



President Hoon's Washington's Birthday Remarks Published

Since 1896, the WRSSAR has sponsored an elegant luncheon in honor of George Washington's Birthday. DAR, SAR and Civic organizations from around the area have joined us for this wonderful opportunity to come together to honor George Washington and to learn a bit more about US History. This year, President Zackary Hoon's opening remarks were printed in the Cleveland Plain Dealer (3/1/2023) as an Op-Ed. We reprint those remarks here today:

It is a pleasure to have you all here today. I've been thinking, everyone of us in this room is truly blessed. We're either blessed by our heritage or blessed with a shared interest in education, patriotism, and especially history. This is something I hope that we never take for granted. Because history is important. And it is important for us to know our history, all of it; not only the glorious parts but even the uncomfortable sometimes ugly parts. As the saying goes "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

We can't change history but we can learn from it and improve. Ever since our Founding Fathers established our great country, we've been a work in process; ever improving; ever being an example to the rest of the world on how to live free. Has it all been perfect? Absolutely not. Do we have room for improvement? Certainly. But we will continue to learn and get better; we always have; as long as we remember our past and learn from it. Unfortunately, most schools today only gloss over our nation's early history. The Revolutionary War is typically covered somewhere between the third and fifth grades. Then that's it. In high school, American history typically doesn't start until the Civil War. And, on December 16th we will mark the 250th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party. This will be followed by a succession of 250th Anniversaries of events we all are familiar with: the First Continental Congress, Lexington & Concord, Bunker Hill, Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death Speech," the publishing of Thomas Paine's "Common Sense," the writing of our Declaration of Independence and so on and so on.

Each of us is duty bound to help keep our history alive so that we never forget the lessons learned and sacrifices made. And our nation's history is full of sacrifices. Sacrifices that in the end made us stronger. The Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Civil Rights Movement... these are just some of the major events that formed our national identity. But, there were also millions of smaller, personal sacrifices that continue to this day; from our early pioneers to the waves of immigrants who came through Ellis Island to those becoming Naturalized Citizens today. All of these sacrifices, large and small, taken together, make us the great melting pot that is the envy of the free world. And it all started with the Revolutionary War. This history is important and it belongs to each and every American citizen. It just so happens that for some of us it's personal. But all of us in this room can trace our own family history back to someone that left what they knew to take a chance on a better life, here. They made sacrifices... sacrifices large and small that make us ALL, Americans.

Personally, I am fortunate to have uncovered a rich family history that on my Father's side goes back the Winthrop Fleet and the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630; but, on my Mother's side, her father came through Ellis Island from Romania in the early 1900s. So I understand both perspectives. And looking back at all of the sacrifices, from both sides, that were made to allow me to be here today is truly humbling. And you all have your own American story; a story of sacrifice that made you who you are today. Your dates and the places are different than mine. But sacrifices were made; sacrifices that allow you to be here today. If you know your story, cherish it; and if you don't, discover it. Because, like I said, history is important. And AMERICAN HISTORY is unique in the history of the world. And all of us have ancestors whose sacrifices made our country what it is today. And, I can think of no better time to reflect on this than on Washington's Birthday. I'm glad you're all here with us today.

WESTERN RESERVE CIRCULAR

The Western Reserve Circular is the official publication of the Western Reserve Society, Sons of the American Revolution, established in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1892.

The editor is J. Atlee Horner, III.

Pictures by Zackary Hoon

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COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Due to the rising costs of printing and postage, we are striving to communicate as much as possible with our members through our website and email!

However, we pledge to keep email communication to as few emails as is necessary to communicate with our members. Please do NOT unsubscribe to emails because once you block delivery, we will never be able to communicate with you again. We truly will only communicate events and important pieces of club information.

From our website, you can:

1. Read all newsletters
2. Access the most current Membership Roster pdf
3. See the Calendar of UpComing Events
4. RSVP & PrePay for all WRSSAR events
5. Renew your membership dues
6. See videos on our media page
7. (Coming Soon) Stream our events online
8. See & Purchase books written by our members
9. See the list of MEMORIAL DONATIONS and the members for whom donations have been made over the years. We are approaching nearly \$100,000 in donations made in honor of members and their families.
10. Archives of important documents & paperwork
11. Contact us via email from the website



Stay in touch with the WRSSAR: Visit our Facebook page for photos, news and updates: www.facebook.com/wrssar

Or, visit our website at www.wrssar.org

Reviving Our Patriot Grave Marking Efforts

Out-Going President Ross Rebuilds Veterans & Graves Committees during his tenure

Throughout his two year term, President Ross guided the WRSSAR back from the depths of the pandemic with a focus on rebuilding our Veterans Committee and supporting Compatriot Horner's leadership in the Graves Committee.

Former Presidents Shanklin and Ross have found *a great new leader in member Michael Quintus* who has plans to honor and celebrate the lives of multiple Patriot Ancestors buried in our geographical area. He hopes to hold these events in 2023

with TV & Print Media present. Graves Chairman Horner is also looking for Boy Scouts / Girl Scouts and other organizations that would like to volunteer to clean and place flags/flowers at sites around the area.

