Daniel H. Weiss was inaugurated as the 16th president of Lafayette College on October 14, 2005. The event included representatives from more than 40 colleges and universities marching in academic regalia, along with Lafayette’s faculty in their full regalia, adding color and excitement inside the Allan P. Kirby Sports Center.

In his inaugural remarks to an audience of 1,500, Dr. Weiss stated, “We are assembled here today in this magnificent setting, many of us turned out in our finest academic costume, because we as a society recognize changes in academic leadership to be significant events. This is not merely because such transitions in leadership are fitting moments for celebration, but because these events allow us to pause and reflect on the state of our college; on our history and traditions, our accomplishments and challenges, and most important, on our aspirations and expectations for the future.”

Dr. Weiss noted that Lafayette College had come a long way since May 1832 when President George Junkin welcomed the first class, consisting of some 43 young men, two faculty members (in mathematics and classics), and perhaps a few trustees and bystanders to the new college founded by citizens of Easton in honor of the aged and beloved hero of the American War for Independence.

In his closing remarks the new president said, “Lafayette was above all dedicated to individual freedom and liberty, and he saw in his adopted country the greatest chance that these ideals might take root and grow. Lafayette believed fully in the ideal of true liberty because he understood it as “the fruition of the enactment of the rights of man.” The founders of this institution understood the essential connection between a free society and an educated citizenry and that is why they named our college in his honor. As we look to the future of Lafayette College we can do no better than to hold this idea close to our own hearts and to our ongoing sense of purpose.

Dr. Weiss came to Lafayette from The Johns Hopkins University where he was the James R. Knapp Dean of the Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. He is a leading authority on the art of medieval Europe in the Age of the Crusades. He has written or edited four books on the art of the Middle Ages.

Flags of the Brigade of the Revolution made a beautiful spectacle.

(Photo by Leonard J. Panaggio)

Continued on page 2
WEISS
(Continued from Page 1)


The new president is married to Sandra Jarva Weiss, a graduate of George Washington University and its law school. The Weisses have two young sons, Teddy and Joel.

He succeeds Mr. Arthur Rothkopf (1993-2005) as president. Mr. Rothkopf, during his tenure, proved to be a good friend of The American Friends of Lafayette and we take this opportunity to thank him for his interest in our accomplishments.

ROCHAMBEAU’S 1780 ARRIVAL
(Continued from Page 1)

Under a bright and clear sunny day, a huge crowd gathered at the monument where former Lt. Governor Roger Begin served as the Master of Ceremonies. To his left were members of various patriotic organizations standing with their flags. One was from Washington, DC.

Rear Adm. Jacob Shuford, president of the Naval War College, Hon. Donald Carcieri, governor of Rhode Island, and the ambassador gave appropriate remarks for the occasion.

The event ended with four patriotic societies placing wreaths at the base of the monument. Leonard Panaggio, president emeritus of The American Friends of Lafayette, placed a wreath in the name of our Society.

WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE IS UNDERWAY

NEWPORT, RI – On May 6, 40 Scouts from the Narragansett Council Boy Scouts of America, members of the Rhode Island Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and 10 Revolutionary War reenactors began the first segment of the 650-mile march to Yorktown.

The event began with a ceremony on Dewey Field in front of the Naval War College. The celebrants then left the Naval Station Newport and marched their part north along the western section of Aquidneck Island.

The Rhode Island marchers will continue their part of the project until June 18 when Connecticut reenactors take over their part of the route to victory.

Committees in the several states involved in this project have worked for a few years and this event marks the 225th anniversary of the march. The marchers, which will result in the eventual marking of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route, will retrace to the extent possible the original 1781 route.

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TROY, NY, WILL HOST OUR 74TH MEETING

TROY, NY – This city on the east bank of the Hudson River, and near Albany, will be the site of our 74th annual meeting. Much of our activity will center around the famous Emma Willard School and the Rensselaer County Historical Society.

Lafayette, “The Nation’s Guest,” visited Troy on September 18, 1824. The local newspapers, according to the Historical Society, followed every move from the day Lafayette arrived in New York in 1824, noting every place he visited, and upon the nobleman’s departure from New York to France.

Ms. Stacy Pomeroy Draper, Curator of the Society, will lead our group on a walking tour of the places in Troy visited by Lafayette including the Troy House where a grand dinner was held. He was greeted by members of the Royal Arch Masons (and a live bald eagle!). He met Mrs. Willard at the Troy Female Seminary, which is where a grand celebration took place.

The School’s archives and library have both correspondence and objects related to the warm regard she and LaFayette developed for each other.

We will enjoy a buffet lunch at the School. This will be followed by a program centering on the Marquis’ support for equal educational opportunities for women.

The tour will begin after breakfast on June 9. The annual dinner will take place at the Century House in nearby Latham.

