Society of the Cincinnati **[1]**

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Society of the Cincinnati

by Armistead Jones Maupin, 2006
Additional research provided by W. Keats Sparrow.

[2]The Society of the Cincinnati was formed at the close of the American Revolution [3] by commissioned officers of the Continental Army who wanted to keep alive the ideals for which they had fought and to bond themselves and their descendants in fraternal fellowship. Under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Henry Knox, the General Society was organized on 13 May 1783 at Verplanck House, Baron von Steuben's headquarters near Fishkill, N.Y. Branches in each of the 13 original states and in France were established later the same year. George Washington served as the first president general of the society and remained in office until his death in 1799. The North Carolina Chapter of the Society of the Cincinnati was founded in Hillsborough in October 1783 and, under the presidency of Brig. Gen. Jethro Sumner [4] of Warren County [5], included 66 charter members. The North Carolina Society has grown to almost 500 members and is now one of the largest and most active of the American state branches.

The society's name commemorates Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, a fifth-century B.C. Roman farmer and soldier who, having laid down his plow and led the republic to victory over invaders, resigned his office and returned to farming. Most of General Washington's officers were civilians who, like Cincinnatus, wanted to resume their peacetime vocations after the Revolution. America's oldest hereditary and patriotic organization, the Society of the Cincinnati today consists of approximately 3,200 descendants of American Continental Army or French army and navy officers. Membership passes by descent and is usually limited to one living member for each Revolutionary War officer.

The society's modern interests are largely historical. Many state branches preserve important historical records, publish historical books, and provide scholarship grants for historical research. The General Society of the Cincinnati has a notable Revolutionary War library-museum in its headquarters at Anderson House in Washington, D.C. The library-museum is open to the public.

Additional Resources:

Davis, Charles Lukens. "The North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati." Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press. 1907. https://archive.org/stream/northcarolinasoc00davi#page/n9/mode/2up [6]

North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati. "Minutes of the meeting, April 10, 1915." https://archive.org/stream/minutesofmeeting00soci#page/n1/mode/2up [7]

Alexander, Charles Beatty. "The hereditary friendship of the Cincinnati; address delivered at the banquet given by the North Carolina society of the Cincinnati to the general society of the Cincinnati at Asheville, North Carolina, May 10, 1917." New York: The Evening Post job Printing Office Inc. 1917. https://archive.org/stream/hereditaryfriend00alex#page/n1/mode/2up [8]

Daves, John C., compiler. "North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati List of Members." Baltimore, Md.: Press of Fosnot, Williams & Co. 1907. https://archive.org/stream/listofmembers00nort#page/n1/mode/2up [9]

Daves, Edward Graham. "The North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati." [S.l.: s.n.]. 1894.

"North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati" Vertical Reference File, Government and Heritage Library [10], Raleigh, North Carolina.

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"Photograph, Accession #: H.1952.30.1 [11]." 1956. North Carolina Museum of History.

Subjects: American Revolution (1763-1789) [12]
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