



# THE RAPPAHANNOCK GAZETTE



*Newsletter of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.*

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*Summer 2003*

## Col. Henry Willis Fredericksburg's First Mover & Shaker (part 2)

*by Trip Wiggins*

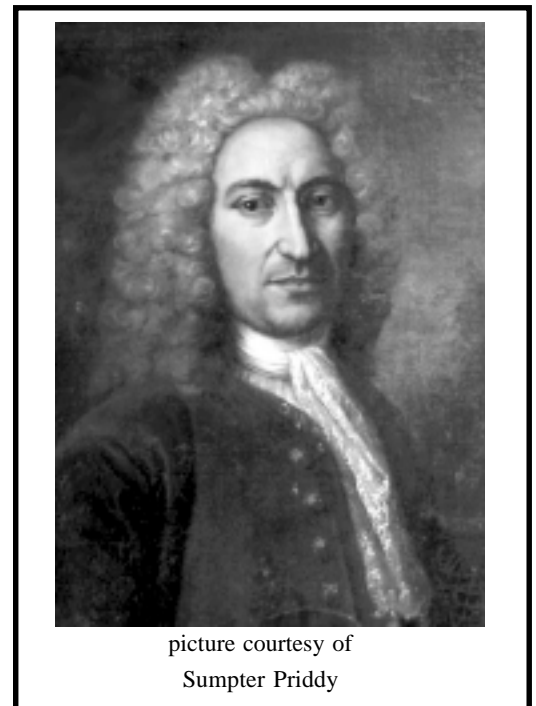
Last issue we looked at the life of this larger-than-life dynamo and traced his roots up until the year 1733 when he was literally building the town of Fredericksburg. He was about 40 now and everything seemed to be going his way... We continue.

1733 brought another child to the growing Willis household and more sorrow. Isabelle, Henry and Mildred's fourth and last child was born but Mildred died that summer. Henry was again a widower with a house full of children and needed a wife and mother to take care of the brood. He again turned to another childhood sweetheart – Mildred Washington, now the widow (her second) of Roger Gregory. (She first married John Lewis.)

Of the courtship, her grandson, Byrd Willis, wrote many years later that when Mildred heard the news of the death of Henry's second wife, she "wept immoderately on hearing it. When someone remarked that it was strange for her to grieve so for a cousin, she replied that the death of her cousin was not the sole cause of her grief, though she loved her dearly... but that she knew that old 'Harry' Willis would be down there to see her at once and she did not know what she should do with him. The sequel proved that she knew her man for in a little month he sat himself down at her door and commenced a regular siege."

They were married on Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1734 but not before Mildred had Henry sign a "prenuptial" agreement to assure her children by her previous marriages would not lose their inheritance. Theirs was apparently a happy marriage and to them a son, Lewis, was born before the year was out.

That same year saw Henry win in his proposal to move the ferry from Mrs. Livingston's lot (near the foot of William Street) to his own lot at the south end of town (foot of Wolfe Street). It was also a year of one of Henry's few reversals as he lost his Burgess seat yet was appointed to fill the seat for ailing Rice Curtis. During that session the Assembly voted to split Spotsylvania into two counties – the western half becoming Orange County.



picture courtesy of  
Sumpter Priddy

*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.*



### **2003 RCHS OFFICERS**

- President:** Trip Wiggins  
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- Vice-President:** Al Piercey  
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- Secretary:** Catherine Bell  
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### **THE PRESIDENT'S PEN**



Hello all and welcome to the summer 2003 issue.

I know this is almost sounding like a broken record (remember those?), but “have we been busy!” and it doesn’t slow down for the next year or so. This is a GOOD thing!

While we had a chance to collectively catch our breath for a portion of the summer, we’ve still been involved in several low-key activities in going to events with our games. I think the public is enjoying it. I know I am and I think the rest of our event attendees are enjoying them also. (A special thanks to Tina and Wayne for making many of our game boards/items. They are really great.)

But now fall is here and we’re ready to “crank it up!” Our college students have returned, sort of like the swallows of Capistrano, and we’re gearing up for Colonial Port Royal Day, THE Tea, Cemetery Tours, the Welsh Festival, our Open House, our annual dinner, the Wreath making/selling and the school visits. I’m excited to get back into the swing of fall and all of the good things popping up.

And finally a “thank you” to all of you who have made this organization what it is – from our veterans to our newest colonists. I am surrounded by people possessing lots of interests and even more talent. It is truly a pleasure to live in 18<sup>th</sup> century Fredericksburg with you all.

