

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the state of West Virginia, under the excellent leadership of its President, Mrs. Chris Smith and the elected board, is very proud and pleased with the accomplishments of the 2016-2017 year.

Museum Properties – The Craik-Patton House Museum is operating smoothly and has enjoyed much activity this year. Paul Zuros is now in his third year as Executive Director and Hayes Strayer is in his second year as an AmeriCorps worker. Over 40 guests attended the third annual Friends picnic on August 13th. More than 100 people attended the annual Cocktail Benefit on September 20th at the home of Jessica and Pat Graney. We had 13 sponsors for the event and over \$20,000 was raised for the operation of the House. A Mourning Exhibit was held at the house during the month of October and we will be featured the October 2017 edition of the national publication, *Early American Life* for it. We also hosted a Christmas Open House on the first weekend in December. We welcomed over 1,500 visitors at the House this year during 20 public and private events.

Patriotic Service – The Parade of Flags Program was presented three times this year: First, on Flag Day, June 14th, 2016 at the Boy Scouts of America – Buckskin Council, which is located next to the Craik-Patton House. Second, on July 4th, 2016 in conjunction with the Daughters of the American Revolution, Burford Chapter, at the Woodlands Retirement Community in Huntington, WV. And lastly, to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Burford Chapter, in Huntington, WV on May 13th, 2017. West Virginia Patriotic Services participated in the topic selection for the National Congressional Essay Contest for 2017-2018. West Virginia's topic was "How did Alexander Hamilton's intense involvement in the formation of our new government affect the lives of the citizens of his time and the lives of the citizens today?" The winning topic is "Why did the authors of the United States Constitution give Presidents the power to issue executive orders? How did Congress and the Judicial Branch limit these orders?"

Communications Committee – The Communications Committee is constantly working to update news for our website. It keeps all members throughout the state informed with news of our activities. They also do an excellent job of providing publicity to the media.

The Cabell County Committee met in April and welcomed two new members. They gave a one-time gift of \$1000 to Dumbarton House to honor Mrs. Boylin, our national Vice President of NSCDA, Chairman of Dumbarton House in Washington, D.C., and Mrs. Wilson, our Lady of Dumbarton House in W.V. Also in April, the Colonial Dames award was presented to a Marshall University student who will be majoring in History or Historical Preservation.

The Greenbrier County Committee held their annual luncheon meeting in White Sulphur Springs and were treated to a presentation by Morgan Dunn about the Lewisburg "Old Stone Church" cemetery. Our members voted to support Morgan's goal of restoration and protection of the cemetery. Further information about needs and financial support will be discussed at the Spring meeting.

The West Virginia Society has continued to support Sulgrave Manor, Gunston Hall, and Dumbarton House. The chairs of these three houses have done an excellent job of raising funds, awareness, and support for the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America houses.

West Virginia Dames attended three Naturalization Ceremonies at the Robert C. Byrd Federal Courthouse in Charleston, WV and helped to welcome 178 new Americans to citizenship.

The Registrar reported four new members, nine resignations, two deaths, and one dropped. As of April 1st, 2017, the membership stood at 135 members.

The semi-annual meeting was held in November and the annual meeting was held in May. Four board meetings were held, and a general membership meeting was held with invited guests and prospective members.

We had a great year!

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sinclair Castle
Historian