



The Musket Report

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



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November Meeting

The November meeting of the Wiregrass Chapter will be held on **15 November** at **11:30** at the **Rawls Hotel**. Bob McClendon, SAR member from Troy will be presenting a program on the *Uniforms of the War of 1812*. Bob is both a War of 1812 and Civil War re-enactor and promises to come in one of his 1812 uniforms.

At our November meeting elections of 2008 chapter officers and selection of Committee Chairman will be held. If you would like to chair or serve on a committee, the chapter has a great many positions available. Please make your interest known to John Ray Fuller. There is something for everyone within the SAR.

At the October meeting the SAR Law Enforcement Commendation Medal was presented to Enterprise Chief of Police, T. D. Jones. Chief Jones, native of Barbour County has had years of experience in the Law Enforcement area starting with the Police Department in Montgomery. He accepted the award on behalf of the entire Enterprise Police Department.



Bruce Taylor's son Brandon returned home safely on October 23rd following a year's deployment in Iraq with the 117th Field Artillery, Alabama National Guard! Welcome Home!!

Color Guard in Action



Andy Spann and Joe Graves were on hand at our Constitution Week Awards Luncheon to help present the National Colors. Bruce Taylor also participated in the Honor Guard.

TRANSFER:

The chapter has received a note from Mark Steetle indicating he will be moving his primary membership to the Tri-State Chapter. Certainly, living in Dothan, it will be much easier for Mark to make the meetings there - their gain is our loss! Mark was the Project Manager for our successful Solomon Wright Grave Marking last year, served in the color guard and, for several years was our chapter secretary. He was also our resident food critic in that his chapter minutes always commented on the meal that was served! We know he will continue his hard work in the Tri-State chapter!

The Three Notch Sons of Liberty Chapter

At a recent meeting of the "at large" SAR members in Troy, they adopted the above name for the prospective chapter. There is a great deal of enthusiasm within the group and William White, Director of the Troy Library, was elected the interim president while Jamey Boutwell of Brundidge will hold the position of Vice-President. They are still seeking a candidate for Secretary/Treasurer. At the moment, there are 12 approved applications with one other making its rounds of the State. Numerous other individuals have expressed an interest, and several applications are in their final stages of preparation. It is hoped that a request for charter can be made at the ALSSAR State Meeting in Feb. 2008.

2008 DUES

Secretary Bruce Taylor and Treasurer John Kelsoe report that better than 94% of all members have submitted their dues as of this writing! This is a tremendous vote of confidence in the work being done by the Wiregrass Chapter. This will also greatly reduce the amount of work these two gentlemen will have to do as we enter into the holiday season. If you have not done so already, please get that check for \$50.00 payable to "Wiregrass Chapter, SAR" to **John Kelsoe at 1654 County Road 606, Enterprise, AL 36330**.

Chartering and Christmas Banquet

The Chapter's Chartering banquet will be held **Thursday, 13 December** at **6:30 PM** at the **Rawls Hotel** at a cost of \$12.00 per person. Please note this is a **by reservation only event** - the enclosed reservation form must be returned to President Fuller **NLT 9 December 2007**. The new 2008 officers will be installed, awards presented and door prizes awarded. Come a few minutes early and socialize with fellow compatriots and their ladies. What a great way to start the holiday season and to show our support of the new leadership. Mark your calendar and get your reservations into the mail ASAP!



The officers of the Wiregrass Chapter want to wish you and yours a Very Happy Thanksgiving. As you enjoy this season with family and friends, please do not forget our men and women of the armed forces stationed around the world who can not be home to share this traditional American holiday with their loved ones.

Badge of Military Merit

As we approach the Eleventh Hour of the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month, we should each reflect upon the service and sacrifice our military veterans have made over the years in safeguarding the liberties and freedoms for the future generations of our great nation. Initially known as Armistice Day to mark the end of the “war to end all wars”, it is now, of course, know as Veterans Day - a time to honor all our veterans. Each of us by being active members of the Sons of the American Revolution honor our patriot ancestors who were the first real veterans of this nation. Likewise George Washington as the Commander-in-Chief felt it was his responsibility to recognize those soldiers who rendered exemplary service in the cause of gaining freedom for what was to become the United States of America.

On August 7, 1782, General George Washington issued the following general order:

“The General, ever desirous to cherish a virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings, over his left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth, edged with a narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with due reward...

Before this favor can be conferred on any man, the particular fact, or facts, on which it is grounded must be set forth to the Commander-in-chief accompanied with certificates from the commanding officers of the regiment and brigade to which the candidate for reward belonged, or other incontestable proof, and upon granting it, the name of the regiment of the person with the action so certified are to be enrolled in the book of merit which will be kept at the orderly office. Men who have merited this last distinction to be suffered to pass all guards and sentinels which officers are permitted to do. The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus opened to all -- this order is also to have retrospect to the earliest stages of the war.” . The Badge specifically honored the lower ranks, where decorations were unknown in contemporary European Armies



At the same time, in order to signify loyal military service, he ordered a chevron to be worn on the left sleeve of the uniform coat for the rank and file who had completed three years of duty "with bravery, fidelity, and good conduct"; two chevrons signified six years of service.



Artist's rendition of Gen. George Washington awarding Sgts. Elijah Churchill and William Brown the Badge of Military Merit. The ceremony took place at Washington's Revolutionary War headquarters in Newburgh, N.Y., May 3, 1783.

Three badges are known to have been awarded in the waning days of the Revolutionary War, all to volunteers from Connecticut. On May 3, 1783, Sergeants Elijah Churchill and William Brown received badges and certificates from Washington’s hand at the Newburgh headquarters. Sergeant Daniel Bissell, Jr., received the award on June 10, 1783.

Churchill was a 32-year old carpenter from Enfield who entered the 8th Connecticut as a private on July 7, 1775. He was cited for gallantry in action at Fort St. George near Brookhaven on Long Island, at Coram, New York, in November 1780, and at Tarrytown, New York, in July 1781.

A native of Stamford, **Brown** enlisted in the 5th Connecticut Regiment as a corporal on May 23, 1775, and re-enlisted as a private on April 9, 1777, for the duration in the 8th Connecticut. No record of his citation has been uncovered, but it is believed that he participated in the assault on Redoubt No. 10 during the siege of Yorktown.

Bissell, from East Windsor, enlisted on July 7, 1775, as a fifer in the 8th Connecticut Regiment, and on April 1, 1775, signed on for the duration as a corporal in the 5th Connecticut. Under Washington’s direct orders he posed as a deserter in the city of New York from August 14, 1781, to September 29, 1782, relaying valuable information to the Continental command.

Following the Revolutionary War, the use of the Badge fell into disuse, and it was not until the 1930’s that it was revived and revised as what we know today as the Purple Heart which is awarded to individuals wounded in the face of enemy fire. The Purple Heart is probably one of the most recognizable awards presented to military personnel.

One SAR member who has been researching the award of the Military Badge of Merit has found eight Revolutionary War discharges which indicated they received the “BOM” - Badge of Merit. . What is unclear if this reference was to the actual Military Badge of Merit or the chevrons denoting long and faithful service. He also has uncovered the names of over 100 more who probably received the “BOM”.

This Veterans Day make an effort to become involved in a local Veterans Day program and
Fly your Flag!

