



The Bell Ringer

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Mark your calendar: Winter Park Elks Club,
SATURDAY, February 14, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00
p.m.

From the President,

Dear CFLSAR Compatriots and Friends,

As we step boldly into 2026, I can already hear the Liberty Bell ringing in anticipation — or maybe that’s just my phone reminding me about another color guard opportunity. Either way, this promises to be a banner year for our chapter. With America 250 celebrations gaining momentum, we have a golden opportunity to amplify our outreach and honor our ancestors. From Liberty Tree dedications to naturalization ceremonies, we’ll be everywhere history is being made — or at least reenacted with flair.

We’ll also be expanding our educational efforts and rolling out new trivia challenges that are guaranteed to stump even the most seasoned historians. Our color guard will be in fine form, and our committees are already plotting greatness. Let’s aim for impact, inspiration, and just enough chaos to keep things interesting.

So, dust off your tricorns, polish your boots, and prepare to make 2026 a year of celebration, service, and storytelling. Together, we’ll honor the past, engage the present, and march toward the semiquincentennial with pride.

With patriotic pride,

Central Florida Chapter SAR
49th Chapter President (2025 – 2027)

2025 – 2027 Officers

President/Historian – Robin Preston

rlpreston0306@gmail.com – (832)655-4173

2nd Vice President – Don LaJoie

grazingbuffalo94@gmail.com - (912) 580-9433

Treasurer – William “Billy” Morgan

wsmorganv@outlook.com - (407) 427-9692

Corresponding Secretary – Gary Smith

trekker01@gmail.com - (214) 437-3577

Member-at-Large/Chaplain - Randal Allen

aerospace321@outlook.com - (407) 909-9649

Member-at-Large – Burt Fairchild

burtfairchild@gmail.com - (407) 415-5655

Immediate Past President – Scott Cook

mousephone2@gmail.com - (407) 579-1612

Sergeant-at-Arms – Michael Meyer

meyermi1775@gmail.com - (407) 452-2666

Patriot Medal Winner/Color Guard Commander
– Phil Markoe

markoevikingsfan@aol.com - (407) 350-8143

---OPEN POSITIONS---

1st Vice President, Recording Secretary,
Genealogist, Registrar, Webmaster

If you are interested in any of the above vacant positions, please get in touch with one of the officers and let him know.

Volunteer today and make your Patriot proud.



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Committee News, CFLSAR Committees

The following are chapter committees. Some need Chairmen, all of them need members.

AMERICA 250 COMMITTEE – Robin Preston Chairman

We are seeking volunteers with 250 America points to present the America 250 minutes over the next year. Presenting the short A250-minute earns you 10 points, and attending the meeting adds an extra 3 points, totaling 13.

FLAG COMMITTEE – Chairman Randal Allen

The Flag Committee is the custodian of the Chapter flags, except those flags assigned to the Chapter Color Guard.

The Flag Committee shall present SAR Flag Certificates to homeowners and business owners who have noteworthy American Flag displays.

The Flag Committee shall present SAR Flag Certificates to homeowners and business owners who properly dispose of flags.

NEW MEMBER COMMITTEE – Chairman Milton Mersinger

Committee News, continued

JROTC/ROTC COMMITTEE – Chairman Phil Markoe

Purpose - Provide patriotic outreach to the Senior and Junior ROTC programs that exist in Florida schools.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE – Chairman TBD

This is the committee that arranges the meeting and program, and, as required, special meetings. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Robin Preston.

VETERANS COMMITTEE – Chairman Phil Markoe

YOUTH EDUCATION OUTREACH COMMITTEE – Phil Markoe, Chairman

He will try to run as many SAR youth programs as possible each season.

These programs include, but are not limited to, the Eagle Scout Program, Joseph S Rumbaugh Oration Contest, George S & Stella M Knight Essay Contest, Sgt Moses Adams Memorial Middle School Brochure, Youth Video, Elementary School Poster, Car Activity Award, and Good Citizenship Awards.

Mission Statement: The Sons of the American Revolution honors our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.

