



# George Washington Chapter Sons of the American Revolution



## Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 7

September, 2009



Mount Vernon's Bowling Green, Independence Day 2009  
George Washington Chapter Members March to General Washington's Tomb

**JOIN US AS CHAPTER MEETINGS  
RESUME  
FIRST MEETING THIS AUTUMN  
WILL BE  
SEPTEMBER 12  
SAME TIME, SAME PLACE**

Chapter President Dave Walker will gavel the opening of the Chapter's 2009-2010 activities at the Belle Haven Country Club at noon on Saturday, September 12. Please plan to join your fellow

compatriots as the George Washington Chapter begins another active season.

Our guest speaker for this meeting will be Dr. John R. Maas, an historian on the staff of the U.S. Army Center of Military History at Fort McNair. His address will be titled "Pivotal Battles of the American Revolution" — a topic which will surely hold your attention.

Dr. Maas earned a Ph.D. in Early American History from Ohio State University in 2007. The topic of his dissertation was "A Complicated Scene of Difficulties": The Revolutionary War and State

Formation in North Carolina, 1776-1789. Dr. Maas has published many articles on various aspects of the American Revolution. His numerous reviews of the works of other American Revolution historians have appeared in *The North Carolina Historical Review*, *The Journal of Military History*, *The Journal of Southern History* and similar publications.

Please use the form at the end of this newsletter to make your reservation. We look forward to seeing you on September 12.

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### **The Chapter President's Column**

Dear Compatriots,

I hope that you and your families had an excellent summer. Even though we did not have any monthly meetings, the George Washington Chapter of the SAR had a number of activities during the summer months.

For the third year in a row, over 12 of our members joined with various members of NSSAR to march in the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, DC. This is the nation's largest such parade.

On July 4th, we participated in two events at Mount Vernon. The first involved our annual July 4th program and wreath-laying at George Washington's tomb. This event was well attended and the weather was excellent. The second event involved participation in the annual ceremony for 100 newly naturalized citizens of the United States on the lawn directly in front of Mount Vernon. It was truly a beautiful and inspiring ceremony.

Chapter Treasurer Paul Briggs and his wife Gina were kind to hold a BBQ for those GW Chapter members who participated in the July 4 events.

I attended a portion of the NSSAR Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 5, 2009. I supported our nomination of General Eric Shinseki, currently the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, for the award of the Gold Good Citizenship Medal. Our nomination was approved by NSSAR and I am now in the process of working with General Shinseki's office to set a date to present it to him. We would like to hold a special Northern Virginia/DC Chapters meeting in November or December in connection with this presentation.

During the NSSAR Annual Meeting, I was appointed to NSSAR's Strategic Planning Committee. I would be pleased to hear your thoughts and

suggestions in connection with key NSSAR strategic issues. I remain Vice Chairman of NSSAR's Government Relations Committee.

Chapter Registrar Bob Carr has made significant progress on the many member reinstatements that we had pending. Bob also worked to help ensure that several additional Chapter members were accepted for membership by NSSAR and VASSAR, including both of my brothers (Rick and Steve). I look forward to installing a number of new members this fall. For his many contributions, Bob is set to be awarded the Liberty Medal during the VASSAR Semi-Annual meeting in Virginia Beach. That meeting will be held on September 18-19. Congratulations, Bob!

Chapter Secretary Mike Elston, continued to work with our outside contractor to develop our Chapter web site. The prototype is now available and can be viewed at [www.gwsar.org](http://www.gwsar.org). Please check it out. We will be adding new material over the next several months in order to have it completed by the end of this year.

Finally, our regular monthly chapter luncheon meetings will recommence on September 12 at Belle Haven Country Club. Our speaker will be Dr. John Maas who is a military historian at the Army's Center of Military History.

I hope to see you at our September Chapter meeting.