I remain,  
Your most humble and obedient servant,  
Trip

### **RAPPAHANNOCK COLONIAL HERITAGE SOCIETY DANCERS**



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 Tina Buchanan 898-2113. We rehearse at St. George’s Episcopal Church, 905 Princess Anne St. Our next rehearsals are:

- September 12 & 26
- October 10 & 24
- November 14 & 28
- December TBA
- January 9 & 23

If you just want to learn the dance of the period, you are also most welcome to come and join us on the above mentioned Friday evenings.

### **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:

- Sept 20 - Fredericksburg Welsh Festival
- Sept 27 - Historic Port Royal Day (formerly Tavern Night)
- Oct 18 - RCHS Afternoon Tea - St. George’s Episcopal Church .  
1-3pm
- Oct 25 & 26. Historic Cemetery Tours. Hosted by RCHS.  
(275th Birthday event)
- Nov 8 - RCHS Open House- St. George’s (George St. entrance)
- Nov 15 - Washington/Lafayette Ball - Great Hall Mary  
Washington College (275th Birthday event)
- Dec 6 - 5th Annual Wreath Sale- this year at St. George’s  
Episcopal Church (George St. entrance)
- Dec 13 & 14 - Stratford Hall Candlelight Tour
- Feb 21 - George Washington birthday celebration. Ferry Farm



## EVENTS OF INTEREST IN THE AREA

Ongoing - Through February 16, 2004.  
Colonial Williamsburg - DeWitt Wallace

**Decorative Arts Museum. The Language of Clothing** showcases Colonial Williamsburg's superb collection of antique clothing, featuring garments ranging from masterpiece court gowns to maternity wear. Discover how clothing offers clues to understanding people of the past.

**Ongoing in 2003 - James Madison: Secretary of State in the Age of Expansion and Exploration. Montpelier.** Presented in conjunction with 200th anniv. of Lewis & Clark Expedition.

**1st Sunday of month Apr-Oct - Slave Life Tours. Gunston Hall Plantation.** Tour museum, outbuildings & slave quarters. 12, 1:30 & 3

**2nd Sun of month Apr-Oct. World of Women Tours. Gunston Hall Plantation.** Explore what it was like to be a woman- gentry, middling or enslaved. 12, 1:30 & 3

**3rd Sat of month Apr-Oct. Behind the scenes Farmyard Tours. Gunston Hall Plantation.** Learn about 18th century crops from the Farm Manager as you tour the pasture and farm yard. 12, 1:30 & 3

**4th Sat of month Apr-Oct. Hidden History Landscape Tours. Gunston Hall Plantation.** 12, 1:30 & 3

**Sept 20 - Annual Fredericksburg Welsh Festival.** James Monroe Museum. Virginia's largest Welsh festival celebratine James Monroes' Welsh heritage on his mother's side. Noon - 5pm.

**Sept 20 - Rail Burning. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Build a bonfire from rotten fence rails. 4:30pm-7:30pm

**Sept 27 - Harvest Festival. Gunston Hall.** Costumed characters will demonstrate open-hearth cooking, autumnal chores, and historic dances. 12-5pm.

**Sept. 27 - Harvest Hoe Down & Dinner. Gunston Hall.** After the Harvest Festival, join us for a lavish buffet under a tent adorned with seasonal decorations.

**Oct 4 - Straw into Gold: From Flax to Linen. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Learn what it means to rett, brake, skutch and hackle. 1-4pm

**Oct 4-5. Fall Fiber Festival & Montpelier Sheep Dog Trials. Montpelier.** See [www.fallfiberfestival.org](http://www.fallfiberfestival.org). 10-5 Sat; 10-4 Sun.

**Oct 18 - Plantation Harvest. George Washington Birthplace National Monument.** Costumed interpretation & craft & farm demonstrations will re-create the daily rhythms of colonial life.

**Oct 18 & 19 - Autumn Market Fair. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Warm yourself by the fire and enjoy the splendor of fall. 11am-4:30pm.

**Oct 19 - Autumn Big Woods Walk. Montpelier.** Guided 2 hr walking tour of the James Madison Landmark Forest. 2pm

**Oct 24-25 - Halloween at Montpelier.** Hayride & Tour of the Haunted Barn.

**Nov. 1 - Mending Fences. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Help the family repair old fences and learn the importance of good, strong fences in the 18th century. 1-4pm

**Nov 1 - National American Indian Heritage Month. George Washington Birthplace National Monument.** Program celebrating American Indian & Alaskan Native peoples' important contributions. 2pm

**Nov 13 - The Americanization of Style: The Presentation of Self, 1700-1825. Gunston Hall.** Symposium seeks to explore the public persona of early Americans, its British & European roots, and distinctly American characteristics. 9a-4p

**Nov 15-Dec 19 - Market Fair Shop Sale. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Do your holiday gift shopping at the Farm Offices while helping to support the only privately operated Naional Park in the US. 10am-5pm.

