



The Sons of the American Revolution Catawba Coalition



A monthly Newsletter for
The Catawba Valley Chapter of
The Sons of the American Revolution

President's Report Compatriots and Friends

Greetings everyone. This is our last The Catawba Coalition newsletter for the year, and what a year it has been. Thank you to all of Catawba Valley Chapter Members and Supporters. Without you, we could do and would be nothing.

At our last meeting, I had to correct an oversight on my part. Our Chapter had presented 16 Certificates of Appreciation to various persons and organizations that join in with and support us in so many of the activities that we undertake in a year, somehow, I overlooked the one person who supports me and our Chapter more than anyone else. That one person is my wife Charlain Setser, I presented with a Certificate of Appreciation, much overdue, on 12 November 2022 at our last regular meeting. She and I are pictured to the right, I am overly blessed to be married to her.

Our 2022 Grave Marking Marathon ended with the Historic Obeth Cemetery Ceremony at Lake James State Park in Nebo NC, November 19th. This was a marvelous day that you should not have missed. Catawba Valley Chapter, in conjunction with Col Alexander Erwin Chapter SAR, Quaker Meadows Chapter DAR and The Overmountain Victory Trail Association conducted a Grave Marking for 4 Patriots at Historic Obeth Cemetery, inside Lake James State Park in Nebo NC on 19 November 2022. This Grave Marking event consummated 17 grave markings this year for Catawba Valley Chapter and 2 for Col Alexander Erwin Chapter. Patriots Lawrence Unger, John Gibbs, William Fullwood and Abraham Renshaw were honored with memorial stones, stories of their lives, the Traditional DAR ceremony, a telling of the search for Ferguson to Kings Mountain by the Overmountain Victory Trail Association, Wreath Laying and a Musket Volley. There were about 70 people in attendance. This service was conducted as a "Partners In Patriotism" function with Catawba Valley Chapter SAR, Col Alexander Erwin Chapter SAR, Quaker Meadows Chapter DAR, The Overmountain Victory Trail Association and North Carolina State Parks Commission. Catawba Valley proved 2 of these patriots, Lawrence Unger and Abraham Renshaw. Please enjoy the photos below. Beginning on the left, the combined SAR, Overmountain Men Color Guard, Ben Setser, President Catawba Valley; Rebecca Heacock and Andrea Kiser, Quaker Meadows DAR; Janie Matthews, Regent, and Jean Riggs, Chaplain, Quaker Meadows DAR; Robert Patton, President, Col Alexander Erwin Chapter, the crowd, and our Musket Volley of Honor.



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Ben Setser
Chapter President



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10 December
2022

Volume 3 Issue 12

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The Catawba Coalition

A Monthly Newsletter of the Catawba Valley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution

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The Obeth Grave marking made number 17 that Catawba Valley Chapter received credit conducted this year, all in an effort to gain the medals for our Chapter members and to show that, yes, this medal can be earned in one year.

Catawba Valley Chapter members not only conducted and presided over 17 Patriot Grave Markings and 1 Compatriot Grave marking in 2022, but our members also participated in a total of 24 Patriot Grave Markings, placed flags on more than 60 Patriot graves, proved 7 men as Patriots, and participated in 34 Veteran's Funerals in 2022.

Along with the time that we spend in cemeteries this year, we have participated in 14 historic celebrations and observances, spoken in 15 high school classes and Boy Scout troops, we appeared in newspapers, magazines, on television and in social media at least 164 times. That portrays a busy year for a Chapter with only 27 members, and I must thank everyone for their participation. It couldn't be done without all of you participating. Pictured below is one of



those unique occasions where one or more of our members has been asked to speak at a function. This was a "Leadership Lincoln" function on 9 November, where Roy Lightfoot, Lisa Pupkiewicz, Stephen McKee and Lynne Smith, described many of the events of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill to leaders of Lincoln County, leading them around the Battlefield, in period clothing, so that they may have an up close and personal description of the battle that took place in their backyard. These compatriots have personified the stated goals of The Sons of the American Revolution. The SAR is a historical and patriotic non-profit, United States 501(c)3, corporation that seeks to maintain and extend: The institutions of American Freedom, An appreciation for True Patriotism, A respect for our National Symbols, The value of American Citizenship, The unifying force of *E Pluribus Unum* that has created, from the people of

many nations, One Nation and One People. We do this by perpetuating the stories of patriotism, courage, sacrifice, tragedy and triumph of the men who achieved the Independence of the American People in the belief that these stories are universal ones of man's eternal struggle against tyranny, relevant to all time, and will inspire and strengthen each succeeding generation as it too is called upon to defend our freedoms on the battlefield and in our public institutions. It is my opinion that we have done these things this year, and have done them well.

