



The Heritage Observer

News from The Heritage Library

Bringing the Past to Life

Vol. 3, No. 2

MARCH 2011

Your New Officers

The annual meeting of the Heritage Library Foundation was held on February 23, at which one new and one veteran director were elected and two directors were reelected.

William (Bill) Standen is our newest director. He is accompanied by Harvey Varnet and Iva Roberts Welton who were reelected. They will serve from 2011 to 2014.

Bill Altstaetter was elected to complete the term of Chipman Collins, ending in 2012. Chip recently resigned, citing the pressure of business and other obligations.

Following the annual meeting, the newly elected board elected officers: Barbara Muller was elected president, Iva Roberts Welton vice president, and Bill Altstaetter, treasurer. Nancy Burke was reelected to the post of secretary.

"I still have a lot to learn about the Heritage Library, its past accomplishments and future potential," said Muller. "But I was able to see, the very first day I visited, the strides this organization had made in (at that time) eleven years. More than my previous Historical Society, with twice as many members and ten times the funds, had done in sixty years."

"I'm eager to spread the word about the Library," said Welton, "and to remind the public we are also the home of the Hilton Head Historical Society."



From left, Robert P. Smith, immediate past president; Barbara Muller, president; Nancy Burke, secretary, Iva Roberts Welton, vice president; and Bill Altstaetter, treasurer.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT

Clemens, Nelson Named Volunteers of the Year



On March 20, as volunteers gathered at the home of Iva Welton, the 2011 volunteers of the year were named. Carol Clemens received the Founder's Award given for the body of her work, while Blanche Nelson received the President's Award for outstanding contributions during the year.

Carol Clemens (shown above as Bill Altstaetter presented her award) is a popular teacher who has given many classes on Family Tree Maker and contributes articles to the Heritage Observer.

Blanche Nelson, who was unable to be with us that night, has been a faithful volunteer: one of her contributions has been the regular dressing of the cabinet by the front desk with current themes.

Robert Smith, who was also unable to attend, was recognized with an Award of Meritorious Service for his many years of volunteering, including most recently serving as president and the public face of the Foundation.

Volunteer of the Year Awards were resumed this year after a hiatus of three years.



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Your New Team

Your new team of officers is in place and hoping to get used to our new roles quickly. I am the newest of this team and have much to learn, and I am depending on them -- and you -- to help me learn and to point out those things which need our attention.

I am excited to be working with Iva Welton, whose energy and enthusiasm are legendary—and contagious. She has long been a voice in the community for the Library, and as our vice president she will continue to be a valuable asset. It was Iva who first introduced me to Bill Altstaetter, and my life has not been the same since.

Bill, who had been assistant treasurer, has swapped places with William Leitner. William, who has an unenviable load with his work at Sea Pines, had been acting as treasurer. He will now be assistant to Bill.

Since I first met Bill I have observed how he and Gwen have together provided the steady hand throughout the history of this organization, always there in some capacity, and invaluable mentors to me as I try to learn.

And then there is Nancy, who as our secretary, quietly and efficiently occupies a role so essential that in many organizations is too often taken for granted. Besides seeing that the legal records of the foundation are properly kept, she is also a popular teacher who shares her love of genealogy by holding classes several times a year.

But in reality, it is all of you, our wonderful volunteers, who have made the Library the success that it is. So that we all may know more about the important jobs you are doing, we will introduce you to each other in later issues of the *Observer*.

In the meantime, please share your ideas with me of things that can be done to improve our Library. Thank you for your support.

BARBARA MULLER

**The New Server is In**

For years we have struggled with a server which would periodically present unpredictable problems. Finally we appealed to the Bargain Box for help, and they responded generously; their contribution covered two-thirds of the cost of the server. The other one-third of this expensive piece of gear came from funds contributed by friends and patrons in memory of our past president, Norma Harber.

The Bargain Box, like the Heritage Library, is run entirely by volunteers. It regularly attracts donations of real value, so that it is able to advertise itself as “the home of affordable treasures.” Residents of Hilton Head Island have voted it the “best antique shop on the Island.”



Lucas Delano of Progressive Technology makes installing a new server look easy, but in actuality it is a complex process requiring many hours to connect all our computers.

In this increasingly complex digital world putting in a new server is not simply a matter of connecting some cables. Fortunately we had Lucas Delano of Progressive Technology who put our computers through their paces in order to take advantage of the increased capabilities of the server.

