



# SAR Alabama



Volume 30, Number 1

March, 2016

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank you for allowing me to serve you as president of the Alabama Society. I will strive to be worthy of this honor.

At our recent State Society convention I requested your assistance in recruiting new members. I asked you to tell your SAR story as the first step in recruiting a new member. Compatriot, why did you join SAR?

We all joined the SAR to honor and preserve the achievements of our patriotic ancestors but each of us has our own story of why we joined. Please join me in our recruitment efforts this year by sharing your SAR story with prospective members.

This year we will also focus on promoting our two outreach programs: educational and community. When we succeed in these two areas we will continue to be a strong and unified Society.

I look forward to working with you this year. Join us at the Spring Board of Managers meeting at the American Village on May 7. Remember all members of the Alabama Society are encouraged to attend the BOM meetings.

—Fred Olive

## Birmingham's Fred Olive installed as ALSSAR president for 2016-17



—Photo by Billy Birchfield

*Stone places President's Ribbon around neck of Birmingham's Fred Olive.*

More than 120 registered compatriots and guests attended the 2016 ALSSAR state convention at the Legends Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Prattville on Feb. 19-20, 2016, which was hosted by the Gen. John Archer Elmore chapter.

At least 40 members from the Montgomery and Prattville chapters acted as assigned hosts throughout the weekend insuring registrations for all guests were properly handled. Convention hosts helped with the unloading of luggage and directions with room assignments. Others helped with gift baskets, signage placement, registration desk and the preparation, setup and maintenance of the hospitality room located on the third floor of the hotel.

Special thanks are extended to Bishop Greg Spears and the 11 teenagers of the Church of Latter Day Saints in Prattville who helped serve as volunteer hosts in the hospitality room throughout the convention, Officer Training School Cadets, Ryan Day and Mathew Jensen of Maxwell Air Force Base in assisting those seated at the head banquet table at the formal banquet and to Billy Birchfield who was our outstanding convention photographer. Convention photographs can still be purchased by our membership through the Alabama Society Web site link.

See CONVENTION, Page 3

## Cheaha chapter marks patriot's grave

On a beautiful Saturday afternoon on March 5, the Cheaha chapter met in the Old Davistown Cemetery in the Choccolocco Valley to hold a grave marking ceremony at the grave site of James Caldwell, a soldier and patriot of the Revolutionary War.

The event was attended by chapter members as well as state and district officers, representatives of



—Photo by Linda Maples

See CALDWELL, Page 5 *ALSSAR Color Guard at grave-marking ceremony.*

### Inside this issue:

Four compatriots earn Lafayette Service Award	2
In Memory... George W. Gayle	4
Cheaha, Galvez chapters award heroism medals	7
Tenn. Valley compatriot has unusual family past	8

## SAR Genealogical Library begins outreach services

In November, after years of development through Friends of the SAR Library and other monetary sources of funding, our national SAR Genealogical Research Library in downtown Louisville announced its ability to begin providing membership access services across the country to the entire membership.

This member outreach service was launched with the recent purchase and ownership of two genealogical and Revolutionary War databases that can be accessed by SAR members anywhere and at any time.

The "Gale Genealogy Connect" database is a first quality e-Book collection consisting of 189 individual titles of on-line genealogical research on how-to materials and original sources and the "Sources in American History On-Line: The American Revolution" database contains nearly 500 primary source documents exploring the American Revolution and featuring personal accounts, maps, pamphlets and monographs.

To access the two new databases from home, simply log in on the sar.org website and then go to the library site. Scroll down and you will see a block under the "Library Navigation" section on the left hand column entitled "Library Databases." The two new database links are listed below.

The library staff, myself and ALSSAR compatriot Walter Stevenson have been painstakingly digitally reconstructing the "Family History Files" housed in our facility comprising 850 individual family files of approximately 33,000 pages of written documentation and family information. Once our cleanup of the digital files is completed in the near future, the Family Files database will also be launched and will also be made available for outreach membership access.

