

# DICTIONARY FOR DAMES

## *A Dictionary for Dames*

*Seventh Edition*

The first edition of A Dictionary For Dames was published in 1987 in the back section of a booklet containing the California Society's Articles of Incorporation, Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution and Bylaws, and the National Society's Constitution and Covenant. The sixth edition was edited by Nancy Perrin Westin in 2010.

The National Society learned of the Dictionary and, after eliminating references to the California Society, published and distributed it to its officers and chairs and to all the societies.

This seventh edition of the Dictionary for Dames has been revised and brought up to date in 2025 by Honorary President Marian Bliss, President Julie Sarno and Vice President Margaret Martin with the hope that all members will find it a worthy reference.

# DICTIONARY FOR DAMES

## *Our Society*

The members of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America share a proud history of, and a lasting dedication to, preservation, education, and patriotic service to our communities and to our country. The Mission of our organization is: *Women opening doors to America's history through preservation, education, and service to inspire a shared love of country.* As we do this work, we are broadening the lens through which we are looking back through history so we can make space for more diverse stories and amplify the ways in which women, indigenous people, and the enslaved played critical roles in our nation's history.

Our organization founded in 1891 by a group of dynamic, visionary women, who were, in many ways, ahead of their time. We can all draw inspiration from their example and keep an eye on the future while staying rooted in our organization's mission. With approximately 15,000 members across the country, we are more than an organization—we are a community that supports each other, learns from each other, and has fun together! (NSCDA.org About Our Society)

### *What Dames Do*

Carving out a future for our country's history is no small feat; luckily, our members are not afraid of challenging work. Our three mission areas of historic preservation, patriotic service, and educational programs help us ensure that, as America looks ahead to the future, our nation's history is examined, understood, and remembered. Ongoing efforts include.

- Great American Treasures Museum Alliance
- Grant and scholarship programs
- Civic engagement and education
- Service to the military
- State and local outreach programs
- Genealogy tools and resources
- And more

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*When a Dame is a Dame*

*It is not when she is invited.*

*It is not when she accepts.*

*It is not when her first papers are filed.*

*these are preliminary.*

*It is not when she receives, fills out, and returns.*

*her forms to the Colonial State claimed.*

*It is only when her Colonial State notifies our California (CA) Registrar that they have assigned her a Colonial Society number and our Registrar assigned her a California Society number that she becomes a member of the California Society.*

*In the case of a Transfer, after the CA Registrar receives a copy of the transferee's Lineage Papers and assigns her a California member number, she becomes a member of the California Society.*

by Mrs. John Gustavus Ziel

As in a dictionary, entries are arranged in alphabetical order and not by topic.

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**ACTS IN COUNCIL** is a codification of the rules and regulations enacted by the National Council of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America at its biennial meetings in Washington, D.C. They are the bylaws of the National Society.

**AFFINITY GROUPS:** While the 43 Corporate Societies operate autonomously, the National Society has now grouped them into four Affinity Groups based on the number of members in each society. Each Affinity Group meets via Zoom several times a year to exchange ideas, express and propose changes, share concerns, and learn new techniques. Workshops are held by the Treasurers, Registrars, and chairs of the Historical Activities, Patriotic Service, and Museum Properties committees. The Affinity Group presidents within the region also meet during the conference. In addition to eight delegates plus observers from each of the societies, the National Society's Officers and Chairpersons will attend the conference.

Previously the corporate societies were grouped by geographic region. California was part of Region I with Washington, Oregon, Hawaii, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska, and Nevada.

**AMERICAN INDIAN MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS:** Officially adopted by the NSCDA as a national project in the 1930s, the American Indian Medical Scholarship (AIMS) gives students of American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Hawaiian Native descent the opportunity to pursue careers in nursing, healthcare, and health education. The scholarship is specifically designed to assist students who, following graduation, plan to work on reservations or in hospitals that serve Native populations with the goal of improving healthcare within those communities.

Scholarship recipients will be granted \$1,500 each semester, so long as they remain in good academic standing. Scholarship award use is restricted to tuition and other specific academic expenses. (NSCDA.org; American Indian Medical Scholarship (AIMS))

**AMPLIFIER:** “Women opening doors to America’s history through preservation, education, and service to inspire a shared love of country.”

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** The Bylaws of the California Society require that the Annual Meeting take place in April each year. This meeting is hosted by one of the Town Committee and rotates from San Diego to Monterey, to Los Angeles-Pasadena-Santa Barbara. All members are invited and encouraged to attend activities, meetings and luncheons associated with this annual event. A second Membership Meeting, the Semi-Annual Meeting, is managed by the NSCDA-CA board, and held in San Francisco each year in September.

**ARCHIVES** of the National Society are held at Dumbarton House and are under the care of the National Archivist and the National Office Committee. Archives of the California Society are in Octagon House in San Francisco. High value items are stored in two Safe Deposit Boxes in the

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Wells Fargo Bank on Union Street in San Francisco. All Membership Papers are housed in Octagon House and maintained *online* in Dropbox. NSCDA-CA meeting minutes including Treasurer's reports from 1941 through 2002 are stored in Dropbox. Recent minutes, from 2014 through 2025, are stored and accessible via the NSCDA-CA Website. Various accounting records and reports are stored in Dropbox from 1956 through 2017.

**ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY MONUMENT:** In 1902, The National Society dedicated a memorial to the soldiers and sailors of the United States who give their lives for their country during the Spanish-American War of 1898 and 1899. This memorial was dedicated during a ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery in which President Theodore Roosevelt gave an address. Built with funds given by all the Corporate Societies, the monument is an impressive slender column of granite fourteen feet high. It was the first permanent project undertaken by the National Society and was the first monument erected in the National Cemetery by a women's group. On October 11, 1964, a bronze plaque was placed on the monument in memory of all the American men and women who in the 20th century gave their lives for our country. During each Biennial National Council in Washington D.C., a wreath is laid during a beautiful ceremony planned by either the National Patriotic Service Committee or the National Historical Activities Committee and directed by the department of the U.S. Army in charge of the cemetery. Members of all the Corporate Societies attending the Biennial Council attend this event.

**BADGES** are available for purchase by all members. Members can send their order to purchase a badge to the CA Registrar.

The badge is suspended from a blue and gold ribbon which is suspended from a gold bar with the name of the members of Colonial Society. Members of Associate State Societies such as California, may have another bar with the name of the Associate State below the Colonial Bar. The President of a Corporate Society may have a bar with the word "President" attached to the ribbon beneath, the state bar. Badges are worn on the left breast by members only on occasions when they assemble officially for any stated purpose or celebration. Only members who are or have been National Society officers may wear the badge on a blue and gold ribbon around their necks. See also RECOGNITION PIN, and POPPY PIN.

**BIENNIAL COUNCIL:** (also called the National Council) is the ruling body of the National Society. It meets in even-numbered years in the Washington D.C. area. Meeting activities include business sessions, election of NSCDA officers, workshops, historic site excursions, and social activities. The National Officers, Committee Chairs, and Corporate Society Presidents report on status and results of the preceding biennium. The Council votes on amendments to the Constitution, to Acts in Council on all recommendations of the National Board, and elects the National Officers.

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California. as an Associate State, is permitted one voting delegate. The CA Society President plus five alternate delegates may be elected by the Board of Managers. Any member of the California Society may attend as an observer, but she must advise the President in advance of her intention to do so.

**BOARD OF MANAGERS:** The affairs of each Corporate Society are managed by a board elected from its membership. The Board of Managers of the California Society meets via Zoom at least three times a year. Meeting participants are society Officers, Managers, and Chairpersons. Any member may send written comments or suggestions. Voting Members of the Board are Officers elected annually, and Managers elected for three-year terms by the general membership. Other non-voting members include Honorary (past) Presidents, chairs appointed by the President, including, but not limited to the, the California Regent of Gunston Hall, California Member of the Dumbarton House Board, and the California Associate Trustee of the Friends of Sulgrave Manor.

**BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:** Duties of Society officers and chairpersons are explained by their titles. However, a few need further description. See entries for Dumbarton House, Gunston Hall, Historical Activities, Honorary Presidents, Patriotic Service, Registrar, Sulgrave Manor, and Vice Presidents. See also the Constitution of the National Society and the Bylaws of the California Society.

**BORONDA ADOBE** was the first museum project of the Monterey Peninsula Committee. The 1840 farmhouse, one of several buildings in a historic park near Salinas, was restored by and is owned by the Monterey County Historical Society. It accepted the Dames' offer to furnish the three-room house in the 1840-1860 California ranch house style. This five-year project included research on what would have been in the house, followed by finding and purchasing the appropriate furniture and household items, clothing, saddles, lariats, and even a bearskin rug. Dames researched the Boronda family, designed display cases to contain information about the family and house, and compiled information for docents. The adobe is California Landmark No. 870 and open to the public.

**BYLAWS** are the codification of the rules and regulations enacted by The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America at its Biennial Council meetings in Washington D.C. Formerly they were known as *Acts in Council*.

**CALIFORNIA SOCIETY of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America** was organized October 8, 1895, in San Francisco. Mrs. Selden Stuart Wright was appointed to lead this effort by Mrs. Howard Townsend of New York, National President. There were eleven charter members in addition to Mrs. Wright, who served as President from 1895 to 1904 and again from 1906 to 1916. The California Society was the first Society established in a non-Colonial state. It was incorporated July 15, 1896. Until acquisition of Octagon House in 1952, it

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had no permanent headquarters. Meetings were held in members' homes and later in rooms rented in several clubs in San Francisco.

