



Mini Connections

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

SPEAKING FROM THE HEART

By The NSCDA/PA Communications Committee

This past June we gathered on a lovely spring day at Stenton for a mini-board retreat. These annual retreats are a great means for us to get-to-know each other on a deeper level.

Dennis Pickeral, Stenton’s intrepid executive director, lead us through several exercises we believe would benefit our membership-at-large. In recent years, a myriad of events and thought processes have changed how we think of ourselves as an organization. We are now mindful that terms such as “patriotic service” aren’t perceived by some in the way we intended. Our strength in moving forward and growing as an organization is to be mindful of these societal changes. But how then, do we talk about our love of the Dames and the mission work of which we are so proud? Each of us, whether we are talking about the NSCDA/PA—its programs and historic sites—to a friend, a potential new member, a current or potential donor, or any other community member, needs to have an “elevator speech” in mind.

Chances are, in those moments, we aren’t going to remember that our History Hunters program annually supports more than 4,000 under-served elementary school children, or that Stenton just received \$17K in general operating support from the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, or any other statistic that illustrates our successes. So, what do you say to that individual which could prove impactful?

Here are two questions to consider:

1. What has been your most powerful and positive moment as a PA Dame?

Our board members expressed a myriad of positive things, from volunteering at the annual Stenton Easter Egg Hunts to chairing the James Logan Award Dinner, spending mother/daughter time, enjoying the overall welcoming environment they discovered among so many talented ladies, helping to expand the Register of Ancestors, and even simply finding companionship in the book club.

2. Why do you give your time, talent, and treasure to the Dames?

It’s no surprise our board members had many answers to this question. Pride in Stenton and the brilliant staff was mentioned often. So too was the “power of place” in that it helps us uncover expanded histories and have an impact on children’s education. We celebrated our preservation successes and enjoy being caretakers for future generations. One thing we all heartily agreed on is that we are most proud of being a women’s organization with 120-years of sustained excellence, and that service is a fundamental part of what it means to be a Dame.

We encourage each of you to ponder these questions. Be ready to share your passion. And know that our NSDCA/PA and Stenton staff are always available to speak further with any individuals who wish to learn more of the details.

THE JAMES LOGAN AWARD DINNER: SEPTEMBER 9

We hope you will join us at the next James Logan Award Dinner on September 9 at the Union League! The dinner is the NSCDA/PA’s most important fundraising event and benefits Stenton and the *History Hunters* educational program. This year’s honorees include NSCDA/PA member, volunteer, and philanthropist Hannah Henderson; retired Philadelphia Museum of Art Director Timothy Rub; and Richard Washington, founder of a youth mentoring program that serves the neighborhoods around Stenton. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 215-735-6737 or email development@stenton.org.



Dear Fellow Dames,

Why do I give my time, talent, and treasure to the PA Dames?

The truth is, I cannot claim credit for joining the Dames. I came home one day almost 50-years ago to discover a large envelope in the mail. Inside a letter stated “Welcome to the NSDCA/PA”—a surprise birthday present from my mother! As an active Dame and chair of Stenton’s furnishings committee, my mom, Mary Ann Bridger, introduced me to meetings at Headquarters, where I found an active social community. I initially joined the board in the 1990’s. I have served as assistant treasurer, treasurer, nominating chair, house chair, and now president!

Why am I still an active Dame?

Family history certainly plays a part. One of my relatives was Maria Dallas Wilkins Sanders, (1892-PA #52.) My grandmother, mother, and several cousins have been Dames. And once my youngest completes her application, all

three of my daughters will be Dames. When I initially joined the board, I was working in the male-dominated investment world. What a privilege it was to suddenly be surrounded by bright, friendly, purposeful women! While I believe whole-heartedly in our mission work and have witnessed much transformation in the intervening years, the reason I continue to be an active Dame is that I enjoy the wonderful relationships I have cultivated with so many like-minded women.

What keeps me excited?

The prospect of the Stenton Education Center is very exciting! Knowing how important Stenton is to the history of Philadelphia and the great strides *History Hunters* continues to make, including the start of *Science Sleuths*, makes me proud. I believe an expanded, renovated education center will have a significant impact on our ability to better address a larger under-served community. I am

The strength of our Society depends on our continued efforts to cultivate new, active members. It’s been difficult during these pandemic years to invite prospects to our stated meetings and events, but we have persevered!

We thought now was a useful time to review the process:

1. Arrange for your prospect to meet with the Membership chair, **Amanda Quinn**, in-person or via phone/Zoom. Also introduce your prospect to as many other Dames as possible.
2. Have your candidate fill out the line-of-ascent form. This is a simple way to see your candidate’s understanding of her lineage. If the prospect’s ancestor appears to be eligible under our guidelines, but is not yet a qualifying ancestor, reach

out to Mickey Herr for further instructions.

3. Submit a membership proposal form to the chair, along with your introduction letter and a second letter from your chosen endorser.