Cash Award Amounts

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
History Teacher	300	200	100
Poster Contest	100	75	50
Brochure	150	100	50
Video	150	100	50
Essay	250	125	75
Oration	400	250	125

BECOME AN ACTIVE PART OF THE CHAPTER and JOIN A COMMITTEE TODAY. YOUR CHAPTER NEEDS YOU. *Make your Patriot Proud.*



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The Elevator Speech

What is it? is a short, memorable description of who the Sons of the American Revolution are and what we do.

Example: The Sons of the American Revolution promotes patriotism, serves the community, and inspires and educates the public about the American Revolution.

Americanism Report



Every year, we, as a chapter, are required to submit a report to the State and National Societies detailing our activities. We are graded in the following categories.

- Media Publicity,
- Speakers Bureau,
- CAR-DAR Support,
- Youth Programs,
- Public Service Programs,
- Historic Sites,
- Grave Markings,
- Color Guards,
- Medals and Awards,
- National Society Service,
- Membership,
- Meeting attendance.

2025 Points were 10,535

2026 Points are 1282

America 250

Compatriots

(16.3% of Chapter Membership have medaled)

- Bronze – 11
- Silver – 6
- Gold – 5

Non-Compatriots

- Bronze – 2
- Silver – 2
- Gold – 3



How do I get Points?

Attending the following events will earn you 3 points. If in colonials, you get an extra five points.

- Chapter Meetings
- Honor Flights
- Chapter Book Club Meetings
- Most SAR activities

Mentoring Program

“I’ve joined—now what?” Exactly. What *do* you do?

The Mentors for the Central Florida Chapter are:

If you’re interested in becoming a mentor to a new Compatriot, please reach out to Milton Mersinger. Your experience could be the key to helping someone else find their place in SAR.

The current mentors for new members are:

Randal Allen

Milton Mersinger

William Morgan

Robin Preston

Harry Rinker

Gary Smith



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February 14 Chapter Meeting

Where: Winter Park Elks Club
4755 Howell Branch Road
Winter Park

Meal Cost: \$25 per person (payable at the door)

Dress Code: Business Casual (not shorts, not t-shirts, not nasty old, holey blue jeans)

If you plan to attend, RSVP to Phil Markoe – by voice or text **407.350.8143** or by email at **markoevikingsfan@aol.com**

Proper dress for a chapter meeting



HOW NOT TO DRESS

HOW TO DRESS

Social Media

Facebook Page – www.facebook.com/cflsar

The CFLSAR Facebook page has something new every day. Take a look at our page for yourself and encourage your family and friends to do the same.

Date of Inception – **15 NOV 2023**

Numbers of followers – 92

Consecutive days with a post since inception - **775**

Total Posts since inception - **1148**

Views since inception– **41,684**

Views in 2026– **2,414** (as of January 24)

Average views per day – **54**

Average views per post – **36.1**

LEARN EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SAR AT

SAR UNIVERSITY



ENROLL TODAY

[SAR University](http://www.sar.org) – National Society Sons of the American Revolution



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Service to our Vets

If you have done something in the service of a veteran or veterans, no matter how small you believe your contribution may have been, please let us know. Small contributions add up to big points by the end of the year. We were the second-ranked chapter in the state in total points. Please email Phil Markoe or Robin Preston and inform them of your actions.

Actions that Count

- 1) Member of a VA Hospital Council, Voluntary Service, or Center of Development or Civic Engagement
- 2) Each hour served in VA Hospital Volunteer Service
- 3) Visiting a Veteran in a Hospital, Nursing Home, or private home, or taking one or more Veterans on an outing where the hours aren't recorded in 2.
- 4) Personal care items donated to veterans through an organization whose primary clients are veterans.
- 5) Cash donations to an organization whose primary clients are veterans.
- 6) Each publication whose primary clients are veterans.
- 7) Participation in the SAR Wounded Warriors Program.
- 8) Activities supporting VETS (Honor Flight)

9a) Decorating Veterans' (Wreaths Across America) graves and attending funerals.

9b) Participation in a Veterans Funeral.

10) Donating New or Used men's or women's clothing to an organization whose primary clients are veterans.

11) Furniture Donation – New or used, but working items to an organization whose primary clients are veterans.