Patriotically Yours,

Dave Walker

Chapter President

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### **Independence Day**

#### **A Full Day of Activities for Our Chapter**

More than 50 compatriots and their family members participated in our Chapter's 48<sup>th</sup> traditional Independence Day pilgrimage to General Washington's Tomb at Mount Vernon. We were honored to have VASSAR President William Simpson, Jr. join us in this special celebration.

Led by the Fifes and Drums of Prince William III and the VASSAR Honor Guard our members were followed by Boy Scout Troop 1158 of Ashburn, Virginia, and joined by many others as we marched up the Bowling Green on our way to the General's Tomb.

In the peaceful glade near the Tomb, Chapter Vice President Vern McHargue welcomed the



assembled crowd. Dr. Don Reynolds, Chapter Chaplain and Past President, offered the Invocation and Chapter Treasurer Paul Briggs led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a brief address by Chapter

carnation at the Tomb's entrance. Scouts from Troop 1158 assisted by distributing the carnations as guests approached the Tomb. This is always a very solemn experience.

At eleven o'clock the SAR continued to play a role in another important ceremony on the Bowling Green. In that event, 102 immigrants from 42 different nations were welcomed to the status of citizenship in our great country. The VASSAR Color Guard presented the colors at the beginning of this ceremony and Chapter President Walker led the new citizens as they recited the Pledge of Allegiance for the first time.



Chapter President David Walker on the Speaker's Platform, Independence Day, 2009.

President David Walker, we moved to the Tomb's entrance where Compatriots Michael Elston and Bob Carr placed a floral wreath beside the General's sarcophagus. Once the wreath was in place,



VASSAR Color Guard at Citizenship Swearing-in Ceremony



Bob Carr and Michael Elston at the entrance to General Washington's Tomb.

compatriots and all others present were invited to pay their respects to General Washington by placing a red

Later in the day, many compatriots and family members enjoyed the generous hospitality of Chapter Treasurer Paul Briggs and his wife Gina, who had opened their Alexandria home for a "Picnic of Patriots." The good food and fellowship made a perfect ending for a glorious July day.

While we are justifiably proud of the manner in which we celebrated Independence Day, it is difficult to imagine a greater Mount Vernon event than that which occurred on July 4, 1918. The



following description is provided by Thane in *Mount Vernon: The Legacy*:

“ . . . On July 4th, 1918 President and Mrs. Wilson, members of the Cabinet and Diplomatic Corps, and some fifty delegates representing foreign-born citizens of the United States, made a pilgrimage to the Tomb of Washington. The presidential party came by the yacht *Mayflower* and walked up to the Tomb from the wharf, each delegate bearing a wreath. Soldiers and sailors lined the route, and a crowd quickly gathered at a respectful distance. John McCormack [a very popular operatic tenor at that time] sang *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and Wilson made his famous address on “Liberty.” Only the lower floor of the Mansion could be opened because of the crowd, and cameras and parcels were stopped at the gate by the President’s security men.”



Fine picnic fare was served at the home of Paul and Gina Briggs

A Picnic of Patriots



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## George Washington Chapter Website

The George Washington Chapter is now online at [www.gwsar.org](http://www.gwsar.org)! Development of the website was made possible by generous donations from Compatriots David Walker and Paul Briggs. The design team, directed by Chapter Secretary Mike Elston, worked over the summer with inputs from the Board of Managers. Nevertheless, the website is still a work in progress. We welcome comments, suggestions and content from all Chapter members. The Board wants this to be useful to members as well as a way to introduce our Chapter to prospective members and the public. If you have not already submitted a short biography of your patriot ancestor, please do so as soon as possible. All comments and submissions for the website should be directed to Chapter Secretary Mike Elston at [gwsarsec@gmail.com](mailto:gwsarsec@gmail.com).

