

The Virginia Giant

Society of the Descendants of Peter Francisco

Volume 2

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Issue 16

Tour the NEW American Revolution Museum in Yorktown, VA

Following our luncheon and annual meeting on Saturday, October 14 (*details below*), all are encouraged to tour the NEW American Revolution Museum at Yorktown. The museum (formerly the Yorktown Victory Center) tells the story of our nation's founding – from the twilight of the colonial period to the dawn of the Constitution and beyond. Comprehensive indoor galleries feature period artifacts, immersive environments, interactive exhibits, and films, including “The Siege of Yorktown,” with a 180-degree surround screen and dramatic special effects. The introductory film “Liberty Fever” and 22,000 square-foot exhibition galleries debuted in October 2016.

In the outdoor living-history areas, visitors can witness artillery demonstrations, drill with wooden muskets at a re-created Continental Army encampment, and explore a Revolution-era 18th Century farm. The museum is the ideal starting place for a tour of Yorktown!

~ General Admission:

\$12 adults; \$7 children (ages 6-12) ~ **Free Parking** ~

~ Group Rate for 15 or more:

\$10.80 adults; \$7 children ~

~ Guided Tours for 15 available ~

RSVP below for information

You are cordially invited to attend the

**Luncheon and Business Meeting
of the**

Society of the Descendants of Peter Francisco

Saturday, October 14, 2017

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Riverwalk Restaurant

Located at Riverwalk Landing on the York River
323 Water Street, Yorktown, Virginia 23690
757.875.1522

Lunch: Order from menu ~ Pay individually

Free parking deck across the street from the restaurant

RSVPs for Lunch/Meeting/Museum: Libby McLeod | 804.245.6770 | elizabeth.m.mcleod@gmail.com

PETER FRANCISCO DAY CELEBRATION

Friends and descendants gathered at the State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia, on Saturday, March 11, to celebrate the 45th celebration of Peter Francisco Day in Virginia. Capitol Guide, Emily McLeod, led our private tour; assistance was given by Benjamin Keller from the Clerk's Office. The Honorable Nancy Rodrigues explained her duties as Secretary of Administration for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and provided a tour of the Governor's Suite and Conference Room. Ms. Rodrigues, who is of Portuguese descent, recalled first learning about Peter Francisco as a young girl in Newark, NJ.

The Old House Chamber was the site for Dr. James Kelly's presentation about migration and early Virginia history. In celebration of Peter Francisco Day, Charlie Bowman (age 11) read the Governor of Virginia's *Certificate of Recognition*, and Society President Libby McLeod read *Honor to the Dead* – Peter's obituary. After the meeting, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the gravesite of Peter Francisco in Shockoe Hill Cemetery.



At statue of George Washington in the Capitol:
Left to right: Ron Geiger; G Cano; Dr. James Kelly (Guest Speaker); Penny Geiger; Martha Beck; Billy and Stacy Purvis; Ed Bowman and daughter, Jane; Sue and Francis Terminella; Edith Buckley; Libby McLeod; and Benjamin Keller (Clerk's Office)



Wreath-laying ceremony at Shockoe Hill Cemetery:
(Left side of wreath) Chip Bowman, Martha Beck, Edith Buckley, G Cano; *(Right side of wreath)* Billy & Stacy Purvis, Ed Bowman, Libby McLeod; *(Front)* James (7) & Charlie Bowman (11), sons of Chip Bowman; Jane Bowman (8), daughter of Ed Bowman



SDPF President Libby McLeod with Nancy Rodrigues, Secretary of Administration for the Commonwealth of Virginia

TAX EXEMPT STATUS RESTORED

The Society's tax-exempt status was restored, effective May 12, 2017, after Treasurer Ed Bowman filed an application for reinstatement under Revenue Procedure 2014-11, including documentation/information provided by former treasurer Anne Wilson. *The Society is classified as a public charity and is exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).* Donors can deduct contributions made to the Society, and the Society can also receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts. Annual filing of Form 990 or 990-EZ by the Society's treasurer will maintain our tax-exempt status.

