

M I N N E S O T A

SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • www.MinnesotaSAR.org • SPRING 2012



MNSAR President McRoberts and the Vice President General of the North Central District, NSSAR, Frederick Walden.

2012 Annual Washington Day Luncheon

February 18, 2012 – Minneapolis, MN – 42 members of the Minnesota Society, along with spouses, guests, and members of the Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of Minnesota and the Society of the War of 1812 in the State of Minnesota, gathered for the Annual Washington Day Luncheon. The total attendance was 78. Jax Café had prepared their signature Beef Tenderloin Tips meal for the group. A table favor of a pencil from Mount Vernon was provided by the SR, having been acquired by Edward R. Lief, their President, who was in Washington, DC, and unable to be present.

The MNSAR Secretary-Treasurer introduced three special guests, each of whom brought greetings: Frederick Walden (wife Janet) from Omaha, NE, the Vice President General for the North Central District NSSAR; Faye Vork, Vice President General, NSDAR; and Roberta Everling, President of the U.S. Daughters of 1812 in Minnesota.

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LTC THOMAS PELHAM CURTIS SPEAKS ABOUT THE WAR OF 1812 TO COMMEMORATE THE WAR'S BICENTENNIAL

LTC Thomas Pelham Curtis II of Milwaukee, WI, who is currently the District Vice President General of the General Society of the War of 1812 presented a most enjoyable, entertaining, and learned talk on the run-up to the War of 1812.

Curtis stated that the War of 1812 has been called the Second American Revolution; the War that should not have happened; and the War of faulty communication.

Thomas Jefferson had a glorious first term as president. The temporary peace between England and France permitted American commerce to flourish between 1800 and 1803. Jefferson was able to perform the political magic of retiring the debt while also cutting taxes. In 1803 not just New Orleans, but the entire Louisiana Territory was purchased from France. Everything that had flowed together so serenely during his first term seemed to collapse in his second. The resumption of full scale war between England and France, then the imposition of naval blockades in the Atlantic and Caribbean,

threw the American economic engine into reverse.

The British navy had lots of ships but they were in need of more sailors. In 1806 Britain ignored complaints about the seizure of American ships and the impressment of American sailors. Congress passed the Non-Importation Act, banning a large number of British goods from the American market.

In 1807 the British frigate *Leopard* halted the U.S. frigate, *Chesapeake*, claiming that four sailors aboard were British deserters. When the commander of the American ship refused to surrender the men, the *Leopard* opened fire, killing three and wounding eighteen before taking the four accused deserters.

Jefferson's answer to these multiple challenges was the Embargo Act of 1807, which essentially closed American ports to all foreign trade.

Following Madison's inauguration as President the New England states want peace in order to resume trade with England. Western expansionists press for war against Great Britain, who they accuse of orchestrating Native Amer-



Larry Wray Sisk, President of the Society of the War of 1812 in the State of Minnesota; COL Robert McRoberts, MNSAR President; LTC Thomas Pelham Curtis, District Vice President General Society of the War of 1812; William R. Johnson, newly elected President of the Minnesota SR.

ican attacks on American frontier settlements.

In 1812 Madison sent a message to Congress, giving four reasons for declaration of war with Great Britain: the impressment of American sailors; violation of American neutrality; the blockade of American ports; and Britain's refusal to repeal the Orders of Council, which prohibits foreign commerce in forbidden European ports. On June 16, 1812 Britain revokes the Orders in Council, but the news does not reach the U.S. Congress until after war is declared. The war, perhaps, could have been avoided.

On a similar note,

Andrew Jackson and a group of expert Tennessee and Kentucky riflemen decimated a larger force of British troops at the Battle of New Orleans, fought two weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, ending the War of 1812.

LTC Curtis was presented the Certificate of Distinguished Service from the SAR, a similar certificate from the SR, and the Minnesota 1812 group presented a CD of Arthur Finnell's newly revised book "War of 1812 Veterans buried in Minnesota – Bicentennial Edition 2012". The book is now available at Barnes and Noble in CD format or as a download for their Nook system.



