



The Iowa Compatriot

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution

Apr. 9, 2022

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

Joint Meeting of the IASSAR and the Iowa Society of the War of 1812

By Mike Rowley

The Iowa SAR and the Iowa Society of the War of 1812 held a joint meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at the Urbandale Public Library. Mike Rowley, Doug Frazer, Robert Niffenegger, Don Richardson, Tom Gaard, Joshua Dyer, Kevin Parmenter, and Don Corrigan were in attendance. Items that were discussed included:

- Four Veteran gravestones were installed in Woodland Cemetery.
- Two additional gravestones were delivered and are awaiting grave location marking by cemetery officials before being installed.
- Six new cemetery video biographies were recorded.
- The April/May issue of the *Our Iowa Magazine* contains an article about the Veteran grave project written by members Bob Niffenegger, Tim Rowley, and Mike Rowley.
- The District SAR Zoom meeting was held on March 29. IASSAR members Lance Ehmcke, George DeMoss, Dave Nation, Randy Lyon, Chris Moberg, and Mike Rowley were in attendance.
- Mike Rowley keeps the SAR Americanism score sheet up to date, including meeting attendance. Members should continue to send Mike any local activities in which they participate.
- Elections will take place at the Spring meeting. A member has come forward to become the new treasurer, but there are currently no members running for the positions of president and secretary. Please contact any of the current office holders if you are interested in serving in an elected position.
- The Iowa Genealogical Society contacted Kevin Parmenter about participating in a future open house or exhibit. More details to follow once they are known.
- The last Iowa SAR member directory was created in 2017. Work is underway to determine the feasibility of creating a new directory.
- A National Nurses Week ceremony, arranged by IASSAR member Mike Rowley, will take place at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 7 at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa. The gravestone of Civil War nurse Rosanna Rush Merrill was recently installed, and her service will be honored as part of the ceremony. Several Color Guards will be in attendance, including members from the Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota SAR Color Guards. Please invite interested individuals or groups to attend.
- The Jean Marie Cardinal memorial sign dedication ceremony, arranged by IASSAR member Randy Lyon, will take place at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 14 in Dubuque, Iowa. Everyone is encouraged to attend. After the event, a gathering is planned at the historic Star Brewery. If you are interested in participating with the Color Guard and do not have a uniform, please contact Mike Rowley.
- A repurposed gravestone will be used to honor Henrietta Wallace, an African American woman who is buried in Woodland Cemetery. She served as a cook for the 39th Iowa Regiment from 1862 to 1865 but was never granted a pension and was therefore never “officially” recognized as a member of the U.S. military. The required documentation to make her eligible for a stone from the Veterans Administration has not been located. Please consider funding this project. The cost will be approximately \$150.

- Minnesota sculptor and artist Ross Pollard has completed a bronze plaque honoring the 42 Veterans of the American Revolution who lived, died, and were buried in Iowa. Details to follow about when and where the plaque will be installed.
- A list of SAR nominees for SAR medals and certificates was submitted to current Secretary/Treasurer Doug Frazer for purchase and presentation at the Spring meeting. If you know of individuals that should be recognized, please forward their name and the suggested award to 2nd VP Don Corrigan or any members of the Board of Managers.
- The place, date, and time of the Spring meeting has yet to be determined. Please forward your suggestions to Kevin Parmenter.

The next joint meeting of the Iowa SAR and the Iowa Society of the War of 1812 will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, at the Urbandale Public Library. For more information about the meeting, please contact Doug Frazer. We look forward to seeing you there!

National Nurses Week Ceremony at Woodland Cemetery on May 7

By Mike Rowley

On Saturday, May 7, 2022, in honor of National Nurses Week, a ceremony will be held at 12:30 p.m. in Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa. The Daughters of the American Revolution, along with the Iowa Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and volunteers, will invite healthcare professionals and the public to join them as they honor Rosanna Rush Merrill.

Whenever one studies history, and in particular military history, it seems that volunteers appear in large numbers at the start of conflicts. That was also the case for young men at the start of the Civil War. While there were some groups that were not initially allowed to volunteer, or at least were strongly discouraged, these groups persisted and went on to make huge contributions and, in some cases, are still vastly underrepresented in the telling of history.

