THE INDIANA LEGION

ORLANDO A SOMERS CAMP #1 KOKOMO
JOHN AUTEN CAMP # 8 SOUTH BEND
WILLIAM P BENTON CAMP#28 CENTERVILLE
JOHN B ANDERSON CAMP #223 COLUMBUS

JOHN W. FOSTER CAMP #2 EVANSVILLE CHAMPION HILL CAMP #17 HUNTINGTON DAVID D PORTER CAMP #116 VALPARAISO BEN HARRISON CAMP #356 INDIANAPOLIS

Newsletter of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Department of Indiana Dennis C. Hutchinson – Commander Issue 2-20



DEPARTMENT ORDER 2020-1, SERIES 2020-2021, June 23, 2020

Brothers of the Department of Indiana,

- A. *June 2020 Encampment:* I am very honored and humbled to have been elected to the office of Department Commander at the 134th Annual Department of Indiana Encampment that was held June 6th, 2020. The Encampment was a first for the Department of Indiana in that the meeting was held virtually using Zoom due the present COVID-19 virus situation. I want to congratulate and thank, the now Past Department Commander, Timothy J. Beckman for his service and leadership during the past 2 years. His insight and guidance has truly been appreciated. Thanks are in order for all of the Brothers, elected and appointed for choosing to serve in the many Department of Indiana Offices over the next year.
- B. *Transfer of Headquarters:* The Department of Indiana Commander headquarters is hereby transferred to 3780 N Old State Rd, Rockport, IN 47635. Mail for the Commander may be posted here. Electronic email is preferred at 31stind@gmail.com . My cell phone number is 812-660-2192. I do accept text messages, but please include your name if you do not regularly communicate with me. Please feel free to contact me by any of these methods if you have a question, concern or information to pass along.
- C. *Community Participation:* It is very important for SUVCW members to participate in activities that can be seen by the Public in the Communities in which we live. We must presently follow government virus guidelines while we struggle through this unprecedented time. I do encourage our members to participate in headstone and monument rededication ceremonies, and to clean and restore or replace headstones and memorials. Participating in educational opportunities, living histories, reenactments, heritage group presentations and school presentations is also encouraged once conditions allow.
- D. *Offices and Forms:* I will follow the lead from Tim Beckman (PDC) to encourage all Camps of the Department of Indiana to fill the offices of Graves Registration, Eagle Scout/ROTC Coordinator and Patriotic Instructor. These important offices are needed for the mission of the SUVCW. Patriotic instruction should be presented at all Camp meetings. From personal experience as a Past Department Patriotic Instructor, it is important that Form-40 be filled out for the Camp and sent to the Department Patriotic Instructor, James M. Floyd Jr. before

