

The Port Ledger

THIS WINTER AT HISTORIC BATH

Hello, and welcome to The Port Ledger, a newsletter produced by the staff at Historic Bath State Historic Site!



UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information and updates about these events, please visit our website or Facebook page.

Spinning 101—January 25th, 9am-1pm

Is your New Year's resolution to try a new skill? Are you interested in making a connection with the lives of women of the past? Would you like to make your own handmade, natural wool yarn? Join us for the first installment of our new workshop series with a cozy morning by the fireside in the Bonner Kitchen, and take part in the timeless art of spinning.

We will begin with an in-depth look at the history and basic mechanics of spinning, after which participants will be provided with hands-on instruction in the use of a drop spindle, and an opportunity to try their hand with a spinning wheel as well. Participants will take home their very own drop spindle and wool.

Tickets are \$50 and include supplies for spinning and a take-home project, and light refreshments. Registration ends January 18th. Tickets may be purchased on our Facebook page, or you can call to reserve a spot at 252.923.2971.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Michael Coutanch and the Palmer Marsh House
- Stately Sea Chest
- Mrs. Randolph's Chicken Soup





NEW EXHIBIT

We have recently received a new temporary Exhibit here in Historic Bath! Come learn all about North Carolina's experience during the First World War, including the Men and Women who went overseas, and those who remained at home. The exhibit includes the original Uniform and Gas Mask of Pvt. Almond J. Drake I, the great grandfather of one of our Interpreters here in Bath. Also, at the end of the month, we will be rotating in new maps from the Gene and Susan Roberts Collection. Stop by our Exhibit Center and check them out!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Historic Bath is recruiting Volunteers! If you have an interest in American History from the 18th and 19th Centuries, or if you are just looking for general volunteer opportunities please let us know. We encourage volunteers of all ages.

Our volunteers help with a number of different activities. Whether it's greeting visitors, working in

the gift shop, giving tours of Historic Homes, demonstrating 18/19th century skills and trades, or costumed interpretation, we have something for you.

If you are interested, please contact us! Call 252.923.3971 or email laura.rogers@ncdcr.gov.

UPCOMING EVENTS, CONTINUED

18th Century Beer Brewing – February 8th, 10am-2pm

Come learn all about Colonial Beer making in the 18th Century! Visit the Bonner kitchen and interact with reenactors portraying 18th century brewers. View demonstrations of colonial beer brewing utilizing actual period recipes, ingredients, and techniques of the era. Learn about the importance of brewing in early colonial life in North Carolina, and how it was an important occupation for many in that time period.

Valentines Making Workshop—February 13th, 10am-11am

Come learn the history of Valentines cards, and make your own Victorian-inspired valentine to take home. Event cost is \$5, please call to reserve a spot: 252.923.3971

Weaving 101—March 14th, 9am-1pm

Are you interested in learning the basics of weaving? This workshop will begin with an in-depth look at the history and basic mechanics of weaving, after which participants will be provided with hands-on help and instruction on the use of a rigid heddle loom and an opportunity to try their hand with a large loom as well. Participants will take home their very own rigid heddle and weaving project.

Tickets are \$50 and include all supplies for weaving and a take-home project, and light refreshments. Registration ends March 7th. Tickets may be purchased on our Facebook page, or you can call to reserve a spot at 252.923.2971.



The Palmer-Marsh House

MICHAEL COUTANCH AND THE PALMER-MARSH HOUSE

Bath has been home to numerous prominent people throughout its history who have left their mark on the town. These people included figures such as John Lawson, Charles Eden and Blackbeard. Another of these prominent men was Michael Coutanch, builder of the Palmer-Marsh House.

Michael Coutanch arrived in Bath from Boston in the year 1739. In Bath, Coutanch prospered. He built a store, purchased seven lots within the town of Bath, and 600 acres next to the town and property along the Pamlico River and Pantego Creek. Along with his private business and land acquisitions, he served his community as a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner of Bath, and as a representative of Bath in the General Assembly from 1746 to 1752 and from 1758 to 1761. With his business prospering, Coutanch began construction on his house.

