

M I N N E S O T A

# SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • [www.sar.org/mnssar](http://www.sar.org/mnssar) • WINTER 2011

## MNSSAR 122ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



*New dual-member with the Ohio Society, Ross Allyn Matlack, III, incoming MNSSAR President COL Ronald McRoberts and new member David Noble.*

Minneapolis, Minnesota – The Minnesota Society, and the Minneapolis and Saint Paul Chapters of the Sons of the American Revolution held their annual general meetings at Jax Cafe on January 8, 2011. Luncheon, from the menu, was served during the meeting.

The Society was called to order by President James Fredrick Foster. Vice President Ronald McRoberts led the Pledge to the U.S. flag and read the Pledge to the SAR. Compatriot John Hallberg Jones gave the Invocation. Jones thanked his fellow compatriots for their prayers during the recent months following the untimely death of his grandson. He informed all of the health problems of MNSSAR Chaplain Rev. Richard Lanklyn Vork and the Minneapolis Chapter

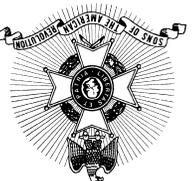
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# MNSSAR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Chaplain Rev. Richard Keene Smith, Jr. and offered prayers for them. The Minnesota Society was then recessed and the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Chapters conducted their business.

## Saint Paul Chapter

The Saint Paul Chapter was called to order by President Larry Wray Sisk. Noting that the Saint Paul Chapter has a much smaller treasury than the Minneapolis Chapter, COL Ronald McRoberts made a generous donation to the chapter and challenged others to do so too. During the Minnesota business meeting Compatriot Jones led an auction of two patriotic books, with the proceeds of \$110 going to the Saint Paul Chapter. The book titles were "*Washington's Spies*" and "*The Confederate Navy*."

Saint Paul Secretary-Treasurer Timothy Harris reported that eleven of the usually twelve area high schools participated in the Bronze Good Citizenship Medal Program in 2010 and their students were presented with medals the past May.

On Flag Day, June 14, 2010, five Saint Paul businesses were presented with a flag certificate for showing their patriotism and love of country by regularly flying the flag.

## Minneapolis Chapter

The Minneapolis Chapter was called to order by Presi-

dent Robert Kahl. Minneapolis Chapter Secretary-Treasurer Jones reported that the Bronze Good Citizenship Medal was presented in 24 area high schools in 2010, and that they also had presentations at two squadrons of Naval Sea Cadets. Letters have already been mailed to all schools/units for the 2011 program. In addition a letter was sent to Bethany Academy inviting their participation.

Compatriot Thomas Truxtun (Truck) Morrison spoke of the success of fund-raising projects and the giving of scholarships by the Lake Minnetonka Society C.A.R. The Minneapolis Chapter will donate \$100 to the Lake Minnetonka Society C.A.R.

## Minnesota Society Membership

Secretary-Treasurer Jones reported on membership. During 2010 we had nine new members, one reinstatement, and two deaths, giving a net increase of eight, for a membership of 136, plus four dual members. However, there are still five that owe 2011 dues, who, if not paid by 25 January 2011, will be dropped for non-payment of dues. David Noble was welcomed as a new member and presented a rosette. His certificate has not yet arrived from NSSAR. Also welcomed was Ross Allyn Matlack, III as a dual member, whose primary society is Ohio, bringing our dual

members to five.

## Minnesota Society Endowment Trust Fund

The Trustees proposed that the 2010 interest of \$469.94 be used to pay the following donation items:

- Duluth Public Library \$50.00
  - Minnesota Genealogical Society \$35.00
  - Taylor Grave Flowers \$20.00
  - Preservation Alliance of Minnesota \$40.00
  - Minnesota Genealogical Journal \$26.78
  - The balance of \$298.16 to the MNSSAR Color Guard.
- The principal as of 31 December 2010 totaled \$17,072.00.

## Minnesota Society Programs

Compatriot Timothy Harris reported on the Eagle Scout Program, indicating that he mailed packets to 904 new Eagle Scouts in 2010 and has received 14 entries for the contest thus far. Our Minnesota winner will be presented at the next meeting. A motion was passed commending the Committee and its chairman for their outstanding work.

