



Above: AFL Members at Independence Hall

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AFL Annual Meeting 2013 – Recap

By Chuck Schwam

The June 2013 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia was a great success. Record attendance was reached with approximately 80 members participating. Here is a recap of the wonderful event.

Some folks arrived early on Thursday afternoon and attended a unique private tour of the American Philosophical Society. Alan Hoffman arranged two tours, due to the size of our group. After a brief discussion in the foyer of this historic building, we were escorted to the library where they had laid out original documents relevant to our interests. Letters were on view in English between Lafayette and Washington along with letters between Jefferson and Franklin. In addition, there were ‘off topic’ original documents presented. Most notably a hand corrected transcription of Neil Armstrong’s famous words “One small step for A man, one giant leap for mankind.” Who knew? We thought some of our members were going into psychogenic shock when the guide pulled out the original hand written diaries of Lewis and Clark. Wow.

The Thursday night welcome meeting was held in the hotel ballroom. Members were welcomed with local pretzels and beer, along with the famous “Lafayette Cakes” provided by Claire Ravosa. AFL member Hank Parfitt (President of the Lafayette Society of Fayetteville, NC), gave an update on the 2014 annual meeting. We are all looking forward to the red carpet experience Fayetteville will provide to attending members.

A special speaker, Marc Jensen of the Hermione La Fayette Association, gave a pictorial presentation and informative overview of the fascinating progress of the project. The aim is to recreate in detail the vessel that carried General Lafayette back to the United States in 1780. The schedule of stops in the U.S. is being finalized this fall. Marc is closely involved with the fundraising to bring about this important recreation of Lafayette’s second voyage to America. Although current codes demand an engine, the intention is to travel by sail to closely reenact history. They are employing trade workers to build the massive vessel, invigorating a local economy, bringing history to French schoolchildren



Diane Shaw Gives Her Keynote Speech at City Tavern

and allowing expert sailors a chance to navigate the Atlantic by sail, all while educating the public on Franco-American history. This project is truly remarkable.

The Board surprised attendees with a special gift Thursday evening as well. An advance copy of the first published essays by the AFL in many years was distributed to each member. Please see the article, *Symbol in Two Worlds: Essays on Lafayette* elsewhere in this Gazette.

We closed the meeting with our annual sing-along with, Carmino Ravosa. Carmino’s songs commemorating Lafayette are always a highlight of our evening.

Early Friday morning, two chartered motor coaches left downtown Philadelphia to reach Valley Forge. This guided tour of Valley Forge was truly extraordinary. The Park Service Rangers were exceptional guides and experts in their field. The near perfect weather allowed the rangers to walk us around the hallowed grounds of the encampment. Our group experienced an interactive tour, sharing facts and opinions with each other. I think everyone in this educated crowd learned something new.

We left Valley Forge and then headed to St. Peter’s Church at Lafayette Hill. The group was

welcomed by long time AFL member, Rudy Cusumano. Rudy presented to the group around the tombstones of St. Peter's Cemetery. Amongst these graves was a stone commemorating the ultimate sacrifice four Oneida Indians made during the Battle of Barren Hill. Rudy explained with fascinating detail the involvement of the Oneida Nation with the rebel cause of the American Revolution. His passion regarding this forgotten ally and the cunning escape of the "Boy General" came through loud and clear.

For lunch, we simply entered the church and enjoyed delicious sandwiches catered specifically for us. Rudy was able to continue the discussion, answering questions and sharing additional information. Peggy Wynn really hit a home run with the combined private room and catered lunch. Peggy deserves a round of applause for her assistance in planning the wonderful and flawless execution of our Friday tour.



Above: Loic Barnieu at the City Tavern

Next we boarded our coaches to arrive on time for our guided tour of the Second National Bank Museum in downtown Philadelphia. At the Second National Bank the Park Ranger there led us through hundreds of portraits of historical figures including two of Lafayette.

Our group next took a quick walk to Independence Hall escorted by the same Ranger. After a very informative introduction, we found ourselves standing in the very room our forefathers determined how to go about achieving independence of the now longest standing democracy in the world.

The day was capped by an evening at famous City Tavern. The evening started with a garden cocktail hour. Several tables were set up so that we could enjoy the food a drink comfortably. During the cocktail hour, AFL member Selene Castrovilla from New York was signing her children's book *Revolutionary Friends*. The surprise guest was the General himself, Loic Barnieu, who joined the party to "Celebrate...me!"

The weather held out, with a hint of rain just as we headed inside. Dinner was served in the "Long Room" which is the very room that in 1777 Lafayette met Washington for the very first time.

During dinner our guest speaker was Michael Quinn. Mr. Quinn is the President and CEO of the Museum of the American Revolution. He was able to share with us the origin of the need for this museum and how his team is making this museum a reality. Soon, students of the American Revolution will have a dedicated venue to explore our unique history.

Later, the group toasted the guest of honor, the General. Then our keynote speaker, Diane Shaw, the Director of Special Collections and College Archivist at the Skillman Library at Lafayette College took the podium. Diane presented to us "*I have been so long the friend of emancipation*": *Lafayette and Slavery*. Diane's words resonated throughout the room as she described Lafayette as one of the world's most passionate abolitionists

The next day our annual business meeting convened with many topics discussed, including a heartwarming tribute to the Pannagio family. Afterwards many members went to the Philadelphia Water Works to listen to Alan Hoffman speak at a well-attended event sponsored by the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R), a National Historic Trail.

Once again this AFL meeting proved to be a wonderful get-together for everyone. This annual event is not only educational but great fun. Spending a few days with people that all admire Lafayette is a very special time.



Above: Rudy Cusumano addresses the AFL at St Peter's Church

Save the Date!

The American Friends of Lafayette is proud to announce that the location of the annual meeting in 2014 will be Fayetteville, North Carolina. The meeting will start on Thursday June 12th with activities planned through Saturday June 14th.

The highlights of this weekend include:

- The Lafayette Trail Tour, where we will retrace Lafayette's footsteps on his 1825 visit.
- A dinner presentation Friday night by Lafayette historian and author Lloyd Kramer, Dean Smith Chair of History at UNC-Chapel Hill
- An old-fashioned North Carolina "Pig-Picken" (that's southern for a 'barbecue'!) on Saturday at Myrtle Hill, the circa 1825 country home of Robert Strange, US Senator and Commander of the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry which served as Lafayette's official escort in 1825.

Did you know...

- In 1783 Fayetteville became the FIRST city or town in the US to be named for Lafayette.
- In 1825, Fayetteville hosted Lafayette on March 4 and 5, thus making it the ONLY Namesake City he actually visited.



Below: The Lafayette Trail Tour provides an opportunity to retrace Lafayette's footsteps during his visit to Fayetteville, North Carolina in 1825. In this photo, tour participant.

Above: The Methodist University Chorale is shown here performing Vive la Liberte, Vive Lafayette at the dedication of the newly-constructed Lafayette Plaza during North Carolina's .jpg



In Search of William Lesure's Father

by Ruth Major

Editor's Note: Many of our members have a great interest in genealogy. This article was written by a new member, Ruth, who is currently engaged in a fascinating search for her 18th century French roots.

