



George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 25, Issue 5

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May, 2023



The beginning at the James Monroe Birthplace . . .

James Monroe 265th Birthday Celebrations



. . . to the end at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA.

Photo by Kat Schwetke

Saturday April 22, 2023, the James Monroe Memorial Foundation celebrated the 265th Birthday of President Monroe with a commemoration at the James Monroe Birthplace and Park, Westmoreland County, Virginia. George Washington Chapter Members Ernie Coggins (President of the Virginia Society SAR), Rand Pixa (President of the George Washington Chapter), and



Escorted by VASSAR Color Guard Commander, Chris Melhuish, VASSAR President, Ernie Coggins, brought greetings and presented a wreath.

Friday, April 28, 2023, the US Army on behalf of President of the United States, together with the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, held ceremonies on James Monroe's Birthday at the 5th President's Gravesite (*also known as the Birdcage for its 19th century wrought iron canopy*) in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, Virginia. The United States Army placed a wreath on behalf of the President. The James Monroe



Photo by Chris Yohn

Tom Roth (Past President, 2021) of the George Washington Chapter placed a wreath and brought greetings on behalf of President Pixa and the GW Chapter.

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President's Corner

Compatriots:

Your Chapter needs your support to secure its mission accomplishment in the future.



Looking over the past few years it is apparent that the emblematic activities of the Chapter are under-resourced. Those activities are the ones by which we turn our shared belief in the core principles established by the Revolution into action designed to educate our fellow citizens about what the Revolution accomplished and the herculean efforts and sacrifices by our Patriot ancestors that made it possible. Those activities which give expression to our beliefs include youth activities like Virginia History Day and oration and essay contests, Scouting guidance and awards, JROTC recognition, Patriot grave marking, public service awards and recognition, commemoration of America's 250th Anniversary, and the Chapter Color Guard we need to reinvigorate. While each one of us would likely be quick to say the Chapter should do all of these things as impactfully as possible, it is impossible to do them without resources. Quite literally in this year's budget discussion the entirety of the public service awards program was on the chopping block and was only saved by the very generous and substantial offer of one member to underwrite the whole program.

It was in that context that the Chapter Board of Managers sought to provide for a steady stream of income for a broad range of activities, including those mentioned above, by establishing a Chapter Outreach and Education Endowment Fund. As established, the Fund may disburse up to 5% of the prior end of year balance of the Fund for the target activities in the coming year. The notion is to have enough that the principal of the Fund will generate sufficient investment income to make a payout each year at that level, while

preserving the corpus of principal for the indefinite future. That way the essential education and outreach functions of the Chapter can be accomplished each year and our Committee Chairmen will have a baseline amount of income on which they can rely.

We were extremely fortunate that we have a nest egg with which we can start. The terms of Colonel Mosher's bequest provide for certain education expenses, flexibly available for the purposes of the Endowment Fund. And then there was the remarkably good fortune of the offer of a gift which could be used to match the gifts of other members to the Endowment Fund. Those two together would total \$41,600 and could produce a little more than \$2,000 per year for our family of education and program activities. However, to put that in perspective, please note that the budget request for public service awards alone for this year was \$2,500; and even at that level it likely would not be possible to make awards to all of the award-worthy public safety officers that come to our attention. It was not possible to provide the full requested level of funding, even with a gift.

To take full advantage of the new money available, the Board of Managers concurred in setting a \$30,000 matching goal. Hence *"Thirty Days / Thirty Thousand Dollars."* If we, the membership, can raise the \$30,000 goal for matching, we could have \$71,600 and a bit more than \$3,500 each year to predictably support our activities, indefinitely into the future.



*... some of our ancestors gave all--
let us give all we can !*

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President's *(from Page 2)*

I would hope we all agree that informing the public, and especially our youth, of the significance of our Patriots' Revolutionary ideals is at the core of what brought us together in the Sons of the American Revolution. To make that happen now, and predictably and sustainably for the indefinite future, is what the Outreach and Education Endowment Fund is all about. Please support it to the greatest degree you can; every gift, no matter its size, matters. This is a team effort and it is important.

Fraternally,
Rand Pixa, President
George Washington Chapter

(You may learn more at <https://www.gwsar.org/Spring-Fund-Raising-Campaign>; you may use the online Donate button there or you may mail your check to Chapter Treasurer Scott Walker at 223 North Royal Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

April 19th – May 18th, 2023

Merit Badge Counselor Volunteers

For a very small investment of your time, you can have a major impact on the lives of young men and women by becoming a Merit Badge Counselor. The Chapter will be conducting a merit badge workshop with Troop 996 at Aldersgate United Methodist Church (1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308) on Saturday, June 3rd. If you have any expertise in American Heritage, Genealogy or Law; we need your help.

