



# EMPIRE PATRIOT

Empire State Society of the  
Sons of the American Revolution  
Descendants of America's First Soldiers

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In early 1779, the Continental Congress authorized funds and instructed GEN George Washington to send an expedition of the Continental Army into Iroquois country to “chastise,” or punish, “those of the Six Nations that were hostile to the United States.” For more than two years, four of the Iroquois Confederacy’s Six Nations, specifically the Cayuga, Onondaga, Mohawk and Seneca, along with many of the tribes they considered their “dependents” and allies, had “taken up the hatchet” in the King’s favor.

Although led by their own war chiefs, the war parties were often accompanied by officers and rangers of the British Indian Department, who coordinated their efforts with the British military. Other Crown forces were also operating against American settlements. One was a corps of Loyalist volunteers and Mohawk warriors commanded by CPT Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea, a Mohawk leader and officer of the British Indian Department. Another was Butler’s Rangers, a corps of Provincial regular light infantry raised specifically to cooperate with the allied warriors and fight according to the Indian style of warfare. It was commanded by long-time Indian Department officer John Butler. Butler served concurrently as the Deputy Superintendent for the Six Nations with the Indian Department rank of lieutenant colonel, while at the same time holding a major’s commission in the Provincial service as the commander of his ranger battalion. Together, these forces conducted a campaign that terrorized American frontier settlements of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

These attacks had several objectives. They could divert the attention of Continental forces from the movements of their regular field armies. The attacks also kept the back country alarmed, which interfered with the recruitment of potential volunteers from those districts, and hindered the ability of the militia to reinforce the hard-pressed Continentals.

In addition to military objectives, this strategy also aimed to damage the American economy as well as the Continental Army’s supply system. Attacking productive agricul-

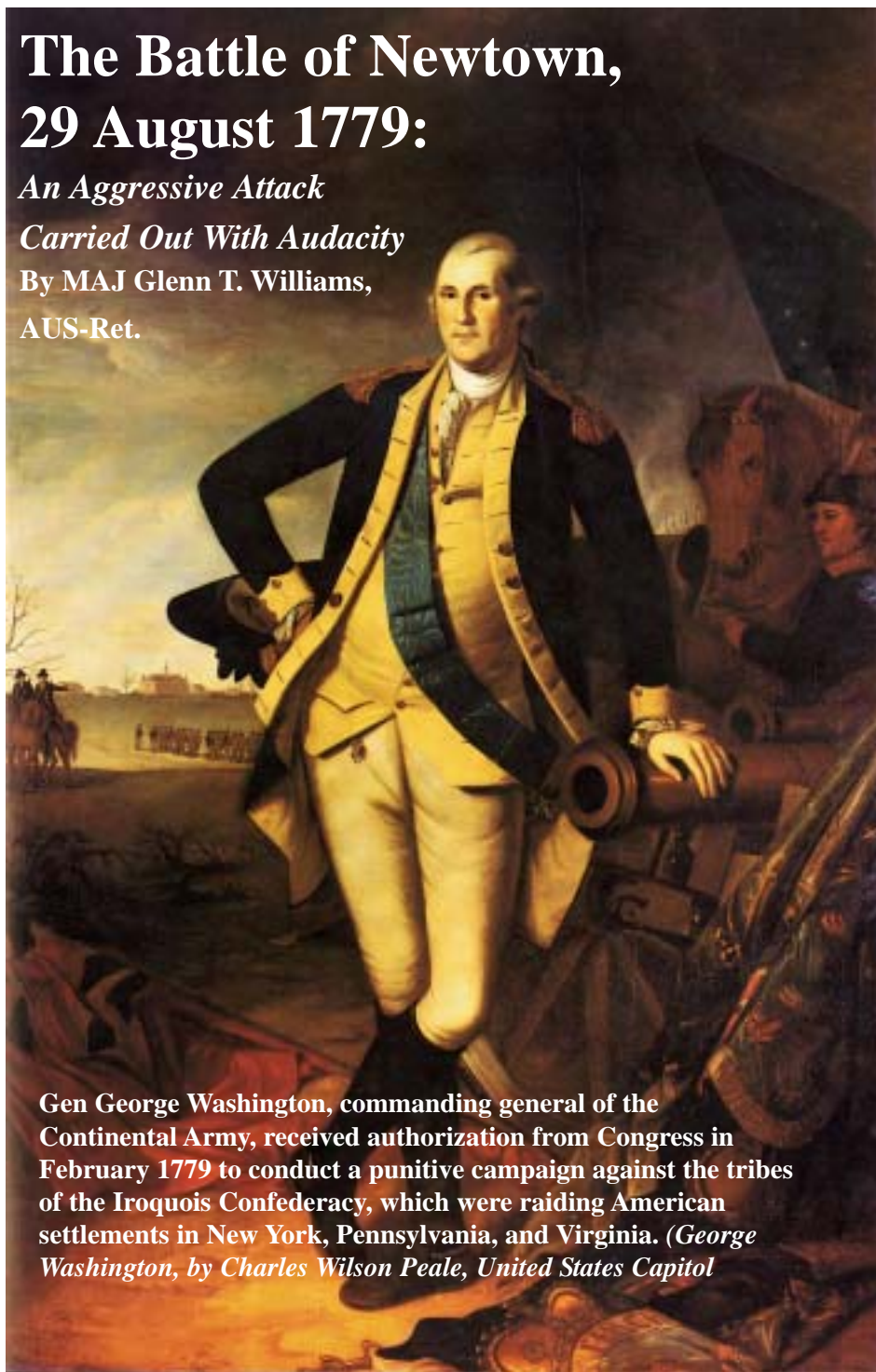
## The Battle of Newtown, 29 August 1779:

*An Aggressive Attack*

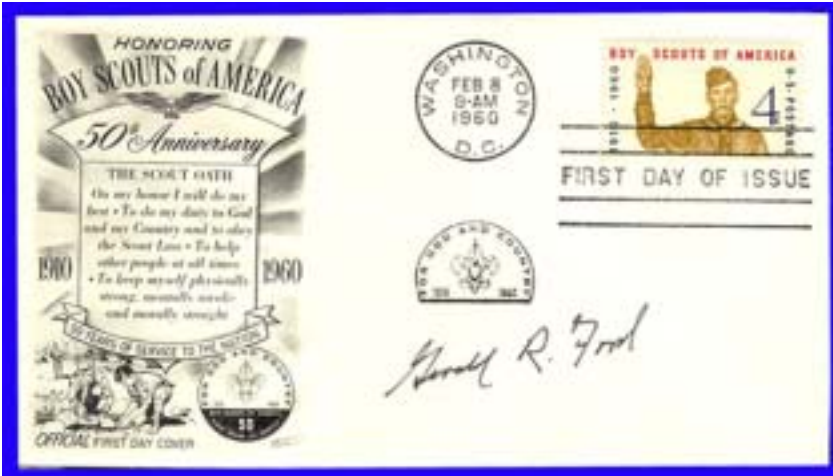
*Carried Out With Audacity*

By MAJ Glenn T. Williams,

AUS-Ret.