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## Important Changes in Membership Fees/Dues and Life Membership

We recently received formal notification from NSSAR of the action taken by the 199<sup>th</sup> Congress held in Atlanta, Georgia, regarding the increase in membership application fees and NSSAR dues. These increases will become effective on January 1, 2010. In addition, the Congress reinstated the NSSAR Life Membership Program and increased the cost of a life membership beginning November 1, 2009. Details are as follows:

### Membership Fees

Membership Application: Each new member application fee will increase from \$60.00 to \$80.00 on applications received after January 1, 2010.

Membership Family Plan: Family Plan applications received after January 1, 2010 will cost \$80.00 for the first application and \$30.00 for each additional application in the same family.

### Membership Dues

National Dues: Beginning in dues year 2010, Regular Membership dues will increase from \$25.00 to \$30.00 per year. Junior Membership dues increase from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per year. The collection period for the 2010 dues increase is effective immediately and will be reflected in your 2010 dues invoice which you will receive in September.

During the period November 1 to December 31, 2009, all New Member Applications submitted must include \$30.00 for 2010 dues plus \$60 (2009 rate) for the application fee. All Junior Membership Applications received during this period must include \$10.00 for 2010 dues plus \$30.00 (2009 rate) for the application fee.

### **Life Membership Program**

The Life Membership Program has been reinstated, effective immediately. However, on November 1, 2009, the rates for Life Membership will increase based on the increase of dues. Currently the one-time fee for Life Membership is \$750.00 for members age 40 and younger, decreasing by \$12.50 per year for each year of age over 40. After November 1<sup>st</sup>, the fee will increase to \$900.00 for members age 40 and younger, decreasing by \$15.00 for each year over age 40.

Members wishing to take advantage of the current life membership fee should go to the SAR web site at [www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org), click on drop down menu "For Members," click on "Forms, Pamphlets and Flyers," then click on "Life Membership Application Form." You can fill the form out on-line and print a completed form and mail it in. The form also has a chart to show you how much a Life Membership will cost under the current fee plan based on your age. Those who are considering a Life Membership can save money if they apply before the new fees go into effect. If you would like assistance in completing a Life Membership application, please contact Bob Carr at 703-407-4496 or at [capt7cs@aol.com](mailto:capt7cs@aol.com)

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### **\*\*\*\* IMPORTANT NOTICE \*\*\*\***

### **2010 MEMBERSHIP DUES AND QUESTIONNAIRE**

**During the month of September, you will receive an invoice for your 2010 National, State and Chapter dues. This year we are sending out the invoices well in advance of the deadline of November 15 to provide sufficient time to send out several reminders in order to maximize the number of payments received by the due date. We would like to avoid the challenging reinstatement process for any of our members this year.**

**Included with your invoice will be detailed information regarding the three basic types of**

**membership: General Membership, Life Membership, and Dual Membership. Each type of membership has a different level of dues. Our Chapter records include information on which type membership is held by each of our members; however, we would like you to confirm the accuracy of our data base.**

**To assist you in determining which type membership you have and to enable you to submit the correct dues, please review the "Membership, Rules of the Game" that will be included with your invoice. That note explains each type of membership and the various combinations that exist. Based on this information, you will be able to submit the correct dues amount using the different categories and options noted on the invoice. If you have questions, please contact any member of the Board of Managers or Bob Carr at 703-407-4496 or 703-780-3066.**

**Finally, we are including a Questionnaire with your invoice in order to help the Chapter's Board of Managers determine how we might increase membership participation in monthly meetings and other Chapter, VASSAR and NSSAR activities. Please complete and return the Questionnaire along with your dues invoice in the envelope provided.**

**Thank you for your time and attention to these important matters.**

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### **Registrar's Report**

#### **Membership**

Our Chapter continues to grow with the addition of new members, transfers and reinstatements. Since my last report, two (2) transfers (one in and one out), thirty five (35) reinstatements and two (2) new member applications have been approved.

