



The Virginia Huguenot Society

An organization of descendants of French Protestants who,
due to religious persecution, fled France.

frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org

Spring/Summer 2023 Newsletter

Our Virginia Huguenot Society family continues to thrive!

The Spring Meeting on Saturday, March 25 was held at the Country Club of Virginia's James River Clubhouse in Richmond. It was a superb setting. The meal was extraordinary. There were close to forty of us in attendance, including folks from other Huguenot Societies. Many thanks and a tip of the hat to Vice President (and incoming President) Constance Paradiso for arranging such a wonderful occasion.

Our speaker was Mr. G. William "Bill" Thomas, president of the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, <https://monroefoundation.org>. His talk was entitled "James Monroe and the French Connection." While numerous sources mention President Monroe having Huguenot ancestry, even citing 1700 as the date of their arrival to Virginia, thus far documentation of that is lacking. Nonetheless, Monroe was an inveterate Francophile, fluent in French. He served as special emissary as well as Minister to France. Monroe was close friends with General Lafayette and arranged for him to tour the United States as a "guest of the nation." There was an unprecedented outpouring of popular support greeting the old general who was so critically important to the struggle for American independence.

Bill went on to discuss what the James Monroe Memorial Foundation and the Virginia Huguenot Society have in common in preserving and perpetuating our rich American heritage. He was very well received and fielded numerous questions.

The meeting was also the occasion for a changing of the guard at VHS. New officers were elected. They are as follows: President, Constance Paradiso; Vice President, yours truly Louis T. March;

Secretary, Gus Lewis; Treasurer, Ann Darst; Registrar, Bonnie Bew; Librarian, David LeGrande; Chaplin, Heath Thompson.

VHS will continue to flourish with the highly capable Constance Paradiso at the helm as our new President. Constance is a natural fit for the position. As a member of fifty-three lineage societies, she has held leadership positions in many including the Jamestown Society, Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims and Colonial Dames XVII Century.

Constance is also a civic leader in Waynesboro, Virginia, working for historic preservation in the city. We are working on prospective VHS projects. Any suggestions would be much appreciated.

And let me reiterate: the Virginia Huguenot Society "punches above its weight" in collegiality, activism and historic preservation. If you know of prospective members out there, family or otherwise, let us know.

Also, please send any news about you and your family to VHS for inclusion into our newsletter. Items on family births, marriages and career changes would be wonderful to have. Entries should be sent to me or Gerald Runyan at gerald@aercorp.com or mail to 39 Madison Lane S., Newport News, VA 23606.

The March 25 gathering was my last meeting as VHS President. It has been an honor to lead such a congenial and vibrant group. We have been profoundly blessed to come together and enjoy one another's company so much. Thank you very much for your friendship and support.

Here's wishing everyone a splendid springtime and stupendous summer!

In Huguenot Faith, Louis

Message from the **OUTGOING PRESIDENT**

Virginia Huguenot Society Spring Meeting March 25, 2023 Country Club of Virginia, Richmond, VA

The Spring meeting was held at the Country Club of Virginia in Richmond. It was a beautiful day. The fellowship, venue, food, and the program were all top drawer. A good crowd assembled for a social time, followed by a short business meeting and lunch. Lunch was either crab cakes or beef, delicious. We welcomed two members of other regional Huguenot Societies as guests, along with several prospective new members. Officers for the 2023-2025 were elected (see meeting minutes).

Bill Thomas, President of the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, presented the program: *James Monroe and the French Connection*. We have seen it stated that James Monroe had Huguenot

lineage but have seen no documentation to that effect. One possible project for the VHS is to explore this possibility. Cat Southworth has indicated she can do some preliminary research.

The program held our attention and was very interesting; the question and answer period evolved into a lively discussion of how history is taught (or not) in our public schools and universities.

Many members and guests lingered after the meeting in order to extend the fellowship time. Everyone appeared to enjoy the day.

We look forward to our next meeting on October 28, 2023.



VHS members enjoy lunch and fellowship at the March meeting.

Bottom left: Guest “Bill” Thomas speaks on James Monroe

Bottom right: Outgoing president Louis March congratulates incoming president Constance Paradisio.



Save the Date! Our next meeting is October 28, 2023!

