Welcome New Compatriots!

John Hull Minehan
Jeremiah David Drinkwater
Aaron Matthew Richard
Seth Justin Richard
William Latham
Douglas John Slater
Ernest Brierley Goodman
David Engel Goodman

In Memoriam
Capt. Eric Lloyd Barr Hale
Elmer Samuel Congdon
Rev. Paul Frederick Everett
Harvey Hubbell IV
John Roy Lambert
Ralph Willard Lathrop
Robert Woodrow Libby

Edward Hapgood Little
Jesse Edmund Schmidt
Thomas Charles Smith
Dr. Benjamin William Thomas
John Richard Trolan
Frederick Treat Strong

Winter Greetings!

Wreaths Across America Ceremonies

Many CTSSAR compatriots took part in the many Wreaths Across America Ceremonies throughout the state. Many organizations participated, including local branches, chapter and societies of the SAR, DAR and C.A.R, as well as many local boy scout troops. Wreaths Across America, a non profit 501-c3 organization, was formed as an extension of the Arlington Wreath Project. The Arlington Wreath program was started by Morrill Worcester in 1992 with the donation and laying of 5000 Christmas wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery. This became an annual journey for Mr. Worcester. It was relatively obscure until 2005 when a photo of the stones adorned with wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet. The project received National attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries spurred the creation of “Wreaths Across America”. Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Mr. Worcester conceived the idea of sending 7 wreaths (one for each branch of the military as well as POW/MIA). In 2006 with the help of the CAP and other civic organizations, over 150 locations held wreath laying ceremonies simultaneously. The wreath laying is now held annually on the second Saturday of December.
At the urging of CTSSAR leadership, led by former CTSSAR President, Ken Roach, Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth Branch President Damien Cregeau coordinated and led a Veterans' Day ceremony in honor of patriot Sgt. Herman Baker. Sgt. Baker, who was from Bolton, is buried with a marked patriot grave on the Pratt and Whitney property on Willow Street in East Hartford.

His grave was the site of restoration work by Pratt and Whitney in the 1990s and 2000s, culminating in a large rededication ceremony in 2004 with an added plaque as part of the W3R (Washington-Rochambeau) commemoration.

CTSSAR Color Guard Commander, Col. Todd Gerlander, started the ceremony with a reading summarizing Baker’s patriotic service. The Reverend Canon Jerry Carroon gave a benediction and read the poem “In Flanders Field” and explained the significance of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month and the signing of the Armistice Treaty in 1918 to end World War I, or what was then known as “The Great War” or “The War to End All Wars.” Ken Roach followed with touching words about the emotional connection shared by all veterans who have gone into harm’s way. The chronological order just happened to end with CTSSAR President Dave Perkins speaking of the link between Sgt. Baker, the patriots like him who gave their lives, and the current Global War on Terror. That war is being fought by CT compatriots such as CPO Bruce Cunard, U.S.N., and SFC Joe Hukill, U.S.A. It also includes Dave Perkins’ two sons, one who is with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan, and the other completing his Q Course for U.S. Army Special Forces.

Compatriot Lee Tryon of the Wadsworth Branch was instrumental in securing an SAR patriot grave marker for the branch’s use. It is a beautiful, expensive marker that was determined by branch officers to be of such value that it be removed after the ceremony and used at future patriot grave ceremonies in the Hartford area.

Sgt. Baker’s story is an amazing story of patriot sacrifice. Baker, a Tolland native, served in the Lexington Alarm in a local company of militia that rushed to help the Boston-area Minute-men. Baker was captured by British forces at the Battle of White Plains in 1776, and contracted smallpox while in captivity. He was one of 200 infected Continental soldiers released onto Milford’s Gulf Beach on January 1, 1777. While trying to walk all the way home to Bolton, Baker got as far as East Hartford before dying on a farm that later became Pratt and Whitney’s plant.

Pratt and Whitney staff volunteer to maintain the landscaping around the grave, and the company’s maintenance department mows the grass and painted the black metal piping.

Besides Gerlander, Cregeau, Carroon, Roach, Perkins and Tryon, other CT compatriots in attendance included Lee and Randy Gerlander, P&W Engineer Tim Wilkins, Wayne Blickley, Norm Gilman and Mark Sheldon of Sheldon’s Light Horse, 2nd Continental Light Dragoons. Jerry Carroon, as National Sr. Vice Commander, and Ken Roach also represented the Order of the First World War.
ROTC Awards In 2011 - Contributed by Ken Roach

We are looking forward to issuing the SAR Silver ROTC Medal to cadets from the University of Connecticut in the spring. The Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth Branch Number 7 offers cash scholarships in addition to the medal. Both the Air Force and Army ROTC Detachments hold award ceremonies on campus at Storrs during March and April.

