

History of the Hill Country Chapter Sons of the American Revolution

Sometime in 1975, Mrs. Thomas M. Daniel (Marguerite, known to most as Mickey), Regent of the Major James Kerr Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, determined that Kerrville needed a chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. She started a list, which tradition says she carried in her purse everywhere she went for the next eighteen months. She began with the husbands of members of the DAR chapter and went on to other sources (and Mickey had plenty of them). By early in 1976, she had accumulated enough names to start organization work.

Joe Hill, Organizing Secretary of the Texas Society, came from Dallas to assist Mickey, and he and a number of local men interested in a Kerrville chapter met with Mickey in her living room on July 19, 1976 to discuss plans. After this meeting Mickey made arrangements for the group to gather at Dietert Claim on August 23 to make further plans. Joe Hill and R. S. D. Lockwood of San Antonio attended this meeting, and Hill explained the steps they would need to take. After much discussion, it was decided to go for a chapter, and the following officers were chosen Guy Kinney, president, Frank Landers, vice-president, Earl Nelson, secretary-treasurer, Hiram Eathorne, assistant secretary-treasurer, Howard L. Jones, registrar, and W. Knight Clynes, chaplain. Before the installation of officers, however, John Frizzell replaced Clynes as chaplain.

At the meeting on August 23, plans for an installation and charter banquet were made, and Mickey presented dates, explained costs, and named places where the banquet might be held. The date of October 30, 1976, was chosen. Guy Kinney agreed to verify available places, solicit prices, and report back to the group. Since it was customary to invite neighboring chapters of the DAR and SAR, it was estimated that as many as two hundred might be present.

At a subsequent meeting on August 30, Kinney, Landers, Jones, and Nelson decided to make arrangements at Inn of the Hills for the banquet, and Landers informed the group that publicity had been mailed to twelve nearby towns.

On October 25 final plans emerged. Kinney, Landers, Nelson, Eathorne, and Mickey agreed to donate champagne. Mickey presented a copy of the tentative program, offered to have copies made and volunteered to have nametags prepared. Kinney and his wife would decorate the programs with red, white, and blue ribbons. Nelson would be at the desk to issue nametags. After a number of preliminaries, William T. Barron, President of the Texas Society, installed the officers and presented a charter to the new Chapter. Mickey Daniel, recent past regent of the James Kerr Chapter of the DAR and Mrs. Sam Gardner, the current regent, received medals of appreciation. The speaker for the occasion was Joe Hill, who addressed the group on "Obligations of an SAR member"

A statement from the first annual report indicates that the Chapter started with five approved members, transfers from Omaha, Chicago, and an Antonio. In addition to the officers named earlier, the roster for 1976 through April 30 1977, lists these members: Louis Domingues, Hiram Eathorne, John Frizzell, Donnell Gould, Howard Jones, John Nunn, James Raymond, Orin Romigh, John Elmore, Emil Hopf, and Merrill Lemmon, Sr. According to Chapter minutes of October 24 1977, October 26 1977 “was agreed upon as the last date the registrar could be notified of papers being submitted as charter members,” so all those just listed were definitely charter members, and a few others may have qualified before the deadline.

From this small beginning, the Chapter grew. The growth can be attributed to the devotion and hard work of many compatriots, but the inception of the Chapter was due largely to Mickey Daniel. She was truly the “Mother of the Chapter”. She continued to be loyal and was a regular attendee for almost a quarter of a century. At a meeting on January 21 1985, she was awarded the Martha Washington Medal. She passed away on December 23 2000, but her service to the Chapter will long be remembered.