**Gen George Washington, commanding general of the Continental Army, received authorization from Congress in February 1779 to conduct a punitive campaign against the tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy, which were raiding American settlements in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. (George Washington, by Charles Wilson Peale, United States Capitol**



The NSSAR Eagle Scout Committee, chaired by Compatriot Charlie A. Newcomer, has initiated a society-wide effort to memorialize President Gerald Ford. The committee hopes to raise sufficient funds to name a part of the new Center for Advancing American Heritage (CAAH) for the late President, a SAR compatriot and an Eagle Scout.

Plans to honor the President in this manner for his support of the SAR and Scouting were presented to family members who, according to Eagle Committee Vice-Chairman Bill Allerton of Louisiana, who represented the SAR at the Ford funeral, were moved and appreciative of the effort by the committee. President Ford's son Michael Ford is quoted by Compatriot Allerton as saying that promoting patriotism and scouting were two of his father's greatest loves.

Contributions and pledges ranging from \$25.00 up to \$5,000.00 have been received already. Anyone who wishes to join the memorial effort may send contributions either to Charlie A. Newcomer, 1601 Spartan Lane, Athens, GA 30606 or directly to National headquarters. Checks may be made payable to the SAR Foundation, Inc. and specified for President Ford Memorial or to the NSSAR Eagle Scout Program, again specified for President Ford Memorial. According to President-General Nathan White, personal contributions for the CAAH will be matched by anonymous donors up to \$100,000. As is established tradition, medals will be given for contributions of \$500.00 or more.

All contributions are welcomed and appreciated. Names of donors who contribute to the memorial will be forwarded to the Ford family. ■

## EAGLE SCOUT WINNERS

Compatriots,

We concluded judging for the NSSAR Eagle Scout Scholarships yesterday at the Louisville Leadership meeting. Twenty committee members were present to judge the 33 state entries. First place goes to Eagle Scout Charles C. McBride II of Connecticut; second place goes to Alexander P. Spillane of New York; and third goes to Paul J.P. Banwart of Minnesota. I will be writing letters to all the contestants in a few days. Meanwhile, you are free to notify your Eagle if you wish.

The first place winner will receive his check at the Congress in Williamsburg. The checks for the first and second runners up will be mailed to the respective state chairmen for local presentation.

Patriotically,

*Charlie A. Newcomer, Chairman*

*NSSAR Eagle Scout Committee* ■

## SARATOGA BATTLE CHAPTER



On Saturday, 17 February 2007, at the annual meeting of the Saratoga Battle Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) held at the Century House in Latham, New York, G. William Glidden, MAJOR (R) USA and historian for the Valcour Battle Chapter, SAR, is receiving recognition for dedication and commitment to the education of youth in American History. On the right, the presenter is Richard C. Saunders, Jr., Chairman of the George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest, Saratoga Battle Chapter, Empire State Society, SAR.

*G. William Glidden, MAJOR ( R ) USA  
Historian, Valcour Battle Chapter, SAR  
6 Washington Place  
Plattsburgh, New York 12901-4234* ■

**Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote!** *Benjamin Franklin*



**THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER**



**PETER K GOEBEL, PRESIDENT ESSAR**

tering Dinner at this very moment. Hopefully they will be able to soon provide an announcement for this coming activity. The Chartering Dinner is an important event in every Chapter's life and I invite each of you who can attend to make every effort to accompany the Valcour Battle Chapter compatriots as they set off to complete the goals and objectives of the Sons of the American Revolution and our Empire State Society. Look for their imminent proclamation and I will look forward to seeing as many compatriots as possible there. We should all be attempting to start new viable chapters, as I know we can. Let's all keep up the hard work of recruiting new members and starting new chapters. It is vital to our existence.

Compatriots,

As New York State attempts to break the bonds of another surly winter season, I hope all Compatriots and their Families are well and steadily working toward achieving all goals set for the Sons of the American Revolution. My thanks again go to each of you who contribute to the completion of these goals and to every objective of the Sons of the American Revolution. We must always think about the SAR and what it means to each of us as an individual, and what it means to our communities and to our country.

Since my last report, I continue my good fortune to travel to many different places across the State of New York and across the Nation to represent the Empire State Society and each of you. In January of this year, I was invited and was able to attend an organizing meeting of the Schoharie Leatherstocking Chapter in Schoharie. The potential members of this chapter are quite enthusiastic and are working closely with both members of the SAR and DAR, as well as with members of the C.A.R., to bring this chapter into our group as proud members of the Empire State Society. They are laboring diligently to help get this chapter off the ground. They are trying to catch the Valcour Battle Chapter, whose members are setting up their Char-

In February I was able to represent the Empire State Society at the Sons and Daughters Gala Ball at The Yale Club in New York City, along with New York State Daughters of the American Revolution Regent Libby McKee, representing the NSDAR, and National Society Sons of the American Revolution President General Nathan E. White, Jr., representing the NSSAR. Many compatriots from across New England and New York State joined with their hosts to enjoy an astonishing evening. The 1<sup>st</sup> New York Continental Chapter joined with the New York City Chapter, DAR; the Mary Washington Colonial Chapter, DAR; the Richmond County/ Staten Island Chapter, DAR; the Peter Minit Chapter, DAR; the Knickerbocker Chapter, DAR; and the Brooklyn Chapter, DAR to present an amazing occasion. A wonderful time was had by all who attended this elegant event. Many other genealogical and hereditary educational societies in New York City were also represented. Other genealogical and hereditary educational societies, especially ones in the original 13 States, are prime recruiting areas for the SAR.

I next attended the Annual SAR Spring National Leadership Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky from 22-25 February. Many items of business were accomplished during this time period. Among other business items, the NSSAR Nominating Committee met for

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2007-2008 and nominated Secretary General B. Wilcox as President General, Treasurer General D. Appleby as Secretary General, Chancellor General E. Butler as Treasurer General, Former Vice President General P. Keltch as Chancellor General, Genealogist General C. Bragg as Genealogist General, Registrar General T. Bennett as Registrar General, Historian General D. Sympton as Historian General, Former Vice President General R. Brockway as Librarian General, Former Surgeon General R. Judice as Surgeon General, and Chaplain General S. DeLong as Chaplain General. The six 2007 NSSAR Minuteman Awardees were also announced and will receive their awards in Williamsburg, Virginia at the NSSAR Annual Congress on 8 July 2007. They are Walter Baker, New Mexico; James McCafferty, Maryland; Floyd Jernigan, Kentucky; William Cox, Arkansas; Michael Jones, Arizona; and Douglas Stansberry, Georgia. It was indeed very inspirational to be able to be with so many others honoring our patriot ancestors and the vital contribution they made to the founding of our nation, and to the wonderful life which we all enjoy today. Please continue to honor them and remember what our existence would be like if they had not made the sacrifices which they made. We must also make as many sacrifices as we possibly can to insure that our nation remains the best place on the earth.