- Booklets detailing the Society's history from 1895 to 1960 and the annual Historian's Reports are available in the Octagon House Library. A history of the California Society's first 107 years was published in 2004. See other PUBLICATIONS reviewing our Society's past.
- NSCDA-CA SOCIETY SUPPORT FOR THE US WAR EFFORT DURING WORLD WARS I AND II: The Society played an impressive supporting role in all major wars since its founding. During World War II almost every member participated in Red Cross work. A Los Angeles Dame started a Red Cross salvage shop that netted over \$200,000, and large sums were collected for hospitals and hospital ships. It helped with the National Society's huge project, full support of a USO in Ketchikan, Alaska. To raise funds for British War Relief, *Rosemary for Remembrance – A Colonial Herb Garden in California* was published in 1941. (In 1994 it was reprinted for sale to members and friends.) In addition to large financial gifts, the Society sent books, magazines, and gifts of all kinds to Ketchikan. The California Society gave “Alaska Luncheons” to raise funds to provide Christmas dinners and gifts for hundreds of military service members in Ketchikan each year for four years. At the same time, the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee sent gifts to military servicemembers stationed on remote islands, and the San Diego Dames collaborated with a Red Cross recreation center.
- CA SOCIETY GROWTH: The founding group of 12 members grew to 106 in 1904, and to 140 members in 1908. There were 426 members at the end of 2025.
- EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE: The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire in 1906 caused the loss of most of the records of the Society's first eleven years.
- SUNDIAL: A large sundial in Golden Gate Park was the Society's first gift to the community in 1907.
- Colonial Dames Day, proclaimed in 1915 at the Panama Pacific International Exposition, marked the Society's 20th anniversary.
- The LA Committee was established in 1915.
- COLLECTIONS: The Society's collection of Colonial and Federal artifacts began with items purchased and given by generous members in the 1920s. From 1926 to 1951,

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before acquisition of Octagon House, the Society had two rooms in the de Young Museum in which members displayed their ever-growing collections.

- **SIGNATURES:** The signature collection, including the legal signatures of the all Signers of the Declaration of Independence began in the 1920s.
- Two Plaques marking historic sites were placed in San Francisco in 1936. Those have since been removed and lost.
- The San Diego Committee was formed in 1940.
- Miss Lottie Woods retired as President in 1949 after 22 years in the office.
- **OCTAGON HOUSE:** In 1952 the Society at last acquired a headquarters of its own, Octagon House. There was a month-long exhibit of Colonial furniture at Octagon House in 1957. It was well attended by the public. In 1962 the Society sponsored a show of portraits and miniatures painted before 1870 at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. Members and friends provided display items. Over 26,000 people visited this exhibit.
- **ALLYNE PROPERTY:** Mrs. H. H. Ashley, President, succeeded in convincing the city that the Allyne property next to Octagon House should be purchased for a park and not sold to developers in 1964. The CA Society gave \$10,000 toward the park's development, beautification, and lighting.
- **WESTERN CONFERENCE MEETING:** This meeting in Pasadena, California in 1966, was held in honor of the National Society's Diamond Jubilee. The Los Angeles-Pasadena Town Committee Dames made all arrangements. The California Society sent a gift of \$8,000.00 to Dumbarton House, our national headquarters. The 42 State Societies donated a total of \$275,000.
- **CALIFORNIA SOCIETY DIAMOND JUBILEE:** Festive gatherings were held in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego in 1969.
- **MOUNT PLEASANT HOUSE:** The Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee began the enormous job of moving and restoring Mount Pleasant House in the 1970s.
- **LA CASA de MACHADO-STEWART (HOUSE) AND LA CASA de ESTUDILLO:** In the early 1970s the entire Society recognized San Diego member Mrs. Walter G. Farrell's

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work furnishing the La Casa Machado-Stewart House and the La Casa de Estudillo, She was commended in a Special Resolution by the State Senate.

- **REGION I MEETING:** Meeting held for several days in San Francisco in 1981.
- **MONTEREY PENINSULA COMMITTEE APPROVED:** During the 1984 Annual Meeting, the Monterey Peninsula Committee was approved by the membership.
- **THE QUILL:** In 1985 the first issue of The Quill, Society's first newsletter, appeared.
- **CALIFORNIA SOCIETY CENTENNIAL:** This was celebrated at its 100th Annual Meeting and Luncheon on April 4, 1995, in San Francisco. That evening Mrs. A. Corkran Nimick, President of the National Society, was the honored guest at a dinner party.
- **REGION I CONFERENCE:** The Society hosted this 1995 event in San Francisco. It was followed by the annual National Board Meeting which met for the first time in San Francisco.

**CALIFORNIA SOCIETY HEADQUARTERS:** The headquarters of a Corporate Society are in the city in which that Society was founded. The California Society was founded in San Francisco, and the society's headquarters have always been in San Francisco. Initially Society meetings were held in members' homes. About 1926 the Society rented a room in the Seven Arts Club. When that club closed, the Society moved to the Western Women's Club where it maintained rooms from 1927 to 1944. From 1944 to 1951 it was headquartered at the Women's Athletic Club (the present Metropolitan Club), and from 1951 to 1953 at the Women's City Club. During this time, the California Society's growing collections were stored at the deYoung Museum. In 1953 the Society moved into its own headquarters building, Octagon House.

**CASA DE ESTUDILLO (La Casa de Estudillo),** in Old Town, San Diego, is an adobe built in 1827 by Jose Antonio de Estudillo, son of the last Spanish commandant of the Presidio of San Diego. He lived here with his wife and seven children and held several civic positions under both the Mexican and the American regimes. Members of the family resided in the Casa until 1887. In 1905 they sold it, and in 1910 it was restored. Later Mr. Legler Benbough bought and donated it to the State of California, which asked the San Diego County Committee to furnish it. Now a registered National Historic Landmark, La Casa de Estudillo continues to attract many visitors each year. The San Diego Committee donated more than 700 items on display at La Casa de Estudillo and two other historic properties in Old Town San Diego, In 1983 they started renovation of the gardens. The San Diego Committee donated \$5,000 to the gardens in 2022.

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**CASA DE MACHADO Y STEWART (La Casa de Machado y Stewart):** is a small house 50 feet by 20 feet built in 1830, is one of the oldest adobe buildings in San Diego's Old Town. Richard Henry Dana described his visit to the house in *Two Years before the Mast*. After its restoration by the California Park and Recreation Department, the San Diego County Committee furnished it with genuine pieces of the period in which it was built, some from as far away as Guadalajara, Mexico. The San Diego Dames donated over 200 items now on display in the La Casa de Machado y Stewart to the State of California in January 2025.

The State of California was so pleased with the way the Committee furnished this “home of simple tastes” that they asked the Committee to take on the much larger project of furnishing La Casa de Estudillo.

**CHARTER MEMBERS** of the California Society:

Mrs. William C. Peyton (Anne Ridgely DuPont)  
Mrs. George Augustus Crux (Cornelia Stanley Armstead Lusson)  
Mrs. Selden Stuart Wright (Joanna Maynard Shaw)  
Miss Anne Aylette Brooke Wright  
Mrs. John Drury Tallant (Eliza Shaw Wright)  
Miss Anna Brooke Rose (later Mrs. Frederick Hastings)  
Mrs. Chevalier Hamilton Jouett (Mary Stuart Hooper, later Mrs. Frederick L. Perry)  
Mrs. Joseph Ledlie Moody (Ida Jorane Schander)  
Mrs. Samuel W. Holladay (Georgiana Catherine Ord)  
Miss Lulu Loraine Maddux  
Mrs. Cyrus Elwood Brown (Hulda Holmes Bergen)  
Mrs. Stuart Selden Wright (Maria Byrd Hopkins)

**COLONIAL STATE SOCIETIES** are those in the original thirteen American colonies and the District of Columbia. They are, in order of joining:

Pennsylvania	June 13, 1891
Maryland	December 29, 1891
New Jersey	April 7, 1892
Delaware	May 10, 1892
District of Columbia	May 20, 1892
Virginia	October 19, 1892
Rhode Island	February 21, 1893
Massachusetts	April 13, 1893
New York	April 29, 1893
South Carolina	November 16, 1893
Connecticut	December 18, 1893

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Georgia	January 24, 1894
New Hampshire	March 8, 1894
North Carolina	March 24, 1894

**CONGRESSIONAL SEMINAR ESSAY PROJECT:** This major project, supported by the National Patriotic Service Committee since 1977, is held under the auspices of the Washington Workshops Foundation, a private, non-profit educational program in American government for high school students. The California Society solicits entries for a national essay contest by sending announcements to high school teachers suggesting that they encourage their students to submit essays on the subject assigned for that year by the National Patriotic Service Committee. All California entries are judged first by the California committee and then sent to the National Society committee for final judgment. The winners are sent to Washington for a week of citizenship education about the national government. The California Society and the Town or County committees pay the students' tuition and airfare with funds donated for the purpose by members. Since 1990, the California Dames have sent over 140 students to the Workshops. Students may not use AI to write or create their essays.

The Monterey Peninsula and San Diego County committees have their own scholarship programs and do not participate in the Congressional Seminar Essay Project.

Winners of the contest will receive full tuition and support for travel to our nation's capital for the Congressional Seminar, a highly interactive, civics-focused workshop. The scholarship also provides university campus housing and meals, access to world class museums, tours, and more! ([nscda.org /Congressional Essay Contest](http://nscda.org/Congressional-Essay-Contest))

To participate in the Congressional Essay Contest, each applicant must:

- Be a high school freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior\*
- Be 16 years of age or older by the start of the seminar in the summer after the application deadline.
- Draft a compelling 750-word essay.

