



The Virginia Huguenot Society

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

frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org

Fall/Winter 2024 Newsletter



What a glorious time it is to be alive! The souls of our ancestors are with us as we carry their dreams of a better world to come. Celebrate our country as we love each other, help each other, and work towards life without tyranny. Their spirits inspire

us and elevate our lives through the generations now and forever.

We have reaffirmed our Huguenot Oath to Christ thereby sustaining our Society for the future. Our members are grateful to be sharing fellowship, lineage and a love of Christ during the upcoming season and beyond. Remember who we are and may the spirit of his love be with you.

Cheers to our Vice President, Louis March for his flawlessly executed program on the history of "The Maury Family and Prominent Son Matthew Fontaine Maury" at our October meeting. Every word was artfully woven into his presentation for a fully engaging history of Mr. Maury. I'm sure all of our members felt pride in having him as a leader in our Society. Merci!

Thank you to several of our members that agreed to new responsibilities this year to further our objectives. Major kudos to Gerry Runyan for his beautiful newsletters that link us together.

Join us in March for our next reunion of Huguenots and the installation of a new administration.

Se réjouir!

Constance Paradiso

President, Virginia Huguenot Society

VHS Committee Members Needed

Our Virginia Huguenot Society needs interested members to serve on our two committees, the Project Committee and the House Committee. The Project Committee is charged with finding an appropriate project for our Society, such as the preservation of the painting, "Attack on the Huguenots" by William Washington. The House Committee's responsibility is to help the Vice President find meeting venues and speakers for our meetings.

In addition, if you wish to serve as an Officer or Council member, or would like more information on what it means to serve, please contact Constance Paradiso, paradiso@ntelos.com, or Gerald Runyan, gerald@aercorp.com, and let them know of your interest.

Virginia Huguenot Society Fall Meeting October 26, 2024 Salisbury Country Club, Midlothian, VA

Our Society met at the Salisbury Country Club in Midlothian, VA on October 26, 2024. We had good attendance and good food, and most importantly we had good Huguenot fellowship. More details of the meeting can be found in Gus' excellent minutes (included in this publication). Constance's President's message also gives information. Here are a few pictures.



The Fall Meeting, the Day of Remembrance for the Virginia Huguenot Society took place on 26 October 2024 at the Salisbury Country Club in Midlothian, Virginia

The meeting was called to order by Constance Paradiso, President, at 12:30 PM. An invocation was given by the chaplain Heath Thompson. The Ritual, consisting of the



Virginia
Huguenot
Society

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and the Huguenot Pledge to the Flag was recited, followed by Le Serment Solennel read in French and repeated in English. New Members were welcomed,

Roliff Purrington and Jocelyn Lance, and guests were introduced, Katherine and John March, quests of Louis March, Shirley and James Seaborn from the Manakin Society, Chardon Jenks and Debbie Pruett, and Richard and Lisa Vaughan. An honorary membership has been conferred on Brian Wunder of Staunton who was unable to attend today because of family illness.

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He was our last meeting's speaker and a member of the Board of the Huguenot Fellowship. Following a blessing given by our chaplain, Heath Thompson, lunch was served. The program was presented by Louis March our current vice president and past president of the Virginia Huguenot Society. The subject of his talk was the Maury family and Matthew Fontaine Maury. He gave the background of the Maury family and the Fontaine family, both of which were distinguished Huguenot families. A naval officer and pioneer in the emerging field of oceanography, Maury was called the "Pathfinder of the Seas". He started his service in the Navy at a young age and spent years at sea circling the globe. Unhappy with current naval books on navigation he set about to improve them. Following an injury that ended his service at sea he worked at the U.S. Naval Observatory (later becoming its head) charting the winds and currents of the world's oceans. His charts revolutionized ocean travel, for by following his routes he reduced the time it took for an ocean voyage by a third and this had significant commercial impli-

cations. He was instrumental in planning the route for the first transatlantic cable by finding a plateau that was able to take it across the ocean safely. He published his "The Physical Geography of the Sea", the first oceanography textbook, in 1855. He had a part in establishing the Naval Academy and also played a role in recommending establishment of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. When sectional tensions led to the War between the States, he resigned from the Navy and became an agent of the Confederacy. After the War he turned down several professorships offered to him, eventually becoming a professor at Virginia Military Institute. Here he was close to his friend, Robert E. Lee who had become President of Washington College in Lexington. He received honors from several foreign governments and had schools and ships named for him. Controversy over his choice to side with the Confederacy clouds current opinion about what was a very distinguished career. At the conclusion of Louis' program, Constance called the business meeting to order. Our vice president, Louis March announced that our next meeting would be on