~ SAVE THE DATE ~
46th Peter Francisco Day Celebration
Sunday, March 11, 2018

AMONG OUR MEMBERS

Jorge and Natalia Medeiros of New Bedford, MA, share their message of gratitude to former treasurer of the Society, Anne Wilson, *“for her many years of service to the Society and the cause of Peter Francisco. We sincerely hope that your dedication, sacrifice and hard work throughout the years will serve as a stimulus for present and future generations of Peter Francisco admirers to continue the work of the Society in paving the way for our main goal: the national recognition of Peter Francisco as the famous Hercules of the American Revolution and that his name is forever cemented, alongside those of George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, as the great men who fought together for the independence of the United States of America.”*

Steven Pruitt of Alexandria, VA, son of Don and Alla Pruitt, was named one of *Time’s 25 Most Influential People on the Internet*. Steven is a most prolific guardian of fact – having made roughly 2 million edits to Wikipedia since 2006. To help correct Wikipedia’s gender imbalance, he has written articles about 212 influential women. Steven also wrote the Wikipedia article about Locust Grove, Peter Francisco’s home in Buckingham County, VA.

Erin Wilson Mwalwanda and Anne Wilson were accepted as founding members into a newly-formed chapter of the National Daughters of the American Revolution, Cedar Park, TX, in July 2017. The chapter will receive its official name in October.

Welcome, New Members:

Charles R “Chip” Bowman and his children, Lily (14), Charlie (11), James (7), of Richmond, VA; and Arthur Hamilton (great great grandson of member Betty Jean Francisco Finke) of Denver, PA; and Mason Williams of Raleigh, NC.

SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTED

Scholarship Committee members, Jane McCroskey, Linda McLeod and Anne Wilson, evaluated twelve applications before unanimously selecting the following two winners of the Peter Francisco Memorial Scholarship for 2017, and awarding each with a \$500 scholarship:

Chelsea E. Bickley (Louisa High School, Louisa County, VA) who is studying Animal and Poultry Sciences at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA; and **Tyler W. Twiggs** (York High School, Yorktown, VA) who is attending Clemson University, Clemson, SC. Chelsea and Tyler not only excelled as students but also as outstanding athletes and citizens. Our scholarships are helping make the dreams of the younger generation come true, as is evident in the thank you note Chelsea wrote – *“I am honored to be a recipient of the...Scholarship...I look forward to attending Virginia Tech...to pursue my dream to become an agriculture teacher.”*



SDPF member Stuart Barret presenting scholarship certificate to Chelsea Bickley May 17, 2017



SDPF Recording Secretary Jane McCroskey presenting scholarship certificate to Tyler Twiggs June 8, 2017

Members voted unanimously to fund the Peter Francisco Memorial Scholarship with personal donations. Please send your donation for the 2018 Scholarship, along with the attached form, to Ed Bowman, SDPF Treasurer.

Screenwriter Brad Cummings Joins Team for *Luso*, The Movie

For several years, Travis Bowman and his film team have been on a quest to produce a *Braveheart*-like movie about Peter Francisco, titled “Luso” (meaning *Portuguese*). In May 2017, excitement reigned as actor/producer/director Mel Gibson expressed interest in directing the film -- which created more funding options for the production budget.

In July, Brad Cummings, co-author and co-producer of the hit movie, *The Shack*, joined the production team. Brad is President/CEO of Windblown Media; co-author of “A Man Like No Other – the illustrated life of Jesus;” CEO of Shiloh Road Publishers; and General Editor of *The Founders’ Bible* – about the incredible, forgotten history of the founding of America, the vision and dream of the Founding Fathers, our foundations of government, and their connection to the very passages of Scripture that inspired those ideas. Brad has worked tirelessly alongside David Barton, the country’s foremost constitutional historian and an expert on the Founding era.

According to Brad, “It was in...researching the *Founders’ Bible* project that we stumbled across Peter Francisco’s story. At first, I thought it must have been some urban legend, a myth...as we dug deeper we discovered that it had verifiable history. So, seeing its potential to inspire, I knew we had to include it. I could not get over how nobody...knew anything about it...

Shortly after the release of the Founders’ Bible, Travis contacted Brad to express his gratitude for Peter’s inclusion. With a shared sense of passion and purpose, it was natural for them to team up. Brad is thrilled to bring his storytelling skills together with his passion for history and the incredible need and chance to inspire the current generation with the EPIC story of Peter Francisco – a story which Brad truly believes is of God-ordained importance, and must be told! Brad’s target date for completion of the screenplay is October 2017.

Several banks have expressed interest in the film, but funds must already be in place to develop this movie further. Please consider donating/partnering in the production of this film by contributing to help bring it to fruition. No amount is too small! (Investors who contribute \$100,000 or more will be offered 1% ownership of the film. Example: 1% ownership of *Braveheart* would have returned over \$2,000,000 in the last 20 years.) **For more details, contact Travis Bowman at 704.728.5800.**

Please contribute online at www.lusothemovie.com

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 ~ open
Treasurer ~ Ed Bowman
Historical Advisor ~ Gail Coffman

**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**