

HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY FOUNDERS AND PATRIOTS OF AMERICA

The patriotic fervor associated with the National Bicentennial of 1876 gave rise to many Patriotic and Hereditary Societies; among them were the General Society of Colonial Wars, The Colonial Order of the Acorn, The National Society Colonial Daughters of the Seventeenth Century, The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. But none of these, or any other society, recognized, as a requirement for membership, an unbroken male line from the descendants of the colonial era to the patriots of the Revolutionary War Period and then down to the era of the Centennial Period and beyond; however, on February 24, 1896 a few gentlemen who could establish such a personal lineage between ancestors of the colonial and revolutionary era met at the Astor House in New York City and founded our Order, The Order of the Founders and Patriots of America. In 1898 a similar organization ; The National Society Daughters of Founders and Patriots of America was organized to recognize ladies who also had such heritage. The exacting requirement for an unbroken male lineage and the necessity of having an ancestor who supported the American Revolution quickly tagged this new Society as one of the most difficult to join and one of the most prestigious. New York was the first State Society, followed by New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, etc. But it was not until 1974 that the oldest English speaking colony in North American found members willing to organize themselves into a State Society.

On May 3, 1974 at a 78th General Court held in Williamsburg, Virginia, a city with dramatic ties to both eras, Governor General Asa E. Phillips presented a Charter to Carroll Wright, the Virginia Society's first State Governor .

Today some 24 states and the District of Columbia have separate Societies.

The following 20 gentlemen are considered the founders of the Virginia State Society:

Whitney Asbridge
Harold W. Chandler
Gilbert B. Fletcher, Jr
Lyttleton T. Harris, IV
Albert B. Jones
Judson P. Mason, Sr.
Robert L. Nash
Asa E. Phillips, Jr
Grahame T. Smallwood, Jr
Lawrence Whitehurst

Howard B. Burgess
Ronland G. Eaton, Jr
Lyttleton T. Harris, III
Charles O. Johnson
Robert R. Jones
Clair C. McElheny
Frederick I. Ordway, Jr
Henry S. Pittard
Frederick B. Tuttle
Carroll Wright



The first organizational meeting of the Virginia Society saw the adoption of Society By-Laws, patterned after the National By-laws, and the selection of the first slate of State Officers. This group was composed of:

Rawley F. Daniel	Governor
Cyrus A. Dolph, III	Deputy Governor
Howard C. VanArsdale	Asst. Deputy Secretary
Clair C. McElheny	Treasurer
Lawrence Whitehurst	Registrar
Gilbert B. Fletcher	Secretary

Starting with that first meeting there have been regular meetings on a semi-annual basis with a slow but steady increase in associates until the mid-1990s when membership leveled off.

As of September 01, 2001 there have been 144 individuals given a state membership number. These early meetings were devoted to internal matters of the Society with emphasis on the means to stimulate membership growth.



By 1980 the State Society had grown and stabilized itself to the point that it was publishing its own newsletter, The Virginia Founder Patriot. The first editor and ‘publisher’ was Francis W. Springer and Durward W. Barker took over as the second editor in 1982 when Mr. Springer resigned for health reasons.. An interesting and reoccurring section in the early issues was a capsulization of the lineage of various members detailing the lives of their Founder and Patriot ancestors

At the General Court in 1982, an Associate of the Virginia Society, Burk O. Barker, was elected Secretary General of the National Organization and Clair C. McElheny was designated

Councillor General. This initiated the Virginia Chapter's increasing role in the organization at the national level. The year 1982 was a banner year for the state Society with an increase of over 20% in membership. The Virginia Society also received the General Hinkley Cup as the 'State Society Evidencing Outstanding Activity.' Nationally, a third supplement to the Order's Register was published, and the Virginia Society presented copies to the Virginia Archives, the Virginia State Library, the Swearn Library of the College of William and Mary and the Mary Ball Genealogical Library. All of these libraries are used extensively by genealogists from all over the United States.

