



George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 24, Issue 9

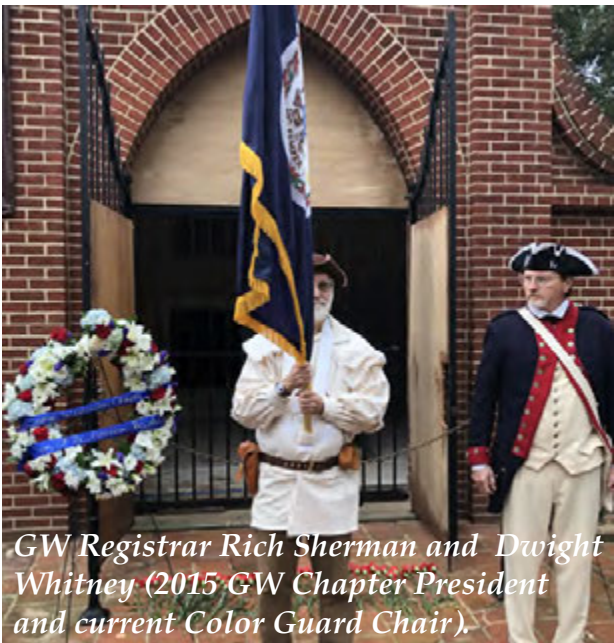
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December, 2022



On Veterans Day GW/DAR Chapters Pay Respects to Washington at Mount Vernon

In front of The General's Tomb: Don Francisco, Tillie Cassidy, Sharon White, Ron Kirby, Terri Maloney, Eric Atkisson, Laurel Wessman, Richard Rankin, John Blair, Rand Pixa and Tom Roth. The men are SAR George Washington Chapter members and the women are DAR Kate Waller Barrett Chapter members.



GW Registrar Rich Sherman and Dwight Whitney (2015 GW Chapter President and current Color Guard Chair).



L-R--Forest Crane, Sgt Maj John Champe Chapter, Sharon White, Regent of the Kate Waller Barrett Chapter, DAR, GW President Richard Rankin and our own Rich Sherman.

(Con't on Page 4)

President's Corner

Compatriots:

With my term expiring in December, this will be my last President's Column.

The past year has moved so swiftly, but I have appreciated the opportunity to serve as your Chapter President.



During my time as Chapter President, we achieved several highlights: our membership grew to 275 members, with 13 new members & 2 supplementals; we presented a record donation by our chapter and individual members of almost \$2,400.00 to the V.S.C.A.R.; we made a donation of \$ 2,000.00 to George Washington's 290th Birthday Fundraiser; Mount Vernon's President & CEO, Doug Bradburn, joined us at our February chapter meeting and spoke of his future vision for the estate; our chapter nominated JROTC candidate, Cadet Kyle Lovejoy won the VASSAR Enhanced JROTC Competition in Richmond and advanced to the national competition; our Public Service Award Committee earned awards in all categories and will be awarded the VASSAR John Blair Public Service Award Streamer in February 2023; our July 4th March to the Tomb at Mount Vernon set a record attendance of close to 140 attendees; our chapter, in coordination with the VASSAR Knight Patty Fund, donated close to \$5,000.00 to Pohick Church for the new epitaph honoring Revolutionary War Surgeon, Dr. William Brown; and finally, our chapter received domestic and international media coverage for marching in the Alexandria George Washington Birthday Parade and during the National Memorial Day Parade on the National Mall.

Many of these achievements would not have been possible without the dedication and support of many chapter members. At our November meeting, I recognized some of them:

Our Chapter Registrar, Rich Sherman, was presented with SAR's Liberty Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) for his continued sponsoring of new members; our Chapter Master-at-Arms, Covert Beach was presented with the VASSAR, Chapter Service Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) for his continued faithful service ensuring all flags & banners for indoor and outdoor chapter events are displayed; our Chapter Secretary, Scott Walker, was presented with the VASSAR, Chapter Service Medal for faithful service as Secretary and on-site Zoom Master for meetings and increasing Wild Apricot productivity; our PRS team member, Craig Batten was presented with the VASSAR Patriot Graves Preservation Medal for outstanding support in the maintenance of American Revolutionary Patriot Gravesites; but there was more, we presented Craig with the VASSAR, Chapter Service Medal for his diligent efforts to visit more than one thousand patriot grave sites; our Chapter Vice President, Rand Pixa was presented with the National SAR Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of notable services on behalf of our American principles and being an invaluable voice of wisdom to me throughout my tenure.