One of those groups were the women who served as Civil War nurses. Nearly as soon as volunteer soldiers marched off in record numbers, news of their casualties from both combat and disease would reach their families back home. This led many of the sisters, friends, mothers, and wives at the time to embark on a mission to reduce human suffering however and wherever they could. Many of these brave souls made the nearly unheard-of choice to go to the site of the suffering and serve as nurses during a time when nursing lacked a certain level of respect, status, and professionalism. Many of these noble women were not only discouraged but attempts were made to bar them from their mission.

Across Iowa, you can find the burial sites for Civil War nurses, including:

- Emily Flint Alder – Evergreen Cemetery in Clarion, Iowa
- Rebecca Adel Lanning Alexander – Oak Shade Cemetery in Marion, Iowa
- Dr. Esther Eliza Poore Allen – Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa
- Phebe H. Allen – Woodlawn Cemetery in Washington, Iowa
- Sarah Birdsell Beach – Allerton Cemetery in Allerton, Iowa
- Diana A. Belden – Oakland Cemetery in Iowa City, Iowa
- Arabella Letitia “Belle” Graham Coddington – Forest Home Cemetery in Mount Pleasant, Iowa
- Isabelle McCall Compton – Glendale Cemetery in Le Claire, Iowa
- Mary A. Douglas – Oxford Cemetery in Chariton, Iowa
- Kate M Thompson Duncan – Evergreen Cemetery in Emmetsburg, Iowa
- Elizabeth Fairfax – Springdale Cemetery in Clinton, Iowa
- Eliza Aldrich Fields – Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Council Bluffs, Iowa
- Virginia C. Fleenor – Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa
- Carrie Emma Witmer Giddings – Fairfax Cemetery in Fairfax, Iowa
- Catharine Githens – Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa
- Sarah Haines – Iowa Veterans Home Cemetery in Marshalltown, Iowa
- Mary Olivia Webber Hall – Palo Cemetery in Palo, Iowa
- Ann Eliza Peck Harlan – Forest Home Cemetery in Mount Pleasant, Iowa
- Nancy A. Lancaster – Fairview Cemetery in Cedar Falls, Iowa

- Rosina “Rosa” Zindle Hesse – Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk, Iowa
- Dr. Nancy Maria Hill – Linwood Cemetery in Dubuque, Iowa
- Mary E. Shelton Huston – Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington, Iowa
- Rebecca Jane Wroe Juhnes – West Union Cemetery in West Union, Iowa
- Georgeanna “Georgia” Wade McClellan – Oakland Cemetery in Denison, Iowa
- Rosanna Rush Merrill – Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa
- Harriet Frances Barnes Miller – Elmwood Saint Joseph Cemetery in Mason City, Iowa
- Rebecca Dow Otis – Oakland Cemetery in Manchester, Iowa
- Phoebe A. Summers Reddish – IOOF Cemetery in Indianola, Iowa
- Emma A. French Sackett – Winterset Cemetery in Winterset, Iowa
- Salome Rebecca Shepherdson – Glenwood Cemetery in Glenwood, Iowa
- Eunice Hitchcock Stebbins – Osage Cemetery in Osage, Iowa
- Sophia Elizabeth Battice Stephensen – Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery in Union Township, Iowa
- Rhoda Amanda Shelton Stewart – Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington, Iowa
- Emily Joy Whitaker – Burge Cemetery in New London, Iowa
- Cecilia Street White – Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington, Iowa
- Annie Wittenmyer* – Edgewood Cemetery in Pottstown, Pa.
- Mehitable E. "Auntie" Owen Woods – Old Fairfield Cemetery in Fairfield, Iowa

*Annie Wittenmyer helped create several Iowa orphanages, including the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home, which was later renamed the Annie Wittenmyer Home. She lived in Keokuk, Iowa for many years.

