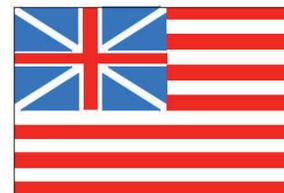




The Rappahannock Gazette



Newsletter of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.

The purpose of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society is to bring together persons interested in preserving and perpetuating the heritage and culture of the colonial era in and around the Rappahannock River Valley of Virginia; to conduct historical research of persons, places and 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 forbears in this area.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 1 - Business Meeting: Mary Washington House. 7:30 p.m. Chair: Trip Wiggins.

Mar. 1 - Business Meeting: Mary Washington House. 7:30 p.m. Chair: Trip Wiggins.

Apr. 16 - Trunk "Sale": St. George's Episcopal Church. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. EC: Naomi McPherson.

May 21 - Spring Tea: St. George's Episcopal Church. EC: Tina Buchanan.

Due to liability concerns of the corporation, **your membership must be current** in order to participate in RCHS events.

ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE CLASSES

Feb. 4 - Demo

Feb. 11 - Open

Feb. 25 - Open

2011 OFFICERS

The Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society is pleased to announce its officers for 2011.

President:	Trip Wiggins
Vice President:	Sharon Brunacci
Treasurer:	Joyce Matherly
Secretary:	Elaine Sturgeon

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello RCHS and welcome to 2011.

As I get the opportunity to become your president I have a challenge for all of us. We all joined RCHS for some reason (dance, fashion, history, etc.).

Great. We are comfortable with whatever we happen to enjoy. In 2011 I urge all of us to stretch out into something entirely new. If you like fashions, how about foods. If you like dance, how about daily life. Whatever. There are hundreds of topics you could choose from. Pick something, do a little research. Who knows, you might really get excited about your new colonial interest and become a resource that the rest of us can go to when we have questions.

As for me, as I sometimes

portray Mr. William Allason, a local Scottish merchant, I hope to learn a bit more on fabrics that I would have sold in my store. I also hope to get back into writing some more articles for the newsletter. Got any ideas?

Elsewhere, it looks like we are off to another busy and fun year with lots of events and school visits. If you haven't had a chance to try a school visit, perhaps this is the time to try it. It's a lot of fun and the kids are great to work with.

Finally, with our new officers in place, I'd like to give a big thanks for outgoing Vice President, Catherine Taylor. Your most humble and obedient servant,

Trip Wiggins

O F F I C E R S ' C O R N E R

Treasurer's Report

December Beginning Balance: \$8,272.52
January Beginning Balance: \$10,465.52
Joyce Matherly

E V E N T S C O M M I T T E E

Tuesday, February 1

Events Committee Meeting:

All members are encouraged to attend the Events Committee meeting at Mary Washington House from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. It's a new year and we are looking for new members to join us. If you have questions, please contact Events Chairperson Myra Wiggins at 540/371-3906.



Saturday, April 16

Trunk "Sale":

Do you have clothes and/or accessories appropriate for Colonial Virginia (1760-1790) but no longer need them? Do you need clothes and accessories for this period? Society members who would like to purchase, barter, sell or exchange items with other like-minded members may do so at this event. We'll set up tables and racks in

Sydnor Hall of St. George's Episcopal Church at 10:00 a.m. and the "sale" will run between 11:00 and 2:00 p.m. If you have questions, please contact Event Coordinator Naomi McPherson at 540/752-4979.



E N G L I S H C O U N T R Y D A N C E C L A S S E S

English Country Dance classes are usually held on the second and fourth Fridays of each month in the Family Room of St. George's Episcopal Church. Classes begin at 7:00 p.m. and are open to the public (\$2 per class). Dance Mistress: Elaine Sturgeon, 540/785-2168 or miselaineus@yahoo.com.

