



The Magazine

*Williamsburg Chapter - Virginia
Society
Sons of the American Revolution*



Vol. XL

Number 37

April 2026

President's Message

Compatriots,

As we move deeper into this 250th Anniversary year of America's Independence, our chapter's activity level continues to rise—and with it, our impact in the community. March was a strong month for us, marked by fellowship, education, and meaningful public service. At our March luncheon, Compatriot Sean Heuvel delivered an outstanding presentation that reminded us why the study of the American Revolution remains so vital. His insights into leadership, sacrifice, and the lived experience of the era enriched our understanding and strengthened our sense of purpose as Sons of the American Revolution. Our Color Guard also represented the chapter with distinction at the Virginia DAR State Convention in Williamsburg. Their professionalism and dedication continue to reflect great credit on our chapter and on the SAR as a whole. My thanks to each guardsman who gave of his time to support our DAR partners. Looking ahead, April 18th will be a significant day for us—one that offers two excellent opportunities for service, visibility, and engagement.

First, our chapter is proud to co-host the commemoration of the Skirmish at Sandy Point with the Charles City County 250 Committee. This event allows us to honor a lesser-known but meaningful moment in the Revolutionary struggle and to stand alongside our regional partners in marking the nation's Semi quincentennial.

That same day, we'll also have a presence at the Revolutionary Rhythms Family Festival at Jamestown Beach Event Park, sponsored by the James City County 250 Committee. We will share a table with the Williamsburg Chapter, DAR, giving us a valuable opportunity to engage with the public, answer questions, and encourage prospective members to explore the SAR. Outreach like this is essential to sustaining our mission and welcoming the next generation of compatriots. I strongly encourage maximum participation at either of these April 18th events. Whether you feel called to support the solemn commemoration at Sandy Point or the lively public engagement at Jamestown Beach, your presence matters. Each of us plays a role in telling the story of the Revolution and ensuring that its lessons continue to inspire our communities. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our chapter and to the principles we uphold. Together, we are making this 250th Anniversary year one of meaning, visibility, and service.

Ron Adolphi
President, Williamsburg Chapter
Virginia Society

Williamsburg Chapter March Happenings



The Williamsburg Chapter SAR recognized two new Eagle Scouts, Charles Klugh and Logan Oleksy, of Scouting America Troop 155 at a Court of Honor held at Williamsburg Baptist Church on March 22, 2026. President Ron Adolphi and Chairman Harley Stewart presented Certificates of Recognition of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution. Pictured, left to right, are Adolphi, Klugh, Oleksy, and Stewart (photo submitted by Bob Davis).

USS *Stark* Award Program

USS *Stark* Award Program
George Corbett, Chapter Chaplain

In 1988, the NSSAR authorized the USS *Stark* Memorial Award to memorialize the brave men and women who continue to stand at the forefront to preserve the freedoms our patriot ancestors fought so long and hard to achieve. Its purpose is to recognize outstanding SAR chapters and societies for their exceptional support of the SAR Veterans Committee and in serving the veterans community.

The USS *Stark* was a United States Navy guided missile frigate deployed to the Middle East on 17 May 1987. The frigate was struck by two Exocet missiles fired by an Iraqi warplane. There were 37 sailors killed and 21 injured. The USS *Stark* was decommissioned in 1999. Competition for the award is divided into several levels based on the chapter membership size and is based on a point system.

Chapters can receive points from a variety of activities by its members. These activities include:

- Visiting veterans in the hospital, nursing home or convalescence center.
- Attending or participating in veteran's memorial services or funerals.
- Contributing to a veteran-only thrift store (i.e. DAV Thrift Store).
- Participating in veteran related activities (i.e. Joint planning activities).
- Participating in veteran related memorial activities such As Veterans Day, National Vietnam Veterans War Day, etc.

Any member participating in any of these activities should provide a report to me with the date, hours expended, miles traveled (RT) and any monies expended for them. In the case of donations, I need the date, location and amount or fair market value of any items donated.

