



# BALCH COLUMN

Thomas Balch Library ■ 208 W. Market Street ■ Leesburg, Virginia 20176  
703-737-7195 ■ Fax: 703-737-7150 ■ Email: balchlib@leesburgva.gov



## News FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Thomas Balch Library, a cultural center for Leesburg, draws visitors from across the county, the surrounding region, and from places far away. Its legacy is not just one of history, but also of community – a sense of place. For those with deep roots in Loudoun County it is a source of on-going pride and fond memories. For those newer to the community it has become a resource to learn about the past and come to an understanding of a new sense of place. For both it is a resource from which to meld diverse ideas and create a vision for the future. Firmly rooted in the ethos of Leesburg and Loudoun County, its ongoing existence is critical. Over the course of the last ten years efforts have been afoot to create an endowed foundation for ongoing support of the library. With a generous bequest from a former volunteer, Virginia L. Bowie, this vision became a real possibility. During the last couple of years many people have worked hard to make it a reality. Town officials - elected and appointed (TBL Commission), the legislature, library and town staff, the Friends with their outstanding annual fundraising event, Black History Committee, and members of the community have worked cooperatively to achieve this goal. On November 26, Town Council voted unanimously to create the Foundation to endow the library. With the establishment of the foundation, Thomas Balch Library truly enters a new era.

During the twenty-first annual Loudoun History Awards ceremony in November four individuals were recognized. This year's honorees were Elizabeth R. Frain for her contributions to research, preservation, and documentation of Loudoun County history; Kevin Dulany Grigsby for his contributions to research, preservation, and documentation of African Americans in Loudoun County's history; and Georgia Ravitz and Peter Basser for their contributions to land conservation and historic preservation in Loudoun County. These individuals have made significant contributions to preserving Loudoun's past through collection of county documents and memorabilia, preservation of historic landmarks and property, visual arts, writing, and long-time commitment to local history organizations. During the awards ceremony Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission presented a certificate of special recognition to the Honorable Joe T. May for his many contributions as a legislator to preserving and enhancing historical resources in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Collections at the Library continue to grow because of the ongoing support it receives from the community and the generosity of visitors from across the country. In October the Kectoctin Chapter of the NSDAR, a longtime supporter of Thomas Balch Library, donated *South Carolina in the American Revolution: A Source Guide for Genealogists and Historians* by Eric Grundset. This is the second in a series of volumes projected to cover the original thirteen colonies.

The library receives collections related to commemorative events. These frequently include invaluable but inadequately identified images of people or the event itself. One such recently processed collection is Confederate Veterans Photograph 1909 ca. (VC 0056). The photograph was taken by Rufus W. Holsinger, a well-known photographer of Charlottesville, distinguished for his visual artistry. The building captured in the image, constructed in 1906, is located on 201 East Market Street in Charlottesville, Virginia. It previously served as the US Post Office and Courthouse and now currently houses the Jefferson Madison Regional Library. The photograph was most likely taken in conjunction with an event in 1909 commemorating the erection of a statue of the Confederate common soldier in front of the Albemarle County Courthouse. The occasion was marked by an extraordinary public ceremony. William Phineas Thomas (1845-1915) of Loudoun County, Virginia, appears on the bottom row standing in the third position from the right. Thomas was one of eight children born to Griffith Enoch Thomas (1814-1899) and Rebecca Burns Wright Thomas (1821-1911). Between 1863 and 1865, Thomas served in the 43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry, Company D, known as "Mosby's Rangers." Thomas was later captured and was paroled in 1865 in Winchester, VA. He is buried at Mount Zion Baptist Church Cemetery, Aldie, VA. Any assistance with identification of other individuals in this photograph or the event would be appreciated; contact balchlib@leesburgva.gov or call 703-797-7195.

Since the last newsletter there have been several staffing changes. Alyssa Fisher, a part time reference librarian accepted a full time grant funded position with the Loudoun County Circuit Court. Ben Tayloe started November 12 as the new (albeit part time) coordinator of reference services. His background includes a BA from James Madison and an MA from Fairfield University. His most recent experience, where he continues to work part time, has been with the Shenandoah County Library processing and cataloguing their archival holdings. He has also worked at Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, the Braswell Gallery, and for ten years worked in marketing with Nortel Networks Corporation. Gabrielle Sanchez, also part time, started December 4 and will be assisting with the photographic collection, manuscripts, and reference. Her background includes a BA in History from Bryn Mawr College with a year spent at the University of Edinburgh and an MA in History and an MLS from Indiana University. Prior experience includes serving as archivist and assistant librarian at the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen in NY, project archivist at The New-York Historical Society, the George Washington University, DC. Her most recent experience was as archivist for the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress. Please welcome these new members of our staff.

As always it will be a pleasure to welcome you when visiting the Library or when attending programs and exhibits.

