



SAR Alabama



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we approach the end of one year and the beginning of another, it is always appropriate to do a bit of housecleaning, to identify needs, issues, wants, successes, failures, etc...

At this point, our dues collection process has been ongoing for four months. Our main focus throughout this year has been to put our Society back on a growth track and to reduce the average number of yearly drops across the State due to lack of dues payments.

We have had some success in this effort this year. I have come to the conclusion that permanently reversing this trend requires a permanent focus throughout every year in the future.

We have had some level of success this year thanks to David Jones, Benny Hannah, Ron Bearden, Dudley Burwell, Price Legg, Bill Daniel and Scott Martin all who serve on the Membership Committee. The focus of that committee has been to implement our membership retention efforts through dues collection.

I am very thankful to each of the members of that committee. How successful we have been is yet to be determined, but it does appear that we have minimized or at least reduced the "bleeding" this year and potentially put us back on a growth track.

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ALSSAR readies for state convention

The Alabama Society's annual state convention will take place on Feb. 23-24 at the Embassy Suites in Hoover.

A block of rooms is open and available for you to book with our special rates.

The convention opens on Friday at 1 p.m. with the annual genealogy workshop conducted by ALSSAR registrar Ron Bearden. (For more information, see the story on page 2).

At the conclusion of the workshop, a special presentation on "DNA and SAR" will be conducted by ALSSAR genealogist Earl Gillian

and former ALSSAR president Bill Daniel.

The day's events will conclude with the annual Friday night reception from 6:30-8 p.m.

The business meeting will kick off Saturday, followed by the youth awards luncheon. The Saturday night awards banquet will include special guests NSSAR Secretary General Darryl Addington and Medal of Honor recipient Mike Rose.

The nominating committee of Edmon McKinley,

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—Photo courtesy of Benny Hannah

Members of the ALSSAR Color Guard with the Pomeroy Foundation marker.

First 'historical marker' unveiled at ceremony

The Tennessee Valley chapter joined forces with the Alabama Brigade, Society of the Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge, the Huntsville chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, CAR chapters from Huntsville and Athens and the ALSSAR Color Guard for a

marker unveiling on Oct. 22.

We were especially honored to unveil the first "historic marker" for patriot burial in Alabama.

These beautiful historical markers are provided by a grant from the Pomeroy Foundation located in Rochester, N.Y.

The unveiling was done by Tennessee Valley chapter president Mark Hubbs.

A very special congratulation letter from the Pomeroy Foundation was read to the audience by master of ceremonies Benny Hannah.

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Message

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Our Strategic Planning Committee headed by Fred Olive is alive and well and putting together our strategic plan which will be presented at the upcoming state convention. And, while we are talking about the state convention, please consider joining us this year at the Embassy Suites in Hoover. It promises to be a wonderful time with your SAR family and friends across the state of Alabama.

Other ongoing efforts include:

- The George Washington Tent -- effort is not as far along as any of us would like it to be, but is continuing to progress. We will be talking about that at the state con-

vention as well.

- Committee on Committees -- headed by Michael Martin and will be presented at the state convention.

- Congress Fundraising -- we are part of the way to our fundraising goal of \$15,000. We anticipate being around \$13k at our state convention.

- ALSSAR Insurance -- we anticipate having a presentation on our insurance policy at the state convention. This presentation will be provided by our State Farm representative.

There are many things happening within SAR and your state society. We cannot be successful without your participation, so please join us in Hoover at the Embas-

sy Suites in February. For more information on the State Convention, please go to <https://alssar.org/events>.

Thank you for being a part of the Alabama Society, Sons of the American Revolution. Please help us identify additional people who might be interested in joining this fine organization. And always remember that our overall goals are patriotic, historical and educational and your membership helps us to be successful in the pursuit of each of those goals.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve the Alabama Society as your president this year.

—Jim Griffith

Annual genealogy workshop to focus on preparation for SAR applications

ALSSAR registrar Ron Bearden has announced that, once again, he will conduct a genealogy workshop at the 2024 ALSSAR state convention.