March 29. Gus Lewis read the minutes from the last general meeting and there were no additions or corrections. Ann Darst, treasurer, gave the report of our current balance. Heath Thompson made the announcement that member Joan Winkler had passed away and she reminded all present to ask families to include in death notices that the deceased belonged to the Huguenot Society of Virginia. David LeGrande repeated for the membership the list of new books in our library. Gerald Runyan discussed the success of our last project, the restoration of the painting by William Washington in the VMI Library and asked for input regarding a new project. Ways of expanding the research into a book of Huguenot ancestry of our Presidents were discussed. In New Business the subject of admitting members who were not Protestants was raised for review by the membership. The Council had voted that the bylaws and the Sacred Oath be retained and no change was recommended. No one raised an objection to this and by voice vote it was decided to follow the Council's recommendation. The meeting was adjourned after 3 p.m.
~ Augustine Lewis, Secretary

Save the Date! Our next meeting is March 29, 2025!

Welcome

New Members

Roliff Holmes Purrington, Jr.

5000 Montrose Blvd. 14E
Houston, TX 77006
713-992-3775
ropurr2050@gmail.com
Ancestor: Gideon Macon
Member # 7-521

Mr. Purrington, Jr. is an attorney who practices in Houston, TX. He is originally from Southampton County, Virginia. He graduated from Woodberry Forest and received this B.A. from Yale University, his J.D. from the University of Virginia in 1977 and his MBA from the University of Chicago's international program in 2001 in Barcelona. He makes his home in Houston.

Jocelyn Ruth Mohler Lance

11206 Wellesley Terrace Court
Henrico, VA 23233
804-730-9667
joceaada@comcast.net
Ancestor: Charles Frederick de Bart
Member # 7-522

Jocelyn has been President of Chapter XXIII of The Colonial Dames of America. She is an excellent genealogist and is a member of many heritage organizations.

New Honorary Member

Mr. Brian Kent Wunder

309 Lariat Circle
Staunton, VA 24401

Brian is an attorney practicing in Texas. He is married to Victoria. Their children are Isabella, Claire, David and Daniel. He serves on the Board of the Huguenot Fellowship, which supports the Reformed Seminary Faculté Jean Calvin (Huguenot seminary) in Aix-en-Provence, France.

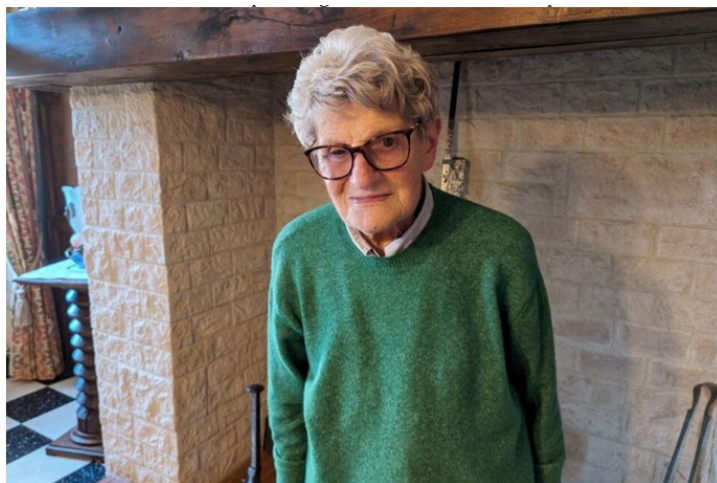


Gentlemen!

Here are Bobby & Gerry sporting their Huguenot ties. These are great looking ties for any Huguenot event or for general wear. While they are not officially "Huguenot," they do carry the colors of our Society. You can purchase yours by going on line to bensilver.com and search for U71 in the search box, They come as a four-in-hand and bow ties.

Débarquement : Michèle Le Tourneur a été gravement blessée par une grenade incendiaire

Michèle Le Tourneur habite Crouay (Calvados). Elle avait 10 ans en 1944 et vivait chez ses parents à Saon. Elle a été blessée par une grenade incendiaire lancée par les Américains.



