

So who is John Constance?

For you stumbling onto this website for the first time, the identity of its author might be of some interest. Or not. But nevertheless, here is who I think I am.

I was born in Baltimore, Maryland on June 25, 1950 (day of the first shot of the Korean War) to Allan Howells Constance and Lillian Loeber Constance of Catonsville. Dad was the son of Reverend Bert Constance, a Welsh pastor who emigrated to North America from Tredegar, Wales; first to Lipscomb, Nova Scotia as a Methodist Missionary and then to Maryland where he became a United Methodist Circuit Rider in the Baltimore Conference of the Church. Dad's Mom was a Skillman, an English family whose roots on Long Island and Brooklyn stretch back to the founding of the Nation. My Mom was the daughter of John Loeber, an attorney and magistrate in Baltimore County who traced his lineage to Germany and Lillian McKenzie of Oella, Maryland. With roots as Scottish as her name, she and her sister dropped out of school to work in a woolen mill to support themselves and the aunts who raised them.

I am a product of the public schools of Baltimore County and graduated from Catonsville High School in 1968. The College of William and Mary was my first and only college choice and I graduated in 1972 along with my fiancé Hayden Rives Gwaltney of Suffolk, VA. We were married at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Suffolk, on November 4, 1972, and will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary next year.

Hayden went off to a career in telecommunications marketing and I transitioned from an internship to full-time employment with the National Archives in September of 1972. My career there spanned over three decades and included information management, management analysis, policy development, and finally congressional and public affairs. I had a serious case of Potomac Fever and always longed to get into the political side of Washington. I would divide my career into two parts. The first part was a graduate level course in all things National Archives. From budgets, to policy, to management, to vital agency issues I was immersed for the first 20 years at the agency. In my last 15 years I represented the Archives on Capitol Hill and to the press based on my accumulated knowledge. I loved those last 15 years in a way that is hard to describe.

I retired from the National Archives in 2007 and accepted a position with the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) as their Director of Government Relations and Public Affairs. LSC is the largest funder of legal aid for low-income Americans. I was

back on the Hill every day, just representing a new client. As I told people, I had spent 35 years preserving the US Constitution and now I was trying to ensure that the document worked for all Americans.

Along the way Hayden and I had two amazing daughters, each with their own unique personalities and talents. Megan McKenzie and Brittany Rolfe both started their education in public school but transitioned to Garrison Forest School to complete their secondary education. Megan went on to attend Wake Forest University and Brittany graduated from William and Mary. Megan received a master's degree in Reading Education from UNC Greensboro and Brittany graduated from University of Virginia School of Law. Megan is married to Andrew Lefaivre, has two beautiful girls, and lives in Jamestown, NC. After a successful teaching career, she is now the literacy outreach specialist for a non-profit in Greensboro. Brittany transitioned this past year from the world of corporate law to become Director of Development and Information for a Raleigh non-profit.

Hayden and I moved from Old Town Alexandria to Raleigh, NC in 2011 and I retired from LSC in 2012. I went to work part-time with Executive Service Corps of the Triangle as a management consultant for non-profits. After three years I became a volunteer with StepUp Ministry in their jobs readiness program and eventually joined their Board of Directors. In addition, I became a member of the Board of Directors of Veteran Life Center and helped guide the way to the opening of a 100-bed residence facility for at-risk 21st Century veterans in Butner, NC. In 2019 I joined the Board of Directors for the Corporation for Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest in Forest, VA. Former Senior Warden for St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Raleigh, I currently hold an appointment as a Trustee for the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina.