

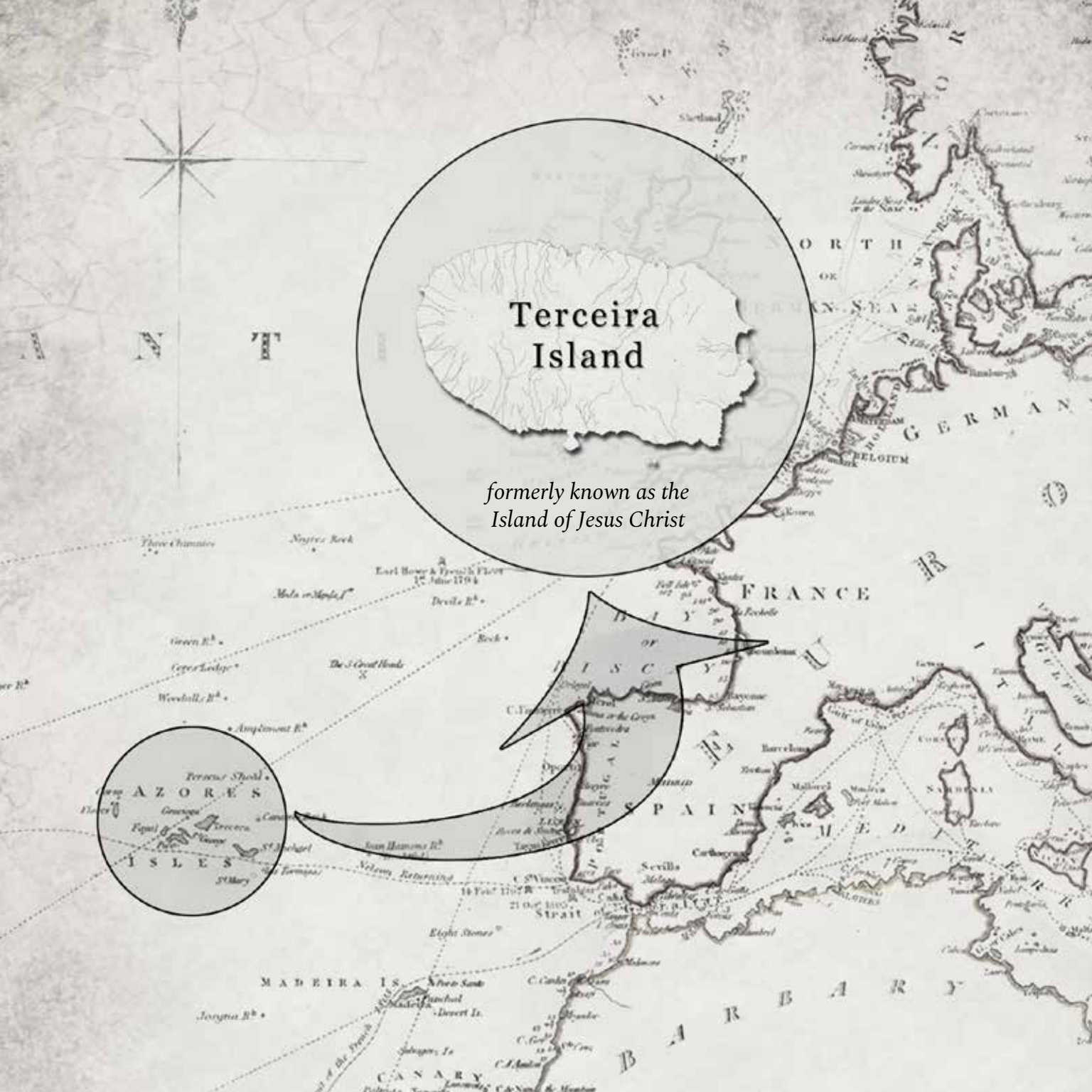


Honoring the Life of Peter Francisco

“The Giant of the Revolution”

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Hosted by the City of Greensboro



