

# Massachusetts Lafayette Day, 2023

by Jan O'Sullivan

The Massachusetts Lafayette Society held a full day of activities to mark the 89<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of Massachusetts Lafayette Day. The celebration on May 19 began at the Boston Athenæum with the presentation of the flags of the United States and France by the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts. After soloist Rebecca Zama sang both national anthems, Alan Hoffman, President of the Massachusetts Lafayette Society, and Mustafa Soykurt, Consul General of France in Boston, both made welcoming remarks. This was the first Massachusetts Lafayette Day for Consul General Soykurt, who assumed his duties in Boston last September.



*Alan Hoffman*



*Consul General Mustafa Soykurt*

A Proclamation from the Governor of Massachusetts, Maura Healey, was read in both French and English. Dorothea Jensen read the English one, followed by Polly Lyman reading the French one.



*Dorothea Jensen*



*Polly Lyman*

We then proceeded across the Boston Common to lay a wreath at the Lafayette Monument. The Monument is located on the Lafayette Mall, which runs the entire length of the Common that borders Tremont Street. The Lafayette Mall memorializes the route that Lafayette took on August 24, 1824 on his way to the State House. After Consul General Soykurt placed the wreath, there was a moment of silence.



*Consul General Soykurt lays a wreath at the Lafayette Monument on the Boston Common*



*On the Lafayette Mall. At far left is Rebecca Zama, who earlier sang the national anthems.*

After a box lunch back at the Athenæum, Alan Hoffman presented a talk, “A Farewell Tour Primer.” We then enjoyed a wonderfully informative tour of the Massachusetts State House by our friend Peter Maguire. One of the many interesting artifacts that we saw was the plaque to commemorate the 1935 creation of the day we were celebrating.



*Peter Maguire leads the State House tour*



*Lafayette Day Plaque*

The commemorative events of the day ended at the Cambridge residence of the Boston Consulate, where the Soykurt family resides. We had a lovely garden party with French wines, cheeses, hors d’oeuvres, and pastries. The Soykurts welcomed two very special guests, nonagenarian WWII veterans Enoch “Woody” Woodhouse, a Tuskegee Airman, and Marvin Gilmore, a recipient of the French Legion of Honor medal. The last issue of the *Gazette* has an in-depth article about Woody.



*Consul General Soykurt with Woody Woodhouse...*



*... and Marvin Gilmore at the garden party*