The house, completed in 1751, was constructed perpendicular to Main Street, a coveted location for southern urban dwellings in the Colonial period. Built using a vernacular Georgian plan, the 2-story house measures 3,700 square feet and includes an attic and a cellar. This spacious house provided Coutanch with ample living space, and perhaps retail space to sell his various merchandise. The exterior covering of the house is weatherboarded and painted Spanish brown, a popular color in the mid-1700s. Most notable and unique to the house is the massive double chimney. ...cont. on page 4

Iconic Architecture: the Uncommon Chim- neys of the Palmer- Marsh House

One of the most quintessential features of the Palmer-Marsh house is the pair of double-shouldered English-bonded chimneys located on the east side of the house. The two chimneys are joined together with a two-story pent that includes two windows and in total measures seventeen feet wide by four feet deep at their base. The first chimney pent is accessed on the first floor in a room that is believed to have been used as a business office. The second chimney pent is accessed on the second floor in one of the bedrooms.

The house also features a third chimney - a Flemish-bond style on the north side of the house which is connected to three fireplaces beginning with a large hearth in the kitchen cellar.

The Grave Marker of Michael Coutanch

East of the Palmer-Marsh House you will find the grave of Michael Coutanch. The ledger-style grave marker reads:

CAPTAIN MICHAEL COUTANCH

Mariner-Merchant

Legislator

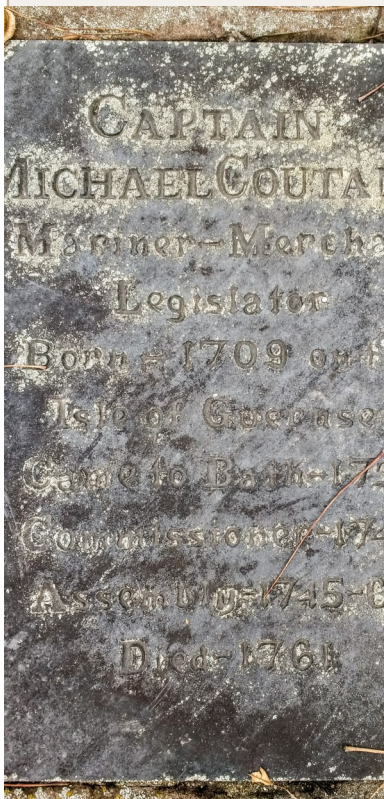
Born 1709 on the

Isle of Guernsey

Came to Bath—1739

Commissioner—1745

Assembly—1745-6



MICHAEL COUTANCH..... CONT.

This architecturally stunning house is a testament to the prosperity that Michael Coutanch achieved upon settling in the town of Bath. On Coutanch's death in 1761 the house passed to his wife who then sold the house to Robert Palmer in 1764. Although Coutanch conceived of and built the house it would become to be called the Palmer- Marsh house after the later families that would call this magnificent house home.

ARTIFACTS OF INTEREST: SEA CHEST

This large, stately chest currently sits in the lobby of our visitor center. It measures fifty-two inches long, forty inches high, and twenty inches wide, making it a very substantially sized chest. Contrary to popular belief, it is not a pirate's treasure chest, or a sea chest that belonged to Blackbeard himself.

The chest is believed to be a Dutch or English immigrants' trunk that is dated by the inscription on the lock plate that reads "J (or I) HS 1714. The initials "J. F." are stenciled very neatly on the front of the chest and on top of the lid, with a destination of "New York," the Dutch spelling of York. This inscription may have been a shipping label.

