Germanna Cultural Landscape: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Readers may be new to the term “cultural landscape,” which has come into widespread use only in recent years.

The World Heritage Committee defines the term as “cultural properties...representing the combined works of nature and man.”

Another way to see the term is as human-modified environments that can include planted forests, fields, houses, churches, highways, mines, and quarries.

It can also be seen as the way a cultural group fashions or modifies the natural landscape as it lives out its history in a specific area.

There is a significant large area in Piedmont Virginia that can be identified as the Germanna Cultural Landscape.

This can reach from the Fort Germanna site in Orange County, northward into Fauquier County to encompass the Germantown site and environs, south into Culpeper County, especially in the Little Fork area, and continuing south into Madison County in the Robinson River Valley area around Hebron Lutheran Church.

It was on this natural landscape that the Germanna settlers were first planted. Over time they expanded the area that they occupied, shaping the landscape as they created their farms, and built their houses, barns churches, fences and roads.

Trustee Kimberly Abe has been actively involved professionally in defining cultural landscapes and working towards their preservation in the face of serious pressures for development, especially in Fauquier County.

Germanna has also called upon the expertise of Kristie Kendall of the Piedmont Environmental Council, a Germanna descendant, and Caitlyn Sylvester, a graduate student of the University of Maryland, who have been developing documentation and maps of the Germanna Cultural Landscape. Kendall will be speaking at Reunion about the cultural landscape area around Hebron Church.

The cultural landscape concept offers us a broad framework to understand the Germanna experience. It enables us to move beyond focusing on “First Colony” or “Second Colony” or “Little Fork” in order to see a wider view of these Germans interacting with each other, with the English neighbors, and shaping the land as they journeyed to becoming Americans.

Salubria to Breathe Easier

This spring will see two important projects carried out at Salubria, electrification and ventilation. These will bring to completion our important work in the preservation of the historic fabric of this magnificent Georgian mansion.

Now that the building has been secured through the repair work done on the chimneys, roof timbers and walls as a result of the earthquake damage; the preservation of the roof and prevention of leaks; the carry-off of water; and numerous minor repairs, it is important for the building to breathe.

A good basic ventilation system will do that job and has been designed specifically for the house. Ventilation will require electricity to run the motor, and for that reason, an electrical line will be run underground to bring the necessary power to the house inconspicuously.

This essential final step in the basic preservation plan has been generously funded by Russell Hitt, Chairman of HITT Contracting.

Doug Harnsberger of Legacy Architecture has provided architectural advice and Kerri Barile of Dovetail Cultural Resource Group has been the archaeological consultant.

The plans have met the approval of the Department of Historic Resources, holder of the historic easement on the property. Mitch Filipowitz, Vice President of Hitt Contracting, will provide the professional oversight for the project.

The Germanna Foundation is deeply grateful to all of these wonderful group of men and women who care so much for this important part of the Germanna cultural landscape and of Virginia’s history.

Their expertise enables your Foundation to be a good steward of a significant piece of our heritage.
In 1964 (the year I was born), the Germanna Foundation invited Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr. to speak at the 250th anniversary. Senator Byrd recalled “…with pride working with you back in 1927 [when he served as the 50th Governor of Virginia], developing information for your Old Country Cousins in connection with their 300th Anniversary of the Evangelical Community of Muesen, Germany.”

Senator Byrd remarked that his ancestor, Colonel William Byrd II, also found “the land of your people intriguing as he learned of them from Governor Spotswood at ‘Enchanted Castle.”

It is remarkable that a prominent American could speak with familiarity among an assembled group of families about ancestral conversations that took place two and half centuries earlier.

Our long memories and deep perspectives are a treasure—few Americans can point with any certainty to where their families first became American, fewer still can cross the Atlantic and walk the village lanes and fields that their ancestors would have known. But can you name the families who can confidently trace their family line, generation by generation, to a very specific site in America that has been preserved for all time for the education and enjoyment of future generations?