Please volunteer by
contacting Marty Johnson at mjvt49@gmail.com.



Richmond Chapter Centennial



Left: Past Virginia SAR Presidents Bill Schwetke, Mark Brennan and Jeff Thomas flank current President Ernie Coggins.

Right: Virginia SAR President Ernie Coggins and Richmond Chapter President Chris Yohn at the Richmond Chapter's centennial celebration Sunday, April 23, 2023.



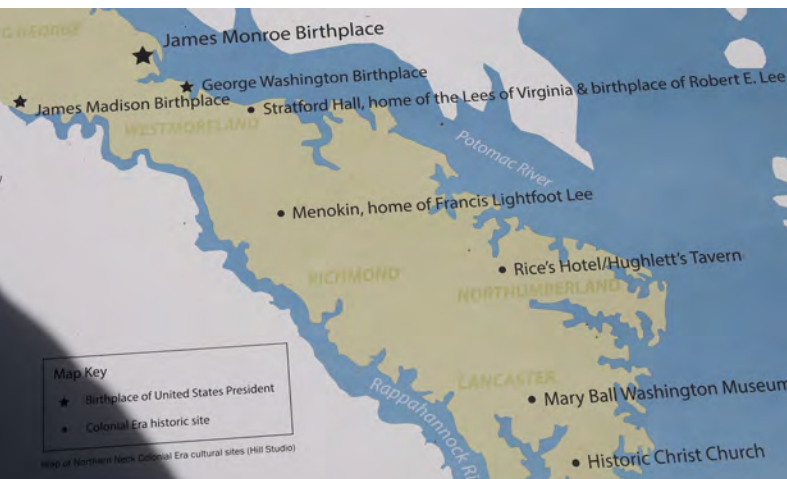
James Monroe (from Page 2)

Birthplace continued . . .

Tom Roth (VASSAR Historian and Past President (2021) of the GW Chapter attended.

President Rand Pixa (right) brought greetings on behalf of the George Washington Chapter.

Tom Roth stayed behind his camera.



Three of the first five US Presidents were born in Westmoreland County, Virginia within about 10 miles of each other. Presidents Washington, Madison, and Monroe.

Presenting the JROTC Bronze Medal and Certificate

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) awards the JROTC Medal to foster the principle of the "citizen-soldier," exemplified by the Minutemen of Revolutionary War days. This award is presented by a SAR Chapter, State-level Society, or the National Society to JROTC cadets who are selected for having a high degree of merit with respect to leadership qualities, military bearing, and general excellence. The Commanding Officer of the JROTC unit selects the recipients.

Cemetery continued . . .

Memorial Foundation and other lineage and heritage societies also presented wreaths and brought greetings. VASSAR President Ernie Coggins and Mrs. Coggins also attended. Fourteen SAR Chapters were registered to present wreaths. The steady rain was felt by the attendees to be a minor inconvenience when honoring President Monroe, a veteran of the Battle of Trenton and the winter at Valley Forge.



The reading of the citation on presentation of President Biden's wreath at Cemetery.



From left: Houston Smith, GWSAR; Ja' Lin Turner, JROTC Cadet; Richard Douglass, GWSAR. The award was presented at Mount Vernon High School's annual JROTC Awards Ceremony, Friday April 28, 2023.

America 250

The Chapter's America 250 program video, found on the Chapter's website under the menu heading "*30/30 Campaign*", amplifies the importance of patriotism. Patriotism creates a sense of community and shared identity which can motivate people to work together to strengthen their country. Most importantly, patriotism promotes democracy and freedom.

When people are patriotic, they are more likely to defend their country's democratic institutions and fight for freedom. Consistent with the America 250 SAR Program Toolkit developed by National SAR, the Chapter's America 250 Committee is creating a set of collateral (files, templates, etc.) for use in the Chapter's America 250 activities as we move forward.



Historical Events – May 1773

(Remember, the American Revolution did not begin July 4th, 1776.)

The Tea Act of May 10, 1773 was a British law that granted the British East India Company a monopoly on the tea trade in the American colonies. The British passed the Act to save the financially troubled East India Company, but it had the unintended consequence of sparking the American Revolution.

The colonists were already angry about the Townshend Acts, which had imposed taxes on imported goods, including tea. The colonists considered The Tea Act to be an attempt by the British government to force them to pay taxes without their consent. In response, the colonists organized boycotts of British tea.

