

Vision for the Future

Part 1: The Virtues of Washington

By George D. Seghers

“To inspire humanity through Education to promote the virtues, character and vision of George Washington, the Man, the Mason and Father of our Country.”

This vision statement of The George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association is one of the many productive results of the April meeting of the Memorial’s Board of Directors. It focuses on the direction the Association is taking to provide services for our members and inform the Fraternity and the public about George Washington and the central role he held in the creation of our nation.

George Washington was and remains the model of what it means to be an American citizen. He embodied the civic virtues that are indispensable in a self-governing Republic. These virtues are: *Civic Knowledge, Self-Restraint, Self-Assertion and Self-Reliance.*

Washington knew that Republican government required the participation of enlightened citizens. First and foremost, citizens must understand what the Constitution says about how the government works, and what the government is



Washington understood the importance of self-restraint and demonstrated it aptly while commanding the Continental Army. Photo courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association.

supposed to do and what it is not supposed to do. We must understand the basis of our responsibilities as citizens, no less than our rights. This *Civic Knowledge* should form the core of education for young people. President Washington, in his First Annual Address to Congress said, *“The people must be taught to know and to value their own rights; to discern and provide against invasions of them; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority...to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness—cherishing the first, avoiding the last; and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with inviolable respect to the laws.”* These profound words are perhaps more relevant and certainly as true today as when they were written. In his First Inaugural Address Washington wrote, *“The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.”*

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Greetings From The President



Michael D. Brumback

Freemasons today are blessed to inherit the vision and dreams of great Masons from times past. It is now our duty to not only preserve them, but to build upon them.

The **George Washington Masonic National Memorial** is an architectural tribute to George Washington the Freemason, and to the Fraternity to which he so proudly belonged his entire adult life. It is our mission at the Memorial to tell the world of the importance that Masonry played in the formation of the greatest democracy the world has ever known - a government built on truly Masonic principles.

George Washington, acting as Grand Master, laid the cornerstone of the Capitol. He was laid to rest with Masonic ceremonies by Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22. Washington saw that Masonry was there at the birth of our Nation, and the Fraternity was there to honor him at his death. These historical facts need to be told to our young Masons, and to the countless young men who would benefit from belonging to a Lodge. With your help, the Memorial will be here for countless generations to do just that.

Is it important to support and maintain a granite building located in Alexandria, Virginia? I would argue that it is more important than ever.

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Greetings From The President, *continued from page 1*

I believe that we are approaching a renaissance in Freemasonry. The “Da Vinci Code”, “National Treasure” and countless documentaries are sparking an interest and awareness of Freemasonry unlike anything I have seen. Young men are fascinated by chivalric ideals, tradition, trust, and honor. We are seeing a return of “family values” and patriotism. All of these factors make Freemasonry attractive and interesting to good men who strive to be better.

So I hope you agree with me that, **Yes!**, The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is important to Freemasonry today. It is important to have a National Masonic Memorial to which all Masons can proudly identify. It is important to have a National presence for the world to come and learn about our beloved Fraternity. It is important to never let the character and accomplishments of George Washington fade from the history books.

We trust that you, your Lodge, and your Grand Lodge will continue to support this great and good work: “*To inspire humanity through Education to promote the virtues, character and vision of George Washington, the Man, the Mason and Father of our Country.*”

Vision for the Future, *continued from page 1*

Washington knew that for citizens to live in a free society with limited government, each citizen must be able to control or restrain himself. Washington demonstrated *Self-Restraint* in his private and public life. Examples of his self-restraint can be seen when he commanded the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Although he had the power of the Army behind him, Washington always deferred to the authority of the civilian government—the Continental Congress. When one of his officers, Lewis Nicola, suggested that the army disregard the civil authority and make Washington a king, Washington was filled with anger. But he exercised restraint over his own temper and wrote a reasoned and even-handed letter rebuking Nicola. At the end of the Revolutionary War, Washington again displayed his self-restraint. Instead of asking for a high office or political power, he resigned his commission as Commander-in-Chief and returned to Mount Vernon.

