

The Virginia Giant

Society of the Descendants of Peter Francisco

Volume 2

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Issue 11

THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF PETER FRANCISCO'S ARRIVAL IN AMERICA

In addition to our March 15 gathering in Richmond, another major event in celebration of the 250th anniversary of Peter Francisco's arrival in America at City Point (now Hopewell), Virginia, has been planned by member Travis Bowman. A five-day trip to the Azores and the Island of Terceira is scheduled for June 20-25, 2015. Touring will include visits to the church where Peter was baptized and the local museum, and the unveiling by the local Portuguese government of a monument honoring Peter Francisco. Space is limited; if interested in taking this tour, please go to www.herculestour.com for details or contact Travis at travis@travisbowman.com.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION MUSEUM YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA

Jane McCroskey, the Society's liaison to the new American Revolution Museum planned for Yorktown, Virginia, has been developing a presentation about Peter Francisco's many contributions to the Revolution and to Virginia, and why he should be included in an exhibit. A March 2015 meeting with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation is tentatively planned.

The Society's Executive Board has approved a "\$234" donation to the museum to commemorate the 234th anniversary of General Cornwallis' surrender in 1781 at Yorktown, which Peter and his friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, witnessed.

SOCIETY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF PETER FRANCISCO

requests the honor of your presence at the

43rd celebration of Peter Francisco Day in Virginia

**Sunday, March 15, 2015
12:30 p.m.**

**Virginia Capitol Building
Old Hall of Delegates**

Guest Speaker: Mr. Greg Eanes

Retired U.S. Air Force Intelligence Officer, teacher, journalist, and author of
"Prelude to Yorktown --Tarleton's Southside Raid and Peter Francisco's Famous Fight"

Following our meeting, a special wreath-laying ceremony in recognition of the
250th anniversary of Peter Francisco's arrival in Virginia
will be held at Shockoe Hill Cemetery

WALKING IN PETER'S FOOTSTEPS

Members came from as far away as Alabama and Texas to attend our annual business meeting on Sunday, October 19, 2014, at Maysville Manor Bed & Breakfast – a historic home in Buckingham, Virginia, that Peter himself may have visited. Sixteen members of the Society were overnight guests at the B&B on Saturday and enjoyed a hearty breakfast together Sunday morning before visiting Locust Grove, the restored home of Peter Francisco in Buckingham County.



Society members (from left) Bob Doherty, Paul Paim, Britney Toste, BJ Craig, Mary Poindexter, Anne Wilson, Jane & John McCroskey visit during breakfast together at Maysville Manor.



Front Row: Sofia & Arianna Paim, Linda & Bob Doherty
 2nd Row: BJ Craig, Camryn & Erin Mwalwanda
 3rd Row: Mary Poindexter, Britney Toste, Caroline Corum
 4th Row: Anne Wilson, Paul Paim

Thirty members attended the luncheon of colonial fare and the annual business meeting. The following officers were re-elected for 2014: President - Libby McLeod; 1st VP - Erin Mwalwanda; 2nd VP - Edith Buckley; Recording Secretary - Jane McCroskey; and Treasurer - Anne Wilson. Bill Geddy was elected as our new Corresponding Secretary. Bill, his wife Meg, and daughter Lizzy are all members of the Society and live in Macon, Georgia.



Lunch in the Tavern Room of Historic Maysville Manor. Owner Nancy Maxey is seated at the front right.



The Peter Francisco Memorial Library at Maysville Manor



Sofia Paim, Camryn Mwalwanda and Arianna Paim

Following the business meeting, members and guests joined Mrs. Nancy Maxey, owner of Maysville Manor, for the dedication of the library in honor of Peter Francisco. Three generations of descendants of Peter led the dedication ceremony: Anne Wilson and her daughter Erin Wilson Mwalwanda read about the many contributions Peter made to the American Revolution and the honors bestowed upon him; Erin's 9-year old

daughter, Camryn, closed the ceremony with a beautiful rendition of “America.” A guest book and a copy of Peter Francisco, The Portuguese Patriot by William Arthur Moon were presented by the Society to Mrs. Maxey for display in the library where a portrait of Peter Francisco hangs in a place of honor above the fireplace. A reception was held after the dedication.

AMONG OUR MEMBERS ...

Three generations of descendants visited Colonial Williamsburg and Yorktown, Virginia, prior to the Society’s fall meeting. Anne Wilson, her daughter Erin Mwalwanda, and granddaughter, Camryn Mwalwanda, toured “Revolutionary City” for three days where they met “the Marquis de Lafayette” who recalled that Peter Francisco was his great friend. While in Yorktown, they admired the Yorktown Monument, historic Nelson House, and the Custom House.



Camryn admiring the bricks dedicated to Peter Francisco and the SDPF along the Custom House walkway.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION TELEVISION SERIES

A three-part series about the American Revolution was aired on the American Heroes Channel during December 2014 and February 2015. Events showing ordinary citizens performing extraordinary acts of bravery were re-enacted during the series -- Peter Francisco’s feat of carrying an 1100-pound cannon and

hiding it from the British was highlighted. Mention was also made of his great size, the battles in which he fought, and that he was called The Virginia Giant and Washington’s One-Man Army!

Link to the 3-hour long series:

www.ahctv.com/tv-shows/the-american-revolution

Link to the third 1-hour program featuring Peter Francisco about 22 minutes into the show:

www.ahctv.com/tv-shows/the-american-revolution/the-american-revolution-video/the-one-man-army

Also after the series aired, members Don and Steven Pruitt researched online activity about Peter Francisco. They discovered an increase in views to the Wikipedia pages “Peter Francisco,” “Francisco’s Fight,” and “Locust Grove.” As Don stated, “Considerable interest in Peter Francisco has been shown by the viewing public!”

