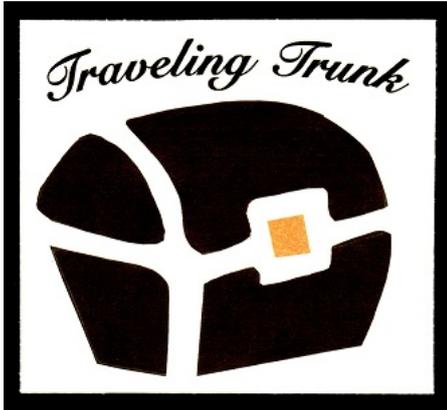


Traveling Trunk Program

Written by GA SAR Administrator - Last Updated Tuesday, 12 July 2011 10:30



In 2011 the Georgia Society SAR Education Committee initiated an effort to allow each of our chapters to own a Traveling Trunk – a trunk filled with replicas of colonial era home, school, and military artifacts for use in living history displays and lectures. We had tested the use of two Traveling Trunks in 2009 and 2010 and found that they were very popular with our members and contributed greatly to a chapter's education outreach program. We estimated the cost of a "basic" Traveling Trunk at \$250 -- half of the amount to be provided by a chapter (\$125) and half from donations from the Georgia Fellows Fund (\$125).

The final value of a trunk and its contents was actually closer to \$400 compared to creating a trunk individually as we were able to take advantage of several volume discounts and to utilize the talents of several SAR and DAR members in making some of the items or obtaining donations of items from them or through them.

Subsequently, some chapters not participating in the program and members of the SAR from out-of-state have asked for information about the program in order to create their own individual Traveling Trunks or Traveling Trunk Programs. Thus, following are some guidelines the Education Committee recommended in implementing programs using the Traveling Trunks.

Set-Up

We have some suggestions for setting up your display. In a pinch we have had to work directly out of the trunk to pull items for discussion. However, a very professional look may be achieved

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by the following means. First, ensure in advance that you will have at least one 6-foot or 8-foot table available for use. We have included a brown velour type table cover that does not wrinkle from storage that will cover an 8-foot table (we thought brown might give the flavor of an animal skin covering). You will likely quickly grow to using two or three tables. The material comes from Jo Ann Fabrics if you wish to add other pieces or to obtain a variety of patriotic table covers.

Secondly, you can use the trunk itself on top of the table as an accent decoration to highlight the theme of a traveling trunk. Depending on space available and the size to which your collection may grow, you can also accent your display by placing medium sized boxes at a few places on the table tops and covering these with other pieces of cloth or placing them under your brown table cloth to create tiers on which to display selected items at differing heights. If you used some plastic cases to hold some of your items in your trunk, these may serve the purpose. Sometimes there are boxes or books at the site that can be used to create these accent tiers. This practice allows items at the rear of the display to be raised up for better viewing by the audience.

Thirdly, you may use a few accent pieces that you won't even discuss as part of your display simply to add visual appeal to your display. For example, a deer antler from a local hunter, a framed map or battle scene, or a black candle lantern in the style of old fashioned lanterns often found in stores such as Ross and TJ Maxx can be added to your display just for the looks.

Suggested Additions to Your Collection

You will likely find your trunk so addictive that you will want to add more pieces or your members or audiences will offer new additions. A couple of sources for additions are:

- Jas. Townsend & Son, Inc. – Visit this catalog supplier of colonial era replica items and clothing at www.jas-townsend.com or call 1-800-338-1665 to receive their 98-page catalog. This was our primary source of items in the basic trunk. For budgeting purposes, you will find that some items in your trunk are examples rather than full sets that are available from Townsend. For example, we included a few playing cards in each trunk to show how monarchs could be jokingly portrayed and that numbers were not printed on cards. Thus, we avoided the

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cost of a full deck of cards for each basic trunk. Similarly, a set of metal toy soldiers is available from Townsend in sets of 10 for the infantry but we included only 2 or 3 for your discussion purposes and did not include any of the artillery or cavalry pieces available. This site also has such items as candle making kits which were too expensive to include in our basic trunk.

- National Military Parks – The gift shops at Revolutionary War era battle sites tend to carry wooden toys, powder horns, mob caps, quills, examples of musket balls, and similar items. Vendors on special holidays or historic site celebrations may visit these sites and have unique items to include in your display.

