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**The American Society of Le Souvenir Français Inc.
Bulletin Mensuel - Vol. 1. No 3 - April 2021**

"FRENCH ALLIANCE DAY"
A PROCLAMATION BY GEORGE WASHINGTON
An enduring 243-Year old Tradition



George Washington Memorial Chapel, Valley Forge, PA

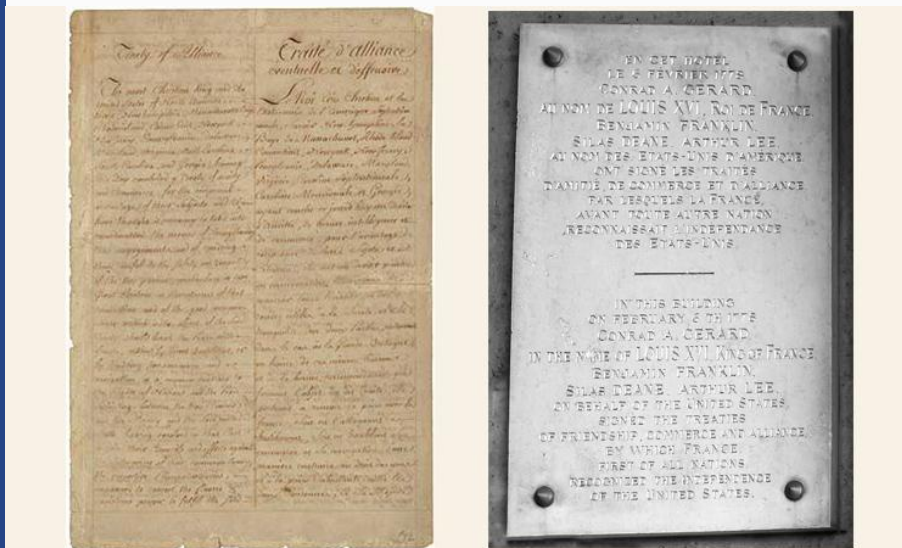
**Annual Service at the Historic Chapel is the
Only Regular Commemoration of the
Landmark Treaty that
Secured America's Independence**

Every year, on the first weekend in May, Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, in accordance with General George Washington's instructions, commemorates the Treaty of Alliance with France.

This ceremony is organized by the Washington Memorial Heritage and the Washington Memorial Chapel with the participation of numerous American patriotic societies dedicated to the recognition and perpetuation of French-American friendship.

The French side is represented by the Association of French Reserve Officers in the United States (ACREFEU), the Federation of French War Veterans, the American Society of the Souvenir Français Inc., the Honorary Consul of France in Philadelphia and the Embassy of France. On May 2, 2021, the American Society of Le Souvenir Français will participate and its president will lay a wreath.

Due to COVID restrictions, attendance inside the Chapel will be limited to 50 guests, and the wreath will be laid on the plaque honoring General Lafayette located in the front porch of the chapel.



The Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States was concluded at Paris, February 6, 1778. News of its signature reached the US on May Day, and the treaty was ratified by Congress on May 4, 1778.

The treaty provided for a defensive alliance to aid France should England attack, and that neither France nor the United States would make peace with England until the independence of the United States was recognized.

When word of the Alliance and its ratification by the Continental Congress reached Valley Forge, General George Washington issued the following General Order on May 6, 1778:

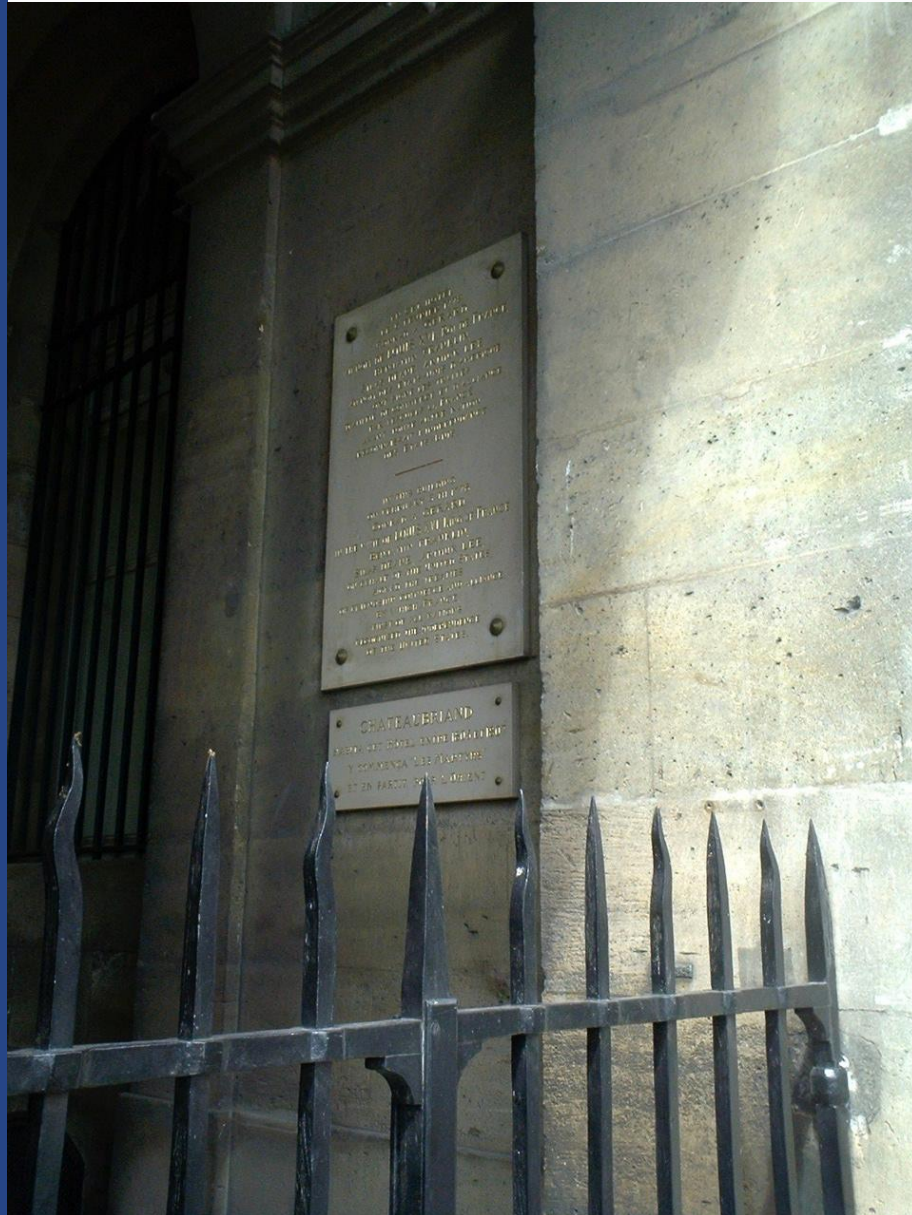
**"...Upon a signal given, the whole army will huzza:
'Long Live the King of France' "**

Thousands of American insurgents from the Continental Army thus shouted this celebratory huzza in unison.

Further, General George Washington issued this famous General Order:

"It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the universe to defend the course of the United States, and finally raise up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth *, to establish our Liberty and Independence upon a lasting foundation, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine goodness, and celebrating the important event which we owe to His Divine interposition."

