



THE LONG KNIFE

Quarterly Newsletter of the Genl George Rogers Clark Chapter
Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution

"Serving Madison County"

Volume XIX, Number 2

Page 1

September 2009



Photo by Bruce Cullen—Inserted courtesy Lola DeGroff

GGRCC Color Guard members ready for Flag Day Celebration. From left, Donald E. Campbell, M. Joseph Hill and A. Robert Shaak. In background, Lloyd E. Schwartz, who gave the invocation. The ceremony featured the chapter's 16 historic flags.

Historic Banners Are Featured in GGRCC Flag Day Ceremony

Replica flags of the Revolutionary and early U.S. eras were featured in GGRCC's annual Flag Day Celebration June 14 at Hartford's Seventh Street City Park.

The flags included such emblems as George Rogers Clark's banner flown by the force that braved winter floods to capture Vincennes, and George Washington's personal flag.

During the ceremony, with the assistance of Boy Scouts and historical reenactors, each of the flags was advanced past the reviewing stand where its significance was described by GGRCC President Gaylord J. (Jim) James. **(continued on page 2)**

The Long Knife is a quarterly publication of the Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter, Illinois Society, Sons of the American Revolution.
Charles E. Burgess, Editor
Col. Charles B. Schweizer, Associate Editor
Send announcements, items of interest and member news to:
Editor, *The Long Knife*
6264 Lanterman Drive
Bethalto IL 62010
Phone: (618) 377-6010
Email: cbur305325@aol.com
Luncheon meetings held the third Wednesday monthly at Edwardsville Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Rd. (IL Rt. 143)

Historic Flags at Annual Ceremony (Continued from Page 1)

The flags are part of the collection originally gathered by the late Ralph Long, a GGRCC member, and now maintained by immediate past President Timothy S. Raymer, who coordinated the ceremony.

“As an educational tool the Gen. George Rogers Clark Chapter offers the ‘Presentation of the Historic Flag Collection’ to school assemblies, public events and organizational meetings within Madison County,” Raymer said.

Also on the program was a demonstration of folding the flag, with the meaning of each of the 13 folds explained. This was performed by three members of A Few Good Marines of Madison County. They were Bernie Marshall, Dave Smith and Joe Hughes, who returned to his hometown of Godfrey in February after serving a year in Iraq.

The National Anthem was sung by Di Rollo of East Alton. Invocation was by GGRCC chaplain Lloyd E. Schwarz. Patriotic expressions were led by GGRCC officers Alan Y. Harrison, James A. DeGroff Jr. and his wife Lola DeGroff, regent of the Silver Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Members of the Fort Hill Society (Bond County) and Edwardsville Boy Scout Troop 1031, led by Scoutmaster Michael Mulligan, assisted at the program, along with Park Manager Donald Jacoby and Lt. John Griggs of the Hartford Police Department.

Madison Co. Deputy Receives GGRCC Law Enforcement Award

Madison County Sheriff’s Deputy Kyle R. Doolen, who pursued a stolen vehicle despite shots striking his squad car, is the 2009 Law Enforcement Award recipient from the Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution.

The annual award scroll was presented to Doolen June 17 at a meeting of the Board of Supervisors at the Courthouse Administration Building. Chairperson for the award event was James A. DeGroff Jr.

Later, Doolen was further recognized with the Law Enforcement Award of the Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution.

Doolen continued a chase on July 2, 2008, despite being injured by bullet fragments. His efforts resulted in the arrest of three suspects from the pursued vehicle, said Madison County Sheriff Robert J. Hertz.

The trio, accused of car thefts, burglary and attempted armed robbery in Ohio, had eluded an arrest attempt in Effingham County before the pursuit by Deputy Doolen began on Interstate 70 near Highland, Madison County.

During the chase, the convertible top of the pursued car was lowered and one suspect fired five shots with an assault rifle at the Doolen vehicle. Two rounds went through the windshield, two through the light bar and one stuck a headlight.

The suspects abandoned the car in Collinsville. Doolen and other officers searched the area, eventually arresting all three.

Doolen, on the Madison County Sheriff’s force for five years, is 29 and resides in Roxana with his wife and son.

French Courted George Rogers Clark for Failed Conquest of West

The exploits of George Rogers Clark, the source of our chapter's name, in capturing the Illinois country early in the Revolutionary War earned him lasting fame and gratitude from the fledgling American government.

Unfortunately, this recognition did not include reimbursing him to any extent for his expenses in financing the campaigns and his later defense of the Kentucky frontier. Neither the Virginia nor the U.S. Congress found means to cover Clark's debts. His bitterness at this neglect festered in post-war years and prompted his proposal to become a French citizen and lead recovery of Louisiana Territory for France.

Clark was unable to settle his debts with his small income 1784-88 as superintendent-surveyor for land grants to Revolutionary veterans. For his services, Virginia had awarded Clark himself 150,000 acres of land, but he was forced by the pressure of creditors to assign most of it to relatives and compatriots.

"My country has proved notoriously ungrateful, for my Services, and so forgetful of those successful and almost unexampled enterprises which gave it the whole of its territory on this side of the great mountains . . . to have neglected me," Clark wrote in February 1793 to Edmond-Charles Genet, first ambassador of Revolutionary France to the new United States.

