



Compatriots,

The hot, lazy days of summer are here. Our spring Recognition Luncheon is now in the rearview mirror emerging into an active season.

The Gaspee Days Committee and the Pawtuxet Rangers held the Gaspee 250th Anniversary Museum Weekend, which kicked off the Gaspee 250th anniversary on April 29th. Compatriot David Davies, RISSAR Genealogist, hosted a table in the Ranger Amory. Brochures and Society publications were made available to share with the public. David fielded questions about membership, starting them on a patriotic journey of family research. Participating in this type of activity will expand RISSAR exposure.

I was honored to represent RISSAR and provide greetings at the RIDAR 128th State Conference on May 2nd. I shared my story on how my membership in the Sons of the American Revolution was due to the extensive family research completed by my Aunt Dolores, who was also a member of the DAR. It was a great opportunity to meet many of the DAR leaders.

On May 4th, for the first time ever, no fewer than *four* genealogical societies came together for a Rhode Island Independence Day dinner event: RISSAR, RISSR, Society of Colonial Wars, and Order of Founders and Patriots. In observance of the 250th Anniversary of the Burning of the HMS Gaspee, our featured speaker for the evening was Professor Steven Park, who spoke on his book “An Attack on the Crown Rule Before the American Revolution.”

I had the distinct honor of presenting the First-Place winner of the RISSAR “Outstanding J.R.O.T.C. Medal,” along with a monetary scholarship award to Cadet Major Matthew T. Mullins. The presentation took place on May 20th during the Rogers High School Army JROTC Awards Ceremony. In total, RISSAR presented 6 JROTC medals and 2 ROTC medals to end the 2021 – 2022 academic season.

On May 28th RISSAR members paid tribute to five Patriots buried at the James Babcock Burial Ground, also known as the RI Historic Cemetery Westerly #7. We recognized the recent cleaning of the grounds by members of the Westerly Lions Club. Along with Lawrence Hunter, of the Washington County RI Advisory Commission on Historic Cemeteries, RISSAR celebrated the replacement and posting of missing SAR Patriot markers.

On June 4th I joined the RIDAR wreath laying ceremony honoring Dr. John Mawney, one of the Gaspee raiders, at the North Burial Ground. The Pawtuxet Rangers, commanded by Ron Barnes, were also in attendance.

On June 11th, members of the RISSAR proudly walked in the Gaspee Days Parade. It was a very special experience to be part of the jubilant crowd in celebration of this historic occasion.

On June 16th, RISSAR gathered at the Squantum Association to welcome two new members and to celebrate Flag Day. In observance of Flag Day, Past President Ron Barnes provided the audience with a presentation on the: “Development of the Flag of the United States.”

I joined several of your fellow Compatriots on July 27, 2022 to attend the 280th Anniversary of Major General Nathanael Greene’s birth. The evening began with the patriotic sounds of the Kentish Guards’ Fife and Drum Corps. We listened to Eagle Scout Samuel Shippee read his essay, “The General Who Saved the South.” The evening closed with Kate A. Greene, Esq., and her family “cutting the cake” with the ceremonial sword, once held by Nathanael Green himself.

It has been an active 5 months being President of RISSAR! Our focus on the Youth Award Programs, along with marching with my fellow Compatriots in the Gaspee Days Parade were high points reflecting a feeling of patriotism and simply being proud to be an American.

Chris Sparks, President, RISSAR

# Calendar of Upcoming Events

## **Thursday, September 22, 2022**

Fall Dinner - a night to celebrate Autumn and welcome new members.

Chapel Grille, Cranston

## **Saturday, October 8th, 2022**

Board of Managers Meeting - 9 am

Brewed Awakenings, Warwick

## **Saturday, October 15th, 2022**

Deadline for Submissions:

Knight Essay Contest

Dr. Lawrence Outstanding History Teachers (High School/Middle School/Elementary) Award

Contact the Awards Chairman, Kevin P. England (kengland19@gmail.com), for details, rules, and application.

