



# George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 25, Issue 1

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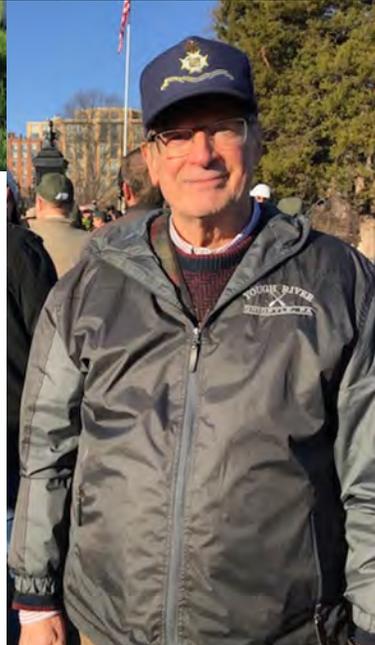
January, 2023

## Wreaths Across America Alexandria National Cemetery



*Above--George Washington Chapter compatriots Frank Weiss and John Brigden.*

*Right--outgoing GW President Richard Rankin.*



*Incoming GW President Rand Pixa and WAA organizer Jack Coulter.*



# President's Corner

## *Compatriots:*



It is with honored humility that I received the Chapter's SAR badge and neck ribbon on December 10th, for I well understand that they symbolize the entrustment of leadership of your Chapter for the coming year. It is a great trust I will discharge to the best of my ability. That trust is shared with the other newly elected officers. We are truly fortunate to have such a distinguished and experienced Board of Managers. The Managers-at-Large are past-Presidents Jay Henn, Tom Roth, and Richard Rankin, whose steady hands and sage counsel assure continued success. Vice President Bill Wilson brings his marketing experience to manage our signature events; who better than financial manager Scott Walker to serve as Treasurer; and Secretary Scot Bryant will apply his IT knowledge gained at Mount Vernon to our communications.

Building on the impressive record of success forged over many years and recounted for the last year in President Richard Rankin's December President's Corner, we aim to honor all of the Chapter's long traditions while turning challenges into opportunities in the new year. The George Washington Chapter is your chapter and it runs on ideas; please share yours with me and the other members of the Board of Managers.

Of challenges, one has been financial. It's no surprise the cost of everything has increased significantly and our Chapter's many activities are not immune to those increased costs. For a time we have experienced expenditures greater than receipts. But through the careful management of the Board of Managers and, significantly, your generous gifts, we have likely turned a corner.

Related is the challenge presented by the increased cost of meetings at our customary

Belle Haven Country Club venue. It is important to us that the cost of luncheon meetings is not an impediment to robust attendance or full participation. While we have and continue to work hard to maintain our relationship with Belle Haven Country Club, the circumstances of cost and unavailability at certain times have caused us to consider other venues and forms of meeting. So, on January 14th, our venue will match our speaker's topic – George Washington Compatriot Dick Hamly's presentation on the history of Pohick Church, on site – with a first-tier but modestly priced boxed-lunch. Other creative possibilities for meetings through the year will be before the Board of Managers for consideration.

As we consider our own activities we can never forget that we are part of a much larger organization, particularly at the state level, but also the NSSAR. At a very high level, there are three big things on the horizon. First, our own former Chapter President Ernie Coggins, who now serves as the First Vice President of VASSAR, will stand for election as President of the Virginia Society in February; we owe him our full support. Second, the election will occur at the VASSAR Annual Meeting, to be held at the Berry Hill Resort in South Boston, Virginia -- it would be great to have a big turnout to support Ernie while VASSAR honors the many efforts to illuminate the importance of the Crossing of the Dan River. Third, the weekend and early week of February 20th will be full of events, highlighted by our march in the George Washington Birthday Parade. Those events will not happen on their own; they happen because of you.

As we move forward, I will never forget the trust you have placed in me and the other Chapter officials, as we all work together to make a meaningful contribution to the highest principles of the SAR.

