



# The Catawba Coalition



A monthly Newsletter for  
The Catawba Valley Chapter of  
The Sons of the American Revolution



## President's Report

Compatriots and Friends

We have just completed our Virtual Commemoration of the 240th Anniversary of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill. It was amazing, more so because I and several members of our chapter and chapters across the nation had no idea what ZOOM was 90 days ago. I have never given up, (Thank you Winston Churchill) and failure is not an option, so we learned what we could do, what was possible, and we were able to create a highly enjoyable, ground breaking and interesting Virtual National Event. I could never have done this on my own and had no idea how to make it happen. This took the concerted efforts of Jack Bowman, Bryant Trombly, Roy Lightfoot, Steven McKee, Darrell Harkey, Will Barton, Rob Buff, Thunder Over Carolina and many many more. Thank you so very much. As a result of the good response with ZOOM, our Chapter will resume meetings on our regular schedule Live and with Zoom, beginning on 18 July 2020 at noon at Granny's Country Kitchen, 2145 N Center St, Hickory NC and on line at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81270942383>

One may order lunch at 11:15 and the meeting begins at Noon. See you there, we have a lot to do.

*Ben Setser*

Chapter President



יהי אור

[Lennon\\_0102@yahoo.com](mailto:Lennon_0102@yahoo.com)



This is Chapter Vice President John Jay Cline. As a new Chapter Officer I thought it would be nice to have a monthly column that gives a few lesser known American Revolution facts, so I will be offering quotes from our Founding Fathers that are as pertinent today as they were 250 years ago.

Thomas Jefferson in some cases could be called a Prophet. Here is one of his famous quotes.

*"When we get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, we shall become as corrupt as Europe."* Makes you think doesn't it?

\*Did you know---From 1774-1781 the highest authority of the American Rebel Forces was the **Continental Congress of the United Colonies** (later United States). Consisting of 56 delegates from the 13 British Colonies, it was an assembly founded to independently debate the colonies' relationship with Britain and help coordinate the pursuit of their collective interest. The Congress' first meeting occurred on 5 September 1774 in Philadelphia. Two years later it would ratify the Declaration of Independence.

*John Jay Cline*

Chapter Vice President

Please e-mail me with any tidbits that you would like to enlighten us with or any Patriot you would like us to Spotlight at

[cline@charter.net](mailto:cline@charter.net)

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& Registrar Jack  
Bowman



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A Monthly Newsletter of the Catawba Valley  
Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution



## *The Patriot Beverage*

Tea was the beverage of choice of the British. Before the Revolution everyone in Great Britain and their Colonies drank tea, everyone from the King down to the poorest of the poor drank tea. The first thing an Englishman will ask is "How about a nice cup of tea?" "Aww, you fell and broke your arm. How 'bout a cup of tea?" So exactly how did a British colony in North American give up its tea for something else?

Well, the simple answer is that those governing the American colonies decided to do things the wrong way. There was already some discontent in America, so the British decided to stir things up a little bit more and impose a Stamp Tax. In 1765 the Stamp Act imposed a tax on every legal document

and on tea. Even after the Americans erupted with their "No Taxation without Representation" slogan and the Stamp Act was repealed in 1766, most of the taxes were eliminated except for, you guessed it, the tax on tea. The Boston and Edenton Tea Parties were only the start. Soon the colonists were boycotting all British imported goods, especially tea.

In a letter to his wife Abigail, John Adams implied that only traitors to the cause of Liberty would drink tea. Soon the coffee house was the place where the intellectuals gathered to discuss their plans for the revolution. Some might even say that coffee fueled the Revolution.

*Jack Bowman*

NC SSAR Secretary  
[jacl9431@yahoo.com](mailto:jacl9431@yahoo.com)

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Chapter President Ben Setser and Vice President John Jay Cline attended the Board Meeting of Thunder Over Carolina Inc in Lincolnton on 2 July 2020. The meeting was a basic debriefing of what worked and what did not with our joint, Virtual Ramsour's Mill Commemoration this past June 20th. President Setser presented Chairman Rob Buff with a Certificate of Appreciation and affirms our continued support of Thunder Over Carolina.

## **A Call to Action**

With the COVID 19 restrictions, the Old Soldiers Reunion festivities in Downtown Newton have been greatly altered. Rather than the weeklong event, it has been truncated to a few hours. Six score and 10 years ago, a few 'Old Soldiers' were picnicking on the front lawn of the Catawba County Court House. The idea came up among them that they should march around the courthouse in solidarity to all soldiers. They formed up, some on crutches, others with empty coat sleeves, and marched once around Court Square. This event began The Old Soldiers Reunion Parade and it has gone on without an interruption and we want to for 130 more years. American Legion Post 544 has acquired the authorization to perform the same march and has ask Catawba Valley Chapter and all Compatriots to March in this Veterans Parade and I have agreed. This takes place, **20 August at 3:00 pm, Court Square, Newton NC.** Afterward we will gather at Blue Moon Tavern for food and drinks. We need to have YOU there and in uniform.





Some screen shots from the live virtual event. Left, Darrell Harkey; Right, A call to arms

Our 2020 Ramsour's Mill National Event made history and blazed a trail for other Chapters and organizations to use modern technology to conduct events and meetings via the internet when 'Live and in Person' is impossible due to whatever reason. Under the current COVID 19 restrictions, large gatherings of people are forbidden, but with the help, knowledge and determination of many people, we were able to create a Virtual 240<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill Commemoration and I thank everyone for their help and dedication.

