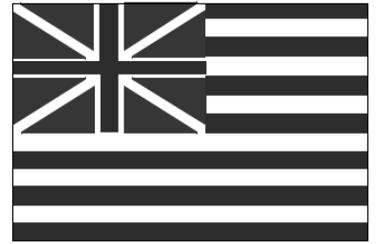




THE RAPPAHANNOCK GAZETTE



Newsletter of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.

Volume 3 Number 6

November/December 2000

“Stand a Poll”

Virginia Elections in the 1700’s

by Trip Wiggins



The First Tuesday in November. We all know what that means, election day! It’s as American as mom, dogs, and apple pie. That’s what makes America great – the opportunity for citizens to vote for the candidate of their choice. President, Vice-President, Senator, Congressman, County Commissioner, Sheriff, you name it, and WE elect them. It’s one of our basic rights. But it wasn’t always that way.

Elections and the laws governing them were vastly different in the 1700s in Virginia (and the rest of the colonies for that matter). They changed from colony to colony, so we’ll stick with Virginia in colonial times before the Revolution. We’ll get to post-revolution at some later date. First, what offices were there, and which ones were elected?

That’s right, many offices were appointed versus elected positions. Probably more than you think. Within the colony, government was rather small; so there were a small number of people who actually ran the government at either the county or colony level. Let’s start at the top.

The Royal Governor. He was appointed by the King, as was the Lt. Governor. The Governor was a choice position for an English leader. He was appointed by the King and Parliament and never had to travel to that malaria-infested colony known as Virginia. He usually chose an assistant, the Lt. Governor, paid him a

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The purpose of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society is to bring together persons interested in preserving & perpetuating the heritage and culture of the colonial era in & around the Rappahannock River Valley of Virginia; to conduct historical research of persons, places & events relating to the Rappahannock River Valley in Colonial times, and to organize activities related to the Colonial era in an effort to educate the public about the way of life of our forebears in this area.

2000 RCHS OFFICERS

President: Diane Nolan
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THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



The streets of Fredericksburg are dressed for Christmas and there are excited shoppers everywhere. Although our community may be considered small by some standards, it is very much a part of the 21st century. Have you ever thought about changing places with a Fredericksburg resident living in the 18th century...just for a day? This is something the members of RCHS do all the time. In fact, we have had an exciting year of performances and presentations doing just that.

It is hard to believe that we are just one year old this month. It has been a busy year and we have been amazed at how many invitations we have had to participate in various area events.

Life in the 18th century seems to be unrealistically romanticised by many who base their ideas on popular movies and novels. Although we do enjoy dressing up and dancing, we also strive to present this part of our history with facts to give people a true and honest account of this time in our past. In all of our presentations, we have had a lot of fun talking about then and now based on our research into manners, dress, community activities, social customs, and life in general. Some members are working on 'first person' personnas, others are involved in putting together vignettes to give a better idea of how people interacted with one another. Indeed, we have come a long, long way in just one year.

On December 2nd, we will be dressed in 18th century work attire to make fresh, mixed greenery wreaths on the side porch of The American History Company. Colonial families had none of the glitz and glitter we associate with Christmas decorating today. This is our only annual fund raiser.

On December 9th, RCHS will present the Open House program for Historic Dumfries. The program was based on research and written by Susan Bailey and focuses on

Dumfrie's strong Scottish heritage, colonial history, as well as some of the well known members of the community during the 18th century. There will be gentle mixture of friends and neighbors getting together to celebrate Christmas in a special way. This promises to be a wonderful evening of education and entertainment for the whole family.

We are looking forward to a new year with many more opportunities to share our love of 18th century history with others. Hope you will join us and participate.

Wishing you a Blessed Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Diane

COLONIAL FREDERICKSBURG FACTS

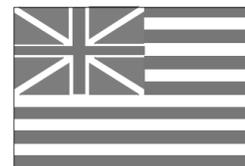


1703 - John Thornton settles at Snow Creek 4 miles south of Fredericksburg

Dec. 10, 1710 - Royal Lt. Governor Alexander Spotswood is appointed

1742 - John Royston's lots, 27 & 28, are designated site for upper tobacco warehouse (S. side of Amelia St., between Sophia and Caroline)

AMERICAN HISTORY TIDBITS



1776 Nov 16 - 1st salute to a US flag (Grand Union Ensign) was volley of 11 guns fired by Fort of Orange on St. Eustatius, Dutch West Indies. Salute was in response to like volley fired from Andrea Doria commanded by Capt. Isaiah Robinson.

