

*Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
Board of Regents of Gunston Hall  
October 12, 2013*

**OPENING SESSION**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Wylie Raab, First Regent.

Julie Linn, Recording Secretary, called the roll. Present, unless otherwise noted, were the following Regents:

Marcy Moody – President of the National Society  
 Laura Towers – President of the Virginia Society  
 Wylie Raab – First Regent  
 Hilary Gripekoven – Vice Regent  
 Jane Barganier  
 Elaine Blaylock  
 Weasy Blodgett  
 Anna Bowman - Excused  
 Angela Box  
 Allison Brokaw  
 Helen Bragg Cleary  
 Torrey Cooke  
 Hannah Cox  
 Peg Crockett  
 Tibbie Field  
 Sally Goodyear  
 Jean Grainger  
 Priscilla Grayson  
 Tat Hardesty  
 Alice Harney  
 Winkie Hatton  
 Sara Hill  
 Melanie Hunt  
 Margery Jenkins  
 Avery Jenkins  
 Sally Johnston - Absent  
 Dianne Kennedy  
 Libby Kingston  
 Brantley Knowles  
 Anita Barbey  
 Julie Linn  
 Cissy Loughlin

Beppy Martin  
 Elizabeth McCallie  
 Jean McGinnis - Excused  
 Tia McMillan  
 Anne Rhett Merrill  
 Mary Millard  
 Betsy Norton - Excused  
 Kandi Osborn  
 Betsy Peters  
 Shannon Ravenel  
 Anne Riley  
 Becky Scott - Excused  
 Virginia Snider  
 Gena Tarbutton  
 Helen Taylor  
 Susan Van Allen  
 Sis Walton  
 Ruth Wilcox - Excused

FORMER REGENTS

Carolyn Abshire  
 Pearl Adamson - Excused  
 Ellen Holt

OBSERVERS

Linda Mattingly - DC  
 Harrison Giddens - Florida  
 Barbara Linville – Illinois  
 Rowena Van Dyke – Missouri  
 Nancy Keuffel – New Jersey  
 Penn Grove – Tennessee  
 Gina White – Massachusetts  
 Ruth Bell – Mississippi - Excused

Approved April 5, 2014

**Approval of the minutes:** Julie Linn, Recording Secretary, asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Board of Regents in April 2013, as distributed. The motion was made by Margery Jenkins and seconded by Jane Borganier. The motion carried.

**Remarks of the First Regent:** Wylie Raab

Dear Ann,

The lovely portraits of you and Colonel Mason still hang at Gunston Hall.

Your tomb bears a beautiful inscription, with words that speak to the adoration and grief of a devoted husband: "... Once she was all that cheers and sweetens life, the tender mother, daughter, friend and wife; once she was all that makes mankind adore ..."

Beyond these descriptions, I know little of you. How did your voice sound? Did you have a childhood best friend? Was there, as I suspect, a prankster in your personality? Were there duties expected of a lady such as you that you found tedious? What was your favorite season? Were you afraid of thunder, or mice? Did you resemble, in appearance or disposition, either of your parents more than the other? How I wonder who you were, Ann, and whether we might have been friends.

I am a citizen among many who share a reverence for those who worked and sacrificed to create our nation. Among our shared interests is Gunston Hall, because we appreciate not only its elegance and simplicity, the activity that defined your plantation life, the work that was expected of you as her mistress, or the love and devotion that clearly blessed your marriage.

Beyond all of these things, we cherish the principles of innate human rights which your husband espoused, fought for, sacrificed friendship for ... and which we presume were as fundamental to your thinking as they were to his. We share gratitude that those powerful declarations of human rights articulated by him now represent the foundation of our government and our society.

It is because of this that you, your husband, your home, and your shared humanity are preserved as a memorial, in perpetuity, for all who cherish freedom. It is because of this that there exists a Society of ladies who endeavor relentlessly to promote and honor the sacrifice of those who helped to create a free, just, and democratic nation.

As a member of this Society, I have often found myself lingering in Gunston Hall's burial ground, chattering away to you. It is a particularly peaceful and lovely setting, although I cannot visit without realizing how painful must have been your moments there, as you laid precious children to rest.

Why I choose you rather than your husband with whom to commiserate only a lady might understand! There lie both of you, but it has invariably been your counsel I sought,

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confident that many of your days as Colonel Mason's wife were devoted to supporting and guiding him as he wrestled with some of the most difficult decisions ever imposed on a caring human being.