Perhaps they are of families every student has heard of—Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Lee—or perhaps it is a family among the families that comprise the Germanna Foundation.

You are a part of a special family at a special time.

This year, we celebrate the founding of a special place—where Governor Spotswood planted on the frontier of the British Empire a German-speaking colony that provided generations of westward-bound pioneers as America fulfilled its Manifest Destiny.

On the cusp of our shared 300th anniversary, the Germanna Foundation (nurtured since 1956 by succeeding generations of Germanna descendants) acquired the missing piece of our heritage: the site of Fort Germanna and Governor Spotswood’s Enchanted Castle.

The Germanna family of families is now the steward of a national treasure.

As Dr. William Kelso, Chief Archaeologist for historic Jamestown, Virginia, and a member of the Foundation’s Council of Advisors, has said of this site, “I have always thought the Fort Germanna/Enchanted Castle site ranks among the most significant historical archaeological sites certainly in Virginia and arguably in the nation.”

Now that the Fort Germanna and Enchanted Castle site has been acquired, the Germanna Foundation is executing our post-acquisition strategic plan that has been in development since 2008.

The Trustees have determined that the critical path to achieving goals worthy of our heritage is to hire a Chief Operating Officer to provide strong, professional management of our resources and enhance our outreach communications with our members and the broader public.

The achievement of that primary objective will help us accomplish the goals we have set for ourselves, so that this generation of members will be remembered with grateful thanksgiving fifty years hence at the 350th anniversary celebration in 2064.

Our 300th anniversary is not an endpoint, it is a beginning. 2014 is an opportunity for this generation to make its mark on American history.

This is the year that we make generous contributions of time, talent and treasure to ensure that the Foundation’s work this year—hiring a Chief Operating Officer, searching for the walls of Fort Germanna, publishing our new discoveries—will reverberate across generations.

Take this time to make history. Give generously, and come celebrate with us—your “family of families”—at the 300th Anniversary Conference and Reunion this July.

Marc Wheat to speak at Historical Society

The Orange County Historical Society in Virginia has invited Germanna President Marc Wheat to be the featured program speaker for their monthly meeting on March 31st. His topic will be “Germanna: 300 Years of Orange County Hospitality.”

The Germanna Foundation values opportunities such as this to tell our story to local organizations, and to build ties with their leaders and members in the mutual task of treasuring the heritage that we all share.

The Germanna Foundation newsletter is prepared by the Education and Publications Committee:

Katharine L. Brown, Chair and Editor
Cathi Clore Frost
Barbara Price
Cindy Kwitchoff, Designer (cjkcreative.com)
The Germanna story will reach hundreds of avid professional and dedicated amateur genealogists from across the country this year at the national convention of the National Genealogical Society in Richmond, Virginia, from 7-10 May 2014.

The theme of the convention is “Virginia: The First Frontier.”

Katharine L. Brown, Ph.D., First Vice President of the Germanna Foundation, has been invited to be one of the featured speakers at the convention.

The Germanna Foundation is sponsoring her presentation, which will take place on Thursday, 7 May.

Her topic is “300 Years in Virginia: The Germanna Colonies and Their Legacy.”

The Foundation hopes in this way to introduce a large audience to the dramatic story of our Germanna ancestors as the first permanent organized settlement of Germans in Virginia, and at the westernmost reach of the British Empire in the years 1714-1717.

Brown to speak at National Genealogical Society

The story of the Foundation and its half century of work in gathering descendants of those early colonists and the many who joined them before the American Revolution is an important component of her presentation.

In addition, the Foundation will sponsor a booth in the exhibit hall.

This will give an opportunity to showcase and sell our publications, and to enlist new members in the Foundation.

Several trustees will be on hand to staff the booth, including Barbara Price, Cathi Clore Frost, Stephen Chanko, and Marc Wheat.

