State of Delaware Welcomed into GSSR

Delaware has begun organizing a state society and will become the twenty-eighth state to be chartered in the Sons of the Revolution. The District of Columbia and the European Society, while not states, bring the total number of associated societies to thirty.

Holding its first meeting on September 17, 2009, the Delaware Society, Sons of the Revolution, under then-acting chair Coleman Sellers, IV, resolved to follow organizing procedures outlined by the General Society. Meanwhile, delegates at the Triennial voted unanimously to give Delaware a charter.

A motion was called and unanimously approved to use the General Society’s Constitution and by-laws until state documents could be drawn up and approved.

The last item of business was the election of top officers. Members present voted in Captain C. Rich Diffenderffer as President, Coleman Sellers, IV as Vice President, and Richard Chappell as Registrar. The remaining officer posts will be filled during the first state society meeting.

—submitted by Richard M. Patterson, Region 2 V.P.

Triennial Report: Glendale, California

By David W. Swafford

Voting delegates convening in late September for the 40th Triennial of the Sons of the Revolution instituted broad changes of command and, for the first time in Society history, nominated and elected six individuals from the floor for elective office.

A ballot vote was taken and the floor nominees were voted in by large majorities.

Terry L. Davenport, of Morristown, Tennessee, was elected General President. He is a past President of the Tennessee Society, which is the third largest

2009–2011 General Society Officers

Terry Davenport (TN): President
Curtis P. Cheyney (PA): Secretary
Laurence Simpson (NY): Asst Secretary
Philip Coombe, III (NY): Treasurer
J.E.B. Stuart IV (VA): Asst Treasurer
William R. Hearter, Jr. (AZ): Registrar
Michael Phelps (CA): Solicitor
Gordon B. Smith (GA): Historian
Rev. G. Clayton Ames III (PA): Chaplain
Charles C. Lucas (NY): Surgeon

continued on page 2

LORD our CREATOR, whose glory is in all the world, bless us, we beseech thee, and defend our venerable Society created to honor those who in time of oppression strove to bring to it the light of liberty and freedom. Bless our endeavors to sustain those principles for which our forebears gave full measure of devotion. Guide us in our deliberations this day that we may always have in mind the welfare of our members and the good of our nation, and that all may be done for thy honor and glory. Amen. —by Rev. Jack Jones Early,

adapted from 2009 Triennial Prayer Service
State Society in the organization. This is the first time a General President from Tennessee has been elected in the 119-year history of the Sons.

It was the largest gathering of any Triennial in recent memory, with 81 members in attendance and 62 voting delegates.

The opening business session got underway with a call to order by then-General President Paul F. Davis, the invocation by then-General Chaplain Rev. Jack Jones Early (see Prayer, page 1), and the Pledge of Allegiance led by California President Douglas R. Boyd, Sr.

In opening remarks printed in the Triennial program, Mr. Boyd emphasized the place of the collective will versus individual will in the Society and in the Triennial.

“Let us keep in mind General Washington in the Long Room at Fraunces Tavern in 1783.” He continued later, “Washington’s spirit is with us in our deliberations [here]. May we be worthy of our ancestors in our conduct as gentlemen, and in our desire to put cause and country before self.”

Open for Business

After the Pledge of Allegiance, President Davis recognized the General Presidents Emeriti in attendance before proceeding through GSSR officer reports and Committee reports.

Rev. Early announced that the development campaign, Campaign for Excellence, had raised nearly $43,000 from June 2007 to June 2009. William R. Gann, then-General Secretary, reported that reorganization efforts for the Ohio Society had been indefinitely postponed, due to ongoing health issues of the principal organizer.

The Heart of the Matter

Generally, the delegates were quick to check any motions or ideas believed unconstitutional. Their discussions and actions, in fact, underscored the founding principles of the Sons of the Revolution: that the national society is grounded on a loose association or confederation of state societies, rather than dominated by a powerful central authority.

As such, delegates voted to rescind the action of the Executive Committee at the 2008 Atlanta Board of Managers Meeting in censoring three members of State Societies as being unauthorized and illegal.

continued on page 6
President’s Message

“Proclaim Liberty Throughout The Land And Unto All The Inhabitants Thereof.”

These are the immortal words inscribed on the Liberty Bell, and these same words dearly resound in the hearts and minds of many men, women and children all across our great land. Indeed, freedom is the heartbeat of our nation!

It is a popular notion among some to say that the Era of Our Founding is over. Yet I proclaim that nothing could be farther from the truth, because the principles upon which our country was founded are the same principles which sustain our nation to this very day. In my mind, the Era of Our Founding will never be over.

George Washington and all our Founding Fathers clearly demonstrated just what can be accomplished when persons of integrity, honor, and faith work together toward a common goal. Through hardships and unimaginable difficulties, they persevered in creating what is now the greatest nation in the history of the world.

Let us never forget the dear price of Freedom! Let us always remember that it is our responsibility as members of the Sons of the Revolution to keep alive the memory of George Washington and the other Founding Fathers and the principles for which they all fought!

It is my honor to serve as your president for next three years. I look forward to all of the exciting days ahead as we work together to fulfill the duties, responsibilities, and obligations of our great Sons of the Revolution!