When the British East India Company ships carrying tea arrived in Boston Harbor in December 1773, a group of colonists disguised themselves as Mohawk Indians and boarded the ships. They dumped 342 chests of tea into the harbor. This event, known as the Boston Tea Party, became a rallying cry for the American Revolution.

The Tea Act was a major turning point in the relationship between Britain and its American colonies. It showed that the colonists were willing to resist British authority, and it helped to unite them in their fight for independence.

Stay tuned... There is much more to come!



GWSAR Launches Test of QR Code Project

For Revolutionary War Graves

To help tell the story of our Revolutionary War Patriots, the George Washington Chapter placed small markers with a QR (Quick Response) code that link to the patriot's biography and service record on the SAR's Patriot Research System (PRS). Not only will this give the public a greater appreciation of the service of our Patriots but will also help publicize the society. QR markers were placed in the Presbyterian Meeting House section of the Wilkes Street complex in Alexandria and in the Flint Hill cemetery in Vienna. Unfortunately, some of the cemeteries where our chapter has marked patriot graves in the past declined to give us permission to place these QR code markers. GWSAR Compatriot Luc Chevalier assisted Paul Walden, Grave Marking Chair, in placing these markers. This first batch of markers is a test case to see how long these last in the elements while we research more economical options for producing these markers.



Compatriot Luc Chevalier assisted Paul Walden.



"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

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.



May through the years with George Washington

- 1784** on the 4th--Washington attends first meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati.
- 1785** on the 17th--Washington elected president of the Potomac Canal Company.
- 1787** on the 25th--Washington elected president of Constitutional Convention.
- 1789** on the 14th--Congress officially adopts "*President of the United States*" as a form of address for new leader.
- 1802** on the 22nd--Death of Martha Washington.

President Jefferson's 280th Birthday and the 80th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Jefferson Memorial

April 13, 2023

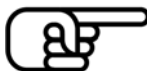


Right: VASSAR President and GW Past President Ernie Coggins presented a wreath flanked by Color Guard.



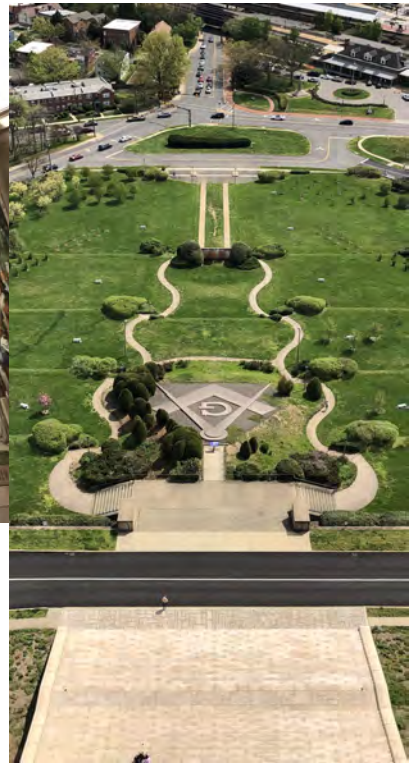
L-R: Bill Schwetke (former VASSAR President), VASSAR Historian Tom Roth (Past President GW Chapter), Pete Davenport (NSSAR Vice President General Mid Atlantic District, former Chancellor General, and VASSAR President), VASSAR President Ernie Coggins, Michael B. Wilson (President Col. William Grayson Chapter) with his daughter, and VASSAR Color Guard Adjutant Dale Corey (Past President Col. James Wood II Chapter).

A few days later, past GW President Tom Roth hiked back to the Jefferson Memorial, found the wreaths were moved inside and sent this picture as proof.



Does look kinda tuckered out, doesn't he?

Visit to the GW Masonic Memorial and Chapter Meeting, April 8, 2023



Left: Washington Statue.
Above: Mason George Washington laying the cornerstone of the National Capitol.
Right: View from top of the Memorial to the surrounding city of Alexandria.



Above: Jamie Callender and Joe Dooley. Below: Frank Weiss, Tom Roth and behind Tom is Tom Bland.

Above: Newsletter Editor Pete Farley receiving the 2022 Editor of the Year Award from GW President Rand Pixa.
Below: President Rand Pixa, Don Reynolds, Rich Sherman and Bill Bland.