- April 1, 2021. His email is jim@jimfloyd.com. I ask that each Camp Secretary promptly fill out Form-30 when any change occurs with our membership. This includes change of address or email address, change of membership status including the following: New member, Transfer, Loss, Achievement, Status, Dual Membership and Death of a brother. If you have a death in your Camp you should also notify the Department Chaplain, Thomas Ashley (thomas.ashley1@aol.com) and the National Chaplain. Other important Camp forms to be turned in to the Department Secretary on a timely basis are Form-22, Form-27 and a copy of form 990-N when filed with the government.
- E. *Camp Websites:* I am asking that all Camps have and maintain their websites. An updated listing of the elected officers should exist along with contact information.
- F. **BANNER and Indiana Legion:** I encourage each member and Camp to submit articles to the BANNER magazine and information about every activity or event to the Indiana Legion. I know it is going to be harder to have activities to submit right now, but if you do, please take some pictures and find someone to write something up and send it in.
- G. *Indiana Civil War Monuments, Markers and Sites:* One activity we can all do during these strange times, is to get out and take some pictures of Indiana Civil War Monuments, Markers and other related Sites. Go to the Dept. of Indiana webpage http://suvcwin.org/ and check out what has been documented. If you know of a Monument or Marker that has not yet been submitted, take some photos of it, gather information on it and submit this information to Sr. Vice Commander James K. Floyd Jr. There are several Generals, Colonels and Monuments that are not yet submitted.
- H. *Goals:* I plan to work on a few goals with a newer member of our Fraternity, Brian Ford II. I asked Brian for his take on a "Social Media Proposal" to improve contact with possible new recruits. Brian came up with a first draft with an acronym I find catchy, "R3" which is short for Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation. He and I will be working together on a plan of action based on his proposal.
- a. Recruitment: Recruitment is the most important and the hardest thing to do in my opinion. Without recruiting new members, the SUVCW will NOT survive. As Commander, I ask that each of us work to invite people to become members of our Fraternity. If they feel intimidated by the Genealogy paperwork let them know that they can first join as an Associate and then you can help them work on getting the hereditary information for Full membership later. Getting a positive word out about us as an organization is the toughest part. One of the ways to get this information out there today is Social Media. Some of our Camps already have Facebook pages, but the Department of Indiana does not. I will be working with Brian on completing this, and later other media outlets will be used as well.
- **b. Retention:** Our organization needs to keep (retain) the members we have. Try and make a special effort to invite those who have not attended a meeting for a while to attend. Utilize meeting agendas to insure that the meetings are meaningful, interesting and move along at a good pace. Get people involved in projects. These efforts will create a better sense of belonging.
- *c. Reactivation:* Our Camps lose members and knowing the reasons and finding understanding and reaching out could bring some back. If we work on Retention, Reactivation will not normally be necessary.
- d. Camp Meeting Visitation by the Commander: A lofty personal goal of mine is to be able to attend at least one meeting at each of the Department's eight Camps in person. Until this COVID-19 pandemic subsides, I do not believe a personal visit is possible at this time. I should be able to sit in on a virtual meeting easily. Please contact me about 2 weeks in advance if your Camp plans to invite me.

e. Outstanding Goals:

- *i.* 26th Indiana Vicksburg Monument: A long standing goal for this Department has been to have the 26th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Monument that was left stranded behind a Walmart, be moved back into the Vicksburg National Military Park. The National Park Service has for various reasons not considered this a priority. Any correspondence concerning this project should be directed through the 26th Indiana Monument Committee of William Adams (PDC), Bruce Kolb (PDC) or Mike Beck (PDC).
- *ii. New Camps:* I fully support the idea of creating new Camps in the Vigo County (Terre Haute) area, Southern Indiana near New Albany/Jeffersonville or Madison and the Southeastern area near Lawrenceburg. If we have members close to those areas who are interested in starting a new Camp, please contact myself or other Department Officers about your interest. All of the listed areas were recruitment centers during the Civil War, and many a fine Regiment came from those areas. I am particularly interested in Vigo County and the surrounding area due my ancestor being in the 31st Indiana Volunteer Infantry which was organized there.
- *I. National Encampment:* The National Encampment this year is scheduled to be held in Atlanta, Georgia on August 13 16th, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 circumstances I will not encourage or request your attendance. We have presently had one Officer cancel his reservation in part due to COVID-19. However, I personally will attend the encampment unless it is cancelled. As the date for the Encampment approaches, I will be asking for a head count of those who, for sure, are attending (Editor Note: The 2020 National Encampment has been cancelled).

J. Closing: The Department of Indiana Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War belongs to each and every one of its members. I ask that you renew your interest in the Fraternity and provide input and support by attending all Camp meetings and getting involved in projects, memorials, and commemorations and other worthy events. Please contact me or any Department Officer if you have a question or if we can be of service in any way.

Ordered this 23rd of June, 2020

In Fraternity, Charity & Loyalty,

Dennis C. Hutchinson Commander - Department of Indiana Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

SUVCW, Camp 17 Meeting

- 1. You Know You're at a Camp 17 meeting if The finance committee refuses to provide funds for the purchase of a chandelier for the meeting hall because none of the members knows how to play one.
- 2. You Know You're at a Camp 17 meeting if the commander says, "I'd like to ask Bubba to act as camp guard and five guys stand up.
- 3. You Know You're at a Camp 17 meeting when the camp finishes singing The Battle Hymn of the Republic the commander shouts, 'Play Ball.'
- 4. You Know You're at a Camp 17 meeting when at the end of the benediction the commander says, "Okie Dokie, lets git on with it.
- 5. You know you're at a Camp 17 meeting when one of the brothers tries to tell you that Ann Margaret could play the role of Mary Todd Lincoln in the next Lincoln movie.