Emily Adler



Esther Allen



Alice Cheek



Kate Duncan



Mary Douglas



Elizabeth Fairfax



Ann Harlan



Emma French Sackett



When my fellow volunteers and I saw a 1905 newspaper article that spoke of “49 Civil War nurses receiving pensions out of the Des Moines Regional office,” we wondered who they were and how we could help honor their memory. The marking of the grave of Rosanna Rush Merrill 99 years after her death is just the beginning, a step toward paying tribute to the sacrifices of Iowa nurses, and your participation is greatly appreciated.

At this time in our history when the need for quality health care providers is recognized as vital. It would seem counterproductive to discourage those with ability to stay out of the field, yet 160 years ago during the Civil War, it was the reality for thousands of women in the nursing field. A conservative estimate is that 6,000 women served in hospitals, makeshift MASH-like units and even battlefields during that bloody conflict of 1861-1865, a time when casualties in a single day could number in the thousands.

For the past year, volunteers Tim Rowley of NCMIC Insurance, Bob Niffenegger, a retired Des Moines firefighter, Kristine Bartley, storyteller and videographer, and myself have been researching Civil War nurses in Iowa. When Kathy Bower, the current national secretary of the National Woman's Relief Corps, was contacted she responded that, "finding all the names of all the nurses will be a task that honestly may never be completed." In the late 1800s, Clara Barton herself stated that, "we may never know the number."

Not all the nurses were acknowledged even while they served, and some worked in such horrible conditions they did not live very long. Some received a small stipend and meager quarters while serving. None received pensions until after the successful passage of the Nurses' Pension Act of 1892. That means that any of the women who served and passed away prior to the passage of that Act are not well-documented.

Iowan Annie Wittenmyer, one of the Past National Presidents of the Women's Relief Corp, is credited with being the reason that the Nurse's Pension act of 1892 got passed. A tall woman, with a remarkable demeanor, she showed up at Congress and went to every legislator with stories of the difficulties of the nurses left with no pension or assistance. At one point it is said she nearly camped out in front of some offices, refusing to take no for an answer.

After seeing an article in a 1905 edition of the Leon (Iowa) Reporter that stated the Des Moines pension agency was then paying out pensions to Civil War nurses, volunteers sought to find the Iowa burial spots of as many Civil War nurses as possible. Today, 37 Civil War nurses who are buried in Iowa cemeteries have been found.



Rosanna Rush Merrill (1843-1923) was a Civil War nurse and descendant of Dr. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence. She married Henry Merrill in 1863. After 99 years, her grave will finally be marked.

Rosanna Rush was born in New Jersey in 1843. Her parents died before she was 18, and before her 20th birthday, she would begin serving as a Civil War nurse in Washington, D.C. She married Lt. Henry Merrill of 15th NJ Infantry in 1863 and welcomed her fifth child in Iowa in 1877. According to census records, Rosanna Rush Merrill was in Iowa at least until at least 1895. After living with her son for several years in South Dakota, she moved back to Iowa to live with her daughter until her death in 1923.

Rosanna was said to be a direct descendant of Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The unmarked grave of Rosanna Rush Merrill in Woodland Cemetery will have a granite stone provided by the Veterans Administration. Today she is remembered and, hopefully, with continued research and documentation by Iowa volunteers, many of her peers will also be remembered for their great sacrifices.

