



---

# Sons of the American Revolution

Discover the other American Revolution lineage society.

by Timothy E. Ward

Most genealogists have heard of the Daughters of the American Revolution, but how many are aware of its male equivalent, the Sons of the American Revolution?

## A Lineage Society

The SAR is a lineage society whose members must be men, 18 years and older, descending from an ancestor who supported the war for American Independence.

Referred to as Revolutionary War Patriots, these ancestors include those who fought in the military and/or militia, who provided supplies to the American cause, who served on political bodies supporting the Revolution, or who signed oaths of support and similar acts.

## History of the SAR

The SAR was incorporated on 17 Jan. 1890 in Connecticut and later chartered by the United States Congress on 9 June 1906. Prior to incorporation, a number of societies were formed in the 1880s,

led by the Sons of Revolutionary Sires, organized in San Francisco, 4 July 1876.

Throughout its history, the SAR has admitted 16 presidents of the United States as members, as well as historical figures, Sir Winston Churchill and King Juan Carlos I of Spain. It should be noted that many individuals, who never set foot on American soil, supported the American colonists against British domination, as did many French, German and Spanish soldiers and sailors.

## SAR Headquarters

The first congress of the national society was held 30 April 1890 in Louisville, Ky., the 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary of George Washington's taking the oath of office as the president of the United States.

Today, Louisville is the site of the society's national headquarters, serving as both an art museum, featuring artifacts from the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, an extensive collection of historical American paintings and an exact replica of the Liberty Bell, and a

genealogical library, containing more than 50,000 books, including 5,000 family genealogies, periodicals, journals, 8,000 reels of microfilm and microfiche of 8,000 family history books, half of which are out of print and are no longer available from the publishers.

## Library Collections

Other items of note in the society's genealogical collection include state genealogical materials, concentrating heavily on New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, the Revolutionary War Pension Applications on microfilm, and three nationally important collections of materials relating to George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, and George Rogers Clark.

The historical and genealogical library is located at 1000 South Fourth Street, Louisville, and is open to the public Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There is no fee for members of SAR, DAR, SR or Friends of the SAR Library and a nominal fee of \$5 per day for all others. The library can be contacted at (502) 589-1776 and several contract researchers are available to conduct searches at the SAR Library.

The SAR recently embarked upon a campaign to raise \$6 million for the construction of a new SAR Genealogical Library.

## International Ties

Currently there are 50 state societies of the SAR, including the District of Columbia and societies in France, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Switzerland and Mexico, with approximately 27,000 active members.

## SAR Mission

The objectives of the society are declared to be patriotic, historical, and educational; to unite and promote fellowship among the descendants whose ancestors sacrificed to achieve independence; to inspire members and the community-at-large with a more profound reverence for the principles of government founded by our forefathers; and to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom.



The OHSSAR and its local chapters also conduct grave marker dedication ceremonies for Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Ohio.

To achieve these objectives, SAR members actively sponsor and promote events and observances to the public, which perpetuate the memory of Revolutionary War Patriots.

## Fort Laurens

Events are scheduled to celebrate anniversaries of significant battles and events of the Revolution. The Ohio Society of the SAR conducts an annual memorial service in July at Fort Laurens, located in Bolivar, the site of the only Revolutionary War-era fort in Ohio. The service includes a wreath laying ceremony at the tomb of the Unknown Patriot.

Members also participate in the annual Point Pleasant Battle Days, held in Point Pleasant, W.Va., across the Ohio River near Gallipolis. The Battle of Point Pleasant was a conflict between the Native American Confederation, under the Shawnee Chieftain Keightughqua, or Cornstalk, and the Colonial forces under General Andrew Lewis.

The battle was one of the bloodiest, hardest-fought battles ever waged between the early settlers and the Indians. While the Virginians suffered a loss of 81 men with 140 wounded, Chief

Cornstalk's losses were more devastating – 200 men and twice as many wounded. The Virginia Colonists' victory opened the area for permanent settlement and rapid expansion in the West.

## First Revolutionary Battle

Some historians consider the Battle of Point Pleasant to be the first battle of the American Revolution, in spite of the fact it took place six months before the documented beginning of the war.

However, no one questions the importance of this battle, which thwarted an alliance between Native American forces and British collaborators and established a peace with the Indians for the first three years of the Revolutionary War.