Terceira Island

*formerly known as the
Island of Jesus Christ*

AZORES ISLES

Schedule



Presentation of Colors	U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Honor Guard
National Anthem.....	Camryn Mwalwanda, Peter Francisco Descendent
Invocation.....	Howard Shoe, NC National Prayer Breakfast Coordinator
Opening Remarks...	Travis Bowman, Author & Co-Producer of LUSO™ & Peter Francisco Descendent
Welcome	Ed Bowman, President of the Peter Francisco Society
Welcome	Greensboro City Manager, Nathaniel “Trey” Davis
Welcome	Mayor of Greensboro, Marikay Abuzuaiter
Intro of Distinguished Guests	Travis Bowman, Master of Ceremonies
Remarks	NC Chief Justice Newby
Remarks	NC Governor Josh Stein
Remarks	NC Senator Ted Budd
Remarks	Embassy of Portugal, Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Pedro Carneiro
Remarks	His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza
Remarks	VA Senator Ryan McDougle
Remarks	Brian Patrick Wade, Co-Producer of LUSO™ & Actor portraying Peter Francisco
Short Film.....	LUSO™ the Series
Music Selection	LUSO: The Army of One (The Ballad of Peter Francisco) - written by Bruno Bettencourt and performed by Tim Helms
Benediction	Pastor Brian Harrell

TO PETER FRANCISCO
A GIANT IN STATURE,
MIGHT AND COURAGE-WHO SLEW
IN THIS ENGAGEMENT ELEVEN OF THE
ENEMY WITH HIS OWN BROAD SWORD
RENDERING HIMSELF THEREBY PERHAPS THE MOST
FAMOUS PRIVATE SOLDIER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

Guest Speakers



★ Senator Ted Budd ★



★ NC Governor Josh Stein ★



★ Chief Justice Paul Newby ★



★ Senator Ryan McDougale ★



★ Pedro Carneiro, Dep. Chief of Mission ★



★ Mayor Abuzuaiter ★



★ City Manager Nathaniel Davis ★

A HUGE Thank You to our Board Members

Travis Bowman
Co-Producer of LUSO.tv
Descendant of Peter
Francisco

Brian Patrick Wade
Co-Producer of LUSO.tv
Actor Portraying Peter
Francisco

Howard Shoe
NC National Prayer
Breakfast Coordinator

Chance Staley
CO National Prayer
Breakfast Coordinator

Vasco Morais
CALuso Director

Matt Barret
Peter Francisco Descendant

Anne Wilson
Peter Francisco Society
Board Member
Peter Francisco Descendant

Francisco Semião
LUSO-American Friend

Jennifer Costa Joss
LUSO-American Friend

Jocquelyn Boone
Chief Creative Economy
Officer
City of Greensboro

Joshua Sherrick
Events & Engagement
Manager City of Greensboro

Peter Francisco – Sites and Artifacts



Peter Francisco's home in Dillwyn, Virginia was built in 1794 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.



This Peter Francisco monument stands at the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park in Greensboro, North Carolina.



This Peter Francisco monument stands in downtown Newark, New Jersey across from Penn Station.



This Peter Francisco monument stands in Hopewell, Virginia close to where he was found abandoned on a dock in 1765.



This Peter Francisco monument stands in New Bedford, Massachusetts recognizing him as a patriot of Portuguese descent.



This city square in downtown New Bedford, Massachusetts is named for Peter Francisco.



This portrait of Peter Francisco was painted in 1828 and hangs in the hall of the Virginia State Capitol building.



The United States Post Service issued this bicentennial stamp in honor of Peter Francisco in 1976.



This street sign in Hopewell, Virginia quotes George Washington's famous saying that Peter was his "One Man Army".

This Peter Francisco statue stands in Porto Judeu, Terceira and was dedicated on June 23, 2015.



The Azores

Rising from the deep blue waters of the North Atlantic, the Azores are a breathtaking chain of nine volcanic islands belonging to Portugal. Located roughly midway between Europe and North

America, the islands are known for their dramatic cliffs, emerald pastures, and a maritime culture shaped by centuries of exploration. In the 18th century these remote islands were home to farming villages, fishing communities, and devout Christian traditions that

bound families and neighbors together through faith and hard work.

One of those islands, Terceira Island, holds a special place in American history. In the 1700s it was commonly called the “Island of Jesus Christ,” reflecting the deep Catholic heritage of its people. It was here, on July 9, 1760, that Pedro Francisco—later known in America as Peter Francisco—was born. Baptized as an infant in a parish church in the city of Angra do Heroísmo, the young boy’s life began in a peaceful Atlantic community that could scarcely have imagined the extraordinary destiny awaiting him.

