

Haddonfield Chapter, Haddonfield, NJ

Organized January 28, 1897

National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights

Members of Haddonfield Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution regularly gather to celebrate the anniversary of its founding. If it is a time of looking joyfully and expectantly to the future, it is also a time of solemn reflection, of recalling the aims and goals first set forth by the founders who sought, primarily among their purposes, to "perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence, encourage historical research, preserve documents, relics, and records of individual soldiers, and promote the celebration of all patriotic anniversaries." They also sought "to promote institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge" and "to foster true patriotism and love of country."

From the call by Mrs. H.D. Moore, the Organizing Regent, which brought the first official meeting to order back on January 28, 1897, the Chapter began its task of fulfilling those goals almost immediately, and its labors have continued unceasingly throughout these many years.



Mrs. Henry D. Moore,
Organizing Regent

* * Section 1 * *

Special mention should be made that the Haddonfield Chapter once counted among its members the daughter of the author of "The American's Creed," that compilation of patriotic utterances that stirs the heart and soul of all Americans, and has become an integral part of DAR gatherings throughout the land.

But it is the service of the Chapter that is particularly noteworthy today, and included in that service are its contributions in the field of historic preservation. Because of those accomplishments, residents and visitors will forever be reminded of Haddonfield's heritage, and its unique standing in American history.

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights

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Buttonwood Tree

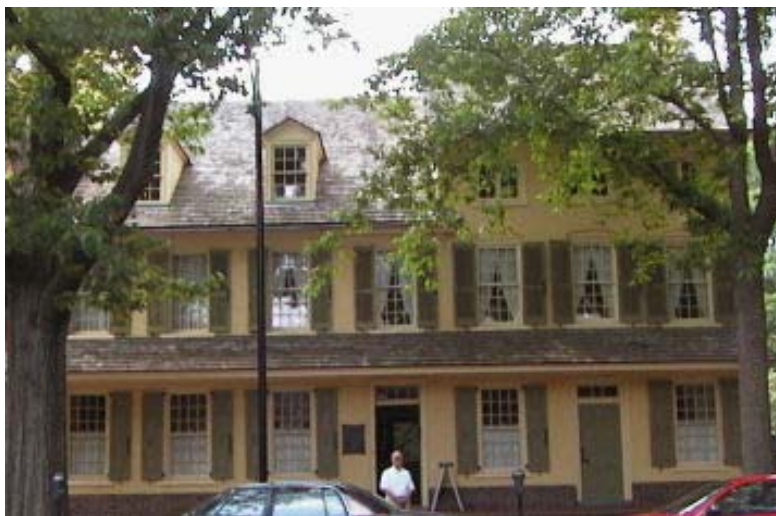
Kings Highway, the Kings Road through Haddonfield to Philadelphia has a marker in a Buttonwood tree first placed there by the Chapter in March of 1899. It reads, *The British army passed under these trees after evacuating Philadelphia, June 1778.*

And within walking distance of those historic buttonwoods, stands the Indian King Tavern, once called the American House (circa 1750), which was pivotal in the events of the Revolutionary War.



Indian King Tavern Sign

Marked by the Haddonfield Chapter on September 20, 1900: *Within this building, then a Tavern-house, the Council of Safety for New Jersey was organized, March 8th, 1777. Herein also, in September of the same year, the Legislature unanimously resolved, that thereafter, the word 'State' should be substituted for 'Colony' in all public writs and commissions.*



Indian King Tavern

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights



DAR Emblem in the
Indian King Tavern Garden

And although monetary support for the care and maintenance of the Indian King Tavern would continue for years, the time and resources expended in preserving it have long since proven to be worthy of the investment. Representing an achievement of national proportions, the site has become a landmark, drawing visitors from near and far.

The Haddonfield Chapter met for many years in the Indian King Tavern before the NJ Park Services took it over as a museum. Chapter members still work there today as docents, telling of the Tavern's history.

* * Section 3 * *

Other nearby reminders of the chapter's efforts in historic preservation include the "Old Guard House" on Kings Highway, marked in 1913, and the first brick house in town, marked in 1938, which was built before the Revolution, and once stood on the very ground where the high school now stands.

A few minutes away, on Grove Street, a passerby might stop to rest on a bench before a mound of earth surrounded by a small stone wall. Just in front of the wall stands a bronze plaque that marks the spot of the first school in this borough. Reading the plaque, he will discover that it was there, that a one-room school house once stood, where the congregants of five of the churches in town first met, and where the spiritual beginnings of this community took root.



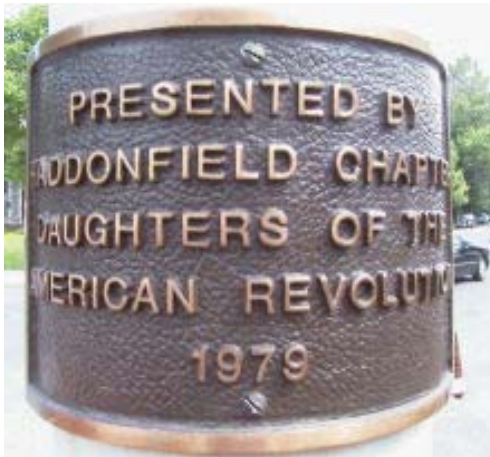
Haddonfield High school site of
"Old Guard House"

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights



Grove Street Garden

And out for a stroll on a warm spring night through the town's King's Court, townsfolk might nonchalantly look up at a star-filled sky, and happen to notice another of the Chapter's contributions to its community, presented in July of 1979. Although it does not qualify as an example of historic preservation, it represents the heart and soul of the DAR: an illuminated flag fluttering in a gentle breeze, high atop a thirty foot pole in the town's darkened courtyard.



