

The CHRONICLE

What Was Life Like in Loudoun in 1776?

Discover Loudoun County's Role in the American Revolution at the Friends' Annual Fundraiser

By Donald G. Cooper, Ph.D. President, The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library

This year, for our 8th annual Friends fundraising event to be held on Sunday, September 13, at Silverbrook Farm, we'll step back in time – to 1776 – to plumb our history and deepen our understanding of Loudoun County and its residents on the battlefield and homefront of the American Revolution.

It's an opportune time for us to delve into this period as the Loudoun Revolutionary War Memorial Committee prepares to dedicate a memorial statue at the Loudoun County Courthouse on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. "The Spirit of Loudoun," sculpted by the renowned Jay Hall Carpenter, depicts a Loudoun family—a farmer taking leave of his wife and son to serve in the militia—as did so many neighbors who contributed to the



"The Spirit of Loudoun"

cause of independence. The event, which supports the Library endowment (see page 5), will feature a panel of three speakers, each looking into a different facet of the war in Loudoun:

- **Tracy Gillespie**, historic site supervisor at Aldie Mill, Mt. Zion,

and Gilbert's Corner Historic Parks, will set the scene of a county that was a major agricultural center and one of Virginia's most densely populated places. The County contributed much of the grain to George Washington's Continental Army, earning it the nickname "Breadbasket of the Revolution."

Loudoun's militia, according to the returns of 1780 and 1781, numbered 1,746—far in excess of the numbers for any other Virginia county.

(continued on page 2)

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• **Don Cooper**, the president of the Friends, will look into three families of Loudoun patriots: the Copelands of Hillsboro, Sergeant Laurence Everhart, and Sergeant-Major John Champe.

Champe was the American double-agent chosen by George Washington and Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee to capture the traitor Benedict Arnold and bring him back for trial.

Sergeant Everhart served as an assistant to Lieutenant Colonel



Sergeant Laurence Everhart

William Washington, the cousin of George Washington. According to legend, he and the famed Sergeant Andrew Wallace saved the life of the Marquis de Lafayette at the Battle of Brandywine. Everhart also rescued William Washington at Cowpens.

• **The Honorable Gary Clemens**, clerk of the Loudoun Circuit Court, will discuss the court system and its influential officials, such as Catesby Cocke, land speculator and the region's first clerk of court.

Friends Member Dorothy (Dot) Shetterly is generously hosting the fundraiser at her beautiful farm, Silverbrook, near Hillsboro in Western Loudoun. It's a place with its own tales to tell of local Quakers during the Revolutionary War period, among them David Potts.

Potts migrated from Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, and purchased 540 acres, including the Silverbrook land, from Catesby Cocke in March 1758. His son David Jr. would later enlist in the Continental Army and be disowned by the Fairfax Monthly Meeting.

But David Jr. and his brother Ezekiel, the future owner of the Silverbrook parcel, participated in the war effort, as so many other Loudoun Quakers did, by helping feed the troops. David provided 425 pounds of beef and Ezekiel another 375 pounds.

Count on the Friends to present a lively program that answers many of your "who, what, when, where, why, and how" questions about Loudoun and the War for Independence.

For more information, please call 540-579-2825 and leave a message with your name and phone number, and a member of the Friends will return your call promptly. **To learn more** about Loudoun in the Revolutionary War, turn to page 6 for the Librarian's list of books, manuscripts, and collections at the Thomas Balch Library.

Summer Classes and Calendar

Saturday tours and Sunday lectures at the Thomas Balch Library will resume in September 20. In the meantime, don't miss this fascinating class.

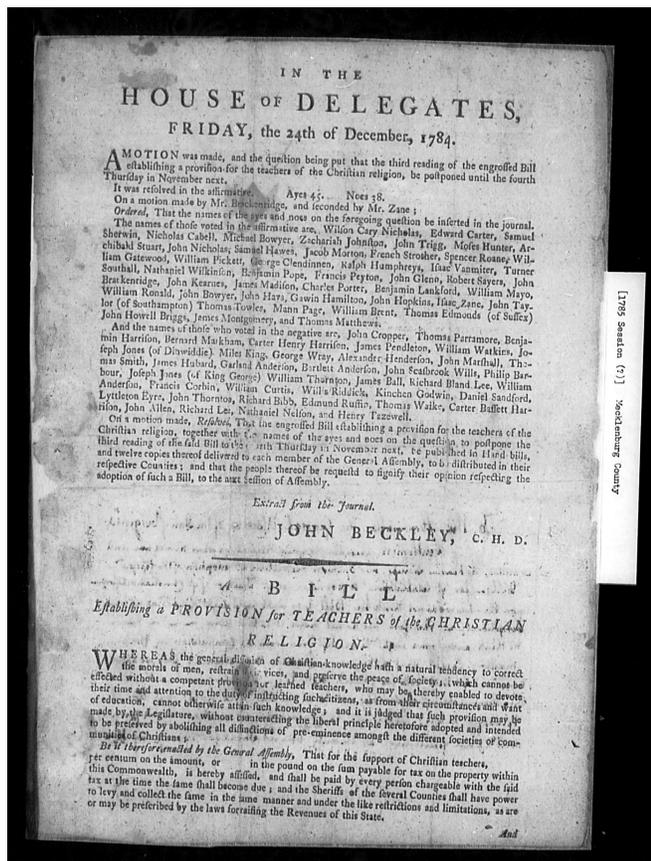
History of Virginia as Told by Legislative Petitions

