



The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



MAR 2014

website: www.learnwebskills.com/sar/index.html
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President's Message

Dear Compatriot:

Our February meeting was enjoyable. The President of the Children of the American Revolution Swamp Fox Society made an informative presentation about their organization. One of the projects they have undertaken is putting together CARE packages for our troops stationed in Afghanistan. They have also sent needed items to severely deprived schools in Appalachia.

The second event which made the meeting one of socialization was the large turnout to celebrate George Dennis' 100th birthday. Incidentally, George is also one of the oldest Eagle Scouts. We can only hope that the rest of us can stay active with the SAR for that long!

At our March 15th Luncheon, we will have a special guest Virginia Bailey. She is coming to speak to us from Naples—let's make a good showing and welcome her. She will be speaking on the history of the American Flag. She will be bringing a collection for us to view.

The meeting will be held at Primavera. Social hour is at 11:30 A.M.. The meeting and luncheon follows at 12 P.M. I encourage you to call fellow compatriots to urge them to attend. I myself will be calling a few of our members. Perhaps the personal call in addition to the burst will encourage a greater turnout.

As always, please feel free to contact me at 954-783-0887 or email me at wwz2620@gmail.com.
Fraternally

William W. Zimmer

January Minutes

The Ft. Lauderdale Chapter, S.A.R., was called to Order by President Bill Zimmer at 12:00 15 Mar.2014.

Invocation given by Compatriot Robert Joynt

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, followed by pledge to S.A.R.

Meeting Minutes in newsletter submitted for approval, 2nd by Compatriot F.D. Flannery Minutes approved.

Treasurer Joe Motes submitted and unofficial report stating about \$2,600 in the checking account.

Veterans Assoc. Voluntary Service Rep Jim Lohmeyer stated the \$50.00 spend for Vets party appreciated. Chicken wings cake, cookies, punch, coffee, were served to Vets. They also appreciated the Hooter girls.

Reminder we host the BOM in May with the WPB chapter. If you can help contact Bill Zimmer or Jim Lohmeyer

We welcome our guest today, Mrs. Busey, Mrs. Sullivan, and Mrs. Flannery.

Program: Our speaker today was introduced by Bill Zimmer, Miss. Samantha Busey is President of Swamp Fox Chapter of the Children of American Revolution Miss. Busey stated a kaleidoscope of activities: i.e. Helping in the Education of Mountain Schools in the back lands of TN, collecting personal items for servicemen/women overseas, working at Ronald McDonalds houses, , helping special Olympic for Vets.

We should be proud of our C.A.R. Side note, our speaker is 15 years old. When she finishes high school she will receive both her high school diploma and her degree from college.

Closing: President Bill Zimmer thanked our speaker and a certificate was issued to C.A.R. Swamp Fox Chapter.

A cake with Happy 100th Birthday to George Dennis. Not enough room to place 100 candles so one candle for each 10 years and George blew them all out.
SAR recessional read.

NEXT MEETING - MAR 15, 2014

Primavera Restaurant

830 E. Oakland Park Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33334
954-564-6363

Future Dates:

Saturday, 04/19/2014

Saturday, 05/17/14

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

Luncheon - \$25.00

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL: 954-559-3202

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



Photos from the February meeting, starting with a happy Birthday party for George Dennis, followed by a presentation by Samantha Busey, followed by Certificate of Appreciation for her presentation, and Certificates of Appreciation to last year's officers.

**Battles of the American Revolution
The Battle of Oriskany, Part 2
Oriskany, New York**

From his camp at Fort Stanwix St. Leger saw all, and directed all. Sir John Johnson led the force thrown out to meet the patriots, with Butler as his second, but Brant was its controlling head. The Indians were most numerous: "the whole corps," a "Large body," St. Leger testifies. And with the Indians he reports were "some troops." The presence of Johnson, and of Butler, as well as of Claus and Watts, of Captains Wilson, Hare and McDonald, the chief royalists of the valley, proves that their followers were in the fight. Butler refers to the New Yorkers whom we know as Johnson's Greens, and the Rangers, as in the engagement in large numbers. St. Leger was under the absolute necessity of preventing the patriot force from attaching his successfully. He could not do less than send every available man out to meet it. Quite certainly the choicest of the army were taken from the dull duty of the siege for this critical operation. They left camp at night and lay above and around the ravine at Oriskany, in the early morning of the sixth of August. They numbered not less than twelve hundred men under chosen cover.

The coming of St. Leger had been known for weeks. Burgoyne had left Montreal in June, and the expedition by way of Lake Ontario, as the experience of a hundred years prophesied, would respond to his advance. Colonel Gansevoort had appealed to the Committee of Safety for Tryon county, for help. Its chairman was Nicholas Herckmeier, (known to us as Herkimer,) who had been appointed a brigadier-general by congress in the preceding autumn.

