



WILLARD NEWS



The Newsletter of the Willard Family Association of
America, Inc.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT



PHILADELPHIA, 2003

By William L. Willard, President

On August 15th, 2003 the "City of Brotherly Love" welcomed members of the Willard Family Association of America for their 95th annual reunion. Headquarters for this year's reunion was the historic Loews Hotel in downtown Philadelphia.

This year a new feature was added in the form of a Hospitality suite where attendees could gather between scheduled events. This proved to be very well received and was often utilized. It also provided the necessary space for the Friday afternoon Board meeting.

Formalities began with registration and a social hour where old friendships were renewed. At 7:00 PM we all sat down to a Prime Rib dinner with all of the fixings. Desert leftovers were sent to the hospitality suite for later consumption.

After dinner the group was treated to a wonderful talk by Karin Kincaid who told us all about the "German Williard's" and the descendants of de-Walt Williard who immigrated to America with his wife on November 3, 1750 from Erlenbach, the Pfalz, Germany. Her informative talk told us how the German Williard clan helped settle Maryland and Pennsylvania. Karin even suggested a connection between the German and English Willard's from whom Major Simon Willard was descended. *(We have printed Karin's talk in its entirety elsewhere in this newsletter.)*

After Karin's talk many returned to the Hospitality suite for more desert and socializing.

On Saturday morning, the formal annual meeting began with a briefing of the past year's happenings and the state of the organization as a whole. Annual reports were given by the President, the Newsletter Editor, the Secretary, Historian, Webmaster and the Treasurer. Motions were made to accept these reports which were carried unanimously.

During "new business," discussions were held on ways to better the organization and bring it more in line with the times. Two important areas of concern were the lack of a finance committee and the WFA still not being recognized by the IRS as a non-profit organization. Motions were made by members attending to establish a finance committee to help manage the organizations funds and assist our treasurer. A further motion set a time limit of two years for the organization to be brought into compliance with IRS regulations for non-profit organizations. Both motions carried and the latter is now in the hands of the new finance committee.

Next on the agenda was election of new officers and Board members. When the votes were in several existing Board members advanced to the executive committee and three new Directors were elected.

After the annual meeting the WFA Historian gave a talk on where to find genealogical information at places that are not normally thought of. Those who are involved in tracing their family roots were given tips on places to look "off the beaten path."

At noon we all gathered for a buffet luncheon and closing thoughts.

Afternoon activities "were on your own" allowing people to visit many of the nearby historic sites such as Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Christ's Church and the ancient burial ground where Benjamin Franklin rests. Some made it all the way down to the water front where the USS Coast Guard Tall ship Eagle was berthed and open to the public. There was plenty to do and several attending the reunion stayed over another night and continued to explore Philadelphia's many historic sights. Saturday evening several of us enjoyed a dinner of Italian cuisine at a local restaurant. We then returned to the hospitality suite for a final gathering and goodbyes..

The theme of this year's reunion was "Recognition of the German Willard's." Many people attending had never been to a WFA reunion before and several new friendships were made and new members of the WFA were recruited. The reunion was voted a complete success.

RUTH WILLARD DIES Long Time WFA Historian

Ruth Hallenbeck Willard, Board member and WFA Historian for well over 25 years, died on Friday, November 28, 2003. She was 84.



Ruth was one of the longest serving Historians and Board members in the history of the Willard Family

Association. She was an expert when it came to helping Willard's find their family roots. [Continued on page 8](#)

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