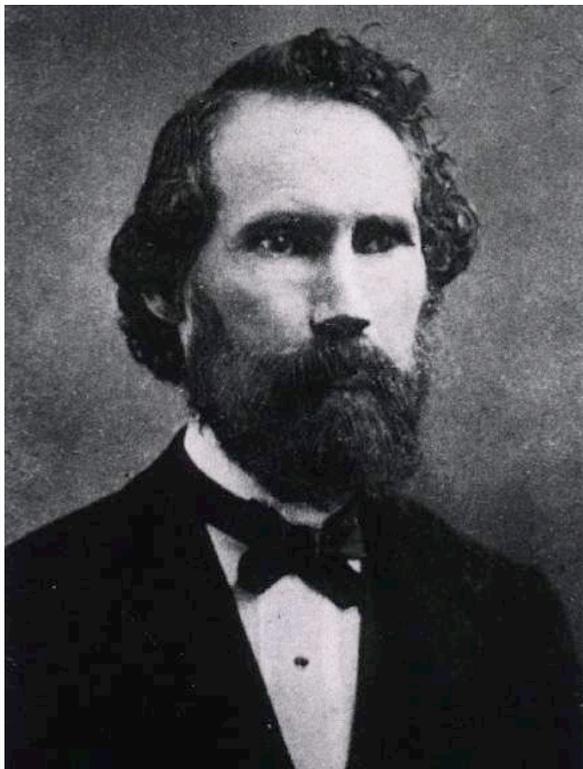
Tangible family heirlooms have a way of triggering intrigue and inquiry into the lives of their original owners. A great grandmother's brooch and well worn wedding ring prompted me to ask questions about my grandmother's mother. Most of the watches, cufflinks, silver flask and other articles for men were passed down to male heirs, but a few of the more intriguing or odd pieces once belonging to great grandfathers fortunately ended up in my hands, and eventually in our small family maritime museum I have been developing since 2005. Some special ancestral belongings spark lifelong searches that continue to this day.

Two such items were passed down four generations to me from 2nd great grandfather, Dr. Horatio LeSeur, born in 1820 and a Harvard trained dentist who practiced in Hyde Park, MA during the late 1850's until his death in 1891. One item seen in the photo below is Dr. LeSeur's #4 dental mirror which is inscribed on the back with the word "Boilable." The other is a small sealed box of pills priced at 25 cents, with a label that identified the now lost contents as "Leseur's Life Preserving Vegetable Universal Pills." The side label warns purchasers that the product is "not genuine without the signature *F. Leseur*."



It is difficult to explain the power of the two objects inherited from Dr. Horatio LeSeur. Holding his "Boilable" dental mirror in my hand has intrigued me for over 45 years since my grandmother first let me have the items which once belonged to her husband LeSeur Collins' grandfather. Several times over the past 4 decades, I have learned new information about the LeSeur line from distant cousins and from on-line research my daughter Paris and I have been doing in tandem. Recently, we were able to identify Horatio's nine other siblings including his much older brother Dr. Francis/Francois Leseur, who I just realized as I re-examined the pill box, was undoubtedly the creator of *F. Leseur's* vegetable pills.

From an "1841-1891, 50th Wedding Anniversary" booklet of Dr. Horatio and his wife Hannah Cooke (Waterman) LeSeur, we learn of Horatio's ancestry, "**They were descendants of the Huguenots, the**



grandfather coming from France to this country, and it is supposed that he lost his life on the return voyage." This never quite made sense to me until this year when a DNA LeSeur match, Diane Sartz Ducey from Mountain View, CA shared her family lore that the grandfather "**came over with Lafayette to help in the revolution.**"

This caught my full attention as I have an oil painting exhibit at the *Mabee Farm Historic Site* in Rotterdam New York this summer entitled, "Prominent Players, 1754-84." I had considered including a portrait of Lafayette with the several other portraits I did of Revolutionary War generals who spent time in New York. Had I known then the magnitude of the French support for the American Revolution, I certainly would have included a portrait of Lafayette.

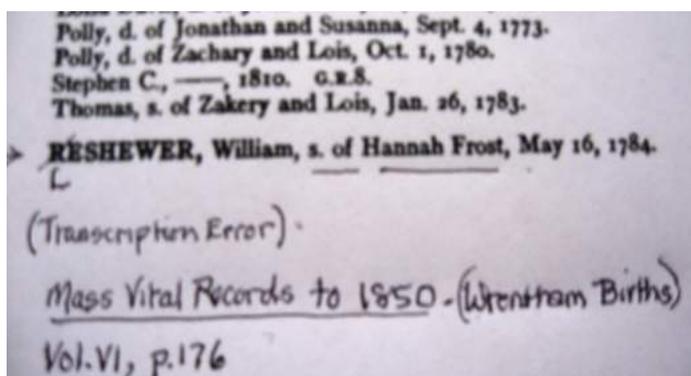
Dr. Horatio LeSeur, D.D.S, b 1820

It appears that DNA matches may be made far up on your ancestral lines, so I believe it is a good idea to learn your family surnames on all lines as far back as possible. My new LeSeur "cousin" Diane descends from Henrietta, one of

Horatio's four sisters, and this match has resulted in the on-line sharing of our genealogical findings, family lore and photos to the benefit of both families. It has also provoked more questions, some of which are still being researched.

Two of the questions we wanted answered were, "Who were William Frost LeSeur/Lesuer's parents?" (Horatio's grandparents) and "What was William's father's connection to France and Lafayette?" Try as we may, we found no trace of William's parents in vital records. Even his 1861 death certificate lists his parents as "unknown." So, one day I asked Paris to look for a woman with the last name of Frost in Wrentham, MA where we knew William Frost LesLesure had lived according to family records. I simply guessed William's middle name might be his mother's surname. As the ancestors or luck would have it, Paris found **Hannah Frost**, daughter of Samuel and Rachel (Adams) Frost, born in Wrentham, May 26, 1760. Within a week Paris also found a record of William's birth seemingly by accident, which due to a transcription error from an original "hard to read" Wrentham Vital Record, had been listed under R instead of L. (No wonder we and others on-line could not find it!)

There it was...



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William Leshewer, son of Hannah Frost, born May 16, 1784. in Wrentham. No father was listed, so the surname seemed odd, as a child born to an unmarried woman in the 1780's would normally have been given the mother's last name.

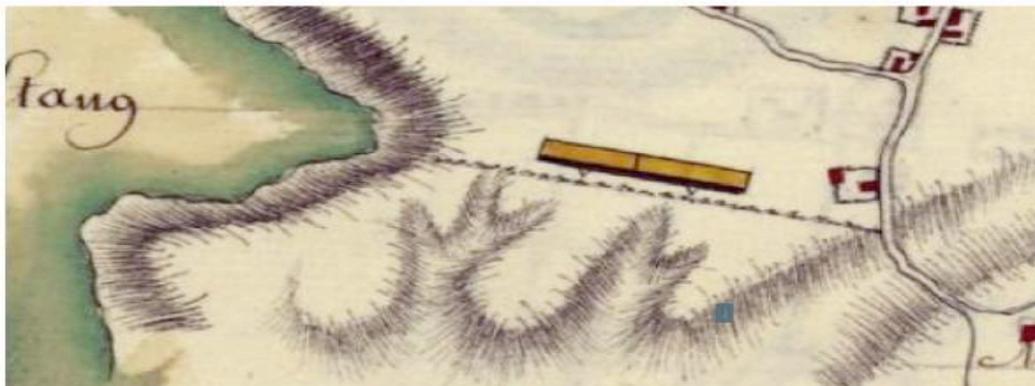
Hannah was the 5th child of 12 Frost children by two wives. Following her younger sister's birth in 1765, their mother Rachel Adams died. Their father Samuel moved to Maine, married Anna Clark in 1767 and had six more children in Winslow, ME. It is not known whether Hannah went with her father to Maine, but her son William was born in Wrentham, so she may have grown up with Frost or Adams relatives in Wrentham.

Samuel Frost, Jr. Hannah's older brother served in 1775 and 1776 under Col. Joseph Reed and Col. Wheelock's Massachusetts regiments. He was a non commissioned officer, a Sergeant in June of 1777 when he reenlisted under Ensign Enoch Pond and served three years in Col. Lee's Continental Regiment in which he was in the expedition under General Sullivan and the Battle of Rhode Island according to his pension and service records. Whether Samuel introduced his sister to a French comrade, we do not know, but he carried his military document folded in his pocket during the three years with Col. Lee, and on the back in one quarter a short poem was written. Hannah was 17-19 years old at the time. Now partly illegible, the 1777-1780 poem on Sam's military document reads:

“Hannah Frost, / her hand I pleg / Land --- for if dead / and for god nows ---- -- --”

Some have said the last two lines read, “Land and for dem-and for god knows what plagued” Was Samuel leaving a will of sorts in case he died on the battlefield, or does this note verify his absence due to illness after a furlough home had ended, and which he mentions in a letter? More questions.