- Classes:**
Feb. 4 - Demo
Feb. 11 - Open
Feb. 25 - Open



Illustration by: [unreadable]



A NIGHT AT THE TAVERN

In planning for this event, Laura Polk and I toured the Rising Sun Tavern, looked up recipes (receipts) and available ingredients, interviewed Society members who had visited taverns and referred to online and print resources for additional information. We recognized that a pot luck supper with families would be fun but not really a tavern experience. We also wanted to ensure that you would know the difference. To that end, Laura created a pamphlet containing information about colonial taverns. The hand-bound publication featured original cover art by Allen Polk and interesting facts compiled from a variety of sources. Only a few copies were made.

Excerpts are reprinted here for your edification and entertainment.

Naomi McPherson

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES

Quality

Following lifted from Colonial Williamsburg online article:

Taverns in early American ran the gamut from the elegant to the mean and nasty, from those that catered to every need of society's elites to those that the locals and travelers who used them could only hope to survive," wrote Sharon V. Salinger, a University of California history professor, in her book *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*. ...Inns were male domains. The places could be rough-and-tumble. A Virginia minister in 1751 described patrons as "lazy," "dissolute," and "the very Dreggs of the People." Customers drank heavily. Foul language was commonplace.

Entertainment

Following from <http://www.foodtime>

line.org/foodcolonial.html#tavernfare: Eighteenth-century entertainment took place in the tavern rather than the home. Diaries describe private parties, business and political meetings, celebratory banquets, and gatherings of male friends held in city taverns....

Following lifted from Colonial Williamsburg online article:

Gambling was widespread. Patrons could participate in raffles, and card and dice games, and bet on cockfights and horse races. Felons planned crimes, fenced goods, and passed counterfeit money in inns. Fights and murders were common. Besides pursuing vices, customers enjoyed other diversions. Inn owners typically did not hire performers, Turner* said. Instead, entertainers came to taverns, hoping grateful patrons might pass the

hat for them. Public houses welcomed actors, magicians, and deformed individuals. Animal acts were popular, Turner said. Records mention displays of a camel, moose, baboon, leopard, and trained pigs.

*John Turner - Colonial Williamsburg's senior tavern entertainer, interpreter & master of a dozen instruments. His "work is a labor of love & the product of a lot of research" states an article by Crews.

Most Popular Tavern Recreation: Drinking Rum

In the 18th century, drinking was the most popular of all tavern recreations. ...The kind of drink offered by an individual tavern was a factor in its location, the availability of supplies, and the economic status and aspirations of its tavern keeper.... The drink was made using the rinds and

juice of imported lemons, limes, and even oranges, commonly mixed with rum, and white or brown sugar...Lime punch was the most popular version of the drink...punch was served warm and sold in taverns by the bowl...Toddy--rum mixed with sugar and water--and sangre [ia]--a mixture of wine or beer sweetened with sugar and flavored with nutmeg--were also dispensed by the bowl...Wine, imported from Spain and

Germany, was also served in taverns, but was not widely available outside the cities...Madeira, served during the meal, was the most expensive and popular wine. The consumption of wine, like punch, was limited to the more affluent. Many colonials drank cheaper, fermented beverages made locally. Cider (hard cider) was sold by the jug...Beer was either imported from England or locally brewed...Brandy was usually

imported, but native varieties were sold, made from peaches, apples, or cherries. Homemade liquors gained popularity during the Revolution when the importation of alcohol, beer, and wine was halted.

---*Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers*, Kym S. Rice for Fraunces Tavern Museum [Regnery Gateway:Chicago] 1983 (p. 85-96).

T A V E R N M U S I C

Common Tunes

Following excerpts in this section come from an online article, "Tavern Music" by Ed Crews, on the official Colonial Williamsburg website:

Although somewhat altered in content and meaning, well-known surviving songs include "Three Blind Mice," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "The Bear Went over the Mountain," "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," and, of course, "Yankee Doodle." ... Historical evidence shows that dancing and singing were integral to tavern life in British North America. Trained musicians did play at inns, and patrons did sing to entertain themselves. What they performed is less well known. Historical records don't say much about specific selections. Turner said there was not a class of tunes specifically known as tavern music.