*Continued Page 10 Col 1*

Cont'd from page 1 - Battle of Newtown



On 3 July 1778, Indian and Loyalist forces attacked American militiamen at Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania. In the ensuing battle, dubbed the "Wyoming Valley Massacre," over 200 Americans were killed, with most of them scalped. Indian and Loyalist casualties were minimal. (*Massacre of Wyoming*, by Alonzo Chappell, Chicago History Museum)

tural communities, laying fields to waste, and destroying harvested crops and livestock before they were taken to market could prove destructive to American commerce. The British could also interfere with the American supply system by reducing the availability of provisions that could be purchased to stock military supply magazines, and force state governments to draw on the provisions already stored in them for the relief and subsistence of suffering inhabitants. The plunder taken from the targeted American farms and settlements also presented British irregulars and their allied Indian war parties a source of supply when donations from "friends of the King" were insufficient.

There was also an element of psychological warfare in the British plans. Under the threat of attack and devastation lest they swear allegiance to the King, the war on the frontier could weaken support for the cause of independence. These "depredations" reached a peak in 1778, especially with the particularly brutal Wyoming and Cherry Valley Massacres, and all intelligence indicated the raids would continue into 1779. Answering calls by the governors and congressional delegates from those states most affected, the Continental Army prepared to take the offensive.

Washington began developing a plan for a coordinated campaign to "scourge the Indians properly." He envisioned an operation "at a season when their Corn is about half grown," and proposed a two pronged attack, the main effort advancing up the Susquehanna River from the Wyoming Valley, and a supporting wing advancing from the Mohawk. Both would be supported by a third expedition advancing up the Allegheny River and into Iroquois country from Fort Pitt as a diversion. In his planning guidance, Washington specified the "only object should be that of driving off the Indians and destroying their Grain." Once accomplished, the expedition would return to the Main Army whether or not a major engagement was fought.

This was economic warfare in retaliation, aimed at the enemy's ability to wage war, not necessarily the destruction of his forces on the battlefield. Successful execution would also force the hostile tribes to choose between two equally unpleasant consequences. They could either change sides and become allies of the Ameri-

cans, or become even more dependent on the Crown in return for their continued loyalty. Choosing the former could secure the American frontier in return for the Continental Congress and state governments providing the Indians subsistence. Choosing the latter would further tax the already strained British logistics system in Canada. Either outcome was more beneficial to the American cause than doing nothing for the back country settlements as the main American army faced the entrenched British forces around New York City. Furthermore, an operation in Indian country would at least offer some relief to the embattled frontier settlements for the season. On 25 February 1779, Congress formally authorized Washington to plan and execute an Indian expedition for later that year.

As he prepared to take command of the "Western Army," MG John Sullivan studied the mission and the available intelligence on the enemy and terrain over which he and his men would march and fight. Troops and stores were soon transported to their respective assembly areas at Wyoming, Canajoharie, and Fort Pitt. As the expedition's start was repeatedly delayed by supply problems, GEN Washington wrote a very frank letter detailing his instructions to Sullivan. The "immediate objects" of the operation were "the total destruction and devastation" of the settlements of the Six Nations. It was essential that their crops then in cultivation be destroyed, and the Indians be prevented from planting more that growing season. It was also important to "capture as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible" to use for prisoner exchange and to ensure that any negotiations were conducted in good faith.

Sullivan then decided that instead of conducting a supporting attack, the 1,500 troops of BG James Clinton's New York Continental brigade would join his 3,000 man division on the Susquehanna, and march together by the "most practicable route into the heart of the Indian Settlements." In doing so, Washington recommended that Sullivan establish at least one post in enemy territory from which his forces could operate. He was then to send detachments "to lay waste all the settlements around with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner," by which "the country may not be merely overrun, but destroyed."

Although Sullivan was confident of success, he held no illusions that the campaign he was to lead would be an easy one. Enemy forces were estimated at 2,000 hostile warriors and several hundred Provincial soldiers. He described the enemy warriors his expedition would face as "perfectly acquainted with the country, capable of seizing every advantage which the ground can possible afford, inured to war from their youth, and from their manner of living, capable of enduring every kind of fatigue." Sullivan expressed a grudging respect when he wrote they "are no despicable enemy," and realized that a two to one numerical advantage was no guarantee of success. Although confident, he was not overly so. He knew that the warriors of the Six Nations, even "when opposed to three thousand troops," were still formidable.

In order to prevent defeat by such irregular forces on ground of their own choosing, Washington cautioned Sullivan that his force should seek "to make rather than receive attacks, attended with as much impetuosity, shouting and noise as possible." The men should, "whenever they have an opportunity, to rush on with the war whoop and fixed bayonet." Washington believed "Nothing will disconcert and terrify the Indians more" than an aggressive attack carried out with audacity. If after the destruction of their settlements was

Cont'd. Page 5 col. 1



*Cont'd from page 4 - Battle of Newtown*

complete, and the Indians showed a "disposition for peace." Sullivan was instructed to encourage it on the condition that they provided evidence of their sincerity. One way the Indians could prove their sincerity was delivering into American custody some of those who instigated or led the attacks against the frontier settlements, like "the most mischievous of Tories, Butler and Brant, or any others in their power." Another sign of friendship would be for the Indians to capture Fort Niagara from the British.

In the weeks while the army waited for supplies, Sullivan's troops trained in the woods, defiles, swamps and hills around the Wyoming Valley, while Clinton did the same around Lake Otsego. They practiced and rehearsed the pre planned actions they would take to immediately respond to enemy contact with Indian warriors and British irregulars. Sullivan's army was prepared to deny the enemy their greatest advantage when fighting in the forest, the element of surprise. When Clinton's brigade joined with Sullivan's wing at Tioga Point, the march order was designed to meet the tactical considerations. The men of MAJ James Parr's Rifle Corps dispersed "considerably in front" with orders to "reconnoiter mountains, defiles and other suspicious places" ahead to prevent the enemy from launching a surprise attack or ambush. The two musket battalions of BG Edward Hand's provisional brigade, detailed as the expedition's "Light Corps," formed in six columns, each separated by 200 to 300 yards and proceeded by companies of light infantry. The artillery park was next in the order of march, with four light 3 pounder bronze guns, two 3 pounder iron guns, two 5½ inch howitzers, and a cohorn mortar. The rest of the artillery train, consisting of a traveling forge and three ammunition wagons, followed the guns.