2025 Points over 43,271

2026 Points to date are 679

Attention Vets

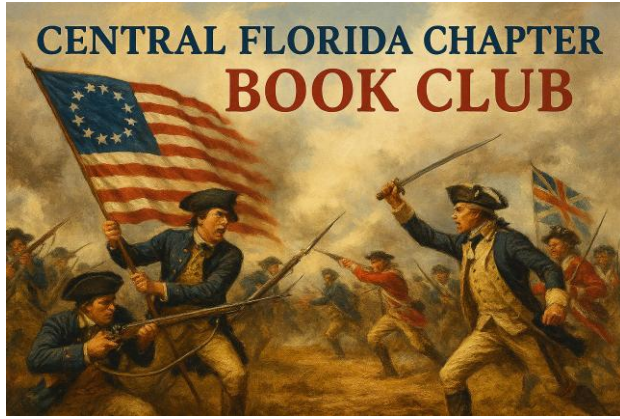
If you are a veteran and have not received a Service Medal, please notify Robin Preston so that we can obtain the medal you have earned through your service to America.



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Book Club Books for 2026



The Central Florida Chapter Book Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.

You can earn 3 America 250 points by attending.

Join via ZOOM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86700729150?pwd=1EI4w8MA8DYMycGEQTriWW7s7qsEDw.1>

You don't have to have read the book to attend.

1st British Southern Expedition – Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge

FEB – March to Independence: The Revolutionary War in the Southern Colonies – by Cecere

FEB – The Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge – by Hatch

Naval Campaign – Battle of Nassau

MAR – Spain, Britain, and the American Revolution in Florida, 1763-1783 – by Raab

Biography

APR – Tom Paine's War – by Kelly

Semiquincentennial

MAY – Our Lives, Our Fortunes, Our Sacred Honor: The Forging of Independence – by Beeman

1st British Southern Expedition – Battle of Ft Sullivan (1st Battle of Charleston)

JUN – Unsung: William Moultrie and the Battle of Sullivan's Island – by Rickerman

JUN – March to Independence: The Revolutionary War in the Southern Colonies - Cecere

New York Campaign – Siege of NY

JUL – The Battle of New York – by Schecter

New York Campaign – Battle of Long Island

AUG – The Maryland 400 in the Battle of Long Island, 1776 – by Reno

New York Campaign – Siege of NY (Kip's Bay, Harlem Heights, Ft. Washington)

SEP – The Battle of Harlem Heights – by Price

New York Campaign – Battle of White Plains

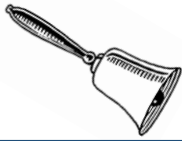
OCT – The Battle of White Plains: Washington and Howe in Westchester – by DeVillo

New York Campaign – Battle of Pell's Point

NOV – Saving Washington's Army: The Brilliant Last Stand of General John Glover – by Tucker

Canadian Campaign – Battle of Lake Champlain (Valcour Island)

DEC – Valcour: The 1776 Campaign That Saved the Cause of Liberty – by Kelly



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State of Hope Veterans Shelter

January 5, 2026

Mission BBQ invited us to join them at the State of Hope Veterans Shelter for homeless Veterans. We provided a color guard for the National Anthem. Mission BBQ provided the barbecue.

You too can join the color guard, honor your Country, honor our Veterans, eat free BBQ, and remember those who came before us.



Top and bottom photo From L-to-R Phil Markoe, Robin Preston, Burt Fairchild, Kim Cullars, Gary Smith, Harry Rinker, Randal Allen.





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Central Florida Chapter Meeting

January 10, 2025

From left to right – Robin Preston, Matt McMillian, Jonathan Hunt, William Morgan.

Although he has been a member for a while, Matt was inducted into the SAR by Senior Vice President Jonathan Hunt. Billy Morgan is his mentor.



Central Florida Chapter Meeting

January 10, 2025



Andrew Sechler speaks about the three Flag Certificates he is giving out



Jonathan Hunt presented Veteran flag pins to veterans in attendance at the meeting.

From L-to-R, Gary Smith, Bill Morgan, Kim Cullars, and Art Bullock.



