



HARRIS FERRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Pennsylvania Society Sons of The American Revolution

Chapter Officers 2026

Winter 2026

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Chaplain

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Harris Ferry Chapter SAR

harrisferrysar.org

Pennsylvania Society SAR

passar.org

National Society SAR

sar.org

President's Report

Hello Fellow Compatriots!

It is that time again to start the year off fresh and stock the calendar with various things to do! Before we get into any of that, I would like to thank everyone for a great first year as Chapter President. When I joined the SAR, I had hoped to earn this title at some point but not this soon. In any case, being in this position gave me prime opportunity to get the Chapter and Board together to kick off a whole slew of rewarding and beneficial events like grave markings or cemetery projects. It has also given me the opportunity to meet many new faces, within and beyond the SAR, and establish some very firm relationships. A deep and sincere thank you to you all, and I look forward to another successful year as your Chapter President.

To recap a few things from recent months; the grave marking for our first President John Mcl. Smith went well. I was hoping to see a few more compatriots and even members of the Robert H. Hoke American Legion attend as he was the Legion's first Commander, but at least those who attended seemed to enjoy the event. Our Annual Meeting went incredibly well at the Civic Club of Harrisburg, which was hosted by a close friend of mine and catered by Mission BBQ. The execution of having Mission supply the food went flawlessly and is something I believe we will pursue for future events.

In regard to the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, I would like to bring attention to something I have put a lot of time and effort into. I am on the SAR's planning committee for the celebration in Philadelphia, where I am not only the Secretary but have helped design and develop the official logo and most of the merchandise. Once the merchandise website is active, I would encourage you all to visit the shop. I will be reaching out via email soon with an order form that you can communicate items you would like to purchase with me and then I can order for everyone in mass. I am trying to do this for each state society as well, which will help with the fulfillment of merchandise for the entire SAR. Items for sale include a challenge coin, cockade, fundraising medal, and lapel pin.

I anticipate this to be a very busy year for myself and the SAR, and I intend to try to bring Harris Ferry Chapter into as much as feasibly possible. If you have any ideas or questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you all again, please stop by at our next event, and be sure to keep in contact with me. A goal of mine is to see our chapter become one of the more active chapters in the state society, and having you all by my side is how we can make that goal a reality.

Respectfully Yours,

Jacob R. Lemon, President, Harris Ferry Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution



*John McIlhenny Smith
SAR National #: 58876
Colonel, Veteran of WWI & WWII*

Harris Ferry Chapter came to be in 1940, when a group of gentlemen approached the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution requesting a charter to form a new chapter after the Harrisburg Chapter was closed due to inactivity. The charter was granted, with John McIlhenny Smith elected as its first President. Fast forward to 2025, Harris Ferry has finally returned the favor to its first president by honoring him with a Compatriot Grave Marking Ceremony at Grantville Cemetery, located at St. John's United Methodist Church in Grantville, PA.

Smith was a veteran a World War One, achieving the rank of Captain in the Quartermaster Corps. During World War II, he served as director and deputy director of the Pennsylvania Selective Service. In the National Guard, he was awarded the rank of Colonel. Outside of the military, he was an accomplished attorney and senior partner of Nauman, Smith, Shissler and Hall law firm. He married Mabel I. Stoner and had one daughter, Anne. John was also the first commander of the Robert H. Hoke Post 272 American Legion in Linglestown.

The ceremony also honored Smith's patriot ancestor Peter Ensminger. Ensminger served in Captain Baltzer Orth's 1st Company of the 2nd Battalion of the Lancaster County Militia between 1781-1782 and Captain John Orth's 7th Company of the 2nd Battalion of the Lancaster County Militia in 1783.

The chapter also recognized all members both past and present of the United States Armed Forces in commemoration of Veterans Day. Many of the attendees stepped forward for recognition of their service.

In commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States, it felt appropriate to mention that Smith, due to his service to the country and the society, as well as his Patriot ancestor's service and of those in attendance, helped to defend and keep this nation strong to the point of celebrating such a momentous occasion.



