



Liberty Gazette

"Give me liberty or give me death!"

Patrick Henry - Richmond, Virginia
March 23, 1775



Winter 2023

Richmond ★ Virginia ★ Sons of the American Revolution

October meeting

The Richmond SAR October 8 meeting featured a great presentation by Historic St. John's Church Executive Director Stephen Wilson.

He shared the story of Patrick Henry's iconic *Give me liberty or give me death* speech and outlined the preparations taking place for the 250th anniversary of that rallying cry of the Revolution, taking place in March 2025.



New member James Sayers

Welcome new Richmond SAR member James Sayers!



New Richmond SAR member James Sayers

Military service recognition

The Richmond SAR honored Greg Surpluss and Steven Norris for their military service.



Greg Surpluss and Steven Norris

Photos courtesy of Beau Robertson

Richmond SAR attends fall events

2023 fall events took place in rapid succession. The Richmond SAR was an active participant.

Grave markings

The Richmond SAR presented a wreath at a Sept. 30 Williamsburg Chapter-hosted grave marking dedicating the resting place of four soldiers of the revolution at the Bruton Parish church, and at an Oct. 15 Virginia and Maryland SAR joint grave marking of George Washington's Aide De Camp Robert Hanson Harrison at the Durham Parish Church in Nanjemoy, MD. Alexander Spotswood CAR President and Richmond SAR Member Jack Akers had the honor of a lifetime in laying a wreath at Arlington's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier for the CAR, on December 2.



Yorktown Victory Day

Richmond SAR members turned out for the Oct. 19 Yorktown Victory Day festivities, including presenting a wreath at the grave of Thomas Nelson Jr., the parade and the official ceremonies. The Chapter also inducted and welcomed new member Dade Grimes.



New Richmond SAR Member Dade Grimes



Skirmish at Kemp's Landing

Richmond SAR Secretary Chris Ackiss represented the Chapter and presented a wreath at this November 4 event. One of Chris' Patriot Ancestors was among the battle's fallen.



Richmond SAR grave marking of Major Joseph Eggleston

The Richmond SAR hosted a November 5 grave marking honoring “Lighthorse Harry” Lee’s second-in-command Major Joseph Eggleston. The event was held at St. John’s “Grub Hill” Church in cooperation with Christ Episcopal Church, Amelia, VA, The Amelia County Historical Society and The Amelia County American Revolution 250 Committee.

The day featured Virginia SAR Second Vice President Dr. Michael Weyler, who brought greetings, The Virginia SAR Color Guard, multiple historic organizations and a descendent of both “Lighthorse Harry” Lee and Major Joseph Eggleston. The grave marking was embraced by the public and had more than 100 people in attendance.



Numerous Richmond SAR members played a role in the program. Guy Smith and Richard Brooks joined the color guard for the day to carry the Virginia State and Richmond Chapter flags. Bill Haskins led the Pledge of Allegiance, William Nash led the SAR Pledge, Chris Ackiss introduced the event’s distinguished guests and Guy Smith led the SAR Recessional.



The Virginia SAR Color Guard: Dale Corey, Mark Robinson, Guy Smith, Michael Geisinger, Gary Dunaway, John Lynch, Richard Brooks and Chip Daniel



Bill Haskins



William Nash



Chris Ackiss



Guy Smith

The following SAR and other historic organizations presented wreaths: Virginia SAR, Richmond SAR, Norfolk SAR, George Washington SAR, Williamsburg SAR, Richard Henry Lee SAR, Dan River SAR, Colonel James Wood II SAR, Patrick Henry SAR, Commonwealth Chapter DAR, Order of Founders and Patriots of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars Amelia Post 8759. A 2024 SAR historic roadside marker is also approved to further commemorate the site.



More Major Joseph Eggleston grave marking

Project Chairman and Richmond SAR First Vice President Philip Barnard did a stellar job in organizing and coordinating the event.