An interesting side bar in the official Minutes of the Virginia Society for 1982 was a listing of 21 OFPA members, all descended from a single founder ancestor: John Barker of James City County Virginia. Among these 21 associates were brothers Glenwood O. and Harry L. Barker and their 'double first cousin Burk O. Barker (Their fathers were brothers and their mothers, sisters).

1983 saw the Virginia Society take on two new programs; one was tied in with our stated goal to assist in preserving our history and the other recognition of those who defend our liberty. The Society voted to offer support to the Flowerdew Hundred Foundation in its effort to preserve this vital part of Colonial History. Later on the Virginia Society voted to also support the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. Donations to both programs have become annual gifts. From time to time the Society has also made one time donations to other organizations involved with protecting our heritage.

And at the suggestion of National Governor General, Burk O. Barker, the Virginia Society began to explore a way to formally recognize an outstanding unit of the National Guard in our Region. This concept was circulated among a number of State Societies. It soon became apparent that the idea to support such recognition would gain the support of other State Societies and eventually the award became part of the National Societies Award Program. Development of this recognition program soon extended to Air Guard units as well. And the program eventually grew to include recognition of outstanding ROTC units in each of the four national ROTC regions. The Order owes a singular debt of gratitude to Mr. Burk Barker and the members of the Virginia Society for championing this cause.

In April of 1984 The Virginia Society OFPA and the Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Virginia signed a formal memorandum of understanding that would allow the OFPA to recognize on an annual basis units of the Army and Air National Guard of Virginia. This recognition was to be in the form of the OFPA Award for Excellence. Because, at the time, Maryland did not have a state Society, a similar MOU was initiated with the Adjutant General of Maryland. The Virginia Society continued to recognize Maryland units until 1988 when a new Maryland Society was chartered.

The earliest record of selected units indicates that for the year 1986 the following units were recognized:

For the Virginia Army National Guard: Battery B; 1st Battalion ; 246 Field Artillery in March of 1985

For the Virginia Air National Guard: Headquarters Staff, Virginia Air National Guard

At a meeting of the Jamestown Society, National Secretary General Burk O. Barker (a member of the Virginia State Society) presented Carroll Wright (Governor of the Jamestown Society) a substantial donation on behalf of the Virginia State Society (OFPA) to be used in the preservation, by the Jamestown Society, of the 1600-1700 records of the Isle of Wight County. This was in keeping with the Order's mission to assist in 'the preservation of original Colonial records and papers for the benefit of posterity.'

The 1984 Spring Issue of the *Bulletin* included an excellent featured article by Society member Burk O. Barker entitled "Alexander Spotswood – Knight of the Golden Horse Shoe."

At the 1984 annual Society meeting it was announced that the Virginia Society would host the 1986 General Court and eventually the Cascades Conference Center, Williamsburg, VA was selected as the meeting location. Also during the 88th General Court the Order's Bylaws on membership qualifications were amended to include descent from an applicant's Paternal and Maternal Grandmothers. This change dramatically enlarged the pool of potential members.

Of note: During the 1985 annual society meeting, Society Governor Burk Barker offered for inspection a "Bacon's Castle" gavel made from the original wood of Bacon's Castle obtained during a recent restoration project. This wood was given to Mr. Barker by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. The gavel rests in a presentation case made from walnut from the Glebe of Westmoreland County, VA., where lived the Vicar that married George Washington's parents. Inset in the case are crosses of wood from Christ Church in Alexander, VA., where George Washington worshiped. Governor Barker presented this unique gavel to the National Order at the 1985 General Court. Governor Barker also presented to the National Order a bound collection of the early papers of the Order that were given him by the New York Society, the Order's oldest state society. These papers include a copy of the original Articles of Incorporation and the Original Appointment of Agent dated August 27, 1957 as was filed in the Office of the Secretary of State of Ohio on August 30, 1957. The book includes other organizational meetings held in March and April 1896, lists of Charter members and many other records.