1782 - 1st Bible printed in U.S. at Philadelphia by Robert Aitken. British copyright laws prevented earlier printing of English Bible and thus printing had to be held off until colonies were virtually independent.

1787 - Growing American belief in education of women seen in publication of *Thoughts on Female Education*, by Dr. Benjamin Rush. Important argument was that to have well-educated children depends on well-educated mothers.

1787 - 1st cotton factory in New England established at Beverly, Mass., under management of John Cabot and Joshua Fisher.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Now through Feb 28, 2001 - Shipbuilding in Colonial Virginia. Nine-month exhibition traces the shipbuilding industry from the colony's earliest days through the Revolution. Examples of tools used in design & construction exhibited along with paintings, prints, maps etc. **Yorktown Victory Center Dec. 16 - Christmas at Popes Creek.** The Memorial House is decorated and colonial music is performed. Fee free. **Nov 29-Dec 15 - Museum Shop Sale.** Do your holiday gift shopping at the **Claude Moore Colonial Farm** Offices while helping to support the only privately operated National Park in the United States. All sales proceeds benefit the Farm's educational programs. **Nov 26-Dec 31 - A Colonial Christmas.** Witness 17th and 18th century holiday traditions at the **Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center.** **Dec 1-Jan 6 - The Holidays at Mt. Vernon.** See the Mansion adorned simply for the holidays. Visitors are also invited to tour the third floor of the Mansion - rarely open to the public. **Dec 8-9 - A Plantation Christmas. Gunston Hall Plantation.** 7-10pm A re-enactment of an 18th century Christmas, with carriage rides, hot cider, open hearth cooking demonstrations and candlelight mansion tours. 1-800-811-6966. **Jan 2-Feb. 28 - Winter in Colonial Virginia.** At **Jamestown Settlement**, learn how English settlers and Powhatan Indians adapted to life in close quarters and survived on a limited food supply. At **Yorktown Victory Center**, discover ways Rev. War soldiers passed the time by making gunpowder cartridges and training for battle while Virginia farmers worked to repair tools and live off stockpiled goods in the 18th century. **Jan. 17-20 - Third Annual Textile Art Studies at Colonial Williamsburg.** For information call 1-757-220-7174 or email <dcountrymann@cwf.org>

WEB SITES FOR ABOVE EVENTS:

George Washington Birthplace National Monument
www.nps.gov/gewa
Montpelier
www.montpelier.org
Yorktown/Jamestown
www.nps.gov/colo
Claude Moore Colonial Farm
www.1771.org
Jamestown Settlement
www.historyisfun.org
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
www.history.org
Gunston Hall
www.gunstonhall.org/events

RAPPAHANNOCK COLONIAL DANCERS



We have formed a Colonial Dance demonstration team. We have been asked by several people and organizations to "perform" for functions, so we have formed a group that will be able to meet those needs. We are looking for people who will be dedicated to coming to rehearsals, getting the proper attire together and be available when we have a commitment to do a demonstration. This will be a team striving to develop a level of expertise in this type of dance over time. For anyone who wants to be on the demo team, contact Elaine Sturgeon, coordinator 540-785-2168 or Diane Nolan 540-373-7651. Upcoming demonstrations are:

Dec. 9 - Weems-Botts Museum. 6-7pm RCHS has been asked to perform for their Christmas Open House.

RCHS ACTIVITIES

In addition to the dancers, the group has several other activities lined up in the near future. Come join us for some fun:

- Dec. 2 -** Annual Christmas Wreath Making. 9am-4pm.
Side porch of The American History Co.,
Caroline and Charlotte St.
- Dec. 5 -** Dinner at Brock's Riverside Grill. Colonial attire required. Dutch treat. 7 pm.
- Feb. 10, 2001 -** Salem Church Library. Kids event. We have been asked to have a program geared for kids.
- Mar. 3, 2001 -** George Washington Ball in Williamsburg.
More info TBA later.
- April 28 -** Scottish Block Party and Colonial Children's Festival

COLONIAL HISTORY YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

Mason-Dixon Line

Most people, when they hear the term “Mason-Dixon Line” immediately think of the American Civil War. It was the line that divided the North from the South; from slave holding Maryland and non-slave Pennsylvania. But in reality, it’s roots go back much farther and had nothing to do with dividing the northern states from the southern states over the slavery issue.