I hope more will begin to comprehend the value of our library and take ownership by extending your financial support so we may continue to improve our facility services to each of you.

—C. Bruce Pickette, NSSAR Librarian General

## Spring BOM set for May 7

The spring Board of Managers meeting will be held on May 7 at the American Village in Montevallo from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The Ladies Auxiliary will serve a lunch buffet. The cost of registration and lunch is \$20. There will also be a meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary; there is no registration or lunch costs for the ladies who attend. To register for the BOM, please print the form off the ALSSAR Web site and mail to Felton Mitchell, P.O. Box 270, Opelika, AL 36803-0270.

One of the highlights of the spring meeting is the unveiling of the new ALSSAR brochure, "The American Revolution: Alabama," which includes a map of the state featuring the Revolutionary War era places to visit. The brochure is designed for distribution at Alabama Welcome Centers and to teachers, students, Scouts and others. Each chapter's president or representative should come to the BOM to receive these brochures.

Also, a vote will be held to approve delegates to 2016 Congress in Boston on July 8-13. If you are interested in being a delegate, please notify ALSSAR president Fred Olive at folive@mindspring.com prior to BOM.

—Fred Olive

## Compatriots honored for flag presentations

We wish to recognize our compatriots who helped us present a large number of Flag Certificates in 2015. For the first time the Alabama Society had 100% participation.

Join us in congratulating these compatriots for their service: Wayne Finley, Birmingham (15); James Dunn, Black Warrior River (1); C. W. Posey, Cahaba-Coosa (5); Ed Kilgore, Cheaha (35); Dan Henry, Cullman (1); Harold Bates, Etowah (8); Mike Winstead, Gen. John Archer Elmore (2); Price Legg, Gen. Galvez (5); Skip Tucker, Gen. Richard Montgomery (3); Carl Thornton, Lamar County (8); J. L. Gibson, Little River (3); Jason Williams, Richard Henry Lee (1); Victor Cox, Shoals Area (11); James Grubbs, Tennessee Valley (20); Dan Berry, Tri-State (1); and Malon Murphy, Wiregrass (1).

Our state chairman of the Flag Certificate program was Howard Poarch.

—Fred Olive

## Four ALSSAR compatriots earn Lafayette Service Award

At the NSSAR Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in Louisville, Ky., on Nov. 20, four Alabama Society compatriots received the Lafayette Volunteer Service Award for their national level volunteer efforts.

The National Society presents the Lafayette Volunteer Service Award to an individual for volunteer service performed at the NSSAR Headquarters in Louisville or other significant volunteer work as determined by the President General.

The award consists of a medal, gold in color, bearing a relief of General Lafayette on the obverse. The award is presented when 40 hours of volunteer service have been accumulated. The Executive Director maintains the list of projects requiring volunteer assistance. Oak-leaf clusters are awarded for each additional 40 hours of volunteer service.

Compatriots Bill Stone and Rick Wells of the Gen. John Archer Elmore chapter received an oak leaf cluster for their hours of diligent research regarding the construction and costs of the Alabama Voices exhibit. This information was used to establish a baseline for various aspects of the SAR Center in Louisville.

Compatriots Walter Stevenson and Bruce Pickette of the Gen. Richard Montgomery chapter received a first award of the medal for their work and time required to complete the correction of approximately 25,000 scanned pages of some 850 loose paper family files and miscellaneous genealogical information donated to the SAR Library. The "Family History" files are to be made available online.

—Bruce Pickette



—Photo by Billy Birchfield

*ALSSAR officers installed at the convention were, from left: Bobby Joe Seales, NSSAR trustee; Dr. John Fred Olive III, president; Harold E. Thornton, vice-president; Edmon H. McKinley, secretary; Brian E. House, treasurer; Ronald A. Bearden, registrar; George W. Royer Jr., chancellor; Walter B. Stevenson Jr., genealogist; William Larry Crabtree, historian; R. Jefferson Coker III, chaplain; and George Thomas Smith III, sergeant-at-arms. Not shown is recording secretary Shelly Felton Mitchell.*

## Convention

*(Continued from Page 1)*

The event began on Friday night with a very special reception giving all members and guests the opportunity of renewing friendships and meeting special out-of-town guests. Period music of the American Revolution was played by “Southern Strings” led by musician Mike Manley.