## **Saturday, October 29th, 2022**

RISSAR hosts the SAR New England District Council Meeting

Varnum Armory, East Greenwich

## **Saturday, November 12th, 2022**

Salute to Veterans, including the reading of the names of Patriot ancestors of new members. Compatriots in attendance will also state the names of their respective Patriot ancestors.

North Burial Ground, Providence

## **Wednesday, December 15th, 2022**

Christmas Holiday Dinner

Rhodes on the Pawtuxet, Cranston

## **In Memoriam**

Mark Watkins Gee (Life Member/1890 Society) - June 2022

Curtis Weston Magee - June 2022

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Editor for the Summer 2022 issue: Benjamin Ewing Nacar

Much of the textual material for this issue was contributed by Kevin England and Chris Sparks. All photographs, unless otherwise noted, are by either John Adams, Michael Deignan, Kevin England, or Chris Sparks.

## Editor's Note

Early this August, your newsletter editor happened to be en route from Rhode Island to Tennessee on unrelated family business, and made a bit of a detour to Cannelton, Indiana to pay respects to his patriot ancestor, George Ewing.

Taken from [sar-ewing.org](http://sar-ewing.org): "On November 11, 1775 at the age of 21, George Ewing enlisted for one year in the 5th Company, 2nd Battilion [sic], 1st Establishment New Jersey Line Continental Troops and served the year on the ill fated expedition of Montgomery against Quebec. [...] On his discharge in November 1776, he enlisted and served as Sergeant in the 2nd Battilion, Cumberland Co. State Militia, under Captain John Barkar. He participated in the battles of Germantown and Brandywine and spent [the winter of 1777-1778] at Valley Forge. During this time, he kept a Military Journal, the contents of which have been passed through the generations. In Februrary 1777, he was commissioned as Ensign in the 7th Company, 3rd Battillion, 2nd Establishment, New Jersey Line Continental Troops which was known as Maxwell's Brigade. This was considered a proud mark of distinction to be placed in the noted corps, the Jersey Blues. He resigned the commission in April 1778 and several weeks later entered Captain Randall's Company of Artillery – Col. Lamb's Regiment, the 2nd Regiment of Artillery, Continental Line."

After the War for Independence, George and his family moved westward, eventually settling in Athens County, Ohio for 20 years, though he moved once more to Perry County, Indiana a few years before his death. George's son Thomas Ewing, who became a Senator for Ohio, is best known for being the adoptive father, and later father-in-law, of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman.



Benjamin Ewing Nacar, along with Suzanne Ewing Nacar and Sylvia Ewing Nacar of RIDAR Independence Chapter, at the graves of George Ewing and Rachel Harris Ewing. The placard between the stones is from the Indiana DAR, Lafayette Spring Chapter. Photo taken by Alexander Nacar.

## Doings of the Compatriots

The Gaspee Days Committee and the Pawtuxet Rangers Historic Militia held the Gaspee 250th Anniversary Museum Weekend on April 29th, which kicked off the Gaspee 250th observations. Museum Weekend offered attendees a chance to view historic artifacts at both the Aspray Boat House and Pawtuxet Rangers Armory. At right, Compatriot David Davies, RISSAR Genealogist, hosts a table for RISSAR in the Armory.



On May 4th, four genealogical societies simultaneously descended upon the historic Squantum Association for the Rhode Island Independence Day gathering: RISSAR, RISSR, Order of Founders and Patriots, and the Society of Colonial Wars. Below, Ron Barnes welcomes everyone to the first-ever joint event featuring all four societies.





The featured speaker for the May 4th gathering was Prof. Steven Park, who delivered an incredibly thorough presentation on the *Gaspee* raid, its historical context, the increase in perceived significance of the event from the time of the raid to the Boston Tea Party a year and a half later, and shifting interpretations of the event from the time of the War for Independence down to the present day.

