

“The Paumanok Alarm”

Long Island Chapter Newsletter
Empire State Society

Sons of the American Revolution

LIBERTAS ET PATRIA

Volume 98 September 2007 Number 2



President's Message:

Dear Compatriots,

As part of the New York State Society Children of the American Revolution *Honoring our American Heroes* project (a project benefiting the *National Purple Heart Hall of Fame*), Al Meyer and David Shields and myself were honored to attend a



C.A.R. wreath laying ceremony honoring Sergeant Elijah Churchill at Callahan's Beach in Fort Salonga on August 4. Sergeant Churchill was a 32-year old carpenter from Enfield, Connecticut. He enlisted as a private for the 8th Connecticut in 1775 and re-enlisted in 1777 for the duration of the war. Serving as a corporal then promoted to sergeant in the 2nd Legionary Corps, he was awarded the first Badge of Military Merit (Purple Heart) by General Washington in 1783 for his gallantry in action at Fort St. George on Long Island (very near where this ceremony took place), in November 1780. This ceremony not only recognized our first purple heart recipient but afterwards proceeded to the Northport VA Medical Center where the C.A.R. honored our veterans of past and current conflicts.

We can be very proud of the next generation of S.A.R. and D.A.R. members who contribute so much to maintaining the values set forth by our forefathers. Many young men and women participated in this moving ceremony; in particular I would like to recognize: *Elizabeth Sullivan*, Long Island District V.P. who welcomed the D.A.R., S.A.R., and C.A.R. attendees. New York State President *Schuyler P. VanBuren* who helped establish the C.A.R. New York State theme "*Honoring Our American Heroes.*" *Rebecca Wickel*, C.A.R. New York State Historian who gave us a biography of Elijah Churchill. *Isabella and Gracie Sobalvarro* who presided over the laying of the wreath, and *Courtney Wickel*, C.A.R. New York State Chaplin for the closing prayer.

I encourage all of you to speak to your children and grandchildren about joining the New York State Society Children of the American Revolution. For more information about how they can easily become members please go to the New York State C.A.R. website:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyscar> If you need assistance on helping someone join the C.A.R. please let us know and we will get you the resources you need.

Honoring Patriot Elijah Churchill

On Saturday August 4th, the Long Island Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, joined New York State Society Children of the American Revolution in honoring one of our own. A Long Island Revolutionary War Hero. The event took place on a beautiful sunny morning near the rolling waves of the Long Island Sound at Fort Solonga.

Sergeant Elijah Churchill, a carpenter from Connecticut, a member of the Continental Light Dragoon Regiment, crossed Long Island Sound with his unit in whaleboats on November 21, 1780. They marched to Fort St. George at Mastic. Sergeant Churchill was in charge of one of three attacks. The Colonists took 300 British prisoners, destroyed the fort and all the British vessels at the wharf.

On October 2, the following year, Churchill took part in a second raid, crossing the Sound again in whaleboats, but this time to attack the British fortress at Fort Solonga. This attack resulted in the destruction of artillery and munitions, and the capture of 21 British prisoners. Sergeant Churchill was the only American wounded in the assault.

For his actions, Sergeant Elijah Churchill was one of the first Americans to be awarded the "Badge of Military Merit" by General George Washington in 1783. This badge is presently called the "Purple Heart".



The Children of the American Revolution, combined Long Island Societies, honored Sergeant Churchill during a ceremony held at Callahan's Beach near present day Northport. Elizabeth Sullivan, Long Island District Vice President welcomed members. Mr. Paul R. Wickel, Senior Long Island Vice President introduced guests. A brief biography of Elijah Churchill was read by Rebecca Wickel, New York State Historian. Isabella and Grace Sobalvarro, laid a wreath beneath the historic marker. Courtney Wickel,

(Continued on Page 2, column 1)

New York State Chaplain read a Closing Prayer.



Isabella and Grace Sobalvarrio

Some of the guests present were Desander J. Mas, Albert Meyer and David Shields from our chapter. From the D.A.R. Mrs. Ann Cooke from the Brooklyn Chapter and Mrs. Jane Sullivan from the Peter Minuet Chapter in New York City.



