Lower Cape Fear History

2022

HISTORY: The Chapter was formed in 1968. A lot of the early information and history on the Chapter was given to the New Hanover Library for safe keeping. Since the Chapter was formed, members have been active in the SAR. The Chapter has had 4 men serve as State President. These are: Walser H Allen – 1981-1983; Lee W Porter – 1991 – 1993; John O. Thornhill – 2010-2011 and Gary O. Green – 2016-2017. On the National level, John O. Thornhill served as the SAR National Historian General – 2017-2019. Gary O Green served as the National Trustee for North Carolina and Chairman of the Patriotic Research Committee. John Thornhill was the Chairman of the National Ladies Auxiliary Liaison Committee for many years. Gary Green is the Chairman of the Patriot Research Committee. Both gentlemen were also members of other National Committees.

Chapter started the year with a total of 71 members. This was 63 regular members, 7 junior members and 1 dual member.

Feb 8 – Joseph H Cain – reinstated.

The Lower Cape Fear Chapter held its’ annual George Washington Birthday celebration at the Cape Fear Club on February 25. During the meeting, the Chapter officers for 2022-2023 were sworn in by North Carolina State SAR President Jay DeLoach. The officers are: Jack Albert – President; Gary Green – Vice President; John Witherspoon – Secretary; Harry Blakeslee – Treasurer; Tom Walz – Chaplain and Kevin Graham – Genealogist/Asst Registrar. Special guest, Luke Alexander, spoke on Persons of Color from southeastern North Carolina in the American Revolution. President Graham presented the Bronze Roger Sherman medal to Wayne Ashcraft and Harry Blakeslee. Gene Funderburk, John Stewart and John Thornhill were given an Oak Leaf Cluster for their Bronze Roger Sherman medals.

On February 26, members of the Chapter Color Guard participated in the 246th Anniversary of the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge. Members in the Color Guard were: Harry Blakeslee, Gene Funderburk, Gary Green, Danny Hilton and John Stewart. Also attending the celebration was John Thornhill, a Director of the Moore’s Creek Battleground Association.

During the March meeting, John Thornhill was appointed to the unfilled position of Chapter Historian. Committees were set as: Nominating – Kevin Graham, Chairman; John Thornhill and Gary Green. Social – John Stewart, Chairman; Gene Funderburk and Michael Hamby. Memorial -Tom Waltz. Finance – Jim Brumit, Chairman; Harry Blakeslee and John Stewart. Youth Awards – John Thornhill, Poster and Brochure and John Stewart, JROTC. Awards – Gary Green, Chairman; John Thornhill. Flag – Kevin Graham. Publicity and Communications – Harry Blakeslee. Membership – Gary Green, Chairman; Joh Wetherington and John Thornhill. Color Guard – Gene Funderburk and DAR Liaison – Jim Brumit.

Four members of the Chapter attended the 93rd Annual Convention of the State Society. These were: Jack Albert, President; Gary Green, Vice-President; John Thornhill and Charles Williams. The convention was held at the Wyndham Garden in Greensboro. At the afternoon Award Program, the Chapter received Flag Steamers for: (a) Flag Certificates, presented 14 during the year; (b) Stark Memorial Award; (c) Membership Retention and (d) State Presidents Cup.

At the May meeting, Jim Brumit reported that the Ladies Tea Walk Chapter of the DAR had donated $500.00 to the Honor Flight Association in Wilmington. He made a motion that the chapter make a similar donation. Motion was passed.

Jack Albert and Gary Green attended the annual Halifax Resolves Ceremony in Halifax, NC. President Albert presented a wreath at the ceremony.

The Wilmington Sharks Baseball Team had a Military Recognition Night on July 1. The SAR was asked to present Colors to start the game. Members from the Lower Cape Fear Chapter that participated included Gary Green, Gene Funderburk, John Stewart, Tom Waltz, Danny Hilton and John Thornhill.

Independence Day was celebrated by members of the Chapter with a picnic held at Long Leaf Park. During the meeting, President Jack Albert acknowledged awards that the Chapter had received in the past two years. The Chapter received certificates for participation in Wreaths Across America – 2018-2019 and 2019-2020; Partners in Patriotism – 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 and a Flag Retirement Certificate for 2022. Individual awards were also presented. The **Military Service Medal and a Military Service Veterans Corps Certificate** were given to Jack Albert, Harry H Blakeslee and Michael Hamby Sr. **Flag Retirement Ceremony Participation Certificates** were given to C. Gene Funderburk, John E Stewart, C Wayne Ashcraft, Thomas E Waltz, Jack H Albert Jr., Gary O Green and James G Brumit. The SAR **Longevity Award** was presented to Brett Knowles – 30 years; Tom Waltz – 25 year certificate with pin. Fifteen year member certificates and pins went to Gary Green; Doug DeGroote; Tip Eames and Jim Brumit. John Stewart received his 10 year certificate with pin. Others recognized with 10 year certificates were Jeffery DeGroote, Greg Kent, Chuck Collins, Rob O’Briant and John White. The last Longevity Awards for 5 years went to Kevin Graham, Thomas Crittenden, C Wayne Ashcraft, Rodney Boswell, Archie Hansen, R Thomas Pearson and Danny Hilton. A new Member Certificate and Rosette was given to Leonard Preston Hilton. The last awards were presented by NC State Color Guard Commander George Strunk. He presented the SAR **Bronze Color Guard Medal** to John Stewart and Danny Hilton.

Gary Green and John Thornhill attended the National Congress held in Savannah, GA from July 9 to July 14. Gary was elected Genealogist General for 2022-2023. This makes him the person holding the highest National office while living in North Carolina. Gary also received the National Minuteman Medal making him the ninth Minuteman in the State and the second in the Chapter.

On July 30, members of the Chapter ventured up to Wallace for the Celebration of the Battle of Rockfish Creek. President Albert presented a wreath for the Chapter.

About 40 members and their wives met at the Surf Club in Wrightsville Beach for the annual Yorktown Celebration. Our guest speaker for the evening was Zachary Luhrow from UNCW. Mr. Luhrow spoke on the Militias in the South during the American Revolution.

Members of the Chapter attended Wreaths Across America at the National Cemetery in Wilmington. Some of those present were Jack Albert, Gary Green and Gene Funderburk.

During the year, the Chapter picked up 5 new members. These were: Leonard Hilton; Charles Williams; Charles Hite; Luke Alexander; Danny Hickman.