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Central Florida Chapter Meeting

January 10, 2026



Kim Cullars received the America 250 Silver certificate.



SVP Jonathan Hunt is presenting William Morgan with a challenge coin.



Randal Allen is displaying one of the markers that will be used for the compatriot grave markings.



Winners of the 2026 Chapter Trivia Challenge

Phil Markoe, Michael Meyer, Randal Allen, and Gary Smith

Don't let their big smiles deceive you; they really didn't do that well.

In the words of George Washington, "Wait until next year."



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Orlando Naturalization Ceremony

January 15, 2026



The group above welcomed 79 new American citizens. Front row: Maria Preston, Kathy Markoe. Back row: Robin Preston, Phil Markoe, Kim Cullars, Rob Patton, Andrew Sechler, Randal Allen and Harry Rinker.





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Central Florida Highland Games

January 17, 2026

The Central Florida chapter manned an information and recruiting booth at the Central Florida Highland Games. Pictured are Harry Rinker, Robin Preston, Phil Markoe, and Kim Cullars.

Some members also joined us during the day. They were Burt Fairchild, William Thompson, Rob Patton, Preston Dyar, and Kelly Crumley from the Daytona-Ormond Chapter.



Showing off the new sign commemorating the 250th anniversary were Robin Preston, Phil Markoe, Kim Cullars, and Harry Rinker.



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Central Florida Highland Games

January 17, 2026



Who wore it better?

Was it Burt Fairchild, Kim Cullars, Robin Preston, Phil Markoe, Harry Rinker, or Kelly Crumley during the recent Scottish Highland Games?

Or was it the AI-modified version of the same people 250 years ago?



Compatriot Rich Lester, on the right, brought a group of Boy Scouts to the Highland Games. With his group were his two sons, who are also junior members of the Chapter.

Rich brought the members to the SAR tent so that they could speak to Harry Rinker about genealogy.

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Compatriot Grave Marking

January 24, 2026



Yesterday, Saturday, January 24, the Central Florida Chapter honored five compatriots who are no longer with us.

Herbert Luther "Bert" Blair

NSSAR # 29911

William Samuel Branch, Sr.

NSSAR # 29907

William Samuel "Bill" Branch, Jr.

NSSAR # 39026

Samuel Austin Robinson

NSSAR # 29908

Donald W Walker

NSSAR #105445

At least 10 more compatriot graves will be marked this year. If you would like to sponsor one or more markings, you can sponsor a grave for \$60 by sending a check to.

William Morgan
c/o The History Center
65 East Central Blvd.
Orlando, FL 32801

Or email William Morgan wsmorganv@outlook.com for a Clover invoice.

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Compatriot Grave Marking

January 24, 2026



Following the grave marking of Compatriot Donald W. Walker, members of the color guard were photographed with descendants of the 18th President of the Central Florida Chapter, who served in 1977.



1st photo – Color Guard marching to position. 2nd photo – Color Guard in position for the start of the ceremony. 3rd photo – Son (Donald Walker Jr.) and grandson (Jon Walker) of Donald Walker.



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Things to do

National Events are in White letters, on a Blue field

28 JAN 2026

4 p.m.

Brewing a Revolution: The Role of Coffeehouses in Colonial Protest

ZOOM Webinar
fau.edu/history/lavoy

31 JAN 2026

10:00 a.m.

Liberty Tree Dedication
Fort Lauderdale Chapter

City of Tamarac
Veteran's Park

13, 14 FEB 2026

CAR State Conference

Gainesville
University Hilton

14 FEB 2026

9:00 a.m.

Compatriot Grave Marking
Palm Cemetery

1005 N. New York Avenue
Winter Park

14 FEB 2026

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

CFLSAR Chapter Meeting

4755 Howell Branch Rd
Winter Park

21, 22 FEB 2026

Pioneer Days
Cypress Grove Park

290 Holden Ave.
Orlando, FL

28 FEB 2026

3 p.m.

Liberty Tree Dedication
St. Augustine Chapter

Palatka, Putnam County, FL

5 MAR 2026

American Revolution Musical

OMNI Hotel
Championsgate, FL

5, 6, 7, MAR 2026

FSDAR State Conference

OMNI Hotel
Championsgate, FL

11 MAR 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

CFLSAR Chapter Meeting
4755 Howell Branch Rd
Winter Park

14 MAR 2026

10:00 a.m.

