

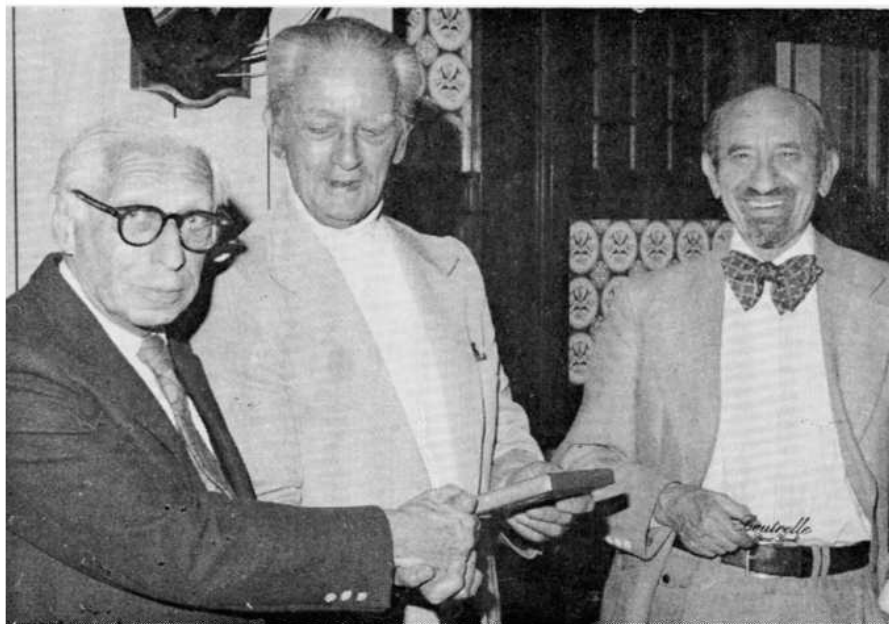


The Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 33

MAY-JUNE, 1977

NO. 5



ANNUAL DINNER

L-R, President Joseph Nathan Kane presenting Guest Speaker Franklin R. Bruns with a gift from the club and Past President Irwin M. (Doc) Yarry.

The MASONIC PHILATELIST

MAY-JUNE, 1977

VOL. 33

NO. 5

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EDITOR Robert A. Smith
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The Masonic Stamp Club of New York was
organized in 1934 for the purpose of encour-
aging research and study in Masonic Philate-
ly, and to establish bonds of good fellowship
among Masons who are stamp collectors. The
need for the organization has proved itself
through the years with its ever-increasing
membership and the formation of other
Masonic stamp clubs in the United States.

★ MEETINGS ★

First Friday of Every Month
(Except July and August)

COLLECTORS CLUB BUILDING

22 East 35th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10017

From The Editor

As this year comes to a close, I would like to thank all those members who have helped me with articles for the "Philatelist". Without this cooperation, our publication could not continue.

After five years of editing this publication, I find it necessary to step down from this position, due to a substantial increase of work in my vocation. It was an honor for me to have maintained this position during these past years and sincerely hope that the new editor will receive the same cooperation that was extended to me.

Again, thanks for all your help, and I hope that you all enjoy a healthy and happy summer season.

Robert A. Smith

Message from the President

In conclusion of my term as president, I want to express my thanks to the members of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York, for the confidence reposed in me.

This had been a very difficult year due to the many changes and circumstances beyond our control. However, in spite of this situation we have maintained our publication, produced cachets and retained our loyal membership. Our club is well rooted thru forty - three years and is still the fountain head of Masonic Philately.

The future looks ever brighter, and our officers, none of whom are salaried, but dedicated to our mutual bond of masonry and philately. To enumerate the many committee activities that each respective chairman has to fulfill in maintaining our organization is a self - rewarding labor of love.

The coming year will feature many fine articles for our publication and limited issuance of individual cachets for the continuing celebration of our bicentennial period — so steeped in masonry.

Again, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the many loyal members and to those especially who so willingly volunteered assistance and moral support.

Wishing you all a healthy summer season.

Faternally,

Joseph Nathan Kane,
President



General Nicholas Herkimer, hero of the Battle of Oriskany.

NICHOLAS HERKIMER

A stamp honoring this famous general will be issued by the United States Postal Service this August.

Brother Herkimer (1715 - 1777) was a Brigadier General during the American Revolution and was fatally wounded in the Battle of Oriskany.

