the combination of the total look,” Whitacre says. “A woman wearing a hat almost seems like she is stepping out of a portrait from another time. It tells you something about her, what she loved and the period in which she lived.”

The desire for fashionable hats debuted on the American scene in the 18th century, and though the craze has diminished since, it has provided women throughout history with a way to express their wealth, social status, style and, in some cases, their preferences and personalities.

In Colonial and early America, “the hat was considered a very important item of dress, not at all the optional item that it is today,” says Linda Baumgarten, curator of textiles and costumes for Colonial Williamsburg. “It offered protection from the sun and the elements, but it was also a fashion accessory that was viewed as a significant part of a woman’s ensemble.”

For many women of the era, it was essential because it “defined not only who you were, but who you wanted to be,” says Ellen Goldstein, chair of the accessories design department at New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology. “If you wanted to step into a fantasy world, if you wanted to be adventurous, a hat allowed you to do that. ... A woman could wear the same hat over and over again, but each time she put it on, she was saying, ‘Look at me, I’m something special.’”

AN ADAPTABLE FASHION

Head coverings had been essential to most European women’s wardrobes since medieval times, when religious leaders required them to cover their heads in church. Soon it became customary to wear them in most settings. “Almost every woman in the 17th and 18th centuries owned caps or white linen kerchiefs for everyday use,” Baumgarten says.

Women wore everything from silk hoods to bonnets indoors, but hats were viewed as “a completion of their outdoor appearance,” Whitacre says. Not only did they offer protection from the sun and rain, they also represented a fashionable ideal that women of any social level could attain.

“Clothing was relatively expensive in the 18th century, but a hat was something that was affordable to all,” says Brenda Rosseau, manager of Colonial Williamsburg’s costume design center. “By putting a hat on or altering its structure or trim, a woman had the ability to transform the look of her outfit.”

Each immigrant group brought over the fashions it had previously known, but due to the dominant British influence throughout the Colonies, many women looked to England for the latest trends in clothing and accessories. Dressing in the latest styles was one of the ways colonists tried to raise their profile in the New World. “Some people tried to dress better than others so it looked like they had a higher social position,” Whitacre says.

The most fashionable hats of the time had a straw or fiberboard base covered in silk and trimmed with ribbon, lace, gauze and artificial flowers. Pancake-style, straw shepherdess hats were also popular for women who wanted to keep the sun off their faces, though some favored felt hats with a more masculine look for riding. In the winters, they traded their straws for fitted cloches and furs. When walking, riding or traveling, it was unusual to see a woman without a hat.
“Whether she was taking a stroll down the boulevard, sitting on the veranda or going to the market, tea or to her house of worship, wearing a hat was almost sacred,” Goldstein says.

The contours of the hat varied frequently in the brim and the crown, growing and shrinking in width to reflect the line of the dresses and bring proportion to a lady’s silhouette. But it was the material, not the make of the hat, that determined its level of fashion. The finer the fabric and the more expensive the trim, the more chic it was.

“A hat could set a woman apart from her peers,” Goldstein continues. “When you look at the very wealthy, their hats always coordinated with their outfits: Each time they changed their outfit, they changed their hat. Middle-class women might have two or three hats in their wardrobe, and one for a special occasion. Poorer women might have two—one for every day and one for church.”

Even a worn hat could be covered with fabric and transformed into an accessory with a completely different look, which was one reason the millinery industry boomed between the 1760s and 1770s. Milliners trimmed ready-made hats exported from England, but they also helped customers spruce up existing hats and chose lace and trim for gloves, cloaks and accessories to complement them.

“The millinery trade was one of the main trades practiced by women at the time, and that continued until the latter part of the 20th century,” Whitacre says.

There were five millinery shops in Williamsburg alone in 1774. While some shops constructed hats, it was hard to find straw well adapted for hat making in the Colonies. The highest-quality straws came from Leghorn, Italy, where the soil and climate gave wheat its length, firmness and flexibility.

**REVOLUTIONIZING STYLE**

When hair became the focal point of the wardrobe in the 1770s, hats got smaller. Influenced by the elaborate hairstyle of French trendsetter Marie Antoinette, women piled natural and false hair up over stuffed pads and wire frames and greased their updos with wheat paste. These stiff, powdered coiffures lasted for weeks, and some were so tall they couldn’t fit into doorways or carriages.

