



George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 26, Issue 1

Visit us online at www.gwsar.org

January 2024

Battle of Great Bridge 13th Annual Commemoration



Photo by Tom Roth

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President's Corner

Compatriots,

YOUR NEW CHAPTER LEADERSHIP team appreciates the trust and confidence you've placed in us, and we're looking forward to the coming year.

We are grateful for the many long-standing Chapter programs already in place, and for the outstanding committee chairmen and other members working hard to keep them successful. Our youth outreach (including JROTC, Scouting, oration, and essay contests), public safety awards, and grave marking programs are notable examples.



Our award-winning Chapter newsletter and website are both in very capable hands, and I have no doubt they will continue receiving the state level recognition that they have enjoyed in recent years.

We also are excited about the emerging America 250 effort—several members are already hard at work creating opportunities for our Chapter and others in the state to participate in this ongoing celebration of our country's struggle for independence.

Another emerging effort is the events committee, which assists Chapter leadership in planning and executing the many events we sponsor each year. Their help is greatly appreciated.

And a re-emerging program, our Chapter color guard, is showing great promise. It's wonderful to see more of our members showing up in period attire, and it's a fantastic tool for furthering public recognition of our organization.

As you may know, 2024 is the 70th anniversary of our Chapter's founding. A committee is already being formed to decide how best to celebrate this milestone.

We're fortunate to have such dedicated members leading all these efforts, and the good news is that it couldn't be easier for other members to get involved. Indeed, to keep these programs, and our Chapter, thriving, everyone's participation is welcomed and needed. Please take time to consider how your interests best align with one of our many worthy missions and reach out to a committee chairman or to any of your officers with questions.

Our December joint Chapter meeting with the George Mason Chapter at Mount Vernon Country Club was well-attended. 2024 Chapter officers were sworn in by Virginia Society President Ernie Coggins, and all attendees enjoyed a presentation about Christmas in the Revolutionary War era by the Rev. Tom Costa.

On a crisp, sunny December 16 morning, we had a great turnout at the Alexandria National Cemetery for *Wreaths Across America*, followed by a brief commemoration for Maj. Samuel Cooper, a participant in the Boston Tea Party and in many significant Revolutionary War battles. Later that same morning our Chapter awarded the Bronze Good Citizenship medal to the crew of the Tall Ship *Providence* in Old Town, Alexandria. Finally, that afternoon several members visited with Chapter member Jack Shawn, a WWII and Korean War veteran, to recognize his service and help celebrate his 100th birthday.

Please join us on Saturday, January 13, 2024 for our Chapter meeting at Montebello Condominium in Alexandria. Isaac Makos, an interpretive supervisor at Mount Vernon and the Revolutionary War Fellow at the American Battlefield Trust, will be speaking on the Trust's efforts to preserve and protect Revolutionary War battlefields with a special focus on Princeton.

I hope you enjoyed the holiday season, and I wish you all the best in 2024.

Fraternally,

Scott Walker

President

George Washington Chapter





During *National Wreaths Across America* Day, Chapter Compatriot Adam Kincaid and his family enjoyed volunteering to place wreaths on the graves of veterans at Alexandria National Cemetery. They then proceeded to the Chapter's wreath laying ceremony at the nearby grave of Maj. Samuel Cooper, a Revolutionary War Patriot who participated in the Boston Tea Party 250 years ago to the day (see page 8).

Top Row (L-R):
Chapter Member
Adam Kincaid and
his wife Carolyn.

Middle Row (L-R):
Sons William and
Jack.

Bottom Row (L-R):
Sons Henry and
George.



And please welcome new member...

RYAN LOUIS CARRADO is a sophomore at Mount Vernon High School, just down the road, where he has a 4.1 GPA and is currently taking honors, IB, and AP classes. His favorite subjects are biology and history. As a freshman last year, he won awards for academic excellence in both of those subjects. He is the oldest of three boys.

He is a competitive swimmer and swims on the varsity team at high school, with a club team, the Potomac Marlins, and in the summer for Mansion House Club Pool. He has recently begun running with the high school Cross Country and Track teams. Last month he was inducted into the Mount Vernon High School chapter of the National Honor Society. In his spare time, he likes to read (mysteries mostly, especially murder mysteries), spend time with his family and friends, and watch football.

