



Franco-American Alliance Commemoration

**4:00 PM
19 September 2024**

**The corner of Rodgers & Upshur Roads
Northwest corner of Worden Field
United States Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland**

Hosts

The United States Naval Academy

**The John Paul Jones Chapter
Maryland Society of the Sons of the American Revolution**

**The Maryland Society
General Society of the Sons of the Revolution**

**The Peggy Stewart Tea Party Chapter
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution**

“A tribute of gratitude to the brave soldiers and sailors of France who rested here on the way to Yorktown to support our quest for liberty and freedom many of whom gave their all.”

Program

Arrival of Guests & Laying of Wreaths

Presentation of Colors

The French National Anthem, *La Marseillaise*, performed
by students of the Naval Academy Primary School

The National Anthem of the United States of America
performed by the US Naval Academy Band

Invocation

Welcome Guests & Greetings -

Remarks - France - TBD

Remarks - Commandant of the US Naval Academy, TBD

**Remarks - President of the Naval Academy French Club,
TBD**



Recognition of Organizational Wreaths

Retiring the Colors

Benediction

Closing

Reception to follow at the Naval Academy Club



Background

We gather here today, near this marker that commemorates the few days in September 1781, that General Rochambeau's French army, and some of Washington's Continental army, camped at this site along the old Severn river and College Creek shoreline, that has become part of the US Naval Academy. This area of Annapolis was the 37th encampment in their long march south from Newport, Rhode Island, en route to join the Continental Army under General Lafayette, near Yorktown, Virginia.

The army began marching into this field around 0700 the morning of 18 September, setting up their tents, digging fire pits, tending the hundreds of horses and oxen that had drawn the field artillery and ammunition caissons, at least ten wagons for baggage per regiment, plus more for supplies, hospital, stragglers, butchers, wheelwrights & farriers. There would have been more than 500 8-man tents set up all along the creek & river from the back of St. John's College all the way to the harbor.

Seven long years of war, against the finest army in the world at that time left the Continental Army and American militias hard pressed and in ragged condition, yet dedicated, confident, and eager to fight. The new nation had been ravaged, and reserves were meager. So, when this new first rate, fully supported, brightly uniformed, well disciplined and organized French army came marching through the country hundreds, even thousands, of townspeople and colonists came from miles around to see what must have been very inspiring, motivational, and amazing.

An actual Treaty of Alliance had not been negotiated and signed until 1778, but the French provided supplies, arms and ammunition secretly to the Colonies. The treaty allowed them to send troops and naval support. A French fleet landed four of France's finest regiments, the Bourbonnois, the Royal Deux-Ponts, The Soissonnois, and the Saintonge Regiments, plus Lauzon's Legion of cavalry, grenadiers and light infantry under the command of General Rochambeau in Newport, Rhode Island, mid-July 1780.

In June of 1781 replacements arrived from France of about 600 plus another 2 companies of artillery. A sea voyage in those days took its toll. Then the army started marching to meet with General Washington's army.

The routes and camping locations were scouted out in advance by quartermasters, and road workers proceeded the troops to fill potholes and clear obstacles in roads that often were little more than ox cart paths.

Reveille was 2 AM, and on the road by 4 to the next campsite, 12-15 miles further on, arriving there around 8-12 to avoid marching in the heat of the day.

They joined General Washington's 4,000 man army July 6, 1781 near White Plains, NY. The Generals reviewed and conferred on options for attacking British forces in New York or Virginia. When they learned that Admiral de Grasse's French fleet was sailing from the Caribbean for the Chesapeake Bay, they determined to march south to reinforce Lafayette's forces and confront Cornwallis troops encamped at Yorktown, Virginia. Admiral De Grasse brought another 3,000 troops from the Caribbean, and significant Spanish silver from Cuba for additional supplies and troop payment.

The first embarkation point on the Chesapeake Bay was at Head of Elk, Maryland, (now Elkton). But with limited local bay boats, only 3,000 could be transported from there. The remainder marched on to Baltimore and then to Annapolis.

The French army encamped in Annapolis between 18-21 September. 3,800 French troops, and another 200 Continental troops, with some of their artillery, supplies, and ammunition embarked on fifteen ships from Admiral de Grasse's French fleet. The French fleet had on the 5th of September defeated and blocked British fleet attempts to resupply and reinforce Lord Cornwallis' Army in the Battle of the Capes.

About this time of the day, 242 years ago, the French ships started to weigh anchor and leave Annapolis, for Williamsburg, Virginia. The troops disembarked there for deployment to positions around Yorktown. The remainder of the huge wagon train, with troops to protect and support it went overland to the Yorktown battlefield.

