

*From the Queen...*

The Queen rushes hither and yon and hardly has a moment to call her own! Consider yourself reminded of our May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting at Rosedale!

I especially want to remind you of the events that will take place on May 20<sup>th</sup> on the Square. This, of course, is the celebration of our own Declaration of Independence. It will be the same basic format, but several new groups will be joining in the festivities. I'll have lots of information on the events at our May meeting, and will tell you just why a Queen can support independence!

But there's nothing regal about the Docent's Book Club — come if you can on the 4<sup>th</sup>. We are reading *The Women of the Frontier* by Billy Kennedy. This is an easy and interesting read. Many of you met the author on March 30<sup>th</sup> when he joined us for dinner at Ri-Ra's Irish pub (afterward we attended his lecture at the Main library). If you would like to research further any of the characters presented in the book, please do so and tell us about them. We have recently read *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* and Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (see book reviews in this issue). Mr. Kennedy's book will take us into our summer reading. We will decide at our May meeting just what this will be, so bring your suggestions.

I recently asked you to concentrate on publicity for the Docents and we have made some headway. Please — no, your Queen demands(!) that you continue to invite prospective members or friends. It is very impressive to fill the room when we have visiting speakers!

And so, with a Queenly wave, I depart.

Sincerely,  
*Rachel*

---

*Program Information*

Lisa Tappy

Refreshments 9:30 am — Meeting 10:00 am — Program 11:00 am

Our speaker for the May meeting will be Pat Veasey, who has continued to do research on embroideries stitched by local girls since her award winning exhibition at the Museum of York County in 2003. For those of us who were given the very special guided tour by the curator herself (Pat) in June of last year, we know what a knowledgeable and interesting speaker she is. On May 4<sup>th</sup> she will be telling us about new research, particularly in respect to Mecklenburg county samplers, and reviewing the exhibit (a wonderful opportunity for those who didn't get to see it). Having recently read letters from the Springs family, she will have lots of information to share about the education of antebellum girls. This is a wonderful program to invite your friends to attend. It will begin at 11:00 am, following our business meeting.

The June meeting will be our annual picnic, and we have the wonderful opportunity again this year to venture to Karen and Stan McConnell's charming home and grounds for this special event. Bring your significant other or "special someone" for what is always a delightful time of fellowship and some really delicious victuals. \$6.00 per person will cover the cost of the meat, beverages, and paper products, and you are asked to bring a side dish to share (BUT NOT A DESSERT—the board will provide those!). Lawn chairs are also welcome, so follow the directions below and join us at 4:00 pm on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. Karen and Stan will be happy to give tours of their restored home and hope all who come to the picnic will stay after we eat for a tour and to play games!

**Directions:** From I-85 North take Peeler Road Exit. Turn right. Follow Peeler Road until it dead ends into Old Concord Road. Turn left. Take next right onto St. Paul's Church Road. Pass church and turn right at top of the hill onto Glover Road. 350 Glover Road is on the right.



## *English Country Dance in America*



**Nancy Follette**

Dance in America came over from Europe with the first settlers in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Because of the lack of instruments, and lack of “proper partners,” most dances reverted to a very informal version of the original. Music was provided with only a flute or the occasional fiddle. And, while popular as entertainment, there was not much time to “perfect” the finer art of the dance.

As the colonists entered the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they experienced a great deal more wealth and, with that, more leisure time. Dance regained its popularity. In fact, it became so important that the colonists soon began sending over to Europe for “dance masters” who would travel to America and teach the American children the proper etiquette and art of the dance. It was not long before dances in the city became huge social events to which everyone wanted to be invited! And they wanted to show off their finest dance steps! These “balls” or “assemblies” often lasted long hours.

In the countryside, dance was also important as a way for people to get together. But often, folks had to come from longer distances to participate. So, many times, the dances were associated with other events, such as a barn raising or a wedding. These dances were known as “frolics” or “bees” and were much less formal!

18<sup>th</sup> Century Dance moved on into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and was the precursor to what we know today as “square dancing”. Many of the steps are the same.

Several years ago, Xena Markine, then a member of the Charlotte Museum of History staff, attended a conference in Williamsburg where colonial dancing was introduced as an entertainment for the evening’s festivities. Xena enjoyed it and felt the docent staff at the museum might as well. After investigation and eliciting interest from the docent corps, she brought in dance mistress, Patti Johnstone, from the NC 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment Revolutionary War re-enactment group to give us a few lessons. Seven years later, we are still at it!