Treasurer's Report



Hi, I'm Gib Young! Your money is as safe with me as if it were in the Bank of Venezuela!

As of the printing of this issue of the Indiana Legion the funds stand at 9553.81

(The Allied Orders amount has been evenly split and is no longer part of the total of the Department Funds.)

On May 20th I received this interesting Civil War footnote from Brother Bruce Kolb by way of Brother Tim Beckman. I am giving it the headline..."We invited A. Lincoln to dinner but he couldn't make it...."

I (Brother Kolb ed. note) was walking through a Civil War show, and noticed a book on a dealers table that had a blank cover. The material on the cover and its size were similar to the Adjutant General's reports issued by most states. I opened the book and found its title was A Record of the Services of Illinois Soldiers in the Black Hawk and The Mexican War. The book was issued by the Adjutant General's Office in Illinois in 1882. It was published in Springfield, Illinois.

Being a Lincoln collector I thought this book must contain information on Captain Abraham Lincoln's Company during the Black Hawk war. I quickly scanned through the pages and found the page below. It reads like a Who's Who of Sangamon County, and lists the names of Lincoln's neighbors.

I quickly asked the dealer how much he wanted for the book, and after a little haggling I paid for the book and rushed back to my table.

It was almost a year later while reading about Abraham Lincoln that I noticed a reference to private A. Lincoln in the Black Hawk war. I thought is this correct? So I pulled the book off of the shelf and paged a little further through the book and found A.Lincoln listed in Captain Jacob M. Earley's company. You can see the page below.

Lincoln had originally enlisted on April 21, 1832 and served as Captain until May 27, 1832. He then signed up again on May 28, 1832 and served until July 10, 1832. In reading the names on the roster I came across the name of James F. Reed of Sangamon County. A few years ago, I read that a librarian in California discovered papers that had belonged to James Reed. They consisted of among other things muster rolls of Captain Early's company. As it turns out the papers had been inherited from his Captain. Obviously these papers were cherished mementos of his service and he kept them safe until he reached California.

How did those papers get across the country? It seems that Reed his wife and four children left Springfield for California in April of 1846. It's seems that Reed and two friends had organized this trip, but early in the trip, Reed was expelled from the group for fatally stabbing another member during a dispute. He was forced to leave his family and travel alone all the way to California.

Reed was a friend of Lincoln's and he tried to convince Lincoln to go on this grand adventure. Lincoln however decided at the last minute not to go because he already had a toddler at home and Mary Todd was pregnant again. The pull of Manifest Destiny was strong, and Lincoln loved the outdoors and adventure.

Reed eventually made it California but his wife and children were not there. He mounted a search for his family in February of 1847. He found them in the mountains, and rescued them as well as the remaining survivors that had accompanied Reed's friends George and Jacob Donner.

That's right, Lincoln was almost a member of the Donner Party...

2020 Memorial Day Activities

In this COVID-19 time not all activities, including Memorial Day, were forgotten or cancelled.

Champion Hill, Camp No. 17, Huntington, had to cancel its outdoor Illumination Ceremony that has been an annual (Decoration Day) Memorial Day event for several years. However the brothers did not want to forget about honoring the 'Boys in Blue' and so they joined with the 30th Indiana Infantry re-enactment organization to hold a ceremony in Fort Wayne.

Because of 'virus restrictions' we had to move the date for a ceremony to June 13, Saturday, at 5 pm which was being held in Lindenwood Cemetery in Fort Wayne. The services were held at the grave of Col. Sion Bass of the 30th Indiana who was killed at Shiloh and at the nearby grave of 'Mother George' who was a well known Civil War nurse. Of course Camp 17 was there to honor them and all other veterans who served during the Civil War. It was a dignified and appropriate time and the guests were honest, patriotic, Americans who knew their history and the correctness of remembering with gratitude the sacrifices, large and small, given by that generation of Americans.