During our visit to the Society, scheduled for the afternoon, we will see artifacts of Lafayette which will add another dimension to connect us with the Marquis’ visit to Troy.

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE COMMENTS ON HIS PAINTING
A PORTRAIT OF LAFAYETTE

Diane Windham Shaw, Special Collections Librarian and Lafayette College Archivist, submitted this article about an incident that occurred while the painter and inventor of the telegraph was working on a portrait of Lafayette.

On June 11, 1858, Samuel F.B. Morse, wrote a protege, Henry Pratt, about the circumstances surrounding the painting of his portrait of Lafayette.

Morse was the winner of a competition to paint a full-length portrait of the Revolutionary War hero for the city of New York during Lafayette’s farewell tour of America in 1824-25, commencing a friendship between the two men that lasted until Lafayette’s death in 1834.

It was during one of these sittings that Morse received the devastating news of the death of his 25-year old wife. In the letter to Pratt, Morse speaks of the General’s sympathetic understanding; “I preserve as a gratifying memorial, the letter of condolence and sympathy sent in to me at the moment by the General... A picture painted under such circumstances can scarcely be expected to do the Artist justice, and as a work of Art I cannot praise it. Still it is a good likeness, was very satisfactory to the General and he several times alluded to it in my presence in after years, (when I was a frequent visitor to him in Paris,) in terms of praise."

Morse goes on to explain the symbolism in his great painting, which hangs today in New York’s City Hall.

“It is a full length standing figure the size of life. He is represented as standing at the top of a flight of steps which he has just ascended upon a terrace, the figure coming against a glowing sunset sky, indicative of the glory of his own evening of life. Upon his right if I remember are three pedestals one of which is vacant, as if waiting for his bust, while the two others are surmounted by the busts of Washington and Franklin, the two associated eminent Historical characters of his own time. In a vase on the other Side is a flower of the heliotrope with its face towards the Sun in allusion to the characteristic, stern uncompromising consistency of Lafayette, a trait of character which I then consider the great prominent trait of that distinguished man.”

DIMITRI S. VILLARD, FILM PRODUCER,
WORKING ON FILM OF LAFAYETTE’S LIFE

Dimitri S. Villard, a seasoned filmmaker and producer, and a new member of our Society, is now at work in California in an early stage of putting together a feature film on the life of the Marquis de Lafayette.

In 1996, Dimitri Villard Productions released “In Love and War,” a feature film which dealt with the friendship that developed in World War I between Ernest Hemingway and Villard’s father, Henry Serrano Villard.

He received a B.A. degree from Harvard University and a M.S. from the China International Medical University. He is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and currently serves as a member of the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Tech Coast Angels, the largest private venture capital investment group in California.

We hope we can meet him and welcome him at our annual meeting in Troy.
COUNT de PUSY
LAFAYETTE AT NEWPORT

On May 18, 2005, Count Gilbert de Pusy La Fayette made a brief visit to Newport, Rhode Island. He was here in connection with the Massachusetts Lafayette Committee.

A brief ceremony was held at the statue of General Count de Rochambeau where the visitor placed a wreath. His entourage was greeted by Leonard J. Panaggio, president emeritus of The American Friends of Lafayette, Curtis LaFrance and Freda MacLeod of the Alliance Francaise de Newport, Hon. John Trifero, mayor of Newport, Col. Frank Hale of the 1741 Artillery Company of Newport and Normand Ouellette and Julien Paul of the Massachusetts Lafayette Society.

Mayor Trifero presented the distinguished visitor with a proclamation that declared May 18 as Lafayette Day in Newport.

"UNCLE SAM" LIVED IN TROY

New England settlers emigrated to the area of Troy. Part of the original Van Rensselaer manor of 1707, resulted in the founding of Troy in 1789.

In February 1789 Samuel Wilson and his brother Ebenezer left New Hampshire and settled in Troy. The following summer they went into the business of making bricks.

A few years later the brothers engaged in the business of slaughtering cattle. Samuel, who had already been known locally as "Uncle Sam," packed barrels of beef during the War of 1812 which he shipped to troops stationed at nearby Greenbush. The barrels were lettered U.S. referring to them as "Uncle Sam's."

75th Anniversary Issue of Gazette

EASTON, PA – Work will be progressing this year for a special edition of the Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette. Several members will be involved in the editing of the material which will mark the 75th anniversary of our Society.

Members whose dues will be current will receive copies in the mail. If you have any questions about the status of your dues, please call our treasurer, Philip Schroeder, 610-759-0551.

MOLAND HOUSE
RESTORATION PROGRESS

WARWICK TOWNSHIP, PA - About 10 years ago members of The American Friends of Lafayette visited Moland House in this town. A plaque on the house read: "In This House Washington Had His Headquarters From August 10, to August 23, 1777, with 13,000 Men Enaped Near. Here The Marquis De Lafayette First Joined The Army."

