

M I N N E S O T A

SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • www.MinnesotaSAR.org • SPRING 2014



2014 Annual Washington Day Luncheon

February 15, 2014 – Minneapolis, MN – 38 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, gathered for the Annual Washington Day Luncheon. The total attendance was 65. Jax Café had prepared their signature Chicken Chardonnay served with green beans and golden potatoes. A Mushroom Ravioli was served as the vegetarian alternative. The assemblage enjoyed vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce for dessert.

VPG of the North Central District Ronald McRoberts with the MNSAR Secretary-Treasurer and the Washington Day Luncheon speaker, John Hallberg Jones.

INSIDE THE
MNSAR SALUTE...
.....
Annual George Washington
Observance and Luncheon
.....
John Hallberg Jones Entertains
With "Our Presidential Cousins"
.....
Forest Lake Eagle Scout Honored
MNSAR Color Guard Report
.....
New MNSAR Members
.....
American Eagle

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Minnesota Society
Sons of the American Revolution
2700 East Minnehaha Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55406-3743





“OUR PRESIDENTIAL COUSINS”

John Hallberg Jones entertained the MNSAR with a delightful speech he called “Presidential Cousins” Jones started researching his genealogy at the age of 15. He has been at it ever since. He is related to 10 presidents. In fact, he noted, 30 of our 44 presidents have a common ancestor with another president.

Presidential Families of America is a lineage society comprised of members who share direct or collateral kinship with one or more presidents of the United States. Anyone who has a common ancestor in the United States with a president is eligible to join.

Hereditary Order of the Families of the Presidents and First Ladies in America is a similar organization.

Jones noted the controversy of President Barack Obama’s citizen status. This is not a new story. John McCain was born in Coco Solo Naval Air Station in the Panama Canal

Zone, to naval officer parents. At that time, the Panama Canal was under U.S. control. The controversy over Chester Arthur’s citizenship status centers around the place of Arthur’s actual birth. By one account he was born in his family’s home in Franklin County, Vermont. If this was true, then he was clearly a natural born citizen. On the other hand, the competing account has it that he was born during his pregnant mother’s visit to her family’s home in Canada.

Jones went on to share some presidential quotes: “*Philosophy is common sense with big words.*” – James Madison, and “*I have noticed that nothing I never said ever did me any harm.*” – Calvin Coolidge, were among many.

In 1869 President U. S. Grant and his Vice President, Schuyler Colfax were the youngest team inaugurated until the Clinton/Gore ticket in 1992. Jones pointed out that

Colfax passed away in Minnesota on January 13, 1885, after walking about three-quarters of a mile in –30°F weather from the Front Street depot to the Omaha depot in Mankato, Minnesota. Five minutes after arriving at the depot, Colfax died of a heart attack brought on by the extreme cold and exhaustion.

From 1840 through 1860 presidents who were elected in a year ending with 0 died in office. Soon after his inauguration, William Henry Harrison became ill with a cold. According to the prevailing medical misconception of that time, it was believed that his illness was directly caused by the bad weather at his inauguration. The cold worsened, rapidly turning to pneumonia and pleurisy. Harrison died on April 4, 1841, exactly one month after his inauguration. Lincoln was elected in 1860 and was assassinated five years later. Garfield (1880), McKinley (1900) and Kennedy (1960) were also as-

sassinated. Warren Harding (1920) and FDR (1940) died in office. Ronald Reagan (1980) survived an assassination attempt and the string was broken. Zachary Taylor is the only president who died in office not to be elected on a year ending with 0. He was elected in 1848.

Jones brought “Presidential Cousins” closer to home by pointing out many of the MNSAR member’s relationships to various Presidents and First Ladies.

Jones ended his oration with a story of 95-year-old Harrison Tyler. Harrison Tyler is the grandson of President John Tyler and lives at his grandfather’s Sherwood Forest Plantation in Virginia. President Tyler was born in 1790, during the presidency of George Washington. Their lives, from grandfather through grandson, covers the years of all 44 presidents of the United States.



The Meritorious Service Medal was presented to COL Ronald Edward McRoberts for his continuing work on a history of Stephen Taylor, the only Revolutionary War soldier known to be buried in Minnesota.



