

New Multimedia Show Opens February 15

Washington's Final Hours Will Be the Focus of an Emotional Piece of "Mood Theater"

What was it like to see America's greatest hero take his final breath?

Among the handful of people present at Washington's death, which occurred on December 14,

1799, was his trusted friend and secretary Tobias Lear.

Fortunately, Lear later wrote down not just the proceedings surrounding Washington's demise, but the remarkable emo-

tions that filled the master bedroom at Mount Vernon.

Realizing this experience would be impossible to communicate to Mount Vernon's visitors through typical exhibits or publi-

cations, the Association has enlisted Europe's premiere multimedia experts to create an intimate piece of "mood theater" entitled "Washington is No More." Set to open on George Washington's Birthday holiday, February 15, 1999, the program will be presented in the restored greenhouse structure.

Produced by Sarner International of London, the eight-minute program will blend digital sound, unusual lighting effects, theatrical reveals, and specially-produced film to create the mood of death and mourning. Sarner has designed award-winning attractions in six countries, including Viking Land in Norway; The Last Labyrinth in Cornwall, England; and the Jorvic Viking Centre in York, England. The Mount Vernon program marks Sarner's North American debut.

"This sort of presentation is as much about the heart as it is about the head," notes Patrick O'Kelly, who heads Sarner's North American office. "It helps us to understand that history is more than just a catalog of facts, places and dates - it is about real people and real emotions and dramatic events."



The traumatic moment of Washington's death is the subject of "Washington is No More"