In the 1680’s a dispute arose between Cecilius Claver, 2nd Lord Baltimore and first proprietor of Maryland, and William Penn, proprietor of Pennsylvania, over the boundary between their respective land grants. Despite numerous conferences to settle the boundary, it continued to be in question for over 80 years. Finally the Crown had had enough of the bickering between the families and the British Privy Council ordered, in 1763, a royal survey. The actual survey was conducted over the next five years by three principal members: Charles Mason, an astronomer; assisted by Jeremiah Dixon; and colonial surveyor David Rittenhouse. The starting point was agreed to be at a point just east of the Delaware river from which the team of surveyors went westward 233 miles to a point just west of the Monongahela river. The Crown confirmed the survey in 1769 giving us our modern border between Pennsylvania and Maryland. In 1784, the survey continued west as the boundary between Pennsylvania and Virginia (today’s West Virginia).

The surveyors set up milestones along the line that over the years have been taken up by souvenir hunters. Most of the original stones have been recovered and replacements dot the way east to west. By the way, in the 1960’s, the survey was re-done and the line modified ever-so-slightly. Today it lies at 39° 43’ 19.521” north latitude.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

At the last meeting, a nominating committee consisting of Trip Wiggins, Tina Buchanan, and Bob Bailey was appointed. They have come up with a slate for the 2001 year. It is their recommendation that the current board remain for the election, which will be held in January. Nominations will be taken from the floor at the time of the election. Please remember that the person being nominated must have given their approval prior to the nomination.

NOTABLE COLONIAL PERSONS

**CARTER
BRAXTON**
(1737-1797)



*Carter Braxton
house in
Newington, VA*

Virginia’s Signers of the Declaration of Independence

Carter Braxton

Carter Braxton was born at “Newington” on the banks of the Mattaponi river in King & Queen county on September 10, 1736. The home was built by the Lumpkin family in the 1600s. It then came into the Braxton family. George Braxton married Mary Carter, the fourth daughter of Robert “King” Carter of “Corotoman” fame. It was here that their son Carter was born. He attended the College of William and Mary graduating at the age of 19 in 1755. He married early to Judith Robinson but after her early illness he sailed to England and continued his education at Cambridge University. While abroad he and his brother George purchased “Elsing Green” in King William county on the Pamunkey river. Carter moved in on his return and managed the large estate which he had inherited. He later married Elizabeth Corbin. He had sixteen children – only ten of which survived infancy.

As with many of the landholding gentry, Carter tried his hand at politics and was elected to the House of Burgesses serving from 1761 to 1771. From 1772 to 1773 he served as sheriff for King William county. Re-elected to the House in 1775 he was a member of the first four Virginia Conventions (1774-75) held after the royal governor dissolved the Assembly. He was elected to the Continental Congress to replace a vacancy (the death of Peyton Randolph) and took his seat in February, 1776, and as such was involved in the debate over the issue of independence.

Though in opposition to the British policy during the years leading to the revolution, he was a moderate among the more firebrands of Henry, Jefferson and the Lees. He was a supporter of the Virginia resolutions against the Stamp Act but thought republicanism an ideal never to be achieved in America. He did, however, sign the Declaration of Independence – although reluctantly. He signed only to insure that the Virginia delegation appeared to be in unanimous agreement since the measure had been proposed by one Virginian (Richard Henry Lee) and written by another (Thomas Jefferson). He expressed doubt that all of the signers realized that they were making a permanent break from England.

A reluctant signer, he remained a staunch Virginian the rest of his life. His conservative views lost him his seat in the Continental Congress when the delegation was reduced from 7 to 5 seats. He was again elected to the Virginia General Assembly in the House of Delegates from 1776 to 1777, 1779-81, 1783, 1785-86, and 1790-94. From 1793 to his death he was a

SUGAR'S ADVENTURES

Written by John Hardia as dictated by Sugar the Parrott

Sugar is on vacation with his master this edition, but will be back next issue.