The year 1985 also saw the re-enactment of the voyage of the Godspeed sponsored by the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. The Foundation requested that the Virginia Society Governor represent the Society and the Order in these Ceremonies. Our Governor journeyed to England to take part in the official ceremonies launching the beginning of this historic re-enactment.

The Society's focus for 1986 was centered around being the host Society for the 90th General Court that convened on Friday, May 16th. It is interesting to note that in 1986 an associate could request an entire conference registration package for \$218.00. This included a 3-day, 2-night arrangement with lodging in the "Colonial Williamsburg Motor House," arrival reception, cookout, Hunt Club breakfast, formal banquet, and Sunday brunch.

The General Court began with noon registration on Friday, May 16th and the first session of the General Court in the early afternoon. Early evening brought everyone together for an 'ole



Virginia' barbecue and cook-out 'featuring many kinds of southern delicacies served in an informal manner. By 9:00 am, Saturday, May 17th The General Court was back in session and the annual election of General Officers topped the agenda. The ladies and guests were free to 'tour the wonders of Williamsburg.' After lunch, the taking of the official portrait of the General Court and the conclusion of final business items, all participants and guests assembled together for a bus trip to Jamestown Island. Newly elected General Officers were introduced to the Order amidst the ruins of the original church built by the Jamestown settlers.

After the induction of the new General Officers the participants toured the National Parks Historic Jamestown Settlement, the Jamestown Festival Park, the re-created settlers village and the Indian village, and saw up close the refurbished *Godspeed* and her sister ships.

After the short return bus ride, associates and guests prepared and dressed for the annual 'White tie/ Black tie formal reception and banquet held on the Cascades terrace and in the dining room. Over 50 associates were in attendance and with them an additional 40 guests and spouses. Fifteen individual State Societies were represented. The after dinner speaker was the Honorable Hunter B. Andrews, majority leader of the Virginia Senate and Vice-Chairman of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and who had recently been presented with the Order's Award for Excellence in Historical Representation. Other distinguished guests included Mayor and Mrs. Robert Walker of Williamsburg, Superintendent and Mrs. Richard Meader representing the US National Parks Service, Mr. And Mrs. Ross Weeks, the Executive Director of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation.

The 90th General Court concluded on Sunday, May 18th with special services at Bruton Parish Church, one of the most historic churches in America. After the formal conclusion of the General Court many of the assembled associates remained in Williamsburg so they could visit the varied and numerous historic places in the area. Some even visited the Virginia State Library and Archives to continue their genealogical research.

By everyone's assessment the 90th General Court was a tremendous success and much is owed to the State Society members who dedicated so much of their time to insure that success and the pleasant memories of the attending associates.

The 90th General Court also saw the conclusion of the two year term of Burk O. Barker as Governor General. Mr. Barker is one of a series of illustrious State Society members who have served as General Officers. During his tenure many new and exciting changes, projects, and undertakings occurred.

His final message to the Order enumerated some of these changes of which he was most proud:

The publication of a revised and updated Constitution and Bylaws for the Order.

Publication of a new and more complete Members Handbook which included for the first time a uniform system for granting Order recognitions and awards.

An overall increase in membership.

And the admission of the North Carolina Society and Indiana Society as a new State Societies along with the revitalization of two inactive or dormant Societies.

Creation of two new recognition programs fostering the Order's objective of recognizing patriotism. One program was the recognition of outstanding Army ROTC units at Colleges and Universities across the country. The other was a similar program to recognize exceptional National Guard and Reserve Components of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and the Air Force. The Guard and Reserve recognition programs were designed for State Society implementation.

The involvement of the Order in the historic re-enactment of the Voyage of the Godspeed.

A very successful fund raising campaign to assist in the preservation of several English historic records including the records of the baptism of Captain John Smith.

Mr. Barker's service to both the State Society and the National Order are of the highest order.