Terry L. Davenport

Maryland to Host 2010 BOM Meeting

The GSSR Board of Managers meeting is scheduled for September 16–18, 2010, at the Baltimore/Washington International Marriott (BWI Airport Marriott.) The hotel is conveniently located adjacent to the Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. The BWI Airport Marriott is situated within the greater BWI business district, adjacent downtown Baltimore, as well as Hanover, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

The event will start with an area tour, lunch, and welcome reception on Thursday; business meeting, lunch and tour on Friday; and business meeting, tour and banquet on Saturday. Hotel rooms will be $120.00 plus tax/night. The hotel is located at the airport property and has free shuttles to and from the terminals via MARC Train and Light Rail Service. Final registration forms, package pricing confirmation, and details regarding tours or business agenda items were not available as of editorial deadline. The Drumbeat will include additional information about the meeting in later issues.

—submitted by W. Hall Worthington, Chair
President Obama once declared Afghanistan as the “good war” or the necessary war. Preparing to escalate the war effort, now in its ninth year, his advisers have prepared several options, all involving more troops. The senior military commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley A. McChrystal said the war, “will likely result in failure unless he receives additional troops within the next year.”

However, Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., together with others, opposes increasing troop numbers, because the war cannot be won through conventional means. He believes that Al Qaeda, primarily located in Pakistan, is the real threat to America’s interests.

There are 68,000 American troops currently in Afghanistan. The Afghan government has an army of about 85,000, although many are poorly equipped and poorly trained. General McChrystal’s requests for additional troops range from 20,000 to as high as 80,000. It is rumored that if approval is given for at least 40,000 it would make NATO’s deployment larger than the former Russian ill fated force, which departed in defeat after nine years.

Military experts have stressed that an increase in troops are only part of the problem. The more important decision is determining a strategy that will work. General McChrystal has said, “Failure to gain the initiative and reverse insurgent momentum in the near term – while Afghan security matures – risks an outcome where defeating the insurgency is no longer possible.” In his assessment he has written that, “The weakness of state institutions, malign actions of power brokers, widespread corruption and abuse of power by various officials...have given Afghans little reason to support their government.”

One observer commented that General McChrystal’s plan is a blueprint for an extensive American commitment to build a modern state in Afghanistan where one never existed and to bring order to a place famous for the empires it has exhausted.

An over-riding issue, however, is whether the U.S. can prevail in a state led by President Hamid Karzai. His election, tainted with fraud, has been a great debacle. General McChrystal’s counterinsurgency plan seeks to protect the Afghan population and win its support for a democratic Afghan government. Although President Karzai has recently pledged that there will be no place for corrupt officials in his new administration this war can not be won unless there is a legitimate government in place.

In his summary, General McChrystal stated, “While the situation is serious, success is still achievable...We’ll stay as long as we have to until our Afghan partners are completely secure. Even if that means years.”
In early November, the Alabama Society (SORA) welcomed neighboring SR members from Tennessee and Georgia to join in a jazz brunch at the Birmingham Museum of Art and view an inspiring collection of early American art on loan from Yale University.

*Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness* features more than 230 masterpieces of early American art, including paintings, prints, drawings, photos, furnishings, silver and ceramics. This marks the first time a group of portraits and paintings by John Trumbull have traveled together since the artist presented them to Yale in 1832.

The Museum arranged a special presentation for the Sons of the Revolution by Curator Dr. Graham Boettcher. SORA President Joe Cox, Jr., reported many SORA members commented how much the lecture added to their visit. The exhibit runs through January 10, 2010.

Right: Paul Revere’s engraving of the Boston Massacre. Image courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery.
Furthermore, they overwhelmingly voted to block the General Society from expelling Florida over its unpaid dues and other stated grievances.

In a closely related matter, delegates voted to amend the constitution by adding the following italicized sentence, proposed by the District of Columbia, to the bottom of Article X:

“...(But) the General Society shall have no power under this provision to expel any state society or member thereof, or otherwise to discipline or prosecute any state society or member thereof.”

According to General President Emeritus James L. Shannon, the constitution never has provided means for the General Society to annul a State Charter or for the General Society to discipline members of a State Society.

“The D.C. amendment was to make sure everyone understood the meaning of Article X,” he said. “The constitution only gives power to withhold votes for non-payment of per capital dues.”

Point of Debate

Following the amendment to Article X, one of the floor nominees for General Society office said, “We have just lost control; there is no point for any state to pay on time now.” Indeed, that sentiment was echoed by several members.

In floor discussions, General President Emeritus Thomas C. Etter, Jr., spoke of the organizing philosophy of the Sons: “The Sons of the Revolution was modeled on the Society of the Cincinnati, which was modeled on the Articles of Confederation. We are governed by Pennsylvania law.”

According to Sons of the Revolution by John Dwight Kilbourne, the traditional concern within the Society has always been to protect the individualism of the respective state societies, which keeps policy implementation in the domain of the states. The familiar Latin phrase, E Pluribus Unum, provides a window for understanding the soul of any confederation: “Out of many, one.”

The Historical Perspective

In the perspective of historical context, this is not the first time in the Society that members have been divided over this issue.

Kilbourne reports that even as early as 1884, SR founder John Austin Stevens cautioned in a letter that “uniting members solely by means of a society bond is a delicate, but not impossible, task. With the will, the way is always found,” Stevens wrote.

Soon after the adoption of the 1890 constitution, for example, debate sparked among members with respect to how much autonomy the state societies could and should exercise. Disagreements about this issue have arisen from generation to generation in the Sons.

The fact is, in this organization state societies were founded before the General Society was adopted. The societies in New York, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia were all established prior to the existence of a General Society, and by 1890 the three societies comprised 1,000 members.

Triennial Social Events

In other activities, the pre-Triennial excursion to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library was a hit. Over forty attendees participated in the private tour. On the final morning of the Triennial, several persons said the Reagan library tour had been their favorite part of the weekend.

The Opening Reception, which included heavy hors d’oeuvres and open bar, was hosted by the General Society and was staged at the American Heritage Library and Museum, the jewel of the California Society and one of the jewels of the General Society.
Upon arriving, members were given guided tours of the library and treated to live Colonial and Classical music, which was performed by a string quartet sponsored by California Society Senior Vice President Paul Gray.

On Friday evening, members and their spouses or guests boarded luxury motor coaches and were transported to the Jonathan Beach Club in Malibu to feast on a gourmet buffet dinner and witness a spectacular red sunset over the Pacific Ocean. The Tennessee Society graciously hosted the reception prior to the dinner, the latter which was sponsored in part by Azusa Pacific University.

The Closing Banquet

The formal banquet on Saturday evening began with the Presentation of Colors by the Azusa Pacific University ROTC Army Color Guard. Before the posting of the colors, all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, led by Pepperdine University’s Jennaca Rode. After members took their seats, Ms. Rode continued singing a selection of favorite patriotic songs accompanied on piano by Dr. Charles B. Witt, Jr., President Emeritus of the California Society.

Following tradition, there were toasts to George Washington, the Military Service and the Office of the President of the United States.

Before California Congressman Dana Rohrabacher gave an uplifting and nostalgic keynote speech, he was presented the Modern Patriot Award, symbolized by the Paul Revere Bowl. Afterwards, he spoke on conservative values and harkened back to the days of Ronald Reagan, for whom the Representative was a speechwriter and presidential aide. Mr. Rohrabacher is now a ranking member of the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee of the House Committee on International Relations and a 20-year member of the Sons.

Before the new officers were installed, and with the formality and graciousness befitting all members, California President Boyd stood at the podium and thanked General President Davis for having served a distinguished term in office. Mr. Davis, in turn, congratulated all members of the California Society for a wonderful and historic meeting — the first Triennial ever held in the Golden State.

The last items of business were the presentation of Society awards as well as the installation of new officers and the transfer of power.

Following the banquet, General President Davenport made the following comment: “The California Triennial was a tremendous success. I applaud President Davis and the Triennial Committee for their great team work. California President Doug Boyd and Richard Breithaupt, Jr., along with their committee, did a fantastic job in all phases of the planning and execution of the event.

“Thanks to the success of these leaders our society will remain strong and vibrant!!”
All Photos by Martin Cash

To view more Triennial photos, visit:
www.srcalifornia.com
Centennial Remembrance of the Founder’s Death
John Austin Stevens: 1827–1910

By Laurence Simpson, DDS

Centennials represent certain milestones in the history of the Sons of the Revolution.

Nearly one hundred years following the ratification of the federal Declaration of Independence, a New Yorker named John Austin Stevens met with a small gathering of men in the second floor library of the New York Historical Society. Stevens called the meeting to draw up the constitution of a new patriotic society for descendants of Revolutionary War heroes.

His immediate purpose, according to historian Francis J. Sypher, Jr., was to form a group to participate in the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia.

A Patriotic Society

From the initial meeting he convened in late 1875, Stevens was committed to organizing a lineage society open to all descendants of a Revolutionary era patriots. He wanted to welcome individuals who did not qualify for membership in the Society of the Cincinnati.

Above all, he wanted a vibrant society that would continue to grow, always emphasizing the importance of patriotism and the memory of the patriot ancestors who fought for this country’s independence.

Good intentions aside, the new organization wasn’t formally established until some seven years later, 1883.

Coincidentally, that year marked the centennial of the British surrender at Yorktown. Additionally, the new Society’s inaugural event was held at Fraunces Tavern in celebration of the centennial anniversary of General Washington’s farewell to his officers.

A Dignified Mourning

Reproduced from 1910 SRNY Reports and Proceedings.
Just one hundred years before in the very in the very same spot, Washington, Knox, and oth- ers had walked across the same floor and stood under the same beams.

Next June will mark the one-hundredth an- niversary of the death of John Austin Stevens, our founder. To honor his legacy, the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York is planning to install a memorial headstone adjacent the family vault in Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn. The un- veiling of the stone will be held on June 21, 2010—a century after he was laid to rest.

**Military Honors**

On Tuesday afternoon, June 21, 1910, St. Paul's Chapel in New York was filled to utmost capacity. The chancel was decorated with nu- merous flowers and wreaths.

Following the service, a proces- sion replete with military honors wound its way through the old churchyard and down Broadway, to the sound of fife and drum, led by a detachment of the Veteran Corps of Artillery of the War of 1812. Four musicians were dressed in black and gold uniforms and their Napoleonic shakos were adorned with mourning badges.

The coffin, borne on the shoulders of six pall bearers, was wrapped in the American flag and silken banners of the Sons of the Revolution, sur- mounted by a superb cross. A wreath of blue corn- flowers and golden coreopsis, tied with the colors of the Society, added to the distinction.

