

ELP Chapter Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2020
Hobcaw Yacht Club Wando Room

Prior to the meeting we enjoyed refreshments out on the porch of the Wando Room. Social distancing and adherence to safety recommendations were followed. The hosts for the meeting were Mary Lucas and her daughter Caye Browder.

Chapter Regent Jill Templeton welcomed honored guests and members of the Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter. She stated how thrilled she was to be able to meet "in person" for today's special meeting. The meeting was recorded and will be available for virtual viewing for those who were not able to come. She explained the format for this meeting would be different than our regular meetings, in that our business session, including reports, old business and new business will be conducted electronically.

She reminded all to wear their masks and follow appropriate social distancing, unless speaking as part of the program.

Regent Jill Templeton called the ELP Chapter meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Chapter Chaplain Brenda Burch gave the invocation.

The opening exercises were led by Chapter Project Patriot Chair, Deedie Harrington Captain, Nurse Corp USN (retired). The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, The American's Creed, and the Pledge to the flag of South Carolina were recited.

Honorary Regent, Melissa Levesque introduced the honored guests:
Elizabeth Krueger Billham, Regent, South Carolina State Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mickey Sieracki, District VI Director, South Carolina State Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mary Whyte, Artist

Arnold Nemirow. Melissa congratulated Mary Whyte and Arnold on their upcoming nuptials.

Sharon Crawford, Agent/Manager for Mary Whyte.

Susan Marlowe, with the Patriot Art Foundation.

Jill Templeton thanked all members and guests who have served or are currently serving in our military. She recognized State Regent Libby Billham, ELP members Brenda Burch, and Deedie Harrington.

Jill Templeton told all that this year marks the 15th anniversary of the ELP Chapter. She introduced Second Vice Regent Claudia Farmer who shared the history of our chapter. Claudia began with sharing that the The Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter of the NSDAR was organized in Charleston SC. on October 8, 2005. Organizing Regent was Pharen Johnson. She then recognized two members in attendance who belonged to the organizing chapter, Nancy Davidonis, and Brenda Burch.

The following is a transcript of the chapter history that was shared by Second vice Regent Claudia Farmer.

In 2005, a group of 25 women came together to form the Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter NSDAR. Inspired by a love of country and service to their community, the founding members chose Mrs. Pinckney as their namesake for a simple reason. One of our founding members, Martha Erwin said, "She exemplified to me what the DAR stood for: God, Home, Country." Mrs. Pharen Johnson was the founding regent and within 3 years, the chapter had more than tripled

in size and was actively engaged in DAR activities and programming within the Charleston area. Today, our membership is thriving and we have 196 active members.

Throughout the chapter's 15-year history, the members have focused on the DAR mission of historic preservation, education and patriotism throughout their programming and chapter outreach. This past year was tremendously exciting working with Mary Whyte supporting the "We the People" project, as she gave a glimpse of the reality of the lives of veterans. Members offered hospitality to the veterans that came to Charleston last year and our chapter will always remember this as one of our involvements that raised us to a higher level of God, Home and Country. We have worked with many programs assisting veterans and members of our Armed Services, the Fisher House of Charleston, Vietnam Veteran's memorial celebrations; letters to active duty military; celebrating our patriotic heritage (Charleston's revolutionary war history, battlefields, and Children in the Classroom activities); honoring and preserving our past (colonial cemetery documentation and clean up) and volunteering and financially supporting Tamassee DAR School. We worked on the "Miss Eliza" Doll with our members making colonial outfits, monetary donations and assisting Linda Hawkins as needed. We loved "Miss Eliza" and lo and behold we won the "Miss Eliza" doll and her collection at Continental Congress. She is now deciding how she will continue her influence in South Carolina.