His father Sebastian retired as a Lt Col in the United States Air Force after more than 20 years of service. He now works as a defense contractor. His mother Jeannine is a trained attorney who now works as a freelance editor primarily of medical textbooks.

Ryan's patriot Ancestor, Oliver Scott, was born in 1761 in Tolland CT and served as a private in Col. Webb's regiment of Connecticut troops in 1782. He married Ruth Kingsbery in 1790 in Tolland; they later moved west and he died in SE Ohio, not far from Point Pleasant, in 1841.





Battle of Great Bridge Commemoration

Great Bridge Park, Chesapeake, Va., Dec. 2, 2023 (Photos by [Tom Roth](#))

THE 13TH ANNUAL National Society SAR Commemoration of the Battle of Great Bridge was held Saturday, December 2, at the Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways Museum in Chesapeake, Va. The Norfolk and Great Bridge Chapters of the Virginia SAR sponsored the event on behalf of the National Societies of the SAR and DAR. Mike Elston, Treasurer-General of the SAR, presented a wreath on behalf of President General John Dodd, and Ernie Coggins, President of the Virginia Society SAR, brought greetings from the Virginia Society and presented a wreath on their behalf. Virginia Attorney General Jason Mirales was the featured speaker. *(Con't on next page)*



(Con't from page 4)

Fought on December 9, 1775, the Battle of Great Bridge was a signal victory for Virginia's Patriot militia, which at the cost of one lightly wounded soldier inflicted upwards of 100 casualties on the British regulars and Loyalist militia, prompting the departure of Royal Governor Lord Dunmore from the colony.



ABOVE: Past Chapter President Richard Rankin poses with Virginia Attorney General Jason Mirales.

BELOW: NSSAR Treasurer-General Mike Elston and Virginia Society SAR President Ernie Coggins pose with uniformed members of the Virginia Society.



Daniel Morgan: From Wagon Driver to Innovative Military Strategist

by RUSSELL WELLAND, Eagle Scout Essay Contest Winner

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION started in the Northeast. In 1780, after years of fighting, the war was at a standstill. The British decided to shift gears and attempt a new strategy starting in the southern United States. The British strategy was effective, so the Patriots desperately needed a win to cut off this strategy.

The Patriots sent a new leader named Nathaneal Greene. He was joined by Daniel Morgan from Virginia who had fought as a rifleman who would snipe at the enemy.

Daniel Morgan was different from many other leaders due to his poverty. His education came from fighting in the French and Indian War where he adapted to fighting in the backwoods. Morgan's role as a rifleman taught him to play on the mind of his enemy through long-range sharp shooting, rather than the mindset of a traditional field battle.

Greene divided his army, with Morgan leading half. His goal was to exhaust the British by zig-zagging through swamp and forest. The British took the bait. The British leader, Cornwallis, sent general Tarleton after Morgan while he chased Greene.

Morgan planned to meet Tarleton in a forested environment. Unfortunately, Tarleton caught up to him in a non-ideal place that favored a traditional field battle - a place where cows were gathered for market.

Morgan needed an innovative solution. His militiamen were not trained for a field battle. He needed them to stay on the field so he chose a site with no easy escape. He put the men in an unusual formation called a "Defense in Depth" with "his most unreliable units far in advance of the main line of defense. (1)" The idea was to keep the untrained men in front for a short time. The British would think the Patriots were weak and uncoordinated. They would be drawn forward only to face a barrage from the trained infantry and cavalry, which were hidden behind a hill.

Morgan knew he was asking the militia to do something unfamiliar. He spent the night visiting them and explaining the plan to them directly. He was up the entire night, joking and encouraging the soldiers in a way that was unusual for a leader of that time.

At the battle on the morning of January 17, 1781, Morgan's plan proceeded. The British were drawn forward and lost their disciplined lines as they saw the militiamen "retreat." But the militiamen were following orders, which were to shoot twice, and "retire in good order... to a position where they were to be reformed and held in reserve (2)."

The militiamen were not held in reserve for long. The Patriot infantry formed a wall for the British. Morgan led the militia to one side of the battle, while the cavalry went to the other. The British were surrounded in a U-shaped trap. This rare and powerful tactic, called a double envelopment, left Tarleton's army in shambles. Had Morgan neglected to give so much attention to his militia, he may not have been able to perform such a decisive attack. (*Con't on next page*)



Daniel Morgan by Charles Willson Peale, circa 1794, courtesy of the Wikimedia Commons.