**Dec 6 - Everything But the Squeal. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** See how the family preserves their meat using salt & smoke, help dip tallow candles.

**Dec 6 - Deck the Halls 2003. James Monroe Museum.** Holiday decorating presentation with Jan Williams. 9:30a-12noon

**Dec 5 & 6 - A Plantation Christmas & Holiday Buffet. Gunston Hall.** Step back in time to an 18th century holiday season on the plantation. 10am

**Dec 7 - Holiday Luncheon Tea & Tour. Gunston Hall.** Celebrate the holiday season with an elegant luncheon tea & special holiday tour of 12-2 or 3-5.

**Dec 11 & 12 - Candlelight Mansion Tours & Garden Illumination. Gunston Hall.** Visit George Mason's home made ready to welcome guests to an 18th century holiday party

**Dec 13 & 14 - Christmas Candlelight Celebration. Stratford Hall.** Our most popular tradition. Enjoy refreshments & holiday music in the Visitor Center, the proceed to the Great House for a candlelight tour with costumed interpreters. Candlelight buffet in the Plantation Dining Room. \$

**December 13 - Christmas at Popes Creek. George Washington Birthplace National Monument.** The plantation is busy with activities as costumed interpreters prepare for the holidays. Open until 7pm.

**Dec 14 - Wassail. Claude Moore Colonial Farm.** Gather in the Farm's orchard to wassail the trees with singing, dancing and chants to ensure a "howling crop."

### <----- WEB SITES FOR LISTED EVENTS

Frontier Culture Museum

[www.frontier.state.va.us](http://www.frontier.state.va.us)

Kenmore/Ferry Farm

[www.kenmore.org](http://www.kenmore.org)

George Washington Birthplace National Monument

[www.nps.gov/gewa](http://www.nps.gov/gewa)

Gunston Hall

[www.gunstonhall.org](http://www.gunstonhall.org)

Stratford Hall

[ww.stratfordhall.org](http://ww.stratfordhall.org)

Citie of Henricus

[www.co.chesterfield.va.us](http://www.co.chesterfield.va.us)

Claude Moore Colonial Farm

[www.1771.org](http://www.1771.org)

## Willis (con't)

Never one to miss an opportunity, and a new county always created new opportunities, Henry was able to produce a letter from the colony's secretary, John Carter, naming Henry as the Clerk of the new Orange County court! (He was still a Spotsylvania justice!) And when the court met in January 1735, he produced a second letter of instruction "signifying the governor's orders that the court be held at his (Willis') house on Black Walnut Run till they agree upon a proper place for that purpose." Henry was now collecting rent for TWO county courthouses!

It was a new court, a new county, but many of the same faces. Henry was well acquainted with several of the justices as they had served together in Fredericksburg as trustees, in Spotsylvania as justices, and at St. George's as vestrymen. Henry was also noted in the Orange court books with the title "Esquire" which carried more social prestige than did "Gentleman."

The court would continue to hold business in Henry's home until it was given a permanent location in 1739 at which point Willis applied for an ordinary license next to the courthouse. He knew from experience that having an ordinary next to the courthouse meant good business during the monthly "court days."

Meanwhile back in Fredericksburg, all was not well. He was behind in his contracts on warehouses and the church. Thus far he had been awarded EVERY public contract in Fredericksburg's short existence.

He sold two town lots to John Gordon who built his ordinary there. It would remain one of Fredericksburg's most noted spots for the remainder of the century first under the direction of Gordon, then after his death, by his son-in-law, George Weedon. He also purchased land southwest of town encompassing today's "Willis Hill."

In 1736 one of Spotsylvania's Burgesses again introduced legislation to remove the county seat from Fredericksburg and relocate it more in the center of the population of the county. It was hotly contended by both sides of the issue and what role Henry played is lost to history, but the deciding vote was cast by none other than Henry's friend and current Speaker of the House, John Carter. The vote was 27-26. The court would remain in Willis' town of Fredericksburg.

With the vote came a contract for Willis to build the new courthouse in town. The work was promised by Willis in 1738 but would not be completed for another 2 years (in 1740). Punctual was not a word associated with Henry.

The following year his slaves and indentured servants were busy working on several projects in the Fredericksburg area, yet he found time to do a few more jobs for the prison: tarring, and the making of handcuffs and irons. Of course he still held his post as Orange Clerk.

As in 1734 when Henry was asked to substitute for the ailing Rice Curtis in the Assembly, 1740 dawned and again his fellow justices asked that he travel to Williamsburg in Curtis' stead.