Presently, five (5) new applications are either at State or National level for approval. There are twenty (20) applications in progress. Nine (9) are complete in draft and have been returned to the applicant for review and attachment of additional supporting documentation. Eleven are in draft awaiting additional documentation from the applicant.

We have received membership certificates for eight (8) new members who are awaiting induction

into the chapter. Some of these are out of town members who will be inducted when they are able to attend our meeting. The remaining are local members who have been unable to attend due to various reasons.

#### Application Notes

If you have family members or friends who are interested in joining SAR, you should encourage them to submit their applications as soon as possible so that they can take advantage of the current application fees. With the current fee increases for 2010, applicants can save at least \$20.00 by doing so. Compatriots with names of prospective members should contact Bob Carr at 703-780-3066, 703-407-4496 or e-mail [capt7cs@aol.com](mailto:capt7cs@aol.com) with the prospective member's telephone number and home address. A New Member packet with application instructions and membership benefits information will be provided. If you would like a New Member packet to give to a prospective member, please let me know and I will get a packet to you.

Bob Carr  
Registrar

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### **In Memory of Wesley H. Schmidt, Sr. Commander, USN, Retired**

Compatriot Wesley H. Schmidt, CMDR. USN Ret., former President of the George Washington Chapter, died on 28 June, 2009. The following is the text of a letter recently received from Mrs. Elizabeth Whitman Schmidt, Compatriot Schmidt's wife, telling about Compatriot Schmidt and the family plans for his burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Mrs. Schmidt extends an invitation to all SAR members who might have known him, to attend the services and the reception at the Army-Navy Country Club.

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This letter brings the sad news that Wes Schmidt died on 28 June 2009. Because of circulatory problems with his legs, he had been in the assisted living section of Washington House in Alexandria for over two years. Recently he experienced difficulty in swallowing and breathing so he entered Inova Alexandria Hospital. Pneumonia

and a "cardiac event" took place and Wes did not have the strength to survive. All five children and their families had given him the love and devotion a patriarch deserves. Eight grandchildren and a great grandson are his proud legacy and he will be greatly missed. Wes will be buried next to our son, Geoffrey, at Arlington National Cemetery on 18 November at 1 p.m. with services at the Old Post Chapel, Fort Meyer, followed by a reception at the Army Navy Country Club. We hope that many of you will be able to join us.

Wes was born in Baltimore but grew up in Chicago on the near north side by Lake Michigan. His friends included child radio actors who brought us Jack Armstrong, Little Orphan Annie and Wheaties cereal. During high school, he became a crew member of sailing teams participating in events such as the Chicago to Mackinac races. He studied civil engineering at Purdue University, signed on for R. O.T.C. and joined Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity. In 1942 he received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy where he qualified for his 'N' as a member of the pistol team. He was the sailing master of the Highland Light, a Cutter Rigged Sloop owned by the Academy. It was on a cruise out of Annapolis aboard Highland Light that Wes and I met in August 1944. Following his graduation from USNA and my graduation from Mount Vernon Junior College, we were married in St. Louis, Missouri, on 15 June 1945. Wes arrived off Okinawa to join USS David W. Taylor in time for the final battles and the first landing on Kyushu, Japan. Subsequent duty aboard USS Samuel N. Moore and USS Blue included operations between Manila, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tsingtao. Orders to Lakehurst, NJ resulted in the designation of Naval Aviator (Airship) and many adventures in the world of Lighter-Than-Air with Blimps and Free Balloons. A year at the Naval Post Graduate School in the Communications- Electronics Curriculum brought Wes to duty as the Communications Officer, Naval Air Force, Atlantic Fleet. Then, after an assignment to Heavier- Than-Air flight training in Pensacola, Wes joined Patrol Squadron 44 in Norfolk where Russian Submarines provided plenty of flight time. A tour as Aide and Flag Secretary to Commander, Fleet Air Wings V was followed by The U.S. Air Force War College in Montgomery, AL. Pentagon years were involved with interesting communications duty. The National Military Command Post Afloat ( USS Northampton and USS Wright ), serving as project officer for Tactical Airborne Communications and Monitoring Operations (TACAMO) involved many flights to Scotland, England and a lot of hours over the water. Working with Polaris Fleet Communications, OMEGA navigation systems, Aegis radar projects and overseeing various installations such as remote Machias, Maine brought Wes to his last Navy duty as

Communications War Plans Officer, Staff of the Chief of Naval Operations from which he retired in March 1970.