*Fraternally,*  
*Rand Pixa, President*  
*George Washington Chapter*

# Eagle Scout Essay Scholarship Winner

## Eagle Scout Clark James

### Young Men of the Revolution

By Clark James

The men behind the Revolutionary War from 1775 to 1783 were extremely brave. They were willing to risk their lives just to fight for a chance to have their own country, a chance to have freedom. Their ages varied, but one group of heroes that not many people talk about are the young men who fought alongside their fathers and siblings. They might have been young, but they still made a massive difference.

In the 1760s, the British and the Americans were clashing with each other over issues such as taxation, trade, and colonization. This would lead to different conflicts happening between the two. One of the most important conflicts was the first fought battle, the Battle of Lexington and Concord. The British had marched into Lexington and Concord, meaning to seize weapons and prevent a war, but they ended up losing to the American militia and sparking one. While the British had a strong army, the American army was made up of mostly farmers and merchants. They did not have experience fighting, but they were confident and brave, putting their lives on the line for what they believed in. Many of these volunteers were adults, but there were also young men in the midst, ranging from ages 15 to 18. There were even a few younger.

One of these young men was Connecticut's Joseph Martin. A year after the war began, at the age of only 15, Martin joined the army, even though the joining age by law was 17. He would help fight for the next eight years of the war until it finally ended. In his old age, he proceeded to write a book and release it<sup>1</sup>, revealing the thoughts and feelings he had during the time. In his book, after his allies were fired upon by the British, Martin claimed the "demons of fear and disorder seemed to take full possession of all and everything on that day". He was nearly in shock, looking at all of the belongings left over at the spot that was fired upon. He did everything he could to help a sick, injured comrade but he could not save him. However, he still persevered and continued to fight. He was a true hero for his time.

Another example of a brave young man is William Diamond from Massachusetts. He signed up to be a drummer boy for the militia. Because of the loud noises during battles, orders could be difficult to be given to troops. The drummer boy's job is to drum certain patterns to convey messages to the soldiers. They are often close to the warfare and exposed to danger. That proves that Diamond was willing to sacrifice himself for the greater good.

Not many people ever think about any of the younger men who helped fight in the Revolutionary War. They are relatively unknown, but they have helped make a massive impact in the history of our country. They inspire me to be braver when I am conquering my problems. If they could do many brave tasks, I should be able to do anything I put my mind to.

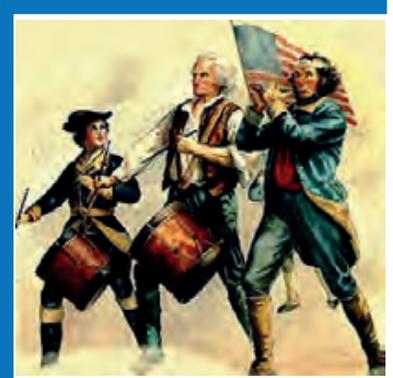
1- The book is titled "*The Adventures of a Revolutionary Soldier*" and was released in 1830.



# December Chapter Meeting



*GW President Rand Pixa, Paul McComb, Past GW President Paul Walden, Past GW President Tom Roth, Past GW President Dave Thomas and Bill Bland.*



Back in June 2017 as part of Fairfax County's 275th Anniversary Celebration, Jamie Callender led a project to identify Revolutionary War dead from Fairfax County, and to create and place a monument in their honor at the old Fairfax County Courthouse. In January 2018 the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors issued a Certificate of Recognition to Jamie in thanks for his efforts. I was able to arrange to present the Certificate to Jamie on the sidelines of the December Joint Chapter Meeting. -- *Tom Roth*



*VASSAR President Bruce Meyer swearing in new GW officers. L-R: Former GW President Richard Rankin, President Rand Pixa, Vice President Bill Wilson, Treasurer Scott Walker, Secretary Scot Bryant.*



# Great Bridge Commemoration

The Annual Commemoration of the Battle of Great Bridge took place on December 3, 2022 in the City Council Chambers in Chesapeake, Virginia. (Inclement weather pushed the event indoors). This National SAR event was attended by GW President Richard Rankin, Chancellor General Mike Elston, V.S.C.A.R. President Will Elston, and past GW Presidents Jay Henn (with wife Bonnie) and Tom Roth. This was the 122nd Annual Commemoration by the Great Bridge Chapter, NSDAR, and the 12th Annual Commemoration by the Norfolk Chapter, VASSAR. The Battle of Great Bridge was an early Patriot victory, which led directly to Lord Dunmore's evacuation of the major port of Norfolk, and prevented British control of the Chesapeake Bay.

