



FORT HARRISON SENTINEL

Fort Harrison Chapter

Sons of the American Revolution



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Compatriots, as the months of spring pass and we look toward summer, I hope that each of you has had a prosperous, happy and productive year so far. This year, as of now, has been a quite active and productive one for our Chapter. If you have not attended any of our meetings, you have missed a number of excellent presentations recently covering such topics as Colonial military uniforms, electronic genealogy and, most recently, colonial lighting. I want to thank two of our own Chapter Compatriots, Tim Knight and Dan Pinnell, for their presentations. Tim did an excellent job in discussing the development of what we now know as web-based or electronic genealogy. Dan's presentation on colonial lighting was held at his home where examples of such lighting were shown and discussed. The fall promises to be more of the same excellent type of material so I invite you to attend. I also want to sincerely thank our Chapter President-elect, Vic Diehl, for putting together this fine selection of programs.

Since our last newsletter, we have lost Compatriot Dr. Darrell Wayne Hurst. Our Chapter has sent a card expressing our condolences to his widow. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

I also need to correct an error made in the first newsletter of this year when I failed to acknowledge the efforts of Compatriot Tim Knight in obtaining one of the two stars we received for our Forgotten Patriots Streamer at the Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society in Richmond. It was through his efforts in gaining recognition of his Patriot Ancestor, James Haney, that our Chapter was awarded a star.

Since our last newsletter, our Chapter has been quite active in other events as well. On the 14th of April, Chapter President Hank Almond, along with my wife, Norma, and myself, attended the Multi-Chapter Meeting held annually at Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria, VA. An excellent meeting with an excellent presentation given by VASSAR President Phil Williams concerning our allies in the Revolutionary War. Through the efforts of Compatriot Hugh Hutchens, a number of our Chapter members gathered in March to clean the gravesite of Patriot Michael Trout and those of his family, in northern Rockingham County. At the April Chapter meeting, it was approved to "adopt" this cemetery and maintain its grounds and Compatriot Bill Robinson and his wife, Donna, have agreed to assume responsibility for this. If you are willing to help in this effort, please contact Compatriot Robinson. On May 5th, Chapter President Almond, along with Norma and I, attended an event in Charlottesville commemorating the "Barracks" and camp used to house British and Hessian prisoners of the "Convention Army" during the Revolutionary War with the placement of a Virginia Highway Marker. On the 27th of April, Chapter President Almond presented our ROTC Award at James Madison University to Cadet Major Matthew Gregory Owens while I presented our JROTC Award at Harrisonburg High School to Cadet Captain Michael A. Tower on May 10th. President Almond also presented each of our new citizens a patriotic scroll on behalf of our Chapter at the most recent Naturalization Ceremony which was held on May 14th. He will also represent our Chapter at the Armed Forces-Veterans Park Dedication in Shenandoah to be held on May 25th as well as at a private wreath laying ceremony for NSSAR President General Larry Magerkurth at the grave of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello to be held on June 22nd. On June 30th, a joint SAR/Society of 1812 event will be held at the old Presbyterian Church in Fincastle at 1 PM at which a plaque will be dedicated honoring those buried there who were veterans of these conflicts or contributed to our nation's efforts during them. Several from our Chapter attended a similar event held at

Old Providence Presbyterian Church near Spottswood in southern Augusta County several years ago and it proved to be a wonderful event. My wife, Norma, and I plan to attend this event in Fincastle and I hope that some of you might also wish to attend as well. At the event in Shenandoah and this one in Fincastle, our Chapter will present its wreath. On the 14th-15th of September, the 225th Anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution will be celebrated in Philadelphia while, on the same weekend, the Semi-Annual Meeting of VASSAR will be held in Charlottesville. Both are excellent events but Charlottesville is a bit closer and there will be wonderful programs for the wives there. In conjunction with the celebration of the Anniversary of the signing of the Constitution, President Almond has sent resolutions marking this event to both the Harrisonburg City Council and the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors for their approval and will be attending their meetings in September for their formal presentation and, hopefully, the approval of them by both bodies. I would also like to recognize Compatriots Hank Almond, Hugh Hutchens, Vic Diehl and Gene Holsinger for their volunteer efforts during the recent visit to Harrisonburg of the Vietnam Veterans' Wall that Heals exhibit. On a national level, the NSSAR Annual Congress will be held in Phoenix on July 7th-11th and the Atlantic Middle States will be held in Newark, DE on August 10th-11th. Links to information concerning both events can be found on the VASSAR webpage. I have had the opportunity of attending both last year and they were well worth the effort though Phoenix can be "a bit" warm in July. I still remember moving one of my daughters to Tucson in mid-June of 2000. However, it is a "dry heat" yet 116° was still quite warm whether dry or damp. The Annual Congress next year will be a bit closer, in Kansas City if I remember correctly. As I mentioned above, there will be, in Philadelphia, a celebration of the 225th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution on September 14th-15th. On our local level, I hope that you will attend the annual reading of the Declaration of Independence by Compatriot David Hatmaker which will be held at noon on July 4th on the steps of the Rockingham County Court House in Harrisonburg. This is a wonderful and very moving event and we all owe David a great deal of thanks for his efforts over the years in doing this.

Our Chapter meetings have now shifted to the Houff Center at Bridgewater Home but the September meeting site is yet to be determined since the Houff Center had a prior commitment for that date in September. We will let you know of the location for the September meeting when it is determined. The date of the meeting can not be easily changed since the weekend before is Labor Day and the weekend after would conflict with the events in Charlottesville and in Philadelphia.

In closing I would like to thank Compatriot Stephen Knight, son of Tim Knight. When it was decided to pursue setting up a Chapter webpage, Stephen took on the task and it is now close to completion. This will be a big asset to the Chapter, getting our message out to the community and increasing interest in the Chapter and in the SAR. We all owe him our thanks for doing this. Have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you on July 4th and at our fall meetings. I especially hope that you will attend our December meeting on the 8th where we will celebrate our Chapter's 25th anniversary. Plans are now being made for this event. Remember that the success of our Chapter depends upon the participation of all of our members. Even if you can not attend all, or even some, of the meetings, there are many ways you can contribute to our efforts. Also this month, as we reflect upon the meaning of Memorial Day and celebrate Armed Forces Day, all of us should remember the price paid by those who have served in our Military. The freedom we now enjoy was paid for by their sacrifices.

Kirk Sheap

