

REMARKS OF JUDGE EDWARD F. BUTLER, SR.
PRESIDENT GENERAL 2009-2010
NATIONAL SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Louisville, KY August 25, 2009

Mayor Abramson, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. We are here today to announce that this morning a contract was signed between the SAR and Leo Post Construction Co., to convert this empty shell at 809 W. Main Street into a modern Library and Archives of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution.

This is an historic moment. Although our roots go back to 1876, our first national convention was held right here in Louisville on Apr. 30, 1889 – the 100th anniversary of the swearing in of George Washington as the first President of the United States. It was only 30 years ago that the SAR moved its headquarters from Washington, D.C. to Louisville. At that time Louisville was considered the population center of the United States. Moving to Louisville in 1979 made our headquarters more available to our members in the Midwest and West. Today marks a move of our library and archives, and hopefully soon, the move of our entire operations from 1000 So. Fourth Street to a very historic spot.

The land upon which the SAR building is located is within the *close* of Ft. Nelson, the historic headquarters of General George Rogers Clark. Ft. Nelson was the epicenter of the American Revolutionary War Western frontier.

The Sons of the American Revolution is the leading male lineage society that perpetuates the ideals, principles and liberties established by the founding fathers during the American Revolution. As a patriotic, historical, and educational organization, we seek 1) to maintain and expand the knowledge and meaning of patriotism, 2) to promote respect for our national symbols, and 3) to teach the public the value of our American citizenship. Through these efforts we hope all Americans come to have a better understanding of their rights and duties as expressed in the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

What better location could we have selected than the heart of the Western Campaign?

We are also here today to honor those who have worked so hard to get us to this point: First, I want to recognize President General Bruce Wilcox, who has served for the past 2 ½ years as the heart of society's efforts to acquire this building and move forward to remodel it.

Some say that President General Roland Downing has been the soul of the SAR's fund raising efforts. Through his dedication, he was able to obtain a \$1,000,000 gift. Three other leaders have been instrumental in getting us to this moment: I. Barnett Ellis, President Emeritus of the SAR Foundation; current Foundation President, Bill Allerton, and Sam Powell, Chairman of our Capital Campaign Drive.

President Generals Nathan White and David Appleby have ably guided the SAR towards today's ceremony. Executive Director, Joe Harris has served as the glue to keep everything together during the transitions from one administration to the next, and has served as an important liaison at every juncture. Through President General Larry McClanahan's in depth knowledge of the construction business, we were able to secure a favorable construction contract.

Through Dan Preston's architectural expertise and experience, we were able to obtain a very pleasing and usable design which should serve us well for decades to come. We are confident that Leo Post, the contractor will redesign our new facility with loving care.

We are in the process of negotiating with the Remnant Trust to become a tenant and a partner with us. Remnant Trust's \$20 Million dollar inventory of classic original books and documents, like the 1350 edition of *The Magna Charta*, and early editions of the *US Constitution* and *Bill of Rights* should increase the traffic through our library and archives.

We hope the citizens of Louisville will come to understand that we are a part of this city; that we aren't going anywhere, and we provide an important beacon to the Revolutionary War history of this area.

Ladies and gentlemen, we need another \$5 Million dollars to complete the rest of this building. Once constructed our headquarters and the Center for Advancing America's Heritage will play an important role in our outreach to students, educators and the public.

Thank you for being here with us today to celebrate this most important event.