He returned to Fredericksburg following the session in mid June and must have learned that his health was deteriorating rapidly. That's when Henry's last, and quite colorful chapter of his remarkable life was written.

His wife either had knowledge of his illness or had a premonition – we just don't know which. In the preceding December she had taken steps to protect her property from the hordes of collectors who would descend on the family with Henry's demise. She had a deed of gift created leaving all of her estate to her young son, Lewis. It contained household goods, cattle, sheep and 50 slaves. It was recorded in May, 1740.

By July, Willis was working on his own will which was recorded July 25<sup>th</sup> and naming his brother Francis and close friend John Grymes of Middlesex County as Executors. Their instructions were clear – sell all or part of his estate to pay his debts and if anything were left over to share it among his children.

In order to have an estate to sell, Henry made the deal of his life and in so doing purchased ¼ of the entire town of Fredericksburg!

Now it might surprise the readers that a dozen years after our fair town was founded, ¼ of the lots were still available for sale. It was a "buyer's" market. Prices had remained flat and still there were many vacant lots in town.

His transactions took place on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Seventeen lots were purchased – but there was a catch. Legally, per the Charter that established the town (and named him a Trustee), no person could purchase more than 2 lots. What was Henry to do? Get creative, of course.

The transactions were all between other persons and the town and the land was then "conveyed" to Henry – and no more than 2 lots were conveyed from any one person. Of course all his friends were in on the scheme – they had to be to make it work, yet no one complained or challenged the purchases.

Who were the conveyors? Some were probably legitimate, but others were something else entirely. Nathaniel Chapman, a Stafford merchant was probably "in" on it, as was Henry's brother Francis and co-trustee John Taliaferro. But others were questionable at best. The Rev. Theodosius Staige, St. George's first Rector, had been gone from the area for over a decade. My favorite conveyor was William Gooch, Esquire – the colony's sitting Governor!

Little more than a month later, on September 14<sup>th</sup>, Henry died.

Per his will his executors began making improvements to his lands and began the task of selling them off to cover his debts. Two lots were chosen for explicit improvements, and within months an ordinary was erected on the lots closest to the new courthouse! This would become known as the Long Ordinary – the busiest place in town on court days. Alas, there are scant records of its operations so it remains dwarfed in history to Weedon's Tavern on William Street.

So, did his plan work? Apparently so. The following spring his estate was put to auction. All debts were paid and there was some money left over for his family.

So is Henry Willis the model for today's MBA candidates? Probably not. Although he had drive and determination, he lacked some of the administration and organization skills to pull off the deals on a routine basis. But

## Willis (con't)

he was here when Fredericksburg needed him. He was instrumental in getting the tobacco inspection process going and paid off the Buckner and Royston families just when it looked like this new "town" idea had pretty much petered out. Also remember, that he had his hand in literally everything in the early days of the town's existence – he built the tobacco warehouses, the church, the courthouse, the prison – practically the entire community. And finally when it looked like the county seat would be moved from Fredericksburg (ensuring its early demise) he got it a reprieve through his ties in the Assembly. He eagerly jumped at each of these daunting tasks and relished in their victory.

Say what you like about Henry Willis – bold dreamer, schemer, whatever – but remember without the likes of him, the town of Fredericksburg would probably not be what it is today.

And of his children...

### Children of Henry and Anne:

Mary (1716-1766) married Col. William Daingerfield of "Coventry" in Spotsylvania County.

Francis (b. 1718), David (b. 1720) and Robert (b. 1726) probably died young as they were not mentioned in their father's will.

Henry (1722-after 1740) married Elizabeth Gregory, his step-sister.

John (1724-1750) married Elizabeth Madison

### Children of Henry and Mildred Brown:

John (1728-177?) married twice and was killed in S.C. by Tories.

Elizabeth (1729/30-?) married Dr. William Sale.

Ann (1731-?) married Duff Green; died in Danville, KY.

Isabelle (1733-?) married Howell Lewis and died in N.C.

### Children of Henry and Mildred Gregory:

Lewis (1734-1813) married Mary Champe, Ann Carter, and Mrs. Elizabeth Bloomfield

## Sources:

Byrd, William. "A Progress to the Mines." (Book is on-line.)