In 1765, on the sacred Day of Pentecost, tragedy struck when the 5-year-old Pedro was kidnapped and carried across the ocean. On May 23, 1765, he arrived alone on the shores of City Point in colonial Virginia. From these unlikely beginnings, the orphaned child from the Azores would grow into one of the most legendary soldiers of the American Revolutionary War, earning the nickname “The Giant of the American Revolution” for his remarkable strength, courage, and battlefield heroics.

Two hundred and fifty years later, the people of Terceira proudly honor the boy who left their shores and became an American patriot. In Angra do Heroísmo, visitors can find a monument dedicated to Peter Francisco, along with a street and a sports arena bearing his name. The original baptismal record of little Pedro Francisco is preserved in the Library and Regional Archives of Angra do Heroísmo, a treasured document linking the Azores to the story of American independence. You can even drink a beer in honor of Peter Francisco.

From the green hills of Terceira Island to the battlefields of the American Revolution, the life of Peter Francisco is a powerful reminder that the story of America has always been connected to the wider world.



Peter Francisco – The Early Years

Kidnapped by pirates from his wealthy family in the Azores in 1765! Abandoned in a New World where he couldn't understand or speak the language! Living alone in a warehouse on a wharf! All of this at only five years of age!

How did this young boy of Portuguese descent become a hero of the American Revolutionary War?

Here is his amazing story!

Pedro Francisco was born to Francisco Machado Luiz and his wife Antonia Maria on July 9, 1760, in Porto Judeu, Terceira Island, The Azores, where his baptism is recorded in St Anthony Church. The unimpeachable testimony of men of integrity told his story which coincides exactly with Peter's account of how he came to be at City Point (now Hopewell, Virginia) in 1765.

Once Pedro learned English, he told of the events of his life, of his lovely mother, when he was kidnapped in the garden, and about his awful sea voyage to America. On June 23, 1765, a small boy was abandoned on a wharf at City Point (now Hopewell, Virginia). The eyewitness account of James Durell of Petersburg, Virginia states: "... a foreign ship sailed up the James River, dropped anchor opposite the dock, and lowered a longboat to the water with two sailors in it. Then a boy of about five years was handed down and rowed to the wharf, where he was deposited and abandoned. The boat returned, quickly, to its ship. The ship weighed anchor at once, sailed back down the James River, and was never heard from again." The child did not speak



English and no one understood what he said, except that he kept repeating "Pedro Francisco." Thus, the local citizens called him Peter Francisco.

He was described as handsome, of dark complexion, probably from Italy or Portugal. His clothing, though disheveled from the long ocean voyage, was of the best quality and his shoes had silver buckles engraved with the initials "P.F." Though confused, sad and lonely, his demeanor and bearing were courageous and engaging which led the local citizens to believe he was from a wealthy family – perhaps nobility.

At first the authorities gave Peter a bed in which to sleep in a warehouse on the wharf; and the local housewives saw to it that he was well-fed. Later in the year he was taken to the Prince George County Poor House where he remained until Judge Anthony Winston took him to his home, "Hunting Tower Plantation" in Buckingham County, Virginia. Peter worked as an indentured servant in the fields and the blacksmith shop for eleven years. He gained in strength and stature – reaching the height of six feet six inches and the weight of two hundred sixty pounds by the age of fifteen!

Judge Winston was a prominent planter and a dedicated patriot who vigorously opposed the tyranny of the King of England. In fact, many conferences were held at Hunting Tower where resentment brewed toward England. While living in this atmosphere, Peter understood at an early age the real importance of the growing struggle for independence of the colonies.

Peter Francisco – Military Service

In the spring of 1775, Peter Francisco traveled to Richmond, Virginia, where he heard Patrick Henry deliver his famous speech at St. John's Church. Inspired to fight for liberty, Peter wanted to enlist immediately, but he was only fourteen. He waited until 1776, when he was sixteen and released from bondage, and then joined the Tenth Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army under Colonel Hugh Woodson. Thus began a military career that would earn him legendary status during the American Revolutionary War.



