

## ***Revolutionary Days are Coming To Washington & Wilkes County, Georgia.***

The Georgia Society, Sons of the American Revolution, Color Guard & Colonel Elijah Clarke Militia converged on Washington, Georgia, Tuesday of this week to support local publicity for the 2008 Revolutionary Days/Kettle Creek Celebration scheduled for February 8, 9 & 10. Many are pictured on the Town Square in front of the Wilkes County Court House with County Commissioners and other local officials.



See the following website for the Front page coverage in the News-Reporter January 17 issue.

[http://www.news-reporter.com/news/2008/0117/PDF/Page\\_01.pdf](http://www.news-reporter.com/news/2008/0117/PDF/Page_01.pdf)

“Citizens of Wilkes County played an important part in the American Revolution,” said Sam Moore, Chairman of the Wilkes County Commissioners. “Many families in our area have ancestors who fought in the Battle of Kettle Creek. We appreciate the efforts of the SAR and DAR to sponsor this event and give these Patriots the recognition which they deserve. We look forward to another outstanding Revolutionary Days Celebration again this year.”

Many new activities have expanded Revolutionary Days into a three-day Celebration scheduled for February 8, 9 & 10. In addition to the Saturday Parade, Living History exhibits on the Washington Town Square, BBQ lunch and Battleground Memorial Ceremony, a presentation by a Revolutionary War author is scheduled for Friday afternoon at the Mary Willis Library. A Colonial Church Service will be conducted Sunday morning at Bethel United Methodist Church and a Memorial Ceremony will be held at Colonel Elijah Clarke's grave at Elijah Clarke State Park on Sunday.

The Revolutionary Days Celebration begins at 3 PM on Friday afternoon with a presentation by Dr. Christine Swager, Revolutionary War author. It is entitled, "Georgia Militia after Kettle Creek" and will be held at the Mary Willis Library. Dr. Swager will tell the story of where and why the Georgians took the fight to the British and the Loyalists in North Georgia and the Carolinas, becoming involved in every major battle.

Also at that time, posters created by Washington-Wilkes Middle School 8th grade students for the Kettle Creek Poster Contest will be displayed at the Mary Willis Library. Judging of the posters will be performed by members of the Kettle Creek DAR Chapter and the Samuel Elbert SAR Chapter. The top posters will be announced at the Parade on Saturday and the posters will be displayed for the Celebration participants.

A full day of activities begins at 8:30 AM on Saturday with a showing of the Kettle Creek Video at the Mary Willis Library. US Army Historians from Fort Gordon, Dr. Walt Andrae and Steven Rauch, will provide a brief summary of the battle and answer questions. The Army-produced video will be available at the Library for "on demand" showing throughout the day.

At 10 AM over seventy-five members of the Children, Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution organizations, SAR Color Guard dressed in Continental uniforms and Militia attire, Revolutionary War re-enactors, and local Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other youth organizations will participate in a Parade, starting at the Mary Willis Library and ending on the historic Washington Town Square. A Ceremony in front of the Court House will acknowledge the naming of the City of Washington as a result of an act of the Georgia Legislature on January 23, 1780.

Then, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Nancy Hart, and many others in Colonial period dress will perform in Living History demonstrations on the Square. Children will be taught colonial games, how to march with muskets and encouraged to sign an oath of allegiance and join the militia. A barbeque lunch will be served at the nearby Court Street Livery.

Throughout the day from 10 AM to 5 PM is an open house at the Washington Historical Museum. An exhibit will provide an interpretation of the Battle of Kettle Creek with information and some artifacts of Colonels Elijah Clarke, Andrew Pickens, and John Dooly.

Meanwhile, at the Kettle Creek Battleground located ten miles from Washington off SR 44, U.S. Army Historians will conduct walking tours from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. They will trace the steps of the Loyalists and the Patriots as they fought for three hours on February 14, 1779.

Saturday's highlight will be the pageantry at the 2 PM Battleground Memorial Ceremony at the large Monument on the top of War Hill. Wreath presentations by various organizations and descendants will honor the memory of the Patriots who fought in the Battle of Kettle Creek which occurred on February 14, 1779. The Kettle Creek DAR Chapter will decorate the Commemorative Markers that list the names of the battle participants.

Memorial Ceremony participants will include the Continental Regiment Fife & Drum, SAR Color Guard in Continental Line uniforms, Elijah Clarke Militia, and Greene County HS JROTC. Revolutionary War era music will be provided and the Children of the American Revolution will perform an impressive flag ceremony for the original thirteen states. Wreath presentations and Musket Salutes honoring the Kettle Creek Patriots will conclude the Ceremony.

Sunday will begin with a Colonial Church Service held at the Bethel United Methodist Church at 9 AM, and sponsored by the Georgia Society SAR Chaplaincy Corps. Bethel Church is located on Skull Shoals Road, about seven miles from Washington off SR 44.

Representatives of the Children, Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution organizations will gather at 11:30 AM at the gravesite of Elijah Clarke for a Ceremony to recognize his part in the successful Battle of Kettle Creek. Additional Living History activities are scheduled at the Elijah Clarke State Park on Sunday.

"Our objective is to provide everyone who participates in the Revolutionary Days Celebration with a better understanding of the Battle of Kettle Creek and the role played by the citizens of Washington and Wilkes County during the American Revolution" states Bill Ramsaur, one of the Revolutionary Days Coordinators.

Washington Mayor Willie Burns recently discussed the positive impact of prior ceremonies on the award of the Kettle Creek Battleground Archeological Study. He said, "An archeological survey at the Kettle Creek Battleground has been a dream for over 35 years. The close cooperation between the SAR, DAR, City of Washington, and Wilkes County enabled us to secure federal funding for this important undertaking."

Mayor Burns added, "The study currently underway will give us the scientific foundation to develop educational materials for our children and to enhance living history presentations that will preserve the sacrifice of those who fought to give us our country."

The Battle of Kettle Creek, fought on February 14, 1779, was one of the most important battles of the Revolutionary War in Georgia. At that time, the State was almost completely under British control. Col. Boyd with 600 British sympathizers (called Loyalists or Tories) crossed the Savannah River into

present-day Elbert County en route to the British army then at Augusta. With about 200 South Carolina militia, Patriot Col. Andrew Pickens joined Patriot Col. John Dooly and Lt. Colonel Elijah Clarke, with about 140 Georgia militia, and marched to overtake the Loyalists.

On the morning of the 14th, Boyd and his men were camped at a bend in the then flooded Kettle Creek. Their horses were grazing, sentries were posted, and most of the men were slaughtering cattle or searching for food. The Patriots attempted to attack the Loyalist camp by surprise but failed and a desperate battle raged on both sides of the creek for three hours before the Loyalists finally broke and fled. Col. Boyd and 20 of his men were killed and 22 captured. Pickens and Dooly lost seven men killed and 15 wounded. Col. Andrew Pickens later wrote that Kettle Creek "was the severest check and chastisement, the Tories ever received in South Carolina or Georgia."

Most Revolutionary Days activities are free and the public is encouraged to attend. For further info call the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce at 706-678-2013. "Revolutionary Days" Sponsors include Georgia Society, Athens and Samuel Elbert Chapters SAR; Kettle Creek DAR Chapter; City of Washington; Wilkes County; W-W Chamber of Commerce; W-W Historical Foundation; Mary Willis Library; Washington Historical Museum and *The News-Reporter*.