Long Island Region C.A.R. at Fort Solonga

Upon completion of the ceremony, our chapter was invited to attend a meeting of the Long Island District Societies C.A.R. The meeting was opened by Suffolk Chapter President Rachel Wickel who had her members lead in the Pledge, the National Anthem, the American's Creed and the C.A.R. Creed. Special guest at the meeting was New York State President Schuyler VanBuren from Chelsea NY. He addressed the members, outlining the National Presidents Program and the New York State Program for the Society which is "Honoring Our American Heroes". All of the members attending took part in the meeting. Adjourning from the meeting, everyone met again at the Northport Veterans Hospital to honor our Veterans. The C.A.R. members gave patients "Purple Heart" pins. C.A.R., D.A.R. and S.A.R. members spoke with patients in the ward which was followed by the singing of a number of patriotic songs. Leading the songs in front of some very enthusiastic patients was Mrs. Denise Doring VanBuren, Senior New York State Chaplain and mother of State President Schuyler VanBuren.

Immediately following there was a luncheon at The Elijah Churchill Public House in Fort Solonga where everyone present enjoyed a delicious lunch and each others company. On the last page of this newsletter is a flyer from the New York Society, Children of the American Revolution for their project to Honor the memory of Sergeant Elijah Churchill at the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor. Please support their program by purchasing a Purple Heart lapel pin and/or silver key chain.



David Shields, Albert Meyer, Schuyler VanBuren New York State CAR President and Long Island Chapter SAR President Desander Mas

Please make checks payable to NYSSCAR and mail to Schuyler VanBuren, P.O. Box 8, Chelsea, NY 12512 (Return postage will be donated)

Centennial Medal

From time to time the National Society issues a "Special" medal, either a commemorative medal or a medal for a special event (i.e. Treaty of Paris event, United Kingdom Congress, etc.). The Sons of the American Revolution Centennial Medal has been approved for purchase and wear by those Compatriots who were members of the Society during the calendar year 2006. Purchase of the medal can be made through the NSSAR Merchandising Department as follows:

NSSAR Merchandise
1000 South Fourth Street
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 589-1776
or online at:
www.sar.org under
For_Members/SAR_Merchandise



The cost of the medal is \$25.00 and includes a miniature medal. The front of the medal has the image of Teddy Roosevelt and the words NSSAR Charter Centennial and dates 1906-2006 on the obverse. Reverse is blank. All suspended from a blue ribbon. The medal has a bronze finish. The set comes in a nice velvet case. This is a particularly appropriate medal for members of our Chapter.

Historic Suffolk County: Come and visit us and our booth at HISTORIC SUFFOLK COUNTY in Port Jefferson Village Center on Saturday October 13th. "Historic Suffolk County" is an annual Archives Week event where the many organizations dedicated to preserving the unique history of Suffolk County gather to raise public awareness of the documentary resources they have available. Public libraries, genealogy groups, historical societies, and schools all take part in this celebration of Suffolk County history.



Archives Week is an annual, week-long observance of the importance of archival & historical records to people's lives. In NY State it takes place the second week of October. Historic Suffolk County ...from the north shore to the south shore, from Amityville to Montauk. Celebrate Archives Week by getting to know more about your local archives. Stop by to view rare documents and photographs and make the most of Suffolk's future by taking a good look at its past.

Tell a Friend about the.....

Long Island Chapter ESSAR

The SAR is a "lineage" society. This means that each member has traced their family tree back to a point of having an ancestor who supported the cause of American Independence during the years 1774-1783. They can help make the dream of our patriot ancestors a reality by joining and participating in our programs to sustain the system of representative government and participatory democracy that they fought with words and weapons to create.

