

## **Brigade of the American Revolution**

### **Prospective / New Member Information Guide**

The Brigade of the American Revolution (BAR) is an international organization dedicating to recreating the life and times of the common soldier in America's war for independence. As a member of the Brigade of the American Revolution (B.A.R.) you are able to participate in events that recreate actions during the American Revolution, activities practiced by the soldiers and civilians living in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and learn 18<sup>th</sup> century skills that you never thought about, at least until now. The BAR is made up of recreated military units and organizations that took part in the American Revolution. These units include "regular" soldiers, militia units, staff departments, Native Americans, and civilians.

So, how do you get started?

Probably the biggest decision you will make is deciding what impression you would like to do. Who will you portray? Do you want to be a soldier or a civilian? If it is a soldier, do you want to be in King George's British army, or with the forces of the Continental Congress? Once you know that, will you be a regular British soldier, a Loyalist, a German, a Continental regular, a militiaman, a French or Spanish soldier, or even a Native American? After you know that, which unit would you like to portray/join? Some things to consider: What recreated units are in your area? This is not required but it is helpful to be able to associate with the members of the unit especially when getting started. Do you have a connection with an existing unit? For example, do they portray a unit from the same area or state where you grew up or one to which you have a connection in your genealogy. It also can be as simple as you like the unit's history, uniform, or the members.

If you would like to participate but aren't sure with which army or unit you would like be, you can join the Brigade of the American Revolution as a member of the Garrison Regiment. The Garrison Regiment is for B.A.R. members whose units have gone inactive and are looking to join another, and for new members that would like to look at the various units in camp and on the field to help make their decision.

If you choose to be a civilian, there are also many choices. Your impression most probably will center around what your 18<sup>th</sup> c. occupation will be. This will help you determine how to dress and what you will do at 18<sup>th</sup> c. events. If you want to join the B.A.R. as a civilian and not do it through a military unit, you can join the Civilian Class Membership (C.C.M.) Often civilians join through the military units of their husbands, fathers or sons but still do civilian impressions.

Again, in choosing your impression, you might want to consider your genealogy (real, or just who you would like to be), and your geography. (Again, real or what you would like it to be). You may also want to consider any particular skill(s) you have that translate to the 18<sup>th</sup> c.

Some impressions are more expensive than others. For someone portraying a soldier, the firearm will almost certainly be the single most expensive item in their kit.

Even if you are not sure which impression you will choose, there are some items that are nearly universal. These include, but may not be limited to;

Males

Plain white linen shirt (necessary to ALL male impressions)  
White wool breeches  
White hose (stockings) & garters  
18<sup>th</sup> c. buckle shoes  
Unbleached coarse linen work shirt  
Black cocked hat  
Neck cloth

Females

Plain white linen chemise  
Petticoat (skirt)  
Hose & 18<sup>th</sup> c. shoes/footwear  
Apron  
Jacket  
Cap  
Neck scarf

You can begin getting your clothing together by making or buying these items.

It is VERY important that any and all clothing and equipment be;

1. Made of correct material -weave, weight, color, etc. . .
2. Made to an authentic 18<sup>th</sup> c. pattern
3. Made to fit properly for 18<sup>th</sup> c. garments and equipment (there is a fine pamphlet available for free from the B.A.R., and available on the [NWDBARSHOT.com](http://NWDBARSHOT.com) website)

Patterns are available for the Brigade of the American Revolution, and from other sources recommended by B.A.R. members.

**CAUTION:** It is always more expensive in both time and money, to make something incorrectly, from the wrong sort of material or a faulty pattern, because you end up re-making it correctly. Make sure you know the correct material(s), pattern and fit **BEFORE** you buy or make anything.

Just because a merchant sells 18<sup>th</sup> c.-style items, it does not mean that all their merchandise is correct or correct for you. (As an example, even if someone is selling absolutely correct cavalry boots, unless you portray a cavalry unit, these museum-quality reproduction boots are not correct for YOU.)

THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO is ask an experienced B.A.R. member before you spent your money.

If you decide to join the Brigade of the American Revolution, and you do not have a specific unit in mind, and/or would like help please go to the website; [NWDBARSHOT.com](http://NWDBARSHOT.com), and contact one of the board officers listed. If you do not have computer access, you may contact;

Bob Cairns, NW Dept. B.A.R. Commander, at (330) 455-9722  
Dave/Diane Miller, NW Dept. Bd. Members, at (440) 842-9128  
Bob Kashary, NW Dept. Bd. Member, at (216) 538-0411  
Joe Forte, NW Dept. Bd. Member, at (740) 474-6183

Some recommended reading ;

Collector's Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Revolution, by George C. Neumann & Frank J. Kravic  
Private Yankee Doodle, by Joseph Plum Martin (this diary has some other names but is the same work)  
Sketchbook "76, by Robert Klinger  
SCOOUWA: James Smith's Indian Captive Narrative, ed. by John J. Barsotti