The Americanism Report that I'm sure everyone has heard mentioned before, the same report that very few members know or want to know about, is a large excel spreadsheet that seems to change a bit every year, designed to create a numerical quantity that will "categorize" if you will, the several SAR Chapters across the nation, to see who is performing at the highest level. It divides these Chapters into small, medium and large, and categorizes these Chapters in numerical order. In finishing up the report last year, I realized that 2 items that gave our Chapter great numbers last year would not be available in the ensuing year, so it was my idea to "Double Down" in order to make up the deficit that appeared as a result. I may have overstepped the mark. In 2021 we did very well and won several awards. Our grand total in Americanism Points was 8720! A great score. As of today, and the year is not quite complete, there is still Wreaths Across America to take care of, our grand total Americanism Points total is 16852! Once we complete Wreaths Across America next week, we will have actually doubled our Americanism Points over last year. I am proud of this Chapter and every person who is a member and supporter of our small movement.

Our Chapter did not do well with membership this year and as a result, will not receive the 95% Retention streamer. We had 1 transfer in and 1 new member, but we lost 4 members to the new Col Daniel Boone Chapter in Boone NC and lost 4 to non-payment of dues.

Thank once again everyone for your continued participation. We are proof positive that if you show up, things can get done. Please accept Catawba Valley Chapter's sincere hopes that this Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Yule, Holiday season will be safe, secure and prosperous. Here's to the new year bringing More Hope and Further Light.

Please join us anytime that you can. Check page 4 for upcoming events that you may be able to attend. Contact us at the email below for more information.

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The Catawba Valley Chapter
of the
Sons of the American Revolution

“The Battle of Trenton”

This month, we will be looking at the Battle of Trenton, which occurred on 26 December 1776 in Trenton, New Jersey. Although this is not a local affair, it is a very important turning point in the American Revolution which sometimes is glossed over. For the most part, we are all familiar with the famous painting of General George Washington crossing the Delaware River, while he stands in the boat with his men. What the reader may not be familiar with is that the original plan was to attack with many more men than were actually present at the time of the battle, however, a winter storm prevented the rest of the force from crossing.

By late 1776, the morale of the Continental Line was dropping quickly with the losses at the Battle of White Plains in October, and Forts Mifflin and Mifflin in November. After these losses, General Washington had removed his force across New Jersey into Pennsylvania. The troops were wearing threadbare clothing, some with no shoes, and had been reduced to only a few thousand, with many enlistments set to expire very soon. Washington believed that one victory could cause reenlistments to rise. He asked the men to stay for one more fight. These men had hunkered down on the west side of the Delaware River. The winter weather was keeping the British opposing force at bay.

On the Christmas night, 25 December 1776, Washington began an audacious and unprecedented plan which would improve the fortunes, resolve, and attitudes of the American Army. It was not only crossing the icy river with a pending storm approaching which is impressive, but that this occurred in the middle of the night with 2,400 troops accompanied by horses, ammunition, and eighteen cannon. Because of the storm, the rest of the 3,000 men, were unable to cross. In addition, after the crossing, the force moved ten miles to the city of Trenton through the ice and snow, where they surprised the garrison of 1,500 Hessians. This garrison, under the command of Colonel Johann Rall, had been harassed for many weeks by the local militia resulting in their exhaustion.

The crossing relied on good boats and able men to guide them. Most of Washington's force was ferried across the river in Durham cargo boats which measured between forty to sixty feet with a shallow draft. These boats were designed for moving iron ore down the river, and were sturdily built with high walls. Experienced sailors of the Marblehead Regiment, under the command of Colonel John Glover, guided the watercraft with the aid of local watermen who knew the stretch very well. They were covering a distance of approximately three hundred yards. Moving this group with all the provisions took great intestinal fortitude and stamina.

Despite being warned of the American imminent attack, Colonel Rall did nothing to prepare nor fortify the city. “Let them come,” he said. “We will go at them with the bayonet.” His troops had faced Washington before, and had defeated them on several occasions, and he felt nothing less than disdain for the abilities of the Americans in battle. In truth, Rall was actually very nervous about a possible attack on Trenton. Even though he had been ordered to fortify his position by his superiors, he believed that Trenton was indefensible. Since mid-December, his troops had been harangued by the New Jersey-based Hunterdon Militia, and by General James Ewing's Pennsylvania Militia, both of which were stationed directly across the river. Knowing a full attack would come soon, Rall did send messages to his superiors, Colonel Carl von Donop, and General James Grant, the British commander of New Jersey, however, his requests were denied.

As the American force approached Trenton, the pickets were engaged, however, Rall and his men were still taken completely by surprise. Because of the storm the American force did not arrive on the outskirts of town until daybreak which was behind schedule. Washington split his force into two columns, with one being commanded by Major General Nathanael Greene, to the north, while the other prong under Major General John Sullivan attacked from the west to cut the Hessian's possible line of retreat to the south. A running fight through Trenton was a one-sided affair resulting in an American victory. Some of the Hessian troops managed an escape, however, most were captured, killed or wounded. Rall himself was mortally wounded as he led his troops, but before he died, he formally surrendered to General Washington. As he lay dying, he implored Washington to treat those captured with humanity. Washington agreed, and complied. Casualties were listed as five Americans wounded, none killed or missing, and twenty-two British killed, eighty-three wounded, and eight hundred missing or captured.

