

*Stony Point Chapter
Sons of the American Revolution*

RHO Cottage
5 Clubhouse Lane
Stony Point, NY 10980



Visit our new website:
www.stony-point-sar.com

*"President's Message"
July 2008*

My apologies for not getting this out sooner, but like most of us, we are all involved in a half dozen other organizations as well. The old adage, "busy people manage to somehow get things done" certainly applies here. I have stopped everything however, until this message is written.

2008 has so far been a very positive year for SAR membership. To date (thanks to the help of our registrar Duane Booth who has been working overtime to proof all these new and prospective members) we have thirteen applications on their way to National, have three reinstatements Kenneth Rose, William Sherwood, and Alan Danielson, and one supplemental application (for me under the Rose family) and two new Nationally accepted members—Robert Kolb and Brendan Phillips. This was all accomplished in the first half of 2008.

At this point, we are in contention for the largest enrollment so far this year. Wouldn't it be just terrific if we could win the \$500 prize and the ESSAR membership trophy?

We have one major hurdle to overcome (finding a new registrar)!!!, but aside from that we are forging ahead not only in membership, but our treasury is gradually increasing, thanks to the dozens of yearly added donations so many of you continued to send to help insure we stay

solvent. Our pensions, for those of us who are retired, certainly don't go as far today as they did last year, due in part to the fuel crises. For those of us able to continue these donations over and above the yearly dues, we certainly appreciate whatever you send. Later this fall when the 2009 dues become due, we will use this money wisely and frugally to publicize our cause. We will make another certificate for the wall in our office where your names will be displayed, as they were last year, for those who gave above the yearly billed amount - in several instances, significant contributions.

As I have said before, the chapter gets \$10.00 of dues out of the \$45.00 yearly dues we are all assessed, with the rest going to the state and national. Our expenses at this point, (excluding the hundreds of dollars the present officers have written off as a donation to the chapter), come to about \$600.00 annually but with no guarantee of that they will remain the same in these inflationary times. Awards have to be purchased for both the middle schools in Rockland County as well as the JR ROTC medals/certificates which we present to several High Schools in this region of the State. Even as frugal as we are, it costs MONEY to run a tax exempt organization!!!

Duane Booth, our registrar, has agreed to stay on board until the end of December 2008, and

more importantly has agreed to help train someone for this vital position for 2009.

We all have so many talents many of which unfortunately neither I, nor the other officers, are aware. For any member reading this who is interested in genealogy, here is a fantastic way of helping our chapter and enjoying doing it (regardless of where you live). *Volunteer to be our new registrar.* Please step forward, and offer your services. This is a critical position and greatly affects our future. Duane lives far away from us - in upstate NY, and through e-mails, and the internet has done a fantastic job for our chapter especially in 2008.

For the first time, we have two new families and one long time Stony Point Chapter member who all have added their children and/or grandchildren to our chapter. Today's youth, and those a generation behind us are our chapters future life's blood. I strongly urge all members to consider sending in the information on your siblings ASAP. And we sincerely thank these three families for setting an example for others to follow. Our younger generation in many cases usually can't afford to "pay the freight", and in all three cases, the parents have graciously agreed to do so. With the internet, they do not have to live in this area to get the benefits of what we are doing. Our chapter website (www.stony-point-sar.com), has photos of our events, and with the password ([WestPoint1776](#)) you can access the minutes of our meetings. See and experience what the chapter has been doing through words and pictures - though they may be a thousand miles away.

Several of our members are in Florida, the Caribbean, and California. We hope they have access to the computer so they can experience second hand what we are doing in this area to further highlight these Revolutionary War ancestors and how they sacrificed to make this nation what is now is 225 years later. It gives us a new prospective on where we were, and can enjoy what we have in this country today realizing the price our ancestors paid for our freedom.

The restoration of the "Historic Waldron Cemetery", a Revolutionary War Era cemetery a thousand feet south of East Main Street, Stony Point, is not in normal public view but has been our focus since January 2008. This cemetery was 18 feet high with brush/briars/vines and virtually Stony Point's version of the "Amazon Jungle". The "weekend warriors" the Sheriff's Department Community Service people came in and did a fantastic job of the initial cut down in January through March. The cemetery however proved to be much larger than originally anticipated and though we do not have the new survey done by the town, two weeks ago the 1859 map stated that the area deemed "cemetery" was over 200 feet by 300 feet.

Charlie Goetschius, an expert douser and chapter member, came down from upstate and he and I (with Larry Brisling's support) spent one full day dousing the gravesites as only about 50 to 60 headstones still survive. We found the remains of hundreds of bodies but have no official count at this time.

I sincerely thank the following members for giving up several mornings to perform really hard manual labor on this cemetery. Ken Conklin, our Vice President, wielded a hefty axe for hours in cutting down huge tree roots; new member Al Booth for his tireless energy working along with us; and Ken Rose for resurrecting many of the fallen headstones.

Many men from the Town of Stony Point Highway Department also donated their time; and local businesses have donated specialized heavy equipment in this restorative process (which is still in its infancy). To date the Town of Stony Point has mowed the recently seeded cemetery twice to keep the briars and thorns under control, but it will probably take two or three years before we are able to rededicate this cemetery, and have new headstones installed for our Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and some Civil War vets). We know of four Revolutionary Soldiers buried here and other early veterans interred in remote areas of the town. We hope to recognize all Veterans here (up and through the Civil War) so future generations can continue to honor these patriots from these three wars in one location.

This Memorial Day, the Stony Point Chapter again had a Revolutionary War Honor Guard followed by a few marching members and a car driven by Tim Phillips containing one or two of our older members. Please see our website for pictures of this parade, as well as the Flag Retirement Ceremony held at Stony Point Battlefield on Flag Day June 14th - a ceremony which we share with the Shatemuc Chapter of the DAR.

