



B. Rice Aston
National Society Sons of the American Revolution
President General 2002-2003

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Compiled by John Greer and John Anderson, July 2020

SAR Magazine LCVI-NO-4_Spring-2002, p. 24

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NATIONAL OFFICER SELECTIONS FOR 2002-03

PRESIDENT GENERAL- B. Rice Aston

Compatriot Aston has been a dedicated member for a number of years at the Chapter, State Society and National Society level, currently holding the position of Secretary General. His experience also encompasses being Chancellor General for two term and a member of the Executive Committee for four terms. He has served as Chairman of the Task Force to Preserve United States History, Chairman of the Legal Advisory Committee, Chairman of the Long Range Planning Committee and member of several other committees, including History, Patriotic Education and Korean War Commemorative. A Texas Society Compatriot, he has served as its President as well as President of the Paul Carrington Chapter. He holds the Minuteman, Patriot and Stewart Boone McCarty Awards and four President General's Certificate of Distinguished Service. A graduate of Rice University, he is a practicing attorney in Houston.

SAR Magazine LCVI-NO-2_Fall-2001, p. 11

Texas Society Officer Candidate

The Texas Society
Sons of The American Revolution

Proudly Presents

B. Rice Aston

For the Office of President General
2002-2003



Personal

- Married to Ursula Goedecke of Hallettsville, Texas. Children: Sonya (DAR), Rick (SAR), Alan (SAR)
- Rice University
- University of Texas Law School
- Thirteenth generation American
- President of cotton warehouse & compress company
- Director of state and national banks
- Resident Managing Partner of nationwide law firm
- Partner and Head of Trial Section of Houston law firm
- Director of *Rice* University Historical Society and Editor of its periodical, *The Cornerstone*
- A Founder, Director and President of St. John's Alumni Association
- Member of Houston Philosophical Society
- Founder of Annual Award to outstanding enlisted man aboard the USS San Jacinto

Texas Society

- President
- Historian
- Editor of Texas Compatriot
- Member Board of Managers
- President Paul Carrington Chapter