The Americans dominated this battle, and would again do so in Princeton a week later. With both of these victories, Washington demonstrated his resilience, and ingenuity as a leader, won the loyalty of his soldiers, and revived an army which was falling apart.

Among the things already mentioned, an important lesson can be shared with the world. Americans will cross an icy river in the middle of the night, and in the midst of a storm, march ten miles, and do battle with them, and defeat them, all on the day after Christmas. They have done it once... they will do it again.

Roy C Lightfoot

Our next regular meeting is, Saturday, January 21st 2023, at Palermo's Family Italian & Greek Restaurant, 924 Conover Blvd W, Conover NC. This is our last regular meeting of the year. Come be with us if you can. A meal may be ordered at 11:00, the meeting begins at Noon. Hope to see you there.

Find us at

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LOGISTICS

SAR-DAR Happenings

- ***Wreaths Across America**, Saturday, 17 December 2022, at 10:00 am, Western Carolina State Veterans Cemetery, 962 Old US 70 W, Black Mountain, NC 28711.
- ***Battle of Cowpens**, Saturday, 14 January 2023
- ***Chapter Regular Meeting**, Saturday, 21 January 2023, 12:00 Noon, Palermo's Family Italian & Greek Restaurant, 924 Conover Blvd W, Conover NC 28613.
- ***Battle of Cowan's Ford, Winter BOM**, Saturday, 28 January 2023, at 8:00 am. Hopewell Presbyterian Church, 10500 Beatties Ford Rd, Huntersville NC. Breakfast 8:00 – 9:00, Indoor Program 9:00 – 10:00, Wreath Laying Ceremony 10:00 – 11:00, Winter BOM 11:00 onward.
- ***Battle of Moore's Creek**, Saturday, 25 February 2023, 10:00 am. 200 Moore's Creek Dr, Currie, NC 28435
- ***Patriot's Day**, Monday, 17 April 2023.

Nancy Ann Morgan Hart, 1735 – 1830, who's silver coin is shown below, was a cousin of Gen Daniel Morgan, born in the Yadkin River Valley of North Carolina. She married Benjamin Hart of PA and they moved to northeast Georgia in the early 1750's. Her several exploits during the revolution, may be little known but are quite epic!



Nancy Hart was described as a 6-foot-tall, red-haired, smallpox-scarred woman so feisty her Cherokee neighbors called her "Wahatche," or "War Woman." One account has it that while her husband, Benjamin, was engaged with the war, about a half-dozen Tory soldiers confiscated a turkey from her farm and demanded she cook it for them. She complied – while quietly removing their weapons with the help of her daughter. Then she held them at gunpoint, killing one soldier and wounding another when they tried to rush her. The rest were hanged by her neighbors.

During the late 1780s, the Harts moved to Brunswick, Georgia. Benjamin Hart died shortly thereafter and she later settled with her son John Hart near Athens, Georgia. Around 1803 John Hart took his mother and family to Henderson County, Kentucky, where they settled near family. Nancy died in 1830 and buried near Henderson.

Catawba Valley Chapter has grave markings and 250th Anniversary Celebrations in the plans for the upcoming year. It is impossible to set actual dates without written approval of venues and cemeteries, nor without the stone work in hand. These dates will be forthcoming. As soon as we know, we will inform you.

The Sons of the American Revolution

Is a nonpolitical, patriotic, educational 501c3 organization of men who have ancestors who fought for, or otherwise supported the War for independence from Great Britain that established the United States of America.

- Working to preserve our nation's past
- Assisting schools, teachers and the public
- Sustaining and preserving our history and constitutional principles

Membership is open to any male (no age limit) who can direct descent from a man or woman who contributed to our country's Independence. A patriot did not necessarily have to serve in the military, but might have supported the Revolution by paying a supply tax, providing food for troops, serving as a juror, or being a local public servant.

Join Today

The Catawba Coalition welcomes submissions, comments and/or suggestions. Please send them to

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Did you Know?

The Connecticut inventor David Bushnell 1740 – 1824, was not only an American inventor, but also a patriot, one of the first American combat engineers, a teacher, and a medical doctor. He created our first submarine, the *Turtle*, so called because it resembled two large tortoise shells of equal size joined together. The watertight hull was made of 6-inch-thick oak timbers coated with tar. On 6 September 1776, the *Turtle* targeted the *HMS Eagle*, flagship of the British fleet. The submarine was supposed to secure a cask of gunpowder to the hull of the *Eagle* and sneak away before it exploded. Unfortunately, the *Turtle* got entangled with the *Eagle's* rudder bar, lost ballast and surfaced before the gunpowder could be planted.