To facilitate their deployment into line of battle regardless of where the enemy struck, the main body moved in a "hollow square" formation, with BG Enoch Poor's New Hampshire brigade marching in column of platoons, aligned with the right division of Hand's brigade, and BG William New Jersey brigade arrayed in the same manner on the left. Each brigade detailed about 200 men from its regiments to provide flankers for security on its respective side along the line of march. Clinton's New York brigade moved in six columns, mirroring the deployment of Hand's brigade, at the back of the square, with one of its regiments detailed to provide the rear guard. Inside the square, the army's 1,200 packhorses marched in two columns along the center, while the drovers herded the 800 head of beef cattle between the pack train in the center and brigade columns on the flanks of the square.

Meanwhile, MAJ Butler and his Provincial rangers, a detach-

ment of British regulars, and CPT Brant with his corps of Loyalist volunteers and Mohawks, had combined with a force of all the warriors the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga and Delaware chiefs could gather, just under 1,000 men in all, near a Delaware village called Newtown. Expecting the American army to advance by marching in column either along the banks of the Chemung River or through the woods on an Indian trail, Butler and the chiefs chose their ground well. Facing the direction of the American approach, there was a ridge of about one half mile in length that dominated a plain of land that bordered the river to the right. If the Americans came

that way, the position afforded a relatively small force the ability to subject the attackers to a withering fire. A steep mountain stood on the left, parallel to the ridge, where warriors fighting Indian style could punish an American force advancing through the woods. Between the hill and ridge, the trail from the Chemung emerged from a swamp into a large open area before it crossed a steep defile with cut by a large creek. It was a perfect site for an ambush.

A relatively small force, like that at Butler's command, could surprise an unsuspecting foe as it emerged into the clearing by opening fire from concealed positions, and hold the Americans in front while Indian warriors swept down around their flanks from the foothills and assaulted through the woods. If the Indians gained the rear of Sullivan's army, they could cause great confusion, possibly stampede the cattle, and inflict casualties disproportional to their numbers, demoralizing the Americans and forcing them to withdraw. In fact, the battle plan was similar to the British, Loyalist, and Indian ambush at Oriskany, New York, in August 1777. At the very least, a

few companies massing their musket fire could get off one or two volleys without risking many casualties before they yielded the field to the much larger enemy army. They could at least buy time for MG Frederick Haldim and, the Royal Governor of Quebec and commander in chief of British forces in Canada, and the allied tribes to send reinforcements before the Americans reached the principal Indian towns. As they waited, Butler's men disassembled the buildings near their line for their wood, chopped trees and "threw up some Logs one upon the other byway of a Breastwork," and masterfully concealed it from enemy view by bushes and other foliage.

The semicircular disposition offered Butler and the Indians the advantage of interior lines, where reinforcements could be sent to meet a threat from any part of the line not heavily engaged. Most of the Iroquois warriors were posted at the foot of the mountain. CPT John McDonnell with sixty of Butler's Rangers, CPT Brant with thirty Loyalists and Mohawks, and a war party of thirty

*Cont'd. Page 6 col. 1*



*Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea, was a Mohawk leader and a British Indian Department officer with the rank of captain. He acquired a reputation for military skill and bravery during fighting on the American frontier. (Joseph Brant, by George Romney, National Gallery of Canada)*

*Cont'd from page 5 - Battle of Newtown*

Cayuga under their own chief took position on the ridge. The detachment from the 8th Regiment of Foot, the rest of Butler's Rangers, and the remaining Indians manned the center at the breastwork overlooking the creek. In order to give his attention to the Indians and coordinate the combined effort, MAJ Butler placed his son, CPT Walter Butler, in command of the rangers. When scouts reported that the Americans camped a few miles downstream, Butler and the chiefs felt their men were ready.

As the Americans marched along the Indian trail toward Newtown on 29 August, the leading elements began engaging Indian warriors deployed as skirmishers in the woods. The further the American riflemen and light infantrymen advanced, the bolder the enemy skirmishers became, although they did not stand and fight, but ran into the woods before the riflemen's advance.

After entering some marshy ground, which "seemed well calculated for forming ambuscades," the light troops advanced with precaution as more Indian warriors fired and retreated. MAJ Parr suggested to BG Hand that the situation was too dangerous to proceed without further reconnaissance, lest the warriors lure them into a trap. Parr ordered one of his men to climb up a tree in order to "make discoveries" of the enemy up ahead. From that vantage, after some time, "he discovered the movements of several Indians, which were rendered conspicuous by the quantity of paint on them." The rifleman described the enemy as "laying behind an extensive breastwork, which extended at least half a mile, and most artfully concealed with green boughs and trees." As the Americans viewed it, the line was situated on high ground, with the left flank secured by a mountain and the right by the river. To assault the works directly, the Americans had to cross marshy ground, ford a difficult stream, and advance uphill through a cleared and open field 100 yards wide.

Immediately after Parr informed him of the enemy disposition, BG Hand advanced the Light Corps under concealment to within 300 yards of the enemy's breast works, and formed a line of battle. The riflemen advanced undercover as far as the creek and "lay under the bank" within 100 yards of the enemy. MG Sullivan arrived and sent for the rest of his subordinate commanders for a council of war while waiting for the army to move up.

According to BG Clinton, the enemy's fortifications "were very extensive, tho' [sic] not impregnable." Because the Americans did not want to merely drive the Tories and Indians out of their defenses, Sullivan presented a plan to turn their flank in order to "bring them to a fair and open action." The Rifle Corps and light infantry would continue to "amuse" the enemy, and keep his attention fixed in front. COL Matthias Ogden, with the 1st New Jersey Regiment and the rest of the left flanking division, would form on the Light Corps' left flank, and if the opportunity presented itself, assault the ridge and turn the enemy's right. COL Thomas Proctor was to move the artillery to the front, immediately opposite the enemy breastwork, to support any assault. The guns would remain concealed until all was ready. BG Maxwell's brigade, minus the left flanking division, was to "remain some distance to the rear" as the corps reserve. The brigades of Poor and Clinton, along with the right flanking division, were to gain the enemy's left flank and rear, and cut off their retreat along the road through Newtown toward Catherine's Town. For the plan to succeed with the desired effect, it was imperative that the units making the flank attack were in position to take the enemy in the rear when the artillery cannonade commenced. The Rifle Corps and

light infantry would then advance on the breast work.