Peter quickly became known for his extraordinary size, strength, and courage. He fought in major engagements including the Battles of Brandywine, Stony Point, Camden, and Guilford Courthouse, as well as in encounters with Tarleton's Raiders. Fellow soldiers praised his bravery, and accounts describe him performing remarkable feats under intense combat conditions. His reputation spread throughout the army for both his physical power and fearless determination.

At the Battle of Brandywine in 1777, Peter helped hold the line at Sandy Hollow Gap, allowing General George Washington's forces time to retreat in an orderly fashion. Though wounded in the leg, he recovered and returned to service. Soon after, he was selected as one of twenty elite light infantrymen

chosen for the daring nighttime assault on Stony Point. During the attack, Peter was the second man over the wall, helped clear a path into the fort, and suffered a severe stomach wound while fighting hand-to-hand with British soldiers.



After reenlisting with the Virginia Militia, Peter fought at the Battle of Camden in 1780. There, he saved Colonel Mayo's life by killing a grenadier who attempted to bayonet him and later carried an abandoned 1,100-pound cannon

off the battlefield to prevent its capture. At Guilford Courthouse in 1781, one of the bloodiest battles of the war, Peter reportedly cut down numerous enemy soldiers with a specially made broadsword ordered for him by General Washington. Despite suffering serious wounds and being left for dead, he survived and eventually returned to duty.

Later that year, while scouting in Virginia, Peter confronted members of Tarleton's Raiders at Ward's Tavern in Amelia County. Through strength, strategy, and bold deception, he killed and wounded several attackers, scattered the rest, and seized their horses. In October 1781, he joined the Marquis de Lafayette at Yorktown and witnessed the surrender of General Cornwallis, effectively ending the war. Peter remained a devoted patriot throughout his life, even attempting to serve again during the War of 1812, and later acted as part of Lafayette's honor guard during his 1824 visit to Virginia.



Peter Francisco – Family Life

In December 1784, Peter Francisco married Susannah Anderson of Cumberland County, Virginia, the daughter of a socially prominent family that owned the plantation known as “The Mansion.” Soon after their marriage, Peter gave up his blacksmith shop and purchased 250 acres along

Louse Creek in Charlotte County, where he built a log home. Local tradition held that he carried fourteen-foot logs on his shoulders to construct the house and even transported an 800-pound stone to cap a spring he built nearby. Peter and Susannah had two children, James and Mary “Polly,” before Susannah’s death in 1790.



During these years, Peter became active in civic life, serving as Surveyor of Roads, sitting on juries, and engaging in land transactions in Cumberland and Prince Edward Counties. In 1794, he married Catherine Fauntleroy Brooke, and together they had four children. With Catherine’s socially prominent background, their home became a gathering place for respected families, and Peter established himself as a successful landowner and businessman. Tax records from the late 1780s reflect his growing prosperity and property holdings.

In 1803, Peter was granted a license to operate an ordinary (tavern) in Prince Edward County. He later moved his family to another ordinary at New Store, where they lived for several years.

These establishments made him well known to travelers and neighbors alike, and they provided yet another setting where stories of his Revolutionary War service and remarkable strength were shared and remembered.

Stories from this period continued to highlight Peter’s legendary strength. At a veterans’ reunion in 1805, he entertained former soldiers with displays of power. In another well-known tale, a man from Kentucky attempted to challenge him, only to be effortlessly overpowered. Despite such colorful stories, Peter was also remembered for his character. During the 1811 Richmond Theatre fire, he rescued numerous people from the burning building but declined recognition, saying he had only done what he could.

After Catherine’s death in 1821, Peter married Mary Grymes West in 1823. He died in Richmond on January 16, 1831. His funeral was held at the House of Delegates, where he had served as Sergeant-at-Arms, and he was buried with full military and Masonic honors. Remembered as one of the last surviving warriors of the Revolutionary War, Peter Francisco was honored not only for his extraordinary strength but also for his courage, humility, and lifelong devotion to his country.

The funeral was the largest ever held in the state of Virginia at that time, and the ceremony was paid for by the Virginia government.



Peter Francisco Day - March 15

Several states observe Peter Francisco Day on March 15 in recognition of his extraordinary strength and courage at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, fought on March 15, 1781. His legendary actions that day helped earn him the enduring title of the “One Man Army” of the American Revolution.