One of the highlights of 1987 was the participation by Society members in the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Jamestown settlement galleries in Jamestown, VA. By 1988, the OFPA National Guard Recognition Program had received such a strong endorsement by the Virginia National Guard that special recognition was given by the National Order to General Castles, Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This recognition was given at the annual ceremony by National OFPA Governor General Herman Nickerson, Jr.

1990 was a banner year for the Virginia Society, three of its members were selected for national office at the 94th session of the General Court held in Dallas, Texas. Elected were:

Granville W. Wehland	Governor General
Glenwood O. Barker	Secretary General
Volney H. Rattan	Dep Secretary General

The Society also received the H. Carroll Parish award plaque for the dramatic increase in Society membership during the past year. In keeping with similar donations made in past years The Virginia Society OFPA presented copies of the Order's books, Founders of Early American Families, and The Order of the Founders and Patriots of America Register 1981 to the libraries of The Williamsburg Regional Library, the Williamsburg DAR Chapter, and the Colonial Dames XVII Century.

During the 1990's and early 2000's, the Virginia Society restored its financial status to a solid footing and increased membership. From 1998 to 2008 VA society active membership increased by 26 percent.

At the 1997 General Court the so-called Virginia Resolution was voted on and passed. The Virginia Resolution gives Past Governors a vote at a General Court. On Sunday, 9 November 1997, the Virginia Society was represented at a Massing of the Colors at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland and a Massing of the Colors in Roanoke, Virginia,

At the 103rd General Court in Cleveland, the Virginia Society received the coveted Parrish Award.

In 2000, Donnel J. Hubbard was elected to the national office of Registrar General and served for four years.

During this period of time Governor Thatcher S. Wood headed the North Carolina "Phoenix" project. NC OFPA had died out several years earlier and there was interest in reestablishing the Society. After a couple years of hard work, numerous trips to North Carolina, etc. the North Carolina Society was back on its feet, thanks to Thatcher.

The ROTC program truly got jump started in 2002 when Associate Thatcher Wood organized presentations to three Colleges and Universities in the Hampton-Williamsburg-Richmond area. Under his guidance and with his persistence it has now grown to 18 awards at thirteen different institutions. In 2008, Associate Roger Kirby, after assisting Thatcher for several years accepted the position as Awards Chairman, replacing Thatcher Wood. The Outstanding State ROTC Cadet or Midshipman Award is presented to a Cadet or Midshipman who has demonstrated superior "qualities of dependability, character, military discipline, leadership, patriotism, and an understanding of the importance of the American Heritage."

In 2008, the VA Society started a program of dedicating with a plaque cemeteries which contain the graves of gentlemen who qualify as an OFPA Founder and contain Patriots. The first cemetery was marked on October 11th, at Christ Church Parish in Topping, Virginia. This cemetery has the distinction of containing the burial of a Founder and a Patriot from the same line.

The Virginia Society has its own web site, www.vaofpa.org. The site contains the VA Cavalier newsletter, provides members not able to attend meetings with past and present activity of the Society and the schedule of upcoming events and meetings.

The Society has also commenced the development of a spreadsheet with the burials of Virginia Founders. The information from this research is being used to determine locations of future meetings so that these burials may be visited and plaques or grave markers put in place. This study may also provide the basis of a publication in the future by the VA Society.

2009 VA SOCIETY OFPA ACTIVITIES

14 February 09 The Governor gave greetings from the OFPA at the VA Society SAR banquet which was part of their annual conference in Richmond, Virginia.

15 February 09 Our society attended and used the OFPA colors in a Massing of Colors Presentation ceremony in Roanoke Virginia

19 February 09 The Governor attended and gave remarks at the Virginia chapter DFPA meeting in Virginia Beach Virginia

08 March 09 The Governor gave greetings at the meeting of the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims in Newport News, Virginia.