See [NSCDA.org/Congressional Seminar Essay for Application](http://NSCDA.org/Congressional-Seminar-Essay-for-Application) and contest details

*Note: While children and grandchildren of active NSCDA members are encouraged to submit essays and may participate in the Seminar as Legacy Scholars at their family's expense, they are not eligible for scholarships awarded to Congressional Essay Contest winners*

**CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS** to Society, which are tax deductible, may be sent at any time to the Treasurer. These gifts may be designated for a specific purpose. All gifts, large and small, help with the increasing costs of operating our Society and its museum properties.

See TAX EXEMPT STATUS.

**CORPORATE (OR STATE) SOCIETIES** are the member societies that together make up the National Society of the Colonial Dames. There are 42 state societies plus the District of

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Columbia making a total of 43 Corporate Societies. Organized October 8, 1895, and incorporated on July 15, 1896, the California Society was the first of seventeen Associate Societies admitted to the National Society on April 21, 1898 at the Fourth Biennial Council. (See Colonial State Societies, These societies reside in each of the original 13 colonies.)

**COURTESY MEMBERS** are Colonial Dames belonging to another state society who request courtesy membership privileges in the NSCDA-CA society. The Dame needs to ask the Registrar of her home society to contact the CA society Registrar when she desires a Courtesy Membership. Her home Registrar will confirm she is a member in good standing and would like courtesy privileges for her. When accepted by the CA Registrar, She will pay her Society and National dues to her home society and her Courtesy Membership dues to the CA society.

Courtesy Members are invited to all social functions and meetings. They have voice but no vote. They may propose and/or second candidates. If a Courtesy member subsequently wishes to transfer her NSCDA membership to the California Society, she should contact the Registrar of her home society and request the transfer.

California members may ask the California Registrar to initiate courtesy membership for them in another state society.

**COVENANT** of the National Society is a document signed on April 29, 1910, in the presence of the National Council, by the Presidents of the then 31 Corporate Societies. It states the purpose of the perpetual maintenance and preservation of the Colonial character of the National Society and details voting procedure by granting each Colonial State Society and the Domicile Society five votes at National Council and each Associate State Societies one vote. Inscribed on parchment, it is 44 by 29 inches in size and bears the seals of all Corporate Societies. When a new Corporate Society is admitted, its seal and its President's signature are added to the Covenant, which is on permanent display in Dumbarton House.

California was the first Associate State Society to sign the Covenant.

**DAMES DISPATCH** is a twice-yearly newsletter of the National Society and is sent electronically to every member. It contains National and Corporate Society news.

See PUBLICATIONS, NATIONAL SOCIETY

**DAVIS-HORTON HOUSE:** 410 Island Avenue, San Diego 92101, is said to be the last local example of a New England prefabricated home that was shipped to San Diego and is the oldest building in San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter, where it has served as a museum and information center for the Quarter since 1984. Among items on display are furniture and a portrait lent by the

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San Diego County Committee. Davis (1822-1909) was a wealthy merchant and ship owner who married into the Estudillo family. His collection of reminiscent articles was published in *Seventy-five Years in California*. The San Diego County Committee's museum committee functions as consultants to the house. The Davis-Horton House is on the National Registry of Historic Places.

**DIRECTORY:** The California Society issues an annual directory which is mailed to members requesting and paying for a paper copy. Directories are available at no cost to members requesting a .pdf (online) copy for use via their computers. *Member contact information changes -- address, telephone number, and email address must be sent to the Finance Secretary and to the Registrar.*

**DOMESTIC VIEWS:** A large format book containing photographs and descriptions of every historic or museum property owned or supported by the various societies, was published in 1992 by the American Institute of Architects Press, Washington. This book is available for purchase on Amazon.com and other book sellers. Also See Great American Treasurers.

**DOMICILE SOCIETY:** Associated with the NSCDA is the District of Columbia Society which was incorporated in 1892 and is one of the “Original Fourteen Societies.” However, it is not one of the Thirteen Original States. A member is admitted into the District of Columbia Society through the Colonial Society in which her qualifying ancestor served. The District Society was asked to arrange the first National Council in 1893 and since then has had the responsibility for making all National Council arrangements. In 1927, the National Council selected the District of Columbia as the headquarters for the National Society.

**DONATIONS:** NSCDA-CA loves donations. All donations should be sent to the Octagon House. Funds are always needed to support the organization’s mission and activities. Donations are also needed to support the operation and maintenance of Octagon House. All donations can, if you wish, be designated for a specific purpose.

The NSCDA is a tax exempt 501 (c)(3) organization. Contributions are deductible to the full extent of the law. The Federal Tax Identification Number (EIN) for the NSCDA-CA is 94-1415312. (2024 NSCDA-CA Donation Conformation Letter.)

**DUMBARTON HOUSE:** Located at 2715 Q Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, it serves as the national headquarters of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America. It is in Georgetown on what was originally a large tract of land patented by Ninian Beall in 1703 and called by him “Rock of Dumbarton.” In 1798 Samuel Jackson bought four and one-half acres and built this splendid home constructed by talented craftsmen who flocked to the Federal City after its creation in 1791. Many successive owners followed and in 1915 the house was moved

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one hundred yards to its present site. In 1928 the National Society purchased the house and in 1932 restored it to its original Federal design.

Dumbarton House is the only property fully owned and operated by The NSCDA. Built in 1799, this Federal period house in Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown neighborhood includes a museum, event space, and beautiful grounds.

Through the interpretation of its historic site and collections, Dumbarton House Museum promotes the understanding of historic preservation and of the early history of our nation, so the lives and ideals of early Americans inspire current and future generations.

Dumbarton House Museum's collection of more than 1,000 pieces includes furniture, paintings, textiles, silver, and ceramics primarily from the Federal period, 1789 to 1825.

As much as the house itself, the grounds at Dumbarton House tell the story of early life in the nation's capital and the burgeoning American Republic. Today, Dumbarton House sits on 1.2 acres of gardens and terraces. The landscaping has evolved over the years, with some additions dating to 1928 and others made more recently.

To celebrate the Society's Centennial in 1991, members all over the US contributed more than \$3 million toward restoration and modernization of facilities and additional office space and a beautiful Assembly Room opening onto a sunken garden patio.

Dumbarton House is now part offices and meeting spaces for the National Society and part museum. All Dames are encouraged to visit it when in Washington D.C. It is administered by a board known as the Ladies of Dumbarton, composed of one member from each Corporate Society, nominated by the Society President, and appointed by the National President, plus officers and members at large. See (<https://dumbartonhouse.org>) for more information.

**EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE** of 1906 in San Francisco destroyed much of the city including the home of Mrs. Selden Stuart Wright, the California Society's founder and first President. Many of the Society's records, which were kept in her home at 910 Lombard Street, were also destroyed. Afterward, the then-Registrar spent years contacting Colonial State Societies to reconstruct the CA society's records. The plans and casting for the Sundial in Golden Gate Park were destroyed, thus delaying execution of the Society's first gift to the city. Mrs. Wright's Certificate of Membership in the Society survived the disaster and was later found in the hands of a strange man on the waterfront, a mystery never solved. It is now stored in Octagon House.

**ELIGIBLE ANCESTORS:** A woman's membership in the Society is based on an Eligible Ancestor, one from whom she is descended in her own right. Each Colonial State Society determines persons within its own state who qualify to be Eligible Ancestors. The Society

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maintains the Register of Ancestors on its website, NSCDA.org. This file may be consulted by all members and candidates for membership. Except for the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, eligible ancestors must have resided in one of the Colonies and have given worthy and efficient services to one of the Colonies before July 4, 1776.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** The Executive Committee is composed of the elected officers. Per the NSCDA-CA Bylaws, the Executive Committee shall act for the Board of Managers between meetings of the board. Any action taken must be ratified by the Board at its next regular meeting.

**FISCAL POLICIES:** The Treasurer is the custodian of all funds, securities, and assets of the California Society, subject to the direction of the Board of Managers. She disburses funds as directed by the Board of Managers and pays only those bills authorized in the budget. She is responsible for keeping accurate accounts of all funds and reporting to the Board of Managers at each meeting. (NSCDA-CA Bylaws p. 9, Adopted 12-6-2022)

The NSCDA-CA Fiscal Year is April 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>: National Dues are specified by the NSCDA. NSCDA-CA dues are approved by the Board of Managers and membership. The Budget is prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Managers. The accounts and records of the treasurer shall always be open for inspection by Board of Manager's members and by the Finance Committee members. (NSCDA-CA Bylaws p. 16, Adopted 12-6-2022)

**GREAT AMERICAN TREASURES:** In partnership with the Artist Book Foundation, The NSCDA is publishing a book titled *Great American Treasures: Women Preserving History since 1891*. This publication is focused on the more than seventy-five historic places and monuments that form the NSCDA's museum alliance, Great American Treasures (GAT).

For more than a century, The NSCDA has led the preservation of these treasures as vehicles for understanding and appreciating four centuries of American history. The publication will draw upon the built environment and material culture of the properties, monuments, and their geographic and social context. The text will provide readers with not only an understanding of more than a century of the NSCDA's preservation efforts but also a window into the power of historic places to connect us to our past. *Great American Treasures: Women Preserving History since 1891* is published as one of the NSCDA's initiatives to honor the nation's 250th anniversary of independence from Great Britain. The volume will be officially released in 2026. (NSCDA.org: *Great American Treasures: Women Preserving History Since 1891*) Moved text from previous location.