The Elmore chapter membership pre-sold advertising to statewide SAR membership and local companies by sponsoring a state convention magazine which helped fund the event through patriotic advertisements. Additionally, the ALSSAR ladies auxiliary auctioned gift baskets which raised more than \$1500 for the Alabama Society.

The Alabama Society business meeting began Saturday with the passage of two proposed statewide by-law amendments and approval for printing and distribution of the Alabama History Brochure. The two-hour meeting was followed by the Rumbaugh Orations contest. A separate meeting of the ALSAR Ladies Auxiliary met at the same time in a different location with election of officers and the sewing of patriotic quilts.

The George Washington Endowment Fund and Southern District luncheon took place in the early afternoon, with Bruce Pickett speaking on the George Washington Foundation and Price Legg speaking on the development of the new Alabama Society Endowment Program.

A feature of the luncheon was the presentation of the Eagle Scout award and the Rumbaugh Oration winner. Both awards

were presented to Matt Stanley, sponsored by the Little River chapter, who could not attend the Saturday night banquet because of a scheduling conflict.

The luncheon concluded with the Southern District Meeting hosted by Vice President General Michael Wells and attended by various representatives of the Southern District societies of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana. Following the luncheon, Rev. Jeff Coker honored Alabama Society members who pass away during 2015 with a special memorial service.

An array of Alabama Society youth awards recipients were acknowledged with awards presented at the banquet, including Addison Dickey, state poster contest winner sponsored by the Gen. John Archer Elmore chapter; Marianne Grace Welsyn, state brochure contest winner sponsored by the Tennessee Valley chapter; Suah Jang, Knight Essay contest winner sponsored by the Richard Henry Lee chapter; and Cadet Chase Flatau, sponsored by the Tennessee Valley chapter, who won the JROTC Outstanding Cadet Award.

NSSAR Secretary General J. Michael Tomme was the featured speaker at the formal banquet. Tomme, who was introduced by Stone, spoke on the “Commander and Chief’s Guard.”

Compatriot James Maples hosted the Alabama Society awards and presentations with more than 150 certificates of

**See CONVENTION, Page 6**

# In Memory...

## George William Gayle Benjamin Meek Miller Childers

Longtime Gen. Richard Montgomery chapter compatriot and former chapter president **GEORGE WILLIAM GAYLE** passed away after a brief illness on March 14, 2016. He was 89.

He joined the SAR in 1993 and remained an active member over the next 18 years, becoming the chapter's vice-president in 1995, chapter president in 1996, ALSSAR genealogist in 1997 and the chapter's treasurer from 1998 to 2011.

In the late 1990s, he fought to have the state society designated as a non-profit organization with the U.S. Postal Service to cut its newsletter costs in half and secured the newsletter's printer and mailer.

In 2002, he was the architect of a proclamation signed by then-Gov. Don Siegelman that designated every April 19 as "Patriot Day" to honor our Revolutionary War ancestors.

Gayle was born on Oct. 2, 1926 in Tuscaloosa and spent the first few years of his life there before moving to Birmingham where he attended Ramsey High.

He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps 12 days after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday on Oct. 14, 1944. He spent the next several months at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island (S.C.) and Camp Lejeune (N.C.) in training to become a forward observer in the artillery's Separation Battalion before he was stationed in Hawaii for the remaining few months of the war.

He was discharged in August, 1946 as a private first class but spent the next four years with the Marine Corps Reserves.