Veteran's Cemetery at Camp Ripley Project



Craig Whiting, John McCallum and Paul Kent Thiesen of the Minnesota SAR Color Guard.

A project has been undertaken at the Veteran's Cemetery at Camp Ripley involving the painting of murals depicting those from Minnesota who have participated in the several wars in our history. Craig Whiting from the MNSAR Color Guard has provided the depiction of the Revolutionary War uniform for the first mural. The matter was referred to the MNSAR Board of Managers for action and possible support.

The website that describes the project is www.buonfresco.com. Click on the Veteran's Cemetery project button for additional details.

Pilgrimage to Winona

June 9, 2012



James Foster, Stoney and COL. Ronald McRoberts visited the Taylor Grave in 2009.

Join other MNSAR members and guests for an afternoon of fun. We are planning a pilgrimage to the final resting place of Stephen Taylor, the only known Revolutionary War soldier buried in Minnesota. Taylor rests in Woodlawn Cemetery along Highway 61 in Winona, Minnesota.

MNSAR Past President, Marvin Stonecipher (Stoney) is organizing the event. His plans are to include a program at the gravesite and a picnic at a nearby location. Please watch for detailed information as they become available.

Constitution Day Luncheon

October 20, 2012



The annual Constitution Day Luncheon will be held at Jax Cafe on Saturday, October 20, 2012. The meeting will be held jointly with the Society of the Revolution (SR) in the State of Minnesota. The speaker is yet to be determined. Watch for detailed information to be mailed to you.

Auction Benefited the Endowment Trust Fund

Two items were auctioned for the benefit of the Endowment Trust Fund during the Washington Day Luncheon. A special postal Civil War stamp folder was the gift of Jonathan Gustafson and a marble artifact from the original monument at the grave of Mary Washington, mother of President George Washington, was the gift of Arthur Louis Finnell.

George Washington. . .

"Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism."

"When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen."

"The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations."

"Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company."

"My ardent desire is, and my aim has been, to comply strictly with all our engagements, foreign and domestic; but to keep the United States free from political connections with every other country, to see them independent of all and under the influence of none."

"Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be."

— From the Proclamation of National Thanksgiving

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NEW MNSAR MEMBERS



Thomas Sisk, Edward Burt, Robert Buie and Peter Lawless

During the Washington Day meeting, SAR Secretary-Treasurer Jones introduced new members and President McRoberts presented each with their certificate of membership and rosette: Bernard Douglas Barton, James Douglas Barton, Thomas Wray Sisk (who also accepted for two junior members, his sons Calvin Wray Sisk and Garrett Michael Sisk), Peter Aloysius Lawless, Robert Craighead Buie, and Edward John Burt. During 2011 we had 23 new members and we have already registered 7 since January 1, 2012. A special Life Membership pin was presented to William Malcolm Witte, our newest Life Member (who just turned 7 years old!)

NEW MEMBERS:	Ancestor
Bernard Douglas Barton	William Barton
James Douglas Barton	William Barton
Gary Monroe Printup	Joseph Printup
Leland Dean Swanson	Richard Jacob
Thomas Wray Sisk	Daniel Sisk
Peter Aloysius Lawless	John May
Douglas Roby Brown.....	David Sayre
Shawn Henry Wilson	Daniel Lane
Robert Craighead Buie.....	Robert Craighead
Edward John Burt	Joseph Adams

JUNIOR MEMBERS:

Enroll Your Children / Grandchildren as Junior Members



Jr. Member Will Witte proudly shows his Life Member Pin. He attended the George Washington Day Observance and Luncheon with his parents Jason and Marie Witte, and his sister, Allison.

