

PEOPLE

WE
THE

THE PUBLICATION OF JAMES MADISON'S MONTPELIER | A NATIONAL TRUST HISTORIC SITE

VOLUME 2 | FALL 2013

FROM MONTPELIER EMERGED
A MORE PERFECT UNION
HOW MADISON SECURED AMERICAN DEMOCRACY



James Madison's
MONTPELIER

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Each year as fall approaches, we gather at Montpelier and elsewhere in the nation to celebrate and recognize Constitution Day, the day when James Madison's genius and persistence bore fruit. The signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787, was a pivotal point in world history—the moment when the dominant form of government began to change from monarchy to democracy. Through the Constitution's ratification, our nation truly was born of the people, by the people, for the people.

While September 17 is a special day, perhaps every day in America should be thought of as a Constitution Day. As our esteemed panel reminded us at the 7th Annual State of the Constitution Lecture, while the Declaration of Independence is the *Why* of America, the Constitution is the *How*.

As my first year as president draws to a close, I feel a tremendous sense of urgency and great opportunity to further secure the Madison legacy, expand Montpelier as an educational resource, and protect this historic national asset for future generations.

At James Madison's Montpelier, there are many intriguing, beguiling, and interesting days. Whatever day is your Montpelier day—bonny spring, crisp fall, subtle winter, or glorious summer—please support all our days of learning, evolving, and sharing. Whether your interest is exploring the old-growth forest and wandering the grounds, picking up a trowel to engage in archaeology, or expanding your knowledge of our country, we are a place for you.

Thank you!

Kat Imhoff
President and CEO



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MONTPELIER CELEBRATES THE CONSTITUTION

The signing of the U.S. Constitution has been described as “the hinge point” in world history. At events in Washington, D.C., and on our historic grounds, Montpelier brought together thousands of people of all ages to celebrate Constitution Day.

WHAT DO AMERICANS REALLY KNOW ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION? SEVENTH ANNUAL STATE OF THE CONSTITUTION ADDRESS

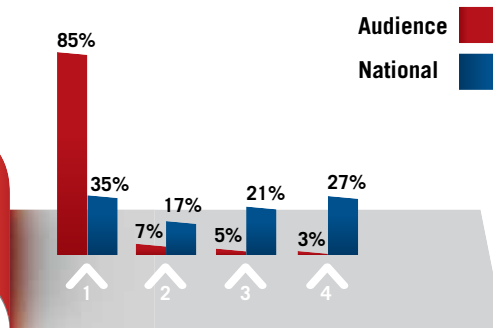


On September 17, Montpelier’s Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution, in collaboration with the National Archives, hosted the Seventh Annual State of the Constitution Address, where nearly 300 people tested their knowledge and participated in a discussion entitled “What Do Americans Really Know about the U.S. Constitution?” Using personal polling devices, the audience answered a series of questions about perceptions and interpretations of the Constitution. Results were tabulated in real time, compared to national survey results, and discussed by the panel, including Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, Akhil Reed Amar of Yale, William Jay, Partner at Goodwin Procter, and Kat Imhoff who moderated the discussion. Test your own knowledge—the results might surprise you. This event was generously supported by the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation.

Which are the first words of the U.S. Constitution?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. We the People | 3. Article 1 |
| 2. When in the course of human events | 4. Congress shall make no laws |

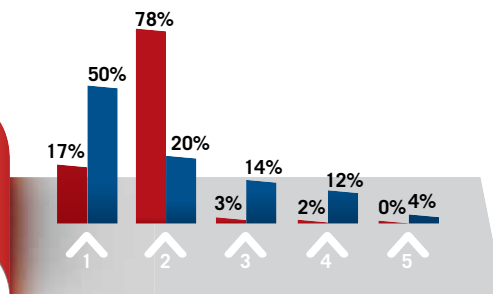
It's a fact – only 35% of those in a national survey recognize the first words of the Preamble.



Who is the “Father of the Constitution”?

