

BATH, N.C. — In conjunction with the Town of Bath's [Tricentennial Celebration of Blackbeard](#), the Greater Bath Foundation announces "Blackbeard's Trial — A Mock Hearing to Reconsider the Guilt or Innocence of the Pirate Blackbeard and His Shipmates From Bath, North Carolina." The hearing will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, October 19, 2018, in the Superior Courtroom at the Beaufort County Courthouse in Washington, North Carolina.

The Honorable J. Carlton Cole, Superior Court Judge for the 1st District Superior Court will preside. Seth Edwards, Esq., District Attorney for Judicial District 2, will represent the government of Virginia, Lt. Gov. Spotswood, and Royal Navy Lieutenant Robert Maynard. J. Erik Groves, Esq., an attorney practicing in Waxhaw, North Carolina, will represent Capt. Edward Thatch and his shipmates from North Carolina. Actors will play the roles of Virginia Lt. Gov. Alexander Spotswood, North Carolina Governor Charles Eden, North Carolina Executive Council Secretary and Collector of Customs Tobias Knight, Royal Navy Lt. Robert Maynard, the pirate/slave Caesar, mariner Humphrey Johnston, and Blackbeard. Historian Kevin Duffus will present a summary of historical facts relevant to the objectives of the hearing.

In November 1718 and the early winter of 1719 at Williamsburg, Virginia, four trials were held by a Court of Vice-Admiralty to consider the guilt or innocence of the surviving members of the pirate crew of Edward Thatch, aka Blackbeard. That crew, jailed under suspicions of piracy, included men who, according to deeds, wills, and estate inventories held in the Beaufort County Courthouse, were known to have been the sons and slaves of Bath and Pamlico region plantation owners. All of the records from those trials at Williamsburg nearly 300 years ago have been lost. However, by reassembling the facts of the case found in primary source documents, it is possible to fairly retry the case, and reconsider the guilt or innocence of the pirate Blackbeard and his shipmates from the Pamlico River and whether it was lawful for the colony of Virginia to dispatch armed forces into their neighboring colony of North Carolina.

Seating will be limited. A portion of the courtroom is being reserved for selected students from Beaufort County Schools. Reservations for admittance will be required and can be made by emailing [blackbeardtrial@gmail.com](mailto:blackbeardtrial@gmail.com). All media inquiries and requests for seating or camera positions should be emailed to Kevin Duffus at [kevin\\_duffus@earthlink.net](mailto:kevin_duffus@earthlink.net).

Few places in America have a legitimate reason to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the life and death of the world's best-known pirate-privateer but Bath, North Carolina, is the home of Blackbeard! Bath's Blackbeard Tricentennial will be held on October 20, 2018 at Bath. For more information visit [www.blackbeard300.com](http://www.blackbeard300.com) or [www.facebook.com/Blackbeard300](https://www.facebook.com/Blackbeard300).

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