

Good afternoon, Patriots, all! Yes, indeed, we are all patriots today and I salute you for joining us today as we gather here in Harmony Cemetery near what had been Woodside Station---- under these magnificent, ancient and stately oak trees----if only they could speak to us, one wonders what they would say.

We are gathered here to dedicate this bronze plaque in memory of one Revolutionary War Soldier and Patriot, George Bryan. I am proud knowing a drop of George's blood thru veins,

I am grateful to the DAR and the SAR who support me in recognizing one soldier in that historic and monumental Revolutionary War.

in a hewed log cabin & a stone chimney

George was born 15 Feb 1758 in Rowan County, NC. He was a young 18 year-old when he volunteered to fight for the freedom of those fledgling colonies---- for that same freedom we all enjoy and take for granted as free Americans in the year. 2001.

\* He was a chain-bearer for Daniel Boone's Survey Crew in KY.

He went or may have been taken by his parents to VA, to KY with Daniel Boone about 1780. He squirmed with the Cherokee Indians in the neighboring frontiers of VA, N and S Carolina and GA. He was a private and spy and Indian fighter. He fought with his brothers and neighbors in the wilderness woods and cliffs of KY where an older brother was killed. In KY he founded by his bold daring as a leader and gave name to a primitive fortification called Bryan Station near what became Lexington, KY.

There is a tradition preserved by his descendants that soon after the fort was established, the young women belonging to the families in it were washing clothes in a stream of running water on the outside of the stockade. George, with some of the other young men stood guard. Not being apprehensive of danger, they permitted the Indians to place themselves between the girls and the fort. The guard quickly secured a position between the girls and the savages and a skirmish ensued. After making the way clear, Bryan, in a LOUD voice announced that he would marry the girl who would enter the fort first. They all escaped. George, true to his word, after gaining consent of the young lady, was married in the fall of 1781 to Elizabeth Ragan. Elizabeth is my name, too. He claimed his was the first marriage of a white couple in what became the state of KY. For his

wedding feast he paid \$10.00 for a bushel of cornmeal to make bread. George rolled pumpkins into the fort as a substitute for chairs for the guests.

George came here to Sangamon County in 1834. He was in his 76th year---no youngster. He continued visiting KY riding each way on horse back annually for 11 years---- Imagine, no car to have to get gas for. No MacDonalds for a quick meal. No motels for sleeping. He died Nov 22, 1845 and is buried here. He was 87 yrs, 9 mos, and 7 days-----all carved on this tombstone.

It seems almost incredible that a man of sufficient age to have been a soldier of the American Revolution and who took an active part in those stirring scenes of the frontier should have become an early settler in this Sangamon County and witnessed some of the earliest strides toward civilization.

As we dedicate this memorial to my ancestor, I am profoundly reminded how I lost my own freedom 60 years ago. On 28 December, 1941, a short 3 weeks after Pearl Harbor was bombed, I lost my freedom. I was an innocent, 12-year-old, 6th grader living happily with my Mother and Dad and older brother, Billy, in the Philippine Islands. After our home-town, Baguio, fell, the invaders ordered us not to escape and to assemble at our school for a meeting where we would be REGISTERED. This meeting would last 3 hours to 3 days. Well, it lasted for over 3 1/2 long years---3 years of brutal incarceration, frustration, starvation, humiliation and deprivation. This experience created an everlasting and indelible set of values in my approaching teenage years. Suddenly, the word FREEDOM took on a whole new meaning. Until you have LOST your freedom, you really can't grasp its full importance.

We civilians, 500 or so, were placed in filthy military barracks. Camp John Hay, the American Army Post, in Baguio, then Camp Holmes, the Philippine Constabulary Post, sleeping on crowded, bare wooden floors.

We were not permitted to have an American flag. However, my patriotic and cagey Mother secretly made one out of scraps that the women took turns placing stitches on. I made a little flag out of scraps of THOSE scraps. It is one of my most treasured possessions. It is displayed on one of the tables in the reception hall for all to see.

