



PATRIOT



President's Message

If you were unable to attend the April breakfast meeting, our newest member, Eli Magaña gave an excellent presentation on Spain's contribution to the American colonists in their battle for independence.

Please remember to attend our May meeting on the 3rd as we are voting on the changes to our bylaws to define the area served by our chapter, as announced at last month's meeting.

Our Registrar Gary Watson is doing an excellent job, and we have four more new members ready for induction.

The America250 committee is progressing well on our project to install a plaque at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, in Boulder City, NV honoring America's first veterans.

Of course, as it warms up and we approach summer please contact Don Hotchkiss and sign up to help with our annual fireworks booth fundraiser project.

I would like to thank our members who volunteered to make presentations for our local JROTC and ROTC programs, Donald Hotchkiss, Jeff Gutting, Al Conant, Gary Watson, John Thalgott, Patrick Wright, Tim Hagan, Bob Reed, Anthony Connolly, and Jim Odell.

David Bentley, President, Signers Chapter, Nevada State Society, Sons of the American Revolution

Upcoming Calendar of Events

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

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

Saturday, June 26 – Friday, July 4, Fireworks Booth Fundraiser

Saturday, August 2, 9am, Breakfast meeting, Egg Works Restaurant, Summerlin

Saturday, Sept. 6, 9am, Breakfast meeting, Eggs Works Restaurant, Summerlin

Saturday, Sept. 13, 5pm, Constitution Day Dinner, Las Vegas National Golf Club

April 2025 Events

On Saturday, April 5th, new Signers Chapter compatriot Eli Magaña was inducted at the chapter's breakfast meeting in Summerlin. Eli was approved for membership into the Sons of the American Revolution in recognition of the contributions of his patriot ancestor, José Vicente Félix, a Spanish soldier stationed in California during the American War of Independence. After induction Eli described the extent to which Spain provided valuable financial and military support, helping the United States defeat the British armies in America and win its independence. Félix also participated in the Anza Expedition, which aimed to roll back British expansion into the Pacific Ocean and the west coast of America. Later in the late 1780s, Félix became the first mayor of Los Angeles, and was awarded by the King of Spain significant properties in the Los Angeles area around what is now Griffith Park and the Los Félix area of greater Hollywood.



A Special Award by the Nevada State Society SAR

A Daughters of Liberty Medal and certificate was presented to Dr. Linda Miller during a luncheon of the Las Vegas Colony of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (Mayflower Society) by Nevada Society SAR, Past State President Tim Hagan. Dr. Miller has excelled in the qualities that the Sons of the American Revolution promotes - honoring our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our Country. She was awarded the medal in appreciation for her devotion, efforts, and assistance.



Dr. Miller is active in several lineage societies and has supported the SAR with our dinners, appearing in colonial dress. She recommended and helped arrange the guest speaker for last year's Annual Meeting banquet. She has given several interpretive talks as Helen Stewart (a Southern NV Pioneer) and has been involved in various historical projects. The Daughters of Liberty Medal is the SAR's highest lady's medal. The medal depicts Sybil Ludington riding a galloping horse in her heroic ride to warn of approaching British forces in Connecticut.

April & May 2025 JROTC/ROTC Awards

The JROTC/ROTC Committee Chair, David Bentley scheduled event dates for the 2025 awards programs at high schools and UNLV. Chapter members volunteered to present an award to a cadet at these events. There were 28 schools involved in the Las Vegas valley. Each school program is associated with one of the branches of the United States military: Space Force, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Army and Coast Guard.

Every year, these programs offer an intensive way for youth to make substantial improvements in academic achievement, physical fitness, as well as developing leadership skills, learning what it means to be a good citizen, developing good character and preparing for higher education or military service.

Not only that, but they participate in extra curricular activities such as drill competitions, color guard units, rifle teams, and academic clubs in the areas of STEM and aviation/drone programs.

Each year, the commanders and their teams recognize cadets and their achievements by selecting them for different types of awards. That is where our chapter's compatriots fulfill a key role, presenting an SAR award to a deserving cadet.



