

GRAVE MARKER CEREMONY



W. Curt Vincent | Bladen Journal

Members of a combined North Carolina Society Sons of the American Revolution salute the colors to open the ceremony honoring Josiah Henden on Saturday. Below, a bugler with the NCSSAR plays 'taps' to close the ceremony.

Local Revolutionary War veteran honored

W. Curt Vincent
Editor

ELIZABETHTOWN — A patriotic, colorful and respectful grave-marking ceremony was held at Elizabethtown Presbyterian Church on Saturday to honor the life and military services of Josiah Henden, a Bladen County resident who lived from 1753 to 1830.

More than 25 people were in attendance as several speakers attached to the local, state and national Sons of the American Revolution gave their accounts of Henden's service — first as a private in the North Carolina Militia and later as a captain in the Bladen County Regiment.

Lewis Smith, — a



renowned historian for Bladen County, also spoke about Henden's service at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, which was the first large-scale engagement in North Carolina during the Revolutionary War.

Smith, who also

spoke about the Battle of Elizabethtown, was credited with leading descendants of Henden to his gravesite, which is located off Hwy. 242.

The ceremony was kicked off with a presentation of colors by the North Carolina

Society Sons of the American Revolution State Color Guard — a somber activity that included the placing of about eight flags and featuring men in Revolutionary War period uniforms.

Following the speeches, Paul Walden,

who is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution from Virginia and descendant of Henden, gave the dedication of the grave marker along with the Rev. A. Clark Wiser, a chaplain with the NCSSAR.

"Many of today's Bladen County residents are descendants of either Josiah Henden or of the many other Patriots from early Bladen County who fought to give us our country," Walden said. "In honoring Josiah Henden, we honor all of those men and women who became America's first veterans."

After the 45-minute ceremony, a group carried the grave marker to Henden's gravesite for placement.