He delivered Major Eggleston's biographical tribute and marker dedication, which he prepared, and unveiled the marker with his mother Nell Barnard, who is a local Amelia member of the Commonwealth Chapter DAR. Philip also delivered the event's appreciation and closing thoughts.



Richmond SAR President Chris Yohn emceed and led the singing of *God Bless America*.

Philip's biography of Major Joseph Eggleston read as follows:

Today, we are here to honor a distinguished officer of the American Revolution. Major Joseph Eggleston, second-in-command of the legendary Legion of Calvary Dragoons under Lt. Colonel "Lighthorse Harry" Lee. While it is not hard to look up the details of their many battles, this occasion calls for an effort to shed light on the moments in his career that made Major Eggleston the courageous and valiant soldier that he ultimately became.

He was raised and schooled just a quarter mile from here at his family home, Egglestetton. It was no small accomplishment for a young man from Amelia to be accepted into the William and Mary College in those days. Not only did Major Eggleston get accepted in 1772, he excelled in his studies and would become an award-winning student in mathematics and literature. His record of achievement was exemplary, with one small humorous exception in his junior year. It seems the college records in 1774 reflect that, after discovering a campus gate propped open for several nights in a row, it was found that Eggleston and a few friends were guilty of sneaking out to the local taverns. Fortunately, for his sake, the punishment involved only a small reprimand. Unfortunately, the College instituted a new nightly roll-call policy which became the outcry of students for the next century.

The young Eggleston also found himself confronted with an education of an entirely different nature. You see, he was in Williamsburg. By the start of his senior year in the spring of 1775, Williamsburg had taken on an odor of division. The actions of Congress during the past fall had forced almost everyone to take sides. There was no longer a common ground to stand upon. He watched as the city began to change. The decisions of the Second Virginia Convention in Richmond had tainted the atmosphere in Williamsburg with the incendiary smell of revolution. All that was needed was a spark. He was fortunate just to actually reach the point of graduation in March of 1776, for no sooner had he completed his studies did they discover the Governor's removal of the gunpowder supply from the public magazine. The explosion of colonial uprising he witnessed swept him up in a fire of emotion that left him only too eager to serve the patriot cause.

One year later, a twenty-one-year-old Eggleston found himself serving the Continental Army as a Paymaster for the First Regular Light Dragoons. No doubt they were taking advantage of his skills in math. Not many of his fellow patriots had graduated from a college with honors in mathematics. One day, while he was in camp just outside of Morristown, New Jersey on May 27, 1777, he decided to write home to his father, Joseph Eggleston, Sr. Addressing his father as "Honoured Sir," this letter would demonstrate his fascination with the Northern States he had never seen before.

Once he finished describing everything from the soil, the farming techniques, and the sales at the local market, he shared with his father just how much the morale of the army was tied to the spirits of their leader.

"General Washington himself, it is said, is in high spirits. Indeed, his feelings must be very different from what they were when his Army was reduced to 600 effective Men, as was actually the case at one time last winter. Yet with this

handful of men did he confine the enemy to Brunswick and the places they already possessed. He artfully induced them to believe his numbers much greater, and by that means deterred them from any new enterprises. But how low will the English General's character be sunk when this Circumstance is made known to them." He would end the letter with, "That Health and Happiness may ever attend you all is the ardent wish of your obliged & affectionate Son."

One year later, Lt. Col. Henry Lee formed his troop of irregular horseman. Eggleston joined as both Lieutenant and Paymaster. By September of 1779, he was promoted to Captain and Lee's Legion began to distinguish themselves in something they called guerrilla expeditions. They did not need battlefields. Their methods could be best described as stealthy and hit-and-run. All was proceeding well until early in 1780 when Eggleston was captured at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. This could have been the end of his life. But the ever-present hand of God intervened. A prisoner exchange allowed him to emerge, not just as a soldier but as a true warrior.

