

MINUTES OF BOD MEETING, JUNE 24, 2023

The Board of Direction meeting was ordered into session by President James Green at 10:20 at the Pilot House Restaurant, Topping, Virginia on June 24, 2023.

22 members and six guests, plus the guest speaker, Comdr. Christopher Melhuish, were in attendance. Members present were Tim Ahlgrim, Kenneth Bage, Robert Bruce, James Green, Kenneth Hawkins, Mike Lyman, Hugh Markham, Willie Martin, James Russell, Paul Walden. Richard Fickling, Robert Bruce, and Stuart Whitehead. The invocation was delivered by President James as well as leading in the Pledge of Allegiance. Past president and vice-president general, Stuart Butler acted as secretary in lieu of Secretary Russell's absence.

Minutes from the February meeting were approved without further reading. President Green spoke of his past activities since the February meeting which included his participation in representing the Society at the John Tyler and James Monroe presidential wreath laying on March 29 and April 28 of this year. President James also presented the Certificate of Merit to Cadet Diamante Moore of Norfolk State University in April. He also announced that he would be attending the Triennial Meeting of the General Society of the War of 1812 at Plattsburg, New York, September 7-10, 2023.

Vice President General Paul Walden informed the Society that he had been invited to attend the wreath laying at the grave of 1Lt Dr. James Carson at Christ Church Episcopal Cemetery in Alexandria on behalf of the Society. Claire Bennett, a descendant of Dr. Carson, and a member of the Eliza Monroe Chapter of the US Daughters of the War of 1812, organized the ceremony. Details and the ceremony's program are included in the posting on the Society's blog.

Walden also stated that grave markers ordered from Centec are on backorder due to labor/supply issues, but the Society has not been charged with any cost.

He also mentioned that his attempts to place a historical highway marker at the former site of Wiley's Tavern, in Fairfax County, have not so far succeeded in getting traction due to the widening of Route 7 and problems associated with the present owner of the land closest to the original site of the tavern.

Treasurer J. Shane Newcombe was not present, but submitted his usual full and complete accounting of the Society's finances and membership count. In short, the Society is in sound financial condition. At present, total membership stands at 153 which includes 31 life members, 2 honorary members, and 9 dual memberships.

Past Vice President General Butler informed the meeting that he has resumed his role as webmaster to the Society's blog in March. As of the current meeting, he had posted eight postings on the blogsite including Walden's participation in the Alexandria grave marking (see above). He had answered one question concerning the War of 1812 through private email, and responded to an inquiry about a Virginia War of 1812 soldier's reduction in ranks that was quoted in Mr. Butler's book, *Defending the Old Dominion*, also through private email.

Butler also spoke on the need for more volunteers to step up and present the Society's Certificate of Merit in-person to deserving cadets of the state's many colleges and universities. He had done so in April at Christopher Newport University.

He reiterated that the Society volunteer need only be present at the award ceremony organized by the ROTC facility on campus, and that no public speaking is required, unless the presenter wishes to do so. He will attempt to contact schools to determine when they are presenting the awards and see if there are presenters to do the in-person job. ROTC units provide the certificate from the General Society in places where there is no presenter available, but it is up to the state society to request the medals from the General Society at \$25 a piece.

Mike Lyman, Publications Chairman, informed the meeting about the status of the Society's publications. He reminded the members that there remains 22 copies of the First Addendum of the Burials of the War of 1812 Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia. He strongly suggested that members purchase the addendum at reduced price of \$12 to distribute to libraries. Copies of the *Burials of War of 1812 Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia* are still available for purchase by members at the discounted price of \$22.50 for distribution to libraries. Personal use copies would be \$37.50. Additional burials have been identified by Lyman and the total of all known burials stand at 6,412. He doesn't think that a second burial compilation be published anytime soon, as more names are being located. He would provide upon request the additions by email. In addition to these publications, Lyman and 2nd Vice President Corey have compiled a list of 153 names of soldiers who served in the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. A discussion followed whereby it was suggested that the dual list be published on the blog possibly on Google Drive (Walden). Lyman mentioned that he had 45 copies of the multi-page document.

