



The St. Petersburg Chapter
Florida Society
Sons of the American Revolution
CHARTERED 1928

PRESIDENT

Robert Rogers
Porsche.bob@outlook.com

REGISTRAR

William Scott
wscott2@tampabay.com

WEBMASTER

Evan Soileau
evan@stpetesar.org

SECRETARY & TREASURER

Peter Ford
fordcgi@msn.com

HISTORIAN

John Stewart
1965UVA@gmail.com



May 2019

CHAPTER WEBSITES

www.stpetesar.org

2019 UPDATED CHAPTER MEETING & EVENT CALENDAR

Please mark your calendars

September 14 - St. Petersburg Yacht Club, 11AM
Constitution Week, Installation of Officers

THIS MONTH IN REVOLUTIONARY WAR HISTORY

1774 – British pass Intolerable Acts

1775 – Fort Ticonderoga captured by Ethan Allen & the Green Mountain Boys

1778 – Battle of Barren Hill (PA)

1780 – Siege of Charleston, Battle of Waxhaws (SC)



President's Message



Dear Compatriots:

At our May meeting I had the honor of recognizing Deputy Jonathan Norris of the Sheriff's Office for his valor and courageous action which saved the life of a person. We as a society have high expectations of our police officers and with cell phone cameras constantly ready for any mistake, someone's always looking over their shoulder. The occasion of this recognition, brings to mind some differences from my youth that have significantly increased the difficulties an officer faces today. Four areas come easily to mind:

1. **Drugs** – I grew to early manhood in small town Mississippi, where the worst a young man might do was drink beer, as alcohol was illegal in Mississippi thanks to the Southern Baptist influence. In a small town everyone knew or assumed they knew everyone's business, therefore, I'm fairly certain that there was no drug problem. Today, our society has a major drug problem. I own a farm in Central Florida, an area where prescription drugs and home brewed drugs are a major cause of crime (money to feed the drug habit) and death from overdosing. I have talked to the Citrus County Sheriff about two known drug houses, so that they are better prepared should there be a call from either of those locations. This is a major new policing area that didn't exist during my youth. The drug epidemic is a menace to society and a challenge for our police.
2. **Respect** -- One of the early important lessons I learned from a retired WW2 Army Coronel was that all adults were to be addressed as Yes *Sir* or Yes *Ma'am* to acknowledge respect for people. This is in sharp contrast to the "ME" generation of young adults. Another aspect of this self-centeredness is the concept of entitlement to safe zones where threatening words (by their definition) are not allowed. This idea is a hindrance to learning adult behavior, which means the little darlings must deal with adversity and opinions that aren't compatible with their thinking. The oft-used term "snow flake" seems to fit this situation well, meaning the poor child might



melt when facing the difficulties of reality. Another aspect of this of lack of respect is the decline of listening to other ideas and calmly discussing differing opinions to reach some consensus. Discussion has been replaced by strident and impolite talking over their “opponent” to prove the validity of their argument. I am concerned that some young people today often don’t show respect for institutions, our flag, our military, our police, nor our Constitution... assuming they know anything about the Constitution.

3. **Social Media** -- Another area very different from my early learning years is the immediacy of the social media today. This immediacy allows the communication of an early impression (perhaps inaccurate) of an event to wrongly agitate people. Another aspect is the immediacy and later replay through YouTube of the heinous crimes relentlessly followed on TV, whereby the media creates a template for unstable people to copy.

4. **Mental Institutions** -- A last area of difference is the elimination of mental institutions. I clearly remember the field trips to institutions for the insane. I suppose the purpose of those trips was education and to scare the crap out of us – if you go crazy, this is where you’ll spend your life. Today under a misguided concept of acceptance, and to save money, the mentally unstable are medicated and put back on the street where their drug regimen is quickly forgotten, resulting in many mentally unstable folk roaming the streets. A 2017 Justice Department study estimates that 37% of prison inmates are mentally ill. My best friend is an MD who has specialized in the treatment of mental health issues, and he estimates that the percentage of the homeless with mental issues would be far greater than 50%. The burden of so many mentally unstable people on the streets has become the responsibility for our police force, which is already asked to do so many tasks to keep us safe.

