



# *Magnolia Messenger*

The national publication of the Order of the Steel Magnolias

Volume 3, Summer 2020 Edition

*OSM was founded in Alabama, the Cradle of the Confederacy for the purpose of honoring those mothers, wives, daughters, and all descendants of the faithful ladies who supported the Confederacy.*

Dear Members,

When we launched the Order of the Steel Magnolias back in 2018, the intent was to not only honor and remember those women who overcame incredible hardships during one of the darkest times in US history, but to also give them a voice. Given the way current events are unfolding, providing that voice and telling their stories is now more crucial than ever.

My heart is heavy as I watch the symbols of this country's grand history defaced and toppled by those ignorant of the truth. As descendants of those incredible men and women who built this great country, it is our responsibility to carry on their legacies. Sharing their stories doesn't take away from any movements from those who have not felt heard. If anything, they should appreciate a voice being given to others whose voices have not been heard.

With that in mind, I want to encourage you to submit the stories of your Steel Magnolias to our group so we can compile them in a book that can be shared for generations to come. The submission of a supplemental application isn't required in order to submit their information for our ancestor book. Of course, we hope you will honor them at some point with a supplemental application thus adding their names to our growing list of ancestors. But for the sake of capturing their unique stories, it isn't required. The entry form is included with this newsletter and is also available on our website. We would like to compile the stories and have a book ready for purchase by our 2021 meeting.

I know these have been trying times and it was so disappointing not to be able to come together this past April. Please stay safe and I hope to get to see all of you in DC next April!

*Suzanna Rawlins*

President



OSM Book  
Submission



## *A Trilogy of Heroine Spies of the Confederate States of America*

*Second in the mini-series*

### *Belle Boyd - "Siren of the Shenandoah, Cleopatra of Succession"*

Carla Whitehurst Odom, DTJ

This article is the second in the *Magnolia Messenger* to be dedicated to the memory of heroine spies of the Confederacy. Belle Boyd was born as Isabelle Marie Boyd in the Shenandoah Valley to well-to-do Benjamin Reed Boyd and Mary Rebecca nee Glenn Boyd. They were a prominent southern family. She attended Mount Washington Female College and received an excellent education that helped in part to equip her for the role as a Confederate spy. The Siren of the Shenandoah spent her debutant season in Washington, DC before returning home at Martinsburg, Virginia. Shortly following, on Independence Day, Bell Boyd shot a member of the Federal troops occupying the town. He had invaded her home and cursed and insulted her mother apparently because the site was flying a Confederate flag rather than a Union one. Belle was acquitted, however, this action caused the Yankees to post guards around the house. She later told of befriending the guards, and in particular a certain Captain Daniel Kelly to whom she attributed provisions of certain Union plans.

Until the shooting incident Bell had been involved in the war effort in usual female pursuits of raising funds and sewing clothing for the Confederates. Using her gender wiles she began actively gathering intelligence for the Southern cause for Generals Stonewall Jackson and Pierre Beauregard. Initially the Union officials underestimated her motives and dismissed her accomplishments as the adventures, read that as sometimes the misadventures of a teenager female. In time they began to realize this Cleopatra of Succession was a far more serious threat. The next year after overhearing Union plans through a door in a hotel located in Front Royal, Virginia, she went between lines to inform General Jackson of the size of the Union forces. Bell Brent suffered close calls as evidenced by bullet holes in her skirt. Her intelligence information is credited for helping turn the tide of the battle. General Jackson awarded her the Southern Cross of Honor and made her a captain and honorary aide-de-camp.

After surveillance by the now famous Allan Pinkerton, the Union Secretary of War Edwin Stanton issued a warrant for her arrest. Our heroine was confined to the Old Capital Prison, that was located then on the current site of the Supreme Court of the United States. During the war Rose O'Neal Greenhow was incarcerated at the same location with her little daughter. She was released shortly before Bell Boyd was entered the facility. Before the conclusion of the War

Between the State the Siren of the Shenandoah was arrested six times, imprisoned three times and exiled to Canada. Once she was released after contracting Typhoid Fever. She offered to carry Confederate papers to England aboard the *Greyhound*, but the ship was seized by a Union Naval Vessel.

