



George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 25, Issue 8

Visit us online at www.gwsar.org

November, 2023

October 14, 2023 GW Chapter Meeting's Riveting Guest Speakers



(Above) Following a spirited presentation by USMC Major General Jason Q. Bohm to the joint meeting of the George Washington and George Mason chapters detailing the Marine Corps' modest beginnings yet vital accomplishments during the American Revolution, GW Chapter President Rand Pixa presented Major General Bohm with a reproduction of a bust by Jean-Antoine Houdon of Chapter namesake, George Washington.



(Right) Virginia Society C.A.R. President Nora Stuftt presented their 2023-2024 state theme: "France: America's First Wingman", highlighting the critical role of French forces in the American Revolution, especially in Virginia.

(Con't on Page 3)

President's Corner

Compatriots:



I'll start and finish this piece with the same request: Please call or write to me, or call or write to other members of the Chapter's Board of Managers with your ideas on how we can improve the Chapter and make it do more of what you want. Contact: pixarrsar@gmail.com or 703-622-7001.

Why do I ask that? --Because your Chapter needs a lot more active participation to come close to its potential to advance our shared ideals of honoring, preserving, and bettering the Constitutional Republic our Patriot ancestors sacrificed to create. It has been an honor to have now served as an officer of the Chapter for four years. And I have seen much of the difference between what a relative handful of members who work really hard to do and the vast potential to connect with broad segments of the public to expand understanding of the revolutionary philosophy and ideas that were provided an opportunity to bloom through the struggle of the Revolutionary War. This 250th anniversary decade is a good time to reflect and to rededicate ourselves.

I went through the 260 names of adult Chapter members in our roster one-by-one and checked those who I knew had actively carried out the work of the Chapter in the last year and more broadly in the experience of my four years. This year it was 8½%; including them, the number was 10% over the past four years. With the "heavy lifting" of those members we have been able to achieve broad successes including full rounds of robust meetings, production of high-quality Newsletters, signature events including the George Washington Birthday Parade, National Memorial Day Parade, Fourth of July March to the Tomb, wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and Veterans Day wreath-laying. Our America 250, Scouting, Grave-marking, Public Safety, and JROTC Committees have been particularly active. And frankly, vast effort has flowed into the administration of the Chapter. So, thanks to the 8½% who made all of

that possible, but without a larger group of active contributors, maintaining the historic and present level of activity, let alone any expansions, may not be possible with those few active members stretched too thin.

The opportunity to maintain, improve, and fill the potential is great; to attract the engagement to take advantage of it, we likely need to do one or many things differently. What to add, what to drop, what to modify? That's where you and all other Compatriot members come in. What should we be doing new or differently to make the George Washington Chapter more worthy of your time and interest? How should the Chapter attract your interest and effort? Your ideas and desires are the key. So, please share them. And when you share your ideas, please don't think of them as suggestions or requests to an anonymous "they." The 22 or so actively engaged members of our 260 are already operating well beyond reasonable capacity. With the new ideas must come many more hands to craft the vision and bring it into reality.

I close as I began, please call or write to me, or call or write to another member of the Chapter's Board of Managers with your ideas on how we can improve the Chapter and make it more conducive to active participation and do more of what you want. What do you want to do, and how should WE do it? Please contact me at: pixarrsar@gmail.com or 703-622-7001.

Fraternally,

Rand Pixa, President
George Washington Chapter



Joint October 2023 Chapter Meeting

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(L-R) Scouting Committee Chairman Martin Johnson, Colin Tridone (BSA) and Compatriot Chris Marston, recipient of the Robert E. Burt Volunteer Award. The award is an honor due to members of the SAR who act as role models and provide dedicated service to the young men in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA).



Senior District Executive, Colonial District, National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, Colin Tridone pins the awarded medal onto a very deserving GW Chapter Compatriot, Christopher Marston.

(October Chapter Meeting photos by Tom Roth.)

