

Starting in 1979, it became the custom for the President General to begin her term in office by selecting a project, preferably one pertaining to the Colonial Period and one that enhances the objectives of the Society. The project of Mrs. Louis W. Patterson, President General from 1979 to 1982, was a portrait of King James I, donated to the Old World Pavilion at Jamestown to commemorate the 375th anniversary of the founding of that colony. Significant contributions by other Presidents General are too numerous to mention here, but many of the selected projects have taken the form of scholarships to students majoring in American or Colonial History. The Cornelia H. Davis Academy Award Fund was established to provide funds for the awards presented by our Society at the Naval Academy at Annapolis and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The Martha Todd Roberts Rare Book Fund at the College of William and Mary is used to replace the books given in 1698 by Royal Governor Nicholson to establish a college library. A fire at the college in 1705 destroyed the library, but an inventory of the volumes is extant, which enables the college to replace original editions as they become available. In 1994, a search for the original fort, located on Jamestown Island in Virginia, was begun. Undisputed evidence of the site of the first English speaking colony in America was dedicated in 1996 as "Jamestown Rediscovery." Through the efforts of three Presidents General an archeological library has been established and materials needed to assist in cataloging excavated artifacts have been donated. The Nuthead Press House at St. Mary's City, MD has also been supported. From 2015 to 2018 the colonial weaving and textile program for students, re-enactors and historians at New France the OTHER Colonial America at Bolduc House Museum, Ste. Genevieve, Missouri is being enhanced by our support. The projects of the Presidents General are supported annually by the Society's chapters.

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National Society
Colonial Daughters
of the
Seventeenth Century

History and Purpose

www.colonialdaughters17th.org

OBJECT

The object of this Society includes preserving the memory of the Founders of this nation, commemorating historical incidents of the colonial period, collecting and preserving colonial relics and documents, and erecting tablets at places of historic interest relating to that period. These objectives are achieved through patriotic, educational, philanthropic, and historical endeavors.

MEMBERS

Membership in this Society is by invitation only. An applicant for membership may join the Society either through a chapter or as a member-at-large.

An applicant for chapter membership shall be endorsed by two members in good standing to whom the applicant is personally known and who shall write letters stating the qualifications which would make the candidate a desirable member.

An applicant for membership-at-large is admitted in the same manner as one for chapter membership, except that the application shall be made directly to the Registrar General rather than the Chapter Registrar. No member-at-large is eligible to be a delegate or an alternate to the meetings of the National Society or a chapter, to hold a national office or chapter office, or to serve on a national or chapter committee. She shall, however, be eligible to attend the General Business Assembly of the National Society.

Bylaws Article IV

ELIGIBILITY

Any woman of good moral character and reputation, past the age of eighteen years, lineally descended from an ancestor who rendered service from 1607 to 1699 inclusive, according to the following eligibility list, may be considered a candidate for membership:

First Settlers of Jamestown
Passenger of the Mayflower (male or female)
Governors or Governors' Assistants
Lieutenant Governors
Magistrates or Magistrates' Assistants
Members of Assemblies
Members of Important Councils and Commissions
Commissioners for Colonies Councilors
Members of Courts of Sessions
Members of the House of Burgesses
Members of the Ancient & Honorable Artillery Co
Members of the Town and County Militia
Officers of Garrison Houses & defenders of same
Town Clerks or Treasurers
Founders of towns named in their first patent
provided the founder settled in the named town
Overseers and Trustees of Towns
Members of the First Town Councils
Secretaries or Deputy Secretaries
Selectmen
Clerks of the Courts
Recorders
High Sheriffs
Deputies
Crown Printers
Ruling Elders
Vestrymen
Interpreters
Surveyors
Physicians
Judges & Jurors
Justices of the Peace
Presidents of Towns
Constables
Court Messengers
Ministers
Deacons
Wardens
Commissaries
Teachers Attorneys

HISTORY

The formation of the Society of The Colonial Daughters of the Seventeenth Century was not the outcome of sudden inspiration but developed after patient consideration and consultation.

The founder, Mrs. Harland Page Halsey of Brooklyn, New York, recognizing the value and advantage of patriotic societies, concluded that it would be an excellent idea to organize a society having in view the special commemoration of men and women and events covering the colonial period in our country's history - a society where membership should include, exclusively, descendants of the very earliest settlers who had rendered distinguished services prior to 1700, hence the name, "COLONIAL DAUGHTERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY."

Mrs. Halsey gathered several ladies who could trace their colonial ancestry to those who met the above qualifications and this group adopted a Constitution and set of Bylaws.

The Charter of the Society was signed by the Secretary of State in Albany, New York, and a Certificate of Incorporation, dated May 5, 1896, was forwarded to the Society making the Colonial Daughters of the Seventeenth Century a legal organization.

The first social gathering of the Society, a colonial tea and musical, was held at the home of the President on November 27, 1896. This event was extremely successful and the purposes and prospects of the Society became more widely known. Many applications for membership were received.

As chapters were added, the General Assembly became Founders Chapter, and on December 14, 1948, in Brooklyn, New York, the General Society officially changed its name to the "National Society Colonial Daughters of the Seventeenth Century, Inc." Missouri Chapter, organized April 10, 1905, was the first to join Founders Chapter in the General Society and became Chapter Number One.

The fifteen founding members established a tradition of perpetuating the memory of those brave and hardy men and women who bore the burden of establishing the colonies of America and laid the foundations upon which the Republic of the United States of America now stands.