Carter Braxton (con't)

member of the governor's executive council. Additionally he assisted in writing a new constitution for Virginia (he opposed the one drawn up in 1776). While skeptical of popular government, he showed more liberality in his support of Jefferson's famous Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom.

The war hit him hard financially, leaving him in financial straits the rest of his life. His last decade was spent in Richmond, dying there on October 10, 1797 at the age of 61.

Stand A Poll (con't)

portion of the pay he was receiving as Governor (the Governor received £3,000), and shipped him off to Williamsburg to govern. Lord Botetourt in 1768 was the first titular governor to come to Virginia since before Alexander Spotswood 60 years previously. Lord Dunmore followed Botetourt and was the last colonial governor.

Next in the pecking order was the Governor's Council. They were a sort of cross between the House of Lords, the Cabinet, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. They held executive, legislative, and judicial powers for the entire colony. (The idea of "checks and balances" won't come along until some of these Virginians write our constitution.) They were made up of older, wiser advisors to the Governor. They were the heads of the leading planters in Virginia (Byrd, Harrison, Fairfax, Lee, Ludwell, Carter, etc.) and they were appointed by the Governor, often for life. Needless to say, they were normally very loyal to the crown. One was chosen as "President" who served as the Governor in the latter's absence. They were addressed the Honorable Mr. Xxx, Esquire. No, they tended not to be lawyers. Of note, only fifty-seven family names appear in a list of the ninety-one men appointed to the council from 1680 to the Revolution. Nine families account for almost a third, and fourteen other names for almost another third.

The Secretary of the Colony was recommended by the Governor but appointed by the King. As were the Receiver General (custodian of all revenues), Auditor General, and the Attorney General. The first three were normally also Councilors, the last a member of the House of Burgesses.

Now we come to the House of Burgesses. They too, were made up of the heads of the leading families (planters) in the colony, but these were elected by the populace from their counties. Each county could elect two. Additionally the cities of Norfolk, Williamsburg and Jamestown could elect one burgess as could the College of William and Mary. It was the House who was initially given some powers to make the colonists think they had a voice in government while major decisions were really made by the Governor and his Council. However this changed over the course of 150 years to be just the opposite. This august body was filled with the names familiar to us all: Washington, Pendleton, Henry, Wythe, Lee, Jefferson, Randolph, Monroe, Madison – the list goes on.

That's pretty much it for the colony level. The county level was where things happened that directly affected the colonists on a day-to-day basis. The county had a county court comprised of 10 or more Justices of the Peace. (There was no set limit.) These men also predominantly came from the leading families. This was considered a stepping stone to colony politics. Now when I say county court you may jump to the conclusion that these men were judges. Well, they were but very few of them ever studied the law.

Unlike today, the county court was the only body to govern the county. As such they had judicial powers, legislative powers, and executive powers all rolled into one body – similar to the Governor's Council. These were gentlemen, and the public (and their peers) expected them to do the right thing. What's more amazing is that is exactly what they did! They took their duties very seriously and made a pretty good government out of it. (Their was little political bickering as there were no political parties.) By the way, there was also no separation of church and state. So these same justices would haul you to court if you missed four consecutive weeks of the "established" church (Church of England) whether or not you considered yourself a member. (By virtue of living in Virginia, you WERE a member of THE church!) Like their council counterparts, these were the gentry. From 1755 to 1775 there were some 1600 justices, three quarters of which were comprised of only 3-400 families. Families had long coattails.

So how did a man become a justice of the county court? Why, they were nominated by the justices themselves and approved by the Governor. (Of course many were sons of burgesses and councilors!)

The county sheriff was also appointed and was usually the senior justice of the peace on the court who had not already held that position. More on the sheriff later. The clerk of the court, also appointed, pretty much ran the day-to-day business between court day sessions (once a month). These two positions were paid. Most of the other government positions had no salary except when their particular body was in session. You served because it was your responsibility.

Stand A Poll (con't)

So that's it. The government of Virginia. Almost totally appointed, except for those burgesses, who turned out to be troublemakers for the crown.

