



Robert Rankin Chapter #62

Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution

The Rankin Register



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Color Guard Special Issue

2010

Our Color Guard

by Patrick Kerr, Past-President (2007-2008)
Guard Commander (02/08-Current)

A bit of history first

As with most matters our guard started slowly, but has gradually built steam each year. Our color guard was started in the fall of 2004 as Ed Raines pulled on his uniform to assist Past TXSSAR President Tom Green with the Flag Program. Richard Shanks joined February 2005 and I started in February three years later and as the last to join at that time was immediately appointed Rankin Color Guard Commander.



That February meeting when I joined, both Ed and Richard received their Color Guard Medals for three years of faithful service, as captured in the photo above. We welcomed David Jones in April of 2009 and Steve Tanner in November, 2009. Ray Cox has been a member of the Color Guard since 2005 and joined the RR CG in 2007, when he became the district VP. As an aside, I joined the CG at the request and gentle urging of Richard and I have enjoyed it tremendously!

Our year thus far

The CG has made forty-four appearances through May's end. This total includes two Memorial Day events, twelve JROTC presentations, eight flag shows, two parades, two flag retirement ceremonies, a sea cadet presentation, three DAR events, two grave markings, two poster contest award ceremonies, a memorial service, a pass in review, a VFW barbecue, five chapter meetings, one state meeting, and one Colonial Pageant and Ball!

George Washington Day Celebration



Perhaps the premier event for the Rankin Chapter this year was our appearance at the George Washington Parade in Laredo, Texas on February 20, 2010. In the photo above, Patrick Kerr is holding the American flag with TXSSAR President Jim Jones and Ray Cox to the right. CG Commander Kerr noted, "The nearly 800 mile round trip ride was well worth it. I was impressed that we

were enthusiastically received by the crowds lining the parade route.” This celebration of George Washington was established in 1898 and the parade is the main event of the month-long celebrations, which attracts over 400,000 visitors each year.



The Society of Martha Washington Colonial Pageant and Ball, held February 19, 2010 in the Laredo Civic Center, was attended by Rankin CG members Ray Cox, shown in the photo above on the far left, and also Patrick Kerr.

President General Judge Ed Butler and Laredo Chapter # 61 jointly awarded Patrick Kerr and Ray Cox a bronze color guard medal. Next year, attendees will be eligible to receive the newly approved Galvez Medal.

Along the parade route: Tom Green is in front, while Patrick Kerr is to his left.



Flag Retirement Ceremonies

The Rankin Chapter has tried the last two years to participate in a color retirement program, but to no avail. In an ongoing embarrassment of riches, the Chapter has attended two this year!

This flag retirement ceremony was held at North Shore High School.



In the photo above is Compatriot Patrick Kerr (l) and Army Brigadier General Designate Beasley, guest of North Shore High School.

The US Flag Code reads; "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." The local VFW was in charge of the burning of the flag. Patrick noted, "A flag retirement ceremony is very moving and I was proud to be part of this event."



Members of the Sam Houston JROTC are in the front row while Rankin Compatriot David Jones is in the middle. On the back row from the left, are John Thompson, Larry Stevens, Rankin Compatriots Stephen Tanner and Raymond Cox, and Compatriot Jim Mitchell.

The flag pole has been lowered and the flag has been removed by members of the ROTC unit of Sam Houston University in Huntsville on April 21st.



Our Flag Show

The Rankin Flag Show, which has been presented to an estimated 20,000 individuals, was started in the fall of 2004 by Tom Green with Ed Raines assisting. Tejas Chapter member Virginia Evans and

Rankin Compatriot Richard Shanks soon joined the flag team as Ed Raines assumed the reins. Joining the team in 2009 was David Jones followed by Stephen Tanner in 2010. Below, from the left, Stephen Tanner, David Jones, Emma Torres (Tayler Ray Elementary teacher), Virginia Evans, and Ed Raines.



The flag program has changed and now each of the four has a separate and distinct program that is woven into a tapestry of American History. Virginia Evans, as part of the presentation recounts the legend of Betsy Ross while David tells of militia and Steve discusses attire. Ed presents a vignette regarding each flag that has graced our shores.



Wherever Ed goes a flag certificate will surely follow! Ed Raines presents a FC to fifth graders at Tayler Ray Elementary in Rosenberg.

In remembrance

“In the graveyard of the Old North Baptist Church, men in Revolutionary War uniforms were seen firing their muskets on Saturday and proudly presenting their flags. This was not a visit from the after-life; rather members of the Sons of the American Revolution hosted a grave dedication for Revolutionary War veteran William Sparks.”