The Colonial Dancers of the Charlotte Museum of History/Hezekiah Alexander Homesite nowadays consists of docents, volunteers, and a few spouses – people who have been seduced by the fun of dancing together and using their “skill” to interact with the public. We are frequently on the list to entertain at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite, but have also assisted with the “Discover Latta” Girl Scout event the past three years at Latta Plantation, participated in the Providence Day School’s Colonial Days for the past two years, and have assisted with a demonstration ball at the Schiele Museum in Gastonia. We have also had our own fun at local 18<sup>th</sup> Century Balls in Brattonville, Gastonia, and Winston-Salem. We have a new dance mistress and master in the persons of Marilyn and Ralph Shore, who once danced with the NC 6<sup>th</sup>, but now have their own dance group in Winston-Salem. Marilyn has been bringing us several exciting new dances to challenge our skill and expertise. Occasionally we get someone new who wants to join our group. That’s OK with us...the more the merrier! We take a step back and focus on getting that person “up to speed.” With the assistance of the more experienced dancers, it doesn’t take long at all to perfect the “art of the dance”!

Why don’t YOU join us? We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday nights each month at the Charlotte Museum of History from 7:00–9:00pm. It’s great fun and we’d love to have you! Give Nancy Follette a call at 704-845-1252 if you have any questions or you want to verify the date of the next practice.

---

*Sarah Frew Davidson Journal Entry — April 1, 1837*

**Submitted by Jane Estep**

“The negroes are amusing themselves by deceiving each other with playful jests. An old custom – but whence it had its origin I have never had curiosity to inquire – but will the first opportunity – It is certainly often cause of a species of lying – & of course not to be countenanced by Christians. But I will not judge – it may be innocent – as I cannot approve it myself – I will take no part in it – It is to say the least – a foolish custom.”



*4th Annual "Discover Latta Plantation"*

**Submitted by Wanda Hubicki**

On Saturday, May 1, 2004 9:30 am – 4:30 pm, celebrate the 4th Annual "Discover Latta Plantation." After a weekend in training to learn various early 19th century crafts and skills, 6th grade Girl Scouts from the Hornet's Nest Council return to demonstrate to the public, as well as their fellow Scouts, what they have learned. These young costumed interpreters will share the lifestyles of the planter, yeoman farmer, and the enslaved populations. Demonstrations will include dancing, sewing, cooking, spinning, and weaving. Girl Scouts will conduct house tours and do routine chores in our heirloom garden and with our heritage breed farm animals. Admission: \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and \$4 for students ages 6 years and up, and children 5 years and younger are free.

Historic Latta Plantation is located on Sample Road, off of Beatties Ford Road in Huntersville, NC. Traveling from Charlotte on I-77 North, take exit 16B (Sunset Road West) make a right at the 2nd light onto Beatties Ford Road, continue on Beatties Ford Road for approximately 5 miles. Make a left onto Sample Road. Historic Latta Plantation is located at the end of Sample Road. Visit us on the web at [www.lattaplantation.org](http://www.lattaplantation.org). This event is made possible in part through the support of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and the Arts and Science Council.

Contact: Historic Latta Plantation, 704-875-2312, Barbara Brundage, Executive Director, [bbrundage@lattaplantation.org](mailto:bbrundage@lattaplantation.org).

---

*Historic Brattonsville Theatrical Skills Workshop*

**Submitted by Carolyn Dilda**

On May 15, 2004 from 1:00-4:30 pm, Historic Brattonsville will present a workshop designed to strengthen your acting skills. It will be held at the McCelvey Center, 212 E. Jefferson Street, York, SC. Liz Funderburk, accomplished actor, director and McClevey Center Site Manager, will lead the training. Through a series of activities, including improvisational games, participants will learn the fundamentals of characterization, motivation, projection & blocking. Whether you have played characters at Christmas Candlelight for years or are new to Brattonsville, you will enjoy this workshop. The workshop will be very interactive, so please wear comfortable clothing. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. Space is limited to 12 people, so if you are interested in taking part, please contact Betty Caughman by May 10.

