



The Fife & Drum

The official publication of the
The Sons of the Revolution
in the State of North Carolina
A 501(c)(3) Non-profit Corporation

From the President:

The Improbable Victory

The outcome of the Revolutionary War was most improbable. The rebels, the patriots, *our* Revolutionary ancestors should not have prevailed, but they did, and a nation was born.

For Christmas, I received from our son, Charles, Joseph Ellis' book, **American Creation** (Vintage Books, paperback ed. 2007). I recommend highly a thorough reading of Ellis' book. His thesis is the improbability of the war turning in our favor, and that after the war was won we became a nation-state despite two self-inflicted, gaping wounds upon our newly-given identity: slavery and the treatment of the Native American. For reasons Ellis provides, reasons most clear to us today, both slavery and treatment of the Native American appeared to the founding generation to be insoluble issues. There was wide-spread disagreement on each, and each carried the means to make the victory at Yorktown short-lived.

Those issues are no less before us in our day, as they should be, for neither has been dealt with adequately. And yet, in some inscrutable way and for some incomprehensible reason, the American nation-state survived and survives today. Out of its survival we Americans have been "given" the gift of time to address such insoluble issues, and to do so with respect, compassion, and in the spirit expressed in both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.



My point is this: we have been "given" an opportunity to be a nation that is representative for *all* people, and I emphasize **all** people. Our ancestors did not engage in revolutionary warfare for the benefit of some, despite what our ancestors might have believed at the time. What the founding generation saw as the goal of revolution was a nation of liberty for all. To be sure, we have been slow to realize fully that goal, but by the grace of God we have been "given" time to make that goal a reality.

Which brings me back to Ellis' book and to one insightful paragraph: "The revolutionary generation won the first successful war for colonial independence in the modern era, against all odds defeating the most powerful army and navy in the world. Washington liked to call the American victory 'a standing miracle,' a phrase that suggests some kind of supernatural intervention on America's side. . . . Nevertheless, Washington's phrase correctly captures the improbable character of the outcome as perceived by most informed observers at the outset of the war and the all-or-nothing gamble that the most prominent revolutionary leaders were prepared to take."

When we gather on March 7 to commemorate George Washington's 288th birthday, let's be willing to remember that the American dream is not about us. It is a gift, an opportunity, perhaps even an expression of Divine will that people can, indeed, govern themselves in ways equitable and just, and that such government is not so much on our shoulders as it is upon the

shoulders of the Giver of life, the One Who calls nations into being. I suspect Washington perceived something along those lines when he received the British surrender at Yorktown. We would do well to discern nothing less as recipients of that victory's bounty.

Paul Jeffrey Lambert

GSSR Executive Director 2012-2019

Our own Paul Jeffrey Lambert, long-time SRNC member and SRNC President Emeritus, has just completed over 7 years serving as the Executive Director of the General Society of the Sons of the Revolution.



Beginning in October 2012, Jeff moved from North Carolina to Williamsburg to respond to the call to serve as the first Executive Director in the new GSSR Headquarters in Williamsburg, VA. He was instrumental in moving the headquarters from Missouri to Williamsburg and getting the society on a more professional footing.



He has tirelessly worked to improve the society and get our records in order. He was instrumental in helping to host and coordinate various GSSR functions such as the Triennial and Annual Meetings. The SRNC is both proud of and grateful to Jeff for his faithful and passionate service to the General Society and to the society as a whole.

In December, GSSR Leadership eliminated the position of Executive Director thus leaving Jeff free to pursue other opportunities including upcoming Federal and North Carolina 250th commemorations. During Jeff's tenure as GSSR Executive Director, the footprint of the SR in Williamsburg was established and its presence in the historic district, Yorktown and Richmond keenly felt.

At the March 7 George Washington Commemoration, the SRNC will recognize Jeff for his conspicuous and faithful service to each one of us through the GSSR office of Executive Director. *Huzzah!*

Sign up now
2020 George Washington
Luncheon Meeting March 7th
Raleigh, NC

LOCATION:
The State Club
2450 Alumni Drive
Raleigh, NC 27606



Compatriots, it is once again time to sign up for the George Washington Luncheon to be held at the State Club on the NC State campus. This is a beautiful venue for our meeting and a great opportunity to meet with your compatriots for some social time and a very interesting program by John Braswell. Bring your family and friends.

You should have received the invitation by now so fill it in and mail it with your check or e-mail our Treasurer to let him know you are coming. You can pay at the door if you register beforehand. You can now pay by credit card on our Web page:

<http://www.nc-sor.org/shop.html>

The keynote speaker will be Mr. John Braswell. A High Point resident, John is a graduate of Wake Forest University. He has completed also three years of graduate study at UNC-CH. John is known for his love of American history. Three of his historical presentations have received awards by civic and patriotic organizations.

