

# The Virginia Giant

## *Society of the Descendants of Peter Francisco*

Volume 2

September 2018

Issue 18

### **IMPORTANT CHANGE TO SOCIETY BY-LAWS** ~ **Business Meetings will no longer be held in October** ~

The Executive Board has voted unanimously to make the following change to the Society's By-laws, effective August 2018:

#### **Article II**

#### **Section 4. Business Meetings**

Business meetings of the Society shall be held, as needed, in conjunction with the celebration of the Peter Francisco Day meeting, usually held annually in March, or at any other time determined by the Executive Board.

#### **Reasons for this change are:**

- newsletters and the Society's website keep members informed of news and activities;*
- officers are elected for two-year terms (and may serve longer without opposition); therefore, there is no need to hold an annual business meeting;*
- the Executive Board will have more time for planning meetings (including extended stay/destination meetings) and other Society activities, events and fundraisers;*
- in recent years, attendance at the October business meetings has declined (unless there is a special event included); and*
- since the Society will continue to meet annually in celebration of Peter Francisco Day, members still will have the opportunity to convene at least once a year.*

Revised By-laws may be viewed at [www.peterfrancisco.org](http://www.peterfrancisco.org)

### **Portuguese Paintings at Museum of Fine Arts**

A special invitation was extended to the Society to attend the reception and private showing of twenty-one Portuguese Modern Paintings at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts held on June 5. Domingos Fezas Vital, Ambassador of Portugal to the United States, hosted the event which included the Portuguese-American community in Virginia. In attendance were members Ed and Lori Bowman; Charles and Brice Bowman; Susan and Alex Brown; Stuart McCroskey and guest, Edie Bethke; Libby McLeod; Linda McLeod; Paul and Martha Louis; and Bill and Stacy Purvis.



Linda McLeod; Suzanne & Alex Brown; Libby McLeod; Portuguese Ambassador Domingos Vital and his wife Isabel; Chip Bowman; Ed Bowman; and Stuart McCroskey during the reception and art show.

## PETER FRANCISCO DAY 2018

In celebration of Peter Francisco Day in Virginia, Society members met in the Capitol Building in Richmond, on March 11. Guest speaker/member, Harry Kardian, presented his research about Peter Francisco, which included family mementos, articles, and a Peter Francisco doll that once belonged to his Great, Great Aunt Lewise Cosby (a founding member of the Society).

All of the articles and documents used in Harry's presentation have been donated by his grandmother, Grace Silverstein, to the Library of Virginia, where they will be stored with other Society archives and made available to the public.

After the meeting, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the grave of Peter Francisco in Shockoe Hill Cemetery, where our youngest member in attendance, Molly Bowman, placed the wreath. The ceremony was filmed by Danny Jarrell, a student at Liberty University, who is now writing a thesis about Peter Francisco and the Society.

After the ceremony, a private tour centering on the Richmond Theatre Fire of December 26, 1811—considered the worst urban disaster in American history at that time—was led by Jeffry Burden (Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery).

The tour included visiting the graves of prominent Richmond citizens who were killed in the fire, or found their lives forever changed by it. Unfortunately, many victims of the 1811 fire were burned beyond recognition and were buried in a common grave on the site. Monumental Church was constructed where the theatre once stood to appropriately memorialize those who lost their lives.

History tells us that, once again, Peter Francisco was a hero—saving the lives of as many as thirty theatre patrons during this tragic event. *How did he do it?* With his characteristic great strength—and keen accuracy—Peter was observed catching person after person as they jumped or fell from the high windows of the theatre! *Only the "Virginia Giant" seemed capable of this heroic feat!*



Rhett and Sue Francisco, Edith Buckley and Sue Terminella at the March 11 meeting



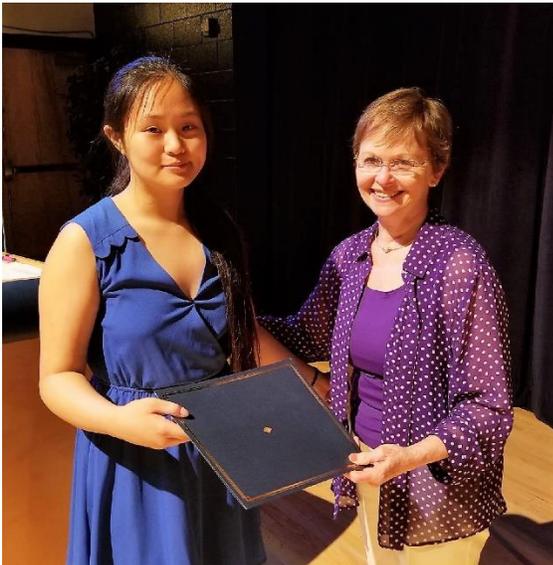
Harry Kardian presenting his research and with Peter Francisco Doll at celebration of Peter Francisco Day – March 11, 2018