To understand the impact of this event one need only look at the statistics. On the day of the event there were 203 ZOOM attendees with 12 states represented. We also had a total of 66 wreaths laid, 50 from SAR, 9 from DAR and 7 from CAR. From FaceBook Live that day there were 1193 reactions, 665 views, 526 engagements and 12 shares. The FaceBook stats seem to continue to grow, As of 2 July it has increased to 3067 reacted, 1080 engagements, more than 1700 views and 30 shares and it continues to grow. We are in the process of attempting to edit the raw video from the FaceBook Live into a usable format and getting release forms signed for those under the age of 18 to upload to YouTube for future viewing, but all of this takes time. Finding someone with the knowledge to do this is a bit of an obstacle, but we keep asking the question "Is it possible to ---?" and often we find that it is.

Our Chapter President and Vice President had the pleasure to attend the Board Meeting on July 2 with Thunder Over Carolina who graciously provided us with three segments of video in our event. While there, we presented TOC Inc director Rob Buff with a Certificate of Appreciation for all they have done with the Ramsour's Mill Event in this and past years and assuring them of our continuing support.

The Catawba Valley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution finds it imperative to thank many people for making this Virtual Event a reality. Please forgive me if you are not mentioned, but there are too many to call them all. Our State Officers, Jacob Forney Chapter DAR, Thunder Over Carolina, Jack Bowman, Bryant Trombly, Steven McKee, Rob Buff, Darrell Harkey, Barbara Stevens, and Roy Lightfoot just to name a few, thank you everyone so very much.

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<https://www.ncssar.org/chapters/catawba-valley/>



Junior members from across the nation who participated



The Catawba Coalition welcomes submissions, comments and/or suggestions. Please send them to [lennon\\_0102@yahoo.com](mailto:lennon_0102@yahoo.com)



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## LOCAL PATRIOT MAJOR GEORGE WILFONG BIOGRAPHY

Major George Wilfong was referred to as "Adjutant of the Regiment" in the Revolutionary War pension application of Sarah Beekman, wife of Colonel Christopher Beekman. In Rowan County NC, there were two regiments and two sets of field officers of the second Regiment, (up the Catawba River) Christopher Beekman was Col, Charles McDowell, Lieutenant Colonel, Hugh Brevard and George Wilfong, Majors. In 1766 George Wilfong was listed as a Lt. in the NC Militia and was appointed Major with the 2nd Reg. Rowan Co by the 1776 Provincial Congress and was associated with Maj. Hugh Brevard in Col William Beekman's regiment. After the King's Mountain engagement, James Coyle, and John Brown, two notorious Tory plunderers passed through Lincoln Co and robbed the house of Major George Wilfong of everything they could carry away and then made off with a couple of his horses, using the clothesline for halters. Major Wilfong and party followed the culprits, overtaking them near Wilkesboro, recovering the horses, but the ruffians made good their escape. Major Wilfong left the halters made of his clothesline with Col Benjamin Cleveland, with which to hang the rascals, should they ever be captured. Not long after, as they were returning to Ninety Six SC, they were captured by some of Cleveland's scouts and brought to Wilkesboro and Col. Cleveland had them hung with Wilfong's clothesline on an oak tree just north of the courthouse in Wilkesboro. George acquired much land after the war, and was heavily involved in civic duties, appearing often at the sessions of the Lincoln Co court. In addition, in 1769 he was named guardian for the minor children of his brother, Jacob. When Burke Co. was broken off from Rowan, circa 1777, several commissions were appointed. George Wilfong was appointed to a commission to choose a site to erect a courthouse, prison, "and stocks". Another reference is made as follows, concerning the erection of a courthouse and person's proximity to the site 'at Edward Smith's:' "George Wilfong lived in the eastern part of the county (east of present Catawba County)". Evidently there was a "deadlock" as to where it should be. Another notation states that "the movement of the courthouse from the plantation of Edward Smith to a location more than 20 miles to the west had far-reaching repercussions. Of the commissioners whom the legislature had appointed to select a site, only Hugh Brevard, George Wilfong, and possibly John Connelly would have been averse to the action. But Wilfong and Brevard were the representatives of the residents of the area which is present-day Catawba County. Their dissatisfaction probably was the determining factor which led to the transfer of this area to Lincoln County. After all, the Lincoln County seat (Lincolnton) chosen in 1784 was much more accessible to these citizens than the site on Hunting Creek." George and his son John both fought at King's Mountain and he was noted for his bravery. Major George Wilfong died 3 Nov 1818 and is buried at Old St Paul's Lutheran Church in Newton NC.

### *Upcoming SAR events*

Pending resumption of public gatherings

- Jul 11-15** 130th Annual SAR Congress –Richmond, VA
- Aug 15** 250th Anniversary of the Tryon Resolves
- Aug 20** Old Soldiers Reunion Newton NC, Marching  
once around the Old Court House
- Aug 22** NC BOM
- Sep 24-26** NSSAR Leadership
- Oct 6** South Atlantic District Meeting
- Oct 7** 240th Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain



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**Our Regular Bimonthly Chapter Meetings will resume Live and by way of ZOOM Beginning 18 July 2020 at 12:00 Noon. On line at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81270942383>. And live at Granny's Country Kitchen in Hickory NC. One may order lunch at 11:45.**

**Please! The only way that we are able print copies of our Newsletter for events, meetings and public gatherings is with donations for advertisements. We are a 501-C-3. Please help us all you can. Contact our Chapter President for donations and add space. Thank you so much!**

[lennon\\_0102@yahoo.com](mailto:lennon_0102@yahoo.com)