



Compatriots,

As I approach the end of my term as President, I look back on two years filled with exciting events celebrating the semiquincentennial of our country and plans for years of celebrations to come. While the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence this year is the “main event” and will be considered by some to be the beginning and end of the celebration, we will continue the party until the anniversary of the Treaty of Paris in 2033! I attended the 250th anniversary commemoration of the Knox Noble Train of Artillery held at the Springfield Armory, where reenactors demonstrated the techniques used to carry 60 tons of artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston.

Since our last newsletter, RISSAR has hosted a number of events. In September we had our Fall Dinner with guest speaker Jonathan Lane, executive director of Revolution 250, who gave a talk on the Battle of Bunker Hill. In October we hosted, on short notice, the Fall meeting for the SAR New England District. In November our Registrar, Chris Krajacich, represented RISSAR at the DAR wreath laying at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery in Exeter, and December brought our annual Holiday Party, with music and fellowship.

That fellowship is a valuable resource in divided times. In recent months, I have been contacted by several RISSAR members asking why we are not taking a position on current political issues. It must be made clear that the SAR is not a political organization and we cannot take a position on political controversies, at risk of losing our tax exempt status. We can, however, talk about the principles of our founding documents without explicitly connecting them to modern politics. All members are also free to express their views on political matters through legal means of expression, as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, as long as they don't claim to be speaking on behalf of the organization. I encourage all compatriots to consider how the principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution can best be applied today.

As I leave my current role, I look forward to finding new ways to support the goals and mission of SAR. I will be handing the reins of the Society over to my successor at our annual meeting, which will be held this year at the Varnum Armory on Saturday, April 25th. Please check the calendar of events, and watch your email and mail for further details!

Yours in patriotic service,  
Alan W. Head, President  
Rhode Island Society  
Sons of the American Revolution

## Calendar of Upcoming RISSAR Events

### **Saturday, April 25th 2026 at 10am**

RISSAR Annual Meeting  
Varnum Memorial Armory, E. Greenwich, RI

### **Thursday, May 14th 2026 at 6pm**

Six Societies Dinner  
Squantum Association, Riverside, RI

### **Sunday, May 17th 2026 at 9am**

Westerly Neighbor Day  
Wilcox Park, Westerly, RI

### **Saturday, May 30th 2026, 11am**

Cranston Library Presentation  
William Hall Library, Cranston, RI

### **Saturday, June 6th 2026 at 9am**

RISSAR Board of Managers Meeting  
Warwick Central Library, Warwick, RI

### **Wednesday, July 8th 2026 at 6pm**

SAR 50-State Reading of the Declaration of  
Independence  
Location TBD

### **Thursday, September 17th 2026 at 5pm**

RISSAR Fall Dinner  
Circe Prime, Cranston, RI

### **Saturday, September 26th 2026 at 2pm**

Scituate Library Presentation  
North Scituate Community House, Scituate, RI

### **Saturday, October 3rd 2026 at 9am**

RISSAR Board of Managers Meeting  
Warwick Central Library, Warwick, RI

### **Time and Date TBD**

Veterans Day Observance  
Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Exeter, RI

### **Sunday, December 6th 2026 at 5pm**

RISSAR Holiday Party  
Rhodes on the Pawtuxet, Cranston, RI

### **Saturday, January 9th 2026 at 9am**

RISSAR Board of Managers Meeting  
Warwick Central Library, Warwick, RI

## Other Events of Interest

### **Saturday, March 28th 2026 at 10am**

SAR New England District Spring Meeting  
Mercy Hall, Thomas More College, Nashua, NH

### **Saturday, May 2nd 2026 at 10am**

Rhode Island Renunciation Act Display  
State House, Providence, RI

### **Saturday, June 13th 2026 at 10am**

Gaspee Days Parade  
Narragansett Parkway, Warwick, RI/Cranston, RI

### **Saturday, October 24th 2026 at 10am**

SAR New England District Fall Meeting  
Varnum Memorial Armory, East Greenwich, RI

Compatriots are encouraged to take photos at all of the above events  
and send to [ben@bennacar.com](mailto:ben@bennacar.com) for future newsletters

## Spotlight: Jay Waller, Jr.

Jay was sworn in to RISSAR in the spring of 2024.