In recognition for my start in SAR, I presented the Lydia Darragh Medal to my sister, Julia Rankin Fulmer. The medal was named for a Patriot woman who crossed British lines during the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1778 and delivered critical information to General Washington. The medal is intended to recognize the assistance of ladies who work behind the scenes supporting SAR programs. Julie is a twenty-year DAR member in Pennsylvania. The Rankin lineage file which she researched over several months at NDAR Headquarters was made available to me as a PDF which supported my membership application to SAR.

We have some upcoming December events which deserve your participation: on December 3 in Chesapeake, VA the commemoration of the Battle of Great Bridge; on December 10 will be our joint

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President's Corner *(from Page 2)*

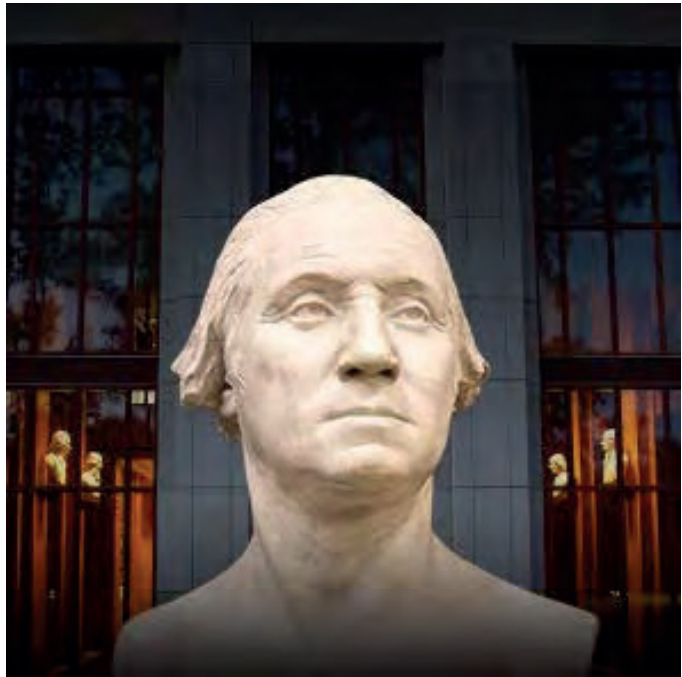
chapter meeting with the George Mason Chapter at the Army-Navy Country Club in Arlington and finally on December 17, we will be laying wreaths at the Alexandria National Cemetery, part of our support of Wreaths Across America, coordinated by Jack Coulter, the chapter's WAA Chairman.

Many thanks to all of you who have supported the George Washington Chapter this year and provided me with much support and encouragement during my tenure.

Pleased to extend my best wishes to Rand Pixa and his leadership team, as their terms begin in 2023.

Libertas et Patria

*Fraternally,
Richard E. Rankin, President
George Washington Chapter*



Veterans at Sunrise Assisted Living Honored

Continuing a 7-year tradition, the Sunrise at Mount Vernon Assisted Living facility in Alexandria honored the resident veterans on Veteran's Day, 2022. Paul Walden, Past President George Washington Chapter and compatriot of the Sgt. Maj. John Champe Chapter, VASSAR and Vice President General, Society of the War of 1812; and Col. Michael Greenberg, past Commander, Fort Belvoir, presented each of the 15 veterans, including one WWII veteran, a Flag pin and certificate of appreciation. The Rev. Tom Costa started the ceremony with prayers for the armed services, veterans, and their spouses, followed by a reading from Ecclesiasticus and the singing of the National Anthem, led by Susan Costa.



Left to right, Rev. Tom Costa, Susan Costa, Col. Greenberg, and Paul Walden.