As American Spirit’s March/April issue described, women dressed their hair with ribbons, pearls, feathers and fresh flowers for formal occasions, so “most of the hats were designed to protect the hairstyles from the wind and rain,” Baumgarten says. The crowns were low, perched flat or at an angle to balance the high hairstyles. In 1772, the calash—a collapsible bonnet made of strips of wood or whalebone sewn into the channels of a silk hood—was introduced as a covering to pull up over the head without disturbing the updo. A ribbon in the front allowed the wearer to hold the bonnet over her face while walking in the wind.

As the Revolution approached, colonists were encouraged to dispense with European finery and make their own attire. The Daughters of Liberty pledged to boycott English goods and called on other women to do the same. Once the war began, the disruption in trade made it difficult to find any kind of stylish clothing. Handmade cotton and muslin bonnets ornamented with ribbons became fashionable for all women. The elite still wore hats, sometimes on top of the bonnet, trimming them...
with flowers, feathered plumes, artificial fruit and—in a nod to patriotism—silver stars.

As women began to wear their hair in a softer, rounder style, hats with tall crowns and wide silk ribbons reappeared, but embargos and ongoing strife with England kept disrupting trade. Fashionable hats became so scarce that 12-year-old Betsy Metcalfe of Providence, R.I., launched her own millinery, fashioning hats from homegrown oat straw, which she braided by smoothing pieces with scissors and splitting them with her thumbnail. She did quite well, collecting a flood of orders and even making a straw bonnet for Louisa Adams, President John Quincy Adams’ wife.

At the turn of the 19th century, the return to the democratic philosophies of ancient Greece and Rome—spurred by the aftermath of the American and French revolutions—brought about a neoclassical revival that drastically altered fashion. Aristocratic staples like powdered wigs and corsets were out. Simple, classical styles were in. Women wore Empire-style dresses with high waists and a draped look that revealed their natural shape.

“What women were wearing was narrower and much more naturalistic, so headwear was not as contrived or complex,” Whitacre says.

Reminiscent of Greek and Roman statues, women wore their hair shorter with curls close to the temples or pulled into a chignon. Hats became less ostentatious and moved in closer to the face to complement the style. Turbans, berets and headscarves resembling the Greek sphendone, or headband, became the rage.

For years, hats had been seen as an essential fashion accessory, while bonnets tended to be more utilitarian and childlike. But rounded straw bonnets trimmed in ribbons, flowers and feathers soon became de rigueur, eclipsing hats in popularity.

When trade with Italy came to a standstill under Napoleon’s regime, these bonnets were fashioned from inexpensive “bonnet board”—cardboard pressed in a roller machine to create a design. Women discovered that they could easily copy designs from fashion plates in magazines or window displays in stores. Many sewed on the flowers and trimming themselves, and instruction books were printed for those who wanted to learn how to make their own bonnets.

“The bonnet was an easy hat to wear, and it was adopted by many religious sects at the time as their hat of choice,” Goldstein says. “It was also believed to be a hat that almost everybody could wear, regardless of the shapes of their faces.”

Older women tended to prefer bonnets because they fit closely to the head and hid wrinkles and other imperfections in the chin and neckline. By 1830, the shape of the bonnet was so broad that it framed a woman’s face in the front, but completely hid her profile on either side.

Though bonnets remained the outdoor accessory of choice until after the Civil War, hats didn’t completely disappear.

“Women who wanted to show off their sophistication or level of wealth and high society moved away from the bonnet,” Goldstein says. “It didn’t give them the sophisticated look they were trying to achieve.”

SHIFTING SILHOUETTES

As the nation grew wealthier during the Industrial Revolution, fashion reflected the country’s ambition and
desire for excess. In the 1820s, dresses began to emphasize the waistline again, and everything from the bodice to the sleeves became broader. To accentuate the look, women wore layers of petticoats underneath their skirts.

As the silhouette of the 1830s became more bell-shaped, hats got bigger and more elaborate to balance the tiny waist and broad shoulder line. Bonnets adopted a wider, rounded brim and were worn further back on the head to frame the cascading curls that women had begun to wear around their face.

“As the silhouette of the dress changed, the hat changed,” Whitacre says.

While it may be easy to look at the style of a 19th-century hat today and wonder what the milliner was thinking, most designs were methodical and driven by a desire for balance and proportion, down to the smallest detail.

“You can look at a hat and tell what period it’s from by the trim and decoration,” Whitacre adds. “As the hats get more outrageous, dresses become pretty plain, but the more trim you see on an outfit, the less you see on the hat.”