Jeffry Burden leading the tour of Shockoe Hill Cemetery

## Peter Francisco Memorial Scholarship

Congratulations to our scholarship recipient, **Annie Cao** of Yorktown, VA, who graduated as Valedictorian from Grafton High School (Governor's School for Science and Technology) in June. Annie was not only an outstanding student and member of the French and National Honor Societies—she was also involved in extracurricular activities, including the Committee for the Aid and Restoration of the Environment. Her other interests include playing the piano, tennis and art. Annie is presently attending the University of Virginia where she is pursuing a pre-med track to become a family practitioner.



Presentation of Certificate of Scholarship to Annie Cao by SDPF member Penny Geiger at the Grafton Senior Awards Night on June 5, 2018

Scholarship Committee members, Jane McCroskey, Chair; Penny Geiger; Karen Kardian; and Kathleen Whanger, evaluated 16 applications before determining the winner of our 2018 Scholarship.

***All Society members are asked to donate to our annual Scholarship Fund. Members voted unanimously to support the Scholarship Fund through personal donations, which are tax deductible. To make a donation to the 2019 Scholarship Fund, please use the enclosed insert.***

### Levels of Giving for Scholarships are:

~Patriot \$100; Cavalry \$75; Infantry \$50;  
Militia \$25; Colonial \$10~

Donations for the 2018 scholarship were received from the following members and friends of the Society:

**Patriot:** Ed Bowman (*In Memory of his grandmother, Sallie Edwards Bowman*); Manuel & Maria Fernandes (*In Honor of Edith F. Buckley*); Mary Echols (*In Memory of Peter Francisco*)

**Infantry:** Gail Tonkens; Anne & Bill Wilson (*In Memory of Anne's mother, Ida V. Shorter Craig*)

**Militia:** James Bechter; Elizabeth Finley (*In Memory of Glenna Corum*); Mark & Jamie Greenough; Roland T. Harris; Anne Linares (*In Memory of her mother, Bess Lloyd Turner*); Francisco & Teresa Mendonca

**Colonial:** William Corum

*~Thank you for your support!~*

### Are You a Member of DAR, SAR, or the Masonic Lodge?

The Society would like to compile a list of our members who also have membership in Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), or a Masonic Lodge. If you are a member of one or more of these organizations, please contact 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Erin Mwalwanda at [sdpf2000@aol.com](mailto:sdpf2000@aol.com), or complete and return the *insert* in this newsletter. By sharing information, Society members may have a link to expedite their joining one of these other organizations.

Note that Peter Francisco was a member of the Masonic Charlotte Lodge No. 17 in Virginia. Since that lodge had been non-existent for many years, in 2010 Peter was honored with Lifetime Membership in Perpetuity in the Richmond Randolph Lodge No. 19, Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia. *It will be interesting to see how many of Peter's male descendants have "followed in his footsteps" by becoming Masons.*

## ~ MEMBER NEWS ~

**Jane B. McCroskey** of Newport News, VA, Recording Secretary of the Society since 2013, has resigned her position (effective June 2018). Jane also has served as a member of the Scholarship Committee and as Chair thereof for the past two years.

*~Thank you, Jane, for your service to the Society.~*

**Edith F. Buckley**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, who moved from Annandale, VA, to Bothell, WA, in March 2018, will be back in Virginia on October 13 to receive the *Excellence in Community Service Award* from Providence Chapter, NSDAR, Fairfax, VA.

**Caroline Corum** and **Libby McLeod** attended the 127<sup>th</sup> Continental Congress of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington, DC, on June 20.

**Robert “Bob” F. Grimes, Jr** of Suffolk, VA, became a member of Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) in June, *through his 5<sup>th</sup> great grandfather, Peter Francisco.*

**J. Eric Wilson** [Dr. of Physical Therapy, USAF Lt Col (*Retired*)] of Colorado Springs, CO, was named *Bio-Medical Research Civilian Employee of the Year for the United States Air Force* in March 2018. (Eric had received the same award as an officer before retiring from the Air Force in 2016.)

### ~Welcome, New Members~

-**Russell Albertson** of Portland, OR

-**Ross Tonkens** of Leawood, KS. Congratulations to Ross and his wife Gail (*Coffman*) (SDPF Historical Advisor) who wed in December 2017.

