



The Kentucky Pioneer Extra Edition



KENTUCKY SOCIETY

SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

President's Message—Preston Thomas Higgins, II



Compatriots: I want to take this occasion to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

2009 has been an eventful one for me. I have been busy, shuffling chapter and KYSSAR activities, but the year has been very rewarding. I have learned a lot from the experience of serving as President of the Kentucky Society. Thanks for giving me this opportunity.

Preston Thomas Higgins, II

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Do you want more out of your membership ?

- Attend meetings of your chapter
- Suggest ideas and take a leadership role
- Visit and take part in activities being done by other chapters

KENTUCKY SAR COLOR GUARD

Calling all KYSSAR Members

On January 18, 2009 the KYSSAR Color Guard will muster at 9:30 AM Central time at the Courthouse in Morgantown, Kentucky to take part in the Butler County Bicentennial celebration. We will open the ceremony by presenting our collection of flags and adding to the festivities just by being there in our period attire.

We need your help. If you have any type of uniform, drum, or black-powder gun, please come out and represent the Kentucky Society, Sons of the American Revolution. Even if you don't have an uniform, come out and show your support. Dress warm as the weather could be cold. We do have a few extra shirts and hats we can lend. You would need to wear a sweat shirt or insulated shirt under these to keep warm.

Contact Charlie Scott for details and so we will know who is attending: cscott@insightbb.com

Be HEP! (Historical, Educational, Patriotic)

Join compatriots from Kentucky in the activity listed above.

If you have an uniform, wear it—if you don't, come anyway. We will find a spot for you!

**MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT GENERAL
LARRY MCCLANAHAN**

Please see the link for the grave marking ceremony at Reedy River Baptist Church in Greenville, SC on Oct 17th. Rev. Capt. William McClanahan is the ancestor of PG Butler and me. His son Thomas (Devil Tom) was in Boonesborough in 1780 and buried in Simpson Co. We marked his grave several years ago. Larry



President General Larry McClanahan and President General Judge Ed Butler and their wives honored Captain William McClanahan recently by marking his grave at the Reedy River Baptist Church in Greenville, SC.



Chapter Activities

Simon Kenton Chapter

Members of the Simon Kenton Chapter presented a Revolutionary War program for the eighth grade students at Conner Middle School, Hebron, KY.



Volunteers for the Conner Middle School event were: (L-R) Tom Geimeier, Terry Collis, Jesse Moore, James Hough, Jenny McClurg, Jackie Miller, Elizabeth McClurg, Janice Geimeier, KYSSAR President Tom Higgins, Paul Wilke and Charlie Scott.



Chapter Chaplain and Drummer James Hough seemed to enjoy watching student try the drums.



Jesse Moore manned the weapons table as Paul Wilke and KYSSAR President Tom Higgins look on.



Paul Wilke talks with the students while displaying a collection of flags.



Dressed up in Colonial attire, three of Harry Geimeier's favorites: His, Daughter, Grand-Daughter and wife. (L-R) Jenny and Elizabeth McClurg and Janice Geimeier.

Simon Kenton Chapter (Continued)



Walking for the SAR

Jackie Miller, Simon Kenton Chapter Historian and Editor of the Chapter newsletter, walked in the 100th Cincinnati Thanksgiving Race and raised money for the Simon Kenton Chapter's 7th-8th grade poster contest.

An unique feature to this special poster contest is: The students that enter the contest must include something about Jackie's Patriot ancestor who fought in the Battle of Kings Mountain and is credited with shooting Colonel Patrick Ferguson.

Great idea Jackie!

HELP A VETERAN IN NEED

Erlanger, Kentucky (December 2, 2009) - The Sons of the American Revolution, Simon Kenton Chapter, is conducting the 1st annual collection for Veterans. On Sat. Dec. 12 and Sun. Dec.13 at the Richwood Flea Market 10195 US 25, Florence (Richwood), Kentucky from 9am-3pm we are collecting non-perishable food, coats, and personal hygiene items. You can also help by mailing a tax deductible donation to SAR, Simon Kenton Chapter, PO Box 18902, Erlanger, Kentucky. 41018. These items will be distributed to the Veterans families and those in the VA hospitals by Veteran organizations and members of the Sons of the American Revolution. Thank you for helping our Veterans.