He operated a clock repair shop briefly before joining Tom Houston Peanut Company in 1948. He would spend the next 10 years with Tom's, primarily in charge of opening new accounts throughout the country before taking over his own distributorship in Montgomery in 1958.

From there, he expanded Montgomery Sales Company to one of the River Region's most successful snack food companies, reaching seven counties in central Alabama. He introduced the area to the industry's first chip machine and the first electric snack machine before parting ways with Tom's in 1972 and continuing as an independent snack food distributor.



**GAYLE**

He became an advocate for vending machine operators in the state, especially in regard to licensing fees and taxation at the state and local level, which led to a campaign for Montgomery mayor in 1977.

A goal of marking his father's grave at Montgomery's Oakwood Cemetery and a three-year search for his grandfather's grave in Clinton, La., would bring him in contact with heritage groups and genealogy that would in turn lead to his joining the Sons of Confederate Veterans in 1991 and the SAR in 1993.

He was an ardent supporter of SCV Camp 692 (Cradle of the Confederacy) and became its commander in 1995. Under his 21-year leadership, the camp was recognized as the "Camp of the Year" in 1997 and he was "Compatriot of the Year" in 1999. His newsletters earned awards in 2004, 2013 and 2015.

In 2001, he was one of the chief promoters behind the renovation of the Confederate Monument on the Capitol grounds.

He was also a member of the Civil War Preservation Trust, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. As a lifelong Mason, he was honored by the Grand Lodge of Alabama in 2007 for 50 years of service as a member of Oak Park

Lodge F&AM No. 864.

In 2000, he was appointed by Siegelman to the state's Bureau of Tourism and Travel advisory board, where he served for eight years as an advocate of the state's Civil War sites.

Survivors included his wife of 65 years, Tommie, sons George Jr., John and Tim, daughter Wendy, 10 grandchildren and several great grandchildren.

Services were held on March 19 at 10 a.m. at Montgomery's Leak-Memory Chapel with Dr. John Killian officiating. Interment was at Greenwood Cemetery.

**BENJAMIN MEEK MILLER CHILDERS** passed away on Jan. 18 following a brief illness. He was 89.

A lifelong resident of Selma, Miller was born on October 1, 1926 to Erasmus Roy Childers and Margaret Miller Childers. Upon graduating from high school, Miller entered the navy, serving in the Pacific theater during WWII. After the war, Miller attended the University of Alabama, earning both Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctorate degrees.

He practiced law in Selma for many years and then served Dallas County as district court judge for 18 years until his retirement in 1987.

Miller was very active in his church, St. Paul's Episcopal, serving as both a warden and vestrymen numerous times and also on many church committees.

He also served numerous times as both a delegate to the Alabama diocesan convention and deputy to the Episcopal General Convention.

In addition, Miller served on the Selma City School Board, the Salvation Army Board, the Public Library Foundation, the Sturdivant Museum Association and the Cahaba Foundation. He was a founding member of the Christian Outreach Alliance Food Pantry, which is now named in his honor.

He is survived by his three children, Caroline Childers Majors, Robert Tingle Jones Childers (Terry), and Benjamin Meek Miller Childers Jr., five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Interment was Jan. 21 at Live Oak Cemetery.

## Caldwell

*(Continued from Page 1)*

the Chinnabee-Ft. Strother chapter and Bienville chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Alabama Society of the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims, the Alabama Society of the Daughters of the Colonial Wars and the Alabama Society Colonial Daughters XVII Century.

Flags fluttered, bagpipes swirled and fife/drum and bugle played as members of the ALSSAR Color Guard, members of the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office and Boy Scout Troop 4007 all participated in honoring Caldwell, who was buried nearly 170 years ago in this cemetery. Descendants of Caldwell came from as far away as Texas and Mississippi to see their ancestor honored by having a plaque installed on his grave denoting him as a veteran of the Revolutionary War.

