



The Magazine

Williamsburg Chapter Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution



By signing the Declaration of Independence, the fifty-six Americans pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. Nine died of wounds during the Revolutionary War. Five were captured or imprisoned. Wives and children were jailed, mistreated, or left penniless. Twelve signers' houses were burned to the ground. No signer defected. Their honor, like their nation remained intact.

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April 2017

President's Message

The 266th anniversary of the birth of President James Madison was commemorated on March 16th at Montpelier, VA and attended by your president. A wreath laying ceremony involving a presidential wreath of the President of the United States was conducted by the United States Marine Corps, its Quantico band, a color guard, a firing party for a three-volley salute and a bugler for taps. Heritage societies presented 32 wreaths including seven Virginia SAR chapters, which included our Williamsburg Chapter, and also one by First Vice President Pat Kelley of the Virginia Society.

The 236th anniversary of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse was observed on March 18th at Greensboro, NC and attended by your president. The National and North Carolina Societies of the SAR conducted a wreath laying ceremony with their color guards. The speaker was J. Michael Tomme, Sr., President General of the NSSAR. A total of 56 wreaths were presented – 37 from five states by the

SAR, 14 from three states by the DAR and five by the C.A.R.. Ten Virginia chapters presented wreaths, which included our Williamsburg Chapter.

Our Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Jim Henry, tendered his resignation at a board meeting on March 6th. This was necessitated by health problems that have prevented him from performing his duties. Jim joined our chapter in 2007. In addition to serving as Chaplain and Historian he has been in charge of our color guard and arrangements for our July 4th observance. We thank him, one and all, for his many contributions to our chapter. Jim's presence at our board meetings will be missed. We wish him well and hope to see him at many a future luncheon/meeting. Jack Lee has assumed the Chaplain duties for the chapter.

Heath Richardson has agreed to chair our Eagle Scout Recognition program. Heath is an assistant scoutmaster of BSA Troop 0414 in Toano, VA. He will be interacting with eight troops in the First Colony District comprising James City County and Williamsburg. ~ Harley



Chapter/VASSAR Calendar
Upcoming Events in Our Region & Beyond

April 8, 2017

Monthly Luncheon Meeting
Colonial Heritage Clubhouse
12:00

April 22, 2017

Battle of Petersburg
Commemoration
Petersburg, VA

April 22, 2017

Virginia History Day
Virginia Historical Society
Richmond, VA

April 28, 2017

James Monroe Birthday
Commemoration
Richmond, VA

April 29, 2017

James Monroe Birthday
Commemoration
Westmoreland Co, VA

May 29, 2017

Memorial Day
Commemoration
Williamsburg, VA

April 8th Chapter Luncheon

The Williamsburg Chapter invites all members and their guests to attend the April luncheon at our new location in the Colonial Heritage clubhouse. We look forward to seeing you there.

Date: Saturday, April 8th, 2017

Location: Colonial Heritage Clubhouse
Williamsburg
Meeting: 12:00

Please see the RSVP information on the last page of this newsletter.

Reservations MUST be received no later than Saturday, April 1st.

Virginia History Day

Virginia History Day is a history competition for students grades six through twelve. To qualify for the state competition, students must place first or second in their category and age division at one of eight district-level competitions held throughout Virginia. The top two entries in each category and age division at the state level will compete at the National History Day finals.

Virginia History Day is conducted in conjunction with the Kenneth E Behring National History Day Contest. The first round of competition is held in the eight districts of Virginia. The top two entries in each category and age division at the district competition qualify for the state contest. Virginia History Day will take place on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at the Virginia Historical Society.

Members of the Williamsburg Chapter SAR have traditionally volunteered as judges. If you would like to help, contact Harley Stewart.

Registrar's Corner

Gentlemen, I believe after the next round of inductions, our membership will exceed 150. A singular achievement, due solely to the efforts of our previous Registrar Exemplar, Ron Losee. I am a good deal slower in processing applications, but please continue to recruit. When doing so, make sure the email address and phone number of the interested party is correct and the interest is genuine.

Advise any new prospects that the approval process for new applicants is presently taking at least 12 weeks. The process for supplemental applications is taking 23+ weeks. NSSAR and VASSAR are well aware of our discontent in this regard. All those interested in applying should have a pretty good idea of the validity of their ancestor's service and line of descent. An application with 2 or 3 blank generations is probably not going to make it. SAR and DAR applications submitted prior to 1985 may provide valuable clues, but in and of themselves are not acceptable sources. Adding a son or grandson to a member's approved application is pretty easy for the registrar, but requires patience of the applicant.

Finally, I would like to see some more member biographies in my email (jimhess42@gmail.com). The red book at the entrance to each luncheon, which I recently referred to as The President's Book, is actually called The Biography Book. Fewer than half of our members have contributed. Please do your part.

- Jim Hess

April Luncheon Speaker

The scheduled speaker for the April lunch meeting is William M. Welsch, current and founding President of the American Revolution Round Table of Richmond. Mr. Welsch will speak about General Washington's subordinate generals, including their backgrounds, and relations with Washington, Congress and each other. He will also explore their contributions to victory, anecdotes, and historical evaluation.

Mr. Welsch is a Co-founder of the Congress of American Revolution Round Tables. His historical interests extend beyond the Revolutionary War as he is a Former board member and preservation chairman of the Robert E. Lee Civil War Round Table of Central New Jersey, and Past President of the Richmond Civil War Round Table, as well.

He is and a tour guide of Revolutionary War battlefields, and a presenter at Fort Ticonderoga. He has published articles in the American Revolution Magazine, the Journal of the American Revolution Annual Volume and on the internet.

He continues to have a special interest in the revolution in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, winter camps, and the generals of the Continental Army.

Mr. Welsch served in the United States Marine Corps, is married, with two daughters and five grand children.

Chapter Happenings

Williamsburg Chapter President and Members Attend DAR Meeting



Williamsburg Chapter SAR President, Harley Stewart, along with several other chapter members, recently attended a meeting of the local DAR chapter. He is shown, on the left, with Mark Schneider, who interprets the Marquis de Lafayette at Colonial Williamsburg, and who spoke at the meeting.

Battle of Guilford Courthouse

On the right, NSSAR President General, J Michael Tomme, is accompanied by his grandson, Landon, at the commemoration of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, held recently in North Carolina.



Williamsburg Chapter Presents Wreath

Williamsburg Chapter SAR President, Harley Stewart, is shown, on the left, with the Williamsburg Chapter wreath which he presented at the Commemoration ceremony for the Battle of Guilford Courthouse.



Chapter Happenings Cont'd

James Madison Birthday Celebration at Montpelier, VA

Williamsburg Chapter President, Harley Stewart, stands with the wreath that he presented on behalf of the Williamsburg Chapter SAR at the commemoration of the 266th birthday of James Madison at the Madison family cemetery in Montpelier, VA.

Below, on the left, is the Marine Corps Honor Guard that was present at the ceremony.

Below on the right, is a picture of the many wreaths that were presented by the various historical societies that participated in the celebration. The Williamsburg Chapter wreath is in the center, toward the back, just in front of the monument.



Chapter Happenings Cont'd

Newest Member Inducted

The Williamsburg Chapter inducted its newest member, David Westenberger, at the March luncheon. David is shown on the left with his wife, Linda, who is an active member in the Williamsburg Chapter DAR.



Wallace Gusler Master Gunsmith

Wallace Gusler, pictured on the right, with part of his collection of Revolutionary era weapons, gave a very interesting presentation at the March luncheon. Mr. Gusler was a master gunsmith with Colonial Williamsburg for many years.



Certificate of Distinguished Service Awarded

Williamsburg Chapter member Howard Perley was presented a Certificate of Distinguished Service, by Harley Stewart, for his many years of dedicated contributions to the chapter. Howard has coordinated the chapter "Teacher of the Year" awards program for many years.



Battle of Petersburg

After a successful invasion from Portsmouth, Virginia, up the James River in April 1781, the British army, under the command of Major General William Phillips, landed at City Point (now Hopewell) on 24th of that month. The Virginia militia, commanded by Brigadier General Peter Muhlenberg, which had been containing the British force at Portsmouth, had paralleled the British movement by marching along the south side of the river toward Petersburg.

On the day of the British landing at City Point, the American militia entered Petersburg, coming under the overall command of Major General Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben. Von Steuben was certain that Phillips was planning to march overland to attack Petersburg and the following morning set the American lines to receive the British onslaught. Having no misconceptions about stopping the British, von Steuben's plan was to put up the heaviest resistance he could and then retreat northward into Chesterfield County, saving his army to fight another day.

Shortly after noon on the 25th, Phillips' army arrived east of Blandford, a small community now part of Petersburg, and launched his first attack. The Virginia militia put up a strong resistance and, after three hours fighting and repulsing several British assaults, Von Steuben ordered a general retreat across the Pocahontas Bridge, on to the Heights (now Colonial Heights), and into Chesterfield County. His hope was to regroup his army and eventually join the American Regulars under Major General Marquis de Lafayette near Richmond.

Notably, the Virginia militia put up a heroic fight at Petersburg. Outnumbered by the British army of 2,500 to the militia strength of barely over 1,000 men, the Virginians denied the king's soldiers the opportunity of capturing the city without fighting for it. Most history books list the action at Petersburg as a minor battle or skirmish. However, the stand of the Americans against such an overwhelming force was a full-scale battle by any Revolutionary War standards. The battle actually bought a full day's time for Lafayette to entrench his army on the heights of Richmond, and ultimately prevented a second sacking of Richmond, as was seen in the previous January, when British Brigadier Benedict Arnold assaulted and burned much of that city.



The Battle of Pensacola

Colonial Williamsburg's celebration of America's diverse history continues with their next Revolutionary in Residence. Chaz Mena is the latest such Revolutionary. He is a scholar and actor, known for works like the Netflix original series "Bloodline," USA's "Burn Notice" and Michael Bay's "Pain & Gain." Mena will also give a REV Talk on April 28, where he will answer audience questions after performing his play, "Yo Solo: On the Stage of the American Revolution."

The piece chronicles Bernardo de Gálvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana who helped the young United States defeat the British in the Battle of Pensacola in 1781.

Mena's REV Talk kicks off at 7:30 p.m on April 28 at the Kimball Theatre. Tickets are \$5; they are available at the Kimball Theatre box office, by phone at 855-296-6627 and online at www.colonialwilliamsburg.com. He will make other appearances throughout Colonial Williamsburg from mid-April through early May.

2017 Williamsburg Chapter Officers

President	Harley Stewart	Registrar/Genealogist	Jim Hess
Vice-President	Jay Smith	Historian	Steve McGuffin
Secretary	Roger Cross	Chaplain	Jack Lee
Treasurer	William Greaif	Newsletter Editor	Richard Newsome
Public Relations	Lew de Seife	Sergeant-at-Arms	Eric Ely
At-Large	Ron Losec	At-Large	Tom Campbell

For information about the Williamsburg Chapter SAR please contact Harley Stewart, President, at hstewart9@cox.net.

Cut along dotted line

Reservation for the Saturday, April 8th 2017 Chapter Luncheon:

Please reserve _____ regular meals at \$20.00

Name(s) _____
 # of Vegetarian meals _____ # of Vegan Dinners _____ # of Gluten free meals _____

Please make checks payable to "Williamsburg Chapter SAR"

and mail to arrive by April 1st:

SAR

PO Box 3622.

Williamsburg, VA 23187

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hsaprof@gmail.com