Crozier, William. Virginia County Records – Vol 1 Spotsylvania 1721-1800. (New York, 1905)

Felder, Paula. *Forgotten Companions*. (American History Co., Fredericksburg, VA. 2000)

Fielding Lewis and the Washington Family. (American History Co., Fredericksburg, VA. 1999)

McCabe, Marian. "A Chronology of the Life of Henry Willis." (Manuscript, CRRL, ca 1999)

Potter, Origanna Willis. The Willises of Virginia. (Mars Hill, N.C., 1964)

Torrence, Clayton. "A Virginia Lady of Quality and Her Possessions: Mrs. Mildred Willis of Fredericksburg." (Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, Vol 56, 1948)

## Wine and Beer measurements

From Philip Vickers Fithian's Journal we learn that in 1773 the Robert Carter household at Nomini Hall consumed the following in alcoholic beverages:

4 Hogsheads of Rum

150 Gallons of Brandy

(If he would have listed beer or hard cider it would be much higher.)

We know what a gallon is, but what is a "hogshead?"

Wines and spirits in the 18<sup>th</sup> century came in bottles and casks of various sizes. A "cask" is a closed vessel for containing liquors, formed by staves, heading, and hoops. This is a general term comprehending "pipe," hogshead," "butt," "barrel," etc.

A <b>Barrel</b> is SUPPOSED to hold	31 ½ gallons of wine
	36 gallons of beer
	32 gallons of ale, or
	34 gallons of beer vinegar

A **Hogshead** is supposed to hold 60 gallons of wine (but could be any cask containing between 63 and 140 gallons).

A **Pipe** is supposed to hold 120 or 126 gallons of wine (2 hogsheads).

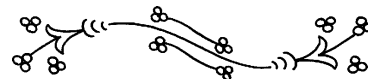
A **Butt** is the same as a Pipe (2 hogsheads)

A **Tun** is supposed to hold 252 gallons of wine (2 pipes or 4 hogsheads). (By the way, a Tun of wine weights about 1,800 lbs; not quite a ton.)

You will note that the numbers will not always add up or be the same between sources. E.g. Some references say a Pipe is 126 gallons, others say 120 gallons. Measurements, like spelling in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had some variety.

**Demijohn** is another term you'll hear on occasion. A Demijohn is a narrow necked bottle of glass or stoneware that is enclosed in wickerwork. A demijohn holds between one and 10 gallons. It was used mainly for storage of wine.

Next time – another drink receipt. Cheers!



## RULES OF CIVILITY

### 6th Rule of Civility:

Sleep not when others speak, Sit not when others stand, Speak not when you should hold your peace.

Walk not when others stop.

## Female of the Species

(from Robert Southey's "Letters from England", 1802)

The women have been more extravagant than the men;—to be more foolish was impossible. Twenty years ago the smaller the waist the more beautiful it was esteemed. To be shaped like a wasp was therefore, the object of female ambition; and so tight did they lace themselves, or rather so tightly were they laced, for it required assistant strength to fasten their girths, that women have frequently fainted from the pressure, and some actually perished by this monstrous kind of suicide. About the same time they all wore powder; the hair at the sides was stuck out in stiff curls, or rolls, tier above tier, fastened with long double black pins; behind it was matted with pomatum into one broad flat mass, which was doubled back and pinned upon a cushion, against which the toupee was frizzed up, and the whole frosted over with powder white, brown, pink, or yellow. This was the golden age of hairdressers; the ladies were completely dependent upon them, and obliged to wait, patiently or impatiently, for their turn. On important occasions, when very many were to be dressed for the same spectacle, it was not unusual to submit to the operation overnight, and sit up all night in consequence,—for to have lain down would have disordered the whole furniture of the upper story. The great hoop, which is now confined to the court, was then commonly worn in private parties. Besides this there were protuberances on the hips called bustlers, another behind which was called in plain language a rump, and a merry-thought of wire on the breast to puff out the handkerchief like a pouting pigeon. When women were obliged to sip their tea with the corner of their mouths, and to eat sideways. A yet more extraordinary costume succeeded, that of pads in front, to imitate what it must have been originally invented to conceal.

All these fashions went like the French monarchy, and about the same time; but when the ladies began to strip themselves they did not know where to stop.

And these follies travel where the science and literature and domestic improvements of the English never reach! Well does Anquillesi say in his address to Fashion:

(translated into English)

*Not because she is free and industrious,  
Great in peace and great in war,  
Is triple England now so dear and  
illustrious among us;  
Not because that land proudly rejoices  
in her Newton,  
And in that great one by whom Othello and Hamlet  
are become immortal names.  
But because it has pleased thee, Oh powerful goddess,  
to attire thyself after the English mode,—  
everyone speaks of that country.  
Hence it is that in fine emulation we are seen  
to dress like My-lord, and Italian matrons like  
the English My-lady.*

**September 20**

**Fredericksburg Big Band  
Concert**  
**5:30-7:30 pm Market Square  
adjacent to the Fredericksburg  
Area Museum**



Take pleasure in an evening of music held in Market Square, the original market place when Fredericksburg was established.

