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Orchid Conservation is Everyone’s Responsibility
A More Perfect Union
As the nation commemorates the 225th anniversary of the Constitution, we take a look at the dramatic journey toward its ratification.

BY BILL HUDGINS

Raising a Republic
The statistics are troubling: U.S. students simply don’t know the basics of civics and history. New programs and resources aim to bridge the gap.

BY EMILY McMACKIN

The Colonial Bookseller
After the Revolution, Americans shook off their dependence on imported British books and built their own book-publishing empire.

BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

About the cover:
“Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States,” a 1940 oil on canvas painting by Howard Chandler Christy
GRANGER COLLECTION, NEW YORK
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BY COURTNEY PETER

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

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

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

How many members does the National Society have?
DAR has 170,000 members in nearly 3,000 chapters worldwide, including chapters in 12 foreign countries. Since its founding in 1890, DAR has admitted more than 900,000 members.

How can I find out more?
Go to www.dar.org and click on “Membership.” There you’ll find helpful instructions, advice on finding your lineage and a Prospective Member Information Request Form. Or call (202) 879–3224 for more information on joining the work of this vital, service-minded organization.

Preserving the American Spirit
www.dar.org
(202) 879–3224
From the President General

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union …” With that eloquent preamble, the law of our great land was born. Yet the Constitution’s elegant and powerful promise of transformative government belies its rocky and tumultuous genesis. The document’s ratification on September 17, 1787, at Philadelphia’s Constitutional Convention came after months of discussion and debate and even rebellion fueled by the nation’s dire economic problems. As American Spirit celebrates the 225th anniversary of this treasured living document, we chronicle our Founding Fathers’ fascinating and anything-but-smooth journey toward creating a new form of government.

It is fitting that this issue celebrating the 225th anniversary of the Constitution features a story on new programs and resources for getting young people engaged in history and civics. Survey after survey shows that many of our country’s students lack basic knowledge about how their government works, not to mention awareness of fundamental constitutional tenets designed to protect their individual rights and liberties. As Sandra Day O’Connor said in an April 13, 2012, article in the Washington Post: “The only reason we have public school education in America is because in the early days of the country, our leaders thought we had to teach our young generation about citizenship … that obligation never ends. If we don’t take every generation of young people and make sure they understand that they are an essential part of government, we won’t survive.” The challenge is great, but the NSDAR and many other organizations and individuals are working diligently to teach young people about their democratic heritage, the underlying values and principles of the Constitution, and their responsibilities as citizens.

Many early Americans loved books and learning but were largely dependent on British imports to satisfy their interests—until after the Revolution. Our feature on the Colonial bookseller details how a powerful industry emerged.

We also look behind the lens of two noteworthy pioneers of photography—Frances Benjamin Johnston and Frances and Mary Allen. These 19th-century women mastered the newly invented camera, using it to support themselves over decades-long careers, as well as to promote their own artistic vision.

Our Historic Homes department examines the unusual history of the Christian Waldschmidt Homestead, built in 1804 outside Cincinnati. Over the years the property functioned not only as a home, but also as a tavern, a mercantile, a paper mill and even a Civil War training ground. Later owners donated the estate to the Ohio Society DAR, which now operates it as a museum that preserves the story of a pioneer family as well as the history of southwestern Ohio from settlement to the Civil War.

Merry Ann T. Wright
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National Treasures

Step inside the DAR Museum for a closer look at its fascinating collection.

Fashion Flashback

THESE TWO dramatically different gowns were worn by NSDAR Presidents General only 35 years apart. Caroline Scott Harrison, the National Society’s first President General, wore her ribbed silk faille afternoon dress with ostrich feathers and jet bead trim about 1890. The garment exemplifies the highly structured and decorative bustle style of the 1870s and 1880s, which Mrs. Harrison favored even after it went out of fashion in 1888.

While it is elaborately detailed and elegant, the simple, boxy construction of President General Lora H. Cook’s flapper-style evening dress, worn about 1925, represents a seismic shift toward modern fashion. Appliqué imitation pearls and rhinestones add weight to the ethereal gown’s floating train and gauzy fabrics, including silk moiré and metallic lace.

The Harrison and Cook dresses provide perfect bookends for the upcoming DAR Museum exhibition “Fashioning the New Woman,” which opens October 5, 2012, and runs through August 31, 2013.

In the years just after the founding of the NSDAR in 1890, many American women were venturing out of the domestic arena to pursue higher education, work in office jobs, play active sports and advocate for social reform. The exhibition examines these changes and the resulting shift to more practical fashions while also highlighting the achievements of Progressive-era Daughters in higher education, politics and reform, including the suffrage movement and volunteerism during World War I.

6 Daughters of the American Revolution
A DAR Connection to a Gilded Age Mansion and Garden

THE 100-ACRE MAYMONT estate in Richmond, Va., is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its Japanese Garden this year. A special event on September 21 will feature Japanese food, music and bamboo sculpture.

The mansion offers a unique look at mid-19th-century life. Built in 1893 and inhabited by Sallie May and James Henry Dooley for more than 30 years, the home has not had any occupants since Mrs. Dooley’s death in 1925, allowing it to retain much of its original character.

James Henry Dooley, born in 1841 in Richmond, Va., served in the Confederate Army before being wounded in the Battle of Williamsburg. After the war, he completed a master’s degree at Georgetown University and became a successful lawyer and businessman, accruing the fortune that allowed him to construct the 33-room Maymont mansion.

Sallie May Dooley was born in 1846 in Lunenburg County, Va. In addition to being an avid writer and horticulturist (she was responsible for many of the gardens on the Maymont estate), she was the organizing regent of the Old Dominion DAR Chapter, the first chapter in Virginia. Mrs. Dooley left Maymont to the city of Richmond to be used as a public park and museum, and it opened to the public in March 1926.

The estate features several gardens, animal exhibits, an arboretum and more than 25 historic buildings. More than 100 animal species reside on the estate, alongside more than 200 tree and plant species.

The Maymont grounds are open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are requested at several indoor exhibits. For more information, visit www.maymont.org or call (804) 358–7166 ext. 310.
Giving Don Juan His Due

One of the most historic places in St. Augustine, Fla., may be one of the least visited—the Tolomato Cemetery, the oldest planned cemetery in the state. The cemetery began burials in the First Spanish Period (1565–1763), according to the Tolomato Cemetery Preservation Association. The cemetery is the final resting place of several important figures, including the first Catholic bishop of St. Augustine, Bishop Augustin Verot, and the first pastor of what has become the Cathedral-Basilica of St. Augustine, Father Miguel O’Reilly.

Also buried at the site is Don Juan McQueen, a colorful, if not very well-known, figure in American history. McQueen, originally born in Philadelphia and raised in Charlestown, S.C., began making his money in land speculation before joining the Revolutionary cause. As a captain in the South Carolina Navy, he ran messages from George Washington to the Marquis de Lafayette.

After the war he fell into debt and fled to Spanish-owned East Florida. There he converted to Catholicism and began settling disputes for the governor of St. Augustine. He died of typhoid fever in October 1807 and was buried in Tolomato.

The Maria Jefferson DAR Chapter, St. Augustine, Fla., recently laid a marker in the Tolomato Cemetery for McQueen in recognition of his contributions to the Revolution. Since no one knows the exact location of his grave, his marker was placed in the shade of a palm tree near the grave site of Father O’Reilly. The two were friends, and reportedly enjoyed playing cards and checkers together.

The Tolomato Cemetery is open for the public on the third Saturday of each month. Free tours are given from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

On Hawaiian Time

HAWAII’S breathtaking natural beauty is an obvious draw for visitors, but its rich history also is worth a much closer look. The records of the Hawaiian Historical Society, many of them online or available as publications, make discovery of the state’s past even more accessible.

First established in 1892 by Honolulu citizens, the society has been collecting books, pamphlets and other Hawaiian memorabilia ever since. The collection, which primarily covers Hawaiian and Pacific history during the 19th century, currently exceeds 12,000 volumes, and is housed in a building on the grounds of the Mission Houses Museum in Honolulu.

The Historical Society publishes an annual scholarly journal, The Hawaiian Journal of History, and has published more than a dozen books on the history of the islands. In 1994, the society helped produce a series of radio spots called “Time Capsules” highlighting notable points on the state’s timeline.

The spots were adapted from a series of short essays, which are available on the society’s website at hawaiianhistory.org/time-capsules. Some of the more interesting stories include:

• A chronicle of the first printing press to be brought to the islands. Its first publication, an eight-page speller for schools, printed on January 7, 1822.
• An article on how Alexander Joy Cartwright, credited with developing the modern rules of baseball, spent the last 44 years of his life in Hawaii.
• The story of how Hawaii ended up with two statues of King Kamehameha the Great.
• The tale of one of the first submarine disasters in the U.S. Navy, when the submarine Skate exploded less than a mile from Honolulu Harbor in 1915.
• How the Massie Case, a 1932 criminal trial involving the death of the well-known prizefighter Joseph Kahahawai, completely revolutionized Hawaiian criminal law in 1931.
New York Marks the War of 1812

To mark the 200th anniversary of the start of the War of 1812, special events will illuminate New York’s critical role in this pivotal event. During the War of 1812, the difficulty of overland transportation made control of the waterways crucial, and as a result, many battles were fought across upstate New York from Buffalo to Plattsburgh.

“War of 1812 events are drawing visitors, history enthusiasts and novices alike who are eager to learn about this lesser-known event in U.S. history,” says Sara Ogger, executive director of the New York Council for the Humanities.

Here are some event highlights:

**The Battle of Plattsburgh Commemoration**
September 7–9, 2012
Plattsburgh (The Adirondacks)
www.champlain1812.com

The Battle of Plattsburgh, also known as the Battle of Lake Champlain, ended the British troops’ final invasion of the Northern states during the War of 1812. A full weekend of tours, concerts, re-enactments, parades and other events are scheduled to celebrate the bicentennial of General Alexander Macomb’s and Master Commandant Thomas MacDonough’s defeat of the British army on September 11, 1814.

**Old Stone Fort Museum History Fair**
October 6–7, 2012
Schoharie (Central New York)
www.theoldstonefort.org

More than 300 years of Schoharie Valley history will be celebrated with re-enactments, demonstrations, artisans, crafts, music and food.

**Web-based War of 1812 Exhibition**
Ongoing
The New York State Museum in Albany
www.nysm.nysed.gov/Warof1812

A commemorative website offers information about New York’s role during the War of 1812 as well as events celebrating the anniversary across New York state and in Canada.

**2012 Lois McClure Schooner Tour**
Through October, stopping at towns along the canals and waterways of New York state, Canada and Vermont
www.lcmm.org/our_fleet/lois_mcclure.htm

The Lois McClure, a working replica of a canal schooner, will visit about 40 U.S. and Canadian communities to commemorate the War of 1812. Many ports were important fortifications during the war, including Kingston, Ontario, Sackets Harbor and Oswego, N.Y. The route will follow the Oswego, Erie and Champlain canals to Lake Champlain and end with visits to Essex, N.Y., and Vergennes, Vt., both with prominent roles in providing ships for the American 1812 naval effort.

**Peace Garden Trail**
Ongoing
(Greater Niagara, Finger Lakes and other regions)
www.ipgf.org/gardens/?type=1812

A permanent 600-mile trail of peace gardens is being established along the historic route where events of the War of 1812 determined the future of Canada, the United States and many American Indians. Peace garden sites in the Finger Lakes include the War of 1812 Bicentennial Peace Gardens at the Williamson Pultneyville Historical Society in Pultneyville. At Sodus Point, a monument memorializes the many lives lost at the Battle of Troupesville.

**American Wars Gallery, West Point Museum**
Permanent Collection
West Point (Hudson Valley)
www.usma.edu/museum

The museum’s War of 1812 exhibit contains original uniforms, weapons and artworks that illustrate the U.S. Army’s participation in the conflict. Other galleries showcase U.S. Army history and a large fine art collection including Hudson River School artists.

