

The Virginia Society  
of the Order  
of the Founders and Patriots of America



### Society Officers

The following Virginia Society of the Order of Founders and Patriots of America Officers were elected and sworn in at the September 11, 2004 meeting.

Governor – Dr. Daniel C. Warren  
Secretary/Historian – Art Battan  
Treasurer – Thatcher S. Wood  
Registrar – Donald W. Wood  
Deputy Registrar – Jerry Hubbard  
States Attorney – Fred Gore  
Genealogist - Jud Mason, Sr.  
Deputy Historian – William Simpson, Jr.  
Chaplain – Russell C. Scott  
Deputy Chaplain – Col. Volney Rattan  
Deputy Secretary – Charles Phebus  
The above named officers serve a two year term of office. The following officers serve a three year term.  
Councillor General – Jerry Hubbard  
Councillors – William Simpson, Jr, Rick Whitson, Christopher Hubbard

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### Incoming Governor's Message

It is truly an honor to be elected the Governor of the Virginia Society of Founders and Patriots of America. We have been very ably led for the past six years by Governor Thatcher Wood, who has steered the Society through a variety of shoals and reefs, and we

## VAOFPA TIMES

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owe him a large debt of gratitude for its strong state today. I am very pleased that he will continue to serve our Virginia Society as Treasurer and Membership Chairman, and we will also have the continued help of past Registrar General Jerry Hubbard as editor of our newsletter.

Our ROTC and National Guard awards programs bring our Order much good publicity, and we are growing, although perhaps not as fast as we would like. We do need to increase the number of Associates who take part in Society activities, and I want to find ways to do that.

I believe that organizations such as ours are needed now more than they have ever been, to embody and defend the attitudes and virtues, which founded our nation, and subsequently brought us our independence over two hundred years ago. We may justly be proud of our membership in the Order.

Steadfast for God and Country  
Dan

### The Governor's Message

It doesn't seem like six years but that is how long your Governor has served the Virginia Society. That will change as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 when Dr. Daniel C. Warren of Gloucester becomes Governor.

With the enthusiastic support of a number of dedicated Associates, note these:

- 1) Continued the annual awards to the outstanding Virginia U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force National Guard units. This has resulted in much good will.
- 2) Have established a closer rapport with other heritage groups like SAR.
- 3) Our individual ROTC cadet recognition program has grown to 12 annual presentations at seven colleges and universities in Virginia.
- 4) Our General Court attendance has increased. This has brought us more influence in the General Court process.
- 5) Despite substantial losses due to death, loss of interest and the aging process we have covered our losses in membership; 15 new Associates in 2002 and 2003 but only a net gain of 3. We are on target this year for a record increase. We could do even better if our Associates would put forward potential members in their own families. Grow, or die.
- 6) We won the Paris Award as the outstanding Society in the Order. Credit my

predecessor Jerry Hubbard for this.

I would like to salute the following for their continued support in our efforts. Past Secretary General Col. Volney H. Rattan; Past Registrar General Jerry Hubbard; Past Governor, Col. William Wright; Past Governor Fred Gore; Past Deputy Governor General Judson T. Mason, Sr.; Dr. Daniel Warren; Maj. Arthur Batten; Russell C. Scott; Richard Whitson; Donald Moore; Past newsletter editor Wayne Lummis; Grant Mouser and Richard Raymond, III.

Thank you for the privilege of being your Governor.

Thatcher

### ***Reminder***

Please pay your dues.



This is the last newsletter of 2004. Have a Happy Holiday season and best of New Years in 2005.





Associate Reverend Everett  
Francis Briggs, L.H.D.  
National # 3985 VA # 078

**Founder Ancestor:** John Briggs, Sr. Son of Richard A. Briggs of Thornbury, England. Arrived in Plymouth, MA before 1657. Three sons; Richard, William, and Hugh.

**Patriot Ancestor:** Isaac Briggs Son of James. Born 1762 at Norton, MA. Served in Brig. Gen. Godfrey's Brigade at Tiverton, RI. One of 39 Briggs in the Revolutionary War.

