

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S
MOUNT ★ VERNON

For Immediate Release

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Special Event at Mount Vernon Celebrates Ties between Spain and the United States

Ceremony with Senator Tim Kaine and United States Ambassador to Spain and Andorra

MOUNT VERNON, VA – During a private event on October 30, George Washington's Mount Vernon hosted Senator Tim Kaine; Duke Buchan, U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra; and Santiago Cabanas, the Spanish Ambassador to the U.S.; among many other dignitaries to commemorate the 240th anniversary of Official Support from the Kingdom of Spain to the 13 American colonies. The gathering included a private tour of George Washington's Mansion, dinner in the Washington Library, and an agreement of the share values, signed by Mount Vernon Ladies' Association Regent Mrs. Coulson and Eva Garcia, President and Founder of The Legacy Association.

The Spanish Legacy Association presented its two latest projects during the event - a book and a limited edition coin. The book "*George Washington and Spain. The Legacy of the Spanish Army in the United States of America*" has been edited, coordinated and published in cooperation with the Spanish Ministry of Defense. The Legacy has also issued a limited edition coin made by the Spanish Mint, which includes the faces of George Washington and Carlos III on the front and the 13 colonies with Carlos III coat of arms on the back.

While not an official ally of the United States, Spain played an important role in helping win the American War of Independence. The governor of Spanish Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez, helped fund the American war effort, and personally led successful attacks against British-held Baton Rouge (1779), Mobile (1780), and Pensacola (1781). The Spanish navy also combined

forces with the French to threaten an invasion of Great Britain (1779), lay siege to Gibraltar (1779-1783), and capture the Mediterranean island of Minorca (1781). These actions kept the

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bulk of the British Royal Navy in European waters, and paved the way for George Washington's capture of British General Charles Cornwallis' forces at Yorktown (1781). During the war Washington had regularly cordially welcomed Spanish representatives and shared political and military intelligence. For their part, the Spanish regularly offered arms, ammunition, and other supplies, items particularly welcome during the scarcity of war.

Spanish-American friendship continued to be strong after the war. In 1785, the King of Spain, Charles (Carlos) III, gave Washington a prized Spanish donkey. Washington, ever the agricultural re-former, had long sought a donkey so that he could breed mules at Mount Vernon. Two years later, Spain's ambassador to the United States, Don Diego de Gardoqui, presented George Washington with an impressive leather-bound copy of Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote. Although Washington could not read the Spanish language version of the book, he had earlier purchased an English translation on the same day that he signed the Constitution of the United States. The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon owns both of Washington's copies of "Don Quixote." Most recently, Mount Vernon welcomed Their Majesties, King Felipe de Borbon and Queen Leticia of Spain, in 2015 for a personal visit and viewing of Washington's copies of "Don Quixote."

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About The Spanish Legacy Association

The Legacy is dedicated to bringing attention to the significance of Spain's historical and cultural contributions to the United States, in order to encourage and promote the ties between the two countries based on the cherished relationship that has united us since before the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. www.thespanishlegacy.com

About George Washington's Mount Vernon

Since 1860, more than 85 million visitors have made George Washington's Mount Vernon the most popular historic home in America. A privately-owned national treasure, Mount Vernon is maintained and operated by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association. Since purchasing the estate from the Washington family and assuming stewardship in 1858, the Association has embraced a heroic mission to preserve, protect, and maintain the estate for the American people, relying exclusively on private donations, admission fees, and restaurant and retail proceeds. Through robust education and outreach programs, the Association expands awareness about the exceptional life and character of George Washington, sustaining his legacy through research, interpretation, and public education. In experiences on the estate and through its digital outreach platforms, Mount Vernon strives to preserve George Washington's place in history as "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of His Countrymen." For more information: www.mountvernon.org.

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