



# FORT HARRISON SENTINEL

Fort Harrison Chapter

Sons of the American Revolution



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In beginning this Newsletter, it is with deep sadness that I must inform you of the death of Compatriot John Phillip Cloud on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November. John was an active member of our Chapter for many years and a Past Chapter President. He had been in declining health and his passing was not truly unexpected. All of us who knew him and worked with him will truly miss him. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Leann, his widow. Our number of Compatriots who have been or now are active in our Chapter continues to decline.

Compatriots, as fall reaches its end, so we approach the end of another year as a Chapter. Beginning in September we have had very interesting programs at our monthly meetings. The November meeting was no exception. Patrick Murphy was our guest speaker and his topic was the French and Indian War. I certainly hope that each of you has had the opportunity to attend at least one of these meetings and enjoy these presentations. Our December meeting will “be a bit different”. **We will not meet on the morning of Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> but instead will have a dinner meeting on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.** It will be held at L’Italia Restaurant at 815 East Market Street in Harrisonburg and will begin at 6 PM. There will be a suggested menu of 5 entrees including a vegetarian selection and payment will be on an individual basis. I hope that you can attend and please remember that this invitation includes your wife (or significant other) as well. Just let our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Tom Pettit (540-434-4029 or tomdd747@comcast.net) know if you plan to attend and the number of your guests. This will also be an important meeting in that we will be electing our Chapter officers for 2015. The slate of Officers for 2015 consists of Compatriots Tom Pettit as Chapter President; Dr. Kirk Sheap as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; David Dean, Jr. as Corresponding Secretary; Randy Heneberger as Recording Secretary; Jim Nelson as Treasurer; Tim Knight as Registrar; Rev. Roy Martin, Jr. as Chaplain; Peyton Yancey as Historian and Stephen Knight as Webmaster. Please note that we do not have, as of yet, a candidate for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. I will return to this topic later in the Newsletter. Many thanks to Compatriot, and Past Chapter President, Hank Almond for all his work in creating this slate of potential future Officers. Now for an apology and a correction to the last Newsletter. I said that the NSSAR “Center for Advancing America’s Heritage” in Louisville would now be known as the SAR Center. Just add SAR at the front of the other name. Now I would ask that all of you take a look at the NSSAR website and see what is planned for the future. It is truly something of which we can all be proud.

At our October meeting, those Compatriots present voted to decrease the charge for the breakfast meal to \$10.00 with the Chapter covering the remaining \$3.00 of the cost we are charged. It was hoped that this might be an inducement to our Compatriots to attend our meetings. Our attendance has been “a bit low” over the past months and we do hope that many of you will attend our future meetings. We have had a number of superb speakers and look forward to continuing with similar programs in the future.

Our last Naturalization Program participation was on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October and this appears to be the last one for this year. We do plan to continue our participation in 2015 and the dates and locations of those events will be included in future newsletters. These are events in which our Chapter is proud to be represented and, for those of you who have not attended, are very meaningful and well worth the time to attend. Our Eagle Scout Recognition Program continues on a very active basis. Compatriot Hank Almond has spearheaded this effort and, as of early November, our Chapter has presented 23 Eagle Scout Awards with 12 more presentations being planned before the end of the year. This is not an easy task and the participation of others in our Chapter in this effort I know will be greatly appreciated.

Compatriot Rev. Roy Martin, Jr. and I (along with my wife, Norma) represented our Chapter at the events held in Williamsburg on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October (a joint SAR-DAR-CAR Ceremony honoring St. George Tucker held at his home) and in Yorktown on the next day recognizing the surrender of the British forces under Lord Cornwallis on that date in 1781. There were a number of events on the 19<sup>th</sup> and Roy and I were able to

represent our Chapter at all but the one held on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> at the French monument. The schedule was such that there simply was not enough time to attend that and then attend the ceremony honoring Thomas Nelson, Jr. at whose grave Roy and I presented our Chapter Wreath. Roy was a member of the VASSAR Color Guard at those Sunday ceremonies. One of his hopes is that our Chapter may eventually form its own Color Guard as a number of other VASSAR Chapters have done. Upcoming NSSAR and VASSAR events include the Commemoration of the Battle of Great Bridge which will be held in Chesapeake, Virginia on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of December. Norma and I plan to attend and I will present our Chapter Wreath there as well. I have not heard, as of yet, as to who else from our Chapter plans to attend this event.

As for upcoming events next year, VASSAR State President Bill Broadus will be with us for our January 2015 meeting (Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup>). He will be our guest speaker and will install our Chapter Officers for 2015. On February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, there will be held the commemoration of the Crossing of the Dan in South Boston, VA. If you have never attended this program, I would urge that you consider doing so. I have attended the Saturday events for the past several years and the programs presented and the events staged were superb. Norma and I hope to attend again this coming year and present our Chapter wreath. The following weekend in February will be the VASSAR Annual Meeting which usually is held in Richmond. The dates for that meeting are February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Further details will be “in the works” once I receive them. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, the annual MultiChapter meeting will be held at Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria, Virginia (Madison County). For those of you not familiar with this, it began a number of years ago as a “gathering” of Officers and Compatriots of a small number of adjacent Chapters to report on their activities and providing ideas to their fellow Chapters on enhancing their efforts in their communities. The number of Chapters represented has grown but it still remains “a local affair”. For the first time, the “chair” of this meeting will rotate among the various Chapters in this group. Our upcoming Chapter President, Tom Pettit, will be “in the chair” for this upcoming meeting. If you have never attended one of these, I would suggest that you do so. An excellent meeting in a beautiful setting and a wonderful meal. More information on this should follow from our Chapter President-elect and Corresponding Secretary.

Now, in closing, I want to begin by wishing you a wonderful Thanksgiving, a blessed Christmas or Hanukah and all the best for 2015. I would also ask that you keep in your prayers the members of the families of our Compatriots who have died this year. This time last year they were, like you, preparing to celebrate the Holiday Season. May we remember Compatriots Bill Wampler, Vic Diehl and John Cloud. I would also refer you to my words concerning the passing of Compatriot John Cloud and to the list of those Compatriots proposed for Chapter Office for 2015. Look at that list. Several Compatriots have changed their “job descriptions” but there is only one new name on the slate of proposed officers, that of Compatriot Rev. Roy Martin who is Past Chaplain of the Florida Society. The office of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President remains empty. One new individual and a blank slot. This Chapter cannot continue in this manner. All too few doing a vast majority of the work needed to keep us active. As those who perform these duties age and also see the lack of participation by the great majority of our members, frustration and “burn out” arises. Do we want our Chapter to continue? If so, we need the participation of more of our members. The choice is yours.

Christopher N. (“Kirk”) Sheap M.D.