**War of 1812 Displays**
Now through December
Historic Palmyra (Finger Lakes)
www.historicpalmyrany.com

Five Palmyra buildings—the Palmyra Historical Museum, Alling Coverlet, Phelps General Store, Print Shop and the Erie Canal Depot—offer displays of community life and events from 1800 through 1976. This year, a special exhibit features the War of 1812 with artifacts and information on General John Swift, Major William Howe Cuyler and Drs. James and John Lakey.

For more information, check out the War of 1812 events listings at www.nysm.nysed.gov/Warof1812.
Fall Into Festivals

Autumn means pumpkins, apple cider, crisp weather and the last glorious moments of outdoor fun. If you’re in the vicinity, consider attending one of the following festive fall events.

43rd Annual United Tribes International Powwow
September 6–9, 2012, Lone Tribes Arena, Bismarck, N.D.

The United Tribes International Powwow, held annually in the Lone Star Arena at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, N.D., has become one of the premier cultural events of North Dakota. It brings together more than 70 tribes, features more than 1,500 dancers and drummers, and draws more than 20,000 spectators. Attendees enjoy drum and dance contests, intertribal dancing and youth day activities, as well as 10K and 5K runs, and softball, basketball and golf tournaments. A tribal leaders summit, held in conjunction with the powwow, gives tribal leaders from around the region an opportunity to discuss current issues in Indian Country.

For more information on the powwow, as well as a brief history of North Dakota’s American Indian tribes, visit www.unitedtribespowwow.com.

Amana Colonies’ Oktoberfest
September 28–30, 2012
Amana, Iowa
www.festivalsinamana.com/oktoberfest.html

The Amana Colonies, a group of settlements of German Pietists in Iowa, is hosting its annual Oktoberfest September 28–30. The festival will include a parade, German singing and dancing, food, drinks and games. Visitors can take carriage rides through the historic streets of Amana, watch craftsmen at work and see free demonstrations at Iowa’s only working woolen mill.

Calling themselves the Ebenezer Society or the Community of True Inspiration—die Gemeinde der wahren Inspiration—the Amana colonists first settled in what is now West Seneca, N.Y., in 1842 and 1843. However, in order to live out their beliefs in more isolated surroundings, they moved to east-central Iowa in the 1850s to live a communal life. Their community sustained itself until the mid-1930s.

“The Amanians were able to achieve independence and a self-sufficient lifestyle by adhering to the specialized handcrafts and farming occupations which they had brought with them from Germany,” according to the Amana Colonies website.

Today Amana attracts tourists to its craft stores, woodworking and wine shops, and Millstream brewery. The Amana Heritage Museum tells the town’s story from 18th-century Germany to the present. It features an award-winning video and exhibits in three communal-era buildings and grounds recalling turn-of-the-century Amana life. The nearby Communal Agriculture Museum in South Amana, Iowa, displays tools, implements and photographs from Amana’s communal era to depict operations on one of the nation’s largest communal farms.

The colonies, listed as a National Historic Landmark, are located 20 miles southwest of Cedar Rapids, and 17 miles west of Iowa City. For more information, visit www.amanaheritage.org.
Living History Days at Leonard’s Mills Historic Settlement  
October 6–7, 2012  
Maine Forest and Logging Museum, Bradley, Maine  
www.leonardsmills.com

Visitors who come to Maine to see the fall foliage should venture to the Maine Forest and Logging Museum, where they can walk through beautiful forest while experiencing life in a 1790s Colonial village. During Leonard’s Mills’ living history days, set for October 6–7, 2012, visitors can enjoy bateau and wagon rides, visit a water-powered sawmill and dam, hike through the forest, and even make homemade cedar shakers and fresh-pressed cider.

Trailing of The Sheep Festival  
October 11–14, 2012  
Ketchum and Hailey, Idaho  
www.trailingofthesheep.org

Some people aren’t sheepish about their love for lamb. The Trailing of the Sheep Festival, spread across Ketchum and Hailey, Idaho, is a four-day annual festival started in 1996 with the goal of preserving the history and culture of the sheep farmers and herders in America.

Featured events at this year’s festival, running from October 11 to 14, include the Fiber Fest, where visitors can learn to craft with wool, and a Folklife Fair with demonstrations of sheep shearing and herding. The festival culminates on Sunday at noon with a parade down Ketchum’s main street, with 1,500 sheep and their herders passing through on their way to winter pastures. Visit www.trailingofthesheep.org for more.

Keene Pumpkin Festival  
October 20, 2012  
Keene, N.H.  
pumpkinfestival2011.org

For more than two decades the annual Keene Pumpkin Festival in Keene, N.H., has been vying for the Guinness World Record for the largest number of lit jack-o’-lanterns in one place. The festival boasts eight world records, and its most recent record—28,952 pumpkins—was set in 2003. (Boston took the title the next year.) At this year’s event, slated for October 20, 2012, watch the building of Keene’s enormous pumpkin tower while enjoying music, crafts and autumn treats like maple cotton candy and apple crisps.

Visit pumpkinfestival2011.org for more information.

Located on approximately 400 acres on Blackman Stream in Bradley, near Bangor, Leonard’s Mills is at the site of an early pioneer settlement, identified by the remains of a stone dam and the foundations of several houses. Today the museum has authentically reconstructed Leonard’s Mills as a logging and milling community of the 1790s. The living history site educates visitors about the forest and logging history of Maine by sharing artifacts, documents, tools, equipment and stories relating to the history of the Maine woods, particularly the pioneer and lumbering periods.

The museum is open daily from April through October for self-guided tours; the nature trails are open year-round. For more information, visit www.leonardsmills.com or call (207) 974–6278.
EXPRESS YOURSELF

Historical Fiction Comes to Life in Revolutionary Rose: Boston Tea to Boston Free

Novelist Evelyn Wolph Kruger has hit the ground running! Her new novel, "Revolutionary Rose: Boston Tea to Boston Free" has it all; an accurate portrayal of the Revolutionary War with a complimentary blend of romance and action.

In the early hours of April 19, 1775, each Minuteman heard the pounding of horses and the insistent cry, “The regulars are out! The regulars are out!” Rose watched as her new husband jammed his legs into his breeches and yanked on his leather vest. He hammered down the stairs and grabbed his rifle, eager for battle. Was this finally the moment the militia had been waiting for? It was indeed.

Eight Americans died after the “shot heard round the world” rang out at Lexington. More Americans perished sniping at the retreating British. It was the beginning of a war that would leave many widows and many fatherless children. But it was the beginning of a war that was necessary, and everyone knew that sacrifices would have to be made to ensure the future of a brand new country. Would Rose’s unborn baby have a loving father, or be left to toddle around a gravestone marker?

“Redeeming Grace has everything. I couldn’t put it down.”

— Reader Don Nelson —

This book and many other Old Line Publishing titles, are available from most major online retailers such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Powell’s, Books-A-Million, and others. You can also order directly and conveniently from the Old Line Publishing Bookstore.

Old Line Publishing is currently accepting unpublished manuscripts. Let us help you share your story with the world. Visit our website today for more details and additional information.

Also available from this DAR member and author: Redeeming Grace, a romance-thriller. In it, a Nebraska teacher and a deputy sheriff fall in love only to confront a man from his past who loves to kill.

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Whatnot

WHAT’S IN A NAME

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

Amite River Chapter, Gloster, Miss., is named for a river that flows through a county of the same name. Amite County was formed February 24, 1809, from the eastern part of Wilkinson County by an act of the General Assembly of the Mississippi Territory. The name Amite—from the French word amitie, meaning friendship—was given to the river in the 1600s by the early French explorers, who found the native Houma American Indians to be very friendly. Several pioneers of Amite County were veterans of the Revolutionary War, or children of soldiers and Patriots. Pioneers of the Mississippi Territory are those who inhabited or were born in the territory before Mississippi became the 20th state on December 10, 1817.

The May/June issue of American Spirit featured an article titled “The Pivotal Battles of Fort Ontario,” which recounted that the unsuccessful surprise attack of February 12, 1783, was planned by General George Washington and led by Lieutenant Colonel Marinus Willett. Willett and his soldiers were stationed at Fort Plain, namesake of Fort Plain Chapter, Fort Plain, N.Y., and the artillery headquarters for the Mohawk Valley during the Revolutionary War. It initially was a small fort, but Washington ordered an expansion that eventually included two blockhouses and an outside kitchen. Soldiers from Fort Plain fought in a variety of central New York battles and skirmishes throughout the war. During July 1783 Washington visited Fort Plain, reviewed its troops, and received a full military salute.

Nestled along the Missouri River on the Lewis and Clark Trail lies Parkville, Mo., home of White Alloe Chapter, which was named for the area’s first white settler. More than a century ago, French-Canadian fur trapper Claude Pierre Alloe spent winters in a cave, or dugout, on the bank of a tributary that empties into the Missouri River at Parkville. The Kickapoo American Indians called him “White Alloe” and gave the name White Alloe Creek to the small stream along which he lived. A monument donated by the chapter marks the location of Alloe’s dugout, now on the campus of Park University.

If your chapter has a unique story behind its name, please send the story to americanspirit@dar.org.
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- Life During the Civil War — $14.45*, 96 pages ($9.95 plus $4.50 shipping & handling)
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A Long And Winding Road

John Adams once said that, in uniting the 13 proud states to fight for independence, “Thirteen clocks were made to strike together—a perfection of mechanism, which no artist had ever before effected.” Independence: The Struggle to Set America Free by John Ferling (Bloomsbury Press, 2011) is the story of that miracle, told largely through the lives and actions the “clockmakers” who signed the Declaration of Independence on a stormy Philadelphia summer afternoon.

John Ferling, a professor emeritus of history at the State University of West Georgia, presents the familiar characters, such as Washington, Jefferson, Madison and the Adamses, but fleshed out in greater detail than usual. For example:

• Sam Adams, the firebrand rabble-rouser and political organizer, was chronically broke because he poured so much time and energy into politics.

• John Adams, meanwhile, evolves in the book from a somewhat reticent political novice into one of America’s supreme statesmen and leaders for independence.

• Ben Franklin endured great suspicion about his patriotism because he spent years in London on various political missions for Pennsylvania and was believed to be maneuvering for a plum position as a Colonial official.

Today it is hard to imagine that even after the battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, many people still hoped for and supported reconciliation with Great Britain.

Some Patriots such as the Adamses ardently supported independence early on, while others like Franklin only gradually became convinced revolution was inevitable.

Across the Atlantic, a divided ministry and Parliament wrangled over whether to offer concessions to the increasingly fractious Colonies or to build up Britain’s military presence to enforce compliance.

Ferling explains that Americans adored their king, and blamed many of the mother country’s odious acts on His Majesty’s venal and vindictive ministers and on a Parliament in which they had no representation.

These hopeful feelings of reconciliation shifted for many when King George III, in his annual address to Parliament in October 1775, declared the Colonies Articles of Confederation—favored reconciliation to the moment his colleagues signed the Declaration.

Independence reads like a historical novel, a long road trip from Great Britain’s triumph in the French and Indian War in America, to the boycotts and riots against the Stamp Act and other tax measures, to the bloody confrontations at Lexington and Concord.

Today it is hard to imagine that even after the battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, many people still hoped for and supported reconciliation with Great Britain.
to be in a state of rebellion and authorized military force to bring them to their proper sense of duty.

Yet when the king in his speech seemed to extend a fragile olive branch by hinting he would send peace commissioners to America to discuss the situation, some in Congress and the country still held out hope.

In addition to recounting the well-known arguments against war—Britain’s huge army and navy; the damage to trade; the potential damage to American towns and farms; the absence in history of a republic as large as America—Ferling points out two less well-known arguments.