I urge you to take the time to get to know your local law enforcement people and give them a firm handshake, look them in the eye and tell them how much you appreciate their effort. Whenever possible, I thank every first responder I happen across. God Bless!

Bob Rogers



Board Chairman's Message



Dear Compatriots:

This year has been another one of remarkable achievement for our Chapter. Our meetings have been well attended, and our programs have been outstanding as is the custom for the St. Petersburg Chapter! A special commendation is due to President Bob Rogers for his vision and commitment to outreach education. We all have special and varying talents, interests and abilities, but this is one area where we can all participate in one way or another.

Your membership in the St. Petersburg Chapter *is* making a difference, and your voice is being heard where it matters. In collaboration with our more than 150 Compatriots in the Tampa Chapter, our Tampa Bay SAR Education Initiative has gained significant momentum over the past year.

Next week, Education Initiative Chancellor John Stewart and representatives of our Initiative's Curriculum Advisory Committee will travel to Tallahassee to meet with the Vice Chancellor of the Florida Department of Education to submit curriculum recommendations for consideration by the Department now that Common Core has been abolished. This is a significant and unprecedented opportunity for us to provide direct input to the Department of Education as it formulates educational goals and policies for our youth. The impact could well last for generations.

A goal without a plan is just a wish.

Together with the Tampa Chapter, our Education Initiative has specific goals and an action plan for implementation. The plan is consistent with and in furtherance of our National Society's 1906 Federal Charter, and our chapter's mission. In the spirit of our SAR oath, Curriculum Advisory Committee members have expended considerable time and effort on behalf of our Chapter and will continue to do so as requested by the Department of Education over the summer and into the fall.

As vacation time approaches, please reflect upon how you can contribute to this vital effort to guide our school curriculum toward love of country, respect for its laws and institutions, and for its Founders. Don't hesitate to contact John Stewart,



Bob Rogers, or me. If you would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one or Patriot ancestor toward this initiative, please contact Peter Ford, our Treasurer.

September's Constitution Week meeting will be an extraordinary educational event. The date will be: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 (Second Saturday of September) .The location will be the St. Petersburg Yacht Club main ballroom The St. Petersburg and Tampa Chapter SAR are collaborating, and The Director of the SAR Library in Louisville, Joseph Hardesty, will be our guest presenter. We are already receiving requests for reservations from DAR chapters, so please mark your calendars today. Watch your email for additional information. We are very pleased to report that the Pinellas County School System has also agreed to participate and will be working with John Stewart to plan for selected students and teachers to attend.

In closing, the St. Petersburg Chapter Board of Governors extends our appreciation to our fellow Compatriots for your support and loyalty to our chapter and its mission. Please make every effort to attend our meetings and events next year. Your participation in the Chapter makes a difference!

In Patriotic Service,
Charles

Meeting Minutes

Sons of the American Revolution
St Petersburg Chapter
May 18, 2019

Call to Order: The monthly meeting held at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club was called to order at 11:40 AM by President Bob Rogers and the invocation was given by John Stewart.

Guests: Pinellas Sheriff's Department Sergeant Jason Stibbard and Deputy Jonathan Norris; DAR members Vanessa Talbott, Erica Skog, Gigi Richardson, and Anne Ford; and prospective members George Ludwig and Harry Richardson.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 20 meeting were approved as submitted.



Officer Reports & Presentations

John Stewart presented our chapter with a certificate representing first place for the 2019 Florida Chapter Challenge. We will also receive a streamer for our flag. John was the recipient of the Patriot Award and an Oak Leaf Cluster for his Roger Sherman Silver Medal for his service to the FLSSAR.