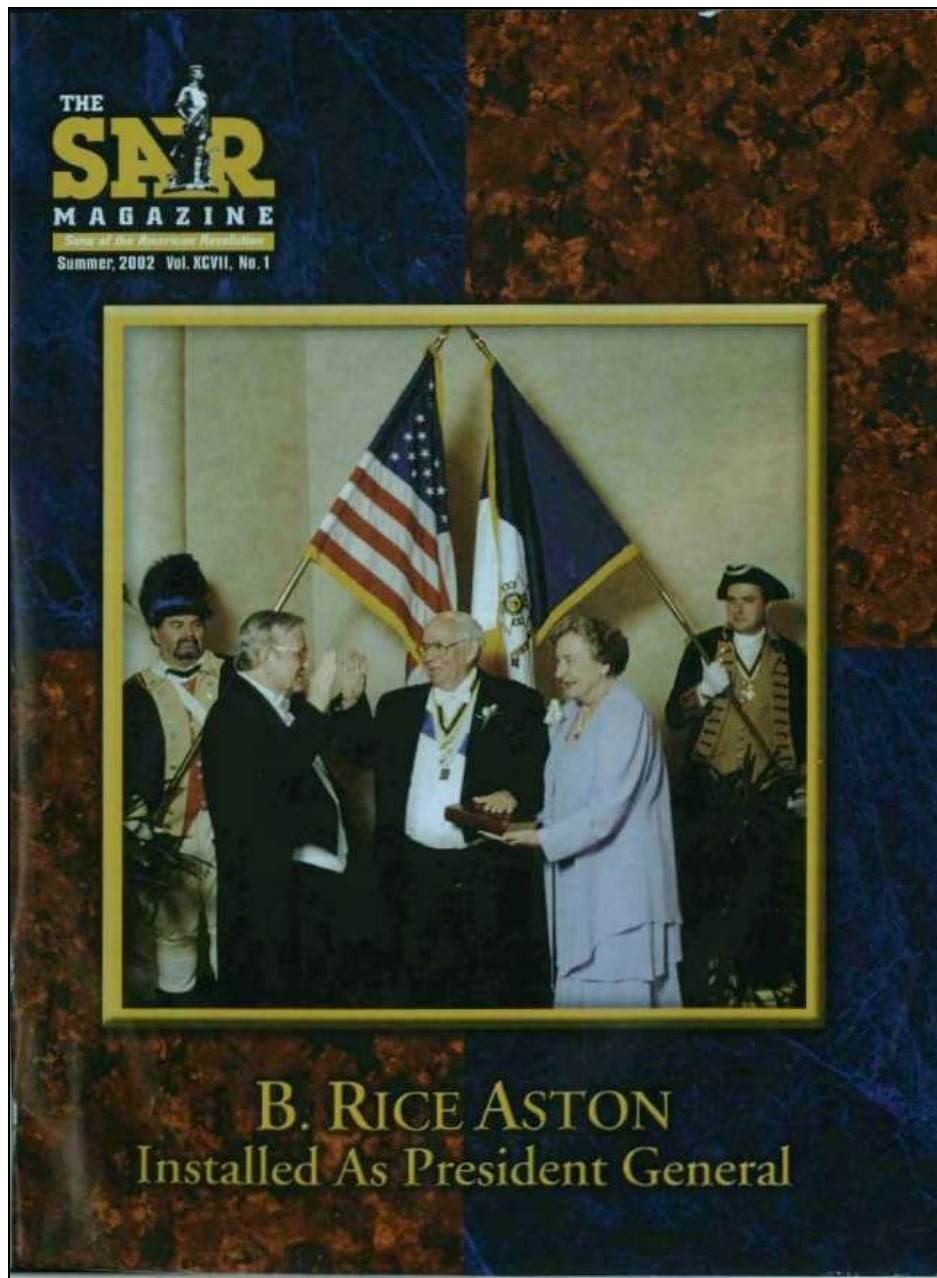
National Society

- Secretary General (current)
- Chancellor General - two terms
- Member of Executive Committee - 4 terms
- Chairman of Long Range Planning Committee
- Chairman of Legal Advisory Committee
- Chairman and Co-Chairman of Task Force to Preserve U.S. History
- Member of History, Patriotic Education, Korean War Commemorative and other Committees
- + Author of five articles for The SAR Magazine and many articles for the History Task Force
- Led SAR efforts to derail INS's attempt to make oath of citizenship politically correct and to further dumb down the citizenship test
- Authored Resolutions supporting the Flag Amendment adopted by three Annual Congresses

Awards

- Minuteman Medal
- President General's Certificate of Distinguished Service (4)
- Stewart Boone McCarty Awards for Preserving U.S. History (2)
- Patriot Award

SAR Magazine LCVII-NO-1_Summer-2002, cover



THE COVER PHOTO depicts the installation of B. Rice Aston as President General, with Chancellor General Raymond G. Musgrave administering the oath of office while Mrs. Aston holds the Bible. Participating were two members of the National Society Color Guard: California Compatriot Garrett F. Jackson (left), who retired as Guard Commander at the Congress; and Tennessee Compatriot James J. Thweatt. This photo was staged following the actual installation because of space problems presented at the site of the Wednesday banquet.

SAR Magazine LCVII-NO-1_Summer-2002, p. 2

The President General's Message

Dear Compatriots:

I recently returned from Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, home of the preeminent World War II historian and founder of the nationally acclaimed Eisenhower Center for American Studies at the University of New Orleans and the O-Day Museum in that city: Dr. Stephen E. Ambrose. Louisiana Society President George Reech and I delivered the Resolution of the Annual Congress in Nashville thanking him for his service to the American people and gave him the Gold Good Citizenship Medal. I then said: "Dr. Ambrose, we have many WW2 veterans in our organization who admire your books on D-Day and President Eisenhower, and many members who admire your volume on Lewis and Clark, and we would like very much for you to become a member of our organization. I have an application with me and all it requires is your signature. I'll be happy to leave it with you if you wish." Dr. Ambrose signed the application and one of my proudest moments was when I swore him to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Sons of the American Revolution - and then welcomed him as a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. Added interesting details relative to this visit are reported elsewhere in this issue of the magazine.