*- Tell us a bit about yourself and your background prior to joining the SAR.*

I'm a lifelong Rhode Islander – I was born at Kent County Hospital and grew up in South Kingstown. I studied Anthropology at the University of Rhode Island focusing on archaeology. I was hired by the University right after completing my undergraduate studies and worked as a contract archaeologist with the University until being hired by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL) in Pawtucket, where I've been employed to this day. While with PAL, I attended the University of Connecticut receiving my Master's degree in Anthropology specializing in Northeastern Native American archaeology.

*- What sort of work do you do for the Public Archaeology Lab?*

I started as a field archaeologist conducting field investigations, but now I serve as a Principal Investigator managing, preparing, and implementing archaeological field projects to assist our clients with federal, state, and/or municipal historic preservation permitting processes. There's a lot of compliance and permitting with regards to the protection, preservation, and registration of historic properties. Our work is very similar to environmental protection, as there's an understanding that it's in the public interest to protect our shared cultural heritage. My own specialties are New England Native American archaeology, historic cemeteries, and most recently battlefield archaeology where I've had the opportunity to work on several American Revolution battle sites.

*- Was that last part what led you to join the SAR?*

Partly, yes, but I have an interest in the past anyway. I had been thinking about it for a while. Of course, I'd been talking with my parents who are getting on in years, and early on they shared a lot of oral family history. I wanted to see if I could make a Revolutionary War connection. My mother in particular comes from an old New England family. My mother is a Huntington, a direct descendent of Deacon Simon Huntington, who was one of the original founders of Norwich, CT. We are also related to Samuel Huntington, signer of the Declaration of Independence. It just seemed like common sense to look into my ancestry in more detail.

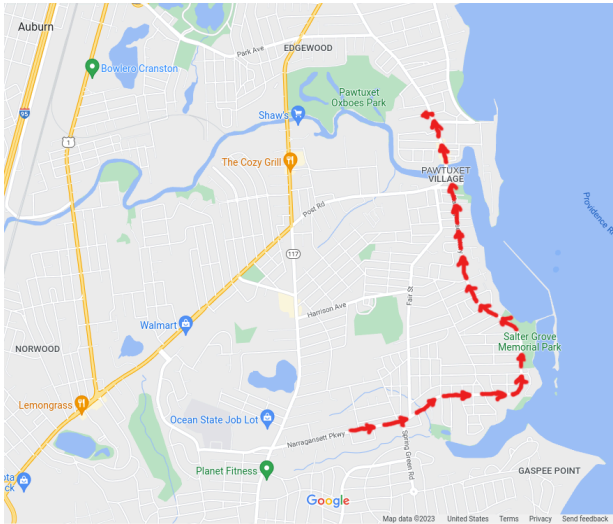
*- How much family research did you end up doing?*

Well, I was actually supported in my search by my employer, because through our work we maintain a subscription to Ancestry.com. On my mother's side, I am descended from one Caleb Huntington, whom I thought might be the connection, but it turns out he likely fought in the French and Indian War, and was probably too old to fight when the Revolution broke out. I assume he stayed home to tend the land while others in the family went out and fought. So, perhaps I'll be all set for joining the Society of Colonial Wars at some point! But for SAR, I ended up following a line on my father's side instead. Here I lucked out, because ages ago, my cousin on my father's side had conducted considerable research beginning with our shared grandmother.

*- What are some highlights of being in RISSAR so far?*

What I really appreciate is the public outreach that we're doing and public awareness. The exposure from things like being in the Gaspee Days parade reminds people that we haven't forgotten our ancestors, that we take pride in their contributions to the beginning of this great Country. I've worked with the National Park Services on identifying skirmish sites associated with the opening day of the American Revolution, and when you uncover things like that, you really begin to appreciate the enormity of what happened and began 250 years ago. After those first shots were fired on April 19th, there must have been this collective gasp of *now what???* There was no knowing at that point what the outcome would be. I'm very pleased that SAR is getting the word out, so this isn't stagnant history. And my dad joined SAR shortly after me, and now my cousin is going through the application down in Maryland!

# Calling all RISSAR Compatriots - The Gaspee Days Parade, Saturday, June 13th



(Left) The parade route (Right) RISSAR in the 2025 parade

We will be marching in this year's Gaspee Days Parade in Pawtuxet Village.

The parade steps off at 10am, rain or shine,  
and follows a two-mile stretch of Narragansett Parkway.