His father, John Jost Herkimer, was one of the Palatine Germans that settled Herkimer Co., New York. The name Herkimer was originally Herchheimer, but was later anglicized to Herkimer.

He became a lieutenant of the militia at the age of 30 and was in command of Fort Herkimer when the French and Indians attacked German Flats in 1758. He later moved to Canajoharie district, and was made colonel in 1775, and brigadier general in 1776.

Bro. Herkimer was made a Mason on April 7, 1768, in St. Patricks Lodge No. 8 (now 4) of Johnstown, New York. The master of this lodge was Sir John Johnson, who was also Indian agent for the British and provincial grand master of New York. The Indian, Joseph Brant, was a protege of Johnson's and at the Battle of Oriskany Herkimer opposed Johnson, Brant, and Col. Butler another member of St. Patricks Lodge. In 1777 when General St. Leger invested Fort Stanwix (later known as Fort Schuyler), Herkimer took his militia to the relief of Gen. Gansevoort. At a point some six miles from Fort Stanwix, Herkimer fell into an ambush. His horse was killed and he was badly wounded, with a leg broken he dragged himself to a stump, he encouraged his men to the last, but

sustained a loss of 200 men. He was removed from the field to his home in Little Falls, where he died on August 16, 1777, ten days after the battle, due mainly from an unskilled amputation of his leg.

There are many a town, township, and county in New York that are named for him.

Robert A. Smith

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

The USPS has released information that a stamp will be issued commemorating the Articles of Confederation, which was adopted July 9th, 1778; and finally ratified on May 5th, 1779.

Forty-eight men signed the Articles of Confederation; nine are definitely known to have been Freemasons; but studies are still going on regarding eight other signers connecting them with the Craft but not enough evidence has been obtained at this time to be conclusive.

The following signers were Freemasons:

Thomas Adams, Virginia; Daniel Carroll, Maryland; John Dickinson, Pennsylvania; William Ellery, Rhode Island; John Hancock, Massachusetts; Cornelius Harnett, North Carolina; Daniel Roberdeau, Pennsylvania; Henry Laurens, South Carolina; Jonathan Bayard Smith, Pennsylvania.

The War of Independence was conducted by delegates from the original 13 states, called the Congress of the United States of America and generally known as the Continental Congress. In 1777 the Congress submitted to the legislatures of the states the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, which were ratified by New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Conn., New York, New Jersey, Penn., Del., Vir., N.C., S.C., GA. and finally Maryland. This was the origin of the Constitution.

Robert A. Smith

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On June 14, 1777, Continental Congress adopted a resolution providing for a flag of 13 stars and 13 stripes

Stars & Stripes Forever

By Rylance A. Lord, 32°

Can we consider the celebration of the American Revolution bicentennial over? I suppose so, if you think of it only as a celebration of such events as the Battle of Bunker Hill or the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere or the Battle at Concord bridge. But the celebration of the nation's bicentennial rightly extends for several more years.

The years 1775 - 77, however, were key years for the development of our national standard. Let us look at the earliest flags of our country to see how they came about and what significance the Masonic Order played in their institution.

Grand Union Flag

Various described as the Continental Colors and Washington's Flag, and perhaps known by other names as well, the Grand Union flag was the first actual (although unofficial) flag of our country. Masons were involved with it. Some believe this flag was first raised on board the Alfred in December 1775 by John Paul Jones. Jones was made a Mason in St. Bernard's Lodge No. 122 of Kirkcudbright, Scotland, November 22, 1770. His story has some degree of plausibility about the event of raising the flag on the Alfred, but the dates involved do shed some doubt about Jones' exact rank at the time.

The flag was raised in early January 1776 on the "Liberty Pole" on Prospect Hill near Charlestown, Mass. (now a part of Somerville) by General George Washington "... in compliment to the United Colonies" which became "official" as of January 1, 1776. It was the aim of the colonists to retain evidence of loyalty to the Mother Country by using the Union Jack in the canton while showing our desire to be 13 independent colonies in the alternating red and white stripes — and the flag was basically the British Red Ensign with alternating 6 white stripes.

What many Americans do not realize is that the Grand Union flag was used as the "official" standard from 1775 - 1777. During this time, of course, there were many regional flags or regimental colors used in various parts of the Northeast. However, the Grand Union flag was considered "official."