*Right: Chancellor General Mike Elston brought greetings on behalf of the President General and (far right) presented a wreath, escorted here by VASSAR Color Guard Commander Chris Melhuish.*

*Below are Bruce Meyer, Jay Henn and Richard Rankin.*



*Will Elston, President, brought greetings on behalf of the V.S.C.A.R. and presented a wreath.* ↑



*At the 2018 VASSAR Annual Meeting, Jay Henn received from outgoing VASSAR President Mike Elston the "President's Award" for his assistance to Mike during his term in 2017 as VASSAR President. We arranged for Mike to present the Certificate to Jay and on the sidelines of the Battle of Great Bridge Commemoration.*



*(Continued next Page)*

*Members of the V.S.C.A.R.*

# Great Bridge (con't from previous page)



GW President Richard Rankin was recognized as presenting a wreath on behalf of the George Washington Chapter.



Past GW President Jay Henn and his wife Bonnie (DAR) attended.



Lisa Davis, Regent, Great Bridge Chapter, NSDAR greeted the assembly.



*"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	Rand Pixa: 703-622-7001
Vice President	Bill Wilson: 301-523-2690
Treasurer	Scott Walker: 703-216-4798
Secretary	Scot Bryant: 703-922-4431
Registrar	Richard Sherman: 301-654-6319

The George Washington Chapter was chartered in its present form 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).

**Immediate Past President:**  
Richard Rankin: 703-538-5805

**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 [sbryant.sarmail@gmail.com](mailto:sbryant.sarmail@gmail.com)

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.



## January through the years with George Washington

- 1759** on the 6th--Washington marries Martha Dandridge Custis.
- 1777** on the 3rd--Victory at the Battle of Princeton.
- 1788** on the 16th--Washington is named chancellor of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.
- 1801** on the 1st--George Washington's enslaved people are freed by his widow, Martha.

# A Cool New Look for SAR Summer Events

*By Rand Pixa*

Last September your Board of Managers unanimously approved a good-looking way to beat the heat at summer events, such as marching in the National Memorial Day Parade. The health and safety measure adds a new option for participants – khaki trousers with SAR blue polo shirt, topped by a straw hat or boater. The new outfit is in addition to customary Revolutionary-era civilian attire or uniform, or blue blazer, tie, and khaki trousers. The new option also has the advantage of providing a smart, uniform look for our marchers.

If you want to wear the new outfit, now is a good time to get ready by ordering the shirt and hat. If you already have a blue SAR-logo polo shirt, great. But if you need one, please order from the SAR store. Also, below, you will find links for three alternative sources of boater straw hats -- boaters may be preferable because they can be had with a blue and red band to match the shirt and SAR logo, but the straw hat is your call.

Links:

SAR polo shirt: <https://store.sar.org/categories.aspx?Keyword=polo%20shirt>

Hats (3 moderate-cost options; many others are available; this is not an endorsement):

Hats.com

[https://www.hats.com/mens/shop-by-fabric/straw/straw-boater?nosto\\_source=cmp&nosto=710514051](https://www.hats.com/mens/shop-by-fabric/straw/straw-boater?nosto_source=cmp&nosto=710514051)

Berkeley Hats

<https://berkeleyhat.com/straw-boater-hat.html>

Amazon

[https://www.amazon.com/ZAKIRA-Straw-Boater-Handmade-Navy-Yellow-Navy/dp/B073WF3KJ2/ref=cs\\_sr\\_dp\\_2?crid=GBPD18HKTNQA&keywords=zakira%2Bstraw%2Bboater%2Bhat%2Bhandmade%2Bin%2Bitaly&qid=1671810953&prefix=Zakira%2Bstraw%2Caps%2C60&sr=8-1&th=1](https://www.amazon.com/ZAKIRA-Straw-Boater-Handmade-Navy-Yellow-Navy/dp/B073WF3KJ2/ref=cs_sr_dp_2?crid=GBPD18HKTNQA&keywords=zakira%2Bstraw%2Bboater%2Bhat%2Bhandmade%2Bin%2Bitaly&qid=1671810953&prefix=Zakira%2Bstraw%2Caps%2C60&sr=8-1&th=1)