30th Indiana Infantry (re-enactment) at Lindenwood Cemetery

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Brother of the SUVCW (and 'old Abe') at grave of Col. Bass (I to r)Paul Kinningham, Gib Young, Brian Ford, Dave Tilden (Murray Cox as 'Abe'), Bill Adams (as himself), Phil Dyer, Terry Furguson

John W. Foster Camp No. 2 Memorial Day Activities: On May 25th, 2020, Dennis Hutchinson participated in the Memorial Day celebration at the Court House Square in Princeton, IN. He was the only SUVCW/SVR member in attendance. There are 2 monuments dedicated to Civil War Soldiers, the 58th Indiana Monument which was completed in July 1865 and the Soldiers and Sailors Monument erected in 1912. The 58th Indiana Monument is one of the oldest Civil War monuments in the United States.



At the 58th Indiana Monument. L-R: Dennis Hutchinson, Mary and Don O' Neal, Jim Munford, Charlie and Karen Michael, (Charlie as Gen. U. S. Grant)

Ben Harrison Camp No. 356 Memorial Day Activities: Since all Memorial Day activities were cancelled at Crown Hill Cemetery for 2020, several camp members spent the day decorating graves of veterans around the Indianapolis metropolitan area. Tim Beckman, Joe Beckman, and Jim Floyd, placed flags at the graves of six Civil War veterans and one Revolutionary War veteran in the Old Trails/McVey pioneer cemetery on the east side of Indianapolis. In addition, Tim and Joe Beckman placed flags and cleared some brush away from five Civil War veterans buried in the Vansickle Pioneer cemetery also located on the east side of Indianapolis. Interesting side note, all five of the Civil War veterans buried in the Vansickle Cemetery died during the war. Bruce and Andy Kolb placed flags on the graves of the Civil War soldiers in the Highland/Beaver Cemetery in Fishers, Indiana. Flags had been placed on modern military markers but they had not decorated the Civil War soldiers graves.



Andy and Bruce Kolb at the Highland Cemetery

Orlando A. Somers Camp No. 1 Memorial Day Activities, Submitted by Alan Teller, PDC: On May 30, 2020, I walked through the west side of Crown Point cemetery and placed 34 Flags on random Civil War Graves and distributed two boxes of flowers as an event for Somers Camp. I was aided in this task by my friend Caryl Lamb. I placed no flags in the Soldiers Circle, because they had flags earlier in the week. I also placed a flag and flowers at the graves Orlando A. Somers and Miranda B. Dye.

Memorial Day 2020 A Different Time – Same Mission

by
Jim Wilson Signals Officer
(John Auten Camp No. 8 South Bend Indiana)

Memorial Day is the result of a great deal of dedicated work done by our fore fathers that made up the Grand Army of the Republic. On May 30, 1868 Memorial Day was celebrated in accordance with General Order #11 and done so to honor the memory of the Civil War dead. To remember the boys in blue that served this nation in its time of trouble, 1861-1865. Following the last encampment of the GAR in 1949 that duty was passed to the Sons of Veterans, and then to the renamed Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Today, that responsibility falls to us – the current day SUVCW.

In 2020 our society faces unusual times. Times that have resulted in the cancellation of nearly all parades, services, ceremonies and celebrations that would bring honor to the memory of the boys in blue. Yet, our current situation does not remove our inherited responsibility to bring honor to the memory of Civil War Veterans on Memorial Day, it only causes us to work harder and be more creative in finding an avenue to do so. To that end, Commander Adams developed a unique three pronged battle plan that was placed into operation Monday. Brother Bill Bierly was dispatched on a circuitous route that took him south of LaPorte, IN and to Walkerton, IN where he cleaned and decorated CW grave stones in Salem and Walkerton cemeteries.





Brother Jim Wilson was assigned to screen the northern front where he entered Cass County, MI for the purpose of cleaning Civil War Veterans headstones in Edwardsburg City Cemetery.

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The main body made up of; Commander Adams, Brother Alan Hall and Brother Jon Swarts held the line at Bowman Cemetery in South Bend, IN. A private "John Auten Camp, 8 only" ceremony was held in accordance with the SUVCW rituals manual at the site of the GAR memorial stone dedicated to John Auten Post 8.



