



# PATRIOT



## *President's Message*

Fellow Compatriots,

I wish to extend a heartfelt welcome to the new members being inducted this month and encourage them to join in the many opportunities we have to serve the community.

One of our new members, Bob Reed, organized and presided over the presentation of the Legion of Honor by the French Government to PFC Onofrio Zicari, a 102-year-old WWII veteran. Tim Hagan and I had the honor of attending a truly inspiring presentation.

This past month your new officers met and began the work to achieve our mission of promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and inspiring future generations to understand and appreciate the founding principles of our great nation. We are making great progress on our new Color Guard unit, Patriot Chest Youth Education Program and participating in the America 250 celebration.

I also want to invite all of you to join us at the George Washington Birthday Dinner on Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> at 5pm at the Las Vegas National Golf Club. We have a great speaker lined up and I hope you will join us.

David Bentley, Signers Chapter President

## **Upcoming Calendar of Events**

**Saturday, February 1,** 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin.

**Saturday, February 15,** 5pm, George Washington's Birthday Dinner co-hosted with the Francisco Garces Chapter, NSDAR at the Las Vegas National Golf Club.

**Saturday, March 1,** 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin.

**Saturday, March 22,** Nevada Society SAR, Annual Meeting, Reno.

**Saturday, April 5,** 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin

**Saturday, May 3,** 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin

**Saturday, June 7,** 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin

## January 2025 Events

On Saturday, January 4th, Breakfast meeting attendees were treated to a lively presentation by Allen “Big Al” Kaercher, President of Kaercher Insurance, and now Managing Partner of the Alera Group. Allen’s lifelong history in Las Vegas and his participation in changing the risk insurance industry in town and specifically on the Las Vegas Strip, provided rich historical perspectives about our “famous international city”. A lot of history was discussed, along with a passionate plea to rename our city’s airport to the Las Vegas International Airport, acknowledging how the world sees this golden desert gem. Continuing Allen’s contributions to Las Vegas, his company is a proud and significant supporter of the Las Vegas Golden Knights.



Chapter President Jeff Gutting then inducted three new members: Robert Reed, Chuck Arnold, and Eric Swanson. Once they received their membership certificates, rosette pins, and Nevada SAR History books, each briefly named their patriot ancestor, and described the type of patriot service performed. Finally, members of the new 2025 Chapter Leadership team were sworn in. Outgoing Chapter President Jeff Gutting handed the gavel to incoming Chapter President David Bentley, who then described his plans for 2025. David concluded the meeting thanking the 30 attendees for their enthusiastic support of the chapter.



Pictures from the French Legion of Honor Ceremony at the Silverton Casino on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, for PFC Onofrio Zicari, a 102-year-old WWII veteran. The award recognized Zicari's participation in the liberation of France in 1944, 80 years ago. Signers Chapter Compatriot Robert Reed introduced and spoke about Zicari's service.



## February 2025 Planned Events

The featured speakers for the **February 1<sup>st</sup> Breakfast meeting** are Kelley Barrett, PhD, and Kharisma Rodriguez. Their topic will be "Getting Started with DNA Testing."



Kelley Barrett, PhD is a professional researcher, writer, and certified Master Trainer. Her genealogy journey began in childhood. Family stories of suspicious name changes, disappearances, cattle rustling, and other mysteries sparked her imagination and a lifelong passion for family history. Following a successful career in Human Resources, she turned her skills in investigation, analysis, and documentation toward finding 'lost' relatives, solving family mysteries, and breaking through brick walls. Kelley currently serves as the Communications Manager for the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG) and is the Secretary of the Clark County Nevada Genealogical Society (CCNGS).

Kharisma Rodriguez is a self-taught Genetic Genealogist and currently serves as a Forensic Genetic Genealogist at Othram Inc., the only lab in the world dedicated exclusively to genetic genealogy. She also owns Red String Research where she specializes in resolving adoption cases, NPEs, surprise parentage discoveries, brick walls, and other complex genealogical mysteries. In addition to her professional work, she is the Vice President of Operations for the Clark County Nevada Genealogical Society (CCNGS). Kharisma is passionate about lifelong learning, and continuously expands her knowledge of genetic genealogy, research techniques, and record searching.

The following topics are included in the presentation:

- The difference between a genealogical and genetic family tree
- Key considerations for selecting a DNA testing company
- A comparison of the top five DNA testing companies
- Free and low-cost resources
- And much more!

The NSDAR Francisco Garces chapter and the NSSAR Signers Chapter will cohost the annual **George Washington's Birthday dinner** at 5pm on Saturday, February 15, 2025, at the Las Vegas National Golf Club facility on 1911 E. Desert Inn Road.

