



# FORT HARRISON SENTINEL

Fort Harrison Chapter

Sons of the American Revolution



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Compatriots, I hope that you had a wonderful Holiday Season and are tolerating this recent brunt of snow very well. We had a foot of snow in my “neck of the woods” (Bridgewater) but my wife and I missed it since we were attending the VASSAR Annual Meeting in Richmond on the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> of February in Richmond and nary a snowflake there with this storm. We came home early Sunday afternoon to find that a wonderful neighbor had plowed part of our driveway so that we could park our car, get out the snowblower, and clear the rest before unpacking. I truly have to commend the Virginia Highway Department and the local county, city and town administrations on how they handled this one. My road was clear as were the main ones in Bridgewater and also State Route 42 and those in Harrisonburg as I headed into Harrisonburg Sunday afternoon to clean the steps and walkways of my office.

Our Chapter has continued to remain active, even in winter when many of us would like to hibernate. Our January meeting saw the installation of our Chapter Officers for 2015. Compatriot Tom Pettit was installed as Chapter President along with myself as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President or President-elect; Compatriots Randy Heneberger as Recording Secretary; Jim Nelson as Treasurer; Tim Knight as Registrar; Rev. Roy Martin, Jr. as Chaplain; and Peyton Yancey as Historian. David Dean, Jr., Corresponding Secretary, and Stephen Knight, Webmaster were not able to attend but were installed as well. These Compatriots had been elected to their positions during our December meeting which, for a wonderful change of pace, was a dinner meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December at L’Italia Restaurant in Harrisonburg. We had a wonderful turnout and a very enjoyable evening. At the January meeting, our Officers were to be installed by our VASSAR President, Bill Broadus, but unfortunately, a case of “double pneumonia” prevented his attendance. In his place, Compatriot Rev. Roy Martin stepped in as VASSAR Assistant Chaplain and not only performed the installation but also, in full Revolutionary War Cavalry uniform, gave a superb presentation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Dragoons of the Continental Cavalry. Our February meeting was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> and featured Pablo Cuevas, a member of the Board of Supervisors of Rockingham County, who spoke on the future of the county. Pablo expanded his presentation to speak on a number of other topics including our new relations with Cuba, the political climate not only locally but also in Richmond and Washington and the problem that many organizations such as ours have in just not attracting new members but in getting those current members to become active and not passive members. A lot of different topics were covered quite well. In March, our speaker will be COL Roy McCutcheon, USA (R), who is the Senior Army Instructor of the Harrisonburg High School JROTC Program.

Also in February, Compatriot Phil Stone again presented a very informative program on the 12<sup>th</sup> at the Lincoln Cemetery on Route 42 north of Harrisonburg. Phil has been doing these presentations for a number of consecutive years with this presentation being his 40<sup>th</sup>. Each year is a different topic concerning President Abraham Lincoln and/or his Virginia family. The topic this year was the assassination of the President in April of 1865. Those from our Chapter in attendance, besides the speaker, were Compatriots John Sipe, Randy Heneberger, Hank Almond, Peyton Yancey and myself. If you have the opportunity, I would urge that you attend this event next year. It is always on the 12<sup>th</sup> and at 2PM at the cemetery. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, Compatriot Hank Almond and Compatriot Bill Blessing (along with his wife Allene) represented our Chapter at the annual commemoration of the Crossing of the Dan in South Boston, Virginia. This is one of four NSSAR sanctioned events held in Virginia each year. Accompanying them was Kemper

Dadisman, Boy Scout Advancement Chairman for our area, who has been of great help to Hank in our Eagle Scout Recognition Program. With the efforts of Kent and Hank, our Chapter presented 37 Eagle Scout Certificates of Recognition in 2014 which is the most we have ever presented in one year. A truly great accomplishment. The following weekend marked the 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution which was held in Richmond on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Representing our Chapter were President Tom Pettit, Chaplain Roy Martin and myself. During the meeting, the Fort Harrison Chapter was awarded Streamers for Chapter Excellence, for participation in the VASSAR Flag Program and for attending the joint SAR/DAR/War of 1812 Grave Marking Ceremony in Dumfries, VA last July. We also received two stars to be added to our Forgotten Patriot Streamer thanks to the continued efforts by Compatriot Tim Knight in researching his Patriot Ancestors. Compatriot Rev. Roy Martin, Jr. was elected and installed as Chaplain of VASSAR and conducted the Memorial Service recognizing those Compatriots who had passed since our last Annual Meeting. I had the privilege of helping to judge the Rumbaugh Orations Contest. This year it was a very difficult task in that there were a number of superb presentations. The winner was Calli Bellinger who had been sponsored by the Richmond Chapter. I feel that she will do very well in the NSSAR Contest to be held at the Annual Congress in Louisville later this year. The Virginia Society has won this contest twice in the past four years.

On a local level, our Chapter also has been active. We have participated in the first Naturalization Ceremony held this year at the Federal District Court in Harrisonburg and plan to participate in the future ceremonies as well. These are planned for the 10<sup>th</sup> of March, 17<sup>th</sup> of April, 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 14<sup>th</sup> of July, 17<sup>th</sup> of September and 16<sup>th</sup> of October. All, with the exception of the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, will be at the Federal District Court in Harrisonburg. The September event will be held at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton. Another upcoming event will be the annual Graves Mountain MultiChapter Meeting to be held on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria, VA in Madison County. We will be the host Chapter this year for this meeting. This is a luncheon meeting and one that is very informative. We have also presented two Flag Certificates in recognition of the proper display of the American Flag. One was presented in January to the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors (County Administration Building) and the other in February to the Rockingham County School Board and Superintendent of Education (John C. Kidd School Administration Building).

In closing, you should have received a survey concerning changing the day and time of our Chapter meetings. A number of years ago, a similar survey revealed that many of you wanted to meet on Saturday mornings. Unfortunately, with time, our attendance at these meetings has decreased significantly and some Compatriots have stated that such a time and date were not convenient. With the good turnout for our dinner meeting in December, we are now exploring the idea of changing our meeting time to an evening dinner meeting, possibly on a Tuesday, which does appear to be the one evening that many may not have any other conflicts. Please let your Corresponding Secretary, Compatriot David Dean, Jr. ([dave@knightcomminc.com](mailto:dave@knightcomminc.com)) know of your preference or of any other suggestions you might have for an evening meeting or as to how to increase our attendance. Our Chapter can only remain active with the support of our Compatriots. From the list of new Officers for this year, you can see that we do not have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President. We need your support.

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