**October 10**

**Colonial Potpourri**

**7:30 pm St. George's Episcopal Church**

A magnificent concert featuring musical selections from the early eighteenth century. The concert will feature James Hicks, organist and Music Director of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown, New Jersey.

**October 25 & 26**

**Historic Cemetery Tours**

**Saturday 11 am-4 pm; Sunday 1-4 pm**

**Downtown Fredericksburg**

A true tour of our past. Cemeteries hold not only the remains of our forefathers but also their secrets. Take a tour of some of our more beautiful and interesting cemeteries where costumed guides will be on hand to provide you with information on these hallowed grounds. Trolley will pick up at Visitor's Center on the hour (last pickup 2 on Sat and 3 on Sun). Refreshments will be provided at St. George's Episcopal Church in Faulkner Hall (left of the cemetery) on Sat. and James Monroe Museum on Sunday.

**November 1**

**Franklin's Glass Harmonica in Recital**

**7:30 pm Trinity Episcopal Church**

A recital by renowned glass harmonicist Dean Shostak with harpsichord accompaniment. Mr. Shostak has been featured on NPR's *All Things Considered*, NBC's *Nightside*, and PBS's *Mister Rogers Neighborhood*.

**November 15**

**Washington/Lafayette Ball**

**7-11 pm Great Hall at Mary Washington College**

The rich heritage of Fredericksburg will be celebrated during this elegant evening in the Great Hall of Mary Washington College.

**December 31**

**First Night**

**6 pm- midnight Downtown Fredericksburg**

Celebrate with us in the historic downtown district a night of revelry as we commemorate the end of our anniversary year and look forward to 2004.

## LETTERS FROM FRIENDS

My dear Friend Jennifer,

We were dismayed that you were unable to attend the recent festivities at Stratford Hall but can understand your recent motherhood has curtailed your travel for a time. Cornelia Lee had made a good choice in this union with John Hopkins being a banker in Richmond recently widowed. Her resolve to only marry a learned man stood her in good stead. One could only hope that I should be as fortunate but given my advanced age and singular lack of fortune I am of a mind to know that it will only be a dream but the good Lord has blessed me with an abundance of family and friends of which I count you dear. The day was greeted with an abundance of rain but this did nothing to mar the Joy of the day. Most of the guests, of which there were too many to mention but I will remark that they were of high means, had arrived the day before journeying from Alexandria down the Potomack by boat. The Reverend Thomas Davis, rector of Christ Church in Alexandria, officiated at the afternoon ceremony. Miss Lee "wore a saten short dress and over it a lace Frock, the Sleeves looped with Pearl, her necklace and earrings and a Crape Cap with one white Flower in it. Her dress, though expensive, was neat and simple." After the ceremony we all adjourned to the Ballroom for a sumptuous buffet replete with smoked Salmon, Ham, fresh cheeses, fruits, and all manner of sweets. After all had partaken of this bountiful feast the dancing began! A Mr. Hickman was the fiddler and wonderful he was. His bowstrings sounded for many hours. It is to his credit and skill that he could play for such a time but you know my love of the Dance so I was especially pleased since I not so often get to Dance as much as I would like. The Dance Master was a Mister Jonathan Fitzefferie lately of Fredericksburgh. I was able to wear the new Frock sewn by my own loving Mother. You will think it lovely. I do love the color and style above the other Gown that I own. Mrs. Davis, wife of the Reverend Davis, had on an older style Gown but this did equal to her age and station. There was a lady - Mrs. Deblois - who had a new style Gown and Cap on that was lovely. I understood her Husband is a notable Ship Owner, Importer, and Merchant in Alexandria so one could understand the fineness of her dress. There was also Mister James Patton there - another Merchant from Alexandria. We were able to share several lines of the Dance but had no time to pass conversation so I was unable to ascertain if he was married or widowed. One of my ilk has to be ever alert to all possibilities. I know that I have inundated you with much nonsense and frivolity but it has been so long since we has seen your Sweet Person. May the good Lord grant you and your Family Health and Peace until we meet again -

Your most humble Obedient Servant and Friend,  
Christina Buchanan  
Rollingwood House



## BYLAW CHANGE

Article IX of our bylaws states “These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Society by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting and mailed to any members not present at that meeting.”

At the September meeting a motion was made to amend the bylaws regarding term limits for the officers. We will vote on this amendment at the October meeting. The motion is to abolish the term limits of the board members.

