



# George Washington Chapter Sons of the American Revolution



## Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 5

May, 2008

### Compatriot Dave Walker will Speak at Our Next Meeting

Chapter members had mixed emotions when we learned that our vice president had resigned his post as U.S. Comptroller General to become President and CEO of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation. Of course, we were happy that Dave had been selected for such a prestigious post. But we were saddened by the prospect of losing his good counsel and strong support. Those concerns disappeared when he announced that his new responsibilities would not require that he move to New York. Although Dave will spend much time in a Manhattan office, he will not move from his Alexandria home.

Your chapter officers were delighted when Dave agreed to be our guest speaker at the May 10 luncheon meeting. The mission of the Peterson Foundation is to enhance public understanding of the nature and urgency of selected key sustainability challenges that threaten America's future, to propose sensible and workable solutions to address these changes and to build public will to do something about them. Compatriots and guests will learn about the challenges Dave faces in guiding the Foundation as it pursues those difficult objectives.

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### Mark Your Calendars

Although our meeting on May 10 will be the last of our 2007-2008 luncheons, that does not mean we will be without important chapter events through the summer months. Please mark your calendars for these events:

- May 19- Annual Naturalization Ceremony at Mount Vernon. This ceremony is co-hosted by the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services and Mount Vernon in partnership with the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution.
- May 26- Memorial Day Parade in Washington, where we will march with members of other SAR chapters.
- July 4- Independence Day Celebration at Mount Vernon. In addition to a wreath-laying ceremony, festivities include patriotic music by the National Concert Band of America and re-enactments by the First Virginia Regiment.
- Sept 13- The next meeting of our chapter.
- Nov 11- Wreath-laying at General Washington's Tomb
- Nov TBA - Wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery

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### Reminders

Please encourage your friends, family and prospective members to attend our monthly meetings. We have had an outstanding line up of speakers and events over the years, and there is certainly more to come for the future. But your support is essential for us to be able to continue to

enjoy high-quality programs, speakers, and events that have been a hallmark of the George Washington Chapter.

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### **Annual Chapter Report**

Although the annual report is not due until early next year, it is never too early to start collecting information. This is particularly true for the support we provide for veterans. Many chapter members make donations to veterans' organizations, visit wounded veterans at area hospitals, send care packages to our service members overseas, or provide other support for veterans. To make sure that we record and get credit for these activities, send an e-mail to Mike Elston at [melston@mcguirewoods.com](mailto:melston@mcguirewoods.com) or give him a call at 703-680-0866 and report what you are doing or have done for our veterans. Mike will keep track of our efforts so we will be able to highlight them in the annual chapter report that is submitted to VASSAR.

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This will be the last newsletter of the Chapter's 2007-2008 season. Your next newsletter should be received in advance of the resumption of regularly scheduled meetings on 13 September. In the interim, your chapter officers will do their best to keep you informed in other ways — perhaps by mailing small bulletins or by e-mail.

E-mail is an inexpensive way to pass the word to many chapter members. If you have access to e-mail, please make sure that the Treasurer has your current e-mail address. That will facilitate the distribution of announcements and special bulletins during the summer break.

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### **George Washington Chapter Mourns the Passing of Blanchard "B.D." Smith**

Blanchard Drake Smith Jr. died on April 10, 2008, from complications due to heart failure. He was 82. B.D. was a very active member of our chapter. He was known to many members for his

expertise in genealogy as he served as our registrar for 10 years.

Blanchard Drake Smith Jr. was born on Aug. 22, 1925, in New Orleans, La., the only son of Blanchard Drake Smith and Anita Eva Koy. After the family moved to Atlanta in the late 1920s, Blanchard attended grammar and high schools there, graduating valedictorian at Boys High School in 1943.

Still a teen during World War II, Blanchard joined the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, and earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering in 1945. As a "Ramblin' Wreck from Georgia Tech," he was a straight-A student (he made only one B during his entire academic career), editor of the yearbook, manager of the football team, and a member of both Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the Institute of Radio Engineers. He also was elected to Phi Eta Sigma, Tau Beta Pi, Sigma Xi, and the secret ANAK Society.

After commissioning, Ensign Smith was assigned to the U.S. Navy Radar Training School at St. Simons Island, Georgia. Returning to civilian life, B.D. continued achieving honors at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, graduating with a master's degree in engineering in 1948. He taught the first class in radar ever taught at MIT.