He rejoined Lee's Legion just as they were ordered to support the Southern Command in their efforts to confront the army of British General Cornwallis. Their specialty in guerrilla tactics as a cavalry unit would allow them to impact the results of almost every major conflict. It would also bring them in direct opposition to one cavalry unit on the British side notorious for such tactics, the Legion of Dragoons commanded by Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton. For Bloody Ban, as he was known, the brutal taking of lives was a means of military advancement. Now he would face retaliation in the form of Lee's Legion with 100 cavalry, and Captain Eggleston, who by 1781, was second-in-command. Between their tactics and their distinct uniforms, these two Legions were often mistaken for one another.

More often than not, they fought against home grown militia units who wore no uniform at all. The only way you could tell a British sympathizer, or Tory, from a patriot in close quarters was through the words that came out of their mouth. Such circumstances led to a little-known battle which took place just as both armies were converging on Guilford Courthouse on the North Carolina border with Virginia. On February 25, 1781, a band of over 400 Tory militia unknowingly allowed Lee's Legion of 600 men safe passage to parade past them thinking they were Tarleton's British Legion. Seeing the short green jackets worn by Lee's Legion, they stood at attention and rejoiced at the chance to meet the legendary Tarleton himself. Instead, they were about to meet Captain Eggleston.

Lee, at the head of the Legion, kept a complimentary smile on his face so as not to give away their identity. Captain Eggleston, commanding the rear, did the same. Just as Lee reached the front of the Tory militia, he dismounted from his horse and walked up to the militia commander, a Colonel John Pyle, to shake his hand and unmask himself. His Intention was to give the commander two choices; surrender or die. But before he could make that proposal, fighting broke out at the rear of the column.

It seemed Captain Eggleston had been informed of the possibility that they had been recognized. He rode up to one Tory militiaman and ask him "to whom do you belong." Unfortunately, the man answered with, "A friend of his Majesty." Eggleston responded without hesitation by striking him in the head. In doing so, he sparked a bloody battle which moved up the entire column from his position in the rear. When all was said and done, Lee's Legion had wounded 253 of the Tory militia and killed 90. Lee's Legion lost one horse. And, all with Tarleton just a few miles away.

This small battle is referred to as "Pyle's Massacre" and was credited with devastating Tory morale. No longer were the British able to recruit local militia in the name of the King. This small battle, which began with Eggleston's sword, was seen by the American side as the ultimate retaliation for Tarleton's atrocities against American patriots and civilians throughout the war. Eggleston was quickly earning a reputation as one of the most efficient soldiers in the American Cavalry. He was a warrior.

*Lee's Legion didn't just win in battle, they would attack the enemy without notice with precision. In June of 1781, after they rescued Augusta, Georgia from British occupation, Captain Eggleston was ordered north to intercept British foraging parties leaving the Siege of Ninety-Six in South Carolina. There, they attacked a large British party, protected by cavalry, and still managed to take 45 prisoners, including their leader, and all of their wagons, without losing a single man. **And then** came September 8, 1781, at Eutaw Springs, South Carolina. In one of the fiercest battles of the entire war, Eggleston's performance was recognized as heroic. Not one to rest on his own glory, he waited until the following day, when the enemy was in retreat. With the men under his command, he ambushed the enemy from the woods in pursuit of their supplies. The results were the same. Eggleston lost no men in taking the enemy's stores and baggage. In the process, his horse was shot dead beneath him, and five bullets pierced his clothing and equipment. He escaped without injury. Or, so he thought.*

November meeting



Peter Broadbent



The Chapter's November 12 meeting featured The James Monroe Foundation's Vice President and Richmond SAR member Peter Broadbent, who delivered a fantastic presentation on James Monroe's career.

Peter also highlighted the Foundation's efforts to commemorate Monroe's life and contributions to the founding of our nation. Those efforts include the James Monroe Birthplace most Richmond SAR members know through Monroe's annual birthday celebration.

