



SONS OF THE REVOLUTION
IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

ORGANIZED JUNE 7, 1895

1 December 2008

Fellow Patriots :

The One Hundred-Fourteenth Year of our Society has been a good one.

Progress Against Goals

To begin with, 2008 has seen continued progress towards the goals set by the Board of Managers in 2005. Our operating budget for the fiscal year showed no increase in operating expenses and the cost of the George Washington's Birthday Dinner was covered thanks to the generous support of many members who sponsored our guests. We are doing our bit by holding steady annual dues (your statement is enclosed) and the member's cost of the George Washington's Birthday Dinner. We all owe our Treasurer Bob Burke and Finance Chair Brooks Zerkel a debt of gratitude for their service.

On that point, and in particular, I want to commend the work of the Development Committee, guided this year by Dan Hillsman, in continuing our work on the Capital Campaign. Year-to-date we have raised over \$3,000 thanks to our member's generous support. It is surely past time to focus on endowing the Society for future generations, please consider a Patriot's Fund contribution when sending in your annual dues.

The Year's Events

We all enjoyed another unashamedly patriotic George Washington's Birthday Dinner and the inspiring remarks by Vice-Admiral Robert Papp, Chief of Staff, United States Coast Guard. The 2008 Dinner again included flag officer representation from all branches of our armed forces.

In May, the Virginia House hosted another rain-free Annual Meeting, our third such meeting in a row! The beautiful weather allowed the membership, their wives, and guests to enjoy Mother Nature's good work on the banks of the James.

Due to a very weak response, we cancelled the bus and lunches for the Yorktown Day trip. In past years this has been a successful event, but falling on a weekend this year likely caused conflicts with many of our member's family events. We look forward to offering this event in coming years.

Membership

We have yet to reach our goal to see membership over the 500 mark. For the past 10 years we have been between 450 to 475 members. Please help your Society by bringing in friends and family. In particular, let me emphasize the ease with which those of you with sons, nephews, grandsons, or brothers may convert your kinship to membership. The "Short Form" found on the Society's website (www.vssr.org) takes about ten minutes to complete, as it is based on your own membership. Our Membership team, Carter Reid, Bev Mauck, and Peter Witt, are of course always available to help with new applications. Please contact Carter Reid at 804.285.9222, or via email at membership@vssr.org. As of this writing we have 476 members.

George Washington's Birthday Dinner

Now I turn at last to plans for our annual Black Tie George Washington's Birthday Dinner, to be held as usual at the Commonwealth Club on 21 February 2009. In early January we will be sending a separate invitation for the Dinner as we did last year. Please look for it and respond promptly. As I mentioned, we have held the member's cost to \$95, guests will be \$125.

For those of you who have never attended this event, we honor the memory and legacy of General Washington and, in 2009, the 277th anniversary of his birth. We have invited the former Governor of Oklahoma, Frank Keating, to be our Principal Speaker, along with the usual complement of Armed Forces Flag and General Officer representatives. We have had representatives from all of the branches of our military speak so we thought it was time to mix it up. Again this year we hope Members will step forward to defray the costs of our Flag and General Officer guests, by way of a contribution to the Patriots Fund. The cost for our Military Guests is the same as for Members, \$95.00 each. Remember that most will bring their wives and an aide as well. The VMI Pipes and Drums are unable to join us this year. Imagine our surprise when they opted to attend Mardi Gras instead of our beloved dinner. Fear not, suitable music will be provided.

One last point about the dinner: again this year we are obliged to request that those of you who wish to have a cigar should please refrain from lighting up until after the evening is over, perhaps in the Grill Room Bar downstairs. We appreciate your understanding of the sensitivity of other Members and our Guests.

We hope to see increasing numbers of you and your guests next February 21st.

I close as I did last year, with the fond wish of the Board that each of you and your families enjoy "... The Merriest Christmas Ever, and the Happiest Possible New Year...".

Respectfully,



Roderick M. Gardner
President