NEW JUNIOR MEMBERS:	Ancestor
Calvin Wray Sisk	Daniel Sisk
Garrett Michael Sisk	Daniel Sisk
Gabriel John Jones	Elijah Lincoln
Joshua David Jones.....	Elijah Lincoln
Zachary James Jones.....	Elijah Lincoln

Jr. Member Benefits:

- Regular Member Number
- Regular Member Certificate
- Small Application Fee
- Minimal National Dues – Only \$5 Annually
- No State or Chapter Dues
- Automatically Receive Adult Membership Benefits at Age 18

Contact John Hallberg Jones 612-721-4275 Today



HASTINGS EAGLE SCOUT HONORED

Blake John Gerold, of the Northern Star Council Boy Scouts of America, received the Spreading Wings Bronze Eagle Trophy as the Minnesota winner of the SAR's Eagle Scout Scholarship and Awards Program. Blake, from Hastings, Minnesota, was honored at the annual George Washington Day Observance and Luncheon held at Jax Cafe. His mother and father, Cynthia and Timothy, were also in

attendance. Blake read his patriotic essay entitled *What it Takes to Be a Patriot* which is presented below. Blake's application, four generation ancestor chart and his patriotic essay were sent to National SAR headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky to compete with other state winners for an \$8,000 scholarship. \$4,000 and \$2,000 runner-up scholarships were also chosen.

This years national winner was Abram Matthew Weeks, the Utah Society candidate. The first and second runners-up were Jason E. Dreyzehner from Virginia and Matthew Samuel Waldrep from Tennessee.

What it Takes to Be a Patriot

By Black John Gerold – 2011 MNSAR Eagle Scout Contest Winner

What does it take to be a patriot? To be a patriot, you must not waiver in your beliefs of why you love your country. I believe John Hancock is a great example of what it takes to be a patriot. To understand how Hancock became such a great patriot, you must look at his whole life.

When Hancock was a child, he became an orphan and was adopted by his uncle. He went to Harvard for business and impressed his uncle so much with his honesty and work ethics that when Hancock's uncle died, he left Hancock with what was regarded as one of the biggest fortunes in the new world. This put Hancock into a social group of people, who were in general, loyalist to

the crown. If he ever had talked about becoming independent from England, these people would have turned him in to be hung for treason. This did not stop him from being one of the most important people in American history.

His dislike for the British began in 1768, when one of his ships was seized for violating unfair revenue laws. People rioted in his name for they needed supplies from that ship. When he consulted with his friends on what was going on, he realized that even his employees were being taxed unfairly. So when the Boston Massacre happened, he afterwards gave a speech that condemned the British for their actions. When Hancock signed the

Declaration of Independence, he along with the other men who signed it, gave themselves the death sentence. But, they signed it because they were willing to die for a chance of freedom. According to legend, Hancock was the first man to sign the Declaration of Independence. His signature was the most famous, for it was big and in the center so King George III could read it without his spectacles. His signature made such an impression on people; they started using his name synonymously for the word "signature." To be remembered throughout history as such a great patriot would be an honor. During the Revolutionary War, he donated his time and money to the war. Even though his

financials were suffering from funding the war, he continued to donate to the poor and helped to support his fellow country men. Later on during the war, he led men into battle, risking his own life. He did a great service for his country.

Hancock was loved by all for his generosity and kindness towards others. After the war, due to how he helped win independence from England, Hancock was given the responsibility and high honor of serving as the Governor of Massachusetts. Afterwards he would die, but he left a legacy behind that we as Americans can admire. To serve our country like Hancock did, by financing, serving, or leading your countrymen, this is what it takes to be a patriot.

AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Wednesday July 30, 1777



AMERICAN'S OBSTRUCT THE PROGRESS OF BURGOYNE'S ARMY

Fort Edward, NY – Last Friday, July 25, an American council of officers including Generals Philip Schuyler, and John Nixon, decided that Fort Edward could not be adequately garrisoned. On July 29, three weeks from the day General John Burgoyne had landed at Skenesborough, his exhausted army reached Fort Edward. It had taken him three weeks to advance twenty-three miles, seven of which had been over uncontested water.