Music

Americans of that period loved song and dance, and taverns were important in eighteenth-century public life. Nothing in twenty-first century America is comparable. Taverns of the 1700s were partially museums, gentlemen's clubs, circuses, schools, and business offices. They were the grandfather of the nineteenth-century saloon, and the great-grandfather of the modern American nightclub.... Music was just part of the tavern entertainment mix.

If a professional musician was unavailable, guests might perform for their own amusement. Homemade music was common in eighteenth-century America, Michael Saffle said. He teaches arts and humanities at Virginia Tech's Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, has a doctoral degree from Stanford in music and humanities, and has a long-standing interest in early American music.

People sang their own songs, often played and even made their own very simple instruments. Keyboard instruments were rare. Violins were more common. People also owned flutes, occasionally trumpets and other wind instruments, Saffle said.

Musical Instruments

Some tavern owners kept instruments for these occasions, Turner said. A colonial inventory of Williamsburg's Shields Tavern shows instruments on hand. The nearby Raleigh Tavern had a **harpsichord**. Any guest who provided his own accompaniment probably relied on something light and portable, like a **flute or a violin**, Turner said. Period instrument makers sold a special traveling violin—a pochette—so small it could fit in a coat pocket. Of course, inn patrons always could fall back on their **voices**. There was group singing.

Tavern Tension

It was not merely about making communal music, however, according to historian Peter Thompson in his book *Rum, Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Philadelphia*. Toasting and singing were means of drawing together people from disparate backgrounds, Thompson wrote, though the gambit didn't always work.

Neither practice was entirely effective, not least because a 'typical' tavern company often contained men who did not want to be drawn into enforced intimacy with the dominant crowd," he wrote. "For this reason, the very forms by which taverngoers attempted to overcome their differences could also become the occasion of division and contest."

Influence of the British Isles

Few references to specific tunes survive. Odds are good, though, that whatever people sang, their tunes originated in the British Isles.

"An ocean separated early English-speaking settlers from the land of their origin, but not from its language, ideology, popular beliefs, proverbs, verses, or music," wrote University of Michigan professor Richard Crawford in *America's Musical Life: A History*. Thomas Jefferson shelved some of these works in his music library. Music for

drinking songs, country dances, and English, Scottish, and Irish airs rested near works by Vivaldi, Handel, and Haydn. Jefferson also liked playing fiddle tunes heard at local gatherings, according to historian Gilbert Chase in *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present*.

Scottish Influence

Particularly popular in Virginia in the 1750s and later was Scottish music, Turner said. Scottish music was in

vogue in London during the period. Virginians who wanted to keep up with current English fashion eagerly embraced these tunes. In his later years, George Washington developed a fondness for these songs and encouraged his granddaughters to perform them for him. Scottish music also was enjoyed by the many Scots who settled and worked in Virginia.

Tavern Dancing

Besides singing, taverns occasionally

featured dancing. This reflected a widespread love of dance, which touched every social class in Virginia, Turner said. Because dancing meant bringing women into a male arena, some owners made accommodations to female sensibilities. Wetherburn's Tavern in Williamsburg added a room just for dances, with a lady's entrance that allowed them to avoid the bar.

T A V E R N F A R E

Source for this section drawn from the following: <http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodcolonial.html#tavernfare>

How do we know?

We know a great deal about what was consumed in colonial American taverns, public houses, and ordinaries.

Information comes from a variety of sources including proprietor records, expense accounts, and travel diaries. Prices were fixed by law. Meals varied greatly according to location, season, and availability...

What Foods Were Prepared for Tavern Guests

Whatever the cook decided to make that day! These daily "Bills of Fare" were sometimes etched on a slate board. People were served together, and they could take as much as they wanted from communal bowls. Most folks ate very quickly; the food disappeared fast. There were no menus or individually priced items for selection...

