

# Sons of the American Revolution

Palm Beach Chapter



Florida Society



## The Patriot

P.O. Box 16735  
West Palm Beach, FL 33416



*Volume 21*

*December 2015*

*Number 08*

*SUPPORT YOUR CHAPTER, JOIN US ON*

**SATURDAY, December 12, 2015**  
**AT 12:00 noon**  
**THE EMBASSY SUITES**  
**1601 Belvedere Road,**  
**West Palm Beach**

**ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**  
**FEATURING THE KINGS ACADEMY VOCAL**  
**ENSAMBLE & RUMBAUGH ORATION**

Full Buffet Lunch & Beverages just \$28.00  
inclusive. **Reservations required.**

**RSVP by Friday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>**, call: Gary Green (561)-  
968-5117 and/or Don Lanman (561)-315-5073

**Guests** are always welcome!

**Please visit our Website: [www.sarpbchapter.org](http://www.sarpbchapter.org)**

### *President's Message:*

Happy Holidays Compatriots. I wish you and your family the best during this holiday season. I hope to see many of you at our meetings in the New Year. As we finalize our membership renewals in the month of December, I would like to thank those who sent in their dues in a timely manner. I would also like to

thank those of you who sent in contributions for specific projects we support and those who contributed to the general fund. Since our Chapter does not do any type of fund raising, the contributions from our members are vital. Published in each Newsletter is the "Presidents Brigade", which recognizes the contributions from Compatriots above a certain dollar amount. Let me assure you that every contribution, no matter how large or small is appreciated and is used.

At our January meeting, we will have the installations of officers for 2016. In February, we will have a very special guest speaker that you will not want to miss. I will give you a hint; he was the third President of the United States. Happy New Year!

### **FALL MEETING DATES**

**December 12<sup>th</sup>, Saturday** with Special Guest, **The Kings Academy** Vocal Ensemble Holiday Program; **January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Officer Ceremony**; **February 16<sup>th</sup>**, Guest Historian **John Stewart** presents a Jeffersonian perspective of George Washington; **March 15<sup>th</sup>; April 19<sup>th</sup>** ; and **May 17<sup>th</sup>**.

**The Patriot**  
**is the official publication of**  
**the Palm Beach Chapter**  
**Florida Society of**  
**The Sons of the American Revolution**



**2015 Officers and Board**

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If you would like to place an advertisement in The Patriot for your business, organization, or any other purpose, the costs for eight consecutive issues are:

<b>Business Card</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>Quarter – page</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Half page</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Full page</b>	<b>\$200</b>

**PRESIDENT’S BRIGADE**

**BRONZE \$50 - \$99**

**Chris Williams**

**SILVER \$100 - \$199**

**Dan Shepherd Sr.**  
**Arthur Griswold Jr.**  
**Robert Culpepper**  
**Gary Green**  
**Bruce Long**  
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**GOLD \$200 - \$499**

**Robert Banta**  
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**William Meakin**  
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**PLATINUM - \$500**

**Duane Lewis**  
**James Kane**  
**Jack Miller**  
**John Curry**  
**Robert Rewey**  
**Ray Wess**  
**Alexander Dreyfoos Jr.**

**2016 OFFICERS & COMMITTEES**

- a. **2016 Officers Elected:**  
**President:** Don Lanman  
**Vice President:** Ben Tidwell  
**Secretary:** Gary Green  
**Registrar:** Bob Boggs  
**Chaplain:** Father Sears  
**Sgt. @ Arms:** Byrd Wenmen  
**Historian:** Ben Miller
- b. **Volunteers Needed!** Help with the Chapters committees! Pick one or several committees to help with, including: **American History Scholarship, Eagle Scout Certificates, Fire Safety/Law Enforcement Commendation, Flag Certificates, JROTC, Knight Essay, Rumbaugh Oration, Liberty Tree, Flag Certificates, Chapter Events, Publicity, Membership, Patriot Bios, Speakers Bureau, Veterans Programs.**

**Call** Gary Green or Don Lanman to help our chapter today! It doesn't take much time and Chapter cannot do it without **YOUR** support!

## STATE SOCIETY NEWS

All Compatriots are encouraged to attend the State Society Board of Management (BOM) winter meeting in Orlando February 5 & 6. The meeting is both fun and informational. Visit [www.FLSSAR.org](http://www.FLSSAR.org), to register, go to [www.thefloridahotelorlando.com](http://www.thefloridahotelorlando.com), special room rates are available for members at the Florida Hotel and Conference Center.

### A MOUNT VERNON CHRISTMAS,

*by Historian Buddy Miller.*

This is America's first and greatest Christmas story, yet one known only to a few. It is deeply moving and uniquely American. It reveals much of the man and the fledgling nation.

What transpired between late November and Christmas Eve 1783 could not have happened anywhere but America. It shaped our republic in ways being felt today and cemented Washington as the greatest man of his era. In an age filled with hollow hyperbole, this account of the 1783 Mount Vernon Christmas is an authentic feel-good classic to share with the entire family.

During the war years prior to 1783, the Washington's had not had the luxury of a joyous Christmas celebrated with family and friends. On Christmas Day 1776, Washington was desperate. That year had been the darkest in American history. He had just endured a succession of military disasters; the morale of his remaining army, starving and freezing, was low; hundreds deserted during the night; he was down to 2,400 troops. At least one-third of the men had no shoes and they were forced to wrap their feet in burlap during the all night march, leaving a trail of blood in the snow. Faced with impossible odds the American

Revolution seemed to be down to one last desperate throw of the dice.

Although Washington's attack on Trenton that Christmas in 1776 was one of the most successful surprise attacks in history, it only bought his army more time. Still to come was the desperate winter of 1777-78 at Valley Forge. Indeed every winter and Christmas until 1783 was to be the same story of hunger, cold, and privation.

