

CINCINNATI FOURTEEN



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Making Waves at Penn's Landing

The State Society of the Cincinnati of Pennsylvania

Warm and sunny weather provided the perfect backdrop for the Pennsylvania Society's Washington's Birthday luncheon on February 17. Forty-eight Pennsylvania members, spouses and local members from other state societies gathered on the upper veranda of the Independence Seaport Museum with spectacular views of Philadelphia's downtown to the west and the New Jersey shoreline across the Delaware River to the east. Penn's Landing would be a familiar setting to those who attended the Triennial celebration last May, where the Hilton—adjacent to the Seaport Museum—was the conference location.

Hors d'oeuvres and cocktails launched the festivities before a seated luncheon in the museum's conference room. President Jim Pringle welcomed guests from the New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and Virginia societies in addition to the Pennsylvanians. One member even flew in from Houston to attend the luncheon.

The highlight of the event was the lecture by Rob Drury, who just published a book about Valley Forge and the winter encampment of 1777-1778, where George Washington transformed his ragged collection of 12,000 soldiers into a disciplined fighting force strong enough to take on the British army by the summer of 1778. Drury emphasized the starvation and disease that killed more than 1,000 soldiers, the key personalities of the Marquis de Lafayette and Baron Friedrich von Steuben, and the challenge to Washington's leadership by members of the Conway Cabal. Drury concisely described the personalities and politics surrounding

Washington as he regrouped his army at Valley Forge against all odds.

Penn's Landing also provided the backdrop for the Pennsylvania Society's annual meeting last October, which drew seventy attendees. The annual meeting and dinner were held aboard the *Moshula*, the square rigger with a tall mast anchored several hundred yards from the Hilton. The *Moshula* was launched in 1904, traveled around Cape Horn fifty-four times and has the distinction of having been captured in both world wars when it happened to be docked in the wrong country at the wrong time.

Members and guests enjoyed cocktails above deck through sunset, then descended to a large dining room for dinner. The after-dinner speaker was Tyler Putnam, a PhD candidate in the history of American civilization program at the University of Delaware. Putnam regaled the audience with the fascinating history of the HMS *Augusta*, the Royal Navy gun ship that ran aground during the attack on Fort Mifflin south of Philadelphia in October 1777. Under cannon fire from Fort Mifflin, the stranded *Augusta* caught fire and when the blaze reached its magazine, the resulting explosion blew out windows in Philadelphia. Wooden pieces of the wreck washed ashore for the next 150 years and have been collected as keepsakes.

Randolph Philip Smith
Secretary

Clockwise from top: Yasamin Miller, Hannah Hepburn, Brenda Kellogg and Liz Ward took in the sunshine on the terrace overlooking the Delaware River at the Independence Seaport Museum this February; Oliver and Helen Picher and Vanessa and Nicholas Hall chatted until the sun went down; Cincinnati from several constituent societies assembled on the deck of the *Moshulu* to share an evening of fellowship; George Read, Mary Read, Bill Scott, and Ross Read enjoyed the unseasonable weather and waterfront views.