14 March 09 Our Society held a meeting, a museum trip, a luncheon and a plaque presentation at the St. John's Episcopal church in Hampton, Virginia. The plaque was installed on a cemetery fence and was paid for jointly by the Virginia OFPA, the Thomas Nelson, Jr. chapter, SAR and

the Virginia chapter of the DFPA. It contained names of founders and patriots buried in the cemetery. Wreaths were laid by the OFPA, the DFPA, the Jamestown Society, the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims, the Society of Colonial Wars, the Virginia Society of the SAR and three chapters of the Virginia Society SAR, plus the local chapter of the DAR and the District representative of the DAR. The OFPA colors were part of the color guard.

15 April 09 Councillor General Jerry Hubbard represented VA OFPA at the DFPA 111th General Court Banquet

18 April 09 We had representatives at the Heritage Breakfast in Washington DC

26 April 09 As Governor of the OFPA, I was master of ceremonies at a grave marking ceremony for a Revolutionary War Lieutenant in Portsmouth, Virginia. It was conducted jointly by the Virginia OFPA, the Fort Nelson chapter DAR and the Norfolk chapter SAR. Wreaths were presented by the OFPA, the Virginia Society SAR and the two SAR and DAR chapters.

25 April 09 An OFPA wreath was laid at the James Madison birthday celebration in Charlottesville, VA

28 April 09 I presented an OFPA wreath and gave greetings at the James Monroe Birthday celebration at the Hollywood cemetery in Richmond.

09 May 09 The Governor laid a wreath and the OFPA colors were part of the color guard at a duel grave marking ceremony in Manassas Virginia for a Revolutionary war soldier and an 1812 soldier. The ceremony was conducted by an SAR chapter and the War of 1812 society in Virginia. The Virginia Society SAR also attended and presented a wreath. A total of 3 Compatriots attended this marking.

16 May 09 The Governor represented the Governor General of the OFPA at the 402nd Jamestown Anniversary celebration at the 1607 Founders monument at Jamestown, Virginia

11 September 2009. Associates Jerry Hubbard and Francis Lay represented VA OFPA at 9/11 memorial day services in Culpeper, VA.

17 September 2009 Associates Jerry Hubbard and Francis Lay represented VA OFPA at Montpelier, Orange County, VA for Constitution Day.

17 October 09 A grave marking ceremony will be conducted for two OFPA founders and a Revolutionary War Lieut. at the Warner Hall plantation in Gloucester County, Virginia. We will conduct this with the local SAR chapter and the VA Chapter of the DFPA. Granite grave markers are being procured for this ceremony and are shown on the invitation. The Governor General and Deputy Governor General and their wives were both present for the meeting, luncheon, grave marking, Fort Eustis gathering and Yorktown Parade.

At the October 17, 2009 meeting, the Society elected Arthur Batten to Councillor General and Councillors Richard Raymond, III, Robert Robbins and William L. Simpson, III to serve 2010-

2011-2012. Donnel J. Hubbard was appointed historian to serve out the remainder of the current term. Next election will be in October 2010.

19 October 09 Our Society purchased a street banner for use in the Yorktown Victory parade. We will be marching in the parade for the first time as a society. We welcome other societies and the General Order to march in the parade with us.

We presented 15 ROTC awards at Virginia colleges this year.

We presented two Virginia National Guard Awards. One to the VA Army National Guard and another to the VA Air Force National Guard

We have a spreadsheet of information on 108 burials of OFPA founders in Virginia and are attempting to identify more. When we have exhausted our research, we have plans to write and publish a pamphlet containing information on each founder.

Our newsletter, The Virginia Cavalier is published quarterly, but a fifth edition was put out this year.

We have established a Virginia Society OFPA website. It lists our officers, our activities and a history of our society and provides information on pending events to our members.

2010 VA SOCIETY OFPA ACTIVITIES

Notes for Virginia's Governor's Verbal Report May 28th General Ct Charleston, SC

Activities to-date in 2010 during first 5 months:

Seventeen framed ROTC awards have been presented

Two National Guard framed awards have been presented.