Secretary-Treasurer Jones reported on the ROTC Medal Program. Letters have already been mailed to the 14 JROTC units and the seven ROTC units in Minnesota. Several Compatriots have assisted with the presentations over the last few years and several

spoke of their experiences at these ceremonies and their desire to do this service again.

Compatriot Paul Kent Theisen reported for the Minnesota SAR Color Guard. The group has made several appearances and have many additional appearances already scheduled. He asked for more volunteers to serve in this outstanding unit. A motion was passed to award Compatriot Theisen the bronze Color Guard Medal.

## Other Business

COL Ronald McRoberts stated that he was preparing a report for the Executive Committee on the project to publish a booklet/pamphlet on the life of Stephen Taylor, the only known revolutionary soldier buried in Minnesota.

Mention was made of the Washington Day Luncheon at Jax Café on Saturday, 12 February 2011. Jax will again do the Colonial Era luncheon, with three entrée choices.

The officers of the Minnesota Society, the Minneapolis Chapter, and the Saint Paul Chapter were installed by Comp. Jones.

MNSSAR President McRoberts, installed into office minutes earlier, read the SAR Recessional, and with no further business appearing, declared the annual meetings of the Minnesota Society, Minneapolis Chapter, and Saint Paul Chapter adjourned.



# FRANKLIN'S PRINT SHOP AND THE DINGY HANDS OF DEMOCRACY

By Christopher Lancette – Reprinted with the author's permission from *DCReflections.typepad.com*

Philadelphia, PA – I stand on the cobblestone street in Franklin Court and imagine Ben Franklin walking into his print shop in 1729, the year he and a partner purchased *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. The one-time apprentice who learned the printing business through the sweat of his brow smiles as he glances at the young men following in his footsteps.

One hovers over a table typesetting the next edition – reading a hand-written document and then placing tiny metal blocks with letters on them in what looks like a tray with wooden strips forming the borders of what will become printed pages. The physical dexterity required is just part of the man's challenge. He also has to lay in the tiny blocks upside down and backward so that the documents read left to right and right side up when stamped on to a page.

Another man is covered in the black, sticky ink he's applying to a block of type with padded leather balls. Once properly coated, he inserts into the press a damp piece of cloth that's wet enough to absorb the ink, slides the block in position, and uses his labor-born pectorals and arms to force the block onto the page. He releases the lever, grabs what looks like a brick oven pizza remover, pulls the paper off

the press and hangs it on an overhead rack to dry. Then he steps back to the press to start all over again.

It is grueling, repetitive, and dingy work. It's made worse by the overpowering odor that clings to their hands and attacks their nostril hair... chamberlye. That's the polite term for the urine-based cleaning solution that had to be applied to the equipment.

Yes, trace the roots of our democracy and you find they pass through chamber pots and come out like Andy Dufresne clean on the other side. You find the un-sung workday heroes who cranked out the newspapers, pamphlets and books that enlightened the colonists and made possible the American Revolution.

Franklin had tremendous admiration and respect for the power of the printing press. He also advanced the profession. He was the first to insert cartoons and maps in a newspaper. The May 9, 1754 edition of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* contained America's first political cartoon – the serpentine “Join, or Die” illustration that called for colonial unity.

I too am awed by what the pressmen of the 18th century achieved.

“Reading's the means by which the lowest man can lift himself up from a state of ignorance,” a press owner

told a newly arrived colonist in volume one of John Jakes' epic historical fiction series about the Revolution, *The Kent Family Chronicles*.

My emotional connection to the printing press runs deep. I joined my school newspaper in eighth grade and stayed with it through junior high and high school.

A bright-eyed University of Georgia student back in the long-time-agos, I had the fortune to be the founding managing editor of *The Campus Times*. The upstart paper sought to compete with the long-standing student paper. I remember the day our first issue thundered through the two-story press bringing our ideas to life: “That's a powerful tool you got there,” the old man running the facility said. He implored us to use it wisely.

I have treated the mass-produced word with sacrosanct respect ever since. The reverence has followed me through my careers in journalism and public relations and is in my heart every time I turn on my computer to write on this new-fangled treasure we call the Internet.