The workshop will be held on Friday (Feb. 23) from 1-3 p.m., with the specific location in the Embassy Suites still to be determined.

With all the changes in genealogy policies and application preparation over the past couple years, this year's workshop will focus on "Suggestions for Streamlining and Improving Preparation of SAR Applications."

Every Alabama SAR member should understand the basics of application preparation and what is required when preparing an SAR application for a prospective member.

Even if you have prepared SAR applications in the past, you should attend this workshop so you will understand all of the new requirements and changes which have taken place over the past couple of years.

Bearden admits that, over the past two years he has changed his approach to preparing an application and will demonstrate his approach during the workshop.

He will explain and demonstrate new rules and policies so all attendees will gain at least basic knowledge

about application preparation. There will be several handouts available.

Bearden has been a member of the Sons of American Revolution since 1989. He has served as the ALSSAR registrar for 19 years. Bearden has personally sponsored more than 300 new members and has reviewed approximately 3,000 applications which have been submitted to SAR. He currently serves on the NSSAR genealogy committee.

The genealogy workshop is open to anyone who wants to attend.

All ALSSAR chapter registrars should make plans to attend.

There is no registration fee for the workshop and although we would like to have a large attendance for the convention, you do not have to be registered for the ALSSAR convention to attend the workshop.

Attendees to the workshop will need to submit a convention registration form with your attendance for the genealogy workshop indicated on the form.

This is necessary so the correct number of handouts may be prepared.

The ALSSAR convention registration form may be found on-line at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1POqIAM-Xbueckz-0AU27gpwFQwXkypGE/view>

Revolutionary War Rarities podcast growing in popularity

Revolutionary War Rarities is the national podcast and newest education program from the Sons of the American Revolution.

You may wonder; "what is a podcast?" Well, it is basically a radio program or a news broadcast. The name "podcast" came from people who used to download programs to their iPods for listening when they were running or working out.

There is nothing special required to listen to Revolutionary War Rarities. The most simple way to listen to Revolutionary War Rarities is to visit our website at www.fastfunhistory.com. You will find links to all episodes at that website as well as our blog, This Day In History, and Revolutionary Times.

At this point, Revolutionary War Rarities is averaging around 770 views and/or listens per episode and has been seen on every Continent except Antarctica.

There are 42 episodes available covering a variety of unusual topics like George Washington's Dog, Revolutionary War Scandals, The Baker General, and many, many more.

Please help support Revolutionary War Rarities by simply joining our Facebook Group, following us on Instagram, and subscribing to our YouTube Channel.

And you can always stay "up to date" by visiting www.fastfunhistory.com.

In order to more rapidly increase our podcast growth, it is critical that our own membership begin watching and sharing these episodes.



—Photos courtesy of Benny Hannah

ALSSAR and DAR members converge on Eldridge Cemetery for unveiling of first ‘historic marker.’

Marker

(Continued from Page 1)

The marker was unveiled at the graves of patriot John Peyton Powell and his wife, Elizabeth Biscoe Powell, at the Eldridge Cemetery in Madison County.

Greetings were provided by ALSSAR president James Griffith, Alabama state regent Patrice Donnelly of the DAR and Cheryl Lewicki, DVF commander and chief. Special DVF wreaths were placed by Lewicki, Susan Royer, commander of the Alabama Brigade DVF, and Anita Bianconi, commander of the Georgia Brigade DVF.

The DAR marker was unveiled by Paige Morris and Charles Powell, descendants of John Peyton Powell and Elizabeth Biscoe Powell. Additional wreaths were then placed by Gweneth Smithers, Huntsville chapter NSDAR regent, followed by four other Madison County DAR chapters.

The Tennessee Valley chapter, two CAR chapters, family descendents and the ALSSAR Color Guard all followed up by honoring the patriot and his wife by placing their wreaths in the cemetery.



—Photo courtesy of Benny Hannah

Patriot descendent Frank Powell, center, with ALSSAR Color Guard and compatriots at ceremony.

Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

Jim Maples, John Wallace and David Jones submitted the list of officers for 2024 — president Michael Martin (Cahaba-Coosa); vice-president Benny Hannah (Tennessee Valley); secretary Ron Dains (J.A. Elmore); recording secretary Bill Carter (Cahaba-Coosa); treasurer Scott Martin (Cahaba-Coosa); registrar Ron Bearden (Little River); chancellor Jay Maples (Tennessee Valley); genealogist Earl Gillian (J.A. Elmore); historian Bill Dean (J.A. Elmore); chaplain Preston “Buddy” Irving (Black Warrior); and sergeant-at-arms Joseph Barker (J.A. Elmore).

On the Endowment Fund Board, Perry Vickers (Wiregrass) was selected to a three-year term to replace John Wallace. David Jones has two years remaining and Stephen Hooks has one.

Jim Griffith will be the ALSSAR trustee, with Martin as the alternate trustee, pending election and installation at the 2024 Congress.

Dr. John Fred Olive III’s name will be submitted to the Southern District Nominating Committee for Southern District VPG 2024-2025. The VPG will be elected at Congress in July.



—Photos by Dale Crawford

TV personality, author speaks to Little River
Neal Wooten, above, was the keynote speaker at the December meeting of the Little River chapter. Wooten, a Fort Payne native, is an acclaimed author, noted speaker, television personality and syndicated cartoonist. The December meeting is always a joint meeting with the Daughters of the American Revolution and representatives from both the Phillip Hammon chapter and the Hanna White Arnette chapter were represented. Four members of the Phillip Hammon chapter are pictured with Wooten, including, from left: Frances Brownfield, Evelyn Newsome, Wooten, Susan Dooley and Barbara Goodwin.



—Photo courtesy of David Jones

Black Warrior River compatriot entertains DAR

On Nov. 7, the Pickens County DAR chapter hosted a Veterans Day luncheon at the Aliceville Museum. Black Warrior River chapter compatriot Dr. Richard Rhone was the guest speaker, discussing “Lafayette Returns to America, 1824-25.” Dr. Rhone went into detail of the importance of “veterans,” using Lafayette’s return as a prime example of what it means to be a veteran. He specifically discussed his tour in Alabama and the expense the newly formed state went to host the youngest major general to ever serve in the United States. Dr. Rhone noted that Lafayette’s return seemed to bring unity to the United States. Dr. Rhone is an excellent speaker who is not only entertaining but accurate in his research for any topic.





—Photo courtesy of Jason Williams

Richard Henry Lee chapter inducts new officers for 2024

ALSSAR president Jim Griffith, far left, inducted the Richard Henry Lee chapter's officers for 2024 at its December meeting. From left: vice-president Bill Sauser, genealogist/membership Larry Leonard, chaplain Alva Webb, secretary Walker Jackson and treasurer Sid Harden. Not pictured is president Will Mooty.



—Photos courtesy of Jason Williams



Chapter recognizes outgoing president

At its December meeting, the Richard Henry Lee chapter recognized outgoing president Bob Harris, above, for his many years of outstanding leadership and service. ALSSAR president Jim Griffith was on hand to thank Harris for his years of dedication to the SAR.



—Photo courtesy of Jess Brown

Salute to veterans

The color guard of the Tennessee Valley chapter, under the command of Randal Jennings, presented the colors at an annual schoolwide convocation called "Salute to Veterans" on Wednesday, Nov. 8. This event was held at Monrovia Middle School in Huntsville and was coordinated by teacher and Tennessee Valley compatriot Mark Lambert. Approximately 1,100 folks were in attendance, including almost 200 veterans. Among them were two World War II veterans. At left, the Color Guard makes an entrance while, below, Tennessee Valley compatriots chat with veterans at the event.



Chapter assists in opening exhibit at African American Museum

The Murphy House/African American Museum in Tuscaloosa has a new exhibit featuring the role of African Americans in the American Revolution.