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One of the most enduring legacies of the National Society of the Colonial Dames is in the field of historic preservation. The first museum house under the aegis of the “Dames” was the Van Cortlandt Manor opened in 1897 by the New York Society in New York City. In the following centuries, the “Dames” have continued to acquire and maintain properties important to the history of the nation.

Octagon House, built in 1861 and acquired by the NSCDA-CA in 1952, was moved across the street and renovated to be the California Dames state headquarters. It is an incredibly unique museum property.

Nationwide, the Corporate Societies own and/or participate in the management and administration of 92 museum properties throughout the nation. They range in size and style from a Georgian mansion to a one-room hand-hewn log post office in Sheridan, Wyoming, to a Sundial in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park. NSCDA-CA’s Octagon House and La Casa de Estudillo are included in the National Register of Historic Places.

Since the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee relinquished ownership of Mount Pleasant House in 1995, the only museum property owned by the California Society is Octagon House, its headquarters in San Francisco. The San Diego County Committee has furnished and displayed many historic items in La Casa de Estudillo and the La Casa Machado y Stewart Adobe. The San Diego Dames have also loaned furniture and a portrait to the Davis Horton House. The Monterey Peninsula Dames furnished the 1840s Boronda Adobe near Salinas.

**GUNSTON HALL PLANTATION:** Located at 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck, Virginia 22079, it is about 20 miles from Washington, D.C. The house was built between 1755 and 1758 by the Revolutionary patriot George Mason (1725-1792), author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, upon which our national Bill of Rights was modeled. Set in formal 18th century boxwood gardens, the Georgian house faces the Potomac. Its rooms were carefully restored and are considered among the finest of the Colonial era. In addition to the house, there is a visitors reception center with gift shop and museum, a library, reconstructed outbuildings, picnic area, and the Mason family graveyard. A visit to Gunston Hall, a National Historic Landmark, is well worth the short drive from Washington.

Gunston Hall is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia and administered by the National Society through a board composed of one member from each Corporate Society and four members-at-large, all known as the Regents of Gunston Hall. Ex officio members of the Board of Regents are the President of the National Society and the President of the Virginia Society. The presiding officer is called the First Regent.

**HISTORIAN'S REPORT** has been issued annually since 1897, apart from the years 1903 and

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1915. Since 1980, it has been included in the annual Directory instead of being issued separately. Collected in bound volumes at Octagon House, the reports are interesting reading and available to any member. The National Historian's report, *Proceedings*, summarizes activities of all Societies since the previous report. They, too, are collected in bound volumes in the Octagon House Library.

**HISTORIC MARKER:** On November 12, 1936, the day the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge was opened, the Society presented a plaque to the city marking the site where in 1844 the first bridge in San Francisco was built, across a small creek. The plaque was mounted on the outside wall of a building at 738 Montgomery Street. (Years later that building became the Playboy Club and the plaque was removed.) About the same time, the Society placed a plaque to mark the Cedar of Lebanon tree planted in 1932 on the grounds of the Commodore Sloat School in honor of the bicentennial of George Washington's birth. Funds for both plaques were raised at food fairs conducted by the Society. Those historic markers had disappeared by 1987.

**HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEES:** National and California, work in the fields of research, preservation, restoration, and education according to the Objects of the Society as set forth in Article II of the Constitution of the National Society.

Since the NSCDA initiation in 1891, The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America has been committed to the exploration and interpretation of our country's complex history. Across 42 states and the District of Columbia, the NSCDA's members are stewards of history, women of action in their communities, and champions of our nation's ongoing story. The NSCDA partners with the American Red Cross, American Cruise Lines, Blue Star Museums, America's Vet Dogs, The American Alliance of Museums, Historic Hotels of America, The Library of Congress Veterans History Projects, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the NSCDA Great American Treasurers. (NSCDA Website About Us page)

The NSCDA-CA has collected legal signatures of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The California Society, via the various Town Committee Historical Activities Committees, present history-based programs to their members and embark on visits to historical sites in their local areas.

**HONORARY PRESIDENTS** are former presidents of the California Society and may be elected to this office for life when they retire as President. A complete list of the California Honorary Presidents is on the Society's website, NSCDA-CA.org. These ladies serve as honorary members of the Board of Managers with voice but no vote.

**HOUSES, HISTORY AND PEOPLE**, by Richard Pratt, contains 175 photographs and descriptions of the 62 houses owned by the Society at the time M. Evans and Company, Inc., of

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New York issued it in 1965. It was published in cooperation with the National Historical Activities Committee and has become a collector's item. (Used copies of this book are sometimes available on Amazon.com.)

**IDDL:** (Index of Documented Descendants Lineage) is a computer program written in 2006 by the National Society's Treasurer and Registrar. It helps a member and her candidate find an ancestor qualifying the candidate for membership. It is especially helpful to membership chairpersons and genealogists.

**JAMESTOWN CHURCH** was an early and important project of the National Society which restored it to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the landing of the first permanent English settlers upon American soil, about ten miles from Williamsburg, Virginia. Thanks to archaeological techniques and detective work, it was possible to rebuild a 1640 sheltering church over the site of a 1616 frame church where the House of Burgesses met in 1619, the first gathering of a legislative body in America. In 1907, in the presence of 600 Colonial Dames and hundreds of other people, the National Society dedicated and presented the restored building to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Now a National Historic Landmark, the National Park Service manages the Jamestown Church.

**LADY OF DUMBARTON:** The Dumbarton House Board serves in an advisory capacity to help steward the historic site and house museum. The Board includes a Lady of Dumbarton House from each Corporate Society, Members-at-Large, Ex-Officio members, Honorary Members, and Past Chairs. Each Corporate Society President appoints a society member to represent her society as a Lady of Dumbarton.

**LAMAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE** recognizes and honors outstanding Corporate Society projects and programs in the three mission activity areas: Museum Properties, Historical Activities and Patriotic Service. This award is granted by the NSCDA and recognizes up to two winners in each mission category. Awards are announced at the Biennial Council.

**LEGACY PROGRAM:** Established in 2000, the Legacy Program eases the membership process for members' relatives who share their direct bloodlines. Members voted to approve an amendment to the Bylaws confirming the Legacy Program be extended indefinitely as of the Annual Meeting of April 8, 2008.

**LIBRARY:** The library in the San Francisco Octagon House reflects the historical and cultural interests of the National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in California. The purpose of the collection is twofold. The Library serves as an Archive for California society, and it also serves as a resource for the Colonial and Federal periods as represented in the Octagon House

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collections; genealogical background of California Dames; and California historical materials (NSCDA-CA Library Mission Statement).

**LIFE MEMBERSHIPS** in the California Society were discontinued in 1994 after an overwhelming majority of members agreed that they be eliminated. As of August 2025, eight (8) Life Members remain. These longtime members pay no California dues but are obligated to pay annual dues to the National Society.

**LOS ANGELES-PASADENA-SANTA BARBARA COMMITTEE (LA-P-SB)** was established on April 5, 1915, by seventeen California Dames who lived in southern California. The first meeting took place on October 5 of that year. Originally called the Los Angeles Committee, its name was changed in 1934 to the Committee of Southern California, later to Los Angeles-Pasadena, and in 2003 to its present name the Los Angeles-Pasadena-Santa Barbara Committee.

The Committee hosted the first statewide NSCDA-CA General Meeting, called the Winter Meeting. This was the first General Meeting held outside of San Francisco. It took place on January 13, 1953, at the Huntington Library in San Marino and was preceded by luncheon parties at the homes of members. The second southern California meeting, on January 12, 1954, was much more memorable. The business meeting, luncheon, and talk by an eminent historian was on a day when Los Angeles had both a rare snowstorm and an earthquake.

The Committee's projects have been many, the largest and most important being acquisition and restoration of an 1876 mansion, Mount Pleasant House. See MOUNT PLEASANT HOUSE.

In May 1965, the LA-P-SB Committee was the host of the Eighth Western Conference, predecessor of Regional Meetings. They carefully planned and prepared for meetings in Pasadena to which eight corporate societies sent representatives. The event coincided with the Committee's own 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Their activities since 1915 have been impressive. For some years, member Mrs. William B. Munro, in the name of the Society loaned an important collection of early American silver for display in the Los Angeles Museum. They endowed a bed in a children's hospital in memory of a member, contributed toward purchase of eye glasses and milk for foreign-born school children, participated in Americanization work at a public school for foreign-born adults, provided toys for underprivileged children, sent Christmas gifts to servicemen on isolated islands during World War II, sent magazines to colleges and libraries in the Middle East, and raised funds to endow a fund for their annual scholarship award. See OFFICERS, MANAGERS, AND CHAIRS.

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**MEETINGS, PROGRAMS, AND PARTIES:** Programs, meetings, and parties are held in San Francisco and by all Town Committees. ALL Dames are welcome at ALL Society functions up and down the state. If you are visiting an area away from your home, you are invited to contact the local Town Committee Chair to inquire about their coming events. Her contact information is in the NSCDA-CA Directory. Dates and locations of many events are listed in the Directory.

**MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES** may be ordered through the California Registrar. The certificate is a 9 x 9-inch document bearing the Seal of the National Society, the member's full name, name of her society, name of her ancestor, his title, and his Colonial State. There is a charge. Also included are the members' Colonial State and California numbers. The National President and the Secretary of the California Society sign it.

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** is the group of Town Committee Member Chairs, the society Membership Chair and the Registrar. The Town or County committees have their own membership committees which work closely with the State Membership Chair and Registrar. Procedures for Proposing New Members, Qualifications for Membership, and Rules of Entrance are included in the Directory.