It is interesting to note that Historian Dr. Robert Selig is currently conducting a study of **Rochambeau in Massachusetts** for the National Historic Trail, similar to the one he conducted in New Jersey, “**which runs from Providence through Wrentham**, Dedham and Roxbury into Boston where ships were waiting for these men.”



The caption beneath the map below reads, “Description in the Berthier Papers: *‘Campsite a Wrentham, Le 1 er decembre, 16 mil du camp de Providence.’* 1-4 December, 1782. Sixteen miles from the preceding camp at North Providence, the campground lay between Lake Archer, (the Etang at the left of the map) and Main Street, near present State Route 1-A, the old road from Providence to Boston.” Knowing that Rochambeau's troops had a camp in Wrentham allows for the possibility of Miss Hannah Frost meeting her son William's father in her home town.

(Detail of Photo used with permission, Dr. Robert Selig)

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We found no record of Hannah marrying a Frenchman with any version of the last name LeSeur, but there are records in Wrentham of her marriage to Cyrus Fisher when William was 3 years old. Paris found that Hannah and Cyrus had eight, possibly nine children in Wrentham, 10 including Hannah's son William who appears to have retained his French father's last name. We know that William left when quite young as he married at age 17 in Rehoboth, MA, 25 miles from Wrentham on July 21, 1801 to Elizabeth Maker, 23. (Rehoboth Vital Records)

Hannah Frost most likely did not speak or write French, but she made certain the last name (as she heard it) of the man who fathered William was on her son's Wrentham birth record. With many variations of his surname, it is hard to know what the correct spelling is for his French surname. Here are five versions found to date on documents for William, b. May 16, 1784 in Wrentham and listed chronologically:

1.) **Leshewer**

Birth Record (NEGHS, MA Vital Rec to 1850, Vol VI, Wrentham Births, p.176.) - May 16, 1784. Transcription error from "hard to read" original R for L.

2.) **Lesure**

(Marriage to Elizabeth Maker, Rehoboth July 21, 1801- Letter from Rehoboth Town Clerk verifying marriage) and (1850 Census-Rehoboth)

3.) **Lashure** (1860- Rehoboth, MA Census)

3.) **Lasuier**

(Rehoboth - MA Vital Records Death Records 1841-1915) - May 8, 1861

4.) **Lesuer** (Head Stone photo - West Dighton Christian Church Cemetery)

In trying to discern which Frenchman was William's father "who came over with Lafayette," I searched online for information about Lafayette's entourage. For a time, I imagined that his Private Secretary, Auguste Levasseur was the father. To get some expert advice though, I wrote to Alan Hoffman, President of the MA Lafayette Society who wrote the excellent unabridged English translation of the Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825, originally written in French by Auguste Levasseur. www.lafayetteinamerica.com

Alan kindly allowed me to correspond with his friend and the society's Membership Coordinator Pauline Cusson. For a week, we e-mailed daily and I was amazed by how much Pauline knows and how willing she was to help me narrow the search for William's French father.

Pauline said the surname most closely related to our ancestor is "derived from LeSieur - the sire or the lord and were generally large landowners who rented acres to peasants and collected rents thereby becoming 'landlords.'" She ruled out Levasseur, Lafayette's Secretary, as he was a Catholic and quite possibly may be the Auguste Levasseur born May 3, 1785, in Paris - only a year after William Leseur's birth. Next she ruled out the French who came down to help the Americans from Quebec as our record states, "They were of Huguenot descent," and additionally "They came over from France." According to The Huguenot Society of America's website, the Huguenots were of the Reformed Protestant Church and "supplied the colonies with excellent physicians and a large number of expert artisans and craftsmen."

I asked Pauline if she would contact a colleague who reads French and has access to Gilbert Bodinier's Dictionary of French Officers, actually entitled *Dictionnaire des officiers de l'Armée royale qui ont combattu aux Etats-Unis pendant la guerre d'Independence*, and see whether there were any French officers with a name like LeSeur. She contacted a reference librarian in Wisconsin Historical

Continued on page 10...

Society who found a listing for Zacharie **Le Sieur**, b. 1738, in Paris, a Captain in the Saintonge Regiment, one of five regiments that came over with Rochambeau. Zacharie was 45 in 1783, but we do not yet know if he was in the country through August, 1783 when William was conceived. Rochambeau's regiments left Boston Christmas, 1782. In a search of some rosters of enlisted men, Pauline found three **Lesueurs**, and there are other lists to consider.

William's father may have been one of the 700 French who remained in America, "the last of whom returned to France in November, 1783," according to Dr. Robert Selig. (p. 260.) He may also have been "more likely one of the hundreds who deserted or were discharged and remained in this country to seek a better life for themselves in the US," Historian, Dr. Selig wrote me, "hundreds of Rochambeau's troops did though rarely in New England." Then again, in pension records, there is a William Leseur from MA who Dr. Selig found along with two other Lesures who served in Col Reed's Regiment in the Massachusetts Line when Sam Frost was enlisted in 1775, though they were in different companies.

Our search continues, and we may never know with absolute certainty the identity of the soldier who fathered Hannah Frost's first child, William (**Leshewer, Lesure, Lashure, Lasuier, Lesuer.**)

I believe that the time when William was conceived in August/September 1783 was a time of great celebration in this country, and that there was enormous gratitude, hospitality and thanks given to the French for their years of faithful support for America's fight for independence. On September 3, 1783, the 2nd Treaty of Paris was signed by leaders of the United States, France, Spain and Great Britain, and American independence was officially recognized by all. According to Dr. Robert Selig, "In February 1778, France became the first foreign country to recognize the United States as an independent nation. In the Spring of 1780, the *comte de Rochambeau* brought over 5,000 officers and men across the ocean and forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis fifteen months later. Rochambeau's forces had decided the outcome." (p. 261.)

While researching Lafayette, I learned a great deal about his enormous contributions to the American Continental Army of supplies, financial assistance and trained military personnel. When taking US History courses as an undergrad, I missed the importance of this country's critical alliance with France. I regret not paying closer attention to Lafayette's years of tireless dedication and support, and that of *Comte de Rochambeau* and his over 5,000 troops who came to help the American colonies for five years in their fight for independence from Britain.

Our family records reveal that William Frost Lesuer succeeded in life despite the challenges he faced as a child. He became "both school master and Justice of the Peace in Rehoboth," and a husband and father to 10 children all of whom lived to adulthood. William was described as "an intelligent and cultured gentleman." I am quite certain that his French father was also. Certainly, his three sons who became doctors - Francis, J. Addison and Horatio Leseur, were also cultured and intelligent men who made significant contributions to their communities and professions. I am just thrilled to have inherited some of their fine French-American DNA!

Ruth Major, LeSeur Descendant
ruthmajor.com
Vineyard Haven, MA
August 27, 2013

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www.njht.org/dca/njht/publ/Volume I.pdf

"Hyde Park Historical Record", Vol I, p. 2, July, 1892,

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MA Vital Records to 1850, Vol. VI. (Wrentham and Rehoboth)

AFL IN FRANCE

There has been some talk in recent years regarding the possibility of an AFL "sponsored" trip to France. Many of you probably saw an email earlier this year regarding this trip. Over 50 AFL members responded to that email showing interest in attending an AFL trip to Lafayette's homeland.