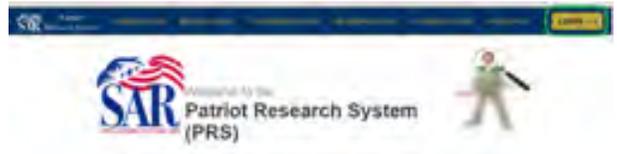
**Pocatello, ID Veterans Day Parade**  
2012 GW Chapter President Paul Briggs and wife Gina attended the first such parade in Pocatello in 80 years (since WW II). Paul brought his Marine Corps Flag along. Paul is retired USMC Colonel, and Gina is a USAF Major retired.

# 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 ([sarpatriots.sar.org](http://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](mailto:webmaster@gwsar.org).

[Jamie Callender](#)



# Upcoming Events

**Jan 14--Saturday: at 11:30**

**Chapter Meeting** --Zoom at 1:00pm

Pohick Church

*Guest Speaker Compatriot Dick Hamly on the History of Pohick Church.*

**Jan 14--Saturday: 1:00 pm**

**Commemoration of the Battle of Cowpens**

*Daniel Morgan's grave site.*

Mount Hebron Cemetery

Winchester, VA

**Jan 19, 20, 21--Peter Muhlenburg Presentations & Commemoration**

**Thursday: 1/19--7:00 pm**--Presentation at Warren Heritage Society  
Front Royal, VA

**Friday: 1/20--10:00 am**--Presentation at Commonwealth Senior Living Facility  
Front Royal, VA

**Saturday: 1/21--1:00 pm**--

Commemoration of Peter Muhlenburg  
Woodstock, VA, at the old courthouse square on Main Street.

**Jan 28--Saturday: 10:00 am--2:00 pm**

Winter Planning Meeting--Zoom

**Feb 9-12, VASSAR Annual Meeting**

Berry Hill Resort

South Boston, VA

*(includes Chapter February meeting)*

**Feb 10--Friday: 5:00 pm--Crossing the Banister Commemoration**

Sponsored by Dan River Chapter in conjunction with the annual meeting  
Halifax, VA

**Feb 11--Saturday: 10:00 am--Crossing the Dan Commemoration**

Sponsored by Dan River Chapter in conjunction with the annual meeting  
Halifax, VA

**Feb 18--Saturday: 11:00 am**

**Grave Dedication and Marking for Phillip Fendall**

Lee-Fendall House

614 Oronoco Street

Alexandria, VA

**Feb 20--Monday: 9:00 am**

**Commemoration at Tomb of Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier**

Alexandria, VA

**Feb 20: Monday: Muster 11:00 am**

**George Washington Birthday Parade**  
Alexandria, VA

*(Jack Evans Chapter Medal for first-time participants)*

**Feb 22--Wednesday: 9:00 am**

**Wreath Laying in Honor of George Washington's 291st Birthday**

Tomb of George Washington

Mount Vernon, VA

**Feb 22--Wednesday: 10:00 am**

**Commemoration of George Washington Washington's HQ**

Winchester, VA

**Feb 24-Mar 4: Virginia History Day**

**(District Five), final judging 3/4**

West Springfield High School

Springfield, VA

**Feb 25--Saturday: 10:00 am**

**247th Commemoration of the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge**

Moore's Creek Battleground

40 Patriots Hall Drive, Currie, NC

**Mar 11--Saturday 11:30 am: Chapter Meeting**

**Location TBA**

*Presentation by VASSAR Color Guard*

**Mar 11--Saturday: 10:00 am**

**Commemoration of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse**

Guilford CH National Military Park

2332 New Garden Road, Greensboro, NC



**Note: Contact for George Washington Chapter Events: email [billwilsongwvp@comcast.net](mailto:billwilsongwvp@comcast.net)**