Our interest in Moland House goes back many more years. Its restoration progress got a big assist when French Consul General Claude Fay visited it. Publicity attending his visit brought renewed vitality to the Warwick Township Historical Society in its endeavors to save it.

From time-to-time we have reported progress on its restoration. When we first visited it, it was indeed a challenge to bring it back to its original appearance.

As of these past few months we have been informed that all walls have been plastered and prepped for painting. The entire historic section was scheduled for completion of painting this past March.

Carpentry in the historic section that was due for completion included three cellar windows, four panelled doors, three stairway doors and a closet door. A sophisticated fire sprinkler system has been installed.

In the 1940s wing, dry walling, wooden trim, doors, electric lighting and a new bathroom were finished. Scheduled work lists painting and installation of a new floor in the first floor and wall-to-wall carpeting on the second floor.

CAROLINE LAREUSE AT PICPUS

Caroline Lareuse was present at Picpus Cemetery, Paris, last July 12 where she placed a wreath on Lafayette's grave at the annual ceremony. We are grateful to this member who has represented The American Friends of Lafayette for several years.

Kirby Foundation's Latest Gift

The Kirby Foundation gave another gift of $2,500 to the Society. We are grateful for the support we have received through the years from the Foundation.

Allan P. Kirby, Jr. who arranges for this gift, suggested that The American Friends of Lafayette send a portion of it to the Yorktown Foundation. This year marks the 225th anniversary of the surrender of the British at Yorktown in 1781.

The Foundation's project includes the erection of four life-size statues of General George Washington, Admiral Comte de Grasse, General Comte de Rochambeau and General, the Marquis de Lafayette. The statues will be located in the waterfront area of the town.

We have learned that many of our members have made individual donations to the project. Our Society will act upon the suggestion that some of the Kirby Foundation gift be given to the Yorktown Foundation and directed it to the completion of the Lafayette statue.

Count de Grasse's Souvenir

The Count de Grasse having been wounded in the knee with a musket ball, the surgeon made many incisions. Losing patience, at last he asked them why they cut and carved so cruelly? -- "We seek for the ball," said they. "Why the devil did you not speak before?" said the Count; "I have it in my pocket."

TROY, NY – Stacy Pomeroy Draper, Curator of the Rensselaer County Historical Society, will be our guest speaker at our dinner which will be held at the Century House, Latham, NY, June 9. Her topic, "Advancing Prosperity; Troy Welcomes Lafayette," will add more information and expand on what she tells us during our walking tour.

The talk will focus on Troy at the time of Lafayette's visit in 1824. It was a period of incredible growth and optimism, both locally and nationally. It was also a time of transition as western lands were being settled and a move toward industrialization began to take hold. Troy was at the forefront of these changes and its history provides a window into the nation as a whole.

Ms. Draper has held the position of Curator at the Society since 1978.

EASTON, PA – A delegation of members of The American Friends of Lafayette called upon Dr. Daniel H. Weiss at his office on April 26. President William Kirchner had previously written to him to congratulate him on his inauguration as the 16th president of Lafayette College.

The Society's purpose was to acquaint Dr. Weiss about our organization and its accomplishments. Also, to express its appreciation for the interest the College's administration has shown to our Society. Kirchner also wanted to inform Dr. Weiss of some projects The American Friends of Lafayette are considering for the Society's 75th anniversary and plans to hold its meeting at Lafayette College. Dr. Weiss is the Curator of The American Friends of Lafayette.

The College was pleased with that news as the 2007 Washington-Lafayette Exhibition will be at Easton where it will arrive in late August and will open shortly before September 6, the 250th birthday of the Marquis. It will be at the College through most of October before it goes to the New York Historical Society in New York. Our Society will break away from its traditional spring meeting dates and convene at the College.

At the meeting, in addition to Dr. Weiss, the College was represented by Gary A. Evans, Executive Assistant to the President and Diane Shaw, Head of Special Collections at the College.

Attending for The American Friends of Lafayette, in addition to Kirchner, were Philip Schroeder, treasurer, Barbara Schroeder, Linda Kirchner and Janice Wolk.

Diane Shaw, who is a member of the Society, hosted the visitors at lunch. She also showed them some noteworthy recent acquisitions at the David Bishop Skillman Library.

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Lafayette leads a charge. From Brandywine, Pennsylvania, where he suffered a leg wound on September 11, 1777 through the misery of Valley Forge, to the Monmouth and Rhode Island campaigns of 1778 and on to the Yorktown victory, the battle-tested nobleman was rated one of the best of Washington's generals.

— submitted picture

Address Change Requested

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