Alexandra S. Gressitt,  
Library Director



Photo by  
Leesburg  
Today



Programs sponsored by Thomas Balch Library are held in the downstairs meeting room and are free unless otherwise noted. Due to limited seating we recommend registering in advance by calling 703-737-7195. For updated news on events visit our website at: [www.leesburgva.gov/ThomasBalchLibrary/publications](http://www.leesburgva.gov/ThomasBalchLibrary/publications) or Find Us On Facebook.

## FREDERICK DOUGLASS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

***It Was More than Just a School, It was a Community***

**Sara Howard-O'Brien**

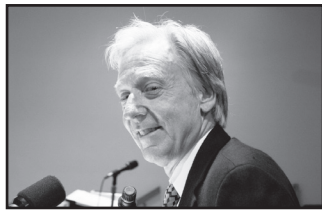
**Sunday, 9 February 2014, 2PM**

Four years after Brown v. Board of Education an elementary school was constructed in Leesburg, Virginia for African American children. It would remain segregated for another decade until the U.S. Courts ordered integration. This lecture will share the process undertaken to preserve these local cultural events, the partnerships forged with the community and the mechanisms employed to turn a little-known piece of history into a teaching tool for generations to come. The exhibit created to memorialize this rich local history has received eight awards, including The Loudoun County Joint Architectural Review Board's Community Blue Ribbon, the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association Implementation Award, and the American Association of Local and State History Award of Merit.

Sara Howard-O'Brien, who received a BA in Sociology, Anthropology, and Psychology from Davis and Elkins College in WV and an MA in Urban Planning from the University of Michigan, is currently Land Management Supervisor for the Loudoun County Public Schools. She has over thirty years of experience in land use planning working in both the public and private sector and has reviewed and represented a broad range of land use proposals over the course of her career, presently concentrating on school planning.



## THE LINCOLN DECEPTION



**David O. Stewart**

**Sunday, 23 February 2014, 2PM**

A deathbed confession and a long-hidden conspiracy are at the heart of a riveting historical mystery centered on the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. In March 1900, as former Congressman John Bingham of Ohio lies dying, he

begins to tell a strange tale to his physician, Dr. Jamie Fraser. Bingham famously prosecuted eight members of John Wilkes Booth's plot to kill Lincoln. But during the 1865 trial, conspirator Mary Surratt divulged a secret so explosive it could shatter the republic. Though Bingham takes the secret to his grave, Fraser cannot let go of the mystery. Bored with small-town medical practice, he begins to investigate, securing an unlikely ally in Speed Cook, a black, college-educated professional ballplayer and would-be newspaper publisher. Cook is fascinated by Fraser's inquiry and, like Fraser, thinks the accepted version of Lincoln's assassination rings false. Was Booth truly the mastermind or were other, more powerful forces pulling the strings? From Maryland to New York City, from Indiana to Washington, Fraser and Cook track down key figures and witnesses – including Mary Surratt's neurotic daughter Anna, Booth's nephew, actor Creston Clarke, and Clarke's attractive business manager, Mrs. Eliza Scott. Piece by piece the truth emerges—separating fact from rumor, innocent from guilty, and revealing a story of greed, ambition, courage, and tragedy.

Blending real and fictional characters, *The Lincoln Deception* is a superbly researched, brilliantly plotted, and thoroughly gripping mystery that explores one of the nation's darkest and most fascinating eras and the conspiracy that changed world history.

After practicing law for more than 25 years, David O. Stewart turned to writing history (though he still practices law). His first book, *The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution*, was a *Washington Post* bestseller and won the Washington Writing Award as Best Book of 2007. Two years later, *Impeached: The Trial of President Andrew Johnson and the Fight for Lincoln's Legacy*, was a Davis-Kidd Bestseller and was called "by all means the best account of this troubled episode" by Professor David Donald of Harvard. Stewart's next work was *American Emperor: Aaron Burr's Challenge to Jefferson's America*, an examination of Burr's remarkable Western expedition, an undertaking that shook the nation's foundations at a time when those foundations were none too solid. Stewart also is president of the Washington Independent Review of Books, an online book review. Books will be available for purchase.

## MISSION TO TOKYO

**Robert F. Dorr**

**Sunday, 2 March 2014, 2PM**

Robert F. Dorr will talk about the experience of bomber crews in World War II in the Pacific using material from his book *Mission to Tokyo*. His talk will cover personal narratives from the B-29 Superfortress air campaign against the Japanese home islands, including the March 10, 1945 firebombing of Tokyo, the August 6, 1945 bombing of Hiroshima, and the flawed August 9, 1945 mission to Nagasaki.