Contact:

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or

Jackie Miller, Food Drive Chairman

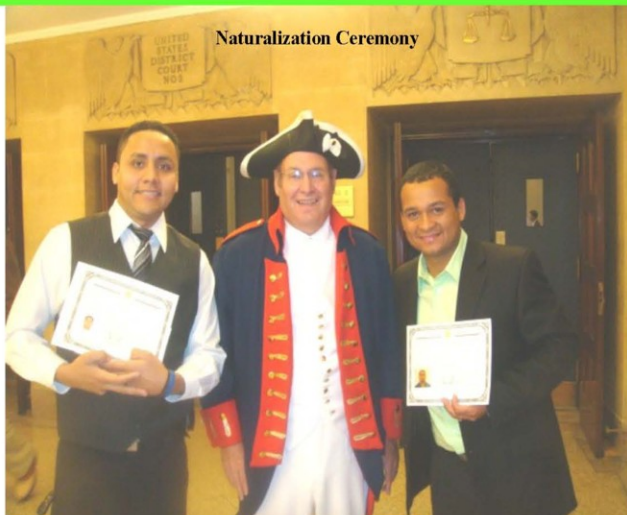
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Editors note: What a wonderful idea! This publication is too late for you to attend the flea market but maybe it will give you an idea or maybe you would like to make a donation to help our veterans. Contact one of the above or our KYSSAR Veterans Committee Chairman: Rev. Forrest Chilton, at (502) 645-1810 or fchilton@insightbb.com

Louisville Thruston Chapter



Dick Bierman poses with two new United States citizens at a recent Naturalization Ceremony. He is a regular at these ceremonies where he makes a presentation about his uniform and the SAR. Afterward he gladly poses for pictures with several of the newly pledged citizens.



Dick Bierman has been representing the SAR at Naturalization ceremonies for several years.

I am sure that our new citizens appreciate his efforts. These ceremonies occur 3-4 times a year and Dick is always there. Anyone interested in helping Dick?

Contact him at: rbierman@insightbb.com

Gov. Isaac Shelby Chapter



Chapter President Forrest Chilton presented the SAR Eagle Scott medal to new Eagle Scout Michael Patrick Hogan. Rich Hogan, Michael's father, assisted by pinning on the medal.



KYSSAR President, Preston Thomas Higgins, II shows off a set of SAR blazer buttons presented to him for honoring the Gov. Isaac Shelby Chapter during his term of office.

In Memory of Compatriot Dick Fowler



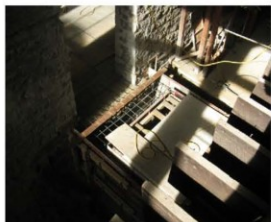
Compatriot Dick Fowler, a Ben Franklin look-a-like, passed away recently. Last August he was a guest speaker at the Memorial Service for the Battle of Blue Licks.

He was active in both the Florida and Ohio Societies. He will be missed by his many friends and compatriots.

SAR Library—Construction Progress



After tearing down the old back wall, workers build a new wall in the rear of the building. Hey, that wall goes up an extra story, the library building only has a basement and one floor. Well, the new SAR library will have a basement, first floor and a balcony. And now you know the rest of the story!



Building the shaft for a new elevator. What's wrong with the old elevator? (pictured to the right) Looks like it would make a good jail!



After a couple of months of tearing down and preparing the building, it is now time to start building up! In the pictures above you see metal studs on the basement walls and worker attaching a metal header to the studs.



Worker puts finishing touches on space that will contain a heat duct.

Finally, a look at what we will have when construction for the library is complete.

Have you made your donation?



Christmas Day, 1776: 'Victory or Death'

by [George F. Smith](#)



On Christmas Day, 1776, a few Americans gave us the first installment of a gift we have all but lost.

