

NATIONAL SOCIETY SONS of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

WELCOME

Congratulations on becoming a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. It has taken someone much time and effort to assemble all the necessary proofs for your application. The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide a general understanding of the organization. If you haven't read the pamphlet SAR WHATS you should do so. If you wish to learn more about the SAR, purchase a copy of the SAR history from the Sons of the American Revolution: 1000 South Fourth Street; Louisville, KY 40203-3292.

HISTORY

After the Civil War and with the approach of the Centennial of the Declaration of Independence a patriotic fervor developed throughout the country. There was also a recognition that the personal connection with the Patriots of the Revolution was being lost. Not only were the Patriots gone, but many of their sons and daughters were also departing this life. Because of this a number of groups were organized in various states to honor the Patriots and to perpetuate the memory of their participation in the War of Independence. By April 1889 there were thirteen of these Revolutionary War Societies in existence.

One of these organizations was the *Society of the Sons of the Revolutionary Sires* organized in San Francisco, California in 1875. Another of these organizations was the *Sons of the Revolution* organized in 1883 with chapters in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. In April 1889 the New Jersey *Sons of the Revolution* invited delegates from the thirteen Revolutionary Societies to meet at Fraunces Tavern in New York City to discuss the organization of a national society. You will remember this was where George Washington bid farewell to his officers in the Continental Army.

Twenty delegates representing the thirteen societies accepted the invitation. A motion was made to adopt the constitution of the New York Society of the *Sons of the Revolution* with other state societies as "auxiliary branches." This motion failed. After much discussion the assembly decided to organize the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR) with each state society (state abbreviation SSAR) a member; equal and independent. This motion was approved. At that time some state societies admitted men and women while others admitted only men. After much discussion and in the interest of harmonizing differences, it was decided the SAR would be an organization of "Sons" only. However, some state societies of the *Sons of the Revolution* (SR) declined to join the group and each organization has continued its independent course.

The first NSSAR National Congress was held in Louisville, Kentucky, in May 1890. Within a few years the ladies organized the *Daughters of the American Revolution* and used the SAR procedures and application papers until they developed their own.

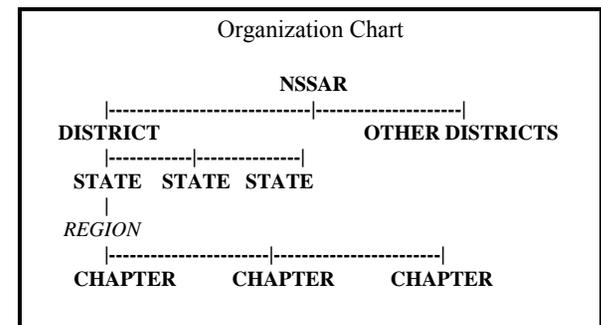
Initially the NSSAR headquarters were in Washington, DC, but in 1980 the headquarters moved to Louisville, Kentucky. Today it occupies a beautiful building which includes national headquarters offices, meeting rooms, a library and a museum. Also in the headquarters is a Merchandise Department where individual items such as the member's medal, caps, ties and T-shirts; promotional literature including the National Society Handbook and general items such as medals and certificates are sold. Use the order form in *The SAR Magazine* or the order form obtained from the NSSAR when placing an order. Members are always welcome and anyone passing through Louisville should visit the headquarters.