Robert F. Dorr is an Air Force veteran and retired Foreign Service officer. He is the author of about 75 books and thousands of magazine articles on military history, the Air Force, and aviation. Dorr writes a weekly column for the *Air Force Times* newspaper and a monthly feature for *Aerospace America* magazine. Books will be available for purchase.

## A WALKING TOUR OF CIVIL WAR LEESBURG

**Richard Treat Gillespie**

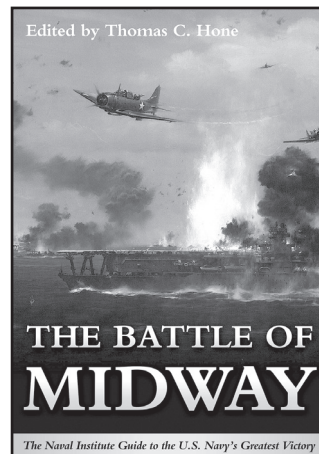
**Saturday, 8 March 2014, 10-12AM**

With its key geographic location just two miles from the Potomac Frontier dividing the Confederate and United States, Leesburg was bound to see a good deal of the Civil War. A Walking Tour of Civil War Leesburg with Rich Gillespie will examine the surviving Civil War townscape and watch the War develop and engulf the county seat of Loudoun. In a circuit of the historic district, the emphasis will be on what the 1,500 residents of the town would have seen at various places, and what they would have experienced during 1861-65. The two-hour chronological tour will provide ample spots to sit for the weary, and will paint some vibrant historic portraits to keep people enthralled. Included in the tour will be three skirmish sites, outside stops at two churches soldiers knew well, the courthouse lawn, "the best street in town," Harrison Hall where General Lee stayed, and the Episcopal cemetery.

Richard Treat Gillespie is the Director of Education for Northern Virginia's Mosby Heritage Area and a founding member of Loudoun's Civil War Sesquicentennial Steering Committee. Before joining the Mosby Heritage Area Association in 2004, he taught US History and Economics for 30 years at Loudoun Valley High School in Purcellville, VA. A graduate of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, he is a strong believer in melding the classroom, the community, and historic sites through heritage education. This tour will leave from Thomas Balch Library parking lot at 10AM. Note: This tour requires good walking shoes.



## THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY



**Thomas C. Hone**

**Sunday, 9 March 2014, 2PM**

The best way for today's sailors to learn about a battle is from those who fought it. The Battle of Midway, commemorated annually in the US Navy, warrants close attention. This Naval Institute guide includes some of the most vibrant and informed accounts by individuals who fought on both sides of the June 1942 battle. The anthology pulls together memoirs, articles, excerpts from other Naval Institute books, and relevant government documents to help readers understand what happened and explain why the battle was so significant to the naval service. The core of the book focuses on events leading up to the battle

and the battle itself, with a separate section examining how others have interpreted the battle's often desperate engagements. When the US Navy stopped the Japanese steamroller off Midway Island, it not only turned the progress of the war but set the Navy's foundation for future counter offensives. The Navy's comeback spread to the Solomon Islands and on to the other key strategic areas in

the Pacific. While many know that Midway was a crucial American victory, they often do not know the details of the battle. This book tells how, for example, the American PT boats contributed to the victory, how the carrier planes formed up for their attacks, and what role radar played in the battle. In addition to excerpts from books and articles, the guide includes selections from several important Naval Institute oral histories. From the enlisted man's perspective all the way to the admiral's, for both Americans and Japanese, readers see the US Navy's greatest victory as the participants saw it.

Thomas C. Hone is a former senior executive in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and a former member of the faculty of the Naval War College with a PhD from the University of Wisconsin. He is the author or coauthor of three books on naval administration and innovation, the coauthor of a book on the Navy between the world wars, and an award-winning author of articles and essays on naval and military affairs. He has taught at the Naval War College and the National Defense University among other institutions.

## SECRET WAR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST:

### *The Influence of Axis and Allied Intelligence*

#### *Operations During World War II*

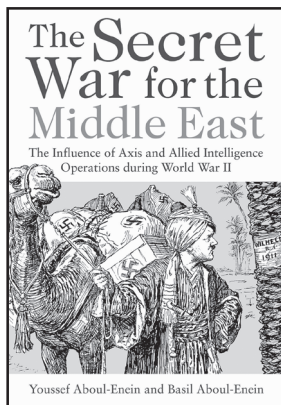
**Youssef Aboul Enein**

**Sunday, 16 March 2014, 2PM**

Although often overlooked in studies of World War II, the Middle East was actually a key theater for the Allies. Though the threat of direct Axis invasion by Rommel's Afrika Corps never materialized beyond the Egyptian Western Desert this did not limit the Axis from probing the Middle East and cultivating potential collaborators and sympathizers. *The Secret War for the Middle East* explores the infusion of the political language of anti-Semitism, nationalism, fascism, and Marxism that was among the ideological byproducts of Axis and Allied intervention in the Arab world. The British-dominated Middle East was ripe for exploitation by Axis intelligence and propaganda. German and Italian intelligence efforts fueled anti-British resentments and shaped the course of Arab nationalist sentiments throughout the Middle East. These actions left an indelible mark on the sociopolitical evolution of the modern states of the Middle East, and their effects continue to be felt today.