After the makeshift American army under George Washington's command ousted the redcoats from Boston in early 1776, the British moved to New York City, where they launched an invasion in August. Washington met them head-on and suffered devastating defeats, and survived only by fleeing from the enemy.

During the sleepless nights and hungry days of their retreat across New Jersey, Washington had hoped to pick up support from the locals. But the opposite turned out to be true: In Newark, for instance, only 30 turned out to join the Americans, while on the same day 300 New Jerseyans fell in for the British.

By the time he escaped across the Delaware River into Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Washington had only 3,000 of his original 20,000 troops. Seeing American forces arriving in retreat only twelve miles from where they sat in Philadelphia, Congress exposed their backbone: They panicked, made excuses and fled. They gave Washington dictatorial powers and went into hiding in Baltimore, 110 miles to the south.

"The game is pretty near up," Washington wrote in a letter to his cousin in Virginia. Even the Bucks County militia let him down. Desperate for troops, he had ordered them called out, but they turned Loyalist, and he had to dismiss them.

As winter set in, Washington made headquarters in William McKonkey's three-story stone house on the west side of the Delaware. British commander William Howe had written to his superior in England, Lord Germaine, telling of the severity of the December weather. For that reason he would go into winter quarters until spring, leaving his men spread over numerous New Jersey outposts, ready to march at a moment's notice. He admitted, though, that the chain of outposts was too extensive.

Lord Charles Cornwallis, Howe's field commander, decided to garrison the outposts with Hessian mercenaries and send the British troops back to New York. He himself was anxious to return to his wife in England, while Howe continued his affair in New York with the wife of one of his officers. Cornwallis left command of New Jersey in the hands of the cocky and thoroughly mediocre General James Grant.

In the 100-house village of Trenton, the outpost closest to Washington, the 1,600 Hessians were under command of Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall, a hard-drinking gambler whose troops had a reputation for plunder and rape. Once encamped, they proceeded to demonstrate their reputation. Hessian brutality swung many New Jersey neutrals to the American cause. Instead of tacking red ribbons to their doors indicating their loyalty to the Crown, they formed militia bands to ambush Hessian patrols. In his diary, one Hessian officer complained "we have not slept one night in peace since we came to this place." [1] He wrote this passage in Trenton, on Christmas Eve.

History tells us of the desperate condition of Washington's men - their ragged clothes, their lack of shoes, their chronic hunger. While this was true, it was also carefully exaggerated. Making excellent use of spies, Washington led the British to believe his condition was completely hopeless. Thus, when Rall complained to General Grant that his position was too much exposed, Grant dismissed it as ludicrous, since Washington was all but decimated. Besides, after December 31 Washington would not even have an army, since the term of service would expire for most of his men.

Perhaps at the suggestion of Benedict Arnold, Washington decided to attack Trenton while the Hessians slept off the effects of their Christmas celebration. It was do or die time; if he didn't take Trenton, the American cause was dead.

Continued on next page

Benjamin Rush, one of the few members of Congress who remained in Philadelphia, paid Washington a visit on the morning of December 24, 1776. Seeing the general depressed, Rush tried to boost his spirits with talk about Congress being behind him, even as they ran like cowards. As they talked, Rush noticed Washington scribbling on scraps of paper, one of which fell to the floor. Rush picked it up and read, "Victory or Death." It was the watchword for the attack on Trenton.

The following afternoon, Christmas Day, Washington gave his officers their marching orders. They included a special oratory they would read to their men, in an attempt to boost their morale. Earlier that month, Tom Paine had written a new essay on a drumhead in General Nathanael Greene's tent as the American army retreated across New Jersey. Called *The American Crisis*, Paine had it printed in Philadelphia on December 19. As the troops prepared to climb aboard the boats and cross the Delaware, with a winter storm kicking up, they heard Paine's opening words: "These are the times that try men's souls." They would not forget them.

Under the direction of Marblehead ship captain John Glover, the first boats pushed off from McKonkey's Ferry at two in the afternoon. It took fourteen hours to transport men, horses, and artillery across the river. Ice floes crunched against the sides of the 60-foot Durham iron-ore barges as the boatmen, sleet slashing their eyes, poled the crafts over and back.