Information on the joining requirements, the applications forms, and fees can be found on the Sons of the American Revolution national web-site at www.sar.org. After you and your friend have worked on their paperwork, he can contact our Long Island Chapter Registrar, Compatriot Edward Burns at eburns02@sprynet.com

Members are encouraged to participate in a number of activities:

- come to meetings, pay dues on time, read the newsletters
- recommend good people for awards and help present them
- encourage youth to enter contests, sponsor their awards
- help with an activity, join a committee, become an officer
- get information on patriot graves, mark a grave site
- learn about local historical markers, tell your friends
- volunteer to talk at a local school or civic association
- join, start or support a color guard with Rev. War uniforms
- support local historical research, get it published
- fly the flag of our nation correctly and often at your home

Gingerbread and Holiday Wassail Recipes from Colonial Williamsburg



Recipes for a Twelfth Night Celebration

HOLIDAY WASSAIL

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 1 large can pineapple juice (unsweetened)
- 3/4 cup tea can use herb tea
- Place in a cheesecloth sack:
- 1 tablespoon whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon whole allspice
- 2 sticks cinnamon

This is great cooked in a crock pot. Let it simmer very slowly for 4 to 6 hours. You can add water if it evaporates too much. Your house will smell wonderful and the family will love it! Serves 20.

GINGERBREAD

- 1 cup sugar
 - 2 teaspoons ginger
 - 1 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup melted margarine
 - 1/2 cup evaporated milk
 - 1 cup unsulfured molasses
 - 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 3/4 teaspoon lemon extract
 - 4 cups stone-ground or unbleached flour, unsifted
- Combine the sugar, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, salt, and baking soda. Mix well. Add the melted margarine, evaporated milk and molasses. Add the extracts. Mix well. Add the flour 1 cup at a time, stirring constantly. The dough should be stiff enough to handle without sticking to fingers. Knead the dough for a smoother texture. Add up to 1/2 cup additional flour if necessary to prevent sticking. When the dough is smooth, roll it out 1/4 inch thick on a floured surface and cut it into cookies. Bake on floured or greased cookie sheets in a preheated 375° F oven for 10 to 12 minutes. The gingerbread cookies are done when they spring back when touched.

History: Lighthouses On Long Island



1	Coney Island (Nortons Point)	Kings	Brooklyn
2	Stepping Stone	Nassau	<i>North Hempstead</i>
3	Execution Rock	Nassau	<i>North Hempstead</i>
4	Sands Point (Mitchell Light)	Nassau	<i>North Hempstead</i>
5	Cold Spring Harbor	Suffolk	<i>Huntington</i>
6	Lloyd Harbor	Suffolk	<i>Huntington</i>
7	Huntington Harbor	Suffolk	<i>Huntington</i>
8	Eatons Neck	Suffolk	<i>Huntington</i>
9	Fire Island	Suffolk	<i>Islip</i>
10	Old Field Point	Suffolk	<i>Brookhaven</i>
11	Stratford Shoal (Middle Ground)	Suffolk	<i>Brookhaven</i>
12	Port Jefferson Harbor (East Breakwater)	Suffolk	<i>Brookhaven</i>

13	Shinnecock Bay (Ponquoque Point)	Suffolk	Southampton
14	Horton Point	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
15	Long Beach Bar (Bug Light)	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
16	Cedar Island (Cedar Point)	Suffolk	<i>Easthampton</i>
17	Orient Point (Coffee Point)	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
18	Plum Island (Plum Gut)	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
19	Gardiners Point	Suffolk	<i>Easthampton</i>
20	Little Gull Island	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
21	Race Rock	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
22	North Dumpling	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
23	Latimer Reef	Suffolk	<i>Southold</i>
24	Montauk Point	Suffolk	<i>Easthampton</i>

Legacy: Lighthouses on Long Island

Lighthouses were so important to the growing commerce of America that the ninth law adopted by the fledgling United States in August, 1789, provided for the government to build and maintain the aids to navigation.

Initially, all lighthouses had keepers. As the lighthouses were automated in the 20th century and the keepers were removed. The last lighthouse on Long Island to be automated was Montauk in 1987. Over the years, 24 lighthouses would be built on Long Island and offshore islands and shoals.

#1 Coney Island Lighthouse: Coney Island has seen many flashy and amusing fads come and go over its long history, and its name conjures up images of crowded beaches, cotton candy, and roller coasters. Probably few in those crowds ever noticed the Coney Island Lighthouse sitting quietly nearby. Among lighthouse aficionados, however, it is known for one of its legendary keepers.