Self-Assertion means that citizens must be jealous of their rights, and must have the courage to defend their rights. After the Revolutionary War, Washington stepped forward to preside at the Constitutional Convention and, with his endorsement, assured ratification of the new Constitution. He left a comfortable retirement at Mount Vernon to serve for eight years as our first President. When the Whiskey Rebellion threatened the existence of the young Republic, Washington asserted his authority as President to raise an army and preserve the rule of law. Both in war and in peace, George Washington repeatedly demonstrated the civic virtue of *Self-Assertion* in the service of our country.

Self-Reliance is the ability of citizens to provide the basic necessities of life for themselves and their families. Without *Self-Reliance* the citizens are not truly free. Citizens who cannot provide for themselves need a large government to take care of them. *Self-Reliant* citizens are free citizens in the sense that they are not dependent on others for their basic needs. They do not need a large government, which has the potential to become an oppressive government. George Washington, understanding the need for citizens to be *Self-Reliant*, wrote, “*This country certainly promises greater advantages, than almost any other, to persons of moderate property, who are determined to be sober, industrious, and virtuous members of society.*” Washington knew that only a strong, self-reliant citizenry is able to fully enjoy the blessings of liberty.

George D. Seghers is the Executive Director of The George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

Walter E. Webber, 33°

An Appreciation

We note with sadness the passing of Walter E. Webber on April 22, a national leader of the Masonic Fraternity, and friend and supporter of The George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Webber became Sovereign Grand Commander of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Jurisdiction of the United States in 2003.

In February of 2004, he was a distinguished speaker at the dedication ceremony of the newly renovated George Washington Museum at the Memorial. The renovation was made possible due to the generous support of both the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions of the Scottish Rite. In a moving presentation at the dedication, he remarked, “American Freemasons can be proud of the way in which this building recognizes the importance of George Washington’s contributions to our way of life... May all who come through this Museum be ever reminded that with freedom and liberty comes responsibility. And so much of what we cherish as a Mason rests upon the character of Brother George Washington.”



In his capacity as Sovereign Grand Commander, Webber was also president of the National Heritage Museum, sponsored by the Scottish Rite, and president of the 32nd Degree Masonic Learning Centers for Children, Inc., which provides one-on-one tutoring for children with dyslexia at 53 centers throughout the Northeastern and Midwestern states.

In February of this year, he attended the Memorial Association’s Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. His enthusiasm and love of the Fraternity will be greatly missed.

Message From Alexandria



George D. Seghers

The Board of Directors held a two-day workshop in April at the Memorial. From this meeting came our new vision statement, "To inspire humanity through Education to promote the virtues, character and vision of George Washington, the Man, the Mason and Father of our Country." This is indeed a bold, ambitious and truly worthy statement for the

Memorial Association. At the February meeting, the Board of Directors, under the guidance and leadership of President Brumback, made the decision to not only become actively involved in the affairs and future of the Memorial, they also decided to enlarge, refine and define the activities of the Board Members and the Association. We are developing several programs this year that are the first steps on our journey to accomplish our new vision.

The Board of Directors' next meeting in August will continue the process of actively involving the Board Members in decision making and in defining where the Association is going and what the Association is doing for its members and for humanity. The Memorial's new vision statement provides the framework to continue our efforts to not only promote and perpetuate the legacy of George Washington, but also to continue our efforts to improve ourselves as Freemasons and as citizens and human beings.