The pinnacle of the chapter's first decade was the conservation of Eliza Lucas Pinckney's 18th century salmon colored sack-back gown (robe a la francaise) with The Charleston Museum. This project was started during Gail Newton's term as Regent. This historic preservation project saved an important piece of colonial history and one of the few extant objects of Mrs. Pinckney owned by The Charleston Museum. With generous support from an NSDAR Special Project Grant in the amount of \$5,000 and the balance raised by our chapter, we were able to accomplish the \$23,000 budget. Jill Templeton, Honorary Regent Karen McCay and Laura Jenkins Thompson were instrumental in the fund raising. Laura Thompson designed a silk scarf, which shares the salmon color and pattern of the dress. These were sold with money going toward the project. The scarf won first place in the 2017 DAR American Heritage Committee Contest. Further an article recognizing the conservation project was published in the May/June 2017 edition of American Spirit magazine.

Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter members are active participants in SCAR and NSDAR programs and committees. Patricia Westgate Sayko is the State Corresponding Secretary and Brenda Todd Larsen is the SCDAR State Organizing Secretary. Patricia Westgate Sayko leads by also having a National appointment and is American 250! Membership Task Force-Special AIR 1 Team Leader. Our other members with State Committee Chairs and leadership:

SCDAR American Heritage Chair: Karen Keough McCay

SCDAR American Heritage Co-Chair Art/Sculpture: Laura Jenkins Thompson

SCDAR MAGAZINE CHAIR: Claudia Patterson Farmer

SCDAR DAR Museum Outreach: Gayle Goudy

SCDAR Lineage Research Co Chair: Ivy Flint Blake

SCDAR Public Relations & Media Chair: Melissa Cliett Levesque

SCDAR Public Relations & Media Vice Chair, Social Media: Jill Templeton

SCDAR Volunteer Information Specialist Chair: Jill Templeton

SCDAR Historic Preservation Grant, Vice Chair: Melissa Cliett Levesque

Claudia concluded: Our members have chosen to be active, entrepreneurial Daughters who enjoy using the talents and skill of our diverse membership to contribute to our community-local, state, and national- to further the DAR mission and live up to the standard of God, Home, & Country as exemplified by our namesake Eliza Lucas Pinckney.

Regent Templeton thanked Claudia. Next she called for the installation of the new chapter officers, who were appointed by the Chapter Regent Jill Templeton, and who will be voted upon at the next chapter business meeting.

Brenda Burch, Chapter Chaplain lead the installation of Chapter First Vice Regent, Laura Jenkins Thompson, Chapter Second Vice Regent, Claudia Patterson Farmer, and Chapter Recording Secretary, Lane Becken.

Regent Templeton congratulated the new officers and thanked them for their willingness to serve this chapter.

Regent Templeton asked First Vice Regent, Laura Thompson, to come forward to begin the special presentation. She introduced Laura, and explained that Laura is a recipient of the Order of the Palmetto, which is the highest honor given by the State of South Carolina, for her dedication to volunteerism. Additionally, Laura has been honored by receiving the prestigious DAR Women in the Arts Award for her lifelong contributions to the Arts. Laura Thompson then presented Mary Whyte with the DAR Women in the Arts Award. Laura said, It is with greatest pleasure to be able to honor Mary Whyte today. I have admired her fabulous paintings for many, many years. Mary is able to depict such deep depth of feeling in her watercolor and render portrait of real people like no other artist today. She is able to capture their souls. Laura explained the DAR Women in the Arts Award was created to recognize women who have exhibited excellence in their chosen field beyond mere mastery of technique. Innovative design work, featured exhibitions, publication, research and technique development are major components of the strict criteria for this prestigious award. Additionally, the recipient must have contributed to her artistic field in an original, outstanding manner. I am sure that it was not very hard for the DAR National Awards Committee to determine that Mary Whyte should receive this honor. Mary is the epitome of everything the Women in the Arts Awards stands for and more! Laura presented Mary with the pin and Regent Templeton congratulated her on behalf of ELP chapter.

The surprise planned for Mary Whyte came next.

Regent Templeton congratulated Mary, saying on behalf to the Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter, NSDAR. We are honored to have been able nominate you for this special award.

Regent Templeton explained the DAR Medal of Honor is the most prestigious award given by the DAR. The recipient must have made unusual and lasting contributions to our American Heritage by truly giving of herself to community, state, country and fellowman.

Jill next asked several of those who endorsed our chapter's nomination of Mary to speak.

