



The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



MAY 2014

website: www.learnwebskills.com/sar/index.html
Fort Lauderdale Chapter chartered December 8, 1966

Volume 47 Number 4

President's Message

Dear Compatriot:

Our March meeting was most informative. The guest speaker, Virginia Bailey, presented a detailed history of the American flag. She covered its origins and the changes over the years. She and her associates had many pictures and full size flags for our perusal.

Our special guest speaker for April 19th is Melinda Johnson. She will be giving us useful insights into how to trace ancestors through the female line. While all of us have proved descent from one ancestor, this could be quite helpful if tracking down supplemental ancestors or looking into the possibility of joining other ancestral societies.

The Florida Board of Management meeting is scheduled for Friday May 2nd and Saturday May 3rd in Orlando. The Fort Lauderdale Chapter along with Miami and Palm Beach chapters is tasked with manning the registration table and hospitality room. I will be there. We need other members to help. If you can attend or know of another member who can attend please let me know.

We were fortunate to meet two new members at last month's luncheon.

I attended the annual Board of Management (BOM) meeting in Orlando from Thursday May 1st through Saturday May 3rd. This was the meeting which elects the President for the FLSSAR for the coming year along with all the other officers. The members in attendance are able to vote. This was Ted Duay's, our Ft. Lauderdale member, last meeting as the outgoing president of FLSSAR. It was an excellent opportunity to get to know the issues which are important to the state and its relationship with the national organization.

I was able to get to know the new regional vice president for the SE region. This area encompasses Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and the Palm Beach chapters.

Our new regional VP is Ray Wess who is the president of the Palm Beach chapter. I would encourage any one of you to attend the next meeting in September.

Our May 17th luncheon will feature Mary Baldwin Allen. Her topic will be the Iditarod dog race in Alaska. She is on the Trail Committee every year as a Vet Technician. The race to Nome is "The Last Great Race on Earth". Let's really make an effort to come as she has several interesting topics she could present at future meetings.

Fraternally,
William W Zimmer
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NEXT MEETING - MAY 17, 2014

Primavera Restaurant

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

Future Dates:

Saturday, 09/20/14

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

March Minutes

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

Invocation by James Lohmeyer

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and Pledge to S.A.R. lead by President Zimmerman.

Guest, Julia Bailey (Guest speaker) Carol Bailey, M. O'Bryan, and John Sheppard.

Officers Report:

President Zimmerman reported Larry Johnson to work on internet website for our chapter.

Secretary Lohmeyer stated corrections to last month's minutes should have read Feb not March. @nd by Ted Duay. Correction noted and approved. Treasurer Joe Motes stated balance of \$2,418.90 Motion to approve, 2nd by Ted Duay. Motion approved

Program:

Mrs. Julia Bailey showed pictures of flags that have been used at various times in our history. We started with a flag that bore a close resemblance to the Union Jack. As each state added, a Star was added. How many stars have been added since your birth? This was a very informative presentation.

President Zimmerman presented Mrs. Bailey with a Certificate of Appreciation

Bill Zimmerman lead the S.A.R. Recessional and Chaplin gave the Benediction.

The meeting closed at 1:30 p.m.



Battles of the American Revolution

The Battle of Oriskany, Part 3 Oriskany, New York

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, 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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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 "completest 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 and 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."

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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.

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. They 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. They 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 ennobles any part of this or any other land.



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