On May 28, 2022 members of RISSAR gathered at the historic James Babcock Ground, also known as Rhode Island Historic Cemetery Westerly #7, Westerly, RI to pay tribute and respect to five Patriots buried in this historic cemetery. From left to right: Paul T. Fetter III, Chris Sparks, Carlen H. Booth, Robert S. Butler, David B. Butler, Lawrence P. Hunter, Les Crandall and Wayland Currie. (John W. Adams is behind the camera.)



On behalf of RISSAR, President Chris Sparks also recognized the outstanding conservation and restoration efforts by: Wayland Currie and Les Crandall of the Westerly Lions Club; Lawrence P. Hunter, Washington County Representative of the R. I. Advisory Commission on Historic Cemeteries; and members of the Phebe Greene Ward Chapter of NSDAR. Through their recent efforts, the James Babcock Ground (WY007) has been cleaned, with leaves being raked and tree limbs and brush removed. During the work, it was also discovered that SAR Patriot markers were missing for Patriots Dr. Josha Babcock, Samuel Babcock, and Champlin Lanphere. At the May 28th gathering, the missing SAR Patriot markers were presented, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. At left, Paul Fetter presents one of the missing SAR markers along with an American flag.

On June 11, 2022, members of the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution proudly marched in the Gaspee Days Parade in Warwick and Cranston amidst cheers from the crowd. It was a particularly special occasion as this year marked the 250th anniversary of the burning of the HMS Gaspee.

At right, near the end of the parade route, RISSAR passes the reviewing stand. RISSAR Immediate Past President Ron Barnes, who served as Grand Marshall for the parade, took the picture.



The participating members of RISSAR pose after completing the 2.4-mile parade. Standing, from left to right: Paul Hoffman, Ronald C. Hillegass, Paul T. Fetter III, Dennis (Denny) M. Cosmo, Benjamin E. Nacar, Alan W. Head, Benjamin D. Carter, Christopher C. Sparks, Joseph D. Brennan. Kneeling: David L. Davies, Alexander Menzies.



On June 13th, just two days after the parade, RISSAR members convened at Robertson Elementary School in Warwick to name the winners of the poster contest. This year's contest was open to 5th-grade students in Warwick and Cranston as well as the Highlander Charter School in Providence, and this year's subject, naturally, was the Gaspee Affair. Ron Barnes, John Adams, and Joe Brennan spent hours sifting through more than 50 submissions, and ultimately selected two:



Grayson McCaughey of the Robertson School, the overall winner, whose poster was subsequently submitted to the SAR poster contest at the National level;

and Hannah Camara of Warwick Neck, who received a special prize for artistic merit.



All participants in the contest received the limited-run RISSAR challenge coin that commemorated the burning of the HMS Gaspee.





On June 16th, the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution gathered once again at the Squantum Association, for the purpose of both welcoming new members and celebrating Flag Day (June 14th).

At left, President Chris Sparks welcomes members and guests, and gives a shout out to new members about to be inducted into the Society that evening. At right, the presentation and posting of the Colors is led by RISSAR Immediate Past President and Commander of the Pawtuxet Rangers Ron Barnes, followed by Past President John T. Duchesneau, Kevin P. England, and Pawtuxet Ranger Adrian Beaulieu.



RISSAR Registrar Glenn W. Russell inducts new members Kevin A. Breene (left) and John H. Buzzi (right).



At right, Ron Barnes places the SAR rosette pin on John H. Buzzi. Below, Kevin A. Breene receives the SAR rosette from David B. Butler.



President Chris Sparks presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Past President Dr. Daniel S. Harrop III for the establishment of the Harrop – Harrington Scholarship Fund to support the RISSAR Youth Award Programs.



In observance of Flag Day, Immediate Past President Ron Barnes delivers a presentation on the “Development of the Flag of the United States - Revolutionary British America.”



RISSAR Compatriots, together with members of the DAR and other genealogical societies, attended the 280th Anniversary of Major General Nathanael Greene's birthday. The celebration took place on July 27, 2022, at "Forge Farm," the General's 1742 birthplace and home until 1770. We were treated to a tour of the home (at left), built in 1684 by James Greene, which was the home to 10 generations of Greenes.