Rhode Island established the observance in 1991 through legislation when the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law designating March 15 as Peter Francisco Day and directing the Governor to issue an annual proclamation encouraging citizens to remember Francisco’s valor and the contributions of Americans of Portuguese ancestry in the nation’s wars.

Massachusetts recognized Francisco through legislative action and later gubernatorial proclamation. The state legislature passed measures in the mid-20th century acknowledging his contribution to the success of the American Revolution and calling for the annual observance of March 15. In 1985, Governor Michael Dukakis reinforced this recognition by signing a proclamation officially observing Peter Francisco Day in the Commonwealth.

The **Virginia** General Assembly established Peter Francisco Day on February 23, 1973. In what many see as a providential detail—perhaps even God-ordained—that same date marks the birth of Travis Bowman, author, producer, and a descendant of Peter Francisco, whose work continues to preserve and share the story of his extraordinary ancestor.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 200

Declaring March fifteenth of each year Peter Francisco Day.

WHEREAS, Peter Francisco was a hero of the American Revolutionary War whose feats of strength and bravery are legendary; and

WHEREAS, when a child, Peter Francisco was abandoned on a wharf at City Point, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, at the age of sixteen he went as a volunteer into the American Revolution, fought in many historic battles, saved the life of his commanding officer, was wounded several times and left for dead once and finally witnessed the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown; and

WHEREAS, despite his huge size and corresponding strength, he was a peaceable, kind and generous man; and

WHEREAS, at the time of his death on January sixteen, eighteen hundred thirty-one, he occupied the position of Sergeant-at-Arms in the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth and was duly honored by that body at his death; and

WHEREAS, he was buried with military honors in the Shockoe Cemetery in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Massachusetts has declared March fifteenth as Peter Francisco Day and March fifteenth, nineteen hundred seventy-one, and March fifteenth, nineteen hundred seventy-two, were declared Peter Francisco Day in Virginia by the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the James Allen Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and a citizens' committee headed by Mr. William Willis have been very active in developing substantial support through the entire Commonwealth to annually recognize this anniversary; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That March fifteenth of each year is hereby declared Peter Francisco Day in Virginia in honor of this great hero of the American Revolution and citizen of the Commonwealth.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates,

February 23, 1973

Henry R. Rich
Clerk.

Agreed to by the Senate,

February 24, 1973

Louis O. Lucas
Clerk.

The Luso-American Community

For close to a century, the Luso-American community in the United States has played a central role in preserving the memory of Peter Francisco. Through monuments, parks, civic ceremonies, awards, and parades, Portuguese Americans have ensured that the story of the “Hercules of the Revolution” remains



alive in both American and Portuguese cultural memory. Communities like Newark, New Jersey and New Bedford, Massachusetts have erected monuments, named public squares, and organized annual celebrations honoring Francisco’s bravery during the American Revolution.

One of the most influential organizations in preserving his legacy has been the Portuguese Continental Union of the United States, which created the **Peter Francisco Award** in 1957. This prestigious medal recognizes individuals or institutions that promote Portuguese culture and strengthen ties between Portugal and the United States. The first recipient of the award was President John F. Kennedy, symbolizing how Francisco’s story bridges Portuguese heritage and American patriotism.

Parades and public commemorations have also been an important tradition within the Luso-American community. Portuguese cultural festivals—such as the large Portugal Day celebrations in Newark—often feature parades that include marching bands, community organizations, and patriotic displays honoring figures like Francisco who represent the



contributions of Portuguese immigrants to the United States. These events grew significantly over time; early parades attracted thousands of participants and spectators and often culminated near Peter Francisco Park, reinforcing his role as a symbolic hero for Portuguese Americans.

The Portuguese-language newspaper *Luso-Americano* has been one of the most consistent chroniclers of these celebrations. Over the decades it has published numerous articles documenting ceremonies and gatherings dedicated to Francisco. The newspaper has covered recognition of Francisco in additional states, community tributes in Portuguese-American neighborhoods, and ceremonies at Peter Francisco Park honoring Portuguese-American veterans.