We are now engaged in a fund raising campaign which is our most important undertaking of the year. We have outgrown our Headquarters in Louisville purchased in 1978 and desperately need additional Library space and room to grow. Beginning back in the 1980s forward -thinking leaders of our Society acquired on behalf of the SAR, parcel by parcel, the land on which we will build. Patriotic and hereditary organizations much smaller and less active than ours, raise significant funds annually. I am convinced that, with the Almighty's help, we shall succeed in this endeavor, and our stronger voice will be heard regionally and nationally. We have just scratched the surface and the pledges now stand at nearly \$1.2 million. I will keep you advised of our progress.

At Saratoga on October 17, 1777, British General "Gentleman" Johnny Burgoyne- so-called because he enjoyed the gentleman's life: good wine, rich food and fine clothes - surrendered his entire army of 5,700 men to General Gates. American losses were only 150. Burgoyne returned to Britain in disgrace and never received another significant command. News of the American victory soon traveled to Europe and it was celebrated in Paris as if it had been a French victory. Ben Franklin was received by the French Royal Court and on February 6, 1778 France and America signed two treaties, one of alliance and one of amity and commerce. Britain's loss was not the beginning of the end, but was the end of the beginning. Jacques de Trentinian, Executive Vice President of the France Society who is serving as Chairman of the Alliance Day Committee, advises that his Society will celebrate the 225th anniversary of these two treaties in Paris from February 4th through February 9th, 2003- with dinners, exhibitions, speeches,



During his remarks following installation as President General, B. Rice Aston commented on the continuing influence today of the American Revolution.



As reported in his accompanying message, PG Aston (left) along with Louisiana Society President George Reech (right) presented Dr. Stephen E. Ambrose with his SAR Membership Insignia and the Gold Good Citizenship Medal.

commemorative services and tours. American Compatriots are urged to attend; already a National Society Color Guard is making plans to participate. In 1983 the France Society marked the 200th anniversary of the Treaty of Paris, with some 200 SARs and guests on hand for a memorable experience. Next year's celebration promises to be equally impressive. More details later.

Sincerely yours,

B. Rice Aston

B. Rice Aston
President General

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An Open Letter from PG B. Rice Aston

Dear Compatriots,

I want to personally thank the hundreds of Compatriot volunteers who successfully launched the Census Project, and the first one thousand that have reported their qualified relatives; their hard work has proved the merit of the Project – it delivers qualified prospects to the Chapters! Our initial effort was limited to seeking reports from Compatriots A-G, but success to date indicates that should now ask all Compatriots A-Z, to join-in now. For your convenience a census form is printed on the opposing page. Please clip it out, make additional copies and report all eligible male relatives. State have been given copies of the census form with instructions and requested to reproduce and distribute to all Compatriots.

The final success of this program depends on the men in the trenches, our Compatriots. Our Chapters can play a vital leadership role by make the Census Project a central topic of a Chapter meeting, ensuring that each member has a Census form, explaining the simplicity of completing the form, and the importance of joining with thousand Compatriots that have already reported. It would be well if this could be done quickly. Our State Societies can play a vital role by ensuring that each Chapter has Census forms for its members and by assisting their Chapters in forming a smooth-working reporting and recruiting organization. Our Vice-Presidents General can play a vital leadership role by contacting the State Societies with their jurisdiction and making sure there is a smooth-working, reporting and recruiting program in place.

The final step, and the most rewarding, comes in turning the prospect into a new Compatriot. This recruiting effort need not wait if your Chapter has been provided a list of prospects. Remember that the list represents the hard work of Compatriots all over the country, so diligently pursue the prospects.

At this point you may be saying to yourself, “I hope the success of the Census project doesn’t depend on me.” The good news is that it does depend on you, and you have the power to increase our membership. With increased membership will come new ideas, a higher profile regionally and nationally, and a stronger voice for traditional American values and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Yours in patriotic service
B. Rice Aston
President General

Census of Qualified Prospects for the SAR

Mail the completed form to NSSAR Census, P.O. Box 543, Weston, MO 64098-0543
See <http://www.sar.org/dessar/censusQ.htm> for instructions and information. – Ver. 2002-06-13

Your Name _____
Date:(month) ____/(day) ____/2002 National SAR # _____ State Society ____ (2-letter)

The **Patriot Ancestor** for the relatives on this form is _____
Include relatives such as grandparent, parent, uncle/aunt, cousin, child, niece/nephew, grandchild