A relevant parallel to the pan-Arab cause was Hitler's attempt to bring ethnic Germans into the fold of a greater German state. In theory, as the Sudeten German stood on par with the Carpathian German, so, too, according to doctrinal theory, did the Yemeni stand in union with the Syrian in the imagination of those espousing pan-Arabism. As historic evidence demonstrates, this very commonality proved to be a major factor in the development of relations between Arab and Fascist leaders. The Arab nationalist movement amounted to little more than a shapeless, fragmented counter-position to British imperialism, imported to the Arab East via Berlin for Nazi aspirations.

The book is co-authored by Youssef H. Aboul-Enein and Basil Aboul-Enein, a former captain of the U.S. Air Force who currently teaches undergraduate nutrition courses at San Jacinto College and East Mississippi Community College. Cdr. Youssef H. Aboul-Enein, USN, the speaker, is an officer in the US Navy Medical Service Corps and a Middle East foreign officer. He is the adjunct military professor and chair of Islamic studies at the National Defense University's Dwight D. Eisenhower School for Resource Strategy and National Security. He holds a master's degree in strategic intelligence from the National Defense Intelligence College and is stationed in the Washington, DC, area. Books will be available for purchase.



final collapse had suddenly become tangible. For days prior to the fall of Saigon, the by-products of the North Vietnamese army's relentless conquest included thousands of panicked refugees trying to flee the country in anything that would float or fly. "It was Dunkirk in reverse," observed Paul Jacobs, commanding officer of USS *Kirk* during Frequent Wind, the operation that turned the destroyer escort into a haven for refugees escaping South Vietnam. *Kirk's* officers and enlisted personnel—trained as warriors—instantly transformed their man-of-war into a humanitarian assistance ship. Desperation and suffering gave way to reassurance as crew members fed their unexpected and anguished guests, dispensed medical care, diapered infants, and provided hope to a dispirited people.

*The Lucky Few* focuses on one small US Navy warship from that task force. USS *Kirk* took part in the rescue of not only the remnants of the South Vietnamese fleet, but also dealt with 32,000 refugees on board those ships. Although the Vietnam War ended in chaos and shame, the epic story of USS *Kirk* and her success in rendering humanitarian assistance under inconceivable circumstances reflects one of America's few shining moments during this military withdrawal. Almost forty years later *The Lucky Few* brings to light this relatively unknown heroic tale of a people caught up in the death throes of a nation and their subsequent passage to freedom.

Jan K. Herman served as the historian of the Navy Medical Department and as special assistant to the Surgeon General for thirty-three years. He produced an hour-long documentary, *The Lucky Few*, which has gained international acclaim since its premiere at the Smithsonian in 2010. He is also author of *Battle Station Sick Bay*. Books will be available for purchase.

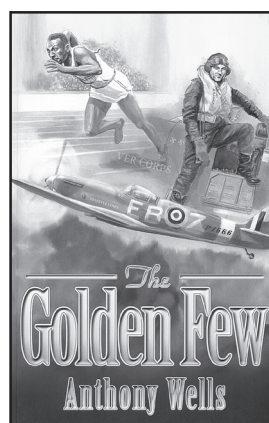
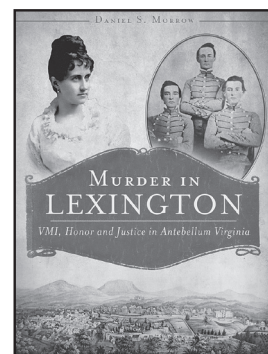
## MURDER IN LEXINGTON:

### *VMI, Honor and Justice in Antebellum Virginia*

**Daniel S. Morrow**

**Sunday, 30 March 2014, 2PM**

In 1853 Lexington, Virginia, Mary Evelyn Anderson, one of the most beautiful women in the Commonwealth, spurned the advances of a young law student named Charles Burks Christian. Humiliated and heartbroken, Christian confronted, stabbed and killed the man he believed responsible for Anderson's decision. The man was her cousin, Thomas Blackburn, a VMI cadet and student of Stonewall Jackson. What followed was a circus of inept and brilliant lawyers dragging members of the most prominent families in antebellum Virginia through an all-too-public discussion of seduction, courtship, honor, and self-defense. In *Murder in Lexington*, author and historian Daniel S. Morrow chronicles the history of the events that led to Blackburn's death, the trials that followed and the impact on Lexington, its two colleges, and the men and women who would soon find themselves engaged in a great Civil War. Books will be available for purchase.