Brown will give her NGS talk as one of the sessions at the Reunion Symposium on Saturday, 19 July, so members can also enjoy this panoramic view of Germanna then and now.

Ways to Help Support Germanna

When you and your family purchase items on or through the Germanna website (GERMANNA.ORG), you contribute to the Foundation! These dollars help us to keep our doors open and preserve our history for future generations. Here are different ways to do this:

- Purchase item on Amazon.com (Don’t go directly to Amazon—first go to germanna.org and click on the Amazon ad at the top right of every page on the site. The Foundation will receive a referral fee percentage on anything you buy.)

- Buy a Germanna Record (germanna.org/store/germanna-records/. When you use the book links on this page, not only will the Foundation receive the money from the book but we’ll also get an Amazon referral fee.)

- Shop our Book Store (germanna.org/store/. This is our Amazon Book Store, and the Foundation receives a referral fee from anything you buy via the links on this page.)

- Shop our Zazzle Germanna Store (see link on Germanna.org website. Don’t go directly to Zazzle.com—first go to germanna.org, click on Store on the menu then Germanna Zazzle Store. When you buy an item, the Foundation gets a commission plus a referral fee.)

- Order Germanna 300 Gear (http://www.companycasuals.com/Germanna/start.jsp. Apparel for everyone with Germanna logo. See order form inserted in the Reunion brochure. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Foundation.)

- Make a Donation (germanna.org/get-involved/become-a-donor/. Easily donate online any amount to the Foundation with a credit card.)

- Become a Member or Renew (germanna.org/get-involved/become-a-member/. Easily pay yearly Foundation membership dues online with a credit card.)

- Get a Germanna Foundation Visa Card (cardpartner.com/affinity/app/germanna-foundation) Apply for a Germanna Foundation Visa credit card and the Foundation receives a commission on every purchase you make with the card.

- Germanna DNA Project (germanna.org/resources/genealogy/dna-project/. Family Tree DNA makes a small contribution to the Foundation for every individual who participates in the Germanna DNA Project.)
The Cuntze Family of Niederndorf and Oberfisbchach

By Barbara Price

The Cuntze/Kuntze/Coons family can be traced back to around 1500 in the village of Niederndorf, located in the parish of Oberfisbach, near the city of Siegen.

The family appears to have moved back and forth between Niederndorf and Oberfisbach. The parish of Oberfisbach originated in the 12th century and in 1597 was comprised of the villages of Oberfisbach, Heisberg, Oberschelden, Niederndorf, Dirlenbach, Niederheuslingen, Oberheuslingen, and Bottenberg.

In 1665, Prince Johann Moritz of Nassau-Siegen dedicated a silver communion set to the parish of Oberfisbach and it is still in use today, 350 years later.

Johannes Kuntze, the father of the 1714 immigrant, Jost/Joseph Cuntze, and all of his sons, including Jost/Joseph Cuntze, were all members of the Steelsmiths and Toolmakers Guild.

Jost/Joseph Cuntze received permission to leave his country on 31 July 1713 (see Emigration Permission on next page), the same day that Philip Fischbach and Hans Jacob Richter obtained their permission to leave.

Jost/Joseph Kuntze/Cuntze was born in 1674 in Niederndorf, the son of Johannes and Anna (Schuster) Cuntze. He married Anna Gertrud Reinschmidt on 7 Feb 1704 and along with their children, Johannes and Anna Elisabeth, emigrated in 1713.

The Kuntze home is still standing in Niederndorf and occupied today (see below).

Joseph Cuntz proved his importation to Virginia in 1724, along with his wife, Katharin, and children in the Spotsylvania courthouse.

It is thought that Joseph’s first wife, Anna Gertrud, died early upon arrival in Virginia and that “Katharin” is the second wife of Joseph Cuntz. She is probably Cathrin Weber/Weaver, the daughter of Johann/John and Anna Margaretha (Huttmann) Weber/Weaver.