Harris Ferry and Washingtonburg Chapters at the grave of Colonel John McIlhenny Smith at Grantville Cemetery

President Lemon conducted the ceremony and led the Color Guard, which consisted of Washingtonburg compatriots. The ceremony was well received and was also accompanied by Marine Corps League member Tony on the Bugle to play Taps. Carnations and flowers beautifully decorated Smith's grave following the ceremony.

*Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (3) Jacob R. Lemon, John R. Boyarski, Gary L. Coburn
Medal Opportunities: 250th Anniversary Medal, Color Guard, Compatriot Grave Marking Medal*

Interested in Honoring a Compatriot?

Compatriot Grave Marking Ceremonies give the society an incredible opportunity to give back to our members one last time. The bronze markers are available in a stake or lug style and are of remarkable quality. If you wish to honor a member with a marker, please reach out to President Lemon to help coordinate the ceremony, color guard, and the purchase of the marker.



Three Law Enforcement Commendation Awards Presented – November 18, 2025



On November 18, 2025, President Lemon attended the Highspire Borough Council Meeting to present three officers with the SAR Law Enforcement Commendation Medal. Officer Robert Schmidt of the Highspire Police Department, Officer Scott Schaeffer of the Steelton Police Department, and Officer Tyler Snyder of the Steelton Police Department were all awarded for their noble actions on and off duty. The three officers, having responded to a domestic violence case, found an injured puppy at the residence. The three officers paid out of their own pockets to cover the veterinarian bills. Lemon presented all three officers with framed awards for their commitment not only to their duties but to their devotion to the public.



Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (1) Jacob R. Lemon

Wreaths Across America 2026 – December 13, 2025

Harris Ferry Chapter held another very successful Wreaths Across America campaign at Paxton Presbyterian Churchyard in Harrisburg, PA. Orchestrated by Curtis Aumiller, Registrar and Genealogist and Committee Chairman, the ceremony was well attended with about sixty participants from various scout groups and the general public. There was heavy emphasis on the 250th anniversary next year during the ceremony and how important this occasion is when honoring the Patriots who fought for this achievement. Ceremonial wreaths were placed, Taps was played by Marine Corps League member Tony, and then all veterans in the cemetery received a wreath following this.

New exciting developments are underway at the cemetery, with the first being the privilege and honor of adding a few more wreaths to the total count for next year. Fortunately, extra wreaths were packed in the boxes from WAA HQ and those recently deceased veterans received their wreaths. Second, there were several moments where Harris Ferry compatriots educated some younger participants on some history, including the backstory of John Harris Jr., who is buried at the cemetery and is our chapter's namesake. Third, Paxton Presbyterian Churchyard has agreed to allow Harris Ferry the opportunity to hold a cemetery preservation project on the headstones. This project will likely occur in the summer or fall of 2026.

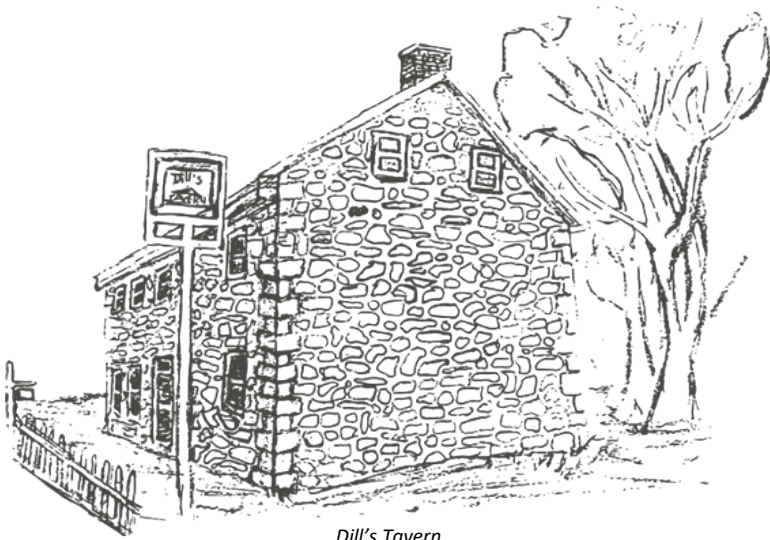


Curtis Aumiller
Registrar and Genealogist



Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (4) Jacob R. Lemon, Daniel G. Lute, John R. Boyarski, Curtis Aumiller
Medal Opportunities: 250th Anniversary Medal