-**Richard Wilson** of Sutherland, VA

*Welcome back* – **Steven Francisco** of Fresno, CA

### ~In Memoriam~

We are saddened by the loss of the following members in 2018:

-**Claire F. Barret** of Newport News, VA, on May 17 - wife of the late J. Stuart Barret, and mother of Jane McCroskey and John S. Barret, Jr

-**Jonell Glenn Kesler** of Roanoke, VA, on August 23 – wife of Raymond Kesler

## *LUSO*: The Movie

Members of the movie production team—Travis Bowman, Chris Cates, and Leah Allen—as well as actor Brian Patrick Wade, who has signed on to portray Peter Francisco in *LUSO*—attended the *Toast to America* on June 27, hosted by the Portuguese Ambassador to the United States, Domingos Fezas Vital. Copies of the screenplay were presented to Ambassador Vital; President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa; and President of Madeira, Funchal Miguel Albuquerque. A letter of endorsement from President de Sousa will be included with the screenplay when it is forwarded to A-list directors and actors.

Without the vision and commitment of Travis Bowman, the screenplay and eventual production of this movie would not be possible. Several members of the Society also have invested in pre-production costs. Its release will be a most effective way to educate others about Peter’s contributions to the American Revolution and to fulfill the Society’s purpose *to give him his rightful place in history!*



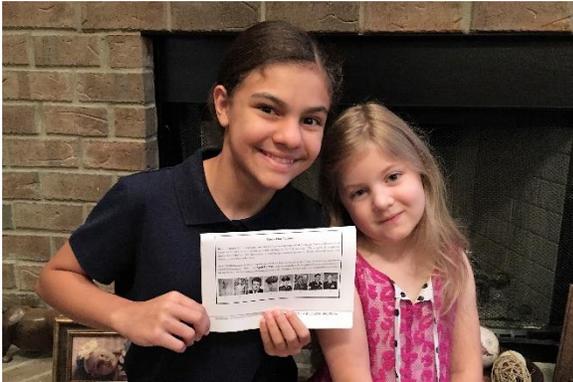
Chris Cates; Travis Bowman; Paula Cristina Silva, President of the Madeira Tourism Dept; Funchal Miguel Albuquerque, President of Madeira; Domingos Fezas Vital, Ambassador of Portugal to the U.S.; Leah Allen; and Brian Patrick Wade at *Toast to America*



Brian Patrick Wade; Travis Bowman; Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of Portugal, holding a copy of the screenplay, *LUSO*; Leah Allen; and Chris Cates

## “Name the Patriots” Contest

*And the winners are...* Camryn (age 12) and Kyan (age 6) Mwalwanda (daughters of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Erin Mwalwanda) of Cedar Park, TX, who each—*independently of one another*—correctly identified 4 of our 8 patriots—Numbers 4, 6, 7 and 8. Their prizes include free membership in the Society for five years and a \$20 gift card each.



The identities of our Patriots included in the contest are:

**(1) Howard A. “Buck” Shorter** (*deceased*, formerly of Darlington Heights/ Farmville, VA) was drafted into the U.S. Army in January 1945, even though he was 32 years of age and married with two young children. He was sent to Ft Knox, KY, for basic training, and then to Seattle, WA, before being sent to the Philippines, where he served until the end of World War II. “Buck” also served in Korea for about eight months before being discharged and returning home to his farm in Darlington Heights.

*(Photo submitted by his niece, Anne Wilson)*

**(2) Ralph E. “Buck” Buckley** (*deceased*, formerly of Annandale, VA) received his Bachelor’s Degree from Virginia Tech and his Master’s in Education from The George Washington University. “Buck” was drafted into the U. S. Army in 1941 during World War II and attended Officer’s Candidate School, attaining the rank of Captain. He trained in NC and TX and served as a gunnery instructor in the U.S. and in the Philippines. Following his discharge in 1946, “Buck” returned to his position as Assistant Principal at Mount Vernon High School in Northern Virginia, where he eventually became Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

*(Photo submitted by his wife Edith, and son Scott Buckley)*

**(3) Roland T. Harris** of Annandale, VA, was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1962. He served in the U.S. Army Security Agency and provided administrative support while serving in Taiwan, advancing from E-1 to SP-4. Afterwards, he served in Thailand and advanced to Personnel Sergeant. While stationed in Taiwan and Thailand, he was required to wear civilian clothes, rather than his uniform, when not on base. (*His photo was taken in Taiwan for his passport.*) Roland was attending Officer’s Candidate School in GA, in 1965, when he opted to return to civilian life.