Caldwell is known to have served with patriot forces operating against the British in South Carolina. Military records indicate that he served with Hicksley's Regiment, Thompson's 3rd Regiment and under Lt. Col. Henry Hampton in the action at the Skirmish of Four Holes Swamp on July 12, 1781. After the war he lived in South Carolina many years but eventually moved to the area now known as Iron City and, with family, owned and operated a racetrack. Caldwell died on October 2, 1847, and was buried in the Old Davistown Cemetery.

Guests and participants in the ceremony were welcomed by Cheaha chapter president Ed Killgore who spoke on the



—Photo by Linda Maples

### ***Cheaha chapter president Ed Killgore speaks at graveside ceremony.***

purpose and importance of this event as well as explaining the purpose and goals of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Greetings were delivered by Vice President-General Mike Wells and ALSAR president Dr. Fred Olive, and Mrs. Annette Smith representing the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Alabama Society of the Daughters of the Colonial Wars, the Alabama Society of the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims and the Alabama Society of the Colonial Daughters of the XVII Century.

Laying of wreaths representing all the

societies, the service of James Caldwell given by LCDR Bob Folsom (ret.), dedication of the marker by Henry Smith, unveiling of the marker by Nancy Hutzler of Kyle, Texas (a descendant of Caldwell), the playing of "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes by Chief Deputy Matthew Wade, the playing of "Taps" by Deputy Phil Rodrige (ret.), presentation of the colors by the ALSSAR Color Guard and the benediction by Rev. R. Jefferson Coker were impressive yet solemn at this patriotic ceremony.

—Ed Killgore

—Photo courtesy of William Rozier

### ***New Cheaha compatriots***

***On Dec. 30, 2015, at a specially called meeting of the Cheaha chapter, president Ed Killgore, far right, inducted Austin and Andrew Brooks, the grandsons of chapter compatriot Judge Edwin "Mac" Smith, into the Sons of the American Revolution. The meeting was held at The Classic on Noble at noon for this purpose.***



## Gen. Galvez chapter installs new officers for 2016

The Gen. Galvez chapter held its annual officer installation banquet at the Heron Lake Country Club in Mobile on Jan. 16.

More than 40 compatriots and their guests watched as ALSSAR president Bill Stone inducted Edmon McKinley as president, Bob Holliman as secretary, Leroy McGaughy as treasurer and John Goss as sergeant-at-arms.

Price Legg, Mike Glass and Howard Schramm were chosen as Board of Managers representatives.

The chapter had another outstanding year in 2015 with plans to continue this effort in the coming year. Our chapter's Knight Essay winner was awarded a medal and certificate of appreciation. Three new compatriots were inducted into the chapter: Gordon, Marvin and Martin Lunsford. Gordon's wife Connie and Marvin's wife Norma pinned the SAR Rosette on their lapels.

We had several compatriots and guests receiving awards this year for outstanding service to the SAR.

Suzanne McGaughy and Jean Legg received our Certificate of Appreciation for their support of our chapter and decorating the banquet room.

Richard Britton received our Service to Veterans Medal, awarded to compatriots who have given long and exemplary service to veterans.

Jean Legg was awarded the Daughters



—Photo courtesy of Mike Glass

***ALSSAR president Bill Stone, far left, installs officers, from left: Edmon McKinley, Bob Holliman, Leroy McGaughy, John Goss, Price Legg and Mike Glass. Not pictured is Howard Schramm.***

of Liberty Medal. This is the highest lady's medal the SAR can award, given in appreciation for her unselfish devotion, tireless efforts and assistance to the SAR.

The Roger Sherman Medal was awarded to Mike Glass. John Goss and Leroy McGaughy in recognition of outstanding service rendered to a chapter.

Edmon McKinley was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and Past Presidents pin.

McKinley introduced our speaker, ALS-

SAR president Bill Stone. Stone provided an update on the NSSAR educational agenda. American history will continue to be taught to interested students and professionals.

This is a multi-year and multi-financial undertaking by all SAR members. The location of our American History School is located in Louisville, Ky., along with the NSSAR Library and the society's headquarters.