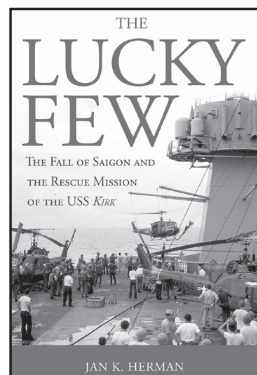
## THE GOLDEN FEW

**Anthony Wells**

**Sunday, 6 April 2014, 2PM**

*The Golden Few* is the compelling story of British men who ran in the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games and four years later engaged in a war of survival, not on the running track, but high above the English countryside and over the Channel during the Battle of Britain. The life of silver medalist and RAF pilot Donald Finlay is intertwined with the colossal victory of the British four-by-four hundred-meter relay team winning gold in one of the greatest British Olympic victories of all time. The story unfolds the struggles at Eleven Group within RAF Fighter Command during the summer of 1940

to stave off the Luftwaffe's massive air assault, and takes us into the heart of the greatest wartime deception of all time and the work of one courageous female SOE agent in Northern France as the unwitting tool of the brilliant plan to fool the Nazi leadership. Behind this dramatic fabric of struggle, courage, and indomitable determination, lie several endearing and unforgettable themes--the British athletes' relationship with the four gold medal-winning American Jesse Owens, and their special relationship with Frederick and Roland Wells at Coventry Gear, revealing in harrowing detail how civilians were as much on the front line as the combat forces. The finale in London at the 1948 Olympic Games is an emotional climax to a story that both warms the heart and threads the complex personal relationships into a fabric that has not just enduring qualities, but also reminders of sacrifices made and remarkable lives that shaped the world's destiny.



## THE LUCKY FEW:

### *The Fall of Saigon and the Rescue Mission of the USS Kirk*

**Jan K. Herman**

**Sunday, 23 March 2014, 2PM**

As the Vietnam War reached its tragic climax in the last days of April 1975, a task force of US Navy ships cruised off South Vietnam's coast. Their mission was to support the evacuation of American embassy personnel and military advisers. But the task force was also assigned to secure the safety of South Vietnamese who had "sensitive" military information in their possession and whose lives would be in danger once the North Vietnamese consolidated their inevitable victory. The magnitude of a nation's

information in their possession and whose lives would be in danger once the North Vietnamese consolidated their inevitable victory. The magnitude of a nation's

Anthony Wells, born near Coventry, England, was educated at St. Cuthbert's Society, Durham University, King's College London, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. He received his basic naval training at the Royal Naval College Dartmouth and was called to the English Bar as a Barrister of Lincoln's Inn. His mentor was Sir Harry Hinsley, the Bletchley Park Enigma code-breaker, who was also chair of Well's PhD board. Wells has been in the national security and intelligence business for over forty years and has been Chief Executive Officer of TKC International LLC in Middleburg, Virginia since 1992. Uniquely Wells served with the Royal Navy, and also in Washington and at sea with the US Navy, and has worked for both nations' intelligence communities. In his spare time Dr. Wells is a US National Ski Patroller and is the Vice President and Life Member of The Plains Virginia Rescue Squad. Both *The Golden Few* and an earlier publication, *Black Gold Finale*, will be available for purchase.

## THE GRANDEES OF GOVERNMENT:

### *The Origins and Persistence of Undemocratic*

#### *Politics in Virginia*

**Brent Tarter**

**Sunday, 27 April 2014, 2PM**

From the formation of the first institutions of representative government and the use of slavery in the seventeenth century through the American Revolution, the Civil War, the civil rights movement, and into the twenty-first century, Virginia's history has been marked by obstacles to democratic change. In *The Grantees of Government*, Brent Tarter offers an extended commentary based in primary sources on how these undemocratic institutions and ideas arose, and how they were both perpetuated and challenged. Although much literature on American republicanism focuses on the writings of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, among others, Tarter reveals how their writings were in reality an expression of federalism, not of republican government. Within Virginia, Jefferson, Madison, and others such as John Taylor of Caroline and their contemporaries governed in ways that directly contradicted their statements about representative—and limited—government. Even the democratic rhetoric of the American Revolution worked surprisingly little immediate change in the political practices, institutions, and culture of Virginia. The counterrevolution of the 1880s culminated in the Constitution of 1902 that disfranchised the remainder of African Americans. Virginians who could vote reversed the democratic reforms embodied in the constitutions of 1851, 1864, and 1869, so that the antidemocratic Byrd organization could dominate Virginia's public life for the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. Offering a thorough reevaluation of the interrelationship between the words and actions of Virginia's political leaders, *The Grantees of Government* provides an entirely new interpretation of Virginia's political history.