Elizabeth B. Caughman, Director of Volunteers and Administrative Services – Historic Brattonsville Culture and Heritage Museums  
1444 Brattonsville Road  
McConnells, SC 29726  
803-684-2327 ext. 27 (phone)  
803-684-0149 (fax)  
[betcaughman@comporium.net](mailto:betcaughman@comporium.net)  
[www.cultureandheritagemuseums.org](http://www.cultureandheritagemuseums.org)

---

*Scots-Irish Tour in 2005*

Join us for an historic tour of Scotland and Northern Ireland in Spring 2005. We will visit sites and explore areas once familiar to the Scots-Irish families who migrated from the Scottish Lowlands to Ulster and eventually to America. Do you have Scots-Irish ancestry? Are you interested in the history of the founders of our area? If so, this tour is for you. A visit to their homeland will greatly enhance your understanding and appreciation of their lives and their struggles. Consider joining us next spring. Look for more information in the next issue of *The Dandelion* or call Camille Smith at 704-334-7620.

## *Her Shape She Doth Owe to . . . Her Tailor*



**Sharon Van Kuren**

On March 26, 2004, four hearth cooks, Carolyn Dilda, Quinn Moore, Linda Gedney and I traveled north to Colonial Williamsburg. Our destination this time was not to attend a hearth cooking class, but rather to attend a sewing seminar on fitting and sewing the proper stays.

As cooks we are familiar with the backache and fatigue of our favorite pastime. The 18<sup>th</sup> century women had her stays for support, posture and fashion. This historic sewing lesson was offered by Burnley and Trowbridge, written and led by Marc Hutter. Marc is the gentleman in the millinery shop on the Duke of Gloucester Street. He is usually perched on the bench sewing anything from gentlemen's cloaks to ladies ball gowns. His passion is the proper fitting and sewing of stays.

The class was for two days, and was one of the most intense I have ever taken. The historical research on the provenance of stays was most interesting – how the body is shaped according to the fashion of the time. We were paired according to our body shapes: square, apple, pear, etc. I was paired with a docent from Mt. Vernon and Gunston Hall. She is a lady of finery and wears the most beautiful gowns.

The next step was to put all 21<sup>st</sup> century tape measures on the floor and leave them there. We were then instructed on how to make our own individual tape. A lesson in the measurement of the body took a great deal of practice. Getting the measurement of your bosom body partner was most important to her properly fitting. This is the most critical step in ensuring that the garment fit perfectly.

After a great deal of instruction, patterns for stays were given out according to our shapes. I needed a pattern that was shorter for bending at the hearth, and Marc found one that suited this requirement. Carolyn Dilda was paired with a docent from Ohio and Linda Gedney and Quinn Moore were matched together. We now have three different patterns among us.

Fabrics, threads and other needs were purchased. It was time to lay out the patterns and adjust them to our measurements on the three layers of fabric. Not such an easy task! Marc helped each one of us to ensure success.

We dragged out of the class at 5:30 pm, all four of us exhausted. We agreed that if we were alone, not one of us would have returned to the class the next day! However, we encouraged each other and promised a successful set of stays for each of us. We had a homework assignment to complete, so two of us burned the midnight oil and the other two got up very early the next morning.

By 9:00 Sunday morning we were back in class, basting our garments so that Marc could properly fit our stays before we left. There were a lot of sore fingers, muttering and heavy sighs as we completed this part of the lesson. By 4:30 pm we had packed up our sewing gear and sat down to a wonderful meal and a welcome glass of wine. We toasted our efforts and promised to meet and sew until each of us had completed our own personal set of stays.

None of us would have tackled a project such as this alone, but misery does like company! All joking aside, we will look and feel great when our project is completed. Too bad the stays are hidden under our shortgowns!

We look forward to presenting a program to the docents in the near future.



*MHA Docents Book Club Review**How the Scots Invented the Modern World*

by Arthur Herman

Discussed March 2, 2004

Great Britain is 94,247 square miles, twice the size of New York State. Small by American standards. Scotland is the northern third of Great Britain, about the size of Maine. Very small by American standards. But the contributions made by this tiny country, according to American historian Arthur Herman, are monumental. The title of his book, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*, may be a bit of a stretch, but he does make a case for the many significant contributions the Scots made to the modern world.