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. Thomas Jefferson | 4. John Adams |
| 2. James Madison | 5. Not sure |
| 3. Benjamin Franklin | |

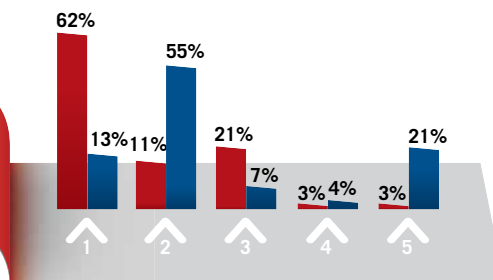
It's a fact – 50% of voters aged 21-34 think Jefferson. He was in France at the time.



When was the Constitution written?

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| 1. 1787 | 4. 1791 |
| 2. 1776 | 5. Not sure |
| 3. 1789 | |

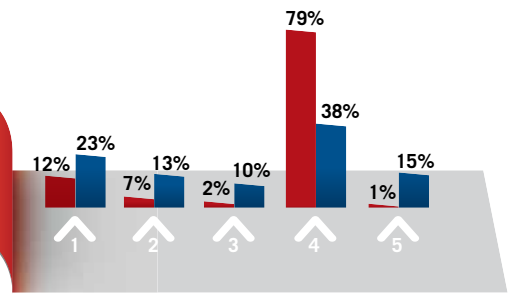
It's a fact – 55% of those in a national survey thought 1776.



How long are Congressional terms?

1. 4 years for Senators, 2 years for Representatives
2. 4 years for Senators, 6 years for Representatives
3. 4 years for Senators, 4 years for Representatives
4. 6 years for Senators, 2 years for Representatives
5. Not sure

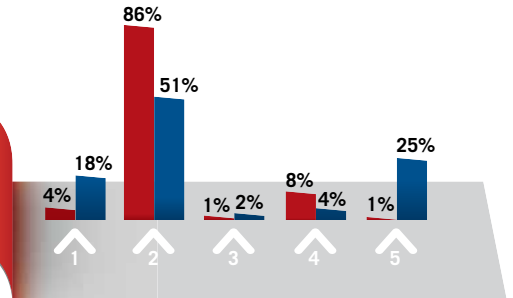
It's a fact – only 38% of those surveyed know the correct term length for members of Congress.



How many votes are needed to overturn a Presidential veto?

1. 51 percent
2. Two-thirds
3. 90 percent
4. Three-quarters
5. Not sure

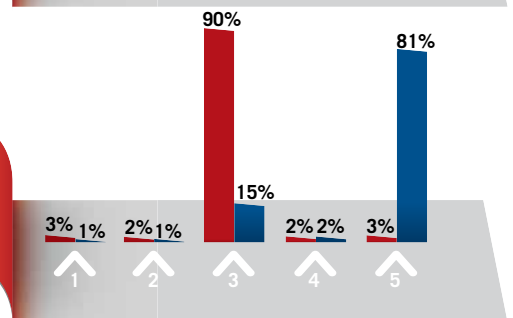
It's a fact – 25% of respondents indicate that they do not know.



Who is the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court?

1. Antonin Scalia
2. Clarence Thomas
3. John Roberts
4. Someone Else
5. Not sure

It's a fact – only 15% of voters between the ages of 21-34 can name the current Chief Justice.



CONSTITUTION DAY AT MONTPELIER

Despite a rainy day, Montpelier welcomed nearly 2,000 visitors to our annual Constitution Day Celebration on Saturday, September 21. In collaboration with the Orange County Chamber of Commerce, this year's event included the first annual Taste of Freedom Wine Festival, which brought together an array of Virginia wineries, breweries, cider houses, and food artisans. Guests enjoyed mansion tours, rides on the Wells Fargo Stagecoach, the Liberty Ride Horse Parade, and live music including the James Madison University Royal Marching Dukes and the U.S. Navy Jazz Band, all capped off by an unforgettable fireworks display over the mansion's front lawn.

WHAT DOES CONSTITUTION DAY MEAN TO YOU?

September 17, 1787, is the day when the delegates to the Constitutional Convention met for the last time at Independence Hall in Philadelphia to sign the U.S. Constitution.