At left: The evening began with the patriotic sounds of the Kentish Guards' Fife and Drum Corps. Below, Hailee Migneault Greene and Casey Migneault Greene pose with members of the Fife and Drum Corps.



Left: Eagle Scout Samuel Shippee reads his essay, "The General Who Saved the South." Sam recently won the RISSAR Eagle Scout Essay Contest, and was presented the RISSAR Eagle Scout Medal. Right: The evening closed with Kate A. Greene, Esq., Rob Migneault, and their daughters, Hailee Migneault Greene and Casey Migneault Greene, cutting the cake with the ceremonial sword once held by Nathanael Greene himself. The sword has a rich history, documented back to 1781, and has been cutting the Major's birthday cake for 35 years. Here, Kate Greene passes down the sword to the next generation with Hailee and Casey jointly holding the Major's "dress sword" during the cutting of the cake.



The Nathanael Greene Homestead held its own celebration of the General's birthday the following Sunday (July 31st), with a Living History Encampment from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm featuring the Kingston Reds and members of the Rhode Island Historic Militia including the Kentish Guards and Varnum Continentals.



Plenty of spectators gathered to watch the Historic Militia units drilling. The Homestead was also open for self-guided tours during this time.





One of the highlights of the day: after a three-year restoration, the iconic cannon that stood guard for almost a century over the National Historic Landmark Gen. Nathanael Homestead was returned to its position overlooking the property. Always a focal point for visitors to the Homestead, particularly for children, the cannon was dedicated this Sunday to late Korean War Veteran Robert “Uncle Bob” Calcagni who visited the Homestead in the 1930s as a child and who found life-long inspiration in the cannon and Gen. Greene. The new granite marker will be dedicated to: “Robert ‘Uncle Bob’ Calcagni and all the eight year-olds it inspired.” At right, Richard Howell and Dave Procaccini at the rededication of the cannon.





On August 13th, Bob S. Butler (Treasurer of RISSAR) and his wife Charlene presided over a grave marking ceremony at the Old Tennent Cemetery in Freehold, NJ. Two Patriots were honored: Capt. Edmund Munroe, Bob's ancestor; and Pvt. George Munroe, Edmund's second cousin. Several other descendants of Edmund participated in the ceremony, as well as members of the New Jersey SAR and DAR.

From Bob's remarks delivered that day:

“Edmund Munroe is my 4th great-grandfather; George was his second cousin. They fought in the Battle of Monmouth just southeast of this church, where they served under George Washington's personal command. Edmund and George were hit by a cannonball...the SAME cannonball on that day. This church served as a field hospital for the wounded and it's likely that both Edmund and George were brought here for treatment prior to their deaths. There is a blood stain on a pew which dates back to that time.

“For the last 244 years, there has been no recognition here of the sacrifice Edmund and George made during the War of Independence. However, we set out to change that. After much research and documentation, we provided information to the Veterans Administration that ascertained that Edmund and George were killed here and likely buried here in a mass grave. These headstones have now been placed here to honor their lives and sacrifice.”

At right, Bob and Charlene at the ceremony. Below, Bob poses with the New Jersey SAR Color Guard at the newly placed headstones for the Munroe cousins. Photos by Al Pochek.



## 2022 ROTC and JROTC Award Ceremonies

RISSAR Compatriot Kevin P. England presented the Outstanding ROTC Cadet Award Certificate, engraved medal and ribbon of the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution to Cadet Truman Bleakly, assisted by Cramer's Sabers Battalion Commanding Officer LTC Cornelius O. Granai IV, Professor of Military Science. The presentation took place April 22, 2022 at the University of Rhode Island at the Rainville Ballroom in the Memorial Union, North Kingston, RI. LTC Granai and Major Shea Leap, Assistant Professor of Military Science, conducted the ceremony.



