



Muskets & Broadsword

Orange County Chapter Sons of the American Revolution
February 2008

Editor-James F. Blauer

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MEETING INFORMATION

When: February 9, 2008

Where: The Sizzler Restaurant

1401 North Harbor Blvd.

Fullerton, CA

Time: Set up and Social begins at 11:00 am.

Meeting: Called to Order at 11:30 am.

Website: www.orangecountysar.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to serve this year as President, with the able assistance of David Siler as Vice-President. Dave had gotten off to a great start, booking several speakers for the year already. We have a great line-up for you and encourage you to attend as regularly as your schedule permits. Our speaker this month will be none other than the Father of our Country, George Washington. Be sure not to miss an enlightening and entertaining presentation as our first President shares his wisdom with us. Also in attendance will be "Historical Impressionist" Peter Small, who educates and entertains regularly at Knotts Berry Farm and other venues. This should be a great meeting, so feel free to bring guests, kids and grandkids.

Please also mark your calendars for the 26th annual George Washington Massing of the Colors on February 17 at 3:00 p.m. (additional information and flyer available via link on State Society web site). This is truly a stirring patriotic event and the largest celebration of Washington's birth this side of the Mississippi, if not nationally. No uniform is required, just show up enjoy the show. If you wish to march in the color guard in uniform, please show up a little early for "marching orders."

One of my goals this year will be not only to continue to bring in new members, but also to increase our chapter's tally of "supplementals." Therefore, we will be having several genealogy speakers this year to motivate us and give us some ideas to help us over the rough spots and gaps in family trees. In March, Beth J. McCarty, Director of the Orange Regional Family History Center, will speak to us concerning "Effective Use of L.D.S. Family History Centers." I have used the Orange facility on many occasions, and the resources are great. Then in May we will have Colleen Fitzpatrick enlighten us concerning DNA Genealogy. This is a fascinating topic. I

recently participated in the "Dodd" surname project and connected up with not one, but two, Dodds in England with whom I am related some how. Karen and I stopped over there on the way back from a trip last spring and met one of the families. We had a very enjoyable day in Stratford on Avon and established a long-lasting friendship. I encourage you all to look into this and see if you can meet with similar luck.

Also, we will be reinstating the "biosketch" feature of our newsletter. We did this several years ago, and ran bios of all of our members who were interested in being profiled. We have gained several new members since then, and others have become more active. Therefore, we will be including these again. To that end, I am requesting that each of you who was not profiled previously email or "snail mail" me a "biosketch" of three to seven paragraphs, outlining your current and past careers, military service, participation in other organizations, and any "fun family facts." Also, please include a paragraph concerning a favorite patriot ancestor. We will run one of these per month until they run out. This is a great way for us all to get to know each other better, and I encourage you to contribute. Finally, this also will be an exciting year for our State Society, leading up to hosting the NSSAR Annual Congress in Sacramento in July (4 through 9). Every 10 years, the Congress comes to California, so it's here in 2008. If at all possible, please plan to attend. Additional information is available on the state and national websites. We need as many members there as possible to help with various events, as well

as share in the fun. For those of you who have not been to Sacramento lately, there is lots to see and do there, in addition to the Congress planned activities. The historic gold country is about 30 minutes away; the wineries of the Sierra Foothills and Napa Valley not much further; and Lake Tahoe is not much more than an hour. Therefore, I encourage you to join us at Congress, share in the camaraderie and meet compatriots from throughout our Nation.

John Dodd

DAVID R. SILER

This month we restart our biography sketches of members. Here we have the bio-sketch of our new Vice-President, David R. Siler.

