



# The Richmond SAR Newsletter

Published by the Richmond Chapter, Virginia Society, Sons of the American Revolution



June 2020

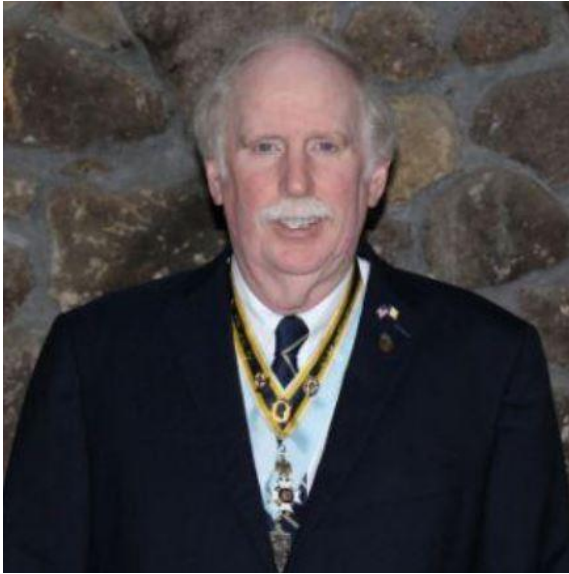


## NSSAR Cancels 2020 National Congress Scheduled for Richmond

The COVID-19 pandemic held all the high cards leaving NSSAR and VASSAR no choice but to call off our organization's annual Congress and lay aside a decade of planning and expense expended to bring the event to Richmond this year. Hope for an easing of restrictions on public gatherings by now was not enough to overcome the realities of deadlines and the withheld participation of Government, business and support organizations needed for a full SAR National Congress agenda, not to mention the continued health threat from the virus itself.

As for the Richmond Chapter of SAR, we enter the Summer months when we do not usually meet and look forward to September when we hope to meet again at our Annual Fall Dinner. Details will be announced as they develop.

The following pages will give the reader a full accounting of the circumstances which led to the conclusion that for Richmond the 130th National SAR Congress was not to be in 2020.



**NSSAR President General  
Jack Manning**

**Cancellation Announcement by  
President General Jack Manning  
National Society Sons of the American Revolution**

Dear Compatriots:

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly presented challenges and cancellations this year. Regretfully, the Executive Committee, pursuant to the authority granted to it by the April 17, 2020 ballot vote of the Board of Trustees, has concluded that the 2020 Annual Congress, originally scheduled for Richmond, Virginia, must be canceled. The Executive Committee waited as long as possible to see how Virginia's, and more specifically Richmond's, reopening plans would impact the Annual Congress. The continuing restrictions enacted by governmental authorities concerning meetings, dining and travel, as well as the health and safety of our membership, has led the Executive Committee to conclude that holding the Annual Congress in Richmond is not possible. The Richmond Marriott, the designated Annual Congress hotel, has been informed that the Congress contract is terminated due to impossibility.

The Executive Committee understands that many State Societies and Chapters have conducted successful meetings electronically during this pandemic. The Executive Committee fully supports these efforts and encourages other State Societies and Chapters to use alternative means to continue the local recognition of our Patriot ancestors, especially as the calendar moves closer to the Fourth of July. The Executive Committee, meeting weekly since March 20, 2020, and Congress Planning Committee Chairman Paul Callanan, devoted considerable effort to researching whether a "virtual" or "Zoom" Congress would be feasible. However, Bylaw No. 17 of the Bylaws of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution does not permit the National Society to hold a Congress by "alternative means." Therefore, the Executive Committee has reached the conclusion that there will be no Annual Congress held in 2020. This is not only consistent with what other similar organizations, such as the American Legion, have determined this year, but with our own precedent concerning both the 1918 and 1945 Annual Congresses.

## President General Manning's Statement Cont'd

No Annual Congress means there will be no election for General Officers, Vice Presidents General, Trustees, or Alternate Trustees in 2020. Pursuant to the National Society's by laws, the current General Officers, Vice Presidents General, Trustees, and Alternate Trustees will continue in their present positions until July 2021.

As with all of you, Sheila and I enjoy attending the Annual Congress to see our friends, participate in the youth competitions, and enjoy the fellowship with our compatriots and family. The members of the Executive Committee feel the same. Notwithstanding canceling the Annual Congress is the correct decision based on the factors outlined above. It is certainly my goal to continue moving the Sons of the American Revolution forward during the coming year. More details will be disseminated as they become available.