He reminded the board that \$2000 for the Second Edition of the Burial book to be undertaken in 2024 was approved at the previous February meeting was unanimously adopted and approved.

Lyman also stated that he had received requests for copies of the previously published *Encounters with the British in the War of 1812*. He suggested that it be posted on the blog for all to see. Lyman had added more encounters since the original publication, and as soon as he can locate the updated version, he will have it distributed, hopefully, to be put on the website.

As Grave Marking Chairman, Lyman informed the meeting that there was to be no grave marking event following the meeting because the lack of grave marking stakes (see above under Walden).

There were no reports from 1st or 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary, Historian, or counsel.

Registrar Hugh Markham informed the meeting that six new members have been approved since last annual muster in 2022, three of whom were inducted at the muster, Jon Thomas Rymer, Robert Bruce and Willie Martin. Gerald Wesley Scott, also a new member, was present at the meeting, but had to leave early for an appointment. (see blog for photos of the induction).

Old Business: President James raised the question about the possibility of placing a grave marker or plaque at the Montpelier Cemetery indicating the burial of Gen. William Madison. General Madison is buried within the cemetery, but his exact

location is undetermined by the resident archaeologist at Montpelier. Butler was to look into contacting Montpelier on this subject, but was delayed doing so because of illness. He has promised to look into the matter and report his findings in the September meeting.

Paul Walden announced the winners of the War of 1812 essay contest sponsored by the Society for the past school year. Walden and Charles Belfield were judges. First place winner was Ryan McComb, a senior at the Mills Godwin High School in Richmond. Second place winner was Joshua Robinson, Light of the World High School, in Dunnsville, Essex County. Walden moved that the 1st place prize of \$1000 and 2nd place prize money of \$500 be approved and distributed. President James seconded the motion, and the motion was adopted. A recommendation was made by Mike Lyman that the winners should come to the next meeting to accept the awards in person, but because the winners would most likely be attending college by that time, it was judged unfeasible to do so. Related to this subject, it was recommended that the winning essay be placed on the Society's blog, and Butler said it could be done.

President Green brought up the possibility of a grave marking ceremony in Southampton County. Vice President Hawkins informed the meeting there would be an SAR event planned for the Battle of the Capes to be held on September 9, 2023, and one planned to observe the skirmish at Kemps Landing in Norfolk in November. Another SAR annual event is to be held on December 2, 2023, to observe the battle of Great Bridge, and two grave marking ceremonies are being planned by the Norfolk Chapter SAR for sometime in the summer or early fall. The SAR events should be up on the VASSAR calendar for more information.

New Business: Mike Lyman discussed the significance and background of the Society's acquisition of a replica of the only Virginia militia regimental flag from the War of 1812. He also discussed the problem presented by the display of the War of 1812's Stars Spangled flag along with the American flag. According to VASSAR, this flag is larger and taller than the American flag and cannot be properly displayed alongside. This occurred at the wreath laying ceremony at the James Monroe Birthplace ceremony in April 2023. He also had on display a telescope made in London that could possibly have been used in the War of 1812, War of 1812 uniform buttons, and a flute which could have been used in both the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 period.

Paul Walden moved that the minutes be placed on the Society's blog; it was seconded by Mike Lyman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Hugh Markham raised the subject of obtaining name tags for present and new members. Butler said he had obtained a good name tag from a shop in Williamsburg for another organization, and that he would look into seeing what prices the shop charges for a quantity of badges at a reduced rate per badge.

The benediction was given by President Green and the BOD meeting was adjourned at 11:30.

Following lunch, 1st Vice President, Kenneth Hawkins introduced the featured speaker, Comdr. Christopher Melhuish, who spoke on the history of the Nation's only commissioned frigate from the 19th century, USS *Constitution* or "Old Ironsides" Melhuish gave a fascinating and highly enjoyable account of the ship through the nation's history and how the pubic was a prime mover in saving the ship from

destruction. As commander of the ship in 1997, he sailed the ship during the 200th anniversary of the ship's construction. Commander Melhuish's biography was included in a previous posting on the Society's blog. The talk was extremely informative and well-received.

The annual muster was adjourned at 2:30pm. Sine die.