The term "official" may be somewhat misleading, because the use of the Grand Union flag was **not** instituted by any act of the Continental Congress but was generally accepted by the Army and

Navy when representing the colonial cause.

By certain circumstances, the Grand Union flag was used until the summer of 1777. Although names have often been mentioned, it is not actually known who was specifically responsible for the adoption of a new flag. On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress finally took its first step in setting some pattern for an official flag. From the **Journal** of the Continental Congress we read: "... the Flag of the united states be 13 stripes alternate red and white, that the Union be 13 stars white in a blue field representing a new constellation."

Betsy Ross Flag

Betsy Ross, the Philadelphia seamstress and maker of ships' colors, is by legend, credited with the design and/or manufacture of the first flag of this design. The legend comes to us by way of William Canby, a grandson of Betsy, in a paper he was permitted to read before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in March, 1870.

An article entitled "Those Husbands of Betsy Ross," by Ill. . Harold V. B. Voorhis, 33°, in the **Transactions of the American Lodge of Research**, gives the details.

In one legend, Washington and ranking members of the Continental Congress supposedly called upon Betsy in her shop and approved a design. Few historians place much faith in this legend.

Betsy Ross had some contact with Masonry of that era. John Ross, her first of three husbands, was a soldier in the Militia of Delaware and was killed in an explosion of gunpowder on a wharf on which he was patrolling January 21, 1776. He was a member of Lodge No. 2, Philadelphia, PA. There exists no Masonic record for Captain Joseph Ashburn, second husband of Betsy Ross, but there is for John Claypoole, the third. Claypoole received his degrees in Lodge No. 7 at Chester Town, Md., December 17, 1779.

Brother John Paul Jones also was associated with the Betsy Ross flag as well. According to legend the ladies of Portsmouth, N.H. (the "Helen Seavy Quilting Party") made a flag of similar design "from pieces of their best silk gowns" and presented it to Captain John Paul Jones to fly on the Ranger, which left Portsmouth harbor November 1, 1777, to bring word of Burgoyne's recent surrender to Benjamin Franklin, our

Ambassador to France. There is much controversy over the validity of this legend about the Portsmouth flag, but if true, it would mean that Jones secured the first salute to the Stars and Stripes (of this design) when, on February 14, 1778, he received a formal salute from the French Admiral LaMotte Piquet as he sailed the Ranger into Quiberon Bay. It would be the third salute to an American flag but the first to the Stars and Stripes.

The 13-star flag (of both the so-called Betsy Ross design and other versions) continued to be used in the colonies until 1795. One version displayed a horizontal row of five stars between two horizontal rows of four stars. Another version showed alternating rows of two and three stars.

Bennington Flag

It will be remembered that the flag of the United States was described by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777. Soon after that resolution, flag makers interpreted the design order in various ways.

The design of the Bennington flag demonstrates how much variation could be achieved. Until research suggested otherwise, it was generally accepted that the Bennington flag was the oldest Stars and Stripes in existence. It was supposedly carried during the Battle of Bennington (Vermont) by a Vermont Militia Company led by Colonel John Stark. Stark was made a Mason in Masters Lodge No. 2, Albany, N.Y. on January 9, 1778. Stark was New Hampshire born and served extensively in the Revolutionary War. According to American History, the Battle of Bunker Hill was an American defeat; but had it not been for Colonel John Stark and his New Hampshire troops, it was to be considered a tragic defeat. Stark had a remarkable military expertise — recognized, unfortunately, too late.

Because of its actual size, the Bennington flag, preserved today in Bennington, Vt., is theorized to have not been carried in actual battle, but was thought to have been hoisted above Stark's headquarters in his camp during the Battle.

In July, 1777, Burgoyne was on his way to ravage and destroy Vermont. Bennington changed the course of the War. This was August 16, 1777. Next came the Battle of Bemis Heights, September 19, 1777, and that of Saratoga in early October. Burgoyne surrendered with 5,000 men October 17, 1777 — and it was news of this defeat that John Paul Jones was dispatched to bring to Brother Ben Franklin in Paris in November 1777.

