

## Graves of long-ago veterans marked

Friday, May 25, 2007

Bronze markers were placed on the graves of men who fought in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Civil War during a ceremony last weekend at Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

Until about four years ago, the grave markers for these men and others buried in the cemetery at St. Nicholas Chapel had been hidden from view for more than six decades.

When Pax River was created after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor drew the United States into World War II, the Navy didn't want base workers — pilots, sailors and civilians — seeing a cemetery as they reported to work or flew overhead. They felt it could be demoralizing.

As the markers were laid down, each one was documented and a map was drawn, showing where they had stood.

The markers remained hidden from view until Park Hall resident Scott Lawrence and other volunteers received permission from the Navy to begin restoring the cemetery. Lawrence first became interested in St. Nicholas because his great-great grandfather, David Hammett, was buried there.

One of the conditions placed on Lawrence was that he first try to locate and re-erect markers of known veterans. Lawrence didn't mind the restriction, though, because Hammett had been a Confederate soldier with the 2nd Maryland infantry, and died in 1897. Hammett's was among the first 13 markers Lawrence located and restored.

Today about one-third of the cemetery's markers have been located, repaired and restored.

At the graveside ceremony on Saturday, representatives from the Maj. William Thomas Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Thomas Stone Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, placed markers at the graves of Robert Jarboe and William Holton, two men who fought in the Revolutionary War.

Members of the Gov. William Smallwood Chapter of the United States Daughters of 1812 placed markers at the graves of George Cissell, Cornelius Combs, James Jarboe, John Peak and Elijah Tarlton, who fought in the War of 1812.



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Staff Photo by Paul C. Leibe

Color guard units wearing period dress representing the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War participate in Saturday's grave-marking ceremony at Patuxent River Naval Air Station's St. Nicholas Chapel. During the event, bronze markers were placed at the graves of more than a dozen men who fought in those wars and were later interred at St. Nicholas Cemetery.



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Jarboe, John Peak and Elijah Patton, who fought in the war of 1812.

Members of the Gen. George G. Meade Camp No. 5, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, marked the graves of Charles H. Chapman, George Washington Matthews and John P. Watts, who were all Union soldiers during the Civil War.

And members of the Col. Richard Thomas Zarvona Chapter 2571, United Daughters of the Confederacy, placed the bronze star markers at the graves of Joseph A. Bean, David Hammett, Charles Bennett Wise and Henry Alexander Wise, all Confederate veterans of the Civil War.

Also honored was the Rev. Sebastien deRosey, a French priest. DeRosey had been chaplain on a French military ship during the Revolutionary War and, after the war chose to stay in America. He is credited with starting St. Nicholas Chapel in 1795 and is buried on the grounds. During the ceremony Lt. Col. Didier Gros, assistant military attache to the French Embassy in Washington, D.C., placed a wreath at deRosey's grave.

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