During the mid-1800s, Coney Island attracted a lot of famous people, including P.T. Barnum, Herman Melville, Washington Irving, and Daniel Webster. The west end of the island, where the lighthouse was to be built, attracted quite a different crowd, and was a very rough area known for its drinking, fighting, and gambling. It wasn't unusual for

bodies to wash ashore on Coney Island during those times.

The growing popularity of Coney Island meant increased ferry traffic to deliver people there. A lighthouse was needed to guide boats headed for the island's piers, and also to direct garbage barges to their dumping grounds nearby. In 1889, Congress approved \$25,000 to build two range lights at the western end of Coney Island. However, when the Lighthouse Board tried to buy the necessary land for the new lighthouse, the property owners asked for twice the estimated value of the land. The properties were condemned instead and obtained for \$3,500.

The front light was an 18-foot high square wooden tower, standing on four concrete footings. That light was dismantled only six years later. The rear light was a square skeleton tower with a steel column containing 87 steps in the center. The tower is identical to the former lighthouse at Throg's Neck. In fact, they literally took the plans for that tower, crossed out "Throg's Neck" and wrote "Coney Island" above it. The tower was slightly over 61 feet, with an eight-sided lantern at the top. The Coney Island Lighthouse marks the rocks of the appropriately named Gravesend Bay at the Narrows, the entrance to Upper New York Bay.

The accompanying keeper's dwelling was also copied from another station, in this case the Gould Island Light in Rhode Island. Once again, they took the plans, crossed out the word "Gould," and wrote in "Coney." The building had two floors, plus a cellar and an attic. A shed was attached, via a covered walkway, to one side of the building, and a water cistern was built in back. A gravel path led to the shoreline,

connecting the dwelling, the lighthouse tower, and the fog bell building.

The original beacon, first lit on August 1, 1890 by Keeper Thomas Higgenbotham, was a fourth-order Fresnel lens powered by kerosene, showing a flashing red light. That lens was removed when the station was automated in 1989, and is now on display at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington D.C. The beacon casts a beam 71 feet above sea level, and is visible for over fourteen miles.

The dredging of the Ambrose Channel changed the course of the currents near Coney Island, and the land in front of the station began to erode. In 1915, a 600-foot stone wall was put up for protection, but a large storm six months later undermined much of the wall. In 1918, the fog bell building fell over into the water. Another skeleton tower for a fog bell was built and surrounded by several tons of rip-rap.

When the station was built, the area surrounding it was mostly vacant. But by 1921 there had been so much construction that there was no way to reach the lighthouse from the shore side, and the Light House Service was forced to buy a right-of-way for \$5,000.

The last civilian keeper at Coney Island Lighthouse was Frank Schubert, who began his lighthouse career in 1938 aboard the buoy tender *Tulip*. He followed that with time at the offshore Old Orchard Lighthouse, and then was assigned to the Army Transportation Service during World War II. After the war, he served as the keeper of three lights at Governors Island. While stationed there, his wife, Marie, and their three children lived on Staten Island.

In 1960, Schubert accepted an assignment to the Coney Island Light as his family would finally be able to live with him at the station to which he was assigned. When interviewed by *New York Times* reporter, Mrs. Shubert explained "We've gone from one extreme to another. We never used to see Frank. Now he never leaves home." Keeper Shubert's duties included tending the light and the 1,000-pound fog bell. When he could no longer see Hoffman and Swinburne Islands, he would turn the bell on. In an emergency, or if the power went out, Schubert said that the fog bell could be hit "with a sledgehammer."

Schubert had other talents and hobbies to keep him busy, including golfing, bowling, cooking, and woodworking, among others. Even with all that, the family apparently seldom left the station; in a 1986 interview, Schubert said that "We haven't been to the movies since 1946, and we haven't taken a vacation in 20 years."

Schubert's wife passed away in the late 1980s. When the station was automated in 1989, he was allowed to stay on as a caretaker, continuing to climb the 87 steps to the lantern every day to perform required maintenance duties. During his years of service, Shubert was credited with saving the lives of fifteen sailors and was invited for a visit to the White House by President George H. W. Bush. He and his dog, Blazer, remained on duty until December 11 of 2003, when Schubert passed away at the age of 88 as the last of the Coast Guard's civilian lighthouse keepers. His lighthouse career had lasted 65 years, including the final 43 years at Coney Island Lighthouse.