Washingtonburg's Holiday Dinner – December 14, 2025



Dill's Tavern

*Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (1) Jacob R. Lemon
Medal Opportunities: Color Guard*

President Lemon attended Washingtonburg Chapter's Holiday Dinner held at the historic Dill's Tavern in Dillsburg, PA. The entire evening was period-themed, down to the clothing, food and punch that were served, and atmosphere. Dill's Tavern is lit by candle and heated by fireplaces and woodstoves.

Lemon assisted in the color guard, provided the toast to His Excellency George Washington, helped set up and tear down, and provided direction to staff and guests throughout the entire evening.

President Lemon would like to extend his deepest appreciation to Washingtonburg for the invitation.

America250PA Bells Across PA Cumberland County – December 19, 2025



Cumberland County's America250PA Bells Across America bell in front of the Cumberland County Court House and Veterans Memorial Courtyard

President Lemon was invited by Washingtonburg to attend the unveiling of the Cumberland County bell as part of the America250PA's program Bells Across America. These bells are handmade and painted by local artists, depicting historically relevant scenes for where the bell was created for. The bell had images of Benjamin Franklin, Jim Thorpe, and the Molly Pitcher statue in Carlisle. Washingtonburg's Steve Troutman commanded Dale Leppard and Jacob Lemon for the presentation of colors inside the courthouse.

Dauphin County also has a bell with Milton Hershey on the front that is on display inside Chocolateworld in Hershey.

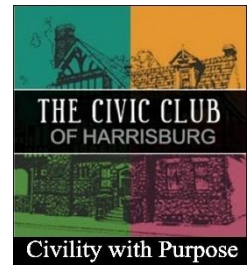


*Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (1) Jacob R. Lemon
Medal Opportunities: 250th Anniversary Medal, Color Guard*



Harris Ferry Chapter SAR 2026 Annual Meeting – January 10, 2026

January 10, 2026 marked the 86th Annual Meeting of the Harris Ferry Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution! The meeting was held at the Civic Club of Harrisburg in Harrisburg, PA. The meeting was extremely productive, with the board discussing various plans for 2026, a review of some financial options going forward, and scheduled events for 2026. President Lemon held a brief presentation on the Committee of Five, which was the group of men that met to draft the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia in the days leading up to July 4th. PASSAR 1st Vice President Dale J. Leppard installed the officers via Zoom; the chapter was very appreciative of his willingness to still attend virtually. The meal was catered by Mission BBQ.



The following awards were presented: Ronald C. Coleman received the Chapter Meritorious Service Medal. Curtis Aumiller received the Bronze Liberty Medal, Bronze 250th Anniversary Medal, and the Chapter Roger Sherman Medal. Gary L. Coburn received the Bronze 250th Anniversary Medal and the Chapter Distinguished Service Medal. The Civic Club of Harrisburg was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation, with Secretary Assunta N. Moore accepting the award.

This will be President Lemon's second term as Chapter President, and he continues to be optimistic on the chapter's yearly initiatives and goals. He and the Board would like to extend deep appreciation to Assunta N. Moore and the Civic Club of Harrisburg for allowing this meeting to be held at this historic venue.



2026 Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Officers



Lemon Awarding Aumiller the Bronze Liberty Medal

2026 Harris Ferry Chapter Board of Management

Jacob R. Lemon President
 Daniel G. Lute 1st Vice President
 John R. Boyarski 2nd Vice President
 Gary L. Coburn Secretary
 Curtis Aumiller Registrar and Genealogist
 Curtis Amuller Treasurer
 Ronald C. Coleman Chaplain

2026 Harris Ferry Chapter Chairmen of Committees

Flag Committee Jacob R. Lemon
 Medals and Awards Committee Gary L. Coburn
 Patriot Records Committee Jacob R. Lemon
 Americanism and Education Committee Jacob R. Lemon
 Eagle Scout/JROTC/Sea Cadets Committee Daniel G. Lute
 DAR and CAR Liaison Committee Jacob R. Lemon
 Veterans Committee Gary L. Coburn
 Wreaths Across America Committee Curtis Aumiller
 Communications Committee Jacob R. Lemon