At about 1300, the diversion began. Tory MAJ Butler recalled, "A few of the Enemy made their appearance at the skirt of the wood to our Front." The riflemen then went into action. According to LTC Adam Hubley of the 11th Pennsylvania Regiment of the Light Corps, "A heavy fire ensued between the rifle corps on the enemy, but little damage was done." At the same time, the artillery filed off to the right and was "carried to an advantageous piece of ground" about a quarter mile from the Tory breastwork. Poor and Clinton then ordered their brigades to "march by column from the right of regiment by files." The troops passed through a very thick swamp overgrown with bushes. For nearly a mile, the "Columns found great difficulty in keeping their order." But by Poor's "great Prudence & good conduct," however, experienced officers like LTC Henry Dearborn remarked that the brigade "proceeded in much better order than I expected we possibly could have done." After negotiating the swamp, the columns inclined to the left, and crossed the creek, which ran in front of the enemy's breastwork farther downstream. As they did so, the soldiers noticed about twenty unoccupied buildings, which curiously had no land cleared nearby for cultivation. Some of the men assumed these were to be used for magazines to supply raiding parties heading for the frontier settlements. Once across, the troops began to ascend the mountain that defined the enemy's left.

After the American riflemen had "amused" his troops and warriors facing them across the open field for about two hours, the Tory commander suspected that the Americans were not taking the bait he had dangled in front of them. Unlike the militia he had faced at Oriskany or Wyoming, these regulars were not lured into the defile where his men could blaze away at them from behind their breastwork. When it became apparent that the Americans were probably deploying to bring their overwhelming numbers to bear, Butler considered a retreat. While the Rifle Corps occupied their attention to the front, however, the Indians were reluctant to leave their fortification. Brant and the Cayuga chief left their position on the right to meet with Butler, and recommended withdrawal before they became decisively engaged in a losing battle.

At about 1500, the American artillery was ordered to advance to the high ground on the near side of the defile, about 200 yards from the enemy position. The artillery opened fire on the breastworks as "the rifle and light corps... prepared to advance and charge." The storm of round and grape shot soon "obliged" the defenders to leave their log fortification. When howitzer and cohorn shells began bursting above and behind them, many of the Indians believed the Americans had surrounded them with artillery. According to Butler, many of the warriors were "so startled & confounded," that a "great part of them run off" in panic. Butler led his rangers and a number of the Indians toward the hill that marked the left of their line in order to retreat.

The swamp and thickets had delayed the progress of Poor's and Clinton's brigades, so that they were not yet in position when they heard the cannonade begin. After ascending halfway up the hill, the Continentals were "saluted by a brisk fire" and war whoops from a body of Indians posted to keep them from turning the flank of the breastwork. As the riflemen of the flank division kept up a "scattering fire," the rest of Poor's brigade quickly formed the line of battle. Though much fatigued by the difficult march and climb under the burden of heavy packs in the oppressive heat, the troops pressed up the hill. With their lines dressed and bayonets fixed,

*Cont'd. Page 7 col. 1*

the disciplined Continentals advanced rapidly in the face of enemy fire, and without returning a shot, drove the enemy "from tree to tree" before them. On reaching the summit, the command was given, and Poor's soldiers leveled their muskets and fired a full volley that broke the resistance of the Indians to their front, and sent them flying. Clinton's brigade, following Poor's up the hill by a quarter mile, "pushed up with such ardor" that a number of soldiers fainted from heat exhaustion. As they closed on the crest, Clinton's brigade extended to the right and endeavored to block the enemy's retreat through the defile along the river.

When they heard the musketry of Poor's battle on the hill, MAJ Butler and his rangers and redcoats realized the Americans had gained the high ground on their flank and threatened to surround them. At the same moment, Hand's Light Corps attacked and swarmed over the breastworks as the last of the British, Tories and Indians abandoned them and fled. In desperation, the remnants of Butler's command turned west. Nearly surrounded, the warriors, rangers and redcoats made their escape as best they could, carrying many of their dead and wounded. Some kept along the hill, skirmishing with the pursuing American light infantry for over a mile. Others crossed the Chemung River or took to canoes to avoid capture. Most of the rangers headed for a village about five miles away where Butler had told them to rendezvous. Many warriors, however, crossed the mountain in an attempt to return to their homes.

Meanwhile on the hill, as most of the regiments of Poor's brigade remained on line, LTC George Reid's 2d New Hampshire "was more severely attacked," and prevented from advancing as far as the rest. LTC Dearborn, commanding the 3d New Hampshire Regiment on Reid's right, saw what was happening. Reid's unit had become separated from the rest of the brigade by a distance of "more than a gun shot." Dearborn therefore "thought it proper" to "reverse the front" of his regiment and go to Reid's assistance. On the enemy side, a large body of warriors saw the opportunity to attack the American rear by going around the left of Poor's brigade, but Reid's regiment stood in their way. They clashed on the slope of the hill, and the warriors were in the process of surrounding the Continentals. Reid "was reduced to the necessity" of ordering either a retreat back down or a desperate bayonet charge up the mountain. He chose the latter, and had no sooner given the order to execute the move when Dearborn's regiment arrived and fired a full volley that broke the Indian attack. The enemy now left the scene of action "in great precipitation & confusion," leaving nine dead warriors on the field.

Soldiers of Hand's corps pursued the enemy beyond the breastwork and along the mountain until they made contact with the flanking brigades. The rifle and light infantry companies continued the pursuit for another mile or so before returning to join the rest of the army in Newtown at about 1800, where they encamped on the same ground the enemy had previously occupied. Three Americans were killed and thirty had been wounded, one of them mortally.

The rout of the enemy had been complete. The enemy's former positions were littered with brass kettles, packs, blankets and other articles dropped in their haste to carry off their dead and wounded in the escape. Some of Poor's men scalped the Indian corpses, as others searched for lurking warriors who could still be in the area. Two prisoners, "a white and a Negro," were taken. The white Tory had feigned death until an officer noticed that there were no wounds

on his body. After being struck with the side of a sword and ordered to get up, the man pleaded for mercy. The black prisoner was taken by Hand's light infantry after he became "separated from his company" during the retreat. Butler reported the loss of five dead and three wounded rangers, and five dead and nine wounded Indians.

Newtown was the only significant engagement of the 1779 Indian Expedition. The British had relied on their rangers and Indian allies to conduct irregular operations in the forest to retard or halt the Americans, but they proved incapable of withstanding the onslaught. In a message to LTC Mason Bolton of the British garrison at Fort Niagara, MAJ Butler blamed the loss on "some officious Fellow" among the Indian chiefs repositioning men on the flank, and the poor turnout of Iroquois and Delaware warriors. Notwithstanding, he admitted to Bolton that the American army "moved with the greatest caution & regularity and are more formidable than you seem to apprehend."