The SAR Congress passed a resolution recommending that the Revolutionary War records stored in boxes and barrels in the State Department be transferred to a fire proof storage area, be indexed and be made available to the public. The US Congress enacted a law directing this to be done. In 1913 the National Archives was established. SAR members can take pride in the fact that our organization played an instrumental role in the establishment of the National Archives.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Sons of the American Revolution was first incorporated in January 1890 in the State of Connecticut. It was chartered by the United States Congress in June 1906. It has an approved Charter and By-laws. National officers are titled General officers - such as President General - and are elected annually by delegates from the state societies at the annual SAR Congress. The number of delegates from each state is determined by the number of active members. An Executive Committee partially appointed by the President General and elected by the members assist the President General in day-to-day operations. An Executive Director heads a staff administering the national organization. The governing body is known as the Board of Trustees. Each State Society elects Trustees and Alternate Trustees, the number is determined by its strength. The Board of Trustees meets twice a year at Louisville to conduct business. The annual SAR Congresses are held in Louisville every five years and are moved around the country the other four years. The President General appoints a number of committees to study various matters and reports to the Board of Trustees and at the annual Congress. Each summer the names and addresses of all national, district, state and chapter officers and national committees are published in *The SAR Magazine*.

The National Society (NSSAR) establishes national dues and approves programs to be implemented by the state societies. The National Society is the final approving authority for membership and keeps original membership records in a fireproof, humidity-controlled space. Membership records are microfilmed and many are available on a CD. The National Society publishes *The SAR Magazine* four times a year.



The United States is divided into thirteen Districts each generally consisting of three or four adjoining states. There are also two Districts for SAR Societies outside the United States. Each District is governed by a Vice President General elected annually by the district and confirmed at the Annual Congress. In general no District has a budget, so the district activities and command are limited.

As provided in the Constitution, each state (North and South Dakota are combined) has a State Society equal and independent to each other. Some states are further divided into regions for administrative purposes. There are also societies in France, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland. Some states have a paid employee. Each State Society has an Annual Meeting of all members and a Board of Managers selected from the membership. The Board meets as directed by the Society constitution. Each State Society performs administrative matters, keeps a copy of the original application, establishes and collects state dues and collects the national dues. Some State Societies collect chapter dues and some leave this to the chapter. The State Society implements programs approved by the National Society and publishes a newsletter.

The chapter is the basic unit of the organization. It has a constitution and by-laws, the officers are elected by the chapter members, a Board of Managers - selected according to the chapter by-laws - performs the administrative duties, establishes chapter dues and most important, implements national and state programs. Each chapter determines its procedures and selects the programs it implements. Chapters vary greatly depending on their location and the interest of members. Some chapters meet monthly while others less often. Some chapters implement a number of programs and some have only a few

NSSAR PROGRAMS

"By their works you shall know them" is certainly true of the Sons of the American Revolution. In carrying out its objectives - declared to be patriotic, historical and educational - it has selected a number of programs. Some of these are:

AMERICANISM to promote principles of freedom and liberty for all Americans.

EAGLE SCOUT to supervise and promote an Eagle Scout Awards program.

EDUCATION to develop ideas for achievement of historical education

FLAG to encourage patriotic respect for the Flag of the United States and promote Flag Day programs.

HISTORIC SITES AND CELEBRATIONS to preserve, mark and interpret historic sites and buildings and promote their recognition by appropriate celebrations.

HISTORICAL ORATION to conduct an annual Rumbaugh Orations Contest at the National Congress.

ESSAY CONTEST to conduct an annual Knight Essay Contest with recognition at the National Congress.

LAW ENFORCEMENT to promote the recognition of persons who have distinguished themselves in the preservation of law and order.

LINEAGE RESEARCH WORKSHOPS to promote family research by conducting courses on genealogical procedures.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR GRAVES to register final resting places of Patriotic forefathers and publish listing of Patriotic Graves.

PRESERVE UNITED STATES HISTORY to develop and implement a program to fight misleading US History in school textbooks.

VETERANS to encourage recognition of and support to veterans in VA hospitals

We welcome you as a member in the Sons of the American Revolution. We urge you to take an active part in the activities of the Society. Your Chapter; State Society and National Society want you to enjoy your membership. Contact any SAR member for additional information.

Written by Compatriot Charles B. Schweizer of Illinois

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This pamphlet has been prepared in order to provide a general understanding to new members of the

**National Society
Sons of the American Revolution**

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<http://www.sar.org>