For those who haven't yet attended the April event, it's definitely worth the trip to Colonial Beach to experience the pageantry, the history and the meticulously recreated birthplace home. The same can certainly be said for Monroe's national birthday observance at his gravesite in Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery.

In other November meeting activities, Richmond SAR Past-President Mark Brennan received his National SAR Lifetime Member certificate.

And, First Vice President Philip Barnard was awarded the Bronze Distinguished Service Medal for the work he did in chairing the Major Joseph Eggleston Grave Marking.

The Distinguished Service Medal is the highest chapter honor that can be awarded. It can only be earned by a member once, and can only be awarded once per year.

Philip earned the honor by project managing all aspects of the event. He researched and wrote Eggleston's biography, designed and fundraised the plaque, coordinated with all outside organizations and much, much more to truly spearhead a hallmark chapter event.



Mark Brennan

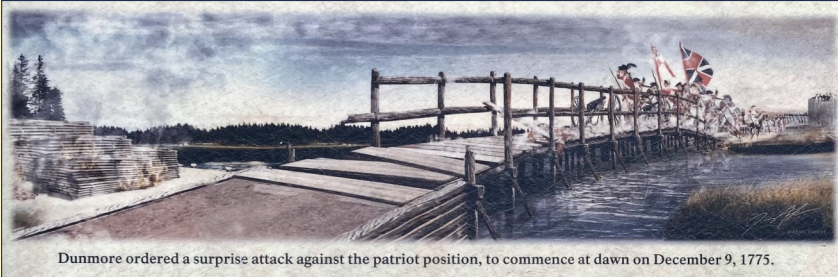


Philip Barnard

The Battle of Great Bridge

The Great Bridge Battle commemoration took place on Saturday, December 2. Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee SAR, DAR and CAR state and chapter organizations were present.

Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares delivered an inspiring keynote speech. Chris Yohn presented the Richmond SAR wreath on behalf of the Chapter.



Dunmore ordered a surprise attack against the patriot position, to commence at dawn on December 9, 1775.

Battlefield wayside marker detail



William "Billy" Flora, a freeborn black man from the Portsmouth area and veteran of the Battle of Great Bridge, deserves to be remembered as a hero.

Apprenticed at the age of eight to Joshua Gammon, a carter and wagon master, Flora worked for both John Fentress and William Brissie in the early 1770s. Shortly after his 18th birthday, he joined the militia of the Princess Anne military district.

On the early morning of December 9, 1775, Flora and two others occupied a Patriot sentry post, more than 200 yards away from their main breastworks, behind a pile of shingles near the southern end of the Great Bridge. As British soldiers began re-planking the bridge and forming for battle, the sentries fired. After several shots, the other scouts ran back to the breastworks to warn of the advancing troops. Flora remained in place, reloaded, and discharged his musket eight times before retreating amid a shower of musket balls. As he neared the breastworks, he stopped again to pull up a loose plank from the small footbridge along the causeway. Flora's actions, "most conspicuous for gallantry," slowed the British advance.

In November 1776, Flora re-enlisted in the 15th Virginia Regiment under Captain William Grymes. He served in the Virginia Line for the rest of the war, moving from the 15th Virginia to the 11th Virginia and then to the 5th Virginia as the regiments consolidated. He escaped capture at Charlestown in 1780 and was among the troops that besieged Yorktown, leading to the surrender of Lord Charles Cornwallis and his army in 1781.

After the war, Flora returned to civilian life and operated a successful cartage and livery stable business in Portsmouth. He purchased the freedom of his wife and children and died around 1820 "at a good old age."



Great Bridge Battlefield and Waterways History Museum display detail

Richard Brooks presents wreath

United States Air Force Colonel (Retired) and Richmond SAR Compatriot Richard Brooks was chosen to present the USAF wreath at the Richmond National Cemetery *Wreaths Across America Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony*, on December 16. Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin was a guest speaker. Several Richmond SAR members were on hand to support Richard and honor our Nation's veterans.