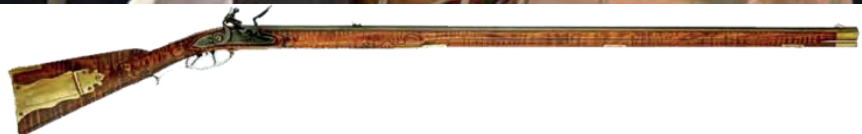
Chapters Pay Respects (from Page 1)



Left--CDR Laurel Wessman, USN retired, and a member of the Kate Waller Barrett Chapter, DAR. In middle is GW compatriot Eric Atkisson, Army retired Lt Col with GW Registrar Rich Sherman on right.



L-R-- Paul Christiansen of Col James Wood II Chapter, drummer Audrey Adams, Teen Militiaman Jack Mills, Forest Crane carries the American Flag and Rich Sherman carries the VA Flag. Dwight Whitney is to Rich's left, and on the end is Andrew Mills, Color Guard Commander Col William Grayson Chapter. Facing them is Don Francisco, Resident Fifer of Mount Vernon and compatriot of GW Chapter.



New Members of GW Chapter

Paul Steven McComb was born and raised in Barrington, Illinois. He attended Northwestern University through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) scholarship program and received both a Bachelor and Master of Science Degree in Civil Engineering.

Beginning in the early 1990s, Paul's naval career included the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FORTY; and assignments in Keflavik, Iceland; Norfolk; the Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; US Central Command, at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida; then back overseas to Qatar. Later assignments were at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) headquarters and the Naval Medical Center Bethesda and the Public Works Officer Bethesda. In June of 2013, after retiring from the Navy, Paul started at the U.S Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) headquarters in Falls Church and later that year he became the Director of Facilities and the Chief Engineer.

Paul is a Seabee Combat Warfare Officer, a member of the Acquisition Professional Community, and a registered licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Virginia. His personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), numerous additional military medals, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers de Fleury Medal (Bronze Order), the Society of American Military Engineers' M.G. Ploger Medal, and the Armed Forces Civilian Service Medal.

Paul and his wife, Deborah, reside in Falls Church, Virginia. Their daughter, Angie, is a recent graduate from the University of Pittsburgh in Industrial Engineering and resides in Pittsburgh. Their son, Peter, is a senior studying Business at the University of South Carolina. Paul is an active member at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Arlington, Virginia; and he is the District 17

Robert Clayton Norris, Jr. started out the first 14 years of his life in New Jersey. His father, an Army officer, was transferred to Virginia for two years and then to Okinawa, where Bob graduated from Kubasaki High School, meaning he never had to worry about a class reunion. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at Frostburg State College in Maryland, an MBA at George Mason University, and a doctorate in artificial intelligence at the University of Florida.

Bob is a defense intelligence senior executive in the Department of Defense, and he served in Afghanistan. He has also been a professor at National Defense University, a senior analyst at the Government Accountability Office, an Assistant Professor of Management Information Systems at the University of North Florida, and an IT Consultant working in Malaysia. His hobbies are golf, kayaking, attending performances at the Kennedy Center, skiing, and international travel.

From his teenage years Bob had an interest in family history and in 1967 he learned about one of his lines, the Watson family, from a book at his grandmother's house. It mentioned that a Watson fought in the American Revolution, but he could not tell how they were related. Years later when he asked a relative about the book, he discovered it was lost.

Recently Bob found a digitized copy on the Library of Congress website. Through the book and related searches, he discovered he was a direct descendant of Colonel James Watson (1743–1831). He received his commission as Captain on July 8, 1776. His commission as Colonel was dated July 1, 1777. His initial assignment was to the First Battalion of the Flying Corps of Lancaster County, PA, and they were stationed in Amboy, NJ. From there they were ordered to the Battle of Long Island and were stationed at King's Bridge until George

(Continued on Page 8)

Fairfax Resolves Honor John Carlyle

Our neighbors of the Fairfax Resolves Chapter joined with the George Washington Chapter on October 30, 2022 and marked the grave of patriot John Carlyle in the Old Presbyterian Meeting House Grave Yard (Old Town Alexandria). John Carlyle was a signer of the Fairfax Resolves.



Richard Rankin, Ernie Coggins, and Tom Roth represented the George Washington Chapter at the John Carlyle Grave Marking.