Most respondents were specifically interested in scheduling this trip in 2015. Consequently, we are tentatively targeting the summer of 2015 for this trip. The timing of the arrival of the Hermione at the various US cities in 2015 may, however cause us to reconsider.

The trip would focus on Lafayette-related sites in Paris along with visits to Lafayette Escadrille, Chavaniac and (a possibility) Château de la Grange. The centerpiece of the trip would be the annual ceremony at Picpus Cemetery where the AFL would be represented like never before. The AFL would organize and schedule this, but all monetary obligations would rest squarely on the participants.

This excursion would be in addition to our annual meeting in 2015 and not a replacement. Please look for updates regarding the AFL in France via email and future Gazettes.

Visit to Memorial of the Escadrille La Fayette

By Caroline Lareuse

It was a great pleasure for me to attend the Memorial Day Ceremony on May, 25, 2013, at the Memorial of the Escadrille La Fayette, Marnes-la-Coquette, France. I was seated with the other guests of honor and invited to the luncheon afterwards.

Remarks were made by Van Kirk Reeves, president of the La Fayette Escadrille Memorial Foundation, Mme. Barody-Weiss, Mayor of Marnes-la-Coquette, and Alexander Blumrosen, treasurer of the Foundation. Major General Mark A. Barrett, Chief of Staff, U.S. European Command, Stuttgart, Germany, Major General Bruno Clemont, Director, State Aviation Safety Authority, Representative of the French Chief of the Air Staff, the Honorable Charles H. Rivkin, Ambassador of the United States of America, and M. Pierre-Andre Peyvel, Prefet of Hauts-de-Seine addressed the audience. Ceremonial music was provided by the French Air Force Band. The invocation and benediction were led by the Reverend Bruce W. Morgan of the American Church in Paris. There was a fly-over of the Memorial by the 2/4 La Fayette Fighter Squadron, based at Istres, France. In spite of a very rainy and cold day, the attendance was good.

Right: Caroline Lareuse standing in front of the Memorial of the Escadrille La Fayette.





President's Message

As President of the American Friends of Lafayette, I am delighted to report on the healthy state of the AFL. Funded by grants made by the A.J. Kirby, Jr. Foundation, Inc., our new publication (“Symbol in Two Worlds: Essays on Lafayette”) was distributed to members at our annual meeting in Philadelphia on June 13-15. . Edited with great competence and skill by Lafayette College’s and our own Diane Shaw, the publication was received with warmth and appreciation by our members, about 80 of whom attended the AFL’s “Philadelphia Convention.” It has been distributed to the remaining members and will be distributed to various libraries and other institutions. One of our members wrote: “Congratulations on the elegant booklet that I just received. The articles are very interesting and the presentation of the booklet is beautiful.”

I can truly report that the state of the AFL is robust. Since January of 2013, the AFL gained 5 life memberships, 17 individual memberships and 18 family memberships. The totals are 148 individual memberships, 40 family memberships and 2 institutional memberships. We believe that the total, well over 200 persons if one counts a family membership as 2 persons, is the highest in recent memory.

Moreover, our members have great enthusiasm. This is reflected in the attendance in Philadelphia on June 13 to 15, approximately 80, almost all of whom were members, and the attendance at our Yorktown reception last October, over 60. While attendance at the AFL’s annual meetings has been growing during the last five years, this year’s total is more than 20 greater than any annual meeting that I have experienced.

I hope to see many of you at Yorktown this October for the annual ceremonies and festivities.

Best regards,

Alan R. Hoffman

YORKTOWN 2013

The American Friends of Lafayette will again be represented at Yorktown this October. The celebration of the 232nd anniversary of the victory at Yorktown begins on Friday, October 18th, with a dinner at the Fort Eustis Club. This dinner begins at 6:30pm at a cost of \$45 per person. Coat and tie are required for men. Please see RSVP form below.

The Yorktown Day festivities on Saturday, October 19th look like this:

- 8:45 a.m. – Commemorative Ceremony at the French Cemetery
- 9:15 a.m. – Wreath Laying Ceremony at the French Memorial
- 9:30 a.m. – Wreath Laying Ceremony at the grave of Governor Thomas Nelson
- 10:00 a.m. – Yorktown Day Parade on Main Street
- 11:00 a.m. – Patriotic Exercises and Wreath Laying at the Monument - Rob Raffety and Lea Gryk will represent the AFL at this event
- 11:30 a.m. – Brunswick Stew Lunch at Grace or...
- 12:30 p.m. Buffet Reception at The Freight Shed on Water Street, Yorktown \$35 per person (see RSVP card below).

A special event this year is the reenactment of the Battle of the Hook at Warner Hall in Gloucester. There will be events all weekend long, but the actual reenactment will be conducted at 2:30 pm on Saturday October 19th. Warner Hall is located across the York River and shuttle buses will be provided from Gloucester High School, which is a 20-minute drive from Yorktown. There will be plenty of parking available at the high school. For more information go to <http://www.battleofthehook.org>.

The pièce de résistance of this weekend is the wine and cheese party for the members of the American Friends of Lafayette. This fabulous get-together takes place on Saturday, October 19th from 5:30 to 8:30 PM. We are very lucky to be hosted again by the Bowditches at the Hornsby House Inn located at 702 Main St in Historic Yorktown Village. Please RSVP for this party by contacting Lea Gryk by October 9, (757-869-6650 or leag4689@gmail.com). \$10.00 per person will be collected at the door.

Last year's Yorktown Day celebrations proved to be a great time to socialize, commemorate and celebrate our hero's involvement in the most important battle of the American Revolutionary. We hope to see you there.

PLEASE FIND RSVP CARD ON PAGE 14



To: Yorktown Day Association • Post Office Box 405 • Yorktown, Virginia 23690

___ Dinner, Friday, October 18, 2013, 6:30 p.m., Fort Eustis Club (Cash bar)
\$45.00 per person

___ Reception, Saturday, October 19, 2013, 12:30 p.m., The Freight Shed, Yorktown
\$35.00 per person

The reservation fees are non-refundable. A list of paid guests will assure your admission at the door. Please submit all reservations by October 1.

Reservations are taken on a first come bases.

Please notify of any special needs.

Make checks payable to the Yorktown Day Association.

Names of those in your party for whom payment is made: _____

AFL at Picpus

Myriam Waze had the honor of representing the American Friends of Lafayette at this year's annual ceremony at the Picpus Cemetery. There was the usual pomp and circumstance highlighted with Myriam laying our wreath at Lafayette's grave. Please see pictures below.

Right: AFL Wreath at Picpus



Left: Lafayette's tomb at Picpus

Below: Myriam Waze laying the wreath at the July 4th ceremony in Picpus Cemetery



Lafayette Day Massachusetts, May 20, 2013

By Jerry Meekins and Daughter Susan Cucchiara

The prelude to Lafayette Day was a reception the night before at the Ritz Carlton. My daughter Susan and I did not attend.

Our trip started at approximately 4:00AM from Northport, LI. We drove to the Wollaston MBTA train station in Quincy, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston. It was here that we parked. From there, we took the red line (T) train system into the Boston Common. The Lafayette Day ceremonies were to start at the Massachusetts State House. This elegant, circa 1798 building is on top of Beacon Hill adjacent to the Boston Common. It was built on land once owned by John Hancock. It is the state capital and seat of government in Mass. It is a most beautiful and historic building. Lafayette visited here in 1824 on his "Guest of the Nation" tour. It was a great venue to start the day. Even though there was a threat of rain, the day was clear and sunny.

We arrived at the Massachusetts State House at approximately 10:00AM. We exchanged greetings with Alan Hoffman and Chuck and Bonnie Schwam. After coffee, we read and took a picture of the 2013 Massachusetts Lafayette Day Proclamation.



To the best of my knowledge, the only other AFL members present were Blanche Hunnewell, Barbara Bayliss, Michele Vlahos and Richard Binzel.