Meanwhile, in Trenton, Rall had eaten a hearty meal and retired for a game of cards with a few of his aides and his host, a man named Abraham Hunt. Shortly after midnight a shivering Loyalist from Bucks County showed up at the door with a written message, handing it to a servant. Rall refused to be disturbed and tucked the note into his waistcoat pocket without reading it.

At 4:00 a.m. the American troops began their ten-mile march to Trenton along River Road. Washington, from his tall chestnut horse, urged his men to keep moving and stay with their officers. Two men stopped to rest - and froze to death. At Birmingham, the force split into two divisions. One, led by Nathanael Greene, swung off to the east to skirt the town, while the other, under John Sullivan's command, headed straight for the main Hessian barracks on King Street.

At 8:00 a.m. Sullivan's advance guard rushed the ten Hessian pickets outside the barracks. Three minutes later Washington ordered the rest of the men to storm the town. As they fell upon the enemy, many of them shouted, "This is the time to try men's souls!" [2] With their gunpowder soaked and useless, Sullivan's men relied on the bayonet to roust the Hessians out of the houses. Earlier in New York, Rall's men had mercilessly slaughtered Americans as they tried to surrender. It was a gratifying sight to see the Hessians turning and running.

Sodden from the previous night's celebrations, some Hessian units threw on their coats and tried to form ranks in the streets. As they did, they were cut down by Henry Knox's six-pounders firing from the ends of Trenton's two main streets.

Rall finally broke from the Hunt house, jumped on his horse and galloped toward his regiment, who were marching down King Street to the sounds of fifes, bugles, and drums while being showered with grapeshot. "Lord, Lord, what is it, what is it?" he kept shouting in German. As he tried unsuccessfully to organize a bayonet charge, he was hit twice and assisted into the Queen Street Methodist Church. While he lay dying, someone noticed the unread note in his pocket: the American army was marching on Trenton.

Minutes later the remaining Hessian officers put their hats on their swords, the corporals lowered their flags, and the infantry men grounded their arms. The Battle of Trenton was over. The Americans had suffered four casualties to the two hundred Hessians killed and wounded. Some of the Hessians had escaped and would alert the Hessian unit at Princeton. After a brief council with his officers, Washington decided his men were in no shape to take on more Hessians that day, so they headed back to McKonkey's Ferry with captured weapons, supplies, and 948 prisoners.

It took them twelve hours to recross the Delaware. The weather had gotten so cold Americans and Hessians had to stamp their feet in time in the boats to break up the new ice that was slowing their passage. When the Continental troops finally collapsed into their tents, they had gone forty-eight hours without food, almost as long without sleep, and had marched 25 miles in freezing weather.

They also won a critical victory for independence and liberty. While no war is good, defensive wars are sometimes necessary. Our forefathers knew this. That's why some of them went marching, 233 years ago.

Wreaths Across America

Compatriots from Ohio and Kentucky Chapters (Simon Kenton and Gov. Isaac Shelby) joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Ohio Patriot Guard Riders, Policemen, Firemen, and other Patriotic individuals in showing respect for military veterans buried in the Rest Haven Cemetery, Sharonville, Ohio.

Seven symbolic wreaths were presented—one for each branch of the service. Other Christmas-style wreaths were placed at the grave sites of Veterans buried in the cemetery.



OHSSAR President Tony Robinson reads a proclamation sent by President General Judge Ed Butler at the VFW Post before the group headed to the cemetery.



Compatriots Gerry Houchell, Charlie Scott, Jack Langlitz, Jesse Moore and OHSSAR President Tony Robinson fired a gun salute to open the Wreaths Across America ceremony at the cemetery. Notice one of the Patriot Guard Riders rendering a hand salute and on the right the Marine Flag and wreath.



Compatriots attending the Wreaths Across America ceremony were: (L-R) Jack Langlitz, Jesse Moore, Charlie Scott, Gerry Houchell, Harry Gemeier, Rev. Forrest Chilton, Tom Gemeier, Chuck Scott and OHSSAR President Tony Robinson.