



# The Musket Report

Newsletter of the Wiregrass Chapter, ALSSAR  
Enterprise, Alabama  
"Home of the Boll Weevil Monument"



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## OCTOBER MEETING

The **October** meeting of the Wiregrass Chapter will be held at **11:30** on **October 18th** at the **Rawls Hotel**. President Fuller discussed with the new management on holding our luncheons there for at least the months of October and November. After the first of the year, the chapter *may* have to locate a new meeting place. A great deal will depend on the turn-out at chapter meetings.

Dr. Jack Oden has arranged for **Dr. Martin Orliff**, Director of the Archives of Wiregrass History and Culture, Troy University (Dothan) to be our guest speaker.

Well, The Gathering II was the place to have been on September 20th for the chapter's annual SAR/DAR Constitutional Week Awards Luncheon. Over 50 people attended including three DAR Regents, Jim Alexander - ALSSAR President, and also a member of the Channel 4 TV News Crew! Mrs. Shelby Ward, ALDAR Regent was precluded from attending due to a death in the family. Once again, the Wiregrass Chapter extend a big **"Thank You"** to the ladies of the John Coffee Chapter, DAR for the beautiful decorations. It was noted during the meeting that Dr. Bill Hazen, our guest speaker, was interested in joining the SAR, but his aunt's line had been closed by the DAR. Since that time, another patriot ancestor has been identified, and work is underway to complete his application. Doris Seem and our own Rex Everage were winners of chapter door prizes. This year's Law Enforcement Commendation Medal went to T. D. Jones, Enterprise Chief of Police. Unfortunately, Chief Jones was called out of town and could not attend. Arrangements are being made to present this award at a later date. The John Coffee Chapter recognized several individuals from the local area for their work in the community and schools. John Fuller managed to stay awake the entire time - having returned that morning from Europe. It was a great afternoon, and numerous positive comments were received about the event - many about the food - it was great! It will be at The Gathering I - located behind where we met that the chapter will hold its Christmas Chartering Banquet.

## DUES COLLECTIONS

Treasurer John Kelsoe reports that the chapter dues collections are progressing nicely. However, several members have yet to submit their 2008 dues. Please get that \$50.00 check, payable to the Wiregrass Chapter, to John Kelsoe at **1654 County Road 606, Enterprise, AL 36330** as soon as possible. Your membership in the Sons of the American Revolution still remains one of the best values around!

Those who have already submitted dues will be receiving their 2008 membership cards with this newsletter. Secretary Bruce Taylor will have other dues cards at the October meeting. Thanks for your continued support of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Wiregrass Chapter, ALSSAR.

## Another Pike County Revolutionary War Soldier

While doing research at the Troy Library, a reference was found to one John Fowler, Revolutionary War Soldier. Fowler received a pension for service in North Carolina, and then moved to Pike County to be with his family. He wrote a letter from Troy requesting his pension be sent to Alabama. John Fowler was born in 1747 and is listed as having died in 1844 in AL in the DAR Patriot Index. His name does appear on the Patriot Doors at the American Village. No information on his possible burial site is currently available.

## History Made in Southern District

On 13 September at a meeting of the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Mississippi Society in Gulfport, Ike Edwards became the first American of Black descent to become a SAR chapter president both in the MSSSAR and the NSSAR.



L - R: 1st VP MSSSAR John Taylor, Chapter Secretary Gil Broussard, Chapter VP John Sullivan, Chapter President Ike Edwards, and MSSSAR President Bill Jenkins.

The Gulf Coast Chapter along with Gulfport and the entire Mississippi coastal area still have a long road to travel to reach full recovery. The local chapter, once one of the largest in the state, lost better than half of its membership due to Katrina. While none were killed, many individuals were forced to move from the area, and have yet to return. Both the leadership and members have a very positive attitude about the chapter's future and its ability to once again actively support all the NSSAR programs.

## Upcoming Special Events

A great many special events are coming up in the last months of the year and offer special opportunities to become involved.

**7 October** - Kings Mountain Celebration - nr. Gaffney, SC

**20 October** - ALSSAR Board of Managers Meeting in Montgomery, AL.

**11 November** - Veteran's Day Banquet - Birmingham, AL

**17 November** - Ft. Morris Celebration - South of Savannah.

**1 December** - Dedication of the Colossus Bust of George Washington at the Louisiana State Capitol - Baton Rouge, LA.

**13 December** - Chartering Banquet, New Brockton, AL

## September 2 1775: Washington Commissions First Naval Officer

On June 15, 1775, the Continental Congress chose George Washington to command "all the continental forces raised, or to be raised, for the defense of American liberty. "On July 3rd, Washington arrived in Cambridge. Across the Charles River, 6,000 British Regulars occupied Boston. The capital lay under siege, surrounded by 14,000 militiamen. The situation was a stalemate.