Now we only need newer computers! Our patrons have been patient in putting up with our old and slow computers, but we will be seeking funds to gradually replace them with faster and newer models.

Selected New York State Newspapers Available Free On-line

by Carol Clemens

You might not have ever seen this Web site:

<http://www.fultonhistory.com/>

If you stumbled onto it, your first instinct might be to ignore it unless you were researching family members in the rather limited area of Fulton County, New York, located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. However, this free Web site is a treasure trove of over 15 million historical newspaper pages from all across New York State. It is especially helpful if you are trying to track down obituaries and tidbits about ancestors that just might have made the local newspapers.

I personally have used this site to find information on numerous ancestors, including obits, a photo of my grandfather in the local Drum Corps, and an article about an ancestor's barn being hit by lightning.

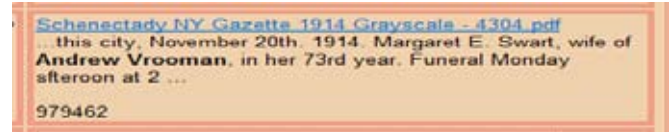
Let's take a look at how to use the site. First, when you access the site you will see a postcard and a fish swimming across it. Just click on "enter" and you are on your way.

A search panel will open on the left with some old videos, etc., on the right, which we will ignore for this article. If you want to see a list of all the newspapers included with the dates covered, click on the FAQ's at the top right and look for the link. However, to most effectively use the site, enter search criteria in the left panel and from the drop-down menu, select exact phrase or whatever option fits your needs. Click "search" and be patient! Some pages load very slowly. In this example, I entered "Andrew Vrooman" which is a very common name in my line.



Numerous links popped up, some of which were to an Andrew Vrooman clearly not in my tree and some of which I needed to investigate further. One did ap-

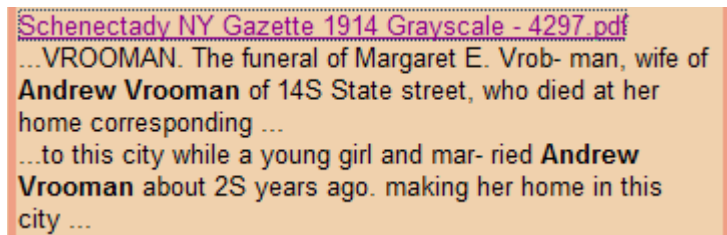
pear that I knew fit, a reference to Margaret Swart who was the wife of Andrew Vrooman. While I did have an Andrew with a second marriage to Margaret Swart, I had no further information on her.



When I clicked on the link, the newspaper page appeared in PDF format. Searching the death notices on the page, I found Margaret's information. It fit perfectly. I now had her date of death and age which allowed me to calculate an approximate birth year. Her address was also given and the phrasing led to the conclusion that Andrew was still alive...which fit with the information I had. Using the snipping tool (found in VISTA and Windows 7), I captured the story, saved it as a jpeg and entered it into my Family Tree Maker 2011 media section for Margaret. It read:

VROOMAN-In this city November 20th, 1914. Margaret E. Swart, wife of Andrew Vrooman, in her 73rd year.
Funeral Monday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from her late residence, No. 146 State Street. Relatives and friends are invited:

Next, I went back to the search box and entered her name instead of Andrew's. There I found something even better...the full obituary! Again, I clicked on the link and found it on the page that opened, used the snipping tool to capture it, save it, and entered it into my FTM program.

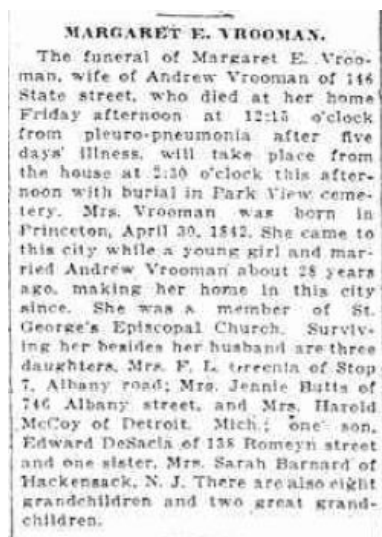


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Editor's Note: This article by Carol Clemens is an excellent example of why genealogy is like archaeology: as the archaeologist draws inferences from shards of pottery or remnants of chimneys, so the genealogist is able to infer from old records previously unknown facts such as, in this case, the existence of a prior marriage.