As home of the Father of the Constitution and Architect of the Bill of Rights, Americans are drawn to Montpelier to celebrate Constitution Day and most importantly to celebrate our freedom, liberty, and right to self-government. We share our individual perspectives on what the Constitution means to us and what it means to be an American citizen. Make it your plan to join us in 2014!

EXPLORING THE MIND OF MADISON



FROM MONTPELIER EMERGED A MORE PERFECT UNION

Every nation has its origin story and its heroes. In America we tend to point to the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War as our national birth. That is how origin stories usually go: bold words and valiant warriors. Rarely does a great patriotic story begin with the hero quietly reading a book. Yet, such is the story of our nation—from the chrysalis of confederation into a fully formed, popularly ratified federal republic. The often-forgotten hero of this story is James Madison, Father of the Constitution.

AMERICA ON THE BRINK

By 1786 the American experiment with self-government was on the verge of failure. The U.S. government under the Articles of Confederation was too weak to accomplish the most basic governing functions. The state governments, increasingly in conflict with one another, were incapable or unwilling to maintain internal order and protect individual rights. A mere decade after independence, the spirit of the American Revolution had given way to fears of disintegration. America desperately needed to be reunified under a common cause.

In this same year, a 35-year-old James Madison stole away to Montpelier with hundreds of books collected over many years of study. In the quiet recesses of his family home, Madison took it upon himself to find a way to save the young United States from ruin. In search of a solution to his country's problems, Madison grappled with one of the most enigmatic questions of all time: how can a nation sustain liberty without sacrificing order and justice?

In the quiet recesses of his family home, Madison took it upon himself to find a way to save the young United States from ruin.

Towards this goal, Madison critically examined over the course of just a few months more than 2,000 years of political thought. With his mind filled with the history of confederacies and the ideas of political geniuses from Plato to Locke, Madison spent much of the next year traveling and rallying support for the proposed Federal Convention in Philadelphia, including an important visit with George Washington at Mount Vernon where he convinced the famous general to attend the convention. Before Madison arrived in Philadelphia in May 1787, he had a diagnosis for America's ills.

THE GREATEST CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRACY: "THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES"

In *Vices of the Political System of the United States*, a memorandum he wrote in April 1787 as part of his preparation and study, Madison concluded that the root cause of America's difficulties was "the people themselves." That is, Madison was concerned about the

tendency of people to form factions—special interest groups opposed to the rights of others. Madison discovered the source of the American Confederacy's disorder in the depths of human nature.

Madison discerned that the inherent flaw in all past democracies was the constant threat of the tyranny of the majority who would act out of "apparent interest or common passion," uniting against the rights and interests of the minority or individuals. Ironically, Madison's solution to this problem was more factions—more interests, more opinions competing with one another, counteracting one another, and resisting the formation of a tyrannical majority. He theorized that the immense size of America would be a barrier to the formation of a majority faction. In what he called an "extended republic," a central government would represent the diverse interests of the people, thereby reducing the likelihood of majority factions and keeping the government neutral.

Ever pragmatic, never cynical, Madison did not give up on the ideal of self-government. He fully believed that only governments which are held accountable to the people respect the rights and liberties of the people.

However, this scheme could only work, Madison understood, if the cacophony of demands from the people were filtered through a select body of leaders whose reason and patriotism enabled them to discern what was truly in the best interest of all—the common good. Ever pragmatic, never cynical, Madison did not give up on the ideal of self-government. He fully believed that only governments which are held accountable to the people respect the rights and liberties of the people.

Madison understood, as well, that those leaders chosen from among the people would always be susceptible to mistakes and corruption. This new governing body could become insular, using its power to promote its own self-interest at the expense of the good of the country; therefore, the government itself would need to be governed by enforceable laws such as a separation of powers, checks and balances, and regular elections.

Madison concluded that if all these pieces could be established and sustained, good government would be achieved. But, these ideas were still just in Madison's mind. The hard part would be convincing others that he was right.



A TURNING POINT IN WORLD HISTORY

When the Federal Convention began, Madison’s ideas, with the help of the other Virginia delegates, were articulated in 15 resolutions now known as the Virginia Plan. By making these proposals, Madison successfully set the agenda for the debates that followed. For nearly the next four months, the 55 delegates, all with their own strong convictions, intensely debated a myriad of issues raised by the Virginia Plan.

