



# The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

## Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



website: [www.sarfl.weebly.com](http://www.sarfl.weebly.com)

Mar 2020

Fort Lauderdale Chapter chartered December 8, 1966

Volume 51 Number 3

### March Message from the President:

Dear Compatriots,

Our regular monthly meeting has been confirmed at the Outback Steakhouse in Davie for March 21st.

I realize we are surrounded by the facts and fears of the Coronavirus; however, we are still small in number and we do meet in a private room. Yet, each of you will be using his own good judgment as to whether or not to attend this or any gathering.

Last month we had a presentation on President Washington. We may continue that program at this meeting with another Patriot.

I am sure that we will be having a follow-up discussion of the survey you all received.

We are very serious about increasing meeting attendance and input from you remains very important.

Tom Shepherd  
President

### Minutes for February 20, 2020

President Thomas Shepherd called to order the Ft. Lauderdale Chapter Sons of the American Revolution. Members and guest present: Tom Shepherd, Chuck Adams, Jim Lohmeyer, Rob Joynt, Bill Bollinger, Mark Parker, Troy Gallant, Peter Moore and Patrick Quirk.

President Thomas Shepherd called Jim Lohmeyer to open with prayer. Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America and Pledge to the Sons of the America revolution were said.

Joe Motes Treasurer absent, attending a meeting in Bartow. He reported the financial report as follows; January balance in checking account is healthy and the CD account is also healthy.

The Florida Sunbiz not for profit Corp annual report submitted.

Chuck Adams, Registrar/Genealogist sent out questionnaire to the membership to see if they have any suggestions for our chapter, time, place, speakers, programs we should be doing, helping out at the V.A. clinic on Commercial Blvd, etc. Not enough time for results to report. Chuck reported we have 6 new applicants to install in May plus 6 more applicants being worked on.

Program presented by Tom Shepherd. George Washington upon his death, many wanted to bury him in Washington D.C., however he wanted to be buried at home in Mount Vernon and he was. He tried to set up education for slaves. Many people desired to make him a King, but he refused. He was not much of a talker, more a doer. He was 6 foot 2 inches tall. During his years as president he spent little time at Mount. Vernon.

Meeting closed with prayer by Jim Lohmeyer.

Meeting scheduled for March 15, 2020 will be postponed to a future date.

### NEXT MEETING - April 18, 2020

**Davie Outback Steak House**  
2725 South University Dr. Davie, Florida 33328

#### Future Dates:

December Wreaths Across America

Saturday, 05/16/2020

Saturday, 09/19/2020

Saturday, 10/17/2020

Saturday, 11/21/2020

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

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL: 954-559-3202  
or e-mail Joe Motes at: [joemotes@aol.com](mailto:joemotes@aol.com)

## The Battle of Oriskany Wednesday, August 6, 1777

Continued from last month

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 engineering, 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. Here were not such helps, no such defenses. Fort or earthworms, 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. 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.

During the carnage a storm of wind and rain and lightning brought a respite. Old men preserve the tradition that in the path by which the enemy came a broad windfall was cut, and was seen for long years afterward. The elements caused only a short lull. In came at the thick of the strife a detachment of Johnson's Greens; and they sought to appear reinforcements for the patriots. They paid dearly for the fraud, for thirty were quickly killed. Captain Gardenier slew three with his spear, one after the other. Captain Dillenback, assailed by three, brained one, shot the second and bayoneted the third. Henry Thompson grew faith with hunger, sat down on the body of a dead soldier, ate his lunch, and refreshed, resumed the fight. William Merckley, mortally wounded, to a friend offering to asset him, said: "Take care of yourself, leave me to my fate." Such men could not be whipped. The Indians, finding they were losing many, became suspicious that their allies wished to destroy them, and fired on them, giving unexpected aid to the patriot band. Tradition relates that an Oneida maid, only fifteen years old, daughter of a chief, fought on the side of the patriots, firing her rifle, and shouting her battle cry. The Indians raised the cry of retreat, "Oonah! Oonah!" Johnson heard the firing of a sortie from the fort. The British fell back, after five hours of desperate fight. Herkimer and his gallant men held the ground.