How long did they serve? Usually they served until: 1) they died, 2) resigned, or 3) were dismissed by the Governor. Additionally, elections were held on the coronation of a new King or appointment of a new governor. What a system! Elections were infrequent at best.

The Electors.

When these infrequent elections were held for burgesses, who could vote? That changed quite a bit throughout Virginia's history. In the beginning (before 1670) ALL freemen could vote. There is no reference to status (white, black, landowner, etc.). Essentially all men over 21 who were free. Of course there was always that unwritten requirement of being a member in good standing of the Church of England. (This changed about 1680 with the passage of the Toleration Act where the dissenters [Quakers, Baptists] were allowed to vote and hold office but still had to attend the "established" church at least once a month. It would be much longer for the Roman Catholics.)

By 1670 the rules changed. Gone were the black freemen. You also had to own property. No mention was made as to how much land you had to own, just that you were a freeholder. (That is a freemen who held [owned] property.) By the early 1700s this was an irritant to the Governor, our own Spottswood, who complained in 1713 "any one can vote, though just out of a condition of a servant, and that can but purchase half an acre of ground." There was also voter fraud where people purchased land (as little as a 1/2 acre) just prior to the election to be eligible to vote.

In 1736 the House of Burgess spelled out the voting requirements more clearly. You still had to be a male, over 21, and now had to own (for a minimum of one year) either 100 acres (uninhabited) or 25 acres (with a house on it where you lived). If you lived in a town, you had to own a town lot and have your home on the lot. If two or three persons went in on a joint partnership to purchase land, only ONE could vote, unless enough land was purchased that each person in the joint venture could qualify on the acreage requirements.

Two things to note here. First, the size of the house is not stipulated. You could own 25 acres and have a shack on it and qualify. Second, if you owned 100 acres in each of three counties, you could vote in EACH county's election! (As the old joke about mayor Daley goes, "vote early and vote often." Many did just that.)

In 1761 the burgesses amended the requirements. They lowered the uninhabited requirement to 50 acres and stipulated that the house must be at least 12-ft square. (This was never ratified by the King, so was not changed until we became a free state.)

By the way, voting was more than a privilege or a rite – it was mandated by law. If you were eligible to vote and failed to cast your vote, you could be fined 200 lbs of tobacco! (Few, if any, were ever prosecuted.)

The Candidates.

Unlike today, to run for election all you had to do was be qualified as a voter. (One exception – the sheriff could not run for burgess while he held office.) That's it - officially. Of course if you were not a prominent planter and had other influential planters/burgesses/justices on your side, your chances of getting elected were remote at best. Oftentimes influential members of the county would come to you and ask if you would "stand a poll," that is run for election. You obviously had their backing and they could probably influence others. One good way of making a name for yourself in the county was to be named to the church vestry. This began the political careers for many a politician. (By the way, most vestrymen held that position for life!)

The Election Process

The first step is the writing up of the "writ" by the Governor. He was the one who decided to call an election, so he had to produce the writ to formally proclaim the election. This was drafted by the Secretary of the Colony and given to the county sheriffs at least 40 days prior to the date the governor wanted to call the burgesses into session.

Once the sheriff received the writ he had a few things that had to be accomplished. First and foremost he had to decide upon a date for the election. (It wasn't the first Tuesday in November. The counties were not bound to hold elections on the same day.) He also had to deliver copies of the writ to the local parish churches. It was the church minister's duty to inform the congregation every week prior to the election as to the date of the election. (No one could claim ignorance of the upcoming election.) The sheriff had to give the date to the church at least 20 days prior to inform the public.

There were penalties for not complying with the law. Sheriffs who failed to give the writ to the ministers in time were fined 2000 lbs of tobacco. An election was serious business.

The date was critical. Since people could vote in any county's election where they were qualified, if all elections were held on the same date some voters (and some candidates) might not be able to participate in more than one election. If the sheriff was on the side of a candidate, he could schedule an election on such a date as to make it difficult for persons from another county to come and add support to the rival candidate. No, there were no political parties, but there was politicking.

Those desiring to be elected had to notify the sheriff at any time up to the day of the election. It was an unwritten rule that a gentleman would NOT actively campaign. It wasn't really necessary. Normally the county only had a few hundred eligible voters and everyone knew everyone else. You saw them at court days, at church, in the tavern, at the races, at the tobacco inspection station – the list goes on. Many were related to each other. The people KNEW the candidates far better than we could ever hope to know our 30-second-sound-bite-wizards. Rarely did anyone espouse a platform. There were no political parties. You knew him and you knew how he acted and what he stood for.