Alan presided over the Lafayette Day ceremonies. This very special day was a joint effort between the Massachusetts Lafayette Society and the Consulate General of France in Boston.

The first order of business was the presentation of the colors by the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts. This was followed by the National Anthems (France/USA) performed by the International School of Boston Chorus. Alan introduced Richard Binzel and Michele Vlahos who, in turn, read the Massachusetts Lafayette Day Proclamation in English and French respectively. Alan then gave a detailed account of Lafayette and his impact on American history. Many notables were mentioned citing Lafayette's impact. Those included FDR, Wendell Phillips (abolitionist) and Daniel Webster. There was mention of Lafayette's connection to the Statue of Liberty. (Another noteworthy person in attendance was Captain Poole, a re-enactor of the Lexington Militia.)

At this point, Alan introduced the Consulate General Fabien Fieschi, who spoke of Lafayette's significant contributions to the continued connection between France and the US.

Before proceeding to the Lafayette Mall in the Boston Common, several of us meandered through the magnificent State House. Two highlights were the Horatio Greenough bust of Lafayette in the Senate Chamber, and the Lafayette plaque installed in the Doric Hall in 1992.

At approximately 11:45, we all gathered at the Lafayette Monument on the Lafayette Mall for the wreath laying ceremony.



It is called the Lafayette Mall because it is the route that Lafayette took during the procession to Boston from Roxbury on August 24, 1824. The Lafayette Monument was dedicated in 1924, the 100th anniversary of his 1824 visit.

We then proceeded to the nearby Union Club for the Lafayette Day luncheon. This event was held in the distinctive Oak Room. There were two significant highlights of the luncheon. First and foremost was the guest speaker, Professor John Stauffer, “Freedom’s Dreams: Lafayette and the Abolitionists”. As stated in the Lafayette Day program, Professor Stauffer is a Professor of English and of African and African-American Studies at Harvard University. His presentation was centered around how Lafayette inspired black and white abolitionists, especially those in Boston. The second highlight, especially for Susan and myself, was the acknowledgement of the presence of Marvin Gilmore, Jr. He is a WWII veteran and recipient of the French Legion of Honor medal. He is also the first African American in New England to be recognized for service on D-Day in Normandy, France.

This concluded the Massachusetts Lafayette Day celebration.

On our way home, Susan and I made two interesting stops. One was planned, the other impromptu. As we mentioned earlier, we had parked our car in Quincy, Mass. in order to take the T(subway) into the Boston Common. This had a dual purpose. The obvious was to avoid traffic and city parking. The second reason was to visit, and pay our respects to John Adams, second President and Signer of the Declaration of Independence. John and Abigail Adams and John Quincy and Louisa Catherine Adams are interred in the very impressive Presidential Crypt beneath the United First Parish Church. When we left the church, we took the T back to Wollaston, where we had parked our car.

From there we headed home. However, while we were driving south on 195, we decided to visit the grave of another Signer of the Declaration of Independence, Stephen Hopkins. He is buried in the North Burial Ground Cemetery in Providence, RI. We paid our respects and continued home. Traffic and time cooperated with us. We were able to catch an evening Bridgeport/Port Jefferson Ferry across the Sound. The sunset was spectacular while we crossed the Sound to Port Jefferson.

Perfect end to a perfect day.

Jerry Meekins and Daughter Susan Cucchiara

The AFL is Growing!

Eighteen New AFL members enrolled since the April '13 issue of The Gazette!
Twelve states represented!!

- Major Bryan Barroqueiro, Old Bridge, New Jersey (Life Member!)
 - Dr. and Mrs. D. P. Chaudhuri, Fayetteville, North Carolina
 - Bonnie Fritz, Gaithersburg, Maryland (Life Member!)
 - Ellen Green, Nashville, Tennessee
 - Jessica Holy, Woodbridge, Virginia
 - Ara Kouyoumjian, Los Angeles, California (Life Member!)
- Katie Leeper, Westminster, Colorado (a birthday gift from her parents!)
 - Ruth Major, Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts
 - Hugh McMahon, Petaluma, California
- Joanne Cullom Moore, Frenchman's Bayou, Arkansas (Life Member!)
 - Harry and Claire Shaw, Fayetteville, North Carolina
 - Wayne Strasbaugh, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 - John Wilson, San Antonio, Texas
 - Drew and Kalli Ziegler, Fayetteville, North Carolina
 - Gina Ravosa, White Plains, New York

First Rhode Island Regiment

Editor's Note: AFL President, Alan Hoffman, gave a speech celebrating the history of the First Rhode Island Regiment. To provide some context, we are reprinting a story from the Newport Daily News in R.I. regarding the speech. Following that story will be the transcript of the speech. Both are accompanied by photographs. These articles will encompass pages 19-26.

Newport Daily News, August 26, 2013

Black Regiment 'blazed trail'

The First Rhode Island Regiment is called 'the Jackie Robinsons of the American military' by the keynote speaker at an annual observance.

By Sean Flynn, Staff writer

PORTSMOUTH — The soldiers of the First Rhode Island Regiment, better known as the “Black Regiment” that fought in the Revolutionary War, were the “Jackie Robinsons of the American military,” according to a historian who spoke during Sunday’s annual commemoration of the Battle of Rhode Island.

On Aug. 29, 1778, the regiment repulsed three attacks by British and Hessian forces and held the army’s right wing. American Gen. John Sullivan praised them, saying they “repelled the British troops and maintained the field.”

“Like Jackie Robinson, they blazed the trail; they led the way,” historian Alan Hoffman told more than 50 people who gathered at the monument in Patriots Park, at the intersection of routes 24 and 114 in Portsmouth.

“That is just mind-blowing; that puts a whole new perspective on it,” said James Vincent, president of the Providence Branch of the NAACP, who served as master of ceremonies.

Between 1775 and 1783, more than 750 black slaves and freemen served in the regiment, and were part of the final victory over the British army in Yorktown, Va., in 1781, according to the summary history engraved on the monument.

Hoffman said the losses suffered by Rhode Island’s First and Second regiments were so great, they were combined in early to form the Rhode Island Regiment, also known as Olney’s Battalion after their commander, Jeremiah Olney. It was “a truly integrated unit,” he said.

During the siege of Yorktown, Gen. Lafayette chose 40 men from Olney’s Battalion for the successful final assault on Redoubt No. 10, which led to the surrender of the British.

“Again, the men of the Rhode Island First Regiment blazed the trail,” Hoffman said. “They led the way, although it took 200 years and the Vietnam War to create a truly integrated Army.”

Hoffman, who has practiced law in Boston for more than 40 years, is president of the American Friends of Lafayette and translated the book, “Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825” by Auguste Lavasseur, from the original French into English.

Speakers at the ceremony also addressed a more recent event, the historic speech the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. gave on the National Mall on Aug. 28, 1963, during the March on Washington.

Vincent said he led a group of 51 state residents, including 10 from Newport, to the 50th anniversary celebration in Washington, D.C., over the weekend. They left by bus Friday night, spent all day Saturday there, and arrived back Sunday morning. Pauline Perkins Moye of Newport and others on the trip also made it to the Sunday afternoon celebration in Patriots Park.

“I was awestruck by the multitudes who packed the National Mall to celebrate the greatest speech in American history,” Vincent said.

He said featured speakers on the National Mall on Saturday included Attorney General Eric Holder and the Rev. Al Sharpton. He said Holder is a hero to many people today for his efforts to protect voting rights of minorities after the Supreme Court recently gutted a key provision of the act, and his opposition to “stand your ground” laws in many states.

Other speakers on Sunday included Jimmy Winters, president of the Newport County Branch of the NAACP, who welcomed the attendees and led them in singing the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”; Audrain Maria Triplett, a retired Navy commander and chairwoman of the Black Patriots Committee; James A. Seveney, president of the Portsmouth Town Council; and Esmond D. “Doug” Smith, chairman of the Portsmouth 375th Anniversary Steering Committee.