(His commission by the New York convention bears the date of September 5, 1776.) His family was large, and it was divided in the contest. A brother was captain with sire John Johnson, and a brother-in-law was one of the chief of the loyalists. He was now forty-eight years of age, short, slender, of dark complexion, with black hair and bright eyes. He had German pluck and leadership, but he had also German caution and deliberation. He foresaw the danger, and had given warning to General Schuyler at Albany. On the seventeenth of July had had issued a proclamation, announcing that the enemy, two thousand strong, was at Oswego, and that as soon as he could approach, every male person being in health, and between sixteen and sixty years of age, should immediately be ready to march against him. Tryon county had strong appeals for help also from cherry Valley and Unadilla; General Herkimer had been southward at the close of June to check operations of the Tories and Indians under Brant; and Frederick Sammons had been sent on a scouting expedition to the Black river country, to test the rumors that an invasion from Canada was to be made from that direction. The danger from these directions delayed and obstructed recruiting for the column against St. Leger. The stress was great, and Herkimer was bound to keep watch south and north as well as west. He waited only to learn where need was greatest, and he went thither. On the thirtieth of July, a letter from Thomas Spencer, a half-breed Oneida, read on its way to General Schuyler, made known the advance of St. Leger. Herkimer's order was promptly issued, and soon brought in eight hundred men. They were nearly all by blood Germans and low Dutch, with a few of other nationalities. The roster, so far as can now be collected, indicates the presence of persons of English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, and French blood, but these are exceptions, and the majority of the force was beyond question German. They gathered from their farms and clearings, carrying their equipments with the. They met at Fort Dayton, near the mouth of the West Canada Creek. This post was held at the time by a part of colonel Wesson's Massachusetts regiment, also represented in the garrison at Fort Stanwix. The little army was divided into four regiments or battalions. The first, which Herkimer had once commanded, was now led by Colonel Ebenezer Cox, and was from the district of Canajoharie; of the second, from Palatine, Jacob Klock was colonel; the third was under Colonel Frederick Visscher, and came from Mohawk; the fourth, gathered from German flats and Kingsland, Peter Bellinger commanded.

Counsels were divided whether they should await further accessions, or hasten to Fort Stanwix. Prudence prompted delay. St. Leger's force was more than double that of Herkimer; it might be divided, and while one-half occupied the patriot column, the Indians under Tory lead might hurry down the valley, gathering reinforcements while they ravaged the homes of the patriots. The blow might come from Unadilla, where Brant had been as late as the early part of that very July. Herkimer, at Fort Dayton, was in position to turn in either direction. But the way of the Mohawk was the natural and traditional warpath. The patriots looked to Fort Stanwix as their defense. They started on the fourth, crossed the Mohawk where is not Utica, and reached Whitestown on the fifth.

Here it was probably that a band of Oneida Indians joined the column. From this point or before Herkimer sent an express to Colonel Gansevoort arranging cooperation. He was to move forward when three cannon signaled that aid was ready. The signal was not heard; the messenger had been delayed. His chief advisors, including Colonel Cox and Paris, the latter a member of the Committee of Safety, urged quicker movement. Fort Stanwix might fall while they were delaying, and the foe could then turn upon them. Herkimer was taunted as a coward and a Tory. His German phlegm was stirred. He warned his impatient advisers that they would be the first in the face of the enemy to flee. He gave the order "march on!" Apprised of the ambushade, his courage which had been assailed prevented the necessary precautions.

He led his little band on. If he had before been cautious, now he was audacious. His course lay on the south side of the river, avoiding its bends, where the country loses the general level which the rude road sought to follow, when it could be found. For three or four miles hills rose upon valleys, with occasional gullies. The trickling springs and the spring freshets had cut more than one ravine where even in the summer, the water still moistened the earth. These run toward the river, from southerly toward the north. Corduroy roads had been constructed over the marches. For this was the line of such travel as sought Fore Stanwix and the river otherwise than by boat. Herkimer had come to one of the deepest of these ravines, ten or twelve rods wide, running narrower up to the hills at the south, and broadening toward the Mohawk into the flat bottom land. Where the forests were thick, where the rude roadway ran down into the march, and the ravine closed like a pocket, he pressed his way. Not in soldierly order, not watching against the enemy, but in rough haste, the eight hundred marched. They reached the ravine at ten in the morning. The advance had gained the higher ground. Then as so often, the woods became alive. Black eyes flashed from behind every tree. Rifles blazed from a thousand unexpected coverts. The Indians rushed out hatchet in hand, decked in paint and feather. The brave band was checked. It was cut in two. The assailants aimed first of all to seize the supply train. Colonel Visscher, who commanded its rear guard, showed his courage before and after and doubtless fought well here, as the best informed descendants of other heroes of the battle believe. But his regiment, driven northward toward the river, was cut up or in great part captured with the supplies and ammunition. In the ravine and just west of it, Herkimer rallied those who stood with him. Back to back, shoulder to shoulder, they faced the foe. Where shelter could be had two stood tighter, so that one might fire while the other loaded. Often the fight grew closer, and the knife ended the personal contest. Eye to eye, hand to hand, this was a fight of men. Nerve and brawn and muscle were the price of life. Rifle and knife, spear and tomahawk, were the only weapons, or the clubbed butt of the rifle. It was not a test of science, not a weighing of enginery, not a measure of caliber not an exhibition of choices mechanism. Men stood against death, and death struck at them with the simplest implements. Homer sings of chariots and shields.