Above, on December 17th, 2022, the Western Reserve Society marked the Patriot Grave of John Shepard at during the traditional events associated with Wreaths Across America at a cemetery in North Royalton, Ohio. Pictured at the marking from left to right are long time WRSSAR members: Greg Arnold; Galen Swab; Zack Hoon; Lee McBride.

It is believed that patriot John Shepard (also "Shepherd"), at a reported 117 years old at time of death, lived the longest of any Patriot in US history. Shepard started his military service under the Union Jack in the French and Indian Wars, fighting with General Braddock (and a young George Washington) in the disastrous 1755 campaign at Monongahela.

Shepard was already of middle age when he enlisted in Pennsylvania with the Continental Army. Records indicate he fought at Brandywine, as well as, Germantown Flats, and was with General Washington at Valley Forge 1777 – 1778. Like many Patriots, after the war, he moved (and with a very young new bride) to the

Western Reserve, and was an original settler of Royalton Township, now known as North Royalton.

We honor his service to our country. A list of all known Patriot Grave Sites in the area is on our website.



2022 Eagle Scout Award Winner's Essay

For decades, Fred Watkins has chaired the WRSSAR High School Essay and Eagle Scout contests. Fred reports that often our winners are young people of incredible character and talent whom he expects to go on to make an impact in the world. Our Eagle Scout winner won 2nd place at the Ohio Society SAR and he has agreed to let us reprint a copy of his essay. Parker Weitzel was a senior from Fairview Park High School.

"Live Free or Die . Death is not the worst of evils." are inspiring words from General John Stark. An experienced former British officer during the French and Indian War, John Stark began the Revolutionary War as a Colonel in the New Hampshire militia. During the Battle of Bunker Hill, Col Prescott and his American forces of a few hundred men were holding their position against heavy naval bombardment and requesting reinforcements. Col Stark and his militia bravely marched through cannon fire without any casualties to support Prescott. Stark Wisely determined that the British forces would deploy at the Mystic River near Bunker Hill. His men were ordered to prepare the area for defense by building a small stone wall and strengthening an existing fence. As the first British soldiers approached, the Americans opened fire killing many before the enemy retreated. Two additional British charges were repulsed by the New Hampshire militia that day. The British suffered heavy losses but eventually pushed Prescott's forces off the hill. Col Stark ordered his men to provide covering fire for their retreat.



George Washington offered John Stark a commission in the Continental Army because of his experience and leadership. Stark and his New Hampshire men were involved in the failed invasion of Canada and later the battles of Princeton and Trenton, New Jersey. Stark became disillusioned with the Continental Army and resigned when a fellow officer, that he felt was inferior, was promoted. He still wished to protect his home state and accepted the position of Brigadier General in the New Hampshire Militia. Stark recruited over fourteen hundred men and traveled to Vermont. The General received information about a supply raid by Lt Col Friedrich Baum's enemy forces heading towards the town of Bennington and marched his militia to intercept them. On August 16, 1777, the two sides fought. Stark's superior forces and strategy during the battle worked and Baum's allies retreated, leaving only Baum and his soldiers remaining. Baum was mortally wounded before his remaining men surrendered. Then, enemy reinforcements led by Lt Col Heinrich Von Breymann arrived. Colonial reinforcements led by Col Seth Warner entered the battle to support Stark and his men. Breymann and his remaining forces were forced to retreat from the battle with heavy casualties. Enemy losses were recorded as 207 dead and 700 wounded that day compared to 30 American dead and 40 wounded.

Stark was promoted to Brig Gen in the Continental Army on October 4th, 1777. John Stark's leadership and the Battle of Bennington helped weaken the British northern army led by Gen John Burgoyne. The lost men and supplies would have supported Burgoyne's forces at the Battle of Saratoga. Stark and his men were also able to block the last escape route the British had before they were forced to surrender. After serving with honor throughout the war, Gen Stark retired to his farm in New Hampshire.

Bennington veterans assembled for a reunion in 1809 but Stark was 81 and in poor health. He sent a letter to his comrades ending with his famous quote above. John Stark passed away at age 94 in 1822. "Live Free or Die" became the New Hampshire state motto in 1945. A bronze Statue of Gen Stark at the New Hampshire Statehouse commemorates his patriotism. (Footnotes deleted for space considerations; photo from Wikipedia)

Get-To-Know Our Members & Leadership

The Board of the WRSSAR would like all of our members to get to know one of our newer members and someone who brings great enthusiasm and leadership to the WRSSAR. Mike is leading our efforts to recognize the patriot ancestors buried in our area and has expressed an interest in trying to generate great PR for our organization. Here is a short biography so that we can all get to know this wonderful man.

