

NEWS RELEASE

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

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COLONIAL RE-ENACTMENT AT MOUNT VERNON CELEBRATES GROUNDBREAKING OF WASHINGTON'S DISTILLERY

-Whiskey, Rum Barrels Come Down the Potomac on Historic River Boat-

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 21, 2001 – Barrels of whiskey and rum from 11 of the nation's largest distillers were shipped down the Potomac River to Mount Vernon today in a colonial re-enactment to mark the reconstruction of General George Washington's historic distillery.

The event was part of the celebration of the groundbreaking for a new educational exhibit, supported by a \$1.2 million grant from the distilled spirits industry, at the archaeological site of America's founding father's colonial distillery.

The arrival of the barrels, which were brought ashore by Colonial-costumed workers and loaded onto an ox cart, kicked-off a day of festivities at Mount Vernon celebrating George Washington's life as a distiller, the uncovering of the archaeological site, and the groundbreaking of the reconstruction effort.

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"This is a marvelous opportunity for us to demonstrate the role of spirits in our nation's history and the part which our founding father played in that great tradition," said Dr. Peter H. Cressy, President and CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS).

Federal, State Regulators Present Historic Permits For Distillery

At the groundbreaking, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Director Bradley Buckles and Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Chairman Clarence W. Roberts presented Mount Vernon with historic permits for the distillery. The ATF issued Mount Vernon "Permit # 1797" in honor of the year that the distillery was first built.

"General Washington" regaled his guests – including members of Congress, government officials and industry leaders – with stories of his days operating colonial America's second largest distillery. His wife, "Martha," joined him in entertaining the crowd by offering a toast with her favorite rum punch.

The restoration project is being funded by a \$1.2 million donation from DISCUS, its member companies, and other distilled spirits wholesaler and retailer organizations. The donation will support the authentic reconstruction of the distillery, as well as educational exhibits and programs for tourists.

The Smithsonian Institution plans to loan Mount Vernon a rare 18th century still which is believed to be one of George Washington's original copper stills.

The project, expected to be completed in the next few years, is adjacent to George Washington's gristmill on Dogue Creek. The public will be able to watch archaeologists as they work to expose the cobble foundation of the distillery until the site is re-covered in November for the winter.

Mount Vernon, in cooperation with DISCUS, plans to store the barrels of traditional American spirits that were shipped today to Mount Vernon and then explore the possibilities of bottling the contents for charitable auction purposes.

The following brands sent barrels for the celebration: **Maker's Mark** (Maker's Mark/Allied Domecq Spirits & Wine); **Bacardi Rum** (The Bacardi Companies); **Very Old Barton** (Barton, Incorporated); **Jack Daniel's** (Brown-Forman Corporation); **Woodford Reserve** (Brown-Forman Corporation); **Jim Beam Bourbon** (Jim Beam Brands Co.); **Four Roses** (Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, Inc.); **I. W. Harper** (UDV North America, Inc.); **George Dickel** (UDV North America, Inc.); **Wild Turkey** (Austin, Nichols & Co., Inc.); **McCormick's Old Style Whiskey** (McCormick Distilling Co., Inc.); **Virginia Gentleman** (A. Smith Bowman Distillery); and **Cruzan Single Barrel Estate Rum** (Todhunter International, Inc.).