—Mike Glass

### Convention

(Continued from Page 3)

appreciation, distinguished service and chapter certificates presented to various chapters and individuals.

The following individuals were awarded state society medals during the formal banquet:

- SAR Medal of Appreciation — Nancy S. Folk and Mindy Manners of the DAR
- SAR Bronze Good Citizenship Medal — Khele Kirby of the CAR
- SAR Lydia Darraugh Medals — Carolyn Ammons Vickers, Karla Flemming Barksdale, Thelma Jean Legg, Gisela Erika Wardlaw, Martha Jeanice Killian, Christine W. Smith, Mary Ann Wallace (Oak Leaf Cluster), Linda Alcott Maples (Oak Leaf Cluster) and Frances M. Stone (Oak Leaf Cluster)
- SAR Daughters of Liberty Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) — Frances M. Stone
- SAR Silver Good Citizenship Medals — Elizabeth Wells and William Stone
- SAR Bronze Color Guard Medals — William R. Baccus

and Harold E. Thornton

- SAR Silver Color Guard Medal — Jack Caraway
- SAR Silver Roger Sherman Medals — Jacob Lewis (J.L.) Gibson, Brian E. House and Bruce Buehler
- SAR Meritorious Service Medals — Walter Perry Vickers Sr., Richard H. Wells and George W. Royer Jr.
- SAR Patriot Medals — Bobby Joe Seales and Rev. Robert J. Coker III
- SAR Medal of State Distinguished Service — Dr. Walter B. Stevenson

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Stone presented an overview of the yearly accomplishments and goals achieved by our statewide chapter management and Board of Managers. He concluded by thanking the membership for the privilege and honor of serving as state president for 2015-2016. The installation of new state officers was conducted by Vice-President General Michael Wells with closing remarks given by our newly elected Alabama Society President, Dr. Fred Olive.

—Bill Stone

## Cheaha honors Anniston police officers for heroism

By KIRSTEN FISCUS

**Anniston Star**

Two Anniston police officers were awarded the SAR Medal for Heroism by the Cheaha chapter at its monthly meeting.

In the second-floor meeting room at the public library, officers Johnell Willis and Justin Hise stood in front of family, friends and fellow officers as Ed Killgore, president of the local group, handed a medal and certificate to each man.

Willis and Hise were partners when they responded to a call in June 2015 to West 19th Street, Anniston police Chief Shane Denham said.

"They were in a situation where there was an individual there who was a little deranged," he said standing at a podium. "It was a hostage situation where a 15-year-old juvenile was being held against his will."

When Willis and Hise arrived to the house, Melanie McCormick, 36, was holding a knife to her son's throat and told officers that a man was pointing a gun at her, Denham said by phone.

"While Hise was talking with the woman, Willis went around to a back door, and entered the house," he said. "He cleared each room and discovered there wasn't anyone else in the house."

McCormick was charged with second-degree domestic violence and possession of drug paraphernalia, Denham said. She entered a pretrial program for her domestic violence charge, and the possession charge was dropped, according to court records.

Willis and Hise were able to defuse the situation without any injuries, Denham said during the ceremony.

"They were well within their rights of our department policy to use deadly force that day had they chose to," Denham said. "They still would have been heroes. We never as law enforcement want to do something like that and they were able to successfully negotiate this situation without injury to the victim, without injury to the sus-



—Photo courtesy of William Rozier

**Anniston police officers Justin Hise and Johnell Willis with police chief Shane Denham at Cheaha meeting.**

pect, and as you can see they are both in perfectly good health."

Killgore said he contacted Denham after seeing a post online about the two officers.

"I called and asked about the circumstances surrounding the incident," he said. "I came back to the chapter and researched what awards they were eligible for. We have a lot of awards and medals we give to law enforcement, firefighters, local officials and this list goes on."