The Scottish Reformation began with one man: John Knox. He was stern, dour, harsh, austere, but he “single-handedly inspired, intimidated, and bullied Scotland’s nobility and urban classes into overthrowing the Catholic Church of their forebears and adopting the religious creed of Geneva’s John Calvin.” Most of us know that the founders of Charlotte/Mecklenburg were Scots-Irish Presbyterians whose ancestors’ journey to America began in the Scottish lowlands. We know that the first seven churches in this area were Presbyterian, that the value Knox and the church placed on education followed the Scots to the new world, and that the faith of our local forefathers influenced their support of independence. But how many of us are aware of the intellectual, philosophical, cultural and scientific achievements that took place in Scotland, particularly in the lowland city of Edinburgh? How many of us are aware of the Scottish Enlightenment?

“The Scottish Enlightenment presented man as the product of history. Our most fundamental character as human beings, they argued, even our moral character, is constantly evolving and developing, shaped by a variety of forces over which we as individuals have little or no control. We are ultimately creatures of our environment: that was the great discovery that the ‘Scottish School,’ as it came to be known, brought to the modern world.” They believed that the study of man was a scientific study. Herman believes the Scots were the inventors of the social sciences: anthropology, ethnography, sociology, psychology, history and economics. Philosophers Francis Hutcheson and David Hume and economist Adam Smith were part of this enlightenment. One of the significant contributions of the Scottish Enlightenment to America was Hutcheson’s idea that oppressed people have a right to rise up against their oppressor and establish a free society.

Herman convinces us that though Scotland was financially poor, it was intellectually rich. It produced not only Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith, but inventor Alexander Graham Bell and magnate Andrew Carnegie, signers of the Declaration of Independence such as minister John Witherspoon, authors among whom were Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns and James Boswell, chronicler of Dr. Samuel Johnson, and Dr. Livingston. And there are so many more! Scottish thinkers viewed “man as a product of history whose collective enterprise involved nothing less than a massive reordering of human knowledge.” Two significant works in which the Scots participated were the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, first published in Edinburgh in 1768, and the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Scotland produced inventors, soldiers, administrators, builders of empires and fortunes – people who have had an effect all over the world. The Scottish literati argued about man, government, commercialism and their interrelationships – issues which are pertinent today. It seems that Scotland’s contributions to our world today are significantly larger than most other countries.

Whether our personal ancestry is Scottish or not, it is the ancestry of the city and county in which we live. The Scots-Irish, through their link to the spirit and intellect of Scotland, brought to us, and the rest of our country, a firm belief in education, a fierce desire for independence, and a will strong enough to help create the most powerful country in the world. In a speech broadcast on C-SPAN shortly after the publication of this book, Dr. Herman said we must acknowledge the contributions of all the Scots: the highlanders, the lowlanders and the Ulster-Scots. Particularly to the last group, Mecklenburg County thanks you.

***Common Sense* by Thomas Paine**

**Discussed April 6, 2004**

In 1776 a pamphlet written by an Englishman openly asked for American independence from Britain, challenged the authority of the British government and the monarchy, and ignited the American Revolution. Read the plain, yet beautiful, language that Thomas Paine used in *Common Sense* and you'll understand how his words spoke to the people of America.

In the Introduction Paine states, "The cause of America is in great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have and will arise which are not local but universal..." Written so long ago, this statement of America's cause is still true.

*Common Sense* begins with a discussion of government ("...government even in its best state is but a necessary evil, in its worst state an intolerable one.") and the English Constitution. ("...the same constitution which gives the Commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterward the king a power to check the Commons by empowering him to reject their other bills, it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!").

In the second section, Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession, he argues against the concept of being ruled by a monarch whose power is a result of the status inherited from his parents. "Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. . . To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and an imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetually preference to all others forever."

Section three discusses Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs. "I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived . . . But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection are without number and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance..."

The final section, Of the Present Ability of America, with Some Miscellaneous Reflections, is about America's ability to fight Britain. "Debts we have none, and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap."

*Common Sense* was propaganda. It was meant to stir the American people, to give rise to feelings of independence. Explanations of his ideas are not necessary. It is not scholarly, not complicated, but clear, concise *common sense*.