The motion affects Article III, Section 2 which reads- “The officers shall be elected by ballot to serve for one year or until their successors are elected. ***No officer shall serve in the same office for more than two consecutive terms.*** The term of office shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.”

and Article VII, Section 2 which reads- “Officers shall be elected each year by a majority vote of RCHS members present at the annual meeting. The term of the office shall be one year beginning at the close of the meeting at which they are elected. ***No officer shall be eligible for re-election to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.***”

If the motion passes, the sentence that is bold in italics will be removed from the bylaws, leaving the rest of the section intact.

**Deadline** for submissions to the Fall issue of the newsletter is **November 8, 2003**. The meeting is on the 4th...just bring your submissions then or email me as you think of something or see something that would be good to add.

Due to liability concerns of the corporation, your membership ***must be current*** in order to participate in any events the group is asked to do.

## NEW MEMBER WELCOME

It's exciting for me to be able to keep this short column alive for it means that we as a group are growing. We have several new members to welcome in this issue of the newsletter also. Catherine Taylor lives in King George and has been expressing interest in several areas within RCHS. Jeff Edmunds is no stranger to some of us. He is with the 3rd Virginia and I personally have known him for about 5 years or so. I received an email from Heidi Hubbell the she and her sister Holly wanted to join. She had visited the web site and became interested in what we do. And this member is no stranger to most of us. Diana Farrar, who is our contact at St. George's, has joined and is interested in helping out in several areas also.

At the September meeting, Wendi Livingston came in for the meeting and to join. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to everyone. We all are part of this organization for different reasons and our levels of participation are different. We hope that you will come to our meetings (held the first Tuesdays of the month at St. George's Episcopal Church-Faulkner Hall, 905 Princess Anne Street) so we can get to know you.



“While wormwood hath seed, get a bundle or twain, to save against March, to make flea to refrain; where chamber is swept, and wormwood is strown, no flea, for his life, dare abide to be known.”

Thomas Tusser



“You will always be lucky if you know how to make friends with strange cats.”  
Colonial American Proverb



## HAZARD

If you like discussing the most popular gambling games of the 18<sup>th</sup> century you'll rapidly come to the conclusion that Hazzard was among the most popular if not THE most popular. It was an old game by then. It's first appearance was in the mid 1300s and it popularity remained until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it evolved into the modern game of craps. As most popular games go it is deceptively simple to learn but quite another to master.

It is a simple game of rolling dice and betting that one number will come up (the Nick) before another (the Out). Unlike Craps, there are several combinations that can win and several which will cause the caster (or shooter) to lose.

Equipment needed: 1 Pair of 6-sided dice

Number of Players: Any number

It helps to have the below chart of Nicks and Outs available to keep track of what must be rolled to determine if the caster wins or loses. Move past the chart to learn how to play.

<b>Main</b>	<b>Nick (Win)</b>	<b>Out (Lose)</b>
5	5	2, 3, 11, 12
6	6, 12	2, 3, 11
7	7, 11	2, 3, 12
8	8, 12	2, 3, 11
9	9	2, 3, 11, 12

### **The Play:**

Each player rolls one die. High roll is Caster. All others Setters.

Caster rolls dice.

If between 5 and 9, it becomes Main and play continues

If not, dice are passed to Setter to the Left who becomes the new Caster

After the Main is cast, each Setter lays a wager on the table or abstains from wagering. (The Setters are wagering that the Caster will lose.)

Caster rolls again. This and all subsequent throws are called the Chance.

If he rolls a Nick, he wins and collects all of the wagers. (Return to first step.)

If he rolls an Out, he loses and pays each Setter the wager. He then passes the dice to his left who becomes the new caster.

A Roll that is neither a Nick nor an Out is called a Mark. When a Mark is rolled no one wins or loses. Each Setter has the opportunity to increase his wager, and then the caster throws again. This continues until either a Nick or Out is rolled.

Play continues as long as the Setter's money or nerve holds out. There are no points to count. The winner is the one who leaves the table with the most money!

The Strategy. Watch the Mains. That determines what must be rolled to Win or Lose. There are a finite number of ways a Nick or Out can be thrown with two dice. The more you understand probability, the better your chances. (Of course in the modern version, you are playing against the House and if the House determined that this game gave favorable odds to the Caster, it would not be hosting the game!)

Fortunes have been won and lost with this Gentleman's game. As Charles Cotton said about it in his "Compleat Gamester" (1674), "To conclude, happy is he that having been much inclined to this time-spending-money-wasting game, hath took up in time, and resolved for the future never to be concerned with it more; but more happy is he that hath never heard the game thereof."

Sources:

Cotton, The Compleat Gamester

Nelson, Walter. The Merry Gamester (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.)