The family, including Wesley Jr., Austin, Peter, Geoffrey, Rodney and Elisabeth, settled in Alexandria in 1962. We gave Wes a home base as he completed his Navy Career. Here we enjoyed an active community life involving Boy Scouts, the Episcopal Church, Children of the American Revolution, USNA Class of '46 events and the Army Navy Country Club where Wes had the proud achievement of being Swimming Committee Chairman when the Olympic size pool was built. He sold a lot of coffee and hot dogs for the Alexandria Crew Boosters and took on many responsibilities at St. Stephen's, St Agnes and Christchurch Schools. This was all supported by a position as Systems Integration Engineer with Wheeler Industries. After his final retirement there were treasured times with the children and grandchildren that filled the days. His daughters-in-law, son-in-law and grandson-in-law brought him special satisfaction. All in all, he had a very good life and his family, friends and neighbors will remember him fondly.

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### Calendar of Coming Events

#### September

- 12 GW Chapter Luncheon Meeting, Guest Speaker will be Dr. John Maas
- 17 Constitution Day, Montpelier admission free all day.
- 18-19 VASSAR Semi-Annual Meeting, Virginia Beach. Details at [www.norfolkchapter.org](http://www.norfolkchapter.org).
- 23-26 National Fall Trustees/Leadership Meetings, Louisville, KY.

#### October

- 10 GW Chapter Luncheon Meeting, Guest Speaker will be Dr. Matthew Spalding of The Heritage Foundation. His topic will be "First Principles."
- 19 Battle of Yorktown, Yorktown, VA - 10 am

#### November

- 14 GW Chapter Luncheon Meeting, Guest Speaker will be Gen. Eric Shinseki (tentative)

#### December

- 12 GW Chapter Luncheon Meeting, Guest Speaker TBA
- 9 Battle of Great Bridge. Details TBA
- 14 Wreaths Across America, National Cemeteries, noon.

#### February

- 12-13 2010 VASSAR Annual Meeting, Richmond
- 20 Crossing of the Dan, South Boston, VA

**September 12, 2009**

### **Lunch Meeting Reservation Form**

Please use this form to make a reservation for the chapter's lunch at the Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Virginia. The lunch cost is \$35.00 per person. Check in and social time begin at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be called to order at 12:00 noon. Feel free to invite your wife and friends as your guests.

**RSVP no later than Monday, September 7th.**

**Walk-ins will be accommodated if possible, but note that to cover the Club's charge for serving those without a timely reservation a walk-in price of \$37.00 is required.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A check for \_\_\_\_\_ persons in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to **G. W. Chapter SAR** is enclosed.

Mail this reservation form with your check to:

F. Paul Briggs, Treasurer  
7213 Regent Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22307

You may also phone (703) 768-6910 and leave a message or e-mail [gnpbriggs@cox.net](mailto:gnpbriggs@cox.net). Please include "SAR reservation for (spell out name)" on the subject line of the e-mail.

**It is important to provide advance notice of attendance to be sure you get a seat.**

**Valet parking is available.**

The George Washington Chapter was chartered in its present form on April 2, 1954. With over 200 members, it is Virginia's largest SAR chapter. Meetings are held at 11:30 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month (June, July & August excepted) at the Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Virginia.

