Who are the Dames and what do they do?

First and foremost we are a preservation society.
In a nutshell our mission is preservation, education and patriotism.

We are a **National Society** with more than 15,000 members in **44 Corporate Societies** throughout the country – including Hawaii. Our first society, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1891. Virginia was founded October 19, 1892. Nevada is our newest society and was founded in 2008. The original 13 colonies are our Colonial Societies. All other societies are called Associate Societies. Their members must descend from a qualified ancestor from one of our Colonial Societies. Each Colonial Society has its own list of qualifying services for their ancestors. There are over 9,700 approved ancestors – 18 are women with Virginia having the most qualifying female ancestors. Nationally Dames range in age from newborn to over 100!

The *Virginia Society* has traditionally been the second or third largest society with an average of 1,331 members since 2005. In Virginia there are nine Town & County Committees where our members meet on the local level. The following summary was tabulated by National from the 44 (2014-2015) Society Annual Reports.

Did you know that *nationally* our State Societies support our mission of preservation and education by:

- Either owning or supporting more properties/museums than any other private group including The National Trust.
- Assisting the operations of 87 historic properties and 7 historical markers.
- Owning 34 properties with additional display collections owned by our State Societies but held and displayed in other properties.
- Owning, curating and displaying 30,000 plus artifacts, objects and works of art.
- Welcoming 210,000 plus visitors, including 60,000 children to our properties.
- Receiving $1.9 million in grant awards.
- Spending $1.4 million on preservation projects.
- Spending $120,000 plus on artifact conservation.
- Spending $250,000 on historic landscape conservation.

Additionally our State Societies support our mission of patriotic service and education *nationally* by:

- Sending 52 students, from all over the country, to the weeklong Congressional Seminar in Washington D.C.
- Awarding $131,150 for scholarships and educational awards.
- Donating $19,035 to The American Indian Nurse Scholarship awarding ten nursing students scholarships for college who represented seven Indian tribes nationwide.
- Sponsoring twelve flag exhibitions for 1,565 attendees for our Parade of Flags, Liberty’s Five Fags and Flag Day programs.
- Donating over $16,200 for citizenship programs involving 604,850 people. These programs included honoring 3,000 new citizens at Naturalization Ceremonies held by 12 Societies. Additional citizenship programs included Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute, National History Day, Why America is Free and the Bill of Rights Day observances.
- Serving 6,832 military personnel and their families with donations of over $24,240 and voluminous volunteer hours.
Article III
Membership

Section 1. Eligibility
(a) A woman of eighteen years of age or over shall be eligible for membership in the Virginia Society provided that she is a citizen of the United States of America and is a lineal descendant of an ancestor who rendered service to his country during the colonial period prior to July 5, 1776, in accordance with the eligibility list of the Virginia Society. All signers of the Declaration of Independence are qualifying ancestors. The Virginia Board of Managers shall approve any substantive changes to Virginia’s Eligibility List (categories of Virginia ancestors eligible for proving descent).

(b) To be proposed for membership in the Virginia Society, a candidate shall meet one of the following requirements:

1. A resident or native of Virginia.
2. A resident of the District of Columbia or its immediate environs.
3. A resident of Virginia with ancestry in a Colonial state other than Virginia who may be admitted upon the eligibility list of such other Colonial state society.
4. Where good reason can be shown for not becoming a member of the society in her own state, a non-resident of Virginia or of the District of Columbia, whose claim for eligibility rests on service rendered by a Virginia ancestor or another Colonial state ancestor can be proposed for membership in the Virginia Society.

Section 2. Election to membership
(a) One member of the Virginia Society shall propose, and another member shall endorse a candidate, and each of the proposer and endorser shall be members in good standing. The proposer and endorser must each know the candidate personally and be convinced that the candidate will add to the strength, dignity, and influence of the Virginia Society. To conform to the Acts in Council, the Board of Managers may decide whether or not to accept a candidate proposed by a member of another Corporate Society.

It shall be the responsibility of the proposer to see that one of these conditions is met:

1. A candidate shall be known personally to two members of the Board of Managers, or
2. A candidate being proposed through a Town and County Committee shall be known personally to the Chairman or past Chairman and two members of that committee.

(b) Candidates shall be presented to the Board of Managers by the membership chairman and spoken for either by two members of the board or the Chairman of the Town and County Committee through which the candidate is proposed. In exceptional cases, particularly of out of state candidates, the President may waive the conditions of subsections (a) and (b) and authorize other members of the Virginia Society to speak for the candidate. Upon the positive vote of two-thirds of the Board, the candidate shall be invited to begin the membership process.

(c) Upon approval of her lineage papers as described in Article V section 7, the candidate shall be elected to membership by the Board of Managers.

For additional inquiries please contact nscda-va@comcast.net.