First, the ongoing crisis had polarized America. Citizens had to choose sides and violence began to flare between Loyalists and Patriots. Besides war with Great Britain, civil war was a distinct possibility.

Second, some feared the political revolution would become a social revolution, opening the door to extremes of democracy and a collapse of established order. The fear of “too much democracy” remained a theme through the war and haunted the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

Independence is an excellent overview of this tumultuous period for readers new to the subject as well as those more knowledgeable about it. It provides a new layer of understanding to the complex events—and individuals—who succeeded in humbling the greatest world power of that time to create a new nation.

—Bill Hudgins

**True Story**

HISTORICAL MYTHS, once firmly entrenched, can be hard to dislodge from popular imagination. Wasn’t death by petticoat fire the second-leading cause of death for early American women, after childbirth? Isn’t it true that buildings were burned down so people could collect their valuable nails? Didn’t the Dutch buy Manhattan from an Indian tribe for a pile of worthless beads?

Because the reality behind a myth can be complicated and the explanation multilayered, it can be easier to grab hold of a simple, perhaps plausible tall tale and pass it along as truth. In Death by Petticoat: American History Myths Debunked, Mary Miley Theobald explores 63 myths about Colonial America, explaining how some have caught on, which ones contain a nugget of truth and why some can be so hard to debunk.

A brisk, no-nonsense read, the author deconstructs the kinds of half-truths, embellished stories and straight-out fabrications that are often repeated in schools, trivia contests, and even historical homes and museums. Theobald, who drew on her expertise as a historic interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg as well as her work for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, was inspired to write the book after attending the DAR Museum’s 2006 exhibit “Myth or Truth? Stories We’ve Heard About Early America.”

Theobald’s title refers to the claim that Colonial women’s long skirts and petticoats were so likely to catch fire that it became their second-leading cause of death. In fact, the leading cause of death for women at that time was disease. There were rare instances of deaths by burning, but because these deaths were gruesome, they tended to stick in people’s minds and become over-inflated.

Theobald debunks other myths about early American women such as the idea that they had ribs surgically removed to make their waists smaller. No evidence of this practice exists, she writes; plus, no such operation could have been performed in the 19th century without putting the patient at serious risk.

Theobald also debunks the story that early settlers’ houses were burned down to collect the “valuable” nails. The myth was probably born from the actions of Jamestown’s first settlers, mostly young and unattached men who didn’t expect to live in this new land forever. When they first arrived, they built shacks instead of homes, but when they realized they would be staying, the rotted shacks were easier to burn down than tear down. Once the shacks were gone, settlers collected the nails, which weren’t especially valuable, but were certainly worth something.

While the myths included are well researched, discussion is short and dissection is brief, which can be disappointing for the hardcore historian. Readers familiar with early America history are probably familiar with most of the myths discussed, and nothing all too surprising is revealed. Yet, Theobald’s humorous approach makes the book a quick and entertaining read, and it certainly lights a fire for further research.

As for the Dutch grabbing Manhattan for a steal, no one knows for sure all the details of the exchange with the American Indians, and what is known is complicated. The truth, while perhaps not as sensational, ultimately tells a better story.

—Jamie Roberts

Mary Miley Theobald

American History Myths Debunked

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WHEN JERRY “RUSTY” GODFREY was growing up, he dreamed of being the president, a lighthouse keeper or a lawyer. “It wasn’t until after high school that I felt the urge to teach—to make a difference like my mentors,” he says. Both past and present students are grateful that he set aside his first ambitions and listened to that calling.

Godfrey remembers that when one of his history teachers taught the Battle of Borodino, part of the Napoleonic Wars, he played Tchaikovsky’s “1812 Overture” on an old phonograph. Another teacher used to walk around the high school track with her students on the “Oregon Trail.” “Both of these teachers knew how to teach history the best way: in the narrative style,” Godfrey says. “That’s what I aspire to do.”

Today Godfrey is the chair of the social studies and world languages department at the South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities, a public, residential high school for the arts. His students use primary documents in all his classes.

“I’m a big believer in the National History Day program, which gets students to find relevant, meaningful documents from the past that help them understand their topic,” he says. “We need to disabuse the students of the notion that primary sources are just diaries and speeches. We sing historical songs in almost every unit of history I teach, and the lyrics of those songs are wonderful time capsules of history. Paintings, furniture and architecture are all brilliant sources of primary information, as are photographs like Dorothea Lange’s ‘Migrant Mother,’” he explains.

He’s a proponent of creating his own courses, and he submitted the first proposal to teach a high-school elective Holocaust seminar in the local school district. He also created courses on the Civil War, World War II and the Vietnam War.

Godfrey and a colleague taught an American studies course that integrated elements of American history and literature.

The busy educator sponsors his school’s International Relations Club and the National History Day Competition. He also plans an annual Washington, D.C., trip as well as trips to local museums and battlefields.

His advice to today’s students is, first and foremost, to discover their own family history.

“Record your grandparents’ and parents’ memories about the past,” he says. “Get them on videotape or digital story format if possible. Realize that they are not living in a vacuum, but rather their lives and the quality thereof derive from the contributions of previous generations,” he says.

Godfrey is the recipient of the 2012 DAR Outstanding Teacher of American History Award. Kim Schmucker, whose daughter Hannah was a recent student in his Honors U.S. History class, recommended him for the award on behalf of the Captain William Hilton Chapter, Hilton Head Island, S.C.

“The DAR first came into my life through a local connection,” he says. “Back in 1987, I won the South Carolina DAR high-school essay contest. An interim director of the essay contest mistakenly told me that I had won some scholarship money since I won the state level. When I got to the awards event, she told me that she was sorry, but that the money was only at the national level, but that my essay would be forwarded on. One week later, totally unprompted by anyone, she sent me a personal check for $2,000 to use for my freshmen year tuition at Furman University. She and I corresponded for several years, and she followed my success through college.”

History as Narrative

Inspired by creative history teachers, Rusty Godfrey passes on the lessons to his own students.

By Nancy Cooper | Photography by Barton Boatwright
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As the San Juan Mountains unfurl behind historic downtown Telluride, Colo., they seem both to stretch across the sky and to envelop the town, proving that it is possible for a place to feel at once infinite and intimate. Trails radiate from side streets to gain immediate access to the mountainside, enforcing the sense of contradiction; you can walk straight from a gourmet lunch to the trailhead of your choice. By Courtney Peter

Minning the Mountains

Long-ago volcanic eruptions formed the 14,000-foot peaks of the San Juan Mountains with help from the descending glacial caps pulled by gravity toward the valley below. The Ute American Indians used the San Miguel River Valley in the southwestern corner of Colorado as their summer camping and hunting grounds for centuries.
Eventually, outsiders arrived. “Traders out of New Mexico, in search of furs and deer hides, had reached the San Juan Mountains by 1765,” writes David Lavender in *The Telluride Story* (Wayfinder Press, 1987). Franciscan friars Silvestre Velez de Escalante and Francisco Dominguez, and a group of Spanish explorers searching for a route from Santa Fe, N.M., to Monterey, Calif., followed in the late 1770s. They paused long enough to name the San Juan Mountains before moving on.

Gold was discovered in the Colorado Territory in 1858, transforming the area from a stopover to a destination. Prospectors advanced south and west to set up a camp on land designated as a Ute reservation, signaling the end of the traditional way of life of the tribe, which stood no chance against the tide of fortune seekers. The Brunot Treaty of 1873 effectively banished the Utes, who ceded 4 million acres to the federal government in exchange for an annuity.

The San Juans contained deposits of gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc, but extracting the ore was not easy. “In the late 1870s, the upper San Miguel district was as tough a place to work a mine as any in the United States,” Lavender writes. “The lodes with the greatest promise stood 11,000 or more feet above sea level.” Even so, reports of massive strikes—particularly from John Fallon’s Sheridan Mine—and acres of unclaimed land drew more and more miners.

If the remote, hardworking mining community hoped to gain a voice in local government and a stop on the postal route, it needed to form a town. Initially the town was named Columbia, a popular choice for place names in early America. (See *American Spirit’s* July/August 2012 article “In the Land of Columbus” for more.) The Postal Department rejected the name, supposedly because it would be too easily confused with Columbia, Calif., even though Columbia, Colo., already had incorporated on July 13, 1878.

Another option was put forth: Telluride, likely inspired by the name of the semimetallic element tellurium, which is not found in its namesake town. Local lore attributes the name to a less scientific but more colorful source. Prospectors departing for the San Juans for a chance at fortune were sent off with cries of “To-hell-you-ride!” In 1880 the postmaster general authorized the establishment of the Telluride post office, and the town took on a dual identity as the two names were used interchangeably. Finally, on June 4, 1887, Telluride became the town’s lone official name.

Telluride’s tether to the outside world strengthened in the early 1880s, when telegraph lines and a toll road built by Russian immigrant Otto Mears both reached town. Still, Lavender writes, “The high-altitude mines had to develop slowly and carefully, as their own finances allowed.”

Transformative change arrived in November 1890, when Mears’ Rio Grande Southern Railroad began service to Telluride, speeding the transport of both raw materials and people. More advances followed. Lucien L. Nunn achieved the world’s first long-distance transmission of alternating-current electricity, from his power plant in Ames to the Gold King Mine above Telluride, in 1891. The ability to generate hydroelectric power instead of having to haul in fuel drastically decreased mining expenses. At about the same time, aerial tramways replaced mules as the main mode of transporting cargo to and from the mines.

Mining in Telluride reached its peak in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. According to the Telluride Tourism Board, the town produced more than $16.2 million in gold
and silver between 1905 and 1911. The population reached 5,000, more than double today’s count. But with the increase in profitability came an increase in industrialization, and miners who came to the San Juans to steer their own destinies found themselves working for corporate bosses. The first years of the 20th century were peppered with deadly avalanches and violent labor strikes.

World War I and the Great Depression crippled and then halted production. The last of the old mines, the Smuggler-Union, closed in 1928. While the local industry staged a short-lived revival in the 1950s and 1960s, by the end of the latter decade Telluride’s identity as a mining town was obsolete.

“A New Beginning

With its flagship industry decommissioned, the town staked its future on the ability to market its mountains as giant playgrounds rather than units of production. The grandeur of the San Juans had not escaped notice during the mining days, but it was not a priority. George Crofutt’s Grip-Sack Guide to Colorado declared in the early 1880s, “To those desiring to climb the most rugged mountains, visit wild, dismal and almost impenetrable canyons, and drink in the grandest of all American alpine scenery ... we certainly recommend a visit to Telluride.”

Telluride’s Ski-Hi Ski Club, established in the 1930s, charged $5 in annual dues and replaced its rope tow each year with the proceeds from a hamburger stand. Becoming a resort town required a more significant investment. Jeeps and snowmobiles made it easier to reach the backcountry, and entrepreneur Joe Zoline helped locals carve ski runs down the mountainsides. By the early 1970s, the town that, at the turn of the 20th century, closed side streets to vehicle traffic after big snowstorms to free the chutes to sled riders had grown into its role as a winter recreation haven.

It even fostered the growth of an adjacent city hidden from view by the peaks between. In 1995 the town of Mountain
Village, conceived as a European ski village-style counterpoint to Telluride’s Old West Victorian character, was incorporated. The two towns are connected by a gondola; rides are free and the views alone make the trip worthwhile.

The lessons learned from the mining collapse stressed the importance of converting the seasonal flow of tourists into a constant one. Perhaps the annual Fourth of July celebration, which dates to the early 20th century, inspired the parade of festivals that powers Telluride’s off-season calendar. Those early events included rock drilling contests, baseball games, rodeos and a parade down Colorado Avenue. The first attempt to capitalize on the fall foliage show came in the 1960s, when the “Coloride to Telluride” offered Jeep rides through the golden aspens and into the mountains, past the ruins of the Tomboy Mine.