Harris Ferry Chapter SAR Attendees: (7) Jacob R. Lemon, Daniel G. Lute, John R. Boyarski, Gary L. Coburn, Curtis Aumiller, Craig P. Constable, Larry Snyder

Updates from the Society

This section of the Harris Ferry Chapter Newsletter is to provide updates from the Pennsylvania Society or the National Society. This would include any changes that may affect compatriots, upcoming events from the state or neighboring chapters, or just general correspondence that compatriots may have missed.

PASSAR Website Update

PASSAR.org is getting a complete overhaul; this will come with a new visual experience, log in credentials, upload capability, sharable chapter events, and updated files and dates. The expected launch date of the website is mid to late March 2026.

PASSAR Leadership Changes

Due to long-term vacancies in various PASSAR committees, several new chairmen have been selected to revitalize the initiatives of their respective committees. The new chairmen are:

Education Committee – Edward Kopsick (Continental Congress)
Posters and Brochures Committee – Jacob R. Lemon (Harris Ferry)
Rumbaugh Oration Committee – Peter Reinhart (Governor Joseph Hiester)
Website and Online Presence Committee – Chris Helm (Governor Joseph Hiester)

Lemon has already developed new materials to distribute to chapters and schools, pending approval from PASSAR. It is encouraged to volunteer in these efforts, such as helping to judge entries or visit schools to present chapter awards to winners.

There was also a need for a cosigner on checks and accounts for the Pennsylvania Society, so Lemon was elected as the Interim-Assistant Treasurer to PASSAR Treasurer Michael Seibert until the Annual Meeting in May.

SAR Independence Day 250 Celebration and Merchandise

The SAR Independence Day 250 Planning Committee has been developing a complete guide of events for the celebration in Philadelphia in 2026. The anticipated schedule is as follows:

Thursday, July 2, 2026

Public Reading of the Declaration, Tour of Independence Hall, Evening Reception at Victory Brewing Company

Friday, July 3, 2026

Salute to Independence Parade, “Ring It On” Public Event, SAR Gala Dinner at the Philadelphia Marriott

Saturday, July 4, 2026

SAR 250 Celebration Public Event, Bench Dedication, and Various Local Events

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Grave Marking for 5 Signers of the Declaration, Tour of Museum of the American Revolution, Social Dinner at Glory Beer Bar

Merchandise has also been in development, which can be purchased via the registration link if you plan to attend, or via the separate merch website that will launch soon. Once the website is activated, the QR Code on this page can be scanned to link to the merch site. Lemon is the overall Committee Secretary and the Vice Chair of the Merchandise Subcommittee. He has developed the official logo and most of the merchandise for sale. More information: <https://harrisferrysar.org/event/250th-anniversary-of-the-declaration-of-independence/>.

Hotel Registration



Event Registration



Merchandise





Support the C.A.R.!

The John Harris Jr. Society of the Children of the American Revolution now has its official flag!

The CAR is very rewarding in assisting young members in leadership experience and participating in various historical elements.

If you have children, grandchildren, etc. that you would like to see join the SAR or DAR one day, joining the CAR is a great steppingstone in getting them experience in our organizations. Please reach out for more details.

Jacob R. Lemon
Senior Vice President, John Harris Jr. Society

Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SAR Pledge

We, descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution who, by their sacrifices, established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and our Constitutional Republic, and solemnly pledge ourselves to defend them against every foe.

SAR Recessional

Until we meet again, let us remember our obligations to our forefathers who gave us our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.