Never one to cling to adversity Bell Boyd fell in love with and married her captor Union naval officer Samuel Hardinge in 1865. He was arrested for aiding the enemy and died in prison. Hardinge entered larger life just before their daughter Grace was born. Our heroine retreated in England for a time. The next year she published Belle Boyd, in Camp and Prison in two volumes that embellished her role, but were highly popular. For a time, she was an actress in England, but retired after marrying a former Union officer, John Swainson Hammond with whom she had four children. Fifteen years later they divorced. The Cleopatra of Succession married the third time to former British Army officer turned actor Nathaniel Rue High in New Orleans. He was several years her junior. She and Mr. High had two sons and two daughters. Following her third marriage the Siren of the Shenandoah toured America presenting lectures about her role as a spy.

She was on stage when she died of a heart attack in Wilbourn City, Wisconsin. The Women's Auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic paid to bury her. Belle Boyd was carried to her grave at Spring Grove Cemetery by veteran members of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Boyd family's house has been converted to a museum in Martinsburg, now in West Virginia.

Several accounts of the Siren of the Shenandoah's life vary in the narratives. This writer has attempted to unsnarl the details to the best of her ability to provide an interesting and factual read of this multi-talented and highly acclaimed woman of the South.

## Bibliography

### Isabella "Belle" Marie Boyd

Cokie Roberts, Capital Dames, The Civil War and the Women of Washington, 1848 - 1867, HarperCollins, New York, 2015.

James Robertson, The Untold Civil War, Edited by Neil Kagan, National Geographic, Washington, DC, 2011, pp. 238-239.

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*Order of the Steel Magnolias*  
Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting  
March 30, 2020

President Suzanna Rawlins called the meeting to order at 8:05 pm via Zoom video conference and welcomed meeting attendees.

Pat Gallagher provided an invocation.

President Rawlins requested that the Secretary call the roll. Present at the meeting were:

Suzanna Rawlins, President  
Leslie Kirk, Vice President  
Robert Odom, Treasurer  
Julie Hesler, Secretary  
Pat Gallagher, Chaplain  
Carla Odom, Historian  
Jane Power, Genealogist

- ❖ The by-laws state that the Treasurer's records will be reviewed prior to the annual meeting.
  - Based on the state of emergency that has been declared in the state of Alabama, President Suzanna Rawlins will invoke the emergency by-laws, whereby the virtual board meeting will be binding.
  - Jane Power brought forward a motion that we suspend the review of Treasurer's records until next year and review books for 2019 and 2020 at the same time in 2021. Pat Gallagher seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
  - Robert Odom gave a summary of financial standing. Will send financial statement electronically to be appended to these minutes.
  
- ❖ Nominating committee
  - The executive board discussed options for creating a nominating committee in light of the emergency.

- The board selected a member of the nominating committee as required by the by-laws. Carla nominated Pat Gallagher, who was unanimously approved by the board, and will serve as the Nominating Committee chair.
- The board selected a list of people for President Suzannah Rawlins to contact to fill to fill the other two positions.
- ❖ Pat Gallagher will send Suzanna Rawlins a copy of the Memorial Program she had prepared for the 2020 meeting. The program will serve as the Chaplain's report and will be appended to the final version of this meeting's minutes.
- ❖ Jane Power gave the Genealogist's report. A copy of the report will be attached to these minutes.
- ❖ Jane Power made a motion to order the Outgoing President General's pin from Pamela Wright, to be used in 2021 meeting not to exceed \$425. The motion was seconded by Carla Odom and carried unanimously.
- ❖ All other officer reports are to be submitted to the Secretary by April 15, 2020 and will be attached to the final version of these meeting minutes. After approval by the board, the minutes will be distributed to the general membership with a newsletter.

President Rawlins asked if there was any new business:

- Robert Odom asked if Suzanna Rawlins had received an update on the catering contract from the Army Navy club. Suzanna confirmed.
- President Suzanna Rawlins will ask Stephen McLeod to be our presenter at the 2021 meeting.

Chaplain Pat Gallagher gave the benediction.

President Suzanna Rawlins adjourned the meeting at 7:55.

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Palmer Hesler*

Secretary

(Officer reports to follow)



*Order of the Steel Magnolias*  
Leslie Kirk, Vice President  
April, 2020

**Insignia**

2019 Pamela Wright Sales

141 pieces sold for a total of \$9,189.85

October 31 PW sent check for \$616.00 – Donation back to the organization on starter sets sold January through October, 2019.

This officer worked with Pamela Wright to create the President's Pin. This pin's design was complete in 2019 but wasn't available until 2020. It has been ordered and received by Suzanna Rawlins.





*The Order of the Steel Magnolias*

Charles Robert Odom

Treasurer

13 January 2020

Treasurer's Report: See attached.