Travel Diary Excerpts—Rural

Samuel Vaughan listed in 1787 the types of food (all commonly found in the cupboards of 18th-century rural communities) available to travelers on the last page of his travel diary: "Ham, bacon & fowl pigeon of one sort or another always to be had upon the road & often fresh meat or fish, dried

Venison Indian or Wheaten bread, butter eggs milk, often cheese, drinks Rum, Brandy or Whiskey, resembling Gin."

Travel Diary Excerpts—"Agrarian" Long Island Sound

The foods served in Thomas Allen's tavern demonstrate the variety of foodstuffs available in agrarian America; the types of foods used, the kinds of dishes prepared and served at the City Coffee House and other taverns in urbanized areas did not vary significantly from what might have been found in a private home. Between January 9 and March 16, 1774, Allen purchased locally, and subsequently served to his customers, beef once, veal seven times, fowl and turkey five times, mutton twice, and lobsters, salmon, eels, oysters, duck, and other fish caught in nearby Long Island Sound at least once. He kept stores of gammons (smoked ham or bacon), smoked and pickled tongue and beef, salt pork, crackers, butter, coffee, apples, and sugar on hand. Meat, heavily salted for preservation, was the mainstay of the 18th-century diet...In addition; Allen regularly served bread and a potpourri of vegetables: potatoes, carrots, peas, beans, beets, onions, cabbages, turnips, squashes, and cucumbers for pickling. He bought several types of English cheeses and

imported lemons and limes for punch. In 1790 Allen ordered four tin plates "to Bake Gingerbread"...

The Most Popular Food Preparation Methods

Tavern meals were simply prepared... Cooking facilities were limited; many kitchens contained only an open hearth...broiling and boiling were the most popular food preparation methods...

The Most Common Dish Served

By far the most common dish served to travelers was ham, and, in the South, chickens...it was improbable that the average traveler in the colonial era would have much enjoyed whatever it was he was eating. Culinary excellence may have been held in high esteem at some homes or in the finer city taverns after 1750, but most inns and taverns served food of a very low, if stomach-filling order. Some communities set minimal standards for food service, even distinguishing between a "good meal" and a "common one." Meals were served at a set time and fixed price (often included in the price of the room) to the public...The food had a numbing sameness to it, depending upon the location of the tavern, it would stick pretty close to what was most readily available...Many customers couldn't

have cared less about the food; they came for news, good talk, and companionship.”

---*America Eats Out*, John Mariani [William Morrow:New York] 1991 (p. 18-21).

A R E A T A V E R N S T H E N & N O W

Differences from today's restaurants?

Following from <http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodcolonial.html#tavernfare>:

For starters, families did not go out to eat for fun, like we do today. Most of the folks who ate in these places were travelers who were not lucky enough to stay in the homes of friends and family.

Taverns &c. places were NOT known for good food. In fact, most people who ate there complained bitterly about the poor quality and service of the food. They ate because they were hungry. The primary draw of these places was the alcoholic beverages ... and company While most of the folks who dined

publicly were men, there are several primary accounts (journals, diaries, letters, etc.) written by women staying in colonial inns. Children of the owners, indentured servants, apprentices also ate in these places.

E N D N O T E S

Websites to Reference

- <http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodcolonial.html#tavernfare>
- <http://oha.alexandriava.gov/gadsby/gt-gadsby-story.html>
- <http://www.history.org/Foundation/cwhistory.cfm>

Recommended Reading:

- *Early American Beverages* by John Hull Brown
- *In Public Houses: Drink and the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* by David W. Conroy
- *Rum, Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing & Public Life in Eighteenth*

-Century Philadelphia by Peter Thompson

- *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* by Sharon V. Salinger
- *Taverns & Travelers: Inns of the Early Midwest* by Paton Yoder

A N I G H T A T T H E T A V E R N

On November 13th, we did our best to recreate a 1770 fall evening with food, drink, entertainment and dancing. Unlike taverns of old,

gentlewomen and children were in attendance, spirits, tobacco and dogs were kept away and the food was delicious! Judging from the smiles all around, everyone had a wonderful time. Thank you for being with us!