Until one day I was struck immobile by the date of death etched on your tomb: March 9, 1773. *1773!* Before everything.

You departed this world two years before the colonies declared a war of independence against Britain; before Colonel Mason *wrote* a Declaration of Rights on behalf of Virginians and all colonists; before your friend Colonel Washington became commander in chief of the Continental forces and led them to victory against the British, securing the colonists' God-willed independence; before the establishment of a democratic government of, by and for the people; before your friends General and Mrs. Washington became our nation's first President and his First Lady; and before ... thanks to the indefatigable work of your husband ... our democracy became grounded in the fundamental principle that ALL MEN ARE CREATED FREE AND EQUAL.

*Could you even have imagined that, Ann, that all must be accepted and entitled as free and equal?*

If only your life had not been cut short! I can only imagine how different the details might have been. Perhaps, with your soothing companionship and gentle counsel, Colonel Mason and General Washington might have found a way to achieve what became our Bill of Rights without the loss of a friendship. Perhaps you yourself might have become a First Lady of the United States of America, and who knows what your intelligence and insight might have brought to bear? Perhaps we might know much more today about the life of Gunston Hall and its inhabitants than is available to us.

Still, we are enormously blessed to have your legacy, if not your written word. Rest comfortably, Ann, in the assurance that your husband's contribution to the creation of our free nation is without equal. And know also that your lives, your home, and your respect for the sanctity of every human life will remain, in perpetuity, an inspiration to all who cherish freedom. There will always be ladies who see to that.

With affection,

An admiring Citizen

12 October 2013

**Report of the Treasurer:** Elaine Blaylock advised that a complete Treasurer's report would be given on Sunday, October 13, 2013, scheduled as Fiscal Responsibility of the Regents and Development.

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**Report of the Vice-Regent:** Hilary Gripekoven introduced the Observers:

Linda Mattingly – DC – Regent At Large  
 Harrison Giddens – Florida  
 Barbara Linville – Illinois  
 Rowena Van Dyke – Missouri  
 Nancy Keuffel – New Jersey  
 Penn Grove – Tennessee  
 Gina White – Massachusetts  
 Ruth Bell – Mississippi

**Introduction of Executive Director, Scott Stroh:** First Regent Wylie Raab introduced our new Executive Director, Scott Stroh.

**Introduction of Staff Members:** Executive Director Scott Stroh introduced his Leadership Team and Staff:

Dana Ross – Administrative Assistant  
 Lena McAllister – Administrative Specialist  
 Frank Barker – Assistant Education Coordinator  
 Mark Whatford – Deputy Director, Programming & Librarian  
 Dave Shonyo – Archaeologist  
 Susan Blankenship – Development Program Coordinator  
 Lacey Villiva – Education Manager  
 Berto Delfi-Hernandez, Buddy Mongold, Lupe Martinez, and Jose – Grounds Team  
 Mavis Dezulovich – Housekeeper in the Mansion and Regent Quarters  
 Patricia Nyland, Louise Higgins, and Angie Barnes – Visitor Services

He noted that Karen Bazzle, Gift Shop Manager, has retired after 14 years of service.

**Remarks of the Executive Director:** Scott emphasized the importance of the gathering last night. We all met new people and felt something new by being together. He was impressed by having his family with him. He defined family as being his wife, two daughters and everyone at Gunston Hall. There was a tremendous diversity of people, together, having wonderful fellowship and sharing the occasion.

We are a gateway to discovery; to learning; to community; to dialogue; to fellowship; and to inspiration! This means we all are unique and special and are tied back to the authenticity of this place. Hundreds of years, which are defined by its beauty, are tied to the authenticity of the mansion, archaeology and structures; tied to George Mason as a person; and tied to an incredible legacy that has been left for us.

It is a great day at Gunston Hall every day!