- Museum Replicas Limited (A Division of Atlanta Cutlery) – In Conyers (east of Atlanta) on 2147 Gees Mill Road (a couple of miles off of the Interstate) is a firm specializing in period knives. They also carry powder horns and period shirts and odds and ends pieces of other Revolutionary War items on occasion. We have found replicas of colonial era coins, lanterns, padlocks, pistols, tin ware, etc. on their bargain table. Phone: 1-800-883-8838. www.museumreplicas.com

- Your members! – The militia outfits and colonial era outfits by spouses suggest additional items to include in your presentation. Those items worn by these persons are of interest to the audience and can double your discussion topics. You may want to obtain some of these items for display when a particular member cannot participate.

Double Your Activity

Remember to use the opportunity of presenting your Traveling Trunk to promote other programs of your SAR chapter and to use it to accomplish other goals such as presenting Flag Certificates. DAR and C.A.R. liaison can be greatly improved by offering to present a program to either of these groups and by including them in your planned programs.

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Suggestions for Your Presentation



Enclosed in this correspondence is a listing of the items included in the basic Traveling Trunk with a brief description of each item. Please read them as we have attempted to add some interesting aspect of the item that we may have found particularly impresses an audience. As you continue to use your trunk you will find new information that you will be able to add to your discussion that will come from your own research, other presenters, your members, and even the audience.

The reason that we love this approach to teaching about the Revolutionary War is that it can be altered a hundred different ways. Most importantly, no script is required. You don't have to stand stranded at a podium or locked into a malfunctioning PowerPoint presentation. You sweep your eyes across the table as you are discussing one item in order to plan which item you will pick up next to discuss without any break in your tempo. If you don't recall what an item is, don't pick it up (and hope no one asks – save it for last).

One method of display that may prove useful is to group your items on the display table into categories for discussion such as toys, military accessories, household items, Indian artifacts, female accessories, etc. Depending upon your audience you will want to highlight some items more than others in the time frame allotted. I now have a collection of tomahawks for adult shows that give an entire progression of the change from wooden sticks with rocks attached to them with leather straps to the metal tobacco pipes popular as a trade item.

While wearing a military uniform certainly adds to the program presentation, it also adds to the cost of giving such programs and many members have no interest in outfitting a uniform. This is yet another great aspect of the Traveling Trunk because you don't have to wear a uniform to make a great presentation. In fact, if you don't wear a uniform, you might consider talking to those who have been using uniforms to see if they have any worn out items that would be of use to adding to your trunk, such as a worn tricorn hat or pair of buckled shoes that is no longer being used by another presenter.

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Visit other chapters that are giving the program to see how they do it! They will be flattered that you choose them to visit and you will benefit greatly in improving your own program. Chapters known to have a trunk from either their own efforts or by obtaining a basic trunk are Athens, Blue Ridge Mountains, Button Gwinnett, Coweta Falls, Joe Early, John Collins, John Milledge, Joseph Habersham, Lyman Hall, Marquis de Lafayette, Marshes of Glynn, Piedmont, Samuel Elbert, Valdosta, and Washington-Wilkes.

You can also gain experience and insight by volunteering to help man a display at a GASSAR function such as Kettle Creek where you can share ideas with presenters from other chapters.

Eventually, we may try to hold a Traveling Trunk seminar at which we can share ideas and swap trunk items.

Thanks

In closing these remarks, let me thank a few members of SAR and DAR that were so helpful in compiling our creation of 11 Traveling Trunks. Bruce Maney, State Historian, and active education outreach lecturer assisted in finding unique, economical sources of several items such as the ox horns, colonial maps of Georgia, and yellow root and in serving as a traveling companion in the search for many items. Leslie Watkins, Vice Regent of the William Day Chapter NSDAR, consulted on women's items and making corn husk dolls.

My wife was of special help. Ginny Manning of the Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR made the table cloths, adult mop caps, and pockets using fabric sales to cut costs, and she compiled the button display cards and assisted in finding discounted trunks on sale.

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The Georgia Fellows Fund made the offer to obtain trunks too good to turn down! If you're not a Georgia Fellow, please consider contributing to this great source of extra funding for our Georgia Society.

The Three Most Important Things To Remember

Have fun! Have fun!! Have fun!!!

Traveling Trunk Item Descriptions

Revised May 25, 2011

To assist in your presentation of a trunk of colonial era replica items, the following information is provided. The information is separated into the following categories: male accessories, female attire, toys and games, fire making material, kitchen items, and other household items.

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Descriptions are provided for items found in the “basic” Traveling Trunk that was created in May 2011 for 11 of our chapters as well as for items that you might add yourself (these additional items are followed by an asterisk - *).