GOING FOR THE GOLD ...

The Society’s Executive Board is in agreement to seek the ***Congressional Gold Medal*** for Peter Francisco. The medal is presented to military members and/or civilians for distinguished contributions to the United States.

Since Peter fought in the militia and in several states, we may also seek the Distinctive Service Medal (Virginia) or similar medals from other states. Obtaining one or more of these medals for Peter would bring significant recognition and could be used as further evidence of the need to recognize him with a Congressional Gold Medal.

The Board chose not to seek the *Medal of Honor* (which was introduced during the Civil War and has not been presented to anyone in an earlier war); the *Presidential Medal of Freedom* (for civilians only); or the *Badge of Military Merit/Purple Heart* (George Washington himself presented only three of these medals in the American Revolutionary War).

After a committee to pursue obtaining the Congressional Gold Medal and state medals is formed, Society members will be asked to participate in a letter-writing campaign to their State Senators. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Libby McLeod at elizabeth.m.mcleod@gmail.com or 804-245-6770. This is your opportunity to bring national recognition to your ancestor!

In Memory...

Faithful member, Warren Rockwell “Rocky” Lambert, Jr., passed away in December 2014. Condolences are extended to his family and especially to his sons, Garrison and Spencer Lambert, and to his sister, Blair Wehrman – all members of the Society.

MEMBERSHIP & DUES

Active membership in 2014 (those who paid dues for 2014) was 144; active membership in 2015, as of February 1 is 112. Our current mailing list consists of 183 members (including children) – some of whom have not paid dues since 2012. *If you receive your newsletter via postal service, please note the year listed after your name on the mailing label. The numbers denote the year through which your dues have been paid. If you receive your newsletter via email, please read the introductory email which will list the year through which your dues have been paid.*

If a member fails to pay dues for a year or several years, he/she is still included on our mailing list and continues to receive newsletters and other Society information. However, the member may be dropped from the active list after several years of unpaid dues and after having been mailed/emailed reminders. To remain an active member, one may pay dues for the current year rather than paying all dues in arrears.

Dues for any year become payable in October of the previous year; however, many members wait to pay their dues once the new year has begun or until they receive their February newsletters. Questions? Please contact Anne Wilson at 512-636-8197 or annecw1@aol.com.

WWW.PETERFRANCISCO.ORG

Go to our website for newsletters, upcoming events, Scholarship news, genealogy, links to the American Heroes Channel 3-part series about the American

Revolution, and much more! Since Brad Vogler became our webmaster last year, our site has seen increased activity. During March 2014, the first month for the rebuilt site, there were 824 hits; after the American Heroes Channel aired the series on the American Revolution in December 2014, there were 641 hits to our site. Total viewings during the ten months of the rebuilt site in 2014 (March-December) were 4,189 – for an average monthly viewing of 419!

CHANGES TO BY-LAWS

Several changes have been made to the Society’s by-laws, i.e., officers will be elected for a term of two years rather than one, and the annual business meeting may be held on a date other than the third Sunday of October. An updated version of the by-laws may be viewed on the Society’s website www.peterfrancisco.org. Active members may obtain a copy of the by-laws by contacting Anne Wilson at annecw1@aol.com or 512-636-8197.

PETER FRANCISCO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Members are reminded to donate to the 2015 Scholarship Fund! Your donations enabled us to present two \$500 scholarships in 2014 and we hope to do the same this year. All donations are tax deductible. You may use the enclosed form for making your donation or simply send your check made payable to SDPF, designated for the Scholarship Fund, to Anne Wilson, Treasurer SDPF, 2613 Moray Lane, Cedar Park, TX 78613-4346.

Distribution of scholarship information to high schools in Virginia and other states is fulfilling our purpose by educating others as to the contribution that Peter Francisco made to the American Revolution. If you know a graduating senior, encourage him/her to apply for our scholarship. See our website www.peterfrancisco.org for more information.

FUNDRAISERS:

Locust Grove Notecards – 8 cards and envelopes for \$12.00

Peter Francisco Postcards – 5 for \$5 or 15 for \$10

Maysville Manor Magnet - \$3.00 each



Magnet



Postcard



Notecards

**Please use the form below for payment of dues, fundraiser orders,
and/or for making a donation to the Scholarship Fund.**

DUES: Annual dues in the Society are only \$10 for adults; \$2 for children under 18 years of age. Dues for 2015 became payable in October 2014. *If you owe dues for past years, you may maintain active status simply by paying dues for 2015.* If you receive newsletters via U.S. Postal Service, refer to the year listed after your name on your mailing label to determine through which year you have paid dues. If you receive newsletters via email, a pre-newsletter email will be sent, advising you of the year through which you have paid dues. Questions? Contact Anne Wilson at 512-636-8197 or annecw1@aol.com.

RETURN FORM

Please complete this form and mail it, along with your check made payable to SDPF, to Anne Wilson, 2613 Moray Lane, Cedar Park, TX 78613-4346.

Names _____

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone _____

DUES Paid for (names and years) _____ \$ _____

FUNDRAISERS:

Locust Grove Notecards - \$12 per set of 8 \$ _____

Peter Francisco Postcards – \$5 for 5 or only \$10 for 15 \$ _____

2015 Magnet - \$3 each \$ _____

DONATION TO THE 2015 SCHOLARSHIP FUND \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

SOCIETY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF PETER FRANCISCO

www.peterfrancisco.org
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

1st Vice President ~ Erin E. W. Mwalwanda

2nd Vice President ~ Edith F. Buckley

Recording Secretary ~ Jane B. McCroskey

Corresponding Secretary ~ William B. “Bill” Geddy

Treasurer ~ Anne C. Wilson

Historical Advisor ~ Gail Coffman

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