On September 17, 1787, 39 delegates signed the United States Constitution, their plan for a new federal government. By their own design, however, the implementation of the Constitution as the highest law in the land required the consent of the governed, meaning ratification by the people of the states. Madison’s work was not done, and he continued laboring tirelessly to achieve the public’s consent through his contributions to the *Federalist Papers* and his leadership at the Virginia Ratifying Convention.

Before the U.S. Constitution, the world’s populations had been dominated by kings, czars, sultans, and emperors. Democracies had existed only for brief moments in tiny corners of the world before being overtaken by tyrants or swallowed up by large empires.

When our Constitution was finally ratified on June 21, 1788, it represented a turning point in history. Before the U.S. Constitution, the world’s populations had been dominated by kings, czars, sultans, and emperors. Democracies had existed only for brief moments in tiny corners of the world before being overtaken by tyrants or swallowed up by large empires.

Today, almost half of the world’s population lives under some form of democracy. American success under the guidance of the U.S. Constitution is the reason for this dramatic change.

THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY

The average written constitution survives just 17 years, but the U.S. Constitution has been in effect for more than two centuries. The U.S. government, despite all its problems, inefficiencies, and history of injustices, is an example to the world that a free people can govern themselves without the heavy hands of dictators or aristocracies. America demonstrates that liberty and stability are not mutually exclusive.

In creating our democratic republic, Madison and the other framers entrusted a tremendous amount of power to “we the people,” the common citizenry. But, power demands responsibility. Self-government means that we are ultimately our own governors. It is our responsibility to understand how our government works and to maintain those checks on power which are the best defenses of our liberties. If we want to pass on those same liberties to future generations, we must ensure that each generation understands the roles and responsibilities of American citizenship. As Madison said, “the advancement & diffusion of Knowledge... is the only Guardian of true liberty.” (Madison to Thompson, June 30, 1825).

But, power demands responsibility. Self-government means that we are ultimately our own governors. It is our responsibility to understand how our government works and to maintain those checks on power, which are the best defenses of our liberties.

“The people will have
virtue and intelligence
to select men of
virtue and wisdom...
So that we do not...
put confidence in
our rulers, but in
the people who are
to choose them.”

—James Madison,
Virginia Ratifying Convention, 1788

James Madison, sitting at home with his books, quietly analyzing forms of government, is not the typical image of a national hero. He does not command the awe of George Washington or the celebrity of Thomas Jefferson. Yet Madison did more than any other individual to find a way to make democracy safe and enduring in America.

At Montpelier in 1786, Madison envisioned a more perfect union, and he committed the rest of his life to making it a reality.

- C. Sterling Howell, MA
The Montpelier Foundation

Sterling Howell has been with Montpelier's Education Department for five years and has a leadership role in the development of the mansion tour and special interest tours, as well as guide training. He was a principal organizer of Montpelier's current special exhibit "A Young Nation Stands: James Madison and the War of 1812," and works closely with the Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution in its partnership with the Kettering Foundation. He is a graduate of North Carolina State University and earned his master's degree from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

AN UNLIKELY PARTNERSHIP: MADISON AND HAMILTON

This year marks the 225th anniversary of the most striking political partnership in U.S. history, James Madison and Alexander Hamilton's collaboration on the *Federalist Papers*. Between October 1787 and August 1788, Madison and Hamilton (with a little help from John Jay), published 85 articles in New York newspapers arguing decisively for ratification of the newly drafted Constitution. Writing under the pressure of stringent deadlines and inflamed political passions, the two men produced what Thomas Jefferson called "the best commentary on the principles of government which ever was written." Many scholars today still call *The Federalist* the finest piece of writing on political science produced in America.

Many scholars today still call *The Federalist* the finest piece of writing on political science produced in America.

Madison and Hamilton were not close friends, and their views on government hardly coincided, as proven by the bitter political rivalry they endured later in their careers. But, in the heat of the battle for ratification they cooperated brilliantly on a project that was to tip the balance in New York State for passage of the Constitution. Just as significantly, *The Federalist* performed the crucial function of educating Americans on the principles underlying the new republic that Madison had envisioned at Montpelier and shaped through the long debates at the Convention in Philadelphia.