The report period is 1 January – 31 December. I must submit a consolidated report to VASSAR and NSSAR by 15 January of each year. I will be glad to entertain any questions about the program.





UPCOMING EVENTS!

1. April 6: Chapter Board of Managers Meeting
2. April 11: Chapter Luncheon
3. April 18: James City County 250th Commemoration
4. April 18: Incident at Sandy Point Commemoration

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS!

On April 11, 2026, at 12:30 pm, the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence and Berkely Plantation will be holding a wreath laying ceremony in honor of Benjamin Harrison's 300th birthday. Parking will be available at the Taps memorial near the cemetery. The ceremony will be held in the Rose Garden near the Berkeley manor house. It would be a good idea to bring your own chair.

On April 18, 2026, The Williamsburg Chapter will be hosting the 250th anniversary of the Incident at Sandy Point. The ceremony will begin at 2 PM; the address is 14931 Sandy Point Rd, Charles City County. In 1776 there was a fortress erected to protect the ferry crossing the James River. Virginia Militia and riflemen were posted when a British Picket ship came upriver the boat was captured and a militiaman was wounded. The Ferry site also played a major role in the movement of patriot troops preceding the battles of Kemps Landing, Great Bridge and the burning of Norfolk.

The Williamsburg Chapter is looking for a member who can assist the Newsletter Editor/Webmaster with social media operations. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Chapter President Ron Adolphi at ronald.adolphi@cox.net – thanks for your consideration!

My Patriot Ancestor: Giles Johnson, Virginia Continental Soldier

By Stuart Butler, Chapter Historian



On June 18, 1818, Giles Johnson of Charles City County stood before the county justices and stated he was sixty-two years of age and that he had been a Continental Army soldier during the Revolutionary War. Johnson was asking that he be considered eligible for the 1818 Act of Congress that provided pensions for veterans of that war. In his deposition he stated that he took the oath of enlistment before Justice William Christian in 1779 and that he was marched as far north as the Blue Ball Tavern outside of Philadelphia before being ordered back to Petersburg, Virginia, where he was enrolled in Capt. Benjamin Taliaferro's company of the First Virginia Detachment under the command of Col. Richard Parker.

Parker's command was sent to Charleston, South Carolina, in the spring of 1780 to shore up American forces in the South. Parker's command as well as several thousand other continental and militia forces surrendered to British forces in May 1780. American prisoners of war in Charleston were held in appalling conditions, either on British ships or on land with woefully inadequate food and health care. Despite attempts of British recruiters to enlist prisoners of war like Johnson into British regiments in the West Indies, Johnson refused and remained as a prisoner until the British paroled many Virginian veterans in 1781, who then made their way to Jamestown where they were finally discharged.

In his deposition Johnson also stated that he also took part in the siege of Savannah. Johnson was pensioned in 1818 at the rate of \$8 per month until he died in 1826. Giles' daughter, Sarah M. Johnson, married about 1826 to John Minson, an ordained Methodist preacher. Their son, James Andrews Minson, was the author's great-grandfather.



Register through Member Clicks or mail in the registration form below!

Topic: The American Revolution on the Pennsylvania Frontier

April 11, 2026 Meeting Speaker: Chris Yohn

Virginia SAR Recording Secretary and Richmond SAR Past President Chris Yohn grew up on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and has been a history fanatic since childhood. He and his wife Nicole moved to New York City after college to pursue a career in the performing arts. For the next 10 years, Chris regularly appeared on daytime television. He was a founding member of the North Country Rock band Parker Hill, which played in some of the city's better-known venues and best-forgotten dives. He also worked on stage and in film before leaving New York with a Broadway national tour. He's written for the Journal of the American Revolution and is a recipient of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) Patriot Medal, the SAR Gold 250th Anniversary Medal, the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizenship Medal and two International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Gold Quill awards

Reservation for the Saturday, April 11, 2026 Meeting

Name(s) _____

Please reserve _____ regular meals at \$28.50 each

Special need _____

Please make checks payable to "Williamsburg Chapter SAR"

Mail to:

William Dorn – Chapter Treasurer

349 Capeside Court

Williamsburg, VA 23188

(252) 658-2348

wrdorn48@gmail.com

Registrar's Corner – By Ron Miller, Registrar

We need your INPUT!