4. The membership chair presents prospective candidates during stated board meetings, to be voted on, only after the first three steps have been completed.

5. Once your prospect has been accepted as a membership candidate, you will both be contacted via email with instructions for completing the membership application and paying initial fees.

- a. We encourage you to submit your membership proposal only when the

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

also heartened by our new, active board members, two of whom are already getting their young daughters involved!

With Warm Regards,

Mary Ann B. Wirts



During our board retreat, president Sally Wirts surprised Gina Whelan with the NSCDA’s Roll of Honor pin, in recognition of her sustained service and leadership, and the many ways Gina goes above-and-beyond in creating a welcoming Pennsylvania Society.

Nominated by former PA Society president Barbara Rogers, and supported by Sally Wirts and Mickey Herr, the entire board was ecstatic to celebrate Gina with this well-deserved honor.

SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBERSHIP

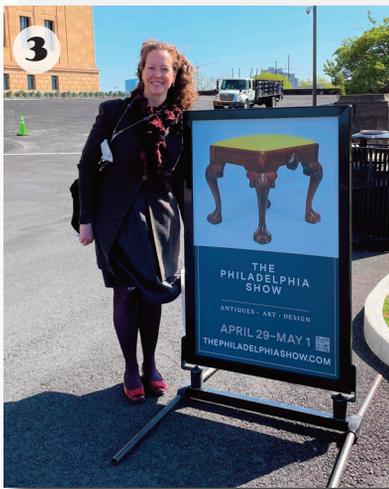
By Amanda Quinn, NSCDA/PA Membership Chair

candidate is truly able to spend time completing her application. The expectation is that the application is started immediately and completed within 3 months. When original research is indicated, we allow for plenty of extra time.

- b. We encourage you to be realistic with your candidate. The application process can be arduous, even for legacy members. As the proposer, your role is to “cheer” on your candidate until the final paperwork has been submitted.

Please reach out to **Amanda Quinn** at membership@nscdapa.org or **Mickey Herr** at registrar@nscdapa.org with questions. We hope to schedule an informal “meet and greet” for prospects in the fall!

DAMES & STENTON SHORTS



1) In April, NSCDA members from Washington, D.C. visited Philadelphia. PA and DC Dames enjoyed each other's company at Headquarters and toured Stenton. 2) Dames visited Wyck Historic House and Garden in Historic Germantown as part of the offsite April Stated Meeting. 3) Stenton Curator Laura Keim hosted a Facebook LIVE program from the Philadelphia Show at the Philadelphia Museum of Art where she and antiques dealer Kelly Kinzle compared a newly surfaced Charles Norris stool and one of its mates in the Stenton collection. 4) Despite the rain, guests at the Stenton Garden Party enjoyed the garden and celebrated new acquisitions at Stenton. 5) Stenton Committee Chair, Dora Rogers, updated Garden Party guests on this past year's achievements. 6) Stenton hosted its second annual Juneteenth Celebration in Stenton Park in collaboration with the Stenton Park Rec Center. Malidelfhia was one of many musical, poetry, and storytelling performances that visitors enjoyed. 7) Councilmember Kendra Brooks and her staff visited Stenton for a luncheon and tour.



NSCDA/PA Headquarters
1630 Latimer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
www.nscdapa.org

NSCDA/PA Staff

Executive Assistant: Adriana Robinson
Curator: Laura Keim
Stenton Executive Director: Dennis Pickeral
Director of Education: Rachel Corma
HQ & Stenton Facilities Manager: Kenneth J. Robinson
Community Engagement Coordinator: Stephanye Watts
Stenton Site Managers: Dawn Reid & Jeff Eckel

About Connections...

Copy Editors: Kaelyn Clark & Gina Whelan
Contributing Editor: Mickey Herr
Coordinator: Adriana Robinson
Layout: Rachel Corma
Printing: Affordable Offset

Headquarters (1921)
1630 Latimer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-735-6737
FAX: 215-735-1666
adriana@nscdapa.org
www.nscdapa.org

Stenton (1730)
4601 North 18th Street
(at Windrim Avenue)
Philadelphia, PA 19140
Phone/Fax: 215-329-7312
www.stenton.org
www.historyhunters.org
www.freedomsbackyard.com

General John Neville House
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-921-4728

NSCDA/Headquarters
www.nscda.org
Dumbarton House
2715 Que Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
202-337-2288
www.dumbartonhouse.org

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

On June 1, Jane Foster Willson gave a presentation about the NSCDA/PA Headquarters to the Lancaster-Dauphin-York Committee entitled, "Honoring Our History and Celerating Today: This is our House." You can view this presentation at www.nscdapa.org.



Entrusted With History's Future

The National Society of The Colonial Dames
of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mission Statement

The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is dedicated to preserving our State and National heritage through preservation of historic properties, conservation of antiquities and archives, education, scholarships, patriotism and respect for our Colonial ancestors whose distinguished service prior to 1776 and ideals are the foundation of our Country.

Adopted by the Board of Managers, October 10, 2003