**MEMBERSHIP NSCDA:** “We roll up our sleeves and volunteer. The NSCDA is not a social club (although we love to gather); it is a nonprofit service organization. So, preservation work is also part of our DNA and our collective purpose. We are privately funded and use our resources, time, and talents to keep historic places open to the public. Being a member of the NSCDA is about much more than ancestry—it is about dedication to service, commitment to communities, and passion for sharing our nation’s history.” (NSCDA.org Membership)

**MEMBERSHIP NSCDA-CA:** Every California Colonial Dame belongs to three societies: the Colonial State Society in which her qualifying ancestor lived: The National Society, headquartered in Washington, D.C. and the California Society. She has membership numbers for the Colonial State and California societies. She pays annual dues to the California and National societies but not to her Colonial State Society.

**MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:** Every member of the California Society has two membership numbers: a California number and her Colonial State number. Her membership derives from the Colonial State of the ancestor upon whom her membership is based. She may not be a member of more than one Colonial State even if she has membership-eligible ancestors in other Colonial States. She may file supplementary lineage papers with a second, third, or more ancestors residing in additional Colonial states.

**MEMBER PERSONAL INFORMATION** is stored in the NSCDA online system, iDames. The Registrar and other selected CA Society members have access to this system. Data stored in

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this system is used to publish the society's annual directory. This information is used to mail and e-mail information to all CA members. Members must communicate all changes associated with their personal information (name, address, telephone numbers) immediately to the Society Finance Secretary and to the Registrar.

**MONTEREY PENINSULA COMMITTEE** was established by the Board of Managers in 1983. Its creation was formally approved by general membership at the 1985 Annual Meeting. Many members of the Society lived in the area decided that formation of their own committee was desirable. Mrs. Frederick B. Henderson, Jr., President of the California Society from 1976 to 1978, was its founding chairperson and since then the committee has grown from ten to 73 members in 2025. Meetings and programs are held frequently, and they enjoy having Dames from other parts of the state visit.

In addition to supporting scholarship programs of the California Society, they have their own scholarship programs. They contribute to a scholarship fund for American history and civics at Monterey Peninsula College and have given the college dictionaries for students in the English as a Second Language Program. They have sent several high school students to the Washington Workshops and strongly support the American Indian Medical Scholarships and Close Up programs.

In 1993, the Monterey Peninsula Committee acquired its first historic preservation project when the Monterey County Historical Society accepted their offer to furnish an 1840s farmhouse near Salinas. See BORONDA ADOBE.

**MOUNT PLEASANT HOUSE** was owned by NSCDA-CA and managed by the LA-P-SB Town Committee from 1972 to 1995. This was an enormous and major project of the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee. When the survival of this large two-story Italianate home, built about 1876 on Pleasant Avenue, was threatened, the Committee raised funds to move it to and preserve it at Heritage Square, a ten-acre historic park on the banks of the Arroyo Seco, near Pasadena. The square is dedicated to the architectural recreation of the Victorian era in Los Angeles. Eight or ten buildings, including residences, a church, and a railroad station, have been moved there. Several are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and all are designated as Historic Cultural Monuments by the City of Los Angeles. In 1995, the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee legally transferred ownership of Mount Pleasant House to the Cultural Heritage Foundation, Inc. of Los Angeles.

**MUSEUM HOUSE vs. HOUSE MUSEUM:** A MUSEUM HOUSE is used exclusively as a museum. A HOUSE MUSEUM serves two or more purposes. Because Octagon House has multiple purposes: as a meeting place for members, Society headquarters, and a museum. It is a House Museum, not a museum or museum house.

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**NAME OF OUR SOCIETY:** The legal name is: The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in California, it having been changed legally in 1985 to drop the phrase “Resident in the State of.” The National Society's legal name is The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America. Note that “The” is always capitalized. Please note that The NSCDA is a society, not a club or an organization.

There are other groups with names like ours but with which we have no connection whatsoever. To avoid confusion, our Society should always be referred to as The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America (NSCDA)

**NSCDA-CA MEMBERSHIP PROCESS:** Membership in the NSCDA-CA is based on the candidate’s genealogy as well as her interest in historic preservation, education, and patriotic service. The membership process begins with the candidate’s contact with a member of the NSCDA-CA. When the candidate expresses interest in becoming a member, she is directed to the NSCDA-CA Membership Chair or Registrar. They will provide information to the candidate about the required ancestry and how to proceed and complete the necessary paperwork. She will introduce her to members who can help with her membership process. All potential members are told of the necessity to serve the Society to the best of their ability.

A California candidate must have descended in her own right from an ancestor who resided in one of the thirteen American Colonies and who rendered efficient service to his country prior to July 5, 1776.

The candidate’s proposer should assist with the candidate’s lineage papers.

Each candidate documents her line from herself to her identified ancestor. She sends her ancestral line documentation to the NSCDA-CA Registrar who sends it to her colonial State, the home state of her ancestor for membership approval. Following approval of her line, the Colonial State Registrar informs the NSCDA-CA Registrar of the candidate’s approval. Legacy candidates, those whose mother, grandmother, or another family member is a member of the NSCDA, can use the ancestral line approved by that family member as part of their own ancestral line documentation.

The NSCDA-CA Finance Secretary will contact the new member and send her a message confirming the last step in her membership process, NSCDA-CA dues payment. The candidate’s membership is established after her dues are paid.

## JUNIOR DAMES

Junior Dames are from birth through 20 years of age who meet all the NSCDA-CA qualifications for membership. After membership approval, the new Junior Dame’s sponsor is responsible for

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paying their dues at the current Junior Dames amount. They may participate in NSCDA-CA activities; however, they may not be an elected officer and may not serve as a committee chair. They have no voice and no vote. After celebrating her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, the junior Dame becomes a full member with all the rights and privileges of other members.

## COURTESY MEMBERS

NSCDA-CA Courtesy members are members in another NSCDA state society. They have asked their home state Registrar to send a Courtesy request to the NSCDA-CA Registrar requesting Courtesy Membership in the California Society. The request needs to include a statement confirming her home state dues are current. After approval by the CA Registrar, the new Courtesy member may attend meetings, programs, social events, and serve on all committees except the Nominating and Membership Committees. She continues to pay membership dues to her home state society and pays Courtesy Membership dues to the California Society.

## TRANSFERS

A Dame who is a member of another NSCDA state society may transfer to the California Society. The Dame transferring to California needs to contact her home state Registrar and request she send a Transfer Request to the CA Registrar. The Originating Registrar needs to confirm to the accepting CA Registrar that the transferring member's dues are current. When the CA Registrar responds to the originating state Registrar she will request a copy of the transferring Dame's membership papers. The new CA society member will be asked to pay a transfer fee and current CA Society dues. Likewise, a CA Society member may request the CA Registrar contact another Registrar to support her desire to transfer her membership to another state.

## VISITING DAMES

A Dame visiting California may be granted guest privilege to attend programs, meetings and special events while visiting California. Visiting Dames will pay admission charges and any other charges associated with attending Dames events in California.

**NSCDA MISSION STATEMENT:** The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America Mission:

Women opening doors to America's history through preservation, education, and service to inspire a shared love of country.

**NATIONAL BOARD** of the Society consists of 66 voting members, Included in this group are 10 elected officers, 11 Standing Committee Chairs, 2 Special Committee Chairs, and 43 Corporate Society Presidents. Additional non-voting members are 3 leaders of Affiliated Museums, and 6 appointed positions. The Biennial National Council elects National Officers.

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Presidents of the Corporate Societies are elected by their society membership and Standing Committee Chairs are appointed by the national president. Ex-officio, non-voting members of the National Board include the First Regent of the Board of Gunston Hall, and the Senior and Junior Representatives to Sulgrave Manor. There are 6 Additional appointed non-voting members on the board.

The National President appoints the chairs and members of the National Standing Committees for two-year terms, with two exceptions. One is the Nominating Committee, whose members are Corporate Society Presidents who serve on a rotating basis and whose chair is always the President of the Pennsylvania Society. The other exception is the First Regent of Gunston Hall who is chosen by the Regents' own Nominating Committee (although she becomes a member of the National Board) and all the Corporate Society Regents who must have the approval of the National Board but are appointed by the Governor of Virginia.

The National Board meets once a year, usually in October, to hear and act upon reports from the Officers and Committee Chairpersons which reflect the work done to implement the objects of the Society. The acts of the National Board are reported and ratified at each Biennial Council. National Officers are elected for two-year terms and may be re-elected twice.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL:** See BIENNIALCOUNCIL.

**NATIONAL ROLL OF HONOR** was started in 1941 by the National Society as part of its golden anniversary celebration, recognizes Colonial Dames who have served their societies with distinction. Each is nominated by a member and elected by her Society's Roll of Honor Committee and/or the Board of Managers which then sends her name, accompanied by a monetary gift, to the National Roll of Honor Chair. Her name is engrossed in black ink upon one of the parchment pages allocated to each Society in a beautiful blue leather volume at Dumbarton House, recording forever the Society's gratitude to an outstanding member.

The names of California Dames are also inscribed in one of the Roll of Honor books kept in the Octagon House. In recognition of their exceptional services to the California Society, several early members, including two Charter Members and six who were no longer living, were placed on the National Roll of Honor when it was established. Through November 2025, 133 California Dames have been honored and designated as Roll of Honor recipients. All California society honoree's names and year honored are listed on the NSCDA-CA website.

**THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA** has an interesting history, very briefly described here. In 1890 a group of New York City residents formed a society of women descended from men who had rendered worthy services to the thirteen colonies and named it "The Colonial Dames of America." They invited several

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Philadelphia women to form a chapter but within a few months the two groups could not agree on how the society should be organized.

The New Yorkers wanted a central organization with all power held by the parent society in New York while the Pennsylvanians wanted a federation of state societies, each with its own constitution and officers. They divided and became two distinct organizations, with no connection to each other. The New York women remain to this day “The Colonial Dames of America.” The Pennsylvanians were incorporated June 17, 1891, the beginning of our society known as “The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America.” (NSCDA) Each group went its own way, independent of each other, for several years. In 1897 the New Yorkers sued the Pennsylvanians to prevent the latter from using “Colonial Dames” as part of their name. The judge ruled for the Pennsylvanians, and the name of our society remained The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America. It has *societies* while the other has *chapters*.

Our first Society dedicated itself to colonial history, historic preservation, and patriotism. They invited prominent women in each of the colonial states and the District of Columbia to form societies so that a National Society might be created, and by 1894 societies had been established in each. The first non-Colonial Society to be organized and admitted to the National Society, California, was the ninth to be incorporated, on July 15, 1896. By 2025, there were 43 Corporate Societies (42 State Societies plus the District of Columbia, called the Domicile or Charter Society). They are independent of each other but are a partnership or alliance bound together by the Covenant of the National Society. There are now approximately 15,000 members, about 435 of whom are California Dames.

The Society’s purposes are well stated in the Preamble and Article II of its Constitution. The National Society is administered by its National Board, which is responsible to the National Council. Its income is from the annual per capita tax, invested funds, endowments, National Roll of Honor, bequests, and gifts.

## **NATIONAL SOCIETY'S MISSION STATEMENT:**

“Women opening doors to America’s history through preservation, education, and service to inspire a shared love of country.”

**NECROLOGY:** The NSCDA-CA website includes a list of every California Dame who was a member at the time of her death. It does not list members who resigned or transferred to another society before their deaths.

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TOWN COMMITTEE:** Northern California members recently formed a Northern California Town Committee as permitted by the 2022 Bylaws revision.

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Northern California Committee received approval by the Board of Managers in early 2025. Membership includes all Northern California residents.

**OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY:** The purpose of the NSCDA-CA shall be to uphold the objects of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, herein after referred to as the NSCDA, and the objects of the California Society as stated in the NSCDA-CA Constitution. (NSCDA-CA Bylaws Article II Objects 12/6/2022):

The objects of this society shall be to collect and preserve manuscripts, traditions, relics, and mementos of bygone days: to preserve and restore buildings connected with the early history of our country; to educate our fellow citizens and ourselves in our country's history and thus diffuse healthful and intelligent information concerning the past; to create a popular interest in our Colonial history; to stimulate a spirit of true patriotism and a genuine love of country and to impress upon the young the sacred obligation of honoring the memory of those heroic ancestors whose ability, valor, sufferings and achievements are beyond all praise. (Constitution NSCDA)

**OBLIGATIONS OF THE CORPORATE SOCIETIES:** Each Corporate Society is expected:

- To follow the general rules of The National Society as laid down in the Constitution and Acts in Council. The National Constitution is the Constitution of each Corporate Society and takes precedence over the Corporate Society bylaws. Corporate Society bylaws must be kept current with the Constitution and Acts in Council.
- To maintain a high standard of membership.
- To pay per capita annually to the National Treasurer.
- To send representatives to Councils, National Board Meetings and to Regional Conferences.
- To send accurate membership lists twice a year, as specified by the National Registrar, to her and The National Society Office.
- To accept any projects approved by the National Biennial Council as far as possible.
- To keep the Corporate Society members thoroughly informed of the work of The National Society.

**OCTAGON HOUSE** is located at 2645 Gough Street, San Francisco 94123. It is the headquarters of the California Society and a house museum of the decorative arts of the Colonial and Federal periods. One of several octagonal houses built in San Francisco in the mid-1800s, this one was erected in 1861 and acquired by the Society in 1952. It was moved from its original location across the street and placed on a lot given the Society by two members, the Misses Lucy Helen and Edith Winslow Allyne. Supervised by Warren Charles Perry, Dean of the Department

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of Architecture at the University of California at Berkeley, extensive remodeling followed and in 1953, during the Society's Annual Meeting, the cornerstone was laid. In it was placed a box containing a copy of a four-page letter left by William C. McElroy, the original owner and builder, documents concerning the Society, current newspaper clippings, and the final report of the then-President, Mrs. Lindley Hoffman Miller.

In 1956 at the Annual Meeting the mortgage was burned, an event memorialized by installation of the ivory button in the newel post. In 1957 Misses Allyne presented Society with an adjacent lot, on the corner of Union and Gough Streets, and there a garden such as might have been found in colonial times was designed and planted. In 1993 the garden won a special award from San Francisco Beautiful, whose mission of creating, enhancing, and maintaining civic beauty is achieved through grants and awards.

In 1968 the house was designated San Francisco Historic Landmark No. 17 and in 1972 was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) entry ramp was designed and installed on the south side of Octagon House in 2023. The garden was redesigned in 2025, and landscape renovation was completed in September 2025.

Octagon House's collections, which began in the 1920s, include furniture, portraits, samplers, silver, pewter, ceramics, and books, all considered fine. Unique in the area is the collection of documents bearing legal signatures of all 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence. *A History of Octagon House* written by Dr. Joseph A. Baird, Jr., an art historian, contains a detailed account of the house and its history, and floor plans.

Any non-Bay Area Dame who wishes to visit Octagon House when in San Francisco should call one of the San Francisco-based officers, who will arrange a special visit. Members from any part of California are welcome at general meetings, programs, and parties. They should contact the President, whose contact information is in the *Directory*, for event information. Members may arrange private parties in Octagon House. See NSCDA-CA.org for information.

The house is open to the public two afternoons each month, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, each month except January. Octagon House is closed on legal holidays. The “Dames” welcome school and group tours by special appointment.

**OCTAGON HOUSE COMMITTEE**, formerly called the Museum House Committee, of the California Society consists of a Chair or Co-Chairs, who are appointed by the Society President, and several additional members chosen by the Chair and the President. They are responsible for maintaining Octagon House as a museum of the decorative arts of the Colonial and Federal

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periods and refurbishing and redecorating, when necessary, in addition to upgrading the collections.

**OFFICERS, MANAGERS, AND CHAIRPERSONS:** Effective with the Bylaws adopted March 10, 2022, the officers are President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President and LA, P, and SB Town Committee Chair, Fourth Vice President and San Diego County Committee Chair, Fifth Vice President and Monterey Town Committee Chair, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, and Historian. Officers are nominated for one-year terms by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee Chair presents the new slate of officers and managers to the Board of Managers in December. The approved slate is presented to the membership for election at the Annual Meeting the following April. Each officer may serve a maximum of six one-year terms.

Four Manager candidates are also selected by the Nominating Committee for election to three-year terms at the Annual Meeting. Four Managers are elected each year so that terms of the twelve do not all expire the same year. None may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. When a Manager is unable to complete her term, the President appoints her replacement with the approval of The Board of Managers. All elected members of Board of Managers are voting members.

Vice Presidents and Managers may also serve as committee chairs. The President appoints other chairs. Honorary (former) Presidents serve on The Board of Managers. They have voice but no vote. (See NSCDA-CA Bylaws, March 2022, Article V – Duties of Officers for a description of duties performed by all elected officers.)

**ORIGINAL FOURTEEN SOCIETIES** are those in the original thirteen American Colonies and the District of Columbia (also called the Domicile or Charter Society). All other Societies are Associate Societies. The Original Fourteen Societies and their dates of incorporation are:

Pennsylvania	June 13, 1891
Maryland	December 29, 1891
New Jersey	April 7, 1892
Delaware	May 10, 1892
District of Columbia	May 20, 1892
Virginia	October 19, 1892
Rhode Island	February 21, 1893
Massachusetts	April 13, 1893
New York	April 29, 1893
South Carolina	November 16, 1893
Connecticut	December 18, 1893

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Georgia	January 24, 1894
New Hampshire	March 8, 1894
North Carolina	March 24, 1894

**PATRIOTIC SERVICE COMMITTEES:** The National Patriotic Service Committee, per the NSCDA-CA Bylaws, “works primarily in the field of education to stimulate a spirit of true patriotism and genuine love of country in all American citizens and a knowledge of the American heritage in citizens and visitors, according to the objects of the Society as set forth in Article II of the Constitution.” Until 1927, the Americanization Committee, the present National Patriotic Service Committee, encompassed seven major projects diverse enough to appeal to members in all parts of the country. State Societies may support any or all of them by funding and/or active participation.

The California Society's Patriotic Service Committee at present supports the American Indian Medical Scholarship Program, the American History Scholarship Award Programs, and The Washington Workshops Congressional Seminar. The Town or County committees have additional local projects.

In the past, Patriotic Service activities have included support of the Education at Home program of the Department of History at the University of California at Irvine, Americanization programs for immigrants, scholarships, participation in Armistice Day ceremonies, contributions of Constitutional Shrines to educational institutions, installation of historic markers, brailling playing cards for the blind, and work in veteran’s hospitals.

**PER CAPITA DUES** are the National Society dues. The national dues are determined at Biennial Council. The NSCDA national dues were \$60 per year in 2025.

