Our Enduring GSSR Monuments

As some of our nation's historical monuments have become embroiled in sensationalistic media coverage, it is important to remember that this organization stands for preserving our heritage—which includes preserving our historical monuments. Since its founding, the General Society, Sons of the Revolution has existed to honor the memory of the patriot-fallen of the American Revolution and to promote greater public understanding of our nation's history.

In nearly one hundred and thirty years, the General Society has funded seven historical monuments or memorials. They include:

- **French Monument** at Annapolis, Maryland (unveiled 1911)
- **General Society's Founding Site Marker** at Washington, D.C. (placed 1923)
- **Colonel Alexander Scammell Monument** at Plymouth, Massachusetts (placed 1923)
- **Battle of San Carlos Tablet** at St. Louis, Missouri (placed 1946)
- **Visitors Center Flagpole** at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania (dedicated 1978)
- **Bronze Bust of Admiral de Grasse** at Yorktown, Virginia (unveiled 1981)
- **Life-Size Bronze Statue of Gen. Nathanael Greene** at Valley Forge (unveiled 2015)

The French Monument

Located at the rear of St. John's College campus near College Creek, the French Monument is a tribute to many unknown French soldiers and sailors who died in the Revolutionary War. In the words of John Dwight Kilbourne, author of *Sons of the Revolution: A History 1875-2001*, “[The French Monument] is believed to be the first instance of a nation honoring the unknown soldiers of another nation.”

Some of the soldiers to whom the monument pays tribute died at a campsite in its vicinity. It is uncertain how many French troops died at that camp, but reports indicate they died of heat exhaustion and were buried in their uniforms. They were part of Rochambeau's long train of troops marching from Newport, Rhode Island, to Yorktown, Virginia in the summer of 1781.

The idea for this monument was conceived by Henri Marion (1857-1913), a French-born language professor of the Naval Academy. The Sons liked his idea and, through the General Society's goodwill, members brought the project to fruition. U.S. President William Howard Taft and French Ambassador Jean Jules Jusserand attended the dedication ceremonies there on...
US President Bush thanks SR-CA Life Member

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, SR-CA Life Member Daniel Rodman Justice (GSSR #26501) was assigned as a Coast Guard Rescuer with a USCG helicopter unit in that city. He and the other members of his unit rescued one hundred sixteen people following the hurricane. Afterward, each member of the unit was personally thanked by President George W. Bush (see photo). Daniel still proudly serves with the U.S. Coast Guard, now stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Other SR members of his immediate family have included Daniel’s uncle, John Rodman Justice, Past President of the California Society; Daniel’s father, Thomas Edward Justice; and Daniel’s grandfather, Lieutenant Commander Richard Rodman Justice, USN (Ret.). His grandfather was a member until his death in 1986.

Daniel’s father served as an influence upon his son to join the USCG. Tom Justice is a retired Master Chief Petty Officer with the USCG, having served for over thirty years (1975–2006). Much of his career was as a Coast Guard Helicopter Rescuer, then he became a Crew Chief on a rescue helicopter and finally served as the Force Master for the Aviation Maintenance Technician Force for the entire Coast Guard.

submit by John Rodman Justice, Past President SR-CA

Jacques comte de Trentinian, Knight of the Legion of Honour, 1930–2017

Jacques de Trentinian, a loyal citizen of France, Knight of the Legion of Honour, and friend of the United States, passed away in his Paris home on 10 May 2017 after an extended battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Marie-Claire, five children, and their extended families. A son predeceased his father.

After retiring from a business career, Jacques devoted the last thirty years of his life to becoming a serious and skilled historian, especially of the Revolutionary War and the French-American alliance. He researched his own family roots, finding a grandfather who, as a French cavalry officer in the 1770’s and a veteran of Yorktown, provided the ancestry for Jacques to join lineage organizations (including the GSSR) which honor that colonial period.

He waded into research of the American Revolution, in English and in French, and accumulated a significant library. He authored many papers and books, the last published in French in 2016, concerning the French Navy in the time of the American campaign at Yorktown. Articles of his appeared in the Drumbeat, and he contributed a great deal of writing to the website, www.xenophobicgroup.com, an informal association of military historians.

Jacques hosted U.S. groups to France and organized events at historical sites common to both nations. He also came to the U.S. frequently, for Yorktown Day and other celebrations, becoming widely known and respected for his depth of knowledge. Jacques was a remarkable intellect, a gifted historian and very much the gentleman—always loyal to France. And he was our friend.

submit by Lanny Patten, PSSR.
Friends,

As you’ve noticed, the *Drumbeat* is continuing its evolution. The General Society has entered contract with a new graphic design firm, which gives the publication a new look and feel.

Part of the publication’s evolution involves our coming advertisements. Beginning in the next edition, Fall 2017, advertisements will begin appearing in the *Drumbeat*. If members would like to buy an ad to promote their company or business, they certainly may do so. However, it is strictly a volunteer decision; there is no obligation upon members to sponsor an ad.

The Executive Committee approved the sale of advertisements in the *Drumbeat* to help offset production costs. All ads will meet standards of decency that are reflective of the comportment of our membership. No smut!

This decision to open the *Drumbeat* to advertising comes as a result of our General Society membership not growing as fast as we would like. Given ongoing production costs, we were faced with a decision: Either sell advertising in the printed newsletter, or cease printing it.

I believe most members will agree that our printed newsletter is a key membership benefit and an enjoyable read. It is also a useful promotional tool. Among its virtues are its rich, colorful graphics and its in-depth historical reporting, quarter after quarter, two reasons that make the printed issues “keepers.”

As I alluded to above, overall membership numbers of the General Society are not as high or as strong as they need to be. Recruiting new members on an ongoing basis should be a priority for every State Society under our umbrella. The more successful we all are in that regard, the less likely the General Society will need to organize a capital campaign.

I’d like to point to the excellent work of the Virginia Society, Pennsylvania Society, and New York Society for exceptional success in their recruiting efforts. For the last three years, the VSSR has averaged thirty-five new members yearly! The PSSR has averaged twenty-three. The SRNY is right behind them, with an average of twenty-two. Kudos, gentlemen. Huzzah!

Among the others, Georgia, Tennessee, Rhode Island, New Jersey and North Carolina are also keeping up an admirable pace. But that still leaves eighteen states where our numbers need to show big improvements. If your Society is working diligently on recruitment, I commend your efforts. Know that they will pay off sooner or later. Never, ever give up!

My final point is to re-emphasize that the Sons of the Revolution stands for preserving our American heritage and history, whether it’s through working to preserve battlefields, historical buildings, records and documents, or through establishing memorials and monuments.

It stands to reason that we would be against the vandalizing, defacing, or dismantling of any monument to our nation’s history. That kind of action is anti-American, not only because it is highly disrespectful of those memorialized, but also because it speaks of extreme intolerance.

Let’s remember that civilized tolerance is the American way. It would behoove us all to remember what Patrick Henry once said: “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” He was preaching tolerance, extreme tolerance.

Some of us have become so hypersensitive about claiming our own rights, that we turn a blind eye on violating the rights of others as we stake our claims. Unfortunately, that is what is happening in America today. Our social hypersensitivity is creating an intolerant nation. Pushed by our media, which thrives on violence, domestic disturbances, and social unrest, America is becoming a reflection of what is fed to us night and day on television and on the Internet.

(But) we as Sons need to continue demonstrating tolerance and the quality of being civil in all of our interactions, public and private. It is important to respect our past, all of our past, because our national journey and our national identity is inclusive of the hard rows we have all hoed together.

By dismantling our memorials, just as by bulldozing over our Revolutionary War and Civil War sites, we are robbing our children and our children’s children of the opportunity to see how far we’ve come. By knowing nothing of yesterday, our progeny will appreciate today much less.
The Drumbeat will begin carrying select advertisements with the Fall 2017 issue. We invite you to think of the Drumbeat as a tool for promoting your business. Your business name would be seen by approximately 15,750 like-minded individuals coast to coast and beyond who see and read this publication quarterly (4,500 printed issues x 3.5 readers per issue, an industry average).

The quality controlled distribution of this newsletter assures that your firm’s image will be seen by a wide range of professionals, skilled workers, and retired folks—among them, multiple generations of the same prestigious families—all who have an interest in the General Society, Sons of the Revolution. Above all, they desire to preserve and promote the history and heritage of the American Revolution.

More than two centuries ago, thousands of men gathered in a sacred fellowship, and risked their lives and livelihoods to establish the ideals of American life. Today, that fellowship and dedication to America’s past, present and future continue in the Sons of the Revolution!

Your advertising dollar will help offset the costs of Drumbeat production, thereby conserving the budget of the General Society. However, members are under no obligation to sponsor an ad.

Ad files will be accepted in Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop or High Resolution PDFs. All type must be converted to paths.

Circulation:
4,500 printed issues x 3.5 readers per issue
(standard industry average) = 15,250 readers per issue.

Production Information
Send digital ad materials to: David W. Swafford, Drumbeat Editor
Tel: (816) 755-0989 • Email: drumbeat1776@sbcglobal.net
2017-18 Quarterly Advertising Rates

Rate Base: 4,500
(3.5 estimated readers per copy)

1/4 Page ............................................................ $455 ea.
3 5/8" X 5 1/8"

$432.25 ea. for 2x contract
$409.50 ea. for 4x contract

1/2 Page ............................................................ $825 ea.
7.5" X 5 1/8"

$783.75 ea. for 2x contract
$742.50 ea. for 4x contract

Full Page ........................................................... $1500 ea.
7.5" X 10.5"

$1425 ea. for 3x contract
$1350 ea. for 6x contract

Special Placement ................................................. $1650 ea.

$1567.50 ea. for 2x contract
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Contact: David W. Swafford, Tel. (816) 255-0989;
Email: drumbeat1776@sbcglobal.net
Name:__________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________ Email: _______________________

Name of Spouse/Guest, if attending: _______________________________

Date and time of check-in: _______________________________________

Please indicate the number of persons attending each event:

• PM Business Meeting Friday September 29 FM (Gold)______________

• Presentation of S.C. and Charleston History for Non-Delegates FM (Calhoun)________

• Reception - Hors d’oeuvres/Entertainment Friday September 29 FM (Colonial)________

• AM Business Meeting Saturday September 30 FM (Gold)_____________

• Tour of Colonel John Stuart and Heyward-Washington Houses for Non-Delegates_____

• Reception Saturday September 30 FM (Gold)_____________________

• Formal Dinner (Black Tie) Saturday September 30 FM (Gold)__________

• Hospitality Suite Saturday September 30 FM (Room 1205/Riverview)___________

• AM Church Service and Sherry Toast Sunday October 1 FM (Gold)_____________

BOM Meeting Registration Fees: $575 per couple, $300 per individual

Hotel Registration/Accommodations: Francis Marion Hotel, 387 King Street, Charleston, SC 29403. * SR Group Room Reservation Rate is $259 Traditional Room.

Phone: 1-877-756-2121

Online Code and Link: Booking Engine 4.0
URL: https://reservations.travelclick.com/76320?groupID=1756162 Online Code: SRSC

SRSC has arranged for special rates at this historic 1924 hotel within walking distance of restaurants, shopping district, historic sites and parking garage. Attendees should register directly with the hotel. Group Room Reservation Rate is $259 Traditional Room. A block of 40 rooms is reserved for attendees. Check in time is 4:00 pm and Check out time is 12:00 pm. These rates are available through August 31, 2017. Hotel parking is available at the City of Charleston owned garage adjacent to the Hotel. The prevailing rates for 2017 is $22 per day plus tax for valet service, which can be added to the guest room folio, and $17 for self-parking per day which must be paid directly to the parking garage in cash.
Planning is ongoing and is subject to change. Changes will be indicated on day of registration.

- **Thursday, September 28, 2017**
  Early Registration begins at 5:00-7:00 pm Mezzanine Level (Laurens)

- **Friday, September 29, 2017**
  9:00-5:00 pm – Registration - Mezzanine Level (Laurens)
  9:00-1:00 pm – Spouse/Guest/Family Activities – On Your Own (Information at Registration Table)
  1:30-5:00 pm – Business Session I - Second Floor (Gold) Dark jacket or blazer, white collared shirt, appropriate slacks and Society ties
  3:00-4:00 pm – Presentation of S.C. and Charleston History – Mezz Level (Calhoun)
  6:00-8:00 pm – Reception - Hors d'oeuvres/Entertainment/Wine Beer Bar - Mezz Level (Colonial)
  8:00 pm – Dinner/Sightsee on Your Own (Restaurant/Sightsee Guide in Registration Gift Bag)

- **Saturday, September 30, 2017**
  8:30-12:00 pm – Business Session II- Second Floor (Gold) Dark jacket or blazer, white collared shirt, appropriate slacks and Society ties
  12:00-2:00 pm – Lunch on Your Own (Restaurant Guide/ Walking Distance King and Meeting St.)
  2:00-5:00 pm – Shopping. Walking Tours, Carriage Rides, Tour Shuttles in Historic Charleston
  3:00-5:00 pm – Tour of John Stuart and Heyward Washington Houses
  6:00-7:00 pm – Reception – Wine Beer Bar Cocktail – Second Floor (Gold) Black Tie
  7:00-9:00 pm – Formal Dinner and “Swamp Fox” Toast – Procession and Speaker - Second Floor (Gold)
  9:00 pm – Hospitality Suite Francis Marion – 12th Floor (Riverview and Bridgeview)

- **Sunday, October 1, 2017**
  10:00 am – Church Service then Sherry Toast- Second Floor (Gold)
  Noon – Departure

Please fill out form and send it along with payment to:
SCSR
12 Highbush Drive
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926
OR
Electronic payment Master or Visa Card on the SCSR website: https://www.srscr776.org/
On or BEFORE August 31, 2017

Comments and Questions: Ivan Bennett, President SRSC (843-681-3144, or ibennett@aol.com)
Apr 1911, and reports indicate thousands of onlookers attended.

Each year in October, the French Club of the Naval Academy sponsors a tribute to the fallen French soldiers and sailors of the Revolutionary War at this monument. The Maryland Society normally represents the General Society on these occasions. General President Emeritus M. Hall Worthington, a Maryland Society member, has led the Sons' representation at this event for a number of years.

The Monument is Inscribed:

A TRIBUTE OF
GRATITUDE
TO THE BRAVE
SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
OF FRANCE
BURIED HERE
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN THE STRUGGLE FOR
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.
THE MEMORY OF THEIR DEEDS
WILL ENDURE FOREVER.
1781-1783

ERECTED BY THE GENERAL SOCIETY OF THE
SONS OF THE REVOLUTION APRIL 18, 1911

Founding Site Plaque

From Mr. Kilbourne's book, "While the Sons of the Revolution dates from a formative meeting in 1875 leading to the formation of the New York Society in 1876, the 'General Society' of the Sons of the Revolution came officially into existence on April 19, 1890... The meeting was held at Chamberlin's Hotel [in Washington, D.C.] located at 823 15th St. NW."

Thirty-three years later (1923), a plaque denoting the site of the founding of the General Society was placed on the building where Chamberlin's Hotel had been located. The hotel was destroyed in 1905. Later, in 1947, the plaque was placed on a subsequent building in that location. Mrs. Charles B. Alexander, great-granddaughter of John Lee Carroll, first General President and first D.C. Society President, dedicated the new placement of the plaque.

The Kilbourne book continues, "Following the service at St. John's Church on Lafayette Square on October 21, 1990, during the General Society's Centennial Celebration in Washington, D.C., the massed Color Guards led a parade of members and guests to the Founders Plaque at 15th and H Streets. Brief speeches were made by D.C. Society President Col. Stewart Boone McCarthy and General President Joseph Louis Loughran."
Col. Alexander Scammell Monument

Alexander Scammell was born in 1744 in Massachusetts and graduated from Harvard College. He taught school in Plymouth County, including at a site adjacent to his monument erected by the Sons. He later became an attorney and surveyor before joining the Continental Army at the start of the U.S. Revolutionary War as a major in the 2nd New Hampshire Regiment.

In December of 1776 he was promoted to Colonel and put in charge of the 3rd New Hampshire Regiment. Scammell was a close friend of Gen. George Washington and crossed the Delaware River with him, often rallying the troops ahead of Washington in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. He and his regiment wintered with Washington at Valley Forge, where Washington appointed him as Adjutant General.

On 17 May 1781, Scammell requested and received command of a light infantry detachment that became known as Scammell’s Light Infantry. Scammell led his brigade in the Battle of King’s Bridge, and then as the leading vanguard for the Army’s march to Yorktown. He headed a reconnoitering party and was close to an enemy position when, on 30 Sept, he was captured then mortally wounded.

Kilbourne’s book states that at Washington’s request, Lord Cornwallis permitted Scammell to be transferred to Williamsburg, where he died on 4 Oct 1781.

The monument reads:

ALEXANDER SCAMMELL
1744 -- 1781
TEACHER SOLDIER PATRIOT
HE TAUGHT THE PUBLIC SCHOOL ON THIS SITE
COLONEL AND ADJUTANT GENERAL IN THE CONTINENTAL ARMY
MORTALLY WOUNDED AT YORKTOWN
THIS MEMORIAL DEDICATED BY THE
GENERAL SOCIETY SONS OF THE REVOLUTION
JUNE 1, 1923

Battle of Fort San Carlos Tablet

On 18 June 1946, the General Society unveiled a tablet in downtown St. Louis, Missouri, recognizing the strategic importance of the Battle of Fort San Carlos. It was the only battle of the Revolutionary War to be fought west of the Mississippi River. The battle entailed an attack by Britain and its Indian allies against the Spanish-led militia stationed in St. Louis (Spanish territory in 1780). The militia successfully repelled the attack and scattered the enemy combatants.

During the GSSR “Victory Triennial” in 1946, held in St. Louis, the Missouri Society’s Historian Col. Leroy K. Robbins gave a presentation on the circumstances surrounding that battle.

Ed. Note: For a more extended look at Spanish involvement in the Mississippi River valley and Gulf Coast during the American Revolution, see the Drumbeat articles by Judge Ed Butler [Winter 2015 – Summer 2016] entitled, ‘The Other European Ally of the Continental Army.’

Battle of San Carlos Tablet at St. Louis, Missouri
Visitors Center Flagpole at Valley Forge NHP

In June of 1978, the GSSR sponsored and dedicated the flagpole at the new Visitors Center at Valley Forge National Historical Park. The timeframe of that project was highly symbolic. Two hundred years before, in June of 1778, Washington's Army departed the encampment at Valley Forge.

A century later, in June of 1878, Pennsylvania legislators organized the Centennial and Memorial Association of Valley Forge to commemorate the centennial of the encampment and secure Washington's headquarters there as a memorial.

By 1976, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had transferred ownership of the Valley Forge state park to the National Park Service in honor of the nation's bicentennial. By then, the park had grown from 250 acres to nearly 2,500 acres—ten times its original size.

The Visitors Center opened in March 1978, and, three months later, corresponding to the bicentennial of the Continental Army's departure, the Sons installed the flagpole.

The inscription reads:

ONE NATION UNDER GOD
AS FAITH IN GOD AND COUNTRY,
AND FAITH IN THE RIGHT TO BE FREE,
SUSTAINED THE MEAN OF GENERAL
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S ARMY AT
VALLEY FORGE THROUGH DEPRIVATION
AND SUFFERING DURING THE WINTER OF
1777-1778, SO THAT SAME FAITH MUST
SUSTAIN AMERICANS THROUGH PRESENT
AND FUTURE CHALLENGES.
Admiral de Grasse Bronze Bust

In October 1981, to mark the bicentennial of the victory of the Franco-American alliance at the Battle of Yorktown, the General Society presented to the Commonwealth of Virginia a bronze bust of Admiral Francois Joseph Paul Comte de Grasse (not the one shown).

A number of French dignitaries attended the private ceremony held at the Yorktown Victory Center, predecessor of the new American Revolution Museum at Yorktown. Among the guests were French President Francois Mitterrand and members of the Rochambeau, de Grasse and Lafayette families. The bust was unveiled by Count Michel de Rochambeau, Marquis Jean de Rochambeau, Marquis de Grasse, James de Grasse and Orsolya.

The General Society commissioned sculptor Jozsef Kendetagi Orsolya to create the likeness. Then-General Vice President Edwin Cox III headed the successful fundraising project and planning for the dedication ceremony. At the unveiling, General President James J. Shannon, Jr., and Major General Pierre Claude Lauzer-al addressed the gathering.

That same year, in France, two copies of a life-size statue of the admiral were unveiled in the city of Grasse and shown in nearby Le Bar-Sur-Loup. In the latter place, the statue stands near the remains of the chateau where de Grasse himself was born.

Major General Nathanael Greene Statue

In August of 2015, the State Societies of Georgia, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia, as well as the entire General Society, dedicated a life-size statue of Major General Nathanael Greene located just outside the George Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge NHP.

By doing so, the Sons of the Revolution called attention to Greene’s outstanding leadership not only in his turning around the entire war effort in the South, but also in his masterful work as 3rd Quartermaster General, which occurred during the Army’s encampment at Valley Forge.

Many members of the Sons attended the ceremony, including then-General President Curtis P. Cheyney, III, current General President Mitchell Bush, and current GSSR Executive Director Jeffrey P. Lambert. Mr. Cheyney, along with Kate Hammond, Superintendent for the Valley Forge National Historic Park, were recognized.

One of the honorable guests was Brig. Gen. Ronald Kirklin, then the 53rd Quartermaster General, who delivered a heart-felt speech to those in attendance. “This monument will serve as a hallmark to Greene’s military career because of the significant role he played during Valley Forge,” Kirklin said. Another attendee was Susie Chisholm, the Savannah, Georgia sculptress who was commissioned to create Greene’s likeness.

The plaque on the base of the statue in part reads:

MAJOR GENERAL CONTINENTAL FORCES
QUARTERMASTER GENERAL VALLEY FORGE
COMMANDER OF THE SOUTHERN ARMY

NATHANIEL GREENE
AUGUST 7, 1742 – JUNE 19, 1786
DEDICATED BY THE SONS OF THE REVOLUTION.
**Annual Champagne Brunch**

On 21 May 2017, the D.C. Society held its annual spring Champagne Brunch at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. Members and their guests enjoyed cocktails and the fine spring weather in one of the club’s gardens before adorning to the dining room, where they took advantage of the club’s brunch buffet. The club’s buffet is extensive, and suffice to say all attendees were well satiated.

The Champagne Brunch was well attended by long-term and newer members alike, and the annual event has been a long-standing tradition of the D.C. Society. Rather than host a speaker, the Society uses the Brunch as an opportunity for fellowship. This year was no exception.

Since the Cosmos Club’s founding in 1878, three U.S. Presidents, a dozen Supreme Court justices, thirty-two Nobel Prize winners, and fifty-six Pulitzer Prize winners have been elected to its membership.

After a summer hiatus, the D.C. Society will resume its programing with its annual Yorktown-Saratoga dinner, which will be held in October at a country club in Arlington, Virginia. The Annual Meeting and dinner are planned for December 11 at a private club in Chevy Chase, Maryland.—Submitted by 1st Vice President Sean Redmon

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**Florida**

The Florida Society held its annual meeting on 20 May at a private club outside of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Society of the War of 1812 in the State of Florida and with the Fort Lauderdale Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. A goodly number of members were present, and we were delighted to host Region 3 General Vice President Roger Coursey at the luncheon. His presence, guidance and participation were greatly appreciated by the assembled Sons.

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**Annual Meeting Highlights**

Society Secretary Saul Montes-Bradley was the speaker and presented a fascinating presentation on his book about the 1985 airliner crash in Gander, Newfoundland and the rise of Islamic National Socialism and its origins in Hitler’s Nazi party. The Treasurer was glad to advise that our finances are in good order, while the Registrar reported that fifteen members had been admitted since the Society’s last annual meeting. As of this writing, eleven of those fifteen were newly registered with the General Society.

As pertaining to Society business, outgoing-President David Mitchell presented copies of the proposed Bylaw change relating to the formation and governance of chapters. The Bylaw change was passed and accepted unanimously.

At the suggestion of Secretary Montes-Bradley, the membership prayed for the health of James J. Shannon, Jr., the Senior General President Emeritus, who had reported that his illness had prevented his attendance and that further participation in Sons business and member applications was aggravating his illness.
Society President Mitchell welcomed three new members, presenting them with rosettes. He also presented a military service pin to long-standing member Joe Motes. He then introduced the new slate of officers, which was unanimously approved. Elected to office were: Jonathan Jensen as President, Ron Benson as Vice President and Deputy Registrar, Ted Duay as Treasurer, Saul Montes-Bradley as Secretary, and Ed Gynn as Chaplain. Additionally Mark Buckles, Scott Curry, Paul Gervais, David Mitchell, Joe Motes, Nelson Montes-Bradley, Bernard Wolff and Bill Zimmer were appointed to the Board of Managers.

At the close of the meeting, General Vice President Coursey was kind enough to swear in our new officers and to witness Treasurer Duay's presentation of a Past President's Star to David Mitchell in thanks for his extended service to the Florida Society. Shortly after the meeting, the Board of Managers was delighted to elect Mr. Coursey as an honorary member of the Society.

In addition to the Sons gathering for the Society's annual meeting, the Palm Beach Chapter has been active. Chapter President James Ward represented both the Chapter and the State Society at a Daughters of the American Revolution Flag Day Luncheon on 10 June 2017 in Rockledge, Florida. At the luncheon the speaker was Dr. David Ralston who spoke to the history of the American Flag and of the Korean Conflict based on his experience in South Korea.

Several newer members have discussed the possibilities of forming chapters in their areas of the state, and the Society encourages such activity. Gentlemen interested in such or in become a new (or dual) member of the Florida Society are encouraged to contact us at SRFlorida@outlook.com — photos and text submitted by Society President Jonathan Jensen

When 248 ‘Screaming Eagles’ and 8 Crew Were Killed

In December of 1985, Arrow Air Flight 1285, a privately chartered Douglas DC-8-63CF aircraft, crashed very soon after take-off from Gander, Newfoundland. Onboard were the crew and two hundred and forty-eight soldiers of the Army’s 801st Airborne Division, affectionately called the Screaming Eagles. The soldiers were on the last leg of their journey home for Christmas from a peace-keeping mission in the Sinai Desert.

They never made it home. While the Canadian Aviation Safety Board (CASB) announced it was ice on the wings that brought the bird down, Florida Society Secretary Saul Montes-Bradley II, then an employee of Arrow Air, knew better. Ice on the wings does not form under mild weather conditions. Ice on the wings does not cause a primary and secondary explosion in the fuselage just minutes after taxing down the runway.

The accident is publicly categorized as the greatest peacetime loss of military personnel in U.S. history, but circumstances surrounding the explosion belie the peacetime epithet. It remains one of the first and worst crimes of terror against the U.S. in our homeland.

In 2016, following the thirtieth anniversary of the incident, Saul wrote and published a 318-page book that pieces together the mystery and names al-Jihad, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, as the perpetrators of the explosion. In Gander: Terrorism, Incompetence, and the Rise of Islamic National Socialism, the public can begin to have some closure. Saul’s cultural background proves indispensable in piecing together the historical roots of National Socialism and its spread from World War II Europe to Muslim countries of the Middle East.

Like he says, “Radical Islam is an old enemy in new clothes.” Islam itself, as a religion and a culture, is not the enemy. The enemy are those who crave dictatorial powers and are using fringe elements of certain populations to make war against democratic countries and the tradition of self-rule. – Editor
The Georgia Society met Saturday, 17 June 2017, for its Summer Social at the Forest City Gun Club in Savannah. Forest City Gun Club is the oldest and largest continuously-operated skeet, trap and sporting clays club in America. It was founded in 1883 by a group of Dutchmen and today encompasses well over five hundred acres.

The Coastal Heritage Society’s Aaron Bradford gave a one-hour presentation on James Jackson, a key player in the Revolution and post-war American Congress. Jackson was born in England but immigrated to Savannah, Georgia by 1772. During the Revolutionary War, he served in the 1st Brigade Georgia Militia at the defense of Savannah, the Battle of Cowpens, and the recapture of Augusta and Savannah.

Following the war, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and more than once to the Senate. But it was in Georgia where his political legacy was strongest. He marshaled the Jeffersonian Democratic - Republican Party into a statewide force, and he led a campaign to overturn and repeal the fraudulent Yazoo land sale in western Georgia. Eventually he was elected Governor of Georgia, 1798-1801. Fort Jackson in Savannah is named in his honor.

In other Society events, member James Smith was scheduled to present a wreath on behalf of the GA-SR at the Colonial Park Cemetery on 4 July 2017. The Society’s Quarterly Board Meeting took place the next day, 5 July 2017.

A Georgia Regiment of Light Horse

Prior to his passing, former General Historian Gordon B. Smith was working on a book with SR-GA member and graphic artist Rick Ross concerning the Georgia Continental Regiment of Light Horse. This unit was raised 1 Jan 1776, at Savannah, Georgia, as the “Georgia State Regiment of Horse” and was later absorbed into the Continental Army. Washington did not approve of cavalry in his army until 1777, when he gave “Light Dragoons” a nod.

Congress had authorized a regiment of rangers/mounted infantry for Georgia, modeled after the Third South Carolina Regiment. Upon transfer to the Continental Army, the regiment saw action in Florida in 1777 and at the Siege of Savannah in 1778. It was present at Charleston in 1780. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln dispatched a force of three hundred fifty Continental dragoons and militia to be stationed thirty miles north of the city to keep his lines of communication open. This saved the men from being captured by the British in Charleston. Despite that, the regiment was disbanded on 1 Jan 1781.

Gordon indicated the uniform details, including the green color. At some point in history, a number of Continental and militia dragoons began wearing green uniforms to distinguish their units. Rick says Gordon initially took exception to the idea of a straight sword, rather than the saber typically used by cavalry, but acquiesced when he saw this rendering.—Editor

Illustration by Rick Ross
On Saturday, 8 April 2017, members and guests of the Missouri Society, Sons of the Revolution gathered in St. Louis for a full day of events. In the morning, Society President Richard W. Strelinger, Sr., led a memorial service at the Washington Statue in Lafayette Square to honor MOSR members who had passed away in recent years.

The ceremony included a dedication given by General President Emeritus Terry L. Davenport, a speech by President Strelinger, the placing of a rose (symbolic of the SR color) for each deceased member, and the placing of a wreath by General President Mitchell Bush and his wife, Leslie.

Wayne Davis, MOSR Board Manager, played a beautiful rendition of “Amazing Grace” on the bagpipes, and MOSR Chaplain Sumner Hunnewell provided a benediction.

The deceased members were: Fred E. Angle, Jr.; Wilson T. Bell; Benjamin H. Brown; James Eugene Lewis, Jr.; Meade M. McCain, Jr.; Lawrence W. O’Neal; Eugene S. Robins; Frank L. Root, and Elwyn C. Murphy.

The group then rendezvoused for lunch at Square One Brewery & Distillery, just off Lafayette Square. Following lunch, a smaller group went to the Missouri History Museum Library & Research Center, where they were given the rare opportunity to gawk at a genuine field journal of the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

The finale was the black-tie banquet held at the Raquet Club Ladue, which featured the installation of officers and board managers; the presentation of membership certificates to Doug Neff and Richard W. Strelinger, Jr.; and the presentation by guest speaker Dr. Frances Levine, President, Missouri History Museum.

Following her inspiring address, Dr. Levine was presented with the MOSR Historic Preservation Award for 2017. Her leadership and drive to preserve the Soldier’s Memorial Museum in St. Louis singled her out for the accolade.

The Society extends its thanks to special guests General President Mitchell Bush and his wife, Leslie; General Vice President Bob Rati and his wife, Margaret, and General President Emeritus Terry L. Davenport for their attendance.

Some drove several hundred miles to be present, including Michigan Society President Geoffrey Hickok, who logged an 800-mile round trip between Kalamazoo and St. Louis. Mr. Davenport, however, outdistanced everyone else by driving over 1,000 miles, round trip, between Morristown, Tennessee, and St. Louis.—text submitted by Society President Rick Strelinger. Photos by Mark Vöhr.

To get a little better feel for the American Revolution, a small-but-hardy band of New Jersey Sons participated in a sleepover at the Old Barracks in Trenton. The outing occurred at the end of April. Before it was time to turn in, the group had a behind-the-scenes tour of the New Jersey State House and the Barracks. The tour was followed by dinner, a lecture on Loyalists during the Revolution, and a tasting of adult beverages served during the war era.

The adventurous group awoke the next morning to a 5:00 am thunderstorm, which that brought to life the sights and sounds of Revolutionary War artillery fire. In September, the N. J. Society will tour the new Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia.—text and photo submitted by Society President Glen Beebe
2017 Flag Day: Biggest in Years

The New York Society marked its Centennial Flag Day Celebration with a huge splash. As the New York Daily News reported: “It was a banner day [Wednesday, 14 June 2017] as more than five hundred city fourth-graders celebrated the history of the American Revolution during a Flag Day parade in lower Manhattan.”

The day after this year’s parade, the Society’s Facebook page boasted, “Thank you to all who made yesterday’s annual Flag Day Parade & Celebration the biggest success in over a decade! We salute you Adam Paige Hess, Flag Day Chairman.” The celebration includes a procession from City Hall Park to the Fraunces Tavern, where afterward proclamations and awards are given out and where school children sing patriotic songs and recite winning essays.

Board member Robert N. McKay in late April presented Chairman Hess with a $1,000 donation toward this year’s celebration.

The Society’s Flag Day Celebration is a tradition that began in 1917, a year after President Woodrow Wilson issued a Flag Day proclamation to commemorate “the Stars & Stripes” and two months after the United States entered World War I.

Memorial Day Color Guard Event

On Sunday, 21 May 2017, the SRNY Color Guard under the direction of Captain David Tisdale Woods as well as the Veteran Corps of Artillery presented colors at the historic Shearith Israel Congregation’s First Cemetery.

Yearly, in a pre-Memorial Day event, the SRNY recognizes the twenty-two veterans of the Revolutionary War who are buried there. The Society also recognized Gershom Mendes Seixas, who was known as the “Patriot Rabbi of the American Revolution.”

Though he did not fight in the war, he was a strong advocate of American independence. He was one of four clergymen who attended George Washington’s inauguration.

Shearith Israel’s First Cemetery is the second oldest cemetery in Manhattan, after Trinity Churchyard. Inactive since 1828, the cemetery is located at 55 St. James Place, opposite Chatham Square.

Family Night Stated Dinner

Every year in the latter half of April, members gather at the Fraunces Tavern for Family Night Stated Dinner. The evening commemorates the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The Society uses the event to announce the winner of the annual Fraunces Tavern Museum Book Award and to celebrate George Washington’s Thirteen Toasts, among other items.

This year, the award winner was Professor Alan Taylor for his book, American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804 (W.W. Norton and Company, 2016). The guest speaker for the evening was runner-up Larrie D. Ferreiro, author of Brothers at Arms: American Independence and the Men of France and Spain Who Saved It (Knopf, 2016). All who attended that evening received a copy of Mr. Ferreiro’s book.

Also this year, SRNY President Ambrose Richardson III presented three gentlemen with forty-year and fifty-year membership medals, respectively, in thanks and recognition for their lifelong dedication to the Society’s mission.

—Text by Editor. Photos courtesy SRNY/Facebook.
2017 George Washington Dinner
The North Carolina Society's George Washington Dinner was held at the State Club, a beautiful facility in the alumni center of North Carolina State University's Centennial Campus. We had an outstanding program on George Washington's Tour of the Southern States by author and historian Warren L. Bingham.

Mr. Bingham is an acclaimed speaker and writer with a commanding grasp of Southern history, culture, and lore. He has long focused on Washington's "Southern Tour"—the President's 1791 visit to Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia.

In 2016, he published George Washington's 1791 Southern Tour, released by The History Press. Later in the year, Bingham and his book were featured on UNC-TV's North Carolina Bookwatch—and he lectured to a full house at Mount Vernon.

Annual Meeting at Molly Inn
Members convened on 10 June 2017 for the Society's Annual Meeting in Pinehurst. This year's venue was a departure from previous years. It was held at the famous Holly Inn in downtown Pinehurst, instead of at the Pinehurst Resort and Country Club.

The beautiful 1895 Holly Inn was the first of the historic Pinehurst hotels, and it is a fitting venue for our Society's activities. In fact, the Holly Inn was being constructed in the same year the North Carolina Society was being formed. We had a capacity crowd in the Music Room of the Holly Inn. The food was outstanding, and the service was attentive.

Our scholarship winner, Jordan Dickerson, read her winning essay, entitled, "The American Anomaly: How the U.S. became the First Modern Democracy." Jordan's analysis of how America was created as a unique country was right on the mark. Hers is one of the best papers we have had to date in our scholarship contest. She had been accepted into the University of Virginia Law School.

Guest Speaker John Braswell gave a solid presentation, "A Colony Divided—The Whigs vs. Tories." He gave a clear perspective on the timeline of the Southern Campaign as part of the overall Revolutionary War. Then he delved into specifics about North Carolina during the war. Forty-seven named battles were fought in North Carolina, of which only two seem to get any publicity. Additionally, there were nearly three hundred and fifty skirmishes, incidents and raids that, when taken together, have made some authors refer to North Carolina as having a 'civil war' during the Revolution that went on well past the Yorktown surrender.

During the Annual Meeting, the Society awarded John Ledbetter the Color Guard's Liberty Medal for his long representation of the SRNC at patriotic events and ceremonies. Huzzah, John! Thank you for your volunteer service.

Memorial Day Weekend
On Saturday and Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend, the Society Color Guard attended the annual Memorial Day Remembrance at Bennett Place, a North Carolina State Historic Site. The theme is always, "The American Soldier through the Ages," with authentically uniformed re-enactors and living history displays of all American conflicts from the Revolutionary War through the current conflicts.

The North Carolina Color Guard led the procession of re-enactors portraying Americans soldiers through the ages. The parade went to the Unity Monument and fired a volley to honor all veterans. The North Carolina Society normally places a recruiting booth at the event, which draws more than one thousand visitors. Color Guard Commander Scott Kennedy and Society President Dan Hopping laid a wreath at the Unity Monument. —text and photos submitted by President Dan Hopping.
Special Projects Committee
The Special Projects Committee has approved an expenditure of $10,000 to restore the seven maps of the Thirteen Colonies displayed in the Long Gallery of Independence Hall. It also has approved $5,000 to restore the PSSR monument at the site of the Continental Army encampment in East Falls. In approving the gross amounts allocated to these projects, the Committee resolved to invite the Color Guard to contribute up to fifty percent of the cost of each project.

Furthermore, the Committee is also investigating the condition of two other PSSR monuments to determine whether restoration measures are necessary: 1) a bronze tablet erected in 1916 at the site of a Continental Army hospital in Allentown, Pennsylvania; and 2) a stone marker indicating the site of Major General Anthony Wayne's headquarters.

The bronze tablet in Allentown is today located at the Liberty Bell Museum in the basement of Zion's Reformed Church of Christ.

In connection with the Wayne headquarters marker, a related project to place state historical markers at the sites of the Wayne headquarters and those of other Continental Army generals in the vicinity will also likely require funding.

Apart from those projects, the Committee is exploring the current needs of the Valley Forge National Historical Park and Washington Crossing Historic Park with the objective of finding ways to assist in their interpretive missions. Finally, the Committee will investigate the restoration project currently being undertaken by the “Saving Hallowed Ground” organization for the National Patriots Tower adjacent to the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge.

PSSR Annual Meeting
The Annual Meeting for 2017 was held April 20th at the First City Troop Armory. By all accounts the event was a great success. There were over 120 members in attendance. The meeting commenced at 5 p.m. in the Dining Hall of the Armory, with the Presentation of Flags by the Color Guard and members of the Orpheus Club singing a very moving rendition of the National Anthem.

Chaplain Ames offered an invocation, which was followed by a reading of the Minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting and Reports of Officers and Committees. After officer elections and appointments by the Society President, the meeting was adjourned. The Color Guard processed out of the meeting with the colors while God Bless America was sung by The Orpheus Club and PSSR members.

A reception was held in the Armory Museum and featured an oyster bar, hand-carved beef and pork, with hors d'oeuvres and open bar. Tours of the museum and its artifacts were well received by PSSR membership.

Valley Forge Commemoration (Annual Church Service)
The 2017 Valley Forge Commemoration and Annual Church service was held on Sunday, April 23rd at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lancaster. Immediately following the service, members and their guests proceeded to a reception at the very convenient and upscale Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square.

In addition to the expected high turnout from the Lancaster Chapter, there was also an impressive turn-out of Greater Philadelphia-area members at this function. Over one hundred adults and six children attended. Since this is one of our Society’s family-friendly functions, the service began at 3 p.m. with the reception concluding by 5:30 p.m. This year, of all things, those attending were also treated to a surprise earthquake at the beginning of the reception.

A special thank-you is extended to Ed LeFevre from our Lancaster County Chapter. He was instrumental in organizing many of the details for both the church and the reception.
Younger Members at Radnor Races
The PSSR Younger Members were out in full force to enjoy the pageantry of the 2017 Radnor Hunt Races at our traditional rail side tailgate that was held on Saturday May 20th.

There was a robust turnout for our annual tailgate party, in large part due to a strong contingent of Younger Members and their significant others on the Party Bus, organized by fellow committee member James Price. More than thirty Younger Members and their guests enjoyed the companionship and hospitality of our rail side neighbor, the First City Troop. The well-appointed tent of the PSSR Color Guard was up on the hill.

The Younger Members Committee will gather at some point in July to plan their event line-up for the fall season.

New Citizens Committee
The New Citizens Committee ceremony was held 14 June 2017 to commemorate Flag Day. The Honorable Timothy J. Savage was the presiding judge. The ceremony took place at 10:30 a.m. in the Ceremonial Courtroom at the Federal Courthouse in Philadelphia located at the corner of Sixth and Market Streets. PSSR President William Gordon addressed the court and assembly on behalf of the Society.

Following the judge’s presentation of citizenship certificates, the PSSR presented to each new citizen our traditional gift consisting of a copy of the U.S. Constitution, a small American flag, a lapel pin, and ball point pen. A reception for the citizens was hosted by the Society following the ceremony.—submitted by PSSR Secretary Michael Whalen

Henry Knox Chapter Teaches Boy Scouts
On 29 April 2017, members of the Henry Knox Chapter of the Tennessee Society of Sons of the Revolution, along with the John Sevier Chapter of the Over Mountain Victory Association, participated as instructors at a one-day Merit Badge College for Boy Scouts in the Great Smoky Mountain Council. The college took place in Knoxville at Marble Springs, the historic home of Revolutionary War veteran and Tennessee Governor John Sevier.

The men were there to teach the American Heritage Merit Badge. The day began with the Society’s Terry Sisk teaching the boys about the Declaration of Independence. Then, the Society’s Bob Jones taught the boys about the life of John Sevier and the Battle of Kings Mountain. He also assisted with teaching militia drill to the boys, and they also learned about music in America from our early history and jobs that relate to history.

Patrick Servey taught them about the flag, the motto, the anthem and seal of the United States. David Whaley taught them about the Sons of the Revolution, and Durant Williams taught them about how some current topics relate back to our founding fathers and the earliest days of our nation.

All of the boys researched their families and learned about how their ancestors may have contributed to our nation, and how various events in American history may have affected their families. After a long day, the boys were able to return to their homes and their scout troops having successfully earned the American Heritage Merit Badge. It was a grand day for the Henry Knox Chapter to teach these young leaders about the motivations and sacrifices of our Revolutionary ancestors.—text and photo submitted by Bob Jones
Earlier in the year, the Rhode Island Sons received excellent coverage in The Newport Daily News. This reprint of the article appears with permission of the publisher. –Ed.

The Newport Daily News

Sons of the Revolution Honor George Washington’s Birthday at Redwood Library

By Colin Howarth | Staff writer

February 23, 2017, NEWPORT — As it has for the past 120 years, the Rhode Island [Society] of Sons of the Revolution [in conjunction with the Artillery Company of Newport] spent Feb. 22 celebrating George Washington’s birthday.

In front of the Redwood Library’s statue of the first United States President, eight men of the Artillery Company of Newport stood on the steps, dressed in their Revolutionary War uniforms — rifles and swords on their sides with high, black boots, white pants and blue and red jackets. Three of them stepped to the side of the steps and fired off their musket replicas three times as a salute to Washington.

For the past few decades, the celebration has been held on the lawn of the Redwood Library. The library’s chief communications officer, Patricia Pettit, said she feels it’s only natural for the first President to be honored at the oldest lending library in America and the country’s oldest library building in continuous use.

Pettit said Washington and Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State at the time, at least saw the outside of the library when they visited Newport in 1790. Some say Washington entered the library as well, Pettit said.

To be a member of Sons of the Revolution, one must be a descendant of a soldier “who was at all times unfailing in loyalty to, and rendered active service in the cause of American Independence.”

Bruce MacGunnigle, President of the Rhode Island [Society] said the group celebrates what the men and women who fought in the Revolutionary War did for the new nation. “We do what we can to help people remember,” MacGunnigle said.

On Wednesday, MacGunnigle stood in front of the 25-50 people on the library’s lawn and read a bit of Washington’s Letter of Farewell to the Army on June 8, 1783.

“I now make it my earnest prayer that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection, that he would incline the hearts of the Citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another....”

MacGunnigle pointed out that politicians don’t speak this eloquently today.

Frank Hale, a member of Sons of the Revolution [in Rhode Island] for the past 70 years, placed a wreath on the statue of Washington. Hale, who lives in Middletown with his wife, Carol, saluted the statue and returned to the front steps. Hale, a descendant of Revolutionary hero Nathan Hale, served as President of the Rhode Island [Society] for 25 years. He’s also a veteran of World War II and a third-generation member of Sons of the Revolution.

MacGunnigle, who is the town historian of East Greenwich, said when [Frank] returned from the war, Hale’s father had the [application] papers already set on the table [to complete for membership in the Sons of the Revolution].

The bronze statue at the library, installed in 1932 for the 200th anniversary of Washington’s birth, is a copy of Jean-Antoine Houdon’s original statue, which is displayed in the state Capitol in Richmond, Virginia. It was a gift from former Redwood Library President Roderick Terry.

The current executive director of the library, Benedict Leca, said it shares a number of ideas and concepts that Washington often spoke about, such as “tradition, republican values, rectitude and civil engagement.” In the future, the library hopes to make George Washington’s birthday a “bigger commemorative ceremony,” Pettit said.
Commemoration of Battle of Sullivan's Island

The South Carolina Society of Sons of the Revolution has joined other patriotic groups in support of the Palmetto Society of Charleston, a co-organizer of the annual Carolina Day festivities in Charleston.

Carolina Day (June 28) commemorates the Battle of Sullivan's Island, which was the first decisive victory by the Patriots in their fight for independence, occurring a week before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The state holiday, which has been celebrated for two hundred and forty consecutive years (beginning in 1777), provides youth an opportunity to learn about South Carolina's role in early American history.

As a supporter of the Palmetto Society, the SC-SR is now among dozens of patriotic organizations that assist in the celebration of Carolina Day in Charleston. Among the others are the St. Andrew Society of Charleston, the Society of the Cincinnati, National Society of Colonial Dames, Society of Colonial Wars, and local chapters of the DAR, SAR, and CAR.

Each year, the commemoration includes a service at St. Michael's Episcopal Church, followed by a procession from Washington Square Park to White Point Garden at the tip end of Charleston Peninsula, where speeches are given and a wreath-laying and musket salute occur at the Sgt. Jasper Monument. This year's event included an excellent and captivating speech of the battle by Mayor John J. Tecklenburg. The wreath laying was provided by the member organizations of the Palmetto Society Board. Across the water, the Town of Sullivan's Island also commemorates the historic battle.

Battle of Huck's Defeat Anniversary

The 237th Anniversary of the Battle of Huck's Defeat occurred the weekend of 15-16 July 2017, in Historic Brattonsville. The SC-SR presented a wreath at the occasion. The battle took place at the home of William Bratton's neighbor, James Williamson, on 12 July 1780.

In the early morning hours of that day, Cols. William Bratton, Andrew Neel, William Hill, and Edward Lacy led a force of one hundred Patriot militia in a surprise attack against Captain Christian Huck and his Loyalist troops, numbering about one hundred and fifteen.

The Patriots lost one man while the Loyalists lost more than thirty. An equal number were wounded, and many more were taken prisoner. The British defeat served as a rallying cry for Patriots in the backcountry.

In addition to laying a wreath at the battle site, the SC-SR later convened a membership meeting at the Historic Brattonsville Visitors Center for the purpose of discussing Society roles and responsibilities during the upcoming GSSR BOM Meeting at the Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, 29 Sept - 1 Oct 2017. Society President Ivan Bennett reported that planning had gone exceptionally well, and many details had fallen into place for a successful meeting.—text and photo submitted by Society President Ivan Bennett
James Monroe Day – 28 April

Representatives of the Sons of the Revolution in the Commonwealth of Virginia attended the 259th anniversary of the birth of President James Monroe on 28 April 2017 at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond. Nearly a hundred honored guests representing a variety of Virginia historical and lineage societies attended the ceremony, hosted by the James Monroe Memorial Foundation. The VSSR attends this event each year.

Annual Meeting on ‘May Day’

The Society on 1 May 2017 hosted its Annual Spring Meeting followed by a cocktail reception at the Virginia Historical Society. Over 180 members, spouses, and guests were in attendance. The Society continues to grow.

New members were given certificates, scholarship winners were announced, and a new slate of officers was elected and installed. The new officers of the VSSR are: Beverly S. Mauck, Jr., President; Dr. John M. Daniel, III, 1st Vice President; J. Mark Bearden, 2nd Vice President; Stan L. Southworth, Secretary; L. Brooks Zerkel, Jr., Treasurer; and C.L. Sigmon, II, Registrar.

The 2017 Scholarship Recipients are: Mary Pace Lewis ($5,000) – Washington & Lee University; Aaron R. Kuzel ($2,500) – Lincoln Memorial University; and Matson L. Roberts, Jr. ($2,500) – University of Virginia.

Correspondingly, on the same date, the VSSR launched its new website. We welcome visitors to take a look: www.SRVirginia.org. The website has a completely modernized look, is very easy to navigate, and is available for both desktop and mobile devices.

Remembrance at Virginia War Memorial

In Richmond, Memorial Day is marked by a state civic ceremony at the Virginia War Memorial. This year was the Commonwealth’s 61st Memorial Day Ceremony held on the south end of the Shrine of Memory, where flags of all the armed services arranged in a semi-circle fly at half-mast.

The public at large and representatives from a variety of military and patriotic organizations, including the Sons, traditionally gather for the event. This year, Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, adjutant general of Virginia, delivered the keynote address. At the conclusion of the service, Society President Bev Mauck placed a wreath from the Sons in honor of Virginia’s fallen.

Making a Visible Difference

The VSSR Board has recently approved nine new applications, while pending applications continue to come in. The Membership Committee is hosting its first after-hours event at a local brewery in Richmond. We hope to target the younger generation of prospects and intend on having several additional events like these in the near future.

In related news, on 4 June 2017, several dozen people gathered at the Shockoe Hill Cemetery in Richmond to dedicate new headstones for eight previously unmarked Revolutionary War veterans and others. This comes after the Virginia Society last year awarded a grant to Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery to help cover costs of installing the markers for the Revolutionary-era veterans.

Those eight men were: Private Anselm Bailey, 1st Virginia State Regiment; Matross Charles Broach, 1st Continental Artillery Regiment; Lieutenant William Carter, Henrico County Militia; Private Andrew Duncan, Montgomery County Militia; Private Thomas Griffin, Albemarle County Militia; Corporal John Potts, 7th Virginia Regiment; Captain John Pryor, 1st Continental Artillery Regiment; and Private Andrew Smith, Virginia Volunteer Artillery. —text and photos submitted by VSSR President Bev Mauck
The following account on Adam Link concludes the series of vignettes on the six Revolutionary War veterans featured in The Revolution’s Last Men, a book by Don N. Hagist published in early 2015 by Westholme Publishing of Yardley, Pennsylvania. These men lived to be centenarians and were photographed during the time of the Civil War. The images were published in the 1864 book, Last Men of the Revolution. Through detailed research, Mr. Hagist has distilled their service records, added to their post-war biographies, and sifted through historical inaccuracies previously published. The following excerpt(s) are copyrighted and republished with permission.

Adam Link

Excerpts: “Adam Link was born in 1760 in the region of Pennsylvania near Fort Necessity that had figured in the onset of the French and Indian War... By the time Link came of military age, war was in full swing in the western reaches of the colony near the Ohio River. It was a very savage, personal sort of warfare among opponents vying for the right to inhabit the land rather than a communal struggle over principles, laws, and governance.

“The Pennsylvania government passed its first law mandating militia service on March 17, 1777, prior to that the colony had had no established militia, relying instead on voluntary service and occasional temporary militia acts. The new militia system, however, mandated service for men from ages 18 to 53, meaning that Adam Link was still too young to be drafted... He nonetheless claimed that on June 1, 1777, he joined the militia from his county and marched out under Captain David Williamson...

“The fledgling soldier claimed to have spent six months at an outpost called Dement’s Fort, one of many small posts that afforded protection against raids and provided a jumping-off point for scouting expeditions and counterstrikes... In 1778 he was drafted again, this time serving from April 1 to October 1 at another outpost called Shepherd’s Fort. The following year saw another six-month tour; this time in the garrison at Wheeling; the fort there, Fort Henry, had been besieged in 1777 and depredations had been frequent in the region...

“...Adam Link’s depositions provide a vivid if brief look at the horrid warfare that he experienced. The frontier war was largely one of raids and reprisals... As homesteaders, Link’s family was in constant danger, ‘very much exposed to invasion from the British and the Indians’...

“Link related vividly, although choppiy, the harsh and dangerous conditions in which he lived, fleeing homes with family, friends, and neighbors when raids were imminent to find shelter in log huts, local forts, or even sleeping in caves or the woods.

“He served in the military for only eighteen months, but spent fully four years at war. Even if he exaggerated his experiences, there can be no doubt that his adolescence and early adulthood saw much hardship and desperation...

“In August 1780, a summer when Adam Link was not called for service, the [family] farm was attacked, the house, barn, and stores burned, the livestock killed or scattered. They lost everything, and worst of all, the senior Link was carried off, scalped, and killed. Now fatherless, Adam and his brother were forced to work at day labor to support their mother and sisters; if they did any additional service for the army, it was in an informal capacity...

“After the war, Adam Link married a relative named Elizabeth Link; in 1820 they moved from Washington County [Pennsylvania] into Ohio... Very little else is known about this veteran who spent the remainder of his long life in the hardscrabble existence of a frontier farmer...

“In 1885, an Arizona newspaper published a biography of him, [including] ‘As years grew upon him in his lonely widowed condition, he went to live with his son-in-law, Horatio Markley, in Crawford county, with whom he spent his last years.”

23
The Comitia Americana Medals: A Wonderful Idea, But Poorly Executed

By James Rhodes, SRNY Member

The present introduces a new series of stories in the Drumbeat highlighting the Comitia Americana medals and others closely related. The late-eighteenth century Congressional medals were designed and struck to honor ten Revolutionary War heroes, beginning with George Washington. But, for reasons explained herein, only a few copies of each medal were struck. Despite having Congressional approval, the project saw the sunset before fully experiencing the dawn.

The text of these articles is largely excerpted from the 2007 book, Comitia Americana and Related Medals: Underappreciated Monuments to Our Heritage, by John W. Adams and Anne E. Bentley, with permission from their publisher George Frederick Kolbe of Crestline, California. Mr. Adams, an investment banker, is a renowned numismatist and accomplished author in the field. Ms. Bentley, curator of Art & Artifacts of the Massachusetts Historical Society, is charged with conserving the Society's numismatic collection.—Ed.

"...It could be said that everybody knows the importance of the Revolutionary War, and this may be true enough, but very few people are more than peripherally aware of the huge personal commitments that were entailed in gaining this country's independence...

"The Comitia Americana medals, the medals voted by Congress, commemorate significant victories during the war by honoring the officers who achieved them. King George III sent the best professional soldiers in Europe – both British and German – to put down the American colonists' rebellion. We opposed these better-trained and armed crack troops with inexperienced, ill-equipped, and underpaid volunteers.

"On the face of the matter, there is no way that America should have won this war. But she did, and the heroism underlying her victory is as uninspiring as it is timeless..."

So begins the writers' narrative, a sumptuous effort to detail the creation of these medals and draw attention to their meaning and relevance to American heritage. The heroes honored by the original ten medals were: George Washington, Horatio Gates, Anthony Wayne, François-Louis Teissèdre de Fleury, John Stewart, John Paul Jones, Daniel Morgan, William Washington, John Eager Howard, and Nathanael Greene. By the nineteenth century, another medal had been added to the series for Henry Lee.

To distinguish their book from earlier published treatments of these medals, Mr. Adams and Ms. Bentley surveyed hundreds of individual collectors, institutions, dealers, and auction catalogues to produce a veritable census of extant originals. The census is, admittedly, "an approximation at best." Nevertheless, it provides a solid foundation for future numismatic researchers to build upon.

It also provides the avid historian a glimpse into the stories behind these monuments, describing their design, tracing their provenances, and, along the way, sprinkling in "an abundance of collecting minutiae." To boot, as Mr. Adams and Ms. Bentley proclaim, no study of the Comitia Americana medals would be complete without also considering the closely-related Libertas Americana, the Diplomatic Medal, and the three major portrait medals of Benjamin Franklin.

The worthy idea of a series of medals honoring these brave men of the Revolution was spirited by the Second Continental Congress. On the same day that
its members heard the good news of the Siege of Boston (25 Mar 1775), they voted that a commemorative medal, the first in the United States, be given to George Washington.

“The execution of the medal began promptly enough,” the authors write, but the project incurred much delay. “[Finally] on July 27, 1779, [the whole of] Congress re-assumed control of the project and ordered Treasury to procure the medal ‘without delay, agreeably to the several resolutions of Congress on this subject.”

By late September 1779, the legislative body had voted thus far to bestow six war heroes with commemorative medals, but up to that point none of the medals had been struck. Frustrated, the government assigned various individuals to procure the medals in France, beginning with Benjamin Franklin, who passed the baton to David Humphreys, who later passed it to Thomas Jefferson.

Almost immediately after being charged with the task by February 1787, Jefferson heartily recommended to John Jay, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs under the Articles of Confederation, that more medals be produced and sent to important stakeholders, including American colleges and European royalty.

With no exaggeration, Jay envisioned a series of Comitia Americana medals as a potential building block of international diplomacy and public relations for the United States. His first draft of recipients included a veritable Who’s Who of world geopolitical status (e.g., not only domestic and European luminaries, but also the Emperor of Morocco and the Emperor of China).

**Raising the Stature**

Between them, then, Jay and Jefferson elevated the original intention of recognizing individual heriocis during the Revolution to assigning the complete series a diplomatic purport. As Adams and Bentley write, “This constituted a major shift in direction, the significance of which has received little if any recognition by earlier writers.” With such exuberance coming from two key Founding Fathers about this project, why, then, do so few people today know about the medals?

“Congress authorized the procurement of 350 sets of [original] Comitia Americana medals. Only two (nearly) complete sets of these national treasures are known today. It is not likely that 348 sets were lost or dispersed. Nor is it likely that large numbers of sets have gone unreported in our widely distributed survey. Rather... the medals were never made...”

In one way or another, Franklin, Humphreys, and Jefferson each made some progress toward the end goal, but ultimately they all failed to deliver what Congress had requested. The project, in a nutshell, was characterized by fits and starts. The few sets that were struck were completed piecemeal, and, lacking a modern publicity campaign or snazzy roadshow, the medals themselves quickly fell into oblivion.

In their 2004 Coinage of the Americas Conference presentation, the co-authors presented a breakdown of the commissioning of the ten original medals: Benjamin Franklin commissioned the de Fleury medal. He also invested much of his own money in the related Libertas Americana medal. David Humphreys commissioned the Gates and Greene medals. Jefferson commissioned seven others in two separate tranches.

Jefferson’s enthusiasm seemed to be centered mainly in the ideal. His progress in completing the actual procurement was slow to kindle and quick to fade. The last medal in the original series (Jones) was commissioned after Jefferson had accepted his post as Secretary of State. The medal for Lee was added to the series in the nineteenth century.

Today, the two best original sets of the Comitia Americana medals on public display in the U.S. include the Washington-Webster silver set at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston, and the John Paul Jones set of tin proofs at Jefferson’s Monticello. A third set, featuring eight in silver and two in bronze, is on display at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria.

From a collector’s viewpoint, that so few original copies of the Comitia Americana medals exist today makes them all the more valuable.

As Adams and Bentley assert: “Here is the seminal point: whereas the collector of federal coinage collects condition, and whereas the collector of colonial coinage collects die varieties, the collectors of our early medals are collecting history.

Whether an electro or an original, the medal tells an uplifting story about dedication, courage, and sacrifice.

“Savor these stories for the lessons they contain and, if you are a United States citizen, embrace these medals as the very foundation of your heritage.”
By James Rhodes, SRNY Member

The Comitia Americana medal honoring George Washington is of high interest because it is the first Congressional gold medal approved by the United States Congress (1776). It is also notable for featuring Houdon’s masterful likeness of Washington on the obverse.

Adams and Bentley write, “Congress was probably as surprised by the turn of events [after the Siege of Boston] as were the British. However, when the good news was read aloud on March 25 [re: the British evacuation], that body responded promptly, voting the same day that a commemorative medal be presented to General Washington and that a committee be appointed to prepare a proper design. This act was followed by a letter of thanks from John Hancock, the President of Congress, and another from John Adams, chairman of the appointed committee.

“After receiving the congratulatory letters from Hancock and Adams, Washington almost immediately conveyed his thanks to Congress, writing to Hancock as follows: Sir, Permit me through you to convey to the honorable Congress the Sentiments of gratitude I feel for the high honor they have done me... The Medal [which is] intended to be presented to me by your honorable Body, I shall carefully preserve as a memorial of their regard.”

It was a given that the medal would be struck in France and designed by one of that country’s foremost medalists. Yet, despite the Congressional vote, it took fourteen painstaking years to actually get the job done. “It is ironic indeed that this quick-paced beginning to the project should have been followed by fourteen long years of desultory activity,” the authors write.

Moreover, in March of 1790, when Thomas Jefferson finally presented Washington his gold medal and a complete set of the original Comitia Americana medals struck in silver, it was probably absent of public formalities. Furthermore, the final design on the reverse side was not the image that he had been promised, and it rather missed the point. All of these circumstances surely must have caused him considerable disappointment.

Delays, Delays, Delays

As the production of ‘Washington Before Boston’ began to languish, different persons were placed in charge of the project. And whenever there was a change of executor, a different engraver was contracted. When John Adams was encharged (March 1775), the artist he selected was Pierre Eugène du Simitière. When David Humphreys (June 1784) was given the project, he chose Augustin Dupré. When Jefferson was finally put in charge (May 1786), he preferred Benjamin Duvivier, and it was Duvivier’s design that was finally delivered.
“Thus, there were two preliminary designs that were not consummated—one by Dupré, and one by du Simitière.” It was the latter artist’s design that Washington expected to see on his medal, and it remains a mystery why that design was abandoned.

In 1779, Congress as a whole resumed control of the project. In July of that year, it ordered Treasury to produce the medal “without delay.” By September, Benjamin Franklin was asked to oversee the procurement of Washington’s medal. In fact, he was asked to procure medals for Gates, Wayne, de Fleury, Stewart, and Lee, as well.

“Ever the Francophile, what interested Franklin was the Stony Point medal for [de Fleury], the only award to a French officer. The execution was accomplished by August 1780 (as were slightly altered impressions, in gold for the award medal to Wayne, and in silver for Stewart).

“After this, Franklin without the blessing of Congress, turned his attention to...the justly renowned Libertas Americana. After completing the Libertas in March 1783... Franklin lost interest in the remaining official medals.”

Washington’s medal languished another five years before Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance, commissioned David Humphreys to procure what Franklin had not been able to. Despite all the positive things Benjamin Franklin did for his country, his not attending to the Commander-in-Chief’s gold medal seems a slight to George Washington.

Humphreys took on the project in 1784, when he was sent to Paris as secretary for the American commissioners there. Congress had viewed him as the perfect candidate for marshaling the General’s medal since he had served as aide de camp to Washington during the war. Morris charged him not only with procuring the medals Franklin had not completed, included a series of ten mounted swords, too.

As with the medals, the Congressional swords were awarded as commemorative gifts to veterans of the Revolution that had distinguished themselves in service. Humphreys successfully commissioned all ten of the swords, including his own, but he commissioned only two of the medals: those for Horatio Gates and Nathanael Greene.

“This desultory performance,” Adams and Berkley assert, “which included his failure to execute the medal voted to his sponsor, George Washington, places a gray mark on Humphreys’ career.” However, the authors do credit his decision for having put the Houdon likeness of Washington on the obverse side of the medal—a choice which caused more delay.

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Thomas Jefferson's Involvement

Humphreys left France in November 1785, and he passed the torch to Thomas Jefferson. “In a letter from Humphreys dated May 7, 1786, [Jefferson] accepts responsibility for procuring all the remaining medals. However, from that point, it was almost three years before [he] finalized the contract with Benjamin Duvivier to engrave the dies.”

Then, in the first eight months of 1789, Jefferson executed six medals, including ‘Washington Before Boston.’ That fact, according to the authors, “demonstrates clearly just how much time had been wasted [from the very beginning of the endeavor].”

With Jefferson perhaps distracted by other circumstances in his life, he apparently did not give sufficient attention to the final design and striking of the Washington medal. He had contracted three engravers to complete the entire Comitia Americana series: Dupré, Duvivier, and Gatteaux. Duvivier was assigned Washington’s medal.

The obverse of the medal was to have shown, in near fluidity, the British army fleeing Boston as the American army took full possession. The stated theme on the reverse is: ‘The Enemy Put to Flight for the First Time.’ Yet that kind of movement does not come out in the end design.

As the authors point out, “Duvivier clearly omitted the fleeing army, which the inscription implies should be the focal point of the reverse... [and his] failure to execute this aspect of the grand design detracts from the purpose of the medal which, with the important exception of the Houdon portrait, is at best a modest success.”

As readily as Washington had expressed his thanks to Congress for the approbation of the medal, back in 1776, as President he “never mentioned the gift in his diary or letters, from the day he received them until his death, nine years later.”

Jefferson left France and sailed for the United States in October 1789, bringing with him Washington's gold medal and a complete set for him of all the Comitia Americana medals in silver. He presented them to the President on 21 March 1790, in New York. One cannot help but wonder how Washington greeted him.

While Franklin and Humphreys share a certain amount of blame, the lion's share of responsibility for the mismanagement of the procurement of ‘Washington Before Boston’ falls on Thomas Jefferson.