*Michèle Le Tourneur s'occupe aujourd'hui de l'association Les Fleurs de la Mémoire.
©La Renaissance*

En 1940, Michèle avait **6 ans** et l'Occupation allemande l'a beaucoup traumatisée. « Les Allemands logeaient à la maison. On ne pouvait rien faire. On avait peur de tout. Ils étaient les maîtres, faisaient ce qu'ils voulaient. On faisait attention à tout ce qu'on disait, car ils pouvaient mal interpréter des mots ».

Beaucoup de personnes de leur entourage avaient quitté leur maison. Le père de Michèle voulait, lui aussi, partir, contrairement à son épouse. Michèle et sa famille vivaient à la ferme. Son propriétaire, officier de la Première Guerre mondiale, est parti quelque temps avec sa famille. Quand il est revenu, une **croix gammée** était dessinée sur la pelouse de leur maison. La Kommandantur était installée.

Une famille juive à Crouay

Parmi les souvenirs de Michèle, l'arrivée d'une famille, dont le père était juif, dans la commune. Cette dernière a été accueillie par le maire de l'époque. Le père de famille n'est pas resté vivre à Crouay (Calvados), abandonnant sa femme et ses enfants. Ces derniers étaient scolarisés à l'école communale où les Allemands venaient vérifier la liste des écoliers tous les jours.

L'instituteur, un homme extraordinaire, avait enregistré les enfants sous le nom de la mère. Il était très courageux, il a risqué sa vie pour eux.



Michèle Le Tourneur entourée de ses parents, de son frère et de sa sœur. ©Document remis à la redaction

« **Ma petite Mimi, on va mourir, on va mourir** »

Le père de Michèle avait fait **une tranchée** avec près de 3 000 fagots. Il y avait un gros fossé et des arbres. Il pensait qu'ils étaient bien protégés, mais malheureusement, on voyait un peu l'entrée. Le 10 juin, au matin, les **Américains**, en passant au calvaire de Saon, aperçoivent cette entrée et pensant qu'il y avait des **Allemands** cachés, ils ont lancé une **grenade incendiaire**. » J'étais seule avec une dame. Tout a pris feu. On était incapable de sortir, nous étions blessées. C'était une véritable souricière. ».

« Ma petite Mimi, on va mourir, on va mourir », s'écriait la dame. Elle avait les deux jambes arrachées. « Moi, j'étais blessée au bras, j'ai eu un éclat d'obus dans l'œil et j'avais des brûlures à la cuisse », se remémore Michèle. Par miracle, cette dernière a été sauvée par un employé de la ferme venu à son secours.

Michèle Le Tourneur tient un âne avec les bidons de lait trait par ses parents. Ici devant la tranchée qui a entièrement brûlé et où elle a été blessée. ©Document remis à la rédaction



Gravement blessée, le frère de Michèle a parlementé pour avoir une ambulance. Vers midi, Michèle fut emmenée dans un **hôpital américain** construit dans les marécages de Saint Laurent-sur-Mer (Calvados). C'est là qu'elle a eu ses premiers soins et transfusions.

Après cinq jours, la petite fille a été transférée à l'hôpital de Bayeux. Le bras de Michèle, en mauvais état, pose question aux médecins qui s'interrogent sur une éventuelle **amputation**. Les avis des spécialistes divergent, le temps passe et l'infection se propage. En huit jours, Michèle **perd la vue** et ont lui retire l'œil.