Jean Marie Cardinal Memorial Dedication in Dubuque on May 14

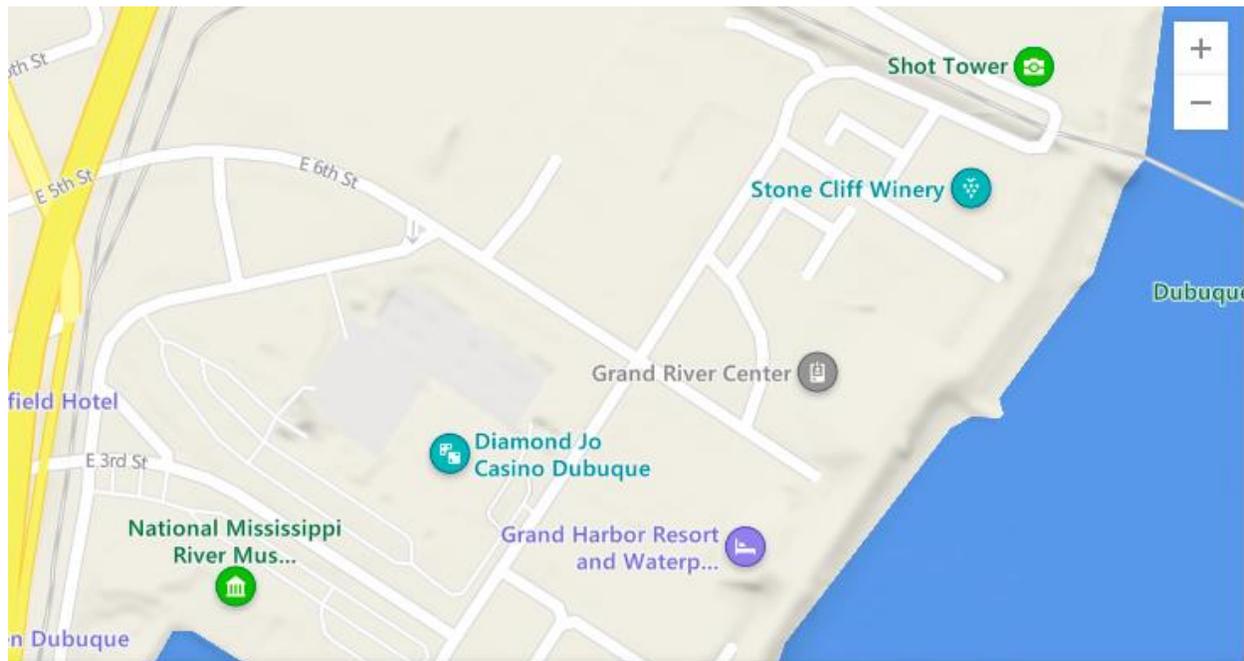
By Randy Lyon

Mark your calendars now to join in the celebration on May 14th at 11:30 a.m. in Dubuque. The Sons of the American Revolution will be dedicating a memorial to Jean Marie Cardinal.

Follow Highway 20 through Dubuque towards the Julien Dubuque bridge. Turn left on Locust Street and follow the signs towards the Ice Harbor/National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium. You will be on Third Street going east. Turn left on Bell Street and follow it towards the brewery complex on Star Brewery Drive. There is plenty of parking. **If rain threatens, we'll hold the ceremony inside the brewery complex.** You'll enjoy all the displays of Dubuque's history as a brewing capital of early America.

The memorial sign to Jean Marie Cardinal will be erected along the Ice Harbor riverwalk near the brewery and the shot tower shown on the following map.

Escaping British troops at Dubuque in the early spring of 1780, Cardinal undertook an epic journey by canoe to St. Louis in time to warn the residents of the British. Together with less than 300 residents, he then fought and died in a battle that crushed British plans in the Mississippi Valley. This was the western-most battle of the American Revolution. Ironically, his feat has been nearly forgotten—until now.



Following the dedication ceremony, join us at the Star Brewery—our alternative site for the ceremony if rain threatens. There will be refreshments and a chance to chat.



After parking your car, enter the Star Brewing Company Complex at this point.

Glance at the fabulous displays of the history of Star Brewery. You'll have plenty of time to look more closely after the program.



One of the rooms available for our use. Don't stop now, proceed through the doors toward the memorial dedication site along the riverwalk.



The tasting room is also for our use. Don't be in a hurry to leave. We'll have snacks and the tap room, which you walked through to get here, is open for business. Save room. Fine restaurants are just back over the bridge in downtown Dubuque. Catch a ride on the cable car—the steepest and shortest ride of its kind in the United States.

Enjoy your view of the mighty Mississippi from the top of the ride. The second house on your left once had a dining room table on tracks that could be filled with food in the kitchen and then electrically moved to the dining room. After dinner, the table was again carried by electricity back to the kitchen to be emptied and supplied with desserts for the guests who returned from the parlors—one for men and another for the ladies.