Susan Marlowe, President of the Patriot Art Foundation, said "Not the least of Mary's personal qualities is the depth of her character and the love for her country and fellow man. Her quiet introspection, graceful and calm demeanor, along with the respect and kindness she shows to all she meets is inspirational."

A short video was played, Richard Colonna, Captain, USN (Ret): said "Mary's vision, that began with a 7 year journey to paint one veteran from each state, has resulted in an historic work that has the potential to change the lives of countless veterans. Through her amazing artwork in this project, Mary Whyte has shown extraordinary quality of leadership, trustworthiness, service and patriotism"

Capt. Winston E. Scott, USN-Retired letter read "Mary Whyte's dedication to our nation's veterans is further evident through her conceptualization and formation of the Patriot Art Foundation, whose mission is to use visual arts to honor veterans who have served our country, celebrate their return to civilian live and assist them in the re-entry process."

Former James E. Livingston, Major General USMC (Ret), Recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the DAR Medal of Honor spoke on video to Mary. "Her contributions to our nation through her art have embodied the best that we are as a nation. Her depictions for our people and our military, each representing our fifty states' contributions throughout out history display

true patriotism and honest love of country. Mary Whyte's innate ability to connect with her subjects on an intimate level in order to tell the person stories of her subjects through her painting exemplifies her true character of trustworthiness and integrity. She exhibits a passionate sense of patriotism in her desire to honor those who have served our country. Her loyalty to these veterans and the obvious honesty of her approach fostered trust in her subjects that their stories would be told with compassion and dignity. With the utmost integrity she remained true to both her subjects and herself. Her ability to lead is demonstrated in the foundation of the Patriot Art Foundation which is dedicated to using the visual arts to honor the veterans who have served our country and to celebrate their return to civilian life while assisting them with the re-entry process. " This video can be seen on our chapter website.

Regent Templeton then spoke saying, " It is to honor these qualities and her accomplishments, that the Eliza Lucas Pinckney Chapter, NSDAR nominated Mary Whyte for the DAR Medal of Honor. She asked Mary Whyte to come forward to receive the DAR Medal of Honor. Laura Thompson presented Mary with a beautiful bouquet of hydrangeas. Regent Jill Templeton presented the Medal of Honor to Mary along with the letters of recommendation. Honorary Regent Melissa Levesque captured the moment with her photography skills.

State Regent Libby Billham congratulated Mary Whyte on this wonderful award, saying that this is highest award that NSDAR offers. State Regent Billham added that she has been asked to serve on the Patriot Art foundation board.

Mary Whyte spoke briefly thanking the chapter for the nomination and for the DAR Medal of Honor award. She also thanked the ELP Chapter for all we did last year assisting in the weekend for the veterans, sponsoring the brunch as well as attending the celebrations on the Yorktown for the veterans that came to Charleston.

Regent Templeton asked Brenda Burch, Chaplain to give the sunshine report and closing benediction. Brenda asked all to congratulate Missy Sauls on her wedding that was happening this weekend. She asked that we remember in our prayers, Jack Harrelson, Karen Mccay, Ivy Blake, and Tracy Kral who is working in Mass. on Covid related research for six months.

Jill announced pictures would be taken outside. The next meeting will be second Sunday in November. Place to be determined. Jill thanked Laura Thompson for all she did in organizing the meeting just held at the Hobcaw Yacht Club. She thanked Mary Lucas and Caye Browder for providing the treat bags and water for refreshment.

State Regent Libby Billham stood and asked to make an important announcement on surprise developments concerning Tamassee. She said that no longer would the NSDAR be supporting the Tamassee DAR School. She said the decision could be viewed on the President Generals Blog. She stated that the SCDAR would continue to support the school and she would have more information to come when she learned more about the national decision and she could meet with the SCDAR Executive Board. She did say the Thrift Store is still existing and will need continued support. Also the new programs that Tamassee is pursuing will need continued support. The new direction at Tamassee will offer After School Programs, Home school education programs, and early childhood education. The Residential Programs is closed now due to changes by DHEC/ court rulings.

Regent Templeton adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