In late November 1783, Washington received word that the peace treaty ending the war had been signed. Only then could he resign his commission and return home to Mount Vernon.

As soon as Washington learned of the treaty, he wanted very much to return to Mount Vernon for Christmas. Except for a few days enroute to Yorktown, he had been away for about eight years. However, he had less than six weeks with many duties to perform and many miles to travel. This is the story of his incredible 38-day Christmas journey.

Just before learning of the peace treaty, Washington dealt with a rebellion while quartered in Newburgh, New York. Washington called a meeting, gave a short speech, and then reached for a letter from congress in his pocket to read aloud.

He gazed upon it and fumbled with it without speaking. He then took a pair of reading glasses from his pocket which none had seen him wear. He said, "Gentlemen, you will permit to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country." This moved everyone to tears as they realized the sacrifices Washington had made. The rebellion died instantly.

On November 17, Washington issued his "Farewell Orders." He lauded his troops for their extreme hardship and urged them never to forget the extraordinary events to which they bore witness. He closed by announcing his retirement from service

stating, "The curtain of separation will soon be drawn.... And closed forever" meaning for all future offices. Instead of using such an opportunity to promote himself, he appeared above all human ambition. When his remarks reached King George III, he called Washington "the greatest man of his age".

Washington arriving in New York from Newburgh via West Point on November 21 believed it necessary to reoccupy New York but had to wait for the British to evacuate. While there he made sure Tories who had secretly assisted the American cause were shielded from retribution.

He also protected the British withdrawal to prevent untoward actions. Everywhere Washington was greeted as a hero with cheering and enthusiastic crowds. Nearly every home had a drawing or lithograph of him displayed in the window. Receptions and dinners were held nightly in his honor.

On December 4, Washington hosted a farewell reception for his officers at Fraunces Tavern. He realized the inadequacy of any formal address and did not trust his emotions to read one.

When all the glasses were filled, Washington offered a toast, "With a heart filled with love and gratitude, I now take my leave of you. I most devoutly wish your later days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable." Following the toast, blinded by tears and voice faltering, Washington continued, "I cannot come to each of you but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take my hand." Each officer came forward suffused with tears and unable to utter an intelligible word.

From December 5 through the 18th, Washington's journey took him to Philadelphia where he spent several days and then onward, via Wilmington toward Annapolis, where Congress was sitting. At every stop and all along his route (throughout his entire journey) citizens gathered to pay tribute. Always courteous, the

general accepted every hand and returned every greeting.

America never before and never again will experience such an emotional outpouring for one man. Every citizen understood he conducted them through a long and bloody war that achieved glory and independence for their country. All knew viscerally there never again would be such a moment or such a man.

Washington arrived in Annapolis, then the Capitol and seat of Congress, on December 19. From December 20 through the 22nd he feted endlessly at lavish dinners and balls always preceded with 13 toasts followed by 13 cannon shots.

On December 23, there was a special session of Congress to honor Washington and to accept his resignation. Attendance overflowed the facility. He closed his address by stating, "I retire from the great theatre of action, and...here offer my commission and take leave of all the employments of public life." Then he withdrew from his coat pocket the parchment given to him in 1775 that was his appointment as Commander-in-Chief and ceremoniously returned it. Some consider it the most significant address ever delivered in civil society.

Immediately after returning his commission, Washington set out for Mount Vernon, still hoping to arrive in time for Christmas. It was so late on the 23rd and the days so short that he only got as far as Blandenburgh, Maryland before retiring for the night. The next morning, Christmas Eve, he rode to the Potomac River, crossed with a ferry to Alexandria, and rode the final miles. It already was dark when he approached Mount Vernon. About a mile away, he could see its many green shuttered windows, now ablaze with Christmas candles.

What a glad Christmas it was for all in that pleasant home on the banks of the Potomac. It was a Christmas to be specially remembered by the retired soldier. It was a day long hoped for by him when engaged in the

mighty labors of his official station. Rest, rest he often sighed for, and now the elements seemed to sympathize in his great desire. An intensely severe winter closed almost every avenue to Mount Vernon, and even neighborly communication was almost impossible. Washington now had plenty of time to rest.

To Lafayette he wrote on the first of February 1784, "on the eve of Christmas I entered these doors an older man by nine years, than when I left. Since that period, we have been fast locked up in frost and snow, and excluded in a manner from all kinds of intercourse."

I have not only retired from all public employments," he added, "but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walks, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."

Little did Washington know how soon his leadership would be needed to guide the new nation safely forward.

### **DO NOT LOSE YOUR SAR MEMBERSHIP!**

**Keep your SAR membership active and support the Chapter...**

**Please** send in your \$75 annual membership dues immediately to keep your SAR membership active to SAR, PO Box 16735, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6735.

Thanks to your membership and additional donations, the *Palm Beach SAR Chapter* continues to promote the values of our *Founding Fathers* through important activities including *Boy Scout and JROTC recognition, Rumbaugh and Knight Essay Youth contests, Police, Firefighter and EMT acknowledgement, and related community programs!*

The Chapter and your fellow Compatriots are counting on you to answer the call once again by renewing your support of your Palm Beach Chapter Today.

### **CHAPTER MEETING NOVEMBER 2015**



New Compatriot Induction - Don Lanman Chapter Vice President, Chase Davis, Keith Davis, Warren Davis, Chris Fluder, John Heitman, Bob Boggs, Gary Green Chapter President



Compatriots Swear Oath to SAR



3 Generations of Davis Inducted Together



SAR Gold Medal Recipient Alex Dreyfoos addresses Chapter on Philanthropy