Present officers are:

President: Dave Walker 703-619-9751  
Vice President: Vern McHargue 202-439-1530  
Secretary: Mike Elston 703-680-0866  
Treasurer: Paul Briggs 703-768-6910  
Registrar: Bob Carr 703-780-3066

This monthly newsletter is edited by Don Kraft, who depends heavily on inputs from chapter officers and committee chairmen. Inputs from others are always welcome. Please send your inputs and comments to [kraftdon@att.net](mailto:kraftdon@att.net) or call 703-451-6132.



Please consider attending this important VASSAR event. Details of this meeting are available at [www.norfolkchapter.org](http://www.norfolkchapter.org).

**- Flower Design Class**

for the Ladies & their guests  
by former White House florist  
Wayne Jones, AAF, AIFD

**- Warbirds Museum Tour**

including a pit stop at the world-  
famous "O-Club" and a peek at  
our nation's latest jet aircraft at  
Oceana Master Jet Base

**- "Tropicals in Your Trunk"**

judged by the Ladies after each  
meeting, members will get the  
chance to dig into their trunks  
at home, pull out and show off  
their most "colorful" attire

**- DAR Member Invitation**

to reach out and encourage  
VASSAR chapter membership  
and to partner in programs of  
mutual interest and intrigue

**- Historic Homes Tour**

for the Ladies & their guests,  
with a pirate re-enactment,  
a "Classic Country Tea," and  
their own personal guide,  
Norfolk Chapter President  
Robert B. Hitchings

**- Ladies Evening Event**

includes a showy tropical  
drinks demo and a casual  
visit by one of our nation's  
most-famous first "Survivor"  
CBS TV stars, Rudy Boesch

**- Speakers & Exhibits**

from "Alliance Française," CBN  
News Anchor Lee Webb and  
Preservation Virginia, to the  
strategic importance of the big  
dune in Cape Henry's "DESERT"



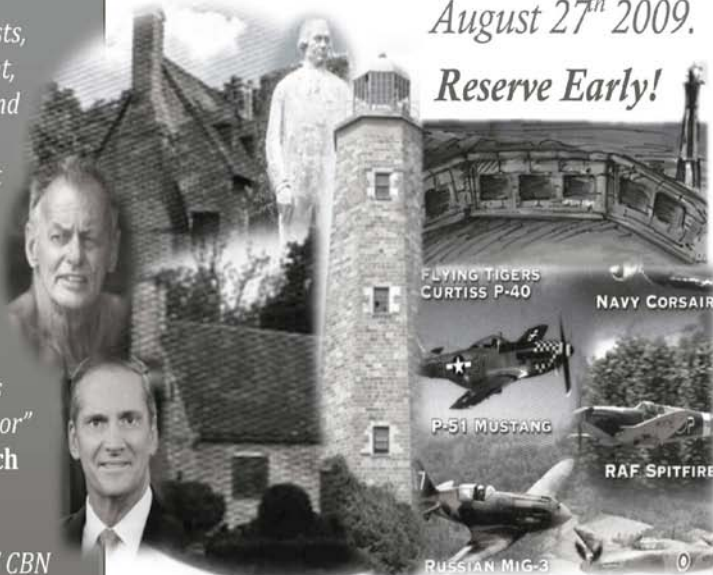
*Where will you  
be while we're  
in the sun?*

Turn your attendance at the  
**2009 Semi-Annual Meeting**

into your family's own  
mini-vacation, experience  
the history, participate  
in the programs, enjoy the  
beaches and save, because  
you'll be among friends – having fun!

To qualify for the Virginia Society's  
discounted rate, as much as \$34 off  
per night, you must book your room  
(1-3 nights) no later than Saturday  
August 27<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**Reserve Early!**



Take \$5 off each of your Registrations if your payment is  
received by August 27<sup>th</sup> so mark the dates and stay awhile!

**SEPTEMBER <sup>(17)</sup> 18-19 <sup>(20)</sup> 2009**  
**VIRGINIA BEACH RESORT HOTEL**