

Message from the desk of President Kenneth Gorton, March 2010

THE RALLY OF THE “SONS OF LIBERTY”

One block east of the Boston Commons is the site of the famous Liberty Tree. Embedded in the wall of a building on this site is a tablet marking the spot of this historic landmark, bearing a tree and the inscription “Sons of Liberty, 1776.”

This area was known as the Neighborhood of the Elms, and on August 14, 1765 this particular tree was selected for hanging the effigies of those men who favored passage of the detested Stamp Act. During Parliamentary debate over the Stamp Act, Isaac Barre described these Americans as “...these Sons of Liberty...” and the name stuck. Thereafter, nearly all political meetings of the Sons of Liberty were held in this square as they were early dissenters of British rule.

Throughout the Stamp Act crisis of 1765, the Sons of Liberty professed continued loyalty to the King because they maintained a “fundamental confidence” in the expectation that Parliament would do the right thing and repeal the tax. Men like Samuel Adams, the father of American Independence, Patrick Henry, John Hancock, James Otis, Paul Revere, Dr. Joseph Warren, and John Adams opposed the Stamp Tax and other parliamentary revenue programs. Their mottos “Taxation without Representation” and “Equality before the Law” became synonymous with their actions. From New Hampshire to Georgia, Sons of Liberty organizations sprung up. Because of their collective efforts, the Stamp Act was repealed in 1766.

This band of committed Americans designed their own flag in 1767, opposed the Townsend Act of 1767 [called “duties” vs. taxes], instigated the Boston Tea Party of 1773 by dumping 342 chests of tea in the harbor – thus Americanism was born, fought against the Intolerable Acts of 1774, and played a prominent role in setting up the First Continental Congress in 1776.

Reflecting on their contribution for the freedoms we enjoy today, we must be defenders of the Constitution, and educate Americans of the rights and liberties of America. SAR maintains “...that we should expand the meaning of patriotism, value our American citizenship, foster true patriotism and carry out the purposes of the Preamble of the Constitution...”. We are modern day ***Sons of Liberty***.

Similarly, we are designing a Chapter Flag for parades and special events by our Color Guard, and we will be honoring the Boy Scouts of America in June as they celebrate their 100th anniversary. A “Liberty Tree” Memorial in conjunction with the BSA is being considered by the Chapter to engender a sense of common heritage and respect for Liberty and Freedom.