Plaque on Flag at Kings Court



Flag at Kings Court

* * Section 4 * *

Beginning in 1913 and continuing throughout the decades, the Chapter has attempted to ease the transition of new citizens by greeting them on the day they take their oaths of allegiance, providing mini-courses in patriotism by distributing the DAR Manual for Citizenship and cards containing Flag Codes, "The American's Creed," and the "Preamble to the Constitution,".

Also from its early days, the Chapter has contributed substantially to Ellis Island, that beloved symbol of American freedom, through whose gates so many immigrants have entered this great country.

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights

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In the all-important area of education, the Chapter has, for over ninety years, faithfully promoted the study of American History by recognizing, honoring, and awarding students who write winning essays or demonstrate excellence in the study of that subject.

In 1940, it sponsored its first DAR Good Citizen from Haddonfield Memorial High School. A program which has grown to include nine area high schools, matching the growth in the Haddonfield Chapter's membership. The Chapter also grants annual achievement awards and scholarships to needy youths at the Camden Center for Youth Development in nearby Camden.



Excellence in History Award



Good Citizen Award Pin

* * Section 6 * *

In following the lead of the State and National Societies, the Chapter has throughout its history also aided in the care and education of the underprivileged and disadvantaged children of Appalachia and wholeheartedly responded to the needs of our Native Americans, both in substantial monetary contributions over the decades as well as in the cartons of books, clothes, and gifts donated to DAR schools and DAR-sponsored schools throughout the land.

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Valley Forge Chapel Bell Tower

Perhaps the most stirring photograph would be of Chapter members attending the long-awaited and solemn ceremonies that took place on April 18, 1953 when the Dedication of the Valley Forge Bell Tower finally became a reality. We can see them now, standing there, shoulder to shoulder, with members of the DAR from throughout the United States on the very grounds where ancestors suffered untold agony and gave their lives for the cause of independence.

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights

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The Haddonfield Chapter has made a variety of presentations over the years: a Commemorative Flag marking the end of World War II to town officials at King's Court; a Braille flag to the New Jersey Association for the Blind; a Teacher of the Year Award to a local teacher who would go on to win the National Award; a trophy to a high school boy who finished first in the historic Jonas Cattell run from Haddonfield to Fort Mercer; and a Conservation Award to Mayor Campbell of Gibbsboro.



Jonas Cattell Sign

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In conclusion, it should be mentioned that in addition to the causes already mentioned, the Chapter has opened its heart and pocketbook to individuals and organizations so numerous and so diverse that it would be impossible to list them all. However, in skipping through the decades, we find that a few of the beneficiaries of the Chapter's largess have included victims of the San Francisco earthquake, a school for immigrants in Massachusetts, patients in the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital, the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, local welfare, civic, and veterans groups, the Independence Hall Association, the Save the Redwoods project, the Penny Pine Project, the Valley Forge Memorial Bell Tower, the Visiting Nurses, the American Red Cross, the C.A.R. for a bus to carry children from the Camden Children's Home to the Philadelphia Zoo, the Cooper Hospital, the Haddonfield Historical Society, the Haddonfield Library, the Camden County Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, the Hospice Program, the Town Food Harvest Committee, and the Marine Corps Tun Tavern Foundation, Inc. for restoration of historic City Tavern on the Philadelphia waterfront.



Greenfield Hall home of the Haddonfield Historical Society

But, of all the causes the Chapter has supported throughout the years, closest to the hearts of its members has been the welfare of the men and women who have selflessly served in this country's armed forces, and the care and education of the children who will inherit the inspiring history of our democracy and in whose hands the future of it resides.

Haddonfield Chapter Highlights

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The Chapter has never forgotten our armed service veterans, proving its commitment to them year after year, with numerous awards throughout its history attesting to that commitment.

Nor has the Chapter ever forgotten the children, whether those in its own back yard, in the nearby city of Camden, or in the hills of Appalachia, or on a reservation in South Dakota.

And finally, it has never forgotten God.

Aware of the strong spiritual foundation provided by its Organizing Regent and Charter members, the Chapter has maintained its collective belief and reliance on that bulwark of strength throughout its one hundred plus years. The Chapter continues the tradition of reciting prayer and reading passages from the Bible at its meetings, turning to Him regularly for strength and guidance, and, on occasion through the years, singing old hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

Many December meetings throughout the years have included a segment during which the old familiar carols were sung in unison, bringing the Christmas message alive in a room aglow with candles and decorated with wreaths and holly.

There seems little doubt that this reliance on faith in Almighty God has encouraged and sustained its members in their work over these past years and that He will continue to be sought in the days and years ahead.

As a footnote, a review of the history of the Haddonfield Chapter of the DAR emphatically attests to its success in carrying on the work of the founders. Not surprisingly, it also reveals that, in so doing, it has simultaneously succeeded in rendering over a century of service to its community, its state and its nation.

These Condensed Highlights are compiled from the minutes and reports of the officers, chairs and members of the Haddonfield Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, and respectfully submitted in recognition and tribute of their service.

E. Louise Lindinger, Haddonfield Chapter Member