Col. Richard Brooks



Gov. Glenn Youngkin

December meeting

The Richmond SAR inducted three new members at the December meeting as Robert Bickert and father-and-son Richard and Timothy Hanes all joined the ranks of the Richmond SAR.

Welcome Robert, Richard and Timothy!



Robert Bickert, Timothy Hanes and Richard Hanes

The meeting also had a seasonal flair as those in attendance enjoyed Willow Oaks' beautiful decorations and colonial Christmas music during lunch.



**Official Chapter
Boston Tea Party
250th anniversary
commemoration**

The destruction of the tea

Richmond SAR member Jim Russell shared a very well-researched and detailed presentation on the events leading up to and surrounding the Boston Tea Party. He included many little-known facts. One was that no-one called it a party. It was known at the time as *the destruction of the tea*

Jim's ancestor had a direct hand in the event and, though the participants list was kept secret for decades, was one of those publicly identified in later years.



Richmond SAR proclamation and special vote

President Chris Yohn proceeded to issue the following proclamation:



Ladies and gentlemen . . . **The tea is in the harbor.** *Whereas*, the Richmond SAR examined the historical meaning of the abominable tea act when marking the 250th anniversary of its passing, last spring, and

Whereas, the Chapter voted to show support of its Patriot Ancestors by embracing a **No Tea in '23** boycott of tea for the remainder of the year,

I hereby proclaim the Richmond SAR has taken a stand and shared some small idea of the hardships faced by our Patriot Ancestors when these events unfolded.

Today, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the destruction of the tea, and recognizing the Richmond SAR joined in the spirit of our Patriot Ancestors by fulfilling its boycott pledge, I move to resume serving iced tea at our monthly meetings beginning in January, 2024.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.



Richmond SAR official Boston Tea Party 250 Commemoration

Richmond SAR fundraising challenge coins



Centennial Celebration coin—limited edition now available



Official Richmond SAR coin - Coming soon

Richmond SAR challenge coins are not only attractive, collectible and fun to own or give as gifts, they serve the very real purpose of raising funds to support the Chapter's 2024 local historic commemoration projects outlined on the following page.

The Centennial Celebration coin, sporting the design of the Chapter's commemorative Centennial Celebration lapel pin, was designed and purchased before the announced disuse of the minute-man design. That made these coins instant collectors' items. This design will not be reordered and limited quantities remain.

The Chapter Board of Managers recently voted to move forward with ordering an official Richmond SAR challenge coin. The Chapter logo, featuring the statue atop the Richmond Washington Monument, will appear on the front of the coin while the back will remain the same. These coins are expected to be ready for sale sometime in early 2024.

Coins are \$15 per piece. They can be purchased via credit card [at this link](#) and picked up at the next meeting. Those who choose to purchase in-person can bring a check to the next meeting made payable to *Richmond Chapter SAR*. The Richmond SAR no longer accepts cash payments and challenge coins will not be mailed.

Just for fun - show your pride

The items for sale at the [Richmond SAR Land's End store](#) are **not** fundraiser items and the Chapter **receives no monetary gain** from these sales. They're purely for fun and to show your pride in being a Richmond SAR member.

