

NEWS RELEASE

Distilled Spirits Council is the trade association representing producers and marketers of distilled spirits sold in the United States.

Website: <http://www.distilledspirits.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MOUNT VERNON LAYS CORNERSTONE FOR HISTORIC GEORGE WASHINGTON DISTILLERY *18th-Century Rum-making, Rare Whiskey Tasting Celebrated Event*

Mount Vernon, VA – Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson and Master Distillers from America’s best-known liquor brands joined Historic Mount Vernon today in laying a cornerstone at the site of the soon-to-be-reconstructed George Washington’s Distillery and Museum, located on the grounds of George Washington’s Gristmill at the Mount Vernon Estate.

At the event, Mount Vernon Executive Director Jim Rees emphasized the importance of the Distillery to the understanding of our first President. “George Washington was not only our nation’s first President but he was also an innovative farmer and entrepreneur, who saw the benefits from producing high-quality whiskey at his farm,” said Rees.

Dr. Peter Cressy, President and CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council, said “The reconstruction of this historic building at Mount Vernon will expand the public’s knowledge of this great man and offer the first glimpse at what distilling practices looked like in Washington’s time.”

It is a little known fact that, after George Washington left the Presidency, he returned to Mount Vernon and opened a large distillery, located near his Gristmill. DISCUS and its member companies, with the support of the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America, are donating more than \$1.5 million to assist Mount Vernon in excavating and reconstructing George Washington’s Distillery at its original site. In addition to demonstrating 18th-century distilling techniques, the distillery will house the nation’s first distilling museum, devoted to the history of American spirits.

In honor of the occasion, and under a special license from the U.S. Government, Master Distillers from some of the world’s best-known liquor brands handcrafted an authentic colonial-style Rum on an 18th-century pot still over an open fire at the site of the George Washington’s Distillery.

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The reconstructed distillery's cornerstone is a sandstone block from the original 1793 U.S. Capitol and from the same vein of sandstone which George Washington used to build his distillery in 1797. The cornerstone was officially laid by former HHS Secretary Thompson, who praised the spirits industry for its commitment to responsibility and moderation.

In addition to creating rum, Master Distillers also bottled a limited edition of George Washington's Distillery Vatted American Whiskey, which was made from a combination of America's most famous brands: Jack Daniel's, Jim Beam, Maker's Mark, Wild Turkey, George Dickel, Virginia Gentleman, Platte Valley, Rebel Yell, Very Old Barton and Woodford Reserve which aged on the grounds of Mount Vernon. Each bottle will be auctioned off at a gala dinner this evening on the grounds of the Mount Vernon Estate, at a minimum starting bid of \$250. Auction proceeds will go to Mount Vernon's educational initiative and hurricane relief. The relief funds will be matched 4-to-1 by Distilled Spirits Council member companies, who have already donated over \$2 million for hurricane relief.