Jack Manning  
President General  
National Society Sons of the American Revolution



May 27, 2020

***The above message from President General Manning is an abridged version of his statement. General Manning's full announcement can be viewed on the VASSAR website at [Virginia-SAR.org/Virginia Dispatches](http://Virginia-SAR.org/Virginia Dispatches)***



NSSAR President General Jack Manning (in the red shirt at left) was escorted by VASSAR President Bill Schwetke and 1<sup>st</sup> VP Jeff Thomas (at right) when he toured the Richmond Marriott last October.

**Statement by  
William L. Schwetke  
President, Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution**

June 1, 2020



William L. Schwetke  
President, VASSAR 2020

Richmond Compatriots,

Now, with the 2020 Congress in Richmond having been cancelled, is a good time to recognize the significant efforts by the Richmond Chapter in preparing to host that Congress. Mark Brennan served for five years as the chairman of the Virginia 2020 Congress Planning Committee and was brilliant in his leadership of all of our efforts. Dennis Peterson was also a committee member and very active in using his knowledge of the local area. Howard Bartholf was key to the selection of Monument Heights Baptist Church for the Memorial Service and First Lady's Tea. Many other Richmond compatriots volunteered to assist during the Congress and donated funding for this effort. Thank you all, so very much.

The decision by the NSSAR Executive Committee, though painful, was the correct one. Concern for the safety of participants and the uncertainty over the restrictions being imposed by several layers of government drove this decision.

The Virginia SAR Strategic Plan envisions a bid in 2026 to host the 2031 Congress, and we are adhering to that plan. That Congress will celebrate the victory at Yorktown and probably be hosted close to the battlefield. I am sure that the Richmond Chapter will again support that effort, just as you have supported the effort for 2020. In the meantime may God bless each of you and yours and keep you safe.

Sincerely,

William L. Schwetke  
President, Virginia SAR

**Correspondence from Compatriot Mark Brennan, Sr.  
Co-Chairman, VASSAR Planning Committee for  
NSSAR 130th National Congress 2020 to Sarah Whiting, Ex. Dir., St. John's Church Foundation**

May 27, 2020

Good afternoon.



Mark S. Brennan, Sr.

I wanted to inform you that over the weekend the decision to cancel the NSSAR Congress in Richmond was made by the leadership. This decision was made after the careful consideration of the decisions by the Governor of Virginia and the Mayor of Richmond as they started to move to re-open the state and city. The decision by the Mayor to delay his re-opening phases until this week made us realize that the probability of the city being able to support our Congress was impossible and, therefore, we have canceled the event.

With that said, I wanted to thank you and the church and church community for their kindness and help during the planning of the Congress. I am just sorry that we will not be in Richmond this summer.

Thanks

Mark

**Visit us on the web at**  
[richmondchaptersar.org](http://richmondchaptersar.org)



**Correspondence between Compatriot Peter Broadbent and William Schwetke  
May 27, 2020**

Bill,

I completely agree that NSSAR made the correct decision regarding cancellation.

I was mildly surprised that Virginia's next turn for a national Congress will not be until 2031, but God willing we will all be there to celebrate and host it then in Yorktown.

I am sorry that your term as VASSAR President has forced you to deal with this type of disruption but am sure that you will persevere and strengthen VASSAR in the long run.

The James Monroe Birthplace home in Westmoreland County is substantially complete (some interior work is still underway in June and early July , and we need to move in furnishings after that) and we would normally be looking at a grand opening ceremony in late summer- but a weekend later in the fall may be more prudent (assuming that our older demographic group is attending public events by then ).

Best regards,

Peter Broadbent  
Executive Committee,  
Richmond SAR Board of Managers  
Officer, James Monroe Memorial Foundation



Peter E. Broadbent, Jr.