William Hess was presented with a check and certificate for his first place entry in the Knight Essay Contest, which he read to the attendees. His entry was titled “Dead Men Floating: Prison Ships in the Revolutionary War.” He also received a check and certificate from FLSSAR for finishing second in the state, and a third check from the DAR.

John Stewart put forth the Nominating Committee’s officer slate for the 2019-2020 chapter year for a vote by the membership. The following compatriots were unanimously elected:

President: Bob Rogers
Vice President: Mark Foster
Secretary & Treasurer: Peter Ford
Registrar: Will Scott
Chaplain & Historian: John Stewart

Charles Butler updated the members on our Education Initiative. We are working with the Tampa chapter, with support from several DAR chapters. He, John Stewart, and others will be meeting soon with Florida’s Chancellor for Innovation to discuss potential curriculum changes.

Sergeant Stibbard introduced Deputy Norris, and recited the incident report for which Deputy Norris was selected for this year’s Law Enforcement Award. He responded to a suicide call, then went above and beyond to locate that caller, who was armed, and then diffused the situation without any injuries. President Rogers presented Deputy Norris with NSSAR’s Heroism Medal.

Benediction & Recessional

John Stewart gave the benediction, and President Rogers adjourned the meeting at 1:30 PM.

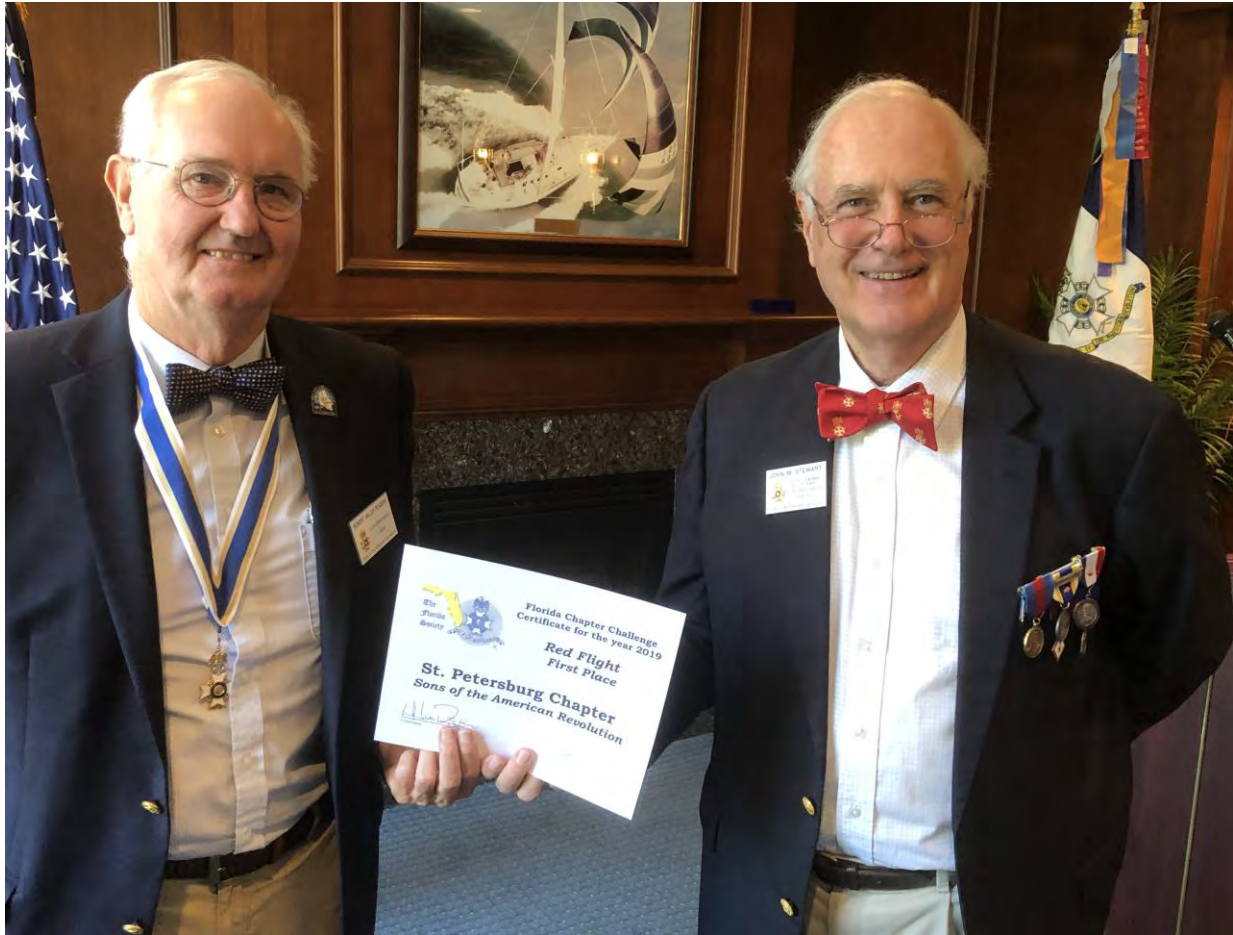
Submitted by Peter Ford, Secretary





Knight Essay contest winner William Hess with committee chairman John Stewart





President Rogers and John Stewart with our First Place certificate from FLSSAR
For the 2019 Florida Chapter Challenge





Newly inducted members Thomas McMullen, Brett McMullen, and Mike McGinn





Sergeant Stibbard, President Rogers, and Deputy Norris





In memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice



Dead Men Floating; Prison Ships in the Revolutionary War

William Hess
12th grade
803 35th Ave N
St. Petersburg, FL 33704
whess@shorecrest.org
727-798-9455

Shorecrest Preparatory School
5101 1st St NE,
St. Petersburg, FL 33703
727 522-2111

I learned about the George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest from my history professor who told me about the opportunity to write about a historical event during the American Revolution. I love history and took up the challenge.