Regarding the chapter, we need to create more active membership depth in the chapter. More hands on board make it possible to eventually increase the awards we give. But, *you have to be in it actively participating to win the satisfaction for what we are doing!* As I have said before, we are a democratically run organization where decisions on events we participate in, what others we support, and how we spend our Chapter's funds are made – the more participants we have, the broader our base is.

Please seriously consider coming to one or all of the four meetings starting with the next one this October.

We have decided to increase our regular membership meetings to four in the coming year. In between regular meetings, we will have an executive board meeting to iron out the wrinkles, and decide our priorities.

I strongly encourage more members to attend these few meetings. We respect your views; welcome your suggestions as we continue to move onward and upward in 2009.

Saying goodbye to our Treasurer, Noel Haskel. Noel is "retiring" from his position as treasurer of Stony Point Chapter, a position he has held since our reorganization almost five year's ago. Noel also is the one who initially contacted me to see if I would consider being President, had obtained the State's blessing to do this, and we were able to bring the chapter back through his initial and continuing efforts.

We have continued to have sometimes lengthy phone conversations from that time to the present. Noel is from the "old school", is not a

computer user, and does everything extremely well, but by hand. His heart is always with the Stony Point Chapter, as was his father before him. Noel has given hundreds of hours each year to this cause though he seldom attends meetings. Now in his 80's, he feels that it is time to let someone new take this position who can carry on in the great tradition after almost five years of dedicated service.

Noel has always personally thanked everyone for their added donations, always making sure the donations were meant for our chapter and not the state organization (if the member hadn't specified where the additional moneys were to go). We will miss Noel and his "witticisms". I always got plenty of laughter when we talk by phone, meeting him in person less frequently, as it is somewhat difficult for him to navigate, but he is sharp as a tack, and a very upbeat type person. He is not afraid to tell things as they are, but is one that you can have a great deal of enjoyment talking to on a variety of subjects, including his beloved SAR.

Stony Point's new acting Treasurer for fall 2008 (pending later election).

Eldred Carhart will be Noel's replacement as treasurer and will meet with Noel in the foreseeable future so El understands Noel's way of doing things, and then he will carry on from there. El has been a member for several years, and is extremely active, dependable, and a very friendly member.

Thanks to El, we have a new website. His expertise on the computer enables him to be our "webmaster"; but he also does each newsletter impeccably well. His enthusiasm also shows in everything he has done for the chapter. Nothing is too difficult, no projects appear to be too demanding.

A slate of officers will be presented before our October 22nd meeting at 7 p.m. at RHO Cottage. This will be open to discussion and then placed up for vote of those present that evening. Barring unforeseen circumstances, all of the officers would look forward to working with him in this added new responsibility as treasurer.

Filling the Registrar's position is a lot more difficult. Hopefully someone will come forward and volunteer their services. Stay tuned as the time nears and I promise to keep everyone alerted as to what is happening regarding that critical position.

Stony Point Chapter Trip to NYC-June 4, 2008

Sally Pellegrini of the New City Library and I planned this annual trip to Revolutionary War sites in NYC, but we had some worrisome moments later that week. Most busses to NYC were on strike and we were afraid the Water Taxi from Haverstraw would be jammed - and such a large group (26 of us total, with 17 from the Chapter) would be "out of luck."

I canceled what I had scheduled for that Monday, went to Haverstraw to greet the Water Taxi to see whether we had to go to plan B. It appeared we didn't. Sally made other arrangements for her small group that was accompanying us, and we had a tour guide who was going to do this for us gratis. Weather was another consideration. It had been raining on and off for days, and that morning we had fog and light rain.

Only two from up near Bloomingburg failed to show that morning, as conditions were far worse at their location. We met at the docks in Haverstraw, and things worked without a hitch. I bought two boxes of munchkins for the trip down for everyone, and we gave them to anyone on board. It was a great trip down, and for twelve dollars each way, we really had a bargain and a no-stress commute. The weather cleared as we left the Taxi at Pier 11 and walked to the Governors Island Ferry for a tour of this magnificent historic island. The ferry and the tour were free, and we had an absolutely wonderful time that morning. We saw the original fort that was a jail in the Civil War era, and hundreds of beautifully restored buildings that still are mostly unoccupied. The amount of information everyone gained about the island was unbelievable and everyone was enthralled with that part of the trip.

We arrived back at Manhattan about noon, and went to Fraunces Tavern, still in existence from the days of the revolutionary war. We ate in one of the formal dining rooms again this year (although I thought it would be cheaper fare on the bar side). Most of us were quickly ushered into one of the large formal dining rooms and a gigantic table was set up for us. It was pricy, and we probably will not go back there next year, but we *did* have a great time. The museum was open upstairs and was free to us being SAR members. Several members went up and we stayed a short time before we left for a tour of lower Manhattan. There were several sites many of us had not seen before. The Viet Nam Memorial, the WW II Memorial all near the fort on the Manhattan side, and that is where anyone going to see the Statue of Liberty would board their ferries. We didn't have time for that, but most went to South Street Seaport to unwind before returning to Pier 11 to get the Water Taxi for the trip back. The weather turned out great in the afternoon, worsening as we entered the Water Taxi. Some rain fell, but we didn't mind as we were in air conditioned comfort on the one and a half hour trip back.

Everyone raved about this trip. It was both a social and educational highlight for the chapter. Everyone looks forward to another trip next year to perhaps Staten Island to explore the historical sites there. This is not set in stone at this time, but we will plan an exciting trip somewhere that should interest all who attend.

My best to you all,

Barry Brooks-President
Stony Point Chapter-SAR