April Outstanding Citizenship Presentations in Dubuque, Iowa

By Randy Lyon



Don Koppes is one of those people deserving of a “world citizenship award.” A retired teacher from Dubuque Hempstead High School, Don immediately began offering his services to the Lantern Center, a local project providing instruction in English to those who had recently moved to the United States.

One of his first students had won a national lottery in Ethiopia to come to the United States. Don found the student to be friendly and a quick study of the language. In time, Don found that this student's home, Homacho, had no running water. All water had to be carried over a mile to the community by women carrying earthen jugs.

From this knowledge, Don started Friends of Homacho, a local effort of Dubuque residents, who raised money to construct the first pumping station and water system to the city. Speaking to local clubs and organizations,

Don built a financial base allowing the Friends to build a second pumping station at another well located further away. The organization branched off into providing concrete floors to the local schools.

Don has traveled annually to Homacho to observe the improvements and then return to Dubuque to foster direct world citizenship between many citizens of Dubuque and the world.

We had two additional Outstanding Citizenship presentations this month, but neither of these public people wished to be photographed. I've had other individuals want assurance that they would not be on Facebook.

Michael Van Milligen became the City Manager of Dubuque in 1993. In Dubuque, he served on the executive committee and board of directors of the Dubuque Racing Association and the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation. He was the 1997 campaign chairperson of the United Way and a board member of the Dubuque Youth Leadership Council, Grand Opera House Foundation, Dubuque Area Labor-Management Council, East Central Intergovernmental Association, Dubuque Metropolitan Transportation Study, and the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Van Milligen was a member of the Dubuque chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.); Community Based Task Force on Gangs, Drugs, and Youth Violence; Dubuque County Dairy Association; Governor's Strategic Planning Team for Strong Families; and the Dubuque Transportation System Innovation Zone Study Group.

In 2003, he was named the Outstanding Manager of the Year by the ICMA. In 2010 Van Milligen was named a National Academy of Public Administration Fellow by the Academy's board of directors. Nominated by three existing Fellows, the nominee had to be recommended for consideration by a nominating committee of Existing Fellows and then be elected by a vote of all Fellows. In 2010 there were approximately 700 NAPA Fellows with Van Milligen one of only 72 current or former city or county managers elected to the group.

Nancy Van Milligen came to Dubuque in 1993 when her husband Michael Van Milligen accepted the position of city manager. Her leadership roles have included helping to organize Every Child-Every Promise and work with the Tri-State Community Health Center, Iowa Empowerment Board, Mercy Health Center Board, Dubuque County Historical Society Board, and Dubuque Empowerment Board. She has served as vice president for institutional advancement at Clarke College, area administrator for the Iowa Citizens Foster Care Review Board, and chair of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service.

April Flag Certificate Presentations (and Three Potential New Members)

By Randy Lyon



Sonya Spivey met me at the door and was quite surprised for the certificate and honor. As we chatted, she asked how her husband and sons could join. I explained the procedure and said that I'd be glad to help get her started and that we had a great person at the state level that could help even more. In the midst of remodeling, she asked for a couple of days to find family information. The result—three new applications for membership in our Society.



Anita Arensdorf met me at the door and then quickly called her husband when I explained my mission. She was so proud of flying the flag that she asked it to be in the picture. It was then that I noticed the yellow and blue lights above their garage door. She explained it was a show of solidarity with Ukraine. This was a family who takes patriotism very seriously.



I was completely surprised by the reaction of Laura Leick. When I explained why I was presenting the flag certificate, she began to cry. As she dabbed her eyes, she explained that she wished I had written her father's and son's names on the certificate. Her father served in World War II and her son had just been promoted to Master Sergeant. She explained that the certificate really meant a lot to her. I was left with the knowledge that this was going to be displayed in a special place in her home.



Thomas Hillebrand had just finished his shift when I stopped by his home. The look of a long day disappeared quickly as I explained that we liked to see the American flag flying. He gave me a strong handshake and thanked me for our efforts.



I met Don Sloan's little dog first and he still wasn't too sure of me—leading to my wary eye on top of my obvious problems shooting “selfies.” Don seemed a bit questioning too, but he thanked me for my work and appreciated the certificate.

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*Let us remember our obligation to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution,
The Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.*