**1st Amphibious Assault
Memorial Dedication**

Pompano Beach, FL

19 MAR 2026

**Inheriting the Revolution:
The Modern Legacy of 1776**

Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, FL



Things to do

National Events are in White letters, on a Blue field

21 MAR 2026

10:00 a.m.

**Last Naval Battle
Commemoration**

Veterans Memorial Center
Merritt Island, FL

28 MAR 2026

10:00 a.m.

**Battle of Thomas Creek
Commemoration**

Jacksonville, FL

4 APR 2026

Liberty Tree Dedication
Jacksonville Chapter

Jacksonville, FL

11 APR 2026

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

CFLSAR Chapter Meeting
4755 Howell Branch Rd
Winter Park

15 APR 2026

9:00 p.m.

The Villages Honor Flight
Mission 70
Allegiant Air
Sanford, FL

17 APR 2026

Time TBD

Liberty Tree Dedication
Clearwater Chapter

Clearwater, FL

25 APR 2026

9:00 p.m.

Orlando Honor Flight
Mission 36

Sanford, FL

2 MAY 2026

American Revolution Musical

Orange County History Center
Orlando, FL

2 MAY 2026

Flag Raising by Color Guard

Orange County History Center
Orlando, FL

2 MAY 2026

Naturalization Ceremony

Orange County History Center
Orlando, FL

8 MAY 2026

**Battle of Pensacola
Commemoration**

Pensacola, FL

8 MAY 2026

7:00 p.m.

America 250 Ball
Desoto Chapter DAR

Tampa Yacht and Country
Club - Tampa, FL



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Things to do

National Events are in White letters, on a Blue field

13 MAY 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

CFLSAR Chapter Meeting
4755 Howell Branch Rd
Winter Park

Awards Night

15, 16, MAY 2026

**FLSSAR Spring Board of
Management Meeting**

Embassy Suites
Kissimmee, FL

27 MAY 2026

9:00 p.m.

The Villages Honor Flight
Mission 71
Allegiant Air
Sanford, FL

6 JUN 2026

American Revolution Musical

Orlando Garden Club
Orlando, FL

20 JUN 2026

10:00 a.m.

**Battle of Alligator Creek
Bridge Commemoration**

Callahan, FL

27 JUN 2026

10:00 a.m.

Liberty Tree Dedication
Central Florida Chapter

Longwood, FL

10 - 13, SEP 2026

FSDAR Fall Forum

OMNI Hotel
Championsgate, FL

30 SEP 2026

9:00 p.m.

The Villages Honor Flight
Mission 72
Allegiant Air
Sanford, FL

17 OCT 2026

9:00 p.m.

Orlando Honor Flight
Mission 37

TBD

28 OCT 2026

9:00 p.m.

The Villages Honor Flight
Mission 73
Allegiant Air
Sanford, FL

FALL 2026

9:00 p.m.

**John Clark Historical Marker
Dedication**

Panama City, FL



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Construction has Begun

Construction on the 1st Amphibious Assault Memorial began on January 20



Aerial side view of Pompano Beach Pier showing a red arrow indicating where the memorial will be positioned.



Front view of the Pompano Beach Pier shops area entrance, showing the context of the proposed memorial location.



Front view of Pompano Beach Pier area with red arrow indicating where the memorial would be located in relation to the pier.



Architectural rendering of the First Amphibious Assault Memorial design concept.