The Patriot Medal, the highest award the MNSAR can bestow, was presented to Hon. Paul Kent Theisen for chartering the Minnesota SAR Color Guard and shepherding its growth.



FOREST LAKE EAGLE SCOUT HONORED



Russell C. Wicklund, 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. Russell from Forest Lake, Minnesota was honored at the annual Washington Day Luncheon held at Jax Cafe. His father and mother were also in attendance. Russell read his patriotic essay about John Paul Jones which is presented in this newsletter.

Russell'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 year's national winner was Samuel P. Donovan from Missouri. The first and second runners-up were, Scott Carl Wilson, Iowa and Landon Gunn Weeks, Utah.

Patriotic Essay, by Russell C. Wicklund – 2013 MNSAR Eagle Scout Contest Winner

My future career goal is to be an officer in the United States Navy. My family values patriotism, as shown by my grandfather being in the army and serving in Greenland, by my father being in law enforcement, and by my cousin serving in the navy as a lieutenant. I would like to continue the tradition by serving my county in the navy. While traveling to the National Scouting Jamboree in 2010, my Jamboree Troop visited the United States Navy Academy. In the lower level of the Naval Academy Chapel, we saw an impressive black marble sarcophagus supported by large bronze dolphins in the middle of the room, and we learned that the remains of John Paul Jones are entombed there. I was intrigued by the display and decided to learn more about the history of John Paul Jones.

John Paul was born in Scotland in 1747. He was apprenticed on a merchant ship and later captained a merchant ship. After a dispute with a crew member's family, he fled to Virginia and used the name John Jones while a fugitive from the British. On December 22, 1755, the Continental Congress commissioned the first officers of the Continental Navy, including Jones as first lieutenant. Jones started working before he was confirmed, and was the first person to raise a United States flag on a naval ship on December 3, 1775.

In 1778, Jones led the first American raid on the British Isles, attacking forts in Whitehaven and capturing three British. In September 1779, he attacked the British ship *Serapis*. During the attack, his own ship, the *Bonhomme Richard*, was sinking. The British demanded that he surrender, and he famously replied, "I have not yet begun to fight." Some historical authors claim this quote is inaccurate and have been paraphrased over the years, but his intention was clear. After a long battle, the British captain surrendered. The *Bonhomme Richard* was damaged and abandoned. Jones took over the *Serapis* and sailed into a Dutch port without a flag. The Dutch recognized a flag based on a description by Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, which included red, white, and blue stripes with eight-pointed stars. This flag is called the John Paul Jones flag or the *Serapis* flag. The flag is incorporated into the crest of the *USS John Paul Jones*, a currently commissioned destroyer.

As one historian noted, after later wars, "the elements of combat doctrine established by John Paul Jones became deeply ingrained in the sailors of the U.S. Navy. In a broader, strategic perspective, Jones's commitment to the proactive, forward employment of naval forces as an essential part of national maritime strategy was validated." John Paul Jones



died in Paris in 1792. His remains found and were ceremoniously brought back to the United States in 1905. In January 1913, he was placed in the Naval Academy Chapel.

American history is filled with heroes. John Paul Jones is one of the great heroes of the American Revolution and the United States Navy. My visit to the Naval Academy has inspired me to continue to reach for my goal of joining the navy.

Next Meeting

The Constitution Day Luncheon will be held at Jax Cafe on October 4, 2014.

The speaker will be a former president of the MNSAR, Hon. David Sinclair Bouschor, a retired judge from Duluth. He will cover reminiscences from his many years on the bench. You won't want to miss it.

Watch for detailed information to be mailed to you.

AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Friday September 12, 1777

SHATTERING DEFEAT AT BRANDYWINE

Chester, Pennsylvania – Toward midnight, in a private home in Chester, Washington informed Congress of the shattering defeat. His letter to John Hancock began, “Sir, I am sorry to inform you that in this day’s engagement, we have been obliged to leave the enemy masters of the field.” It continued: “Notwithstanding the misfortune of the day, I am happy to find the troops in good spirits; and I hope another time, we shall compensate for the losses now sustained.” This sounded, after the bloody disaster, like sheer fantasy, but the troops had fought in a spirited manner; the defeat resulted from the failed performance of the leaders, not the lethargy of the rank and file.