(Con't from page 6)

Morgan's success at Cowpens raised morale for the Patriots everywhere and showed Greene how to leverage militiamen effectively in field battle. It was the beginning of the end of the southern strategy and the American Revolution. Daniel Morgan - who started from zero - used his life experience and determination to make a critical impact on American history.

- (1) Higginbotham, Daniel Morgan: Revolutionary Rifleman, page 133.
- (2) Ibid.

WORKS CITED

Babits, Lawrence E. *A Devil of a Whipping: The Battle of Cowpens*. The University of North Carolina press, 199g. Callahan, North.
Daniel Morgan: Ranger of the Revolution. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961. Higginbotham, Don.
Daniel Morgan: Revolutionary Rifleman. University of North Carolina press, 1961

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Russell Welland earned the rank of Eagle Scout on January 23, 2023, after spending 11 years in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. He is a Senior at South Lakes High School in Reston, Va.*

Chapter Has Scholarship Opportunities for High School Students

OUR CHAPTER, like many other SAR chapters, sponsors scholarship opportunities for high school students. Two of these scholarships are The George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest and the Joseph S. Rumbaugh Historical Oration Contest. The scholarship amount for these contests is \$400 each.

These competitions are open to all high school students, 9th through 12th grades, who are U.S. Citizens or Legal Residents attending home schools and public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range, and have an interest in the American Revolution.

If you know of a family member or neighbor who might be interested in these scholarship opportunities, please encourage them to compete. Winning one of these contests would look great on a college application! Ask them to contact Marty Johnson at mjvt49@gmail.com.



JANUARY through the years with George Washington

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1759 on the 6th: | Washington marries Martha Dandridge Custis. |
| 1777 on the 3rd: | Washington defeats the British at Princeton, New Jersey. |
| 1778 on the 16th: | Washington is named Chancellor at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va. |
| 1801 on the 1st: | Washington's slaves are freed, according to his will and his widow Martha's decision to free them early. |



Wreaths Across America

Alexandria National Cemetery, Alexandria, Va., Dec. 16, 2023 (Photos by Tom Roth)



MANY THANKS to those intrepid Compatriots and family who turned out to lay wreaths at Alexandria National Cemetery last month. As a reminder, through Tuesday, January 16, wreaths sponsored through the Chapter's *Wreaths Across America* (WAA) webpage will be **MATCHED** by WAA for placement on 2024's *National Wreaths Across America Day*: Saturday, December 14, 2024.

Please consider kickstarting the Chapter's 2024 *Wreaths Across America* campaign with this tremendous opportunity to double the wreaths sponsored while also adding a third wreath for every two sponsored.

For example: For every two wreaths sponsored at \$17 each, a third wreath will be added, plus, for this limited time, the two sponsored wreaths will also be matched by WAA. That's five wreaths placed on U.S. veterans' graves for a contribution of two wreaths. Not 3-for-2 but 5-for-2! But only until January 16.

It's never too early to show your support for our veterans! Order online at:

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



Chapter honors Tall Ship *Providence* Foundation, Maj. Samuel Cooper on 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party

Dec. 16, 2023 (Photos by Tom Roth)

DECEMBER 16, 2023, was the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, and the Chapter held two special events to commemorate the occasion.

First, past Chapter President Rand Pixa laid a wreath at the grave of Maj. Samuel Cooper, a veteran of the Boston Tea Party as well as the battles of Bunker Hill and Trenton. Born in Boston, Cooper died in Alexandria at the age of 83 and is buried at the Christ Church Episcopal Cemetery, where a small crowd of Chapter members and family gathered for the wreath-laying ceremony.

Next, President Pixa and a group of Chapter compatriots proceeded to the Senator John Warner Maritime Heritage Center in Alexandria's Waterfront Park, where they presented the SAR's Good Citizenship Medal to Clair S. Sassin, CEO and President of the Tall Ship *Providence* Foundation.

An educational organization based in Alexandria, Va., the Foundation acquired the *Providence* in 2017 and uses it to educate visitors on the role of the Continental Navy in the American Revolution.