Dead Men Floating: Prison Ships in the Revolutionary War

The American Revolution was a very unconventional war. The fledgling United States in an effort to gain independence had taken on the behemoth that was the British Empire. For centuries, Europe's wars were fought in a very gentlemanly fashion. There were rules of engagement on the battlefield, standard maneuvers by naval ships, and protocols regarding prisoners of war. Due to several specific circumstances, prisoners kept by the British during the Revolutionary War were not treated according to these standards. First, the Continental Army could never have won a conventional war according to European standards. The use of guerrilla tactics by the "rebels" infuriated the British. After the battles of Lexington and Concord, the British began to take the Colonial Army a bit more seriously, but never considered them a true army worthy of professional respect. Second, the British never considered the United States as a recognized foreign power, so all prisoners (military or civilian) were merely "rebels" and again unworthy of any standard rights. And third, the conditions around the time of British rule in New York made caring for prisoners impossible. The British use of prison ships, such as the H.M.S Jersey, was a tactic that started out of necessity and became a tool of fear as the war progressed. The terrible conditions on these ships led to the deaths of thousands of colonial Americans. This chapter in United States history goes largely overlooked.

From medieval times, British justice was swift. And this was no different when it came to military imprisonment. By the 18th century, The British had started using decommissioned ships anchored in the Thames as prisons to remedy overcrowding in prisons around London. This practice was transferred to New York during the American Revolution. In 1776, the British had control of New York and was using all available storehouses and churches to house "rebel" prisoners. The prison ships were a perfect way to secure large



numbers of prisoners. As the poor conditions and high death rate on the prison ships became known throughout the colonies, it became an additional weapon of propaganda for the British. The threat of being sent to a prison ship had become a useful deterrent against would-be rebel sympathisers and colonial militias alike.