With the Battle of Bunker Hill fresh in their minds, the British officers were not about to order an attack. On the other hand, Washington had no illusions that the poorly-equipped colonial soldiers could drive the Redcoats from Boston. He did, however, believe that it might be possible to starve the British out. While the Patriots could receive supplies from the surrounding countryside, the Regulars were dependent on whatever came in by water. This gave him an idea.

Many of the militiamen waiting impatiently in Cambridge were seamen. One was Colonel John Glover, who commanded a company from his hometown of Marblehead. Born in nearby Salem in 1732, he owned a wharf, a warehouse, and three schooners across the harbor in Beverly, all bought with profits from the West Indies trade. Washington asked Glover to disrupt the flow of supplies into Boston Harbor. Glover offered to lease his 78-ton schooner *Hannah* to the Continental Army for "one Dollar pr Ton pr Month." Washington agreed to the terms, and the colonel selected a crew of 43, most of them men from Marblehead. They would receive army pay and would split amongst themselves one-third of whatever cargo they captured except "military and naval stores which with vessels and apparel are reserved for public service." On Glover's recommendation Nicholson Broughton was appointed the captain and Washington issued the following orders to Nicholson Broughton on September 2, 1775. "You being appointed a Captain in the Army of the United Colonies of North America, are hereby directed to take Command of a Detachment of said Army and proceed on board the Schooner *Hannah*, at Beverly, lately fitted out and equipped with arms, ammunition & provisions at the Continental expense." Thus the General set in motion sea operations to capture British supply ships sailing with impunity into Boston Harbor and to divert precious cargos of munitions and provisions to the needy Continental troops.

The refitted *Hannah* sailed out of Beverly, MA on September 5, 1775. Washington had instructed Broughton to "cruise against such vessels as may be found . . . bound inward and outward to and from Boston, in the service of the [British] army, and to take and seize all such vessels, laden with soldiers, arms, ammunition, or provisions which.. you shall have good reason to suspect are in such service." Two days later, the *Hannah* intercepted the ship *Unity* en route to Boston. Broughton soon learned that *Unity*'s owner was John Langdon, a New Hampshire delegate to the Continental Congress - hardly the enemy. Langdon's vessel, originally bound for the West Indies, carried a cargo of salt fish, beef, and lumber. A British frigate had captured the *Unity*, and a Royal Navy crew was sailing her to Boston. Broughton took control of the ship, but rather than returning her to Langdon, he sailed her to Gloucester. Broughton requested a share of the cargo for himself and his crew, but Washington ordered the vessel released and suggested Langdon might reward the *Hannah*'s officers for having recaptured her. The crew mutinied over not receiving their share, and some were punished and replaced.



THE SCHOONER "HANNAH" RUNNING THE GAUNTLET OF TWO BRITISH SHIPS

Broughton assembled a new crew for the *Hannah* and ventured forth again. On October 7th, he was sailing along the Massachusetts coast when he saw a small vessel. He fired four shots her way, disregarding Washington's orders not to waste ammunition. The noise attracted the Royal Navy's attention. Three days later, the captain of the British 16-gun *Nautilus* caught the schooner off Beverly. Broughton tried to escape but ran the *Hannah* aground on mudflats in Beverly Cove. The *Nautilus* came as close as she dared, anchored, and began firing. The *Hannah*'s crew scrambled over the side and made for the shore. The tide kept running out and soon, the *Nautilus*, too, was aground.

The shooting continued, and soon involved the Beverly and Salem militia. The *Nautilus* crew retreated below decks while the colonials shot holes in her hull, sails and spars. After four hours, the incoming tide had

the *Nautilus* afloat once more, and she headed back out to sea. The Patriots' victory was muted by the fact that the *Hannah* had rammed the mudflat so hard that her keel was damaged to the point that she would never sail again.

Despite *Hannah*'s record, Washington stayed with his plan. Glover refitted five more schooners and two more were launched from Plymouth. These came to be known as "George Washington's Navy." The General sent eight Massachusetts schooners to intercept vessels supplying British troops in Boston. This little fleet helped persuade the Continental Congress that the new nation needed a proper navy and on October 13th, 1775 Congress authorized the first building of vessels. This is the date that the United States Navy considers its birthday. Once Congress created the Continental Navy and made it legal for privately owned vessels to capture enemy vessels, the small schooners played a less important role.

Who owns the Liberty Bell?
The Liberty Bell is owned by the City of Philadelphia - not the National Park Service.