ABOVE RIGHT: Past Chapter President Rand Pixa lays a wreath at the grave of Boston Tea Party Patriot, Maj. Samuel Cooper.

MIDDLE RIGHT: President Pixa presents the SAR Good Citizenship Medal to Tall Ship *Providence* CEO and President Clair Sassin.

BELOW RIGHT: Chapter members pose with Tall Ship *Providence* Foundation CEO and President Clair Sassin, as well as living history reenactors.



100-year-old Chapter member honored who served in WW2, Korean War

Dec. 16, 2023 (Photos by [Rand Pixa](#))

ONE DAY AFTER Chapter Compatriot Wendell "Jack" Shawn turned 100 years old, Chapter President Rand Pixa, Virginia SAR and Chapter Historian Tom Roth, Chapter Secretary Scot Bryant, and Scot's wife Vickie Bryant from the Nelly Custis Chapter NSDAR, were honored to attend Compatriot Shawn's birthday celebration along with his family in Alexandria, Va. Mr. Shawn was presented with the National SAR War Service Medal, the Virginia SAR Silver Meritorious Service Medal, the NSDAR Distinguished Citizen Medal and the Nelly Custis Chapter NSDAR Distinguished Citizen Certificate.

Compatriot Shawn served in both World War II and the Korean War. Among other medals and decorations received during service to his country, Compatriot Shawn earned two Bronze Stars, a Combat Infantryman Badge, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and World War II Victory Medal.

Congratulations to Chapter Compatriot "Jack" Shawn!



ABOVE: The Combat Infantryman Badge and WW2 Victory Medal ribbon, courtesy of the Wikimedia Commons.



December Joint Chapter Meeting

Mount Vernon Country Club, Dec. 9, 2023 (Photos by Tom Roth)



ABOVE LEFT: Chapter Registrar Rich Sherman was one of several members to receive the Liberty Medal from Virginia Society SAR President Ernie Coggins. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Compatriot Don Francisco, on the fife, received the War Service Medal for his military service and a certificate of memorial membership in the Virginia Society SAR for his late brother, Leo Gerard Francisco. **BELOW RIGHT:** 2023 Chapter President Rand Pixa hangs the President's Ribbon and SAR Badge on newly installed 2024 Chapter President, Scott Walker.

HIGHLIGHTS of last month's joint meeting with the George Mason Chapter included the installation of our new 2024 chapter leadership, the initiation of new member Ryan Carrado (see page 3), and a variety of awards presented by Virginia Society SAR President Ernie Coggins. The Rev. Tom Costa of the Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild also gave a memorable presentation on Christmas traditions during the Revolutionary War. (Con't on next page)

BELOW: From left to right: 2026 Manager-at-Large Rand Pixa; 2024 Chapter Secretary Jaymie Cook, Treasurer Jonathan Coles, Vice President Scot Bryant, and President Scott Walker; and Virginia Society SAR President Ernie Coggins.



BELOW: Guest speaker Rev. Tom Costa receives a miniature Houdon bust of George Washington from 2023 Chapter President Rand Pixa





(Con't from page 11)



You can find more photos of last month's meeting, and of the other events covered in this issue of the Chapter newsletter, on Compatriot Tom Roth's Flickr page (*see link below*). You can also view a recording of the December meeting on the GWSAR website at <https://www.gwsar.org/> by selecting Members Only and Recent Meetings.

See more photos on Tom Roth's Flickr page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/33987981@N05>.

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.



DUES REMINDER

Dear Compatriots: The deadline for 2024 dues has been extended to Jan. 15. If you haven't already paid your dues, please pay them **ASAP** via the Virginia SAR website at: <https://www.virginiasar.org>.

*(Processing 2024 dues payments before the 2023 dues expire takes the GW Chapter and the Virginia SAR volunteers some time. Those keeping the books on behalf of all of us would sincerely appreciate your assistance by submitting your dues payments soon, no later than **Jan. 15.**)*

If you do not recall receiving the emailed dues renewal invoice or if you need assistance accessing the website, contact Treasurer Jonathan Coles by email at jdc329@gmail.com.

If you wish to pay your 2024 dues by check: The cost is \$125 for most members (\$75 for Life members).