The best way to treat the *Federalist Papers* today is to READ THEM. As I have found with students, their format makes for splendid reading: they are bite-sized essays on what the Constitution means and does not mean. Only three or four pages long, each essay is a crisp, cogent argument combining deep scholarship and passionate advocacy. Of his 29 contributions, Madison's most enduringly powerful essays are probably numbers 10, 14, 37, and 51, though one could start an argument with such an assertion, given their overall quality.

Go forth and read the *Federalist Papers*!



Hunter R. Rawlings III
President, Association of
American Universities
President Emeritus, Cornell University
Director Emeritus,
The Montpelier Foundation

EXPLORE MONTPELIER

THERE'S MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE





Montpelier spans 2,650 acres in Orange County, Virginia in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Observe native flora through three miles of forested walking trails. Restore your senses in the Annie du Pont Garden. Tour the mansion and delve into the personalities, styles, and friendships of James and Dolley Madison. Learn how archaeologists are piecing together the unwritten histories of Montpelier's enslaved community. Expand your knowledge about Madison's roles in crafting the Constitution, as well as Montpelier's history during the Civil War and the Jim Crowe era. No need to leave your kids at home—we have kid-sized archaeology in the lab and touchable exhibits in Dolley's kitchen. Our grounds are open to visitors year-round at no cost.

Explore America's founding roots.

FINDING PEOPLE IN THE PIECES OF HISTORY



While much of what visitors see today is a twentieth century landscape, for nearly 200 years Montpelier was a working plantation cultivated by hundreds of enslaved people. Mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends, and foes, Montpelier was their home.

Over the last decade, The Montpelier Foundation has remained committed to interpreting the lives of the Madison slaves and the site as a working plantation. The archaeological record is the most prolific source of information about the plantation landscape and its operations. Landscape restoration is a crucial step in our goal to interpret the history of Montpelier in an accurate and meaningful way.

Towards this end, the archaeology team recently completed an eleven-month excavation, which revealed the initial footprint of the living quarters of the Madisons' field slaves.

Just inches below the surface, we found building foundations, as well as glass, ceramics, nails, and bone, which tell us how slaves lived, what they ate, wore, and did daily.

The findings from this excavation serve as an important point of departure for comparison with other slave quarter sites across the property and are the capstone to a four-year collaborative research grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The research compiled from this particular project will help us reconstruct the homes of the various groups within the enslaved community and underscores Montpelier as a valuable research hub on early nineteenth century slave life in the Virginia Piedmont, as well as the larger Atlantic history of the African Diaspora.

HELP US MEET THE PERRY FOUNDATION CHALLENGE

The Perry Foundation has made a generous challenge grant to help Montpelier's Archaeology Department maintain momentum on its continued investigations of the mansion grounds and slave quarters. Montpelier is striving to raise \$200,000 to complete the match. To date, we have received gifts totaling \$120,000 leaving us a funding gap of \$80,000.

Please consider a gift to help us reach our goal before the funding deadline of December 31, 2013. For more information, contact Matthew Reeves, Ph.D., Director of Archaeology and Landscape Restoration, at mreeves@montpelier.org or (540) 308-2061.



Artist unknown, European, ca. 1800
Oil on panel with gilt frame; LMF2013.2.2ab
Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Peter R.W. Roughton Jr.

“The friendship which has subsisted between us, now half a century, and the harmony of our political principles and pursuits, have been sources of constant happiness to me thro’ that long period.” — Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, February 17, 1826

James Madison and Thomas Jefferson’s friendship was one of the longest and richest relationships of both men’s lives. In the spirit of this founding friendship, The Montpelier Foundation and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello continue to collaborate on research, collections, and interpretation initiatives.

This spring, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation gifted to Montpelier a portrait medallion of Nelly Conway Madison, James Madison’s mother. Italian artist Pietro Cardelli visited Montpelier in 1819 as part of a campaign to sculpt busts of current and former presidents. While at Montpelier, Cardelli sculpted the 88-year-old “Mother Madison” (1731-1829), who throughout her son’s life was a visible presence at Montpelier where she maintained a separate household in the south wing of the mansion.