Whatever period they were worn in, hats have always made a statement. From the wide-brimmed straw hat worn with trousers by women’s rights advocate Amelia Bloomer in the 1850s to the gilded Juliet caps that mimicked the bustle of the 1880s to the picturesque hats worn by the Gibson Girls at the turn of the century and the colorful cloches flaunted by bobbed flappers in the 1920s, these hats offer a glimpse into the culture and attitudes of their time. You can even track the political and social history of the country by looking at hats from different eras.

“During wartime, hats were more utilitarian, and you didn’t see as much festooning or detail,” Goldstein says. “During happier, more peaceful times, hats had more flowers, feathers and veiling.”

As dress styles grew more casual throughout the 20th century, hats were no longer considered a necessary accessory. “In the 1950s, you wouldn’t leave the house unless your hat, bag, shoes and gloves all coordinated,” Goldstein says. “But as hairstyles, like the bouffant, became popular, hats lost their mass appeal and importance.” Hats did enjoy a brief resurgence when first lady Jackie Kennedy debuted the pillbox hat in the early 1960s, and some women still occasionally wear elaborate hats to church and social events, but the accessory’s popularity has waned.

Few hats from the Colonial and early American eras survive, but the ones that have “are quite beautiful and have maintained their position of style in the millinery industry,” says Goldstein, who describes the sculpted furs, felt cloches and flowered and feathered straw hats she has handled from this period as very “beautiful, delicate and feminine.”

So beautiful, in fact, that she sees a comeback for the hat in the future. “Women today are starting to look at hats in a different way,” Goldstein says. “They like wearing them because it gives them a level of mystique and sense of individuality. It lets them strike a pose or create an illusion, and because of that, they really want one.”

Emily McMackin wrote about covered bridges for the May/June 2010 issue.

“Patrons-Modèles” (Patterns), from Le Petit Echo de la Mode, Paris. September 13, 1925.

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A/S
Colonial Beauties, Modern Monsters

Faced with untillable soil and unfamiliar vegetation, early American settlers sent for the plants they knew and loved from home, plants like English ivy and St. John’s wort. How we wish they hadn’t.

BY STACEY EVERS
For most of us, vegetation comes in two varieties: plants we love and weeds. But some weeds are more insidious than others. They grow aggressively, expanding their range at the expense of other plants and disrupting complex networks of ecological relationships. These über-weeds generally hail from far-flung places and do not face local predators. They flourish with abandon. Appropriately, they have been labeled “invasives.”

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that invasives cost the United States about $33 billion a year in lost crop production. Farm fields aren’t the only danger zones; invasives are ubiquitous and fairly undiscriminating. Nearly half of all the United States’ endangered and threatened plants are jeopardized by invasives, according to the 2004 findings of Cornell University ecologists. You’re likely to run across invasives during a walk in your local park or your own neighborhood. The names of familiar and sometimes beloved plants populate an ever-growing list of offenders: Norway maple, Chinese and Japanese wisteria, periwinkle, burning bush, honeysuckle, and callery and Bradford pear, just to name a few.

What brought these species to the United States? Human beings, mostly. Many invasives were intentionally introduced for crops, gardens, pharmaceutical purposes and forage for the livestock that also were imported. But some slipped in as stowaways, clinging to boots and sheep’s wool, contaminating imported grains or waiting in the dirt and sand thrown onto Colonial-era sailing ships as ballast. Once in the Colonies, the wet ballast was tossed ashore. Any seeds therein “were watered and ready to go,” says Wallace Kaufman, an Oregon-based naturalist and co-author of the comprehensive field guide *Invasive Plants* (Stackpole Books, 2007). English ivy has been so disruptive to the ecology of the Pacific Northwest that in February of this year, Oregon became the first state to ban the sale, transport or propagation of English ivy.

English ivy offers an example of good intentions gone bad. The earliest record of the low-maintenance, decorative plant in North America dates to 1727. While its sinuous vines graced the buildings of Colonial towns and universities, it also quickly traversed the continent. Today it thrives in 26 states and lower Canada. But in 18 of these states and the District of Columbia, it is reportededly invasive, weighing down and strangling trees, smothering native competitors for light and space, and prying apart wooden siding on buildings. Its success is largely due to two
Among the Worst Offenders: Who they are and how they got here

Species: Why it is a threat:

Black henbane
One of the first plants to be introduced to the Colonies, it contains two highly toxic alkaloids that have been used as sedatives. These alkaloids can increase the intoxicating effects of beer (although too much black henbane would be lethal). The plant is prolific: Each one produces hundreds of thousands of seeds, and the majority of the resulting plants survive because they are poisonous to most mammals.