President Rankin paid respects to John Carlyle's Grave and placed a wreath on behalf of the George Washington Chapter.

(Continued on Page 13)



"A citizen, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, December 26, 1799.

President	Richard Rankin: 703-538-5805
Vice President	Rand Pixa: 703-622-7001
Treasurer	Bill Wilson: 301-523-2690
Secretary	Scott Walker: 703-216-4798
Registrar	Richard Sherman: 301-654-6319

The George Washington Chapter was chartered in its present form on April 2, 1954. With over 250 members, it is Virginia's largest SAR chapter. Meetings customarily 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.

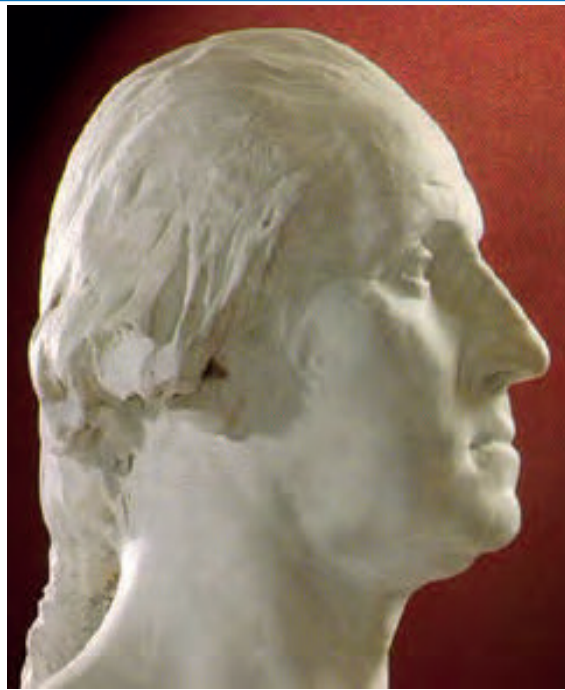
Immediate Past President:

Tom Roth: 703-739-8811

Ride Share: Members in need of a ride to a Chapter meeting or a Chapter-sponsored event may contact the Amenities Committee Chairman, Don Reynolds, at (703) 765-4947.

This newsletter is **temporarily** edited by **Pete Farley**. Inputs from Chapter officers, committee chairmen, and fellow Compatriots are always needed. Please send your inputs and comments to nyyno7@cox.net or call 703-585-3163.

By signing the Declaration of Independence, the fifty-six Americans pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. Nine died of wounds during the Revolutionary War. Five were captured or imprisoned. Wives and children were jailed, mistreated, or left penniless. Twelve signers' houses were burned to the ground. No signer defected. Their honor, like their nation remained intact.



December through the years with George Washington

1776 on the 25th--Washington crosses the Delaware River.

1776 on the 26th--Victory at the Battle of Trenton.

1783 on the 23rd--Washington resigns his military commission at Annapolis.

1791 on the 15th--Ratification of the Bill of Rights.

1792 on the 5th--Electoral college unanimously elects Washington to his second term as President.

1799 on the 14th--Death of George Washington.

1799 on the 18th--Funeral and burial of George Washington.

New Members *(from Page 5)*

McComb -- *Continued*

and Post 1976 Chaplain for the American Legion.