Thursday, 6 August 2015, at 10 a.m.

Petitions to the General Assembly were the primary catalyst for legislation in the Commonwealth from 1776 until 1865. Public improvements, military claims, divorce, manumission of slaves, division of counties, incorporation of towns, religious freedom, and taxation were just some of the concerns expressed in these petitions.

They often contain hundreds of signatures and are a useful tool in genealogical and historical research. Frequently, they contain supplementary support documents useful in research, including maps, wills, naturalizations, deeds, resolutions, affidavits, judgments, and other items.

Greg Crawford of the Library of Virginia will discuss how one can access these valuable documents online through the Library of Virginia database for Legislative Petitions (<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions>) Crawford, who received a BA and MA in History from Auburn University, was hired in 1999 as Local Records Archivist at the Library of Virginia and is currently the Local Records Services Program Manager.



Petition for "a provision for teachers of the Christian religion."

EXHIBITS 2015

Margaret Mercer Room

July- American Colonization Movement – Greg Paxton



Early organizers of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States were, left to right, Richard Bland Lee, John Randolph, and Henry Clay.

August – Local Civil War Relics – John Creamer

September – The Village of Aldie – Aldie Preservation Society

Lower Level Meeting Room July – September – Celebrating Virginia's Heritage - Morven Park

News From the Friends' Black History Committee

A Busy Spring for the BHC: Studying Loudoun's Lost "Colored" Schools, Discovering a Long-Lost Mortician's Ledger

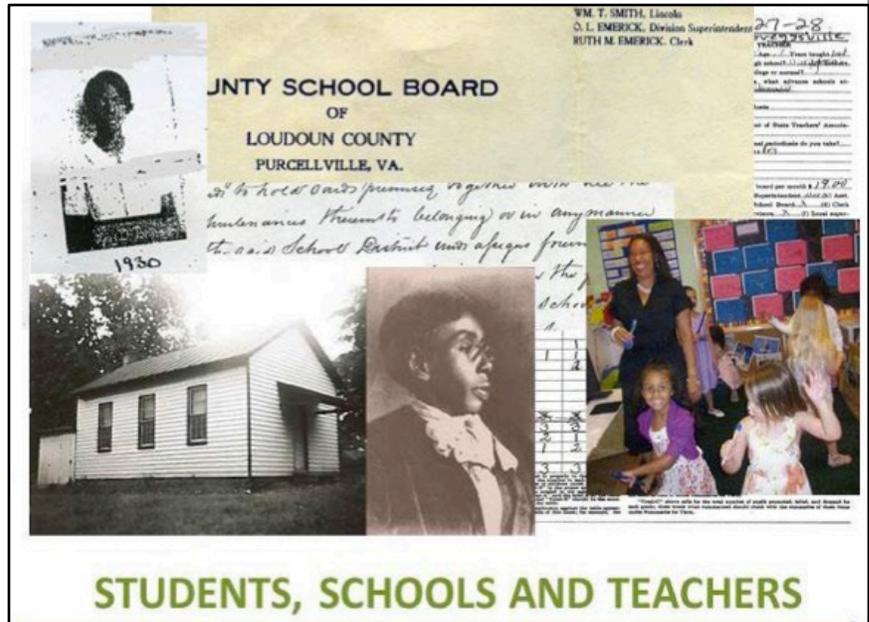
By Robert Sanabria, BHC Member

In May and June, members of the Black History Committee participated in conferences, led cemetery tours, uncovered treasures in attics, and moved forward with a new study of Loudoun County's "colored" schools.

Donna Bohanon the BHC Chairperson Donna Bohanan and several other Committee members attended the Journey through Hallowed Ground 's 10th Anniversary Annual Conference held in Waterford, Virginia, on May 19 and 20.