---

*Cooking Guild Summer Events*

**Submitted by Carolyn Dilda**

The cooking guild has at the moment the following events planned for the summer. Others are in the works:

- July 26: Kathleen Purvis, Food Editor for the Charlotte Observer will share her research on southern funeral foods
- August 23: Kate Carter will discuss and demonstrate proper deportment for the late 1700s and early 1800s
- We will travel to Union, SC, to tour Rose Hill Plantation. Contact Carolyn for more information.

Each of these programs will be followed by a covered dish lunch. The programs are free, but space is limited. Please call Carolyn at the James K. Polk Memorial Site to register: 704-889-7145





*James K. Polk Memorial State Historic site*  
*Living History Day Campus for Children*

**Carolyn Dilda**

*The James K. Polk Memorial State Historic Site is a recreation of the farm that 11<sup>th</sup> president James K. Polk, lived on from 1795–1806. All day camps are supervised and led by trained staff members and volunteers. All camps are \$35.00 per day and cover materials, lunch and gifts for the campers.*

**“Be the President for a Day” – For boys and girls ages 7 – 10 years old.**

Through living history, the campers will learn about how the country elects its president, members of Congress and appoints cabinet leaders. Campers will use the election of the 11<sup>th</sup> president, as their model and will elect their own president, vice-president, congress and cabinet. Campers will engage in 1840s style stump speeches, make campaign posters and buttons and conduct group projects where the issues of the 1840s will be discussed.

July 19 and August 2

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Each day is limited to 15 campers

**“A Young Soldier in Polk’s Army” – For boys and girls ages 7 – 12 years old.**

Campers will recreate a recruiting and training post for soldiers of the U.S. Army of the 1840s, when James K. Polk was president of the United States. Activities will include marching and the manual of arms, camp life, 1840s campfire cooking, 1840s customs and clothing and an 1840s baseball game!

July 22

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Limited to 15 campers

**“History Camp for Girls” – For girls ages 8 – 12 years old.**

Spend the day in the historic area learning about life in Mecklenburg County in the early 1800s. Activities will include cooking lunch using original recipes, learning about customs and manners of the time period, and performing various hands-on activities. We will also have tea with a person from the past.

July 13 and July 15

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Each day is limited to 10 campers

**“A Day on the Polk Farm” – For boys and girls ages 8 – 12 years old.**

The campers will spend the day in the historic area. Some of the activities will include surveying the land for the farm, cooking late 18<sup>th</sup> century food for lunch in the historic kitchen, learning customs and clothing styles from the time, and meeting a person from the past.

July 27 and July 29

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Each day is limited to 10 campers.

The James K. Polk Memorial State Historic Site is located off exit 65B, I-485, at 308 S. Polk Street (also known as Lancaster Highway) in Pineville, NC. For more information or to register, please contact the site at 704-889-7145 or e-mail at [polkmemorial@dasia.net](mailto:polkmemorial@dasia.net).



*Charlotte Museum of History Public Programs for 2004*



*May*

**Charlotte Originals**

*Saturday, May 15, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm*

Join us for this celebration of the people, places, and things original to Charlotte! Record your memories of Charlotte on the Community Memories Wall. Visitors are invited to bring Charlotte memorabilia to share with each other. Enjoy samples of food from original Charlotte restaurants and enter in a drawing for a gift certificate from one of Charlotte's original stores! No reservations needed. Regular Museum admission.

**Celebrating the Spirit of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence**

*Thursday, May 20, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm*

Join in the celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence with costumed docents from the Alexander Homesite, members of the Mecklenburg Historical Association, and the Public Library of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County at the Square Uptown. No reservations needed. Free admission.

*June*

**D-Day Swing Dance**

*Saturday, June 5, 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm*

Spend the evening celebrating at our Swing Dance join in the dancing or just enjoy the music! Wear your vintage clothing, or come dressed to have a good time. Reservations required at (704) 568-1774. Admission: \$15.00 includes refreshments and drinks.