— **Prospect #1** I have an eligible (give relationship) _____, listed below:

Name _____
Street Address _____ 2nd Line _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Approx. Age ____
Gender (M,F) ____ Phone _____ Email _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's First Name _____

— **Prospect #2** I have an eligible (give relationship) _____, listed below:

Name _____
Street Address _____ 2nd Line _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Approx. Age ____
Gender (M,F) ____ Phone _____ Email _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's First Name _____

— **Prospect #3** I have an eligible (give relationship) _____, listed below:

Name _____
Street Address _____ 2nd Line _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Approx. Age ____
Gender (M,F) ____ Phone _____ Email _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's First Name _____

— **Prospect #4** I have an eligible (give relationship) _____, listed below:

Name _____
Street Address _____ 2nd Line _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Approx. Age ____
Gender (M,F) ____ Phone _____ Email _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's First Name _____

— **Prospect #5** I have an eligible (give relationship) _____, listed below:

Name _____
Street Address _____ 2nd Line _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Approx. Age ____
Gender (M,F) ____ Phone _____ Email _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's First Name _____

SAR Magazine LCVII-NO-2_Fall-2002, p. 2

The President General's Message

Dear Compatriots:

Twenty years ago patriotism was unquestioned. Our public schools played an important role in developing public spirited citizens willing to make sacrifices for their country and their communities. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and The National Anthem was sung daily in schools throughout America. Our children were taught the importance of the American Revolution to the world and the Founding Fathers were universally revered.

A sea of change began in the social turmoil that engulfed our country in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Activists sought to impose radical multiculturalism and radical diversity upon our traditional society, and George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Paul Revere and other Revolutionary Patriots grew dimmer and began to disappear from school textbooks. Their names were removed from public buildings. Political correctness required that students be taught all cultures are equal, there is nothing special about America, and no good reason to admire the men who founded her, and no good reason to make sacrifices for her, and that America is a hard land ravaged by racism, sexism, and that most degenerate of all "isms", capitalism.

Historian Stephen Ambrose observed: *"The first thing our young people want to know about our nation's history is "Who are our heroes and what did they do?" Yet teaching about heroes today is scorned in many academic circles as triumphalism, and is not done. Our children have an unparalleled legacy of freedom and opportunity, paid for with blood, sweat and tears by men and women whose names we barely know."*

We are the guardians of our history and heritage, and from this turmoil began to emerge a different and outward-looking SAR. We saw youth as the key to the future. We developed and expanded our youth programs: oration, essay and poster contests to instill reverence for our Revolutionary heritage in the best and brightest of our youth. There are 21 million single parent families in America, most without a father as a role model; our nation's Boy Scouts, ROTC and JROTC instill in these youth the manly and womanly virtues necessary to a successful life, and we developed Boy Scout, ROTC and JROTC programs to support them.

Color Guards and the Task Force to Preserve U.S. History were formed. Far-seeing administrations began to acquire land tract by tract near National Headquarters as a site for our proposed construction of the Center for Advancing America's Heritage. New committees began to appear and existing ones expanded their agenda. We developed one of America's foremost Revolutionary War Era web sites, initiated [SARtalk](#), and two short years ago the [Headquarters Dispatch](#) newsletter was born.

When there is a Revolutionary War battlefield or historic trail to preserve, we are there. We successfully opposed the efforts of the INS to devalue American citizenship and joined with other organizations to defeat the Smithsonian's proposed Enola Gay exhibit which portrayed America as the aggressor and Japan the victim in World War II. The number of our Color Guard units increased dramatically and they participate throughout the country in civic events and naturalization ceremonies and give programs in schools. We celebrate the Battles of Point Pleasant, Cowpens, Kings Mountain, Saratoga, Kettle Creek, Moore's Bridge, Guilford Courthouse, Yorktown and numerous others.

The DAR long ago resolved that a library and museum of the first order was necessary to raise their profile, attract new members, and enable them to speak with enhanced vigor. Our library followed suit and we have acquired 30,000 volumes and 20,000 rolls of microfilm, and special collections of the papers of George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, and George Rogers Clark. Our museum acquired one of America's most important collections of Revolutionary War Era newspapers, many paintings of famous American patriots, and the cannons of Saratoga and Yorktown.

