



The Sunflower Picket

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Publication of the Department of Kansas, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

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NINETEENTH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT Saturday, January 10, 2015 Emporia, Kansas

The Nineteenth Annual Department Encampment will be held on Saturday, January 10, 2015, in Emporia, Kansas, at the Emporia Senior Center, 630 E. 12th Street. This is where the 2014 encampment was held. While the agenda is still being finalized, please make plans to attend. Hopefully, we'll be able to greet some of our new Brothers from Old Glory Camp 7 in St. Francis.

Remember, the Department Encampment is your opportunity to be part of the process. Although we tend to think of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War in terms of just our local camp, it is important to remember that the camp is part of a larger organization. The encampment is the place where Kansas Brothers can come together in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty to conduct department business.



The agenda will be provided in the near future. Also, the inclement weather date is January 24, 2015.

OLD GLORY CAMP No. 7

The northwestern approaches to the Soldier State are now more secure with the establishment of Old Glory Camp 7 in Saint Francis. Thanks to the tireless efforts of PDC Alan Russ, the camp was organized and chartered in October. Welcome!



National Secretary and PDC Alan Russ (right) administers the oath of office to (l-r) Camp 7 JVC Ethan Smith, Camp Cmdr Chance Marble, and SVC Pat Owens

BATTLE OF MINE CREEK 150TH SESQUICENTENNIAL SIGNATURE EVENT



The Department of Kansas proudly partnered with the Kansas State Historical Society at its Mine Creek Civil War Battlefield State Historic Site near Pleasanton to remember the largest Civil War battle to occur in Kansas. On October 25, 1864, retreating Confederate forces under General Sterling Price, which had suffered a decisive defeat by Union forces at Westport, Missouri, two days earlier, were forced into battle as they attempted to ford Mine Creek with a large wagon train of vital war materiel. The action became the second largest cavalry battle of the entire war. In its aftermath, Price's shattered army made haste for sanctuary in Arkansas and never again threatened Missouri or Kansas.

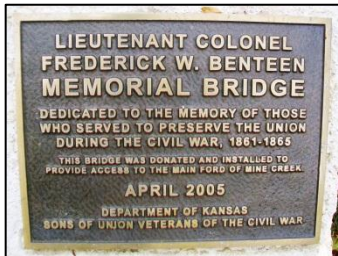
With more than 500 people attending the event, department brothers were able to answer questions about the order, speak

with visitors about the battle and war, and exhibit military objects that held special attachment. Of particular interest were the 115th Illinois Infantry sword that belonged to Dept SVC Kent Melcher's Civil War ancestor, and the G.A.R. membership certificate for Conrad Fisher, which had been beautifully framed by his descendent and namesake, Conrad Fisher of Old Abe Camp 16. The SUVCW sesquicentennial medal and a commemorative passport stamp were available at the event.



The Department of Kansas has conducted good work over the years to help ensure that the state's most important battlefield is properly cared for. Perhaps the most visible effort was raising funds and building a bridge over a small tributary that enabled visitors to safely access the former Fort Scott Road ford across Mine Creek. This strategic crossing served as a chokepoint that slowed Price's retreating army.

The bridge was built by Dept of Kansas Brothers in 2005 and dedicated to Frederick Benteen, who commanded the 10th Missouri Cavalry during the campaign. The Department hopes to



reestablish regular work days at the state historic site.

Learn more about the battle and site at:

http://www.kshs.org/mine_creek

<http://www.ozarkscivilwar.org/archives/333>

<http://www.civilwaronthewesternborder.org/map/battle-mine-creek>

Complementing the Department of Kansas Sesquicentennial Signature Event at Mine Creek Civil War Battlefield State Historic Site, PCC Bill Fischer, historian at Fort Scott National Historic Site, hosted at the park a Kansas Humanities Council/Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area *Shared Stories of the Civil War* on "Price's March of 1864". The *Shared Stories* use the voices of those who were there. For more information on these free programs, visit

<http://kansashumanities.org/programs/shared-stories-of-the-civil-war/shared-stories-topics/>



UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

Camp Officer Elections must be held by end of year

Nov 15, 2014 – Remembrance Day, Gettysburg PA

Jan 10, 2015 – Dept of Kansas Encampment, Emporia

Apr 11, 2015 – 59th Lincoln Tomb Ceremony, Springfield IL

November 15, 1864 – What remains of Atlanta is burned by Union troops under the command of General William T. Sherman. The act culminates a fierce six month campaign to take the city, a critical link between the Confederacy's coastal states and its western interior.

