



The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



Fort Lauderdale Chapter Organized November 26, 1966

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ELECTION OF CHAPTER TRUSTEE

At the October 2005 meeting, George Dennis was elected to replace Oscar Kraehenbuehl as a Chapter Trustee. With this change, the current Chapter Trustees are Ted Duay, George Dennis, and Rich Jones.

The next meeting of the Fort Lauderdale Chapter will be held at the Flaming Pit on Saturday, January 28, 2006. Saul Montes-Bradley, who is a past Regional Vice President for the Florida SAR and a past Chapter President for the Miami Chapter will induct the new officers at the meeting. Compatriot Bradley, who is the current Editor of the The Florida Patriot, Official Magazine of the Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution, will discuss his duties as Editor and the challenges he faces in the production of our state magazine. His speech should prove to be both lively and informative!

On January 6-7, 2006, Compatriots Duay, Lohmeyer, and Motes will be attending the Winter Board of Management Meeting for the Florida Society SAR. Compatriots Lohmeyer and Motes have both volunteered to assist Compatriot Duay, Florida Rumbaugh Chairman, in conducting the Florida Rumbaugh Oration Contest at the Winter BOM. Kudos to the Fort Lauderdale Chapter in taking an active role in this worthwhile contest!

Ted Duay, 2006 President

SPECIAL NOTE: There will be no December Meeting, we wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and a very Happy Holidays.



Cadet Ryan McCord received a Good Citizenship Award Medal by President Joe Motes at the December 10th Weston Civil Air Patrol award ceremonies.

Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

NEXT MEETING - JAN 28th

"Flaming Pit"

*1150 N. Federal Hwy., Pompano Beach
(11 blocks north of Atlantic Blvd.)*

Time: 11:30AM social gathering; Lunch at noon

Buffet luncheon - \$12.00

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:

954-441-8735

or e-mail Joe Motes at: joemotes@aol.com

**Minutes of Ft. Lauderdale Chapter SAR
22 Oct 2005**

The Ft. Lauderdale Chapter SAR was called to order at the Flaming Pit. President Joe Motes presided over this meeting with 18 members and guests present.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

Society President, Joe Motes, Advised that the chapter needs to bring forth a slate of candidates for next years Chapters officers and those dues notices were needed to be mailed.

The following personnel were nominated for office.

President: Ted Duay
Vice President: Jim Lohmeyer
Treasurer: Joe Motes
Secretary: William Spencer
Chancellor: Ed Sullivan
Chaplain: Rob Joynt
Registrar: Ted Duay
Trust Fund Trustees: George Dennis, Rich Jones & Ted Duay

Society Chancellor, Ed Sullivan advised the group on the legal liability of Non-Profit organization Officers, There is no personal liability in the performance of their duties.

Society Registrar, Ted Duay, reported that there was only 1 new application.

The coming Holidays being on the chapters usual fourth Saturday weekend, has forced the chapter to modify its schedule to the third Saturday for November & December.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

**Minutes of Ft. Lauderdale Chapter SAR
19 Nov 2005**

The Ft. Lauderdale Chapter SAR was called to order at the Flaming Pit. President Joe Motes presided over this meeting with 14 members and guests present.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

Society President, Joe Motes, announced that he had presented the Sea Cadets with a \$100.00 donation. He then called to vote the slate of officers to serve for 2006.

The following personnel were unanimously voted into office.

President: Ted Duay
Vice President: Jim Lohmeyer
Treasurer: Joe Motes
Secretary: William Spencer
Chancellor: Ed Sullivan
Chaplain: Rob Joynt
Registrar: Ted Duay

Trust Fund Trustees: George Dennis, Rich Jones & Ted Duay

Society Registrar, Ted Duay, reported that there are 4-6 applications in process. He also announced that the Board of Management has decided that it will be able to reimburse 100% for the JROTC Medals. The next BOM meeting will be held 6&7 Jan in Lakeland.

Society President, Joe Motes stated that the dues notices have been mailed out and that he has received approximately 40% of the dues.

There being no further business before the chapter, the meeting was adjourned.

When told that the British had taken Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin, representing his nation in Paris, said, "No Sir, Philadelphia has taken the British." As events turned out, Franklin's clever quip contained a kernel of truth.

Washington attempted a bold surprise attack on the main British forces at Germantown on October 4. His plan was too complex and after some initial surprise and much confused fighting, the Americans were forced to retreat. Those remarkable amateur soldiers had marched about 35 miles and fought a four-hour battle in one day.

For several weeks American forces camped about 20 miles from Philadelphia in Whitemarsh along high hills that were ideal for defense. Howe tried to lure Washington from his impregnable position in December, but after a few minor skirmishes withdrew back to Philadelphia.