The funeral procession itself was viewed by untold thousands of people as it moved down Broadway toward the Fraunces Tavern. The tavern building was draped in black and stood as a silent widow, a touching tribute to the one who had evoked that property out of its shadowy past and restored it to its Colonial dignity and prestige.

From the Fraunces Tavern, the procession continued to the family plot in Green-Wood. Green- Wood contains famous as well as some infamous people. As *The New York Times* put in 1866, “It is the ambition of the New Yorker to live upon Fifth Avenue, to take his airings in the [Central] Park, and to sleep with his fathers in Green-Wood.”

Cemetery records indicate that within the founder’s vault are the remains of his wife, his son, two daughters, as well as his grandfather, General Ebenezer Stevens of the Revolutionary War.

That vault is marked by a flat stone featuring the names of his parents only. His father, also named John Austin Stevens, had been an influential ban- ker.

**The Headstone**

SRNY has re- ceived family per- mission to plant a headstone honor- ing the founder. On the front side, the stone will fea- ture the name John Austin Stevens, with a Society Seal and the phrase, “Founder of the Sons of the Revo- lution,” with the year 1876. The re- verse lists the three generations of that Stevens line.

It will also fea- ture the quote, “You built better than you knew.” This was discovered in a note written to Mr. Ste- vens in 1904 by his beloved friend, fellow “found- er” and past General President James Mortimer Montgomery.

The SRNY is accepting contributions for the project. The cost of the headstone will be about $5,000, of which $3,000 has already been collected, including a generous check from the General So- ciety. Also, members who plan to be in New York City on June 21 are invited to participate in the headstone dedication ceremony. For more infor- mation, call 212–425–1776.

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Dr. Simpson is GSSR Assistant Secretary and SRNY Past President and Historian
Magna Carta Opening Draws Record Numbers

An overflow black-tie crowd jammed the Fraunces Tavern Museum on September 15 for the opening and private viewing of “Magna Carta and the Foundations of Freedom.”

The cost of entry: $80 per person. After complimentary drinks and hors d’oeuvres and a few brief speeches, a ceremonial ribbon was cut and numerous small groups were escorted upstairs to see the exhibit.

The star of the show, of course, was the 1215 Magna Carta, a sheepskin parchment contained in a $70,000 vacuum-sealed display case. The temperature inside the case is maintained around 65 degrees F. and the humidity at 50 percent. Wherever it goes around the world, the Lincoln copy of Magna Carta, which is the best surviving copy, is remotely monitored on a 24-hour basis by security personnel and is reportedly insured for $30 million.

The exhibit also featured a few British artifacts, one of only two known “anastatic” copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and a dented cannonball from the Revolutionary War, among other items.

One of the museum’s antique Tiffany displays featured a British tax stamp from the Colonial era positioned next to a circular protest letter from 1768 signed by John Hancock with the words, “no taxation without representation.”

Before the exhibit opened, the New York Society had begun a $1 million+ renovation to the entire Fraunces Tavern Buildings complex, which included replacement of all five roofs, restoration of windows and trim, and installation of new HV/AC, fire repression, and security systems.

Much of the extensive work related directly to Magna Carta exhibit requirements, which are pointedly strict.

Many individuals and institutions helped defer the cost of hosting Magna Carta at the Fraunces Tavern, including the Bodman Foundation and the Order of Colonial Lords of the Manor in America.

According to SRNY President Charles C. Lucas, Jr., M.D., individuals including General Colin Powell, Sen. Joseph Lieberman and others lent their names to the host committee.

Additional support came from Mrs. Victoria Hughes, President of the Bill of Rights Institute in Washington, D.C., the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, the American Jewish Historical Society, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the New York State Archives and many others.

—Editor
The annual meeting of the Florida Society was held October 10, 2009, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, preceded by a social hour. New state officers were elected, including James Warner Loymeyer, President, and Joseph Mark Motes, Vice President.

This was the first Florida Society meeting since the Triennial, during which delegates restored full membership privileges to Florida with the payment of its delinquent dues for 2008 and 2009. A check was presented at the Triennial by General President Emeritus W. Hall Worthington on behalf of the Florida Society.

R. Mitchell Bush, General Vice President, Region 3, on behalf of the General Society presented the new state officers with commemorative coins from the 2009 California Society. James J. Shannon, Jr., General President Emeritus, also was present and relayed the General Society’s welcome and full cooperation. He called upon the Florida Society “to move forward.”

After new officers were installed, the group voted to make a contribution of $250 to the John Austin Stevens Memorial fund. (see related story, page 8).

—submitted by James Warner Loymeyer

Members of the Georgia Society of Sons of the Revolution celebrated the anniversary of the Battle of Savannah in full regalia. The battle occurred on Oct. 9, 1779. Several patriot-ancestors of current Georgia members participated in that battle.

—submitted by Christopher Frame
INDIANA

In mid-September, SR-Indiana members and guests met at the Woodstock Club in Indianapolis for the society’s annual black-tie event. The speaker was Alan Coe, Executive Vice-President of Content Services for the Indianapolis PBS. President Robert D. Rati executed meeting commands with an espontoon.

The SR-Indiana Parade Unit participated in late September at the “Back to the Days of Kosciuszko” re-enactment, held annually in Warsaw, Indiana. The society displayed revolutionary war uniforms and weapons at the re-enactment. Members also participated in fashion shows of period dress.