Stand A Poll (con't)

There was one bit of "campaigning" that many of the candidates did partake in. That of the "treat."

Treating the voters was an established custom by the mid 1700s. The candidates would treat the voters to food, entertainment, and drink before, during, or after the election. Of course the official reason was to show their appreciation to ALL the voters of the county for participating in the election. The real reason was to "buy" your vote with liquor. The House of Burgesses officially outlawed the "treat" in the 1730s stating that no treating was permitted from the time the sheriff announced the writ to the close of the polls on election day. This was very loosely enforced and few were ever fined for treating. It was just part of the Virginia election. In fact, George Washington and his famous expense book records for the election of 1758 in Frederick county that he treated some 391 voters to 160 gallons of alcohol including: 28 gallons of rum, 50 gallons of rum punch, 34 gallons of wine, 46 gallons of beer, and 2 gallons of cider royal. That works out to better than a quart and a half per voter! He won.

Some candidates kept true to the laws. One such candidate in his first election refused to "treat." During the election of 1777 he held the feeling that "the corrupting influence of spirituous liquors, and other treats," was "inconsistent with the purity of moral and republican principals," and wishing to see the adoption of a "more chaste mode of conducting elections in Virginia," determined "by an example, to introduce it." He lost – but learned a valuable lesson in Virginia politics! James Madison changed his style the next election. Treating continued to be practiced well into the 19th century.

Treating and staying at a candidate's home while traveling to the election was the norm. Since the election was at the courthouse, many voters had to travel a great distance in order to cast their vote. Candidates knew this and often opened their homes to these out-of-town voters (together with a good breakfast, and drink) and in return often received their grateful vote.

Election Day.

Finally the day approached for the election. It was always held at one location in each county – the courthouse. At the appointed time (usually noon) the sheriff read the writ and opened the polls. He then had several duties to perform. First he had to ensure a table was set up with the tally sheets, places for the candidates and their clerks to sit, decide the method of voting, and then formally start the election.

There were two methods of voting. By "view" and by "poll." By view would be used in circumstances where there were only enough candidates as offices to vote for, or for small elections where voting was by a show of hands (and counted by the sheriff). Usually this was an approval of the slate en-masse.

By "poll" is what we are more interested in and was the prevalent form. A voter would come up to the table to make his vote known. The sheriff would declare whether or not he was qualified to partake in the election. If so, the voter would announce publicly whom he was voting for, which was recorded like a box-score.

(If there were several people running for two burgess seats, the voter had to declare when they came up both of their votes. If they decided to cast only one and hold his second back to see how the election was going, he would forfeit his second vote.) Since all vote tallies were public, if a candidate saw himself behind he would send men out to round up more voters for his cause. As a voter would declare his vote the candidate receiving it would normally stand and (based on the voter's social status) express his heartfelt thanks for the voter's kind attention.

The election continued until either the sheriff decided to extend the election another day or call a stop to the election. This was his call entirely. It was also the reason that most candidates wanted to be a friend of the sheriff. Officially he could extend voting hours (or occasionally add an extra day) due to inclement weather conditions. In reality he may have been keeping the polls open long enough for his friend to bring in enough voters to win the election. Conversely he could end the election when his friend was winning. As the loser of such an election, your only recourse was to petition the House of Burgesses. Once in a while they upheld the petition, but more likely would side with the sheriff. (He may have been one of their relatives.)

Finally, with the election over, the sheriff would certify the results and furnish them to the Secretary of the Colony. Another election was in the books and our newly elected burgesses were off to Williamsburg.