# Honoring Our Patriot Ancestors

## *The Richmond Chapter Memorial Fund*

**Howard Bartholf** – *James Varian,  
Gilliam Bertholf, Jacobus Bartholf*

**Mark S. Brennan, Sr.** – *Hendrick deHart*

**Peter Broadbent** – *Lt. Richard Talbott*

**Roderick D. Brown** – *Judge Benjamin Waller;*

**Richard Spencer Burke** – *Hendricus Deyo*

**A Brian Cowardin** .– *John Cowardin*

**Lewis Taylor Cowardin** – *John Cowardin*

**Douglas Cumins** – *George Philip Keister*

**Ronald James DePue, Sr.** – *Benjamin DePue*

**Lowell K. Flickinger** – *Pvt. Ralph Cherry*

**David Paul Griffith** – *James Griffith*

**Robert E. Halpern** – *Ens. James Sproul*

**John A. Harler** – *William Sommerville*

**Vincent Warrick Kern** – *Lewis Hott; Michael Hott*

**Dana K. Law** – *Pvt Henry Law*

**Robert E. Lusk, Jr** – *Lt. Reese Bowen, Lily McIlhaney*

**Brian K. Miller** – *Abel Sholes; Theophilus Avery*

**Brent Dean Morgan** – *Fauntley Muse*

**Dennis C. Peterson** - *Capt. John Wyatt*

**Lester N. Oberg III** – *James Monroe*

**Irvin Owings III** – *Richard Owings*

**Harry A. "Hal" Raddin, Jr.** – *Benjamin Bullard Raddin*

**James G. Ralls, Jr** – *Samuel Huckstep*

**Daniel Renfro** - *Victor Renfro*

**Mack T. Ruffin, III** – *Benjamin Denson*

**Donald M. Schwartz** – *Joseph Walkup*

**Art H. Taylor, III** – *Silas Call*

**Cullen C. Walker, Jr.** – *Paul Carrington*

**Alfred B. Whitt** – *Thomas Harrison*

Your \$10 donation to this special fund helps honor your Patriot Ancestors and supports the programs and work of the Richmond Chapter of VASSAR.





## **Richmond SAR Compatriots Honor Memory Of Those Who Served and Sacrificed By Their Service for America This Memorial Day**

We observed Memorial Day this year in our own way as the limitations of the pandemic controls even affected the way we honor the fallen. Past SAR Chapter President Howard Bartholf (above left) visited the Ft. Harrison-Burnham National Cemetery in Varina where he placed a wreath on the grave of George Buchanan, a Medal of Honor recipient from the Civil War.

For most, the Memorial Day observance was a solitary occasion such as experienced by Compatriot Charles Cheek (center) who enjoyed reading the SAR Magazine on his balcony.

Chapter President Dennis Peterson (above right) placed a wreath at the foot of the SAR Memorial stone at Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg where 26 known Revolutionary War veterans are interred. The stone and an accompanying American Flag and lighted pole were installed in April 2016.



The Richmond, Virginia

# SAR

The VASSAR Color Guard is pleased to join Compatriots of the Richmond Chapter in welcoming

**William M. Brown III**

**Cecil H. Creasey, Jr.**

both of Richmond, as our newest members. Despite the obstacles created by the virus restrictions, Richmond and VASSAR Registrar Bill Haskins continues to assist new applicants in qualifying for membership.

Compatriots Brown and Creasy will be formally inducted at a future Chapter meeting.





Brian K. Miller, Esq  
Chancellor, Richmond SAR

## Chancellor Brian Miller Donates VASSAR History Records to Richmond Chapter

VASSAR looks to tell the story of its individual Chapters as part of the agenda of its Semi-Annual Meeting next Fall.

We hope.

Brian Miller, a twice former Richmond Chapter President, was part of the last history review, joining our Mark Brennan and others, a decade and more ago. It is our good fortune that he saved documentation and research pieces written at the time. And now he has made them available to help tell the history of our Chapter to a new generation of Compatriots.

“This information is priceless and should be available to future Chapter leaders especially. The information Brian has given us should be part of the record and resources passed on to each new Chapter President whenever there is a change in leadership. How else are they supposed preserve and tell our story?”

Tidewater Chapters usually disagree but original VASSAR records clearly indicate our Chapter was among, if not the first, Chapter(s) Chartered by VASSAR in 1923. Statewide membership, starting in 1890, was as few as three dozen members with meeting attendance spotty at times. Nonetheless, early leaders like Patrick Henry’s Grandson William Wirt Henry and W.H.F. Lee, second son of the famed Civil War General, served as our first President and Vice-President respectively.

Our founder’s spirit and vision guide our organization to this day. From the minutes of the VASSAR Annual Meeting of February 1904 comes this quote from John Goode, the Solicitor General of the United States:

***“As Virginia took the lead in inaugurating the Revolution, her sons should ever be among the foremost in perpetuating its glorious and precious memories. Let us resolve that they shall never be allowed to perish from the earth.”***



**Thanks to those who donate their time and service to our Richmond Chapter of SAR.**

Pictured here left to right: Theodore “Ted” McConnell, Chaplain; William J. Bray, Jr, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP; Christopher T. Yohn, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP; Dennis C. Peterson, President; William Meade Haskins, Jr., 1<sup>st</sup> VP and Chapter Registrar; Mark A. Samples. Secretary.  
(not pictured: Brian Miller, Chancellor; Dana K. Law, Jr., President Pro-Tempore, Board of Managers; Brian K. Miller, Chancellor)



The Richmond SAR Newsletter is a copyrighted publication of the  
Richmond Chapter,  
Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution.  
Dennis C. Peterson, Editor  
[denny234@verizon.net](mailto:denny234@verizon.net)