SR-Indiana will again sponsor the SR Winter Encampment Luncheons in Avon Park, Florida from January-March for all SR (Snowbirds) who migrate to Central Florida for the winter months.

The next state society meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2010.

—submitted by Robert D. Rati

IOWA

In early August, more than sixty persons, including family members, dignitaries, color guard members and local citizens, gathered outside of Fort Madison, Iowa, to participate in the dedication of a new headstone for Ebenezer Ayres. Ayres is the most recently discovered Revolutionary War veteran buried in the state.

GSSR at-large member Mike Rowley and Missouri Society member Paul Cochran and wife, Peggy, played major roles in organizing the event.

Cochran is a third great-grandson of the patriot, who served in a Connecticut militia during the Revolutionary War before moving out west. Cochran joined the Sons based on new research confirming the true identity of his third great-grandfather.

At the dedication, which took place at Hickory Grove Cemetery north of Fort Madison, colors were presented by Mr. Rowley as well as by the Iowa Rifles Company A 49th Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment. A fife player and drummer added fitting pomp to the celebration.

Afterward, in late October, Ayres’ name was added to a monument at the State Capitol Building in Des Moines, which honors all Revolutionary War veterans buried in Iowa. His was the fortieth name added to the pillar monument.

—submitted by Paul Cochran

MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Society held its Annual Meeting on Saturday, 19 September 2009, at Jax Café in Minneapolis with President James Foster presiding. The chief item of business was the election of officers. The sitting officers, in accordance with Society custom, were re-elected for a second one-year term.

The following slate of candidates was installed:

President: James F. Foster
Vice President: Edward R. Lief
Secretary-Treasurer: Duane L. C. M. Galles
Registrar: Arthur L. Finnell
Chaplain: Ronald E. McRoberts
Solicitor: Duane L. C. M. Galles
Rep to GSSR: John H. Jones
At the Kansas City chapter’s Victory-at-Yorktown meeting, members and guests enjoyed a talk entitled, “The Tale of Two Soldiers,” presented by Col. James Speicher, US Army (ret). New member Paul Daniel Toms (descendant of Lt. Gideon Durfee) received his membership certificate, and several long-standing members received certificates of appreciation for special service.

Chapter President K. Michael Smith announced that the chapter’s framed original Sons’ application of President Truman’s is on long-term loan to the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum in Independence, Missouri.

One telling detail of that application is the penciled-in second name of the President’s—Harry Ship Truman.

The chapter’s collection of over fifty Revolutionary War regimental flags are now on loan to the Midwest Genealogical Center, also located in Independence, Missouri.

In another development, the prestigious Alexander Doniphan Community Service Award, named in honor of the son of a Revolutionary War officer, was recently bestowed upon Missouri Society member and retired William Jewell College President Dr. W. Christian Sizemore. The award recognizes Dr. Sizemore as one who exemplifies Doniphan’s outstanding characteristics and personal commitments in education, jurisprudence, statesmanship, patriotism and financial success. The ceremony was held in the College’s Gano Chapel, named after John Gano, who served as chaplain with George Washington during the Revolution. A sword given to Gano by Washington is displayed in the chapel.

—submitted by William C. Buckner and Gary Toms

On July 18, 2009, SRNJ participated in the Commemoration Ceremony of the 230th Anniversary of the Battle of Minisink, fought on July 22, 1779. The ceremony took place at the Minisink Battleground Park, Minisink Ford, Sullivan County, N.Y., where forty-six members of the New York and New Jersey militias lost their lives to Tories and Mohawks, led by Capt. Joseph Brant, an Indian warrior.

Thirty-six flags from the SRNJ collection provided the backdrop for the ceremony. SRNJ President Gerald G. DeGroat addressed the audience and spoke briefly of two of his Patriot ancestors, Capt. Bezaleel Tyler and Capt. Benjamin Vail, both of whom were killed at the battle. The battleground is situated on lands once within the boundaries of East and West Jersey.

—submitted by Gerald G. DeGroat

The fall meeting of the North Carolina Society was to have taken place on October 17. During its previous meeting, held in Southern Pines, N.C., in May, members were entreated to a presentation by University of North Carolina scholarship recipient Rebecca Steder Jessen. Mrs. Jessen gave a lecture based on her award-winning paper, “Abigail Adams and Her Influence on the Life and Politics of John Adams.” The lecture was heartily received by everyone present.

During the same meeting, new officers were unanimously approved for the next term. They are: President, Paul J. Lambert; VP/President-Elect, Patrick B. O’Neal; Vice President, East, Ekron C. Crow, III; Vice President, West, Julius C. H. McPhaul; Secretary, John S. McKee, IV; Treasurer, Monroe M. Diefendorf; Registrar, John R. Harmon, Jr.; Historian, Robert L. Sprinkle, III; Chaplain, Milton J. Sills; Color Guard Captain, Grant Mark Peterson; and Chancellor, Thomas W. Johnson.

—taken from N.C. Society newsletter, Fife & Bugle
**RHODE ISLAND**

The Rhode Island SR held its annual meeting and dinner at the end of August at the Atlantic Beach Club in Middletown, R.I. The evening’s speaker was James A. Wermuth, founder and executive director of the John Clarke Society. Mr. Wermuth spoke on John Clarke and Rhode Island’s Royal Charter of 1663.

