

North Carolina SAR Handbook, Vol 4
Color Guard Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
20 January 2021



Standing Operating Procedure (SOP)
for
Color Guard

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Foreword

These instructions are additional to the NS SAR Color Guard Handbook, found on the SAR Website. All Chapters within the NC SAR are encouraged to form color guards, within their means, and to participate in color guard ceremonies at the chapter level, which include posting the colors at meetings, grave markings, patriotic parades, as well as wreath laying ceremonies as part of a combined State and/or National Color Guard. To accomplish this, the recommended basic color guard element at the chapter level would be: two color bearers and one musketeer. The chapter color guard commander may fill any of these positions.

1. Getting started: Step one is to acquire a color guard uniform portraying either Continental or Militia. The NC Society encourages each Compatriot to accurately portray their ancestor. Militia is perhaps less costly and more versatile as it may be worn in both warm and cold weather by simply adding layers of clothing, long underwear, thick socks and gloves in the wintertime. It will normally consist of a Tri-Corn or other brimmed hat, Revolutionary War period shirt and pants, thick belt, moccasins or plain black shoes with

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buckles, and other simple items of equipment, i.e. a Knapp sack, canteen, hunting knife, powder horn, tomahawk, bayonet and other items as desired. Ideas may be gleaned from the selection of items offered by: Jas. Townsend & Son (<http://www.townsend.us>), Sampson Historical (<http://www.Samsonhistorical.com>), G. Gedney Godwin (<https://www.gggodwin.com.3dcartstores.com>), C&D Jarnagin (<http://www.jarnaginco.com>), Fugawee Historical Footware (<https://www.fugawee.com/>), American Heritage Clothing (<http://www.colonialuniforms.com/>), Bethlehem Trading Post (<http://bethlehemtradingpost.com/>).

2. Suitable museum-quality non-firing weapons of the Revolutionary War Period may also be found on-line, in addition to period reproduction black powder weapons, slings and equipment - bear in mind that only one or two riflemen or none are needed to perform a basic color detail i.e. post the colors at a chapter meeting or event in which case only the National Colors (50-Star American flag or Betsy Ross), the State of North Carolina flag, and/or the Chapter S.A.R. flag would be used.

3. Chapters should be aware that there is no standing NC SAR Color Guard. For most events, including grave markings, the color detail will consist of members of the chapter in period dress with invited members of other chapter color guards to make up a combined Color Guard detail, in order to post the Colors and provide rifle escorts to participants who wish to present wreaths as part of the ceremony. A protocol has been established within the NC SAR in which notice of the event is posted by the hosting chapter with details on the date, time, and location of the event, with a request for invited chapters to notify the hosting chapter of intent to participate, the number of participants, and intent to present a wreath. Such invitations should be answered by the date indicated by the hosting chapter. For planning an event, the host should check the SAR Calendar to assure that the planned event does not conflict with a key event that appears on the NS SAR web site calendar. Chapters should utilize their own assets first and then coordinate with the State Color Guard Commander or Adjutant, for support from the State Color Guard Inventory of Flags, as detailed in paragraph 4 below:

4. State Color Guard Inventory of Flags under charge of the State Color Guard Commander, all sleeved and on 8-foot oak poles or extendable aluminum poles. Also in inventory are four indoor flag stands and four spiked outdoor flag supports. See below:

- a. U.S. 50 Star flag, fringed, topped by an Eagle.
- b. Betsy Ross 13 Star flag, topped with wooden period knob.
- c. State of North Carolina flag, fringed, topped w/spike.

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- d. State S.A.R. flag, fringed, topped w/ spike.
- e. Grand Union (a.k.a. Continental Colors or Cambridge) flag, topped w/spike.
- f. Guilford Courthouse flag, topped w/ spike.
- g. Gadsden (Don't Tread On Me) flag, topped w/ spike.
- h. New England (Red Pine Tree) flag, topped w/spike
- i. Hornet's Nest Flag (Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence), topped w/spike
- j. Bladen and Brunswick Militia Rattlesnake Flag, topped w/spike.
- k. SAR 250th Anniversary Flag

5. The NC Society uses the event system for determination of eligibility for SAR Color Guard medals.

- a. The Bronze Medal is purchased and awarded by the Chapter.
- b. The Silver Medal is purchased and awarded by the State Society.
- c. The Von Steuben Medal is provided and awarded by the National Society.