Stark, commissioned a Brigadier General as a result of the Vermont

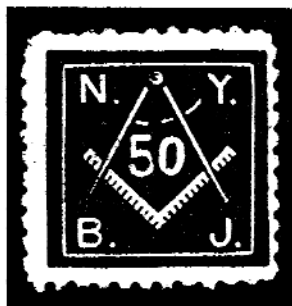
campaign, went on to make a remark which became the state motto for New Hampshire when he wrote of his inability to accept an invitation to attend an anniversary celebration at Bennington in July 1809: "I shall remember, gentlemen, the respect you and the inhabitants of Bennington and its neighborhood have shown me, until I go 'to the country from whence no traveler returns.' I must soon receive marching orders." He closed his message: "Live Free or Die . . . Death is not the worst of evils." The State of New Hampshire Legislature approved the motto "Live Free or Die" on May 10, 1945.

Star-Spangled Banner

In existence from 1795 - 1818, the 15-star flag is believed to be the first United States flag to be carried across the continent to the Pacific on the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 - 06. The same design was flown over Baltimore's Fort M'Henry in September 1814 and inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner." (See *The North-ern Light*, June 1975.)

An Act of Congress, passed April 4, 1818, provided for the addition of one star for each state admitted to the Union.

An executive order issued by President Taft in 1912 provided for the first time a legal regulation of uniformity for the arrangement of the stars. The order called for six horizontal rows of eight stars each. With the admission of Alaska in 1959, the stars were arranged in seven rows. A year later, with the admission of Hawaii, the present arrangement of nine rows came into existence.



FROM THE DESK OF BRO.
HERMAN (PAT) HERST, JR.

Dear Bob:

Maybe some reader can tell us what N.Y.B.J. stands for. The fact that the sign is on the third degree would establish that this is of Masonic content.

Glad to see you back in publication.

Herman Herst, Jr.
P.O. Box 1583
Boca Raton, FL 33432

Reprinted from the June, 1977/The Northern Light

JUNE 1777

Lafayette's First Visit to America

An acquaintance during the Frenchman's early days on American soil plays an intriguing role in later life

By Paul D. Fisher, 32°

This June marks the 200th Anniversary of the first visit to America by the Marquis de LaFayette, one of the most romantic figures of our revolutionary era. Although many fascinating anecdotes are attached to the Lafayette legend, none is so unusual or captivating as the story of Lafayette and Dr. Francis Kinlock Huger of Georgetown, S.C.

Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, became interested in the American cause soon after our revolution began. His father was killed by the British at the Battle of Minden. Upon the death of his mother when he was 13, Lafayette became a titled orphan possessing one of the largest fortunes in France. Following an arranged marriage when he was 16½ with Adrienne D'Ayen, daughter of the Duc D'Ayen of the powerful Noailles family, Lafayette was commissioned a captain in a dragoon regiment.

Why did he abandon the soft life of a courtier, assured advancement, and his young bride to antagonize both family and court by surreptitiously sailing to America? He was only 19, naive, and a product of his age and social class. With this in mind we can appreciate his original motives of avenging the death of his father by the English and escaping the all - powerful cloak of his in - laws, the Noailles, by earning personal renown in a romantic cause. Lafayette's adolescent reasons later matured into a genuine love of freedom and a belief in the equality of men.

So it was that Lafayette, opposed by official government policy, purchased a small merchant vessel of 200 tons, renamed it *Victoire*, and quietly sailed to America. He was accompanied by the self - styled Baron Johann DeKalb and about a dozen companions. After 54 days at sea, during which time Lafayette suffered greatly from seasickness, the *Victoire* ran the British naval blockade and landed on June 13, 1777, at Georgetown, north of Charleston, S.C.

Lafayette and DeKalb rowed ashore, where they met a few slaves who were harvesting oysters. They led the visitors to their master, a Major Benjamin

Huger (pronounced Hugee). The Major was of French Huguenot stock, an officer in a South Carolina militia regiment, and a plantation owner in the immediate neighborhood. The French tongue had been kept alive for almost a century by the local Huguenot settlers, and Major Huger cordially invited Lafayette to spend his first night on American soil at his home. It was at a late meal that night that the Marquis de Lafayette met the Huger's son, Francis, a young lad of about three years of age. Years later young Huger was destined to play a role in one of the most unusual events of Lafayette's life.

At the beginning of the following week, Lafayette and Baron DeKalb rode to Charleston, S.C. From Charleston, they traveled to Philadelphia. There he presented his letter from Silas Deane, the American representative in Paris, who had promised him a commission as Major General, the highest rank in the Continental Army. Lafayette's timing could not have been worse, as Deane had sponsored several foreign adventures who had recently appeared and demanded commissions as General officers. Continental Congress rather abruptly dismissed his claim and offered his companions passage money to return to France.