The reserve forces consisting of Brothers Craig Powers, Ken Showalter, and Michael Downs were not committed, yet they prayerfully considered the sacrifice made by those brave boys in blue. The battle plan was well executed, with success being obtained across the entire front. Our Civil War Veterans were remembered, honored and prayed for in a sincere and professional way. May we see a return to a more normal observance of this all important day in 2021. Yet, if we do not, our dedicated efforts will be focused on an alternate celebration of remembrance in some unique and special way. The mission has not changed.



Champion Hill, Camp 17 Holds a Last Soldier Ceremony for Huntington County

On July 25th Camp 17 and guests gathered on one of the small hills in Mt. Hope Cemetery to honor the last Union Soldier to be buried in Huntington County. Corpl. Edwin Sexton, Company C, 130th Ohio Infantry, was the county's last Union Veteran when he died in 1942.

He moved to Huntington to work on the Erie Railroad where he was a conductor until retiring. The camp not only honored Corpl. Sexton with a ceremony and a plaque but we also, in the same ceremony, recognized Col. George Pride, who served as chief engineer on Grant's staff from Belmont to Shiloh and Pvt. John Kissinger who was

awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for volunteering to be bitten by a yellow fever carrying mosquito in Cuba in an Army medical experiment. Each of these soldiers also had their graves marked by a plaque, flag, and flowers. (Interestingly Corp. Sexton is buried a few yards away from the county's most infamous traitor, Lambin P Milligan, a Copperhead, but no note was made of him.)

*This marks the ninth county where the last veteran has been recognized.



SUVCW Brothers, Tom Schmitt, Jim Floyd, Phil Dyer, Gib Young Rick Wiegman, Dave Tilden, and Bob Winters, at the Grave of Corpl. Edwin Sexton

On June 20, 2020, John W. Foster Camp #2 Commander – David Hoesli, Dept. of Indiana Commander – Dennis Hutchinson PCC and John W. Foster Camp #2 Sr. Vice Commander – Brian Lankford, replaced the broken headstone for Private Benjamin F. Buntin. Benjamin F. Buntin is the 3rd Great Uncle of J. W. Foster Camp brother, Thomas J. Carson Jr. Pvt. Buntin mustered into Company F, of the 1st Indiana Cavalry. Commander Hoesli helped Thomas Carson with the paperwork to obtain the headstone. Buntin is buried in the Beasley Cemetery in Spencer County, Indiana.



L. to R. Dept. of Indiana Commander - Dennis Hutchinson, J. W. Foster Camp #2 Commander - David Hoesli and J. W. Foster Camp #2 Sr. Vice Commander - Brian Lankford



Recognizing Shared Values with the Boy Scouts of America

John Auten Camp #8 has begun awarding the SUVCW Eagle Scout Commendation in the South Bend area. Brother Jonathan Swarts, who has been active as a parent and leader in a local Scout troop for some years, was asked by Commander Bill Adams PDC to begin awarding the SUVCW Commendation, both as a way to honor local Eagle Scouts as well as to increase the camp's visibility. A full-color flyer was developed for inclusion in the local Scout newsletter and Brother Swarts attended a local

Scout leader meeting to promote the award. He stressed the values of duty, service, and love for country and flag that are shared by both the SUVCW and the Boy Scouts of America.

A number of interested Scout leaders and parents quickly got in touch to request that Brother Swarts attend their scouts' Eagle ceremonies to present the award. COVID-19 restrictions, however, canceled or postponed most such ceremonies. This year, John Auten Camp #8 has presented two Eagle Scout Commendations, only one of which could be in-person. At the in-person Eagle Court of Honor, Guiseppe Nania, a new Eagle Scout in Troop 562 (St. Pius X Church, Granger, IN) was presented with the Commendation certificate, SUVCW Eagle Scout patch, a special letter of commendation from the camp, and an SUVCW brochure explaining our order and giving contact information for potential new members. Earlier in the year, another scout was mailed these items as his Eagle Court of Honor was cancelled due to the pandemic.

While this program is still new for John Auten Camp #8, it promises to help spread the word of the SUVCW, with many people saying how the Scout award was the first time they had heard of our organization.