As Americans we should care about our country and live worthwhile lives. To do this it is necessary to know our history, to know what is good, what is worthwhile and what is possible. We learn these by thought, action and experience. Our family, friends and those we work with provide us with a learning experience. Hard working, loving parents, steadfast friends and successful professional acquaintances teach us by example what is good and what is possible, and inspire us to follow their example. What Shakespeare is to literature, Mozart is to music and Lou Gehrig is to sports, George Washington is to life. He practiced and displayed in his life courage, self-control, justice, dignity, steadfastness and fairness. He placed the good of all above his personal desires. He lived his life in harmony and with a steadfast purpose and met so many challenges and trials with honesty, integrity and fairness. He was an example of what it means to be a human being. He reached levels of greatness that could not have been imagined and have not been reached by anyone else. Today more than ever we need to follow his example. Today more than ever Americans need to learn and understand the history of Washington and the founding of our Nation. Washington is truly the epitome of citizenship and humanity.

George D. Seghers is the Executive Director of The George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.



Memorial Tree Program

Over the years, the Memorial has lost many beautiful, older trees. Your participation in the Tree Program will help to restore the grounds to their original splendor, while giving you an opportunity to pay a special tribute. For a donation of \$500, a tree will be planted on the Memorial grounds in honor or memory of an individual or organization. A granite marker will be installed near each tree to identify the donor and honoree.

For information or to participate in this program, please contact George Seghers at 703-683-2007 or gseghers@gwmemorial.org. As always, your generous contribution to this and other Memorial programs will be received with the deepest appreciation.

WISH LIST - 2006

The following maintenance and improvement projects have been deferred due to a lack of funding. If you, your Lodge, Grand Lodge or Masonic Organization would like to contribute to any of these projects, please contact George Seghers at 703-683-2007 or gseghers@gwmemorial.org

Install Emergency Generators	\$125,000
Sponsor one issue of <i>The Messenger</i>	\$20,000
Install Second Phase of Surveillance System	\$35,000
Structural Survey of the Memorial	\$40,000
Install Room Dividers in the Dining Room(s)	\$10,000
Install Air Conditioning and Glass Windows/Doors in Assembly Hall	\$200,000
Remove and Reset the Front Steps	\$300,000

Memorial Plans for Ambitious New Programs and Services

By
Mark Tabbert

Since January many changes have occurred within the Memorial's collections. With the motto "service to the fraternity" we are seeking ways to bring Freemasonry and George Washington to a broader audience. This new mission begins within the Memorial itself. In February we hired Bro. Michael C. Seay, Jr. as a part-time assistant. In the last four months he completed a full inventory of the Memorial's 1,000 artifacts, including confirming storage and display locations, measuring and describing items and taking more than 700 digital images. Michael has also begun reorganizing the mezzanine level. For many years it has stored thousands of duplicate books and a near complete set of proceedings from American York Rite bodies. We plan to renovate the mezzanine to become a first class safe repository for the records and archives of American Freemasonry.

In other areas, the Memorial's library has been a hub of regular activity. While it is open only to researchers and by appointment, we still answer numerous e-mails and letters every week and have assisted several students and Masons. With the continual "Da Vinci Code" phenomenon, the Memorial has hosted and advised the media and several film crews.

Reaching out beyond the building, we are fulfilling the Memorial's mission to the public and Freemasons. First and foremost, we have renewed our relationship with Mount Vernon. With Executive Director, Bro. James Rees, new programs are underway to inspire Americans and Freemasons to uphold the virtues Washington lived. Outreach to Masonic bodies has also increased. Since January I have given talks and consulted with Masons in New York City, Schenectady, Rochester, Milwaukee, Detroit, Vermont and Alberta, Canada. Several trips are already planned in the fall. Please remember, I am always ready to speak about Freemasonry and the Memorial to any Masonic or public body.

These activities are just the beginning. Plans are underway for the Memorial to undertake several revolutionary and audacious projects. It is our ambition to bring American Masonic history to the world through the Internet. We expect to: 1 – digitize all Grand Lodge Proceedings, 2 – create a database of every Grand Lodge, Lodge and every American Mason who lived prior to 1980, 3 – coordinate a national on-line catalog of every American Masonic library, and 4 – create a similar on-line database of Masonic historical artifacts. In September, representatives from several Grand Lodges will meet to advise and recommend information and technical parameters.