Following the annual meeting held March 27th 2010, a luncheon was conducted with attendance including the Presidents of the VASSAR, War of 1812 Soc in VA and the VA chapter DFPA

These three Societies joined with us in purchasing a plaque which was mounted at the entrance of an historic church that honored two founders, two Revolutionary War patriots and six 1812 veterans buried there. It was unveiled in a ceremony involving a color guard and wreath layings and was attended by about 70 people. Two newspaper articles recorded the event.

We have carried the OFPA flag and or presented the VA OFPA wreath on seven occasions so far this year.

We have issued two newsletters, with three more newsletters planned this year.

We have had four new members approved so far and we are processing others.

We have prepared a draft publication on the burials of Virginia Founders to include write-ups on 115 of

them (show draft by Associate Hubbard). We plan a publication when research is completed.

The distributed handout invites all of the Order to attend our Yorktown activities. Please march in the parade with us behind our street banner. Also, please attend our luncheon and grave-marking ceremony as well. Two more of our granite grave markers will be installed on George Washington's grandfathers' gravesites in a nearby cemetery. We invite you to present wreaths and join the color guard for the event.

TWO-FER

At the 2010 OFPA General Court held in Charleston, SC, the Virginia Society came away with the Parrish Award (for the second year running) and is sharing the Hinckley Award with the D.C. Society. The Parrish Award is for the best large society and the Hinckley Award is for the largest percentage of membership increase.

Community Affairs: the VA Order organized or participated in 22 events.

- a. The Virginia Order organized and conducted two grave marking ceremonies. The first was a combined plaque presentation and grave marking ceremony at The Historic Christ Church in Irvington, VA . The second was a grave marking ceremony where two founder grave markers were installed at the Grace Episcopal Church graveyard at Yorktown..
- b. The VA Order jointly organized a grave marking ceremony for a Revolutionary War and 1812 veteran with a VA SAR chapter and the VA 1812 Society in Manassas
- c. The VA order participated in a grave marking ceremony where both the Orders colors and wreath were presented at the Shockoe Hill cemetery in Richmond
- d. The VA Order participated in two ceremonies where both the Orders colors and a wreath were presented. These were at The James Monroe Birth Place ceremony in Westmoreland County and at the Old Providence Church Cemetery Plaque presentation ceremony in Augusta County
- e. An associate of the VA Order publicized the reason for an event and participated in organizing a wreath laying ceremony in which the Order's colors and wreath were presented at the Leland-Madison Park in Orange County.
- f. An associate of the VA Order publicized the reason for an event as a descendant of a Revolutionary War soldier and assisted in organizing a wreath laying ceremony in Ohio
- g. The Society participated with the Order's colors in a Massing of colors ceremony in Roanoke
- h. The VA Order participated in three other ceremonies where the Order's wreath was presented. One was at the Madison Birthday ceremony at Montpelier in Orange County; one was at The Battle of Great Bridge Ceremony in Chesapeake; and one was at the Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr. Wreath laying ceremony at Yorktown.
- i. The VA Order gave greetings and presented a wreath at the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond celebrating the birthday of President James Monroe.
- j. The VA Governor gave OFPA greetings at two VASSAR functions. One was at their Annual Banquet in Richmond and the other at a joint meeting of VA SAR chapters at Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria.
- k. The VA Order participated in two parades by marching with their street banner and having announcements made about the Order at the parades viewing platform. One was at the 4th of July parade in Culpeper and the other at the Yorktown Victory Parade.
- l. An Order's representative was on the program and gave greetings at the DFFA (Heredity Society of the Daughters of the Founding Fathers of America) luncheon at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC.
- m. The Governor of the VA Order gave a speech in the Culpeper County Court House Independence Day Ceremony and an Associate of the Order read the Declaration of Independence.

n. The VA Order participated in two special events. The first was on September 11th when an associate of the Order and an SAR member escorted a bugler to three different locations in Culpeper to play Taps and the second was when three VA associates participated in the Wreaths Across America program at the National Cemetery in Culpeper.