John will present, "The Youngest Two Generals of the Revolutionary War: *One a Quaker & the Other a Teenager.*"

SRNC President Gus Succop will convene a Board of Directors' meeting at 10:30 a.m., followed by a cash-bar Patriotic Social at 11:30 a.m. The luncheon banquet will begin at 12:15 p.m. A brief business meeting of the membership will follow Mr. Braswell's presentation.

Registration for the luncheon may be made on-line via PayPal (www.nc-sor.org) or by sending your check for \$60/pp to SRNC Treasurer, Charles R. Odom, 5233 N. Willowhaven Drive, Durham, NC 27712-1958. Dress is coat and tie. All members are encouraged to express to friends, spouse, and prospective members an invitation to attend the 2020 George Washington Birthday Banquet.

Past Events

SRNC Hosts Yorktown Luncheon

Members and Officers of the SRNC met on Oct. 19 at The North Ridge Country Club, Raleigh, NC, for the commemoration of the British surrender at Yorktown, VA.

Prior to the luncheon, State President Gus Succop convened the Board of Directors for a business meeting, which included the election of three New Members.

The keynote speaker, The Hon. Gary E. Trawick, was introduced by long-time friend, Allen James, a member of the Board of Directors. Judge Trawick's



topic was the Battle of Moores Creek, which took place in what is now Pender County, NC. After entertaining a number of questions and receiving compliments for his presentation, Judge Trawick received the hearty appreciation of the society.

The topic was of special interest since the anniversary of the Moores Creek Battle was the next event on our schedule. That battle, lasting only a few minutes may have had a significant outcome on the American Revolution. That the battle was important is not debatable. It can be debated how important the battle was, but not that it was important. It kept the British out of the South for some time.

Before State Chaplain, Robert Boykin, pronounced the Benediction, New Members Russ McCullough and John Misenheimer were recognized.

OVTA March to King's Mountain

By Dan Hopping, Curmudgeon third class

Each year the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) takes the story of the Revolutionary War to over 17,731 fourth, fifth and eighth grade children and 18,858 adults who live in the five state area covered by the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (a part of the National Park System).

In September and October of 1780, the American Patriot Militia Army chased British Major Patrick Ferguson and his Tories for over two weeks and caught them on Kings Mountain in a battle that was a turning point of the Revolution. Over 60% of the original Patriots were citizens of North Carolina.

The OVTA retraces this path each year on the actual dates of the original march. At each location where the original patriots camped in 1780, the OVTA sets up camp and puts on a living history program for all the school children, their parents and the media. The OVTA pays for the gas and bus driver's salary to get the school busses out for the kid's field trip.

Each year the Sons of the Revolution in North Carolina (SRNC) provides a grant to the OVTA to help defray the costs of the Annual March.

On the Annual March, the SRNC sets up a booth and helps to teach the school kids about the Revolution.



The OVTA Annual March ends on October the 7th on Kings Mountain where the OVTA Marches into the Kings Mountain Amphitheater at 3:00 pm, the time of the start of the battle.

On October 6th, the night before Kings Mountain, the OVTA provides a day of living history on the Cowpens where the original patriots camped. The SRNC participates in the ceremonies.



Please plan to participate and support the SRNC by attending the OVTA Annual March and the Kings Mountain Ceremony in 2020.

On October 7th, the day of the battle, there is a ceremony at 10:00 am on top of Kings Mountain. The SRNC lays a wreath and participates in the OVTA firing of a volley at the close of the ceremony.

Most of the SRNC Color Guard members are also members of the OVTA and are certified by the National Park Service (NPS) to fire our firelocks on NPS Parks.

Wreaths Across America December 14, 2019

By Dan Hopping



We had a great Wreaths Across America ceremony at Raleigh National Cemetery on

December 14th. It had been raining all night and morning but the rain quit just as the motorcycle procession and the truck with the wreaths arrived.



We had over 300 volunteers along with the Cleveland High School Junior ROTC Cadets, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Sea Cadets to place the wreaths. There were wreaths on all graves (over 5,600), and it was absolutely beautiful.

The graves in this cemetery first date from the 1865 Union occupation of Raleigh when the fallen from the Civil War battles of Averasboro and Bentonville were laid to rest in the corner of the then Camp Lincoln. The graves on the left as you enter the cemetery are from the Civil War. The cemetery also includes the grave of Sergeant First Class William M Bryant, a recipient of the Medal of Honor for his action in Vietnam.



The sun came out as soon as the wreaths were placed on the graves. The weather was perfect as the ceremony started.

Eleven Wreaths were laid for the soldiers of the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, Masonic veterans, the US Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, POW/MIA and the Medal of Honor recipients.



SRNC President Emeritus Dan Hopping laid the Wreath for all the soldiers who served in the Revolution.