The Medical Advisory Committee



*National Society
Sons of the American Revolution*

This short medical history form, as suggested by Compatriot John B. Fitzgerald, MD, is presented to you by the Medical Advisory Committee.

To use it properly:

- ✓ Fill it out (using the info from your prescription containers).
- ✓ Fold it.
- ✓ Keep it in your wallet/purse.
- ✓ Offer it to new physicians (specialists, emergency rooms) to copy.

Daniel H. Heller, MD
Surgeon General

Cut

Fold

Fold

Cut

Cut

Major Surgeries

My Allergies

Primary Diagnoses

Medi-Log

For your wallet



Sons of the American Revolution
Compliments of
The Medical Advisory Committee
Suggested by
John B. Fitzgerald MD

fold

Name _____
Insurance Company _____ Phone () _____
Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone () _____
Pharmacy _____ Phone () _____

Cut

New York State Society Children of the American Revolution
2007-2008 State President Schuyler VanBuren's Project to
Benefit the Purple Heart Hall of Honor

Theme:

Honoring our American Heroes

Project:

Revive Sergeant Elijah Churchill

Our goal is to raise approximately \$2,000 to authentically clothe and equip a Revolutionary War re-enactor who will portray Sergeant Elijah Churchill at the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor and in local schools.

Please support our work by purchasing a Purple Heart lapel pin and/or silver key chain:

Minimum donation just \$5 each!

What is the Purple Heart

Hall of Honor?

In the closing days of the Revolutionary War, General George Washington ordered the creation of a new award that recognized enlisted men for unusual gallantry, extraordinary fidelity and essential service. He ordered his men to assemble at the New Windsor Cantonment and there awarded the first Badges of Military Merit, symbolized by pieces of purple wool in the shape of a heart. More than 150 years later, in May 1932, a new award, called the Purple Heart, inspired by the Badge of Merit and emblazoned with the image of Washington, was bestowed upon 138 veterans who had been wounded during World War I, at the Cantonment.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor was dedicated on Veterans' Day 2006 at the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site as the permanent national archives, museum and memorial to the nearly 2 million Americans who have earned the Purple Heart in service to our nation. The 7,500-square-foot facility features interactive displays and the stories of some 12,000 veterans — with hundreds of new additions arriving each week.



Who was Elijah Churchill?

Churchill, who was born near the Pennsylvania/New York border at the "source of the Delaware River," was a 32-year-old carpenter living in Connecticut who entered the service as a private on July 7, 1775. He re-enlisted for the duration of the war in 1777 as a corporal in the 2nd Continental Light Dragoon Regiment and was promoted to Sergeant on October 2, 1780. He was cited for gallantry in action at Fort St. George on Long Island, at Coram in 1780, and at Tarrytown in 1781.

On November 21, 1780, Sergeant Churchill and his unit crossed Long Island Sound in whaleboats, and marched to Fort St. George at Mastic. Sergeant Churchill was in charge of one of three attacks. Shouting "Washington and Glory," he and his dragoons ran across the parade ground and stormed the fort. Three hundred British soldiers were taken prisoners, the fort destroyed, and heavily laden British vessels at the wharf were burned.

On October 2, 1781, Churchill took part in a second raid, crossing from Westport to attack the British outpost at Fort Slongo, near present-day Northport and a notorious rendezvous for Tories and Loyalists. The successful attack, which resulted in the destruction of artillery and munitions, resulted in the capture of 21 prisoners. Sergeant Churchill was the only American wounded in the assault.

Churchill was awarded one of the first Badges of Military Merit by Washington in 1783. His badge was handed down within his family for generations, as was his sword. Both the badge and sword were purchased by the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site in the 1960s. Churchill's Badge of Military Merit is the only surviving example from Washington's inaugural presentations.



Long Island Chapter
Empire State Society
Sons of the American Revolution
David M. Shields, Secretary
59 Dart Street
East Rockaway, NY 11518

To:

Dates To Remember: Fly your Flag

- **Tuesday, November 6
Election Day**
- **Sunday, November 11
Veteran's Day**
- **Tuesday, November 22
Thanksgiving Day**