Canada thistle
Likely arrived unintentionally in the early 1600s as a contaminant in agricultural seeds. Crowds out native vegetation to reduce diversity, disrupts crop yields, and hosts multiple insects that damage crops.

Chinese tallow tree
Believed to have been introduced in the early 1700s as a garden plant, its dense growth denies native plants light, water and space.

Garlic mustard
Believed to have been introduced in the early 1800s for salads and soups. Displaces spring wildflowers and may inhibit the growth of fungi that native plants rely on to obtain soil nutrients. Also threatens butterfly species because it resembles the native mustard plants that the butterflies lay their eggs on; larvae can't survive because of the garlic mustard leaf's different chemistry. Its seeds can remain dormant in the ground for up to five years.

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Common privet
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English ivy has been so disruptive to the ecology of the Pacific Northwest that in February of this year, Oregon became the first state to ban the sale, transport or propagation of English ivy. (The ban also applied to butter- fly bush, which didn’t cross the Pacific from southwestern China until about 1900.) The prohibition, which also applies to potted plants and floral arrangements, took effect June 1 in order to give nurseries time to sell the stock they had on hand.

Even on the East Coast, where English ivy has enjoyed a long history of cultivation in gardens and yards, the vine now poses a threat. It is deemed one of the “worst weeds”

Norway maple
John Bartram, America’s first native-born botanist, introduced it into his renowned Philadelphia garden in 1776. The tree’s deep shade and dense root system challenge other plants’ ability to establish.

Purple loosestrife
One of the first introductions to the Colonies, it is believed to have been transported in ship ballast, livestock bedding and/or livestock feed. Also imported for gardens. Highly tolerant of varying water and soil conditions, and damaged stems or roots produce new shoots and buds. A single plant can produce more than 1 million seeds per season. In some areas, it has displaced half the native plant population, endangering a host of plants and animals, but it also can be an important source of food for honeybees.

Sapodilla
This fruit may have been introduced to Florida as early as the 16th century. Popular in Central America, where sapodilla is native. Creates a dense shade too dark for other plants to survive in.

St. John’s wort
Introduced into Philadelphia in 1696 by German immigrants who believed it could exorcise the devil. Dense colonies outcompete natives, and a single plant can produce up to 30,000 seeds. This species of St. John’s wort (Hypericum perforatum), which is still used to treat mild depression, is different from other, native Hypericum species that share the name St. John’s wort.

Tree of heaven
A gardener introduced this Chinese native to Philadelphia in 1748. The tree has an aggressive root system that releases chemicals that prevent other plants’ growth.

Woolly mullein
Introduced into Virginia in the mid-1700s, likely as a traditional remedy for coughs, diarrhea and other illnesses. In Michigan by the 1830s and on the West Coast by 1876. Thrives in disturbed soils before other plants can establish, and its seeds may remain viable for at least 100 years.

characteristics: It invades as both a climbing vine and dense ground cover, and it is an evergreen, continuing to grow after native competitors have succumbed to low temperatures.

“English ivy eliminates other ground covers entirely,” Kaufman says. “It eliminates an awful lot of the natural system.”

American Spirit • July/August 2010
at Monticello, ranking 14th on a list compiled for *American Spirit* by Peter Hatch, gardens and grounds director (see table, page 37). He and his staff have made “concerted efforts” in recent years to combat invasive species, but, he says, “the battle has only begun.” The Thomas Jefferson Foundation is studying the sustainability of the property, and Hatch says he suspects that hiring an invasive plant manager will be one of the final report’s recommendations.

**Useful Blossoms Turn Useless**

There’s a touch of irony to the plague of invasives at Monticello, given Thomas Jefferson’s strong advocacy for the importation of plant species. “The greatest service which can be rendered to any country,” Jefferson famously said, “is to add a useful plant to its culture.”

But our third president can hardly be blamed for contemporary flora troubles. Not only was Jefferson referring to economically useful plants like rice and bread grains—a philosophy reflected in the 170 varieties of fruit and 330 varieties of vegetables planted in his gardens—but he “lacked 200 years of hindsight to be able to judge whether certain introduced species might become the pests, the bullies, the weeds of the garden world,” Hatch writes in “Garden Weeds in the Age of Jefferson” (*Twinleaf Journal*, 2006).