The Silver ROTC Medal is presented only to students in a university ROTC unit. No recipient may receive it more than once. The medal was authorized in 1933. As an aside the Bronze ROTC Medal was authorized in 1965 and is presented only to students in secondary school JROTC programs. The Silver ROTC Medal may be presented by the National Society, a state society or a chapter to students enrolled in ROTC programs. The medal endeavors to foster the principle of “citizen-soldier” exemplified by the Minutemen. Recipients are selected for a high degree of merit with respect to leadership qualities, military bearing and general excellence. The recipients are selected by the Commanding Officer of the ROTC unit.

There is a movement to reinstate ROTC Detachments at other universities in Connecticut. We hope this comes to pass and look forward to expanding our award program.

“When doing family history research, it’s not as important that we are proud of our ancestors - It’s more important that they would be proud of us.”

News From The Front

Dear Compatriots,

The Connecticut Line will soon be coming out of Winter Quarters, and we are gearing up for the 2011 Campaign Season. We officially ended the 2010 Campaign with members participating in the Christmas Tree Lighting event in Lebanon, and in various Wreaths Across America Ceremonies throughout the State. 2010 was a GREAT year for the CTSSAR Color Guard. As I mentioned at the last State Meeting in November, WE, the members of the Connecticut Society are in a “Golden Age”. Looking back at the last five to ten years, and all of our accomplishments, the CTSSAR has put forth a tremendous effort to preserve and promote the American Revolution in Connecticut. For our part, the Color Guard annually participates in 30+ events each year. We also have grown to be the largest SAR Color Guard in New England with 65 active and uniformed members. We are also the only SAR “Living History” unit remaining in New England. I think that deserves THREE HUZZAHS!!!

The Color Guard will be holding its Annual Meeting soon, where we will elect our officers and select our event schedule for the year. As of now we are set to march in the New Haven St. Patrick’s Day Parade on Sunday, March 13th and the Concord Patriot’s Day Parade on Monday, April 18th.

2011 marks the 230th Anniversary of the Battle of Groton Heights (September 6, 1781) at Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park in Groton. I have heard that plans are in the works for another reenactment similar to the one held for the 225th Anniversary in 2006. That was a great show, with battle reenactments down the streets of New London and at Fort Griswold. Hopefully we will see more information on this event.

In closing, this year will mark my seventeenth year as an SAR Color Guardsman, and as a Color Guard Commander. I would like to thank the Connecticut Society for their continued support of the Connecticut Line, as we all work together to keep the history and ideals of the American Revolution ALIVE today, and for future generations.

Put your faith in God and keep your powder dry,

Todd L. Gerlander
Colonel Commanding
Happy New Year compatriots! Another year has come and gone. The Connecticut SAR continues to grow, membership is just shy of 550 now. It makes us the 19th largest state society. Considering how small we are as a state, that’s quite an accomplishment! Since our November meeting in Plainville, I’ve spent a day with Stephen Shaw clearing brush from around the East Haddam Nathan Hale schoolhouse, along with about 50 cadets from the Coast Guard Academy. What a great time! These are some of the finest young men and women you will ever meet. In December, my wife and I attended the Gov. Wolcott branch Christmas dinner in Torrington and listened to colonial period songs from Thomas Hooker Hanford. What delightful evening it was. The big event for December was the annual Wreaths Across America program. I’m happy to report that 12 compatriots have emailed me with their participation, including Bill Bell at Arlington National Cemetery. The Humphries, Baldwin, Huntington, Sherman, and Putnam branches all had members involved. If you were at a WAA ceremony or made a wreath donation, please let me know. I would like to make a complete report to national by the end of January. Speaking of reports, I would also ask that each branch president take the time to submit an annual report to me as soon as possible for 2010. The usual items, meetings, events, awards, list of officers. Any questions about it just let me know. Once again the SAR magazine has asked for World War II vets to complete a survey, if you haven’t please do it. The Knight Essay youth contest is in need of a chairman. It is one of three youth contests that our society runs each year. It would great if several members would step forward to run this contest. Lastly gentlemen, one very important item of business! As you know Stephen Shaw does one hell of a job managing our three properties each year. What better way to say thank you for all his efforts than to volunteer for one day this coming season to work as a docent, you know, tour guide! I live in Bethel on the NY border, but I have already given my commitment to be a docent this year. What about you?

As always, your obedient servant.

David J. Perkins
President, CTSSAR

C.A.R. Children Make Valentines for Wounded Soldiers

The Trumbull-Porter chapter of the Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution sponsored a meeting of the Charles Merriman Society of the Connecticut Society of the Children of the American Revolution on Sunday, January 9th, at the Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Naugatuck. Shelton based General David Humphreys Society C.S.C.A.R. children participated in their joint meeting and project. Now in its fourth year, the Valentine’s Day card project is part of the DAR chapter’s patriotic endeavor in support of their national societies “Project Patriot”. Project Patriot is the official DAR committee that supports America’s service personnel in current conflicts abroad. The children and adults made valentines for the wounded soldiers who are recuperating at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. The goal was to produce 400 cards for our injured service personnel. Cards were still coming in from children who were unable to attend. In this picture, a sampling of the C.A.R. and DAR members who participated is shown.