Willis' mother hugged him while Hise's sons passed the medal, in a plastic case, back and forth awing over it. Both Hise and Willis have been with the department for two years, they said after the ceremony. Willis, 36, said he wasn't expecting the recognition, but he was appreciative.

"It feels great," he said. "It's a good feeling to be appreciated by the public."

Hise, 30, said the award was "a little overwhelming."

## Gen. Galvez honors Coast Guardsmen for saving trucker

The Gen. Galvez chapter presented the SAR Medal for Heroism to a quartet of Coast Guardsmen for their efforts in saving a man in a fiery truck collision on Interstate 10 on Oct. 8, 2015.

Chief Warrant Officer Paul S. Rotolo, Chief Warrant Officer Benjamin D. Wagner, Ensign Andrew J. Nielsen and Ensign Richard Quintana were honored by the SAR chapter at its monthly meeting at Felix's Fish Camp on Nov. 12.

The four Mobile-based Coast Guardsmen witnessed an accident between a disable vehicle and a semi truck while driving near the Tillman's Corner exit ramp on I-10. They jointly rescued pulled



—Photo courtesy of Mike Glass

**Coast Guardsmen receive medals and certificates at November meeting.**

the unconscious driver from the semi that had rolled on its side and administered first aid until emergency medical services arrived. Officials at the scene stated that

seconds after these men moved the driver a safe distance from the truck, the entire cab was engulfed in flames.

—Leroy McGaughy

## Tennessee Valley compatriot uncovers unusual family past

David Byers, having served as registrar for the Tennessee Valley chapter, has assisted dozens of men in researching their past in the process of becoming compatriots in the Sons of the American Revolution.

Byers himself, in a recent chapter meeting, was given a supplement for having found a new ancestor who was a 1776 patriot. That alone is not remarkable but the circumstances surrounding this discovery of his new patriot is extraordinary remarkable.

For all of his 78 years, Byers has passed up and down a lonely Madison County rural road, Macon Lane, in the backslope bank of which are affixed two grave headstones marking the final resting place of William and Lucretia Petty. He said he'd been aware of the graves as he passed by maybe a thousand times through the years, but he didn't know of a personal connection. He knew he had Pettys somewhere in his past but was amazed to discover the entombed couple were his forebears seven generations removed.

It is astonishing that in our exceedingly mobile 21st century society Byers could be born and raised less than a dozen miles from the burial site of his forebears who lived and farmed here two centuries ago.

William Petty (1764-1835) was born in Virginia; his wife Lucretia (1765-1842) was born in Virginia. They married in 1784 in Surry County, N.C., from which they presumably departed southward soon after land in Madison County was placed on sale beginning in 1809, a decade before Alabama became a state. While his research is not yet complete, Byers has learned that William Petty, who received a pension for his services, owned several plots of farm land near his burial site. He apparently was quite an active farmer in north Alabama's first county.

The grave sites, it should be added, had been appropriately marked and memorialized decades ago by the Hunt Springs chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

—Joseph M. Jones



—Photo by Joseph M. Jones

**David Byers at the grave of his ancestor, Revolutionary War soldier William Petty.**



—Photo by Linda Maples

### Tennessee Valley chapter inducts new officers for 2016

At the chapter's March 11 meeting, ALSSAR president Fred Olive inducts new officers, from left: William R. (Bob) Baccus, president; Millard E. (Mac) Moon, vice-president; Thomas Kimbrough (Kim) Keller, recording secretary; James H. (Jim) Maples, corresponding secretary; Joseph T. Stegmaier Jr., treasurer; Charles O. McMurry, registrar; Robert S. Doherty, historian; and Richard W. Tingle, chaplain.



—Photo courtesy of Jason Williams

**Medal of Honor recipient is speaker**  
**Medal of Honor recipient Command Sergeant Major Bennie Adkins, front right, was the guest speaker for the January meeting of the Richard Henry Lee chapter. Diane Lowe, left, of the Hampton Inn of Opelika, was honored with a flag certificate at the meeting. Also pictured is chapter treasurer Wayne Stephens.**

## Compatriot helps needy veterans

During the 2015 Christmas season, several groups banded together to help provide clothing for the veterans at the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System in Tuskegee.