Naomi McPherson extends special thanks to Laura and Allen Polk (for planning and decorating) and Elaine Sturgeon (our dance mistress) for making this a successful event.



Left: Lyn Padgett carves a pork roast prepared by Catherine Taylor while Michael Gilchrist looks on.
Right: Allen Polk sings a love ballad.
Photographs by Naomi McPherson.



A G I F T O F C L O T H I N G

At the beginning of 2010, Jennifer Sustar presented RCHS with a fine suit of clothes. The beautiful blue wool breeches, sleeveless waistcoat and coat were handmade by her grandmother, Veronica Sustar.

According to Jennifer, Mrs. Sustar “loves to sew and made clothes, costumes and quilts for the family.”

Years ago she was given the fabric and asked to create an 18th-century costume out of it. But the person who made the request never returned to pick up their finished garments.

She gave the suit to Jennifer’s family but no one could wear it. And

so it remained...until Jennifer ran across it while cleaning



Elaine Sturgeon models the blue wool coat, breeches and waistcoat made by Veronica Sustar and donated to RCHS by Jennifer Sustar and her family.

Photographs by Naomi McPherson.

out a closet. She returned from winter break with the clothes and passed them on to Elaine Sturgeon in the hope that someone within RCHS could wear them.

The fact that the period-appropriate attire fit our Dance Master, “Mr. FitzEfferie,” was a delightful surprise!

We extend our thanks to Jennifer and her family for this wonderful gift. It is greatly appreciated.

Jennifer is currently a sophomore at UMW. She was recruited at the Community Welcome Fair in 2009.

E V E N T S O F I N T E R E S T I N T H E A R E A

The following were gathered from various sources and are subject to change.

February – James Madison Museum: Enjoy free admission for the month of February and see special exhibit on Revolutionary War patriots. Visit www.jamesmadisonmus.org for more info. FREE

Mar. 10 – Great Lives Lecture: John Paul Jones. 7:30 p.m. in Dodd Auditorium in Geo. Washington Hall, UMW. Speaker: Evan Thomas, author of *John Paul Jones: Sailor, Hero, Father of the American Navy*. Visit www.umw.edu/greatlives for info. FREE

Apr. 16-24 – National Park Service Fee-Free

Dates: Visit without paying an admission fee! Colonial National Historical Park includes Yorktown Battlefield, the site of General Cornwallis’ surrender during the American Revolution and Historic Jamestowne, the site of the first permanent English settlement in America. You may also visit George Washington Birthplace National Monument.



Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society, Inc.

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**Visit our Web site:
www.rchsinc.org**

2 0 1 1 D U E S A R E D U E

If you haven't already, please take a moment to mail in your dues for 2011. Individual dues are \$10 and family dues are \$15.

The address to mail it to is:
RCHS
P.O. Box 7823
Fredericksburg, VA 22404-7823

Dues for 2011 are due at the end of January.
Thank you!

N E W S L E T T E R G U I D E L I N E S

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.

Any member may, and is encouraged to, submit articles for publication. Committee chairpersons are especially en-

couraged to write reports of past and upcoming activities. The newsletter is distributed to and read by people with varying degrees of expertise. Articles should be accurate in detail, sources/references must be given for factual information and opinions of the writer must be clearly identified as such. This newsletter will be posted online, so be very careful about listing your sources and getting permission for reprints. The editor has the final say on content, format and deadlines. Items for the newslet-

ter should be addressed to the Editor, c/o RCHS, P.O. Box 7823, Fredericksburg, VA 22404 or e-mailed to nana4979@comcast.net.

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