**Remembering World War II on D-Day**

*Sunday, June 6, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm*

**Main Streets of Our State Opening Celebration**

*Saturday, June 26, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm*

*July*

*Saturday, July 17, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **Hands-on-History**

*August*

*Tuesday, August 3, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm* **Kids Fun Night @ the Museum**

*Saturday, August 21, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **Exhibits Alive: Beginnings Gallery**

*September*

*Saturday, September 11, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **Hands-on-History**

*October*

*Saturday, October 16, 6:00 pm – 10:00 pm* **Civil War Lantern Tour**

*Saturday, October 30, 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm* **Haunted Homesite**

*November*

*Saturday, November 13, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **American Indian Traditions**

*Saturday, November 20, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **This Old Rock House Opening**

*December*

*Saturday, December 11, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm* **Celtic Traditions Festival**

*Saturday, December 18, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* **Exhibits Alive: Alexander Homesite**





Submitted by Karen McConnell

**May 16 — National Museum Day Open House**

Rosedale will be open to the public at no charge to celebrate National Museum Day (May 18<sup>th</sup>).

**June 16/July 7—Summer History Camps**

9:00 am to 12:00 noon — Hands-on exploration into the lifestyles of the North Carolina backcountry.  
\$5/child — intended for children 8 and older.

**Sunday, August 22 — Family Reunion**

All those involved with Rosedale are invited back to share their stories with staff and the public.  
This is a free event.

**Saturday, October 2 — Oyster Roast**

Fundraiser

Welcome fall with an oyster roast on the beautiful grounds of Historic Rosedale. Support this historic treasure as you enjoy freshly roasted oysters and listen to live music performed throughout the evening. \$20/adult plate, \$12/child, senior plate

**Saturday, November 20 — Williamsburg Style Decorating Workshop**

**9:30 am to 12:00 noon** — Learn the art of decorating in the Williamsburg style. This workshop will teach the techniques for using natural materials to decorate just in time for the holidays. \$55/non-member, \$45/members. All materials provided.

**December 11–12 — Candlelight Christmas Tours**

**5:30 pm to 8:00 pm** — Our annual look at the way Christmas celebrations evolved through time. Step back to a time when Christmas was simpler. Enjoy beautifully decorated rooms in the glow of candlelight as you listen to period music and meet people from the past. \$7/Adults, \$5/Members, seniors, and children over 8. Children under 8 free with paid adult.

---

*Excerpt from Red Carolinians*

by Chapman J. Milling

Submitted by Lisa Tappy

On March 13, 1840, a treaty was effected at Nations Ford on the Catawba River, between John Springs, David Hutchinson, E. Avery, and Allen Morrow, Commissioners for South Carolina, and James Kegg, David Harris, John Hoe, William George, Philip Kegg, Samuel Scott, and Allen Harris, Chiefs and Headmen of the Catawba Indians. By its terms the Indians agreed to cede their lands to South Carolina, in return for which the state was to procure for them a tract of land in Haywood County, North Carolina, "or some other mountainous or thinly populated region," to the value of \$5,000. At the period of the treaty, the majority of the Catawba had been living a wandering life, "without homes, houses or fixed residence, and destitute of any species of property, save dogs and a few worthless horses." The report of the Commissioners shows the general esteem in which the tribe was held: "They have now lived in the midst of a dense population for more than half a century, and your Commissioners all concur in testimony that they have never known or heard of dishonest charge made against a Catawba or their meddling with anything that did not belong to them, and have always been harmless, peaceable and friendly . . . From a once populous tribe they dwindled down to 12 men, 36 women and 40 young ones — in all 88, nine of whom are counted with a family of Purmunkey Indians, and it is believed will not remove." The Indians removed themselves in small parties to North Carolina, joining the Eastern Cherokee, but North Carolina refused to sell a reservation for their use . . . After about 18 months they were forced to come back to South Carolina, where they were secured a reservation of 800 acres in their original country.

Note: Chapman J. Milling was Phil Tappy's step-father.



*Excerpt from "Textbooks Flunk Test"*



By George Archibald, *The Washington Times*, March 28, 2004

Submitted by Jane Estep

Social studies textbooks used in elementary and secondary schools are mostly a disgrace that, in the name of political correctness and multiculturalism, fail to give students an honest account of American history, say academic historians and education advocates. "Secondary and college students, and indeed most of the rest of us, have only a feeble grasp of politics and a vague awareness of history, especially the political history of the United States and the world," says Paul Gagnon, emeritus professor of history at the University of Massachusetts.