May 2025 Planned Events

The **May 3rd Breakfast meeting** will be held at 9am at the Egg Works Restaurant in Summerlin. The **featured speaker will be chapter compatriot Don Hotchkiss, Jr.**, who will describe the battles of Lexington and Concord that occurred on Apr 19, 1775 (250 years ago). Part of his presentation will include a video that shows an animated map of the battle in order to highlight how events unfolded that day, which is considered to be the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

Don Hotchkiss, BS, MS, PE, was born into an Army family and grew up in California, Germany, Arizona, and Turkey. He graduated High School in AZ and went to the University of Arizona in Tucson on a ROTC scholarship where he graduated with a BS in Civil Engineering and was a Distinguished Military Graduate. He was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army Corps of Engineers and was one of 50 ROTC cadets to receive a Regular Army Commission. His first assignment was in Germany with a Construction Battalion. While in Germany he received his Master's Degree from Boston University (Heidelberg Campus) in Construction Management. On return to the states, he was assigned to President Reagan's Star Wars project (High Energy Laser Project) at White Sands Missile Range. While there he obtained his Professional Engineer license in Arizona. He was then assigned to a Combat Engineer Battalion in Hawaii where his daughter Abigail was born while stationed at Schofield Barracks. He was then reassigned to Altus AFB Oklahoma as a Resident Engineer where his daughter Hannah was born.

Upon leaving the military, Don and his family moved to Arizona where he served as the Environmental Engineer for the US Army Information Systems Command at Fort Huachuca. He and his family then moved to Las Vegas in 1990 where he served under Governor Miller as the Deputy Manager of the State Public Works Board. Don was in charge of all State Building Construction contracts, and at that time obtained his Nevada Civil Engineering License. In 1993 Don got into the Contracting business as a VP with Carson Construction. In 1997 he joined G. C. Wallace as their VP of their Construction Management Division. In 2006 he opened his own Civil Engineering business and operated it until 2010. In 2016 Don started to work at the Nevada National Security Site as a Nuclear Systems Engineer with the JASPER project, which is part of the National Nuclear Stockpile Stewardship Program that tests components of nuclear weapons. There he was the principal engineer with the Water/Wastewater Division at the NNSS until 2024 when he took a retirement. He is now the Engineering Manager with Aztech Materials testing.

Don's daughters were both married in 2016. Abby and Evan Wilson now live in Nashville, Tennessee with their twins August and Matilda and Ulysses who is 3. Hannah and her husband Brok Watts live in Las Vegas with their daughter Hazel and are expecting a son in June.

Don is involved with a number of historical and veterans' organizations. He has served as the Departmental Graves Registration Officer for the Sons of Union Veterans and was Camp Commander of the SUV Camp which received the Abraham Lincoln award for the Most Outstanding Camp in the US in 2008. He is a past commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp in Las Vegas and is also past President of the Friends of the Fort, a 501 c3 nonprofit that operates to benefit the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Park and is a past President of the Las Vegas Civil War Round Table. Don is a Commissioner for the City of Las Vegas and serves on the Historic Preservation Commission and is the Past President of the Signers Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and Past State Society President. Don can trace his ancestry back to 13 Revolutionary War patriots and veterans.

His interests include fundraising, public speaking, gardening, woodworking, and family history research. He has written two informative books on his Revolutionary War and Civil War family history. Don volunteers to teach US History in CCSD schools and has put on overnight Military History immersion programs in support of local JROTC programs.

Don was recently recognized and awarded the SAR Patriot Medal for his long, faithful, outstanding, and distinguished service at the state and chapter level.



Supporting the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home

The Signers Chapter initiated a program this year to support the Southern Nevada Veterans Home in Boulder City, and its approximately 165 residents, of which about a third are women veterans or spouses of veterans. The support entails collecting hygiene product donations and delivering them periodically based on a sufficient volume of items. Hygiene products for residents are deemed a needed type of donation by organizations in town. The following items are deemed very helpful to residents:

Donation examples (full size): body wash, hair shampoo, foot powder, body powder, Sensodyne toothpaste and toothbrushes, dental floss, mouthwash, hairbrushes and combs, women's scarves, deodorant, lip balm, lip sticks, disposable razors, skin creams, eye drops, Wet Wipes, eye glass lens cleaners and breath mints. Additional types of donations, such as small, knitted blankets and socks are also welcome.