I have also had the divine pleasure to hold in my hands numerous, original Revolutionary publications that paved the way for independence and democracy. I've read books owned and inscribed by Thomas Jeffer-

son, other books Franklin himself wrote in, and a first edition of *Common Sense*.

Through the fortune of knowing the right person, I have also held in my hands a copy of the Declaration of Independence that was among the first to roll off John Dunlap's Philadelphia press on the very afternoon the fellas in the Pennsylvania State House stuck it to 'ol King George. Tears filled my eyes the moment the document was placed in my hands because I recognized immediately that I had reached the zenith of what a patriot and a student of history can experience.

My head was spinning from the thrill.

I poured over the words so familiar to me now and graciously returned the document to its proprietor.

I sat there, stunned, for what seemed like a long time. Then I gave thanks not just to the famous 56 men but to the countless unheralded souls who fought black, sticky ink and pots full of piss to educate our people and give us a nation.

*Christopher Lancette is a Washington D.C.-area freelance writer born in St. Paul. Read more of his history pieces by clicking on the American history section of his blog at <http://dcReflections.typepad.com>*

# AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Friday April 4, 1777

## NEW JERSEY FORAGE WAR

Morristown, New Jersey – Following the Battle of Princeton on January 3, 1777, General Washington faced the dilemma of being caught between Lord Cornwallis in Trenton, NJ and the rest of the British army at New Brunswick. Rather than make an attempt on the British outpost at New Brunswick with his exhausted troops, Washington moved his army up the Millstone River valley toward Morristown, a place he knew could be strongly fortified and used as winter quarters. Cornwallis and the remaining British and Hessian troops in and around Trenton and Princeton withdrew to New Brunswick to regroup after the battle at Princeton.

During this time, militia companies mustered to assist the Continental Army. The militia was anything but organized. On a local level, they simply took advantage of opportunities that came their way. They realized they were not strong enough to duplicate Washington's conquest of Trenton or Princeton, by attacking some of the fortified garrison towns, but they could disrupt both the flow of information and supplies. Constantly being intercepted, the British couriers could not carry dispatches between New York City, the headquarters of the British Army, and the numerous New Jersey garrison. This proved very demoralizing. Every British garrison wanted to know, on a daily basis,

where Washington and his Army was, for fear they would become the next Trenton. On January 3rd, 1777, Hessian Chaplain Philipp Waldeck wrote home: "...one can no longer lie down to sleep without thinking this is the last night, the last night of freedom. Instead of undressing in the evening as usual, one becomes accustomed to dress completely, and to go to bed in this manner."

The captured supplies were sent to General Washington in substantial quantities. So much so that it forced the British to increase the armed escorts for their supply wagons, which proved not to be a deterrent, but just supplying more targets for the militia. General Washington realized he had been handed an opportunity – forage and fodder. He wrote Congress "...if their horses are reduced this winter, it will be impossible for them to take to the field in the Spring." Obtaining the amount of fodder needed for the entire British Army in North America was a supply nightmare. The main source of fodder was collected from local farms, gathered by foraging parties. Washington's orders – "stop the foraging parties!" Thus started the foraging war!

On January 4th, Captain John Stryker, leading the Somerset Horse Unit intercepted a British supply train near Ten Mile Run and captured it. The wagons were filled with warm woolen winter clothes. These



much needed supplies were sent to General Washington.

The next three days, the militia attacked the British and Hessians at Newark, Rahway and Bound Brook. The Militia attacked the Hessian patrols near Elizabethtown, a heavily fortified and garrisoned town. Captain George von Haacke was ordered to take a force of 60 Hessian Infantry and a squadron of British Dragoons and clear the area around the town. They were attacked, and only some of the Dragoons managed to make it back to Elizabethtown. General Howe, safe (and warm) at his New York City headquarters immediately ordered Elizabethtown abandoned. The British left in such a hurry that George Washington notified Congress that the British had: "...evacuated Elizabeth Town with so much precipitation that we made 100 prisoners and took the baggage of two regiments,

besides a quantity of provisions." This astonishing turn of events all occurred within a fortnight of the taking of Trenton! The tables had been turned!