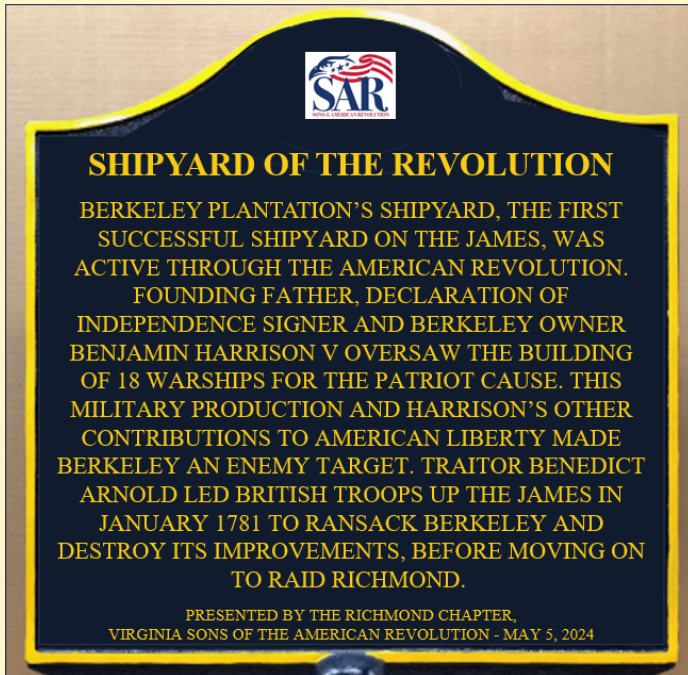
The new Richmond SAR logo design is now available to purchase on shirts, sweaters, jackets and other larger items that fit 3"x 3" applications.



Now available

Richmond SAR upcoming projects

Funds raised by the sale of the challenge coins will be used to support the following 2024 Richmond SAR local historic commemorations:



The Berkeley Plantation Shipyard Tentative unveiling - May 5, 2024

It's not widely known that Berkeley Plantation was the location of an industrious shipyard that built 18 warships for the patriot cause in the American Revolution.

The Richmond SAR is working to place a historical marker at Berkely commemorating the site of such a significant contributor to our Nation's independence. Upon seeing the marker design, Berkely officials replied, "Thank you for making this happen. The marker will be a wonderful addition to our historic exhibits and monuments."



Susannah Bolling historical marker Tentative unveiling - October 27, 2024

As presented by local author Libby McNamee at the March 2023 meeting, Susannah Bolling's home in present-day Hopewell was used by British General Cornwallis as his headquarters. While there, Susannah overheard him and his officers planning to capture General Lafayette, who was headquartered at the Halfway House, located on present-day Route 1, just north of 288.

Susannah crept out of her home in the middle of the night, mounted a horse and rode to the Halfway House to warn Lafayette. He made his escape and avoided capture thanks to Susannah's brave ride. The Richmond SAR is working to place a historical marker at the Halfway House in honor of her heroism and great contribution to the cause of liberty.

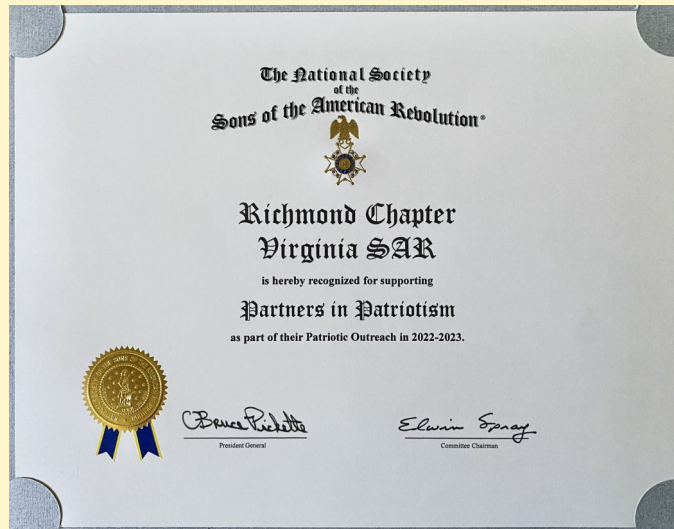
The tentative October 27, 2024 unveiling date coincides with the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's return to Richmond on his triumphant 1824-1825 tour of the United States.

Richmond SAR earns national award

The Richmond Chapter earned a Partners in Patriotism award from the National SAR Patriotic Outreach Committee.

The award is presented to state societies and chapters that participate in an organized program or event with another veteran's organization.

The chapter regularly participates in events with numerous veteran and historic organizations.