“What a year for celebrations,” Seveney said, noting this also is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Providence Branch of the NAACP.

“We are all proud of our history,” Smith said





The First Rhode Island Regiment: The Jackie Robinsons of the American Military and Lafayette by Alan Hoffman

In his landmark work “Colored Patriots of the American Revolution,” Boston (1855), William C. Nell, this country’s first African-American historian recounts a speech given in 1842 before an Anti-Slavery Society by a now aged veteran of the Revolution, identified only as Dr. Harris, who had served in the Rhode Island Campaign in 1778: “There was a black regiment ... Yes, a regiment of negroes fighting for our liberty and independence – not a white man among them, but the officers – stationed in [a] dangerous and responsible position. Had they been unfaithful, or given way before the enemy, all would have been lost. Three times in succession they were attacked, with most desperate valor and fury by well-disciplined and veteran troops, and three times did they successfully repel the assault and preserve our army from capture. They fought through the war. They were brave, hardy troops. They helped to gain our liberty and independence.”

We are gathered here today to pay a tribute of respect and gratitude to the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment near the spot where these enslaved persons of color, African and Native American, fought valiantly to preserve the American Army during its withdrawal from Aquidneck Island on August 29, 1778, 235 years ago.



These heroic men, I submit, are the Jackie Robinsons of the American military. Like Jackie Robinson, they blazed the trail; they led the way. Others followed. And, having grown up in Brooklyn and seen the Brooklyn Dodgers play at Ebbets Field when I was a boy, I know Jackie Robinson.

The First Rhode Island Regiment, the Black Regiment, was created because of military necessity. Simply put, the State of Rhode Island could not otherwise supply its quota of troops to the Continental Army. It also came into being because blacks wanted to volunteer and were willing to risk their lives in return for freedom. So it was that the Rhode Island legislature, in February 1778, voted that any slave volunteering for the new regiment would be declared “absolutely free” after his service and would be entitled to the wages and bounties of regular soldiers.

The first test of the Black Regiment came only 6 months later in the engagement that Dr. Harris described. During the evacuation of Aquidneck Island, the Black Regiment was assigned to what turned out to be one of the hottest sectors of the American right wing and was the target of three charges, by principally Hessian forces. As Sidney Kaplan wrote in “The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution 1770-1780,” published in 1973, “Here the Germans ‘experienced a more obstinate resistance than they had expected,’ noted an observer. ‘They found large bodies of troops behind the work and at its sides, chiefly wild looking men in their shirt sleeves, and among them many negroes.’ ‘It was in repelling these furious onsets,’ wrote a Rhode Island historian in 1860, ‘that the newly raised black regiment, under Col. Greene, distinguished itself by deeds of desperate valor.’ The day after the battle, the Hessian colonel ‘applied to exchange his command and go to New York, because he dared not lead his regiment again to battle, lest his men shoot him for having caused them so much loss.’ General Sullivan announced that ‘by the best Information the Commander-in-Chief thinks that the [Black] Regiment will be intituled [*sic*] to a proper share of the Honours of the day.’”

The men of the First Rhode Island Regiment had enlisted for the duration of the war; that was a condition of their freedom. And they proved their valor and courage on more than one occasion. “In the attack made upon the American lines, near Croton river [in New York State], on the 13th of May, 1781,” wrote William C. Nell, “Colonel Greene [Christopher Greene, a cousin of General Nathanael Greene], the commander of the regiment, was cut down and mortally wounded: but the sabres of the enemy only reached him through the bodies of his faithful guard of blacks, who hovered over him to protect him, *and every one of whom was killed.*”

General Lafayette had commanded troops in the invasion force during the Rhode Island Campaign. He was mortified to have missed the Battle of Rhode Island on August 29 as he was just returning from Boston where he had tried unsuccessfully to have the French Fleet return to Rhode Island and support General Sullivan’s forces. Lafayette did return in time to lead the rear guard of the Army off the island to Tiverton.

During the month of September, Lafayette was in charge of the defense of the mainland, and the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment served as part of his division in Bristol and Warren.

By the time of the siege of Yorktown the losses suffered by the First and Second Rhode Island Regiments were so great that the two regiments had been combined to form the Rhode Island Regiment, also known as Olney’s Battalion after their Commander Jeremiah Olney. At Yorktown, due to their reputation for bravery, General Lafayette handpicked 40 men from Olney’s Battalion for the final assault on Redoubt #10. So during the siege of Yorktown and the successful storming of Redoubt #10 in October 1781, which led to the Surrender of the British Army a few days later, these men served nobly in a truly integrated regiment. Again, the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail. They led the way, although it took 200 years and the Vietnam War to create a truly integrated Army.

It is probable that his experience with the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment and with an enslaved African-American spy, James Armistead, who reported to him from Lord Cornwallis’ camp during

the Virginia Campaign and the siege of Yorktown, influenced Lafayette to become a sincere and committed abolitionist.

After the peace treaty that ended the American Revolution was signed in Paris, Lafayette wrote his paternal friend Washington a letter dated February 5, 1783:

“Now, my dear General, that you are going to enjoy some ease and quiet, permit me to propose a plan to you which might become greatly beneficial to the Black Part of Mankind. Let us unite in purchasing a small estate where we may try the experiment to free the Negroes, and use them only as tenants – such an example as yours might render it a general practice, and if we succeed in America, I will cheerfully devote a part of my time to render the method fascionable in the West Indies. If it be a wild scheme, I had rather be mad that way, than to be thought wise on the other tack.”

Washington replied in an April 5, 1783 letter from Headquarters in Newburgh, New York: “The scheme, my dear Marquis, which you propose as a precedent, to encourage the emancipation of the black people of the Country from that state of Bondage in which, they are held, is a striking evidence of the benevolence of your Heart. I shall be happy to join you in so laudable a work; but will defer going into a detail of the business, till I have the pleasure of seeing you.”

Although Lafayette visited America in 1784 and spent over a week at Mount Vernon with Washington and his family, Washington never joined him in that “so laudable a work.”

However, Lafayette was true to his word. He purchased a plantation in French Cayenne on the Northern coast of South America in 1785 and established a program of gradual emancipation for the enslaved workers.

After Lafayette wrote Washington on February 6, 1786 to inform him about his purchase of the Cayenne plantation “in order to make that experiment” of freeing the negroes, Washington responded by letter dated May 10, 1786:

“The benevolence of your heart my dear Marquis is so conspicuous upon all occasions, that I never wonder at any fresh proofs of it; but your late purchase of an Estate in the Colony of Cayenne with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country, but I despair of seeing it ...”

Many historians attribute Washington’s decision in his last will and testament to free his slaves upon his and Martha Washington’s death to the influence of Lafayette.

In a letter to a Boston abolitionist in 1845, the great British abolitionist, Thomas Clarkson, Lafayette’s long-time friend, quoted Lafayette as follows: “I would never have drawn my sword in the cause of America if I would have conceived that thereby I was founding a land of slavery.” This statement became a rallying cry for Northern abolitionists in the 1840’s and 1850’s. William C. Nell quoted



Lafayette's anti-slavery lament and described the Cayenne project in the Appendix to his 1855 book. He also gave Lafayette this tribute: "Lafayette was consistent, having bravely and disinterestedly acted in vindicating America's rights, he did not incur the reproach of hypocrisy by turning and trampling on the rights of others."

Lafayette returned to America in 1824 and stayed for 13 months visiting all 24 states. When he arrived in New Orleans in 1825, he was greeted by the corps of men of color who had fought for America under Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans. In his remarks which were reported in the local newspapers, Lafayette acknowledged the courage and sacrifice of the First Rhode Island Regiment before praising the Freedmen who served during the War of 1812.

