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NSCDA
—PENNSYLVANIA—
A legacy in motion...



PRESERVATION • EDUCATION • SERVICE

The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (NSCDA/PA), headquartered in Philadelphia, with county committees in Allegheny (ACC) and Lancaster/Dauphin/York (LDY), is an organization of women which actively promotes an appreciation of America's national heritage through preservation, service, and educational projects. The PA Dames are part of a network of 43 Corporate Societies, with a national headquarters at Dumbarton House in Washington, D.C. Pennsylvania membership is about 450 women across the state, with National membership at approximately 15,000 women.

For more than a century, the members of the NSCDA/PA have led the way, as the founding society of the NSCDA and as drivers of the Dames' mission in historic preservation, education, and service.

Since 1899, the NSCDA/PA has administered Stenton, one of America's early and enduring preservation stories, where many of the Society's exciting educational programs take place today. Spurred on by Mary Chew, who believed that the "fine old mansion [would] prove to be an important acquisition, not only to The Colonial Dames, but to the city of Philadelphia," our founding Dames signed an agreement with the Logan family on December 9, 1899 and officially opened Stenton as a museum on May 23, 1900.

One wonders what those ladies, dressed in their Colonial Revival garb on opening day, would make of Stenton today. Could they envision the incredible post-industrial transition of the surrounding neighborhoods, Stenton's well-curated collections, or the transition from a purely volunteer stewardship to a professionally managed accredited house museum? What would they make of the Dinah Memorial, Philadelphia's first permanent memorial to a formerly enslaved woman? Surely, they would applaud *History Hunters* and *Science Sleuths*. And they would love the open gates inviting the neighbors to appreciate the ever-evolving gardens and meadows.



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For more information about joining the Dames and supporting our mission & programs:

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Connect with us on
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PRESERVATION

125 Years of administering Stenton

Over the past decade, the NSCDA/PA has invested more than \$700K in the ongoing preservation of Stenton's six historic structures, including Philadelphia's only surviving 18th century log house

Stenton—Philadelphia's most authentic house museum—has benefited from more than \$570K investment in collections, conservation, and interpretation projects over the past decade. Objects with a family provenance make up almost 95% of the museum collection

Centennial celebration of our NSCDA/PA Latimer Street headquarters, a purpose-built, Ritter & Shay designed (1923) building along with its Marion Coffin landscaped garden

In partnership with the Neville House Associates, the Allegheny County Committee (ACC) has **furnished Woodville with Federal Period furnishings**, and contributes through local ongoing volunteer and fundraising initiatives, including a **\$1000 annual contribution from the NSCDA/PA**

In 2024, the Lancaster/Dauphin/York County Committee (LDY) **spearheaded the rededication of the Ann Wood Henry Memorial**, which celebrates Pennsylvania's first woman to hold public office (1786)

Support of Great America's Treasures, the museum alliance of over 60 NSCDA national properties, including **annual donations of \$4K** toward Dumbarton House, Gunston Hall, and Sulgrave Manor

EDUCATION

45,000 4th - 5th grade students served through *History Hunters* since 2003 (3,500 students annually)

125 6th - 8th grade students served through *Science Sleuths* in its pilot year (2024-2025)

Average yearly contributions of \$6,000 toward NSCDA initiated scholarships: the American Indian Medical Scholarship (AIMS), the Congressional Essay Contest, and the American Heritage Award. AIMS was founded by the PA Dames in 1928, and in 2025, through national contributions will support 16 medical scholars

2 National History Day Philly Fellows funded annually since 2023, \$4500/year. (NHD-Philly served 590 6th-12th grade students in 2024-25)

71 "Founding Females" documented through the NSCDA's "250 by 250" project (as of July 2025)

Production of the docuseries, *For the Common Good: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation* through a partnership with You Will Never Forget Productions. This \$220K project, set to premiere in March 2026, was funded through grants & individual donors

\$2,500+ support provided to James Logan Elementary in 2024-25, which helped purchase 250 books at the Scholastic book fair

\$360K Pew Grant (2024) to fund Wrestling with Justice: Quakers and Northern Slavery, a community-led project based at Stenton

SERVICE

An early and ongoing commitment to helping immigrants prepare for U.S. citizenship continues as NSCDA/PA volunteers participate in yearly Naturalization Ceremonies in Philadelphia, Lancaster, and Pittsburgh, which includes welcome packages for new citizens

Veterans Interview Project, in partnership with the Library of Congress. Nationally, **NSCDA Dames have conducted and documented more than 500 veteran interviews**, Philadelphia volunteers added three interviews in 2025

The NSCDA/PA helps fund initiatives across the state, averaging \$8500/year to our county committees, our annual Washington Memorial Thanksgiving service, and in support of Thorncroft Equestrian Center's Veteran's programming

Official opening of the Dinah Memorial, Philadelphia's first memorial to a formerly enslaved woman, unveiled at Stenton in 2024, the culmination of the \$450K multi-year Inequality in Bronze project

\$450K William Penn Foundation grant plus \$525K NSCDA/PA (internal) fundraising challenge led the 2025 kick-off of our \$5M+ Capital Campaign in support of Stenton's educational and community programming. Through a phased project, Stenton's public spaces will be transformed to make the site more accessible, inclusive, and community-driven



Partnerships

From sustaining partnerships with The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Museum of the American Revolution, and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, to emerging programming with the In Color Birding Club and Mama Carla Community Quilting Circle, the NSCDA/PA volunteers and staff work to expand the ways we can maintain a welcoming presence.

Key Stenton neighborhood partners such as Bringing Everybody Together and the Stenton Park Advisory Council along with new partnerships with Keepers of the Culture, 339 Manumission Project, Heroic Gardens (inaugural Veterans Wellness Day), and This Hallowed Wilderness, have helped us expand our definition of what a historic site can represent.

Founding member of Historic Germantown, a partnership of 20 extraordinary historic houses, destinations, and museums in Northwest Philadelphia, that work collaboratively to preserve, interpret, and share prized local history, and collectively serve about 100K visitors each year.