Some in Congress -- now safely in York, Pa. - urged Washington to attack the British in Philadelphia, but the commander-in-chief realized it would be suicidal. His men were worn out and ill-equipped. Even before Valley Forge, there was a supply crisis. Many soldiers were already shoeless and their uniforms in tatters.

It was normal for 18th century armies to cease combat during the coldest months and take up "winter quarters." Washington was looking for a place to rest his army that would "afford supplies of provisions, wood, water and forage, be secure from surprise and best calculated for covering the country from the ravages of the enemy."

He sought the opinions of his generals on the best location for the winter encampment. There was no consensus, and Washington was forced to decide the matter alone.

On December 12th, the troops began the move from Whitemarsh to the west bank of the Schuylkill River at Valley Forge. It was a 13 mile march that was delayed and took eight days.

The troops crossed the Schuylkill on a wobbly, makeshift bridge in an area called the Gulph. They were forced to bivouac at the Gulph for several days after a snowstorm and several days of icy rain made roads impassable. On December 18th the soaked and miserable troops observed a Day of Thanksgiving declared by Congress for the American victory in October at Saratoga, N.Y.

Joseph Plumb Martin, a Connecticut Yankee, who wrote a fascinating account of his years in the Continental Army recalled that thanksgiving dinner decades later: "We had nothing to eat for two or three days previous except what the trees of the forests and fields afforded us, but we must now have what Congress said, a sumptuous Thanksgiving to close the year of high living. . . . it gave each man half a gill (about half a cup) of rice and a tablespoon of vinegar!"

On the 19th, the famished troops finally marched into Valley Forge. The ragged soldiers might have thought the worst was over, but they were wrong.

Valley Forge - 25 miles from the city - was a good choice. It is a high plateau that might have been designed by a military engineer. One side is protected by the river. Two shallow creeks provide natural barriers that would present problems for attacking cavalry and artillery. Any attackers would have to charge up-hill.

Where the Valley Creek entered the Schuylkill was a small village, giving the area its name. It contained a complete iron-making operation owned by two Quaker families, the Dewees and Potts.

A cache of American military stores had been placed at Valley Forge. After the Battle of Brandywine the British had learned of the cache and raided the village, seizing the goods and burning houses. Arriving American troops found trees in the area but little else.

• Suffering •

The troops arrived at Valley Forge in time for Christmas, but there was no holiday feast. Already the men’s diaries spoke bitterly of a diet of “fire cakes and cold water.” A fire cake was simply a flour and water batter fried on a griddle. The morning after Christmas, the men awoke to find four additional inches of snow on the ground. The first priority was the building of huts. An order issued by Washington spelled out the style and size of the Spartan quarters.

Every 12 men would share a 16x14 foot log hut with walls six and a half feet high. Each would have a stone fireplace. The roof would be of wood board. Most huts were built in a pit about two-feet below the ground. Generally, there was only a dirt floor and some sort of cloth covering for a door. The huts were drafty, damp, smoky and terribly unhealthy.

The primitive shelters were laid out in regular patterns to form streets. Officers built their huts behind the enlisted men’s cabins. These were similar in construction but, perhaps, not as crowded.

Housing the Army was fairly simple. Clothing and feeding the troops was a daunting challenge.

Transportation was the major stumbling block. The supplies were out there. Getting them to Valley Forge seemed impossible. Roads were rutted quagmires. It was difficult to recruit wagoners. Continental money was nearly worthless, so Pennsylvania farmers often hid their horses and wagons rather than contract with the Army.

The man in charge of military transportation, Quartermaster General Thomas Mifflin hated his job. Mifflin was a wealthy Philadelphia merchant and a born politician who wanted glory on the battlefield not the headaches of transportation. He literally ignored the job.

It wasn’t until the spring when Washington’s most capable general, Nathanael Green, took over the quartermaster’s post that supplies began to move in decent quantity.

• An Unhealthy Life •

The first priority of the soldiers was keeping warm and dry. The troops faced a typical Delaware Valley winter with temperatures mostly in the 20s and 30s. There were 13 days of rain or snow during the first six weeks.

Illness, not musketballs, was the great killer. Dysentery and typhus were rampant. Many makeshift hospitals were set up in the region. The Army’s medical department used at least 50 barns, dwellings, churches or meetinghouses throughout a wide area of Eastern Pennsylvania as temporary hospitals. These places were mostly understaffed, fetid breeding grounds of disease. All were chronically short of medical supplies.

America’s first true military hospital - constructed for that purpose - was built at Yellow Springs, a popular health spa about 10 miles west of the encampment. About 300 sick men were accommodated in the large three-story wood structure. Washington once visited the Yellow Springs Hospital and stopped to exchange a few words with each patient. Dr. Bodo Otto, an elderly German and his two physician sons, ably ran the hospital until the end of the war. *continued next month*

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