CTSSAR Commemorates Independence Day

Sunday, June 18, 2006 marked the 230th Anniversary of Connecticut Independence Day. It was on this day in 1776 that Governor Jonathan Trumbull’s broadside declared Connecticut’s independence from Great Britain.

The main event was held at the War Office, and we also set up a Revolutionary War encampment and exhibit at the Wadsworth Stable. The CTSSAR obtained an official proclamation from the Governor proclaiming June 18, 2006 as “Connecticut Independence Day” in the State of Connecticut. We also had special commemorative ribbons printed to commemorate this important event in Connecticut history. Compatriot Russell Wirtalla again excellently portrayed Governor Trumbull.

I would like to thank the members of the Connecticut Line CTSSAR, the Societies Color Guard. Three Huzzahs!

I would also like to thank the two CTSSAR compatriots visiting from Florida; Charles W. Riegel and Timothy M. Jacobs who were present during the ceremonies. Compatriot Jacobs is the editor of the Common Patriot, a Revolutionary War magazine. Event photos and an article on Governor Jonathan Trumbull should be appearing in the next issue.

I would also like to thank the members of the DAR, Mary Brown in particular, for their help during the event, and for the use of the Wadsworth Stable.

Todd Gerlander
CTSSAR Historic Sites/Celebrations
President’s Corner

This will be my first column as President of the CTSSAR. I thought long and hard about what I was and was not going to write. I have seen many of these columns from various society newsletters over the years, where the President will go on about his job, family, education, awards, and number of organizations he belongs to. But after reading the column, I am always left with the questions, what are you going to do for this Society? How are you going to make this Society better? What do you stand for? It is my belief that a leader “leads”, and every office that I have held over the past dozen years, I believe shows that. Compatriots who are active members of our Society know who I am, and what I stand for. I have many ideas that I would like to see happen during my term of office, some will succeed, some will fail. In the end a President should be able to look back at his term of office and say I did make a difference, I did leave the Society better off then when I started.

I will focus on our Societies objective of promoting the history and ideals of the American Revolution. In 2005 the CTSSAR sponsored the largest tribute to Captain Nathan Hale’s 250th Birthday in the State, at both of our schoolhouses. In 2006 we sponsored the 230th Anniversary of Connecticut Independence Day, commemorating Connecticut’s own, “Declaration of Independence”, at our War Office. In September 2007 we plan to commemorate the Marquis de Lafayette’s 250th Birthday, and it is not too early to start planning the 300th Birthday of Governor Jonathan Trumbull in 2010. Both commemorations will take place at our War Office in Lebanon. There is a lot of work to do, and I hope to see more compatriots join in the cause. We as a Society are in a very unique position. We own and maintain three historic properties, each with its own unique story to tell. We are also volunteers, we do not get paid. Our reward is that we are keeping the history alive for future generations.

I recently met with members of the Planning and Program Committee, and there is a lot of enthusiasm and interesting new ideas we are going to try, BUT, their success is going to rely on each and every member of this organization. Whether our upcoming member activities and events are a success or a failure depends on YOU.

I have been in contact with most of the Branches, and I plan to visit them all, hopefully by April 2007. The State Secretary and 2nd Vice President have also shown interest in accompanying me on these visits. I think this would be a great opportunity to hear from members about what they would like to see happen, and how the CTSSAR can help them. I am also interested to see the type of activities being run at the Branch level.

On a closing note, the CTSSAR State Meetings are NOT just Board of Managers Meetings, THEY ARE OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS. There seems to be a lot of confusion about this. I have heard many members say that they do not attend, because they are not members of the Board of Managers, wrong answer. As a Society we hold Meetings/Luncheons four times per year. It is at these meetings that we discuss both the present and the future of the Society. If you do not like something, or if you want a voice in the Society, become a regular at upcoming meetings.

You will find the CTSSAR September Meeting/Luncheon invitation within this newsletter. I expect to see record attendance.

Patriotically,
Todd Lee Gerlander, (860)872-0438, eleventh.ct.regt.sar@snet.net
250th of Cogswell Tavern in New Preston


Cogswell Tavern was built in 1756 by William Cogswell when he was about 22 years old. William Cogswell married Anna Whittlesey in 1762, and eventually they had ten children.

In Colonial times, travelers needed taverns to get rest and nourishment for themselves and their horses. Taverns were also the place where much of the community’s business was discussed and conducted. Tavern licenses were awarded only to a “man of outstanding character and importance in his community”. William Cogswell was a First Selectman, a member of the Committee of Correspondence, and a Justice of the Peace.

In 1779, William was Captain of a company in Lieut.-Col. Samuel Canfield’s Regiment of Militia. Captain Cogswell’s Co. was one of those that answered the New Haven Alarm in response to the attack by the British there on July 5, 1779. In May of 1781, Cogswell was promoted to Major in Col. Increase Moseley, Jr.’s 13th Regiment of Militia.

While William was away during the war, his wife was left to manage things in his absence. Family lore has it that local Tories would sometimes gather around the premises and try to intimidate the children and Mrs. Cogswell, perhaps by saying “Major Cogswell is dead and now is a good time for the Tories”. More than once, tired of their impertinence, she armed herself with a chair and cleared the house in quick time. In later life she was quoted as saying “I never feared a Tory”. Another interesting story tells that the public decided that a certain Mr. Patterson, a noted Tory was to be tarred and feathered. He was seized and brought to Cogswell Tavern. Mrs. Cogswell warned them not to touch the tar down in the cellar nor the feathers upstairs. This obviously told the crowd where the articles could be found. Mr. Patterson was taken to a nearby oak tree and the coat of tar and feathers were applied with great thoroughness and satisfaction.