In addition, the Monticello team made an important discovery last summer about a pair of paintings with a surprising and significant connection to the Madison family. These two small cabinet paintings were first brought to Monticello by the owners who believed they were given to the family by Thomas Jefferson. Montpelier’s curators now believe the paintings descended through the extended Madison family and were erroneously connected to Jefferson in the early twentieth century. The subjects of both paintings match titles found on a ca. 1837 list titled “Oil paintings at Montpelier.” Research suggests these

pieces may have been acquired by John Payne Todd, Dolley Madison’s son, during his travels in Europe with the U.S. diplomatic delegation sent to negotiate the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812.

The Montpelier Foundation recognizes with gratitude the Thomas Jefferson Foundation for their collegiality and generosity, and invites you to come see these items, which are now on display in the Joe and Marge Grills Gallery.



Nelly Conway Madison
Pietro Cardelli (1776-1822), 1819
Plaster
MF2012.13.1
Gift of Monticello/Thomas Jefferson
Foundation, Inc. 2013



Artist unknown, European, ca. 1800
Oil on panel with gilt frame
LMF2013.2.2ab
Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Peter R.W. Roughton Jr.

SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY

YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION

In partnership with you, our supporters and friends, Montpelier continues to be a source of inspiration for all people seeking opportunity and freedom in this world.

Our fiscal year ends on December 31, and we need your help to achieve our Annual Fund goal of \$1.5 million.

These gifts are critical to providing exceptional experiences for our visitors, transformational learning opportunities for American teachers and students, and the preservation of this beautiful and historic site.



THE IMPACT OF YOUR GIFTS BY THE NUMBERS

In the last 18 months...

153,859

people visited Montpelier, including

16,034 children

79% of every dollar was spent on programs

Original founding documents were viewed online

11,650 times at ConText

630

people registered for an online Constitution course

37,500

Facebook friends

2,075

people attended a Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution seminar

2,504

students participated in the "We the People"

Congressional Hearing Competition

248 volunteers and students participated in Archaeology programs

WAYS YOU CAN GIVE TODAY



By check: please use the enclosed Business Reply Envelope



Online: please visit <http://www.montpelier.org/donate>



To make a gift by phone or for more information on how to make a gift of appreciated securities, contact Ann Lawrence Grasty, Director of Development, at (540) 672-2817 or email at algrasty@montpelier.org.

MONTPELIER WELCOMES MADISON CABINET CO-CHAIRS



The Montpelier Foundation is pleased to welcome Gail Babnew and Joel Silverman as co-chairs of The Madison Cabinet. They will be working closely with current co-chairs Dennis Kernahan and Jacob Price to ensure the continued success of this generous and fun leadership giving circle. Gail and Joel have been Madison Cabinet members since its inception, and Gail is a collateral descendant of James Madison, making this a truly great fit!



MONTPELIER WELCOMES KIMBERLY SKELLY AS EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

In May, Montpelier welcomed Kimberly Skelly as the Executive Vice President for Advancement. In this role, Kimberly is leading all fundraising, communications, and special event efforts. “Montpelier is one of those special places in this world where people can learn more about the creation of the American republic. James Madison’s genius and contributions to the founding of our nation are what inspire me,” she stated.

Kimberly served as Montpelier’s Vice President for Development from 2007-2010 during the \$65 million capital campaign, making this a homecoming for her. “We are thrilled to have Kimberly return to the team and to have this opportunity to work with her as we define Montpelier’s next chapter,” commented Kat Imhoff.

With nearly 20 years of progressive fundraising and communications-related experience, Kimberly has held leadership positions at the Focused Ultrasound Foundation, the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. She is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Mary Baldwin College, and lives in Somerset, Virginia with her husband and two sons.

ANNOUNCING FRIENDS OF MONTPELIER COLLECTIONS

Launched this spring, the Friends of Montpelier Collections support and strengthen Montpelier’s growing collection of fine and decorative arts, while safeguarding and preserving the legacy of James and Dolley Madison. Friends are invited to study art, architecture, and material culture with experts at behind-the-scenes gatherings and through study trips to historic sites and private collections. The annual membership gift of \$1,000 or more is tax deductible and will be used solely to acquire objects for Montpelier’s collection. Join us!