The featured speaker will be Signers chapter member Stan Vaughan. Stan has continued to have a passion for history ever since he was the Woodmen of the World's 1971 Most Outstanding History student in the USA. He has been a Commissioned Kentucky Colonel since 1989 when he received a commission for his authorship of a legislative bill which protected Kentucky's 14 remaining historical covered bridges. Here in Nevada, he was President of the Kyle Ranch Historical Preservation Society. Stan is featured on a Burundi 2011 postage stamp commemorating his being a Mensa High IQ Society member and WCCF World Correspondence Chess Champion. He was 1986 World Trivial Pursuit Champion which was held that year in Johannesburg South Africa. Stan was also the 1980 gold medalist in chess representing the USA in the International Student Games. A noted Cryptanalyst, he is noted for having solved the Shugborough Hall Monument Cipher, the Westminster Abby Shakespeare Monument cipher, and the infamous Zodiac 340 cipher. He has written several books primarily about history and chess and is currently President of the Admiral John Paul Jones Russian American Friendship Society.





Founded in 1895, the [National Society of the Children of the American Revolution](#), is the oldest patriotic organization for youth in our country. Membership is open to descendants of patriots of the American Revolution.

Any boy or girl under the age of twenty-one is eligible for membership in the National Society of the Children of the American Revolution who is lineally descended from a man or woman who, with unfailing loyalty, rendered material aid to the cause of American Independence as a soldier, sailor, civil officer, or recognized patriot in one of the several Colonies or States, or of the United States, provided that the applicant is personally acceptable to the Society.

Meetings and activities are planned for all ages with special consideration given to younger members. Members gain invaluable leadership experience in conducting meetings, following parliamentary procedures and standard protocol, serving as delegates, and speaking before groups at local, state, and national conferences. The responsibility and privilege of selecting officers helps members gain an understanding of the democratic process.

Las Vegas is home to the local John Ashley Society, Childrens of the American Revolution.

[www.nevadacar.org/nevada-state-society](http://www.nevadacar.org/nevada-state-society)

## A Patriot's Life: The Revolutionary War in South Carolina

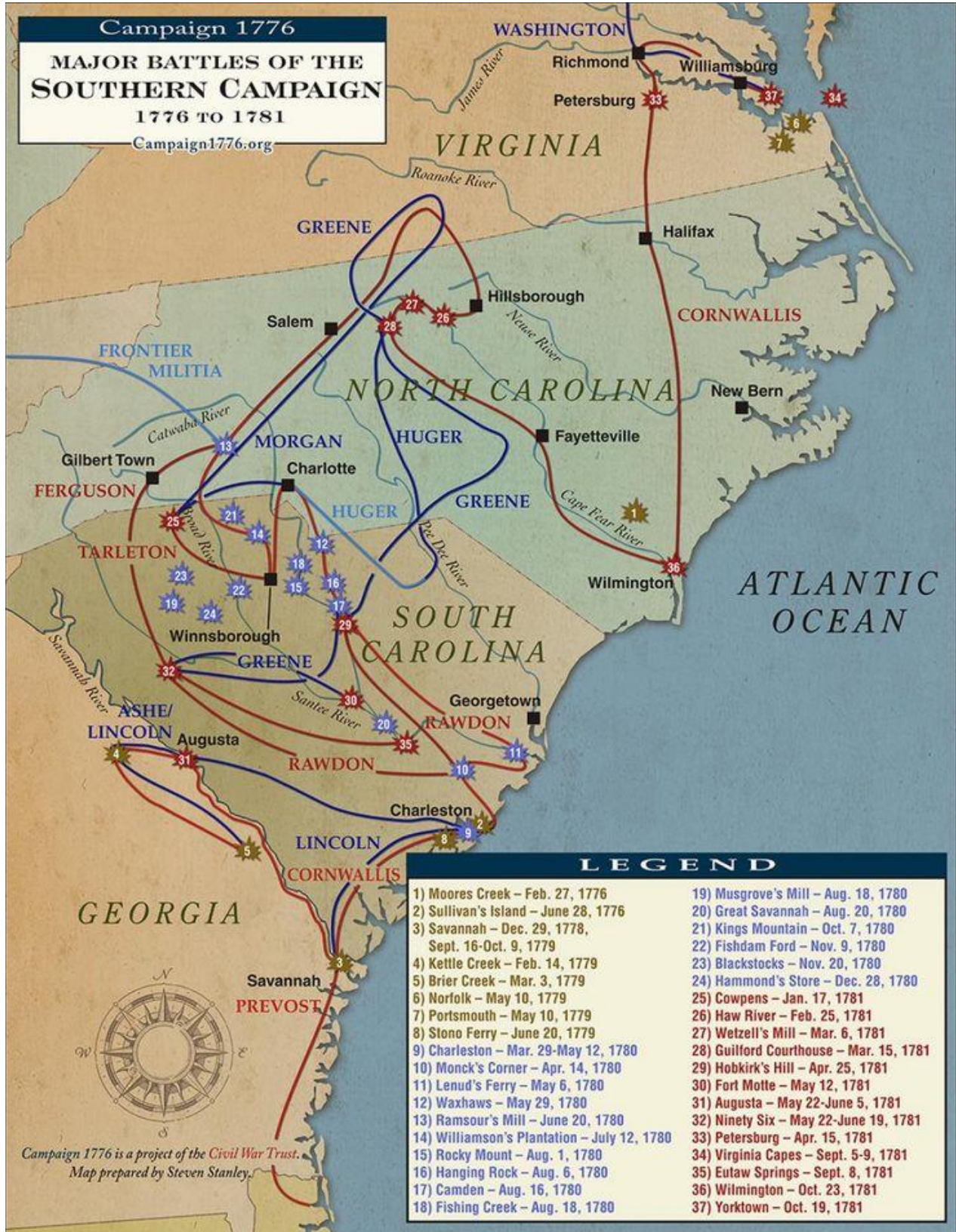
Part 1: While the Continental Army fought off the British from 1775-1777, British generals made a new plan to win the war in 1778. Fighting the Americans in the North for three years, the British won nearly all the battles, so they weren't losing the war. But that didn't mean they were winning it either. To win, the British would have to really defeat the Continental Army. Every time the British had a chance to do that, General Washington and his army managed to slip away.