Memorial Service for Past Department Commander Ron Gill Held on July 25, 2020

Brother Ron Gill was remembered and eulogized at a special Memorial Service Saturday July 25th in Valparaiso. Over 50 family and friends gathered outside in a shaded grove behind the First Christian Church to remember Brother Gill. Ron's son Jeff, a former SUVCW member, gave the eulogy while Ron's other son Brian provided his musical talents to the Memorial Service. David D. Porter Camp Commander Steve Mockler paid tribute to Ron and talked about how Ron had affected his life and the many he had touched through the years. PDC Brother Tim Beckman also gave remarks remembering Ron and his contribution to the Department of Indiana as well as the entire SUVCW organization.

Company D, 27th Indiana S.V.R. members presented the colors at the beginning of the service. The Memorial Service concluded with the 27th Indiana firing a three volley salute and with the playing of Taps. Bothers from five different camps attended to pay their respects to Ron.











A Word of Remembrance



In the SUVCW, all of us have found a place. A place to honor the history of those soldiers and families that gave not only some, but in some cases, gave ALL. It is a place for us to escape into our research. A place for us to enjoy friendship with like minded individuals. It's a place for us to give back to our communities.

On March 12, 2020, our organization lost one of the most important people behind the scenes. March 12 was the day we lost Ron Gill. Ron was a member of our organization for 46 years! He first joined the SUVCW in 1974 to a Camp in Illinois, as it was the closest to his home in Valparaiso, Ind. Ron told me that he was tired of the drive and wanted to make it easier so he helped to re-charter David D. Porter Camp, #116, Department of Indiana. On a side note- those that knew Ron, know that he never took the easy road a day in his life.

Ron served as an officer in Porter Camp for nearly every year since 1976. He held all positions at the camp level at some point in his tenure. He also served in a variety of roles at the Department level, including Department Commander. He also served twice as the National Chaplain.

For those that knew Ron, can attest that no one could ever question his commitment to not only the organization, but to virtually everyone that he met.

Ron knew almost everyone in the organization or so it seemed. I first met Ron shortly after joining the organization. I was in a rut in life, and the Vice Commander of the Camp (My Father), convinced me to join, and it was after that I met Ron. I was at a point in my life where, I needed something-someway to feel I belonged, a place where I could focus on something other than my career. I was rather bored with the business meetings in the beginning and decided I wanted to do something to make it exciting for me. Having a passion for genealogy, I decided to work on the graves registration. I was going to get every grave in the county. I was gung-ho, and fired up! I remember mentioning this to Ron (mind you I hadn't really got to know him yet) and he said if I ever needed any help to just ask. Well I never was one to ask for help and, I started working diligently on the project. I had been told that quite a few of the graves were in the database already and was shown where that was.

Being undaunted, I was ready to get every piece of Information I could on these men! It was about 6 months in I

found out that Ron had done most of this research already. He never mentioned to me directly. I figured it was a lesson. He was letting me find myself. He allowed me to have my own passion, my own purpose. He never pushed nor prodded, he sat back and gave hints now and then. To me this is what made him such a great leader.

I got to know Ron after bonding about the passion for finding these men. After working on the project for some time and encountering some roadblocks, he told where a box in the Porter County Library was with a lot of his records in it. And some years later, he gave to me a real treasure. He gave me his notes from his research in not only Porter County, but in others as well. This is something that I always keep close to my research area. He wanted me to seek out the answers on my own, just like he did with so many of you.

Ron always did what he could for the Camp, even in his later years. He would always help set up a tent, or sit at an encampment. His knowledge of the organization was second to none. Most people would agree that Ron was more than a member of the organization, more than a friend to many, he was a mentor to more people than any of us could count.

His passion about the Civil War, the Veterans, the history, the Camp, the Organization, the friends he met along the way, and most importantly, his family, was second to none. He embodied our long held Motto- Say it with me-Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty! I along with all of you that knew Ron, will miss our friend and mentor. We will miss our conversations, his opinions, and mostly I think we would agree, his passion. All of us that got to know Ron, need to make sure we embody the same spirit and passion that Ron did. This is how we will honor him. Rest in Peace Ron. You will forever be in our hearts. We will miss you and honor your memory. Please share your memories on the David D. Porter Camp 116 Facebook Page, and we will get them to the National Page for all to see.

Steve A Mockler- Commander David D. Porter Camp #116 Department of Indiana