During the conference, she participated in a panel discussion "Challenges and Successes in Activating Interest in Black History," along with Christian Cotz, director of education and visitor engagement at James Madison's Montpelier; Jenny Masur, manager of the National Capital Region's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, and Karen Hughes White, president of the Afro-American Historical Association of Fauquier County.

Larry Roeder, chair of the Black History Committee's Research Committee, led a Spring Cemetery Tour on May 16 starting at the Prosperity Baptist Church, founded by Jennie Dean. To learn more about Loudoun's black cemeteries, visit <https://conklin-project.wordpress.com/cemetery-tour/>.



Larry Roeder also is engaged in a multi-year project to fully document all of the former "colored" schools in Loudoun, showing their locations, available photos, the names of instructors, and subjects taught to their students. County residents are invited to provide personal information on the colored schools. A research model may be found on <https://conklin-project.wordpress.com/>, which documents the Conklin Colored School, as well as McGraw's Ridge, a "white school."

In his recent research Roeder has focused on Caroline Thomas, a Quaker instructor from Pennsylvania who taught African-Americans in Leesburg and Lincoln.

She then went on to instruct Winnebago Indians in Nebraska as part of a program led by Samuel Janney of Loudoun. In May, members of the research committee joined members of the Lincoln Preservation Foundation to study the Lincoln Colored School.

Louis Jett, BHC secretary, recently made a fascinating discovery while cleaning out an upstairs room in an old Hillsboro house: an early 20th century mortician's ledger. The abandoned record book contains information on many old families in Loudoun, including the Emerick family. Oscar Emerick was one of the longest serving superintendents of the Loudoun County Public Schools.

News From The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library

Time to Celebrate and Support

At Last! The Thomas Balch Library Endowment Foundation Now Can Accept Funds Directly

By Ronald A. Rust, Board Member

On behalf of the Friends of the Thomas Balch Library Board, I am pleased to announce that the IRS filing for 501(c) 3 status is nearing completion and the Thomas Balch Library Endowment Foundation (TBLEF) will be ready at last to receive funds currently held in trust by the Town of Leesburg.

The Foundation grew from a generous bequest of more than \$600,000 made by the late Virginia Bowie, a longtime volunteer, to the Balch Library.

We first announced the gift in 2011. Since then, the Friends has been involved in securing the required IRS status for the endowment, a process



Balch Interior/Bowie Gridley Architects

that has been complicated by the Library's ownership and operational position. **The Balch Library** is owned by the Town of Leesburg, and, at the same time, it is not part of the Loudoun County Public Libraries system. It is, in effect, just another department of the Town. Because the Commonwealth of Virginia operates under what is called the Dillon Rule, the use of public money is prohibited unless expressly



The Thomas Balch Library/Bowie Gridley Architects

authorized by the General Assembly. Therefore, because the Balch Library is owned by the Town, bequests made to the Library could not be used by the Library without special authorization.

In 2013, this problem was surmounted by the enactment of special legislation that formally authorizes funds to be used by the Library. The state's action made it possible to draft and review bylaws. These bylaws have now been approved by the Town Council and incorporated into Town Ordinances, making the Foundation an official vehicle for those who wish to provide specific funding for the Balch in perpetuity to do so.

With these last steps, the endowment funds that the Friends has raised over the past seven years can now be transferred to the Foundation as it secures additional funding to begin to provide significant assistance to the Balch. That means that the contributions we raise at the fundraiser in September can go directly into the endowment.

On the Shelves, In the Vaults at the Thomas Balch Library

This Summer Discover Loudoun's Revolutionary War History

Alexandra Gressitt, director of the Thomas Balch Library, and her colleagues kindly provided *The Chronicle* with this list of books and collections at Balch related to the Revolutionary War for your summer reading and explorations at Balch.

Allison, Robert. *The American Revolution: A Concise History*. 2011

Balch, Thomas. *Papers Relating Chiefly to the Maryland Line During the Revolution*. 1857.

Cecere, Michael. *An Officer of Very Extraordinary Merit: Charles Porterfield and the American War for Independence, 1775-1780*. 2004.

Cecere, Michael. *In This Time of Extreme Danger: Northern Virginia in the American Revolution*. 2006.

Eckenrode, H. J. *The Revolution in Virginia*. 1964.

Hartmann, John W. *The American Partisan: Henry Lee and the struggle for Independence, 1776-1780*. 2000.

Isaac, Rhys. *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation*. 2004.

Levy, Andrew. *The First Emancipator: The Forgotten Story of Robert Carter, the Founding Father Who Freed his Slaves*. 1962.

Morrill, Dan L. *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*. 1993.

O'Connell, Christy Marie and Jerome T. *Revolutionary War Militia Commissions of Loudoun County, Virginia*.

Purcell, L. Edward. *Who Was Who in the American Revolution*. 1993.