To see the beginning of construction, go to the link below

<https://www.downtownphoto.us/Client-Preview/CORPORATE/SAR-Fort-Lauderdale-Chapter/1st-Amphibious-Memorial>

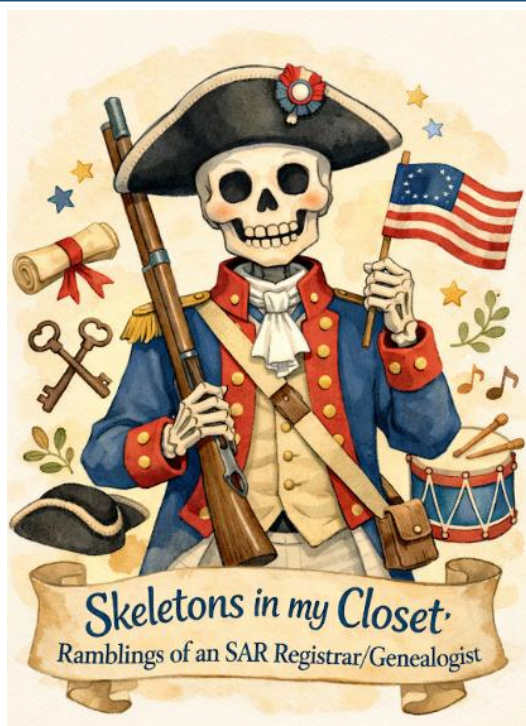


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Skeletons in the Closet Ramblings of a SAR Registrar/Genealogist

By and with permission of Harry L. Rinker



Welcome to issue No 1 of “Skeletons in the Closet,” a quarterly column focusing on issues of interest to SAR chapter registrar/genealogists and other chapter members. The goal is to share knowledge that will aid in understanding the SAR application process from initial contact through final “registration” of a successful application.

It is a fortunate SAR chapter that has a separate genealogist and registrar. The chapter is even more fortunate if each does his job (rather than just holding a title to be on the Board) and works in partnership with the other. A chapter genealogist is responsible for working with an applicant to assemble the documents needed for an application, reviewing the documents to determine what is and is not eligible to appear on the application, properly mark the documents, and prepare the online digital application. The chapter registrar, usually an experienced former genealogist, reviews the work of the

chapter genealogist. If he approves the application, he forwards it to the state Registrar for a final review before sending it to NSSAR national headquarters.

This above is the ideal situation. The reality is that most chapters have one individual who fills both roles - the chapter registrar/genealogist.

There is key distinction between the abilities of a chapter genealogist and chapter registrar in respect to working on a SAR digital application. The chapter genealogist can input data into the application but cannot go back in and change it. Only a chapter registrar can change an application once it is complete. This is why any individuals working on applications within a chapter be registered by the chapter with the state either as a chapter registrar or assistant registrar, thus giving the individual full access to the chapter dashboard and the ability to function fully.

The position of chapter registrar/genealogist is one of the most demanding, frustrating, time consuming, mentally stressful, and pressured positions in a chapter. It is not for everyone. It requires constant training, a commitment to exhaustive research, and the ability to absorb many of costs for hardware, software, and supplies. Most SAR chapters cannot begin to fund the costs of the position, which can easily run into the high hundreds or thousands of dollars per year.



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Skeletons in the Closet Ramblings of a SAR Registrar/Genealogist

By and with permission of Harry L. Rinker



SAR registrar/genealogists are volunteers. Most will not accept a fee for their services. They do what they do for two reasons. First, they have a strong commitment to helping their chapters and the SAR grow. Second, they relish the challenge or assembling a documented family legacy that can be passed down from one generation to another.

Given the above, why become a chapter registrar/genealogist? The answer is twofold - it is an adventure and fun. Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" ends with these lines: "I took the one less traveled by / And that has made all the difference." Each applicant's application is a road less traveled by." The application is an invitation to a new adventure, a new challenge, and a test on one's abilities. If keeping one's mind active is one of ways to prevent dementia or Alzheimer's disease, the SAR chapter registrar/genealogist is lessening his risk. Also, the mental high of solving a difficult application far exceeds that achieved by drugs.

Finally, the chapter registrar/genealogist experiences Christmas multiple times a month. Each new application is a gift waiting for him to wrap, play with, and experience its joy.

Being a chapter registrar/genealogist is FUN.

PS: Do not forget to thank and honor your chapter registrar/genealogists. A little praise goes a long way.

WHAT'S NEXT - The role of the chapter registrar/genealogist in the membership recruitment process.



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It's time to party. These Compatriots are celebrating a birthday during the next month.

