

SOCIETY MEMBERS ATTEND BATTLE OF THE CAPES EVENT

Three members of the Society of the War of 1812 in Virginia attended the Norfolk Chapter of the Virginia Sons of the American Revolution event in Virginia Beach on September 7, 2024. The event was the 243rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Capes which took place off the Virginia Capes on September 5, 1781. Although no Virginia troops or naval personnel participated in the battle, the French navy under the command of Admiral Compte de Grasse defeated the British navy and made possible the subsequent victory of the American and French forces at Yorktown on October 19, 1781. Among the Virginia Society's participants were President Stuart Butler, 1st Vice President Kenneth Hawkins, and Councillor Timothy Ahlgrim, all of whom are also members of the Sons of the American Revolution. Enclosed are pertinent pages from the official program describing the event and photos (taken by Tim Ahlgrim). There were over forty different organizations laying wreaths during the event.

The event took place in front of the statue of Compte de Grasse, a gift from France, near the Old Cape Henry Lighthouse in Virginia Beach. Although it was a rainy day, nearly 100 people gathered there to observe the festivities. It is a nationally recognized event.

MC for the program was Capt (USN-Ret) Christopher Melhuish, who Society members may remember as our principal speaker at our annual muster 2023.



President Butler behind the Society's wreath



Wreaths of the principle sponsors of the event



Admiral Comte de Grasse statue

SAR Pledge

We descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution who, by their sacrifices, established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and our Constitutional Republic and solemnly pledge ourselves to defend them against every foe.

SAR Recessional

Until we meet again, let us remember our obligations to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.

Acknowledgements

CAPT Bertrand Pouliquen, FRA Navy
CDR Alban Théodose Morel, FRA Navy
CPO (SEL) Ricardo Sanchez, JEB Little Creek-Fort Story
Security Office and Staff
VASSAR Color Guard
City of Virginia Beach

Battle of the Virginia Capes Planning Committee

Robert E. Bruce, John M. Hall, Gary P. Pridgen, Suzanne S. Camden
CAPT Aurélie Guilleret, FRA Navy
CDR Alban Théodose Morel, FRA Navy
Dr. Kenneth Hawkins
CPO Timothy Ahlgrim, USN (Ret.),
CDR Kimball Thompson, USN (Ret.)
CAPT Christopher Melhuish, USN (Ret.)



Second Battle of the Virginia Capes Painted by Vladimir Zvegintzoff, 1962

The 243rd Anniversary Battle of the Virginia Capes

Saturday, September 7, 2024, 11:00 a.m.
Admiral Francois Joseph Paul, Comte de Grasse,
Marquis de Grasse-Tilly Statue
JEB Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia Beach, Virginia



Norfolk Chapter
Virginia Society
Sons of the American Revolution



Comte de Grasse by M.J. Baptiste



Thomas Graves by T. Gainsborough

The naval battle of September 5, 1781, that took place just a few miles east of where we are gathered, is one of the most critical naval battles in the history of the United States. The "Battle of the Virginia Capes" lasted only two-and-a-half hours, and did not involve any Americans, but was a decisive factor in America's quest for independence from Great Britain. Without the Battle of the Capes, or the Battle of the Chesapeake as the French call it, the Franco-American victory at Yorktown may not have taken place.

On October 20th, 1781, General George Washington gratefully wrote Admiral Comte de Grasse to thank him "... in the Name of America, for the glorious event for which she is indebted to you..." The Admiral responded with a masterful understatement on November 3rd "**I consider myself infinitely happy to have been of some service to the United States ...**"

And on this day, from all Americans, "Admiral de Grasse, we will always be in your debt. We will never forget your glorious victory!"

The Battle of the Virginia Capes Commemoration

Commemoration of the The 243rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Virginia Capes

Wreath Presentations

**Wreath Presentations
(Continued)**

| Organization | Presenter |
|--|--|
| Montpelier Chapter NSDAR | Jennifer Kelly Regent |
| Charles Parish Chapter NSDAR | Sharleen West Regent |
| Lynnhaven Parish Chapter NSDAR | Carolyn Guenveur, CDR, USN, Ret. Regent |
| Chesapeake Chapter NSDAR | Catharine Rowe Regent |
| Old Cannonball Society, C.A.R. | Robert Evans President |
| Col. Alexander Spotswood Society, C.A.R. Honorary V.S.C.A.R. Virginia State President 2021-2022 | Sara Cox |
| Moore House Society, C.A.R. | Brendan Gay V.S.C.A.R. Registrar Toni Gay, CDR, USCG, Ret. Senior President |
| United States Daughters of 1812 Fort Norfolk Chapter | Cynthia Hiddemen President |
| Society of the War of 1812 in the Commonwealth of Virginia | Stuart Butler President |
| VA Soc Order of Founders and Patriots of America | Dr. Kenneth Hawkins Governor |
| VA Soc Daughters of Founders And Patriots of America | Faye Sobel Governor |
| Colonial Dames of the 17 th Century | Brucie Standahl President |
| Daughters of the American Colonists Norfolk Mace Chapter | Wanda Russo Regent |

Welcome

CAPT Christopher Melhuish, USN (Ret.)

Invocation

Dr. Mark A. Jumper

Presentation of the Colors

CDR E. Kimball Thompson, II, USN (Ret.)
Color Guard Commander

The National Anthems

France
The United States of America

SAR Pledge

Mr. Ernest Coggins, Jr.

Greetings

Hon. Robert "Bobby" M. Dyer, Mayor, Virginia Beach
RDML Cassidy Norman, USN
Dr. Darryl Addington, President-General, NSSAR
Dr. William Greaf, President, VASSAR
Mrs. Laurie Parker Nesbitt, State Regent, VADAR
Ms. Emily Hopkins, Historian, VA C.A.R.

Keynote Address

RDML Frédéric de Rupilly, FRA Navy

Presentation of Award

Wreath Laying

Dr. Patrick Hannum

Closing Remarks

CAPT Christopher Melhuish, USN (Ret.)

SAR Recessional

Mr. Jeffrey Thomas

Benediction

Dr. Mark A. Jumper