



The Friends of the Maryland State Archives  
The State House Trust

*General Washington will be present to read his resignation speech  
and the original of his personal copy of his speech will be on display.*

Cover image: *Washington Resigning* (Detail) by Edwin White, 1858. Collection of  
the Maryland Commission on Artistic Property of the Maryland State Archives.



*Please join us for a  
very special evening in  
the Maryland State House*

On December 20, 1783, George Washington arrived in Annapolis to resign his commission as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. The War was won, he had said his farewells to his troops and was now looking forward to returning to his life as a farmer at Mt. Vernon, a life he had left some eight years earlier. He settled in at George Mann's Tavern and wrote to the president of Congress inquiring as to how they wished him to tender his resignation.

In the meantime, Annapolis feted the national hero in their midst with dinners and toasts and a gala ball in the State House on the eve of his resignation, December 22. By all accounts, Washington had a wonderful time and danced with every lady present.

At noon on the following day, December 23, Washington came before Congress and gave this short, emotional speech. James McHenry, writing to his fiancée, noted that it was a "solemn and affecting occasion." Immediately following the ceremony, Washington mounted his horse and rode off to Mt. Vernon to have his Christmas dinner at home.

As he left the Old Senate Chamber, Washington handed the copy of the speech from which he had read to a member of the committee that had planned the ceremony. This precious document remained in private hands until it was purchased by the state of Maryland in January 2007.

Now, the Maryland State Archives is raising funds for an exhibit for the Old Senate Chamber that will allow the public to see this important document in its original. The exhibit will also be part of an educational interpretation of the pivotal nature of Washington's resignation – the handing over of the power of the military to the civilian government, a precedent that has remained at the heart of American government to this day. The proceeds to this event will be used to design and construct this new exhibit.

Your support of this effort is crucial to its success and very much appreciated.