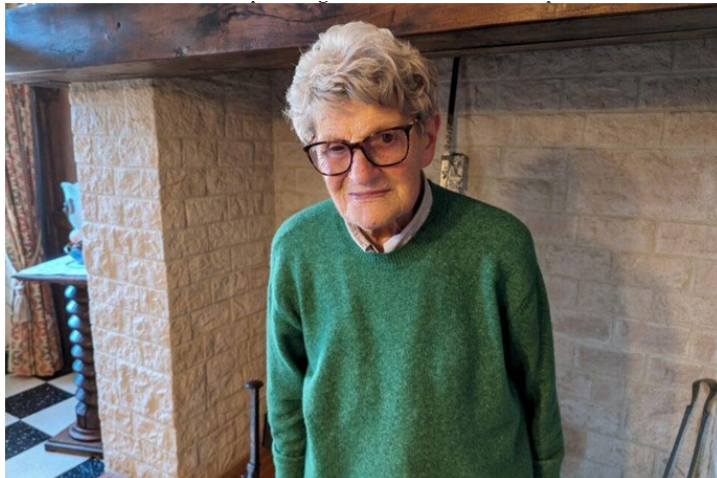
Les Fleurs de la Mémoire

Son vécu, Michèle souhaite le **transmettre** aux plus jeunes. Son rêve se réalise quand elle ouvre ses chambres d'hôtes. Elle y a notamment reçu le **vétéran américain** Franck Tower, un ancien GI américain qui venait fleurir les tombes de ses camarades. Il est revenu plusieurs années. « Un jour, on ne pourra plus venir fleurir nos copains », a-t-il confié à Michèle.

En 2000, elle crée l'association **Les Fleurs de la Mémoire**. « On s'engage à fleurir les tombes choisies une fois par an. On s'engage aussi à témoigner auprès des jeunes ». Elle conclut : « Je ne remercierai jamais assez ceux qui ont donné leur vie pour notre Liberté ».

Original article is published in French for all of our Francophones out there. This is a mechanical translation. While this article has little to do with Huguenots, it is an interesting story.
(Gerald Runyan met Michèle Le Tourneur in Normandy last year.)

D-Day: Michèle Le Tourneur was seriously injured by an incendiary grenade



*Michèle Le Tourneur lives in Crouay (Calvados).
She was 10 years old in 1944 and lived with her parents in Saon.
She was injured by an incendiary grenade thrown by the Americans.
Michèle Le Tourneur now runs the association "Les Fleurs de la Mémoire. La Renaissance".*

In 1940, Michèle was 6 years old and the German Occupation traumatized her greatly. "The Germans were staying at our home. We couldn't do anything. We were afraid of everything. They were the masters, they did what they wanted. We were careful about everything we said, because they could misinterpret words. "

Many people around them had left their homes. Michèle's father also wanted to leave, unlike his wife. Michèle and her family lived on the farm. The owner, an officer in the First World War, left for a while with his family. When he returned, a swastika was drawn on the lawn of their house. The Command Post was set up.



Michèle Le Tourneur surrounded by her parents, her brother and her sister.

©Document submitted to the editorial staff

A Jewish Family in Crouay

Among Michèle's memories, the arrival of a family, whose father was Jewish, in the commune. The latter was welcomed by the mayor at the time. The father of the family did not stay living in

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Crouay (Calvados), abandoning his wife and children. The latter were educated at the communal school where the Germans came to check the list of schoolchildren every day.

The teacher, an extraordinary man, had registered the children under the mother's name. He was very brave, he risked his life for them.

"My little Mimi, we're going to die, we're going to die"

Michèle's father had dug a trench with nearly 3,000 bundles of wood. There was a big ditch and trees. He thought they were well protected, but unfortunately, we could see the entrance a little. On June 10, in the morning, the Americans, passing by the Calvary of Saon, saw this entrance and thinking that there were Germans hidden, they threw an incendiary grenade. "I was alone with a lady. Everything caught fire. We were unable to get out, we were injured. It was a real mousetrap."

"My little Mimi, we're going to die, we're going to die," cried the lady. She had both legs torn off. "I was wounded in the arm, I had a piece of shrapnel in my eye and I had burns on my thigh," recalls Michèle. Miraculously, she was saved by a farm employee who came to her aid.

Seriously injured, Michèle's brother negotiated to get an ambulance. Around noon, Michèle was taken to an American hospital built in the marshes of Saint-Laurent-sur-Mer (Calvados). That's where she received her first treatment and transfusions.

After five days, the little girl was transferred to the hospital in Bayeux. Michèle's arm, in poor condition, raises questions for doctors who wonder about a possible amputation.

The specialists' opinions differ, time passes and the infection spreads. In eight days, Michèle loses her sight and her eye is removed.



Michèle Le Tourneur holds a donkey with the cans of milk milked by her parents. Here in front of the trench that burned completely and where she was injured. ©Document given to the editorial staff

The Flowers of Memories

Michèle wants to pass on her experience to the young. Her dream comes true when she opened her bed and breakfast. She notably welcomed the American veteran Frank Tower, a former American GI who came to lay flowers on the graves of his comrades. He returned for several years. "One day, we will no longer be able to come and lay flowers on our friends' graves," he confided to Michèle.