Virginia SAR annual meeting volunteers needed

The Virginia SAR annual meeting returns to Richmond on February 9 and 10. Volunteers are

needed for the registration tables while also selling Chapter challenge coins.

Available shifts are:

- Friday, Feb. 9 from 1 - 5 p.m. and
- Saturday, Feb. 10 from 7 - 10 a.m.

Those interested, please contact

Chris Yohn at CY.RVA.SAR@gmail.com.

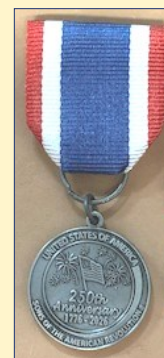
The Chapter will also host a grave marking at Shockoe Hill Cemetery on Friday, Feb. 9, dedicating the graves of two of the Patriots listed on the SAR Revolutionary Veterans' monument.



Earn your grave marking and America 250 medals

Have you been attending and participating in SAR grave markings and America 250 commemoration events? Richmond SAR has been holding both this year and both help you on the way to qualifying for special SAR medals.

Members track their own qualifying activities. When you've completed the requirements for the Silver 250 Medal or filled the grave marking form, please notify Chris Yohn for submission instructions. Follow these links to download the [America 250 tracking form](#) and the [SAR Grave Marking Medal Reporting form](#).



The Richmond SAR Memorial Fund



**Your \$10 donation
to this special fund
honors your patriot
ancestors and supports
the programs and
work of the
Richmond SAR.**

Jack Akers - John Lester

Will Akers - John Lester

Kenneth L. Bage - John Hinton, John Hinton, Sr.

Phillip Barnard, Jr. - Joel Barnard

Howard E. Bartholf - Cpt. James Varian, Jacobus Bartholf, Guiliam Bertholf, Jonathan Varian

Mark S. Brennan, Sr. - John Oliver

Robert S. Bridges, Jr. - William Jordan

Peter E. Broadbent, Jr. - Lt. Richard Talbott, Cpt. Alexander Wells, Lt. James Marshall

A. Brian Cowardin - John Cowardin

James E. Creech, Jr. - William Ragland

Doug Cumins - George Keister, Nathaniel Wilson

Wyatt F. Davis - Alexander Guthrie

Ronald J. DePue, Sr. - Benjamin DePue

Richard Dohm - John Gibson, Jr.

Charles Lewis Grant - William Russell

Robert Halpern - Ens. James Sproul

John Harler - William Sommerville

William M. Haskins, Jr. - William Gannon, Moses Preston, Gilbert Stevens, Thomas Prather

Dana K. Law - Henry Law

Brian K. Miller - Theophilus Avery, Abel Sholes

Hal Raddin, Jr. - Benjamin Raddin

Philip M. Revene - William Withers, William Slack

Mark Samples - Jane Porter Green

Christopher Small - Hugh Hayes

Walter Smith - Casparus Pruyn, Sylvanus Smith

Arthur H. Taylor III - Silas Call

Cullen Walker - Paul Carrington

Chris Yohn - Lt. Jacob Vanderslice

January meeting and 2024 schedule

Our next meeting takes place on
Sunday, January 14, at 1 p.m.

We'll be joined again by local author
Libby McNamee who will share details on
Dolly Madison and her experiences with her
husband James through the
American Revolution.



Richmond SAR upcoming meetings
All meetings take place at Willow Oaks Country Club

- Sunday, January 14 - 1 p.m.
- Sunday, March 10 - 1 p.m.
- Sunday, April 14 - 1 p.m.
- Sunday, May 19 - 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 10 - 6 p.m.**
- Sunday, October 13 - 1 p.m.
- Sunday, November 10 - 1 p.m.
- Sunday, December 8 - 1 p.m.



*Season's
Greetings*

*May the warmth of the holidays find you and your family happy, healthy
and safe. Have a wonderful Christmas, a happy Hanukkah and the best
of all holidays you may celebrate. Here's to a bright and happy new year!*



SONS of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Patriotic ★ Historical ★ Educational

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