Upcoming Events

May 13--Saturday: 11:30 am

Chapter Meeting

Pavilion C-2, Fort Hunt Park

8999 Fort Hunt Road

Alexandria, VA

*Meeting and catered barbecue for
Chapter families*

May 20--Saturday: 2:00 pm

27th Annual Patriots' Day in

Alamance County

Alamance Battleground

State Historic Site

5803 South N.C. 62

Burlington, NC

May 21--Sunday: 2:00 pm

Grave-marking for Captain

McIlhaney, Cont'l Army &

Captain Parker, Virginia Navy

37628 Grovers Mill Rd.

Hillsboro, VA

May 29--Monday: 12:45 pm

Memorial Day Parade

The National Mall

Washington, DC

July 4--Monday: 9:30 am

March to the Tomb

Mount Vernon, VA

Sept 9--Saturday: 11:30 am

Chapter Meeting

Army-Navy Country Club

Arlington, VA

Sept 9--Saturday: 4:15 pm

Wreath-laying at the Tomb of

the Unknown Soldier by the

President General, NSSAR

Arlington National Cemetery



For up to date George Washington

Chapter events, please see

<https://www.gwsar.org/Events>

(log in for all events and details) or

email billwilsongwvp@comcast.net.

Please see the VASSAR calendar for

upcoming statewide SAR events:

<https://vssar.memberclicks.net/calendar>



George Washington Chapter Loses A Giant

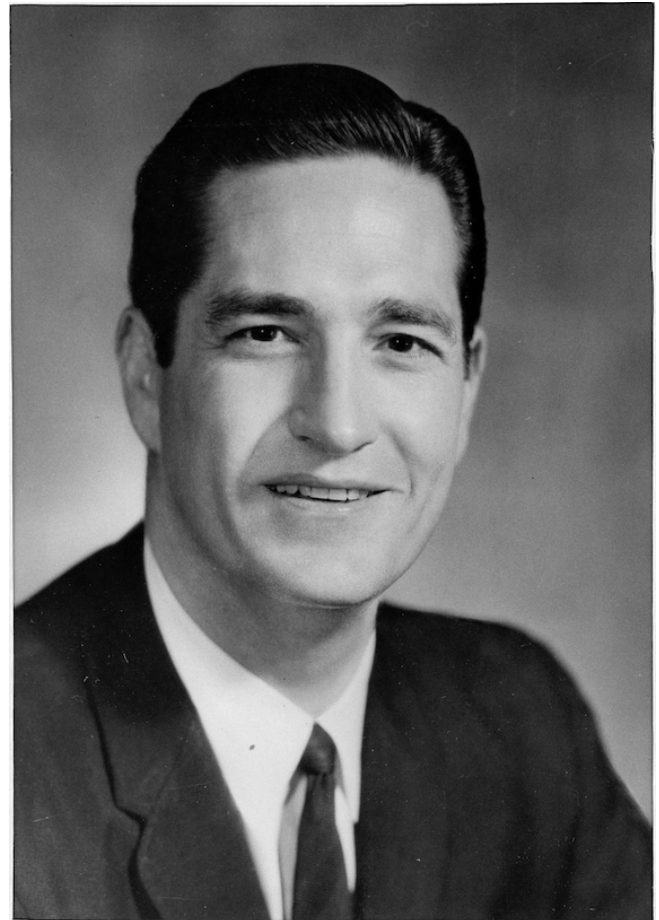
Don Baldwin Passes at Age 93

When Donald W. Baldwin passed away on April 17, 2023 the George Washington Chapter lost one of its earliest, longest-standing, and most dedicated members. Born in Danville, VA on May 18, 1929, Don became a Chapter member in 1960 and served as Chapter President in 1963. After his tenure, he continued his service to the Sons of the American Revolution, serving as Virginia Society (VASSAR) President in 1969-70 and subsequently as Vice President General of the Mid-Atlantic District. Don's VASSAR legacy continues to live on through the Donald W. Baldwin Award, given annually to the VASSAR Chapter with the largest membership increase. Don continued to be a regular attendee at Chapter meetings and events for six decades before eventually moving to Kettering, OH.

For more recent members, however, Don was likely best known for the introduction he typically received during the annual July 4th March to the Tomb and Wreath Laying at Mount Vernon as *"the Chapter President when the first such commemoration was held"*. In 2019, Past Chapter President Jay Henn (then Chapter Vice President) was preparing his introductory remarks for that year's March to the Tomb and had occasion to talk to Don about the beginnings of one of the Chapter's premiere events. Jay's notes of that discussion follow:

"On June 30, 2019 I spoke by telephone with Donald W. Baldwin. In preparing for the annual Independence Day March to the Tomb and Wreath-Laying at Mount Vernon, I was attempting to get clarification/more insight into two issues:

First, I had always heard that Don was Chapter President the year we started this event. Our Chapter Directory lists Don as being the Chapter President in 1963, but according to our records 2019 was to be our 58th annual wreath-laying, which would put the first year in 1962.