Today Telluride’s slate of annual festivals helps draw visitors after the snow melts. The events celebrate diverse areas of interest, such as film, bluegrass, photography, even mushrooms, bringing an eclectic assortment of visitors to town for long weekends. (For a complete calendar of events, see www.visittelluride.com.) The topography itself creates a stage: Vertical cliffs surrounding the town on three sides form a box canyon around Telluride Town Park, which often is used as a natural amphitheater with a spectacular backdrop.

Hiking, biking, rafting and fly fishing dominate the recreational itinerary during the warmer months. Trails begin at the fringes of the town, and only time and tolerance for switchbacks limit a hiker’s choices. For a gentle stroll, the San Miguel River Trail follows the river’s path along the southern edge of town and joins the Idarado Legacy Trail, which ends at the old Pandora Mine building in clear view of 365-foot Bridal Veil Falls, the tallest freefalling waterfall in the state. The Bridal Veil Hydroelectric Plant, built in the late 19th century to power the Smuggler-Union mine, sits at the top of the falls. The plant produces enough energy to power approximately 2,000 homes per year.

When outdoor adventures sap travelers’ energy, compact downtown Telluride, which occupies a 12-by-8-block area and became a National Historic Landmark District in 1964, offers plenty of ways to relax and recharge without leaving the shadow of the mountains. The New Sheridan Hotel and Opera House, dating to 1895 and 1914, respectively, provide drinks, dinner and a show. The Aah Haa School for the arts makes its home in the restored Rio Grande Southern Railway Depot, and the Telluride Historical Museum occupies a former hospital.

After absorbing some culture, indulge with a spa visit or a trip to Telluride Truffle, where the triangular chocolates mimic the shape of the mountains. Telluride has worked hard to make sure it offers a diversion for every visitor, no matter the season.
A More Perfect UNION

Teetering at the edge of ruin, the United States took a giant leap of faith 225 years ago.

By Bill Hudgins
LIKE THE LEGENDARY GORDIAN KNOT, the problems were interconnected, but most stemmed from the inadequacies of the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union as a framework for national government.

Four months earlier in May, delegates from the states had assembled in Philadelphia with orders to unsnarl the mess by revising the Articles. Few if any Americans outside the closed doors and windows of the Pennsylvania Statehouse knew that the delegates, like Alexander the Great, would decide to cut the knot rather than untie it.

The delegates completed their work on September 17. Within days, the nation learned that instead of amending the Articles, they had scrapped them and drafted a completely new plan of government, the Constitution.

To understand why the delegates chose this course, it is necessary to know more about what led to calling the convention and why the Articles of Confederation failed.

‘A Firm League of Friendship’

In June 1776, while its delegates debated whether to declare independence, the Second Continental Congress appointed a 13-man committee led by John Dickinson to draft a constitution for the new nation. Congress had served as the de facto national government since May 1775, with the delegates operating under instructions from their respective states.

Dickinson was a lawyer and the author of the influential 1767 pamphlet, *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. He was also a conservative and longtime proponent of reconciliation with Great Britain: On July 1, 1776, he argued passionately against declaring independence and abstained during the vote on July 2. But he also was an outstanding writer with a profound political mind, and he quickly set to work.

On July 12, 1776, the committee submitted a draft of the Articles of Confederation, written mainly by Dickinson, to Congress. As he conceived them, the Articles would have created a strong national government that could respond swiftly to wartime emergencies and needs, writes Carol Berkin in *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* (Harcourt, 2002)

Congress debated the draft during the summer, but laid it aside to deal with war-related crises. It wasn’t until November 15, 1777, that Congress finally approved a heavily revised version and sent the Articles to the states for ratification.
general welfare, binding themselves to assist each other, against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade or any other pretence whatever.” The Articles also guaranteed that “each state retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence.”

Under Article IX, Congress was empowered “to make war and peace; conduct foreign affairs; request men and money from the states; coin and borrow money; regulate Indian affairs; and settle disputes among the states.” In practice, however, Congress wielded little authority. Enforcing laws, regulating commerce, administering justice and levying taxes were powers reserved to the states.

The single-house Confederation Congress was the national government—there was no separate executive or judicial branch. The President of the United States in Congress Assembled, who was chosen annually from among members of Congress, only presided over its meetings and signed documents.

Unlike today, each state had only one vote—a concession to smaller states that feared domination by the larger ones. Each state was required to have at least two, but no more than seven, representatives present. So if a state had only two delegates and one could not or did not attend a session, the state could not vote. And, if the two members disagreed, that also prevented the state from voting. Major issues, such as declaring war, required at least nine votes to pass, while lesser matters required seven yeas (though a simple majority sufficed to adjourn).

Long-simmering state and regional conflicts and rivalries doomed many measures from the start, as did increasingly spotty attendance by delegates, Berkin notes.

The Articles empowered Congress to oversee the army, which after the war dwindled to about 600 soldiers. In part this was a reaction to Great Britain’s stationing a peacetime army in America after the French and Indian War. It was also a shield against an ambitious general or political cabal seizing power. The army, such as it was, “consisted of troops raised and sustained by the individual states. Congress could not enforce the quotas it set for each state, and control of the purse strings allowed the state legislatures to retain a final say in many areas of military matters,” according to the U.S. Army’s official history. There was no navy.

But the key to the Confederation Congress’ weakness was that it could not tax. Having started a revolution over taxation without representation in a remote government, Americans restricted that power to local and state governments. Congressmen were handpicked by state legislatures and were not regarded as representative enough to levy taxes.

The states were supposed to contribute funds, called “requisitions,” to support the national government, although Congress had no power to enforce this. As a result, writes historian Pauline Maier in *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution 1787–1788* (Simon & Schuster, 2010), none of the states paid their full amount, while Georgia didn’t pay at all.

Despite what came to be seen as drawbacks later on, the Articles did serve as an important step in political maturity, Maier says. Congress gained experience in creating and managing departments such as war, finance, foreign affairs and a national postal service. Congress also tackled issues dealing with federal lands—the states had after much debate ceded vast tracts of western lands to Congress for sale to raise revenue, Maier writes in *Inventing America* (W.W. Norton, 2002).

Congress also wrestled with the difficult issue of apportioning the financial requisitions and division of war debts among the states. The chief question was whether and how to include slaves in the population count.

Southern states resisted including the huge slave population because it would have greatly increased their financial obligation. Non-slave states saw bondsmen as a source of wealth and pressed for inclusion. A proposal to count each slave as three-fifths of a person—the same figure that would be used in 1787 to determine representation in the House of Representatives—failed to pass Congress.

**‘The Critical Period’**

In his graduation speech at Harvard in 1787, John Quincy Adams called the peacetime years “The Critical Period” in the new nation’s history. But when the Treaty of Paris officially ended the war in 1783, Americans believed the future looked bright.

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In his graduation speech at Harvard in 1787, John Quincy Adams called the peacetime years “The Critical Period” in the new nation’s history. But when the Treaty of Paris officially ended the war in 1783, Americans believed the future looked bright.
Great Britain closed its Caribbean ports to American shipping. This cut off a previously rich market for American foodstuffs and naval stores such as pitch and hemp. And tobacco planters and other businessmen who had renounced their debts to British merchants during the war were now unable to obtain credit essential to resuming trans-Atlantic commerce.

Claiming U.S. treaty violations, Great Britain refused to vacate its forts in the Ohio Valley as required by the Treaty of Paris. Britain also stirred up American Indian attacks against settlers, making the frontier a dangerous place to live. And without funds for troops, Congress could not defend the frontier between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River.

The American Indian attacks discouraged settlement, leaving land speculators (including founders such as George Washington) unable to cash in on the vast tracts they owned. Congress also ran into this problem when it attempted to sell western lands to raise revenue under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787—few buyers wanted to risk it.

The United States also failed to secure from Spain the right to use the Mississippi River, which Spain controlled, to ship goods to New Orleans. This strangled commerce along the western frontier and underscored the nation’s weakness.

Fueled by the problems with trade and credit, an economic slump gripped the country. In states where fighting had been light, farmers had borrowed to buy more land to grow food during the war. With the war over and battlefields returning to cropland, food prices fell, and the heavily indebted farmers faced foreclosure.


Congress also owed a total of more than $34 million to private creditors and to soldiers, who were due back pay and future pensions. Rumors and threats of mutiny rumbled through the Army: Washington famously addressed a group of his officers at Newburgh, N.Y., to defuse a rebellion there.

Some citizens favored renouncing all debts, both foreign and domestic. With the war won, they wondered why soldiers should be treated so well now that peace was at hand.

Eventually, the Confederation Congress agreed to apportion the war debts among the states. But most of the states were impoverished as well. Taxes were supposed to be paid in scarce gold or silver, and the heavily mortgaged farmers preferred saving their farms to promptly paying taxes.

With creditors and tax collectors hounding them for payment, many citizens urged their state governments to issue paper money as legal tender—meaning creditors and government agents would have to accept it, notes Woody Holton in *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (Hill & Wang, 2007).

Since the paper money quickly lost value, this threatened to bankrupt the creditors and led to spiraling inflation—according to the Library of Congress’ webpage on the Articles of Confederation, a pound of tea could cost $100 in some places. Nevertheless, some states yielded to public pressure and issued paper money.

Citizens sometimes rebelled openly against attempts to collect taxes and debts. In New Jersey, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and Massachusetts, armed bands of citizens closed courts to prevent foreclosure proceedings, attacked tax collectors and threatened judges, jurors, sheriffs and even their legislatures.

The most notable uprising was Shays’ Rebellion in western Massachusetts. After several months of disturbances, a large body of farmers led by Daniel Shays, a veteran of the Battle of Saratoga, attacked the Springfield courthouse in January 1787 to prevent foreclosure proceedings. General Benjamin Lincoln raised and funded a militia that caught the rebels in February 1787. Shays and 12 others were tried and convicted, but they were pardoned by Governor John Hancock. Shays’ rebellion shocked the states and is often regarded as a tipping point in revising the Articles.

“The Exigencies of the Union”

By the mid-1780s, pro-nationalist leaders such as George Washington, James Madison and Alexander Hamilton had concluded that the Articles of Confederation were inadequate to govern the new nation. A series of meetings to discuss navigation and commerce soon provided an opportunity for change.

In March 1785, Madison called a meeting between Maryland and Virginia at Alexandria, Va., to work out
Daughters of the American Revolution

trade agreements for the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. They met at Washington’s home, Mount Vernon, and encouraged by their success, they recommended inviting other states to a second conference.

In January 1786, Virginia invited all the states to meet at Annapolis, Md., in September. Delegates from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York arrived first; though other delegates were on the way, the early arrivals decided to proceed without them.

Seven of the dozen men present were Revolutionary War veterans who supported a stronger national government. Instead of discussing trade, they decided to call for a general convention that would focus on solving the crises facing the nation, writes Richard Brookhiser in *James Madison* (Basic Books, 2011).

Hamilton, representing New York, wrote a draft report to the states and Congress, but his friend Madison felt it was too inflammatory. The final softer report asked Congress and the states to allow the appointment of delegates to meet in May 1787 in Philadelphia “to take into consideration the situation of the United States, to devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the constitution of the Federal Government adequate to the exigencies of the Union; and to report such an Act for that purpose to the United States in Congress assembled, as when agreed to, by them, and afterwards confirmed by the Legislatures of every State, will effectually provide for the same.”

Previous attempts to discuss changing the Articles had fizzled, “so it was surprising that the proposal that came out of the Annapolis meeting actually led to the convention,” Maier told *American Spirit* in an interview. The key this time was that Virginia endorsed the meeting in December 1786 and also selected George Washington as a delegate. “That signaled it would be an event of some significance,” Maier says.

But Washington almost immediately tried to refuse the appointment. He was worried the meeting would fail and that participating would tarnish his reputation, Maier says. “Washington was the American hero, without any of the negative connotations that kind of celebrity carries with it today.”