When we were an inward-looking organization, dues were sufficient to support our activities, and we did not ask our members to remember us in their wills, trusts, and gifts. Today, the national dues of our organization are similar to those of the DAR, VFW, and the American Legion, but each of these have substantial endowments to support their programs and we must follow the lead of our patriotic companions and increase our endowment.

We have reached the limits of expansion of our library and museum. We are out of space. The number of school children we can accept for tours is space limited as is access to our important collections and artifacts. We lack space for new volumes, collections, census records, committee meetings, citizenship programs for new citizens, flag programs, and offices.

Can we go back to a more peaceful time of 20 years ago? The answer: *"There is no path back. The clock only moves forward and the activists will not cease their assault and our history and heritage lay in the balance."*

We are in the process of a nationwide fund raising program to further the construction and operation of a Center for Advancing America's Heritage. As with our companion patriotic organizations, we found it necessary to obtain the assistance of a Director of Development to lead and coordinate fund raising, and Cindi Harbin has recently come on board to do that. To date we have raised \$1.5 million in pledges and cash and a commitment of \$300,000 from the Brown Foundation.

At this point you may be saying, "I hope preserving our history and heritage, and providing for the Center for Advancing America's Heritage don't depend on me." The answer is, "it does depend on you. The good news is, you have the power to change things, just as your ancestors against great odds, achieved the independence of the American people. When you are called upon to contribute to the Center for Advancing America's Heritage, remember the sacrifices, the blood, toil, tears, and sweat spent by your Revolutionary ancestors so we can live today as free men and women, and recall with pride that the SAR is fighting to defend our history and heritage for future generations, and then sign your pledge."

Sincerely yours,

B. Rice Aston

B. Rice Aston
President General

SAR Magazine LCVII-NO-3_Winter-2003, p. 2

The President General's Message

Dear Compatriots:

One of the expectations of a President General is not much different than the expectations of a corporate executive or college president-you must be deeply involved in fund raising, for it is the breath of life to any growing organization. We are fortunate that we have a terrific staff to support this effort; all believe in what we are doing and they give 110 percent. Our Director of Development is a self-starter and has brought many new dimensions to our fund raising efforts; I can't say enough nice things about her. The Chairman of the Fund Raising Task Force for the Center For Advancing America's Heritage has traveled all over the United States at his expense to bring to our members the message of what the Center means to the SAR and to our country.

There have been many inspiring moments in fund raising and I would like to share a few of them with you.

The Ladies for The Library put together an outstanding cookbook, sold it, and are well on their way to raising \$25,000. As Sam Houston once said, "Thank God for the Ladies!"

Our staff has pledged generously. This has been very inspiring.

The City of Louisville has given us \$100,000. It is nice to be appreciated in Louisville, the home of the SAR since 1778.

Local Foundations have welcomed us with contributions of over \$300,000.

Past and present Executive Committee members have pledged over \$300,000.

Three former Presidents General have made significant pledges and outright gifts.

A member of the DC Society has pledged \$25,000 and made a challenge grant of \$75,000.

A Committee Chairman and a national officer have each pledged \$50,000.

A State Society of 600 members has pledged \$59,950.

One of our smallest State Societies has a goal of \$100,000 and has obtained pledges to date of \$63,788.



As reported in the Fall 2002 issue of our magazine, PG Aston participated in programs in New York City marking the first anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. While there he visited St. Paul's Chapel and sat briefly in the pew reserved for George Washington while he was President of the United States. On the wall is a reproduction of the Great Seal of the United States circa 1789.

Small gifts have been received with animating notes such as the following: "I live on a pension and don't have a great deal to give, but I want to do what I can. Thank you for what you are doing for our country."

A member and his wife reside in a rest home. One of our members told them of the new Center. The husband said "For the last 51 years the SAR has been number one in my life. I have been fortunate to have enjoyed the companionship of many, many patriotic Americans. I may not be able to attend another meeting, and I wanted you to have this." He then gave us his check for \$20,000, and his wife gave us a check for \$5,000.

A young couple gave us a check for \$5,000 and said, "We believe in what you are doing."