I became a member of SAR as a result of researching in the DAR Library while on vacation to Washington D.C. in 2004. I became a member of the State Society of Delaware in December of that year and transferred to the Orange County Chapter in 2006. My qualifying ancestor was a young German by the name of Plikard Dederic Siler (b.1719, d.1784), who immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1741. He then migrated with his new wife to North Carolina where he had a farm with a grist mill on Lacy Creek, Chatham County. During the Revolutionary War, he and his family of 12 produced food and supplies for the Continental Army and North Carolina Militia. The ruins of the gristmill can still be seen on the old farmstead of what is now part of Siler City in Chatham County. Another ancestor, John Burgess Lambdin of North Carolina, enlisted in 1775 and fought

under General Gates and later General Greene in the Carolinas and Georgia, and saw action at King's Mountain and Cowpens, among other battles. He was discharged in January of 1783 and awarded a land grant of 640 acres in what is now north-central Tennessee.

I was born in Long Beach, California in 1953 and grew up in Anaheim. I married my wife Lynnette in 1980 and we lived in Garden Grove for 20 years. During that time we had 3 children, James Colin (1981), Karen Dana (1987), and Steven Edward (1990). We moved to Corona in 2000. I work for Automatic Data Processing in Orange County during the week and on Sunday I am on staff with the music ministry at the First Presbyterian Church of Westminster. As a member of the Board of Deacons, I am Chairman of the Military Outreach Committee, and a member of the Welfare Committee. I have just started a home study certificate program in Genealogical Studies with the National Genealogical Institute based in Arlington, Virginia. Along with being Vice-President of our chapter for 2008, I am also a Councilor to the Governing Council of the Order of the First Families of Maryland, and a member of several other hereditary societies. Presently, I am working on memberships into the Society of Colonial Wars and the General Society of the War of 1812. I am very honored and proud to be a member of the Orange County Chapter and look forward to an exciting year.

PETER M. SMALL-SPEAKER

Peter Small's interest in living history

performances began as a history teacher in the greater Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles areas. His costumed performances made his lessons memorable and enjoyable for his classes. He has performed for a wide variety of audiences nationally, including the Ronald Reagan, Richard Nixon, George Bush, and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Libraries, the Edison Memorial Site in Menlo Park, New Jersey, and the History Channel. He is presently on the staff of the International Printing Museum in Carson, California and as adjunct instructor for the North Orange County Community District's Older Adult Program. You may visit his websites at www.history-alive.com and www.schoolshows.com or contact him at 949-583-1905.

IRAQ PROJECT UPDATE

The first month of our "adopt-a-platoon" of Marines in Iraq had been a smashing success. We raised approximately \$9,000.00 to purchase much-needed gear and comfort items for our platoon. We purchased and shipped fire-retardant shirts and balacavs and have the special protective gloves on order. We also shipped multiple boxes of socks, spices, multi-tools, and all sorts of items to make their lives a little easier. We have sufficient funds to purchase and ship additional needed items. Please continue to bring items to the monthly meetings, which we will send over on a more-or-less monthly basis. The Marines continue to need socks, dvd movies, coffee, fuzzy blankets and snacks. See last month's newsletter for more details. Many thanks to all of you who contributed.

CONTEST WINNER

At our January Meeting it was announced by Compatriot Rex Shannon that we had a winner in the Knight Essay Contest. Entries were received by Jeffrey Lee and Nahel Kapadia. Nahel Kapadia was declared the winner. His application is being forwarded to the State Society for consideration on that level of this competition.

In the Eagle Scout Scholarship Contest we also had two entries. Ryan Beber and John Hunsaker. Compatriot Jim Blauer reported that it was John Hunsaker who was selected the chapter winner in this year's contest. John's application has been forwarded to State Eagle Chairman Shawn Price and is now under consideration for that level of this contest. The Medal given to the chapter winner has been received and Eagle Scout Hunsaker and his mother will be joining us for the presentation at our February Meeting.

Here is wishing both winners good luck at the state level. We will report the results once they have been announced.

EVENTS

We are currently looking at two events following our February meeting and before our March meeting.