The major warned of the serious consequences that would follow if his rangers and Indian warriors were unable to stop them. If there was not "speedily a large Reinforcement," Butler was certain that after the Indians' villages and corn were destroyed, the refugees would flock to Fort Niagara, where they would consume large quantities of provisions and be in need clothing and shelter that was already in short supply for the King's forces. The Tory rangers and their Indian allies, however, were never able to mount a credible defense of Iroquois country.

The American invasion resulted in the destruction of forty Indian towns and agricultural fields yielding some 160,000 bushels of corn and other vegetables before returning to the Main Army. Sullivan's army had "chastised" the forces of the Six Nations that were hostile to the United States for taking the side of the British, and forever ended the Iroquois Confederacy's military dominance over other Indian nations. Although the British and Iroquois remained allies, the British supply system was indeed strained to support the Indians in their distress. When the British ceded their land to the victorious United States by the Treaty of Paris that ended the war in 1783, their Indian allies paid the consequences for the alliance they made with the Crown in 1777. ■

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** *Glenn F. Williams is a retired Infantry officer, and Charter Life Member of AHF. He entered public history as a "second career," and is currently employed at the U.S. Army Center of Military History at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, DC. He is the author of Year of the Hangman: George Washington's Campaign against the Iroquois (Westholme Publishing, 2005) and USS Constellation: A Short History of the Last All-Sail Warship Built by the U.S. Navy (Donning, 2000), as well as a number of journal and magazine articles on military and naval history topics. His previous positions include Historian for the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service, and Curator of the USS Constellation Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in History from Loyola College of Maryland and University of Maryland Baltimore County, respectively, and is presently a doctoral candidate in History at the University of Maryland, College Park.*

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*EDITOR'S NOTE*

*As outlined in the previous article, in February of 1779, Congress had authorized General George Washington to conduct a campaign against the Joseph Brant Iroquois Confederacy leading to the Battle of Newtown (August 29 1779). Ironically, just five weeks prior to the Battle of Newtown, the Battle of Minisink was underway led by non other than Joseph Brant.*

**THE BATTLE OF MINISINK**

*July 20, 1779*

The only major battle fought in Sullivan County during the Revolutionary War was the Battle of Minisink. It was where a Mohawk Chief Thayendenega who was also known by the name of Joseph



Brant, led 60 Indians and 27 Loyalists down the Delaware heading toward the western settlements, searching for food and supplies for his hungry followers. Consequently, at around the same time in 1779 that General George Washington sent a strong show of power into western New York to protect settlements on the Rivers of

Susquehanna, Mohawk, and Delaware from Indian attacks such as these.

On July 20, 1779 Brant attacked the unprotected Minisink settlement located near what is now Port Jervis. In retaliation two commanders, Col. John Hathorn of Warwick and Lt. Col. Benjamin Tusten, banded together and combined their troops to form a large command. Regardless of the two Colonels concerns, some troops apparently thought the pursuit was not advisable and went home while even other parts of the troops seem to have been either delayed or separated.

The two commands met near the mouth of the Lackawaxen on the Delaware on July 22. Lt. Col. Tusten found out that Brant and his men were crossing the river at Minisink Ford with stolen cattle, goods/supplies, and prisoners. His intent was to surprise the Indians but one of Tusten's men accidentally fired a shot that gave Brant warning which in return allowed Brant the chance to defend himself. Using bush warfare, Brant was able to surround Tusten and begin a terrible 4-hour battle ending when Brant's men broke through and defeated Tusten's forces that were running out of ammunition and suffering from thirst. Dr. Benjamin Tusten and

forty-four of his militiamen were killed during battle.

The town of Goshen, NY itself was completely laid waste and some say that more than 33 women were left as widows on that day. It is also believed that a total of 150 men were killed, with a separate company of 50 men that had been completely cut off, slaughtered and scalped. One of my ancestor's was out of those that died there. Captain Bezaleel Tyler. Captain Tyler served between 1775 and 1779 in the American Revolution. He was part of the Cohection Company of the Second Ulster County regiment of the New York State Militia.

In Colonel John Hathorn's account of the battle in a letter dated July 27th, 1779 he described the "proceedings on a later Tour of duty with (his) Regiment." Upon discovering Brant was taking his plundering across the river he divided his command into 3 divisions. One of them was under Captain Tyler as an advance Guard. Colonel Hathorn found himself forced to rally all of his men, which he realized by this time was smaller than he expected due to casualties, but none the less returned fire and kept up a constant battle of ammunition shooting up the hill from the river in which the "brave Captain Tyler fell."

Brant and his men escaped up the Delaware. Brant was noted as saying that he "would have done more damage, but there were too many houses there for him to burn."

While the surviving Revolutionists returned home during the days immediately following the battle there is no telling how many may have died from their wounds.

Survivors of the battle, along with families and friends in the communities were filled with such fear and sadness that no one ever went to the battleground to find the deceased soldiers until more than 40

years after. Although a couple of attempts were made later on, it was not until in July of 1822 the bones were gathered and placed together in one common grave in a Goshen park with a ceremony of approximately 12,000 in attendance.

While the Battle of Minisink was an Indian/Tory victory, Washington's troops under the leadership of General John Sullivan advanced into Western New York and eventually defeated the Indians and destroyed their settlements. The Minisink Battleground Park is located in Southern Sullivan County, off Route 97 just west of Barryville, NY.

A monument was erected to commentate the battle — Captain Bezaleel Tyler is the second name listed on that monument. As a citizen he was a farmer, to his family he was..... a hero. ■





## COLUMBIA-MID HUDSON VALLEY CHAPTER

Our spring Chapter meeting was held at the Roasted Garlic at the Red Hook Inn in Red Hook, NY on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM. There was an exceptional turnout of members, potential members, DAR spouses, member's spouses, Eagle Scouts and their families, and guests.

The results of the 2007-2008 Chapter electronic election that ended February 28, 2007 were reported. Seventy percent (27 out of 39) of our members participated. With a new procedure, there were some minor problems that were easily addressed. Last year the members voted on having the elected officers serve a two-year term starting in the year of 2007. Current officers Rodney S. Andrews, President; Bernard H. Weaver, Jr., Vice President, and Alan D. Coon, Secretary/Treasurer, were reelected unanimously for the two-year term. President Andrews immediately reappointed last year's Registrar, Donald L. Schiro; Chapter Chaplain Robert L. French and Historian, John M. Helmeyer, as officers.

Two transferred SAR members, Kevin D. Kitowski from the Westchester/Putnam Chapter and Wylie G. Borum from the Philadelphia/Continental Chapter, were introduced to members. Charles R. Nichols was acknowledged as a reinstated member. Mr. Nichols was actually reinstated last November but was unable to be at the December meeting.