British generals considered shifting the battle to the South. That would provide several advantages. Most of the Continental Army was in the North. They believed that there were many Loyalists in the South who would help with food and supplies. The British would then have the Continental Army squeezed between their forces in the South and the North. The plan was successful for a while. The British navy brought soldiers from their base in New York to Savannah, Georgia. The soldiers quickly captured the city. Within a year, they controlled the whole state of Georgia. Soon after, the British took Charleston, South Carolina.

Patriot militias were established in South Carolina in February 1775. By November, they were organized as regiments. By March 1778, the South Carolina Assembly resolved to consolidate all the regiments into four brigades, each led by a Brigadier General. Most of the Brigadier Generals became POWs due to the fall of Charleston in 1780. The brigades were disbanded, and militias were left to their own devices to reorganize and recruit new men.

From there, British troops successfully went on to control a large part of the South. However, the British were still not able to crush their enemy. American military commanders in the South followed George Washington's strategy. Small battles, yes. Big battles, no. Southerners knew their land better than the British. They set up secret bases in the swamps of South Carolina. They came out of the swamps to attack small groups of British soldiers. Then, as suddenly as they had appeared, they were gone. This kind of hit-and-run fighting was known as guerrilla warfare. A general named Francis Marion was so successful at it that he became known as the Swamp Fox. The British armies won many small battles, but they could never catch up to the American forces to defeat them in a big one. In time, the Americans began to win their share of the battles.

The American Revolution produced many heroes, such as George Washington. Most of the heroes, though, were ordinary people. Their names are not written in the history books. They were the Minutemen on Lexington Green. They were the men who dashed out of their swamp hideouts to strike at the British army. When the war was over, people asked, "How could the American colonies have won a war against one of the greatest military powers in the world?" The answer was not difficult to find. The Revolutionary War was won because ordinary Americans refused to lose it.





Part 2: One such hero in South Carolina was Sgt. **Elijah Hollis**. Sgt. Hollis is the patriot ancestor of a new member of the Signers Chapter, Chuck Arnold.

The Hollis family established their initial colonial roots in Virginia when Elijah's grandfather, John Hollis, emigrated to the colonies from England. Born in Surrey, England, John traveled to Fairfax County, Virginia by 1720, where he married and started a family.

John and his wife Esther Canterbury could be considered the origins of the largest southern Hollis clan that settled in NC, SC, GA, AL, MS, and LA in the 1700s and 1800s. John leased 205 acres of land that was part of the Ravensworth estate in Virginia, where he farmed tobacco and apples. He also operated an "Ordinary" on the estate (sort of a tavern/hotel/livery all in one). Ravensworth was about 10 miles southwest of Washington. Decades later three of John's sons moved down from Virginia and settled about 400 miles south near Wateree Creek in Fairfield County, South Carolina; one being Elijah's father, Moses.

The extended Hollis family were firmly established in Fairfield County when the Revolutionary War began in 1775. By 1778, when the British commenced their Southern Campaign, Elijah's father had already participated in numerous skirmishes against Loyalist forces with South Carolina militia units, some led by Capt. Francis Marion. Elijah's brother, John Hollis, became a Lieutenant and later Captain of a Fairfield Militia Regiment, which Elijah joined by 1781.

Elijah married Aley Knighton in 1780 and his first of 9 children (all male) was born in 1781. After the war, the family raised their sons to adulthood. Most of the sons and their families moved on to different counties of Alabama after 1830.

Elijah died in Fairfield, South Carolina in 1832, at the age of 68.

Sources:

<https://animalia-life.club/qa/pictures/battlefields-in-south-carolina>

<https://Hollishistory.blogspot.com>

<https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~Gowenrf/Genealogy/Gowenms/102.htm>

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