



Newsletter of The Tampa Chapter, Florida Society,  
Sons of the American Revolution

Volume V · Issue IV

PATRIOTIC  HISTORIC  EDUCATIONAL

April 2005

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## “The British are coming!”

The first armed encounter of the American Revolution took place in Massachusetts, where the British force in Boston numbered some 3500 men. General Gage was aware that the militia members of the outlying towns were being trained and reorganized into active elements known as minutemen, ready for immediate service. Ammunition and military stores were being gathered under direction of a Committee of Safety acting for the provincial assembly. On the night of April 18–19, 1775, Gage, under orders from Lord North, sent out about 800 men to seize munitions being gathered at Concord, some 18 miles from Boston. The move did not escape the vigilance of the Committee of Safety, whose mounted messengers, including a local silversmith named Paul Revere, spurred into the countryside to give the alarm. Early on the morning of April 19, the advance guard of the British force exchanged fire with a party of militia at Lexington; eight Americans were killed, and the British continued marching on to Concord. Lt. Col. Francis Smith (1720?–91), the British commander, found militia companies assembling near Concord. Most of the military stores had already been removed, and a British attempt to seize one of the two bridges near the town was forestalled by an American counterattack. More militia companies were appearing. Smith, having sent back for reinforcements, took his time reassembling his men for the return march to Boston. That 800 British regulars should be seriously threatened by colonial militiamen, no matter how numerous, was impossible for a British officer to conceive. Smith's men, however, were tired and low on ammunition. Combined with persistent, if inaccurate, American sniping from the cover of hedges, trees, and buildings, the British retreat became a disorganized flight by the time the troops met a supporting force of 1400 men under Brig. Gen. Hugh Percy (1742–1817). British reinforcements checked the Americans briefly and enabled the retreat to continue in somewhat better order. When the regulars reached Boston, British casualties numbered 273, American casualties less than 100. Militia companies from at least 23 towns took part in this operation, which was nothing less than an uprising in arms of a whole countryside against the British. The American offensive did not end with chasing the invaders back to Boston; militia forces kept coming, closing in on the city, which remained under siege from April 20, 1775, until the British evacuation on March 17, 1776.



## OUR NEXT LUNCHEON MEETING WILL BE SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2005

The location is the PICCADILLY CAFETERIA, 11810 Dale Mabry Highway North, Tampa, Florida (telephone 963-1660) in their private room at 11:30 AM. This gives us time for camaraderie. Wives and guests are always welcome at our meetings. Members and guests will be responsible for their own meal and gratuity.

# Minutes of the March 19, 2005 meeting of the Tampa Chapter SAR

President Bolen called the meeting to order at 12:00. Chaplain Lloyd offered the invocation. John Skillman led the pledge to the flag and the President led the pledge to the SAR.

Members present: Jack Bolen, Rodney Stebbins, Ed Neugaard, John Skillman, Ken Skillman, Marty Miller, Luke Lloyd, Dwight Tetrick, Barry Rich, Walter Lang, Walter Bell, Cy Gamber, and Kevin Yarnell.

Welcome guests: Janette Tetrick, June Bolen, and Charles Sheldon.

The President asked the members and guests to introduce themselves.

The minutes were approved with a correction to the roll as recorded.

President Bolen then asked the secretary for his report. A new copy of the SAR prayer book has been obtained from National. He also reported on the status of the ROTC and JROTC awards.

The treasurer was unable to report an exact balance but assured the members that the chapter was still well in the black. Marty Miller reported that he had completed the audit of the 2004 books and found everything to be in order.

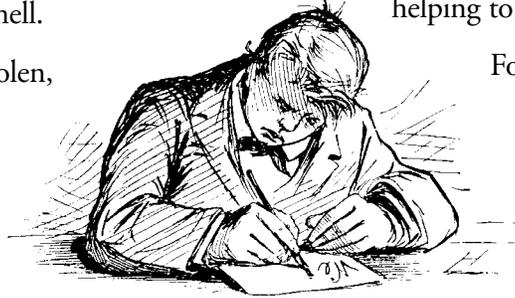
Dwight Tetrick reported on the status of applications approved and in process. Dwight then introduced his wife, Janette, who shared with the members a brief article that discussed "The Last Revolutionary War Veteran".

The Liberty Tree looks like it will be part of the Mayor's beautification program and located in the Al Lopez Park.

The cost to participate is \$300.00. Luke moved that the program and cost be approved. The motion was seconded and passed without dissent.

The President reported on a combination of a joint event with the St. Petersburg SAR chapter and the wives. He contacted the St. Petersburg chapter President but has not yet gotten a response.