The British also abandoned the Loyalists, leaving them to fend for themselves. Many of the Loyalist troops changed sides, joining the American Army. Citizens that had taken the oath of allegiance to the Crown swore a new allegiance to Congress. "Many of the inhabitants of Monmouth County who received written protections, are now determined to return them to his Britannic Majesty's Commissioners in cartridges."

By the end of January the New Jersey Militia, now reinforced, by Washington, with units from the Continental Line became more brazen. On the 20th at Van Nest Mill, General Philemon Dickinson led 400 New Jersey Militia and

50 Pennsylvania Riflemen against 600 British regulars. The British prevented Dickinson from attacking over a bridge, so he led his men downstream, forded the ice choked Millstone River, flanked the British and launched a surprise charge. The British suffered 25 killed or wounded and 12 taken prisoner. In addition, they lost 43 supply wagons, 104 irreplaceable horses, 115 head of cattle and 70 sheep.

The British were not slow to react. They realized that they had lost the initiative and had to take action to recover. On February 1st, Sir William Erskine set a trap. He sent out a small foraging party, but just out of sight he hid the 42nd Highlanders, some light grenadiers, Hessians and eight artillery pieces.

The Patriot force, the 5th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line took the bait. The ambush of the Americans failed. They fought with so much ferocity that they drove the superior British force back. The British suffered 136 killed or wounded.

Lord Cornwallis decided that he would personally take to the field and stop the carnage. He, with six other generals, led twelve Regiments into the New Jersey countryside. The Americans were smart enough to avoid a general action with such a superior force, but constantly harassed

the flanks and rear of Lord Cornwallis' column. It was a repeat of the British retreat from Concord, Massachusetts.

To the North, the British Soldiers of the Sixth, Seventh and Twenty-sixth Regiments of Foot were stationed in Hackensack. The interdiction of the New Jersey Militia had successfully prevented supplies from reaching them, they were literally starving. Additionally, as the northern most British garrison, they were rightfully concerned that the American forces stationed in the Hudson Highlands could attack them from the North. They abandoned Hackensack and marched to the eastern shore of New Jersey, where they could be resupplied and protected by the Royal Navy's guns laying at anchor in the Hudson River.

American Brigadier General William Maxwell, Irish born, with a heavy accent, known as 'Scotch Willie' to his men, undertook the coordination of the many militia units. He organized them into a formidable fighting force that met and defeated the British at every turn.

Colonel Charles Mawhood, one of the better British Officers, led the British Third Brigade, which included the famed Forty-Second Highland Regiment (The Black Watch) supported by a Regiment of Grenadiers and a Regiment of Light Infantry into New Jersey

in a desperate attempt to gather forage. Like failed attempts before, he intended to trap the Americans attacking his foragers. 'Scotch Willie' Maxwell was waiting for him. At Rahway, Mawhood sprang his trap. But Maxwell had set up a trap too. He had Colonel Edward Hand's Pennsylvanians, Colonel George Stricker's Maryland Regiment and Colonel John Broadhead's Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment arrayed around him. The trap sprung, and the British suffered heavy casualties, losing 100 men. Their forage wagons returned not with fodder for their horses but filled with wounded soldiers. The American losses were five killed and nine wounded.

On March 8th, now very desperate for fodder, a force of 2,000 crack troops was dispatched. At Bonhamtown, they had the misfortune of encountering 'Scotch Willie'. A British officer who survived the engagement wrote that they had marched into "a nest of American hornets." The British lost 60 men, the Americans 20.

Up until January 1777, the British held the American's fighting ability in utter contempt. In just a few weeks that all changed. On March 17th, 1777, Colonel William Harcourt, commander of the elite British Sixteenth Light Dragoons wrote his father, The Earl of Harcourt, imparting his

opinion of the American soldiers. "...they are now become a formidable enemy... they seem to be ignorant of the precision and order, and even in principle by which large bodies are moved, but they possess some of the requisites for making good troops, such as extreme cunning, great industry in moving ground and felling of wood, activity and a spirit of enterprise upon any advantage."

Between the attack on Trenton and the beginning of April, General Howe had lost an estimated 2,887 killed or captured. The victorious year of 1776 saw the total British losses at 1,510. When Howe invaded New York he commanded 31,625 troops of which only 24,464 were considered fit for duty. A report filed by Howe on January 8th, 1777 states that he had 22,957 men of which only about 14,000 were still fit for duty.