The Williamsburg Chapter is looking to participate in some public events during this 250th Anniversary year that will give us the opportunity to talk about our chapter and the SAR with the general public. In preparation, we seek to zero in on reasons/interests that attract new members.

We need your help by answering the following questions. Your answer shouldn't be very long, but they need to be candid and personal. Your name will not be shared with anyone, but your comments without attribution will be compiled with all of the other responses received. Here are the questions:

1. Why did you want to join the SAR initially?
2. What is the most meaningful benefit to you as a member of the SAR?

The more that participate, the better results!! Please take a moment today and send your comments to Ron Miller at ronmsar@gmail.com.

Registrar Report

Three HUZZAHS for Hunt Berryman for his past five years of dedicated work as Registrar, working on over 200 applications. Hunt has graciously agreed to complete the applications that he is in the process of completing, as we transition. I look forward to receiving requests for new member and supplemental applications as well as general registrar questions. I have been working with the new member requests since December and look forward to many new members in 2026.

Statistics for March 2026

4 New member inquiries
Completed 2 new member applications
Currently actively working on 7 new member applications
Currently actively working on 9 Supplementals

Revolutionary War History of the Month Submitted by Stuart Butler, Chapter Historian

Captain John Paul Jones

In the early hours of April 23, 1778, Captain John Paul Jones brought the war to British shores when he and his picked crew landed and assaulted the town of Whitehaven and its fortifications. Whitehaven (shown below) was a primary shipping center for Britain's coal and other goods from Britain's northwest coast. It was also a port that the Scottish-born Jones knew quite well. As a young boy of thirteen, he had sailed out of the port on the first of many voyages to the American colonies. After several futile attempts to destroy British ships in the Irish Sea in the spring of 1778, he turned his attention to destroying Whitehaven's docks and sinking as many ships in the harbor as possible. Shortly after midnight on April 23, Jones and thirty crew members quietly reached the Whitehaven docks. First, they spiked the defensive guns on the docks but were rebuffed in their attempts to set the harbor structures on fire. A few of the crew were briefly diverted by entering a pub, but instead of setting it alight, they decided to have a few drinks before doing so. The coal ship, Thompson, Jones had hoped to set afire to have it drift towards other vessels, thereby setting them ablaze. However, a crew member managed to escape the ship and alerted the townspeople of the Americans, and enough people assembled to force the Americans to retreat. The spiked guns enabled Jones and his crew to escape into the twilight. Although the effort to inflict any real damage on the coal port was unsuccessful, as it brought no prize money to the crew, the daring raid on a heretofore thought-safe harbor did bring the threat of war to British shores. Additional raids on the coast, however, by Jones did bring rewards. The thought that Jones could at any moment swoop down on a quiet port town did cause British citizens to wonder about their safety, which they thought inviolable at the time by "the wooden wall" that was the British navy. But it also caused the county militias to be much more aware of the possibility of invasion by French marauders, thereby strengthening their defenses for either contingency.



Chaplain's Corner – By George Corbett, Chaplain

The Halifax Resolves and Other April Events

Prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776, the colonies were already moving toward that momentous day. On April 12, 1776, the North Carolina Provincial Congress adopted the Halifax Resolves, which authorized its delegation to vote for independence from Great Britain at the Continental Congress. This marked a pivotal moment as it was one of the first official calls for independence by a colony.