Moreover, Washington was viewed as the modern Cincinnatus, the Roman farmer who was called to lead an army and, after winning the battle, returned to his plow instead of using the army to seize power.

“Washington had resigned as general of the Continental Army and returned to private life. He feared that it would undermine his reputation if he returned to the public stage,” Maier says. He also may have worried that, as in the past, the episodes of popular insurgency could signal the possible end of the republic.

Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph managed to delay Washington’s decision, while Madison waged a subtle campaign that finally persuaded his old friend that this meeting would succeed, especially if Washington participated.

In February 1787, while General Lincoln was rounding up Shays’ rebels, the Confederation Congress endorsed a convention to meet that May in Philadelphia.

**The Long Hot Summer**

The Constitutional Convention delegates had precise orders—they were meeting “for the sole and exclusive purpose of proposing amendments to the Articles of Confederation that would have made the Confederation sufficient to the exigencies of American affairs,” Maier says.

But within days of arriving in Philadelphia, the delegates concurred that the Articles didn’t provide a solid enough foundation to support the necessary repairs. Instead, New Jersey and Virginia each presented model government plans for consideration.

The delegates agreed to keep their proceedings secret—and amazingly, they did. It’s part of American lore how, despite a brutally hot summer, they shut the doors and windows of the Pennsylvania Statehouse to prevent passersby from eavesdropping.

During that summer of secrets, Maier notes, the day’s pundits and editors guessed at what was happening and generally urged the public to be willing to accept major changes. Some hints may have been discreetly given out, but if anyone outside the convention knew details, they did not let on.

Borrowing from state government models, the delegates devised a new, much stronger national government with separate executive, legislative and judicial branches. It divided the legislature into two separate houses, the lower elected by the people with representation proportional to population, and the upper selected by state legislatures.
The Constitution reined in the sovereignty of the states, forbade them to print money and, for the first time, authorized the federal government to impose taxes.

“They created an entirely new government—that they were not authorized to do,” Maier adds.

The delegates presented their work to Congress, which voted to submit it to the states for ratification. The states were to hold ratification conventions, so that approval would derive from the people. Only nine states had to ratify the Constitution for it to become law.

On September 17, 1787, the Constitutional Convention met for the last time. James Wilson of Philadelphia took the floor and read a speech written by the aged and ailing Benjamin Franklin.

Though most delegates, including Franklin, had reservations about the Constitution and the extent and its distribution of powers, the elder statesman appealed for unity: “I think it will astonish our enemies, who are waiting with confidence to hear that our councils are confounded like those of the builders of Babel; and that our States are on the point of separation, only to meet hereafter for the purpose of cutting one another’s throats.”

Though the fight for ratification would be bruising and intensely partisan, the Constitution survived and has served as a model for other constitutions ever since.

Bill Hudgins explored the origins and meanings of various symbols of America for the July/August issue.

In 1955, the NSDAR asked Congress to authorize a National Constitution Week from September 17–23. Congress approved, and President Eisenhower issued a proclamation on August 19, 1955. The next year, Congress voted and the president agreed to make it an annual event.

Thanks to a U.S. Department of Education order that schools and colleges receiving federal funds must offer programs about the Constitution on September 17, the DAR has been able to partner with schools, homeschoolers, Scout groups and other youth organizations to offer instruction.

“The partnerships vary greatly and include such things as the DAR creating displays for the school or an individual classroom,” says Connie Grund, Constitution Week Committee National Chairman. She adds that the committee’s current theme is “Commemorate—Educate—Celebrate!”

Chapters may adopt classes and provide Constitution Week educational kits, which include items like a pocket-size Constitution, the American’s Creed and a Bill of Rights fact sheet, a copy of the U.S. Flag Code, bookmarks printed with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Preamble, a small desktop flag, a patriotic pencil and a small bell.

The bells are part of the DAR Bells Across America initiative. DAR members are asked to step outside and ring a bell at 4 p.m. EDT on September 17, and to encourage local churches, schools, firehouses and other locations to do the same.

This year, in honor of the 225th anniversary, a small group including President General Merry Ann T. Wright, members of the Constitution Week Committee and other national officers will travel to Philadelphia, the birthplace of the Constitution.

The group will spend the morning of Constitution Day, September 17, at the National Constitution Center where they will distribute 2,500 Constitution Education Kits to visiting students. The group will also attend a naturalization service, present a Constitution Week flag to the center and tour the exhibits. They also will lay wreaths at the burial sites of five of the signers at historic Christ Church. The celebration will conclude with a bell ringing at 4 p.m.

How You Can Participate in the Commemoration

Looking for ways to help schools in your community celebrate Constitution Week? Here are a few ideas:

★ Buy a book on the Constitution or one of its signers for a class or dedicate it to the school library.

★ Put together an exhibit on the Constitution to showcase in the school lobby.

★ Dress in period costume and put on a historical program for a class or assembly.
It started with a question. A seventh-grade student in Nathan McAlister’s history class at Royal Valley Middle School in Mayetta, Kan., wanted to know more about a highway near the school that was once part of the Underground Railroad. McAlister did what he always does when students ask questions: He challenged the class to research it themselves.

What they found inspired them to write a bill renaming the road, which covers a portion of U.S. Route 75, the James Lane Freedom Trail Memorial Highway to commemorate its abolitionist history. Though the kids had studied how a bill becomes law, they soon got a crash course in the politics involved in getting one passed, from testifying before committees to writing legislators to lobby for support. They watched their bill sail through the Kansas State House on a unanimous vote, but stall in the Senate. They refused to give up, writing more letters to revive it and eventually meeting with Senate leaders to work out a compromise.

“It wasn’t easy—that was the biggest lesson they learned—but that was also the most exciting part because they had to fight for this,” McAlister says.

Once the Kansas Legislature passed the bill and it was signed into law in 2010, students raised money to buy signs marking the route. It became “the most exciting civics project ever,” McAlister says, because of the passion it sparked in the students and the sense of ownership it gave them in a government that had seemed so far removed to them before.

“I hope to see a lot of these kids running for political office someday because they know a little bit about how the game is run,” McAlister says.

Many teachers nationwide share the same aspiration and are looking for ways to give their students experiences that make history and civics not only real and relevant, but also empowering.

“Kids need to see that it matters, that changes can happen in a community because of people speaking out about it,” says Melinda Dickinson, a fifth-grade teacher at Sheridan Road Elementary School in Lansing, Mich.

Dickinson’s goal during the school year is to expose students to the constitutional rights they take for granted and help them not only understand how the document shaped the lives of Americans before, but also what it means for them today.

“With the Constitution’s 225th anniversary and the presidential election coming up, it’s the perfect opportunity to have this kind of conversation with kids,” she says. “People say you can’t do this with little kids, but you can.”

Even with all the distractions vying for their attention, it’s possible to get teenagers passionate about the subject, too, says Roseanne Lichatin, who teaches U.S. history at West Morris Central High School in Chester, N.J. She makes sure that every classroom unit she covers draws a connection to the present to get students talking and raising questions.

“Kids shouldn’t just accept things at face value,” Lichatin says. “They should be asking why.”

One way she challenges students to think critically is by encouraging them to explore historical events from many different perspectives.

“How do you figure out the truth? The best way to do that is to look at as many sources as you can,” she says. “I’m always asking them, ’What is the textbook not telling you? What do you wish you knew that isn’t there?’”

**Bridging the Gap**

Raising the interest and enthusiasm for history and civics in the classroom is more crucial than ever, considering scores from the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which show students performing lower in those subjects than any others.
Only 27 percent of fourth-graders performed at or above the proficient level in history and civics, with that percentage dropping even lower for eighth- and 12th-graders. The number of students scoring at the advanced level was miniscule: 2 percent for fourth-graders; 1 percent for eighth-graders; and 4 percent for 12th-graders.

Fourth-graders made some progress in the subject matter over the past decade, but most students continue to score below basic levels throughout elementary, middle and high school.

“Too many students don’t understand the basic facts of government,” says Chuck Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education (http://new.civiced.org), “They are not aware of who the people in positions of power are, who the Supreme Court justices or the House and Senate leaders are, but more important they don’t understand the relevance of due process and other constitutional tenets designed to protect their individual rights and liberties.”

Just as the space race with Russia during the 1950s and 1960s brought an increased focus on improving math and science skills, Quigley says, legislation from the No Child Left Behind Act has put the focus on reading and language arts, with social studies often getting the short shrift. Civics used to be required in kindergarten through sixth

From History Teachers on Getting Students Inspired

1. Have students rewrite the Preamble in their own words or illustrate it.

2. Give them questions from the U.S. Naturalization Test to answer.

3. Create a Facebook page for a Founding Father, Revolutionary War general or other historical figure.

4. Teach students how to be historians, from researching sources to developing and defending hypotheses.

5. Explore historical figures and events through primary documents like letters, speeches, artwork, etc., then have students record their impressions.

6. Give students the facts of a famous Supreme Court case and ask them to predict the outcome.

7. Encourage them to interview older relatives about a memorable historical event or trace their family’s arrival in America.

8. Pick a historical event to re-enact in class and assign roles to students so they can research their characters.

9. Share a newspaper clipping about a national, state or local issue in class and ask students to discuss or write an editorial expressing their views.

10. Sponsor a history club that allows students to plan their own field trips, patriotic celebrations, guest lectures and voter registration drives.
grade, but now it’s relegated mostly to 11th or 12th grade. Students who drop out or never finish high school may never be exposed to it, Quigley says.

Socioeconomic status created a sharp divide among students tested in civics on the 2010 NAEP. Those who performed best tended to be from more affluent homes with parents who held college degrees. The growing gap between students competent in history and civics is troubling, Quigley says.

“If democracy relies on an enlightened citizenry, it doesn’t work as effectively as it should when you only have a small group of people who are being enlightened,” he says.

Since 1987, the Center for Civic Education has educated 30 million students about their democratic heritage, the underlying values and principles of the Constitution, and their responsibilities as citizens through the We the People program. Administered in states and congressional districts across the country, the program provides textbooks and other educational materials to teachers. It also sponsors annual team-based competitions at the local, state, regional and national levels, where students debate constitutional issues and defend their views in simulated congressional hearings.

“They become active and engaged because they’re not just regurgitating information—they’re having to grapple with problems and come up with solutions,” Quigley says. “They become more critical of government—not in a way that turns them off, but in a way that makes them want to fix it.”

Some students who participate in the program go on to run for office or work in politics. It not only helps them understand the foundational reasons behind the constitutional system, but it also "shows you how to change it," says Julia Chiu Guenther, an alumnus of the program. “You begin to realize that you have a voice and the power to do something about it.”

What she learned in the program eventually led Guenther, a Taiwanese immigrant, to pursue a career in civil service.

The program continues to inspire students, especially those who participate in its grassroots counterpart, Project Citizen, which teaches the basics of activism by showing them how to make a difference at the state and local levels. Students survey people in their community to identify an issue that needs to be addressed, then divide into teams to research it, come up with solutions, select a proposal and develop a political action plan for getting local or state authorities to adopt their proposed policy. They present the proposal to a panel of civic-minded community members during a simulated public hearing.

“We try to give them experiences where they can feel empowered,” Quigley says.

More than 3,000 schoolchildren are expected to ring in Constitution Day on September 17 at the National Constitution Center (NCC), and millions more will join the Philadelphia museum for a virtual celebration of the 225th anniversary festivities via Constitution Hall Pass, an online webcast and live chat series on the creation of the Constitution and its contemporary relevance.

Available free of charge to educators and in classrooms nationwide via the Channel One network, viewed by 1 million students last year, the webcast covers everything from the events leading up to the creation of the Constitution to its ratification and the Bill of Rights. Students can ask questions of scholars during a live chat series the week leading up to and during Constitution Day. NCC provides participating classrooms with discussion questions to use during the activity.

