



EMPIRE PATRIOT

Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution

Preserving the Past, Forming the Future

Vol. 20 Issue 2: January – March, 2020

Winter Issue



George Gydesen, President

Message from the President

As the season of Joy, Anticipation, Peace and love moves in to bring a new rebirth to each of us, may we ponder the days of the past, remembering the events that become part of us and our thoughts may we remember the sacrifices our ancestors put forth on Christmas night in 1776 in the effort to attain our Republic.

Hopefully we all have had wonderful memories to carry us into the new year.

Good News on the Odell House. VP Metropolitan Region Ken Stevens has reported that the Town of Greenburg has learned that it is the recipient of a \$1,200,000 grant from NY State for the restoration of the Odell House. The State will contribute \$600,000 towards the restoration work and the town, along with the Friends of Odell house Rochambeau Headquarters will raise the matching funds. This is the first big step in their goal of making the Odell House a place of learning for all of us. The friends of Odell house are ready to receive donations now. The donation form is on their web site (www.odellrochambeau.org)

Happy New Year
George Gydesen



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Saratoga Surrender Site Dedication

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Upcoming Events

March 28, 2020

ESS Board of Managers Meeting
hosted by the Syracuse Chapter
at the Half-Shire Historical
Society, Richland, NY
Details to Follow

May 2, 2020 -

ESS Annual Meeting
To be hosted by the Thousand
Islands Chapter
Details to Follow

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March ESSAR Board of Managers Meetings

The first Empire State Society Board of Managers meeting of the new year is scheduled for March 28, 2020. It will be hosted by the Syracuse Chapter. Further details will be available on the Syracuse Chapter website (www.syrsar.org) as soon as they are available.

Amendment to By Laws

In accordance with proper procedure the following motion is hereby published in the Empire Patriot newsletter and will be voted upon at the March Board of Managers meeting.

PROPOSED BY-LAWS AMENDMENT

Section X Quorums

1. Fifteen (old: Twenty-one) members of the Society shall constitute a quorum at its annual meeting or any special meeting of the Society.

Get Your ESS-SAR Patriot Certificate

See sample below



To commemorate your ancestral patriot. The Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution has designed this

beautiful certificate. Personalized with your name, your ancestors name, with your state and national member numbers. The certificate is custom printed using the highest quality professional equipment available.

Printed on premium quality heavy paper. A perfect reminder to you and your family who your revolutionary ancestor was. The price for this valuable family record document is very modest at \$20. When you purchase a certificate, five dollars of the purchase price is donated to your chapter.

This beautiful heirloom certificate was designed by compatriot Joseph B. Fitzpatrick, President of the Leather Stocking Chapter, and Vice President of the Capital Region, ESSSAR. Please use the following form to order your Patriot Certificate today.

Empire State Society SAR
Patriot Certificate

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C/O Joseph B. Fitzpatrick
PO Box 193
Esperance, NY 12066



Saratoga Battle Chapter SAR member Larry J. Arnold, and multi-time president of the Friends of Saratoga Battlefield, played a significant role in bringing the Surrender Site at the Saratoga Battlefield Historical Park in Schuylerville, NY to fruition. Most recently he served as chairman of the Surrender Site fundraising project. Larry Arnold, not related to Benedict, is an authority on historical matters, an expert on the American Revolution, and serves as an interpretive Park Ranger at the Saratoga Battlefield. Arnold was a speaker at the dedication ceremony and recognized for his effort..

Surrender Site Unveiled

By Edward Munger Jr., 2nd VP, Saratoga Battle Chapter

Cannon smoke filled the Schuylerville hilltop where dozens gathered to celebrate the new memorial honoring Patriots involved in the pivotal Battles of Saratoga. The October 17, 2019 gathering marked the 242nd anniversary of British General John Burgoyne's surrender to American General Horatio Gates following the Americans' Revolutionary War victories at Saratoga. Several members of the Saratoga Battle Chapter gathered with founders, supporters and others who worked for years to establish the Saratoga Surrender Site memorial.

The Saratoga Battle Chapter's Color Guard marched the American Flag to the podium and, later in the event, sounded a 1700s replica cannon as the recreated 2nd Continental Artillery Regiment. The October event recognized the monumental impact the British Army's surrender at Saratoga had on the world stage. It also served as a time to thank many individuals and groups who made the memorial a reality. The Saratoga Surrender Site features a granite memorial wall on the same hill overlooking the Hudson River where British and American troops gathered for a feast and ceremonial sword surrender.