These gifts, large and small, from men and women, the old and the young, remind me of the refrain of old WWII ballad: "Bless them all, bless them all, the long, the short, and the tall ... "

One circumstance that was related to me is especially memorable: a retired man of the cloth said: "Sir, I am not a wealthy man, but I am all for what you are doing for the SAR and for our country. Here is my donation. I only wish it could be more." He gave us a check for \$500. His carefully chosen words and the expression on his face radiated love for his country and the SAR, and whenever I even think about being tired or discouraged, I think of that gentleman and his quiet inspiring words.

There is much more to tell. These are but a few of the stories. I thank you for this opportunity to be involved in them.

Sincerely yours,

B. Rice Aston

B. Rice Aston
President General

SAR Magazine LCVII-NO-4_Spring-2003, p. 2

The President General's Message

Dear Compatriots:

It has been my privilege to have served you as President General and Ursula's privilege to have served you as First Lady. It has been a tremendously uplifting and a rare experience for us to travel throughout the United States and work with men and women deeply in love with their country, dedicated to true patriotism and to preserving our heritage. It has been a once in-a-lifetime experience and one that we shall never forget.

A goal of the SAR for many years has been to raise its profile regionally, nationally, and internationally, and my administration has endeavored to further that goal with such events as inducting famed American historian Stephen E. Ambrose into the SAR; the September 11th commemorative ceremonies in Louisville, KY, New York City, Arlington, VA, and Somerset County, PA; the presentation of a specially designed September 11th commemorative flag in each of those venues and to the President of the United States; presentation of the Heroism Medals, posthumously to many of the passengers on United Flight 93; ceremonies to mark the Battle of Point Pleasant and others; a trip to France to celebrate the 225th anniversary of the Treaty of 1778 between France and the United States, and the trip to Normandy-American cemetery, Utah Beach, Point du Hoc, and St. Mere Eglise to honor the men and women of D-Day.

It was especially enjoyable to induct Stephen E. Ambrose into our Society, and an incredible thrill to swear him to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the SAR, and hand him his membership certificate.

Our country has changed greatly in the last twenty years and serious threats have arisen to challenge our history and heritage. Our Revolutionary War heroes have begun to disappear from textbooks and our public buildings. Historian Stephen Ambrose, writes in the Wall Street Journal about our disappearing heroes:

"The first thing our young people want to know about our nation's history is, Who were our heroes and what did they do? Yet teaching about heroes today is scorned in many academic circles as triumphalism, and is not done. Our children have an unparalleled legacy of freedom and opportunity, paid for with blood, sweat, and tears by men and women whose names they barely know ... "

Today, in many of our classrooms, it is unlawful to display the Declaration of Independence, the Ten Commandments, the Mayflower Compact, and our national motto because they contain a reference to God. The ability of school children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance hangs in the balance for the same reason.

These are a few of the great challenges that now face us.

I respectfully offer a few suggestions: When attacks on our history or heritage occur, PUSH BACK, AND PUSH BACK HARD! Never forget the power of the individual; this is the one thing that America has taught the world.

Shine the light of day on mindless acts of political correctness, sunlight is the best disinfectant. A few ways: letters, newsletters, telephone calls, and emails to peer organizations, the print media, talk shows, friends, and all those who labor in the same vineyard.

Do not wait for a more convenient time or until you have more resources, heed the advice of President Theodore Roosevelt: *"Do what you can, with what you have got, right where you are."*

Distribute to educators in public, private, and home schools the CDs available from our national offices which contain classroom ready American heritage teaching and testing materials. Over 2,000 of these have been distributed to educators throughout the United States. This is a project you can undertake now.

Expand our youth programs: oration, essay, poster, ROTC, JROTC, and Boy Scout.

Join the Color Guard. It conveys our message of true patriotism to thousands of people we will never be able to talk to.

Send more outstanding teachers to Valley Forge Freedoms Foundation.

Tell and retell to your family and friends the stories of our Revolutionary War heroes and heroines; these stories are part of the *cultural* glue that binds us together as the American people. This effort is too important to be left to our public school system. This is one of the many stories and it is relevant to all time.