Just days before Covid caused the “great shut down,” then-museum director Mason Bonner attended a meeting of the Black Warrior River chapter. In coordination with chapter president Ryan Montgomery, Bonner asked for assistance to establish an exhibit featuring the role of African Americans during the revolution.

He wanted to show the historical value of what black Americans did from a military standpoint to help build this nation.

This sounded like a great project, not only for the Black Warrior River chapter, but for the Tuscaloosa community and West Alabama.

Then Covid hit and everything was put on hold.

During his third term as president, Montgomery asked David Jones to take the lead on the project. A meeting was held with new museum director Ruby Simon and a couple of the museum board members to discuss what type of exhibit they desired.

Ideas were exchanged and the project grew legs and began running.

The Murphy House Museum has limited space and budget. They wanted the exhibit to be mobile to take it to



—Photo courtesy of David Jones

Black Warrior River chapter members assisted with the Murphy House to add an exhibit featuring the role of African Americans in the Revolutionary War.

schools and other community events.

The project focused on the 1st Rhode Island Regiment. A picture of the style uniform was presented to the board members along with other famous black Americans during the war.

We started with “The Boston Massacre,” featuring Crispus Attucks as one of the first casualties of the war.

The Museum of the American Revolution provided a roster of Black Americans of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment.

Jim Capers, a free man of color who is buried in Pike

County, is also featured in the exhibit.

Other biographies include those of Peter Salem, Salem Poor, James Armistead, Jude Hall and Phillis Wheatley.

Approximately 20 books for different age groups about African American heroes of the American Revolution were also donated to the museum by members of the Black Warrior River chapter.

Each step of the way, Simon was kept up to date on the progress of the exhibit. Each time that she was notified, the excitement in her voice and in her writings was exhilarating to say the least.

The exhibit made its debut on Nov. 10 during the museum’s Veterans Day program. Numerous media outlets were in attendance as Simon began calling everyone that she could think of on the day the exhibit was set up.

A huge thank you to the George Washington Endowment Fund for supporting this project.

Other sponsors are The Museum of the American Revolution and compatriots Ryan Montgomery, Rich Johnson, Kevin Windham, Craig Patterson and David Jones.

—David Jones

'THIS IS MY FOTHER'S HORN'

A Revolutionary War-era powder horn carried at the Battle of New Orleans

By M.E. Hubbs

Jan. 8 marks the 209th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. This battle, although not fought during the Revolution, did decide the fate of British influence in the fledgling United States and forever solidified American independence from the British. The victory at New Orleans in 1815 was so important that "The Eighth," as it was called, was a national holiday from 1828 until 1861. It was second only to the Fourth of July for patriotic celebrations.

I'll not try to repeat the story of that important, one-sided victory for the fledgling United States. That has been chronicled by many others. Instead here is the story of one man who was there and the 1775 powder horn that he carried into battle.



The Thomas Whitwell Powder Horn

Early powder horns with good provenance to the War of 1812 and earlier eras are quite rare. Many that have survived did so because of well executed inscribing and carving that propelled the horn into the realm of folk art as much as historic artifact. Other horns only survived by chance. Simple horns carried by common soldiers are the rarest and are usually the most difficult to document.

The horn that is the subject of this article has an impeccable provenance, yet it is a simple horn, carried by an ordinary man during an extraordinary moment in history.

Thomas Whitwell was the quintessential American frontiersman of the late 18th and early 19th century. He is remarkable only by the extraordinary amount of documentation pertaining to him that was recorded in legal and governmental records of his time.

In an era when few left a trace on the written record, evidence of Whitwell's life stretches from Massachusetts to Louisiana and several states in between. Most of the details of Thomas Whitwell's life have been discovered through the diligent research of his fourth great-grandson, Dr. David Whitwell. That research, coupled with family oral traditions, has pieced together a compelling story of tragedy and adventure.

Thomas was born in 1774 and was only a toddler when he was "bound out" to his maternal grandfather at Charlotte Courthouse, Virginia. His father had died suddenly in 1775 and his newly remarried mother left him and his older brother in the care of relatives when she departed for the Kentucky wilderness

with her new husband.