Do you have a story like this from your research? Our readers would love for you to share it. Email to editor: barbaraguild@earthlink.net

Selected New York . . . , Cont'd from Page 3



From this, I learned her exact birth date and also was able to use the information to estimate her marriage to Andrew Vrooman as 1886. This meant she married Andrew at age 42 which is fairly late for a first marriage during that time frame. A list of daughters with married names was given. However, what stood out was that her son had a different last name. This led me to believe that Margaret, too, was previously married. It also suggests that the daughters could also be from her first marriage, since I have found no children for Andrew and Margaret. All of these clues can be used for further research. The obituary clearly stated that her husband, Andrew, was still alive. I also now had information on where she is buried.

While this is a great site for anyone searching for New York State ancestors, I will warn you that the site can sometimes be quirky and pages will either not load or will load very slowly. If that happens, I normally return to the site at a later time and usually find it running more smoothly. Also, you must have a current version of adobe flash installed on your computer (at least version 10.0 or newer). Need help with that? Here is a link to download the latest version of flash. There is also a note that the site will be updated in late April 2011 to add even more newspapers.

<http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

Have questions or need help? Contact me at clemens318@roadrunner.com

CAROL CLEMENS

Thank You, Bob Smith

For many years, every Monday found Bob Smith holding down the desk as Librarian-in-Charge at the Heritage Library, welcoming and helping many researchers. A member of the Sons of the American Revolution, he helped many other applicants develop the information required for their membership. He also served as vice president of the foundation.

By 2008 Bob considered himself basically retired and someone else was seeing to Mondays. But that year he was prevailed upon to serve again as vice president when Blanche Sullivan was elected president. He was enjoying a (relatively) leisurely second retirement, when he received a phone call advising him that he was now the president following the resignation of Blanche Sullivan.

I never remember this story but I am reminded of Cincinnatus of ancient Rome, who had retired and was living a quiet life on his farm across the Tiber until that quiet came to an end. In 485 BCE, according to legend, he was plowing his field when a deputation from the Roman Senate arrived and called him back into service. The Romans, about to lose an important battle, had named Cincinnatus dictator. He left his plow, donned his toga, crossed the Tiber and spoke before the Senate, then personally led the battle. (The Romans won.) Shortly thereafter Cincinnatus retired again to his farm.

And so Bob "donned his toga" and spent almost two years as president. During that time he was tireless; he took the story of the Heritage Foundation to numerous local civic organizations, represented us on the Mitchelville Committee, gave lectures on Hilton Head during the Civil War, participated in the redesign of our Web site, and discharged many other duties pressed upon him as president.

We are extremely grateful to Bob for not only stepping into the breach but also for increasing the visibility of the Foundation. Thanks to his lectures and his work on Mitchelville, many more Islanders now are familiar with contributions of the Heritage Library.

Now Bob, like Cincinnatus, is retiring one more time. Thank you, Robert P. Smith, for all you have done for us. We know that your love for the library will mean that we will still see you often.

BARBARA MULLER



**FROM THE MEMBERSHIP
DIRECTOR**

News of Members and Volunteers

Happy Spring! It has been a long time coming, hasn't it? We do get spoiled weather-wise but the flowers and trees blooming bring a smile to all of us.

Since the last *Observer* our membership has expanded and we do welcome our new members and look forward to seeing them in the Library. The following out-of-staters have joined us: Paul Borntrager, Cincinnati, OH; Richard and Sara Edmond, Marcellus, NY; Pat and Mike Berg, Sterling VA; Alan and Jessie McCollough, Atlanta GA; and Eleanor Phillips from Williamsport, PA. From South Carolina, Chase Goff and Samuel Baker; Mt. Pleasant; from Bluffton, Patti Smith; and from Hilton Head, Priscilla Dement, Diane Schommer, Lynne Armfield and Dan Doerge. A special welcome back to returning members Linda Cope and Carol Delgado.

Our newest volunteer Anna Marie Meyerink is busily researching and getting acquainted with the Library. Thanks to her for her support.

A vote of thanks also goes to the volunteer members who stepped up to help with the Open House we held in January. It was a real success and I think all attending had a good time. We had 40 guests and some of our former members came as well to add to the festivities.