"Gentlemen, I have often during the War of Independence, seen African blood shed with honor in our ranks for the cause of the United States," he said. Then he continued: "I have learnt with the liveliest interest, how you answered to the appeal of General Jackson; what a glorious use you made of your arms for the defense of Louisiana. I cherish the sentiments of gratitude for your services, and of admiration for your valor. Accept those also of my personal friendship, and of the pleasure I shall always experience in meeting with you again."

The First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail; the men of the colored corps of Freedmen who fought with Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans in 1814-1815 followed it.

As we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, we continue to learn about the Black soldiers who fought for the Union, particularly the Massachusetts 54th Regiment whose courage was dramatized in the movie "Glory." Governor John Andrew of Massachusetts said of them:

"I know not where, in all of human history, to any given 1000 men in arms there has been committed a work at once so proud so precious, so full of worth and glory."

The First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail; the Massachusetts 54th followed it.

In 1877 Henry Ossian Flipper became the first black graduate of West Point, the US Military Academy. A former slave born in 1856, he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. He became the first non-white officer to lead a regiment of the so-called "Buffalo soldiers" – black regiments of cavalry and later infantry who fought in the Indian Wars out West and later in the Spanish American War (1898), the Phillipine-American War (1899-1903) and the Mexican Expedition (1916).

The First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail and the Buffalo soldiers and Lieutenant Flipper followed it.

Segregated black regiments served in World War I and World War II, most notably the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. The commander of the Tuskegee Airmen was Benjamin Davis, Jr., an African-American officer who later became the first black US Air Force General. His father Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. had been the first black US Army Brigadier General.

The First Rhode Island First Regiment blazed the trail; General Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the Tuskegee Airmen and General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. followed it.

Despite President Truman's post-World War II executive order integrating the US Armed Forces, the first war in which we had a truly integrated military since the Rhode Island Regiment of 1781 was, not Korea, but Vietnam.

The men of the First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail; the American armed forces in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan followed it.

President George H.W. Bush appointed General Colin Powell Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the second highest military position in the country in 1989. And he served ably in that capacity until 1993. The First Rhode Island Regiment blazed the trail and General Powell followed it.

Finally, and you know where I'm going with this, in 2008 Barack Obama was elected President and when he took that oath of office on January 20, 2009, he became the Commander in Chief of the American military. The Commander in Chief, the highest rank in the land.

The men of the First Rhode Island Regiment, the Jackie Robinsons of the American military, blazed the trail; and President, and Commander in Chief, Barack Obama followed it.

God bless the United States of America and God bless the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment whose memory we are celebrating here today.



Brandywine Battlefield 7/2/2013
Jerry Meekins And Daughter Susan Cucchiara

Once again, our journey started at 4:00AM from my daughter Susan's house in Northport, LI. Our first stop was Lafayette's headquarters at Valley Forge. Due to the logistics and time constraints, we were not able to visit this site during our AFL Valley Forge tour. We decided to make it a point to visit this important Lafayette site prior to going to Brandywine. We arrived at the site at approximately 7:00AM. Although it was tricky to get to, it was not hard to find. There is a sign identifying the house as Lafayette's headquarters. The house is a short walk up a small hill. Although there is the highway nearby, this circa 1763 house is located near a creek and it stands in a decent-size clearing surrounded by trees. It is very beautiful and picturesque. In researching its history, I found out that the house is located on Wilson Road on the south side of Valley Creek. During the Revolution, it was the home of Samuel Havard, a bachelor who lived with his two sisters. It is believed Lafayette occupied two rooms. We could see through the window of the original structure. We noticed a fireplace that is probably the original one used by Lafayette. The last family to live there was the Henry R. Wilson family. It is now vacant and supposedly part of the University of Pennsylvania property. From there, we made our way over to the Brandywine Battlefield.

After a quick stop for a coffee and a roll, we arrived at the Brandywine Battlefield Visitor Center just before 9:00AM. As we entered the parking lot, there was a small group of children who were assembling for an historic educational summer camp activity.



We had made prior arrangements with our own (AFL) Gene Pisasale. For those of you who do not know Gene, he is an author and history buff. He lives near the Battlefield. He has also lectured on Lafayette and the Battle of the Brandywine. Interestingly, Gene refers to the Brandywine, as opposed to Brandywine without the. His rationale is that there is no place called Brandywine; it is a creek. Hence, the Battle of the Brandywine. It may be insignificant or unimportant, but it is a detail that I think is cool.

Due to the fact that Gene's time was limited, he had to maximize his time with us. We agreed on a quick tour of the Visitor Center's interpretive exhibit, which graphically tells the story of the battle and its association with the entire Philadelphia Campaign of 1777. From there, we went just down the road to the very interesting Christian Sanderson Museum. Although it wasn't open yet, Gene, a member, had a key. I couldn't even begin to explain in any detail this most fascinating museum. I will defer to Gene's explanation on the back cover of his book, The Christian Sanderson Museum.

"This museum, located in scenic Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, is dedicated to the memory of one man – Chris Sanderson, a musician, lecturer and historian who chronicled our heritage. Upon Chris's death, his

friend Tom Thompson was given the task of sorting through the more than 18,000 artifacts in Chris's collection. Thompson, along with Andrew Wyeth (famous painter) and others, created this "undiscovered gem" of a museum we have today."

There were many Lafayette related items that Susan and I thoroughly enjoyed during the short one hour we spent in this amazing place. I have never seen so many historic items collected by one person in all my life. Thanks to Christian Sanderson, history has been preserved. Before Gene left us, he gave us his recommendation as to how best spend the remainder of the day.

We went back to the Visitor Center. It was there we joined a tour guide, Steve Krenz, who guided us through the Benjamin Ring House with two other couples. This was Washington's headquarters. The tour was very interesting and informative. Steve shared with us some thought-provoking explanations of artifacts within the house. Here are a few:

- The placement of fork and knife at plate settings was reversed so the revolutionaries could be different than the British.
- The bed cords were tightened each night before retiring. Hence, "sleep tight".
- Coins were cut to denote variations of a dollar, e.g. ½ dollar, quarter, 2 bits, etc.

From there we went on our own to the Gideon Gilpin House. This was supposedly where Lafayette stayed. This house was very interesting to see, but it was not open to the public. Outside the house was a 390-year-old Sycamore tree. There is an arborist plaque that verifies that this particular tree was alive and growing at the time of the signing of the US Constitution. It has since been referred to as the Lafayette Sycamore.

Sometime after noon, we meandered back to the Visitor Center where we watched an eighteen-minute video about the Battle of the Brandywine. Following the video, we went to Hank's Place for lunch. This is a very nice local diner-type restaurant recommended by Gene. After lunch, we started our self-guided driving tour of the Battlefield.

For those of you who may not know, Brandywine Battlefield Park encompasses 42 acres of land (10 sq. miles). The battle took place on September 11, 1777. The British defeat of the Continental troops paved the way for the British occupation of Philadelphia. Even though the Americans were defeated, they were not conquered. Quite the contrary, the Americans proved to be formidable. Lafayette had his first taste of battle at Brandywine. It was here that he was wounded and endeared himself to George Washington, who wrote that Lafayette "*possesses a large share of bravery and military ardor*".

For those of you who attended the 2010 Annual Meeting here at The Brandywine Battlefield, this next and final section will, hopefully, be a little bit of a refresher segment. For those of you, like Susan and myself, who did not share in that event, the following is a journey through and around the actual battlefield.

Due to the fact that Susan and I had already visited the Benjamin Ring House (Washington's headquarters) and the Gideon Gilpin House (probably Lafayette's headquarters), we started our self-guided car tour on the extreme western end of the actual battlefield on Rt. 1 at the Old Kennett Meeting House. This is still an active meeting house established in 1710. Because we were driving and time was an issue, we chose not to stop at many of these historic sites. We were very selective about our stops. I will be specific about what sites we actually stopped at and perused. From there, we drove east on Rt. 1 back toward the Visitor Center, closer to the main battlefield area.