Also, Jefferson’s early 19th-century proclamation came late in the New World’s history of plant introduction. Three hundred years before, Spanish settlers had introduced plants like Central American native sapodilla, or chicle-gum tree, into Florida, where today its dense stands cast shade too dark for most native plants to survive. The British also were quick to bring in exotics, pushing Colonial farmers to grow non-native crops like sugarcane that would allow England to be less dependent on foreign sources.

In *1629*, the fields around Jamestown were home to “all manner of herbs and roots we have in England,” John Smith observed. When English tourist John Josselyn visited his brother in “Mayne” in 1638 and 1663, he noted in his accounts that New England’s rocky landscape featured dandelion and chickweed. Within a century, some of the introduced plants were already being singled out as aggressive troublemakers. John Bartram, the first American-born botanist, in a 1759 letter described and decried 35 “troublesome” plants, including “stinking” butter and eggs (also called toadflax) and “pernicious” St. John’s wort.

Of the 20 worst weeds at Monticello today, five were known to be serious threats in the United States before 1832: chickweed, various species of briars, wild onion, Bermuda grass and crabgrass. It’s hard to believe that crabgrass once was purposefully planted and cultivated, but to our forefathers, it was good feed for livestock. “I think even Jefferson regarded crabgrass as a legitimate forage for pastures,” Hatch says. “It grows in lawns when everything else is dormant during the late summer heat and drought.”

**Fighting Foul Flora**

For nearly 150 years, the United States government distributed exotic seed and plants to farmers and introduced experimental plants from abroad. Then, in 1912, Congress passed the Plant Quarantine Act to quell widespread worries about pest problems in U.S. nursery stock. At the time, the United States was the only major nation lacking legislative safeguards against importing infested plants, according to a USDA history.
The 1912 law allowed the USDA to declare quarantines and establish programs regulating plants. Following its passage were a series of plant-related regulatory programs, building to a 1999 presidential executive order forbidding federal programs from introducing invasive species and providing for the restoration of native species in invaded ecosystems. The order also calls for biennial management plans for the nation’s invasive species, whether they are plants, animals or pathogens.

Critical to the eventual success of these plans is a USDA lab that until earlier this year was called the Invasive Weed Management Unit. Now merged with another lab and renamed the Global Change and Photosynthesis Unit, it is one of the few federal facilities devoted to solving weed issues.

While much of the USDA’s weed-management efforts are focused on field crops like wheat, corn and soybeans, this research unit works on vegetables, organic products and biofuels. Adam Davis, one of the lab’s research ecologists, has dedicated himself to screening potential biofuel plants to make sure they don’t become invasive.

“We want to make sure that we do due diligence before we roll these things out on millions of acres,” Davis says. “The USDA has gotten black eyes on occasion from releases gone awry.”

The campaign against invasives isn’t one that anyone expects to win via total eradication. Weeds are too diverse and too adaptable and, on occasion, fill important gaps in an unstable ecosystem. For instance, English ivy kills native competitors but provides shelter for small birds; purple loosestrife is rampant across the continental United States, significantly displacing several animal and plant species, but in some areas is an important source of nectar for honeybees.

“This is an endless work,” says naturalist Kaufman. “In many ways, we are reduced to the role of a referee.”

Stacey Evers wrote about the Colonial baby boom for the September/October 2009 issue.

While invasives most often are non-natives, native plants also can grow aggressively, as seen on these lists.


Source for 2010 list: Peter Hatch, director of gardens and grounds at Monticello.
Though its volumes are scattered from Boston to Baltimore, George Washington’s library lives on. As part of the Legacy Library project on LibraryThing.com (www.librarything.com/profile/GeorgeWashington), the collection—united for the first time in more than 160 years—survives in its entirety on the Web, thanks to the efforts of Jeremy Dibbell of the Massachusetts Historical Society.
When Washington died in 1799, his library remained intact in the study at Mount Vernon. It’s estimated that he owned about 900 volumes worth more than $2,000 at the time of his death. He’d acquired some of these titles through an agent in England, but in his later life, many of his admirers also sent books as gifts. In his will, he left the contents of his library to his wife, Martha, and his brother John’s son, Bushrod Washington, a U.S. Supreme Court justice who, in turn, bequeathed the collection to two of his nephews—John A. Washington and George C. Washington. In 1834, the U.S. government acquired the military titles, according to Frances Laverne Carroll and Mary Meacham, authors of *The Library at Mount Vernon* (Beta Phi Mu, 1977).