“This year, we are highlighting the executive branch and how it came into being, so we will have a special guest connected to the presidency at the center to help us ring in Constitution Day,” says Kerry Sautner, vice president of visitor experience and education.

NCC will kick off the festivities with a reading of the Preamble and a naturalization ceremony. Christopher Phillips, author of Constitution Café (W.W. Norton, 2011), will lead students from Philadelphia’s Constitution High School in a discussion about how they view the Constitution today.

“We always ask the students: ‘What would you change in the Constitution and what you would keep?’” Sautner says. "We like to give them the day to have their say.”

The celebration will conclude with a Liberty Medal ceremony, which pays homage to courageous Americans who have answered the call of freedom.

Throughout September, NCC will be promoting some of its newest exhibits, including interactive voting booths that match visitors up to the presidential candidate who shares their views and live polling results that show where they stand in comparison to other Americans on various issues.

Happy 225th to the Constitution!

National Constitution Center teaming up with classrooms across America to celebrate
Secrets of Engagement

A nation of educated Americans perceptive enough to learn from the past and use that knowledge to build a better future was the kind of republic the Founding Fathers envisioned when they met in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 to draft the Constitution. Most of the Founders were either formally taught or self-educated and expected the same of those leading the future democracy.

“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be,” wrote Thomas Jefferson, who considered education so critical to the nation’s future that he pushed for publicly funded primary and secondary schools.

Before convening the Constitutional Convention, James Madison asked Jefferson to send him every book he could find on government, so he could read them and “figure out what had worked in the past, and what hadn’t worked and why,” says historian Bruce Kauffman.

“To preserve those freedoms we need to know how they were created and what the Founders were thinking when they created them,” he says. “Kids today are the ones being handed this mantle—it’s up to us to make sure it’s handed to them properly.”

A lack of knowledge about historical events among adults inspired Kauffman, a former CBS News speechwriter, to launch a weekly 450-word syndicated newspaper column that tells the story behind both pivotal and obscure dates in U.S. history. His columns, “Bruce’s History Lessons” (historylessons.net), have become a favorite among history teachers who use them to kick off classroom discussions. Students find his perspective on history’s “oddities and ironies” entertaining and his focus on average Americans whose actions changed the course of history relatable.

“History isn’t about names, dates or places,” Kauffman says, “It’s about people … ordinary people who did extraordinary things that moved history. Many of these stories tend to be ironic—things you could never predict and even the best Hollywood screenwriters couldn’t dream up.”

That’s the angle Nadja Baer took when writing her graphic novel adaptation of the creation of the Constitution. She pored over the biographies, journals and letters of James Madison, John Adams, Thomas Paine and others to understand the motivations of the men behind the document.

“Lots of kids go through school thinking of the Constitution the same way I did: That it’s the way it is because that’s how someone else decided it should be,” says Baer, author of The United States Constitution: A Graphic Novel Adaptation (Round Table Comics, April 2011). “But they don’t realize how many fights there were over how it was worded or how many viewpoints it encompassed. I try to give them the context of why these men decided what they did and highlight the thought processes behind how they balanced these decisions.”

Baer hopes presenting the story in an illustrated format will not only make the Constitution more tangible for her middle-school audience, but also “make them want to find out what happened after the story ends, and what is still happening today,” she says.

Listening to the stories of the people behind the historical artifacts on display is what captivates students who visit Philadelphia’s National Constitution Center (constitutioncenter.org) the most, says Kerry Sautner, vice president of visitor experience and education.

The American National Tree at the National Constitution Center tells the stories of 100 Americans whose actions have helped write the story of the Constitution.
“We try to get across that the Constitution is not just a document, but it starts with all of us,” Sautner says. “I like telling them about the little guys they never hear about, so they can see that as Americans we don’t just take action to win fame or notoriety; we do it because it’s who we are.”

From live theater on the American experience and a lifelike recreation of Signers’ Hall to mock voting booths, exhibits are interactive and designed to spur students to action. “We try to bring out that little spark so they can see that this is about them and what role they will play,” she says.

For students who can’t travel to Philadelphia, the center offers a wealth of online resources for educators, including videos and podcasts; downloadable lesson plans, secondary and primary sources, activities and projects; and interactive games and forums. The center also sponsors traveling exhibits and teacher training grants.

“We see amazing teachers out there doing great stuff, and we have the ability to make sure what’s working well for them is shared,” Sautner says.

Starting Classroom Conversations

Many teachers trained in history are passionate and want to offer students more, but are hampered by a lack of resources and time devoted to it in the curriculum, says Lance Warren, an educational coordinator at the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

“The interest in history is there, the talent to teach it is there; it’s the investment in history that is lacking,” Warren says.

The institute is working to expand its educational resources with its newly designed Home for History website (www.gilderlehrman.org), which offers a storehouse of content searchable by historical eras and themes, including essays, teaching tools, videos, podcasts, and interactive timelines and exhibitions. The most popular feature on the site is its Essential Questions in American History video series, which asks expert scholars to answer complex questions on topics ranging from early settlement in North America to the Civil Rights Movement in less than two minutes.

“I wanted to offer students what I wish I had been offered in school—an interesting discussion about these topics,” says Warren, who produced the series.

Not only can the videos help initiate conversations for students, he says, but they can also help teachers reconnect with the subject matter.

“For some teachers, it’s been 10 years or more since they’ve had the chance to sit in a history class,” Warren says. “This gives them an easy way to dig in and learn more.”

Each video opens the door to a broader discussion explored in one of more than 50 online essays written by renowned historians, six of whom are Pulitzer Prize winners. More video series are in the works, including conversations with recently published authors and stories behind featured items in the institute’s collection of 6,000-plus primary sources.

These virtual resources are invaluable for teachers, says Melinda Dickinson, who is always looking for new materials to share with her students.

“It’s amazing what they remember from a story you tell them that’s not in the textbook,” she says.

But as Nathan McAlister has learned, often the best teaching experiences start with the questions students raise themselves.

“Anytime a student comes in and asks how something happened, that is an open invitation for me to jump in and say, ‘Let’s explore this,’” he says.

Emily McMackin wrote the March/April 2012 story on women and musical instruments in early America.
Generations of women
in my family lovingly preserved our history. Because of them, my brothers and I are able to turn the pages of the 1851 family bible, stir our tea with coin silver spoons from that era, and handle the Medal of Honor, awarded to an ancestor at Gettysburg. Yet, much of our history seems so long past, just faded images of stern men and women. I don’t think of them in the same way I think of my grandparents, who taught me such important skills as how to catch fireflies and which way to vote (early and often, according to Grandpa).

Yet, my grandparents lived through WWII, a critical time in our nation’s history, and a time that is still just close enough for my children to grasp. I was lucky to record my Great Aunt’s tales of flying planes for the WASPs, but now I kick myself for never asking my Grandmother what she planted in her Victory garden.

Though we began a little late, my husband and I have interviewed over 300 WWII veterans. Those interviews gave birth to a film series, now widely viewed on PBS stations, called The American Road to Victory. It is a trilogy of battlefield tour films that follow American GIs through D-Day, Holland, and the Battle of the Bulge. We filmed in the actual locations where the battles took place, at the same time of year and weather conditions faced by American soldiers. This meant filming in waist-deep snow at one point.

The eccentric Ellwood von Seibold leads the tours, racing around the battlefields in his 1943 Dodge Command Car, wearing period uniforms and carrying actual weapons from his vast collection. Ellwood was recently awarded the honorary rank of Captain in the US Army for his tireless efforts to keep history alive for American families.

As Ellwood visits and describes the heroic actions that took place at various sites, his words are punctuated by first hand veteran accounts, re-enactments and special effects.

As more and more people began to watch our films, we received notes from teachers who wanted to utilize them in the classroom, particularly the film on D-Day. Doug Barber, a teacher from Dayton, Ohio, created thought provoking lesson plans and activities to go along with the films. We then took it a step further and created detailed maps, highlighting events from each campaign. The next question was how to make The Americans on D-Day accessible to teachers wishing to add a visual memory to their WWII studies.

“D-Day is the next best thing to being there.” - The American Legion

One viewer commented that the overall effect, “makes you feel like you are really there.”

Though our children read about D-Day in their school textbooks, the events of that day did not come alive to them until they watched the first film in our series, The Americans on D-Day. Our twelve year old was enthralled by the idea that an entire fake army, complete with blow up tanks and wooden aircraft, was set up by the Allies to hide their actual invasion plans. Our nine year old was amazed that anyone could carry the hundred pounds of equipment strapped onto a paratrooper, not to mention jump out of an airplane, into enemy territory, in the dead of night. And, when we watch them, I can say, “see that beach? Your great-great Uncle John landed right there on that beach and helped save the lives of men who were hit by German machine gun fire.” It changes the way they look at their older relatives and neighbors when they realize what they lived through.

We discussed this issue with our partner, The National Infantry Foundation, based at Fort Benning, Georgia. We decided to ask local businesses to place the films, lesson plans and maps into schools. For just $50, an individual or business can place two copies of the film and associated materials into a local school, thus giving teachers an incredible resource for engaging young people with history. We decided to call the outreach OPERATION IGNITE.

If you or your company would like to participate in Operation Ignite, please contact me, Heidi Lanni at 917-231-1231 or email me at heidi@livingbattlefield.org
You can also learn more on our website, www.livingbattlefield.org
The name of the Christian Waldschmidt Homestead, built in 1804, implies that the property encompasses more than just a historic home, but it only hints at the scope of the narrative that unfolded there. The house itself included a mercantile and a basement tavern. A paper mill on the property supplied Cincinnati newspapers, and its workforce included young girls. Later, the estate became part of a Civil War training ground known as Camp Dennison. Restored after a period of disuse, today the site operates as a museum owned by the Ohio Society DAR, which deftly interprets its wide-ranging history.

By Courtney Peter
From Germany to New Germany

Johann Waldschmidt, a minister in Gengenbach, Germany, became a missionary in the New World to escape religious persecution. He settled in eastern Pennsylvania, where he and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Grub, had four daughters and three sons, including Christian, born March 23, 1755.

Christian Waldschmidt spent his early life in Berks and Bucks counties in Pennsylvania. He signed the oath of allegiance to the Patriot cause in Lancaster County, Pa., and served as a private during the Revolution. He married Catherine Bolender on August 15, 1780, and together they had nine children, six of whom lived to adulthood. Catherine Bolender Waldschmidt died November 4, 1810. One year and one day later Waldschmidt married Mary Magdalena “Polly” Kern Custard, with whom he had a daughter, Sarah.

Instead of becoming a minister like his father, Christian Waldschmidt followed the example of his earlier ancestors, who “possessed extensive farms near Gengenbach and an important paper mill on the Kinzig, as well as a considerable dry goods store on that line,” wrote Susan S. Browning in the December 1952 issue of The Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine. Waldschmidt left his home state to launch a remarkably similar enterprise of his own.

In 1794, John Cleves Symmes bought more than 300,000 acres in southwestern Ohio. That same year Waldschmidt and a group of men departed Pittsburgh via flatboat hoping to find a suitable location for a new settlement in the Northwest Territory. The ideal site would have plenty of flat, fertile land, forests to provide timber, and access to water, not only for transportation but also to power the mills that would anchor the local economy. Waldschmidt found what he was looking for along the Little Miami River, approximately 15 miles northeast of Cincinnati between the present-day towns of Milford and Indian Hill. He purchased 1,140 acres from Symmes and returned to Pennsylvania to retrieve his family.

