



PineyWoods Pine Shavings

Official Newsletter of the PineyWoods Chapter, No. 51

Texas Society, Sons of the American Revolution

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OCTOBER 1995

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PINEYWOODS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Chapter President Thomas Green has called for a Board of Directors meeting to be held on Thursday, October 12th at the upstairs meeting room at the Kingwood Randall's on Hwy. 59. The meeting will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Any member of the PineyWoods Chapter may also attend this meeting.

INTEREST IN STARTING A PINEYWOODS CHAPTER COLOR GUARD

There is an interest in starting a PineyWoods Chapter Color Guard which was discussed among a few compatriots at this past dinner meeting. If you are interested in participating in this patriotic project, please let the chapter know. Research is now being conducted on period uniforms and a selection will be made at a later date, along with selecting a seamstress to sew up the individual uniforms.

If you need further information, please refer to the current issue of *The Texas Compatriot*, Fall 1995.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Oct. 01	Raymond Cox
Oct. 06	Larry Stevens
Oct. 07	Bernard Balser
Oct. 20	John Meredith
Oct. 20	Glenn Withrow
Oct. 30	Matthew Greenwood

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 06	Marshall Battle
Nov. 06	Gary Smith
Nov. 11	Harold Green, Jr.
Nov. 11	Jere Hart
Nov. 13	Byron Basham
Nov. 15	Worthy R. Warnack, Sr.
Nov. 16	Allan Henshaw
Nov. 20	Paul Luther
Nov. 25	Jack Ward

C. H. BRAKEBILL, PAST NSSAR PRESIDENT GENERAL TO SPEAK AT OCTOBER 19 MEETING

The PineyWoods Chapter Dinner Meeting on Thursday, October 19, 1995 proves to be an very entertaining

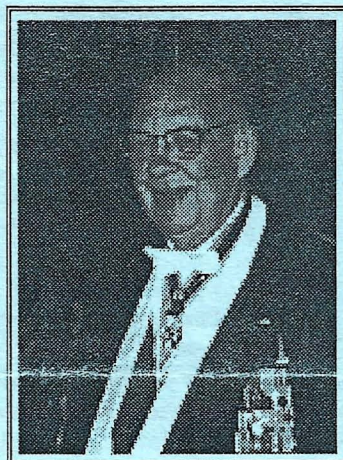
meeting with our special guest speaker, Clovis H. Brakebill. His speech entitled "The Lafayette Love Affair," we are told, will be enjoyable to everyone, especially the ladies.

Our speaker has been a resident of Dallas for over 35 years. He is a native Texan, a graduate of Texas A&M University and retired from the business world.

Mr. Brakebill belongs to numerous hereditary societies and has been an officer in the following:

President General of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution; Treasurer General of the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne in the United States of America; Registrar General of the National Society Americans of Royal Descent; Governor of the Colonial Wars in the State of Texas; Deputy Governor General of the General Society of the Colonial Wars.

Clovis H. Brakebill has received many awards including the D.A.R. Medal of Honor.



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PINEYWOODS CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE

Future meetings of the PineyWoods Chapter are as follows, so that you can make plans now to attend. Remember - your attendance counts.

October 12, 1995: PineyWoods Chapter Board of Directors meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Kingwood Randall's upstairs meeting room. Any member may attend.

October 19, 1995: Regular Dinner Meeting with special guest speaker, Clovis H. Brakebill

November 16, 1995: Members Only Dinner Meeting with guest speaker - Proposals from the Nominating Committee for 1996-1997 Chapter Officers

January 18, 1996: Regular Dinner Meeting with guest speaker - Nomination of 1996-1997 Chapter Officers.

February 15, 1996: Regular Dinner Meeting with guest speaker - Election of 1996-97 Chapter Officers.

March 21, 1996: Regular Dinner Meeting with special guest speaker - Installation of 1996-97 Chapter Officers.

COMPATRIOTS HONORED AT SEPTEMBER 21 MEETING

At the September 21 dinner meeting of the PineyWoods Chapter, Raymond W. Cox and Richard G. Lowsetter both received their membership certificates, membership cards and lapel rosettes. Four future compatriots were recognized for their attendance as they are currently working on their applications. They were as follows: MacLeod Smith, Richard Shanks, Woody Reese, D.D.S. and Craig Reese, D.D.S.