**SOLD AT AUCTIONS**

In 1848, John A. Washington decided to sell most of his portion to Vermont bookseller Henry Stevens. According to Stanley Cushing in *Acquired Tastes: 200 Years of Collecting for the Boston Athenaeum* (Boston Athenaeum, 2007), “Stevens was an ambitious self-promoter who had the flair to occasionally add the initials G.M.B after his name to signify that he was a ‘Green Mountain Boy.’”

Stevens approached the British Museum about buying the lot, but it declined. Angered at the potential sale of these treasures, a group of 70 men from Boston pooled resources to purchase 354 volumes and 450 pamphlets—including a copy of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*—and gave them to the Boston Athenaeum, one of the nation’s pre-eminent private libraries. Today one-third of those titles reside in a locked case, with the rest in the rare book collection.

John A. Washington’s heirs exhibited the remainder of his library inheritance at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. In November of that year, they were sold at auction. Many of the books were purchased by John R. Baker of Philadelphia, a stockbroker and collector of Americana. But upon Baker’s death in 1891, everything was once again auctioned off to the highest bidder, and the titles were scattered among various collections. Other branches of the family also sold books during the 1890s. According to Carroll and Meacham, when Mount Vernon’s library underwent restoration in 1929, none of Washington’s books were left. Since that time, the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association has repurchased some original volumes.

**RECONSTRUCTING THE LIBRARY**

Dibbell found that piecing together Washington’s original collection took quite a bit of investigative research. He recreated Washington’s library using various sources,
including a probate inventory of the collection compiled after Washington’s death, auction catalogs and the first president’s personal papers, which frequently mentioned books ordered. A bibliography of these sources is included in the virtual collection.

According to Dibbell, the Legacy Library is a “mix of technology and old-fashioned books.” Through the site’s “I See Dead People’s Books” group, the Legacy Library projects recreate the libraries of famous deceased individuals. The group has a cataloging guide for participants and a list of libraries in progress—completed ones as well as proposed ones for real and fictional literary characters such as Robinson Crusoe and Don Quixote. A subset is the Early American Libraries project, which started in 2007 with Thomas Jefferson’s library. The George Washington library project launched in December 2008.

This Web-based catalog of the first president’s library is a scholar’s dream. “While we know what was in Washington’s library, more study is needed to determine the relationship between what was in his library, and what he actually read and applied to his life,” says Joan Stahl, librarian at Mount Vernon. “Given the titles in his library, we know his books were of a practical nature on topics relating to his estate business and political career.”

INSIDE THE CONTENTS

Washington wasn’t a collector of first editions; his titles primarily consisted of second and third editions of popular titles and pamphlets. “The books in the Washington collection were books he needed such as military textbooks, agriculture guides and government publications,” Dibbell says.

Unfortunately, Washington didn’t annotate his books; he only signed them, so it’s difficult to know which volumes he actually read versus what he simply owned.

LibraryThing’s profile page for George Washington includes a list of libraries that own his volumes, subject tags to search specific groups of books, a short biography, and a statement about his library. A sidebar lists random books from his collection. Some exist as digital copies, allowing users to read through specific titles. Click on a particular book, and in the upper right-hand corner of that book’s Web page, a quick links box identifies titles available on Google Books or through Project Gutenberg. For instance, users can read Thomas Jefferson’s Notes on the State of Virginia by selecting the Google Book link.

The comment section for many titles provides a detailed history about the ownership of each book or pamphlet. Remarks are made visible by clicking the “A” toolbar in “Styles” for the collection or selecting the “Details” icon on the far right. For example, the 1782 publication, A new annual register, on an improved plan, or authentic repository of all public events that have happened from June 1781 to January 1782, is annotated on LibraryThing’s Washington library with the following details: “It was bound with another title, Remarks on the East-India Company’s balances in England, purchased by a William Stephens Smith for Washington on May 20, 1783, and appeared in the probate inventory with a value of 50 cents.”

“The Legacy Library Project is a mix of technology and old-fashioned books.”
– Jeremy Dibbell, Massachusetts Historical Society –

The oldest book in Washington’s library may have been Sir Matthew Hale’s Contemplations Moral and Divine in Two Parts, published in 1685. It belonged to Washington’s mother, Mary Ball Washington. The virtual library includes these notations: “Signed by Mary Washington. In his biography of GW, Edward Everett said that this book belonged to GW’s father, and contained the signatures of both of his wives (Jane and Mary). The page containing Jane’s autograph is no longer present.” This book was also one of the volumes sold to John Baker in 1876 for $11 and resold in 1891. At the end of each detail is a copy note identifying the current home of the title. While the important details about this particular book are recorded, its current whereabouts are unknown.