Major General (ret.) Kurt Sonntag was the speaker, and at the close of the ceremony, the SRNC Color Guard, commanded by Scott Kennedy fired a volley with revolutionary war period correct firelocks.



It was a great outing and we had many SRNC members there for support. Quite a few SRNC members sponsored wreaths to support this worthwhile cause.

(Photos are by Bill DiBenedetto)

**Sons of the Revolution
Grave Markers Are Back!**



After an absence of nearly a century, grave marker medallions are being made available to all Sons of the Revolution (SR) state societies. The Reverend Augustus E. (Gus) Succop III, North Carolina Society President, spearheaded an effort to bring back these markers. He had enthusiastic support in the effort from GSSR President Larry Simpson, GSSR Regional VP Ivan Bennett and GSSR Executive Director Jeff

Lambert. Special thanks go to the New York society, which graciously loaned its antique marker from the Fraunces Tavern Museum to be used to make the mold pattern. The museum piece is a significant historical marker and it is thrilling to see replica commemorative medallions being made available to state societies. The SR has long been without a general embodiment for state societies to honor ancestors or to publicly identify membership in this distinguished organization. This announcement remedies that.

Grave marking ceremonies are one of the more visible events that promote the society and honor our ancestors. The process is straightforward and the General Society has a book titled *“Prayer Book Memorial Service and Grave Marking Ceremony”*. This short book is available for \$5.00 plus shipping and handling from the GSSR Williamsburg Office. The book has an outline and a script for the participants. The ceremony is short, simple and reverent.



It is most important that we continue to renew and grow the society – especially as many older members are passing on.

If the public is unaware that the society exists, there won't be new members. Publicity is key, but society publications are internal and of themselves of little help in promoting the SR to prospective members.

The public face of the SR today most often rests on the state color guard units. New York's and Pennsylvania's color guards are well regarded and maintain a high visibility, for example. Color guards are not required to be in Revolutionary War attire - blazers with matching pants and/or hats are perfectly acceptable. It is the professionalism of the color guard in public events and parades that attracts public attention and reflects positively on the organization.

Grave marking ceremonies provide additional high profile color guard opportunities to enhance a state society's visibility. But a grave marking ceremony does not necessarily require a color

guard to be present, and it can be done in conjunction with other hereditary societies. It does need to be done with descendants of the patriot and the cooperation of the cemetery, however.

Publicity is key to visibility and needs to be arranged weeks before. Local newspapers, TV and social media should all be utilized.

For state societies that have not done a grave marking ceremony in the memory of the current members, an easy start is with an ancestor of one of its members. Identifying a standing group of descendants for an eligible ancestor is an even better starting point.

Cemeteries will have rules for graveside ceremonies. Representatives should be contacted before working with the family.



Many cemeteries do not allow markers to stick up where a mower might hit them. Most markers are attached to a grave stone and the cemetery will likely have a company that they recommend to do the work. Grave markers that mount on a rod with room for a flag to be put on top are not in favor with cemeteries, since they are often stolen and can interfere with maintenance.



The new SR grave markers are bronze, 5 ¼ inches in diameter and have two lugs for screws on the back. To mount to a stone, two half inch holes are drilled into the stone to a depth of about an inch. Cement or epoxy is put into the

holes and screws placed into the back of the marker are pressed into the filler. This makes the marker permanent. In the case of a fragile gravestone or a stone with no room, a concrete pad of about twelve by eighteen inches can be buried in the ground so that a mower can pass over it without damaging it. The local society can add an inscription to the pad as desired.

Lighter aluminum markers with an adhesive backing are also available. These can be placed on a wood backing with a plate or certificate as an award or recognition of membership. The aluminum marker has a bronze finish.

Orders can be placed for the aforementioned ceremony book from the GSSR Headquarters by going to the GSSR website (<http://www.sr1776.org/>) and clicking on the Merchandise link on the right side of the page.

Orders for grave markers can be made by downloading the order form from the NCSR Web site at: <http://www.nc-sor.org/>

Bronze grave markers are \$85.00 plus shipping and handling. The lighter aluminum markers for awards and plaques are \$50.00 plus shipping and handling. You can have the wood plaque and sublimated plates done locally.

Chapters News

**Col's. Hinton and Polk Chapter
2019 Year-end Report**

By Allen James, Chapter President

It is a pleasure to serve as the second President of our growing chapter in the Raleigh area of North Carolina. Under the very able leadership of Frank Powell III for the first three years of existence, our chapter became well established, with regular quarterly meetings and outings. During his tenure, we visited Moores Creek National Battleground in Pender County to support our State Color Guard, as well as providing volunteers at Bennet Place State Historic Site. Unfortunately, during the same period we lost our favorite luncheon meeting site, the BBQ Lodge, a landmark in Raleigh, which unexpectedly closed. But, not to be

January 2020

discouraged, we quickly moved our meetings to another good dining spot, as we enjoy our meetings best when well fed!