Male Accessories

Haversack (*) – This cloth or leather pouch was used to carry a variety of items with a hunter or soldier such as food and small clothing items. Pockets were not in popular use.

Wooden Canteen (*) – Some canteens were made from metal. Others were made from wood such as pine. These were less expensive but had to be replaced every 3 to 6 months. It was usually carried by a strap on the left side.

Ox or Buffalo Horn – A horn in its initial rough state may be shown to highlight the beautiful, hidden powder horn hiding within and to note the necessity of our ancestors to use every part of a plant or animal that could be conceivably used.



Powder Horns – Larger powder horns carried black gun powder for use in muskets and rifles to project musket balls. Smaller horns (*) carried the finer gun powder used to prime a gun. Wooden plugs were placed at both ends. Maps, designs, family information, or other information was often carved on the exterior of a horn.

Bullet Bag (*) –A small leather pouch used to carry spare musket balls.

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Musket Ball - Typically a ball was made of molten lead about the size of a large marble. As shown on the laminated card, a soldier would often carry pre-made cartridges containing a ball and gun powder to speed up his firing time with his musket. A “good” soldier could reload his musket every 15 seconds. Gun battles during the Revolutionary War were often of short duration as they ran out of “prepared” paper bullets and the flints in their guns wore down, forcing bayonet charges at that point. Pieces of flint attached to pistols and other guns were used to create a spark to ignite the gun powder in a gun. A piece of flint was usually replaced after 15 shots.

Pistol Ball & Flint (*) – This ball was about the size of a marble and used in English pistols as shown on the laminated card.

“USA” Continental Button (*) – This is the most common type of soldier’s button and was used circa 1775-1783. The regulation Continental Line military coat had about 44 large buttons like this on it. The vest used a smaller button. When out of musket balls these buttons could be melted down and poured into bullet molds to create more bullets. Buttons on coat sleeves were first used by British midshipmen to stop them from the bad habit of wiping their nose on their sleeve!

Signal Whistle (*) – Made of wood or horn, such whistles could be used to signal commands in battle.

Stockings – An extra pair of dry stockings was important to the soldier or man out hunting. Long stockings were worn rather than long pants since it was easier to clean stockings than long pants and less costly to replace one or two worn stockings than a pair of worn pants.

Neck Stock (Black) (*) – Black or white neck stock was worn like a tie is worn today around a man’s collar outside the shirt.

Clay Pipe (*) – Clay pipes were used to smoke tobacco. The stem on the pipe would typically be about 6 inches long. As the end of a pipe became broken or plugged it would be broken off until all that was left was the bowl of the pipe. Even then a hollow reed or stick might be used to

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replace the clay stem. A tavern pipe might have a stem that was twice as long and broken off with succeeding customers. A variety of designs might be found on the bowl of a pipe.

Ostrich Feather (Black) (*) – Feathers were popular for decorating the hats of men and women. The type of feather on a man's hat might indicate with which military unit he was serving.

Map of Colonial Georgia – This map shows the outline of Colonial Georgia in comparison to current boundaries and is helpful in showing the Indian lands and the small size of Georgia at the time of the American Revolution.

Female Attire



Mob Cap – This simple white cloth cap was worn by women and young girls to keep their long (and dirty) hair in place. As a safety measure it kept hair away from open fires used in the kitchen.

Bonnet Cap (*) – A white bonnet cap might be worn on special occasions and would include some fancy lacework on it.

Straw Hat (*) – This would be worn over top of the mob cap and with a wide brim would be used to block sunshine from reaching the face when working outdoors. Ribbon was usually used to hold the hat in place on the head. Their use eventually spread to using them on special occasions as well when they might be decorated with a variety of ribbon, lace, beads, feathers, or other decorations.

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Brise' Fan – Fans were popular fashion accessories for ladies and gentlemen. The brise' style fan is wooden sticks held together with ribbon or string. Sandalwood was a popular source and an ingredient in many perfumes. The fan was often used to hide what was likely bad teeth or smallpox marks on the face. Such scars were often also covered by small leather patches, often in “fashionable” designs such as stars and half moons, which of course portrait artists did not include in portraits. A fan “language” was published in 1797 suggesting the silent means of using a fan to flirt with the opposite sex.

Pockets – Women’s skirts or petticoats did not have pockets in them but they had slits in them to allow reaching inside the skirt. Under the skirt she would wear pockets on a belt made of similar material and tied around the waist. The pockets would hold common household items used throughout the day.