Cathrin is not listed in the importation document of her brother, Tillman Weaver, but he does list his mother, indicating that his father is dead, and, as you can see in the document below, Joseph Cuntz lists his wife as being imported in April 1714 and her name is Katharin (see Importation Statements on next page).

Joseph Cuntz died in 1731, both of his wives preceding him in death, in Germantown, Fauquier Co., Virginia, according to his will that was probated on 10 Feb 1731.

Other members of the Cuntze family also emigrated to Virginia—the nephew of Jost/Joseph Cuntze, Johann Jost/Joseph Coons, and his niece Anna Margarethe Kuntze, both children of his brother, Johannes Kuntze and his wife Catherine Daub, immigrated to Virginia in 1737 and 1750, respectively.

Anna Margarethe Kuntze married Tillmann Weissgerber/Whitescarver, also from the village of Niederndorf. They emigrated to Virginia in 1750 with their 6 children, settling in Culpeper Co., but not with the Little Fork Colony, as it was called, due to its location at

In 1703, the Rev. Henry Haeger, and his wife, Anna Catharine Friesenhagen, came to Oberfisbach where he was the parson, or minister.

The Kuntze family attended church in Oberfisbach and would have been very familiar with the Rev. Henry Haeger and the schoolteacher, Hans Jakob Holzklau.

Were they an influence on Jost/Joseph Cuntze, and his family, to emigrate to America when Johann Justus Albrecht was recruiting miners for the George Ritter Company in Siegen?

The village of Niederndorf, and home of the Cuntze family, is well known in the mining industry with an iron works dating back to at least 1417.

The owner of the iron works at that time was Tyl van Fispe, the ancestor of the Fischbach/Fishbach families. The Kuntze/Cuntz family was also involved in the mining industry.

The Communion set and church books at Oberfisbach. 2013

Ellis Hitt (center), a Cuntz descendant, and fellow travelers, in front of the Cuntz house in Niederndorf on the Germanna Foundation Germany Trip, 2013
the Little Fork of the Rappahannock River in the northern part of Culpeper County

Johann Jost/Joseph Cuntze/Coons was born in Niederndorf in 1712, the son of Johannes Cuntze and his second wife, Anna Gertrud Stieger.

He emigrated to Virginia in 1737, probably staying with his relatives in Germanatown (Fauquier County) before being granted 127 1/2 acres in the Little Fork (Culpeper County) on 8 December 1747.

This land was located between the land of two other members of the First Colony, Jacob Holtzclaw and John Fishback, and below the land of John Crim/ Grimm.

John Crim, son of Christian and Elisabeth Spielman Grimm of Oberschelden, was also an immigrant from Nassau-Siegen, and was related to First Colony immigrant John Spielmann / Spilman. This is yet another link to the Germanna immigrants of 1714!

The home of Joseph Coons, the 1737 immigrant, is still standing and occupied in Jeffersonton, Virginia, once part of the Little Fork Colony (see top right).

Jacob Holtzclaw and John Fishback, enterprising members of the First Colony, purchased more than 2000 acres in the Little Fork area in order to settle families here. This was just one of several land ventures in which the two were partners.

This venture was successful in that many of the families of the Little Fork Colony were either relatives or neighbors of the First Colony immigrants and had lived in the Nassau-Siegen area of Germany.

Kinship and settlement patterns in the Little Fork Colony is positive proof of active communication between the members of the First Colony and their homeland.

Sources:
(2) Ibid, 91.
(3) Furstentum Siegen Landesarchiv 11, No. 28th.
(4) Holtzclaw, *Ancestry and Descendants of the Nassau Siegen Immigrants to Virginia 1714-1750*, 93
(5) Will Book A, Spotsylvania County, Virginia, 74.
(6) Stafford County, Virginia Will Book 1729-48, 22.
(7) Holtzclaw, *Ancestry and Descendants of the Nassau Siegen Immigrants to Virginia 1714-1750*, 92, 95, 520.
Exhibit for Visitor Center
Underway for 300th Reunion

A long-planned and anticipated new exhibit for the Brawdus Martin Germanna Visitor Center will reach realization in time for the 300th Jubilee Reunion in July.