I began my tenure in mid-2019, with a goal of extending our service of historic recognition by marking graves of patriots and cleaning Revolutionary War monuments. Recently, our chapter had the opportunity to clean a relatively unknown monument in front of N.C. State University, by Hillsborough Street in Raleigh. Erected in 1936 through the efforts of DAR, especially the Caswell-Nash Chapter of the NCSDAR, the monument honors men and women who served the cause of freedom in the original 13 colonies. Although the monument remains fully intact and strong, it was in dire need of cleaning after 80 years.

In cooperation with ladies of Caswell-Nash and Micajah Bullock DAR Chapters, our SRNC Chapter members enjoyed a morning of monument cleaning by a hard-working group of enthusiastic volunteers. And, in keeping with our tradition, we followed the event with a fine meal at a local dining establishment.

Now we have a committee appointed to identify graves of patriots in Wake County (Raleigh) we may mark with our newly minted medallion developed by SRNC for this type use. We will conduct dedication services and mark one or more graves before summer 2020.

SRNC Shirt

The Colonels Hinton & Polk Chapter is making Sons of the Revolution Shirts available to the SRNC membership. The order forms can be found on the SRNC Web site.

Once you fill out the order, send it to Harley Walker at the address on the form with your check.

You can pick up your order at the next meeting. There will be a small shipping charge if you want it sent to you. There are a number of summer weight Navy blue shirts that will be available at the Annual Meeting meeting.



The shirts are high quality Port Authority polo and oxford shirts that can be ordered in several colors and sizes.



Contact Raleigh Chapter Treasurer, Harley Walker at harleywalkerjr@icloud.com

Gen. Wm. Lee Davidson Chapter

Gen. Wm. Lee Davidson contacts:
Gus Succop (Pres. gus.succop@gmail.com);
David Boggs (VP)
Jay Joyce (Treasurer)

Consider a Bequest to the Sons of the Revolution in North Carolina

A bequest is one of the easiest and most meaningful way to make a gift to the SRNC. Gifts of any size made through a bequest help to ensure that the

society receives valuable ongoing support that will benefit generations far into the future.

The SRNC is a 501(c)(3) Corporation and all donations and bequests are tax deductible.



You may make a bequest by including a provision for the Society in your will or trust. You may also choose to give the society a specific dollar amount, property, or a percentage of an estate. Your bequest is a gift to the future of the society and to the preservation of the story of our ancestors who fought to create our nation.

For more information, please contact our Treasurer, Charles Odom or Dan Hopping.

Upcoming events

2020

Jan 11	Cowpens
Jan 25	Cowan's Ford
Feb 1	Crossing the Dan
Feb 22	Moore's Creek
Feb 29	NPS/OVTA Flintlock certification
Mar 3	NC Primary Election
Mar 7	George Washington Luncheon
Mar 14	Guilford CH Anniversary
Mar 28	SCWNC Spring Court
Apr 12	Halifax Resolves
May 23-24	Memorial weekend recruiting booth at Bennett Place, NC Historic Site
Jun 13	SRNC Annual Meeting, Pinehurst
Aug 1	House in the Horseshoe
Sep (TBA)	Davidson Chapter Chartering Dinner
Sep 13	Grandparent's Day
Sep 19-Oct 7	OVTA Annual March to Kings Mountain
Oct (TBA)	Yorktown Luncheon Commemoration
Oct 7	Kings Mountain Anniversary
Dec 12	Wreaths Across America

Preamble from our By-Laws

The Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of North Carolina, Inc. has been chartered and organized to perpetuate the memory of the men who, in military, naval, or civil service, by their act or counsel, achieved American Independence.

Objectives of our Society are:

- To keep alive the spirit of patriotism
- To foster devotion toward the institutions of our country
- To encourage historical research in relation to the Revolution
- To preserve documents, relics and individual records of the Revolutionary period
- To promote the celebration of patriotic anniversaries
- To impress the importance of these subjects upon the rising generation



Like us on Facebook

Sons of the Revolution
in the State of North Carolina
And receive periodical updates
Our Facebook group is at 157 members

Article submission Guidelines

Font	Arial
Font size	11
Space before paragraph	None
Space after paragraph	None
Line spacing	1.0
Columns	one
Alignment	left
Images	prefer .jpg
Title	Bold 12 point center
Author	10 point center

Please do not use a low resolution phone for the images. We will resize the images to fit the format.

Please send the photos separate from the text rather than in-line with the text. Attach them to the note. I can rarely do anything with an imbedded image.

Please send the article with "SRNC Newsletter" in the subject line. Articles are due by the Friday evening after the monthly board meeting.

Please send submissions to Editor, Dan L. Hopping (hopping@nextretailgroup.com).