Next on our agenda will be the fund raiser scheduled for March 26 – The World's Largest Yard Sale, sponsored by the *Island Packet* which is being held in the HH High School parking lot. We accepted items for sale until March 21 and have been busily pricing them. If you have any last-minute items call me at 689-9558 to see if they can be included. We thank those who have donated items and offered to help on the big day! Without the assistance of many hands we would not be able to have a successful event. If you have never attended this Yard Sale it is truly an interesting way to spend a Saturday morning.

Thanks again to all who have responded to our membership renewal letters in a timely manner. Without your support there would be no Heritage Library.

GWEN ALTSTAETTER

Improvements at Fort Mitchel

The walkways at Fort Mitchel are now safer, thanks to an award from the Accommodations Tax Committee of Beaufort County. We have been able to make some needed improvements to Fort Mitchel, correcting upheavals along the walks and adding railings where erosion has changed the landscape. New groundcover has been planted.



Note the drop-off resulting from erosion in these photos where railings have been installed to give physical and psychological safety. In the photo below, as the installation crew puts up a railing, one of the crew stands below the walkway in the eroded area.



We will also install a light for the permanent flag there. According to proper protocol, when the United States flag is not taken down at night, it must be illuminated.

Other additions to the landscape still await funding. Corrections and updating of the signage is needed. Also planned are additional lighting, the creation of a natural lecture site within the fortification for programs and historic lectures, and the creation of a new access point close to Skull Creek Drive and the plantation's adjacent bike path for walk-in traffic. (The present access, near Old Fort Pub, will remain.)

These modifications, contracted by West Wind Construction, are especially timely, since the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the Civil War begins this year.

THE LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

Women's History Month

March is Women's History month. During the past year the Library has received several donations on the subject of women:

Women of the Revolution: Bravery and sacrifice on the Southern battlefield. Robert Dunkerly, 2007.

This donation, from our friends in the Capt. William Hilton Chapter of the DAR, portrays the life of active female participants, such as spies and scouts, and of civilian women who helped with chores in camps on both sides of the Revolution.

A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from pre-history to the present. Vol. II. Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser. 1988.

This volume covers the period from 1600 to the 20th century, giving examples from royalty, rulers, courtiers, professions, working classes and feminist activists.

The First Ladies. Betty Boyd Caroli. 3rd ed., 2001.

This book profiles Presidential wives from Martha Washington to Laura Bush, and details the development of the office.

Timelines of American Women's History. Sue Heine-mann. 1996.

This book traces changes in the role and achievements of women in all areas of life, from religious to political activities. It is arranged chronologically.

Other books on the subject were previously donated - for example:

The Women's War in the South. Edited by Charles G. Waugh and Martin H. Greenberg. 1999.

Recollections and reflections of the Civil War by women, of their roles in combat or in maintaining the home front. Taken from diaries and other personal accounts.

South Carolina Women. Idella Bodie. 2nd. ed. 1991.

Abbreviated biographies of about 50 women, from colonial times to the 20th century, who have made noteworthy contributions to the state's history.

We are your Sisters: Black Women in the 19th Century. Edited by Dorothy Sterling. 1984.

Lives of slave and free African Americans before and immediately after the Civil War, from oral in-

terviews by the WPA Writers' Project, and excerpts from contemporary diaries.

Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas frontier. Joanna L. Stratton. 1981.

Detailed record of frontier life as recorded in personal recollections, depicting the challenges and dangers such pioneers faced.

Confederate Women. Bell Irvin Wiley. 1975.

In-depth portraits of three women: Mary Boykin Chestnut, Virginia Tunstall Clay, and Varina Howell Davis, based on their letters and diaries. Shorter biographies of other women are included, all depicting how strong and proud they were of their activities.

ISOBEL BITNER

New Director Bill Standen

Our newest director, William (Bill) Standen, shown here with Barbara Muller and wife Sheila Standen (r) is the newest director for the Heritage Library Foundation, elected at our Annual Meeting in February.

We are fortunate to have Bill join our Board. He has a long-time interest in history. He has also been a cultural advocate for Hilton Head Island, active in the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, the Choral Society, the Rotary Club and the Computer Club. He is also Financial Chair for the International Piano Competition, the 2011 competition recently completed.