The Osher Life Long Learning Institute (OLLI) at Auburn University assisted in the collection spearheaded by Linda Shabo and Katie Spraggin of the Martha Wayles Jefferson DAR chapter in Opelika.

OLLI at Auburn member and ALS-SAR compatriot Felton Mitchell learned of the DAR program and contacted OLLI executive director Linda Shook to see if OLLI would be interested in assisting the DAR. OLLI members donated approximately 25 bags and three large boxes of material.

The Happy Hour group of the Opelika Rotary Club also assisted after Rotarian Jericho Wilson, himself a Marine Corps veteran, learned of the program from Mitchell. The Opelika Rotarians donated approximately 15 bags and boxes of material to the needy veterans, including more than a dozen hats, which are especially appreciated by the vets.

—Felton Mitchell



—Photos courtesy of Felton Mitchell

**Mitchell with Jericho Wilson and Katie Spraggin, above, and Linda Shook, below.**



## Wiregrass holds 15th Constitutional Week luncheon

On Sept. 17, 2015, the Wiregrass chapter hosted their 15th annual SAR/DAR Constitutional Week Luncheon in conjunction with the DAR's John Coffee chapter.

Eighty people were in attendance, including both ALSSAR president Bill Stone and ASDAR state regent Nancy Sturkie Folk.

The group was treated to some highly entertaining remarks by Steve Flowers, considered by many to be the preeminent authority of the history of Alabama politics, on some of his interactions as a state legislator with Gov. George Wallace and other state officials.

In addition to the guest speaker, other highlights of the luncheon were the induction of four new members (Brian Lassiter, Jerry Allen, Michael Lait and his son Michael) into the Wiregrass chapter by Stone and the presentation of

the SAR Law Enforcement Medal to Tom Anderson, Esq, district attorney for Coffee and Pike counties.

Anderson thanked those present for the positive recognition of the law enforcement team during these times of negative press for both police officials and the judicial system.

Mrs. Bruce Blankenship was recognized for her years of support of the SAR within the Wiregrass area of the state. Not only has she attended numerous SAR events over the years but assisted in obtaining new members for the Wiregrass chapter and the Tri-State chapter as well as at-large members.

The ladies of the John Coffee chapter outdid themselves in decorating for meeting room to include handmade red, white and blue infinity scarves for everyone in attendance.

—John Wallace



—Photo courtesy of John Wallace

**Tom Anderson, left, receives medal from Wiregrass chapter president Malon Murphy.**

**ALABAMA SOCIETY, SONS OF  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

**NEWSLETTER OF THE ALSSAR**

3104 Cabot Street Phone: 334-328-4580  
Montgomery, AL 36110 E-mail: timgaylesar@gmail.com



[www.facebook.com/AlabamaSocietySAR](http://www.facebook.com/AlabamaSocietySAR)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**Paid**  
Permit No. 77  
Montgomery, AL

**Visit the ALSSAR Web site at [www.alssar.org](http://www.alssar.org)**

***Please send in your chapter news for the next newsletter***

If you're submitting material for the next newsletter, please e-mail your pictures and information to [timgaylesar@gmail.com](mailto:timgaylesar@gmail.com) or send information about your chapter's activities or upcoming events by June 10 to Tim Gayle at 3104 Cabot Street, Montgomery, AL 36110.



—Photo courtesy of Bruce Pickette

***Montgomery chapter wins streamer for SAR 1776 Campaign donation***

***At the SAR 1000 Breakfast during the NSSAR Spring Leadership meeting on Feb. 27, Gen. Richard Montgomery compatriot Walter Stevenson, second from left, accepted a flag streamer for the chapter's donation to the SAR 1776 Campaign. The streamer recognizes the chapter's donation of \$1776 in support of the SAR Center.***