Remit online at:

<https://www.virginiasar.org>

- Or -



Make checks payable to:
George Washington Chapter, VASSAR

and mail to...

Scott Walker
223 N. Royal Street Alexandria VA 22314



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

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

<i>President</i>	Scott Walker: 703-216-4798
<i>Vice President</i>	Scot Bryant: 703-922-4431
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jonathan Coles: 570-449-8197
<i>Secretary</i>	Jaymie Cook: 202-570-2008
<i>Registrar</i>	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:

Rand Pixa: 703-622-7001

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.

Editor: Eric Atkisson. Submissions from Chapter officers, committee chairmen and fellow Compatriots are always needed. Please send submissions and comments to Secretary Jaymie Cook at vasargwsecretary@gmail.com.

Thank You from Bill Wilson

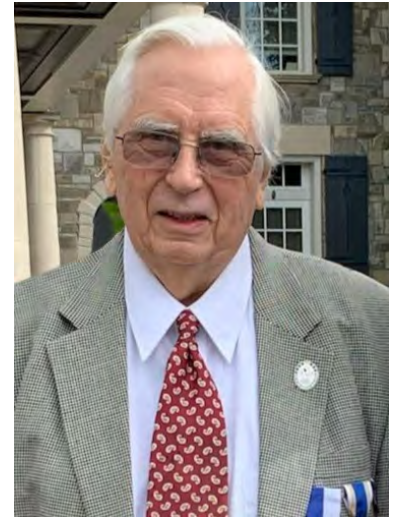
2023 Vice President, George Washington Chapter SAR

I SEND A HEARTFELT "Thank You" to my fellow 2023 officers of the George Washington Chapter, the Chapter's Managers-at-Large, the committee chairs, and to fellow compatriots who illuminated my pathway of service to the Chapter over the years. It was a great honor and joy to have had this unanticipated opportunity!

Due to several health challenges last year, I was frequently unable to serve in full capacity as the Chapter's vice president. There are far too many compatriots to acknowledge individually who stepped up to help me, with the notable exception of Richard Douglass. Compatriot Douglass heartily volunteered to assist with the planning and execution of 2023's special events.

I would also like to specifically congratulate two Chapter members, Mark Jackson and Paul McComb, who became Color Guardsmen within the Chapter in 2023. To no surprise, Mark has already become the vice commander of the Chapter's Color Guard. Also, to no surprise, Paul McComb is now the Chapter's vice chaplain and the vice chaplain of the Virginia SAR. This is a remarkable infusion of strong leadership that will serve the Chapter well for many years.

Thank you, again, to all. It has been my pleasure to call you compatriots and friends.



Upcoming Events

Jan. 13: Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

January Chapter Meeting

*Montebello Condominiums Community Center
5905 Mount Eagle Drive, Alexandria, VA 22303*

Feb. 9-10: Starting Saturday, 11 a.m.

Virginia Society SAR Annual Meeting

*Online workshops will be held Jan. 22 - Feb. 2
Omni Richmond Hotel
100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219
The Chapter may conduct an informal meeting in Richmond during the VASSAR Annual Meeting.*

Feb. 19: Monday, time TBA

Commemoration at Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier

*Old Presbyterian Meeting House
323 S. Fairfax St., Alexandria, VA 22314*

Feb. 19: Monday, time TBA

George Washington Birthday Parade

*Old Town Alexandria
The Jack Evans Chapter Medal will be available for first-time participants.*

March 9: Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

March Chapter Meeting

*Mount Vernon Country Club
5111 Old Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22309*

March 16: Saturday, 1 p.m.

Grave Marking Ceremonies

*Presbyterian Cemetery at the Wilkes Street Complex
Alexandria, VA 22314
The George Washington and Fairfax Resolves chapters will conduct joint grave marker dedication and grave marking ceremonies honoring Fairfax Resolves signer John Adams and Rev War Patriots David Black and John Dundas. The Virginia Society SAR Color Guard is scheduled to participate.*

**Note: Details for "Events" are updated on the Chapter website at:
<https://gwsar.org/>**

***Please remember that you must be logged in to view SAR members-only events in addition to the public events.**

**Please see the Virginia SAR calendar for upcoming, statewide SAR events:
<https://vssar.memberclicks.net/calendar>**