



Compatriots,

Since our last newsletter, we have held our 2025 annual meeting, at which you honored me by reelecting me to a second year as your President. I have endeavored to represent our organization in the community in order to bring attention to the ongoing semiquincentennial events. At our annual meeting, we also inducted new members Patrick Charland and Scott Tillotson – welcome to these new compatriots!

The week before our annual meeting, I represented the Rhode Island Society at the 250th anniversary of Lexington and Concord. SAR was an official sponsor of Concord 250, and we had over 300 SAR members marching in the parade! We marched over North Bridge exactly 250 years to the hour after the battle, and the feeling of history in the moment is not something I will soon forget.

In May, we held another library event in Westerly with the title “Do You Have a Revolutionary War Ancestor?” We had better attendance than past events, partially due to the generous donation of newspaper advertising by a member, and partially due to co-sponsorship by a local DAR chapter.

Also in May, my family and I attended the 250th anniversary of the capture of Fort Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys. The unique nighttime reenactment, in which the attackers entered the fort and found most of the garrison asleep, was ably performed by the reenactors even after several days spent reenacting the march to the fort, including rowing across the lake earlier in the day!

June found our society once again marching in the Gaspee Days parade; despite our relatively small membership, we once again outnumbered our DAR counterparts. Hopefully we can further increase turnout in the future.

Finally, on Friday August 30, I represented RISSAR at the 247th anniversary of the Battle of Rhode Island. The commemoration, held at Butts Hill Fort (where one of my Patriot ancestors was stationed in 1781) was a wonderful preview of what we can expect when we arrive at the 250th anniversary in 2028. I hope RISSAR can be a big part in planning the important commemorations to come.

The coming months are full of America 250 events, including the all-important 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence next July. I will be in Philadelphia for the occasion, but I hope members who cannot join me there will attend and participate in commemorations in their own communities.

Yours in patriotic service,

Alan W. Head, President
Rhode Island Society
Sons of the American Revolution

Calendar of Upcoming RISSAR Events

Thursday, September 18th, 2025

Fall Dinner
Circe Prime (formerly Chapel Grille)
Cranston, RI

Sunday, December 7th, 2025

Holiday Party
Rhodes on the Pawtuxet
Cranston, RI

Saturday, October 4th, 2025

Board of Managers Meeting
Brewed Awakenings
Warwick, RI

Saturday, January 10th, 2026

Board of Managers Meeting
Brewed Awakenings
Warwick, RI

Tuesday, November 11th, 2025

Veterans Day observance
Details TBD

Other Events of Interest

October 2nd-4th, 2025

SAR Fall Leadership Conference/Trustees Meeting
Louisville, KY

November 29th, 2025

Small Business Saturday
Nathanael Greene Homestead
Coventry RI

October 25th, 2025

SAR New England District Fall Meeting
Details TBD

December 6th-7th, 2025

Christmas Through Time
Nathanael Greene Homestead
Coventry RI

October 25th-26th, 2025

Historic Trick-or-Treat Timeline and Colonial Market
Nathanael Greene Homestead
Coventry RI

In Memoriam

Jonathan Farnum (former RISSAR member) (1939-2025)

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Editor for the Summer 2025 issue: Benjamin Ewing Nacar

Spotlight: Patrick Charland

Patrick is one of our newest members, and currently serves as RISSAR Ensign.

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

I'm a Rhode Island native, although I was largely raised in North Carolina due to my father's career in franchising. But I've always considered Rhode Island home, I'd come back here to visit my grandparents a lot, and my strongest friendships have always been here. I got my MD from Brody School of Medicine and my MBA from the College of Business at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina, and I spent several years in the field of public health before partnering with my father to start an Amazon Delivery Service Partner business. I moved back to Rhode Island about a year and a half ago to be closer to family, and right now I'm preparing to open a UPS store in Warwick off of Centerville Road this October.

- What led you to join the SAR?

The Fourth of July community celebrations in Buttonwoods (in Warwick) had a big impact on me growing up. Every Independence Day we'd have a parade down to the field where the kids would run relay races and potato sack races and there'd be prizes, and we'd all collect firewood for a bonfire at the end of the day, and we'd set off fireworks. These Buttonwoods July Fourth traditions still continue to this day, and just this summer I got to be one of the adults handing out the prizes to the kids. Anyway, these celebrations of Independence made a big impression on me as a kid, and really ingrained that spirit of freedom and democracy.