Toys & Games

Cup & Ball – This simple pastime required one to use dexterity and eye-and-hand coordination to toss the ball at the end of a string to land in the cup. Usually carved simply in wood, wealthy homes might have jewel encrusted varieties.

Nine Pins – Bowling games have been popular since 5,000 B.C. This small version was used to play on the floor or on a table top. Larger versions were often played in taverns on a long narrow table on which betting was popular. In 1841 Connecticut outlawed the game because of the heavy gambling that became associated with it. To avoid such laws, a tenth pin was added and called Ten Pins. Ten Pin bowling evolved into today’s modern bowling. The head pin or “King” pin that we refer to today came about when colonials painted the front pin red to depict King George in a red jacket, enabling them to take out their frustrations by knocking down the King pin.

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Clothespin Doll (*) – An inexpensive small doll could be made with a clothespin and small pieces of cloth. Dolls were also sometimes used to display examples of clothing that could be ordered from Europe rather than using printed catalogs.

Toy Soldiers – Toy soldiers were made individually for hundreds of years, but not until the mid-1700s were small tin soldiers made in large numbers and sold to the general public. Our example is made from lead-free pewter.

Slate Boards (*) – Slate boards were generally used in classrooms rather than expensive paper.

Jacob's Ladder – A colonial version of today's "Slinky"!

Fire Making Material

Tinder Box Candle Holder (*) – This type of candle holder held both a candle and the means to start a fire. Inside the base of the holder would be tinder (dried plant material that caught fire easily), a piece of flint, and a steel striker to create a spark. Both soldiers and civilians used them.

Candle Mold (*) – Candles were made from tallow (rendered animal fat), beeswax, bayberry (wax from bayberry bushes found along the New England coast), or spermaceti (from the heads

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of sperm whales) and candle molds were a more efficient way of creating candles than dipping wicks. Molds typically formed more than one at a time and varied in height. A typical beeswax candle is included in the basic trunk.

Lantern (*) – Lanterns come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and material. Lanterns were particularly useful outdoors to protect a burning candle from rain and wind. Glass sides were probably expensive. Metal sides with numerous small holes punched in them were often more popular when glass was not available.

Fire Making Kit (*) – The booklet *Making Fire with Flint and Steel* by James Townsend Company provides details on starting a fire from scratch. The four elements essential to a kit are flints, a striker, char cloth, and tinder (all included in the kit). Char cloth is used to catch and hold sparks made by striking a steel striker (metal piece) against the edge of a piece of flint stone. The sparks are used to catch tinder such as cedar bark, straw, old rope, or dry plant material on fire which has been placed in a circle around the char cloth. The small fire is then used to start a bigger fire or to light a candle or pipe. Such a kit would be carried in one's haversack. A striker and flint and a few strands of jute are included in the basic trunk. The sparks created by the flint and striker are popular with the kids.

Kitchen Items

Tin Plate – Tin was a common material for tableware especially in less affluent homes. China dinnerware might crack, chip, or break. Tin was more durable.

Horn Spoon - Knives, forks, and spoons might be made from metal or wood. If made from metal, their handles might be made from wood, antlers, or bones. An entire spoon could also be made of horn.

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Soldier's Fork - A soldier's fork could be created by twisting a long piece of metal wire into shape and sharpening the ends.

Sugar Cone – Sugar came in solid cones. It might come wrapped in paper with a wax seal on it proving that the proper tax had been paid on it. It was so valuable that it might be kept under lock and key.

Brick of Tea – Unlike today, tea often came in solid bricks. Audiences love this fact! This made it easier to transport on ships and generated a greater profit. A company logo could be impressed on the exterior. Tease them first by suggesting that it might be a bar of chocolate, then ask them what was thrown in the bay at Boston.

Tea Infuser – Once flakes of tea were shaved from a brick of tea they were used to make tea. They might be put in a tea infuser to hold the flakes like we use a tea bag today. In colonial times a tea infuser might be made of bamboo in the shape of a small basket or of metal.

Cast Iron Utensils (*) – Large spoons and forks used for cooking were often made of cast iron just like the pots and pans that were in use. These held up well in the hot cooking fires.

Yellow Root – The small branches from this plant were cut into about 1-inch pieces and brewed in water to provide a homemade medicine used for a variety of illnesses. It has not been found to be particularly useful under modern research. An example can be used to highlight the impact of American Indian culture on European settlers.