Brent Tarter is a founding editor of the Library of Virginia's *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* and a cofounder of the annual Virginia Forum. Books will be available for purchase.

## LEESBURG TOUR

**James P. Roberts**

**Saturday, 3 May 2014, 9-12AM**

James Roberts, a native of Leesburg, member of Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission, 2008 recipient of a Loudoun History Award, and recognized in 2011 by Loudoun Laurels, will lead a walking tour of Leesburg. The tour is an insider's commentary of local people, places, and points of interest both in and around Leesburg. Particular detail is paid to how Leesburg has grown and evolved through the years architecturally, economically, and racially. Factual, historical, and anecdotal information is intertwined and presented in storytelling fashion as only someone who lived through it and thoughtfully observed it, can do. This unique tour will leave from Thomas Balch Library parking lot at 9AM; sturdy walking shoes are recommended.



## BLACK ROCK AND BLUE WATER:

### *The Wreck of the Royal Mail Ship Rhone In*

#### *St. Narciso's Hurricane of October 1867*

**Andrew C. A. Jampoler**

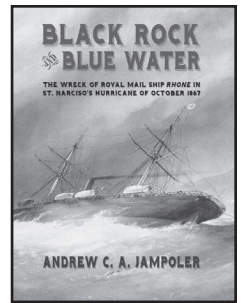
**Sunday, 4 May 2014, 2PM**

Lauded for his ability to tell compelling, true adventure stories, award-winning author Andrew C.A. Jampoler has now turned his attention to the sinking of the RMS *Rhone* during a ruthless hurricane. Just three years old and the pretty queen of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's fleet, RMS *Rhone* sank in the great St. Narciso hurricane in October 1867, a devastating category three storm that bored a line east to west atop the Antilles, and ruthlessly thinned

the islands' population while sinking some seventy ships in port and local waters.

Fleeing from Tortola across Drake Strait and toward open water at full speed, through the backside of the hurricane and nearly blinded by rain and spray, RMS *Rhone* drove aground on Black Rock, in the shallows off Salt Island, shoved to her fate by 140 mile per hour winds. The impact and the subsequent explosion of her boiler tore the 310-foot long ship in half. One hundred twenty four drowned that morning or were scalded to death in the engine room. Only twenty-three survived. Five other company ships also went down. Remarkably, a sixth company ship, the tiny paddle steamer *Conway* managed to live through the day, although dismantled and with her deck swept clear of funnel, paddle boxes, and rigging. In his presentation, Jampoler will recount the story of those ships, and the story of Jeremiah Murphy, a salty hardhat diver, who spent most of the next six years salvaging the wreck of the RMS *Rhone* and clearing neighboring harbors of the storm's detritus. *Black Rock and Blue Water* will appeal to readers of maritime history, and to recreational divers of all ages. Note this book is available only in e-book format.

Andrew C. A. Jampoler spent twenty-four years as a naval aviator before his retirement from the US Navy in 1986. A resident of Loudoun County, VA, he has been writing history books and magazine articles for more than a dozen years, winning the Naval Institute Press's Author of the Year in 2003 for *Adak* and *Naval History* magazine's Author of the Year in 2006.



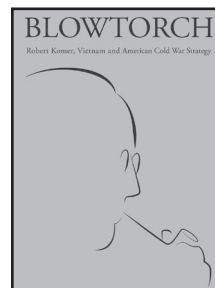
## CLERK'S OFFICE TOUR,

### *Loudoun County Courthouse Historic Records*

**John Fishback**

**Monday, 12 May 2014, 7PM**

Meet in the parking lot of Thomas Balch Library by 6:45PM. John Fishback, Historic Records Manager for Loudoun County, will lead a tour of the Clerk's Office. He will discuss the extent of Loudoun County's records holdings, where to look for records of births, deaths, marriages, and deeds, and how to use these records in research. No one is permitted to enter restricted areas of the Clerk's Office after 7:00PM, so the group will leave the library promptly at 6:45PM.



## BLOWTORCH:

### *Robert Komer, Vietnam, and American Cold War Strategy*

**Frank Leith Jones**

**Sunday, 18 May 2014, 2PM**

**[Rescheduled from 8 December 2013]**

History has not been kind to Robert Komer, a casualty of bad historical analysis and inaccurate information. A Cold War national security policy and

strategy adviser to three presidents, Komer was one of the most influential national security professionals of the era. The book begins with a review of his early life that helped shape his worldview. It then examines Komer's influence as a National Security Council staff member during the Kennedy administration, where he helped set its activist course regarding the Third World. Upon Kennedy's death, Lyndon Johnson named Komer his "point man" for Vietnam pacification policy, and later General Westmoreland's operational deputy in Vietnam.

