



The Valley Patriot

Tennessee Valley Chapter, Alabama Society

Sons of the American Revolution

July/August 2026



President

Lawrence Hillis
256-655-1822
lhillis@bellsouth.net

Vice-President

Ray Cassell
256-323-1261
rvcassell@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

Steve Brouse
256-679-4582
sbstevenb367@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary/ Newsletter Editor

Jim Maples
256-656-9898
jhmables@gmail.com

Treasurer

Ken Michel
843-290-7227
osubken@yahoo.com

Registrar

Mark Hubbs
256-430-0040
mark.hubbs.tvcsar@gmail.com

Chancellor

David Canupp
256-457-5200
djc@lanierford.com

Genealogist

Mark Icenogle
256-924-8082
markice218@gmail.com

Chaplain

Larry Layne
334-312-9188
larry.d.layne@gmail.com

Historian

Richard Blanton
256-325-6395
bluefalcon063@gmail.com

Meeting Schedule

6 July 2026

11:00am Regular Meeting
Huntsville Public Library
1st Floor Meeting Room

11 August 2026

11:00am Regular Meeting
Huntsville Public Library
1st Floor Meeting Room

Greetings Compatriots,

During the Spring our chapter was deeply involved in ROTC/JROTC Award Ceremonies in Huntsville, the city of Madison, Madison County, Limestone County and Morgan County. Steve Brouse coordinated SAR members who attended the school's award programs and presented our certificates and medals to outstanding cadets. The ceremonies began in March and the last one was in May. In most cases, Steve recruited two members to attend the ceremonies at 18 high schools and universities in the north Alabama area. Thanks Steve and to your many volunteers.

The State Board of Managers meeting was held in May 16th at the American Village in Montevallo, Alabama. The color guard was scheduled to present the colors, but at the last minute, was asked to present the colors at the Armed Forces recognition ceremony at St. Thomas church near the American Village at the same time. State Color Guard Commander Joe Barker and State President Ron Dains decided it would be best for the Color guard to accommodate the ceremony at St. Thomas church. It was a large ceremony with many state political officials attending.

On May 19th, Benny Hannah and I presented the Abigail Adams Award to Mrs. Gina Smith at her DAR Awards Ceremony at the Ledges Country Club. Mrs. Smith was responsible to recruiting three SAR members. I would really love to give many more of those awards. After leaving the Club house I spent another 45 minutes driving around the Ledges community viewing the beautiful homes.

Also in May, James Henderson and I spoke at the Liberty Tree Dedication Ceremony at the Morgan County Courthouse. The famous Liberty Tree was an American elm at the Boston Common area where the Sons of Liberty gathered to discuss how the colonies could separate themselves from Great Britain. For years people transplanted seedlings from that same tree in many locations in memory of those first freedom fighters. Obviously since then, there has not been enough seedlings to accommodate the demand. It was an American elm so now it is the custom and purely acceptable to buy an American elm and plant it in an important location with a permanent marker to honor our forefathers.

Continued on next page

We had a great Memorial Day Celebration at Veterans Park again this year. Despite foul weather warnings, when I got there at 10:00 it was a light rain sprinkle which stopped. About 40 groups presented wreaths on behalf of our fallen veterans. Our color guard made up of Randal, Steve, Chip, Scott, Bob, Don, and I presented our chapter wreath.

I am glad to say we got off to a great start for America 250 Celebration. Nationwide several TV channels including A & E and PBS produced really good documentaries about the Revolutionary War. NBC channel 48 has an ongoing program titled We the People featured the Revolutionary War several times. The program is on Saturday morning at 7 AM. Fox Business Channel showed the series Legends and Lies: The Patriots. Fox Nation mobile app has The Patriot War.

Our chapter was involved in many activities in April, May and June. During April and May, Mark and Bob held American 250 zoom calls making plans for the Independence Day activities in Hartselle and the parade in Huntsville. We finished our float in June which depicted the signing of the Declaration of Independence. TV stations have been advertising the parade and highlighting the signing of the Declaration of Independence to begin the parade. Our chapter teamed with DAR for the event. Their float included a bell and was entitled Ringing in the Next 250 Years.

Maddie McCaffrey with WAAY TV conducted interviews with Benny Hannah and put together a really good feature story on the Gray Cemetery in Madison where Patriot William Gray is buried. Hopefully after approval with the land owner is final, we can have a grave marking for William. In the same TV feature, Maddie also interviewed Bill and Susan Sommers who showed her their collection of many colonial era clothing. The TV coverage was on June 11th.

Bob Anderson worked with Hartselle on their American 250 Celebration on July 4th which is a huge event scheduled from 9AM to 2PM in Sparkman Park. Several informative stations will be set up and manned by SAR. Volunteers will speak about Revolutionary War clothing, weapons, camp life and flags.

By the time this newsletter is out, many of the American 250 Celebrations will be over. I appreciate all of you who worked at the events. I hope those of you who attended the events had fun.

Lawrence Hillis
President



Above, our speaker for our May meeting was Vice-President Ray Cassell. Ray's topic was "America's Friends", Whigs in the Parliament.



Above, Bob Cheney receives a Bronze Henry Knox medal and certificate. This award was given by Chapter President Don Wolfe at the March Chapter Banquet.



At the right, Ron Bridges receives the Liberty Medal for being the first line signer on 10 new member applications. This award was made at the 2025 Congress.

Upcoming Events

Monday, 6 July 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room. Speaker, Bob Baccus "Field Music of the American Revolution" **NOTE: FIRST MONDAY**

Tuesday, 11 August 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room. Speaker, Kay Anderson, "The Rooster Crows", the evolution of men's clothing. **NOTE: SECOND TUESDAY**

Saturday, 15 August 2026 - Summer Social, 11:00am, Holmes Street Methodist Great Room

Tuesday, 8 September 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room. Speaker, Mark Hubbs "Uniforms of the American Revolution" **NOTE: SECOND TUESDAY**

Monday, 5 October 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room. **NOTE: FIRST MONDAY**

Monday, 9 November 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room.

Monday, 14 December 2026 - Regular Meeting, 11:00am, Downtown Huntsville Public Library Main Meeting Room.

Welcome New Members!



Brent Jowers



Matthew East



Matthew Bentley



David Poehlein



Thomas Mullins



At the right, Miranda Cassell was our guest speaker for the June meeting. Miranda's topic was "Revolution in Their Words", first hand accounts of those who lived it.



We have a Publicity Chairman! New member David Poehlein has stepped up and volunteered to be our Publicity Chairman. With the size of our Chapter and the number of Chapter activities, this is a much needed and critical position. If you need to contact David his email is: david.poehlein@gmail.com.

David has created an online form for members to submit activities and pictures. Use the following link to open the form:

<https://form.jotform.com/261617790688068>

Scan the QR code at the right to open FastFunHistory.com, the website of Revolutionary War Rarities. You can find our podcast on YouTube, Apple, iHeart Radio, Spotify and others. The website has links to all locations where we can be seen or heard. Please subscribe!



Click on the link below for the latest episode entitled:

"Season 4 Finale, Bullet Holes - 250 Years Later"

<https://youtu.be/4UkOpM3MHj8>