## What did we eat?

Here's an excerpt from an essay written by Thomas Gwatkin's about his time in Williamsburg in the early 1770s. He was a minister teaching at William & Mary until the revolution broke out at which time he sailed back to the safety of the Mother country and fellow Englishmen. This is reprinted from the William & Mary Quarterly, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, Vol 9, pp 81, 83, & 84.

"I observed...that the natives of Virginia eat greater quantities of animal food than the inhabitants of Britain. A short account of their manner of living may afford you some entertainment.

"Their breakfast, like that of the English consists of tea Coffee and Chocolate; and bread or toast and butter, or small Cakes made of flower and butter which are served to Table hot, and are called hoe Cakes from being baked upon a hoe heated for that purpose. They have also harshed [hashed] meat and homony, Cold beef, and hams upon the table at the same time, and you may as frequently hear a Lady desiring to be helped to a part of one of these dishes as a cup of tea.

"Their tables at dinner are crowded with a profusion of meat: And the same kind is dressed three or four different ways. The rivers afford them fish in great Abundance: and their Swamps and forests furnish them ducks teale blue-wing, hares, Squirrells, partridges and a great variety of other kinds of fowl. Eating seems to be the predominant passion of a Virginian.

"To dine upon a single dish is considered as one of the greatest hardships. You can be contented with one joint of meat is a reproach frequently thrown into the teeth of an Englishman. Even one of the fair Sex would be considered as Glutons in England. Indeed, I am inclined to believe more disorders in this country arise from too much eating than any other cause whatsoever.

"In the Afternoon tea and Coffee is generally drank, but with bread or toast and butter. As Supper you rarely see any made dishes. Harshed and Cold meat, roasted fowls, fish of different kinds, tarts and sweetmeats fill up the table.

"After the cloth is taken away both at dinner and supper; Madeira and punch or toddy is placed upon the table. The first toasts which are given by the Master of the family, are the King; the Queen and the royal family; the Governor and Virginia; a good price for Tobacco.

"After this, the Company be in a humour to drink, the ladies retire, and the Gentlemen give every man his Lady; then a round of friend[s] succeeds; and afterwards each of the Company gives a Sentiment; then the Gentleman of the house drinks to all of the friends of his Company and at last concludes with drinking a good Afternoon or good Evening according to the time of day."



### 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 being 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 articles(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 quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. My target date to have the newsletter published is the 15th of January, April, July and October. In order to do that, I will need any submissions by the 8th of those months. You may mail to the PO Box, or email me at [myrawig@cox.net](mailto:myrawig@cox.net).
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 issue.
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. So please let me know if you have a particular interest.

The RCHS Gazette is published quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. All members receive a copy. Membership is \$10.00 per year for individuals, \$15.00 per year for families. **RCHS does not maintain an office.** All correspondence should be addressed to RCHS, PO Box 7823, Fredericksburg, VA 22404-7823. *Items for the newsletter* should be addressed to the Editor c/o RCHS or emailed to [myrawig@cox.net](mailto:myrawig@cox.net). Copyright 2003 RCHS. The content of the RCHS Gazette is the property of RCHS, its members and contributors. RCHS is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to the Society are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
*for*  
**THE RAPPAHANNOCK COLONIAL HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.**

P.O. BOX 7823  
FREDERICKSBURG, VA 22404-7823  
PHONE 540-371-3906

*The purpose of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc. 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 ways of life of our forebears in this area. The time period of concentration is 1760 to 1820. Our business meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm at Faulkner Hall, St. George's Episcopal Church, 905 Princess Anne St., Fredericksburg.*

YEARLY DUES:

INDIVIDUAL    \$10.00  
FAMILY         \$15.00

TO JOIN, FILL OUT THE INFORMATION BELOW, SELECT A MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY, ATTACH A CHECK WRITTEN TO **RAPPAHANNOCK COLONIAL HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.** IN THE PROPER AMOUNT, AND MAIL TO THE ABOVE PO BOX.

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_ CHECK NUMBER:\_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT:\_\_\_\_\_

KEEP THE TOP PART FOR YOUR RECORDS

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OTHER ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU WILLING TO WORK ON PROJECTS? YES ( ) NO ( )

**Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.**  
**PO. Box 7823**  
**Fredericksburg, VA 22404-7823**

**Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.**

Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 7:30pm at Faulkner Hall, St. George's Church, 905 Princess Anne St., Fredericksburg, VA  
Please join us!

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

Oct. 7

Nov. 4

Dec - TBA-Dinner out

Jan. 6 - Happy New Year!

English Country Dance Lessons (Colonial Dancing):

St. George's Church, 905 Princess Anne St., Fredericksburg, VA (downstairs in Family Room)

Bring the family for some old fashioned fun!

September 12 & 26

October 10 & 24

November 14 & 28

December TBA

January 9 & 23