Virginia Huguenot Society
General Meeting – March 25, 2023
Country Club of Virginia
Richmond, VA

The General Meeting of the Virginia Huguenot Society met at the Country Club of Virginia, Richmond, VA on March 25, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Louis T. March.

The President welcomed the members and led the The Ritual followed by The Sacred Oath led by Dr. Augustine Lewis.

The Blessing was given by Heath Thompson.

Following a delicious lunch the business meeting was held.

The President announced that the following officers had been nominated and presented to the Council:

President	Constance Paradiso
Vice President	Louis March
Chaplain	Heath Thompson
Secretary	Dr. Augustine Lewis III
Treasurer	Ann Darst
Registrar	Bonnie Bew
Historian-Librarian	Edward David LeGrande

The slate was presented to the members and elected unanimously.

Ann Darst, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$16,872.85 as of March 1, 2023. A motion was made and seconded that the report be accepted as presented by email earlier this month.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed earlier by email, by the Secretary, Nancy Agee.

Registrar Bonnie Bew announced that the VA Huguenot Society has had no new members this year but does have one (1) applicant in progress. We have had no known deaths this year:

Historian David LeGrande called attention to the numerous books about Huguenots in our library and that he can also search the library at the Goochland Historical Society for information for members.

Guests of the Society were introduced:

Shirley Seaborn, President of the Virginia Branch, HSFMCV, and her husband, Tom.

Louis March's wife Catherine and son D.T.

Beth and Dale Burgess

Brenda Rose, President of the Huguenot Society of Virginia

The President announced that the Council had voted to hold Council meetings on Zoom during the week prior to the regular meetings in order that the people will not have to arrive an hour early for the meetings.

Gerald Runyan requested news items for our newsletter that he edits and sends to our members.

The President asked that suggestions for a new society project be sent to him.

There being no new business the meeting was adjourned and Constance Paradiso introduced the Speaker, G. William Thomas, Jr., who spoke about "James Monroe and the French Connection."

Nancy Agee, Secretary

Future Meeting Sites

Do you have a favorite location that would make for a good meeting site, or a speaker you feel our members would be interested in hearing? If so, please contact Vice-President Louis March at 540-960-0504 or email him at marchlouis@aol.com.

Congratulations Cheryl!



Our member, Dr. Cheryl Bradford Billingsley, was elected Vice-president of the Pierre Fauchard Academy, an honorary dental society. The Pierre Fauchard Academy International is an organization that furthers leadership skills of dentists throughout the world. The Pierre Fauchard Academy is named after Pierre Fauchard of France (1678-1761) who is recognized as the "Father of Modern Dentistry" for raising dentistry to a profession. He wrote a book named "*Le Chirurgien Dentiste, ou Traité des Dents*" which was the first true textbook of dentistry.

Cheryl Billingsley, DDS, ND, MAGD, BSDH
Vice President of the Pierre Fauchard Academy International, "Providing Leadership for Dentists throughout the World "

cbillingsleypfa@proton.me, www.fauchard.org

Have you ever thought about why you are interested in Genealogy?



Why do people get interested in genealogy? The answer is surely different for everyone. I caught the bug 25 years ago when some of my relatives thought I should be the keeper of the family history. I remember when Ancestry.com launched its website in 2000 the census records were not indexed. I spent hours paging through records. At the time I had dialup Internet access and it tied up my phone line for hours. Didn't care. Was having so much fun. I can't take all the credit for the work done on my family as I had cousins and aunts who visited and wrote letters to clerk's offices, state libraries, and contacted other members of the family for information and memories.

My father's family had a reunion every year which was held on the weekend closest to my great-grandfather's birthday. The earliest documented reunion was June 1928 in which there was a group photo. Before he died, this great-grandfather gave each one of his grandchildren a copy of his family history. There was also a monthly newsletter where each child (of said great-grandfather) submitted his/her news of the family. Both these traditions ended in recent years.

As a child when visiting my mother's side of the family, I was amazed that my grandmother could

tell me who her parents, grandparents, and great grandparents were. (I thought their names were funny.) However, my interest was sealed when she gave me her tintypes and old photographs of the family. She also gave me my great-great grandmother's recorded "memories" of the Civil War and the letters written to her by her husband who died while serving, not from action but from an "impure vaccine." The widow found out about her husband's death when his casket was dropped off at their home. She was given a bill for the delivery of his body.