Mike Quintus joined the SAR through his 5th Great Grandfather, Alexander Erskine. Patriot Erskine enlisted on Sept 10, 1777 in Col. William Jones Regiment, in Capt. Henry Hunter's Company. He later served as a life guard to George Washington. At the close of the war, Patriot Erskine returned to Bristol, Maine, and became the captain of a vessel. In 1784, on a Voyage to Boston with a load of lumber, Captain Erskine encountered a severe storm and was driven ashore at Ipswich, Massachusetts. He lost most of his load during the storm. In addition to having to pay for repairs to his boat, he had to pay \$150 to float while his boat was being repaired. He made it back to Bristol, where he spent the rest of his life.

Like his 5th Great Grandfather, Mike also served his country in the Marine Corps. Mike lives in North Royalton with his wife of 17 years, and teenage children. Mike is a Senior Project Manager in the Oil and Gas industry, and has a few hobbies that include Powerlifting, Recreational boating on Lake Erie, and competitive shooting.

Pictures: Upper Right: Mike's leadership at the WWA event in North Royalton; Lower Right: Mike's family photo of him power-lifting; Below: Mike presenting a wreath with the WRSSAR Color Guard in December of 2022 (furthest right)



Remember to notify us at any time concerning: A change in address or phone number; A change in email address; Or the passing of a beloved SAR member.

Unveiling the Archibald Willard Circle in the WRSSAR

At the Western Reserve Society Sons of the American Revolution, our mission is dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history and teaching American history to future generations. This mission extends far beyond the here and now. WRSSAR has formed the Archibald Willard Circle. This group recognizes those members that are planning for the future, while remembering our Revolutionary past.

The inclusion of Western Reserve Society Sons of the American Revolution in your will, estate and/or planned giving arrangements allows us to promote fellowship among the descendants of those who sacrificed to achieve the independence of the American people, to inspire them and the community at large with a more profound reverence for the principles of the government founded by our forefathers; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom. over decades and generations to come.

Whether you would like to put your donation to work today or after your lifetime to secure your legacy, the process is simple and we would welcome the opportunity to assist you. The official form is available in the Members Only area of our website (password: WRSSAR1892)



Pictures from the recent past (top left > bottom)

Family Fun @ the WRSSAR Holiday Party DEC 2022

Remember, we may be a male lineage society but all of our events are open to wives, children, friends, etc.

More and more, we will offer events that are activity based such as Happy Hour, Sports, Picnics: Give us ideas!

Washington's Bday luncheons @ Shaker Club 2023 & 2022.

New Member Induction post covid pandemic @ Union Club

A Call to Support Your LOCAL WRSSAR Chapter and Our Efforts

The Western Reserve Society SAR is a fully volunteer organization—actually, the oldest and largest local chapter in the United States.

There are two ways that you can help us to grow and become more well known in our area among the general public.

First, GET INVOLVED.

Like Rotary and many other civic organizations, the number of our members who are actively involved is shrinking.

So, we want to try to do things differently to match the new interest of our members.



1. We are going to continue to hold a handful of traditional formal dinners and speakers. But, we will be adding many more informal, casual, get-togethers with the purpose of BUILDING FELLOWSHIP and helping members to get to know each other.
2. While we originally had an immense list of committees and chairmen, we recognize that the times have changed and few people are interested in “committee work”. So, we are appealing for members to let us know of their interests and we will reach out to them for SPECIFIC events where we can use their help or they might have interest. The idea is to lower the commitment but increase participation.
3. If you are quite busy and unable to attend events or participate in various activities, **consider making a donation to our general fund** which will allow us pay for advertising that will let Clevelanders know about our amazing organization that has been around since 1892 and how we continue to find ways to promote American history and patriotic, civic service. Did you know that we continue to reach out to public, private and parochial schools to support American history through our Elementary School Poster Contest, Middle School Brochure Contest, 8th Grade Good Citizenship Contest, High School Oration Contest, High School Essay Contest, Gates Mills Fourth of July Contest, Eagle Scout Award, to name a few...
4. Do you have time to participate IN A SINGLE EVENT? Consider our Color Guard (pictured above in North Royalton). You do NOT need to own a uniform! You do NOT need to commit to more than 1 event. Did you know that our Color Guard volunteers at several dozen community and civic events throughout the year. We have been a regular presence across NE Ohio for decades but without new volunteers, all of that legacy, IS AT RISK! **Consider carrying a flag at just 1 event a year.**

Did You Realize?

The National Society SAR is preparing all state and local chapters for a major public relations push to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolutionary War (1776-2026). But, PRIOR to 2026, there are many events deserving of recognition (Bunker Hill, etc). With you support (time or treasure), we can take a more active role in promoting these commemorations locally.

Western Reserve Society
Sons of the American Revolution
J. Atlee Horner III, Treasurer
17511 Daleview Drive
Lakewood, OH 44107



We Are Back! In-Person Meetings

See our website for more info

www.wrssar.org

We are looking to design programs and events that are of interest to our current membership. Whether it is historical, patriotic or just family fun, PLEASE let us know your ideas at wrssar.communications@gmail.com

We are always looking for people (members or not) who enjoy genealogy and who would be willing to help prospective members complete their applications.

If this is you, please let us know. Share your experience!

Help others to come to know their past.