The next point of interest we weren't sure we recognized. It is referred to as the White Barn Complex of 1730 stone houses and barn. This particular site is significant because it was near here that a Virginia Captain and future Supreme Court Justice, John Marshall, was wounded. Next was the Barns-Brinton house, a 1714 tavern still open to the public. We then passed over Brandywine Creek on the southern end of the battlefield. We turned right on South Creek Rd. and headed south along Brandywine Creek to the most southern section of the battlefield. This site was called Pyle's Ford. There are at least eight fords along Brandywine Creek. A ford is a shallow area people use to cross a creek. No heavy fighting took place there. From there, we turned around and headed north traveling alongside Brandywine Creek.

As we crossed Rt. 1 on Creek Road, we passed the John Chad House, built in the 1720's. Elizabeth Chad occupied this house during the battle and refused to leave fearing it would be plundered. This was an area which was the center of Washington's defenses at Chad's Ford.

We continued north on Creek Road still parallel to Brandywine Creek. We passed several fords. Strategically, the British had the advantage because the Americans were unaware at the time that fords existed that far north along Brandywine Creek. In fact, the British crossed there and began to flank the Continentals. We soon passed Jefferies Bridge, which is where the British Army crossed Brandywine Creek. At this point, we turned south down Birmingham Rd. headed toward the area where the main battle took place.

Our next stop was Strodes' Mill. It was here, on October 6, 1824, Lafayette stopped on his "Guest of the Nation" tour. Continuing south, we stopped at Osborne's Hill, the site of British General Howe's observation post. We passed "Fair Meadow Farm" and the Samuel Jones Farm. According to Alan Hoffman's Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825, a translation of Levasseur's, Journal of a Voyage to the United States, Lafayette visited the Samuel Jones' house and the then "bed-ridden by age and infirmities", Gideon Gilpin, at the Gideon Gilpin House in July 1825.

Our next stop was a very interesting one. It was the Lafayette Cemetery adjacent to the Birmingham Friends Meeting House. It was here that we saw three very large monuments commemorating Lafayette, Pulaski and another for Colonels Isaac Taylor and Joseph McClellan (both of Wayne's brigade). Aside from the history of the Birmingham Friends Meeting House which is still an active Quaker Meeting House, there were two other very interesting sites in and around the cemetery. One was a rare octagon shaped school house circa 1818. The other was an area called the Peace Garden at Birmingham. In addition to the emotional aspect of this common grave for all unknown soldiers killed in the battle, there were several granite blocks with



quotes from now famous people regarding war. One in particular was “*An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind*”, Mohandas K. Gandhi. How profound!

The next four stops were equally interesting. First was an area referred to as the Ridge. This plowed field and now a County Park, known as “Birmingham Hill”, was where the main American line formed. Close by is a Civil War canon which marks the approximate site of the second American line. We could sense and feel the battle. Slightly further south on the opposite side of the road was a slender granite column that stands in front of a private house. This memorial was erected in 1895 by local school children in honor of Lafayette who was wounded near here in an area known as “Sandy Hollow”. Heavy casualties were taken by both sides here at the third American line.



When we stopped at the southern end of Sandy Hollow, we met a very interesting person. He was an elderly gentleman walking his dog. We asked him to take a picture of us. His name was Bob and he was an active member of a local Methodist Church. Oddly enough, our conversation was not too much about the Battle of the Brandywine, nor Lafayette. He talked to us about his interest in American Indians. He and his church group travel annually to North Dakota to help the American Indians. He was a very moving and emotional person regarding this wonderful passion. He and I shared some common interests. Both of us were Boy Scouts and we both read Stephen Ambrose’s book, Undaunted Courage, the wonderful account of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Continuing south, we passed Dilworth Crossroads where the last action was fought at nightfall. Although there were some other interesting sites, such as the Blacksmith Shop, the Blacksmith House, the Dilworthtown Inn and a country store, we did not stop. We continued on to the 1704 Brinton House, where we stopped to take a picture. This house is open to the public, but it was closed at the time. It resembles medieval English architectural style. The last site on the self-guided auto tour was the 1754 Gilpin House which was General Howe’s headquarters. This was the Gilpin’s family homestead, not to be confused with the Gideon Gilpin House where Lafayette stayed in 1777. We actually didn’t get to see or visit this particular site.

At this point, it was about 5:15PM. We started home. As usual, it was a fantastic day and another great history lesson with an emphasis on our very own Lafayette.

Symbol in Two Worlds: Essays on Lafayette

The American Friends of Lafayette is pleased to announce the publication of *Symbol in Two Worlds: Essays on Lafayette*, a set of four essays written by the following distinguished AFL members:

Robert Crout – “Lafayette and the Bastille: The Symbolism of Revolution.”

Paul Spalding – “After Seven Years of Prison and Exile, Why Didn't Lafayette Move to America?”

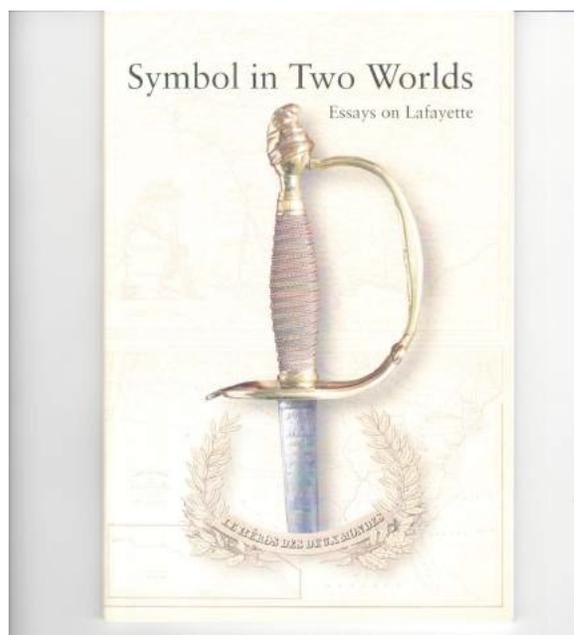
Diane Shaw - “I have been so long the friend of emancipation’: Lafayette as Abolitionist.”

Alan Hoffman – “Lafayette: Symbol of Franco-American Friendship.”

This wonderful collection of essays is bound with many illustrations and beautiful cover art. *Symbol in Two Worlds* is now for sale for \$15.00 in selected bookstores, but was distributed free to all AFL members.

Members may purchase additional copies for \$10.00

each (plus \$3.00 postage) by sending your order to the AFL Post Office Box. We are in the process of distributing copies to research institutions, libraries and the like.



A Special Lafayette Find

By Jerry Meekins

On July 4th, two days after my Brandywine visit with my daughter Susan, I was in Norwichtown, Connecticut, with my brother John. We were visiting a very old, historic, colonial cemetery to pay our respects to another Signer of the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Huntington. As we entered this old, quaint, historic and seemingly out of the way cemetery, we spotted a large rock with an inlaid plaque surrounded by French flags. Inscribed on the plaque was the following:

**IN MEMORY OF
TWENTY FRENCH SOLDIERS
WHO, SERVING UNDER
LAFAYETTE,
DIED WHILE IN CAMP AT
NORWICH TOWN 1778**



Apparently, this happened on his march to Providence RI, late July, early August, 1778. I am in the process of doing more research on this particular event. I will follow up in the next issue.

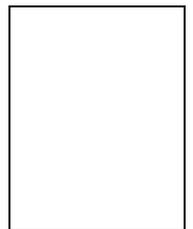
Have photos, ideas, or submissions for the Gazette? We are always looking for additional content. For distribution to the editors please email Dan Fitzpatrick at dfitzpatrick21@gmail.com



THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF LAFAYETTE

Dedicated to the memory of Major General Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette

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