By 1796 the group had relocated to the new settlement, named New Germany. Waldschmidt set about building a permanent family home and an industrial foundation for the new town. Of New Germany’s citizens, Ruth J. Cast, in an article from the May 1958 issue of The Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine, wrote, “These were not farmers but artisans who formed a community of mills and shops to supply the area around them.” To meet the community’s immediate needs, Waldschmidt built a sawmill, a gristmill, a distillery, a church and a school. He did not produce goods only for his immediate neighbors, however; he also constructed a paper mill to satisfy a critical local need. According to the Indian Hill Historical Society, “In the early days of Cincinnati, and the whole Northwest Territory, the scarcity of paper was a serious problem.” Newspaper publishers forced to rely on faraway paper mills often were unable to adhere to regular publication schedules. Waldschmidt’s mill, opened by 1810, was a welcome addition to the area. In 1811, the Cincinnati newspaper Western Spy noted that “Our impression appears for the first time on paper manufactured at Mr. Waldsmith’s [sic] new paper mill in Sycamore Township.”

As the business grew, Waldschmidt placed another ad: “Wanted five or six boys and girls, about 14 years of age, as apprentices to the paper making business, at the subscriber’s paper mill on the Little Miami, to whom good encouragement will be given.”

The mill quickly achieved success, but its founder did not enjoy the prosperity for long; Waldschmidt died suddenly on March 31, 1814, of influenza. He was one of the wealthiest men in Ohio at the time; in addition to his industrial enterprises he was an early director of the Miami Exporting Company, one of the first banks west of Philadelphia.

Waldschmidt’s oldest daughter Catherine Waldschmidt Kugler and her husband, Mathias Kugler, who had been a handyman at the estate before they married, took over the family business, moving into the main house from the small stone cottage her father built for them at the edge of the property. By the late 1840s, the paper mill had been destroyed by fire and Kugler went bankrupt. A new railroad
line alongside the river cut off access to the water power required to run a mill.

"By 1850, this place was listed in the census as a tavern," says Elizabethe Graweelman, president of the Waldschmidt Homestead Board of Trustees and a member of Turtle Creek DAR Chapter, Lebanon, Ohio. For part of the following decade, it would serve a completely different function.

In Service to the Union

In April 1861, when President Abraham Lincoln called state militia into federal service to the Union, Ohio Governor William Dennison pledged strong support from his state. More than 30,000 Ohio men volunteered for duty. The prolific turnout was a point of pride, but the state soon confronted the reality that the enlistees must be housed, clothed, fed and trained.

The same attributes that attracted Waldschmidt to the region, as well as its proximity to the railroad, the city of Cincinnati and the Kentucky border, led Major General William Rosecrans to select the Little Miami River area as a training site. It was named Camp Dennison in honor of the governor.

The transition from a civilian production center to a large military installation was not easy. Overcrowding, disease, and shortages of food, clean water, uniforms and weapons were serious problems.

"Camp commandants came and went, 18 of them in the period from November 1861 to September 1865, holding the post for periods varying from one day to six months," wrote Stephen Z. Starr in "Camp Dennison 1861–1865," originally published in the July 1961 Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin. The camp commandant lived in the Waldschmidt home. When General Joshua Bates arrived to assume command, the house was already deteriorating. "Bates thought it was an insult that he had to stay in this terrible house," Mrs. Grauwelman says. Bullet holes preserved in a section of the kitchen wall's original plaster attest to the disdain the camp felt for the house. The Waldschmidt cemetery included about 400 Civil War casualties. After the war, the Union and Confederate casualties were removed and reinterred at cemeteries in Cincinnati and Columbus, respectively.

The life cycle of Camp Dennison followed the phases of the war. As enlistments expired, veterans passed through to be mustered out; those still serving at the war’s end came to receive their discharges. The camp was deactivated in September 1865. The barracks were dismantled, and the Waldschmidt Homestead was never again used as a residence.

“For many years it was a warehouse holding tobacco, wheat, corn or hay,” wrote Mrs. Browning. In 1941, Mr. and Mrs. Chester Kroger donated the house and a small endowment to the Ohio Society DAR, which hired Cincinnati architect Robert Kennedy to lead a restoration. World War II delayed restoration efforts, and even after the war work proceeded haltingly as funds became available. The site opened to the public in October 1952.

A House Divided

The home’s unembellished stone façade conveys a formidable yet simple sense of dignity. The Waldschmidt Homestead is one of only a few examples of Pennsylvania German architecture found west of the Allegheny Mountains. “Fieldstone buildings are far more prevalent around Berks and Bucks counties in Pennsylvania,” writes Doris Penrod in Waldschmidt: House and Family 1804 (Capozzolo Printers, 1997). “It was logical for Christian Waldschmidt to build his new home in the style which he had always known.”

Depending on his or her reason for calling, a visitor approaching the home could choose one of three points of entry. One opens to the central hallway in the family’s private quarters, and a door at the right side of the building allows direct access to the mercantile. Between these two a staircase leads to the basement tavern.

Inside, the floor plan follows a center hall construction. The entry hallway showcases one of the most charming family artifacts in the house—a framed section of crazy quilt made by Julia and Josephine Kugler, third-great-granddaughters of Christian Waldschmidt. Made of scraps from men’s neckties—more specifically, the neckties of gentleman callers—the quilt is accented by embroidered designs and sayings, such as “Two is company, three is a crowd.” Despite the variety of ties, neither woman ever married.

A parlor and dining room provided space for the family to receive guests and enjoy meals. Portraits of Waldschmidt
family members and descendants line the parlor walls, and a humidor that belonged to Arthur St. Clair, the first governor of the Northwest Territory, sits in a corner. The mantelpiece in the parlor is the only original one remaining in the home. It is also noteworthy for another reason: The mantel was hand-carved by Thomas Boone, a cousin of Daniel Boone.

The dining room holds a cherry china cabinet custom-built from a tree grown on the property. Years later, a matching table was made to accompany it. An unusual piece of serving ware perches on a credenza. Both ornamental and functional, the pressed metal condiment caddy resembling a tiny cathedral contains compartments designed to hold sauces and relishes.

Although there is no documentation to prove the theory, the Ohio Society believes that the kitchen, which extends from the back of the house, was built first, and that the family lived there while the rest of the house was under construction. The wall between the kitchen and dining room is noticeably thicker than the other interior partitions, and the kitchen ceiling is lower. There is also a loft space above where the family could have slept.

Architect Kennedy’s restoration uncovered the huge original fireplace along the back wall behind a woodstove and a smaller fireplace that had been layered over it. Antique cooking implements surround the hearth. At the other end of the kitchen, two distinctive wooden doors face each other from across the room. One features a special lock purportedly designed to allow the door to be opened easily with one hand.

The mercantile occupying the remainder of the ground floor once sold necessities but today is filled with items prized for their historical significance, beginning underfoot. “When the house was renovated, the salvageable original wood was installed in the mercantile, and the floors in the rest of the house were replicated to match,” says Tonia Edwards, Hamilton County building commissioner and a member of Waw-Wil-A-Way DAR Chapter, Hillsboro, Ohio.

A copy of the Western Spy hangs in the store, as does an unofficial flag commemorating Ohio’s admission as the 17th state in 1803. (The design was never formally adopted.) Display cases contain two gowns worn by Christine Kugler Turpin, Waldschmidt’s granddaughter—one is the bridal gown she wore to marry Edward Turpin in 1839, and the other is her “day after dress,” worn the Sunday after the marriage.

Compared to the refined furnishings of the family’s quarters, the downstairs tavern feels like a separate world. At one end of the room, a swinging gate made of wooden spikes hangs above the bar. “When it was up the bar was open, and when it was down the bar was closed,” says Ohio State Regent Sharlene Shoaf. Rows of tankards donated by Ohio DAR chapters line the shelves behind the bar. Most are metal, and some have glass bottoms, a feature that made the a mug harder to craft but easier to break.

Though the tavern space isn’t large, Waldschmidt’s bar offered all the comforts a businessman or traveler needed: a hot meal, ales and whiskey, and even a place to sleep.
Upstairs in the north bedroom, where parents likely slept with the youngest children, the home’s Pennsylvania German influence is visible. “Pennsylvania winters were cold, so no windows were placed on the north side of the house,” Mrs. Grauwelman says. It is a detail that easily could be missed by eyes drawn toward any of a number of remarkable objects on display.

A large, richly detailed wardrobe called a kas stands against one wall. Featuring carved cherubs and lemon wood inlays and dated 1714, the piece is believed to have been made in Salzburg for a bride whose initials are inscribed upon it. Although it did not belong to the Waldschmidt family, the kas “is the type of heirloom that a family of German descent would have taken with them regardless of the hardship involved,” Mrs. Cast wrote. “It can be dismantled and shipped almost flat.”

Throughout the room other items exhibit similar combinations of practicality, artistry and sentiment. A sewing box Mathias Kugler made for his wife, Catherine, in 1798 sits on a chair, and a white work quilt on display was made by the couple’s daughter, also named Catherine, as she awaited the birth of her own child. The stationary base of a platform cradle positioned by the fireplace allows the vessel to rock without creeping across the floor.

A trio of period ensembles also adorns the north bedroom. Even the simplest of the three features a train and lace cuffs, which proves that frontier fashion had evolved beyond the utilitarian but does not inspire wardrobe envy as do the petite, deep blue dress with a jet-beaded cape and the purple velvet, tasseled gown with cascading ruffles. Waldschmidt descendant Alice Turpin may have worn the purple dress to marry William Turner Ragland in 1877.

Across the hall, the south bedroom contains its own cache of historic textiles: an extensive collection of 19th-century woven coverlets. Many employ a palette of red, white and blue. “They were very popular in the early part of the 19th century until about the 1860s,” Mrs. Grauwelman explains. “Itinerant weavers would travel from town to town weaving coverlets. The looms were narrow for easy travel, so to make a coverlet two separate panels were woven and joined with a center seam.” Some even bear the name of the weaver.

The property also includes a springhouse and a newly constructed multipurpose building. The barn, as it is called, houses a collection of antique farm implements and three historic vehicles, including a surrey that belonged to President James A. Garfield.

The Waldschmidt Homestead preserves not only the story of a pioneer family and its industrialist patriarch, but also the history of southwestern Ohio from settlement to the Civil War. “This house truly represents the major events of the 19th century as they occurred in this part of our world,” writes Waldschmidt historian Penrod. Maintaining a collection of such breadth is both a challenge and an opportunity, and the Ohio Society meets both head-on.

“It’s a gem. It’s a responsibility,” Mrs. Shoaf acknowledges. “It takes a lot of our time and money, but this is our way of preserving our history.”

Courtney Peter wrote about the restoration of the DAR Library lay light for the July/August issue.
CHANCES ARE your family’s photographs are shot, organized and displayed by the females in the family. In fact, women with cameras have captured much of America’s history. American women and the field of photography came into their own around the same time, so the two have always paired naturally.

Taking photographs with a camera first became possible in the 1820s with the development of chemical photography. By the time George Eastman developed the technology of film to replace photographic plates in 1884, the Industrial Revolution had transformed American life, leaving women with much more free time to pursue their own interests and for some, their own careers beyond the family farm.

“In its beginnings, photography wasn’t considered an art, and many of the established professions were closed to women,” says Sam Watters, author of Gardens for a Beautiful America (Acanthus Press, 2012), which records the photography of Frances Benjamin Johnston from 1895 to 1935 and was published in collaboration with the Library of Congress, which holds a partial archive of Johnson’s work. “Photography was one artistic profession where women were allowed to participate during a period when women had just become able to live on their own and were just beginning to enter the workforce.”

While most American women during the 19th century continued to depend on their husbands and fathers for their livelihoods, some used the newly developed camera to create their own careers. In addition to supporting themselves, these women also left behind important bodies of work that chronicle their America.

**Frances Benjamin Johnston**

One of the first women to attain prominence as a photographer, Frances Benjamin Johnston was born in 1864 in West Virginia and grew up in Washington, D.C. Eastman, a close friend of her family, gave Johnston her first camera, a gift that led to a career spanning almost six decades.