[b.] January 27, 1908, Fitchburg, MA; [p.] Thomas Everett and Mary Lillian Hughes Briggs.

Associate Rev. Briggs was assigned to Japan in 1932 as Catholic Maryknoll missionary. He founded and was pastor of St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church in Otsu City. St. Mary's was the first Catholic Church built in this territory since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Rev. Briggs family has a history of service to God. Brother Arthur was a missionary to China, one cousin was a missionary to Korea and another was a missionary to Pakistan. Rev. Briggs himself somehow felt fated to follow another cousin, Rev. Francis Clayton Briggs, the last foreign pilot on Japan's

Inland Sea, as Captain of the Fukuin Maru (Gospel Ship).

Among his memories is the day when, he approached a group of college students in Tokyo for directions. He overheard them discussing an American Lady aviator whose plane had come down on an island in the South Pacific. "Probably, they will bring her to Tokyo as a spy," someone said. He contacted the FBI, from his hospital bed after his return to the United States.

Prior to the war with Japan, he was involved on the periphery in the secret endeavors to dissuade Japan from entering World War II. He still remembers the night he guided the late Bishop James E. Walsh of Cumberland, MD through the rice field to a rendezvous with a collaborator. He remembers, too accompanying a General who borrowed his prayer book to shield the General's heart from a possible bullet. After the war started Rev Briggs was taken prisoner and while interned he went on a hunger strike in defense of abused parishioners. Since one does not fly in the face of his captors in a wartime concentration camp, Rev. Briggs did not escape impunity. He almost lost his life.

After repatriation, the war remained part of him. When he returned to the United States the U.S. Army requested he take the Japanese language examinations. He passed the examination with one of the highest grade on record. He was offered three different commissions. He volunteered for service in the U.S.N. V-12 Training Program, as professor of Japanese at Holy Cross College.

When the American Armed Forces was preparing for the landing in Japan, they solicited Rev. Briggs' cooperation. He requested that Japan be given prior warning to save the common people. He went on to devise the first "paper bomb." The Japanese referred to them as "letter bombs." They came in the form of a green leaf bearing in Japanese the warning: When the leaves fall, flee for your life. A Japanese friend saved and gave him a "paper bomb." Rev. Briggs detailed his wartime experience in one of his earliest publication, "**A New Dawn in Japan**," in 1948. The book was publicized by General MacArthur and became a Book of the Month Club selection.

Rev. Briggs has found time to author fourteen publications, seven of them in Japanese. He has written hundred of poems in many forms, including the Japanese tanka, haiku and senryu, many of which have been published in prestigious English and Japanese journals.

After the war, his next work took him to California where he became Assistant Pastor of a Japanese Catholic Church In the Los Angeles area. In 1956 he was asked to serve as a Pastor in West Virginia. In the City of Monongah, WV, which is 150 miles west of Washington, D.C. Fr. Briggs founded St. Barbara's Memorial Nursing home in 1961. The center was built in memory of the miners who died in a 1907 explosion described as the "Monongah Disaster." This disaster impacted West Virginia's history and in lieu of a "slab of marble," Fr. Briggs decided to open the non-profit nursing care facility.

In his 96<sup>th</sup> year, Fr. Briggs considers himself retired from the active priesthood, and admittedly if "not climbing any more ladders," Rev. Briggs maintains that he has "all his marbles," and continues to serve as administrator of St. Barbara's Memorial Nursing home.

Recently, the State of West Virginia honored Rev. Briggs by naming a bridge and a highway after him.

Fr. Briggs is a member of the O.F.P.A., S.A.R., Americans of Royal Descent, American of Armorial Ancestry, descended from Thomas Rogers of the Mayflower. Rev. Briggs is a Knight Commander of the Holy Sepulchre, was awarded the Silver Palm of Jerusalem. He served as confidant and advisor to Ngo Dieh Diem, later president of South Vietnam.

Associate Briggs has remained Steadfast for God and Country.

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Forward your story to me. The article can be about your ancestors or yourself.

Happy Holidays.