In 2000, she created the association Les Fleurs de la Mémoire. "We commit to laying flowers on the chosen graves once a year. We also commit to bearing witness to young people." She concludes: "I will never be able to thank enough those who gave their lives for our Freedom."

News & Notes by VHS members

March family “marches” on!

Louis T. March
Staunton, VA 24401
October 2024

Louis March reports that his family is doing well. With Hurricane Helene, Staunton, VA, had several days of rain and minor flooding in surrounding Augusta County, but thankfully no significant damage. They were on the very northern fringe of the storm and spared the destruction that ravaged parts of southwestern Virginia, western North Carolina, east Tennessee and north Georgia.

Katharine March is an artist (painter) working in oils; her work is mostly landscapes and still-life's, though she is frequently commissioned for family homes and pets. For more information, see <http://kbmarch.blogspot.com>.

Son John B. T. March, a Hampden-Sydney grad, is enjoying the advertising business as part of Lewis Media Partners in Richmond: <https://www.lewismediapartners.com>. He started with Lewis shortly after earning his Masters at VCU's BrandCenter specializing in Creative Brand Management.

Daughter Isabel March, Fulbright Scholar, is a singer/songwriter and performs venues throughout Virginia. She



is putting the finishing touches on an album featuring her original music in both English and Spanish. <https://soundcloud.com/isabelmarch>

Paul Morrisette has been appointed to the Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission. The purpose of the Commission is to advise the City Council and the Departments of Planning and Community Development and Cultural Affairs on all issues related to the preservation of historic buildings, structures and sites located in the City of Virginia Beach. Congratulations Paul.

David LeGrande - At the Fall meeting David related how he completely renovated a 1790 stone farm house in his hometown in Pennsylvania. The farm had been in his family for years. His folks eventually sold the farm but kept the house. He lived in it with his family until it was sold to a

nice couple, who still live in the house and David keeps in touch with them.

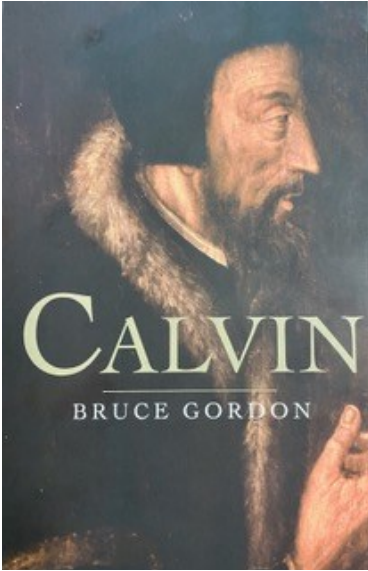
Suzanne Reynolds - Our own Suzanne Reynolds is very involved in the Yorktown Day Association. She shares her job with us here.

I represent the N.S.C.A.R. on the Association board. The Yorktown Day Association (YDA) is made up of 13 lineage/historical organizations in partnership with the Colonial National Historical Park. N.S.C.A.R. is the host for the 2031 celebration, which will be the 250th anniversary of the surrender. Personally, I look upon that date as the key to everything we hold dear. Without that surrender, July 4 would be just another date on the calendar, not the joyous celebration of American independence. Without that surrender, monarchy would have won and our "experimental" representative government would have been squashed. Without that surrender, we never would have known the amazing scope of leadership of George Washington and our other revered patriots who stayed the course through war and the fledgling nation that evolved.

However, as president of the YDA it is my responsibility to

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“CALVIN”



After hearing our speaker, Brian Wunder, at the March meeting tell us about the Jean Calvin Reformed Seminary Foundation in Aix-en-Provence, France, I realized that I did not know much at all about Calvin. I asked the pastor of my church about a good book on Calvin and he recommended "Calvin" by Bruce Gordon (Yale University Press c.2009).