As for my Huguenot ancestors, I have at least three: Thomas Lamar, who arrived in Virginia and then moved on to Maryland in the late 1600s; Michael Desloges, who arrived in Isle of Wight, Virginia, in the late 1600s; and Timothy Jerome, who came to Connecticut by 1700 and left many descendants, one of whom was Winston Churchill.

I now have shelves filled with reference books, family binders and photograph albums. So much information has recently been digitized and available on various websites that I can barely keep up with it. How can someone not be thoroughly taken with their ancestors? They deserve to be remembered and I'm doing my part.

Catherine Southworth

Incoming

President's Message

It is an honor to serve as your new President and I appreciate the confidence our society members have placed in me.

We always have a joyful time together when we meet and I look forward to many more. I am sure our new Vice President, Louis T. March, will have some interesting programs for us. And bringing guests always makes it livelier!

Our last society project restoring the Huguenot painting was a multi-year project and extremely worthwhile. We have some ideas for a new project, but would like to hear more from the members. Please contact Gerald Runyan or me with your thoughts.

Let us know about your travels and any connection to the Huguenots along the way. Until October, here's wishing you a wonderful summer season.

À VOTRE SANTÉ!

Constance Paradiso, President
Virginia Huguenot Society
2023-2025

Virginia Huguenot Society Website: Great Place for Information!

Visit our VHS website, **frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org** to learn about Huguenot history and the history of the VHS. There is also information on how to apply for membership and the necessary requirements needed; photos and issues of past newsletters as well as important links are also available on our website.

Feel free to send pictures and articles of our VHS members to Gerald Runyan at **gerald@aercorp.com**.

Who Was James Monroe?



James Monroe was born April 28, 1758, in his parents' house in a wooded area of Westmoreland County, Virginia. The marked site is one mile from the unincorporated community known today as Monroe Hall, Virginia. The James Monroe Family Home Site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. His father Spence Monroe (1727–1774) was a moderately prosperous planter who also practiced carpentry. His mother Elizabeth Jones (1730–1772) married Spence Monroe in 1752 and they had five children: Elizabeth, James, Spence, Andrew, and Joseph Jones.

His paternal great-great-grandfather Patrick Andrew Monroe emigrated to America from Scotland in the mid-17th century, and was part of an ancient Scottish clan known as Clan Munro. In 1650 he patented a large tract of land in Washington Parish, Westmoreland County, Virginia.

Monroe's mother was the daughter of James Jones, who immigrated from Wales and settled in nearby King George County, Virginia. Jones was a wealthy architect.

Also among James Monroe's ancestors were French Huguenot immigrants, who came to Virginia in 1700.

This article on James Monroe comes from Wikipedia.

My Huguenot Hero

by Delbert T. Agee

It was 1943 and I was just 6 years old when my dad received his draft notice for military service. He would have been ineligible to go in two months as he would have been 35 years old with two children. His basic training and quartermaster training occurred at then Camp Lee, Virginia where he was told: "You are too old. You will never see combat."

After training he was sent to a camp in Pennsylvania where he was issued a machete and mosquito netting. A few days later the unit was called to formation. He was told to step out and the rest of the unit was sent to the Pacific. Two weeks later he was on a Liberty ship bound for North Africa.

When he arrived in North Africa the fighting had ended there.

Here he worked at a quartermaster depot and was soon promoted to sergeant. He received orders to go to Italy and boarded another Liberty Ship. The ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat in the

Adriatic Sea just off the east coast of Italy. Dad said the oil was spewing everywhere, and when he tried to go down the rope ladder on the side of the ship, he lost his grip and fell into the water. He and others were pulled from the ocean by English soldiers in small boats.



Delbert W. Agee



From left to right: Corporal Richard Stewart, my dad, Sgt. Charles Manhart.

In Italy, Dad received intensive infantry training and his new unit was put into combat to replace one that had many casualties. After Italy, he was in the 7th landing wave of the invasion of Southern France where fighting, though not as fierce as Normandy, was still against a strong foe. During this time, his company was attached to General George Patton's Army. When this battle was over Dad was sent to Belgium, a quiet

area at the time. While he was in charge of setting up a mobile laundry unit for a hospital, they saw German tiger tanks coming through the trees. The beginning of the Battle of the Bulge was on. He and his men jumped in their jeep and fled the area. He was not trapped in the Bulge but was involved in some major fighting. All told, Dad was involved in three major battles and I have his ribbon with the three battle stars.