**PERISTYLE AT PLYMOUTH ROCK** is an early and significant project of the NSCDA. A handsome granite structure twenty-five feet high, thirty feet long, eighteen feet wide that faces the harbor and protects the Rock and is now one of our country's most important shrines. It was built by the National Society, dedicated and presented to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1921 following the tercentenary of the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620.

**POLITICS:** Acts in Council (bylaws of the National Society) state that, “At no time shall any Corporate Society be associated, affiliated, or otherwise connected with any organization whose activities might be construed as political or partisan, as such activities would not be deemed consistent with the general good of the Society.” Dame’s meetings should **never** be used by any member as a political forum, nor should political or partisan speakers address a Dames meeting. This does not mean that Dame cannot participate in politics as an individual.

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**CALIFORNIA POPPY AWARD:** The President accepts recommendations from members wanting to give a significant award to a member recognizing their extraordinary service. The President selects members from those nominated to receive a Poppy Pin in recognition of their outstanding service. The NSCDA-CA President presents the Poppy Awards each year at the society's Annual Meeting in April.

**POPPY PIN:** The California Society's state pin, was designed by Mrs. George A. (Patsy) Fish, Jr., an NSCDA-CA member. It is in the shape of a stemless Golden Poppy, the CA state flower. It is one and one eighth inches in diameter and may be worn on any occasion, not just Society events as is the case of the Society badge. Only eighteen societies have state pins. To order a Golden Poppy pin, contact the California Registrar.

## **PRESIDENTS OF THE CALIFORNIA SOCIETY:**

See the NSCDA-CA website, NSCDA-CA Honorary Presidents for a complete list of NSCDA-CA presidents.

## **PROGRAMS, PARTIES, AND MEETINGS:**

See MEETINGS, PROGRAMS, AND PARTIES.

**PROPOSER** is a Dame who recommends (proposes) a candidate for membership. She should assume responsibility for guiding her through the membership process and advising her that as a member she will be expected to contribute to the Society in whatever capacity her talents may lie. The Proposer should also invite her candidate to Society functions and be her mentor while she is a new member.

**PUBLICATIONS, CALIFORNIA SOCIETY:** For many years, the California Society has published directories and booklets on a variety of subjects, many of them historical.

*The Quill*, the California Society's newsletter was founded in 1985 by Mrs. John H. Manwaring, its first editor, and is sent each year to all members. It serves to inform and educate members about the Society's activities. The editor welcomes newsworthy items from and about members and the Town or County committees.

The *Directory* of members has been issued regularly since soon after the Society's founding. The *Directory* has been published annually since 1980. In addition to listing every member and her Colonial Dames ancestor, it gives names of officers, dates of meetings and social events, qualifications for membership. An annual *Historian's Report* has been issued since 1897. Since 1980 it has been included in the *Directory*.

The *Exhibition Catalogue of Colonial and Early American Art* was published by the Society in connection with an exhibit sponsored by the Society for several months at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco in 1937.

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*A Colonial Herb Garden in California*, by Helen Lyman, was published and sold by the California Society for the benefit of British War Relief in 1941. In addition to herb lore and advice on raising herbs, it has many recipes.

About a dozen scholarly papers written by members were published in individual booklets in the 1930s and 1940s. Subjects were mostly California history, such as *The Russians in California*, *California's Old Burying Grounds*, *Early California Navigators and Their Maps*, *The Farallon Islands*, and *The Hills of San Francisco*. A member wrote and the Society published *Books and Libraries in Colonial America*.

In 1959, the California Historical Activities Committee prepared and published a compilation of reports on the work of the Historical Activities Committees of all forty-one societies then in existence. Detailed descriptions of most of their museum properties were included.

The Society published *Counties and Courthouses of California*, a survey by the Historical Activities Committee in 1964, Mrs. Frederick M. Fisk, Chair. Along with detailed descriptions of the courthouses in California's 58 counties, brief histories of many of the counties themselves are given. In 1968, the committee published *Some of the Early Churches of California - A Survey*.

Florence Slocum Wilson of Pasadena wrote *Windows on Early California*, which was published by the California Society in 1971. An outgrowth of talks Mrs. Wilson gave in southern California; the book provides glimpses of early adobe homes and the families who lived in them.

Two booklets about Octagon House were issued in the 1970s and are still available for review in the Octagon Library. *A History of Octagon House\** was written in 1973 by Dr. Joseph Armstrong Baird, an eminent San Francisco art historian, and in 1978 Carol Green Wilson, a Dame, and a well-known writer, wrote *The Ladies of Octagon House.\**

*Simple History of Octagon House*, a booklet for young visitors, was published in 1994. Mrs. A. M. D. Lampen wrote and illustrated this publication.

In 1979, Mrs. Elizabeth Wellborn Schieffelin, a Los Angeles-Pasadena Dame, wrote *The Leading Lady of Mount Pleasant*, which the Society published. It is the story of Mamie Perry, daughter of the man who built the house about 1878.

Mrs. Lynn Morley Bell, Historical Activities Chair, in 1987 edited and published *Eyewitness to Disaster\** in which five women, each in her own words, told their stories of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco.

Four histories of the California Society have been published. *The First Twenty-one Years of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in California* by Mrs. Vanderlynn Stow appeared in 1922 and was followed in 1935 by *Forty Years of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in California* by Mrs. James Henry Deering. A third booklet, by Mrs. Frederick M. Fisk, covered the years 1935 to 1960.

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In 2004, *A History of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in California 1895-2003*, was published. Its subjects include a brief description of the National Society; texts of the three booklets mentioned above which outline the Society's history before 1960; a chapter about its history from 1960 to 2003; chapters about the many accomplishments of the three Town Committees; and other subjects. A substantial appendix includes lists of major office holders from 1895 through 2003; California members on the National Roll of Honor; Sulgrave Manor, and Gunston Hall; a list of all California Society publications since 1922; and brief descriptions of nine historic preservation projects since 1960 when the first one was completed. Generous donors made it possible to send a complimentary copy of the hardbound illustrated book to all members and new ones as they join. It was compiled and edited by Miss Nancy Weston.

All these books and booklets are in the Octagon House library, most of them in bound volumes. Many California Dames have authored books on a variety of subjects. Some of them are in the Octagon House Library.

**PUBLICATIONS, NATIONAL SOCIETY:** At present, the National Society issues two publications, which are its only direct contact with members. *Proceedings*, which serve as a historian's report, are issued every other year following the Biennial Council. It is kept in bound volumes in the Octagon House Library.

*The Dames Dispatch*, begun in 1989, is a semi-annual newsletter sent to all members to keep them informed about the National Society. It is the successor to *New Idea News*, which was sent quarterly only to those Dames who subscribed. Earlier newsletters include *The Messenger*, published from 1932 until World War II, and the biannual *Bulletin*, 1963 to 1987.

*A History of The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America, from 1891 to 1933*, by Mrs. Joseph R. Lamar of Georgia, President of the National Society from 1914 to 1927 is in the Octagon House library.

In 1992, *Domestic Views*, a large format book with photographs and descriptions of every museum property owned or supported by the then forty-four corporate societies was published by the American Institute of Architects Press. It is available at Dumbarton House.

**QUALIFYING ANCESTORS** are the people (men and women) whose service during the Colonial period (pre-1750) makes it possible for a woman to become a member of the NSCDA. The Colonial State Societies have lists of those ancestors whose service has been proven as acceptable, "either in the founding of a State or Commonwealth, or of an institution which has survived and developed into importance, or who shall have held an important position in a Colonial government, or who by distinguished services, shall have contributed to the founding of our nation." (Quote from the NSCDA Constitution.)

**QUILL:** the California Society's newsletter.

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**RECOGNITION PIN** may be ordered from the Registrar. It is a small disc in light blue enamel surrounded by gold beading and has the figure of a Colonial Dame in gold in the center. It may be worn by any member for purposes of identification when traveling or for any occasion she chooses. See also STATE IDENTIFICATION PINS and ca POPPY PIN.

**REGISTRARS:** The National Registrar and the California Registrar work closely together. The National Registrar keeps an account of the membership, issues, permits for insignia, recalls and redeems insignia, and, if necessary, processes requests for the flag of the National Society. Additionally, she issues certificates of membership, and is the official Custodian of the Covenant, kept at Dumbarton House.

The California Registrar is elected annually by the general membership and may not serve for more than six consecutive one-year elective terms. She reports regularly to the National Registrar all membership changes, such as names, addresses, new members, members lost through death and resignation, and transfers to or from another society. She is an ex-officio member of the Membership Committee, and she works closely with the Society Genealogist to help membership candidates with their papers. In addition to recording names of each member, she receives orders for insignia, certificates of membership, Colonial state identification pins, and recognition pins.

**REID ADOBE:** built in 1839, named for Hugo Reid, a Scottish-born trader in local hides, is maintained by the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum on its grounds in Arcadia. In the 1960s the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee equipped it with 1840 furnishings, simple local furniture, Indian-made articles, and objects available through coastal trade with Reid's Indian wife. The Committee also replanted the garden. The house is open to the public.

**ROLL OF HONOR:** See NATIONAL ROLL OF HONOR.

**ROMERIA:** a Spanish word meaning pilgrimage or picnic, is an annual excursion, usually in the spring, sponsored for many years by the Los Angeles Pasadena Committee for its members and their guests to visit a place of historic interest.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG** occurs at all meetings of the Society and is addressed to the American Flag, not the Society Flag. It is part of an inscription on a tablet on the wall of the Jamestown Church restored by the National Society in 1907.