The allied troops around Yorktown totaled roughly 9,000 Continental and 9,000 French troops against about 8,300 British, although different sources give different numbers. About 8,000 English marched out between the French and American forces on 19 October following the surrender. That troop strength does not include the vital Naval forces that blockaded the Chesapeake and Yorktown Harbor.

Our nations have shared many efforts fighting tyranny to further the finest qualities of freedom, equality and justice. We think back of our great grandfathers fighting for France in World War I, followed by our fathers and grandfather's valiant invasion of the Normandy beaches during World War II, and we remain allies in NATO.



The French Monument

Erected in 1911 by The General Society, Sons of the Revolution.

The Monument is located just across the street from our location, we suggest a visit to honor those French Soldiers and Sailors that gave their all to help found our great nation.

The Inscription.

This monument honors unknown French soldiers and sailors who gave their lives in the American War of Independence and were buried near here.

Dedicated by President Williams Howard Taft, April 18, 1911



"Our soldiers rest in hallowed ground in a friendly country. To the Sons of the Revolution I beg to express the gratitude of France." - Jean Jules Jusserand, Ambassador of France

The memory of their deeds will live forever.

Participants

The French Embassy

The US Naval Academy

The State of Maryland

Anne Arundel County

North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Headquarters

Supreme Allied Commander Transformation

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

National Society Children of the American Revolution

National Society Children of 1812

Alliance Francais d'Annapolis

Historic Annapolis

American Friends of Lafayette

Maryland State Society Daughters of the American

Revolution and its Chapters

Maryland Society of the National Society of Colonial

Dames of the XVII Century

Maryland Society, Sons of the American Revolution and

its Chapters

Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of

Maryland

Annapolis High School, Naval Junior ROTC

We kindly request those laying wreaths place them 20 minutes prior to the start of the program at 4 PM, and remove them immediately following the ceremony.



United States National Anthem 'The Star Spangled Banner'

Francis Scott Key – 1814

*O say, can you see
By the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched,
Were so gallantly streaming!
And the rockets red glare
The bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled
Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free
And the home of the brave!*

History of the U.S. National Anthem

On September 13, 1814 Francis Scott Key visited the British fleet in Chesapeake Bay to secure the release of Dr. William Beanes, who had been captured after the burning of Washington, D.C. The release was secured, but Key was detained on the ship overnight during the shelling of Fort McHenry, one of the forts defending Baltimore.

In the morning, he was so delighted to see the American flag still flying over the Fort that he began a poem to commemorate the occasion. First published under the title "Defense of Fort McHenry," the poem soon attained wide popularity as sung to the tune "To Anacreon in Heaven." The origin of this tune is obscure, but it may have been written by John Stafford Smith, a British composer in 1750. The Star Spangled Banner was officially made the national anthem by Congress in 1931.

French National Anthem

La Marseillaise

Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle, 1792

French

Allons enfants de la Patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé !
Contre nous de la tyrannie,
L'étendard sanglant est levé,
Entendez-vous dans les campagnes

Mugir ces féroces soldats ?
Ils viennent jusque dans vos bras
Egorger vos fils, vos compagnes !
Aux armes, citoyens,

Formez vos bataillons,
Marchons, marchons !
Qu'un sang impur
Abreuve nos sillons !

English

Arise children of the Fatherland,
The day of glory has arrived!
Against us is tyranny,
The bloody standard is raised,
Do you hear the bellowing

Of these fearsome soldiers in the
countryside?
They are coming into your midst
To slit the throats of your sons and
your wives!
To arms, citizens,

Form your battalions,
Let us march, let us march!
May unclean blood
Water the furrows of our fields!

History of the French National Anthem

La Marseillaise, the French national anthem was composed in one night during the French Revolution (April 25, 1792) by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle. A captain of the engineers and an amateur musician stationed in Strasbourg in 1792. It was played at a patriotic banquet at Marseilles, and printed copies were given to the revolutionary forces then marching on Paris. They entered Paris singing this song, and to it they marched to the Tuileries on August 10th.

A Special Thanks to:

Our Hosts

The United States Naval Academy
The John Paul Jones Chapter, Maryland Society, Sons of the
American Revolution
The Maryland Society, General Society Sons of the Revolution
The Peggy Stewart Tea Party Chapter, National Society
Daughters of the American Revolution

Our Supporters

The United States Naval Academy Band
The United States Naval Academy Color Guard
The Annapolis High School Naval JROTC Color Guard
The Students of the Naval Academy Primary School
The Maryland Society, SAR Color guard
and
to those donors that helped make this commemoration possible

Our Volunteers

LCDR Gabriel de Roquefeuil, FN
Ronald Shuey
Geoffrey Wood
Bobbi Carleton
Glenn Moss
Lynne Moss
Scott Devanny
Bob Rice
Mark Deeds