Left to right: Compatriot Kevin P. England, Outstanding ROTC Cadet Truman Bleakly, LTC Cornelius O. Granai IV, with Major Shea Leap at the lectern. Photo by Cheryl England.

Cramer's Sabers Battalion consists of cadets from the University of Rhode Island, Salve Regina University, and Roger Williams University. The Army ROTC Battalion on the URI campus originated from the military training unit established in 1894 by Captain William W. Wetherspoon, later Chief of Staff of the United States Army.



RISSAR Compatriot Kevin P. England (and Providence College, Bryant University, and Johnson & Wales University Alumni) presented the Outstanding ROTC Cadet Award Certificate, engraved medal and ribbon of the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution to Cadet Isaac Yi, assisted by Patriot Battalion Commanding Officer LTC Tyler L. Jones. The presentation took place May 1st, 2022 at Providence College in Slavin Center '64 Hall, Providence, RI.



Left to right: Compatriot Kevin P. England, Outstanding ROTC Cadet Isaac Yi (Brown University, MSI), LTC Tyler L. Jones. Photo by Cheryl England.

Patriot Battalion consists of cadets from Providence College, Brown University, Bryant University, Johnson & Wales University, Rhode Island College, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, Community College of Rhode Island, and Bristol Community College. The Providence College Army ROTC Battalion began on 8 January 1951. Before 1957, ROTC was required for all physically qualified freshman and sophomore students, except those engaged in pre-ecclesiastical studies and veterans of the armed forces.

Hope High School: RISSAR Compatriot Kevin P. England presented the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution Bronze JROTC Certificate and Medal to Cadet 2LT Isaiah Matheu, accompanied by COL (Ret.) Peter Parente. The presentation took place May 20, 2022 during the Hope High School Army JROTC Awards Ceremony and Military Ball at the “O” Club in Quonset, RI.



Above: Compatriot Kevin P. England, Cadet 2LT Isaiah Matheu, and JROTC Hope High School Commanding Officer COL (Ret.) Peter Parente



The ceremony included the awards presentations, Hope HS JROTC Color Guard and Drill Team, and an Observance to MIA/POW soldiers with an “empty table ceremony” pictured below.

Cranston High School East: The Enhanced Program 2nd Place Award Winner went to Cadet Captain Alexis Franco, who received the “Outstanding JROTC Medal” along with a monetary award. Cadet Franco wrote in her award application essay how receiving the SAR award “...strengthened my belief in myself, allowing me to believe that I am doing the right thing and that I have improved as a person.” LTC John Murray, the Senior Army Instructor at CHSE, said “she is a shining example that both youth and adults should aspire to emulate” in his endorsement of her. Compatriot Dennis (“Denny”) M. Cosmo presented the RISSAR awards on May 20, 2022. He himself is a Cranston High School East (CHSE) Class of 2001 alumnus and a JROTC graduate.



Podium: John E. Murray LTC, Aviation United States Army (R) Sr Army Instructor  
Center stage: (left) Compatriot Dennis M. Cosmo, (right) Cadet Captain Alexis Franco

During the Ceremony Compatriot Denny Cosmo also presented the “Unit Level Award” with the ROTC Bronze Medal and Certificate to Cadet Victor Alonzo.

At right: Stephanie Richter and Karen Brunner Lemke of the Daughters of the American Revolution were also at the awards ceremony. They presented the 2021's DAR JROTC award recipient Cadet Victoria Boa along with 2022's recipient Cadet Amaya Cabral. “Having the DAR and SAR together was a great pleasure as we honored these fine young Americans,” Denny Cosmo said.





Rogers High School: Compatriot Kevin P. England and RISSAR President Christopher C. Sparks presented the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution “Outstanding JROTC Medal” (along with a monetary scholarship award) to first-place winner Cadet Major Matthew T. Mullins. The presentation took place May 20, 2022 during the Rogers High School Army JROTC Awards Ceremony in the “North Casement” of the historic Fort Adams, Newport, RI.