**Fort Lauderdale Chapter
Sons of the American Revolution
2133 NW 208 Terrace
Pembroke Pines FL 33029-2320**

Here were not such helps, no such defenses. Fort or earth-worms, barricades or abattis, there were none. The British force had chosen its ground. Two to one it must have been against the band which stood and fought in that pass, forever glorious. Herkimer, early wounded and his horse shot under him, sat on his saddle beneath a beech tree, just where the hill rises at the west a little north of the center of the ravine, calmly smoking a pipe while ordering the battle. He was urged to retire from so much danger; his reply is the eloquence of a hero: "I will face the enemy."

Meanwhile, Gen. Nathanael Greene's column on Limekiln Road caught up with the American forces at Germantown. Its vanguard engaged the British pickets at Luken's Mill and drove them off after a savage skirmish. Adding to the heavy fog that already obscured the Americans' view of the enemy was the smoke from cannons and muskets, and Greene's column was thrown into disarray and confusion. One of Greene's brigades, under the command of Gen. Stephen, veered off course and began following Meetinghouse Road instead of rendezvousing at Market Square with the rest of Greene's forces. The wayward brigade collided with the rest of American Gen. Wayne's brigade and mistook them for the redcoats.

2014 CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - BILL ZIMMER

133 N. POMPANO BEACH BLVD APT 902
POMPANO BEACH FL 33062-5732
954-783-0887

VICE-PRESIDENT - OPEN

REGISTRAR / GENEALOGIST - TED DUAY

11901 TARA DRIVE
PLANTATION FL 33325
954-473-2754

SECRETARY - JAMES LOHMEYER

15862 SW 14 STREET
PEMBROKE PINES FL 33027-2361
954-436-1156

TREASURER / SGT-AT-ARMS / EDITOR - JOSEPH MOTES

2133 NW 208 TERRACE
PEMBROKE PINES FL 33029-2320
954-441-8735

CHANCELLOR - EDWARD SULLIVAN, ESQ

2837 NE 27 STREET
FORT LAUDERDALE FL 33306-1912
954-564-1014

CHAPLAIN - DAVID KRAMER

6241 SW 9th STREET
PLANTATION FL 33317-3962
954-584-2337

HISTORIAN - GEORGE DENNIS

2771 SE 15 St
POMPANO BEACH FL 33062-7506
954-942-3081

The two American brigades opened heavy fire on each other, became badly disorganized, and fled. The withdrawal of Wayne's reserve New Jersey Brigade, which had suffered heavy casualties attacking the Chew house, left Conway's left flank unsupported.

The ground tells the story of the fight. General Herkimer was with the advance, which had crossed the ravine. His column stretched out for nearly half a mile. Its head was a hundred rods or more west of the ravine, his rear guard reached as far east of it. The firing began from the hills into the gulf. Herkimer closed his line on its center, and in reaching that point his white horse was shot under him. The flag staff today on the hill marks his position. Then, as today, the hills curved like a cimeter, from the west to the east on the north side of the river. Fort Stanwix could not be seen, but it lay in the plain just beyond the gap in the hills, six miles distant. The Mohawk, from the mouth of the Oriskany, curves northward, so that here it is as far away in a right line, perhaps a mile in each case. The bottoms were marshy, as they yet are where the trees exclude the sun. Now the New York Central Railroad and the Erie Canal mark the general direction of the march of the patriots from their starting place hither. Then forests of beech and birch and maple and hemlock covered the land where now orchards and rich meadows extend, and grain fields are ripening for the harvest. Even the forests are gone, and the Mohawk and the hills and the ravine and "Battle Brook," are the sole witnesses to confirm the traditions which have come down to us. The elms which fling their plumes to the sky are young successors to the knightly warriors who were once masters here. Through the forests Herkimer, from his elevation, could catch the general outlines of the battle. Some of his advance had fallen at the farthest point to which they had marched. Upon their left the enemy had appeared in force, and had closed up from the southward, and on the east side of the ravine. The patriots had been pushed to the north side of the road, away from the line which the corduroy still marks in the ravine, and those who fled sought the river. Skeletons have been found in the smaller ravine about two hundred rods west, and at the mouth of the Oriskany, an extent of a mile and a half; and gun barrels and other relics along the line of the Erie Canal, and down toward the river. These are witnesses of the battle. They mark the center here. Here gathered the brave militia without uniforms, in the garb of farmers, for their firesides and their homes, and the republic just born which was to be. Against them here, in the ravine, pursuing and capturing the rear guard on the east of the ravine or down in it, and thence toward the river, rushed from the forests, uniformed and well equipped, Johnson's Greens, in their gay color, the German Chasseurs, Europe's best soldiers, with picked men of British and Canadian regiments, and the Indian warriors decked in the equipments with which they made war brilliant. Some of this scene Herkimer saw; some of it extent of space and thickness of forest hid from his eye. But here he faced the enemy, and here he ordered the battle.



Continued next month.