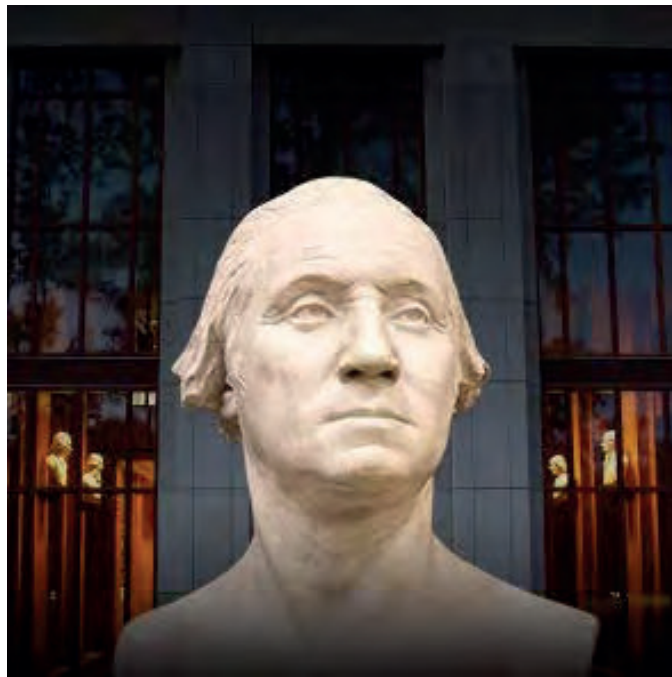
Paul's patriot ancestor, Elizabeth Lambert, was born around 1754 in Virginia. Around 1772 she married Jacob Springston who died in 1778 and as a widow she performed patriotic service by providing provisions to the Continental Army. She died in 1787 in Harrison County, VA

*See
photo of
new
members
bottom
of Page 9.*

Norris, Jr. -- *Continued*

Washington crossed the Hudson River. After the war he settled in Lancaster County, PA.

Bob was interested in joining SAR for several reasons. First, to go through the rigorous documentation process to definitively prove the family relationship to Colonel Watson. Second, to let family members know about the history they are part of. Third, given his interest in American history, to participate in the activities of SAR.



Patriot Research System

PATRIOT RESEARCH SYSTEM (PRS) – FIVE YEARS LATER

The PRS was launched in January 2018 and if you have not looked at it in a while, you might want to do that as it has changed a lot over the past five years -- [NSSAR PRS](https://sarpatriots.sar.org) (sarpatriots.sar.org)

One key feature today is the ability to access “Member Only” features by clicking LOGIN button (upper right side). That will take you to the NSSAR site so you can enter your NSSAR username and password. You then automatically are taken back to the PRS site with member privileges. Try it to see the additional features that will now be available to you.



A key part of making the PRS a success has been an effort by many Volunteers to upload NSSAR approved record copy (RC) lineages. RCs detail the Compatriot's lineage to his Patriot as well as critical information about each Patriot. This effort is now over 99% complete for about 160,000 RCs – all the RCs approved since 1970.

One of your George Washington Chapter Compatriots, Craig Batten, has spent the past year locating and visiting cemeteries all around Virginia, identifying Patriot graves and GPS coordinates, and updating the PRS. This effort supports the PRS capability to map Patriot burials within each County and to use Google Earth to create interactive map presentations. You can see a Virginia-wide map of Craig's efforts at [Virginia SAR Patriot Cemetery Map](#).

The Descendant Search feature has been improved – it now allows you to search for Patriot connections to your lineage. Descendant Search will compare your Ancestor to the individuals found on approved RCs and where matches are found, provide you with links to the Patriot, the matching Lineage and the Compatriot. This implementation is increment #1 in what will eventually be a “Patriot Tree” that will connect all common ancestors within the PRS Lineages and allow you to navigate up and down these lineal branches.



The PRS Committee is always looking for volunteers to assist with entering new data into the PRS and if that would be of interest to you, please contact me at (703) 455-8317 or webmaster@gwsar.org.

[Jamie Callender](#)



New Members

L-R--George Washington Chapter President Richard Rankin, Robert Norris, Paul McComb and GW Registrar Rich Sherman.

Upcoming Events

Dec. 10: Joint Chapter Meeting
(George Washington & George Mason Chapters)
at 11:30 am
Army-Navy Country Club Arlington, VA

Dec 17: Wreaths Across America
at 9:30 am
Alexandria National Cemetery
1450 Wilkes Street
Alexandria, VA
(please contact Compatriot Jack Coulter for participant information)



Jan 14, 2023: Chapter Meeting at 11:30 am
Pohick Church
Guest Speaker Compatriot Dick Hamly on the History of Pohick Church

Feb 9-12, VASSAR Annual Meeting,
Berry Hill Resort
South Boston, VA
(includes Chapter February meeting)

Feb 18, Grave-marking for Phillip Fendall at 11:00 am
Alexandria, VA

Feb 20: George Washington Birthday Parade, muster 11:00 am
Alexandria, VA
(Jack Evans Chapter Medal for first-time participants)

