



VOL. 21, NO. 4

®

## **BATTLE LINES**

NEWSLETTER OF THE SARATOGA BATTLE CHAPTER, SAR

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WINTER 2017-2018

### **CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING**

**Douglas Gallant, President**

It was good to see both new and returning compatriots again as the Chapter held its Annual Meeting and Washington's Birthday Luncheon on February 24th, 2018. The meeting was at a new location this year, the Holiday Inn Express in Latham, NY. The room was spacious and I received several positive comments regarding the food (sprinkled with a couple of suggestions for next year!)

It was a well attended meeting with over 40 individuals present. This included 5 new members and several honored guests. The guests were Shayla Cole, C.A.R. NY State President; Jean Cole, C.A.R. NY Senior State President; Priyanka Kumar, Chapter Knight Essay Contest winner; Amy Bracewell, Saratoga National Historical Park Superintendent; and Larry Arnold, Friends of Saratoga Battlefield.



The business meeting began with approval of the minutes from the prior meeting then moved on to the Treasurer's Report. Treasurer David Flint delivered the message that the Chapter remains on solid financial footing. Total net income for the reporting period was over \$1,700. And the Chapter disbursed \$1,000 in donations to various organizations including the Rensselaer County Veterans Fund, Fort Crailo Chapter DAR; Friends of NYS Military Museum, Wreaths Across America and the Schuyler and Bemis Heights Societies C.A.R.

We were fortunate to meet and install five new chapter members at this meeting.



*L to R - Welcome new members James House, Thomas Gross, Kyle Dikeman, Sam Dikeman, Sr., William Moore*

The program portion of the meeting was next. Our first speaker was Priyanka Kumar, the 2017 Chapter level winner of the Knight Essay Contest. Her essay was titled "When The World Turned Upside Down" and she presented it in full. The thesis was that "Cornwallis' campaign at Yorktown was doomed to be unsuccessful due to Cornwallis not being in direct control of his army, the lack of British soldiers and relief, and the natural environment and diseases during the battle." Those points were amply supported. Priyanka was presented with a cash prize, a certificate and a medal for her efforts.



*Priyanka Kumar (center), her father Aseem Kumar (left) and President Douglas Gallant*

C.A.R. State President Shayla Cole then did a presentation on her State project, "Honor Flight - A Flight of a Lifetime." Honor Flight's purpose is "We fly our heroes to Washington, DC to experience and reflect together at their memorials." The flight is free to any veteran that wishes to go. Their cost is paid via donations to the organization. Shayla's project is to raise funds which will be presented to Honor Flight at the C.A.R. State Convention in Albany on March 24th, 2018. The Chapter authorized a \$500 donation to this project.



*C.A.R. State President Shayla Cole*

Next we heard from Friends of Saratoga Battlefield's Larry Arnold and Saratoga National Historical Park Superintendent Amy Bracewell regarding the current status of the Saratoga Surrender Site project. The site has been in private ownership until only a few years ago when the Friends, in conjunction with a couple of other organizations, were able to purchase the property. There is a vision and a plan to develop a suitable memorial park.



(Photo credits: Tom Dunne & Benjamin Gallant).

## CHAPTER MATTERS

The reports presented at the meeting reflect a thriving chapter. Treasurer David Flint's report shows that we remain on solid financial footing. Our total net income over the preceding six months was \$1,700; we were able to make donations during that same period totaling \$1,000. In addition to the donations mentioned by Pres. Gallant, we were also able to make a donation to the New Hartford, CT Ambulance Assn. in memory of our late compatriot John T. Bailey.

Registrar Thomas Dunne reported on membership activity. The prior six months included the annual dues renewal period, a time when we and other organizations are apt to lose members. We began the period with 211 members and ended with 203; this still leaves us as the largest chapter in the Empire State Society. Additional applications were pending at the time and Tom expected us to be back at or above our beginning number of 211 in the near future. Kudos to past chapter and state Duane Booth for his yeoman work in assisting Registrar Dunne.

## CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE

We have a very nice page on Facebook, and members are invited to log in and ask to be added. This can be a great way of sharing news about your SAR activities. Your Editor is also an Administrator of this page, so please check it out and join at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/saratoga.battle.sar>

## ANNUAL 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY CEREMONY

Discussed and approved at the Annual Meeting.

At the annual July 4th citizenship ceremony at Saratoga Battlefield, each new citizen is given a bag of small gift items with the contents provided by various organizations. The Chapter used to provide a copy of the Bill of Rights but US Customs and Immigration Services began supplying that recently.

It was decided that the Chapter would contribute an Empire State SAR pin and an engraved pen with the Chapter's name on it in each bag starting this year. Note that this is in addition to our continued contribution of both cookies and a singer to the event.