As General Sir William Howe moved toward Philadelphia, General Washington decided to cut off his approach at a place called Brandywine Creek, a difficult stream to negotiate. A landscape of plunging ravines and forested hills, Brandywine Creek presented a natural line of defense southwest of Philadelphia. Washington concentrated the bulk of his forces on wooded high ground behind Chadds Ford, on the east side of the creek, where the major road crossed. Relying on flawed intelligence, he posted detachments the length of the creek, stretching up to what he thought was the northernmost crossing.

On the night of September 10, a spy informed Howe of the existence of two fords still farther north – a flagrant breach in American defenses that had

gone unnoticed, in a manner reminiscent of the Battle of Brooklyn. Howe decided that he and Cornwallis, with 8,200 men, would secretly execute a bold sweeping movement to the north. They would then turn east, cross these newly discovered fords, circle back to the south, and sneak up behind the right flank of Washington’s army. All the while, an advance column of 5,000 troops under Baron Wilhelm von Knyphausen would smash straight east into Washington’s army at Chadds Ford, distracting the Americans and duping them into thinking this was the main enemy offensive. While Washington’s military instincts told him that Howe might steal up behind his right flank, he didn’t assign a high enough priority to investigating this possibility and delegated a crucial scouting mission to General John Sullivan and Colonel Theodorick Bland. Unaccountably, the Americans proved ignorant of their own home turf, while Howe operated with faultless information.

In the predawn light of September 11, 1777, General Howe launched his maneuver. In the early morning, Knyphausen’s units clashed, as planned, with the main American force at Chadds Ford. Washington presided over the troops there and, as usual, showed no qualms about exposing himself to enemy fire, even when it beheaded an artilleryman nearby. With the newly commissioned Major General the Marquis de Lafayette at his side, Washington rode the length of the line to the sound of cheering men, but he



was blind to the true shape of the emerging battlefield.

Aware that he saw only a fraction of the British Army, Washington was tormented by a nagging question: What had happened to the bulk of the enemy’s forces? Around noon Lieutenant Colonel James Ross of Pennsylvania informed him that, on a reconnaissance expedition, he had clashed with five thousand British troops on the west side of Brandywine Creek, along the Great Valley Road; he thought these troops had been led by General Howe himself.

On the spot, as his original battle plan unraveled, Washington sorted through a blizzard of contradictory information. Amid sharp clashes at Chadds Ford, General Sullivan relayed a report from Major Joseph Spear saying that he, too, had been at the Great Valley Road but found not a trace of Howe’s army. Tricked by Howe many times, Washington feared that his nemesis was about to deceive him again. Indeed, he drew the wrong conclusion from Spear’s report: he imag-

ined that Howe had turned south and was doubling back to Chadds Ford, But in fact Howe was heading north in a long, looping movement; around noon his soldiers and horses, veiled by thick fog, waded across the northern crossing at Jeffries Ford, of whose existence Washington was unaware. As they splashed through waist-high water, the British and Hessians were flabbergasted to encounter no American resistance. By one-fifteen P.M. Washington had received reports of two British brigades moving upon Birmingham Hill from the north and abruptly realized that Howe had outwitted him.

Now that he knew his peril, George Washington moved decisively. He ordered his entire right wing – all three divisions under General Sullivan – to march north at once to oppose Howe coming south. He was to seize and fortify the terrain around Birmingham Meeting House. At Chadds Ford General Anthony Wayne, with two brigades and artillery, was ordered to hold Knyphausen.

General Greene's division of two brigades was detached from Chadds Ford as a reserve to march to the assistance of either Sullivan or Wayne. Washington remained with Greene. Waiting... Waiting... Waiting for the eruption of the sound of battle to the north of him at Birmingham or to the west of Chadds Ford.

At half-past four it came with a roar that could be heard in Philadelphia. The main battle had begun at Birmingham. To the west of Chadds Ford, Knyphausen, having heard the signal, opened a bombardment preliminary to attack. Washington hesitated momentarily, but then, deciding that Wayne would have to handle Knyphausen by himself, he ordered Greene north to reinforce Sullivan and to hold open the road to Philadelphia. Washington himself must follow Greene because he wanted to be at the scene of the grand battle. He spurred his horse toward the hill as fast as it would fly. Behind them streamed the general's staff, and the sound of battle grew louder – then ominously still.

