



## FORT HARRISON SENTINEL

Fort Harrison Chapter

Sons of the American Revolution



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Compatriots, again summer is beginning to head into fall and the Fort Harrison Chapter is beginning to “gear up” for our September through December meetings. I hope that each of you has had a very enjoyable summer. While our Chapter has been quiet as to meetings, we have remained active. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, my wife, Norma, and I represented our Chapter and presented our Chapter Wreath at a grave marking/monument dedication ceremony in Dumfries, VA. This was sponsored by not only VASSAR but also by the Society of the War of 1812 in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia State Society United States Daughters of 1812 and the Prince William Resolves Chapter NSDAR as I mentioned in the previous newsletter. It was also one of the initiatives of our VASSAR President, William Broadus. While there, we learned a bit of history concerning Dumfries during the colonial period. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Dumfries was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most active port in British Colonial America, only being surpassed by Boston and Philadelphia. Its population at that time actually exceeded that of New York City. Its decline came quickly when the continued deforestation of the surrounding land (estimated to be an acre of forest cut a day) led to massive silting of the harbor and by 1800 the excellent harbor was no more and the city became a mere small village. We also had a “taste” of northern VA traffic. VASSAR President Bill Broadus lives in Manassas, 30 miles from Dumfries and it took him 3 hours to make it to the ceremony. It took Norma and I 1 ½ hours to drive the 30 miles from Dumfries to Fredericksburg in leaving. A week later, on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Norma and I had the great pleasure of again representing our Chapter and presenting our Chapter Wreath at a Grave Marking Ceremony a bit closer to home. The Colonel Fielding Lewis Chapter marked the graves of 3 patriots, all of whom were the ancestors of Col. Jack Morris, USAF, Ret., a member of their Chapter. This was held in the old section of the Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church Cemetery on U.S. 11, just south of Mt. Sidney. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, our Chapter sponsored the Annual Reading of the Declaration of Independence held at noon on the steps of the Rockingham County Court House. Our Chapter President, LTC L. Lamar Sale, USA, Ret., gave the introduction and Compatriot David Hatmaker was superb in what has, over the past 19 years, become a very meaningful program for our community. Joining us were members of the Beaver Creek Long Knives; Shenandoah Society, CAR and the Massanutton Chapter, DAR. Several hundred individuals were present which was an excellent turnout from our community.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of April, Past Chapter President Hank Almond presented our Chapter’s ROTC medal and certificate to Cadet LTC David M. Snellings of James Madison University. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, Chapter President Lamar Sale presented our chapter’s JROTC medal and certificate to Cadet Staff Sergeant Idida Castaneda of Harrisonburg High School. In May and July our Chapter presented Eagle Scout Certificates to Seth Thomas Morris and to Zachery Richard Davis bringing the total of such presentations to 7 for the year. Many thanks to Compatriot Hank Almond for his continued efforts on behalf of this program. We also continue to remain active in the local Naturalization Programs. Since the beginning of the year, we have been represented at programs held February 11<sup>th</sup>, March 10<sup>th</sup>, April 17<sup>th</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup>, June 19<sup>th</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup>. If you never have attended one of these, I would urge you to do so. We will be represented at the program to be held at the Frontier Culture Museum on September 17<sup>th</sup> and at the one to be held at the Federal District Court in Harrisonburg on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Norma and I have just returned from attending the 124<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of NSSAR. In case you were unaware of this, the President General of NSSAR for the past year was Joe Dooley, past VASSAR President. Norma and I were able to attend his installation at the Annual Congress in July 2013. At that time, Joe issued a challenge stating that if over \$1,000,000 was raised during his year as President General for support of the Center for Advancing America’s Heritage in Louisville, KY (NSSAR’s new headquarters and proposed major museum), he would have his head shaved at the 2014 Congress. Well, Joe is now bald. Over \$1,300,000 was raised for this project. This year’s Congress was held in Greenville, SC which proved to be an excellent choice

for a host city. VASSAR came away with a number of honors. For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, a contestant from VA won the Knight Essay with the award going to Elizabeth Lilly sponsored by the Norfolk Chapter. The Rumbaugh Orations Contest winner was Hayley Snowden sponsored by the Fairfax Resolves Chapter. I was especially proud of this one since I had the privilege of being one of the judges of this event at the VASSAR Annual Meeting earlier this year in Richmond and she was simply superb there. VASSAR was also awarded the Admiral William R. Furlong Award for our successful participation in the NSSAR Flag Program. This was our 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive such award and our 13<sup>th</sup> year of participation in this program. For the first time, NSSAR recognized all State Societies who received this award with 100% Chapter participation. VASSAR was among the 6 State Societies so recognized but what was, to me, more important, none had more than 10 Chapters with the exception of VASSAR. For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, VASSAR, with 26 Chapters, achieved 100% Chapter recognition for the presentation of at least one Flag Certificate. Other news from the Annual Congress includes the sale of our old headquarters in Louisville and the moving of all staff into our new location on what is known as "Museum Row". This building may well now be known as the SAR Center instead of the Center for Advancing America's Heritage. Funds have now been raised (thanks to Joe's bald head) to complete the first two stages of construction. The third, and final, is now off and running with a new fund raising program. Those contributing will do so to the newly formed 1776 Society and a contribution of as little as \$25.00 will be recognized. A proposal had been introduced to raise the charge for a supplemental application to \$80 from \$40 for an individual Compatriot and from \$20 to \$40 for a family. It was pointed out that the current fee schedule simply did not cover the true cost of processing these applications. After a somewhat "spirited discussion", a new fee schedule of \$60 and \$30 was approved. Overall, it was a meeting well worth attending. Upcoming VASSAR and NSSAR events include the Atlantic Middle States meeting coming up in Maryland on the weekend of August 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> (which Norma and I plan to attend), Constitution Day at Montpelier in Orange County on September 17<sup>th</sup>, the VASSAR Semi-Annual Meeting to be held at Hyatt Fair Lakes in Fairfax, VA on September 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> (and information for hotel reservations is available on the VASSAR website) and Commemoration of the Battle of Great Bridge, VA on December 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>.

On a local level, our Chapter will end its summer meeting hiatus on September 13<sup>th</sup> when Mark Tueting will be our guest speaker and his topic will be the War of 1812. In October, Charles Chenault will speak to us on the History of Woodbine Cemetery (a topic for which he was scheduled in May but had to cancel because of another commitment and many thanks go to Compatriot and Past Chapter President Barkley Rosser who filled in excellently with an outstanding talk on aspects of current events concerning Russia relations and their possible ramifications). In November, we will have Patrick Murphy who will talk on the French and Indian War. We meet on the mornings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at the Bethesda Theater at Sunnyside Retirement Community east of Harrisonburg. Breakfast begins at 8:30 with the meeting beginning at 9:00. Again, I want to emphasize that though we are an active Chapter, there is much more we could do if only we had Compatriots who would be willing to "step up to the plate" and become active. A few cannot do it all. Also, if you know anyone who might be interested in becoming a Compatriot in our Chapter, bring him along. Membership is the "lifeblood" of any organization. Hope to see you on September 13<sup>th</sup>. One more thing: "Happy 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary" to the SAR.

Christopher N. ("Kirk") Sheap M.D.