The success of all this work and planning depends on the continual support of American Freemasons. For nearly 100 years you have built and maintained the Memorial. Now the Memorial is dedicated to greater support to Freemasons and America. Together we can make it happen.

Mark Tabbert is the Memorial's Director of Collections.

Memorials as Charitable Deductions

"Memorials" are yet another means for providing for a charity such as The George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Your memorial contribution to our future needs is a wonderful way to let us remember you or a person you loved and respected. Your gift becomes a lasting tribute to an important relationship. It can establish a permanent link with the past and may encourage others to participate in your vision for the future. The gift could be restricted permanently in an Endowment Fund, or it could be temporarily restricted for a particular purpose. You as the donor would have the benefit of making the decision. Also, you would receive an immediate income tax deduction to the extent allowed by law.

- Please send me Planned Giving information
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To respond, please fill in your information, tear along perforated line and mail to:

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Or Fax to 703-519-9270

For additional giving opportunities, please see reverse side

Join the GWMNMA Today!

Yes! Count on me to support our Memorial.

Enclosed is my membership contribution of:

- \$100 - Silver Craftsman:** You will receive a Membership Certificate and a Memorial lapel pin.
- \$250 - Gold Master:** You will receive a Membership Certificate and a Memorial lapel pin.
- \$500 - Platinum Presidential:** You will receive a Membership Certificate, a Memorial lapel pin, and a replica of the George Washington Penknife.
- \$1000 - 21st Century:** You will receive a Membership Certificate, a Memorial lapel pin, a replica of the George Washington Penknife, and your name will be cast in bronze and displayed in the main entrance to Memorial Hall.

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In addition to the above benefits, all Millennium Members will receive a Membership Plaque and your name will be permanently displayed on a Millennium Wall of Honor recognizing major benefactors prominently located in the Memorial.

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Memorial Offers Class on Freemasonry

Freemasonry 101, a class for the new Mason or those who want to know all about Freemasonry, will be offered for the first time this summer at the Memorial. The class will explore the rich traditions of the Masonic Fraternity, discuss the intrigue and controversies surrounding Freemasonry and explain the mission and purpose of the Memorial, highlighting some of its beautiful artwork, artifacts and displays. The class will run for six weeks every Tuesday beginning June 13th (except July 4th) from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Enrollment is free. The class will be taught by Harry Shaffer, Tour Guide Director at the Memorial and a former Art History teacher. There will also be special guest speakers from various Masonic organizations throughout the course.

In Residence Theatre Company Begins 3rd Season

Natural Theatricals, the professional theater company in residence at The George Washington Masonic National Memorial will begin its 3rd season this summer by presenting two world premieres and the first staged adaptation of a new translation of a rarely performed 2,400-year-old classic. Natural Theatricals specializes in presenting plays with classical themes derived from the ancient Greek theatrical tradition.



“Nobody does what we do,” says Brian Alprin, producing director. “The material we choose is unique.” Artistic director Paula Alprin notes, “Since we opened in 2003, every show we’ve mounted has been a *first* of one sort or another.”

Natural Theatricals will open its 2006 season July 13 with the world premiere of Paula Alprin’s *Alice in Underwear* (July 13 – 30) about an abusive Manhattan theater critic who lands an exclusive interview only to discover things are not what they seem. The season continues with Euripides’ *Phoenician Women* (August 10 – 27). This rarely performed sequel to the well-known Oedipus story has been newly translated by Carl R. Mueller, professor of theater at the University of California at Los Angeles.

The season will conclude with the world premiere of Phillip Freund’s *Jocasta*, (October 26 – November 18) a feminist re-imagining of the Oedipus myth about a wealthy heiress of a plantation fortune in 19th century Martinique. The play was written in the 1960’s, published in 1973, and several times came close to being produced in New York and filmed in Hollywood. The 97-year-old playwright is thrilled that his *Jocasta* is finally reaching the stage.

For tickets and information, call 703-739-5895 or visit www.naturaltheatricals.com.



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The Messenger

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