The American position, on an eminence opposite Osborne's Hill, was faulty. Stirling's and Spenser's divisions were joined, but Sullivan, in coming up on Stirling's left, was nearer to the enemy and about a half mile away from Stirling. Falling back, Sullivan formed his troops in line with the other divisions, but with the undefended half-mile space still separating them. Then he rode off to confer with Stirling and Stephen. They told him that the British apparently were planning to turn the American right and that he, Sullivan, should move in that direction to present a united front and the whole force would then shift farther right to block the turning movement. Sullivan agreed and returned to his division to move it to the right. At

this point, the British attacked, coming down Osborne's Hill in a bright mass of color and glittering bayonets, the bands playing, "The British Grenadiers."

Crossing the road between the two heights in perfect alignment, the British forces began climbing the hill in a silent, disciplined mass, with the light infantry and Hessian and Anspach jaegers in the lead. With loud cries but no shots, they fell upon the American right, which was held by the three regiments of Marylanders commanded by the French General Prudhomme de Borre. The sight of those out-thrust steel tips was too much for the Yankees, and they broke and fled into a nearby wood, thus exposing Stephen's right flank.

At this point Sullivan's troops were marching to close the gap between themselves and Stirling's left. They moved directly in a column in front of the oncoming enemy. Unnerved by the sight of all the martial color approaching them; of those cruel steel points; and the disdainful, arrogant sound of the military music, they began to straggle, to become fragmented into groups. Sullivan was not there to rally and re-form them, for he had gone to his center to direct his artillery. Now thoroughly panicked, his men sought to return whence they came. Sullivan, riding up at last, sought to restrain them but they paid him no heed, and so the American left was also swept clean away. Shorn of its wings, the American center, with Stirling's division and what was left of Stephen's fought valiantly against the pride of European militarism. There were three thousand of them, and their generals – Sullivan, Stirling, Stephen and French-Irishman Thomas Conway – moved among them shouting encouragement. Galloping into the fray, ardent for battle, came the young French nobleman, the Marquis de La-

fayette – fighting on after being wounded in the leg. Shot in the left calf, he didn't grasp the severity of the wound until his boot was soaked with blood and he had to be lifted off the battlefield.

Five times the rebels were driven off that hill, and five times they returned to evict their tormentors. Though shaken, the British regulars and their Hessian allies, twice the number of the Yankees opposing them and backed by four twelve-pounders, were not to be denied. All seemed lost for the American army and the new American nation. Its best troops fighting their best fight in the young country's brief history were giving way, tumbling back downhill – but marching up the road to their rescue came Greene's division, the brigades of Colonel Peter Muhlenberg and Brigadier General George Weedon.

Opening their ranks, the fresh Americans allowed their exhausted comrades to stagger through and re-form – closing their ranks again to confront the flower of Europe. At first they held them, backed up by artillery. But the British pressure was too great, and Greene began a slow, fighting retreat. Coming to a narrow defile, flanked on both sides by thick woods, the Americans turned again – holding off their pursuers with a steady fire. Still the enemy pressed forward, resorting for the first time to regular volleys of musketry, launching repeated bayonet charges. The fighting raged so close, sometimes hand to hand, that the Anspachers recognized their old comrade, Colonel Muhlenberg, who had fought with them as an enlisted man, "*Hier kommt Teufel Piet!*" they cried in delight. "Here comes Devil Pete!" But the Americans doggedly held the pass for forty-five minutes. At last the sun went down, and Greene skillfully drew off his entire division. Exhausted,

the British and Hessians made no attempt to follow.

The Battle of Brandywine Creek did not end at Birmingham Meeting House. At Chadds Ford Knyphausen attacked furiously behind an artillery bombardment. Wayne's Americans held stubbornly at first, but gradually gave way after the Hessians, with Knyphausen personally leading, moved across Pyle's Ford below Chadds and launched an attack in the face of artillery and musket fire. With this assault, Wayne's left gave way, losing its artillery – after which Lady Luck, so often the true arbiter of battle, waved her wand over Knyphausen. Cornwallis's guards and grenadiers, who had pursued Sullivan's fleeing soldiers, became lost in the woods and by accident blundered upon the exposed flank of Wayne's center, and the entire American line fell back. With this and the advent of darkness, the Battle of Brandywine Creek came to an end.

