



Number 2, 2005

MEMBERSHIP

As indicated in the previous issue of this newsletter, we added eighteen new compatriots in 2004. Some of these were sons or grandsons of either SAR or DAR members or a number of them also have sons that we would like to eventually bring in as members.

The list of 2004 additions is as follows:

Joseph Bennett Brearley Westerly, RI	Rodney Earl Burdick Lubbock, TX	John Crocker Eastman North Kingstown, RI
William Evan Elder Tuscaloosa, AL	Nathaniel Brittin Foss Providence, RI	Adam Cleveland Jenks Woodstock, VT
Airell Blaine Jenks Woodstock, VT	Carl Stetson King North Kingstown, RI	George Parker King East Greenwich, RI
Kevin Michael King Warwick, RI	Richard Harold Lord Bradenton, FL	Richard Morse Lord Westport Point, MA
Curtis Weston Magee Newport, RI	James Robert Masog Bradford, RI	John Thomas Ouderkirk Westerly, RI
Harold Eugene Snyder Barrington, RI	Charles Lippitt Stafford Whistler, BC Canada	Everett DeVere Watrous IV Byron, CA

We welcome all of you to the Rhode Island Society and expect that you will be joined by a number of additional members in 2005 since we already have admitted six more since the first of the year.

WASHINGTON - ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE (W3R)

The events celebrating the 225th anniversary of the arrival of the Comte de Rochambeau and his 5,500 man expeditionary force in Newport in 1780 are set for the weekend of July 8-10, 2005. Enclosed with this newsletter is a brochure from the Fort Adams Trust indicating the activities at the Fort on Saturday and Sunday of that weekend. The Fort is the location of the encampment by the Brigade of the American Revolution as well as other French re-enactment units. However, this is only a partial list of the activities since there will be much going on in downtown Newport as well. The actual landing of Rochambeau in Newport will be re-enacted Friday noon when a longboat will arrive at the ferry landing bearing Rochambeau, the boat crew, staff and guards. There will be a 13-gun salute and other activities with the entire entourage including the military units proceeding via the pedestrian mall to the Colony House where a brief official welcome will take place. There are a number of additional activities that afternoon and again on Saturday when there will be wreath laying ceremonies, a parade and a formal military review. While there are some aspects of the program still somewhat in a state of flux, the final plans and schedule will be available next week at www.RIRevolution.com (or .org or .net).

RISSAR's involvement will occur in at least three ways. First, we are hosting a dinner at the Clambake Club on Thursday evening, 7 July for the approximately thirteen compatriots from the French Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. The announcement for this dinner is at the end of this newsletter. Second, RISSAR will participate in the wreath laying ceremony on Saturday and third, we are sponsoring an American Heritage merit badge program for the Boy Scouts at Fort Adams on both Saturday and Sunday of that weekend. We need as many compatriots as possible to help with that program. Please call Daniel O'Connell (401-828-7549) to sign up even if only for a few hours on either day. There is no heavy lifting required but our presence is needed to guide the Scouts through the program.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENTS

If you click on www.sar.org you can find your way to the state website directory and under Rhode Island at this time it simply says website under construction. The domain name has been registered and we are now working on content. Our research has led us to uncover a wealth of information about your Rhode Island Society. Perhaps a number of our older members are familiar with the Society's state seal but I, for one, did not even know it existed. In the earlier years of its existence, this Society published several manuals including one in 1899 that is hard-bound and includes over 300 pages. This volume includes many illustrations, the text of many historical addresses and extensive biographical information on members and ancestors. This could easily be source material for our website. We intend to eventually include articles related to individuals, events and sites that are significant in Rhode Island history. If you are interested in helping with this effort, please call the President or Secretary.

STATE SEAL

The Following abstract from a paper read by Edward Field, Esq., before the Rhode Island Historical Society on January 26, 1886, is here printed for the purpose of explaining the significance of the design on the seal of the Society:

“At a town meeting in Providence, held July 3rd (1775) “it was voted, among other matters, that the town take steps regarding the erection of a beacon to alarm the county in case of the approach of an enemy.