And who were these burgesses? From our area, here is a condensed list:

<i>Year</i>	<i>King George</i>	<i>Spotsylvania</i>	<i>Stafford</i>
1769-71	Charles Carter Wm Robinson	Benj. Grimes Roger Dixon	John Alexander Thompson Mason
1772-74	Joseph Jones Wm Fitzhugh	Geo. Stubblefield Mann Page, Jr.	John Alexander Charles Carter
1775-76	Joseph Jones Wm Fitzhugh	Geo. Stubblefield Mann Page, Jr.	Tho. Ludwell Lee Charles Carter

<i>Year</i>	<i>Caroline</i>
1769-71	Edmond Pendleton Walker Taliaferro
1772-74	Edmond Pendleton James Taylor
1775-76	Edmond Pendleton James Taylor

Three of these gentlemen, Pendleton, Fitzhugh and Jones, represented Virginia in the Continental Congress. Yes, the process of electing our representatives has changed a great deal in the past 200 years but the republic and the democracy they created for us still rings true.

For more:

Boorstin, Daniel. "The Americans: The Colonial Experience." 1958.

Griffith, Lucille. "The Virginia House of Burgesses 1750-1774." 1968.

Leonard, Cynthia M. "The General Assembly of Virginia 1619-1978." 1978.

Kolp, John G. "Gentlemen and Freeholders." 1998.

Sydnor, Charles. "Political Practices in Washington's Virginia." 1952.

NEWSLETTER GUIDELINES

In order to produce a good newsletter, accurate and in a timely manner, please try to use these guidelines.

1. Our time period and location is 18th Century Virginia with our area of concentration Fredericksburg and the Rappahannock River Valley. The Rappahannock River Valley covers from the ford of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers down to the Chesapeake Bay. Our particular interests lie in the areas of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford, King George, and Caroline counties.
2. Any member may, and is **encouraged to**, submit article(s) for publication. The newsletter is distributed to and read by people with varying degrees of expertise. Some of us are not as well versed on Colonial life and times as others, so in order to be as accurate as possible, please check your facts prior to submitting an article.
3. Sources/references must be given for factual information. This enables the reader to go to the original source for more information, gives credit to the source, and also lets the editor of the newsletter off the hook if the information is challenged. This includes information from the internet. If you write to someone for permission to reprint and receive it, I would appreciate a copy for my files.
4. Opinions of the writer must be clearly identified as such.
5. The newsletter is published every other month in January, March, May, July, September, and November. My target date to have the newsletter published is the 15th of those months. In order to do that I will need any submissions by the 8th of the month. you may mail to the PO Box, or email me at <MyraWig@aol.com>.
6. The editor has the final say on content, format and deadlines. I try to keep the newsletter to 12 pages for postage. If I receive several articles and we also have a good bit of news to go into the newsletter, it may be necessary for me to edit, publish as a two part article or use it in the following month's publication.
7. If you have an idea for an article but don't have the time, resources, etc. to write it yourself, we have someone who is willing to do the research and write the article.

NEW MEMBER WELCOME

We have two additional memberships this issue also. We want to welcome Sue Tuttle, and Joe and Marjorie Steen. Sue is from Newark, Ohio. Joe and Marjorie have recently moved here from Annapolis, MD, but are not strangers to Fredericksburg. She is the Fredericksburg Seamstress at the Waterfront Shoppes. Welcome !

FUTURE MEETINGS

As topics for the new year's meeting are decided on, I will update this. The dates for the next few meetings are:

January 2
February 6
March 6
April 3

BOAT COMMITTEE



After quite a long spell and much anticipation, the boat committee is finally active again. Al and a couple of other members have begun work on "our" boat.

This will be a long awaited dream for some of our group. They could always use more help. If you are interested in building a boat as it was done in Colonial times, contact the editor at 540-371-3906 and I will put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Just to let you know some happenings pertaining to the boat. Al has been to the Wooden Boat School in Maine for a couple of weeks the last two years in order to learn more about period boat building. The first year he went, the class built a boat and Al purchased it and brought it home. This past year, he donated that boat to the Friends of the Rappahannock for the auction at the Riverfest this fall. Just prior to the Riverfest, someone decided it would be "fun" to see how much damage they could do to the boat. As a result, it was not in shape to be put up for auction at the Riverfest. The proceeds from the sale at the auction were to be split by FOR and RCHS. We were planning to use those funds to help with the funding of the boat that is currently being built.

The latest update we have on the outcome of the court proceedings are that the three people who stole the boat pleaded guilty and have turned over money for the repair of the boat. Since Al donated the boat to FOR, it is up to them at this point to decide about repairing it. We will keep you updated as we learn things.

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