The accounting period is 1 January to 31 December and the checking account is held at Wells Fargo.

All checks received have been deposited in a timely manner and all bills have been paid in a like manner. Each monthly bank statement has been reconciled and all treasurer and bank records are in agreement. A transaction register has been maintained that identifies each financial transaction.

All financial records will be reviewed in April 2020 and the written report will be made a part of this narrative.

*Charles R. Odom*

# *Order of the Steel Magnolias*

Treasurer's Report January 1 - December 31, 2019

Checking Account Balance January 1, 2019		\$20,396.74
<b>INFLOWS:</b>		
Life Membership Applications	\$6,955.00	
Supplemental Applications	\$325.00	
SDVAFF & OSM 2019 Meeting Reservations	\$2,640.00	
Donation	\$616.00	
Total Inflows		<u>10,536.00</u>
<b>OUTFLOWS:</b>		
SDVAFF & OSM 2019 Meeting Banquet	\$2,511.49	
SDVAFF & OSM 2020 Meeting Deposit	\$250.00	
Memorial Wreath	\$250.00	
Office Supplies and Postage	\$649.65	
Refund	\$180.00	
Speaker	\$50.00	
Donation	\$500.00	
Registrar's Fee	\$25.00	
Shredding	\$60.00	
Total Outflows		<u>4,476.14</u>
Checking Account Balance December 31, 2019		<u>\$26,456.60</u>
Outstanding checks	\$13.85	
Available Balance		<u><u>\$26,442.75</u></u>



*Order of the Steel Magnolias*  
Pat Gallagher  
Chaplain  
(Memorial Service to serve as Chaplain's Report)



*Memorial Service*  
*April 13, 2020*

*Chaplain: This Memorial Service expresses our hope of Immortal Life and our belief that love can never lose its own.*

*Response by All: They are not dead, who live in hearts they leave behind. In those whom they have blessed they live a life again. Eternal life is theirs throughout the years, and time declares their immortality.*

*Chaplain: Let us now, with quiet and grateful hearts remember before God our beloved dead. They have left our earthly companionship, but they live within our hearts. The remembrance of them is clear and blessed.*

*FM29 Jack Grady Dyess 6-5-2019*

*Chaplain: This Steel Magnolia maintained the foundations of our beloved Southern culture and heritage for generations yet to come.*

*Chaplain: I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. Whosoever believeth in me shall not die, but have everlasting life. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*



*Order of the Steel Magnolias*  
Second Annual Meeting  
Historian's Report  
April 13, 2020  
The Army and Navy Club, Washington, DC

This officer serves by appointment of Founder President Suzanna Rawlins as fellow Founder and Historian of Order of the Steel Magnolias. Assigned duties include maintaining an informal history notebook of artifacts presented by members, and as editor of the national publication, the *Magnolia Messenger*. Highlights of Volume 1, Number 2, Winter edition, included the recent Alabama Bicentennial 2019 Tea, and the first in a mini series of Heroines of the Confederate States of America, featuring the famous spy Rose O'Neal Greenhow. The *Magnolia Messenger* is provided on line. In early announcement members were asked to save the date of this meeting.

Please continue to be encouraged to share keepsakes for inclusion of Steel Magnolia history! The first book is nearly full!

It is a great honor serve with Founder, President Rawlins and fellow founder officers.

*Carla Whitehurst Odom*

The second installment of the



## *Order of the Steel Magnolias*

### REPORT OF THE GENEALOGIST March 2019 – 31 Mar 2020 Delivered 30 Mar 2020 – Electronic Meeting

Total Membership: 245

Total Founders: 9

Total Honorary: 1

Total Founding Members: 54

Total Charter Members: 146

Total Regular Members: 35

Deaths: 0

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 245

Supplementals: 12

Total Blank unassigned numbers: 10

Last member number assigned: 257

Total Pending Applications: 0

Total Pending Supplementals: 0

Total Applications requesting more information: 0

*Jane Routt Power*



*Order of the Steel Magnolias*

Leslie Kirk, Webmistress

April, 2020

**OSM Website**

This officer has maintained the website that includes ten pages of information: The Home Page, Membership Information, Officers, Ancestors, Insignia, Meetings, News & Photos 2019 & 2020, Newsletters, and Contact Information.

The website is current with the Steel Magnolias ancestors provided by the genealogist, insignia photos to include new president's pin, pricing, forms, and meeting invites and organization photos.