Lafayette then sent his famous letter to Congress in which he stated: "After the sacrifices I have made in this cause I have the right to ask two favors at your hands: The one is to serve without pay, at my own expense; and the other that I be allowed to serve first as a volunteer."

Following some debate, Congress issued Lafayette's commission, as a good will gesture toward France. This was done with their understanding, but not his, that it was to be honorary in nature.

Quite briefly, the young nobleman rapidly earned the respect and admiration of George Washington by serving with distinction in the battles of Brandywine, Barren Hill, and Monmouth Court House. The bond was further strengthened by the Marquis' defense of Washington in the Conway Cabal, an unsuccessful attempt by jealous officers to have Washington replaced as Commander - in - chief. Lafayette crowned his service to the American military cause by leading the

Virginia campaign of 1781.

The young Major General, although only 23 years of age and out - numbered by five to one, fought a three - month running engagement with Benedict Arnold and Lord Cornwallis. During that period he crisscrossed Virginia and marched his 1800 troops over 110 miles, saved Richmond from being burned, and frustrated his opponents' aim of destroying American supplies. The culmination of the campaign was the Battle of Yorktown, where Washington and Count de Rochambeau's troops met with the French West Indies fleet to force Lord Cornwallis' surrender on October 19, 1781.

Lafayette is mainly remembered in the United States for his youth, generosity, and friendship with Washington. His American experience, however, is only the opening chapter in a career that included involvement in three additional revolutions, a major part in the abdication of Napoleon, and declining the crown of France in 1830.

As he was trusted by the common people and was also a member of the nobility, he became the first commander of the National Guard of Paris in 1789 and de facto ruler of France. By nature, he possessed neither the calculating ruthlessness nor the political shrewdness to impose his liberal political philosophy on the French. Late in 1791 the National Assembly appointed him to lead one of three armies that were formed to protect the French frontiers. With the French Revolution about to enter its "Reign of Terror" period European monarchies such as Prussia and Austria were preparing an invasion to restore the nobility. When the Jacobins seized power, Lafayette was with his army in northern France and was faced with the decision of marching on Paris and attempting to restore the constitutional monarchy. He hesitated, was relieved of his command by the Jacobins, and was ordered to Paris, where he probably would have ended on the guillotine. Lafayette, realizing that he could no longer command the necessary loyalty of his troops to confront the revolutionary powers in Paris, slipped away over the Belgium border. His ultimate destination was the United States, but he was soon captured by the Austrians.

Although Lafayette was actually a deserter from the French army, both Prussia and Austria viewed him as one of the prime movers of the French Revolution and responsible for the destruction of their fellow monarch, King Louis XVI. He was held prisoner in several different Prussian fortresses and in May, 1794, was transferred to the Austrian fortress - prison of Olmutz,

located about 110 miles north of Vienna in what is now Czechoslovakia. Conditions were harsh. Beneath his window ran an open sewer that permeated his room with its odor. He was held incognito and was not permitted to send or receive letters or to read any newspapers. The American consul at Vienna was unable to learn where he was imprisoned, only that he was "alive and well."

A few of the former Marquis' French friends who had emigrated to London funded an attempt to liberate him. They sent Dr. Justus Erich Bollman, Hanoverian by birth and adventurer by inclination, on the risky mission. Bollman was able to learn that Lafayette was being held in Olmutz and established contact with him through means of writing in lemon juice, which only appears when heated, on the back of an otherwise harmless letter.

Lafayette suggested an escape plan. He was taken for a carriage drive on alternating afternoons, accompanied only by two guards and a driver. Some distance from the fortress Lafayette was permitted to exercise by walking across a field to a grove of trees; only one guard would be with him at that time. He asked Bollman to have two horses hidden in the grove. At the end of the field Lafayette would overpower the guard, they could both ride away to the Prussian border, and slip through that country in disguise.

Bollman returned to Vienna to make final plans and there, for the second time, Francis Huger entered Lafayette's life. At a chance meeting in a restaurant frequented by medical students, Bollman chatted with Huger, who was by then 21 years of age and studying in Vienna. Huger raised the popular speculation as to where Lafayette was imprisoned and explained his particular interest. Although he had been too young to remember the scene, his family had housed the Marquis during his first night in America. Bollman told Huger of his plan to free Lafayette and asked for his aid. The young medical student immediately agreed.