The PineyWoods Chapter currently has 93 approved members and approximately 30 approved supplements for this year. There were 50 approved supplements last year, so that gives the Chapter about 80 total supplements.

Due to inclement weather, our scheduled guest speaker, T. David Yeilding, Ph.D., was not able to attend. Kim Morton, Chapter Genealogist, gave a talk on obtaining and proving additional supplemental Revolutionary War ancestors. Also discussed was some of the possible sources for obtaining Patriot service records within certain state records. A question and answer period followed.

PINEYWOODS CHAPTER MEETING ATTENDANCE

The PineyWoods Chapter wants to stress the importance of meeting attendance. Not only, as a Compatriot of the PineyWoods Chapter, will you learn from the regularly scheduled chapter meetings and its programs, special guests and speakers but your attendance will count toward the final percentage totals at the end of the year and at each meeting.

The Secretary of the PineyWoods Chapter keeps a running total of the number of meetings attended by each approved compatriot of the chapter in alphabetical form,

but also which meeting(s) you attended. A percentage is formulated at the end of each meeting by the total number of members attending a particular meeting with reference to the total number of approved members.

This report is presented to the Chapter Board Members so that all will be aware of who is or who is not attending meetings and the interest in the Chapter programs. The attendance chart reflects also those who do not attend meetings at all and the regularity at which many members attend, whether or not they are receiving a membership certificate, a war service certificates and medals or have a general interest in the patriotic and educational functions of their chapter.

This attendance report will be part of the Annual Report made by the Secretary of the PineyWoods Chapter to the Texas Society before March of 1996. This is done so that the Texas Society will know what the attendance numbers are for the PineyWoods Chapter and also allow the chapter to participate in an attempt in obtaining the E. Marshall Hunter Attendance Trophy awarded each year in March at the Texas Society Annual Convention.

Your attendance does count and most will be aware of whether you attend or not and if you are interested in the operation of your chapter or just the certificate on your wall.

YOUTH SAR MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE

Active members of the SAR and DAR for years have realized the need to provide the younger compatriots in this country, an opportunity for them to help preserve this Nation's great heritage. For many years that organization has been the Children of the American Revolution or CAR. The patriotic and historical work the CAR contributes is very important and provides a rewarding experience for many sons, nephews and grandchildren of their parent organizations. If however, you would like one of the younger members in your family to be part of the SAR, did you know there is a SAR Youth Membership program.

Established about ten years ago, the SAR Youth Membership costs only \$10 to register. Males, under the age of 18, whose father, grandfather or uncle is an SAR in good standing, can apply for registration using a *very simple* application form. Upon receiving the completed application and fee, the Registrar General NSSAR, will provide an attractive blue, white and yellow lapel insignia and official registration certificate for presentation to the new SAR Youth Member.

Additionally, there is a Youth Life Membership program. This plan, which cost \$500 to join, will pay the National dues for the entire life of an SAR member who joins the



organization's Youth Membership, as detailed above.

If you have a son, grandson, or nephew, that you want to affiliate with the Sons of the American Revolution, you are encouraged to register them through this program. Contact any officer of the PineyWoods Chapter for a copy of the registration form.

THE PATRIOTS' FUND

Every compatriot need to know about and participate in the growth of the Patriots' Fund, a program conceived by the Texas Society in 1978, whereby members and friends may

contribute into a fund to foster projects with a patriotic, historical or educational value.

Under the management of a seven member Board of Trustees chosen from within the TXSSAR, the donations are placed in a separate savings account, from which only the interest may be removed and spent for purposes enhancing our American Heritage. The Texas

Society is justifiably proud of the strides the fund has made.

Expenditures from the accrued interest have been used since 1982 for worthy causes to enhance our organization. The following types of gifts may be made: (1) Cash donations; (2) Wills and bequests; (3) Stocks and bonds; (4) Benefits of Life Insurance policies; (5) Gifts of real estate; (6) Oil, gas and other mineral interests; (7) Gifts from a private or family donation. All are tax deductible and may be designated for a specific purpose.