It's hard to figure out why Burgoyne decided to plod through the forests rather than sail down Lake George. Lake George was ten miles as the crow flies from the Hudson and about twelve miles from Fort Edward, where a waterfall interrupted river traffic, but now that Burgoyne was on the scene, consulting knowledgeable local people, he decided that the army would continue along its present path and march overland the sixteen miles to Fort Edward. Fraser's advance corps would lead the way, taking ten small field-pieces that had been brought to Skenesborough. However, provisions, baggage, ammunition, thirty-three cannon, horses, and everything else would be carried by water from Ticonderoga to the head of Lake George and then carted overland to Fort Edward.

By electing to pull his troops back from Fort Anne to Skenesborough and wait for supplies until the entire army could advance, Burgoyne presented the Americans with a magnificent gift of time, during which Generals Nixon's

and Fellows's soldiers-turned-axemen made great progress felling trees, damming streams, and dismantling bridges, in which they were aided by a providentially rainy July that flooded scores of acres and created vast new bogs. Every ten or twelve yards the men dropped enormous trees across the road in such a way that their branches formed an impenetrable tangle that had to be hacked apart, after which the weary British artificers had to construct forty bridges and rebuild others. Adding to the difficulty was the sheer size of Burgoyne's train of baggage and artillery, and the army was further encumbered with camp followers that included 297 women, plus some children, as well as officers' wives and orderlies.

Finally, after the demolition crew finished its job the men were to drive off all the cattle, leaving only milk cows for families unable to move, and bring off iron from the mills. While all this was going on, Nixon had the scouts out "at almost every point of the compass," and the news they brought back was very disturbing – the woods were alive with Indian parties, one of which surrounded Captain Lane of Alden's regiment, killed one man, and captured the captain and twenty others.

Sources:

George Washington's War
by Robert Leckie,
HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1992
*Saratoga, Turning Point of America's
Revolutionary War,*
by Richard M. Ketchum
Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997

JANE MCCREA MURDERED BY SAVAGE INDIANS ALLIED TO THE BRITISH

Fort Edward, NY – Beautiful young Jane McCrea was planning to meet with her fiance, a soldier in "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne's army. Her day was full of anticipation; the glory of the summer sun shines on her radiant hair, and Jane is wearing the dress she plans to be married in later on that day. It's a glorious morning on July 27, 1777. A great day to be young, a great day to be married, a great day to die.

Jane McCrea was one of seven children born to a Presbyterian minister in New Jersey by his first wife, and after both parents died she moved to the Fort Edward area to live with her oldest brother, John, a colonel in the New York militia. She was in her early twenties and was uncommonly attractive – tall and well-formed, with reddish hair said to be so long it touched the floor. During her stay with her brother she and a local man named David Jones fell in love, but his loyalist sympathies were so strong that he went to Canada and joined Peter's American Volunteer Corps. With the approach of Burgoyne's army, Jane's brother John decided to move his family to Albany, and he urged her to accompany them, but she had hopes of meeting and marrying her fiance and elected to remain near Fort Edward with an elderly woman, a Mrs. McNeil, who was a cousin of Brigadier General Simon Fraser. There they were presumably warned by a militiaman fleeing Fort Edward that the Indians were coming.

The two women sought cover inside the log cabin and evidently were climbing through a trapdoor into the cellar when they were discovered by the war party. Both were seized and taken off as prisoners toward Fraser's camp, but somewhere along the way the women became separated, and two Indians began arguing about whose prisoner Jane McCrea was. One brave, in a fit of rage, shot and scalped her, stripped off her clothes, and mutilated her body; then her corps was rolled down an embankment and covered with leaves.

The Widow Jones was brought to Fraser's camp. She was huge and the warriors had stripped off her clothes. The embarrassed brigadier discovered that none of the women with the corps had clothing large enough to fit his cousin, so he finally draped her in his own greatcoat until something more suitable could be found.

Then Jane McCrea's captors appeared. They were trailing a scalp of long silken hair. Her raw scalp was taken to Burgoyne's camp at Fort Anne that evening, and a shocked David Jones was said to have seen and recognized Jane's hair as the Indians danced about the trophy in triumph.

The story was white-hot in the hearts of militia gathering across the border in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Sources:

<http://www.4peaks.com/fkmcree.htm>
Plus sources previously cited.