Reading through these online catalogs is a fascinating journey into the past. Without leaving your home you can take a trip in your armchair, browsing the libraries owned by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Delving into books these great men read and consulted offers a rich new way to experience history.

Maureen Taylor is the author of The Last Muster: Images of the Revolutionary War Generation (Kent State University Press, 2010).
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.

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PLANS FOR A BRAND-NEW LIBRARY to safeguard George Washington’s books and manuscripts, create educational outreach programs, and establish dedicated scholarship on the first president are under way at Mount Vernon. Construction of the 45,000-square-foot facility, to be named the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, is expected to begin in early 2011 and be completed in 2012.

The library will house Mount Vernon’s various collections of approximately 12,000 books, serials and periodicals as well as reference materials containing biographical information about the Washington family, the history of the Mount Vernon Estate and 18th-century American life and culture. Mount Vernon owns 40 books belonging to Washington and close to 450 manuscripts bearing his signature.

Located adjacent to the estate, the 55-acre site is a part of Washington’s original farm and within walking distance of the mansion. The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation has pledged $38 million to the project, the largest gift in the history of Mount Vernon. Fred W. Smith is longtime chairman of the foundation and a champion of projects related to George Washington.

Washington’s written works are spread among collectors across America. But Mount Vernon’s library eventually will bring together a complete digital record of letters to and from Washington. These letters have been assembled by scholars at the University of Virginia over a period of some 40 years. All the records related to “The Papers of George Washington” project will be transferred to the library at Mount Vernon when the last of around 90 volumes of letters is edited, about 15 years from now.
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After a rocky start, the quintessential patriotic holiday took root in post-war America.

By Lena Anthony
On July 4, 1778, George Washington was encamped with his army at New Brunswick, N.J. Even in the midst of war, he was determined to make the most of his Fourth of July celebration. According to James Heintze, librarian emeritus at American University and author of *The Fourth of July Encyclopedia* (McFarland, 2007), “each troop was given an extra ration of rum and they were asked by Washington to put ‘green boughs’ in their hats. A special artillery salute was then commenced.” There were no streamers or parades or elegant dinners, which were common in the earliest celebrations in cities like Philadelphia in Boston, but it was a celebration nonetheless.

Early efforts to observe the signing of the Declaration were grand in some places, but nonexistent in others, or a big deal one year, but overlooked the next. It took about a decade—and winning the war—before the holiday spread across the new republic. But by the mid-1780s, celebrating the Fourth of July was a classic American event.

**SETTING THE DATE**

Perhaps the earliest tradition is the date itself. Delegates of the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 2, 1776, then approved it on July 4, with the first delegate signing it on August 2. On July 4, though, the Declaration was printed in multiple copies to be distributed to communities throughout the Colonies. The printer, John Dunlap, “added a new heading at the top of the Declaration—‘In Congress, July 4, 1776’—and that information helped establish the tradition of celebrating independence on that date,” Heintze writes.

Even John Adams expected the holiday to be celebrated on the second of July. On July 3, 1776, in a letter to his wife, Abigail, he wrote, “The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more.”

**A CELEBRATION INDEED**

Adams may have been wrong about the date, but he was right about the holiday being celebrated in such a grand way. The first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was indeed a celebration in Boston and Philadelphia. In *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic* (University of Massachusetts, 1997), author Len Travers describes Boston’s first celebration of the Fourth: “The cannon on Fort Hill, Castle William (aptly renamed Fort Independence), and the ships in the harbor fired a ‘grand salute’ to announce the dawn. In the afternoon the Reverend Dr. Gordon of Roxbury preached a patriotic interpretation of 1 Kings 12:15–16 to the state Assembly. ... Afterward, from the balcony of the statehouse, Governor John Hancock proposed 13 toasts, one for each of the states, each salutation punctuated by the crash of cannon fire in the street below. Boston’s militia companies turned out for parade and drill. ... In the evening, Colonel Croft’s artillery company furnished more noise and pyrotechnics.”
The first anniversary was celebrated similarly in Philadelphia, with “the navy ships and galleys in the Delaware River, all of them bedecked with streamers and with colors flying,” and “an elegant dinner (for members of Congress) at the prestigious City Tavern, with music provided by a Hessian regimental band captured at Trenton the previous Christmas,” Travers writes.