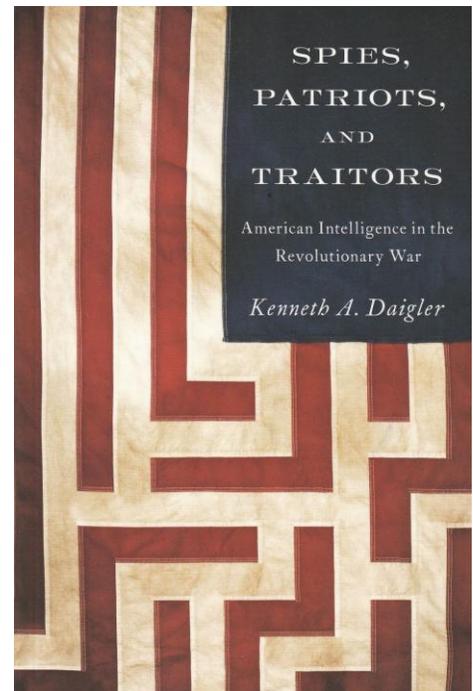
On the military front, throughout April 1776, tensions escalated, after the Lexington/Concord battle, with various military engagements occurring as colonial forces prepared for a broader conflict. The atmosphere was charged with anticipation as the colonies moved closer to claiming independence.

Politically, the climate was increasingly radicalized; with discussions among leaders about the necessity of breaking away from the British Crown. This period set the stage for the signing of the declaration late that year.

At each of these events, there was great risk and danger for those that chose to participate. As I have written before, it is my sincere belief that the Divine Hand of Providence was at work here. In many writings of the time, our forefathers spoke of their belief that they were guided by it in their thoughts and actions. In our time, this is no less important as we must seek His guidance and wisdom in all of our affairs.

Almighty God, we thank thee for Thy gifts, especially this good land that thou hast given us as our heritage, and for love of friends in heaven and on earth. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service to thee. Amen.

***Book of the Month – By
Stephen Holm, Sergeant-at-
Arms***



***Spies, Patriots, and Traitors
American Intelligence in the Revolutionary War
By Kenneth A. Daigler***

Students and enthusiasts of American history are familiar with the Revolutionary War spies Nathan Hale and Benedict Arnold, but few studies have closely examined the wider intelligence efforts that enabled the colonies to gain their independence. *Spies, Patriots, and Traitors* provides readers with a fascinating, well-documented, and highly readable account of American intelligence activities during the era of the Revolutionary War, from 1765 to 1783, while describing the intelligence sources and methods used.

Much of the book describes intelligence-collection activities against the British by various American agents during the war. Individual chapters describe intelligence efforts in British-occupied Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, and in areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Particular attention is given to the Culper Ring, the best-documented American intelligence network of the war, which operated in and about New York City. However, the book also provides details of George Washington's background in intelligence, which started prior to the French and Indian War, and gave him the mindset and experience to organize and direct intelligence activities while commander of the Continental Army.

The author, a retired CIA officer, provides insights into these events from an intelligence professional's perspective, highlighting the tradecraft of intelligence collection, counterintelligence, and covert actions and relating how many of the principles of the era's intelligence practice are still relevant today. Kenneth Daigler reveals the intelligence activities of famous personalities such as Samuel Adams, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Nathan Hale, John Jay, and Benedict Arnold.

2026 Williamsburg Chapter SAR Officers



President	Ron Adolphi
Vice President	Ray Duncombe
Secretary	Mike Braswell
Treasurer	Bill Dorn
Registrar	Ron Miller
Public Relations	Robert Davis III
Newsletter Editor/Webmaster	Sean Heuvel
Chaplain	George Corbett
Sergeant-at-Arms	Stephen Holm
Historian	Stuart Butler
Member-at-Large	Bruce Laubach
Member-at-Large	Michael Doucette
Immediate Past President	John Lynch

SAR GIFTS AND FASHIONABLE APPAREL



SAR apparel and other items are available for purchase at: store.sar.org

Nametags can be purchased at: <https://store.sar.org/personalized-items-C46.aspx>