Not denoted in the report was that the British losses were heaviest in their best Regiments. Howe wrote London asking for an additional 15,000 reinforcements. The British government had already stretched its resources to provide the original 32,000 man army.

Sources:

Donald N. Moran –  
<http://www.revolutionarywar-archives.org/newjerseyforage.html>  
 – Sons of Liberty Chapter,  
 California Society SAR



## 2011 MINNESOTA SOCIETY SAR OFFICERS

The following compatriots were nominated and elected to serve the Minnesota Society and/or their respective chapters. Congratulations to all the compatriots who accepted service to the Minnesota Society Sons of the American Revolution.

### MINNESOTA SOCIETY SAR

President.....COL Ronald Edward McRoberts  
 Vice President.....Larry Wray Sisk  
 Secretary-Treasurer.....John Hallberg Jones, PP  
 Registrar.....Arthur Louis Finnell, PP  
 Genealogist & Asst. Registrar.....William Leslie DeCoursey, PP  
 Chancellor.....Hon. David Sinclair Bouschor, PP  
 Historian/Newsletter Editor.....Timothy Charles Harris, PP  
 Librarian.....Thomas Christopher Harris  
 Surgeon.....Dr. Roy Franklin House, Jr.  
 Chaplain.....The Rev. Richard Lanklyn Vork  
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Jonathan Lee Gustafson

Past Presidents are automatically members of the Board of Managers. Those not named above are:

James Fredrick Foster	Duane L.C.M. Galles, Esq.
Curtis John Oliver	Marvin Eugene Stonecipher
Michael Scott Swisher	Hon. Paul Kent Theisen
Page Gregory Whitmore	Buford Allen Young

#### Board of Managers:

(up to 20 members, in addition to the above.)

Geoffrey Robert Bodeau, M.D.	Charles Edward Boyles
Tracy Ashley Crocker	Peter Arrott Dixon
Jay Thomas W. Franklin	William Arthur Harris, Sr.
Hon. William Raymond Johnson	Robert Edward Kahl, II
Mark Allen Labine	Larry Allan Lundblad, Ph.D.
Paul Victor William E. Miller, Ph.D.	Robert Arthur Minish
Thomas Truxtun Morrison, Sr.	Randall Roger Nelson
Christopher John Pizinger	John Charles Sassaman
George Floyd Smith, M.D.	Robert Leslie Smith, III
Rehn Douglas Smith	Stephen John Vescelus

#### SAR Endowment Trust Fund: (three year terms)

Trustee ending January 2012.....Michael Scott Swisher, PP  
 Trustee ending January 2013.....John Hallberg Jones, PP  
 Trustee ending January 2014.....Duane L.C.M. Galles, Esq., PP

#### Nominated for election at the NSSAR National Congress in Cleveland, Ohio in July 2010:

National Trustee for Minnesota...Peter Arrott Dixon, PP  
 Alternate National Trustee MN...John Hallberg Jones, PP

### MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER

President.....Rehn Douglas Smith  
 Vice President.....Hon. William Raymond Johnson  
 Secretary-Treasurer.....John Hallberg Jones  
 Chaplain.....The Rev. Richard Keene Smith, Jr.  
 Board of Managers.....Thomas Truxtun Morrison  
 Tracy Ashley Crocker  
 Timothy Charles Harris

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 Larry Allan Lundblad, Ph.D.  
 Michael Scott Swisher  
 Hon. Paul Kent Theisen  
 Larry Larson Warren  
 Page Gregory Whitmore

### SAINT PAUL CHAPTER

President.....John Charles Sassaman  
 Vice President.....Charles Edward Boyles  
 Secretary-Treasurer.....Timothy Charles Harris  
 Chaplain.....Michael Scott Swisher  
 Board of Managers.....James Fredrick Foster  
 COL Ronald Edward McRoberts  
 Larry Wray Sisk

### NEXT MEETING

The Minnesota SAR's annual George Washington Day Luncheon will be held at the Jax Cafe on Saturday, February 12, 2011. Festivities begin at 11:30 am and luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon. *You won't want to miss this meeting. – The luncheon will feature a menu from the Colonial era!*