The Veterans Committee will manage donation collections at breakfast meetings and dinner events. Chapter members are welcome to accompany the committee in delivering the donations to the Veterans Home, which will be announced when the volume of donations accumulates to an appropriate amount.

Please bring hygiene products, such as listed above to our breakfast meetings in May and June so we can arrange a delivery sometime before July 4th, 2025. The exact delivery date will be announced well in advance in case anyone wishes to join us in making the delivery.



A Patriot's Story

People like John Potter could seemingly do everything. As if they were born with a “how to” manual stored in their brain. John of North Brookfield, Massachusetts was just such a person. Blacksmith, cabinetmaker, carpenter, clockmaker, cooper, silversmith, soldier, surveyor, and a prolific pro-creator, a father of fifteen. John was an 18th century renaissance man. Born September 12, 1746, in the northeastern Massachusetts town of Ipswich, John was married twice and died at the age of 72, on October 20, 1818, in North Brookfield, Massachusetts, where he lies at rest today.

John Potter's father Daniel Potter (1712-1779) and grandfather, John Potter (1680-1724) have unknown burial locations, but his great-grandfather John Potter (1652-1718) and great-great-grandfather Anthony Potter (1627-1690) have verified memorials in Find A Grave. Anthony Potter is a recognized founder by The Order of the Founders and Patriots of America (OFPA).

During the Revolutionary War, John Potter served as a Lieutenant and Paymaster in Col. Ezra Wood's 3rd Worcester County Regiment of Massachusetts Militia, 1778-1779. In 1777, 1 Lt. Potter served in Col. James E. Converse's 4th Worcester County Regiment of Massachusetts Militia. Col. Converse's regiment were assigned to the defense of lines at and about Boston. His regiment was also one of the militia regiments which marched to New York under Maj. Gen. Lincoln.

During the 1778-1779 period, John kept a diary of his war service, which was preserved by a family member, transcribed, and is now stored at the Vermont Historical Society. The “Diary of Capt. John Potter, Revolutionary War, 1778-1779” shows various New York encampments, including the towns of Peekskill, White Plains, Fredericksburg, and Pawling, in addition to a variety of towns in both Litchfield and Fairfield counties, Connecticut. One entry in John's diary mentions, “..my Boy left me and Sett out for home... Capt Green & his Compy...”, which can only mean a chaperoned visit during an encampment from his eldest son at the time, who was Daniel Potter (1769–1839).

John married Lydia Cutting in April 1768 in North Brookfield, MA. John next married Rhoda Burnap on April 30, 1782, in North Brookfield, MA. Between them, they had 15 children, many living well into adulthood. Some became notable citizens and a few served in the military.

One of John and Lydia's sons was John Potter, born in 1777, who served in the War of 1812. He participated in the First Battle of Sacket's Harbor, northern New York, 19 July 1812. While serving with Capt. Elisha Camp's company, the unit was on duty that morning when five British ships were spotted attempting to enter the harbor. Through the efforts of the whole fort, including Camp's company, the British were expelled from the harbor, and the first battle of the War of 1812 was a victory for the United States.

The old Potter House, which John Potter built himself over ten years (before, during and after the Revolutionary War) stood at the corner of Ward and South Main Streets in North Brookfield. Later, John Potter's son, F.A. Potter, ran a shop attached to the house. In 1929, the "Potter Mansion", which had passed out of the Potter family's hands in 1920, was moved in 1929 40 miles away to the Storowton Village in West Springfield, Massachusetts. The Potter Mansion, an epic Colonial American home, originally housed a family of 15 children by his two wives, and several Potter generations thereafter. Storowton Village is a living history museum located on the Eastern States Exposition. It is now open to the public for tours.

Here are some photos of the John Potter House.



Patriot John Potter is the patriot ancestor of new chapter member David Gibbs.

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