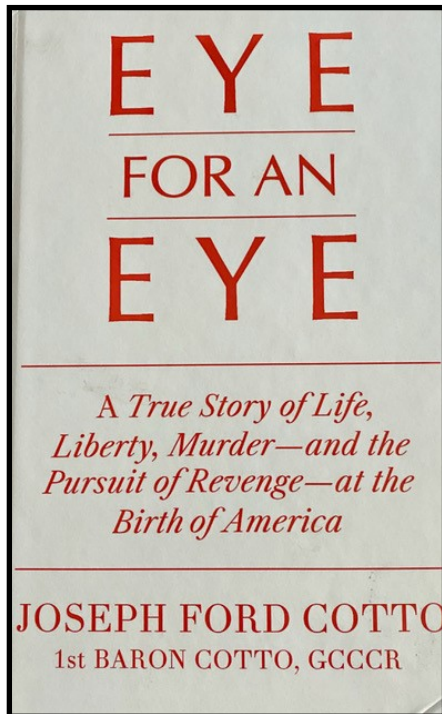
My father never talked much about the actual combat, but I learned a lot from his company commander, Captain Eugene Kroeck. The bond between the two men was strong. He came to visit my Dad every year until dad died.

The captain told me that he and my dad were the only ones of the original outfit that were not killed or seriously wounded. My father was wounded however, when during house to house fighting in France, a German soldier lunged at him with a bayoneted rifle. Fortunately the point of the bayonet caught on a steel I.D. bracelet my mother had given him. Another G. I. had time to shoot the German before he could make a second attack. Dad had a long scar on his left arm as a memento of the attack. His other close call happened when he and 1st sergeant Manhart were in a foxhole together and a mortar shell landed in the hole. The 1st sergeant was killed, but my dad was not hurt.

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Book Review

Eye for an Eye by Joseph Ford Cotto



This book is primarily concerned with the Huguenots that attempted to establish a refuge in Florida by establishing Fort

Caroline in the late 16th century. The efforts of Coligny, Ribault, and Laudonnière are elaborated upon. Their trials, misfortunes, tragedies, successes and final capitulation are well laid out. The book, in contrast to “Global Refuge” (reviewed in the Fall 2022 newsletter) is written in everyday American English, complete with some vernacular language. It is an easy read.

The author is hard hitting, minces no words, and clearly states that Pedro Menendez and the Spanish conquistadors were cruel and violent people, tyrants of the Old Continent. Besides murdering Huguenots, Menendez enslaved blacks, tortured, enslaved, and killed the local American Indians. His men raped the American Indian women then kept the offspring as slaves. Not

someone you would likely invite to your next garden party.

Cotto brought out several interesting points:

The first slaves to be transported to the new world were not those dropped off in Hampton in 1619. Rather in the late 16th Century the Spanish brought sub-Saharan slaves to the New World for their use in conquering Florida. The first Slave Market was established in St. Augustine. The author goes on for four pages dismissing the 1619 Project, quoting a Princeton University critique “the 1619 Project offers bitterness, fragility, intellectual corruption - not history.”

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Dad’s company advanced into Germany and was at the liberation of one of the death camps. He was very moved by the horror of it. At the surrender of Germany, he sailed from England to New York City on the aircraft carrier Wasp. The voyage was not uneventful as they encountered five terrible storms in the North Atlantic which took 90 feet off of the flight deck. A picture of the damage appeared in the *New York Times*.

My father, Delbert W. Agee, died in 1985 and was buried with full military honors. He was proud of his Huguenot heritage and I am proud of him.

Delbert T. Agee



Sgt. Delbert W. Agee taken with M. Mois Remeclé, a Belgium friend., dated Aug 19, 1945, Andenne Belgique, Prov. Of Namur

A Message from “Gus”

At our last meeting in October, our speaker mentioned that John Fontaine traveled through King and Queen County and recorded his visit there. I became intrigued and wanted to read what he had written. Our speaker recommended checking in a university library for a copy of the journal and indeed I did find a copy of it in the VCU library.

I was fascinated that on November 15, 1715, he heard a sermon delivered by my Huguenot ancestor, Parson Lewis (Louis) Latané. It must have been a wonderful experience for Parson Latané to have a fellow Huguenot in the congregation.