It is believed that General Washington stopped at Cogswell Tavern three times. Family tradition holds that it was while en route to New Preston that General Washington was told of Benedict Arnold’s treason (Sept. 25, 1780). It is said that he was so upset that “he couldn’t set and paced the room holding a bowl of warm milk”. While the family is not certain where Washington paced with his milk, they like to imagine that it was in the Tap Room of the house. We know for a fact that he did stop at the Cogswell Tavern on May 25, 1781, because Washington noted in his diary, “Breakfasted at Squire Cogswell’s”.

By the time William Cogswell died in 1784 he had acquired over 2000 acres and owned a country store, an iron foundry, a saw and grist mill, a potashery, a distillery, malt-house and the tavern. From his orchards a thousand barrels of cider were made each year.

Kenneth A. Buckbee,
Past President (2003-2006) – CTSSAR

Upcoming Events

225th of Groton Heights
Sept 1st to 3rd
Groton, CT

225th of Burning of New London
Sept 6
New London, CT

Burlington Bicentennial
Sept 10th
Burlington, CT

Application Genealogy Workshop
Sept 16th
Bridgeport, CT

Connecticut SAR Meeting
Sept 23rd
Mystic, CT

W3R Marker Unveiling
Sept 30th
Hartford, CT

Color Guard Training Weekend
Oct 7th and 8th
Charlestown, NH

Yorktown Day
Oct 19th
Yorktown, VA

Massing of the Colors
Oct 29th
Glastonbury, CT

Connecticut SAR Meeting
Nov 18th
Torrington, CT

Connecticut SAR Formal
Dec 6th
Hartford, CT

Connecticut SAR Meeting
Feb 17th
Bridgeport, CT

The complete schedule is at: www.ConnecticutSAR.org

We count on our members to let us know about events in your area.
West Point Graduates

This Memorial Day Weekend I had the pleasure to attend the graduation of my youngest son Jim, a newly minted 2LT of the class of 2006 from West Point. The graduation speaker was President George W. Bush. Following the graduation exercises and the traditional hat-toss, we joined our son along with five of his classmates for their bar pinning ceremony up at Redoubt #4, built in 1778 and overlooking all of West Point and the Hudson River.

What a day of events. Jim now joins his older brother Dave, as one of the newest members of the long gray line. After graduation, Jim will spend 4 weeks in Russia as a youth camp counselor so he can work on his Russian. Jim was a dual major graduate of French/Russian and Economics. As part of his French language major at West Point, Jim spent one semester studying at the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ont. and part of one summer at St. Cyr in France. Upon completing his Officer Basic Course this fall at Ft. Leonard Wood, he will be assigned to the 1st Armor Division in Germany as a Combat Engineering Officer. Jim is a past recipient of the CTSSAR Eagle Scout Award. He graduated from Bethel High in 2002 and received his appointment to West Point from Sen. Lieberman.

David Perkins
President, Baldwin Branch
In Memory of Nathan Hale’s execution on September 22, 1776, we will celebrate his eternal sacrifice. Before he became the first spy to be killed during the American Revolution, he uttered the immortal words “I only regret that I have only one life to lose for my country”.

Captain Daniel Packer Inne
32 Water St
Mystic, CT 06355
860-536-3555
www.DanielPacker.com

11:00 AM – Meeting (All members welcome)
12:00 PM – Social (Cash Bar available)
12:30 PM – Luncheon (Members and their wives are encouraged to attend)
2:00 PM – Debra Dickey, President of the friends of Fort Griswold will speak about Fort Griswold

Menu
Warmed Baguettes with heads of freshly roasted garlic and sweet cream butter
New England Clam Chowder
Choice of 3 entrees: Blackjack Sirloin
Lemon Pepper Chicken
Scallops Nantucket
Whipped Red Potatoes
Apple Pie
Coffee or tea

$27.00 Per Person - Luncheon reservations must be received by September 16th

Name: ___________________________________________ Entree
_______________________________________________ Entree

Number in your party _______________ Amount Enclosed _____________

Please mail to: Bruce Lyon
200 Luchon Rd
Willington, CT 06279

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: CTSSAR
DIRECTIONS TO CAPT PACKER INNE

DRIVING SOUTH ON ROUTE 95:
Take exit 89 (Allyn street) and turn left at the end of the ramp.

DRIVING NORTH ON ROUTE 95:
Take exit 89 (Allyn Street) and turn right at the end of the ramp.

* Follow Allyn Street to the traffic light (Route 1). Turn left onto Route 1 North. Just before you enter downtown, turn right onto Water Street (Route 215).

** Continue for two blocks (approx. 2/10 of a mile). Bear left when you see an island in the road. The inne is on the right side of the street across from the marina. Parking is in the back of the building.

FROM THE MYSTIC SEAPORT:
From Route 27, turn right onto Holmes Street. Follow this road to the flag pole (at the flashing light and stop sign). Turn right onto West Main Street to go over the drawbridge and through downtown Mystic. Take the first left onto Water Street (Route 215).

** Continue following directions as above.