6. The wearing of neck ribbons, medals and name tags on colonial uniforms is not in keeping with the tradition of the Revolutionary War era and as a matter of policy should not be worn. The time and place for the wearing of such awards include on a blue blazer, tuxedo, dinner jacket or formal military uniform, dress mess, service whites, dress blues, but not when dressing out as an SAR Color Guardsmen.

References

1. The Illustrated Drill Manual and Regulation for the American Soldier of the Revolutionary War, First Edition ISBN: 0.913150.47.9 Edited by A.N. Schultz ~ Illustrated by R. T. Coleman. Available: [Revolutionary War Drill Manual - Wikisource, the free online library](#) or for purchase: check Amazon or Abe Books.
2. The SAR Color Guard Handbook: found on the National Sar Web site – Member tab – Committees – Color Guard.

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Procedures

1. The Chapter commits to an event and plans to use its own Color Guard assets to complement a combined color guard, inviting other chapters to participate by posting the date, time, and location of the event in coordination with the NC SAR Web Master using the Calendar of Events on the State Website..
2. If the host chapter plans to give streamers to participants, they must be ordered well in advance.
3. It is standard protocol that if the National or State Color Guard Commander or his adjutant attend an event that they are invited by the Chapter Color guard Commander to take command for the event.
4. The Chapter President or his designated officer should submit an event report: [Forms, Fees & Dues – North Carolina SAR \(ncssar.org\)](https://www.ncssar.org/forms-fees-dues) upon completion of the event.
5. The State Color Guard Commander, with the assistance of the adjutant(s), will record participation at the National, District and State Color Guard events. This data will be presented semi-annually to the Board of Managers. Recommendations for award of the Bronze Color Guard Medal, the Silver Color Guard Medal or the Von Steuben Color Guard medal will be coordinated with the State Color Guard Commander. Recommendations for the award of State medals will be forwarded to the NC SAR Senior Vice President for presentation at a state, district or national meeting, as appropriate.
6. The chapter color guard commander or the chapter president should maintain a log of chapter member participation in color guard activity for presentation of the Chapter Bronze Color Guard medal and as a back up to the Chapter Americanism Report submitted annually. The report of color guard activity should be sent via e-mail or USPS mail to the state Color Guard Commander and the designated District Vice President. Award of the Chapter Bronze Color Guard medal should be coordinated with the NC SAR Color Guard commander and the NC SAR Color Guard commander or Adjutant should be invited to present the medal at an appropriate chapter venue.

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7. Individual color guardsmen should also keep a log or journal of all qualifying color guard events in which they participate as a guide for the time they plan to submit their request for the Bronze or Silver Color Guard, or the National Von Steuben Medal as defined in the SAR Handbook.

Musket Procedures

1. **Use of Firelocks** - On certain occasions a musket/rifle salute is deemed appropriate and shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:
 - a. **All participants must be insured and the property owner provided a copy of the Certificate of Insurance if requested. The State has an insurance policy with Robinson and Stith.**
 - b. **All participants must be certified and trained. (Par 5 Below)**
 - c. **No compatriot may fire a musket while wearing Polyester clothing.**
 - d. **ALL Compatriots must be a minimum of 16 years of age. Any Compatriot under 18 years of age participating in the Firing Element must have written consent of a parent or legal guardian.**
2. **Roles and Responsibilities:**
 - a. **Color Guard Commander (or Firing Element Commander, if designated by Color Guard Commander):** responsible for overall command of the Color Guard and will call issue all firing commands. Independently observes and verifies Safety Inspection of all firelocks performed by the Safety Officer. Responsible for designating the position of the Firing Element of the Color Guard
 - b. **Safety Officer:** Color Guardsman designated by the Color Guard Commander and assists the Color Guard Commander in maintaining safety for both the Color Guard and spectators. Conducts Safety Checks of all firelocks under the supervision of the Color Guard Commander. Maintains area around firing element clear of spectators and observes area downrange of Color Guard to maintain safety. SAFETY OFFICER does not participate in Live Fire. SAFETY OFFICER is responsible for the security

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and issuance of BLANK CARTIRIDGES for use in volleys.

- c. **Firing Element:** that portion of the Color Guard that will participate in Volleys/firing demonstrations. Responsible for the safe handling of all firelocks by themselves and others, as well as maintaining their personal fitness for Safe Firing and obeying the orders of the Color Guard Commander during the event.

3. Firelock Safety Check

SAFETY CHECK begins 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the event. LATE ARRIVALS may only be permitted with the express permission of the Color Guard Commander and will be the exception rather than the rule.