GW Chapter 2024 Leadership Nominations

Richard Rankin, Chairman of this year's Nominating Committee, announced at the October 2023 Chapter Meeting that the following compatriots are nominated to 2024 Leadership positions:

Scott Walker, President
Scot Bryant, Vice President
Jonathan Coles, Treasurer
Rand Pixa, Manager-at-Large

Note: Compatriot Jaymie Cook was selected for the 2024 Chapter Secretary nomination subsequent to the October Chapter Meeting date. He is currently lined up to be nominated at the November Chapter Meeting.

An election will then be conducted at the November Chapter Meeting for all submitted nominations. Those nominees who are elected at the November 11th Chapter Meeting will be inducted at the joint Chapter Meeting with the George Mason Chapter, December 9th. The inductions will be conducted by Virginia SAR President Ernie Coggins.



Jonathan Coles

Recent Chapter members, Jonathan and Jaymie. Please extend your best wishes to them at one of the upcoming events.



Jaymie Cook

Let's Tell the Story of Alexandria's Patriots!

by David Harrity, GW Chapter America 250 SAR Committee

Each Patriot has a story to tell us about themselves; let's tell it! Each participated in the struggle for America's Independence, and their legacy and impact still ring loudly within our community near and far. We, as descendants and compatriots of the nation's largest male lineage organization, are each thankful as we celebrate America's 250th Anniversary and no place is that truer than with those interred within the City of Alexandria and surrounding Fairfax County areas, including our namesake George Washington. In all, the City of Alexandria is the final resting place for more than 85 Patriots of the American Revolution with burials located in 12 of the city's 28 recorded cemeteries within the SAR Patriot Research System (PRS).

Whether it's Samuel Cooper who participated 250 years ago in the Boston Tea Party on 16 December 1773 and went onto to become a major in the artillery. Or, 1st Lieutenant Henry Piercy who served in Pennsylvania regiments, and after the war is credited as Alexandria's first known potter with works that are presented today at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. As we move closer and closer to the apex of the 250th Anniversary of our Nation, their struggles and triumphs become important chapters to the overall story for Alexandria and its role within the American Revolution.

No less than nine Patriots have served 13 terms in total as the city's mayor between 1780 and 1812 including: Robert T. Hooe (#1), James Hendricks (#2), William Herbert (#3/#30), David Arell (#7), Dennis Ramsey (#11/#15), Philip Marsteller (#13), John Dundas (#17/#20), Francis Peyton (#19/#21), and Elisha C. Dick (#27).

Thanks to the incredible foundational work by Compatriots Craig Batten, Jamie Callendar, Paul Walden and many others, the entire Commonwealth of Virginia's listings within the SAR PRS are likely more well-documented than any other state (okay, Georgia SAR has done an outstanding job too!). Nearly all cemeteries and the Patriots interred within Virginia, including Alexandria, have headstone photographs, GPS coordinates, and the appropriate DAR Genealogical Research System (GRS) and Find-a-Grave cross-references. This is not nearly the case in many other states.

Because of this great work, our chapter is leading an effort to tell more of the story of these venerable Patriots by completing the biographies of each person's civil, patriotic and/or military services performed, certainly during the war, but also their contributions after the war are often just as important in the founding of our young Nation.

Current status of SAR PRS Biographies:

<u>Cemetery</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>	<u>Patriots Interred</u>	<u>Biographies Completed</u>
C-0371830	Old Presbyterian Meeting House Burial Ground	29	3
C-0371204	Presbyterian Cemetery	20	4
C-0069667	Trinity United Methodist Church Cemetery	8	4
C-0073358	Christ Church Episcopal Cemetery	7	4
C-0371786	Saint Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery	6	6
C-0371829	Old Christ Church Cemetery (aka Christ Church Graveyard)	5	3
C-0374046	Quaker Burial Ground	5	2
C-0375199	Saint Paul's Episcopal Church Cemetery	4	4
C-0372249	Peake Family Cemetery	2	2
C-0375217	Ivy Hill Cemetery	1	1
C-0375188	Penny Hill Cemetery	1	0
C-0299557	Shuters Hill (aka Bloxham) Cemetery	1	0
Totals		89	33

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CALL TO ACTION: Volunteers are needed to assist in the completion of the biographies for each of the 85 Patriots interred in Alexandria before the George Washington Birthday Celebration Parade in February 2026.