The sortie from Fort Stanwix, which Herkimer expected, was made as soon as his messengers arrived. They were delayed, and yet got through at a critical moment. Colonel Willett made a sally at the head of two hundred and fifty men, totally routed two of the enemy's encampments, and captured their contents, including five British flags. The exploit did not cost a single patriot life, while at least six of the enemy were killed and four made prisoners. It aided to force the British retreat from Oriskany. The captured flags were floated beneath the stars and stripes, fash

fashioned in the fort from cloaks and shirts; and here for the first time the flag of the republic was raised in victory over British colors.

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The slaughter at Oriskany was terrible. St. Leger claims that four hundred of Herkimer's men were killed and two hundred captures, leaving only two hundred to escape. No such number of prisoners was ever accounted for. The Americans admitted two hundred killed, one fourth of the whole army. St. Leger places the number of Indians killed, at thirty, and the like number wounded, including favorite chiefs and confidential warriors. It was doubtless greater, for the Senecas alone lost thirty-six killed, and in all the tribes twice as many must have been killed. St. Leger makes no account of any of his whites killed or wounded. Butler, however, mentions of New Yorkers (Johnson's Greens) killed, Captain McDonald; Captain Watts dangerously wounded and one sabalern. Of the Tory Rangers Captains Wilson and Hare (their chiefs after Butler) were killed. With such loss of officers, the death list of privates must have been considerable. The Greens alone lost thirty. In Britain it was believed as many of the British were killed by the Indians as by the militia. The loss of British and Indians must have approached a hundred and fifty killed. Eyewitnesses were found who estimated it as great as that of the Americans. The patriot dead included Colonel Cox, and his Lieutenant-Colonel Hunt, Majors Eisenlord, Van Slyck, Klapsattle and Belvin; and Captains Diefendorf, Crouse, Bowman, Dillenback, Davis, Pettingill, Helmer, Graves and Fox; with no less than four member of the Tryon county Committee of Safety, who were present as volunteers. They were Isaac Paris, Samuel Billington, John Dygert and Jacob Snell. Spencer, the Oneida, who gave the warning to the patriots, was also among the killed. The heads of the patriot organization in the valley were swept off. Herkimer's glory is that out of such slaughter he snatched the substance of victory. In no other battle of the revolution did the ration of deaths rise so high. At Waterloo, the French loss was not in so large a ration to the number engaged, as was Herkimer's at Oriskany; no did the allies suffer as much on that bloody field. Frightful barbarities were wreaked on the bodies of the dead, and on the prisoners who fell into the hands of the Indians. The patriots held the field at the close of the fight, and were able to carry off their wounded. Among these was the brave and sturdy Herkimer, who was taken on a litter of boughs to his home, and after suffering the amputation of his leg, died on the sixteenth of August like a Christian hero. Of the dead some at least lay unburied until eighteen days later. Arnold's column rendered to them that last service.

After the battle, Colonel Samuel Campbell, afterward conspicuous in Otsego county, became senior officer, and organized the shattered patriots, leading them in good order back to Fort Dayton. The night of the fight they bivouacked at Utica. Terrible as their losses had been, only sixteen days later Governor Clinton positively ordered them to join General Arnold on his expedition with one-half of each regiment. In his desperation, Sir John Johnson "proposed to march down the country with about two hundred men," and Claus would have added Indians; but St. Leger disapproved of the suggestion. Only a raid could have been possible. The fighting capacity of St. Leger's army was exhausted at Oriskany, and he knew it.

St. Leger's advance was checked. His junction with Burgoyne was prevented. The rising of royalists in the valley did not occur. He claimed indeed the "complete victory" at Oriskany. He notified the garrison that Burgoyne was victorious at Albany, and demanded peremptorily the surrender of the fort; threatening that prolonged resistance would result in general massacre at the hands of the enraged Indians. Johnson, Claus and Butler issued an address to the inhabitants of Tryon county, urging them to submit, because "surrounded by victorious armies." Colonel Gansevoort treated the summons as an insult, and held his post with sturdy steadiness." The people of the valley sided with congress against the King. For sixteen days after Oriskany, St. Leger lay before Fort Stanwix, and heard more and more clearly the rumblings of fresh resistance from the valley.