Feb 22: Wreath Laying in Honor of George Washington's 291st Birthday 9:00 am
Tomb of George Washington
Mount Vernon, VA

Feb 25: 247th Commemoration of the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge at 10:00 am
Moore's Creek Battleground
40 Patriots Hall Drive, Currie, NC

Feb 24-Mar 4: Virginia History Day (District Five), final judging 3/4
West Springfield High School
Springfield, VA

Mar 11: Chapter Meeting at 11:30 am
Location TBD

Mar 11: Commemoration of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse at 10:00 am
Guilford Courthouse National Military Park
2332 New Garden Road, Greensboro, NC

Note: Details for events are updated on the Chapter website at www.gwsar.org. Please remember that you must be logged in to view SAR members-only events in addition to public events.



November GW Chapter Meeting



GW Chapter Secretary Scott Walker flanked by his father and son, also GW Chapter members. President Rankin awarded Scott the Virginia Society Chapter Service Medal (aka the "Pineapple Medal") for his distinguished service as Chapter Secretary.



Craig Batten was presented with the VASSAR Patriot Graves Preservation Medal for outstanding support in the maintenance of American Revolutionary Patriot Gravesites;



but there was more, we presented Craig with the VASSAR, Chapter Service Medal for his diligent efforts to visit more than one thousand patriot grave sites.



Our Chapter Master-at-Arms, Covert Beach was presented with the VASSAR, Chapter Service Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) for his continued faithful service ensuring all flags & banners for indoor and outdoor chapter events are displayed.



The newly elected officers for 2023 are shown in the image L-R Richard Rankin (3 year term as an at large member of the BOM), Scot Bryant (Secretary), Scott Walker (Treasurer), Bill Wilson (Vice-President) and shown on the monitor Rand Pixa (President). Dave Thomas, Past President (2019) and member of the BOM, served as Chair of the Nominating Committee.



**National Society
of the
Sons of the American Revolution**



**PROCLAMATION
2022 Wreaths Across America**

WHEREAS, the organization Wreaths Across America coordinates wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 3,400 additional locations in all 50 states, at sea and abroad; and,

WHEREAS, the mission of Wreaths Across America is to remember the fallen, honor those who serve and teach our children the value of freedom; and

WHEREAS, Wreaths Across America has chosen “**FIND A WAY TO SERVE**” as its 2022 theme to encourage youth to get involved in their own communities to serve in even small ways that can make a big impact; and,

WHEREAS, one of the patriotic, historical, and education purposes of the Sons of the American Revolution is “to perpetuate the memory of those individuals who, by their services or sacrifices during the war of the American Revolution, achieved the independence of the American people;” and,

WHEREAS, the Sons of the American Revolution seeks to foster cooperative arrangements with patriotic organizations such as Wreaths Across America in pursuit of our common goals to honor, respect, and support veterans, and to inspire our communities to “a more profound reverence for the principles of the government founded by our forefathers;” and,

WHEREAS, Saturday, December 17, 2022, has been designated by the Wreaths Across America organization as the date for these wreath laying ceremonies to occur;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, C. Bruce Pickette, President General of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, encourage all Compatriots to join with Wreaths Across America and other patriotic, community, and veteran's organizations, on Saturday, December 17, 2022 to participate in wreath-laying ceremonies and activities in their communities and to help youth **FIND A WAY TO SERVE**.



C. Bruce Pickette

C. Bruce Pickette
President General, 2022-2023

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution this twenty-first day of November, two thousand twenty-two and the two hundred and forty-seventh year of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America.



Fairfax Resolves (from Page 6)



Left--President Rankin shown among the other SAR and DAR representatives who paid respects.



Above--In 2006 the George Washington Chapter, VASSAR and the St. Andrews Society placed a Plaque honoring all of the Patriots buried in the Old Presbyterian Meeting House Graveyard.



Left--VASSAR First VP Ernie Coggins paid respects to John Carlyle's Grave and placed a wreath on behalf of VASSAR. Right--Ernie presented greetings on behalf of VASSAR.



The Color Guard