Blanchard and his growing family moved to Alexandria, Virginia, in 1948, where he went to work for Melpar, Inc., later bought by American Standard, then E-Systems, then Raytheon. Over the next 44 years, Blanchard developed radars, telemeters, simulators, and other information-gathering systems and equipment, accumulating six design patents. For several years in the late 1960s, he took a break from Melpar and formed

and ran his own company, Applied Systems Technology (ASTECH). After he left Melpar in 1992, he joined ST Research, later renamed Sensytech, and then Argon ST. Blanchard worked as chief scientist there until 1998, when he fully retired.

In his retirement, he enjoyed puttering on his computer in the basement and volunteering to sell Christmas trees as a longtime member and officer of the Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club. In addition to his membership in our chapter, he was an active member of the Order of Founders and Patriots of America. He had been a member and deacon of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria since 1948.

Among his other hobbies and interests were genealogical research, crossword puzzles, playing bridge, watching football, harmonizing, and e-mailing to family and friends.

In addition to Mary, his wife of 62 years, B.D. is survived by his children -- Blanchard Drake Smith III, Sarah Mell Smith, Anita Koy Stocklin, Marion Seabrook Smith, and Rebekah Lynn Smith Fredenburg -- 11 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He is also survived by many cousins in Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, and California.

Led by Chapter Chaplain Don Reynolds, many SAR compatriots paid their respects to B.D. in a ceremony conducted at Demaine's Funeral Home, on Tuesday evening, April 15.

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## Highlights of the April Meeting

### Guest Speaker James Rees

James Rees, Executive Director of Mount Vernon, spoke enthusiastically about General Washington. He emphasized facets of Washington's life and character that often go unmentioned in today's

history texts. Washington was first of all a farmer who loved his Mount Vernon home. As a farmer, he was a leader in the development of new techniques in agriculture and animal husbandry. Washington was also the general that guided a sometimes rag-tag army to victory over about thirty-five thousand well trained and experienced soldiers of King George's army. When that war was over, Washington stepped away from the opportunity to be a king himself and returned to his beloved Mount Vernon. Washington again stepped away from the clear opportunity to retain power when he declined to stand for election to a third term as our president. Those two acts set Washington apart from the kings of Europe and leaders of popular revolutions before or since.



James Rees responds to questions following his address at the April 12 luncheon.

One of the primary objectives of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association is to restore Washington to the prominent place he rightfully holds in the history of the United States. To achieve that objective, Mount Vernon has established a strong out-reach program focused on elementary schools across the country.

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### **Flag Certificates**

In the coming year, one of our chapter objectives is awarding Flag Certificates to organizations and individuals who daily display our national flag at their businesses or residences. Compatriots are asked to recommend individuals or organization who are eligible for this recognition. Flag Committee Chairman David Grimes has prepared a form which you may use to recommend the award of a Flag Certificate. A copy of that form is included at the end of this newsletter.

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### **New Chapter Directory**

A new Chapter Directory is in the final phase of production. If all goes well, you may find the new Directory in your mail box before the May luncheon meeting.

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## Flag Certificate Recommendation Form

Name of person or organization being recommended:

\_\_\_\_\_

Point of Contact (if an organization): \_\_\_\_\_

Member of SAR Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

Address (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would person or representative of organization be able to attend a meeting for presentation of certificate? Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

Preferred method of delivery: Presentation @ Meeting \_\_\_

Mail \_\_\_

Compatriot will self deliver \_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Compatriot Information

Compatriot Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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**May 10, 2008**

**Lunch Meeting Reservation Form**

Please use this form to make a reservation for the chapter's lunch at the Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Virginia. The lunch cost is \$35.00 per person. Check in and social time begin at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be called to order at 12:00 noon. Feel free to invite your wife and friends as your guests.

**RSVP no later than May 5th.**

**Walk-ins will be accommodated if possible, but note that to cover the Club's charge for serving those without a timely reservation a walk-in price of \$37.00 is required.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A check for \_\_\_\_ persons in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to **G. W. Chapter SAR** is enclosed.

Mail this reservation form with your check to:

Vern McHargue, Treasurer  
6846 Ericka Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22310

You may also phone (703) 313-0671 and leave a message or e-mail [vern.mchargue@heritage.org](mailto:vern.mchargue@heritage.org).

**It is important to provide advance notice of attendance to be sure you get a seat.  
Valet parking is available.**