Eagle Scout certificates were given to Gregory Anderson and Andrew Middlebrook. Gregory, whose father John and brother Christopher who are Chapter members, spoke about his Eagle Scout project of building picnic tables and landscaping Lincoln Park in Poughkeepsie, NY. Andrew, whose father, Timothy who is a Chapter member, spoke of his Eagle Scout project of cleaning up and landscaping Mills Mansion Cemetery in Staatsburg, NY.

"Year's of Service" pins and certificates were presented to Bernard H. Weaver, Jr. for 35 years and Almon M. Miller for 35 years. Mr. Miller, who lives in Florida, was unable to attend the meeting and his award was mailed to him.

"Past Chapter President" pin and certificate were presented to Lloyd M. Loop, Jr. for years, 1988, 1989 and 1990. Mr. Loop was also awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and certificate. Mr. Loop has served

in many capacities for our Chapter since 1981 and has always been available to assist whenever asked. In 2004, Lloyd was awarded the Patriot Medal, the highest award presented at the state level, for his service at the state and Chapter level. Mr. Loop and his wife, Janet, a DAR member, will be leaving the Hudson Valley area and relocating upstate later this year. He will be missed by all who have worked with him. Secretary/Treasurer, Alan Coon, reported that our Chapter had achieved 100% dues paid very early last fall in the competition with the other chapters. Registrar, Donald L. Schiro, reported that there are at least six potential SAR members working on their applications to join our Chapter, bringing our total membership to 45. Historian, John M. Helmeyer, reported that he is busy sorting out and arranging records for 1971 to 1992 that were discovered by Alan Coon last fall. The Nominating Committee Chairman, Donald L. Schiro, which ran the election, shared the details of our first election using the internet to distribute the ballots. Eagle Scout Committee Chairman, John Anderson, reported that Eagle Scout Alexander P. Spillane of Bloomfield, NY and of the Finger Lakes Council took second place prize of \$4,000 in the national competition.

Under old business President Andrews reported on the "Charter Member" status at the New York State Military Heritage Museum in Saratoga, NY. In 1992, our Chapter wrote a check to join as a "Charter Member" and at previous meetings the subject came up as to just what does the term "Charter Member" mean. A series of emails to Tom Gallagher, Secretary of New York State Military Heritage Museum, cleared up the confusion. Daily admissions are free but Charter Members have free admission to special events and 10% off any purchase at the museum gift shop. Charter members may also hold meetings or gatherings at the museum at no charge and are eligible for free glided tours that are prearranged through the museum.

As new business, the Heritage Department of Kingston, NY, has requested that we could join the Senate House members in the marking the Revolutionary Trail through Kingston this summer. Stephen Wood, a potential SAR member, will coordinate the program.

The Chapter has set up an exciting schedule this year. President Andrews went

through each event with the event coordinator reporting on each event. Each event will be represented by members of our Chapter sitting at tables or booths. If any of our state SAR members are in the area at that time, please stop by and introduce yourselves to our members.

### 2007 SCHEDULE

**July 4<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday-Senate House, Kingston, NY (SAR brochures are now available in the Senate House)

**July 14<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday-Hurley Stone House Day, Hurley, NY

Summer or early fall-Ceremony at Mills Mansion Cemetery, Staatsburg, NY (date TBA)

Summer or early fall-Ceremony at Hudson City Cemetery, Hudson, NY (date TBA)

August 21<sup>st</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday-Sunday-Dutchess County Fair (invited to join the DAR booth)

**September 8<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday-Huguenot Festival Day, New Paltz, NY

September 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, Saturday & Sunday-Indian Encampment, Pawling, NY

September 15<sup>th</sup>, Saturday-Heritage Day at the Senate House, Kingston, NY

**October 20<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday-English Burning of Kingston, NY (also possibility of having our members in the parade)

President Andrews described and displayed the seven brochures that will be available at each event. Some are SAR brochures and the others are of the Historical Hudson River Valley involvement during the Revolutionary War. The Historical Hudson River Valley brochures were obtained free of charge through various New York State Government Agencies.

Please visit our web site at "<http://www.geocities.com/cmhvsar>" with up-to-date information about our Chapter and for details about our next meeting to be held September 22 at the Chipotle Grill in Saugerties, NY, from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM. *Rodney S. Andrews, President*  
*Columbia-Mid Hudson Valley Chapter* ■

**Individual liberty is individual power, and as the power of a community is a mass compounded of individual powers, the nation which enjoys the most freedom must necessarily be in proportion to its numbers the most powerful nation.**

*John Quincy Adams*

Remember to collect any dues for those have not paid yet. Send your Chapter records of C.A.R. support to ESSAR C.A.R. Chairman Jonathan Goebel or to me - samples are in the SAR Handbook on line under C.A.R. Thank you for supporting C.A.R. State President Loretta Cassidy in her State project to purchase phone calling cards for deploying service members. She was very successful.

All SAR Chapter Color Guard service should be registered with ESSAR Color Guard Commander Jonathan Goebel. Please do so at your earliest opportunity.

My special thanks again go to all those Compatriots who donated funds to the ESSAR, and to the Center for Advancing America's Heritage in Louisville, and to those Compatriots who returned the postage paid cards showing support for the SAR and for all of the SAR programs. All Chapters and Compatriots should continue to donate as they are able. This is a never ending process.

The Saratoga Battle Chapter was the first Chapter in the ESSAR to join our State Society and the North Atlantic District (first District in NSSAR to donate), in the donation of at least \$1,000 to the building of the Center for Advancing America's Heritage. Who is able to catch them? We must all continue in this endeavor. Get others to donate, too.

I look forward to seeing each of you at our next meeting. We must all continue to work for our country and we must all continue our patriotic service to honor our Patriot Ancestors. Thank you again to everyone for their conscientious and concerted labors on behalf of our Society. We must continue to work and to rise above the common level of life.

Peter K. Goebel, State President Empire State Society  
Sons of the American Revolution ■

**SYRACUSE CHAPTER HOSTS  
PEARL HARBOR DAY LUNCHEON**



The Syracuse Chapter hosted the annual Pearl Harbor Day Luncheon at the Corinthian Club in Syracuse on Friday, Dec. 8, 2006. Guest speaker was former Staff Sgt. Reginald Chester, shown on the right with long time friend and SAR member, Ken Sweet. Sgt. Chester was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for services with the 10th Mountain Division in the Po Valley Campaign in Italy during WWII. About 35 members and friends enjoyed the luncheon and a bit of the history of the 10th Mountain Division, so frequently in the news today. ■

**LIVING HISTORY GROUP  
PROMOTES BATTLEFIELD**

*By Joyce Bucci, Binghamton, New York*

The Chemung Valley Living History Center is a group of people who are history buffs, nature lovers, educators, living historians, re-enactors, and just plain people. We are an incorporated, non-profit (501-c-3) organization. About 17 years ago, we decided to join together with the common purpose of enjoying history, and about 12 years ago, we were given permission to hold Living History Re-enactment events at Newtown Battlefield State Park.