It is an excellent biography, well researched with a long Bibliography and Index. It relates the story of Calvin's life beginning as a young man to his passing. I had no idea of the trials and tribulations that Calvin went through his entire life. He was on the sickly side & suffered from health issues, but his main problem was with other Reformed sects and leaders. I did not know that there were so many struggles between the various divisions within the Reformed faith. There is little in the account of any struggles with the Catholic Church. He was attacked by other Reformed leaders, and he attacked back. He never wavered in his beliefs, and was a strong proponent for the "Genevan" Reformed principals. Much of his work was preaching and training of "Missionaries" to go back into France and spread the word of the Reformed faith. Some of the differences with other Reformed thinkers include - The Lords Supper, Lutherans, Predestination and the tragic death of Servetus. The story moves back and forth from theological issues to the history of the era and Calvin's personal struggles and weaves it all together in a fashion that can be easily followed by a modern audience.

It is a good read for anyone interested in the Reformation or the issues of religion and politics of the era. ~ *Gerald Runyan*

David LeGrande has added three new books to our library

Here are the three Huguenot books introduced at our Fall meeting.

The Huguenot Anglican Refuge in Virginia: Empire, Land, and Religion in the Rappahannock Region by Lonnie H. Lee

Huguenot Emigration to Virginia and to the Settlement at Manakin Town with appendix of Genealogies by R. A. Brock

Find the Living Truth In Dead Records: 17 Century Virginia Genealogy by Lynn Zancy Busby

These books are available to Society members to read. Please contact David at edlegrande@hotmail.com. He can mail the book to you or arrange for pick up.



We will make the Huguenot Library a regular feature of our Newsletter in the future.

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coordinate the annual celebration of this momentous event, and each year a different organization is the host (takes responsibility) for the events that take place as we celebrate the victory at Yorktown in 1781. The host organization each year makes arrangements for the dinner on Oct 18, the reception on Oct 19, arranging for a keynote speaker and for presiding at the patriotic exercises at the Yorktown Victory Monument on Oct 19. This celebration is an annual partnership between the Yorktown Day Association and the National Park Service. So each year I work with a different host organization to plan the events, but everyone in the YDA has responsibilities in one way or another.

I hope this gives you a glimpse into what the Yorktown Day Association is and what we do. It actually is very interesting and has been a total learning experience for me. As a side note, I am an Honorary Senior National President of N.S.C.A.R., and am currently serving as the Personnel Chairman for their office in DC. I do belong to the Thomas Lee DAR chapter in Northern Virginia. I'd like to say that all this keeps me off the streets, however, it's actually the opposite! (Note: I attended the Yorktown Day events this year and it was a

wonderful experience, and it was very well done - I recommend it to everyone - Ed.)

Gerry & Bette Runyan traveled to Europe three times in 2023. They decided to take a break in 2024 - Well not much of a break since they brought France to Virginia. They housed a French College student for 7 weeks, Antoine Furdyna . It was quite an experience. They took him everywhere they could, including Yorktown, Virginia Beach, and 3 days in Washington DC. He learned a lot about what life in the US is like for average folks, and he worked on his English skills. We met him & his family on a trip to France in 2023. A very pleasant, easy to get along with & accommodating fellow. We all had a good time hosting his visit to the United States.

Brian K. Wunder , recently named an Honorary member, is an attorney (commercial litigator) practicing in Texas. www.laurahaley.com/brian-wunder

He is married to Victoria. Their children are Isabella, Claire, David and Daniel. He serves on the Board of the Huguenot Fellowship, which supports the Reformed Seminary Faculte Jean Calvin (Huguenot seminary) in Aix-en-Provence. www.huguenotfellowship.org/ In his engaging and informative address about The Huguenot Fellowship to our Society

last Spring, he mentioned the while genealogically he doesn't have a Huguenot connection, "Spiritually I am with you."

He is very supportive of VHS, and extremely knowledgeable about Huguenot history and the religious aspect. An Honorary Membership in the Virginia Huguenot Society was conferred upon him for his continuing and tireless work to promote our Huguenot heritage.

Brian is a cum laude graduate of Baylor University School of Law and recipient of the prestigious American Jurisprudence Award. His undergraduate degree is from the University of Texas at Austin. He is multilingual, being fluent in French and German.

We warmly welcome Brian to the Society and look forward to having him in the fold.

This just in!

Scott Bessent has recently been named as the new (79th) Secretary of the Treasury. He is from Conway SC and is of Huguenot descent. His ancestors helped found the French Huguenot Church in Charleston in the 1680's and he is a member of that congregation.

We'd love to hear more about the families of our other Virginia Huguenot Society compatriots. Send your articles and photos to gerald@aercorp.com.



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May God bless you abundantly in this coming year.