Sea chest, dated 1714

While the iron bound trunk is made of Oak wood, the exterior was painted and grained to look like a much more exotic type of wood, like mahogany. The interior of the chest is also decorated, the inside is lined with a wallpaper that



seems to be from the late eighteenth century to early nineteenth century. This means that it was probably added well after it was in transit in 1714. The pierced Iron hinges, latch, and corner sheathing seem to be of very high quality. At the bottom of the chest the bracketed feet conceal 5 inch wooden wheels, making transporting the chest much easier.

The Trunk was probably made for boat travel, based on the Iron Handles on the sides, and the wooden wheels on the bottom. It is very likely that a trunk of this size was made to carry the entirety of the belongings of a person or family as they traveled to a new land and home. While the trunk is not directly related to the port of Bath, many chests of a similar nature would have been carried on ships moving in and out of Bath in those early days. And perhaps, even on Blackbeard's ship as well.

THE ART OF COOKERY

This quarter we're sharing a recipe (or receipt in 18th century terms) for chicken soup, perfect for a chilly day. This particular receipt is originally from Mary Randolph's *The Virginia House-wife*, published 1824. The modern adaptation is summarized from *Hearthside Cooking* by Nancy Carter Crump:

Mrs. Randolph's Chicken Soup.

To make soup of any kind of fowl. (The only way in which they are eatable)

[Put the meat] ... on the fire with about a pound of bacon, a large onion chopped small, some pepper and salt, a few blades of mace, a handful of parsley cut up very fine, and two quarts of water if it be a common fowl or duck—a turkey will require more water. Boil it gently for three hours, tie up a small bunch of thyme, and let it boil in it half an hour, then take it out. Thicken your soup with a large spoonful of butter rubbed into two of flour, the yolks of two eggs, and half-pint of milk. Be careful not to let it curdle in the soup.

Notes for the modern kitchen:

Ingredients:

4 cups chicken stock	3 tablespoons fresh minced parsley
1/3 cup diced salt bacon	2 1/2 cups chopped, cooked chicken
1 cup coarsely chopped onion	1 tablespoon butter, softened
3/4 teaspoon salt	2 tablespoons flour
1/4 teaspoon pepper	2 egg yolks
1/4 teaspoon mace	1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon thyme	Additional minced parsley for garnish

1. Combine the stock, bacon, onion, salt, pepper, mace, thyme, and parsley. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat, then simmer for about 45 minutes. Remove from heat and strain broth into another pot, discarding bacon, onion, and seasonings.
2. Return broth to a moderate heat and add chicken, gently simmering for 10-15 minutes.
3. Combine butter and flour. Add to soup and stir until butter is melted and soup thickens slightly.
4. Lightly beat egg yolks, then combine with milk in small bowl.
5. Gradually pour about 1 cup of the soup mixture into the egg and milk, stirring constantly to prevent curdling.
6. Pour it all back into the pot with rest of soup. Stir until soup is steaming hot and slightly thickened. Do not allow to boil.
7. Season to taste, garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

Credit

Content written by site staff Laura Rogers, A.J. Drake, and Hope Steffens.



HISTORIC BATH STATE HISTORIC SITE

European settlement near the Pamlico River in the 1690s led to the founding of Bath, North Carolina's first town, in 1705. By 1708, Bath had 50 people and 12 houses, and soon became North Carolina's first port. Its original town limits encompass a historic district today.

At Historic Bath, you can visit three historic homes, the Exhibit Center, a 1-mile walking tour, and a 15-minute orientation film in our Visitor's Center. St. Thomas's Church is also open to the public.

FIND US ON THE WEB

Visit our website and social media for up-to-date information on events and exhibits, as well as tour information, resources for educators, and further history of the site.

Website: historicsites.nc.gov/bath

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HistoricBath

Instagram: @historicbathsite

Twitter: twitter.com/HistBathSiteNC



Historic Bath State Historic Site

P.O. Box 148
207 Carteret Street
Bath, NC 27808

Phone: 252.923.3971
Fax: 252.923.0174
E-mail: bath@ncdcr.gov

Hours:
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Tuesday-Saturday
Closed Sunday, Monday, and
most major holidays