FOUND IN STORAGE

Virginia Colonial Abstracts by Beverley Fleet

We recently discovered in storage twelve volumes of the delightful work done by the famed Virginia genealogist Beverley Fleet in abstracting the earliest records of Virginia counties. It was a huge job: the quality of handwriting in these old records varies widely. Some of it is difficult if not impossible to read. Fleet himself mentions instances, such as where it is impossible to tell if a name is Land or Laud.

There were actually 32 volumes, painstakingly mimeographed between 1937 and 1949, and later republished by the Genealogical Publishing Company in 1961.

While the contents of all these volumes are available in CD, these volumes are still valuable and we must decide whether to put these volumes on the shelves. They do reward browsing, especially for the nuggets of wit which B.F. (as he styled himself) would insert on those mimeograph stencils.

He wrote in the Lancaster County volume: "We also know only too well the chief delight of every genealogist is to find the error made by another. It would never do to disappoint those who are so much the holier"

Suits for slander were common in the colonial period. In Volume 31, (Lower Norfolk County, 1651-1654,) Fleet has abstracted the account of the appearance of one John Lownes in court on the first of November, 1653. The record states "Lownes hath in a most scandalous grosse and contemptuous manner abused" Lt. Col Cornelius Loyd [one of the Justices of the Court] by writing 'I have often been before you and in stead of receiveing Justice I have had abuses by you and your wife'."

Lownes "being unable to prove this, he is ordered to ask, in open Court, Loyd's pardon, to acknowledge he has done Loyd 'great wrongs and that he is sorry for it'. Lownes is also fined a [hogshead of tobacco] for the use of the County."

In the next entry we find:

"Upon the humble petition of John Lownes, as alsoe his open submission to this Court, and with the consent of [Loyd] this Court hath thought meete to remitt the [abovesaid] fine."

B.F. then comments:

"There is right much false alarm in these records. Observe the terrifying words in the above entries, all of which amount to nothing."

A further perusal of this volume shows that John Lownes was often in court both before and after this incident. He must have had a strange relationship with one Richard Richardson, a merchant. On June 15, 1652, both men were in court. Loyd was among the justices who ordered Lownes to pay 342 pounds of tobacco to Richardson, while also fining both Richardson and Lownes: they were to pay 150 pounds of tobacco each for using "Unlawfull Weapons in a most riotous manner upon the Sabbath Day." In the same order, Richardson was ordered to apologize to Mrs. Lownes, who apparently was present, asking her "forgiveness . . . for abusing her by scandalous and abusive terms."

Noting that someone was fined 50 pounds of tobacco for swearing in court, B.F. observed "Evidently he was a painter." Of another man who styled himself "Gent." B.F. tartly remarked, "he was no gentleman but an ass."

But perhaps the saltiest entry in this particular volume followed an abstract about a master striking an indentured servant. In his aside, B.F. noted: "I did kick one [servant] once. Not that she did not deserve it - that sanctimonious bitch that tried to seduce my friend the Methodist minister in my pantry. As usual I was to blame. Me, a good High Church Episcopalian ever letting a Methodist minister in my house."

The Fleet volumes and the early Virginia counties covered are: 22, Lancaster County, 1652-1655; 23, Westmoreland, 1653-1657; 24, York, 1633-1646; 25, York 1646-1648; 26, York 1648-1657; 27, King and Queen, 18th Century Persons (reconstructions where possible of burned records); 28, more King and Queen but also includes snippets from Amelia, Chesterfield and Essex, graveyard inccriptions and early grants; 29, Essex, 1703-1706; 30, Huntington Library, colonial Virginia information that B.F. found in that California Library; 32, Accomack, 1637-1640; 33, more King and Queen, late 18th century.

For genealogists in the twenty-first century, it is doubly rewarding to read the work of a dedicated genealogist who flourished over sixty years ago.

BARBARA MULLER

About *Glimpses*

A Spring issue of *Glimpses* is now in production and you will be receiving it soon.

We started *Glimpses* with a bimonthly schedule, but are presently re-evaluating the work required to issue six a year. Rosemary Staples has agreed to write some articles for future issues. We will continue to study and evaluate whether to resume bimonthly or go quarterly.

Photos from the Volunteers' Party

Here are just two of many photos. Below left, part of the group gathered for the awards; immediately below, Tom Senf and Norman Harberger. Photos from my camera will be posted on the bulletin board at the Library with identifying numbers. If you would like copies, email me, with the numbers: barbaraguild@earthlink.net

BARBARA MULLER



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