At the Chapter level, gifts are often made as memorials for departed compatriots. Individually, members send their personal contributions as well. The address to donate to this fund is: The Compatriots' Fund

c/o: Treasurer TXSSAR
Frank A. Gibson, CPA
P.O. Box 26529
Austin, TX 78755-0529

A convenient time to participate is

when annual dues are paid in the fall. A special line for that purpose is on your renewal statement. Remember, your contribution is fully tax-deductible. It's easy. It's important. It's rewarding.

Patriotism and The Stars & Stripes

"Nothing seem more natural to an American than to venerate the patriotic symbols that represent America. They are virtually sacred. Scornful as we are of the candidate who wraps himself in the flag, it is often the candidate who fails to do so who loses.

But if Americans cherish their symbols of patriotism, they haven't always loved them. It used to be good enough just to respect them.

Take Old Glory, that 'emblem of unity, of loyalty to home and to kindred, and to all that is sacred in life.' The early adoption of the flag by the United States has been considered proof of its early acceptance as a sacred symbol of the United States. But that seems not to have been the case. Milo Quaife, in his exhaustive history of the flag, concluded that the generation that gave us the national flag remained astonishingly indifferent to it.

From early congressional debates, for instance, it is quite clear that the only reason the founders adopted a national flag was for the practical reason that the navy needed one for identification when sailing into foreign ports. The bill providing for the establishment of the flag consisted of a single sentence, just twenty-nine words long.* The preamble to the Constitution was longer (fifty-two words). [Resolved, That the flag of the (thirteen) United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." June 14, 1777 (*Journal of the Continental Congress: 1774-1789* [1907], VIII, 464).

When in 1794 someone introduced a bill to add two stars to the flag to take into account the admission into the union of Vermont and Kentucky, many members objected that the matter wasn't worthy of their attention. It is 'a trifling business,' said one, 'which ought not to engross the attention of the House, when it was their duty to dis-

cuss matters of infinitely greater importance.' The Vermont representative agreed. In the end, says Quaife, the members approved the bill 'as the quickest way of terminating' debate about it.

The existence of great varieties of flag designs demonstrates the profound carelessness with which it was treated. Some stars came with five points. Some stars came with six. Some stars came in white. Some came in silver. Because Congress never specified if the stars should be arranged in a circle or in rows, flag makers stitched them both ways. On the eve of the Civil War it became fashionable to put them in an oval. Even the number of stripes seems to have varied by whim, though it was established by law. At one point the flag over the capitol had eighteen stripes, while the flag over the New York Navy Yard had only nine.

The flag is a particularly poor example of an early sacred symbol, as many Americans — including top government officials — were unsure of its appearance. More than a year after its adoption by Congress, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, in a joint letter to the king of Naples, said it 'consists of thirteen stripes, alternately red, white and blue.'

They may be forgiven for their ignorance. For Americans in our early history seldom got the chance to see the flag. It did not fly from buildings. It was not put in the schools. It was never reproduced in the newspapers. And painters did not make pictures of it. Wilbur Zelinsky, reporting on a search of major catalogs of art from the Revolutionary War, says he could not find a single depiction of the American flag.

The fact is, not a single land battle in the Revolution was fought under the Stars and Stripes. There was no American Flag at Bunker Hill, at Trenton, or even at Yorktown. Indeed, not until the Mexican-American War did American soldiers fight under Old Glory. Even then the use of the flag was limited. The marines did not adopt the flag until 1876; the U.S. Cavalry not until 1887. Forget those pictures of George Custer and the Stars and Stripes. His men never carried it.

Soldiers did not go flagless, of course. They had battle flags to keep up their spirits. But nobody cares about those old battle flags. What we want is Washington crossing the



Delaware with the Stars and Stripes. And what we want the artists in the nineteenth century gave us; pictures with flags sell.

Of America's Revolutionary War heroes, only one fought under the Stars and Stripes, John Paul Jones, who has been the subject of endlessly silly stories. Biographer Augustus C. Buell, for example, claimed Jones's flag aboard the *Bonhomme Richard* was sewn by a band of 'dainty' girls 'from slices of their best silk gowns;' one of the girls, Helen Seavey, was even said to have sacrificed her bridal dress to provide material for the stars. Actually, the story is as fanciful as Jones's famous sea-battle boast that he had 'not begun to fight.' And Helen Seavey never existed.