Donald W. Baldwin circa 1969-70

Second, previous March to the Tomb scripts had mentioned a "great-great grandson" of Alexander Hamilton as being the instigator behind this event, but I had found no record of which Hamilton descendant this might be.

With respect to the first item, Don reported that he actually functioned as President for two years. His official predecessor, James M. Thomson, was too busy with his duties as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, so Don stepped in to lead the Chapter in 1962, as well. I did not ask Don if he was formally installed as Chapter President or just served in an acting capacity, but the dates now fit.

The second item was/is not so clear-cut. I asked Don about the first name of the Hamilton in question, and he said "Alexander, of course." He didn't know whether it was Alexander Hamilton IV or Alexander Hamilton V, if either. He also

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Loss of a Giant

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mentioned that there was an Alexander Hamilton (or another Hamilton) at the University of Virginia when Don was there, but it was not the same person. He then went on to relay a few anecdotes about this particular Hamilton, including:

- George Washington Chapter members were confident that the individual involved was indeed a bona fide Hamilton descendant.
- The Washington Post was also convinced of his lineage, as they reported on his activities while he was in town.
- He must have had a lot of family money.
- He served as the SAR's Vice President General for the "Eastern District."
- They went to pick up the wreath for that first observance in Mr. Hamilton's Cadillac and drove right onto the grounds.
- He was rather eccentric. On one occasion at dinner he became very friendly with a waitress and proposed to her.
- Eventually his family "came and got him."

Following that conversation I was successful in identifying a Hamilton great-great grandson named Alexander Morgan

Hamilton (he was also a grandson of J.P. Morgan) who would have been of the right age (1903-1970). No other information about this individual was immediately available.

[While trying to find information in the Post, however, I came across some articles about an older brother, Laurens Morgan Hamilton (1900-1978). What caught my eye about this was the fact that he did actually propose to - and marry - a waitress in Washington, D.C. (!) and she believed that he (i.e., Laurens) was "President" of the SAR at some point. Mention was also made of his driving around in a big Lincoln. This story (and their marriage) dates to 1965-1966.]

So, based on minimal research, at this point I can provide no definitive proof one way or another as to the identity of the Hamilton great-great grandson who was responsible for our Fourth of July event. Perhaps others can follow-up, but based on the detailed nature of some of Don's other recollections (for example, the reactions of Chapter membership when he proposed raising the cost of meals at Chapter meetings from \$4.00 to \$5.00!), I for one am comfortable with the identification of our July 4th "godfather" as Alexander Hamilton."

Don was an alumnus of both VMI and the University of Virginia and served two years



Don Baldwin receiving the acknowledgment at the 57th Annual March to the Tomb on July 4th, 2018.

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Loss of a Giant

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in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. He worked as an Administrative Assistant to two Republican members of the House of Representatives before joining the National Forest Products Association, working later at the White House Conference of Food, Nutrition, and Health under Richard M. Nixon, and eventually founding Donald Baldwin Associates. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Joan (Jody) Bolling Baldwin; son, Alan H. Baldwin; and daughter Elizabeth B. Chryst. His eldest son, Winston M. Baldwin, preceded him in death. He is also survived by his daughter-in-law Kate E. Baldwin, seven grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

Don was also one of the founding parishioners of St. Andrew and St.

Margaret of Scotland (Anglican Catholic Church) in Alexandria, VA. Among other duties, Don served as Senior Warden and Sunday School teacher. A requiem service for Don was to be held at St. Andrew and St. Margaret's at 11:00 am on May 8th. A private, family-only burial will be held in the Baldwin plot in Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem, VA. Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be made at www.routsong.com.

Don touched the lives of many Compatriots in the SAR, and especially within the George Washington Chapter, and he is remembered fondly and with great respect.

In addition to wishing Don *"Godspeed"*, we salute him as befits a member of the Sons of the American Revolution:

"Huzzah!"

"Huzzah!"

"Huzzah!"



*Article submitted by past
George Washington Chapter
President Jay Henn.
Photos by Tom Roth.*



Don Baldwin (fourth from right) at the September 8, 2018 Chapter Meeting

Past GW Chapter Presidents. (L-R) Ernie Coggins (current Virginia SAR President), Dick Kusserow, Don Reynolds, Larry Lisle, David Walker, Don Baldwin, Mike Elston, Paul Walden, and Dwight Whitney. (Don Reynolds, Larry Lisle, Don Baldwin, and Mike Elston are also former Virginia SAR Presidents. All in all, a high powered group!)