



THE EAST TEXAS PATRIOT

Sons of the American Revolution
Chapter # 57 Longview, Texas



Volume 13, Number 6

December 5, 2019

The President's Message

“How Time Can Fly By---Is it Really Six Years?”

It does not seem possible that I have served as your Chapter President for six years. The time has flown by and you have given me memories and friendships that will last the rest of my life. It has been a pleasure to meet you and your lovely guests at our meetings. My only regret is that on various topics we did not have an opportunity to meet for a longer period for visiting. I do want to thank each of you for your support and assistance in all our projects.

I must thank my Panola College colleagues, friends, and family for their support and willingness to present programs to our group on various topics. The first program was Mr. Bev Brown, “Just Talk it Over,” and his war letter. To the Texas State Historian, Bill O’Neal, Government Professor Dr. Charles Taylor, Academic Dean Freddy Mason are all dear friends. Then you had programs from my family members. Elizabeth and her superstitions, Kimberley and the UIL, academic programs, then Sarah Elizabeth explanation of the Children of the Republic of Texas.

It has been a goal that we would increase our numbers, become an active chapter of Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution, and become a more active chapter with social events. Which brings to mind that we have a standing invitation to visit the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame in Carthage. Let me know when and I will confirm the date and time.

Please do what you can to help us grow. Bring a friend to our meetings and perhaps we will have a new member. The December meeting will be one of reflection upon our chapter with acknowledgement to years of membership.

Again, thank you for your support and assistance during my time as president.

See you at Jason’s Deli on December 5. Try to bring a friend or prospective friend. We need to grow!

Carl

Merry
Christmas



Minutes and Treasurer's Report of October 3, 2019

The East Texas Chapter #57, TXSSAR, held its bimonthly meeting on October 3, 2019, at Jason's Deli Restaurant in Longview, Texas at 7 PM. The meeting was called to order by Vice President David Conner. The opening prayer was given by Chaplain, J.D. Denton. The pledges to the United States Flag, the Texas Flag and the SAR Flag were given and guests were introduced. Guests were J.R. Kuna and wife, Patti, and Bobby Reid, and prospective member Bennie Hair and wife, Susie.

After dinner, the meeting resumed with the consideration of the Minutes of the previous meeting and the Treasurer's report as printed in the newsletter. Both were accepted as presented.

Vice President Conner "passed the hat" for members loose change.

John Bolton presented the nominations for officers for the next two years. They are President, Gary Fletcher; 1st V.P. Barney Jones; 2nd V.P Carl Hedges; Secretary, John Bolton; Treasurer, Mickey Cole; Registrar, John Bolton and Historian/Web Master Mickey Cole, and Chaplain, J.D. Denton. These nominees were elected by acclamation. Congratulations to all !

John Bolton inducted new member John Whitsell into our chapter. His wife, Suzanne Whitsell, pinned the rosette onto his lapel. Welcome Compatriot John Whitsell.

It was announced that the next meeting will be on December 5, 2019. Please remember to send news items to Mickey Cole our Webmaster.

The speaker for the night, Alan McReynolds was introduced. His program was on The Francis Marion Smith Family of Virginia.

The meeting was adjourned with the SAR Closing and the benediction by Chaplain J.D. Denton.

John Bolton, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

September/October 2019

Beginning Balance (09/1/2019)		\$1175.21
Deposits: Membership "Pass the Hat" Donations	\$43.56	
Total Deposits:		\$43.56
Checks: J. Bolton —Meals for Speaker & Guests	\$10.21	
J. Bolton – Stamps	\$22.00	
Total Checks:		\$32.21
Ending Balance (8/31/2019)		\$1186.56

Mickey Cole, Treasurer

Recent Findings at –and about—Valley Forge

A symposium held in March 2011 revealed the latest thinking about life at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777. The symposium brought together some of the nation's leading Revolutionary War authorities to discuss artifacts, campaigns, army life and the experiences of those involved in America's struggle for freedom.

General George Washington and his weary troops arrived at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania six days before Christmas in 1777. The men were hungry and tired after a string of losing battles that had resulted in the British capture of the patriot capitol, Philadelphia, earlier in the fall. The defeats had led some members of the Continental Congress to want to replace Washington, believing he was incompetent.

General Washington had planned on being "huttet" in a small log cabin, just as his soldiers were. It soon became apparent, however, that the work of administering an army of roughly ten thousand men required more space than a simple log cabin. The General chose the Isaac Potts house, located in a defensible position as the base of his operations that winter.

During the Continental Army's stay at Valley Forge, Washington, his aides, servants and wife all lived and worked together in the small headquarters house. To ease the cramped conditions in what some historians have dubbed the "1778 Pentagon," the general had a cabin constructed. When archaeologist began digging behind Washington's Headquarters, they spotted soil discoloration indicating this log cabin General Washington had built behind the headquarters to use as a dining hall and war room for himself and his top military advisers during the six-month Revolutionary War encampment. From here, he and his officers set about the task of molding the Continental Army into a fighting force that was capable of taking on one of the world's most powerful armies. The dining cabin is mentioned briefly in a letter from Martha Washington to her friend Mercy Otis Warren, whom she tells: "...the General's apartment is very small; he has had a log cabin built to dine in which has made our quarter much more tolerable than they were at first." Martha stayed at Valley Forge for four of the six months that Washington was there.

Many excavations have been worked at the site. Of particular interest are two refuse pits that date to the last quarter of the eighteenth century, at least one of which was almost certainly in use during Washington's occupation of the Potts House. Intriguing artifacts that are coming out of the excavations are French gunflints, the type commonly used by the American troops, as well as many fragments of glass, bone, metal and ceramic. Some of the more interesting ceramics include pieces of a porcelain teapot, hand painted in red and black, and a creamware cherub face that probably once decorated a fancy soup tureen or other serving piece. These objects are things that would have belonged to the elite classes; no enlisted soldier in a hut would be using such beautiful pieces. These objects were almost certainly used by Washington and his officers.

On the last day of an archaeological project near Valley Forge in 2017, Dan Sivilich told his team not to expect to find a whole lot. His group had spent years helping archaeologists scour the site for artifacts. He figured there would be little left to find. Quickly one of the volunteers, who use metal detectors to locate artifacts, located a nine-pound cannonball hidden underneath a walking path. But he was the man of the day for about five minutes when another volunteer found a bayonet. And then another. When they opened the ground, they found a cache of 30 bayonets, stacked together. This site is on private property but was once part of the encampment where the Continental Army spent the hard winter. The bayonets were of various makes and manufactures, reflecting the army's hodgepodge state. More than two years into the war, George Washington's army was still cobbled together, a mishmash of militias who supplied their own materials and weapons. Although the bayonets stand out among the artifacts discovered, other intriguing finds were discovered. There was a musket ball that had been turned into a die with Roman numerals on its face, and a particularly rare U.S.A. uniform button with the date 1777. It appears someone hid the bayonets or disposed of them deliberately. When the army moved on, the men had little time to pack up, so perhaps the man who left the bayonets behind intended to come back for them but never did.

Time continues to reveal history.

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Bayonets found at Valley Forge



J. Bolton and John and Susanne Whitsell



David Conner and Alan Mc Reynolds



Larry Auld and J. Bolton at Tyler Airport Brookshires flight for Veterans to Washington D.C.



**Our next meeting will be December 5, 2019 at Jason's Deli in Longview.
 Dinner at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.
 You are encouraged to attend and support Chapter # 57.**