Subsequently John Fontaine went to stay for a while at the Walker estate on the Mattaponi River. This farm which has been in the Walker family since 1693, is called Locust Grove now but was the site of Fort Mattaponi. The current owner, Jerry Walker, who is a close friend and distant relative of mine through the Temple family, was aware of the reference to his home in the journal.

I am still working on tracking down where John Fontaine stayed on a farm that was trying to become a commercial vineyard. There is an old plantation property adjacent to our farm that is called “The Vinyard” but I think it is not the same place John Fontaine stayed.

I find these connections really interesting.

I am so glad that Heath is back home.

Warmest fellow Huguenot regards,
Gus



John Fontaine.
credit wikisource.com

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Our VHS library has some wonderful books on our history. Borrowing a book is easy, just contact David at edlegrande@hotmail.com

He also goes on to note that the universal Christian church split in 1054 and that Catholicism added extra-biblical teachings and practices which they held on an equal footing with scripture. Later they even incorporated foreign and pagan practices.

The author relies heavily on two main sources, the books & writings by Caroline Mayes Brevard, a noted and early Florida historian and a historical novel by Kirk Munroe “The Feathered Flamingo”. While a novel, Cotto explains that Munroe thoroughly researched the facts that he used in writing the book.

Cotto ends the book lamenting that so few Americans today are aware of the most basic aspects of American history, and that the residents of Florida know little of the Huguenot’s history in Florida. In St. Augustine schools and a street are named after Menendez. There is a statue of him in the city.

St. Augustine and the Jacksonville area have several sites of interest to Huguenots. St. Augustine is a delightful city today with historical sites, fine shopping, night life, beaches and fishing etc.

In Memoriam



Beatrice (Beaty) Adeline Jenkins England of Montross, VA, 98 years of age, born Sunday, 2 September 1923 at Stratford, Westmoreland County, VA passed away Thursday, 3 March, 2022 at her home in Stratford, Westmoreland County, VA. The eldest daughter of the late, James Bruce Jenkins and Virgie Agnes Bryant Jenkins.

Predeceased by her beloved husband of 50 years, William Buchanan England, Sr.; her only sister, Margie Katherine Jenkins Isaacs of Virginia Beach, VA and only brother, James Robert Jenkins of Montross, VA. Survived by a family tree laden with the love of her only son, William Buchanan England, Jr. and daughter-in-law, Donna Daiger Eng-

land of Montross, VA.

She was graduated from Washington-Lee High School, Montross, VA in 1941, attended Strayer Business College and the Department of Agriculture Graduate School in Washington, D.C.; retired from United States Civil Service, 29 October 1979, Washington, D.C. with 35 years Federal Service.

She was a lifelong member of Providence United Methodist Church, Chiltons, VA where she served after retirement as Church Historian to the present time. Beaty was involved in many historical and lineage societies, including the Virginia Huguenot Society, Colonial Dames XVII Century the Jamestown Society, and the Northern Neck Historical Society.



Wayne Chittick Thompson, 86, of Colonial Heights, husband of our chaplain, "Heath" Thompson, passed away peacefully with his family on February 13, 2023.

Wayne was born to the late Waldo and Helen Olafson Thompson, on June 5, 1936, in West Palm Beach, Fla. He graduated from Palm Beach High School and continued to college, first getting a bachelor's degree and then a master's degree in psychology from Florida State University. He then later completed another master's degree on his way to receiving his doctorate from Yeshiva University in New York. He worked nearly his entire career for the Commonwealth of Virginia, first as a trainer/educator in behavioral health centers and later as a psychologist in the correctional system. He also taught psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University, and spent time during the Dalton administration working in the state developmental disability office.

Wayne is survived by his wife of 53 years, Heath Thompson; a daughter, Helen Mosher and husband, Dean, of Annandale, Va.; a son, Richard Thompson and wife, Katie, of Richmond, Va.; and three grandchildren, Kieran, Jesse and Ellie. He was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He had cerebral palsy and accomplished all of the great things in his life without being able to write, as he would proudly tell you. He inspired countless people through his experiences as a varsity gymnast in college, his teaching and training and his commitment to faith.



The Virginia Huguenot Society
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Constance Paradiso, President
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Registrar Bonnie B. Bew
rbbew@aol.com

May the Lord bless you and
keep you:
the Lord make his face
to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his
countenance upon you
and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26

