



THE LONG KNIFE

Quarterly Newsletter of the Genl George Rogers Clark Chapter
Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution

"Serving Madison County"

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September 2014



Baritone soloist Don Bradford presents a patriotic song at the June 14 Flag Day event. Program leaders included GGRCC President Jim DeGroff (seated) and Lloyd E. Schwarz (behind podium).

Annual Flag Day Program Commemorates Late President Raymer

The annual Flag Day Celebration of GGRCC June 14 was dedicated to the late Timothy S. Raymer, a former president and frequent Flag Day organizer for the chapter who died in January.

At the event, held for the third straight year at the Lewis and Clark Confluence Towers, Hartford, President Jim DeGroff presented an SAR state awarded Lifetime Achievement Award medal for Timothy Raymer to his son Jason.

"Tim was a passionate volunteer for this place and for SAR and Flag Day," said a guest speaker, Brad Winn, a supervisor for the Lewis and Clark Museum. Compatriot Raymer was a long-time volunteer at the museum.

The event featured a display of the chapter's state flags and an explanation of 20 historic flags, narrated by chaplain and charter member Lloyd E. Schwarz as the historic banners were displayed by Boy Scouts of Troop 1031, Edwardsville, and an adult scout leader, Brian Walsh.

Chapter Vice President Marvin Meng coordinated the event. Don Bradford sang patriotic songs, and James Spann, mayor of Hartford, commended GGRCC for staging the event in his municipality.

The chapter will return next year to a policy of holding the Flag Day event in various local communities, President DeGroff said.

The Long Knife is a quarterly publication of the Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter, Illinois Society, Sons of the American Revolution.
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Luncheon meetings third Wednesday monthly Edwardsville Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Rd. (Rt.140)

President's Letter By Jim DeGroff

Thanks to all our chapter members, the GGRCC has 119 members as of this date in 2014. It is because many of our great members have submitted their sons, grandsons, brothers and cousins for inclusion in our community-involved chapter. As of this report we are working on over 20 more applications. We look forward to many more active members. And don't forget all members are involved in something and just a little of their personal time is all that is expected to be involved with the chapter. We always need help. Some members rarely come to meetings but do a superb job at some of our high profile award programs and presentations. So you see you don't have to come to meetings to be part of our chapter. Thanks to all those who volunteer.

Eagle Scout awards continue to be a very visible and rewarding outreach for our chapter. Recently Court of Honor Eagle Awards presented include one in Godfrey, one in Vandalia and two in Granite City. The chapter presents a certificate and an impressive patch for the Scout's uniform. My personal thanks to Ronnie Hicks, Chuck Dobias and Chairman Bill Johnson for their continued support of the Eagle Scout program.

Former GGRCC President Ron Hicks received special recognition from Glen Carbon Mayor Rob Jackstadt for organizing and chairing the Memorial Day service at the village Veterans Monument. Ron is a long-time leader of Glen Carbon VFW.

Chuck Dobias and I were in the color guard during Belleville Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter grave marking May 24 in Shiloh for Col. John Thomas. Chuck Dobias and I were in the color guard July 19 along with Dan Grafton of the Lewis and Clark Chapter for the marking of the grave of James McRoberts at the Moore Cemetery, by the Waterloo DAR.

We enjoyed our spring trip to the Civil War fort in Germantown. Our fall trip, planned by Chuck Dobias, is to the historic church founded by French priests who founded in Cahokia 1699.

On June 14 GGRCC had all 50 state and 20 historic flags on display for the Flag Day Program at Confluence Towers, Hartford. See story on Page 1.

Our Members and Ladies Night Out is planned for Oct. 7 at Julia's in East Alton. Brad Winn of the Lewis and Clark Historic Site will be the speaker.

GGRCC has received permission to install a Revolutionary Cemetery Marker at the Judy/Nix Cemetery in Glen Carbon where the chapter has placed six markers honoring Revolutionary War patriots who died in Madison County. The marker has arrived and we have mounted the pole in concrete and spread rocks and stones around the area. The marking ceremony will be at 2 p.m. Sept. 21. We have invited Sen. McCarver, representatives of the Glen Carbon mayor, Illinois SAR President Tom Ashby, and Father Finley who gave us the land for the marker. The financing, much assisted by the solicitations of GGRCC members Tom Beavers and John Roach, was described in the June *Long Knife*.

George Rogers Clark Key Character in St. Louisan's Novel

The accomplishments and difficulties of George Rogers Clark, our chapter's namesake, have been adapted to numerous works of fiction. One of the best treatments was in 1908's *The Crossing* by the popular and prolific St. Louis novelist Winston Churchill, distantly related to the British statesman.

Clark's life from early Kentucky activity to an embittered end is seen through encounters with the novel's narrator, David Ritchie. Their first contact is when David, an orphan fleeing with Kentucky-bound immigrants from Revolutionary turmoil in North Carolina, is rescued near the Harrodsburg fort by frontiersmen led by Clark. The youthful "Colonel Clark," David is told, "held that title in Kentucky by reason of his prowess" in thwarting Indian incursions.

David observes Clark's defensive tactics, finally including recruitment of volunteers for the conquest of British-ruled French settlements in Illinois and Indiana. David accompanied the small force as a drummer boy. He observes the laborious march in 1778 from the Ohio to Kaskaskia, which Clark captures without a shot. When Clark looks for "a light man to go over and open the postern" David is chosen.

In the following February, David is part of the expedition across the flooded landscape to capture British-occupied Vincennes, carried by the soldiers and floating his drum when necessary. He beats it and also aids the siege by bringing "bread and bullets" from sympathetic townspeople to Clark's force. As David leaves the conquered village, Clark says prophetically, "you have been a faithful friend, Davy, when I needed loyalty . . . Promise me that you will not forget me if I am--unfortunate."

In post Revolution years, David returned east to study law in Virginia. At age 21 he returned to Kentucky, establishing a practice in Louisville which Clark had founded during the wartime campaign. Clark, in residence administering the land grants his Revolutionary campaigners had received, directed business from his former soldiers to David. David becomes aware of the unfortunate, brief alliances of Clark with scheming General James Wilkinson and Aaron Burr. Clark, drinking heavily and unkempt, tells David of his intention to become "commander-in-chief of the French Revolutionary Legion on the Mississippi."

Clark attempts unsuccessfully to recruit David for what became an abortive French campaign to recover American territory. Never compensated fully for his sacrifices in the American Revolution, Clark breaks a sword Virginia had sent him, saying "So much for the gratitude of my country."

In 1804, after the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon, David rides from Kentucky to St. Louis and notes that his route was "along the way that was made memorable by the footsteps of Clark and his backwoodsmen."

A David Ritchie, of course, never existed but through his fictional eyes the triumphs and tragedies of Clark's life get a dramatic portrayal. The book, one of Churchill's best sellers, can be found in nearly every public and university library and used book stores.



GGRCC Places New Markers at Graves of 2 Revolutionary Patriots

The burial places of two Revolutionary War patriots previously marked by GGRCC received new markers installed by the Chapter Aug. 17. (Above) Chapter Vice President Marvin Meng plays taps for the ceremony at the grave of John Rattan at Vaughn Cemetery, Wood River. Rattan, who died in Madison County in 1821, served in the Continental Line in North Carolina. The other ceremony was at Lusk Park Cemetery, Edwardsville, for Thomas Tindall, who died in that area in 1832. He provided food for Revolutionary forces in Virginia. Bill Wilson, Robert Ridenour and Chuch Dobias provided the color guard for the activity.

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