Planning for this exhibit began several years ago with the assistance of a generous grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

Trustee emeritus John Pearce and Dr. Katharine Brown prepared the exhibit script, and Cheryl Lyon of LDS Creations in Dayton designed the panels.

Raising the necessary funding had to take a back seat to dealing with the earthquake damage at Salubria and the negotiations for the transfer of the important Fort Germanna/Enchanted Castle site.

With those goals accomplished, several trustees turned their attention to ways the exhibit panels could be funded.

Trustees Skip Poole and Cathi Clore Frost took the lead in enlisting a number of Clore descendants to sponsor a panel.

Treasurer Keith Hoffman picked up with that successful venture and approached several other family groupings and individuals to do likewise.

The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities provided a second grant to assist Germanna with the fabrication and installation of the panels.

Families that have sponsored panels to date include Clore, Hitt, Martin, Hoffman, Wilhoit, Rector and Weaver.

The panels they sponsor are not about those individual families, but tells a part of the larger Germanna story: the regions in Germany from which they emigrated, Lt. Gov. Spotswood’s role in sponsoring the settlers, the time at Fort Germanna, the spreading out to new locations in present Fauquier, Madison, and Culpeper counties, Germanna in the Revolution and Civil War, the creation of the Germanna Foundation, and so forth.

Collections for four more family-sponsored panels are underway and donations are still gladly accepted from Broyles, Fishback, Spotswood, and Yager descendants.

The handsome village coats of arms that Werner Hoffmann-Gassner of Eisern has created will be incorporated into the exhibit.

It was with great sadness that the Foundation received news that Torrey “Bud” Kaatz passed away in late January.

The retired Ohio radio sportscaster was a well-known and popular figure at Germanna Reunions and had also traveled to Germany with the Germanna group.

Bud was not a Germanna descendant, but adopted us as his own family when he married Margaret.

His years in the insurance business had taught him the importance of the designation of a favorite college, university, or non-profit organization as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy.

Bud pointed out that this is a relative simple way that a person of moderate means can build a legacy of significance for Germanna.

The board and members of the Foundation extend their heartfelt condolences to Margaret.

We will miss Bud’s cheerful sense of humor and his sincere interest in the Foundation’s future.

We are also sorry to report the death of Albert Burroughs Crigler, Jr. in California in February. He was a descendant of 1717 immigrant Jacob Crigler and a cousin to former trustee Kathy Ellis of Rixeyville in the Little Fork.

We shall not cease from exploration.
And the end of all our exploring,
will be to arrive where we started,
and know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot, The Four Quartets
For Your Reading Pleasure: Books that help tell the Germanna Story

Marc Wheat has selected some books to recommend to Germanna members and friends for their spring reading pleasure.

It is also a great way to bone up for our exciting 300th anniversary celebration in July.

All of these books can be ordered through this link on our webpage:

www.germanna.org/store/
then click on the “Germanna-Related” link.

By purchasing these books through the Germanna Foundation website, the Foundation will receive a percentage of the book price. You win some wonderful reading and Germanna wins some helpful support!

- So Help Me God: The Founding Fathers and the First Great Battle over Church and State by Forrest Church
A history of the battle lines formed and fought over religion and politics, this book features an illuminating discussion of the race for the first Congress under the recently enacted United States Constitution, with a focus on the race between James Madison and James Monroe.

The Constitution was unpopular among the voters in what is now Culpeper and Madison Counties because it lacked a Bill of Rights that would protect non-Episcopalians from the re-establishment of a State church.