It had been a fierce fight, and although Howe was victorious, the Americans for the first time showed a tenacity and discipline that surprised their enemies. All told, the Americans lost about 200 killed, 500 wounded, and 400 captured versus only 90 killed and 500 wounded for the triumphant British.

Sources:

George Washington's War
by Robert Leckie,
Harper Perennial, 1993

Washington by Ron Chernow,
The Penguin Press, NY 2010



Minnesota SAR Color Guard Report

The Minnesota SAR Color Guard was organized in 2007 to provide a uniformed team to present colors at SAR and public events: to remind us of our heritage and honor those from whom we are descended, and the public for the same plus a way to kindle the flame of patriotism.

The team began with three members and has now grown to eight.

The Guard has appeared at local DAR meetings, a State DAR Convention, Freedom Day events in the Brainerd Lakes area, citizenship ceremonies in Saint Cloud, Patriot Day service at Fort Snelling, joint DAR/SAR recruiting events in Brainerd, many schools and for four years participating in the Fourth of July CAR flying pancake breakfast in Wayzata. This coming Patriot Day the MNSAR Color Guard will be participating with hundreds of flag bearers at the Twin Cities 9-11 day memorial presentation. With all this mentioned, they would like to be busier.

Of course, the first need is for members of the uniformed team. They would like additional flag bearers and muskets. Their pressing need is for drummers and fife players. They could use members in revolutionary war era civilian clothing who have a story to tell, like a preacher in period costume.

They would welcome wives and children of members to dress the part and stand with the uniformed members at events.



What a learning and teaching opportunity for our families.

They need assistance from the membership at large as well. They would like a person, either in uniform or not, to cover Public Relations, to take photographs of their events, to write the events up for the newsletter and the SAR magazine, as well as local press releases.

The MNSAR Color Guard is the nucleus for a growing team. They hope that in the future they will be open to "Associate" members outside of the SR and SAR: like the DAR, CAR, 7th Pennsylvania re-enactment group, American Legion and anyone who shares the dedication to the ideals and goals of the SR and SAR, but may be unable to meet the membership requirements.

The MNSAR Color Guard has no requirements for one's amount of participation. Participate when you can. This is a fun activity, full of teaching and learning. Each member of the MNSAR Color Guard have individually grown with the experience and wish to have others join.

Contact: Paul Kent Theisen
psth36@mainstreetcom.com

New MNSAR Members



New members Stuart Henry Markham, III and Stephen Edward Neiswanger received their certificate of membership and rosette during the Washington Day Luncheon.



Three Generations of MNSAR Members – VPG Ronald McRoberts, Dr. Sean McRoberts and the youngest member of the MNSAR, Jack McRoberts.

MNSAR Secretary-Treasurer Jones presented new members with their certificate of membership and rosette: Stephen Edward Neiswanger, Stuart Henry Markham III, and Jack Edward McRoberts (grandson of VPG McRoberts). Additionally Jack McRoberts was presented his Life Membership certificate and pin, and his father Dr. Sean McRoberts was presented a rosette, as this was the first meeting he attended. A rosette was also presented to Ronald Erickson who had joined last year.

Supplemental Application certificates were presented to James Everett Hagen, Michael Alan Wedell, and Ronald Edward McRoberts. A supplemental certificate will be mailed to John Charles Sassaman, who was unable to attend.

NEW MEMBERS:

Name	Patriot
Stephen Edward Neiswanger.....	Nathan Brewster
Stuart Henry Markham, III.....	Barzillai Markham
Jack Edward McRoberts.....	Elijah Barnes, Sr.

SUPPLEMENTAL PATRIOTS APPROVED:

James Everett Hagen	Peter Relyea
John Charles Sassaman.....	Johan Martin Potteiger
Michael Alan Wedell	Lambert Darland
Ronald Edward McRoberts	Elisha Phillips