Active Membership

55 Compatriots

Welcome New Members

Samuel K Fisher
Dwight D. Varnes

Harris Ferry Newsletter

Winter (Nov, Dec, Jan) – Feb 15

Spring (Feb, Mar, Apr) – May 15

Summer (May, Jun, Jul) – Aug 15

Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct) – Nov 15

SAR Newsletter and Magazine Archives

[Harris Ferry Newsletter](#) ↗

[PASSAR Minutemen](#) ↗

[SAR Magazine](#) ↗

Atlantic Middle States

Association SAR

amssar.org

Harrisburg Chapter NSDAR

harrisburgdar.org

Pennsylvania Society DAR

pssdar.org

National Society DAR

dar.org

Pennsylvania Society CAR

pennscar.org

National Society CAR

nscar.org

SAR Store

store.sar.org

Media Editor (Website, Facebook, & Newsletter)

President Jacob R. Lemon

Issued February 15, 2026

Calendar of Events

SPRING 2026

Feb 21 – Washington's Birthday w/ Harrisburg Chapter, NSDAR

- 11:00 am, American Legion Post 594, 137 E. High Street, Middletown, PA 17057. Harris Ferry hosts this year.

Mar 20-21 – Pennsylvania C.A.R. 2026 State Conference

- Two-day event, various sessions and events. Registration: <https://harrisferrysar.org/event/pennsylvania-c-a-r-2026-state-conference/>.

Mar ? – HFSAR BOM Meeting

- TBD date, time, and location.

Apr 11 – America250 PA Celebration w/ Hampden Township Veterans Recognition Committee

- 2:00 pm, Hampden Township Veterans Park, 4345 Marketplace Way, Enola, PA 17025.

Apr 19 – PSATS 2026 Annual Educational Conference

- More details to come. PASSAR is holding color guard activities, and there may be table set up for promotion.

SPRING 2026

May 1-2 – PASSAR 2026 Spring BOM & Annual Meeting hosted by Washingtonburg Chapter SAR

- Fri May 1 – Evening Social. Sat May 2 – BOM Meeting. Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center, 1150 Camp Hill Bypass, Camp Hill, PA 17011. Registration: <https://harrisferrysar.org/event/passar-2026-spring-bom-annual-meeting/>.

May 3 – Patriot Grave Marking at David's Community Bible Church w/ Fort Halifax Chapter SAR

- TBD time, David's Church Cemetery, 1072 State Route 25, Millersburg, PA 17061.

May ? – HFSAR BOM Meeting

- TBD date, time, and location.

May 30 – Patriot Grave Marking at Shoop's Cemetery w/ Harrisburg Chapter, NSDAR

- TBD time, Shoop's Cemetery, 4332 Lexington Street, Harrisburg, PA 17109.

Jun 13 – Patriot Grave Marking at Union Deposit Cemetery w/ South Hanover Township Historical Society

- TBD time. Union Deposit Cemetery, 100 W Hershey Rd., Hummelstown, PA 17036.

Jul 2-5 – 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence

- Various events spanning several days in Philadelphia, PA. Hosted by the National Society SAR.

Registration: <https://harrisferrysar.org/event/250th-anniversary-of-the-declaration-of-independence/>.

2026 OUTLOOK

Grave Markings – Harris Ferry is planning several Patriot Grave Markings, some with Pomeroy Foundation marker dedications. The unveiling of the Pomeroy markers will likely be accompanied with individual SAR markers or bronze plaques commemorating those interred. All grave markings will be 250th-oriented events. Those without scheduled dates are:

- **Spring Creek Cemetery**, 335 East Areba Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033. Nine Patriots.
- **Nafzger Family Cemetery**, 2 Naftzinger Rd, Annville, PA 17003. Three Patriots. One Patriot is confirmed buried here, but a plaque will be proposed for him and his two brothers.

Cemetery Projects – Harris Ferry is planning at least two Cemetery Preservation Projects at various cemeteries in and around Dauphin County. Some of the *proposed* cemeteries include:

- **Paxton Presbyterian Churchyard**, 3500 Sharon Street, Harrisburg, PA 17111.
- **Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Cemetery**, 444 Silver Spring Rd, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050. This would be a partnered project with Washingtonburg Chapter.

Events involving any sort of cemetery work will primarily be scheduled during late spring to mid fall.

There are more events recognized by the National Society SAR that are not listed that would fulfil Color Guard , 250th Anniversary, and other award requirements but are outside Pennsylvania. Check chapter and state websites for more info.