I have done 20 or more biographies to date and have insights to draw upon for the most common online resources. Currently, 4 of the 12 cemeteries have biographies for all interred Patriots, but there are more than 55 Patriots whose stories have not been told. Once completed, we plan to develop and publish a unique book to present to the City of Alexandria as part of America's 250th Anniversary celebration. This work also enriches the Historic Sites section of the Chapter website, and supports future Grave Marking ceremonies and memorials in the coming years.

If you are interested in supporting the America 250 SAR Committee's efforts with the SAR PRS or if you have any questions, I can be reached by email at: djharrity+gwsar@gmail.com to best coordinate our efforts.

Flag Certificate Presentations

As GW Chapter Flag Committee Chairman Paul Walden reported in last month's **George Washington Chapter Newsletter**, the SAR endorses the appropriate display and respect of the United States flag. One way the organization promotes this is to award a Flag Certificate to individuals and businesses who appropriately fly the flag. All members need to do to nominate a neighbor or a local business who is known to properly fly the American flag is provide the Flag Committee Chairman with the name of the individual or business along with their address so that a Certificate can be processed. (A photo is also appreciated.)



As soon as GW Chapter Secretary Scot Bryant heard Flag Committee Chairman Paul Walden's encouragement to honor friends and neighbors who proudly display their patriotism by appropriately flying the American Flag he thought of two devoted citizens in his neighborhood who qualified for the SAR Flag Certificate and was proud to present the awards to them last month. Congratulations and "Thank you!" to The Powell Family and to The Smith Family of Alexandria, Virginia.

Dues Renewal

Compatriots: Even though our 2023 dues are paid through 12/31/2023 here is a reminder to ***please*** pay your 2024 dues **ASAP** via the Virginia SAR website at: <https://www.virginiasar.org/>.

*(Processing the 2024 dues before the current dues expire takes the GW Chapter and the Virginia SAR volunteers some time. So, those keeping the books would sincerely appreciate your assistance by submitting your dues payments soon, no later than **November 15th** if possible.)*

If you do not recall receiving the eMailed dues renewal invoice or if you need assistance accessing the website, contact Treasurer Scott Walker by eMail at this address: scottwalker2363@gmail.com.

If you wish to pay your invoice by check: The cost is **\$125** for most members (**\$75 for Life members**), payable to **George Washington Chapter, VASSAR**.



Please remit online at

<https://www.virginiasar.org/>

Or mail checks to:

Scott Walker
223 N. Royal Street
Alexandria VA 22314

Thank you!



"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.

Interim Editor: Scot Bryant. Submissions from Chapter officers, committee chairmen and fellow Compatriots are always needed. Please send submissions and comments to GW Chapter Secretary Scot Bryant at 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.

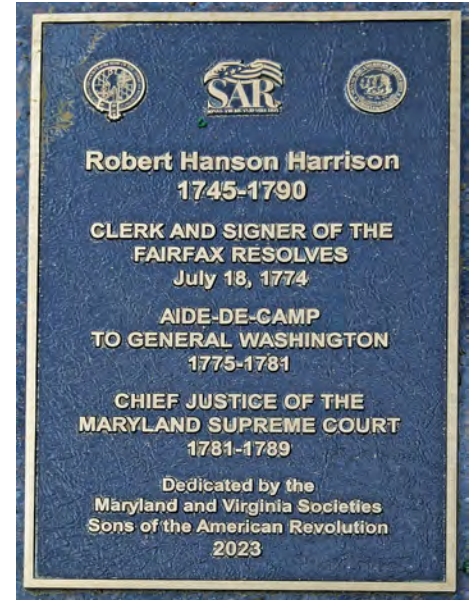


November through the years with George Washington

- 1752** on the 4th--Washington becomes a Freemason.
- 1752** on the 6th--Washington appointed Major in Virginia Militia.
- 1781** on the 5th--Death of Washington's stepson, John "Jacky" Parke Custis.
- 1783** on the 2nd--Washington bids farewell to army at end of Rev War.
- 1789** on the 26th--First observance of the "*day of public Thanksgiving*" ordered by Washington at request of Congress.