Richards, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. *German-Americans in the American Revolution*. 1992.

Stewart, Robert Armistead. *The History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution*. 1993.

Sweig, Donald. *The Virginia Nonimportation Association Broadside of 1770 and Fairfax County*. 1979.

Van Doren, Carl. *Secret History of the American Revolution: An Account of the Conspiracies of Benedict Arnold and Numerous Others Drawn from the Secret Service Papers of the British Headquarters in North America Now for the First Time Examined and Made Public*. 1941.

Christopher Greenup Muster Rolls 1778 (SC 0028).pdf <http://www.leesburgva.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=2256>



Christopher Greenup (1750?-1818) was born in either Loudoun or Westmoreland County, Virginia. He served as a lieutenant in the 16th Virginia Regiment, and was later promoted to colonel. He went on to become governor of Kentucky.

John Champe Chapter Sons of the American Revolution Collection 1999-2001 (M 063).pdf <http://www.leesburgva.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=7458>

Mediterranean Pass for Rising Sun 1819-1924 (SC 0009).pdf

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=2355> European nations made payments to these countries to ensure the safety of their merchant vessels, including those of the American Colonies. After the war, U.S. ships had to manage alone.

Mollie Brady Collection 1847-1893 (M 084).pdf

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=11140> Ephemera consists of a facsimile of a Continental Line pay voucher and published lyrics to "When This Cruel War is Over."

The Thomas Balch Library Director's Summer Update



By Alexandra S. Gressitt

The Thomas Balch Library underwent reconstruction with sympathetic additions 15 years ago. Even with ongoing maintenance by the Town of Leesburg, we have now reached a point where some aspects of the building and grounds are in need of attention beyond routine maintenance.

To refurbish the garden and grounds will require at the minimum an investment of some \$25,000. The Agnes and B. Powell Harrison Garden, a much-loved niche on the grounds, is in need of upgrading and rehabilitation.

The fountain, replaced five years ago, again needs replacing. The brick patio area surrounding the fountain has settled, resulting in an uneven walking space with drainage pipes sticking up.

Work has started on upgrades. The Town has already replaced the fountain with a pirouette-style head. This is similar to the original fountainhead, which is still unavailable. The handicap slot in the parking lot has been upgraded and the entire parking lot re-stripped. In the process one parking slot was lost, but the two remaining spaces, handicapped and regular, are now much more useable.

Over the years, the brick light fixtures at the back of the parking lot have been tipped and broken periodically by vehicles and the snowplow. While the Town of Leesburg has always fixed them, their lifespan has come to an end, and replacements must be installed.

As you are aware, a couple of years ago the pine trees lining the western corner of the lot became a hazard.

The Town removed the pines, graded the ground, and planted three crape myrtles and several other bushes. Due to complaints from the public about the condition of plants, particularly the boxwood, the Town removed damaged and dying plants, as well.



Plans are afoot for bids to level and reset the brick patio. This is the most costly portion of the proposed work and one for which we are soliciting donations. A plaque with donor names will be installed in the garden.



Photos by Laura Christiansen

Additionally, the Town is investing in a permanent solution to the audio issues in the meeting room. Equipment has been ordered and will be installed to provide appropriate amplification levels and meet ADA requirements.

The electric bill always has been a budgetary challenge. Working with the Town's Buildings staff, all but two of the HVAC units have been replaced, achieving huge savings. Various windows in the building—the window in the kitchen and the bay windows in the Janney Room, for instance—are single pane. Storm windows for the bay windows have been ordered.

The tables in the meeting room are beautiful but extraordinarily heavy. Constant moving of the tables as the room is set and reset for different public uses has taken a toll on their condition. They need to be refinished and perhaps replaced with lightweight, more mobile tables.

To sustain the quality of the Thomas Balch Library's assets and insure ongoing usability of the facility, we look to the Friends and the community for ongoing support. Please consider supporting the Library in these projects.



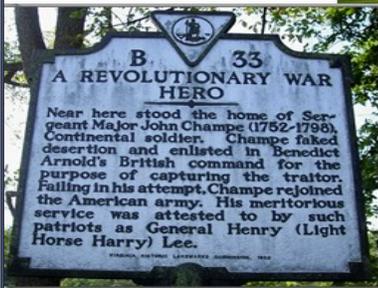
The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library

The CHRONICLE

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(540) 579-2825 | balchfriends.org

Save the Date for Our 8th Annual Fundraiser Sunday, September 13 at 4 PM at Hillsboro's Silverbrook Farm



Come learn about Seargent-Major John Champe of Aldie, Washington's double-agent ordered to capture traitor Benedict Arnold, and other Loudouners during the American War of Independence.