The first is the Massing of the Colors at Forest Lawn. If you enjoy watching pomp, ceremonies and patriotism all in one shot here is the place to do so. The massive Color Guards (there are 50 or more units) are lined up in front of the Wall of Liberty about 2:30pm. At 3pm the march down to the Statue of George Washington begins. Last year we had mounted horses lead the

procession. We have learned that this year there will be 4 F-16s that do a fly over. Do not let the weather dissuade you from attending. Should the weather be inhospitable the hall has been reserved for indoor ceremony, if necessary. Our very own Jim Blauer will once again be singing the National Anthem. So, come on out and help us celebrate the birth of George Washington and Salute to our Armed Forces.

The second event is the Laguna Beach Patriot's Day Parade. This is a short but fun parade that if you are walking is all downhill. We will have 1-2 cars for those who wish to ride and flags to carry for those who wish to walk. If you are interested in joining, contact Jim Blauer your parade chairman, so he can get the information to you on parking and line up information.

NEW COLOR GUARD MEMBER

Your chapter has a new color guard member. Compatriot Kent Gregory has just finished getting his Lee's Legion uniform together and will be ready for the Patriot's Day Parade in

Here Kent is seen in his uniform. He has obtained the plume for the hat and has also had a pair of trousers made which are full length compared to the breeches seen here in this photo.

Looking good Kent!!



Laguna Beach on March 1st. We look forward to seeing you there.

EARLY MILITARY AWARDS

The chronicle of military awards in the United States begins early in the American Revolution when Congress voted to award gold medals to outstanding military leaders. The first such medal was struck to honor George Washington for his service in driving the British from Boston in 1776. Similar medals were bestowed on General Horatio Gates for his victory at the Battle of Saratoga and Captain John Paul Jones after his famous naval engagement with the Serapis in 1779. Unlike present practice, however, these were large, presentation medals not designed to be worn on the military uniform. Interestingly, once the dies were cut, many copies were manufactured and distributed as commemorative medals to instill patriotic pride in the new country's victories. As a matter of interest, many of these early commemorative medallions are still being struck and offered for sale by the U.S. Mint.

The "Andre" Medal broke the custom of restricting the award of medals to successful senior officers and is doubly unique in that it was designed to wear around the neck. The medal was presented by Congress in 1780 to three enlisted men who captured Major John Andre with the plans to the West Point Fortifications in his boot. For their actions New York State Militia patriots Private Isaac Van Wert, Private John Paulding, and Private David Williams were awarded the Andre Medal by Congress in 1780.

This is also known as Fidelity Medal. On the face of the medal is the word, "Fidelity"



The front and back of the Fidelity/Andre Medal are seen above. The inscription in the middle of the back says, "Presented by Congress to John Paulding for the capture of Major John Andre September 23, 1780."

and on the reverse was the motto "Amor patriae vincit" which means, "The love of country conquers".

The Fidelity Medal was never again bestowed and it quickly became regarded as a commemorative decoration. For this reason, the Badge of Military Merit is generally considered, by many, the first decoration of the U. S. Military, even though it was created two years after the Fidelity/Andre Medallion, in 1782.

The Badge of Military Merit was first announced by General George Washington in his orders to the Continental Army on August 7, 1782 at his headquarters in Newburgh. In his orders, General Washington indicates that three badges, two Honorary Badges of Distinction and a Badge of Military Merit were created.

On the Badge of Military Merit Washington said: "The General ever desirous to cherish virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of

Military merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth, or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with a due reward. Before this favour can be conferred on any man, the particular fact, or facts, on which it is to be grounded must be set forth to the commander in chief accompanied with certificates from the Commanding officers of the regiment and brigade to which the candidate for reward belonged, or other incontestable proofs, and upon granting it, the name and regiment of the person with the action so certified are to be enrolled in the book of merit which will be kept at the orderly office. Men who have merited this last distinction to be suffered to pass all guards and sentinels which officers are permitted to do. The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus open to all. This order is also to have retrospect to the earliest stages of the war, and to be considered as a permanent one."