Charleston, S.C., was also among the cities that celebrated the Fourth in 1777, albeit on the heels of what was considered a more important local event—Palmetto Day, which was celebrated on June 28. According to Travers, on June 28, 1776, the “Charleston militia had turned back a British invasion force attempting to force the harbor entrance.”

The first Palmetto Day celebration was marked with much the same pomp and circumstance as the Fourth of July was in Boston and Philadelphia. “Topping these festivities for July 4, less than a week later, would have been difficult, and apparently Charlestonians did not try,” Travers writes. “Instead, they simply repeated many of the elements of the June 28 celebration, with some subtle differences.”

While the first celebrations themselves were novel, the way in which the holiday was celebrated was nothing new—fireworks and militia involvement had been mainstays of occasions from royal birthdays to accession days, Travers writes. There were some unique qualities, however: “It was common to have artillery blasts 13 in number to
Visions of America

reflect the original 13 states,” Heintze says. “Using numerical
symbolism on the Fourth was very common, and the
practice began in 1777.” Many of the elegant dinners also
included 13 toasts, which Heintze describes as “an often
long and time-consuming ritual of offerings.” The tradi-
tion of parades and dinner celebrations, he says, began in
Philadelphia through the influence of Congress.

PAUSE IN THE FESTIVITIES

With the exception of Boston, grandiose celebrations
largely subsided as the Revolutionary War wagéd on. In
Philadelphia, it wouldn’t be until 1786, after Philadelphians
got over their “patriotic amnesia,” according to Travers, that
the city would experience a Fourth as grand as the one cel-
ebrated in 1777.

In 1783, the Fourth should have started in Charleston
as it did in previous years, with the ringing of St. Michael’s
bells, a landmark for ships coming into the harbor and a
patriotic symbol for the city. (Patriots rang the bells to cel-
brate the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766.) However, the
British had taken them the year before.

“Nine months before, when it became clear that
Charleston was to be given up to the Americans, officers
of the Royal Artillery claimed their rights according to the
customs of war and made off with the bells,” Travers writes.
“Charlestonians would have liked to celebrate their inde-
pendence with pride; instead, the acoustic vacuum caused
by the loss of the bells, Charlestonians remembered their
defeat and humiliation.”

Despite the war and its immediate aftermath, the
Fourth still was observed and served an important purpose.
“Initially, the observances bolstered public enthusiasm for
war at a time when American arms had fallen far short of
expectations and real independence was far from certain,”
Travers says. Similarly, Heintze says George Washington’s
insistence on celebrating during the war “helped to lift
spirits and foster a common bond among his men.”

A NEW MEANING

After the war was won, the meaning of the Fourth shifted
as the holiday became more regularly observed across the
new country. “Because the United States prevailed in that
war, Americans had more hope for the future, and celebrat-
ing that sentiment on July Fourth was highly encouraged
everywhere,” Heintze says. “One of the principal tenets of
celebration that began in the 18th century and continues
today was that Americans have a responsibility as stewards
of independence and freedom to safeguard those for future
generations.”

The theme of education was played out in Fourth of July
orations, which during the war, Travers notes, had been
delivered privately to assemblies. After the war, however,
they were open to all who could fit into whatever building or
public space the orations were held.

The holiday has come a long way since Washington’s
salute in New Brunswick. Over time, the Fourth has come
to mean more than just a declaration of independence, but a
“genesis for thousands of civic projects,” Heintze says, “that
were launched on the Fourth of July in reverence and honor
to the development of the country as a world leader.”

Lena Anthony wrote about Revolutionary POWs for the May/June
2010 issue.
It's amazing how technology has changed the way we live. Since the end of the Second World War, more products have been invented than in all of recorded history. After WWII came the invention of the microwave oven, the pocket calculator, and the first wearable hearing aid. While the first two have gotten smaller and more affordable, hearing aids haven't changed much. Now there's an alternative… Neutronic Ear.

First of all, Neutronic Ear is not a hearing aid; it is a PSAP, or Personal Sound Amplification Product. Until PSAPs, everyone was required to see the doctor, have hearing tests, have fitting appointments (numerous visits) and then pay for the instruments without any insurance coverage. These devices can cost up to $5000 each! The high cost and inconvenience drove an innovative scientist to develop the Neutronic Ear PSAP.

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**The Evolution of Hearing Products**

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<th>Invisible?</th>
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