Johnston began working in photography during the 1880s as a portrait photographer. Because she was raised by wealthy...
parents in Washington, D.C., Johnston gained access to the inner circles of the capital city, a position that propelled her career. Her mother had been a congressional journalist for The Baltimore Sun, and Johnston capitalized on her familiarity with the Washington political scene by becoming the official White House photographer for Presidents Harrison, Cleveland, McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and Taft. She took portraits of many famous Americans including Susan B. Anthony, Mark Twain and Booker T. Washington. Her work was commissioned by magazines such as Ladies’ Home Journal and Town & Country.

While Johnston’s access to leading American families may have helped launch her career, she sustained her success with her energy, business savvy and the diversity of her subjects. “Johnston was quite an entrepreneur,” Watters says. “She very skillfully navigated herself through a 60-year career in a radically changing world.”

One sign of her entrepreneurial skill was her ability to change direction mid-career, Watters says. For instance, when the field of portrait photography became more crowded and competitive, Johnston switched to photographing gardens. During the 20-year period of 1915 to 1935, which represents roughly one-third of her career, Johnston focused on garden photography.

“She was really cutting-edge,” Watters says. “She understood that gardens were becoming a major force in American design and architecture. She was attuned to new developments in the culture.”

Johnston’s garden photography, “long neglected in her body of work,” includes more than 1,100 hand-colored, glass-plate slides owned by the Library of Congress. As part of his book project, Watters cataloged those photographs, and the Library of Congress recently unveiled an online viewing gallery that includes the complete collection, as a companion to the book. The collection, which can be viewed at www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fbj, includes beautiful and vanished places such as the color-themed gardens of the artists Albert and Adele Herter in East Hampton, N.Y., urban sites in New York City, and estates from Pasadena, Calif., to Brookline, Mass.

In the 1930s, when the economy made it more difficult to make a living photographing gardens, Johnston gradually switched her focus again to photograph houses of the South. She was hired by clients such as the University of Virginia and 10 different Southern states to document their historic buildings and homes and record their architectural history. Her photographs of rapidly deteriorating plantations and historic homes across the South were given to the Library of Congress for public use. For her work in preserving old and endangered buildings, Johnston was named an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects.

A member of the Mary Washington DAR Chapter, Washington, D.C., Johnston frequently cited her status as a Daughter as an important professional credential, Watters says. “One way Johnston found success was by identifying herself as a member of the establishment, and being a DAR member was part of that,” he says.

Johnston’s body of work, considered part of the canon of American photography, includes many images that have been highly discussed and frequently published, Watters says. However, because she was always working to make a living, her work also includes many photographs that are not necessarily important historically or artistically. “She struggled with the balance between commercialism and art all her life,” Watters says. “She saw herself as an artist, but society didn’t see some of her work, especially in the gardens, as art.”
Today, “all these 19th-century figures who were so important are becoming less visible to a new generation,” Watters says. Johnston is worth remembering not only because she produced many historically significant photographs, but also because she used her artistic talent to support herself and influence the direction of a developing field.

The Allen Sisters
Sisters Frances and Mary Allen were born in 1854 and 1858, respectively, and were raised in Deerfield, Mass., where their family had lived for generations. Like Johnston, both of the Allen sisters remained unmarried throughout their lives, so earning a living was a necessity for them. Both worked as teachers until they gradually lost their hearing in their thirties, a misfortune that is thought to have been caused by chronic ear infections. By 1884, Frances and Mary had begun experimenting with photography as a hobby, and when they were forced to leave the classroom because of deafness, together they pursued photography as a second career.

“The thing that set the Allen sisters’ work apart was that they took advantage of their surroundings,” says Suzanne Flynt, author of *The Allen Sisters: Pictorial Photographers 1885–1920* (Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, 2002) and curator of Memorial Hall Museum in Deerfield. “They lived in Old Deerfield where their grandparents and great-grandparents had lived, in an old house, surrounded by other old houses. They took pictures of their farming neighbors, schoolchildren and life in Deerfield, and those evocative images were relevant to other Americans’ lives.”

While their photographs had attracted attention in their local area and had been commissioned for books on the region, the Allen sisters began gaining national attention near the end of the 19th century. In 1896, they first entered their photographs in the Washington Salon and Art Photographic Exhibition. Nine of their photographs appeared in this juried exhibition and two received awards. Through this experience, the sisters sold two photographs to the Smithsonian Institution and began a friendship with Frances Benjamin Johnston, which would take their careers in new directions.

In 1901, Johnston included the Allens in a series of articles for *Ladies’ Home Journal* titled “The Foremost Women Photographers in America.” That article made the Allen Sisters a household name. “At the time, the *Ladies’ Home Journal* was wildly popular,” Flynt says.

In addition to earning a place in the canon of artistic American photography, the Allen sisters were able to make a comfortable living for themselves with their art for almost 50 years. Their work was often commissioned for books or magazines, and they operated a photography shop in their home, publishing catalogs of their photographs and selling original works and reproductions.

“A lot of people say, ‘They were single and had no children, so they had the time to pursue photography,’” Flynt says. But the Allens were not free from the burdens of financial pressures, and both had the added challenge of progressive deafness. “They took care of their mother and three elderly aunts as well,” she continues. “And they lived in rural Deerfield, not near a major city, making their accomplishments even more amazing.”

After World War I, the field of photography changed significantly, and for almost 50 years, there was little interest in the Allen sisters’ work, Flynt says. With the publication of Flynt’s book in 2002 and the traveling exhibition of photographs that accompanied it, interest in the sisters’ photographs has increased.

“Today, the Allen sisters’ photographs of old Deerfield “are as relevant as they were 100 years ago,” Flynt says. “They allow the viewer to look back at a romanticized view of 19th-century America and understand rural life during that time.” The local Memorial Hall Museum maintains a large collection of the Allen sisters’ photographs, and many of them are frequently lent to other museums.
The Birth of Book Publishing in America

By Nancy Mann Jackson
More than 288,000 books were published in the United States in 2009, the last year for which figures are available. American homes and schools are lined with bookshelves brimming with works by American authors, published in America. Even more American books are found on our electronic reading devices, tablet computers and smart phones.

But works of American literature, and books in general, weren’t always so easily accessible. Early Americans in pursuit of books were largely dependent on British imports for much of the Colonial period. “Most books were, therefore, relatively expensive to purchase,” says Joseph Adelman, Ph.D., National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow at the American Antiquarian Society.

From 1700 to 1780, 45 percent of English book exports departed for the American mainland and the West Indies, according to A History of the Book in America, Volume 1: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World. By 1770, more books were exported annually from England to its American Colonies than to Europe and the rest of the world combined.

With so much interest in books and learning among the American colonists, it’s not surprising that a powerful American publishing industry eventually emerged. Beginning with a single printing press imported from England in 1640, American publishing has grown to a multinational industry, earning almost $28 billion in revenue in 2010, according to the Association of American Publishers. But the beginnings were slow.

“American publishers did not truly become players in book publishing until after the Revolution,” Adelman says.
Printing Books in Early America

The earliest printing office established in America was in Cambridge, Mass., in 1640, says David D. Hall, professor at Harvard Divinity School and co-editor of A History of the Book in America, Volume I. Presses followed in Boston in the 1670s, Philadelphia in the 1690s, Maryland by 1700 and South Carolina in the 1730s. But even though presses were present, “the output of these presses was very limited,” Hall says. For many years, American printing offices printed only government laws, almanacs, a handful of sermons, political-themed “letters” and blank legal forms, he says.

Most Colonial-era printing offices were very small, operating one to three presses at any given time, Adelman says. “Therefore, printers published almanacs, newspapers, pamphlets, broadsides and a few books, but more often [these were] cheap editions rather than long, expensive works.”

It wasn’t until the early 18th century that printers began to issue newspapers, beginning in Boston, Hall says. “But up until the 1760s, they were still dependent on English and Irish printers for Bibles, books of any real size and novels,” he adds. “The local press was very utilitarian, producing newspapers and pamphlets. There was no local news; it was all international. So there was a heavy volume of imported books.”

Publishing was an expensive business, and early on, “much of the financing came from patrons,” Hall says. “For instance, someone wanting a funeral sermon on a wife or husband paid for it.” Before a book was published, a bookseller had to agree to finance the project, which involved buying paper and supporting the printer in cases where the printer and bookseller were not the same person, Hall says.

After the Revolution, Americans began to become more involved in the business of publishing books domestically. They were led by Isaiah Thomas of Worcester, Mass., and Mathew Carey of Philadelphia, Adelman says, who “both began to build networks of book publishing in the 1790s on a national scale.” While religious and educational texts remained popular, as American printing presses began publishing more books, “novels exploded in popularity, especially among women, because they were accessible to a broad swath of the population,” Adelman says.

Benjamin Franklin, one of the most well-known printers from the Colonial period, was one of the first to branch out into publishing fiction, according to the Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. History. In 1744, he began publishing popular English novels in America. At the time, international copyright....
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laws were not enforced, so American printers took the liberty of printing British works without paying royalties to the authors or original publishers. Franklin’s three editions of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* sold out rapidly. Similarly, Thomas became a successful publisher of European books in the Colonies, printing popular English works such as Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* and John Cleland’s *Fanny Hill*.

Until the mid-19th century, most American authors published books at their own expense. However, a printer and a bookseller might share costs with an author whose work appeared to have strong sales potential. In 1846, George Palmer Putnam started the modern royalty system, offering authors a percentage of the sale price for each copy of a book sold.

**Selling Books in the Colonies**

While bookstores were open in the Northeast by the 1680s, they weren’t the only avenue for purchasing books. “First, because books were an expensive venture, authors and publishers would frequently try to sell subscriptions to the book in advance of printing it, to ensure that an audience existed sufficient to cover the cost,” Adelman says. A publisher would print a book only after a certain number of subscriptions were sold. “Second, customers could go to a bookshop, which was often part of or adjoined to a printing office, to make purchases. Third, the well-to-do could order books directly from England or Scotland.”

To keep up with demand, American printers tried to maintain contact with English and Scottish booksellers, Adelman says. But American booksellers and English publishers often disagreed about which books should be or had been shipped. Gradually, bookstores began opening up across the Colonies, but there were “many more in the Northern Colonies than in the Southern Colonies,” Hall says.

**Building a Foundation for Modern Publishing**

As printing and selling books became more common in America, several trends emerged that set the stage for the powerful American publishing industry to come. By 1850, New York City had overtaken Boston and Philadelphia to become the center of the publishing industry in the country, a status the city maintains today. The early 1800s saw the launch of New York publishers such as Harper, Putnam and Scribner, which remain important players two centuries later.

*Nancy Mann Jackson’s story “What Do I Do With All This Stuff?” appeared in the July/August issue.*

**What Were They Reading?**

Best-seller lists had been printed during the Colonial period, they would have been dominated by religious texts. The two most popular genres of literature in early America were religion and children’s schoolbooks, mainly "because of the importance of education both for this life and the next," says Joseph Adelman, Ph.D., National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow at the American Antiquarian Society. “By far, the most popular book was the Bible, as it was the one book that nearly every household made sure to own a copy of, and close behind were almanacs, which were not books, but were nonetheless popular.”

Other religious books that were among the most popular for Colonial-era readers were:

- *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* by Isaac Watts
- *First Set of Catechisms and Prayers* by Isaac Watts
- Books by British evangelist George Whitefield
- Collections of sermons, such as *Seven Sermons* by Robert Russell, *Sacramental Exercises* by Jabez Earle and *Communicant’s Companion* by Matthew Henry

Educational books were the second most popular category, especially Noah Webster’s spelling book, first published in 1783 and titled *The American Spelling Book* beginning with its 1787 edition, Adelman says.

As for novels, the most reprinted during the early years of the United States included *Charlotte Temple* by Susanna Rowson and *The Coquette* by Hannah Webster Foster. In the 1820s, Sir Walter Scott’s *Waverley* novels and works by James Fenimore Cooper sold well, Adelman says.
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➻ **Comfort** - Insist on ergonomic design, easy-to-reach controls.

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