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Other Household Items

Bone Comb – Bone was a popular item from which to carve a hair comb. No part of an animal left unused!

Toothbrush – This bone handled brush in the shape of a toothbrush used an interesting source for the brush – boar's bristles. An alternative to using a tooth brush was to use the end of a stick of sassafras to clean one's teeth.

Playing Cards – Cards have long been a popular game. The Jack, Queen, and King were relevant to the royalty of Europe. Cards were often annotated or drawn to make fun of royalty. To prevent this, the King of England placed a heavy tax on each deck of cards. A seal was placed on the deck to prove that the tax was paid. Even today many decks of cards have a seal placed on the box to show that the cards have not been opened. Note also that printed numbers were not placed on the cards since most people could not read.

Pieces of Eight – A coin called the Spanish Milled Dollar was often used around the world with which to trade. In the American colonies it was used because of the lack of English coins available. Not having other coins with which to make change, the Spanish Milled Dollar was often cut into eight pieces to make change. Thus it was also called a Piece of Eight. Each 1/8th

piece was called a bit. Thus two bits were one-fourth of a dollar or a quarter of a dollar which is why a quarter today is still referred to as 2 bits, such as in the phrase, "Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar."



Continental Currency (*) – From 1775 to 1779, the continental Congress issued \$241 million worth of Continental currency in 23 denominations. Each denomination had its own unique emblem on the front. The backs were decorated with nature prints of leaves. Beginning on

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May 20, 1777, some of the words were changed from “United Colonies” to “United States.” Each denomination included a Latin phrase.

Homemade Soap – Soap was made in an iron kettle over an open fire by boiling rendered animal or cooking waste fats with wood ash lye from 6 to 8 hours until it formed a thick frothy mass. One rendered fats by cooking them with water first in a two-step process to remove any impurities such as remaining meat tissues. Wood ash lye was created by pouring water over wood ashes creating an oozing brownish liquid. This procedure resulted in a soft (liquid) soap typically used by colonists that was stored in a wooden barrel and ladled out with a wooden dipper when needed. “Hard” soap could be created by adding common salt at the end of the boiling and letting it cool into a hard texture, but salt was considered expensive and not to be wasted on this process. Hard soap when created by vendors was formed in large wooden frames and sold in that size or by the pound rather than into bars as we think of soap today. A vendor might add scented oils. The specific recipe was very much trial and error and often involved several attempts to obtain a usable batch of soap.

Sewing Kit – In lieu of a full sewing kit that might include scissors; a spool of sinew; a wooden needle case with pins and needles; wooden, bone, horn, and pewter buttons; a wooden thimble; and heavy cotton thread in a roll-up, canvas bag, the basic Traveling Trunk includes scissors, an example of sinew (the stringy part of an animal’s muscle, i.e. the tendon, such as from the front leg of a deer – real sinew comes in lengths related to the size of the animal and must be spliced together to create longer lengths and artificial sinew comes in long lengths like a ball of string) used as thread or string, and two each of the button types on a display card. The expense of metal buttons can be compared to home made buttons. Sinew was used like string to tie arrowheads onto arrow shafts, for sewing, and similar uses.

Stoneware Inkwell and Quill – A quill pen and ink container were used for writing.

Scales (*) – A set can be used to show how gold dust could be weighed or pieces of eight might be weighed to ensure that none of the cut edges had been shaved down by unscrupulous traders.

Dunlap Broadside (*) – The Dunlap Broadside is the first 200 copies of the Declaration of Independence, printed on the night of July 4, 1776, by John Dunlap of Philadelphia. In 1989 only 24 were known to remain in existence. In 1989, a 25th copy was found behind a painting bought at a flea market for \$4. It was sold for \$8.14 million.

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Redware Grease Lamp – Burns a jute wick using vegetable oil or animal grease such as bacon grease and was an alternative to more costly and harder to make candles.

Rabbit Fur - The impact of the fur trade can be highlighted with this sample fur.

Sassafras - The sassafras is a medium size tree (up to 70 feet). The leaves are eaten by deer, bear, and other woodland animals. Rabbits love to chew the bark in winter. People in Colonial times would boil the roots and bark to make a tea. They would also use a piece of the root, about the size of your finger and perhaps several inches long, to cleanse their teeth. This was useful to persons that could not afford to buy the boar bristle toothbrush. The sassafras oil also left a minty smell in your mouth, thus giving you fresh breath.

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