No doubt the founders would be pleased to see that the flag is respected today. But they would not understand it being worshipped. Worship of the flag is strictly a modern development. A hundred years or so ago only a few self-appointed flag defenders conceived of it as a sacred object. Schools were not required to fly it until 1890. Americans did not begin pledging allegiance to the flag until 1892. They did not begin saluting the flag until around the Spanish-American War in 1898. Flag Day was not nationally observed until 1916. The flag code, prescribing the proper way to treat a flag and dispose of it, was not approved by Congress until 1942 and did not become part of federal law until 1976.

During the Revolution, when men were fighting and dying on the battlefield to establish a new nation, saluting the flag would have been regarded as an empty gesture. The thing to do was to go out and join the fighting. That was patriotism.

(One cannot mention the flag, of course, without making reference to the story that it was Betsy Ross who stitched the first one. She did not, unfortunately. The whole story was made up by her grandson. Nor did she have anything to do with the selection of the flag's design or its colors. If anybody was responsible for designing the flag it was probably Francis Hopkinson, who was given credit by Congress for having done so. But no one individual actually designed the flag. Our flag came about through two modifications of the British Union flag, which includ-

ed a red, white, and blue cross in the corner square and a solid red field. Our first flag, commissioned for the navy in 1776, was simply the basic British Union flag divided by white stripes. Our second flag, the Stars and Stripes, substituted stars for the cross in the corner square. The red, white, and blue colors were derivative. They did not, as some allege, come out of Washington's family crest. And they do not mean anything. Contrary to the Boy Scout *Handbook*, the blue in the flag does not represent justice, the white is not for purity, and the red is not for bravery.)* [*Quaife, *Flag*, pp. 53-61, 163, 184-89; on Betsy Ross see Shenkman, *Legends, Lies & Cherished Myths of American History* (1988), pp. 147-48.]

The popularity of the 'Star-Span-gled Banner' — is due as much to the fabulous circumstances under which it was written as to the appeal of its lyrics. Most of the story has been independently confirmed. Francis Scott Key actually was fortunate enough to watch the bombardment of Fort Mchenry (which guarded Baltimore), and he actually waited through the night to see if 'our flag was still there.'

But did the flag he saw at 'dawn's early light' fly through the night? As anyone can testify who has seen the flag, which is on display at the Smithsonian, it is huge: 30 feet by 42 feet. The stars alone measure 2 feet across, point to point. For this flag to have survived the night the fort was under attack — a stormy, rainy, windy night — is almost inconceivable. Walter Lord, who wrote an acclaimed book on the War of 1812, is of the opinion that it probably did not fly all night. If there was a flag on the pole in the morning, as there undoubtedly was, it was probably 'hoisted up the pole that morning. And that is precisely what an eyewitness says happened. According to the testimony of Midshipman Robert J. Barrett, as the British fleet sailed away after the battle, the Americans 'hoisted a most superb and splendid ensign on their battery.' This, says Lord, is 'most likely' the flag Key saw. If there was a flag that flew all night it would have to have been the fort's so-called 'storm flag,' a small flag designed expressly for bad weather. But how Key could have seen it is a mystery. He was 8 miles away — possibly near enough to see the big flag, but not the smaller

one.

That Francis Scott Key is associated in the American mind with the War of 1812, and is thought of in connection with one of the great battles of the war, is ironic because Key hated the war. He told his mother he thought the United States was to blame for the conflict and deserved to lose it. In letters home to friends and neighbors Key condemned 'this abominable war' as a 'lump of wickedness.'

Key volunteered to defend the capital but according to his biographer his service as a soldier was brief and uneventful, and when the war was over he confessed he was glad. His most thrilling moment had occurred when he was knocked off his horse by a 'bone of bacon' and landed in the river.

About the song itself there are several myths. It was not immediately popular and it was not adopted as the national anthem until 1931. Army and navy bands did not begin playing it on a regular basis until the 1890s. Everyone knows it is sung to the tune of an old English drinking song, but few realize it was a song that celebrated not only wine but love. If Key ever felt any embarrassment over that, he never said so, but it's interesting that the fact is not more widely known.

"I Love Paul Revere, Whether He Rode or Not - Warren Harding" by Richard Shenkman, publ. Harper Perennial, 1991

