POSTCARDS OF BRUTON PARISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH TOWER AND GIFT SHOP

Join Our Worldwide Congregation by visiting www.brutonparish.org/fobowc to become a Friend of Bruton (or email BPC@brutonparish.org) and receive our quarterly electronic newsletter.

To purchase any of the following postcards, please contact BPC@brutonparish.org.

The 1771 Tower & Steeple
The Tower and Steeple completed in 1771 were built to house a bell given by local merchant James Tarpley in 1761.

In his book, Bruton Parish Church, An Architectural History, Dr. Carl Lounsbury writes that. “In the late 1760s, the Vestry decided to build a tower and steeple.” Towers and steeples were costly undertakings and were not very common in colonial Virginia. “They were ideal locations for bells and the gift of an English-cast bell by merchant James Tarpley in 1761 may have been an incentive to build one.” The tower had a room for vestry meetings.

Lounsbury goes on to inform us that the vestry hired Benjamin Powell, a prominent local contractor, to undertake the project in September 1769 to build them and do additional repairs for a total fee of £410. The oak and poplar timbers that were used in the tower and steeple were cut in the fall or winter of 1770-1771. Powell located the tower in the center of the west façade of the church building. The brick tower rises 46 ft. with the steeple and spire rising 51 ft about it. The bricks of the tower were laid in Flemish bond and followed the pattern of the church building. It has three windows on the north and south walls and two above the arched doorway of the west entrance. The Tarpley Bell was hung in the upper part of the steeple.

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Bruton Parish Church
Williamsburg, VA. Est. 1674.

Bruton Parish, founded in 1674, takes its name from the town Bruton, in the English county of Somerset, which was the ancestral home of several leading colonial figures. Construction of the present building began in 1712 to a design of Governor Alexander Spotswood and was completed three years later. It was enlarged in 1752 when the Vestry voted to make the east end as long as the west, extending the chancel twenty-five feet. The tower was added in 1771. It was Bruton’s Rector, the Rev. Dr. Wm. A.R. Goodwin, who first conceived the restoration of Williamsburg. Goodwin removed Victorian changes to the church early in the 20th century, and his work was later taken up by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in its restoration of the building in 1938-41. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970.

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The 45-rank Dobson Organ

The 45-rank Dobson Pipe Organ at Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, Williamsburg, VA.

Bruton Parish Church’s 3-manual, 45-rank pipe organ was built by Dobson Pipe Organ Builders, Ltd. in Lake City, Iowa and installed in 2019. It is the 96th new instrument built by the Dobson Company and stands in the east gallery, in the space formerly occupied by the 1785 Samuel Green organ case and multitudes of concealed pipes from the previous Aeolian-Skinner organ. It can be heard regularly both in worship services and Candlelight Concerts.

To read the full history of the organs of Bruton Parish Church go to https://www.brutonparish.org/musicalinstruments.

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Bruton in Winter

A rare winter scene of Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, Williamsburg, VA.

Bruton Parish was founded in 1674. The present pictured building was started in 1712, completed in 1715, and has been in continuous use ever since.

Although heavy snowfalls are rare in Williamsburg, light dustings are not uncommon during the winter months. When snow does fall it provides those infrequent opportunities to capture a beautiful scene.

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Bruton at Christmastime

Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, Williamsburg, VA, at Christmastime.

Each year at Bruton Parish Church, as in many other churches, during Advent season volunteers gather for the “greening of the church.” The fresh evergreens, dotted with fruit in the custom of Williamsburg, remain until the first Saturday after Christmas. The holiday season is an especially lovely time to visit Bruton Parish Church to participate in one of the worship services or enjoy a holiday candlelight concert.

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Bruton Parish Church with Dogwood in Bloom

Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, Williamsburg, VA, est. 1674.

The church is one of the most recognizable structures in Colonial Williamsburg. Construction of the present building began in 1712 to a design of Governor Alexander Spotswood and was completed three years later in 1715. It has been in continuous use since. The building was enlarged in 1752 and the tower and steeple were added in 1769. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970. Bruton Parish Church is an active Episcopal church with multiple services each Sunday and candlelight concerts during the week.

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**The Roosevelt Lectern**
*The Roosevelt Lectern (The Angel of Peace) presented in 1907 to Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg, VA.*

The bronze "Angel of Peace" lectern was presented to Bruton Parish church in 1907 in the name of President Theodore Roosevelt. As the church was preparing to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the settlement at Jamestown and was undergoing renovations to restore the interior to resemble the colonial church, arrangements were being made to receive a Bible – a gift from England’s King Edward VII. It was thought appropriate to have a special lectern on which the Bible would rest. The Rev’d. Henry Satterlee, Bishop of the Diocese of Washington, DC agreed to approach President Roosevelt with the idea of him presenting a lectern to be crafted from an oak tree cut from the grounds of the National Cathedral. A wooden lectern was not to be. J. Steward Barney, the historical architect who was donating his services to design and oversee the church’s restoration project, was aware of the king’s gift and of the desire to have a proper lectern on which it would rest. Barney designed a lectern, had it cast in bronze, named it the Angel of Peace, and presented it as an anonymous gift to Bruton Parish Church.

An August 11, 1907, article in the NY Times described the lectern which would hold the Edward VII Bible. "The lectern stands with her left foot in the Old World near the American Eagle and the right foot in the New World near the British Lion. The Washington Family Coat of Arms is in front of the globe. At the base of the lectern there are three inscriptions. On the front it reads ‘To the Glory of God.’ On the right tablet are the words, ‘And Commemorative of the Permanent Establishment of English Civilization in America.’ On the left are found the words, ‘Presented by Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States.’

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**The Tarpley Bell**
*The Tarpley Bell (aka The Virginia Liberty Bell) 1761 at Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, Williamsburg, VA.*

The bell that hangs far up in the steeple of Bruton Parish Church was given by local merchant James Tarpley in 1761. The 450-pound-bronze bell was cast at Whitechapel Foundry in London, the same place where the Philadelphia Liberty Bell was first cast. However, the Bell at Bruton has not cracked. Also known as the Virginia Liberty Bell, it was rung to announce the repeal of the Stamp Act, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and the signing of the 1783 Treaty of Paris officially ending the Revolutionary War. Today it is rung before church services and at weddings, funerals and on other special occasions such as the 4th of July. The tone of the Tarpley Bell heard today is the same tone George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry heard when they attended services at Bruton Parish Church.

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