## Grave Marker Dedication

The OHSSAR and its local chapters also conduct grave marker dedication ceremonies for Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Ohio. Members have been very instrumental in obtaining headstones for Patriots whose grave sites have been lacking appropriate identification.

## Documenting the War

The SAR participates in and encourages the historical research and documentation of the American Revolution, in-



The OHSSAR color guard participation in public events throughout the state has become one of the highlights of the organization.

cluding the production of books and pamphlets regarding battles, grave sites, and other important events associated with the Revolution.

In conjunction with the American Heritage Foundation, the SAR promotes and provides curriculum materials to local schools. These materials provide lesson plans and other practical exercises, which focus on developing an understanding and teaching of our nation's factual and philosophical heritage to promote freedom, unity, progress and responsibility among our students and citizens.

## Recognizing Excellence

In addition to honoring Revolutionary War Patriots, the SAR also honors the outstanding achievements of individuals who display an unusual patriotic achievement on a national, regional and local level or for bravery and self-sacrifice in the face of imminent danger, and members of Congress for their service to the nation. Annual awards are also presented to high school students, Junior and Senior ROTC cadets, law enforcement officials, and Eagle Scouts.

SAR members also assist veterans in veterans' hospitals, conduct an annual

national historical oration, sponsors Boy Scout troops and chapters of the Children of the American Revolution, and cooperates with the DAR, CAR, and other hereditary organizations in the promotion of patriotism.

## Ohio's State Society

The OHSSAR currently has 22 chapters located throughout Ohio and a members-at-large chapter who do not belong to a local chapter. Individuals are encouraged to join through a local chapter, as they will become more acquainted with men in their own community with whom they have many common interests.

Local community chapters include: \*Western Reserve Society Chapter (Cleveland), \*Cincinnati Chapter (Cincinnati), Benjamin Franklin Chapter (Columbus), Nathan Hale Chapter (Youngstown), \*Richard Montgomery Chapter (Dayton), \*John Stark Chapter (Canton), \*Lafayette Chapter (Akron), \*George Rogers Clark Chapter (Springfield), Constitution Chapter (Mansfield), \*Ewings Chapter (Pomeroy), \*Northeastern Ohio Chapter (Ashtabula), Ethan Allen Chapter (Warren), Firelands-Bicentennial Chapter (Lorain), \*Samuel Huntington Chapter (Painesville), Rufus Putnam

Chapter (Zanesville), \*Centennial Chapter (Lima), \*Arthur St. Clair Chapter (Chillicothe), John Hancock Chapter (Findlay), Bill of Right Chapter (Bowling Green), Northwest Territory Chapter (Bryan), \*Ebenezer Zane Chapter (St. Clairsville), and General Henry Knox Chapter (Mt. Vernon).

## Color Guards

Chapters with an asterisk have some type of color guard available for any public event.

The color guard consists of members in Revolutionary War-era uniforms and Colonial attire. Their participation in public events, such as parades, reenactments, and new citizen induction ceremonies, has become one of the highlights of the organization.

Members of color guards are often asked to speak with primary and secondary school students, historical or genealogical societies and civic organizations to talk about the struggle for independence or their ancestor's role in the founding of this nation.

The state society also utilizes members from various chapters to form the OHSSAR Color Guard. Anyone interested in inviting the Ohio Society Color Guard to an event can contact Color Guard Chairman, John Franklin, via e-mail at [jhfbmwm5@aol.com](mailto:jhfbmwm5@aol.com) or President James Lochary, [jhlochary@cs.com](mailto:jhlochary@cs.com).

## Becoming a Member

Membership enables a person to record and preserve their family lineage, making it forever available to their descendants. Chapter and state representatives will provide assistance and guidance in genealogical research for prospective members. More information about the SAR can be found on their Web site, [www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org), or the OHSSAR Web site, [www.sar.org/ohssar/ohssar.html](http://www.sar.org/ohssar/ohssar.html). OGN

*Timothy E. Ward is the registrar for the Ohio Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and president of the Member-at-Large Chapter of the OHSSAR. For further information or membership questions, write to: Timothy E. Ward, 16431 Messenger Road, Burton OH 44021, (440) 543-2880 or via e-mail, [TimothyWard@worldnet.att.net](mailto:TimothyWard@worldnet.att.net).*