Most textbooks, produced by a handful of giant commercial publishers, are exposing generations of children to cultural and history amnesia that threatens the very basis of American free institutions and liberties, warn leading historians who are calling for better-defined, more rigorous state teaching standards. Just 11% of eighth-graders show proficient knowledge of U.S. history on standardized tests – down from 17% in 2001, Mr. Gagnon noted in a recent study for the American Federation of Teachers. "Less than half knew the Supreme Court could decide a law's constitutionality," he said in the Albert Shanker Institute study titled *Educating Democracy: State Standards to Ensure a Civic Core*. "Only a third knew what the Progressive Era was and most were not sure whom we fought in World War II."

Publishers acknowledge having buckled since the early 1980s to so-called multicultural "bias guidelines" demanded by interest groups and elected state boards of education that require censorship of textbook content to accommodate feminist, homosexual and racial demands. The California State Board of Education was the first to adopt such guidelines in 1982, according to New York University education research professor Diane Ravitch in her latest book, *The Language Police*. The California guidelines instruct textbook publishers and teachers: "Do not cast adverse reflection on any gender, race, ethnicity, religion or cultural group." The board had informal "social-content standards" going back to the 1970s.

Publishers followed with their own editorial anti-bias guidelines, which banned words, phrases, images, and depictions of people deemed unacceptable – such as "man," "mankind," "manpower," "men," said to be sexist. Also banned are "able-bodied," "aged," "babe," "backward," "chick," "fairy," "geezer," "idiot," "imbecile," "Redskin," "sissy," "suffragette" and "waitress."

"There's an incredible sameness about them. They're following the same script," she told reporters in a briefing on the study of a dozen American and world history texts issued Feb. 26. In a 1,000-page textbook weighing almost eight pounds, "There's so much included," Mrs. Ravitch said. "They're incoherent because of the pressure to include everything. They're colorful but they have irrelevant graphics."

At a time when the Harry Potter series grabbed children's imagination and loyalty because the books "are exciting and well written ... resonate with suspense, mystery, intrigue and showdowns between the forces of good and evil," school history textbooks had "achieved the heights of banality," thanks to political correctness, she wrote in an essay last fall for the *Hoover Digest*. "They aim not to engage students' imagination, but to bolster their self-esteem.. Harry Potter has triumphed because his author understands the power of story. If the story is good enough, children will take a flashlight to bed so they can keep reading after the lights are out. Unlike textbook publishers, who must screen everything before they print to avoid giving offense."

*(Continued on page 11)*



### Who's responsible?

A handful of commercial publishers produce most elementary and secondary school textbooks used in the United States, which cost the nation's taxpayers about \$250 million per subject. All companies have developed their own internal checklists that dictate writing, graphics, photos and other textbook content. A team of 16 academic reviewers in Texas, the second-largest state market for textbooks behind California, last year found 533 factual and interpretive errors in 28 social studies texts submitted for adoption by the state board of education.

"For 351 of the 533 errors identified, publishers agreed to either revise statements to correct factual inaccuracies or to add clarifying statements to rectify ambiguity," said Chris Patterson, research director for the Texas Public Policy Foundation in Austin which commissioned the review. For 35 percent of noted errors, "publishers denied that the information was incorrect and stated that the reviewers misunderstood the textbook," Mrs. Patterson said. "However, in these cases, publishers did not modify the text to ensure students would not fall victim to the same misunderstanding suffered by scholars and teachers who reviewed the texts." She said many textbook errors cited by the foundation involved "clear bias" – opinions presented as fact, content "not sufficiently objective" or distortion through lack of substantive facts.

### Deadly dull

Historian David McCullough, who won two Pulitzer Prizes for his biographies of Presidents John Adams and Harry Truman, also calls school history and social studies textbooks "deadly dull." "It is as if they were designed to kill anyone's interest in history," he said in an interview. "A child made to read these books would ask, 'What did I do wrong today that I am being so punished?'"

Further evidence of "something that's eating away at the national memory," Mr. McCullough says, is a survey last year of seniors at 50 top colleges and universities by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. "It's astonishing. More than half didn't know George Washington was the commanding general of the Continental Army during the American Revolution who accepted Brig. Gen. Charles Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown. "Thirty-six percent thought it was Ulysses S. Grant," commander of the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War. "Six percent said it was Douglas MacArthur," U.S. commander during the Korean War. "Thirty-two percent said Washington. It was a multiple-choice question. They were winging it. If you don't know what Yorktown was all about, and that Washington was the commander, you don't know a lot about American history that you ought to know," Mr. McCullough said.