## **OPEN-AIR RIDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE**

If you are interested in marching (or riding!)  
in the parade as a member of RISSAR,  
or want more information,  
contact Compatriot Ben Nacar at [ben@bennacar.com](mailto:ben@bennacar.com).  
The more the merrier!

The Gaspee Days website: [www.gaspee.com](http://www.gaspee.com)

## Doings of the Compatriots

**September 18th, 2025** – RISSAR held its Fall Dinner at Circe Prime in Cranston, or as we say in Rhode Island, “Where the Chapel Grille *used* to be.”



Six new members were present for their induction ceremony that evening: Mark Hodges, Devin Hodges, Trevor Hodges, Ben Mosher, Al Bergstrom, and Joseph Waller Sr; Al Bergstrom’s son John was inducted in absentia.





Compatriot David Pickering became the first RISSAR member ever to earn the Robert E. Burt Boy Scout Volunteer Award, an honor due to members of SAR who act as role models and provide dedicated service to the young men and women of Scouting America (formally the Boy Scouts of America). The award was presented to Dave Pickering by David Perkins, the National SAR Compatriot and Chairman of both the Robert E. Burt Boy Scout Volunteer Award and the Arthur M. & Berdena King Eagle Scout Award.

The featured speaker at the Fall Dinner was Jonathan Lane, the Executive Director of Revolution 250 in Massachusetts, who gave a finely detailed presentation on the Battle of Bunker Hill/Breed's Hill.



**October 4th, 2025** – Sarah Peshka of the Gaspee Days Committee made a brief cameo at the RISSAR Board of Managers meeting to present us with the “Best Colonial Unit” award for the 2025 Gaspee Days Parade. A most unexpected honor, especially given that only one-ninth of the participating compatriots had been in period attire! Left to right: Sarah Peshka, Alan Head, Ben Nacar.



**October 25th, 2025** – RISSAR hosted the New England District Fall meeting at Harmony Lodge #9 in Cranston. Delegates from across New England enjoyed fellowship, lunch, and a presentation by CAR National President Reese Holmes on her national project, Revolutionary Valor, supporting the Dr. Joseph Warren Foundation. After the meeting, the delegates were encouraged to adjourn to the General Nathanael Greene Homestead, where the annual Trick Or Treat Timeline and Historic Marketplace were in full swing. At right, Alan Head and Reese Holmes.

**November 11th, 2025** – At the RIDAR Veterans Day observance at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery in Exeter, Chris Krajacich brought greetings on behalf of RISSAR (not pictured).



**December 7th, 2025** – Compatriots, together with friends and family, reunited at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet for the Christmas party. Ben Nacar provided musical accompaniment during cocktail hour, including a brief sing-along period featuring some holiday classics (not pictured).

Among the guests that evening was Kahdija Kouraj, who won the 2025 state level Knight Essay Contest with her essay on the influence of the Iroquois' Great Law of Peace on the United States Constitution. Kahdija is seen here with her parents Karim and Keville, and RISSAR President Alan Head.



Five new members received their certificates: Dean Lees, Peter Grant, Les Christoffel, Bill Boardman, and Ed Boardman. Andy Boardman was inducted in absentia.



**March 7th, 2026** – Meanwhile in CAR news, RISSCAR State President Henry Head was presented with the Silver CAR-SAR Medal of Appreciation by Alan Head.



## Updates from the Nathanael Greene Homestead



Dave Procaccini reports that the Homestead has a full schedule for 2026: beginning with their Opening Day on April 11th, complete with encampment and Militia inspection, planned events include the Forgotten Founders Speaker Series and Period Demonstrations on May 3rd, combined with the Rhode Island Independence Day ceremony; an Open House on July 4th; the Nathanael Greene Birthday Ceremony and encampment on July 26th; the ever-popular Trick or Treat Timeline and Historic Market on October 24th and 25th; Small Business Saturday with tactical maneuvers on November 28th; and Christmas at Spell Hall celebrated on December 12th and 13th.

Volunteers recently replaced the floor in the Homestead kitchen and reinstalled the granite hearth that was removed in the early 20th century. One acre of the adjoining south field has also been cleared. The Homestead is currently working to raise funds for replacing the roof, which has been estimated at \$80,000.

As always, any extra helping hands at the Homestead are greatly appreciated.

## **In Memoriam**

Henry Anthony Lewis Brown (1931-2025)

Marc Christopher Brownell (1959-2025)

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