Robert Hanson Harrison Plaque Dedication and Grave Marking Ceremonies

Christ Church - Durham Parish, Nanjemoy, Maryland
Sponsored by the Virginia and Maryland SAR Societies
Sunday, October 15, 2023



Lieutenant Colonel Harrison was the second longest serving Aide-de-Camp to General Washington and the first Chief Justice of the Maryland Supreme Court. George Washington Chapter Compatriots were well-represented by Chapter President Rand Pixa, Virginia SAR President Ernie Coggins and Virginia SAR Historian Tom Roth.

Don't Forget Wreaths Across America

Honor Veterans by Supporting the Chapter's Mission!



On-line order deadline: November 28, 2023

Use the QR code at right or order on-line at:

<https://www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/va0726>

Just \$17 per wreath.

IF paying by personal check...

Make checks payable to: Wreaths Across America and
bring to the November Chapter Meeting -or-
mail before November 21, 2023 to GW Treasurer at...

Scott Walker
223 N. Royal Street
Alexandria, VA 22314



Yorktown Day Celebrations

October 19, 2023

The 1781 surrender on this date of Lord Cornwallis' troops to General George Washington's Allied American and French troops is commemorated annually in Yorktown, Virginia. The day's tributes begin with wreath-layings that are followed by a parade down Main Street.



(Left) SAR front and center. Included are the GW Chapter's Michael Elston (1st row-second, National SAR Treasurer General) and Joe Dooley (2nd row-fourth, Past National SAR President General). Also shown, 1st row-third, 2024 Virginia SAR President Bill Greaf and 1st row-fourth, Virginia SAR Color Guard Commander Chis Melhuish.



GW Chapter Compatriot and Virginia SAR President Ernie Coggins salutes at the wreath-laying ceremony for Thomas Nelson, Jr. who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Nelson was elected to serve as the Virginia's governor in 1781, the same year he fought as a brigadier general in the siege of Yorktown, the final battle of the Rev War.



GW Chapter Past President, now Manager-at-Large (2023) Jay Henn and Jay's wife, Bonnie Henn (NSDAR), enjoying the day's events.

(Yorktown Day photos by Tom Roth.)

Building a Bridge with the Virginia Children of the American Revolution

By Rand Pixa



(L-R) Virginia C.A.R. President Nora Stufft, GW Chapter Registrar Richard Sherman, Virginia C.A.R. Senior President Anne-Cabrie Forsythe, and GW Chapter President Rand Pixa at the trailhead leading to the Washington-Rochambeau Route, Prince William Forest National Park.

October 7th was the day on which our Chapter helped to build a bridge with the Virginia Society of the Children of the American Revolution, when our purpose was as much to build a bridge *to* the C.A.R.

The Virginia C.A.R.'s annual project is to honor the French contribution to our Nation's independence in the 200th anniversary year of General Lafayette's farewell visit to the United States after the Revolution. The Virginia C.A.R. State Theme and Project for 2023-24 is styled "France: America's First Wingman." The C.A.R. is partnering with the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association, Inc., Virginia (W3R-VA), in its "film project which includes filming, editing and producing documentary episodes of the 15 historic sites along the national trail in Virginia, including interviews with noted trail historian Robert A. Selig and famous historical characters. The cost for filming and editing each episode is approximately \$2500-\$3000." The C.A.R. is also partnering with the American Friends of Lafayette commemorating "the 2023-24 bicentennial of Lafayette's farewell tour, [by funding] a set of educational panels, and will be noted as an official sponsoring organization (along with [the] DAR, SAR, and many others) on all tour materials during this 18-month commemoration of Lafayette's farewell tour."