To understand the use of prison ships, one must understand the activity of the Continental Army in New York. Washington was badly defeated in Brooklyn and although he escaped, over 1,000 of his men were captured by the British. This created a need for prisons on Manhattan Island. Most of the first prisons were on land in modified churches and storehouses. These began to grow overcrowded as the British imprisoned many American privateers, private citizens who were suspected of working with the Americans, and Continental Army or State Militia troops. As more and more prisoners were huddled into these makeshift prisons, there became no room for anymore. This led them to look to offshore imprisonment. The use of prison hulks had been allowed since a 1776 Act, urged by William Eden, first Baron of Auckland, which allowed the ships to serve as a temporary fix to the overcrowding in prisons in mainland England.

The prison ships conditions were deplorable even by the meager standards of the time. The main reasons for this were disdain from the British toward the Colonial Militia and simply how the British army classified the American soldiers. These reasons were really two in one, simply the British did not recognize the American Continental Army or the largely privateer American Navy as a formal combatant, they were seen as rebels. For this reason, The British forwent the usual military protocols and standards offered to regular foreign enemy combatants. This meant that terrible conditions were allowed in British prison ships. Being left on a prison ship, especially the HMS Jersey, was the most feared fate of any American privateer. This was for good reason, the ships often were overcrowded, disease ridden, falling



apart at the timbers and on top of all of that there was little food. These ships were docked in Wallabout Bay, NY. The HMS Jersey had over 1,100 men stuffed into its holds. Conditions were so crowded that men had to sleep right next to the overflowing waste buckets. It was said that the Jersey had every imaginable disease aboard. This was in part because the British refused to inoculate prisoners against smallpox as it would kill more prisoners and free up more space if they did not. Disease was so prevalent on the ship and medical attention so poor that men could not even think about attempting mutiny because they were so weak. Lanterns were not allowed to be used by prisoners at night for fear that they would set fire to the ship like other prison ships at the time. Many men saw death as a better option than to remain a prisoner. The HMS Jersey was also rotting and leaked so badly on the lower decks that the bilge pump had to be constantly worked by the prisoners. Food seemed to be a major complaint. The food given to prisoners was rancid and often inedible. This caused prisoners to hate David Sproat, Commissioner General of Naval Prisoners of war in North America.



highlighted the oppressive conditions and galvanized the colonists against British foreign rule. The story of British prison ships also goes largely untold, relegated to a paragraph or two in textbooks at best. The paradigm shift in prisoner treatment these hulking prison pits of despair represent deserves greater scrutiny. Especially when considering the importance of prisoner treatment under the Geneva Convention following World War II and the erosion of prisoner treatment witnessed throughout the world today. The lessons that should have been learned by the horrors perpetrated upon the “rebels” seem to only permeate the consciousness on paper. Would it be that they were enacted in practice.



Biography Page

My name is William Hess. I have been accepted early decision to Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University. There I plan on studying mechanical engineering and political science. Although I seem to be very science focused based upon my classes, I have a love for history which I foster through my school activities. I have participated in National History Day every year since sixth grade and have been to states four times. I also started and run a segment called This Month in History where I make and present ten minute videos explaining the historical events happening each month. In addition, I have been a member of the award winning History Bowl team for all four years of high school. I also have been working with the St. Petersburg Department of Historic Preservation and started my own neighborhood group to help document historic properties and attempt to gain landmark status for the magnificent homes in my area. When I am not indulging my love for history you may find me working on the bench in my neighborhood park, which I refurbished and was awarded the Volunteer of the Year award for in 2015 by the City of St. Petersburg's Department of Parks and Recreation. I also help at PARC which provides services for those with cognitive disabilities. I also am a thespian, winning multiple Critics' Choice awards for Student directed scene at the district and state level. I also have put in 350 hours of service in at my schools theatre doing technical work. Finally, I am the lead singer in my rock band. The achievement of which I am most proud this year is earning the rank of Eagle Scout. In class, I take honors and AP classes, and I have been on the headmaster's list since freshman year. Nationally, I have been elected to multiple honors societies including Rho Kappa, National Honors Society, the French National Society, and I am a National Merit Semifinalist (finalist application pending).



..