John Skillman noted that the National Society makes awards to the Naval and Air Force Academy but not to the other academies. He is a West Point graduate and is helping to establish these additional awards.



Following lunch the president called on John Skillman who suggested the chapter support the research of Dr. Levy who spoke at the February meeting. The treasurer was asked if the chapter good afford a donation. He indicated that the chapter was able to afford this. Some discussion followed. No motion was made.

The President introduced the secretary reported the results of the chapter's Knight Essay Contest. The secretary serves as the state chairman for the contest. As a result, our contest includes both local entries and some from areas of the state where there is no local SAR chapter. This year the chapter received only a few local entries and all, regrettably, were poorly written. Thus, we submitted as our winner to the state contest the essay "Life is Freedom" written by Yevgenia Agapova of Hollywood, Florida. The Secretary read the essay to the members.

Rod Stebbins was then introduced to speak on the chapter's on-going genealogy project. Rod maintains a genealogy database and gave some details on its size (169,000+ individuals),

*(continued on page 4)*



*New Sergeant-at-Arms Alan Bell (left) is welcomed by President Jack Bolen at the March 19, 2005 meeting.*



*Captain Rod Stebbins talked about the search for his own family history and explained the benefits of computer-assisted genealogical research.*



Cover Portrait: "Paul Revere"  
by John Singleton Copley, 1768  
courtesy of The Museum of  
Fine Arts, Boston, MA.

At Left and Back Cover Inset:  
"The Midnight Ride of Paul  
Revere" by Grant Wood, 1931  
courtesy of The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, New York, NY.

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## A Few Thoughts From Our President

Good news on two counts. First, the Liberty Tree project is moving ahead and we should have a date for the ceremony by the time we meet. Second, the initial response from St. Petersburg Chapter President, Will Scott, regarding a joint dinner meeting this fall was positive. They will discuss it at their next meeting and we should know more when we meet. Dwight Tetrick is Chairman of the Liberty Tree Project and a member of the St. Petersburg chapter so, hopefully, he can give us updates on both of these projects.

Some thoughts on the Second Amendment; the first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, list protection from the federal government for the following: from the establishment of a State religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, right to petition of redress of grievances, **right to keep and bear arms**, against quartering of soldiers in private homes, against unreasonable search and seizure of property, right to a grand jury for capital crimes, against double jeopardy of life or limb, against testifying against yourself, against taking private property without just compensation, right to a speedy and public trial by jury, right to confront witnesses against you, right to assistance of counsel, against excessive bail and against cruel or unusual punishment.

All of these rights are understood to be rights of the individual and not of a group or government. All that is except the "right to keep and bear arms." Gun control advocates insist that that one right of the twenty or so spelled out is a right of the States to have militia. The writers of the Constitution were masters of the English language and laws yet we are told that somehow they included in a long list of individual rights, for no apparent

reason one right of the States.

If this argument were made against any of the other rights it would be laughable.

Others who oppose individual gun ownership say that "times have changed" and the Second Amendment is no longer viable. If so, why do they not work to amend the Constitution by repealing the outdated amendment in the same way that the prohibition was repealed?

Still others, and this is my personal favorite, say that yes an individual has the constitutional right to keep and bear arms but it is related to sports like target shooting and hunting! Why in the world would the Founding Fathers include a right to hunt in a list of such serious rights as speech and a speedy trial? Did they simply fail to include fishing tackle or were they against fishing?

"The Second Amendment secures a right of individuals generally, not a right of States or a right restricted to persons serving in militias." That's the conclusion of an exhaustive memorandum written for the U.S. Attorney General by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel and made public on the Department's website last December. The Second Amendment protects the individual right of citizens to be armed to reduce the potential of the government to become tyrannical..

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



*(continued from page 2)*

complexity (more than 21 generations), and contents. Additional data is provided from members' proven genealogies. The goal is to make it easier for those who follow us to trace their ancestry. Rod shared his own research, parts that took place over many years, as a way to illustrate the potential use of the database.

At the end of his talk Rod moved that the funds derived from the project no longer be limited to the CAR but be used for any purpose approved by the chapter. John Skillman seconded the motion and it passed without dissent.

John Skillman won the 50/50 drawing.  
The treasury was enriched by \$21.00.

President Bolen led the recessional and  
Chaplain Lloyd the benediction.  
The meeting adjourned at 2:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Yarnell  
*Chapter Secretary*



## APRIL SAR NEWS INSIDE!



### Chapter Notes

Please visit the Chapter Website at:  
[www.patriot-web.com](http://www.patriot-web.com)  
and the National SAR Website at:  
[www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)

Our next two meetings will be held  
on April 16 and May 21, 2005 –  
please mark your calendars.