Clarke was a doctor, a minister, and a founder of Rhode Island. More important, he was instrumental in overturning a previous charter that had given the governor the power of sovereign for life. Clarke went to England in 1651 and stayed through mid-1663 to obtain the King’s seal on a new charter that he wrote, guaranteeing unprecedented religious tolerance, among other things. The 1663 charter stood until 1843, when the present state constitution was adopted.

—submitted by Frank S. Hale, II

**TENNESSEE**

The Tennessee Society is very proud that the new General Society President hails from the Volunteer State. It is the first time that a Tennessean serves as General Society President.

Terry L. Davenport has served as a board member for many years and is a Past President of our society. During that time, he worked very hard to not only build membership but also to increase the percentage of active members. He will continue to do this now on a national scale.

The society had organized several Veterans Day celebrations and as of mid-November was looking ahead to the George Washington Annual Banquet in February. As the holiday season approaches, we encourage all to remember what George Washington and troops endured for the sake of our freedom in the bitter winter of 1777.

—submitted by Martin Cash

**WISCONSIN**

The Annual Board Meeting of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of Wisconsin was held on September 12, 2009, in Johnson Creek, Wis. President Erbes opened the meeting at noon and officers’ reports were presented and approved. Justin Jurack was approved to fill the vacant Second Vice President position.

Society Treasurer Paul Unangst is researching a possible connection between Revolutionary Patriot Nathan Hatch, who is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Brookfield, Wis., and a historic home located on land in Brookfield once owned by the Nathan Hatch family. The Italianate brick farmhouse of Civil War era is reportedly eligible to be listed in The National Register of Historic Places, but is being targeted by shopping center developers.

If the home has any connection with the Revolutionary War, the Wisconsin Society may place a historic marker on the property independently or do so in conjunction with the Elmbrook Historical Society (EHS) and other patriotic societies.

In other news, the Wisconsin Society was planning to hold a Thanksgiving luncheon with the Wisconsin Society of the Order of the Founders & Patriots of America, as well as with local chapters of the Society of the War of 1812.

—submitted by William T. Erbes

**VIRGINIA**

Kathryn M. “Kate” Lundvall of Richmond, Virginia, is the 2009–10 recipient of the Virginia Society’s Scholarship Award Program. The VSSR established the program in 1989.

Ms. Lundvall, a senior at the University of Delaware, wrote about the public service of her fifth great-grandfather, Chief Justice John Marshall.

In other news, the Sons of the Revolution in the Commonwealth of Virginia participated in the 2009 Yorktown Day Celebration, held October 19, and planned an early November oyster roast and barbeque at Fort Pocahontas.

—submitted by N. Douglas Payne

Photo by N. Douglas Payne, Jr.  
l-r: Thomas G. Vance, Virginia Society President; Kathryn M. Lundvall, Scholarship Winner; C. L. Sigmon II, Scholarship Chairman
American Revolution Center Moves to Philadelphia

The American Revolution Center (ARC) reached an agreement just before July 4th to open its long-awaited museum and research center in downtown Philadelphia.

Through an historic land swap with the National Park Service, the ARC will become a part of the Independence National Historical Park, which comprises Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell Center and other points of national interest.

The 501(c)(3) organization is dedicated to engaging the public in the history and significance of the American Revolution and its enduring legacy by documenting, preserving, researching, and exhibiting its distinguished collection of objects, artifacts, and manuscripts from the American Revolution.

For many years, the ARC with local support had wanted to build a museum and conference center on private property within the boundaries of Valley Forge National Historical Park. National park advocacy groups opposed those plans.

The difficulties ended with a land swap arranged this summer by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, Governor Edward G. Rendell and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. In exchange for the prime real estate in downtown Philadelphia, which includes a federal building on the property, the ARC released to the Interior Department its 78-acre parcel of land within Valley Forge.

All parties emerged victorious.

For information, call the ARC in Washington, D.C., at (202) 828-4150 or visit the website, www.americanrevolutioncenter.org.

---compiled by Editor

Southern Revolutionary War Institute

In the heart of York County, South Carolina, at the McElvey Center in York, the Southern Revolutionary War Institute is a researcher’s dream. The Institute is part of a system of linked cultural institutions in York known collectively as the Culture and Heritage Museums (CHM).

The Institute fills a void in Revolutionary War studies and scholarly resources, which traditionally have concentrated on the Northern campaigns of the American Revolution. At present, the Institute is the only research center in the United States exclusively devoted to the study of early American wars as pertains to Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

Although the general scope of the Institute is the entire Southern Campaign, it has a particular focus on the Revolutionary War in the Carolina backcountry. Patrons may also research the French and Indian War, as well as the battles against various Native American tribes.

Resources of the Institute consist of a growing collection of books, microfilm, databases and historical artifacts on virtually all aspects of the various battles and engagements of early wars across the South. The organization supports academic internships and volunteer programs, publishes scholarly books and articles, and presents ongoing public educational programs including lectures, guided tours and a biennial symposium.

For further information, please call (803) 684-3948 or visit www.chmuseums.org.