January 25 – Stephen Bradbury

January 27 – Michael Bridgford

January 30– Kevin Short

January 31– John Grist

February 1 – Preston Dyar & Paul Hughes Jr.

February 2 – Matthew Assenmacher

February 4 – Ashley Rosser

February 6 – Maynard Pittendreigh & Charles Buckles

February 8 – James Eshelman

February 13 – Robert MacMurray

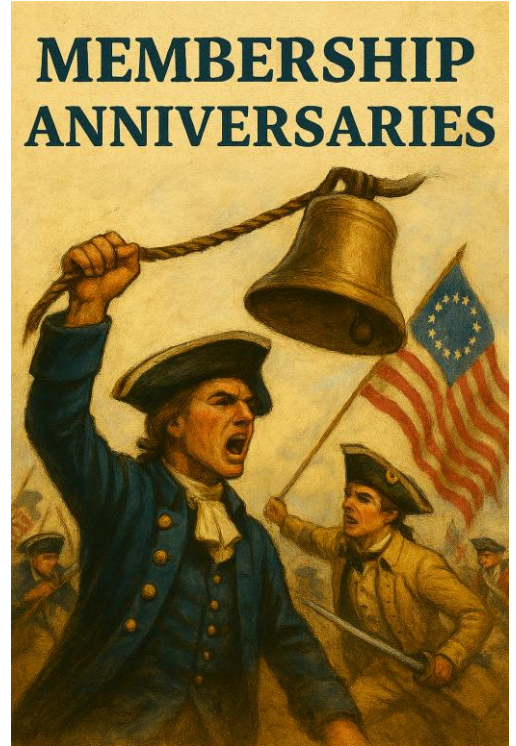
February 14 – Harrold Roberts

February 15 – Finnegan & Harrison Lester

February 20 – Grant Meier

February 24 – Ryan Pries

February 28 – Charles Grist II & Cole Harper



Congratulations on being a valuable member of our chapter. In the next month, you will reach a SAR membership anniversary.

February 5 — 5 Years

Ashley Rosser



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It Happened 250 Years Ago

1776 – General Howe warned London that Boston had only three weeks of fuel left. Firewood had become scarce, and the British were using up to 336 tons of coal per week. In desperation, horse dung was even being burned for heat.

1776 – Quebec Campaign

In January, Congress offered the first bounty of the war to those who would join the army bound for Canada. Those soldiers were given \$6.66 (\$235 today).

Throughout the first few months of 1776, there were some minor artillery actions taken against Quebec, but nothing of significance. Major General David Wooster replaced Brigadier General Benedict Arnold in early April. At the end of April, Wooster was replaced by Major General John Thomas. Upon taking command, Thomas quickly concluded that the siege could not be sustained. In May, the retreat began and continued until they reached Fort Ticonderoga.

Governor General Guy Carleton requested that the Canadians who helped the Americans be identified. The final tally was over 700. Carleton showed leniency to some while being stricter with others. Those who faced harsher treatment were made to repair parts of the city and fortifications that had been damaged or destroyed during the siege.

In the month following the Americans' departure, forty British ships and 9,000 British troops arrived at Quebec City.

JAN 1, 1776 – Between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m., four British ships off the coast opened fire on the town of Norfolk, Virginia. Over 100 guns were firing into the city. After several hours of cannonading, landing parties were sent ashore—some to obtain provisions, others to set fire to buildings. The British succeeded in setting most of the waterfront ablaze.

The Patriot militiamen were able to resist the landing parties but had little success against the flames, which were fueled by advantageous winds. The burning continued for three days. By the time order was restored, much of the town had been destroyed.

The British shelling destroyed only 19 properties, while the Patriots destroyed 852 buildings. By February 6, the remaining 416 structures in the town were also destroyed. It took over a year for the Patriot involvement in the fires to come to light.

JAN 4, 1776 – Quebec Campaign - On New Year's Day, the British recovered the body of American Major General Richard Montgomery, who had been killed the previous night during the Battle of Quebec. Three days later, he was honored with a military funeral by the British. Forty-two years later, in 1818, the general's body was reburied in New York.



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It Happened 250 Years Ago

Trivia Alert: During the second half of the 1700s, one out of every three ships flying the British flag at the start of the revolution was built in the colonies.