The author highlights Komer's activities during the three years he strove to fulfill the president's vision that Communism could be repelled from Southeast Asia by economic and social development along with military force. Known as "Blowtorch" for his abrasive personality and disdain for bureaucratic foot dragging, Komer came to be seen as the right person for managing that effort, and in 1968 was rewarded with an ambassadorship to Turkey. The book analyzes Komer's work during the Carter administration as special adviser to Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, credits him for re-energizing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's conventional capability, and forging the military instrument that implemented the Carter Doctrine in the Persian Gulf - the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. It also explores his final role as a defense intellectual and critic of the Reagan administration's defense policies. The book concludes with a summary of Komer's impact on American policy and his contributions to counterinsurgency practices, a legacy now recognized for its importance in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Frank Leith Jones is professor of security studies at the US Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he holds the General Dwight D. Eisenhower Chair of National Security. A retired member of the Senior Executive Service, he served in several high-level policy and strategy positions in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and is the recipient of several civilian awards. Books will be available for purchase.

# T H O M A S B A L C H L I B R A R Y

## 2014 Classes

### RESEARCHING HISTORY AND GENEALOGY AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

The library offers classes introducing researchers to research techniques and resources at Thomas Balch Library. Classes will include subject-specific training by experienced staff or guest speakers. The classes, limited in size, with registration required, will be held the first Thursday of each month.

#### INFORMATION SEEKING STRATEGIES FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

**Thursday, 6 February 2014, 10AM**

Under the direction of Elizabeth E. Preston, Library Archives Specialist, participants will learn techniques for developing and implementing effective search techniques. While the techniques discussed are applicable in a wide variety of environments, specific attention will be paid to Thomas Balch Library's subscription databases, including *America: History and Life*, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, and *Fold3*.

#### BURNED COUNTY RECORDS IN THE SOUTH

**Thursday, 6 March 2014, 10AM**

This lecture will discuss the effective use of surviving county records and then focus on federal and state records that provide genealogical information that help fill in research gaps such as military, pensions, Southern Claims, Serial Set and state land grants. Non-Government sources such as church records, manuscripts, cemetery records and local histories are also reviewed. Victor S.

"Vic" Dunn is a board-certified genealogist and a full-time professional researcher. An instructor for the Virginia instructional track at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research at Samford University in Alabama, he is a frequent contributor to major genealogical publications including feature articles in the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, *NGS Magazine*, *BCG OnBoard*, *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy*, and *Virginia Genealogical Society Newsletter*. He is a current governor of the Virginia Genealogical Society and a past trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and past treasurer and board member of NGS.



#### RESEARCHING COURT RECORDS

**Thursday, 3 April 2014, 10AM**

Jeanette Irby, Leesburg Town Attorney, will discuss how to use court records and other resources for data that are frequently overlooked in genealogical and historical research. Irby will demonstrate how to mine court records for clues that can be used to collect information for genealogical research. Examples of these records include real estate records, chancery suits, estates, and indexes. Jeanette Irby, previously employed by Fauquier County, has researched land records dating from the 1700s and participated in genealogical seminars sponsored by the Warrenton Court House Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution of which she is First Vice Regent. She holds a BS from Central Michigan University and a JD from Thomas Cooley Law School.

#### HISTORY OF VIRGINIA AS TOLD BY LEGISLATIVE PETITIONS

**Thursday, 1 May 2014, 10AM**



Petitions to the General Assembly were the primary catalyst for legislation in the Commonwealth from 1776 until 1865. Public improvements, military claims, divorce, manumission of slaves, division of counties, incorporation of towns, religious freedom, and taxation were just some of the concerns expressed in these petitions. They often contain hundreds of signatures and are a useful tool in genealogical and historical research. Frequently, they contain supplementary support documents useful in research, including maps, wills, naturalizations, deeds, resolutions, affidavits, judgments, and other items. Greg Crawford of the Library

of Virginia will discuss how one can access these valuable documents online through the Library of Virginia's Legislative Petitions database (<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions>)

Greg Crawford, who received a BA and MA in History from Auburn University, was hired in 1999 as Local Records Archivist at the Library of Virginia and is currently the Local Records Services Program Manager.

#### LOCATING REAL PROPERTY

**Thursday, 5 June 2014, 10AM**

Wynne Saffer, author of *Loudoun County, Virginia 1860 Land Tax Map*, who previously presented a class on deed research, will show how to convert a metes and bounds survey to a plat of the property. He will show some examples of plats and how to identify their location by using roads, streams, and other landmarks. He will demonstrate the use of current parcel maps to locate ancient property lines.

