

SAR Meeting Minutes, May 9, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 10:01 AM by Vice President Don Hansen, with welcoming comments.

Our Sergeant of Arms, Chuck Opferman, indicated that there were 68 in attendance and presented an American History for May 1776 including the capture of Fort Ticonderoga. Don Hansen added that on this date, May 9, 1754, Benjamin Franklin published his now famous “Join or Die” cartoon in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. "Join or Die" is the first known political cartoon produced by an American colonist. The woodcut, depicting a snake severed into eight pieces representing the colonies, aimed to urge colonial unity.



The Invocation was led by Past President Jerry Byers, the Pledge of Allegiance by Treasurer Lee Duff, and the SAR Pledge was led by Secretary Rick Smith.

The April 2026 meeting minutes submitted by Secretary Rick Smith were approved as written and sent out.

Treasurer Lee Duff reported our Chapter balance and our membership is 115.

Our speaker was Henry Stish, President of The Villages Genealogical Society, and his topic was “AI Tools for Genealogy.” AI tools are constantly evolving, and new ones are being introduced. Currently some of the best are Perplexity, Gemini, Claude, Nano Banana, and ChatGPT; each having their strengths and weaknesses. Some of the uses for AI in family research are to restore old, faded and damaged photos, determining the date of a photo, identifying the people in a photo, translating documents from cursive or foreign languages, and even generating videos from photographs. As an example of the latter, Henry showed a video based on an old photo and the verbal family history that had been passed down through generations.

Cindy Clark Kelly remembered the story about how her 2x great grandfather survived during the Civil War because of advice from his mother (“When things get hard, hold on.”) and her gift to him before he left for the war of a gold ring family heirloom. As a Union army soldier, Henry Psmore carried that ring throughout the war, and his eventual capture as a prisoner of war, until he finally had to use the ring to pay for a cabbage when he was starving! That cabbage helped him survive. You can watch the complete video at <https://youtu.be/LLNk3H4xiDk> , “The Inheritance, The survival story of Henry Pasmore.” Henry Stish produced the video using Google Veo 3.1. Cindy Kelly was with us at our meeting today for its showing.



Don and Henry

Announcements:

- 1. This month's Split-the Pot drawing was \$85, with the proceeds going to our Education Awards for local students.**

2. Next month, our program will be John Rainey speaking about the "History of Old Glory and our Patriotic Songs and Holidays".
3. The Chapter will again be participating in the Memorial Day Flag ceremony at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, information forthcoming.
4. Florida Sons of Liberty Brigade will be commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary on June 26th at the Hardee Agri-Civic Center in Wauchula, FL, beginning at 5 PM.
5. WWII Victory Club meets at the Eisenhower Center at 9:30 am on the 4th Wednesday of each month.
6. Early American History club meets the fourth Thursday of the month at Bridgeport Recreation Center on Buena Vista Blvd. across the street from the Arnold Palmer Country Club and Golf Course. Doors open at 1:00 P.M.> The program begins at 1:30 P.M. and ends at about 3:00 P.M. There is a Question-and-Answer period after the presentation.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

MAY - Bill Lau will present on "Aaron Burr."

Rick Smith led the SAR Recessional and Jerry Byers gave the Benediction.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:26.

Rick Smith

Secretary