Information submitted by CHM Research Director Michael C. Scoggins and taken from CHM website
Over portions of the spring and summer of 2009, I assisted my cousin identify a qualified ancestor so that she could join the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.). The project took me from Chicago, where I work and reside, back to my hometown of Easton, Pennsylvania. What I initially thought would be an educational adventure for her turned out to be an extraordinary journey into the past for both of us. Not only did we identify a qualified ancestor for her, I was able to complete supplemental applications for my SR membership.

Easton is located about sixty miles north of Philadelphia, at the confluence of the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers, and is the seat of government for Northampton County. The Lenape Indians originally named the region Lechawekink, meaning, “Where there are forks.” Today, the area in and around Easton, Pennsylvania, is commonly known as the Forks of the Delaware. The Penn family, principally through Thomas Penn, a son of the Quaker William Penn, acquired the land where Easton is situated from the Lenape in 1737 through highly unscrupulous means. Generally known as “the Walking Purchase,” the agreement swindled the Lenape out of some 1,200 square miles of their traditional homeland, including most of today’s Lehigh Valley. The good reputation of William Penn, therefore, was quickly sullied by the actions of his children, not ten years after his death.

Easton proper took its name from Easton-Neston, in Northamptonshire, England, which was the estate of Thomas Penn’s father-in-law, Thomas Fermor, the first Earl of Pomfret. The town was laid out in 1752 by William Parsons, Jr., who was Surveyor General under Thomas Penn. The town’s first settler, David Martin, operated a ferry on the Delaware River between Easton, on the west bank, and Phillipsburg, New Jersey, on the east bank. The current population of Easton is about 25,000. At the outbreak of the Revolution, it was approximately 400.
The Revolution in Easton

In going back home to find suitable proofs for my cousin, Gloria Condon-Macher, I utilized state databases, church records and several history books. In poring over these resources, I reviewed forgotten details about the town’s history and for the first time learned extraordinary things about our family’s history. It turns out we had not one, but several, patriot-ancestors who had fought in the war.

I knew from school history that every able-bodied man had to pick up the rifle, but I didn’t expect to find so many in our family lines that had done so. What an incredible find! Most significantly, the service of these men had not been known to the most recent generations of the family.

During the Revolution, Easton was the site of negotiations on important Indian treaties. Most significantly, however, it was one of the locations where on July 8, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was read publicly. One of its signers, George Taylor, resided in Easton and is interred there. The Declaration was read on the steps of the town courthouse by Robert Levers, Northampton County’s prothonotary.

In the sizeable audience were townspeople, members of the local Committee on Safety, and a group of militiamen. Accounts of the day recall that of those people in attendance, one-third of the group was steadfastly behind independence from Great Britain, a third was dead-set opposed to the idea, and a third was more-or-less indifferent. Nevertheless, at the outbreak of the American Revolution, the Pennsylvania Assembly passed a law known as the Militia Act, which required that every able-bodied male to pick up arms and fight for the cause of liberty.

Signing an oath of allegiance to Pennsylvania was also necessary. Those who declined to sign the oath and abide by the Militia Act, including members of pacifist religious sects, faced jail; and if they continued to resist, their families were evicted from their homes and their property and personal belongings were sold at public auction.

The men serving in the militia of Northampton County saw action in the Battle of Long Island (1776), and the Battles of Trenton and Brandywine (1777). Other men served in the wilderness of Pennsylvania, in the various forts beyond the Easton area. The town was also the location of a prison camp for captured British soldiers. Moreover, Easton holds the distinction of being the embarkation point of General John Sullivan’s foray into the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania and the Chemung region of New York (1779), to suppress raids on settlers by the Iroquois nation. The campaign is known as Sullivan’s March.

Family History Revealed

Given what I knew of my family, particularly the kin of my maternal grandfather, all of whom were long-time residents of the Forks of the Delaware, most of them from Easton, it seemed likely that we would come across at least one direct ancestor who provided aid or served in the war.

After researching a few lines that became “dead ends,” I turned to our ancestor Jacob Reese, a tailor in Easton in the 1780s. A scan of books on Easton’s history, muster rolls and other primary-source documents revealed that Jacob served as a private in the Easton Company of the Northampton County Militia from 1780 to 1782. Jacob’s father, John Reese, and his father-in-law, Philip Meixell, also served in the same militia.

We had always known a little about the Reeses, but through the passing of the generations, the family no longer recalled of their involvement in the Revolution. We were completely unaware that Philip Meixell also figured into our lines. The Meixells (through Philip) were very prominent and historically noteworthy. Philip was the stone mason who built the structure of the First German and Lutheran Reformed Church,
which today is the First United Church of Christ, one of Easton’s oldest structures.

On June 8, 1775, Philip laid the cornerstone of the present sanctuary. The church was completed in November 1776. From 1776–1780, the church and the courthouse were often used as hospitals for wounded and infirm soldiers. It is said George Washington visited the building and that it was often crowded with sick and wounded soldiers. During that period, the congregation obviously had to worship in improvised locations elsewhere.

Following the discovery of the service of these men, I turned to another family line. Low and behold, disguised behind his German name, Ludwig Rieger, our ancestor Lewis Ricker was also found on the militia’s muster roll. Suddenly, we had four ancestors to work with!

After an inquiry to the GSSR office in Independence, Mo., I was told no member of the Society to date had claimed Jacob and John Reese or Ludwig Rieger/Lewis Ricker as their patriot ancestors; however, Philip Meixell had been claimed by a member in the 1890s. With three of four names being undocumented in the Society, I set out on subsequent trips to Easton throughout the summer to obtain the necessary proofs linking myself and Gloria to these men.