The American Revolution is alive and well today enlightening the dark corners of the world. These words of Thomas Jefferson written over 227 years ago are the most powerful words in the English language today:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

These words have been embraced by the whole world. Historian Samuel Eliot Morrison tells us: *"These words are more radical than anything ever written by Robespierre, Marx, or Lenin. They are more powerful than an atom; and they bring hope to the oppressed peoples of the world."*

These words resound today in the hearts and minds of men and women living in tyranny in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, wherever people yearn to be free. These words underlie all wars against tyranny; they echoed in the hearts and minds of those brave Chinese students who stood up for democracy in Tiananmen Square, and carried with them a copy of the Declaration of Independence.

The Center for Advancing America's Heritage should become our flagship, an American heritage highway, that uses the internet, our web site, and teleconferencing to *tell* a worldwide audience what is good and right about America. It should produce programs for newly minted Americans so that they may learn of our common civic culture. Strategic relationships should be formed with colleges, universities, museums, libraries, and nonprofit corporations to further these ends.

On December 31, 2002, our membership stood at an all-time high. We have employed an outstanding new Executive Director, Jim Randall, and a highly competent and self-starting Director of Development, Cindy Harbin, and are positioned to confront the challenges of the new century.

I have acquired a greater respect for the works of my predecessors in office. My request to my successors is to continue to raise the profile of the SAR until it becomes the brightest star in the sky. My wish to my immediate successor is: *"Godspeed, fair weather; and following seas."*

The First Lady joins me in this wish to all: *"God bless the Sons of the American Revolution and these United States."*

Sincerely yours,

B. Rice Aston

B. Rice Aston
President General

Texas SAR History Volume 2, Dec. 2006 pp. 261-262

B. RICE ASTON TXSSAR President 1997 – 1998

Texas Society President B. Rice Aston started his year running. On March 22, 1997, he installed the new officers for the Paul Carrington Chapter where he holds his membership. It was his pleasure to install Rev. M. Douglas Harper, Jr. as the chapter president.

At the March 1997 meeting of the Captain William Barron Chapter, President Aston presented the program on "The Sons of the American Revolution in the 21st Century." On March 17, 1997, B. Rice Aston was the featured guest where he addressed the Hill Country Chapter. Then, on March 26, 1997, he addressed the Plano Chapter. President Aston saw the need to adopt new technology to get the message out about the SAR and its purposes. The times had changed and the SAR needed a new voice to be heard on a national level. Also, he believed that the current level of dues were not adequate to advance the national organization to the higher recognized level he envisioned.



At the Texas Society SAR Annual Meeting held in March 1997, President Aston urged compatriots to use the internet, email, and web pages to communicate.

On April 1, 1997, President Aston had the pleasure of addressing the Major K. M. Van Zandt Chapter on the subject of the "SAR in the 21st Century." It was the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the chapter.

In *The Texas Compatriot* news bulletin for the Summer of 1997, President Aston wrote on the topic "The Media - A Powerful Friend." He wrote "A short well drafted press release or story delivered to local newspapers and radio stations which describes the chapter's patriotic programs for Eagle Scouts, JROTC and ROTC, and others, is of community interest, and may well attract many qualified people interested in becoming members."

In *The Texas Compatriot* news bulletin for the Fall of 1997, President Aston was particularly pleased with the Texas Society's performance at the National Congress held in Baltimore. The Blaine C. Willhoite, Sr. Chapter received the Carl F. Bessant Award for the most outstanding one page newsletter and the Piney Woods Chapter received the President General's Streamer Award for the best Chapter Activities in the category of 100-199 members. In addition, Compatriot Aston had the honor of receiving and wearing the newly designed State President's Medal. It was reported that the medal belongs to the State Society and should pass on to the next State President.

In *The Texas Compatriot* news bulletin for the Winter of 1997, President Aston wrote on the topic "I Pledge Allegiance." At the time, the U. S. Senate was facing a crucial vote regarding an amendment to

the Constitution to permit Congress to make it a crime to desecrate the American Flag. He commented, "When the Texas Attorney General refused to appeal to the United States Supreme Court, John Vance, the Dallas County District Attorney, undertook the appeal using the resource of his office. The Texas Society awarded him (John Vance) the Silver Good Citizenship Medal at its annual meeting for his efforts to protect the American Flag." In order to gain national recognition on the Flag Amendment, President Aston designed and printed a brochure on the subject so that the SAR could influence the votes of legislators.