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After reporting on various visitation statistics, Scott shared the proposed calendar of events for January – June 2014:

January 20	MLK Day
January	Author Lecture TBA
February 2	Seeds of Independence Program
March 2	Liberty Lecture
March 9	Liberty Lecture
March 29-30	Cooking Class/Fairfax County Adult Education
April 4-6	Regents Meeting
April 5	Kite Day
April 11-13	Boy Scouts Camporee
April 20	Easter
April 27	Britain on the Green British Car Show
May 2-4	Continental/British Encampment at Gunston Hall
May 11	Mother's Day
May 16-18	'Everybody Eats' - Food Ways of late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century Seminar
May 24	Naturalization Ceremony
May 26	Memorial Day
June 7	Writing Workshop
June 14	George Mason Day
June 23-27	Cub Scout Day Camp

Scott was very proud to announce that a Staff Recognition Fund has been established and funded in honor of our First Regent Wylie Raab.

The meeting was recessed until Monday, October 14, 2013 at 8:45 a.m.

*CLOSING SESSION*  
*October 14, 2013*

First Regent Wylie Raab reconvened the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

**Roll Call** – Julie Linn, Recording Secretary, called the roll. Present, unless otherwise noted, were the following Regents:

Marcy Moody – President of the National Society	Elaine Blaylock
Laura Towers – President of the Virginia Society	Weasy Blodgett
Wylie Raab – First Regent	Anna Bowman - Excused
Hilary Gripekoven – Vice Regent	Angela Box
Jane Barganier	Allison Brokaw
	Helen Bragg Cleary
	Torrey Cooke

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Hannah Cox  
 Peg Crockett  
 Tibbie Field  
 Sally Goodyear  
 Jean Grainger  
 Priscilla Grayson  
 Tat Hardesty  
 Alice Harney  
 Winkie Hatton  
 Sara Hill  
 Melanie Hunt  
 Margery Jenkins  
 Avery Jenkins  
 Sally Johnston - Absent  
 Dianne Kennedy  
 Libby Kingston  
 Brantley Knowles  
 Anita Barbey - Excused  
 Julie Linn  
 Cissy Loughlin  
 Beppey Martin  
 Elizabeth McCallie  
 Jean McGinnis - Excused  
 Tia McMillan  
 Anne Rhett Merrill  
 Mary Millard  
 Betsy Norton - Excused

Kandi Osborn  
 Betsy Peters  
 Shannon Ravenel  
 Anne Riley- Excused  
 Becky Scott - Excused  
 Virginia Snider  
 Gena Tarbutton - Excused  
 Helen Taylor  
 Susan Van Allen  
 Sis Walton  
 Ruth Wilcox - Excused

#### FORMER REGENTS

Carolyn Abshire  
 Pearl Adamson - Excused  
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#### OBSERVERS

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 Gina White – Massachusetts  
 Ruth Bell – Mississippi - Excused

**Report of the Treasurer:** Elaine Blaylock – No report.

**Report of the Corresponding Secretary:** Betsy Peters circulated a card for Betsy Norton, retiring Regent from Illinois.

**Report of the Strategic Planning Committee:** Hilary Gripekoven, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, stated that the Committee recommends adoption of the Strategic Plan. She so moved, and a vote was taken. The motion carried.

The First Regent acknowledged those Regents whose positions on the Executive Committee have been eliminated in the new bylaws. They are: Council Directors Anita Barbey, Elizabeth Martin, and Dianne Kennedy; Corresponding Secretary Betsy Peters; and Assistant Treasurer Avery Jenkins. The Presidents of the NSCDA and the Virginia Society no longer serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

**Bylaws:** First Regent Wylie Raab made a motion to adopt the proposed bylaws for the new corporation, The Board of Regents of Gunston Hall, Incorporated, with the understanding that the Governance Task Force will review them and bring amendments to the board at our April

2014 Semi-annual meeting. The motion was seconded by Regent Winkie Hatton. A vote was taken and the motion carried with one abstention. NSCDA President Marcy Moody abstained.

**Report of the Nominating Committee:** Susan Van Allen presented the 2014 slate of officers.

First Regent to fill a two year unexpired term – Hilary Gripekoven  
Vice Regent to serve a three year term – Julie Linn  
Recording Secretary to serve a three year term – Virginia Snider  
Nominating Committee position to serve a four year term –  
Hannah Cox

A motion was made by Weasy Blodgett and seconded by Jane Barganier to accept the slate. The motion carried.

**Report of the Former Regent's Advisory Committee:** Ellen Holt and Caroline Abshire are working to plan a number of events for the local Former Regents and to increase communication between the Regents and Formers.

**Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, First Regent Wylie Raab called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.