Colonel Willett who led the gallant sortie, accompanied by Major Stockwell, risked no less danger on a mission through thickets and hidden foes, to inform General Schuyler at Albany of the situation. In a council of officers, bitter opposition arose to Schuyler's proposal to send relief to Fort Stanwix, on the plea that it would weaken the army at Albany, the more important position. Schuyler was equal to the occasion, acting promptly, and with great energy. "Gentlemen," said he, "I take the responsibility upon myself. Where is the brigadier who will command the relief? I shall beat up for volunteers tomorrow." Benedict Arnold, then unstained by treason, promptly offered to lead the army. On the next day, August ninth, eight hundred volunteers were enrolled, chiefly of General Lauren's Massachusetts brigade. General Israel Putnam ordered the regiments of Colonels Cortlandt and Livingston from Peekskill to join the relief "against those worse than infernals." Arnold was to take supplies wherever he could get them, and especially not to offend the already unfriendly Mohawks. Schuyler enjoined upon him also "as the inhabitants of Tryon county were chiefly Germans, it might be well to praise their bravery at Oriskany, and ask their gallant aid in the enterprise." Arnold reached Fort Dayton, and on the twentieth of August issued as commander-in-chief of the army of the United States of America on the Mohawk river, a characteristic proclamation, denouncing St. Leger as "a leader of a banditti of robbers, murderers and traitors, composed of savages of America and more savage Britons." The militia joined him in great numbers. On the twenty-second, Arnold pushed forward, and on the twenty-fourth he arrived at Fort Stanwix. St. Leger had raised the siege and precipitately fled.

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St. Leger had been frightened by rumors of the rapid advance of Arnold's army. Arnold had taken pains to fill the air with them. He had sent to St. Leger's camp a half-witted royalist, Hon. Yost Schuyler, to exaggerate his numbers and his speed. The Indians in camp were restive and kept tract of the army of relief. They badgered St. Leger to retreat, and threatened to abandon him. The raised the alarm, "they are coming!" and for the numbers of the patriots approaching, they pointed to the leaves of the forest.

On the twenty-second of August, while Arnold was yet at Utica, St. Leger fled. The Indians were weary; they had lost goods by Willett's sortie; they saw no chance for spoils. Their chiefs killed at Oriskany beckoned them away. The began to abandon the ground, and to spoil the camp of their allies. St. Leger deemed his danger from them, if he refused to follow if he refused to follow their counsels, greater than from the enemy.

He hurried his wounded and prisoners forward; he left his tents, with most of his artillery and stores, spoils to the garrison. His men threw away their packs in their flight. He quarreled with Johnson, and the Indians had to make peace between them. St. Leger indeed was helpless.

The flight became a disgraceful rout. The Indians butchered alike prisoners and British who could not keep up, or become separated from the column. St. Leger's expedition, as one of the latest became one of the most striking illustrations to the British of the risks and terrors of an Indian alliance.

The siege of Fort Stanwix was raised. The logic of the Battle of Oriskany was consummated. The whole story has been much neglected, and the best authorities on the subject are British. The battle is one of a series of events which constitute a chain of history as picturesque, as exciting, as heroic, as important, as ennoble any part of this or any other land.

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**What Is Coronavirus?**

You could get lab tests, including nose and throat cultures and blood work, to find out whether your cold was caused by a coronavirus, but there's no reason to. The test results wouldn't change how you treat your symptoms, which typically go away in a few days.

But if a coronavirus infection spreads to the lower respiratory tract (your windpipe and your lungs), it can cause pneumonia, especially in older people, people with heart disease, or people with weakened immune systems.

**What to Do About Coronavirus**

There is no vaccine for coronavirus. To help prevent a coronavirus infection, do the same things you do to avoid the common cold:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Keep your hands and fingers away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are infected.

You treat a coronavirus infection the same way you treat a cold:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids.
- Take over-the-counter medicine for a sore throat and fever. But don't give aspirin to children or teens younger than 19; use ibuprofen or acetaminophen instead.

A humidifier or steamy shower can also help ease a sore and scratchy throat.

Even when a coronavirus causes MERS or SARS in other countries, the kind of coronavirus infection common in the U.S. isn't a serious threat for an otherwise healthy adult. If you get sick, treat your symptoms and contact a doctor if they get worse or don't go away.

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