Ships were classified into three categories based on the number of guns. The various types included barks, brigs, brigantines, corvettes, cutters, frigates, pinks, schooners, scows, and sloops. There were also ships of the line, which were the large battleships of the day. Ships of the line ranged from sixty-four guns to first-rate vessels, which carried over one hundred guns and were almost as long as a football field.

A ship-of-the-line carrying 74 cannons was constructed of wood—a lot of wood. It took 2,000 oak trees covering 57 acres of forest to build just one. The ship had a crew of 500 – 750 men. These ships were large but not the largest; ships of the line carried 90 or more cannons.

The first 13 ships Congress ordered built were frigates. These were second-class ships, carrying between twenty-four and forty-four guns on a single gun deck.

Not counting the ships used by Benedict Arnold during the Champlain campaign or Washington's navy, the United States utilized fifty-seven vessels in its Navy over the course of the war. Additionally, hundreds of other ships were employed as privateers, but that is a different story.

The average Continental Navy sailor was paid between \$6.66 (\$235) and \$8.00 (\$283) per month.



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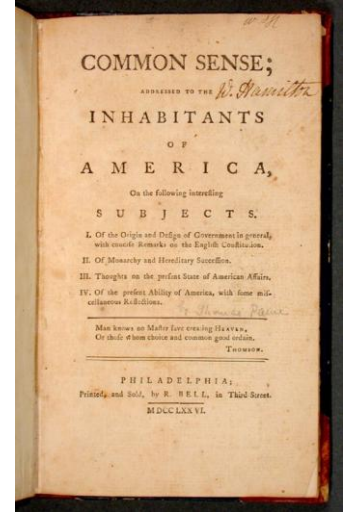
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It Happened 250 Years Ago

JAN 5, 1776 – Although they were not officially States yet, the Congress of New Hampshire ratified the first constitution for what would become the state of New Hampshire.

JAN 9, 1776 – *Common Sense* was a small book that advocated for independence from England. When it was released, the author of the 47-page pamphlet was anonymous. It was later revealed to be written by Thomas Paine (born 1737). At the time of its release, it sold 150,000 copies at 2 shillings each (\$1.45 today). While that might not seem like much by today's standards, consider that there were about 2.5 million people in the colonies in 1776. If we equate 150,000 to the United States' population in 2020, the book would have sold almost 20 million copies.

Paine never made a penny off his book. He signed over all proceeds to the Continental Congress.



JAN 18, 1776 – After a two-month absence, Colonel Henry Knox rode into Cambridge with great news about the artillery being moved from Fort Ticonderoga.

JAN 20, 1776 – British Lt General Henry Clinton left Boston, ultimately heading to New York City.

JAN 23, 1776 – The *HMS Blue Mountain Valley* was captured about 40 miles off the coast of Sandy Hook, New Jersey. The Patriot force that captured the ship was out of Elizabethtown.

Trivia Question: When was **HMS** first used to designate a Royal Navy ship? The abbreviation HMS to describe a boat in the Royal Navy as **HIS** or **HER MAJESTY'S SHIP** did not happen until 1789. Beginning in the late 17th century, they began referring to Royal Navy ships as HIS or HER MAJESTY'S SHIP, but the abbreviation didn't come into use until after the American Revolution. To make things easier, we'll use the term throughout the book.

JAN 27, 1776 – Admiral Richard Howe replaced Samuel Graves as the commander of the British fleet in the Americas. If the last name sounds familiar, it's because Richard Howe was the older brother of William Howe, the commander of British army forces in the Americas.



The Bell Ringer

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Henry Knox's Noble Train of Artillery



On January 24, 1776, Henry Knox arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with over 60 tons of artillery from Ticonderoga. He had left Massachusetts in November with a group of 30 soldiers and teamsters. The expedition spent about 70 days moving the artillery some 300 miles using specially built sledges drawn by horses and oxen. They crossed two major rivers, the Hudson and Connecticut rivers, and numerous smaller rivers and streams. It was the placement of the 59 artillery pieces on Dorchester Heights that drove the British out of Boston in March.