



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.*

Vol. XXV

Number 12

DECEMBER 2020

President's Message

I hope you and your families have continued to stay safe and encourage you to safely celebrate the upcoming holidays. As in the past, we do not have a Chapter meeting in December.

Our fourth Chapter virtual monthly meeting was held on Saturday, November 14. We had approximately 30 members join the meeting to hear our excellent speaker, Sarah Whiting. Sarah discussed not only Patrick Henry's life, his role in the American Revolution and his influence on revolutionary ideals in other parts of the world, but she also discussed the history of St. John's Church, the site of his famous speech. I would encourage you to go to the Historic St. John's Church website for a more in-depth discussion of the topic.

The 2021 Slate of Officers and the proposed changes to the Chapter By-Laws were approved during the November meeting. The new officers are listed later in this newsletter. If you see them around town, please thank them for agreeing to serve the Chapter.

Our Veterans Day Ceremony, in partnership with Colonial Williamsburg, was a success. The virtual event went live at 11 AM, November 11, and is still available on YouTube <https://youtu.be/6XKghsxVqUo>. If you haven't watched it already, I would encourage you to do so. Again, I want to thank SAR members Jeffery Wooldridge, David Westenberger, Bob Schmidt and Reggie Beane for representing our chapter.

The Battle of Great Bridge Commemoration on December 5, 2020 will begin at 10 AM. Information on how to attend this virtual event is provided later in this newsletter.

Finally, if you have not paid your 2021 dues yet, please do so as soon as possible. Honor your Patriot's contribution to the American Revolution and help the Chapter support the SAR mission in Williamsburg.

I encourage you to celebrate the holiday season by helping those that are less fortunate, and I hope we can get together in person before long in 2021.

Roger W Cross, III



Calendar

Saturday, December 5th

The 10th Annual National Observance by the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR) and 120th Annual Commemoration by Great Bridge Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) This is the 245th anniversary of the battle.

The link to attend at 10:00 a.m. is via ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9778794398>

Monday December 7

10:00 BOM meeting
by Virtual ZOOM

Saturday January 9, 2021

Installation of Officers approved during the November 14, 2020 Chapter meeting.

Joint Dinner meeting hosted by the Thomas Nelson, Jr Chapter Location..time..will be in the January newsletter

Chapter News

New Compatriots



PHOTO BY HARLEY STEWART

President Roger Cross presented new member certificates to Louis Simmons, Richard Mayfield, and Robert Neely



PHOTO BY DAVID WESTENBERGER

President Roger Cross presented a **Chapter Distinguished Service Medal** to Past President and Public Relations board member Harley Stewart for his outstanding service to our chapter.



Photo by: Barbara Ketchum



Compatriots,

On Monday, October 26, 2020, the NSSAR Fire Safety Commendation Medal was presented to Battalion Chief Brad Beam by Chapter President Roger Cross in a ceremony at the Williamsburg City Fire Department. Chief Beam was thanked for all he does for the Williamsburg Fire Department and this community. President Cross made the following remarks in commendation: “This medal is awarded in recognition of your accomplishments and outstanding contributions to protect human life and property by preventing injuries or casualties due to fires. While serving as the EMS chief, you have been instrumental in the COVID-19 pandemic response and efforts to reduce its spread in Williamsburg and throughout the region. You are also active with fire emergency management, fire prevention, and are the lead for a new program called Mobile Integrated Health providing an additional level of support and service to those most needy in our community.”

Fire Chief David Eagle thanked the Williamsburg Chapter for recognizing one of his worthy members. Chief Eagle then announced that he had received this same Fire Safety Commendation Medal from the Dan River Chapter SAR of Danville, VA in about the year 1999 and still wears it on his dress uniform with pride.



PHOTO BY LINDA WESTENBERGER

Colonial Williamsburg sponsored Veteran’s Day ceremony with veterans from the Sons (SAR) and Daughters (DAR) of the American Revolution rendering a salute following George Washington’s speech.

CHAPTER AWARDS

Chapter Distinguished Service Medal

This is the highest medal that can be awarded at the chapter level.

Bill Greaf is our immediate past president (2018, 2019) and has served as chapter Historian and as Treasurer. He has also been a 3 year member of the chapter **Color Guard** and is currently also a member of the **VASSAR** color guard. In addition, he has recently accepted the nomination of the state 3rd VP.



Virginia Society Chapter Service Medal

James B. Hess- Jim has served as both Chapter Registrar (2017, 2018) and Chapter Treasurer (2019, 2020). He has done an outstanding job in both positions. He has been extremely dedicated as Treasurer particularly during yearly dues campaigns where he interacts multiple times with members to make sure that we retain as many members as possible.

Virginia Society Medal Ron Losec

Ron has consistently made major contributions to the Chapter since joining our ranks a decade ago. His service has included Sergeant-at-Arms (1 year), Historical Preservation Committee (5 years), Website Design Committee, Newsletter Development, Flag Committee (5 years), Graves Marking Committee (6 years), 50th Anniversary Committee, Registrar (8 years) and Board of Managers (8 years).



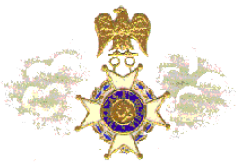


Participants during our New member Induction and Awards ceremony at Freedom Park on Nov 20, 2020.



PHOTO BY Harley Stewart (who should be in the picture)

Sons of the American Revolution



Compatriots receiving Awards (L to R) Ron Losee, Jim Hess, Steve McGuffin, Ben Fegan, Roger Cross, Don Swain, Reggie Beane, William Greaf, David Westenberger

Registrar's Corner

Compatriots,

Ten years ago, shortly after I joined the Williamsburg SAR, the president assigned me "member at large." I was sitting at an early board meeting when the chaplain reported that the registrar had passed way. I couldn't get under the table fast enough and when I surfaced, I had been elected chapter registrar.

The files consisted of an empty Xerox box and two file folders.

I survived about six years, Jim Hess assumed the duty for 2017-2018,, and I agreed to come back until a new registrar could be found. Hunt Berryman has been elected, and I wish him every good fortune in the future.

The chapter had about 50-60 members then, we are headed to 200 now. During the year 2020 we added 15-20 new members.

My sincerest thanks to all of you who were helpful to me. I guess one of my greatest regrets is that I didn't have time to process all of the supplements.

Semper Fi, Ron Losee



" Speakers Wanted"



Seeking your assistance and hopefully possible input for our monthly meetings.

If you have heard or know of a speaker who you think the membership (and guests) would be interested in hearing at one of our luncheons next year, please contact **VPres. Steve McGuffin** at mcguffis@gmail.com

Your serious interest and potential response to this matter will be greatly appreciated!

Aftermath of The Battle of Great Bridge

Following a truce to permit the British to remove their dead and wounded, the Tory forces sneaked out in the night to return to Norfolk. Captain Fordyce was buried with full military honors by the rebels near the site of the battle. Casualty estimates ranged from Dunmore's official report of 62 killed or wounded to an escaped patriot's report that the British losses totaled 102, excluding militia casualties. The only claimed rebel casualty was one man with a slight wound to the thumb. Colonel William Woodford, reporting on the 2nd Virginia Regiment's service at the battle, wrote in a letter published in Purdie's Virginia Gazette, December 15, 1775: "This was a second Bunker's Hill affair, in miniature; with this difference, that we kept our post, and had only one man wounded in the hand." The Virginia militia forces were then reinforced by the arrival of Colonel Robert Howe troops from North Carolina. Dunmore blamed Leslie for his decision to attack without the accompanying diversion, although the outcome of the battle may not have been different even with the diversion, given the disparity in force sizes. In the following days, Dunmore and his Tory supporters took refuge on ships of the Royal Navy, and Norfolk was occupied by the victorious rebel forces. The danger Dunmore posed to the rebel cause, however, had not been eliminated. General George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental Army and a Virginian who knew Dunmore well, wrote a letter to Charles Lee in late December, warning of continued danger despite Dunmore's flight to the navy. He told Lee that "if that Man is not crushed before Spring, he will become the most formidable Enemy America has", and that "nothing less than depriving him of life or liberty will secure peace to Virginia."



After a series of escalations over the rebel's refusal to allow provisions to be delivered to the overcrowded vessels, Dunmore and Commodore Henry Pellow decided to bombard the town. On January 1, 1776, Norfolk was destroyed in action begun by Royal Navy ships and their landing parties, but completed by rebel troops that continued to loot and burn the former Tory stronghold. Lord Dunmore occupied Portsmouth in February 1776, and used it as a base for raiding operations until late March, when General Charles Lee successfully forced him back to the fleet. After further raiding operations in the Chesapeake, Dunmore and the British fleet left for New York City in August 1776. Dunmore never returned to Virginia.

**The link to attend on Saturday
Dec 5TH at 10:00 a.m.
is via ZOOM:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9778794398>

In response to construction threats to the battlefield, local citizens organized in 1999 to preserve the area. ↓ Posted Nov 18, 2020 ↓

**Help save this critical Revolutionary War tract of land.
Just click the link below for a very informative narration.**

<https://youtu.be/kXfHt76ETpw>

Flag Recognition

A continuing review of our flags from the Revolution to the present.



When war broke out with Great Britain in 1775, the colonists realized they needed a new flag.

The Grand Union Flag was first flown on the US Navy's first flagship, the USS Alfred on December 3, 1775. This is why it is sometimes called the "First Navy Ensign." (An ensign is a flag.) The first fleet of ships commissioned by the Second Continental Congress sailed from Philadelphia on the Delaware River. The Alfred's First Lieutenant, John Paul Jones, raised the Grand Union Flag aboard the USS Alfred.

When the flag was hoisted, it was misinterpreted by British observers as a sign of surrender from the colonists. The British loyalists had just received a copy of a speech by King George III offering leniency if the colonists would surrender, so the soldiers mistakenly believed the colonists had read it and surrendered. George Washington referred to this in a letter to Joseph Reed a few days later. This may have been part of the reason why it was ultimately decided that a new flag was needed and the Betsy Ross Flag was created in July.



The National Sons of the American Revolution Flag Recognition certificate was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Jim Whittenton on 16 September 2020 by the Williamsburg chapter. Pictured left to right is George Corbett, chapter Flag Recognition committee chairman, Mary Whittenton and Jim Whittenton, USAF, Retired. The Whittentons are residents of Ford's Colony. Photo credit: Karen Corbett.



IN MEMORIAM



Donald Joseph Brannon, 87, born December 24, 1932, passed away on October 24, 2020 after bravely battling multiple cancers. Growing up in Washington DC during World War II, Don did his part to support the "War Effort". He collected tires, newspapers, and pots and pans; attended War Bond drives; and helped the neighborhood Air Wardens. He joined the United States Air Force and served in Korea.



After completing his service, he enrolled in Miami University of Ohio where he was a member of Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity and met his wife, Suzi. In 1965 Don earned his MBA from American University in Washington DC. During his career in finance, Don first joined Westinghouse, Aerospace Division, where he worked on the Bomarc Missile and the B-70 Bomber. Wherever the Brannon's lived, Don was an active volunteer. He supported the American Cancer Society and the Rotary Club (President). After Don sold his Western Auto Store, he and Suzi moved to Ford's Colony in Williamsburg, VA where Don designed and acted as the General Contractor to build their dream house. In Williamsburg he was active in the James City Lions Club, the **Sons of the American Revolution**, the USO and the Historic Virginia Land Conservancy where he received the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year in 2015. Don was in the first team of volunteers for the opening of the Liberty Lounge, providing hospitality to military personnel visiting Colonial Williamsburg. The Brannons are members of St. Bede Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, donations in Don's memory may be made to The Williamsburg House of Mercy (10 Harrison Ave, 23185) or to the Historic Virginia Land Conservancy (5000 New Point Rd. STE 2202, 23188).



From The Chaplain

Jim Morford

Our Thoughts Turn from Thanksgiving to Christmas

As we approach the Christmas Holiday Season it is noteworthy that our patriot forefathers did not, for the most part, make merry at Christmastime. In the 18th century, Christmas in the colonies was pretty much just another day. William Byrd, living in Virginia near Williamsburg, kept diaries documenting each ordinary day with thorough details. In the years 1709 to 1712 the word "Christmas" does not appear. The closest mention is in his notes for December 25, 1709. He observed that he went to church that day. He did so not because it was Christmas but only because the 25th of December fell on Sunday that year.

In New England, Christmas was just another day to do the Lord's work, which meant an ordinary working day. Puritans abhorred the excesses of church celebrations.

Much of the modern tradition of Christmas can be traced to post-colonial times through German roots. By mid-19th century Christmas was being more generally celebrated as a special day. Holiday decorations including Christmas Trees began to appear.

Credit for the introduction of Christmas Trees in Williamsburg goes to George Frederick Minnigerode. In 1842 German born Minnigerode accepted a position at the College of William & Mary where he taught Latin and Greek. As a boarder and tutor in the home of law professor St. George Tucker, Minnigerode is said to have introduced the German custom of decorating an evergreen tree at Christmas time.

In 21st century America Christmas has become a more secular holiday. We have drifted back toward the origins of the holiday. The December 25th recognition of Christmas overlaid the Roman Saturnalia, a 12-day harvest festival that marked the winter solstice—the return of the sun—and honored Saturn, the god of sowing. Saturnalia was a rowdy time, much opposed by the more austere leaders among the still-minority Christian sect.

This year we enter the Christmas Holiday season under the cloud of a pandemic. With multiple restrictions imposed by officials, traditional festivities will be severely curtailed. Many may find time this season to refocus their view of Christmas and contemplate the reason for the season.

A Prayer for the Holiday Season:

Heavenly Father, Christmastime is such a blessed season of the year as we remember a baby born in a stable in Bethlehem. We thank You for that gift to Your people.

We pray that Your love shines through to us especially during this season and that we reflect You in our actions, our attitudes, our behaviors.

Lord, may we be like the Wise Men who were guided by Your star. Give us Wisdom to seek You - Light to guide us to You - and Courage to search until we find You.

Draw close, we pray, to those who are alone and lonely during this holiday time. May they discover closeness and comfort in their relationship with You.

And finally, Lord, allow our love for our country and our patriotism to give us the strength and courage to defend her from all enemies.

At Christmas and throughout the year, we pray for peace on earth and good will to all.

AMEN



Williamsburg 2021 Chapter Officers

For installation in our January meeting



President	Roger Cross	roger.cross66@gmail.com
Vice-President	Stephen McGuffin	mcguffis@gmail.com
Secretary	Woody Spivey	spivey530@cox.net
Treasurer	Jeff Wooldridge	jwooldridgecpa@gmail.com
Public Relations	Harley Stewart	hstewart9@cox.net
Registrar	Hunt Berryman	huntberryman@aol.com
Historian	Milton Holt	h.m.holt@cox.net
Chaplain	James Morford	Morfordjc@gmail.com
Newsletter & WEB	David Westenberger	pa1744@cox.net
Sergeant-at-Arms	Stephen Holm	sdholm1@cox.net
Past President	William Greaif	hsaprof@gmail.com
At-Large	James Swords	james.swords@cox.net
At-Large	Gerald Sailors	gsailors@outlook.com



Our January 2021 installation meeting details will be in the January newsletter. Typically we do not have a meeting in December.

The dues deadline was 7 November

NAME (Please Print)

Make your check payable to: Williamsburg Chapter SAR
 2021 Dues:
 NSSAR(35)+VASSAR(25)+Chapter(20)= \$80.00



Jim Hess-Treas. 2509 Nathaniel Powell Road Williamsburg, VA 23185

SAR GIFTS AND FASHIONABLE APPAREL



0695CAAH

CAAH WHITE TWILL CAP

\$6.50

0695S

SAR ROYAL BLUE TWILL CAP

\$20.00

0695NEW

SAR NAVY TWILL CAP

\$20.00

0695red

Red SAR Cap

\$23.00



0684BWT-L

BLUE/WHITE/TAN TIE EXTRA LONG

\$40.00



0686

SAR RED LOGO TIE

\$35.00



0688

SAR RED BOW TIE

\$35.00



0690

NAVY SAR LOGO TIE

\$35.00

SAR apparel is available on the National SAR WEB site:

<https://store.sar.org/storefront.aspx>



0928

Personalized Name Badge (Name Tag) - Pocket Attachment Nametag

\$25.00

There has been confusion on how to add this item to the cart. There is a statement that says "I understand personalized items are not refundable" that has a small box after it on the bottom of the page where the personalized items are added. You must click that box before the "ADD PERSONALIZED ITEM TO CART" button will become active. Unless you click the box agreeing that Personalized Items are not refundable, the item can not be added to the cart.

Personal Name Badge link is:

[https://store.sar.org/categories.aspx?Keyword=personalized%20name%20badge%20\(name%20tag%20\)](https://store.sar.org/categories.aspx?Keyword=personalized%20name%20badge%20(name%20tag%20))