The Salute is as follows:

To the glory of God; and in grateful remembrance of those, our ancestors, who through evil report and loss of fortune, through suffering and death, maintained stout hearts and laid the foundations of our country, we, The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America, pledge our loyal and affectionate allegiance to the Flag.

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMITTEE** was founded April 14, 1940. Despite its lack of headquarters and geographically scattered membership (about 126 on May 1, 2010), it has always had many projects. Major undertakings have included furnishing the 13-room La Casa de

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Estudillo and the La Casa Machado y Stewart (House) in San Diego's Old Town Historic Park and Father Serra's quarters in the San Diego Mission. They loaned furnishings to the 1887 Sherman-Gilbert House which were later returned to the Committee. Since 1986 the committee has lent furniture and a portrait to the 1850 Davis Horton House, for which they also act as museum consultants. The two Portuguese santos bequeathed to the Committee by Mrs. C. Julian Wheeler are on permanent loan to the San Diego Mission. In 2003 the committee took on another big project, that of furnishing the 1870 Sikes Adobe Farmhouse in San Dieguito River Park which was restored by its then-owner, the City of San Diego, which in 2008 transferred ownership to the San Dieguito River park Joint Powers Authority.

The San Diego Dames have given scholarships and worked with veterans' hospitals, supplying patients with cameras, film, books, magazines, and other gifts. Recently they have provided meals and snacks to Fisher House which provides housing to military families with a member receiving medical treatment in San Diego. In the past they have given books on American history to the rural bookmobile in San Diego County, sponsored historic tours for their members, worked with the Red Cross recreation center, collected and sent supplies to the San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind, given doll teas to which each member brought a dressed doll to be given at Christmastime to patients at the Crippled Children's Center, and performed additional similar civic activities. For many years they gave books, magazine subscriptions, and gifts to the men on the *U.S.S. Gunston Hall*. Its homeport was San Diego, their interest in the ship due of course to the Society's interest in the plantation for which it was named. In 1971 they co-sponsored the annual convention in San Diego of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. They participated in the work of the San Diego Historic Site Board in a project to replace vandalized tombstones of San Diego pioneers. Another past project was to sponsor two annual USO dinners, for which they donated, prepared, and served meals to service men and women and their families. Twice a year they sponsor a naturalization ceremony for new citizens. The San Diego Dames have a Writers Group in which members research and write about their ancestors for their Ancestors Book.

See:

CASA DE ESTUDILLO; (La Casa de Estudillo)  
MACHADO-STEWART ADOBE; (La Casa de Machado y Stewart),  
DAVIS HORTON HOUSE,  
SAN DIEGO MISSION.  
SIKES ADOBE FARMHOUSE.

SAN DIEGO MISSION, founded in 1769, was the first of the twenty-one missions established by Father Junipero Serra in Alta California. It was restored in 1931 and in 1978 the San Diego County Committee completed the renovation and furnishing of Father Serra's quarters. They have placed on permanent loan to the Mission the two Portuguese santos bequeathed to the Committee by Mrs. C. Julian Wheeler.

**SEAL OF THE CALIFORNIA SOCIETY.** Each State Society has its own seal. The California Society's seal is that of the State of California which was in use before 1906. As in the California seal, it has a female figure seated against the western hills, spear in hand, at her feet the California bear and the horn of plenty. Above the spear is the state motto EUREKA. In the

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distance the sun sets over the Golden Gate. The beaded annulet (the ringlike molding around the edge) contains the name. The seal is blue on white.

**SEAL OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY**, Article VI, of the Constitution established that the seal be: Within a beaded annulet a title scrolls bearing the inscription, “National Society of the Colonial Dames of America.” For a detailed description, see the Constitution of the National Society, Article VI, 6. The National Seal appears, in its proper heraldic coloring, in the center of the yellow field of the Flag of the National Society. A Corporate Society may use a flag of the same design with permission, with the name of the State or the Society inscribed in gold letters beneath the Seal.

**SIGNERS COLLECTION** in Octagon House is a rare assemblage of legal signatures on various legal documents of Signers of the Declaration of Independence. It was begun in the late 1920s by nine members who donated several signatures. In 1937, to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Constitution of the United States, four more signatures were added to the collection, followed by others. It is now complete with documents containing legal signatures of all 56 men who signed the Declaration. The legal signature Button Gwinnett of Georgia was the final signature obtained. The collection is on display in specially designed cabinets in Octagon House and is the most popular exhibit in Octagon House.

**SIKES ADOBE FARMHOUSE** in San Dieguito River Park in the San Pasqual Valley of San Diego County is an 1870s seven-room adobe farmhouse. Built by Zenas Sikes for his family and as headquarters for his 2,400-acre wheat farm, its restoration was financed by a grant from the State of California. In March 2002, the San Diego County Committee agreed to furnish the house, a project that took several years of research about the Sikes family, pioneer life in San Diego County in the late 1800s, and appropriate period furnishings before actual furnishing of the house. On October 22, 2007, the farmhouse burned to the ground during the San Diego County Wildfires. Only its adobe walls were left. The San Dieguito River Park Authority, which now owns the property, rebuilt the house, and the Dames helped furnish it. The house serves as a museum with exhibits of such things as weaving to show visitors how people lived when the Sikes were in residence. It is San Diego Historic Landmark No. 231 and California State Point of Interest No. SDI-013.

**SOCIETY TERMS:** for easier understanding and comparison, are grouped together here.

NATIONAL SOCIETY is the association of Corporate Societies.

CORPORATE SOCIETIES are the individual state societies which together form the National Society.

STATE SOCIETY applies to all Corporate Societies except the District of Columbia Society, which is the CHARTER or DOMICILE SOCIETY, legal residence of the National Society.

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COLONIAL STATE SOCIETY is any of the thirteen Colonial State Societies representing the thirteen Colonies.

ASSOCIATE STATE SOCIETY is any of the societies in non-Colonial States.

ORIGINAL FOURTEEN SOCIETIES are the thirteen Colonial State Societies and the District of Columbia Society.

**STATE IDENTIFICATION PINS** are available for certain Colonial and Associate State Societies by placing an order with the California Registrar. Charges vary with each Society. See also **RECOGNITION PIN** and **CALIFORNIA POPPY PIN**.

**SULGRAVE MANOR:** near Banbury, Northamptonshire, England, is 72 miles from London and an ancestral home of the Washington family. It was from there that George Washington's great grandfather left in 1656 for Virginia, where he acquired land later the site of Mount Vernon. First mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086, the Sulgrave property was sold by Henry VIII in 1539 to Lawrence Washington, who built the present manor house in which the family lived for the next 120 years. In 1914 a group of British subscribers gave Sulgrave Manor to the people of Great Britain and the United States to celebrate one hundred years of peace between the two countries and as a permanent memorial of their common heritage and friendship. It was carefully restored and is now considered to be a fine example of a small manor house and garden at the time of Shakespeare.

The National Society has endowed the manor, cooperates with its board in the upkeep, and promotes interest within the United States by, among other things, sponsoring tours to visit it. Each State Society is represented by one member called the Associate Trustee of the Friends of Sulgrave Manor; a support group formed in 1978. The National President of the Society appoints two Colonial Dames to serve on the Sulgrave Manor Board for a two-year term, renewable for a total of six years.

Dames visiting England will enjoy seeing the manor even though few Washington furnishings or memorabilia are located there. The gardens are beautiful, and the Washington family pew and memorial brasses are in the adjacent 14<sup>th</sup> century church. If you plan a trip to England, contact the California Associate Trustee for Sulgrave Manor, whose name will be found in the *Directory*.

**SUNDIAL** in front of the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, was the first project of the California Society in 1907. The Dames gave to the city of San Francisco a sundial which they had commissioned M. Earl Cumings, a prominent San Francisco sculptor, to design and execute. It commemorates the first three European navigators of the California coast: Fortuno Jiminez of Spain in 1534, Juan Cabrillo of Portugal in 1543, and Francis Drake of England in 1579. It was placed on the lawn near to the entrance to the old de Young Museum. In 1995, the Society granted funds to the city for restoration of the sundial and a member partially endowed it. It stood for more than 90 years in its original location until placed in storage while the museum was demolished and a new de Young built. It now stands on the approach to the main entrance of the new de Young. In 2007 the Dames celebrated the sundial's centennial in a

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ceremony to which the Consuls General of Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain and other dignitaries were invited. The dial is on the flat side of a half globe. On its face are the words HORAM SOLE NOLENTE NEGO (if the sun is unwilling, I do not tell the time) and reliefs of the heads of the three explorers. On the round back of the globe in relief are the continents of North and South America. The sundial stands on the back of a large bronze turtle, which stands on top of a partially fluted marble column about four feet tall. The entire monument is about six feet tall.

**TAX-EXEMPT STATUS.** See GIFTS AND BEQUESTS.

**TOWN COMMITTEES**, not chapters! The National Society constitution allows only one Corporate Society in a Colonial or Associate State, and its headquarters must be in the city in which it was founded. The National Society suggests that in geographically large states local Town or County Committees should be established in areas too far from headquarters for members to attend Society events easily.

At present, California has four Town Committees, each of which chooses its own Chairperson and Officers and pursues its own projects. The Chair is also a Vice President of the California Society and attends or is represented by another member at all Board of Managers meetings. Town Committees are standing committees of the California Society. They are formed with the approval of the Board of Managers and are subject to the authority of the Board of Managers. The California Society makes an annual contribution of \$30 per member to each Town Committee, which also raises funds for its own projects. A brief history of each of the NSCDA-CA Town Committees is given in the entry for each Town Committee. (The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in California Bylaws, Adopted March 10, 2022.)