"Teachers should abandon textbooks altogether and use other books and resources instead to teach history and geography." Textbooks written to be "politically correct" do not tell the truth about struggle and conflict through the ages in order to avoid offending minorities, ethnic groups, women and other advocates, he said. "History is a story, cause and effect. And if you're going to teach just segments of history, women's issues, these youngsters have almost no sense of cause and effect."

Mr. McCullough said, "I would do away with the textbooks. Get rid of all the state commissions that write the textbooks" because they fail to instill in students a sense of gratitude for the country's leaders over the centuries and what the American people endured and accomplished in order to pass on a legacy of freedom and prosperity. "I think that to be ignorant or indifferent to history isn't just to be uneducated or stupid. It's to be rude, ungrateful. And ingratitude is an ugly failing in human beings."

*MHA Docents Board*

Chairman	Rachel Abernathy	Secretary	Pam Dudeck
Vice Chairman	Lisa Tappy	Treasurer	Valerie Jones

---

*Committees*

Corresponding Secretary	Betty Pierce	704-399-5308
African American Committee	Karen McConnell	704-797-8964
Costume Committee	Sharon Van Kuren	704-846-6187
	Barbara Goodwin	704-821-4810
Hospitality Committee	Carolyn Dilda	704-596-8834
Journal Committee	Karen McConnell	704-797-8694
Library Committee	Millie Hodge	704-563-1435
Passport Committee	Lynn Spada	704-398-2943

---

Historic Cooking Guild	Carolyn Dilda	704-596-8834
	Barbara Goodwin	704-821-4810
Decorative Arts Survey	Linda Dalton	704-364-7435
	Jane Estep	704-541-5011
MHA Training Class	Karen McConnell	704-797-8694

---

*MHA Dues 2004*

MHA dues are due January 1 each year. Please make checks payable to *MHA Docents*. Give the check to Valerie Jones, docent treasurer, at the monthly meeting, or mail to:

Valerie Jones  
4700 Coronado Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28212

Questions? Call Valerie at 704-567-0599.

*Levels of MHA Membership*

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Couple</u>
General	\$25.00	\$45.00
Senior (over 60)	\$12.50	\$20.00
Patron	\$50.00	\$90.00
Life (single payment)	\$300.00	\$500.00
Student	free	n/a

Mecklenburg Historical Association: [www.meckdec.org](http://www.meckdec.org)  
MHA Docents: [www.meckdec.org/docents.html](http://www.meckdec.org/docents.html)



## *Latta Plantation Bluegrass and Barbecue*

**Submitted by Wanda Hubicki**

Bring the family out to Latta Plantation to enjoy two Southern favorites: bluegrass and barbecue! Spring is the perfect time to enjoy this beautiful Catawba River plantation, seated in the midst of the 1300 acre Latta Nature Preserve. Spend an evening in the country listening to traditional, original, and gospel bluegrass delivered by Southern Junction. This favorite regional band has placed “first” thirty-four times in competition since 1993 and is renowned for driving rhythms and soaring, harmonious vocals. Savor the delicious flavors of barbecued pork and all the fixings from Herlocker’s Park Drive Inn! Bring lawn chairs and blankets and have an old-fashioned family picnic on the grounds.

Relax and let the children enjoy special activities planned just for them. Door prizes will be drawn for Historic Latta Plantation family memberships. Donations by ASC affiliates and associates will be raffled. Raffle donors include: Afro-American Cultural Center, Carolina Raptor Center, Charlotte Children’s Choir, Charlotte Folk Society, Charlotte Repertory Theatre, Charlotte Symphony, Discovery Place, Lowe’s Motor Speedway, Mint Museums, and Opera Carolina. This event is hosted by the Board of Directors of Latta Place, Inc. and sponsored by First Charter Bank and New England Coffee. All proceeds will be used to support the operation of Historic Latta Plantation

Date: Saturday, May 8

Time: 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

Tickets:

Adults — \$15,

Children over 4 — \$5,

Children 4 years and under — free.

To purchase tickets in advance, please contact Tony Kougiolis or Erin Score at 704-875-2312.

Latta Plantation Bluegrass and Barbecue will take place rain or shine.

This event is made possible in part through the support of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and the Arts and Science Council.



Southern Junction