JERRY REIMAN SERVES OUR BOYS IN BLUE

After several months of dedication to the task, Brother Jerry Reiman has cleaned about 1,100 Civil War headstones. Brother Reiman, who retired from teaching music at Seaman High School in 2013, began his project that summer, continued as weather permitted through the winter and spring, and completed cleaning headstones in the Topeka Cemetery early this summer.

When he began working on the once monthly cleaning project with Old Abe Camp 16, he saw the deplorable condition into which many of the stones had fallen. Covered with lichen and moss, many had turned almost black, making them impossible to read. And most of these veterans have no family remaining to care for their graves or markers.

So, Brother Reiman stepped up and made the cleaning project an almost daily ritual. He arrived at the Topeka Cemetery around 6:00 a.m., spent about twenty minutes cleaning each stone using water and brushes, and repeated his efforts until about 10:00 a.m. when the summer heat began to make itself known.



"When the sun got overhead," he said, "I was done for the day." Although he did not know how long it would take, Brother Reiman did have a listing of Civil War gravesites in Topeka and surrounding Shawnee County. His next task will be to clean the markers of former United States Colored Troops at Mount Auburn Cemetery, just across the street from Topeka Cemetery. Working hard – no doubt sweating – to clean as many Civil War

headstones as possible, Brother Reiman plans to work the following Topeka-area cemeteries: Rochester, Half Day, Mount Calvary, Mount Hope, Lynn Creek, Bethel, Bauer, Emmanuel, Mission Center, Topeka, and Pioneer.

Brother's Reiman's service project rightly came to the attention of the Topeka *Capital-Journal* newspaper, which ran a feature story this summer. He was also interviewed and filmed by KAKE TV in Wichita for the local news feature, "Hatteburg's People," which highlights exception community service. Jerry was awarded the Dept of Kansas Captain Patrick H. Coney Award for Brother of the Year for 2014. Huzzah!

November 29, 1864 – Troops led by Colonel John Chivington attack and massacre more than 400 Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians at Sand Creek, Colorado, in one of the worst atrocities perpetrated during the American Civil War.

BROTHERS ACTIVE IN HEADSTONE DEDICATION CEREMONIES

Kansas is known as the Soldier State because so many Civil War veterans moved west to seek a new beginning on the Great Plains. Despite the great distances (Kansas is >82,000 sq miles in size) involved in traveling the state and the limited number of camps in our department, Brothers have made much effort to honor our Boys in Blue. Several ceremonies were held this year.

PVT CHARLES H. YUST

Charles Henry Yust joined the 21st Missouri Infantry at the tender age of 14 years as a drummer in Company B, which also included his father and brother, both named Frederick, and uncle Charles Yust. After the war the Yusts moved to rural Reno County, Kansas, where the family still farms some of the original homestead.

Initiated by descendant Ryan Todd (at right), the Dept's 2012 John Clem Jr. Member of the Year, and his father, Mike (left), the VA application was completed in time to have the headstone dedicated at Hayes Twp Cemetery during the Yust family reunion in July. The ceremony was attended by more than 125 family members from across the country.



PVT PHILIP H. NICKELSON

Wilma Handley requested a headstone dedication ceremony for her ancestor, Philip Nickelson, who served in Company G, 114th Illinois Infantry. Nickelson was born in New Jersey, enlisted at



Springfield IL in 1862, and received a disability discharge at Memphis TN in 1863. He moved to Anderson County KS by 1870 and was later a member of Rufus Gilpatrick GAR Camp 180 in Garnett.

PVT RUFUS ANDERSON

The Dept was invited by Carolyn Whitaker, who had worked with descendants to obtain a VA headstone, to perform a dedication ceremony for Rufus Anderson, who had been born into slavery in Tennessee. Self-liberating, he made his way from Arkansas to Kansas, where he later joined Company H, 1st KS Colored Infantry, which reorganized as the 79th USCT.

(at right) Pvt Anderson's descendants, Ms. Whitaker, and Brothers Fisher, Lester, & Melcher.



PVT THOMAS M. MANNEN

Franklin Camp 5 member Josh Young researched his ancestor and found his unmarked grave in Fredonia City Cemetery in Wilson County. He obtained a VA headstone to honor Thomas Mannen, who served in Company D,



12th Kansas Infantry. Mannen, an Illinois native, was active in Phil Harvey GAR Post 98 in Fredonia.



Josh Young