France, under the monarchy later overthrown by its own Revolution, had ceded Louisiana—New Orleans and vast territory west of the Mississippi—to Spain in 1763 as part of the settlement of the French and Indian War. Genet was sent to America by a Revolutionary government that hoped to regain control of the territory and its still predominant population of French extraction.

During the Revolution, Clark's relationship with the Spanish governing upper Louisiana from St. Louis had been good. Spain became an ally in wresting British control from the mid-continent. But later, like many American frontiersmen, his resentment grew at restrictions placed on Mississippi commerce by the Spanish authorities. Also, the Spanish turned back his attempt in 1788 to establish a colony in Missouri.

Learning of Genet's interest, Clark wrote to him in February 1793 that he could raise an army "of 1,500 brave men" to capture St. Louis and "the whole of Louisiana for France," and as others "flock to my standard," further capture New Orleans, Pensacola, "Santa Fe and the rest of New Mexico." For this campaign, "these are the men, who, with me, will instantly expatriate ourselves (as the Law directs) to become citizens of the French Republic—if my proposals shall have been approved of."

Genet appointed Clark "major general of the Armies of France and Commander-in-Chief of the French Revolutionary Legion on the Mississippi River." Clark began recruiting former comrades at arms, and spent \$4,680 for supplies pending expected financial support from France.

But failure of France to provide money and swift blocking of the plan by the highest American authorities prevented not only a Clark-led filibuster but also any disavowal of American citizenship.

For Genet had the brashness to outline his plans to U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who as a hard-pressed Virginia governor had provided some support to Clark's activities in the later years of the Revolution. Jefferson considered Genet's proposal a threat to the neutral status of relations between the U.S. and Spain. He immediately informed Spanish officials that full efforts were taking place to "restrain the citizens of the United States . . . by preventing in general their sharing in any hostility by land or sea against the subjects of Spain or its dominions."

Northwest Territory Gov. Arthur St. Clair, as ordered from President Washington, issued a proclamation "forbidding the citizens of the United States, North West of the Ohio, from engaging with certain French men in that expedition, or committing any other act which might involve the United States in a war with Spaniards."

In 1794 Genet was ousted as French ambassador at Washington's request. The last throes of the proposed conquest died when French officials ignored the funding claims by Clark. But as late as 1798 he refused U.S. government requests to give up the French appointment as a general.

More debt-ridden than before, he was reduced to operating a mill in Indiana as his drinking problem (which U.S. authorities had suspected since the early 1780's) increased. Another unfortunate association was his link with Vice President Aaron Burr when both were directors for an unsuccessful effort to build a canal around the Falls of OHIO. This was just before Burr went on trial for alleged treason.

In defense of Clark's questionable activities, it should be noted that his beliefs were shared by many in the frontier region. His later misfortunes have not dimmed the luster of his achievement of winning much of the Northwest Territory for the new United States.

Sources: *Encyclopedia of American Biography*; Wikipedia; F. R. Hall, "Genet's Western Intrigue," *JISHS* (1928).

GGRCC Members, Teacher Get Awards at Annual State Meeting

Members of GGRCC received a number of awards at the annual Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution-Board of Managers annual meeting in May.

The chapter received the USS Stark Memorial Award for service to veterans, and the Joel Willis Newsletter Award for quarterly publication of the newsletter *The Long Knife*. The chapter also received a Presidential Citation for perfect attendance at ILSSAR Board of Managers meetings during the previous years. Individual awards were a bronze medal to immediate Past

color guard activity; certificate of appreciation for noteworthy contributions to Harry K. Windland and M. Joseph Hill; bronze Good Citizenship Award to Donald E. Campbell; War Service Medal to James A. DeGross Jr.; and Service to Veterans Medal to Ronnie D. Hicks.

The American History Teacher Award, which is sponsored by GGRCC founder Charles B. Schweitzer and his wife Eleanor, was presented to Deanna Wiist, who teaches American studies and geography at Normal Community West High School. The honor includes a \$500 check.

Deanna Wiist, a graduate of Wheaton North High School, earned degrees at Western Illinois University-Macomb and Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. She has done graduate work at Illinois State University-Normal, Western Illinois University and Princeton University. Before teaching at Normal, she taught at Alton High School and Olympia High in Stanford, IL.

It was the second year for the American History Teacher Award, available to applicants statewide. GGRCC member Harry K. Windland is coordinator for the competition

GGRCC Birthdays

Harry K. Windland, Oct. 4
 Lloyd E. Schwartz, Oct. 15
 Alan Y. Harrison, Oct. 25
 Robert B. Lahlein, Oct. 25
 James J. Kessler Jr., Nov. 9
 Matthew R. Wallace, Nov. 9
 John B. Oleson, Dec. 7
 Lynn D. Hargus, Dec. 15
 John A. Fruit, Dec. 18
 Vernon S. Fox, Dec. 20

President Timothy S. Raymer for

The Long Knife, Quarterly Newsletter
 Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter
 of the Illinois Society,
 Sons of the American Revolution
 6264 Lanterman Dr., Bethalto, IL 62010