The Safety Officer, under supervision of the Color Guard Commander (or Firing Element Commander) will perform a safety inspection of firearms prior to the beginning of the ceremony. It should be conducted as follows:

- a. Ensure the physical and mental alertness of each firing Guardsmen for safely handling their firelocks
- b. Ensure each Guardsmen's cartridge box is EMPTY
- c. Physical examination of firelock for excessive corrosion and mechanical soundness. This physical examination should ensure a properly installed and secured flashguard
- d. The rammer should be pinged to show that the weapon is clear
- e. Place the firelock on HALF-COCK and hang from trigger on HALF-COCK to ensure mechanical safety is functional
- f. Place firelock on FULL COCK, close the frizzen, point at ground and ensure adequate spark from flint to ensure pan ignition.
- g. Replace hammerstall and shoulder firelock until inspection of entire Firing Element is complete

The Color Guard Commander (or Firing Element Commander) directly observes and independently verifies all elements of the SAFETY CHECK for all members of

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the Firing Element and is the Final Certification of Firing Element Readiness. Once SAFETY CHECK is COMPLETE, blank cartridges will be issued to each Guardsmen (enough for planned number of shots in volley + 1) and placed securely in their Cartridge boxes. **NO SMOKING** shall occur once cartridges are issued

- 4. Firing Element Position:** As determined by the Color Guard Commander, with the consent of the Event Coordinator, the Firing Element will be positioned in such a manner as to:
- a. Maintain the Safety of the Element and all Spectators
 - b. Firelocks shall be aimed in a direction which protects against all possible injury to persons and property, clear of persons, animals, and occupied dwellings for at least 40 yards downrange.
 - c. FIRING ELEMENT POSITION will be physically marked by small red flag markers PRIOR TO THE EVENT BEGINNING and will be maintained clear of spectators by SAFETY OFFICER during event

5. Certification:

- a. All guardsmen who are assigned to fire muskets shall be certified as to their competency by the NC SAR Color Guard Commander, Adjutant or designated safety officer, based upon the following criteria:
 - 1). Demonstrated knowledge of and competency in the safe handling of firelock and black powder weaponry
 - 2). Demonstrated efficiency in breaking down, cleaning and assembling musket.
 - 3). Demonstrated efficiency in safely loading and firing a musket. No one joined a firing line unless they had been taken to the range for live fire and volley practice.
 - 4). Participation in at least two (2) volleys at 2 separate events in the preceding 12 months will maintain Certification.
 - 5). Notice of participation should be provided to the State Color Guard Commander or Adjutant(s) by Chapter Color Guard Commanders.

The State shall hold *at least* 2 Certification Clinics per year at times and locations conducive to certifying Guardsmen from around the State efficiently and expeditiously.

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Certification Elements:

- a. Guardsmen must fire their firelock 5 to 10 times the powder load appropriate for individual firelock

RIFLES:

Bore size	2F (or FFg)	3F (or FFFg)
32 caliber	50 grains	30 grains
45 caliber	65 grains	45 grains
50 caliber	75 grains	50 grains
54 caliber	80 grains	55 grains

MUSKETS:

69 caliber	100 grains	90 grains
72 caliber	120 grains	110 grains
75 caliber	120 grains	110 grains

- b. Guardsmen will be taught and be competent in the manual of arms with a firelock following the Steuben Drill Manual of 1780
- c. Guardsmen will be provided a copy or link to the pertinent elements of the manual of arms so they can practice at home.
- d. Guardsmen will be taught and be competent in firing a volley with others inline and by command.
- e. Guardsmen must be able to maintain discipline, safety and stay in line during the ceremony.
- f. After training is COMPLETE, the Color Guard Commander must certify the shooter as safe
- g. The Color Guard Commander is responsible for all live fire activities and will ensure discipline and safety of all concerned.
- h. A listing of CERTIFIED Guardsmen will be recorded on the State Website and each musketeer issued a Certification card to be presented as proof of Certification

6. GENERAL SAFETY REGULATIONS

Making a Firelock SAFE – each firelock will be transported to and from the event in the following condition:

The rifle or musket must have a hammer stall ON the frizzen

No unburnt powder in the barrel (firelock not loaded)

Flashpan OPEN

Firelock de-cocked

There shall be no powder in the horn or elsewhere about the shooter

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Bayonet – NOT FIXED

NOTE:

All muskets, rifles, & fowlers are to be fitted with a proper METAL flashguard and LEATHER hammerstall (also called frizzen covers or hammer stalls). The Color Guard Commander or Safety Officer have the authority to exclude anyone carrying a weapon without both of these items from Firing Element at an event. Any small arm not having a working half cock, having a split stock, not "pinging" to the inspecting officer's satisfaction, or any other condition considered by the inspecting officer to be unsafe for whatever reason is to be excluded from any firing demonstration or battle recreation, without exception.