The actual escape attempt could easily come straight from a comic opera. Two horses were to carry the three men from the scene of the rescue to Hof, a village on the Prussian border where Bollman's carriage was waiting. Through exchanging handkerchief signals with Lafayette, a day for the attempt was arranged.

All went well with the escape until they attempted to overcome the lone guard who accompanied Lafayette on his walk. He was finally knocked out by Huger but not until he severely bitten Lafayette in the hand, alerted the other

guard, and frightened away one of the horses by his cries. Lafayette was persuaded to mount the remaining horse and, as he left, Huger shouted in English, "Get to Hof." Lafayette thought he said, "Get off," so he rode away blissfully unaware of the rendezvous.

In several days all three were captured and returned to Olmutz. Following several months' imprisonment, both Bollman and Huger were set free and ordered to leave the country. However, ultimately, the tale does have a happy ending. The notoriety given the exploit enabled the world to learn where Lafayette was imprisoned and a campaign in countries where the press was free was launched against Austria. As a consequence, Lafayette's wife and two daughters were permitted to live with him in Olmutz under slightly improved physical conditions. Lafayette did not die a forgotten prisoner but was released in 1797 through the intervention of Napoleon and by 1815 had reentered French politics as a leader of the liberal wing.

That Lafayette was a Mason we have no doubt; however, historians have long debated where and when he joined the Craft. Three leading theories have emerged: in Europe, prior to his coming to America; at Morristown, N.J., in American Union Lodge; and at Valley Forge, in an unidentified traveling military lodge. The most telling evidence points toward France, probably when he was garrisoned at Metz. Lafayette addressed the Grand Lodge of Tennessee on May 4, 1825, and in the minutes summarizing his comments is to be found the following statement: "He had been, he said, long a member of the Order, having been initiated, young as he was, even before he entered the service of our country in the Revolutionary War."

It would certainly add to the romance of the story if Huger was also a member of the Fraternity. Unfortunately, a search of the membership records of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina does not reveal his name. Neither do the records of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, which warranted several early lodges in South Carolina. Following the Olmutz exploit, Huger returned to America and completed his medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He later became a successful South Carolina planter and served as Adjutant - General on the staff of General Thomas Pinckney in the war of 1812. Dr. Huger died in Charleston at the age of 81.

The third meeting of Lafayette and Francis Huger occurred in 1825 during Lafayette's spectacular "farewell tour" of the United States. During his 15

months in America, the last living Major General of the Continental Army visited all 24 states, spent time with the leading figures of the day, and attended hundreds of public ceremonies. At Camden, S.C., he laid the cornerstone of a monument to Baron DeKalb, who had stepped ashore with him near Georgetown nearly 50 years before and was killed in American service in 1780. Dr. Huger joined Lafayette's party at Columbia, and they rode together as far as Charleston. Congress had given a grant of \$200,000 to Lafayette, a part of which he wished to give to Huger, who declined with thanks.

Of the many almost unbelievable events in General Lafayette's life, his encounters with Dr. Huger must rank as one of the most unusual. It is the story of a little boy who met him during his first day on American soil, who participated in one of 18th century Europe's most bizarre jail breaks, and who greeted the returning hero almost 50 years after their first meeting.

Lafayette or LaFayette?

Over the years, Lafayette biographers and historians have spelled the Marquis' name in various ways. According to biographer Louis Gottschalk, Lafayette's autographs merely compound the problem, since the capital and lower case f's were made in the same way. The Northern Light uses the more common spelling of Lafayette.

ANNUAL DINNER

Our forty - third annual dinner was a great success. It was held June 3, 1977 at the Dutch Taverne of the New York Hilton Hotel, New York City. Prior to the dinner, liquid refreshments were served in an adjoining room. The dinner was well cooked, attractively served and ample.

Our guest speaker Franklin R. Bruns, Jr., Associate Curator, Division of Postal History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. who gave a short interesting talk about philately and his association with the craft. He was Director, Division of Philately, United States Post Office Department (1957 - 62). He is a former president and editor of the American Philatelic Congress, member of the Honorary Congress Council and recipient of the American Philatelic Award (1966).

A token was given to the ladies and a package of astronaut cachets to the gentlemen. Four large - size deluxe books were offered as door prizes.

All - in - all it was a very enjoyable affair and it is unfortunate that you were not able to attend, but we'll be looking forward to seeing you next year.

Joseph Nathan Kane,
President