This opening paragraph from the Sunday, May 23, 2010 issue of *The Daily Sentinel*, perfectly describes the scene below in Nacogdoches, Texas. Rankin CG member Stephen Tanner is shown on the far left firing his black powder musket.

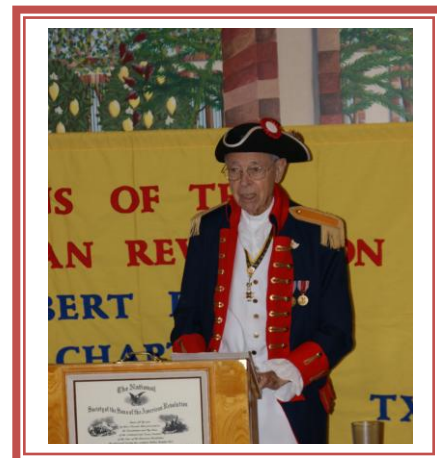


This grave marking ceremony of American Revolution Patriot William Sparks was rather well attended and included the Nacogdoches Police Department Honor Guard, members of the DAR, townspeople and descendents of this Patriot. Shown below from the left, David Jones, Karen and Stephen Tanner. Karen is our photographer!



Editor's note: Grave marking ceremonies of American Revolutionary War Patriots has long been an important part of the SAR work. We should all remember SAR President General Horace Porter and his amazing work in this area. Perhaps Mike Everheart summarized it best: "We try to mark all of the revolutionary war graves and patriot graves in the state of Texas. We mark where they are and make sure they're preserved to recognize that soldier for the sacrifice during the Revolutionary War that gave us a democracy that we have today."

Our Color Guard appears at grave side services as well. We did so earlier this year to honor our fellow Compatriot Richard Shanks on March 24, 2010. Patrick Kerr is in the foreground and David Jones is in the back, left, in the photo below.



Richard, we will miss you.

More Memorials



Members of the Rankin CG, Ray Cox, David Jones, Stephen Tanner, and Patrick Kerr join with other members of the Texas Color Guard to recognize Patriot Joseph de la Baume with a memorial plaque at the Austin County Jail Museum in Bellville on March 20th. The presentation included a black powder musket salute with Stephen Tanner participating. An emissary from the French consulate attended as did members of the DAR including Virginia Evans as Betsy Ross.

VFW participation



It is important to keep your color guard well fed and after sampling the barbecue delights of Cypress VFW Post 8905 they appear from the left Steve Tanner, David Jones, and Patrick Kerr.

DAR Appearances



Several times a year the CG is requested by DAR Chapters to “troop the colors” in addition to being present at their meetings. An annual event for the Rankin Chapter is participation in the Margaret Montgomery DAR Chapter Youth Award Recognition Day, held this year on April 10, 2010. Appearing for the event and shown in the photo above from left to right, Stephen Tanner, Conroe Compatriot, David Jones, Patrick Kerr, and John Thompson.

Appearances at Meetings



Color Guard Commander Patrick Kerr appears above as he presents “This Day in History” at our January meeting. Patrick started this program feature. During the tenure of David Jones a color guard appearance was requested at every meeting.

Appearances at State Meetings

The Rankin CG hit a high water mark at the TXSSAR State Convention this year with Ray Cox, Ed Raines, David Jones, Stephen Tanner, and Patrick Kerr in attendance in uniform!



The Chapter is quite proud that our Compatriot Raymond Cox, shown above in the front of the TXSSAR CG, is the TXSSAR fifer and leads the Color Guard in at every state event.



Stephen Tanner, above with his Pedersoli Pennsylvania Long Rifle (.45 Cal. Flintlock Black Powder), is the first and only Rankin Member of the State Color Guard Musket unit.

Closing Thoughts

by Patrick Kerr, Past-President (2007-2008)
Color Guard Commander (02/08-Current)
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“Our Rankin Chapter is blessed as we have several Compatriots who devote considerable time to parades, youth programs, veteran activities, and other events. This participation provides us with immediate visibility and instant publicity. Come join us as we have fun as we spread the ideals of our organization!”

Editor's note: The newsletter is generally issued six or seven times a year on a monthly basis that parallels our meetings.

Upon occasion, when the Chapter is very active, an issue will appear in the summertime or to highlight special events, such as our state convention when the Rankin Chapter receives special recognitions. Special issues have also been released to highlight extraordinary efforts by members of the Chapter such as has been done with the flag program.

*The actions of the Color Guard have risen to such heights as to warrant a special news release. Compatriots, well done!
Thomas Jackson, Editor
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