.The Japs provided NOTHING - Our wood crew and (3) garbage crew looted necessary items - tin plates, utensils, mattresses, curtains cut up for clothing!

We were the first "recyclers"-----using the same things over and over, patching over patches. American ingenuity played a huge part in our survival. Plus good-old American SPUNK. We weren't going to let the Japs get the best of us.

My Dad and George would have had a lively dialogue-----making a shovel from a shrapnel-severed piece of roofing iron. Of course no roofing iron in George's day. Shovel necessary to dig a latrine after the toilets became plugged. Similarly, my Mother with Elizabeth, George's 1st wife, unraveling a homespun sock to gather a length of thread for mending or sewing.

FOOD was always our biggest problem----only ONE SINGLE Red Cross shipment during the 3 1/2 years. It truly saved us from starvation as total daily calories the last several months was a measly 800.

Special permission had to be granted for a SCHOOL for us kids. Our captors proclaimed "Why do you want a school???? Why this war will last 100 yrs and we will come out victorious!!!" Teaching geography and history was forbidden. However, our teachers hoodwinked the Japs and called History "Reading" on our Report Cards. I completed the 6th, 7th and 8th grades and was a Freshman in high school when school was terminated.

In late December 1944, all 456 of us, were transported like a herd of cattle in open Japanese army trucks to Old Bilibid Prison in Manila. Bilibid had been a penitentiary, condemned for living before the war. Like a dungeon, despicable, foul-smelling, open sewers. A trickle of water supplemented with well-water drained from graves of Military POWS who had previously occupied Bilibid. Bedbugs, flying cockroaches, zillions of flies and huge rats.

So ladies and gentlemen-----it is with this background----many years after our GLORIOUS LIBERATION, I learned that my ancestor had actually been a soldier in that Revolutionary War----thus began our cemetery journey---a crusade, if you will----with my husband, Karl----in search of this most special gravesite. Having lost my own freedom, I think I

know WHY ou ancestors fought so determinedly for their own freedoms  
they they established for their infant country.

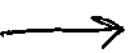
I am also a WILDCAT from Northwestern University where I took my  
nurses training at the Evanston Hospital on the Evanston Campus.

My husband, Karl, my coueslor, my best friend, father of our 4 children, is  
a Badger from Wisconsin. We have traveled from Barrow, Alaska to Key  
West, Florida; from the Hawaiian Islands to East Point, Maine, covering the  
4 corners of this Great Land.

When Karl was Mayor of Wheaton, Illinois, we gained a deep respect for  
this LAND OF LINCOLN----and the GREATEST of our Presidents to  
whom we give credit for preserving our Union and extending FREEDOM to  
ALL people. We enjoyed the state-wide sesquicentennial celebrations when  
Karl was Vice President of the Illinois Municipal League.

Ladies and gentlemen, PATRIOTS ALL, let us dedicate in George's  
memory and countless other Revolutionary War Soldiers that we shall  
maintain and preserve our Sacred Heritage.

In conclusion, I, for sure, would not be standing here today as a wife, a  
mother, a grandmother, a FREE AMERICAN, a Genuine DAUGHTER of  
that Revolution were it not for the MIGHTY 37th Infantry Division who  
literally stumbled onto our starving, ragged lot in Bilibid Prison--  
those courageous, gallant, fearless, up-beat AMERICAN GIs--  
the Greatest Generation---They sloshed thru bloody, muddy, sweltering  
South Pacific following their Code of Conduct: Duty, Honor, Country  
---- and fought to gain that SAME FREEDOM those Revolutionary War  
Soldiers attained over 225 years ago.



at onset of the  
Inferno of Battle  
of Manila  
our seats  
were  
front +  
center  
in the  
Holocaust

God bless them---- and any other grey-haired gentleman and PATRIOT  
here today. You of the Greatest Generation

YOU accepted your Country's call to duty-----I THANK YOU.

Blessings eternal Eternal Blessings to these  
UNITED STATES OF AMERIA!!!9

Betsy Herald Heimke