Centered on the stone wall is a sculpture in brass by Artist Chas Fagan. The artwork is a rendition of artist John Trumbull's 1821 painting depicting Gen. Burgoyne's surrender. A granite memorial opposite the stone wall honors the generals of the army and the militia members who captured victory at the Battles of Saratoga. It reads: "The Saratoga Surrender Site is dedicated to the soldiers of the United States Army who on this spot accepted the surrender of a British army and forever changed the course of American and World history."

Saratoga Town Supervisor Thomas N. Wood III served as Master of Ceremonies during the event, offering thanks and welcome to all in attendance. U.S. Army veteran Larry J. Arnold, a seasonal interpretive Park Ranger at Saratoga Battlefield and past president of the Friends of Saratoga Battlefield, who served as chairman of the Surrender Site fundraising project, offered words of welcome and history during remarks to the group. "The British plan of invasion was to end the American war for independence, but instead led to a devastating British defeat," Arnold said. "The path that led us here to today's celebrations and the building of this beautiful park was long, but thankfully it brought together a diverse work group and a community that saw the value and the historic significance of this site. "The property went up for sale in 2006, Arnold said, and NYS Assemblyman Steve Englebright and his colleague Sen. Roy

McDonald secured state funding to purchase the land. Early on, donations from the National Park Service Battlefield Protection Program, the Children of the American Revolution and the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust “got the ball rolling,” Arnold said.

“These donations paved the way for what you see here today,” Arnold said.

FEAST AFTER SURRENDER

Historian Eric Schnitzer, a Park Ranger at Saratoga National Historical Park, gave an account of this historic day, using details gleaned from the writings of those who were events, Schnitzer said. Burgoyne and Gates met a half-mile from the surrender site, Schnitzer said, where one of the Continental soldiers recalled Burgoyne approaching Gates with his hat off, extending a handshake. It was their first meeting face to face. The entourage went to the hilltop – now decorated with the new Surrender Site memorial – and had a dinner, Schnitzer said. They sat beneath awnings set up for the feast. Schnitzer said an anonymous British officer listed the menu for the afternoon meal: “A ham, a goose, some beef, and a boiled mutton. The liquor was New England Rum, mixed with rum without sugar.”

Gates is said to have filled a cup for a toast and “in the most polite and liberal manner, drank to his Britannic majesty’s health.” Not to be outdone in politeness, General Burgoyne filled a cup and “Drank to General Washington’s health,” Schnitzer said. The size of the Saratoga-area Revolutionary War engagement is evident in the number of people there. Schnitzer said in total, the American northern army totaled 17,000 which included U.S. Continental Army officers and soldiers from Massachusetts New York, New Hampshire Virginia and Pennsylvania. Most of the American military men were from the militias of the states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and New York. Vermont – which at the time was a newly-declared, independent republic, sent militia troops under the leadership of Brigadier General Jacob Bailey, Schnitzer said. The surrender and departure of British forces included a gauntlet of sorts –as the vanquished trudged down the road while the victorious Americans lined both sides.

Burgoyne’s troops surrendered their weapons on the “Field of Broken Arms,” present-day Fort Hardy Park. Nearly 7,000 soldiers, officers and women and children marched down the road at about 3 p.m., Schnitzer said. The British were in the lead, followed by Germans and then a dwindling number of American Loyalists – those still loyal to the British Crown –and French Canadians. American Indians and First Nations people all left before the surrender took place, Schnitzer said. At the end of the column were hundreds of barefooted women and children, Schnitzer said. A surprised German officer wrote that the American victors “Stood straight and in orderly lines. There was absolute silence in those regiments as can only be demanded from the best disciplined troops. Not a single man gave any evidence or the slightest impression of feeling hatred, mockery malicious pleasure or pride for our miserable fate. Their modesty rather filled us with amazement.”As the defeated group made its way off, the Fifes and Drums played “Yankee Doodle,” Schnitzer said.