Over the intervening weeks, I located the graves of Jacob Reese and his wife, Christina. They were buried not in Easton, but across the river in Phillipsburg. Over the intervening weeks, I located the graves of Jacob Reese and his wife, Christina. They were buried not in Easton, but across the river in Phillipsburg. It was a very moving experience to see their final resting places. With my documents in hand, I made arrangements with the cemetery staff and the local Veterans Administration office to place a Revolutionary War flag stand and the stars and stripes on Jacob’s grave.

Later Appreciation

As a boy, I would hear from my parents, grandparents, and aunts and uncles about the various families to whom my siblings and I, and my cousins, were related. At the time, it was all very confusing and uninteresting. Not until I became an adult, did I become curious about these families and how we were connected.

Today, my medal of membership in the Sons bears two gold stars for my five ancestors who were soldiers in the Revolution. They include my grandfather from Connecticut, whom I claimed to join the Society in 2001, and four new patriots from my hometown. What’s more, Gloria is now a member of the D.A.R. through Jacob Reese, and plans to submit her own supplemental applications. I am also pleased to report that my sister and niece are likewise joining the same national society.

I am delighted with these developments and especially proud that, through these findings, additional names appear on the honor roll of American patriots of our venerable Society.

Michael T. Kelly, Ed.D., is a member of the Illinois Society and Past General Vice President, Region 3
Easton Patriot Vignettes

Major Philip Meixell: (1731–1817, b. Conestoga, Lancaster County, PA), was a stone mason in Williams Township, near Easton. He served in the 1st Battalion of the Northampton County Militia beginning in 1775, initially as the Lieutenant of the Williams Township Company under Captain Melchior Hay; and in 1777–1778, as a staff officer, a Major, with the battalion’s commander Colonel George Hubner.

Private Lewis Reeger (Ludwig Rieger or Lewis Ricker): (b. ~1740s–50s) was a stone mason. Pennsylvania archives records point out he served in the 5th Company (Deichman’s) of the 5th Battalion of the Northampton County Militia between 1777 and 1780, seeing Continental Service in 1778. He also enlisted in the 2nd Battalion of the Northampton County Militia, Horn’s Company of Easton, in 1781 and 1782.

Private Jacob Reese: (1760/1–1829), m. ~1785 to Christina Meixell, daughter of Major Philip Meixell. Jacob Reese was a tailor who resided in Easton to 1787, then relocated to Phillipsburg, NJ. He served in the 2nd Battalion of the Northampton County Militia, listed as a Private in Captain Henry Alshouse’s Company of Easton, 5th Class, for returns dated May 16 and November 18, 1780; same company, same class dated April 30 and September 5, 1781; and Abraham Horn’s Militia same class, May 20, 1782.

Private John Reese: (b. ~1730s) was the father of Jacob Reese and was likewise a tailor. John Reese was a private in the 5th Battalion, 5th Company (Deichman’s) of the Northampton County Militia in 1778.

The author at the graves of Jacob and Christina Reese.
A Tale of Two Oaths

Arizona Society member Richard C. Hudnall sent the *Drumbeat* with *Flintlock & Powderhorn* a copy of his patriot-ancestor’s Revolutionary War oath of service. It was signed and pledged by Lieutenant William Hudnall on 25 May 1778 at the Bedford County Courthouse, Old Liberty (Bedford), Virginia. Congress required all members of the Continental Army to sign an oath, acknowledging support of national independence. This was an effort to weed Loyalist sympathizers out of the military.

It is interesting to note the similarities between the officer’s oath taken during the Revolutionary War and the contemporary Oath of Allegiance that all naturalized citizens of the U.S. are required to recite:

**Oath of Allegiance**

“I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; ... that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.”

*Courtesy Richard C. Hudnall, AZSR*
Washington’s Thanksgiving Day Proclamation

“Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor — and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me “to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

“Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be — That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks — for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation — for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the tranquility [sic], union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed — for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted — for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions — to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually — to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed — to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn [sic] kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord — To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease [sic] of science among them and us — and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New York
the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

[Signature]
Editorial Policy

The General Society Sons of the Revolution issues the following publications in print and electronic formats.

The Editor of the Drumbeat and the Flintlock & Powderhorn actively seeks manuscripts and articles for publication. Suitable topics for the Drumbeat are articles about the state and local Sons of the Revolution Societies, their activities and members. Articles should be approximately 100 to 500 words, and photos should be included when possible. Drumbeat submissions will be printed in a timely manner.

Articles sought for the Flintlock & Powderhorn include narrative history, biography, historiography, historic preservation, and related fields of study that deal with the time period and place of the American Revolution. The Editor reserves the right to submit all manuscripts for review by a committee prior to publication. No guarantee is given as to when an article will be published in the Flintlock & Powderhorn.

The Society assumes no responsibility for statements or opinions of contributors.

All submissions are requested by email or on disk/CD, but print versions can also be mailed or faxed. When mailed or faxed, submission must be typed on 8 1/2” x 11” paper, double-spaced. If pictures are to be returned, please send self-addressed, stamped envelope. The Society is not responsible for items sent through the mail. Please do not send original or irreplaceable materials or photographs.

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