Each year, CVLHC presents several Living History events at Newtown Battlefield State Park. Our season begins with the Ben Newton Memorial Civil War Weekend event, held the 1st weekend in May. In late August, we commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Newtown, which was the key battle of the Sullivan Expedition against the Iroquois Nations. In between these two events, we sometimes present other events, such as a Rendezvous, a Native American Heritage Festival, or a Fall Mountaintop Music Festival.

One of the main focuses of our group is to support and promote Newtown Battlefield State Park. We do this primarily by helping to bring attention, and people, to the park through our Living History events. Most notably, our 225th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of Newtown, which took place the weekend of August 27-29, 2004, brought thousands of visitors to Newtown from many states and Canada. We have constructed a historically accurate Indian Village of the type used by Northeastern woodland Indians within the park. This village is one of only three in New York state. Our group is currently looking into the possibility of becoming an official Friends of Newtown group with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Additionally, one of our group members has been instrumental in the revitalization and improvements of the wonderful system of trails that criss-cross Newtown Battlefield State Park. Created in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, they had fallen into disrepair over the years and were rarely used. Duane Saxton, an avid runner, decided to do something about it. He, along with many volunteers and Boy Scouts, worked to clean up, condition and repair the trails. Now, runners can be seen on the hilltop all season long, and several large high school Cross-Country Running events have been held on the trails.

We will be presenting our annual commemoration of the Battle of Newtown during our Revolutionary War Weekend Event, which will be held Saturday, August 25 and 26, 2007. The hilltop will come alive with the sounds of muskets and cannon-fire as re-enactors from all over the Eastern Seaboard come to participate in this exciting event. Battles and skirmishes will be presented both days and period sutlers will sell their reproduction 18th century items. It's an exciting, colorful, fun time as we celebrate the wonderful heritage and history of the Southern Tier of New York State and the important part this area played in our Nation's fight for Independence. Join us, won't you?

Joyce Bucci, Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Chemung Valley Living History Group

For more information, go to [www.chemungvalley.org](http://www.chemungvalley.org) ■



## SARATOGA BATTLE CHAPTER INDUCTS NEW OFFICERS

The Saratoga Battle Chapter held its annual meeting & Washington's Birthday dinner on Saturday evening February 17, 2007. About 50 members and guests gathered at the Century House Restaurant in Latham, NY for the event. Following dinner and the regular business meeting outgoing president Jonathan E. Goebel presented Richard H. Fullam & George H. Ballard the chapter level SAR Meritorious Service Award as well as certificates of appreciation to Dennis F. Marr, Richard C. Saunders, Jr., Duane Booth, Stephen C. Coye and to Charles W. King who the donated a Betsy Ross American flag, case and floor stand to the chapter. The War Service Award was presented to CPT. Brian James Van de Wal for service in Iraq. Past Chapter President Lewis O. Slocum received the Past Chapter President's pin, certificate & neck ribbon.

The chapter elected and installed new officers for the 2007 – 2009 term. Incoming officers are George H. Ballard, President; Richard H. Fullam, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Primitivo Africa, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Stephen C. Coye, Secretary; Michael S. Companion, Treasurer; Duane Booth, Registrar; Dennis F. Marr, Genealogist; Peter K. Goebel, Chaplain and Henry Goebel, Jr., Assistant Chaplain. State Society President Peter K. Goebel installed the officers. Incoming president George Ballard presented Jonathan with the Past Presidents pin and certificate. Brian McVay presented a very interesting talk on President George Washington. Brian as well as Past Chapter President G. William Glidden gave an update on NYS Military Museum happenings.

*Duane Booth, Past President* ■

ceremony showed the heroism of the four chaplains who gave up their life vests on the troop ship that was torpedoed in the North Atlantic near Greenland while traversing the icy Atlantic in 1944. Hundreds of troops perished, but when the life vests ran out; the chaplains took off theirs and gave them to the troops so more might survive. The four chaplains a Jewish Rabbi, a Protestant Reformed Church Minister, a Methodist Minister and a Catholic Priest all went down with the ship as they held hands and prayed before entering the icy Atlantic while aboard the troop ship, a converted old passenger liner, the "Dorchester". The ship sunk within two hours after being torpedoed.

*Barry Brooks, President Stony Point Chapter* ■



## ORISKANY BATTLE CHAPTER

Since 1976 a small blockhouse has sat near the Herkimer exit of the New York State Thruway. It was built by the local Boy Scout Troop in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of this nation.

Perhaps you may have seen it as you leave the Thruway. The blockhouse is small, being roughly eight feet by eight feet at the base with a top of twelve feet by twelve feet. Though it may be small, it is authentically a reproduction of an original. Until recently it has been owned by the Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has decided that they no longer want to provide for the maintenance of the blockhouse.

Rather than let it deteriorate the Revolutionary War Heritage Committee has offered to take over the ownership of the blockhouse. The Heritage Committee is composed of several members of the Oriskany Battle Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the American Revolution, local re-enactors and American history buffs. The only stipulation was that the blockhouse be removed from its present location and the property returned to its original condition. These terms were agreed to and the ownership of the blockhouse has been transferred. We hope to have in moved in either April or May depending on them weather. It's new home will be at the Fort Herkimer Church grounds where the annual re-enactment takes place. The new location has been named Patriot field and will be located near where the re-enactment takes place. This program will be held on October 13th and 14th. If you are in the area stop in and see our latest addition along with the three new flagpoles that have been set. Submitted by: *The Rev. Terry L. Sheldon, President Oriskany Battle Chapter* ■



*Left to Right: Steve Coye, Jonathan Goebel, Henry Goebel, Duane Booth, Mike Companion, Tivo Africa, Rich Fullam, George Ballard & Dennis Marr*

## STONY POINT CHAPTER

Compatriot Gene Erickson, Rockland County Veteran of the Year for 2007, and I (Barry Brooks), attended the "Four Chaplain Service" in New City on Sunday, February 4, 2007. Gene represented the Marine Corps League, I represented the Coast Guard Auxiliary (also an Army veteran), but **we both represented the Sons of the American Revolution**. This ceremony commemorated and cherished the memory of all who perished in this tragic troop ship sinking in WW II. The facts for those of us too young at the time to remember were re told. This moving



Saturday 24 February 2007 Louisville, Kentucky  
NSSAR National Leadership and Trustees Meeting  
(left to right) Compatriot Grassl, KSSSAR; Compatriot Goebel, ESSSAR;  
Compatriot Dixon, DCSSAR, Compatriot Kelch, OKSSAR



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