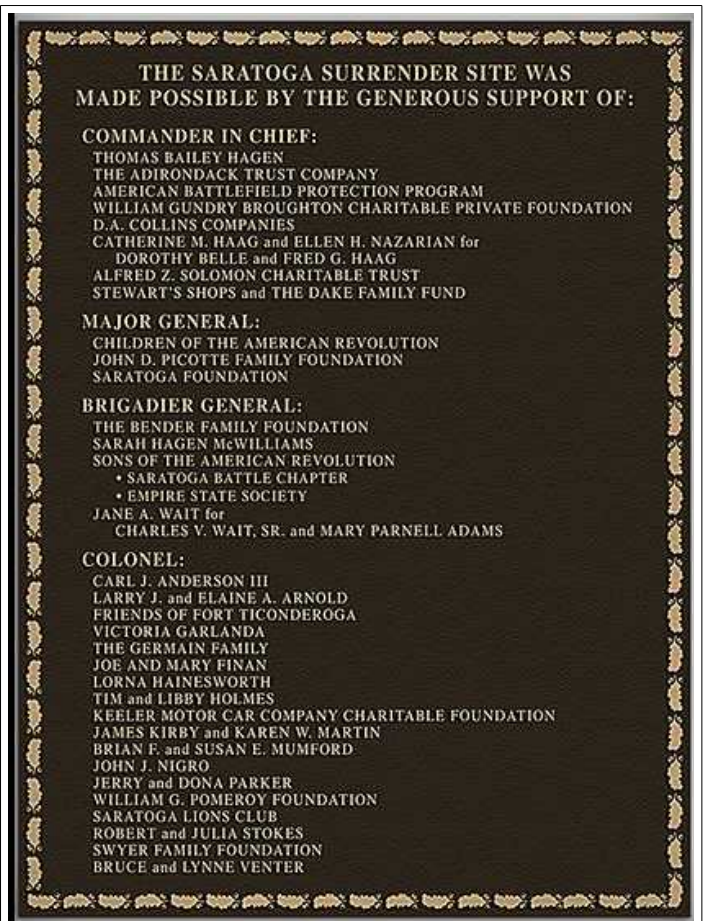
Gates and Burgoyne, from the hill that now serves as the Surrender Site memorial, arose to watch the procession. It was at this time when Burgoyne handed his sword to Gates, Schnitzer said, and then Gates “gave it back to him, as a present.”The end to the 1777 Battles of Saratoga marked an important point in the early days of the Revolutionary War, which raged on until 1783.“Burgoyne’s surrender was only the beginning and few if any here in 1777 could have foreseen its ramifications,” Schnitzer said. RAMIFICATIONS Educator James Kirby Martin, a Professor of History and author of “Insurrection, the American Revolution and its Meaning,” served as a keynote speaker during the site dedication. There have been countless military engagements over the course of human history, Martin said, which highlight a harsh reality: Though millions suffered in and around them, most battles large or small “have really had little lasting significance beyond the momentary confrontation that occurred,” Martin said. Of the untold number of battles, 15 were included in 19th Century Historian Sir Edward Creasy’s book “The 15 Decisive Battles of the World.” Among them are the 1066 Battle of Hastings, the 1588 defeat of the Spanish Armada; and the 1815 Battle of Waterloo in Belgium which ended the Napoleonic Wars. Also prominent among Creasy’s list was the earth-shattering victory of the Americans over British General John Burgoyne, Martin said.

“What happened here wasn’t merely consequential ... it was of grand significance throughout modern history,” Martin said. “This was, for the British Empire, the first time they’ve really lost a battle, and that’s a very, very tragic and traumatic thing for the British Empire,” Martin said. He said the loss in the Northern Campaign shifted the British strategy, forcing their efforts to the south from 1778 to 1781 where the British lost a second army at Yorktown—which represented the beginning of the end of the war, Martin said. The American victory over the British led the French to form an alliance with America. France’s recognition of the young United States as a legitimate nation had important consequences, Martin said. The United States arrived on the world stage as a new Republic among monarchies and totalitarian regimes across the world. “It’s a beginning of something that will be very, very special,” Martin said. “May this site serve as a lasting memorial to those who fought and died on both sides of this remarkable, decisive clash of arms. May it also serve as a daily reminder that freedom is not free, that it must be earned and preserved for the benefit of not just ourselves but also for our posterity. I contend that the remarkable American Revolution was critical, going back to Saratoga, in creating and sustaining hope for greater freedom and liberty for all peoples across the face of the earth. Saratoga was at the heart of this highly consequential trend and development,” Martin said.



(Photo: Heather Mabee)

Members of the Empire State Society's Saratoga Battle Chapter joined with other groups on October 17, 2019 to celebrate the completion of the new Saratoga Surrender Site in Schuylerville, NY.



(Photo: Larry Arnold)

Note from the Editor: If your chapter would like to have your stories, events and photos published in the *Empire Patriot* send your material to Editor Karl Danneil at kdanneil@fairpoint.net

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