But I never really knew that much about my own family history, other than that my great-great-grandfather had fought for the Union during the Civil War. And then one day back in 2011, I was in North Carolina at the time talking to this Southern guy and he dropped this remark, "Son, your history is who you are." And I got curious and started digging deeper into my lineage. It was while researching the Bailey line in particular that I became fascinated by Revolutionary-era connections, and I feel quite strongly a responsibility to honor my ancestors who helped shape this country.

- How much family research did you end up doing?

I have an uncle who had done some initial research on my surname line, but I went much further down the rabbit hole and I'm still uncovering new documents and insights on a weekly basis. I've traced birth, marriage, and death records back to my first surname ancestor arriving in North America in 1646. I have ancestry in both New England and New France, which is kind of funny because at that point in history the English and French were opposing each other, but I think of myself as both.

- How did you end up becoming RISSAR Ensign?

I first met Alan [Head] and Joe [Brennan] at the State Capitol back in March for the Providence Tea Party commemoration. I hadn't been sworn in yet, but my RISSAR application had already been approved in late January, and so I asked if there was any specific way I could contribute, and they said there was an open role. I was nominated after my induction ceremony in April.

- What are some highlights of being a member of RISSAR for you?

One recent highlight was that grave marking ceremony last month at the North Burial Ground in Providence, where we got to meet compatriots from Pennsylvania who are also researching their family histories, and that's a great bond to have. One of the great things about joining all these lineage societies and historical societies is that you get to meet so many people who are eager to help you along in your research, and some of them have whole piles of letters and other records from your ancestors that they've been preserving all these years, so kudos to those people.

Not to mention the Squantum Association is a great place to eat, hear some really good guest speakers, and talk with other welcoming people who know so much about history. The social aspects of RISSAR are pretty cool!

Doings of the Compatriots

April 19th, 2025 – Lexington and Concord! What more needs to be said? Two hundred and fifty years *to the hour* after the face-off between Regulars and Minute Men erupted into the War for Independence, the momentous events at both towns were re-enacted for a huge crowd of spectators, followed by a ceremonial procession across (the present-day replica of) North Bridge in Concord. RISSAR President Alan Head captured the below photo of members of SAR from around the country crossing the Bridge.



In case you haven't been to Lexington Green before, Compatriot Patrick Charland took these photos of the memorial to those Minute Men who first faced off against the Regulars:



April 26th, 2025 – RISSAR's Annual Meeting was held at the East Greenwich Veteran Fireman's Association. Clockwise from upper left: Ethan A. Stewart Sr. (SAR VPG, New England District) and RISSAR President Alan Head; RISSAR Registrar Chris Krajacich pins the SAR rosette on new member Scott Tillotson; Immediate Past President Chris Sparks; Alan Head presents new member Patrick Charland with a challenge coin. Photos by Bob Butler.

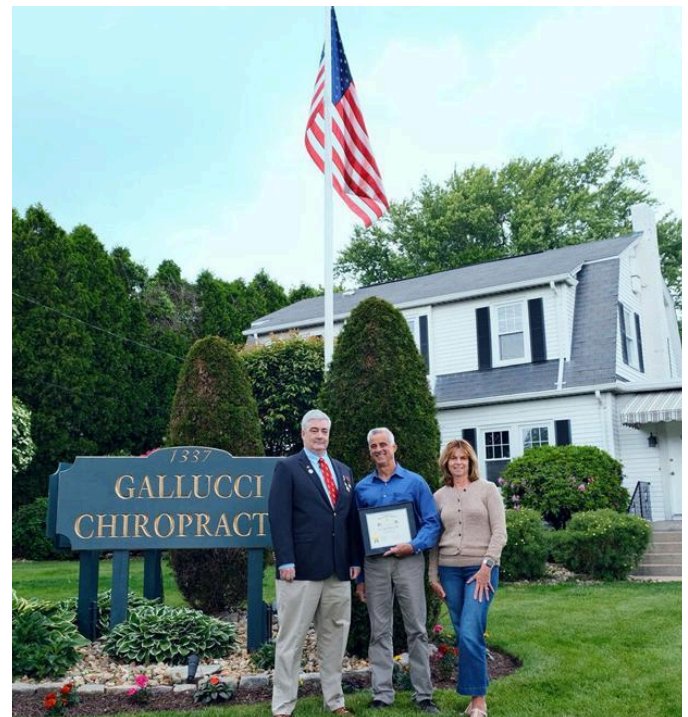




Above, Ethan Stewart Sr. swears in this year's slate of RISSAR officers at the Annual Meeting. Photo by Bob Butler.