“One week later at a town meeting a committee, consisting of Joseph Brown, Joseph Bucklin and Benjamin Thurber, then appointed to ‘erect a beacon on the hill to the eastward of the town to alarm the country in case of an enemy’s approach.’ The hill designated for the location of this beacon was the one now known as Prospect Hill, and then called Beacon Hill, and the spot, near what is now the corner of Prospect and Meeting streets. A beacon had been erected at this location more than a century before, in May, 1667, during the Indian war in the colony. The work was immediately commenced.

“The *Providence Gazette*, the first newspaper published in Providence, on July 29, 1775, informed the colonists that ‘a beacon is now erecting on a very high hill in the town by order of the Honorable General Assembly. A watch is likewise kept on Tower Hill in case of any attempt by water from our savage enemies.”

A handbill was later distributed that described the building of this tower. “This structure was very simple in its design, consisting of a wooden shaft or mast, about 85 feet in height, securely braced at the foundation: wooden pegs or steps, at regular intervals, projected from either side to enable a person to climb to the top. From the end of this shaft an iron crane extended, from which hung an iron basket; this was filled with inflammable material. By order of the town, a house was built at its base in which to store the combustibles, so as to be ready at a moment’s notice. The beacon, probably, was never fired after the trial of August 17th, unless, perhaps, at the proclamation of peace it was used to spread the glad tidings throughout the neighboring country.”

LAPEL PINS

We found the state seal to be so interesting that we arranged with Pincrafters, Inc in Burlington, Vermont to create a lapel pin based on the seal. Describing this as a “lapel pin” may be a bit of a stretch since the end product is 1 ½” in diameter but it is a very attractive die struck pin that gives a two-tone appearance due to the polished and sand blasted treatment of the different surfaces. These will be available for purchase by all compatriots in the very near future.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR GRAVESITE RECORDS

Thanks to Bruce MacGunnigle, we are now in possession of two copies of a three volume set of gravesite records of Revolutionary War patriots buried in Rhode Island cemeteries. The front page of one the volumes say that the records were compiled by the Grave Marking Committee of the R.I. Society of the SAR and lists Col. Willis C. Metcalf, Chairman and Capt. Walter M. Baker, Secretary. These are hard bound volumes with alphabetical index tabs. Each page contains the name, date of death and age at death, burial location and a description of the individual’s military service.

The volumes came to RISSAR in the mid-seventies from Elsie Williams (DAR) following the death of her husband Harold P. Williams who was Chairman of the RISSAR Graves Registration Committee for many years. Anyone who can provide additional background information about these records or has an interest in viewing what we now have in our possession; please call the President or Secretary.

REGISTRAR

After many years of service to RISSAR, compatriot Alden Saunders has decided that it is time to relinquish the reins as Registrar for RISSAR. While we all realize that Alden is truly irreplaceable, Michael Northup has agreed to (or been dragooned into) serving as Registrar at least temporarily.

CALENDAR

Board of Managers - Saturday, 16 July 2005 at 8:30 AM at Evelyn’s Villa, 272 Cowesett Avenue, West Warwick, RI

State Meeting - Friday, 16 September 2005, Cook House, Newport

Gravesite Ceremony – Saturday, 17 September 2005, commemorating Solomon Southwick at the Common Burial Ground on Farewell Street in Newport. Southwick is the ancestor of David Marsh who resides in upstate New York and is a member of NYSSAR

Thank you for your support.

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Please join us in welcoming our French SAR Compatriots at the Clambake Club of Newport on July 7th for dinner. The hospitality hour will begin at 6:00PM. The meal will be a fish dinner at 7:00PM and the cost per person is \$40.00. Seating for this event is very limited and we need to know immediately, if you plan to attend. Reservations can be made by emailing, or calling, call Carlen Booth, or John Adams.

The Clambake Club offers a wonderful setting to look out over the ocean and it is away from the hustle and bustle of the city. We are sure that our French Compatriots will enjoy the evening from that perspective.

The Clambake Club is located at 353 Tuckerman Avenue, Middletown, RI 02842

Please send your check payable to RISSAR to John Adams, 131 Spencer Woods Drive, Warwick, RI 02818, once you have confirmed your reservation with Carlen, or John.