Both candidates did extensive outreach to dissenting clergy and spoke to several Baptist gatherings. Included in the politicking was a debate after services on the steps of Hebron Lutheran Church (founded by Germanna colonists). Of the debate at Hebron, Madison wrote,

“Service was performed and then they had music with two fiddles. They are remarkably fond of music. When it was all over we addressed these people and kept them standing in the snow listening to the discussion of constitutional subjects. They stood it out very patiently—seemed to consider it a sort of fight of which they were required to be spectators.”

- 250 Years in Fauquier County: A Virginia Story, by Kathi Ann Brown, Walter Nicklin, and John T. Toler
Colonists from Germanna founded Germantown about the year 1721, years before founding of Fauquier County. Find out what happened next in this important Virginia county over the following centuries!

- A Pride of Place: Rural Residences of Fauquier County, Virginia, Kimberly Prothro Williams, editor
Kimberly Prothro Williams has done a beautiful editorial work in leading a gifted group of writers to portray historically significant houses in Fauquier County, settled circa 1721 by German Reformed colonists from Germanna. Assisted by the talents of Cynthia A. MacLeod (now Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park of the National Park Service and wife of Ger- manna descendant and former Germanna Foundation trustee Doug Harnsberger, architect of the Brawdus Martin Germanna Visitor Center) and Germanna descendant Bob Barron (Germanna descendant and former publisher of Preservation magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), this splendid book includes houses associated with John Fishback, John Kemper, Peter Kemper, Benjamin Hitt, John Rector, Caleb Rector, William Rector, Thomas Rector, John Spilman, Tilmann Weaver, and many others.

- Fauquier County in the Revolution, by T. Tripplett Russell and John K. Gott
John K. Gott (1929-2004), a former trustee of the Germanna Foundation, was the foremost authority on the history of Fauquier County, Virginia. He had deep Fauquier roots, descending from the Rector and Fishback families of Germantown in southern Fauquier County.

- Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America, by A.G. Roeber
This book provides some answers as to why Germanna families overwhelmingly supported the patriot cause in the American Revolution (to help the Germanna Foundation identify individuals who participated in the American Revolution, see www.germanna.org/the-revolutionary-war-and-germanna).

A.G. Roeber, co-director of the Max Kade German-American Research Institute at Pennsylvania State University, explores in this book German conceptions of personal and public property in the context of cultural and religious beliefs, village and family life.

This book will be of special interest to scholars of Germanna families who were the backbone of Hebron Lutheran Church: Dr. Roeber relied on Germanna Records Number 3, 6, and 10 for support material (these books are available through the Germanna Foundation as well, see the Germanna Store link).

John M. Murrin of Princeton University said about this book:

“The most thoughtful and comprehensive study ever attempted of the German migration to eighteenth-century America and how it affected and was affected by the Revolution. Roeber’s research on German law and patterns of landholding has no parallel in English-language scholarship. This is the one book that everyone should read who wishes to understand the scope and significance of the first massive voluntary migration of non-English speaking settlers to British North America.”

- The Black Man’s Burden by William H. Holtzclaw
The Hinds Community College in Mississippi is the former Utica Normal and Industrial Institute, which was founded by author William Henry Holtzclaw, an African-American and son of a slave. There is a rich and deep legacy of African-American Holtzclaws in Mississippi and Alabama.
Renew or Give Membership in the Germanna Foundation

New or renewing members of The Germanna Foundation will receive all the benefits of membership:

- Preserving the historical legacy of those who blazed a trail in the frontier of colonial Virginia
- Helping to preserve and protect the Fort Germanna archaeology site
- The Germanna newsletter delivered to your door
- A listing in the Germanna membership directory
- Future benefits as they become available to members

Your membership dues support the operations of The Germanna Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization sustained primarily by the volunteer efforts of its members.

Membership dues are only $35/year single membership or $45/year family membership. Fill out the below form or join securely online at: http://www.germanna.org/get-involved/become-a-member/.

**UPDATE MY CONTACT INFORMATION**

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NAMES OF GERMANNA ANCESTORS (if any):