May 8th, 2025 – The Rhode Island branches of no fewer than *six* heritage organizations – Society of the Cincinnati, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of the Revolution, Order of Founders and Patriots, Society of Colonial Wars, and the Order of Foreign Wars – convened at the Squantum Association in Riverside for the fourth annual Joint Societies Dinner. The featured speaker was Professor Robert A. Gross, who gave an extensive talk on the shifting social climate in Massachusetts in the interval between the Boston Tea Party and the outbreak of the War for Independence. Alas, everyone was so engrossed in either the talk, the food, or each other's company that no photos were taken, at least that we were able to locate before publication of this issue.

May 30th, 2025 – Gallucci Chiropractic (on the North Providence/Providence border) received the SAR Flag Certificate. At right: RISSAR 1st Vice President Joseph Brennan presented the certificate of commendation to Dr. Edward T. Gallucci, center, in recognition of his exemplary patriotism in the display of The Flag of the United States of America. Gallucci was accompanied by his wife, Anne. Picture from the *Valley Breeze*.



June 7th, 2025 – While the U.S. Navy’s official 250th birthday won’t be until October, Rhode Island was in fact the first of the Thirteen Colonies to pass a resolution creating a navy four months earlier: the General Assembly, meeting at the town of East Greenwich, approved the resolution on June 12th, 1775. Present-day East Greenwich celebrated the 250th anniversary of the occasion with a special “Navy Day Picnic in the Park” event at Academy Field. Compatriot Murray Norcross, who happens to be a Captain in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps, represented RISSAR at the Navy Day Picnic, where he had the honor of meeting two World War II Navy veterans aged 101 and 105! Photo courtesy of Murray Norcross.



June 14th, 2025 – Members of the Rhode Island Society Sons of the American Revolution proudly marched in the Gaspee Days Parade in Warwick and Cranston. RISSAR previously participated in the 2022 Gaspee Days Parade, marking the 250th anniversary of the Gaspee Affair itself. Below, left to right: Ben Nacar, Bob Butler, Jay Waller Jr., John Homer III, Alan Head, Rich Keene, Alex Menzies, Skip Davis Jr., Chris Krajacich. Photo by Kristy Head.



July 19th, 2025 – Patrick Charland has this to report on the day’s activities: “Dave Pickering and I were proud to welcome visiting compatriots from Pennsylvania to Rhode Island for three SAR grave marking ceremonies. On this beautiful summer day, together, we honored the final resting places of patriots Col. John Arnold, John Pettey, Pvt. Daniel Pettey, and Pvt. Joseph Grant – with moments of reverence, storytelling, and mutual connection.

“At the historic North Burial Ground in Providence, we paid tribute to father and son John and Pvt. Daniel Pettey. Descendant Jack Guinan recounted Pvt. Daniel’s daring escape from the infamous prison ship *Jersey*, where he’d been held after capture. Armed only with a small cooper’s axe used for barrel-making, he evaded three pursuing army officers – who capsized while firing at him – ultimately surviving both yellow fever and musket fire with grit and luck.

“Col. John Arnold of the Pawtuxet Rangers was memorialized at Pawtuxet Memorial Park in Warwick. His descendants, along with their spouses, stood proudly in remembrance, joined by members of the Warwick Historical Society – further cementing local ties to our shared heritage.

“Pvt. Joseph Grant’s legacy was honored at Burial Hill Cemetery in Barrington with thoughtful reflection on the sacrifices of these patriots and their families.



“Special thanks to our dedicated compatriots from Pennsylvania, including Raymond Mowery IV, Chapter President Jeff La Marca, and Past President Dale Leppard. Dressed in full Revolutionary attire, they delivered ceremonies rich in symbolism and historical significance. These ceremonies honored not only our patriot ancestors, but also reaffirmed the enduring bonds of service, remembrance, and tradition that unite members of the Sons of the American Revolution across generations and geography.” (Photos courtesy of Patrick Charland)

August 29th, 2025 – Alan Head reports: “Members of RISSAR attended the 247th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Rhode Island. Butts Hill Fort, which until recently was overgrown and barely visible, has been cleared by the Battle of Rhode Island Association and served as a parade ground for the combined color guard. All RISSAR members are encouraged to visit the fort and support the efforts of the Battle of Rhode Island Association as we approach the 250th anniversary of this important event in 2028.”



Above: the color guard, consisting of members of the 1st and 2nd RI Regiments, the Rhode Island United Train of Artillery, the Kingston Reds, the Henry Knox Color Guard from MASSAR, and the 13th Continental Regiment). Below, left to right: compatriots Patrick Charland, Alan Head, James Wolfe. Photos courtesy of Alan Head.