Weapons which show signs of severe corrosion or show signs of damage from poor maintenance are to be excluded from any Firing Element use.

The local law enforcement agency must be informed of the volley by the Event Coordinator

The Color Guard Commander, Safety Officer, or Firing Element Members must be able to call off the volley any time an unsafe condition exists. ALL MEMBERS own the CEASE FIRE command.

At ANY time CEASE FIRE is called, ALL Firing Element members will render their firelocks safe by spilling the powder from their barrels AND their flashpans, installing hammerfalls, de-cocking the firelock and shouldering arms, and await further instructions

NEVER allow firelocks to be handled by a spectator/visitor without maintaining direct control over the firelock (Guardsmen maintain one hand on the firelock at ALL times). Spectators MAY NEVER fire or flash the pans at an event. NO EXCEPTIONS

ALWAYS keep the muzzles of firelocks at an elevated angle when firing
NEVER load your firelock unless given the command to load. Firelocks are to remain UNLOADED at all times unless actively engaged in volley firing under the command of the Color Guard Commander

Alcohol and Medication Policy– For safety and liability reasons there is no alcohol consumption prior to the handling and firing of weapons. Additionally, substances or medications which impair an individual's ability to concentrate, focus, or handle firelocks safety may not be used prior to Firing Element participation. The Color Guard Commander is responsible for ensuring the Fitness for Duty of all Firing Element participants.

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for the betterment of the North Carolina Society, Sons of the American Revolution

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Annex 1

National, District and NC SAR Area Color Guard Events – Check State and National Calendars for specific dates.

National Events set by NS SAR. See latest edition of the SAR Color Guard Magazine on SAR website: Member tab – Committees – Color Guard

District Events: District Meetings. State/Chapter events become District Events when the National Society SAR South Atlantic District Vice President General attends.

State Events:

Date	Event
February	Winter Board of Managers Meeting
April	Annual Convention
May	Patriot's Day at Alamance Battleground, Alamance, NC
May	Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence (Meck Dec) Day, Charlotte, NC
August	House in the Horseshoe, Sanford, NC
August	Remembrance of Tryon Resolves, Bessemer City, NC
August	Summer Board of Managers Meeting
October	Battle of Shallow Ford, Winston-Salem, NC

Chapter Events:

Date	Event
February	President's Day Community Dinner, Mecklenburg chapter
July	Battle of Colson's Mill, Norwood, NC Battle of Rock Fish, Wallace, NC
August	New Bern Resolves, New Bern, NC
September	Battle of Elizabethtown, Elizabethtown, NC
September	Revolutionary War Weekend, Morganton, NC
November	33 Patriots, Huntersville, NC
December	Christmas Parades in Fayetteville, Raleigh or Roanoke Rapids Patriot and compatriot Grave Markings Chapter Meetings

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There will be other Chapter Events that occur, as hosted by individual Chapters.

Participation in events outside the state of North Carolina may be included in the determination of the Bronze Color Guard medal at the chapter level. The Chapter Color Guard Commander will determine the veracity of the participation.

National Society SAR Color Guardsmen of the Year – from North Carolina

2014 Dr. Samuel C. Powell
2019 Lt. Col Gary O. Green, USAF (Ret)

North Carolina Society SAR Color Guard Commanders

2002 – 2004 Paul Callanan
2004 – 2005 Larry Brown
2005 Alex Long
2005 – 2009 Tim Berly
2009 – 2010 Dan Jutson
2010 – 2014 Maj. Richard Bishop, USA (Ret)
2014 – 2016 Lt. Col. Gary O. Green, USAF (Ret)
2016 – 2018 John Thornhill
2018 – 2019 MSgt. Ken Wilson, USAF (Ret)
2019 Lt. Col. Gary O. Green, USAF (Ret)
2019 – SMSgt. George K. Strunk, USAF (Ret)

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North Carolina Society SAR Color Guardsmen of the Year

2014 – Samuel Powell

2015 – No one selected

2016 – Kenneth Luckey

2017 – Lt Col. Gary O Green, USAF (Ret)

2018 – James Tatum

2019 – Rolf Marris

2020 – SMSgt. George K. Strunk, USAF (Ret)