In 1791, when Thomas was 17 he was either released or fled an apprenticeship with William Johnson. Family oral traditions are that Thomas was "shanghaied" and later jumped ship in Boston. On Dec. 12, 1791 the *Boston Gazette* reported that the ship *Generous Friends* had arrived in Boston from Africa. A few weeks later a Thomas Whitwell received two official "warnings" from Boston authorities to leave the city. Thomas was listed as "white" and his last residence as "Africa." The family stories of abduction and jumping ship appear to be true, and on a slaver no less!

Thomas next appears in Mercer County, Kentucky where he joined his older brother, mother and stepfather. He married Polly Anderson there in 1798. By 1802 he was in Barron County, Kentucky. Just before the War of 1812, Thomas moves again to recently opened lands along Yellow Creek in Dickson County, Tennessee. It is here in 1814, at the age of 39 that he and his brother-in-law and best friend, Elkanah Anderson, would join Captain Ellis's Company of Militia.

Ellis's company was one of about 30 companies of West Tennessee militia that were raised in the autumn of 1814. William Carroll of Jackson's staff was sent home to recruit a new force to assist in the defense of New Orleans. Carroll succeeded in raising three regiments.

Ellis's Company, raised in Dickson County, was made a part of Colonel John Cocke's 2nd Regiment. (This John Cocke is not to be confused with General John Cocke of the East Tennessee Militia during the Creek Indian War.) Carroll's command made a torturous 1,300 mile, month-long journey down the Cumberland, Ohio and Mississippi rivers and reached New Orleans on Dec. 20, 1814.

Carroll's three regiments were placed near the center of the American line along the Rodriguez Canal. They took part in the fighting on Dec. 27 and Dec. 31 and the climatic battle on Jan. 8, 1815. Carroll's regiments occupied the line just opposite of where Lieutenant General Sir Edward Pakenham was killed on Jan. 8.

Family tradition states that Thomas's brother-in-law, Elkanah Anderson, was killed in the famous battle. Muster rolls from Ellis's company show that Elkanah died on Jan. 15 in New Orleans. It is not clear if the death was due to wounds received during the engagement or from other causes.

The horn is rather small in size with a total length of approximately nine inches. Though relatively small, the volume of the horn would comfortably hold the one quarter pound of powder that militiamen armed with rifles were required to provide for themselves under the Militia Act of 1792.

The base of the horn is nine inches in circumference and the hardwood base cap appears to have been originally attached to the horn body with metal tacks. Although the tacks are missing from the 14 evenly spaced holes, the tale-tale signs of the tack heads are visible around the holes. The base cap is not lathe turned, but is hand carved with the base and sling button carved from a single piece of wood.

See HORN, Page 9

Horn

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To prevent (or to repair) cracks the horn spout has been reinforced with lead. It appears that the spout was cast and bored then slid over the spout mouth atop a previous sheet lead repair. There is no way of determining if the lead spout was applied when the horn was in use by Whitwell. The horn lacks a stopper or sling.

Inscriptions on the horn body are rather crude. The various lines of the 1812 era inscription appear to have been added in stages. There is also speculation that the horn originally belonged to Whitwell's father, also named Thomas. This is due to the date "1775" which seems to be out of context with the rest of the inscription on the horn. This is a year after the birth of Thomas Jr. and the year of Thomas Sr.'s death.

The lines are inscribed from the base towards the spout and are generally justified on the left near the base cap. They read:

The War of 1812 era inscription is followed by this:

THIS IS MY FOTHER'S HORN

Wm. WHITWELL 1818

William Whitwell was Thomas's oldest son. It is not clear whether the "This is my father's horn" was carved by Thomas, referring to Thomas Sr., or by William in reference to Thomas Jr. Changes in the style of carving suggest it is the former.