In support of the theme, the C.A.R. chose a service project along the Washington-Rochambeau route to Yorktown through northern Virginia. The National Park Service had identified a footbridge *(Con't next page)*

Building a Bridge

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adjacent to the remnants of the Washington-Rochambeau route that passes through the Prince William Forest National Park that needed replacement. The Virginia C.A.R. took on the project. The work on the 7th entailed hauling all of the materials necessary for the replacement bridge down a rather steep, half-mile grade, demolishing the existing bridge, constructing the major components of the new twenty-foot bridge, putting them in place across a streambed, assembling the rest of the new bridge, and then back-hauling all of the old bridge the half-mile back up the grade to the accessible trailhead. It wasn't light work; telephone poles underpinned the bridge which was replaced. About twenty C.A.R. members, their parents and advisors, and George Washington Chapter SAR Compatriots Rich Sherman and Rand Pixa worked for more than four hours to complete the new bridge which won the praise of the National Park Service maintenance supervisor overseeing the work. The new bridge will last a long time. The ties and friendships built during the work may last longer.



*Registrar
Richard Sherman*

*President
Rand Pixa*

**The Virginia C.A.R.'s goal is to raise \$15,000 in support of the annual project. If you would like to support the project, please mail your contribution, to be forwarded to the C.A.R., to Chapter Treasurer Scott Walker scottwalker2363@gmail.com at:
223 North Royal Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.**



Extending the Chapter's Reach and Fellowship

Saturday, October 7, 2023, Pohick Episcopal Church produced their 77th annual Country Fair. SAR, DAR and C.A.R. set up a tent and table to meet and greet fairgoers to raise awareness of their respective organizations. Information about the organizations' goals and objectives was provided to those who stopped by the table as was information about membership opportunities and membership's rewards.



(Left) SAR representatives: (L-R) Fairfax Resolves Chapter President Forrest Crain and GW Chapter Past President + National SAR Treasurer General Michael Elston. DAR representatives: Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter Diane Williams, Fairfax County Chapter Elizabeth Bays, Nelly Custis Chapter Vickie Bryant and Kate Waller Barrett Chapter "Tillie" Cassidy. (Photo by GW Chapter Secretary Scot Bryant.)



GW Chapter Compatriot Richard Douglass organized a genealogy "Open House" at the Montebello Condominiums Community Center which was held after the October 14, 2023 GW Chapter Meeting there earlier that afternoon. In addition to SAR and DAR, there were representatives from The Society of Mayflower Descendants and Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.



At right, GW Chapter Compatriot David Harrity introduces Montebello residents to interesting history learned through genealogy research. "Tillie" Cassidy from the Kate Waller Barrett DAR chapter in Alexandria (far right) joined the program to provide information to attendees. (GW Chapter Compatriots also on hand but not pictured included Eric Atkisson and Richard Sherman. Photo by GW Chapter Manager-at-Large and Virginia SAR Historian Tom Roth.)



Upcoming Events

2024

Nov 4: Saturday, 2:00 PM 248th Anniversary of the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 5181 Singleton Way, Virginia Beach, VA 23162

Nov 5: Sunday, 2:00 PM Major Joseph Eggleston Grave Marking
St. John's "Grub Hill" Church, Grub Hill Church Rd. (State Rd. 609) north of Amelia Court House, VA and just south of N. Lodore Rd. (State Rd. 636)

Nov 11: Saturday, 9:30 AM - 9:45 AM Veterans Day Wreath-Laying at General Washington's Tomb
Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon, VA 22121

Nov 11: Saturday, 11:30 AM Chapter Meeting
Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, VA 22307. **Speaker Chuck Schwam Exec. Dir. & Bicentennial Cmte. Chairman of American Friends of Lafayette**

Dec 2: Saturday, 11:00 AM Celebration of the Battle of Great Bridge
Great Bridge Battlefield and Waterways Museum, 1775 Historic Way, Chesapeake, VA

Dec 9: Saturday, 11:30 AM Joint Chapter Meeting (George Washington + George Mason Chapters)
Mount Vernon Country Club, 5111 Old Mill Road, Alexandria, VA. Installation of 2024 Chapter officers. **Speaker: Ernie Coggins Virginia SAR President**

Dec 16: Saturday, 9:30 AM National Wreaths Across America Day
Alexandria National Cemetery
1450 Wilkes Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Jan 13: Saturday, 11:30 AM Chapter Meeting
Montebello Condominiums Community Center, 5905 Mt. Eagle Drive, Alexandria, VA 22303

Feb 9-10: Friday, 11:00 AM Virginia SAR Annual Meeting. (Online workshops prior.)
Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219

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.