Together, these monuments, awards, parades, and publications represent a sustained effort by the Luso-American community to keep the memory of Peter Francisco alive. Through cultural institutions, civic events, and historical storytelling, Portuguese Americans have preserved the legacy of a man who not only helped secure American independence but also stands as one of the earliest and most celebrated figures of Portuguese heritage in the history of the United States.



LUSO™ the Series Overview

LUSO™ is a 9-episode miniseries based on the life of Peter Francisco and Travis Bowman's novel. Historians have called Francisco

"America's Braveheart." Legends have named him "LUSO, the Virginia Giant." George Washington called him the "Hercules of the Revolution" and said: ***"Without him we would have lost two crucial battles, perhaps the war, and with it our freedom."***



Yet few people, to this day, know his name or have heard the story of this Portuguese slave who fought for his freedom and the freedom of our country in a story that is epic, mythical and true.

He was born Pedro Francisco, the son of exiled Nobles from Portugal who fled to an island paradise in the Azores. But it soon became Paradise Lost. At the age of five, Pedro was ripped away from his family and kidnapped by pirates. When the ship he was imprisoned on was destroyed in a hurricane, young Pedro miraculously survived in a rowboat and eventually washed ashore in Virginia at a time when rebellion and war were brewing on the horizon. With no idea of who he was or where he came from, Pedro was placed in an orphanage then purchased and adopted by a wealthy plantation owner who gave him a new name: Peter Francisco.

As he grew from boy to man, Peter -- standing at 6' 6" when the average

height was a foot shorter than that -- was a literal giant among men. But his life was not an easy one. Though he longed for the freedom he remembered from his childhood, he was not free. He was treated like an adopted son, but he was also a slave.



His journey is as much a struggle for identity as it is for freedom. Who is he? Where does he come from? What is his destiny? He also longed for the freedom to be with the woman he loved but, like Romeo and Juliet, their love was a secret and forbidden one.

As war became inevitable, Peter defied his adopted "father" and joined the new Continental Army in exchange for his freedom.

He was a warrior on the battlefield and in the ongoing fight to free the budding new nation that had become his adopted home the warrior became a legend. This is an epic story of the birth of a hero and the birth of a country, born of protest, rebellion, and revolution.

Even though it's a story from long ago, the same vibrant protesting "American Spirit" is alive and well today, as is the same fight for equality, justice, and a voice to be heard. The ideas and themes aren't about yesterday they are about today. LUSO™ will explore them all through the eyes and through the incredible journey of Peter Francisco as he forges his destiny and ours through the steel blade of his sword and the fire in his heart.



***Watch The Short
Film Now***



Travis Bowman

***Producer, Author, and
Descendent of Peter Francisco***

Travis Bowman is an author, actor, film producer and 7th generation descendant of Peter Francisco. He released his novel LUSO™ in 2009 and worked with the History Channel to produce the first ever television documentary about his famous ancestor. The documentary, The Peter Francisco Story, won a Platinum Aurora Award in 2012.

Travis stands 6'6" tall just like Peter Francisco, and has brought his great-grandfather to life over 100 times through a 30-minute dramatic impersonation for historic societies, schools, universities, and church groups across the US and Portugal. In 2013, he was honored to bring Peter Francisco to life in Porto Judeu, Azores close to where he was kidnapped 250 years ago.

Mr. Bowman's work has earned him numerous awards and accolades and dozens of newspapers have published articles about him around the world. But, being knighted by the Duke of Braganza (King of Portugal if they had a monarchy) in 2019 was the highlight of his achievements. Travis is cofounder of Into The Storm Productions, LLC which manages LUSO™.



Brian Patrick Wade

***Producer and
Actor Portraying Peter Francisco***

For over 20 years, Brian Patrick Wade has been entertaining audiences around the world with his acting skills. As an actor, he's portrayed serious characters, comical roles, true heroes, and even comic book figures, and some people consider him one of the most diverse artists in Hollywood. But, the road to Hollywood wasn't easy.

Brian was raised in Florida and by age 18 he was 6'4" and 230 lbs. He played football at Clemson University and shortly after college he decided to move to Los Angeles to pursue his passion. It was not easy breaking into the industry, but over the last two decades he's been blessed to work with Kevin Costner, Laurence Fishburne, Ashton Kutcher, Kelsey Grammer, Clark Gregg, Chloe Bennet...just to name a few. You might recognize him from the Big Bang Theory, The Guardian, Two & Half Men, NCIS, Teen Wolf or Marvel Agents of SHIELD, and now he's stepping into a Producer/Actor role on LUSO™.