It has been indicated by most historians that there were only three people who received the Badge of Military Merit during the American Revolution. All were non-commissioned officers. They were: Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the second Connecticut Regiment of the Connecticut Line, Sergeant William Brown of the 5th Connecticut Regiment of the Connecticut Line, and Sergeant Elijah Churchill of the second Continental Light Dragoons.. While these three soldiers were most likely the first to receive the Badge of



The Badge of Military Merit seen here is the one awarded to Sergeant Brown and is now in possession of the Society of the Cincinnati, New Hampshire Branch

Military Merit, discharge certificates of other Revolutionary War soldiers indicates that they also received the "Badge of Merit" for their years of faithful service. Microfilmed images of these discharges bearing Washington's signature can be found in the individual records of soldiers at the National Archives.

George Washington's papers show that he also referred to the Badge of Military Merit as the Badge of Merit. This is evident in his orders to award the above-mentioned Sergeants Brown, Churchill and Bissell.

Sergeant William Brown's badge is in the possession of The Society of the Cincinnati, New Hampshire Branch.

After the American Revolution, the Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse, although it was never officially abolished. In 1932, the United States War Department authorized the new Purple Heart Medal for soldiers who had previously received either a Wound Chevron or the Army Wound Ribbon. At that time, it was also determined that the Purple Heart Medal would be considered the official "successor decoration" to the Badge of Military Merit.***

Photo Album

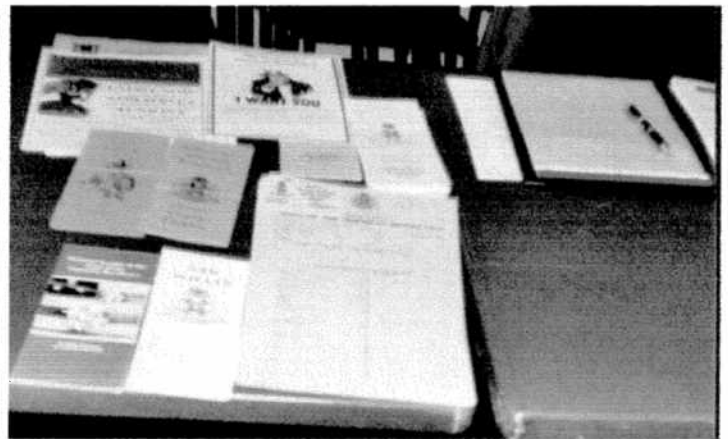
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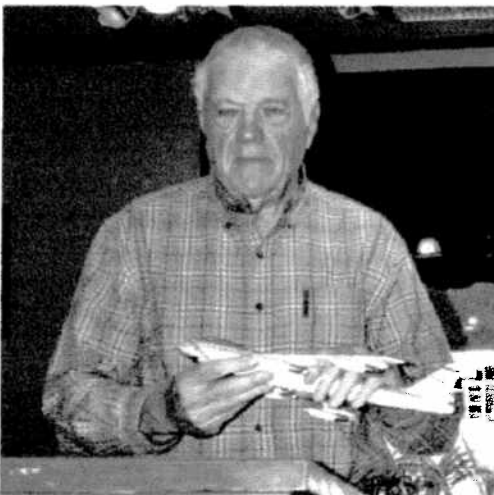
At left Vice-President South Lou Carlson inducts officers for 2008. David Siler-VP, John Dodd-Pres., Jim Wallace-Corresp. Secretary, Jim Blauer-Recording Secretary Arthur Koehler -Treasurer and Lou Carlson-Chaplain. President Dodd said he would announce the Chairman positions at the February meeting.



Members were generous in bringing gifts this month for the Ben Franklin raffle. That is correct, there are 6 bottles of wine. What is that saying, "great minds think alike". We made \$81.00, No complaints here.



Compatriot Jim Blauer also belongs to the Orange County Genealogical Society that meets the first Saturday. Here he set up a display of information on the SAR for those interested in membership.



General Mall, our speaker, spoke to us on the B-47 bomber and the jet engine. He received a Certificate of Appreciation and a book with our thanks.



Outgoing President Dan Henry received a Certificate of Appreciation from new President John Dodd on having served as the chapter President for 2007. Good Job, Dan!!