At the December 1997 meeting of the Paul Carrington Chapter, it was reported that two compatriots were seeking national office - B. Rice Aston as Chancellor General and William N. Floyd, Jr. as Treasurer General.

Sources: *The Texas Compatriot* Summer 1997, pp. 1, 8-12; Fall 1997, pp. 1, 6, 9; Winter 1998, pp. 1, 9; Conversation between Don Stone and B. Rice Aston

SAR Magazine 101-NO-4_Spring-2007, p. 12

Former President General Aston called to eternal rest

IN OUR MEMORY

President General B. Rice Aston

Benjamin Rice Aston, born February 26, 1934, passed from this world on February 21, 2007, in Houston, Texas. He had served as President General (2002-03), Secretary General (2001-02), and Chancellor General (1999-01). He also served as Chairman of several National Committees, including the Executive Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, Nominating Committee, Ethics Committee, the Task Force to Preserve U.S. History and as a member of the History, Patriotic Education, Korean War Commemorative and others.

In his home state of Texas, Compatriot Aston served as Society President in 1997-98 and in a variety of other positions including Historian; Editor of the *Texas Compatriot*; Member of the Board of Managers; and President of Houston's Paul Carrington Chapter.



President General Aston was a proud Texan - and was often seen wearing his "Lone Star" tie.

A member of the Minuteman Class of 2001 and a George Washington Fellow, his numerous medals and awards include the Gold Good Citizenship Medal; Patriot Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Silver Good Citizenship Medal and Bronze Good Citizenship Medal; four President General's Certificates of Distinguished Service; Former PG Stewart Boone McCarty Award for Preserving U.S. History; and his Chapter's George Washington Distinguished Service Award, to name but a few.

As President General, Rice - as he preferred to be called - led the SAR tribute to victims of 9-11 in ceremonies at the sites of all three terrorists attacks; led an SAR contingent to France to commemorate the French Alliance; procured a CD for distribution to elementary schools, middle schools and high schools to help teachers organize and conduct programs teaching America's rich history; and helped kick off the first major fund raising effort for the SAR's Center for Advancing America's Heritage.



In remembrance of the 9/11 attacks, PG Aston had a special flag designed for presentation at each site. Here (at right) he is holding the flag that was given at the plane crash scene in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. On the left was Past Vice-President General Marshall E. Lignian.

Compatriot Aston was a graduate of St. John's School, Rice University and the University of Texas Law School. He was a director of state and national banks; resident managing partner of a nationwide law firm; director of Rice University Historical Society and editor of its periodical, *The Cornerstone*; a founder, director and president of St. John's Alumni Association; member of the Houston Philosophical Society; and founder of an annual award to the outstanding enlisted man aboard the *USS San Jacinto*.

In addition to the SAR, Compatriot Aston was a proud member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas, the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Texas, San Jacinto Descendants, Republic of Texas, the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Texas, Jamestown Society and the Magna Carta Barons. Rice was a great grandnephew of William Marsh Rice, the founder of Rice University. He and his wife, Ursula Goedecke



First Lady Ursula Aston was almost always with her husband at a wide variety of official National Society functions. Here the couple made a grand entrance at the beginning of the Wednesday evening banquet staged at the Annual Congress in 2003.

Aston, raised two sons, Miles and Rice, and a daughter, Phoebe, all members of either the SAR or DAR.

Among testimonials sent to the *Houston Chronicle* following Rice's death were the following which are indicative of the esteem in which Rice was held: *"His life was a model for many to emulate."* - An Illinois Compatriot. *"Rice was an icon among his fellow lawyers and among SAR leaders. His command of the English language allowed him to write glowing prose about the founding of our country and the principles upon which it was founded."* - A fellow Texas Compatriot.

And, *"Rice was one of the finest gentlemen I have had the pleasure of associating with in the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. He was sincerely interested in our very great Society and he was instrumental in obtaining the seed money to begin the effort to build and establish the Center for Advancing America's Heritage. His wise counsel will be missed."* – A Delaware Compatriot.

And, *"Rice was a powerful voice for patriotism as one of the Sons of the American Revolution and a Son of Texas. He will be truly missed."* - An Oklahoma Compatriot.

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