Brian is cofounder of Into The Storm Productions, LLC which manages LUSO™.

Would you like to invest in the next Braveheart story?
Go to www.LUSO.tv/club83

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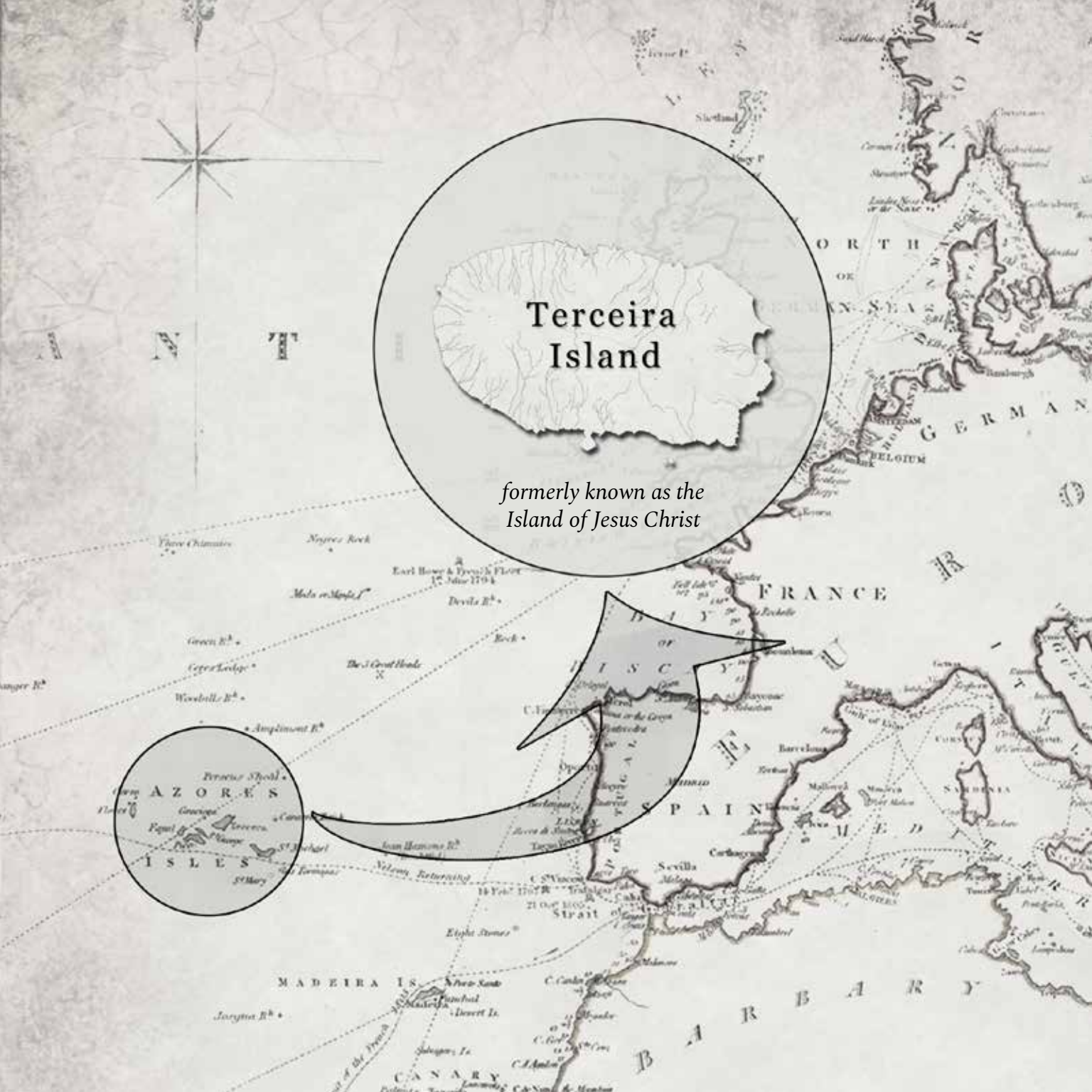
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