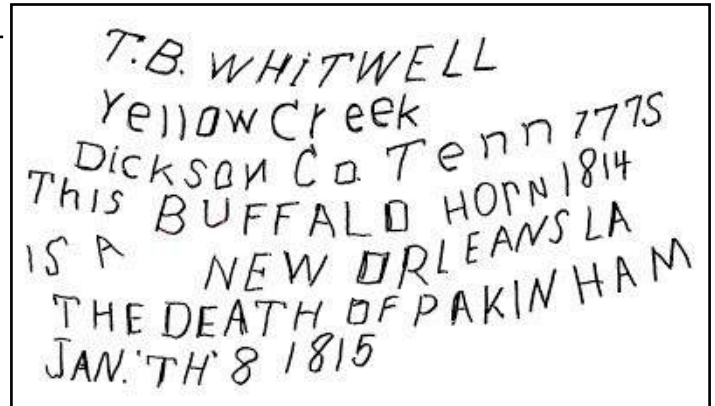
From Thomas down, the horn passed through a five-generation unbroken line of descent. Each descendant-owner inscribed a line on the horn to celebrate their generation. Some put their names and date of acquisition; others added their name and birth date. The last descendant-owner that appears on the horn is also the only female. She added her name and birth-day:

LETA WILMA WHITWELL

5-24-1910

Leta Whitwell Johnson inherited the horn sometime after the death of her father in 1947. After many years of correspondence with Dr. David Whitwell, who descends from Thomas through a different line, she decided to pass the horn to him to keep it in possession of a Whitwell.

David was granted the horn in 1975 and drove from California to Oklahoma to secure the treasure. It was rescued from the Johnson family barn. The loose base cap and long cracks in the



horn are the result if it being stepped on by a cow at some time before its rescue! The horn also shows signs of earlier repairs.

Although some may be disappointed that additional lines and names were added to this horn after its first historic inscription, those carvings are indicative of the significance and importance each succeeding generation has placed on this treasured family heirloom.

Without that family perception of importance this artifact may never have survived to surpass its standing of heirloom, to become an artifact of national significance.

Acknowledgments:

My thanks to Dr. David Whitwell for remaining patient with my many emails concerning Thomas Whitwell and his horn. And most of all for the diligent research that he has done on our common fourth great-grandfather. Besides my fourth great grandfather, Thomas Whitwell, I had three uncles in the same militia company. Thomas and Uncle Elkanah Anderson were from my mom's side of the family. Bane and William Hubbs were from my father's side. It was only coincidence that these men all ended up in the same Middle Tennessee militia company. The families would not be allied by marriage for another 150 years!

A version of this article originally appeared in: Military Collector & Historian; Spring 2008, Vol. 60 Issue 1, p2 (The Journal of the Company of Military Historians)

—Photo courtesy of William Rozier



Cheaha chapter welcomes secretary
ALSSAR secretary Benny Hannah was the featured speaker at the Cheaha chapter's monthly meeting on Oct. 11 in the Anniston Room of the Anniston/Calhoun County Public Library. Hannah presented a program on "Americanism" for the chapter. After the presentation, chapter president Eric Sloughfy, left, and chapter vice-president Ron Burson, right, give Hannah a National Society Sons of the American Revolution's Challenge Coin.

**ALABAMA SOCIETY, SONS OF
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALSSAR

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If you're submitting material for the next newsletter, please e-mail your pictures and information to timgaylesar@gmail.com or send information about your chapter's activities or upcoming events by March 10 to Tim Gayle at 3104 Cabot Street, Montgomery, AL 36110.



—Photo courtesy of Edmon McKinley

***Gen. Galvez chapter
presents gifts to veterans***

Pictured are the gifts presented by the Gen. Galvez chapter to the veterans at the William F. Greene State Veterans Home in Bay Minette. Chapter members contributed nearly \$1,800 for gifts that included drinks, candy, board games, snack treats and clothing items. This has been a project of the Gen. Galvez chapter for a number of years. Compatriots Tommy Rhodes (second from left) and chapter Veteran's Committee chairman Edmon McKinley (second from right) are pictured here with some of the veterans home staff.