** King Louis XVI*

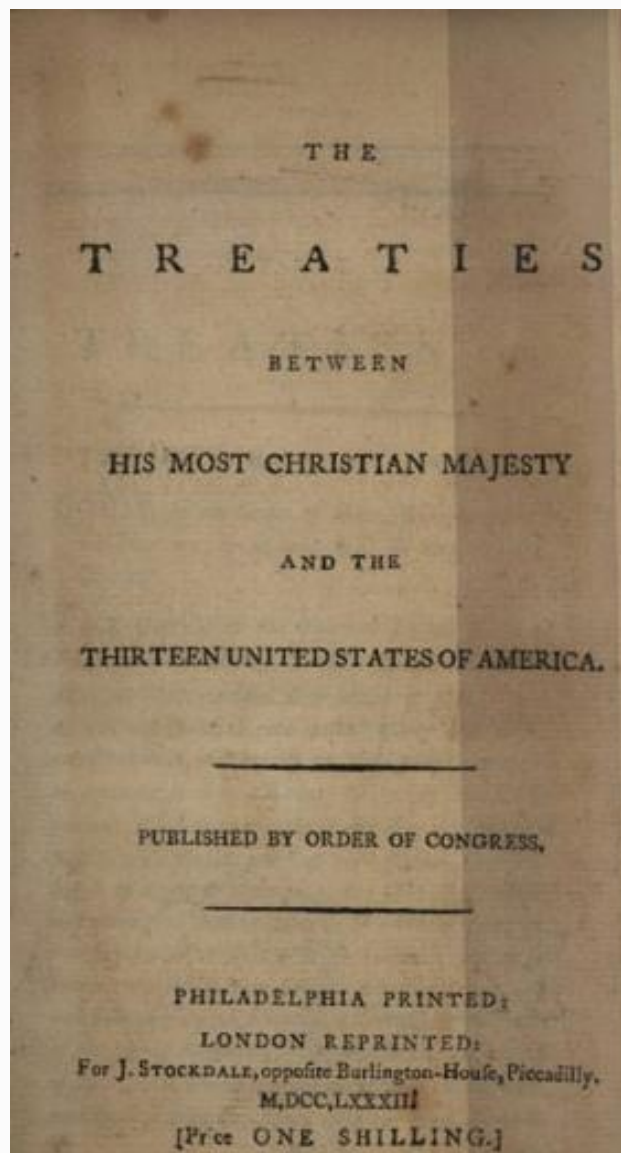


A plaque located at the corner of Rue Royale and Place de la Concorde in Paris reads:

**In this building
On February 6th, 1776
Conrad A. Gerard
In the name of Louis XVI King of France**

Benjamin Franklin
Silas Deane, Arhtur Lee,
On behalf of the United States
Signed the treaties
Of friendship, commerce and alliance
By which France
First of all nations
Recognized the independence
Of the United States

En cet Hotel
Le 6 février 1778
Conrad A. Gerard
Au nom de Louis XVI, Roi de France
Benjamin Franklin
Silas Deane, Arthur Lee
Au nom des Etats-Unis d'Amérique
Ont signé les traits
D'amitié, de commerce et d'alliance
Par lesquels la France
Avant toute autre nation
Reconnaissait l'indépendance
Des Etats-Unis



Excerpts from remarks pronounced on May 5, 2013 by LCL Patrick du Tertre, president of the the Association of French Reserve Officers in the United States, 1st Vice President of the American Society of Le Souvenir Français, and President of TheFrenchWillNeverForget.org

..."You have invited me because of the tens of thousands of French service men who fought for the US Independence, including the 8,000 well trained and well armed French Soldiers, and the 28,000 Sailors who were key to the final victory at Yorktown.

...You invited me to honor the memory of the more than 5,000 of these sons of France who gave their life, throughout the war... To put this figure in perspective, in relation to the size of the French population at the time, compared to the current population size of the US, it is as if close to 80,000 US soldiers would have been killed in a modern conflict today, and represents a significantly larger number than all US casualties in Vietnam. Countless more were injured most of the time "for life".

...You invited me because of the 13 billion (in today's US dollars) expended then by the French state, which became bankrupt in the process, and for the countless other private donations or contributions, from these French visionaries who often paid all their war expenditures from their own pocket.

So why did the French do that? Why did they invest so much in blood and treasure, to allow your young democracy to blossom, and become a beacon to the world?

Well first, let's be honest, and recognize that, at the time, it seems that no Frenchman would let a good opportunity to fight the English, go to waste; and on the other side of the channel, the feeling was mutual... But the core purpose; the driving force motivating the French leaders of this vast undertaking was to make the world a better place. It was the time of the enlightenment, the time of experimenting with new ideas; and French philosophers, from Voltaire to Rousseau were very much at the forefront of this quest. The nascent United States was a perfect laboratory; a sublime opportunity to try out these new ideas, which at the time were shared and commonly developed in Washington, in Valley Forge and in Paris.

Benjamin Franklin was a key facilitator; and Louis XVI (certainly the most progressive of all French monarchs in history) and Lafayette (a true visionary and the wealthiest man in France) seized on this opportunity.

In fact the French and American Revolutions are two sisters, both born from the same Mother; the same intellectual brew. The same intellectual brew which gave birth to all our modern western democracies today.

Lafayette used to say:

"THE WORLD NEEDS A STRONG UNITED STATES OF AMERICA"

How much more visionary than that can you get?..."





Photos credit: Gardiner Pearson, past President, Washington Memorial Heritage

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

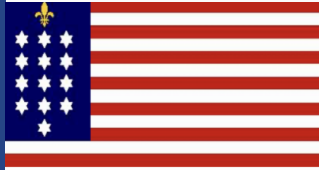
The event is organized by:
the **Washington Memorial Heritage**
and
the **Washington Memorial Chapel**

With the participation of:

Sons of the American Revolution (which provides a Color Guard)
Pennsylvania Society Sons of the Revolution
Pennsylvania Society Sons of the American Revolution
Pennsylvania Society Daughters of the American Revolution
National Society Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Colonial Dames of America
Penn's Grant Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the XVIIth Century
National Huguenot Society
Huguenot Society of Pennsylvania
Order of Founders and Patriots
Society of the Cincinnati (Maryland and Pennsylvania)
Washington- Rochambeau Revolutionary Route
Patriotic Order of Sons of America
National Park Service - Valley Forge National Historical Park

And:

Embassy of France in the United States
Honorary Consul of France in Philadelphia
Federation of French War Veterans
American Society of Le Souvenir Français
Association des Cadres de Réserve Français aux Etats-Unis
Alliance Française de Philadelphie



Our association is pleased to share the impressive work done by TheLafayetteTrail.org in view of the 200th anniversary of his triumphal tour of 1824 as "Guest of the Nation" throughout 24 States, and to promote the following LAFAYETTE TRAIL MARKER DEDICATION CEREMONIES IN MAY:

A bronze plaque will be dedicated on **May 17, 2021** at **Fort Hamilton, NYC**, to mark General Lafayette's arrival in New York harbor (attendance restricted due to Covid).

There will be a dedication in **Niagara Falls** on May 20, 2021 at 2PM EDT (please RSVP by Monday, May 17th by clicking on the following link: <https://secure.givelively.org/event/lafayette-trail/niagara-falls>)

There will also be 3 Lafayette Trail Marker dedication ceremonies in New Hampshire:

1. **Greenland NH**, Monday, **May 3rd at 10AM** (2 Post Road);
 2. **Derry NH**, Tuesday, **May 4th at 10AM** (17 Nesmith Street);
 3. **Hopkinton NH**, Wednesday, **May 5th at 2PM** (354 Main Street);
- No RSVP is required to attend the dedication ceremonies in Greenland and Hopkinton. RSVP is required to attend the Derry event. This can be done easily by emailing Elizabeth Robidoux at: elizabethrobidoux@derrynh.org

For more information, contact www.thelafayettetrail.org



Our association also would like to acknowledge with gratitude the good work done by Chuck Schwam, W. Robert Kelly Jr. and several volunteers from the American Friends of Lafayette association, who gathered on April 10 in **Yorktown** to clean up and embellish

with new plantations the **French Cemetery**.

This particularly moving place is situated in the midst of the battlefield, on the historical Tour Road.

Some 50 brave French soldiers and sailors are buried in a mass grave in the midst of a clearing, marked by a single large white cross.

To join in the many activities organized by The American Friends of Lafayette, please visit:

<https://friendsoflafayette.wildapricot.org/>



Since our last bulletin, the date for the dedication of the two grave markers for the two French Navy Officers buried in Trinity Church, Newport, RI, has been moved a day earlier to **Friday September 10.**



Watch for more news in the coming months as we honor General Rochambeau, Commander of the French Army, in cooperation with the National Park Service - Washington-Rochambeau Route and the 240th celebration of the final Victory at Yorktown, VA on October 15-19, 2021.

[Visit the Washington-Rochambeau Route, the Route to Victory.](#)



Watch for more news in the coming months as we honor the Centennial of the transfer of the US Unknown Soldier from France to the United States on board the *USS Olympia* on **October 25, 2021**, and at the Arlington National Cemetery on November 11, 2021.

<https://tombguard.org/>

The American Society of Le Souvenir Français Inc. aims:

- To preserve the memory of the French soldiers, sailors and airmen who gave their lives for freedom, and who are buried in the United States.
- To honor French Citizens who did great deeds in the United States, or with a strong connection with the United States,
- To promote esteem for French military heritage in the United States,
- To strengthen the long-standing traditional bonds of friendship between the American and French peoples, and to this end: erect or

maintain memorials and monuments and encourage historical research, public presentations and publications in the media.

Le Souvenir Français, a French association under the high patronage of the President of the Republic, was born in 1872 in occupied Alsace-Lorraine, and was founded in 1887 in Paris by Professor Xavier Niessen. The association has more than 300,000 members in France and in more than 45 countries.

In the United States, the American Society of Le Souvenir Français (Souvenir Français USA) has been represented since the First World War by a General Delegate, among whom were Dr Jules Pierre, MM. Bruno Kaiser, Colonel Roger Cestac, Christian Bickert, Mathieu Petitjean, and Jean Lachaud. The association is presided since November 2020 by CF(H) Thierry Chaunu (H) Lt Cdr., French Navy.

The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc. is a 501(c)3 corporation established in 1993 in NY.

Join us!

Help us implement several historic commemorative projects celebrating the 243-year-old Franco-American friendship and alliance!

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