*(Photo submitted by Roland Harris)*

**(4) William L. “Bill” Wilson** of Cedar Park, TX, enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1968 during the Viet Nam War. He attended basic training at Ft Bragg, NC, and advanced infantry training at Ft Lee, VA. Bill served six years in a teaching unit in the U.S. Army Reserves before being discharged in 1974. He taught in the public-school system for two years before entering the pharmaceutical industry from which he retired as a Division Sales Manager in 2004.

*(Photo submitted by Bill Wilson)*

**(5) Robert “Bob” F. Grimes, Jr.**, of Suffolk, VA, was drafted into the U.S. Army in June 1966, during the Viet Nam War. He was sent to Fort Jackson, SC, for boot camp and then to Ft Bliss, TX, for advanced training as a Radar Operator. He served at Ft. Bliss and at McGregor Range, NM, until his discharge in June 1968. Bob graduated from Old Dominion University in VA in June 1973, with a degree in structural engineering, and continued to work in that field until retiring in 2012.

*(Photo submitted by Bob Grimes, Jr.)*

**(6) J. Eric Wilson** of Colorado Springs, CO, enlisted in the army in 1987 at the age of 18, and achieved the rank of Sergeant at age 21. He was an infantryman in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and served in Desert Storm. After being discharged from the army, Eric attended Longwood College, graduated from the Medical College of VA with a Master’s in Physical Therapy in 1998, and then from Rocky Mountain University with a Doctorate of Science in Orthopedic Physical Therapy in 2001.

*See (8) (Photo submitted by his parents Bill and Anne Wilson)*

(7) **Elizabeth “Libby” M. McLeod** of Beltsville, MD, enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps after high school and served in Okinawa, South Korea, Parris Island and Fort Lee. After active duty, Libby received her degree in Liberal Arts from the University of Richmond. She has worked for the Latin American Caribbean Bureau of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Washington, DC, and received her MBA from Virginia Tech in August 2018.

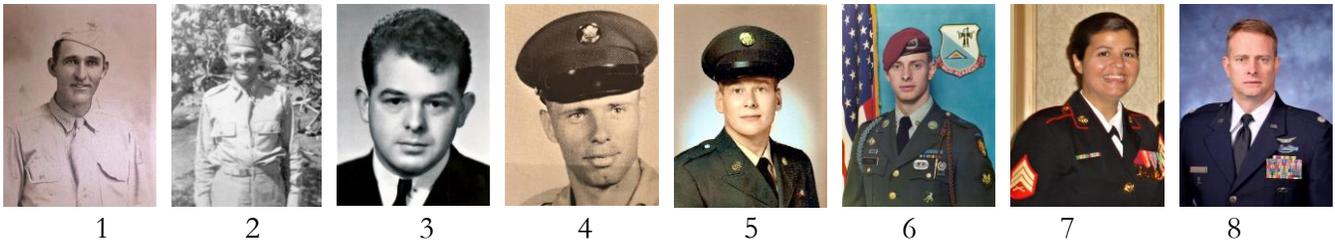
*(Photo submitted by Libby McLeod)*

(8) **J. Eric Wilson** enlisted in the Air Force in 2001, attained his second doctorate in P.T., completed a post-doctoral Fellowship in Orthopedic Manual

P.T., and attained board certifications in both Orthopedic and Sports P.T. He has published research and authored chapters in medical textbooks, is a nationally recognized expert and instructor in Orthopedic P.T., and is the *only* Air Force P.T. to graduate from the Flight Surgeon and Dive Medical Officer Courses. Eric attained the rank of Lt Colonel and was serving as Associate Athletic Director for Sports Medicine for the USAF Academy and as Program Director for the Tactical Sports & Orthopedic Manual P.T. Fellowship when he retired in 2016. As a civilian, Eric continues to run the Fellowship.

*(Photo submitted by his parents Bill and Anne Wilson)*

### Our SDPF Patriots



### Society of the Descendants of Peter Francisco

[www.peterfrancisco.org](http://www.peterfrancisco.org) | [sdpf2000@aol.com](mailto:sdpf2000@aol.com)

**Purpose:** *To compile and maintain the documented records of Peter Francisco and his descendants and to give him his rightful place in history.*

#### OFFICERS

**President** ~ Elizabeth M. “Libby” McLeod  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** ~ Erin E. W. Mwalwanda  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President** ~ Edith F. Buckley  
**Recording Secretary** ~ open  
**Corresponding Secretary** ~ open  
**Treasurer** ~ Ed Bowman  
**Historical Advisor** ~ Gail Tonkens

**If you have any news for the next issue of “The Virginia Giant,” please send it to writers/editors: Anne Wilson and/or Erin Mwalwanda**