— Nancy Campbell, Chair, Friends of Montpelier Collections

Friends of Montpelier Collections recognizes those who make special gifts in support of the acquisition of objects and furnishings for the mansion. Their generosity is returning the Madisons’ style and furnishings to their beloved home.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard M. Ader
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Mr. and Mrs. Alan L. Potter
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Nancy Woodson Spire Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Sponski
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Mr. and Mrs. Clayton M. Timmons
Martha and Howard Zaritsky

REPORT OF GIFTS

The Montpelier Foundation recognizes with gratitude those who generously have made leadership gifts. The following individuals, foundations, and corporations have made gifts or pledges to Montpelier between January 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013. Thank you!

LEADERSHIP GIFTS

\$1,000,000 AND OVER

Commonwealth of Virginia
Robert H. Smith Family Foundation

\$500,000 AND OVER

The Estate of Paul Mellon

\$250,000 AND OVER

The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation
National Endowment for the Humanities
Nancy Woodson Spire Foundation

\$100,000 AND OVER

The Charles Fund, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Grills
Montpelier Steeplechase & Equestrian Foundation
Claude Moore Charitable Foundation
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Perry Foundation, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Alan L. Potter
Ms. S. Sonjia Smith
Anonymous

\$50,000 AND OVER

Dolley Madison Legacy Luncheon
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Ms. Jacqueline Badger Mars
Pauley Family Foundation
Cynthia M. Reusché

MADISON CABINET PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

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DOLLEY MADISON LEGACY LUNCHEON

The Eighth Annual Dolley Madison Legacy Luncheon, held on May 14, 2013, was another great success, raising \$69,500 towards the research and refurbishment of the mansion. The Montpelier Foundation extends special thanks to this year's guest speaker, Cynthia A. Kierner of George Mason University, who discussed "Dolley Madison, Martha Jefferson Randolph, and the Politics of Hospitality," as well as to the luncheon committee, all those who attended, and this year's patrons.

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MONTPELIER ON THE MOVE



LOG CABIN WORKSHOP

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16 - SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2014

Team up with Montpelier's craftsmen in hewing logs to recreate an early nineteenth century slave cabin. Participants will spend a week learning authentic wood-working and joinery techniques that were used in Madison's era.

For more information, contact Matt Reeves, Director of Archaeology and Landscape Restoration, at 540-308-2061 or mreeves@montpelier.org.

CANDLELIGHT TOURS

FRIDAY - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6 & 7 & 13 & 14

Experience the splendor of the holidays at Montpelier's Candlelight Christmas. Visitors will learn about early nineteenth century Christmas customs and delight in wine, wassail, and live entertainment. Complete your holiday shopping with unique gifts from our Gift Store!

EXHIBIT INSTALLATION AND MANSION RESTORATION

JANUARY 2-17, 2014

Montpelier will be closed for the first two weeks of January to allow curatorial and restoration staff to install new exhibits and complete interior painting and restoration work. Stay tuned for new exhibition announcements!

MADISON'S BIRTHDAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2014

Celebrate the legacy of James Madison at Montpelier's annual ceremony to commemorate Madison's birth. Led by the Marine Corp Band and Color Guard at the Madison family cemetery, Madison's grave will be adorned with dozens of wreaths, including one from the President of the United States.

CONTEXT CROWDSOURCING HISTORY'S MOST IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

The Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution has re-launched ConText, a groundbreaking tool bringing together historians, political theorists, technological innovators, educators, and the public to crowdsource founding documents. In collaboration with the Brookings Institution, ConText originally debuted in 2012 with a focus on James Madison's notes on the 1787 Federal Convention. Today the ConText library also includes the U.S. Constitution as well as a growing collection of constitutions from other nations, international charters, and historical documents from around the world, with annotations and discussions provided by hundreds of contributors to help explain these important but often complex texts. The site provides a global nexus for diverse voices and has been visited more than 11,500 times.

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