#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**Thursday, 7 August 2014, 10AM**

Kim Del Rance, Preservation Planner, Town of Leesburg, previously served as the Historic Preservation Planner for St. Augustine, FL. Her education includes a Master of Architecture from the University of Florida and a BA in Fine Art from Flagler College, St. Augustine, FL. This presentation will be about researching a home in the historic district and what it means to be "historic" and "contributing" to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### PRESERVATION FOR HOME ARCHIVES

**Thursday, 2 October 2014, 10AM**

Elizabeth E. Preston, Library Archives Specialist, will introduce participants to the basics of preservation and discuss the best ways to house and protect personal archives. Topics will include proper ways to handle letters, books, photographs, and other media; common conservation needs; threats to paper and electronic media; and the dangers of non-archival storage products.

#### CHRONICLING AMERICA AND THE VIRGINIA NEWSPAPER PROJECT

**Thursday, 6 November 2014, 10AM**

Errol S. Somay, Director, Virginia Newspaper Project, Library of Virginia, will discuss *Chronicling America and the Virginia Newspaper Project*, their significance for researchers, and how to best utilize these resources.

#### USING THE VISUAL COLLECTIONS

**Thursday, 4 December 2014, 10AM**

Lisa DeZarn, Library Reference Associate, will introduce users to visual collections at Thomas Balch Library. Types of images available and how they may be accessed will be discussed.

#### IN HONOR OF PRESIDENTS DAY

Join the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership and Thomas Balch Library for a book talk by former White House official Tevi Troy on February 18th. The talk begins at 7:00 p.m. and will be held in the Council Chamber of the Leesburg Town Hall. Copies of Troy's book, *What Washington Read, Eisenhower Watched, and Obama Tweeted: 200 Years of Popular Culture in the White House*, will be available for purchase and signing. To register, or for more information, visit [www.hallowedground.org](http://www.hallowedground.org).



# THE BALCH COLUMN

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Leesburg, VA 20176

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## WINTER/SPRING 2014 LECTURES AND EVENTS

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### *Exhibits 2014*

#### MARGARET MERCER ROOM

<b>January</b>	World War II Memorabilia - John Wyrick
<b>February</b>	Douglass Elementary School - More than a School, It's a Community - Sara Howard-O'Brien
<b>March</b>	Civic Service Projects of SCV/UDC - Ken Fleming/Becky Fleming
<b>April</b>	Generations of Oatlands Historic Houses and Gardens - Lori Kimball
<b>May</b>	Thirty Years of the Loudoun Preservation Society - Lori Kimball
<b>June</b>	Antique Arms of the War of 1812 Era - Gary Heath
<b>July-August</b>	Local Civil War Relics - John Creamer
<b>September</b>	Projects and History of 4-H in Loudoun - Ann Ludwig
<b>October</b>	New Collections at Thomas Balch Library - Elizabeth Preston
<b>November</b>	Native Americans in Loudoun County - Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum
<b>December</b>	Paintings and Photographs - Cathy Payne

#### LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM

<b>January-March</b>	Scenes from Northern Virginia - Ofelia Knapp
<b>April-June</b>	Art in Cross Stitch Scenes Along the Back Roads of Loudoun - Cathy Payne
<b>July-September</b>	Photographs of Historical Figures - Bachrach Photography
<b>October-December</b>	The Grist Mill in Northern Virginia - Jim Stewart

### *Other Activities* At Thomas Balch Library

**THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION** sponsors the annual Loudoun History Awards and an award for excellence in historical research at the annual Loudoun County Public School Social Science Fair. It meets at the library the second Wednesday of each month at 7PM. The public is always welcome.

**FRIENDS OF THE THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY, INC.**, a 501c3 organized to provide support for Thomas Balch Library, meets at the library every other month and sponsors an annual fundraiser. The public is always welcome. For more information, visit [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org) or call 703/737-2166.

Join the Friends, Sunday, 26 January 2014, for their 19th Annual Meeting and election of directors. Guest speaker will be Dan Morrow who will discuss his new book *Murder in Lexington: VMI, Honor and Justice in Antebellum Virginia*. Snow date: Sunday, 3 February.

**BLACK HISTORY COMMITTEE OF FRIENDS OF THE THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY, INC.**, meets at the library the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7PM. The public is always welcome. For more information, visit [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org) or call 703/737-2166.

**LOUDOUN COUNTY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE** meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30PM except January and February. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Loudoun County's history during the American Civil War. Meetings are held at Thomas Balch Library unless otherwise noted.

**THE EIGHTH ANNUAL VIRGINIA FORUM** will be held 13-15 March 2014 on the campus of George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. The Virginia Forum is interdisciplinary, bringing together historians, teachers, writers, archivists, museum curators, historic site interpreters, librarians, and others engaged in the study and interpretation of Virginia history to share their knowledge, research, and experiences. This year's theme is "Traffic." From familiar modern concerns with transportation to more general processes of commerce, both licit and illicit, to historic modes of exchange and interaction between people, issues of "Traffic" have pervaded Virginia's history. For additional information please see [www.virginiaforum.org](http://www.virginiaforum.org)